

Forget Catalonia, Flanders Is the Real Test Case of EU Separatism!

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

Global Research, October 12, 2017

[Oriental Review](#) 11 October 2017

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [History](#)

Catalonia's separatist campaign has dominated European headlines for the past couple of weeks, but it's really the northern Belgian region of Flanders which will serve as a barometer over whether large chunks of the EU will fall apart into a collection of identity-centric statelets prior to the bloc's reconstitution into a "federation of regions".

What's going on in Catalonia is of paramount importance to the geopolitical future of Europe, since it could very well serve as the catalyst for fracturing the EU if copycat movements elsewhere are emboldened by the Spanish region's possible separatist success. This was explained in detail in the author's recent analysis about "[The Catalan Chain Reaction](#)", which readers should familiarize themselves with if they're not already acquainted with the thesis put forth in that work. To concisely summarize, there's a very distinct possibility that the EU's liberal-globalist elite have been planning to divide and rule the continent along identity-based lines in order to further their ultimate goal of creating a "federation of regions".

Catalonia is the spark that could set off this entire process, but it could also just be a flash in the pan that might end up being contained no matter what its final result may be. Flanders, however, is much different because of the heightened symbolism that Belgium holds in terms of EU identity, and the dissolution of this somewhat artificially created state would be the clearest sign yet that the EU's ruling elite intend to take the bloc down the direction of manufactured fragmentation. Bearing this in mind, the spread of the "Catalan Chain Reaction" to Belgium and the [inspiration](#) that this could give to Flanders to break off from the rest of the country should be seen as the true barometer over whether or not the EU's "nation-states" will disintegrate into a constellation of "Balkanized" ones.



"The First Bosnia"

In order to properly understand the state of affairs at play, it's necessary to briefly review the [history](#) of what could in some sense be described as "The First Bosnia", or in other words, Europe's "first artificially created state". Most of the territory of what is nowadays referred to as Belgium was unified with the modern-day Netherlands from 1482-1581 when the political entity was referred to as the Habsburg Netherlands. The southern part (Belgium) came under Spanish control from 1581-1714 when it was called the Spanish Netherlands. Afterwards, it passed under Austrian administration from 1714-1797 when it became the Austrian Netherlands prior to its brief incorporation into the First French Republic and later Empire from 1797-1815. It was during the Spanish and Austrian eras that Belgium began to consider Catholicism as an inseparable part of its national identity in

opposition to the Netherlands' Protestantism. Finally, Belgium was part of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands from 1815-1839 until the [Belgian Revolution](#) made it an independent state for the first time in its history.

In essence, what ended up happening is that a majority-Catholic but ethno-linguistically divided population got caught up in the 19th century's wave of nationalism and created a hybrid Franco-Dutch state that would eventually federalize in the late-20th century, in a structural sense serving as a precursor to the dysfunctional Balkan creation of Bosnia almost a century and a half later.

It's important to mention that the territory of what would eventually become Belgium had regularly been a battleground between the competing European powers of the Netherlands, the pre-unification German states, France, the UK, and even Spain and Austria during their control of this region, and this new country's creation was widely considered by some to be nothing more than a buffer state. The 1830 London Conference between the UK, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia saw the Great Power of the time recognize the fledgling entity as an independent actor, with Paris even militarily intervening to protect it during Amsterdam's failed "Ten Day's Campaign" to reclaim its lost southern province in summer 1831. For as artificial of a political construction as Belgium was, it fared comparatively well during the 19th century as it leveraged its copious coal supplies and geostrategic position to rapidly industrialize and eventually become a [genocidal African colonizer](#) in the Congo. Although it was devastated in both World Wars, Belgium was able to bounce back in a relatively short period of time, partly because it could rely on its Congolese prison state.

In The Belly Of The Beast

Flash forward to the present, and the only thing that modern-day Belgium has in common with its past self is its internal divisions. The post-colonial aftermath of "losing the Congo" and shortly beforehand agreeing to host the capital of the European Union opened up previously nationalistic Belgium to liberal-globalist influence, which contributed to what would eventually become its utter domestic dysfunction in recent years. It wasn't by chance that Brussels was chosen as the EU's headquarters either, since its inherent weakness was thought to make it an ideal "compromise country" for establishing the bloc's headquarters, as it would never become as powerful as France, for example, in potentially monopolizing the international organization's agenda. Again, Belgium's history as a buffer state/region came into relevant play in positioning it "in the belly of the beast" that's nowadays reviled by all sorts of individuals across the continent.

