

Greeks versus Romans: A Talebian framing of immigration discourse in the West

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In this paper, political division in the West is depicted as a function of i) demographic changes in Europe and the United States due to mass immigration; ii) tension between government policy and public opinion on mass immigration; and iii) attempts by the media and governments to proscribe and punish the expression of anti-mass immigration sentiment. The 'two sides' of the immigration debate are characterized as Greek (ideology-driven) and Roman (practice-driven), utilizing concepts popularized by the writer Nicolas Nassim Taleb. Current divisiveness in political and civil discourse is framed as a consequence of Greek ideology taken too far, in opposition to which populist movements have taken full advantage of social media and the new news media and the concomitant loss of monopoly power by traditional opinionmakers.

Keywords: *Greek versus Roman, political discourse, media, immigration, multiculturalism, diversity*

1. Introduction

The West is currently in a state of heightened political tension. The US and the four greatest European economic powers (Germany, the U.K., France and Italy) were all ranked less politically stable in 2016 than in 2006 (The World Bank 2018). In the United States, divisions between Republican and Democrat voters on issues such as the role of government, immigration, national security, and the environment were marked in 2016, and have since widened further (PRC 2017). Brexit, the election of Donald Trump, and the rise of populist movements in Poland, Hungary, Italy, Sweden and Germany, have been greeted with alarm by a majority of legacy media outlets, suggesting that there is a rift between large parts of the voting public and traditional opinion- and policy-makers.

This rift can be understood in ideological terms as the opposition of 'Greek' and 'Roman' understandings of the world (Taleb 2018). Greeks favor theory over

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practice, while Romans favor practice over theory. It is argued that Greek elements on both sides of the political spectrum have become increasingly fundamentalist in recent years, determined to push their ideologies regardless of any flaws in them that become apparent on implementation.

The first three sections of this paper offer an overview of government policy, public opinion, and the interplay between the two. Section 4 applies four of Taleb's (2018) principles for understanding politics under complexity, placing particular emphasis on the Greek/Roman distinction.

2. Immigration: Government policy

For the thousand years prior to the Second World War, the demographic make-up of the British Isles was more or less static. The biggest influx of foreigners during this period was that of 50 thousand Huguenots fleeing persecution in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Despite their cultural proximity to the protestant English, it took centuries for the Huguenots to integrate fully (Murray 2017). Approximately 300 years later, in 1948, a more momentous wave began. The British Nationality Act of 1948, introduced to address labor shortages, gave 800 million former colonial subjects the opportunity to live and work in the UK. By 1953, the number of migrants stood at a modest 3000 per year, rising to more than 130 thousand in 1961 (Westminster Hall Sitting 2003). Despite *Commonwealth Immigrants Acts* of 1962 and 1968 and 1972 introduced in response to misgivings on the part of a public until recently largely unacquainted with multiculturalism, the 1970s saw an average of 72 thousand immigrants per year entering the country, and in the 1980s the figure rose further (Heinzerling 1968). During this period the U.K. began to accept immigrants from Soviet held territories such as the Ukraine and Poland, and Hungary following the Hungarian revolution in 1956. In the 1980s and 1990s a significant number of Somalis entered the country. Changes to the law instigated by the Blair Government in 1997 made it much easier for the UK residents to bring foreign spouses into the country. The expansion of the EU has led to more immigration from central and Eastern Europe. From 2004 to 2009, 1.5 million workers migrated from new EU member states to the UK, particularly from Poland (Doward and Rogers 2010; GPP 2010). The UK participates in two refugee resettlement schemes in co-operation with the UNHCR, and hosts one of the largest populations of Iraqi refugees outside the Gulf region (BBC News 2006). From 2001 to 2011, the population living in England or Wales who had been born overseas rose by nearly 3 million. Over the same period, the number of people identifying as Christian dropped by 4 million, from 72% to 59% of the population.

Meanwhile, the size of the Muslim population doubled in size. The UK now sees over 330 thousand immigrants arrive each year (ONS 2017), the majority of whom are far more culturally distant than their French protestant predecessors. The upshot of post-Second World War immigration policy is that the contemporary demographic make-up of the UK would come as a shock to a time-travelling visitor from the 1940s. For example, the 2011 census in the UK indicated that:

- Only 45% of London residents identified themselves as white British.
- In 2011, nearly 3 million people in England and Wales were living in households where not one adult spoke English is the main language.
- At least 1 million people are thought to be in the UK illegally.
- The rising population of the UK is due to a large extent to higher birthrates among immigrants.
- The most popular name for baby boys, taking spelling variations into account, was Muhammed.
- In 2014 women who were born overseas accounted for 27% of all live births in England and Wales (Murray 2017; ONS 2017).

