

The Euro-American Shift

by George Friedman - July 7, 2024

There are certain pressures that reverberate throughout the globe that can manifest in different realms, including the economy, the military and the legal system. As the world evolves, so do these pressures. They normally affect countries one by one, but sometimes they can impact multiple countries at the same time. We are now in the midst of a transcontinental systemic crisis affecting many European countries as well as the United States.

In these regions, the forces being brought to bear have resulted in a loss of confidence in the state and the cultural matrix. There is a culture war, focused on issues ranging from gender to the movement of people, driven by economic and political forces. Long-standing cultural norms are being restructured, a shift frequently overseen and endorsed by the state. The movement of people across borders brings with it diverse cultural values, poverty-driven crime and the difficulties of social integration. Former U.S. President Donald Trump has challenged these changes with a force that has surprised and alarmed his opponents.

Amid the pressures generated by the fear of unemployment is a sense that the state has lost interest in the well-being of poorer citizens in favor of migrants. With that comes a fear that their country's long-standing moral values will be deemphasized and new ideals constructed as new groups are granted legitimacy over older generations.

This all generates a political response against not so much parties of a particular political leaning but those parties in power. In the United States, the challenge comes from the confrontation between the Democratic Party and the radical wing of the Republican Party. Democrats are seen as heedless of the moral values that were dominant in the past and the dangers of migration.

In Europe, many of these issues are still in play, coupled with the sense that European unification has favored some countries over others and that the political system has not satisfied many people's needs. In some cases, traditional concerns over distribution of wealth have also been at the root of the battle. The political trajectory is mostly against left-wing parties, with the details of the challenges varying, though resistance to migration is a common thread.

Overall, incumbent parties are the targets of the frustration. The incumbents, irrespective of their ideology, are held responsible for the public's grievances. As opposition parties – even sometimes

those on the left – take on issues like mass migration and shifting values, they begin to tilt elections in their favor.

The U.S. election is a model of this tendency. Trump is focusing on delegitimizing Democrats and Republicans who are more conventional, in favor of a new political structure. A similar dynamic is taking place in Europe, where the left-wing parties are moving to recognize the moral claims of newly energized parties skeptical of European unity, migration and changes in cultural norms. The Euro-American world is thus undergoing a routine but dramatic shift.

Author: George Friedman

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