

Beat: Politics

FRANCE FACING TODAY ITS IMMIGRANTS DESCENDANTS

DO THEIR LIFE AND FUTUR MATTER ?

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USPA NEWS - Napoleon was saying that the geography dictates politics. We are talking more precisely about strategic interests, economical, political and security issues. History cannot deny the place of geography : the arab world is neighbour to Europe.

So, should those two worlds increase intensively their relationship ? Some finally consider North Africa not any more as a french lost province but a group of emancipated territories having intense human relations with France.

This is the General de Gaulle, after the algerian independence, who started an approach of cooperation with the arab countries. The year 1958 is an essential landmark regarding the relationships between France and the arab world. That year is connected to the accession to the power of a great nationalist who understood perfectly the arab nationalism.

France and the arab world live between dreams and economical realities. Connections between the two of them go back up to Charlemagne. But how french people describe and explain them exactly ? Why not creating a new way different from myths, inheritages, passion and coming to reality ?

From both sides, wrong ideas, preconceptions, cliches, often distort reality. We are not yet capable of distinguishing what is today, what was before in the past and how we would like things to be or imagined. Some say that the bonds between France and the arab world are indestructible. Do they seriously think it ? Is this feeling a typical french pretention hurting itself to a young generation not seeing France as a major actor on the international scene ?

Different visions predominate : the one coming back to Laurence of Arabia and the thousand and one nights story ; the one more contemporary of rich leaders throwing away petrodollars ; the one of the arab terrorist, fanatic and violent. Finally, the one of the arab world with fast demographic growth ready to invade aggressively the northern rivers of the Mediterranee. We cannot therefore ignore that, since the fall of the Berlin Wall and USSR, in the western countries, never stopped the stigmatization and designation of the Arab or Mulim as being the Ennemy.

As in France, where a large arab community lives, seems to be a disturbing matter for some, even if this community is represented by peaceful and respectuous citizens perfectly integrated into the society. Only one person acting badly and the whole community pays the prize.

For years, two attitudes from french people toward Arabs were the most visible : the first one being humanist, curious and based on the desire to discover the other one, to comprehend his culture, to accept the difference. The second one inspired by fear, contempt and rejection. The Arabs are neither angels or demons, or neither princes or terrorists.

The comparision of figures between the western and arab masses does not tend to determinate a conflict between north and south of the mediterranee. The parallel between Europe and the Arab World's history does not imply the storytelling of arab leaders being similar as Hitler, Mussolini or Staline. France needs to evacuate all the ideas well established during so long, stereotyped images and both sides should try to make mutual grievances disappear. This attitude will enable finally the possibility to tackle a more objective futur based on the reality of the 21st Century.

In the 1980's, France was dealing with the issue of integrating arab immigrants. Today, we have to insist on the importance of the middle class which is very active economically, also on the upper class with arab and muslim origins. This last one growing in the french society and soon will be playing a big part in dealing with countries of origin. Both classes often spend their holidays in their country of origin, exchanging ideas, strengthening french speaking language...

Often, the french population wonder about the following : does France have one arab political approach or simply is this concept a myth ? The term « arab politics » should designate the interest shown by France for the arab world in order to promote friendship bonds and multidisciplinary exchanges. The arab world exists and represent an undeniable political reality, even if its diversity implies a

different approach with each country.

Finally, what is most requested from France is : to deal with others on an equal level and to respect the right to self-determination and countries' full sovereignty. The second point is to support the arab mass in their modern aspirations for freedom, solidarity and peace.

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