In the light of recent immigration trends, the arrival of the Huguenots seems quaintly low-key. Table 1 demonstrates how similar demographic changes have occurred over the whole of Western Europe:

Country	Population density per square mile	Total population (million)	Total foreign-born (million) (%)	Foreign-born born in non-EU states
Germany	583	82	9.8 (12%)	6.4 (7.8%)
U.K.	662	62	7.0 (11.3%)	4.8 (7.7%)
France	301	65	7.2 (11.8%)	5.0 (7.8%)
Italy	522	60	4.8 (8%)	3.2 (5.3%)

Table 1. Demographic change in Europe (UNDESA, 2015).

It should be noted that this data was collected before the Syrian refugee crisis, which led to the entry of more than a million refugees into Europe (UNCR 2018).

3. Immigration: Public opinion

In 1968, Enoch Powell delivered his infamous ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech to parliament, warning in dramatic fashion of the dangers of unbridled immigration to the UK:

We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. (Powell 1968)

The public response to Powell's subsequent firing from the shadow cabinet is telling. He received 110 thousand letters, more than 108 thousand of which were supportive. A Gallup poll taken shortly afterwards indicated that 74% of people agreed with the sentiment of his speech (Neather 2009).

The gap between the (shadow) government position and public opinion was stark in 1968, and it remains so. The 2011 UK census indicated that 67% of the British public believed that immigration over the previous decade had been 'a bad thing for Britain'. A majority of respondents viewed the entry of skilled migrants from culturally close countries such as Australia more favorably than that of unskilled immigrants from culturally distant countries such as Nigeria (ONS 2012). In 2014, a majority of the public in seven EU nations polled wished to see fewer immigrants allowed into their countries. In none of the countries surveyed did more than 40% agree that having an increasing number of people from many different races, ethnic groups and nationalities makes their country a better place to live. More than half the public in Italy, Germany and France expressed frustration over immigrants' perceived failure to assimilate. And at least four-in-ten expressed this view in Greece, Spain, the UK and Poland (IPSOS 2016).

Many in Europe harbor particularly strong concerns about Muslim immigration. Only 30% of the general public in Britain agree that the values of Islam are compatible with those of British society (Comres 2015). 77% of respondents to a survey conducted in Holland agree that Islam does not enrich their country (Maurice de Hond 2013). In France, 73% of people polled said that they viewed Islam negatively, and 67% said that they believed the Islamic values to be incompatible with the values of French society. 74% said that they regarded Islam as intolerant (note: 10% of France is Muslim, and this Poll was conducted prior to the Paris terror attacks of 2015). In Germany, 64% of respondents associated Islam with violence, and 70% with fanaticism and radicalism (IDA 2012). In a survey of 10,000 people across European countries, majorities in eight of the ten countries surveyed agreed with the statement "All further migration from many Muslim countries should be stopped" (Focus 2016).

The purpose of this paper is not to judge which 'side' of the debate is correct, but to document the existence of division between the government and public. It should be noted, however, that to simply ascribe such commonly held

beliefs to racism or xenophobia is a grave error, since surveys of Muslim opinion do in fact vindicate them to a degree. In 2009, 0% British Muslims surveyed thought that homosexuality was morally acceptable, and 52% that it should be made illegal (Butt 2009). 78% of British Muslims believed that the Danish publishers of cartoons portraying Mohammed should be prosecuted, and 19% respected Osama Bin Laden (ICM 4, 2006). According to a 2015 poll, 27% of British Muslims said they had some sympathy for the motives of the attackers who massacred the Charlie Hebdo staff who published caricatures of Muhammad, and 24% said they believed violence against people who publish images of Mohammed can be justified (Comres 2015). There are currently thought to be more British Muslims fighting for ISIS than for the British Armed Forces (Hashimi 2018). The European court recently ruled that criticism of Muhammed does not fall under the jurisdiction of 'free speech' (Mccarthy 2018). Blasphemy laws, it appears, are making a comeback in Europe. Americans are more likely than Europeans to view immigrants as strengthening their society (50%). However, polling suggests that more than four in ten Americans believe that immigrants represent a threat to American culture. Views tend to correlate with party lines, with 67% of Republican voters believing that immigration to the U.S. should be decreased, compared to one-third (33%) of Democrats (AVA 2015).

