



# A Convergence of Civilizations: The Transformation of Muslim Societies Around the World

*Youssef Courbage, Emmanuel Todd*

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We are told that Western/Christian and Muslim/Arab civilizations are on the verge of destroying each other. The demographics of one group remain sluggish, while the population of the other has exploded, widening the cultural gap and all but guaranteeing the outbreak of war. Leaving aside the media's sound and fury on this subject, measured analysis shows another reality taking shape: rapprochement between these two civilizations, benefitting from a universal movement guiding humanity since the Enlightenment.

This book's historical and geographical sweep discredits the notion of a specific Islamic demography. The range of fertility among Muslim women, for example, is as varied as the religious behavior among Muslims in general. Whether agnostics, fundamentalist Salafis, or al-Qaeda activists, Muslims are a diverse group that proves the immutability and individuality of Islam. Youssef Courbage and Emmanuel Todd consider different degrees of literacy, patriarchy, and defensive reactions among minority Muslim groups across the world, underscoring the massive secularization movement spreading throughout Arab and Muslim populations. In this regard, they argue, there is very little to distinguish the evolution of Islam from the history of Christianity, with the Muslim world now entering into a global modernity. Sensitive to demographic variables and their reflection of personal and social truths, Courbage and Todd effectively upend a dangerous meme, in which a fractured world is believed to be close to crisis because of an epidemic of closed cultures and men made different by religion.

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