The following section addresses how the government and media have responded to a significant numbers of Western citizens who oppose mass immigration.

3. Public opposition to immigration: The establishment response

The motivation and methodology of pollsters are legitimate targets of critical scrutiny. Shortcomings notwithstanding, however, the challenge of gauging public opinion through polling data pales in comparison to that of compiling an impartial overview of government and media discourse. Little more can be done here than to present for the reader's judgment a selection of examples deemed representative. In this writer's judgement, the orthodox position of Western European and American governments in recent decades towards immigration can be encapsulated in the following axioms:

1. Mass immigration and its corollaries (multiculturalism, diversity etc.) are *beneficial* and *inevitable*.
2. The problem with immigration is not inherent to it, but resides in *opposition to it*.
3. Those who oppose mass immigration are at best ignorant, at worst racist; the cure for their ailment is *more diversity*.

These sentiments can be seen to underlie the government and media commentary presented in this section. Let us examine some examples from British government officials and think tank members:

- ◆ A spokesman for the Office for National Statistics hailed a report that white Britons form a minority in 23 out of 33 boroughs in London as a “tremendous display of diversity” (Goodwin 2012).
- ◆ Foreign minister, Boris Johnson declared: “We need to stop moaning about the downburst. It’s happened. There is nothing we can do now except make the process of absorption as euphonic as possible” (Johnson 2012).
- ◆ Sunder Katwala of the think tank ‘British Future’ opined: “The question of do you want this to happen or don’t you want this to happen implies that you’ve got a choice and you could say “let’s not have any diversity”. But this is not possible, continues Katwala, “...this is who we are—it’s inevitable” (Katwala 2012).
- ◆ Former Labour speechwriter Andrew Neather, who refers to those opposing immigration as “whingers”, admitted that the Blair government “willfully eased immigration laws because they wanted to “rub the right’s noses in diversity...” (Whitehead 2009).

Media rhetoric on immigration is by nature more diverse than that of government-connected actors, but more often than not is built on the same axioms. The BBC chose to report the results of the survey of UK Muslim opinion introduced in the previous section under the headline ‘Most British Muslims oppose Muhammad cartoons reprisals’ (BBC News 2015). This might charitably be described as *factual yet disingenuous*, since it puts a positive spin on results that many British citizens (who fund the BBC) would find deeply disconcerting. An inset offers a selection of key findings. Positive results of the survey (‘95% feel loyalty to Britain’) are listed in bullet points using a larger font size than that used for the ‘negative’ results (‘46% feel prejudice against Islam makes it difficult being Muslim in Britain’). The result that 27% of Muslims have some sympathy for the Charlie Hebdo attackers—manifestly a key finding—is curiously omitted here, but included elsewhere in the article. The second half of the article is titled ‘analysis’, and presents two ‘man on the street’-style opinions. The first, for some reason from a Today reporter, trots out a talking point rather than analysis: “Islam is a religion of peace and love—not violence”. The second, from a university student, reads: “...politicians and the media perpetuated a dehumanized image of Muslims, which opens them up to all forms of attack.” The real danger, we are told, is not terrorism (which, may we remind you, has no connection to Islam), but the way in which society brings such problems upon itself.

In an article titled “The Immigration Crisis is Tearing Europe Apart”, Foreignpolicy.com does a better job than the BBC in presenting the results of polling data. The closing paragraph, however, by omission, and through the use of tried-and-tested tropes, pushes the orthodox position:

The intertwining fear of refugees, Muslims, and terrorism is now very real among many Europeans. This in itself poses a major challenge for leaders of countries that are rapidly becoming more diverse. Compounding this is the rise of right-wing populism and the spread of nativist rhetoric. And each terrorist incident only strengthens this argument and adds to the base of support. If the far-right continues to surge in the months ahead in countries like France and Germany, it could mean a return to nationalist politics that have more than once left Europe with a sorry legacy. (Stokes 2016)

Though strictly speaking factual, this paragraph indicates clearly that the problem lies with the public, rather than immigration policy. The writer bemoans the way in which terrorism strengthens the populist argument (“if only terrorism *didn't* turn people against immigration” is the implication). In reality, of course, such a response is inevitable (it is the absence of such a response that would be notable). The primary consequences of terrorism—dead bodies and bereaved families—go unmentioned, as does an analysis of the extent to which public fears are justified. Immigration and demographic change (diversity) are portrayed as inevitable, and since there is no point in fighting the inevitable, the only thing to do is to address the public’s ‘unreasonable’ fears. The scared public are, in *de riguer* fashion, tarred with the ‘far right’ label, and linked to a possible resurgence of Nazism. Far right, like diversity—both buzzwords albeit used for opposing purposes—are relatively seldom defined, nor is care taken to examine why diversity is preferable to homogeneity or unity, or exactly how much, and what type of diversity—ideas, skin color, country of origin, culture, education, skill level—is preferable.

When the focus of politicians and the media is understood to be on mediating between the public and the facts (Murray 2017) in order to ‘fix’ thinking on immigration, rather to protect the public from something they fear, it is hardly surprising that people begin to reciprocate that antagonism, favoring at the ballot box strong leaders who promise a return to simpler times. The most striking example of the populist movement is the election to the US presidency of Donald Trump, whose immigration policies, most notably the proposed building of a wall on the Mexican border, resonate strongly with those opposed to mass immigration, particularly of the illegal variety. A cursory examination of 232 of Trump’s tweets on immigration illustrates this point. The Tweets, taken from the announcement of his candidacy (June 15, 2015) to August 11, 2018, yielded the following results:

Proportion	Message
38% (87/232)	Proclaim strength on immigration, contrasted with opponents' weakness (during the primaries, Republicans; during the campaign, Hillary Clinton; after the election, Democrats).
17% (39/232)	Straightforward calls for a better immigration system
16% (38/232)	Citing or re-tweeting people offering support for his immigration policies
5% (12/232)	Attacking the media for 'misrepresenting' the immigration situation.
4% (9/232)	Drawing attention to particular examples of immigrant crime.

Table 2. Analysis of Trump tweets containing "immigra".

In recent years, Internet news outlets and social media platforms have begun to undermine the legacy media's monopolistic power to mediate political discourse and shape public opinion. The populist movement has been particularly adept at harnessing the power of the new media. Trump's use of Twitter is perhaps the starkest example of the way in which new technology allows political actors to bypass traditional opinionmakers to deliver messages directly to the general public.

The thesis presented so far can be summarized as follows: Broadly speaking, there is a rift between Western European/American government policies and public opinion on immigration. Instead of bringing policy into line with the public will, or coming to some form of compromise, governments and media outlets have instead attempted to bring public opinion into line with their idealistic vision of a harmonious, multicultural West. This has been attempted through persuasion, but also by brow beating and demonization. To the extent that these efforts are unsuccessful, the resulting discord has facilitated the rise of a populist movement led by candidates offering a vision more in line with significant swathes of public opinion. In the following section I propose a conceptual interpretation of the situation.

4. Principles for understanding politics under complexity

Taleb (2018) proposes ten principles for understanding politics under complexity. Four of them, deemed applicable to the immigration debate, are introduced in Table 3.

The application of these principles can suggest limits to what can be deemed rational or irrational within immigration discourse. The principle of *survival* dictates that one tends to prioritize family over the community (other families), the community over the county, the county over the state, the state over the country, and one's country over other countries. Any admixture to the status quo that contradicts this principle will, all other things remaining equal, lead to discord. For example, if a government uses tax revenue to house refugees rather than its own

poor, people are likely to feel unease *even in the complete absence of xenophobia or racism*. Up to a point, of course, such ‘rule breaking’ can be tolerated, and may indeed be embraced since other principles, for example the moral obligation to help those in need, may override the survival principle. Nonetheless, the survival principle helps to explain why, for example, many American citizens feel frustrated with what they understand to be excessively lenient policies toward illegal immigration/immigrants.

Concept	Definition and example
Survival	Survival necessitates a minimum level of fractal tribalism. If you are friends with everyone, you are friends with no one. If you don’t give preferential treatment to your own children you threaten their survival
Asymmetries	A weak form of homophily (preference for similar people) is not xenophobia (distaste of the foreigner). A study of adaptive systems shows that a collection of people who are tolerant yet have a weak preference not to be in a minority will inevitably cluster to the point that a community may appear deliberately segregated.
Skin in the game	No decision should ever be taken by someone who doesn’t exit the gene pool in case he or she is wrong. Every company under the backstop of the taxpayer should be treated like a utility, with its executives compensated like other civil servants.
Greek vs. Roman	The real difference in politics is not <i>right vs left</i> but <i>Greek vs Roman</i>. Greeks put theory above practice. Romans put practice above theory. Polybius in his Histories compares the Greek legislator Lycurgus who constructed his political system while “untaught by adversity”, to the more experiential Romans who, a few centuries later, “have not reached it by any process of reasoning, but by the discipline of many struggles and troubles, and always choosing the best by the light of the experience gained in disaster”.

Table 3. Principles for understanding politics under complexity. Adapted from Taleb (2018)

The principle of *asymmetry* dictates that there is an inbuilt tendency for citizens with some shared characteristic such as educational history, language, or culture, to cluster. Clustering happens even when shared characteristics are minor in degree. A moderate level of integration of a newly arrived immigrant community—especially one culturally distant from the host population—is therefore likely to require many decades for the commonalities between the communities to become

comparable in degree to those between the community and the host population. If immigration levels are high and sustained, this becomes increasingly unlikely. Furthermore, if immigrants are encouraged to 'keep' their culture, or are taught about the unique 'original sins' of the native culture, there can be no reason to ever expect immigrants to integrate *en masse*. The separate clustering of communities may not lead to insurmountable inter-group friction, but only up to a point. Robust, long-term research (predictably subjected to a furious reception from outraged Greeks) suggests that the greater the diversity, the less trust between members of society (Putnam 2003). The comparatively successful integration of European immigrants into America society in the 19th and early 20th centuries took multiple decades, and was a result of deliberate efforts to promote integration, such as the mandatory use of English in schools. How confident can we be of the chances of so many more culturally distant peoples since the 1964 immigration act, in an era of multiculturalism?

The Mesopotamian code of Hammurabi decreed: "If a builder build a house for some one, and does not construct it properly, and the house which he built fall in and kill its owner, then that builder shall be put to death." (Hammurabi, n.d.) Hammurabi's builders had *skin in the game* (Taleb 2017), i.e. they were forced to bear the price of failure. In terms of immigration debate, a strong implication of skin in the game would require public policymakers (and, for that matter, university professors enamored of diversity) to live in the society they propose beyond the level of enjoying the cuisine: living, competing for their jobs, and sending their children to school with immigrants. Thus, they would be forced to examine their theories on immigration in the light of firsthand experience. In addition, their opinions on the topic would be considered much more sincerely by working class citizens who typically have more skin in the immigration game than their leaders.

Those with skin in the game are more likely to learn from their mistakes (or be helpfully eradicated from the decision-making system), while those with little or no skin in the game are less incentivized to learn; the former ones are more likely to prioritize practical experience as their 'teacher', while the latter can cling to their pet theories, come what may. In other ways, the *doers* have a Greek understanding of the world, and the *theorizers* have a Roman understanding the world. Table 4 contrasts tried-and-tested, *Roman* ideas with idealistic, *Greek* ideas of how Europe should, or could be.

Roman	Greek
The West is home primarily to those of European descent.	The West is a home for whoever wishes to live there.
The identity and ideology of the West draws on philosophical and historical foundations such as the rule of law, and the ethics derived from the continent's history and philosophy.	The identity and ideology of the West concerns <i>respect, tolerance and diversity</i> .
Integration	Multiculturalism
Celebrate European culture	Celebrate all cultures except European culture, given its shameful historical heritage.
Public opinion guides immigration policy	Immigration policy is based on the identity and ideology of Europe (respect, tolerance, diversity). If public opinion differs, it is wrong, and must be changed.

Table 4. Roman vs. Greek understandings of immigration. Adapted from Murray (2017).

This writer does not advocate partisan support for a Roman over a Greek position. On the contrary, a belief (or even simply a desire to believe) in human progress requires both respect for both the tried-and-tested *and* idealism. Nonetheless, the current division in the West can be understood as the Greek ideology of openness, diversity, and multiculturalism *taken too far*. The Roman approach to immigration and diversity is to find out, through trial and error, how much is the 'right' amount. Historically, the answer appears to be: *some, but not much, and slowly*, in line with the principles of survival and asymmetry. Current fundamentalist Greek positions are either that of an 'ethno-state' (the far right) or open borders (the far left). There can be little doubt that the political mainstream, as portrayed in section three, leans strongly toward the latter. No matter how well-intentioned the ideology, it will inevitably face the court of reality. In adopting the values of respect, tolerance, and diversity, Murray (2017) argues, Europe has stretched its ideology so wide as to make it meaninglessly shallow. Cohesive societies must have norms to which citizens conform. If one allows in immigrants to whom such norms are an anathema (gay rights to Muslim Somalians, for example), one can either enforce the in-group norms, penalizing the newcomers, or one can respect the norms of the immigrants, in so doing violating one's own norms.

A Europe which is home for the entire world will also be home for the practices that the worlds' people bring with them, some of them very different in nature to the native population's problems. One cannot separate immigration policy from the fact that 2000 victims of female genital mutilation sought treatment in London alone in the years 2010-2013, for example (Evening Standard 2013).

Murray (2017) ascribes the 'strange death' of Europe to two things, the mass movement of peoples into Europe, and the way in which Europe has lost faith in its beliefs, traditions, and legitimacy. He writes:

...the states that have been so open liberal that they had allowed and encouraged large-scale migration were portrayed as countries which were uniquely racist. And while any and all other cultures in the world could be celebrated within Europe, to celebrate even good things about Europe within Europe became suspect. The multicultural era was one of European self abnegation where the host society appeared to stand back from itself and hope that it would not be noticed other than have some form of benign convener. (101-102)

It was for this reason, among others, that the celebrated American political philosopher Samuel Huntington viewed multiculturalism as an essentially anti-Western ideology (Huntington 2015, 171).

Japan provides a counterpoint to the orthodox position that immigration is inevitable and beneficial. Famously welcoming to short-term foreign visitors, Japan offers various types of visas for foreign workers who are to provide services that citizens are unable to. Given a probation period of ten or so years of good behavior, foreigners are able to apply for permanent residency and Japanese nationality. This writer's experience is that foreigners who make the effort to integrate by learning the language and the local customs are rewarded warmly for their efforts. With that said, the flip side of a cohesive society with low crime rates and high levels of trust such as Japan's is a certain 'closed off-ness' towards the outside, and the reality that becoming *truly* Japanese is *not an option*. The principles of survival and asymmetry dictate that openness or cohesiveness are negatively correlated. Japan presents an example of a country with a tried-and-tested approach to immigration that *works*, in line with the principles outlined above.

5. In closing

This paper presented the argument that pro-and anti-mass immigration advocates can usefully be characterized as Greeks and Romans respectively. The Greeks currently hold the upper hand in terms of power to govern, and power to influence through the establishment media. Their situation is, however, increasingly precarious state of overreach (Schlesinger 1992) marked by tension and division. Ideally, there would be more balance between the Romans and the Greeks. The ideologues (Greeks) need to keep their 'feet on the ground', adapting their Utopian

theories when they prove insufficient or even dangerous, and the realists (Romans) need to have at least a degree of idealistic optimism for the future. Mayer (1992) characterizes a range of progressive ideas seen since the Second World war—equality of opportunity between men and women, gay rights, the establishment of the welfare state, the welfare state—as having been incremental and ‘balanced’ by conservative counter-sentiment. To this writer, such developments are Greek in conception, and Roman to the extent that they *work*. Should they continue to refuse to accede to some extent to genuine concerns about mass immigration, they will likely continue to pay a heavy price at the ballot box.

The larger debate is of course about more than just immigration. Advocating for free speech has recently caused some to be accused of offering a platform to extremism; viewing men and women as fundamentally different is said to be misogynistic; to be tolerant of, but to have no interest in the celebration of homosexuality is homophobic; and expressing the ‘wrong’ ideas on social media can lead to one’s voice being removed from the public space (a space dominated by Silicon Valley corporations decidedly Greek fundamentalist in political outlook). The trouble is that such views and behaviors, like distrust of outsiders (hence wariness of immigration) are mainstream, especially when viewed from any perspective other than late 20th century Liberal West. Embarrassed by the undermining effect such seemingly age-old human tendencies have on their ideology of equality, diversity, and multiculturalism, the fundamentalist Greeks will likely cling ever more tightly to their ideologies. We may be at a point at which the Greek/Roman divide portends tumultuous times during which unanticipated events could lead to a drastic changes in political momentum. Perhaps these changes are already underway.

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