The administrative disconnect between its northern region of Flanders and the southern one of Wallonia, as well as what would eventually become its multi-tiered federal, regional, and community structure, was exploited by the [EU's ideologically extreme elite](#) to make the country the centerpiece of their "[multicultural experiment](#)". After decades of [facilitating mass migration](#) from civilizationally dissimilar societies of the "Global South", [5.9%](#) of the country is Muslim while at least an astonishing [20%](#) of Brussels follows Islam. Almost all of the capital's Muslims are immigrants, mostly from Morocco and Turkey, which isn't surprising considering that [70%](#) of Brussels' inhabitants are foreign-born. Unfortunately for the native locals, the "multicultural experiment" has failed miserably, and Belgium is now Europe's [jihadist leader](#) in terms of the per capita number of fighters who have travelled abroad to join Daesh. All things considered, the "utopia" that the Belgians were promised by

joining the EU and hosting its headquarters has turned into a dystopia, and the country now finds itself in the belly of the liberal-globalist beast.

It's little wonder that some of Belgium's population wants to escape from the organization which is responsible for their socio-cultural and security challenges, ergo the Flemish independence movement which aims to see the country's northern region become an independent state because of the lopsided demographic-economic advantage that it has over Wallonia. Flanders contributes four times as much to Belgium's national economy as Catalonia does to Spain's, being responsible for a whopping [80%](#) of the country's GDP as estimated by the European Commission, and it also accounts for roughly two-thirds of Belgium's total population unlike Catalonia's one-sixth or so. This means that Flemish independence would be absolutely disastrous for the people living in the remaining 55% of the "Belgian" rump state, which would for all intents and purposes constitute a de-facto, though unwillingly, independent Wallonia. Therefore, it's important to forecast what could happen if Belgium ultimately implodes with Flanders' possible secession.



Breaking The Buffer State

This section should appropriately be prefaced by emphasizing that there's no guarantee that Flanders will actually secede from Belgium, or that it would be successful in holding an unconstitutional referendum such as the one that Catalonia did in attempting to "legitimize" its anti-state ambitions. Furthermore, the Belgian state or its EU superstate overseer might resort to force just as Madrid did in trying to prevent this region's secession, so the reader shouldn't take it for granted that Flanders will inevitably become an independent state. Having gotten the "disclaimer" out of the way, however, there's a very real chance that the "Catalan Chain Reaction" will spread to the "belly of the beast" in catalyzing a similar separatist process in Flanders, hence why the author argued in the introduction that the outcome of such a reenergized post-Catalan movement in this region will be the best barometer in gauging whether the EU's liberal-globalist elite do indeed plan to "Balkanize" the bloc into an array of regionally "federalized" identity-centric statelets.

Given the domestic and historical particularities of the Belgian case study, it appears likely that Flanders' successful secession (however it ends up coming about) would lead to a narrow range of geopolitical outcomes for the Western European country. The first one is that Wallonia would be unable to function as a stand-alone "rump"/"independent" state given its measly 20% of unified Belgium's GDP, its one-third of the previous population, and presumed dependency on Flanders' port of Antwerp for most economic contact with the "outside world" aside from France and Germany. For these reasons, it's conceivable that the French-speaking region could be [taken over by France](#) just like how the famous French diplomat Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord originally envisioned in his unfulfilled eponymous "Talleyrand partition plan" that was first unveiled during the 1830 London Conference. As for Flanders itself, it could either attempt to remain an "independent" state or possibly confederate with the Netherlands, if there was any desire from both parties for this latter option.

Where things get tricky, however, is when it comes to the German-speaking community in eastern Wallonia, which might not want to become part of France. Also, for reasons of sensitive political-historical optics, they probably wouldn't be able to join Germany because it would carry uncomfortably strong shadows of Hitler's annexation of the Sudetenland

during the pre-World World II dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Therefore, it's likely that this sub-region would remain within Wallonia, which itself would probably become part of France, albeit with possible autonomy guaranteed to the German speakers that Paris would be "inheriting". That said, this isn't the trickiest part of any Belgian breakup, as the status of Brussels would definitely occupy center stage in this scenario. The EU would be inclined to see to it that its capital becomes an "independent" city-state on par with similarly sized Liechtenstein, though with a much higher and more dangerous Salafist demographic to contend with, one which could make it the "rightful" capital of "Eurabia" if [civilizational-geopolitical trends](#) continue in that direction.

Concluding Thoughts

The future of Flanders will be more of a harbinger of the EU's administrative-political future than Catalonia's will be, though the latter is indeed the trigger for sparking what might become the former's [emboldened](#) separatist push. If the host country of the EU's headquarters falls victim to the secessionist trend that might be poised to sweep across the bloc due to the "Catalan Chain Reaction", then it would confidently indicate that the EU's ruling liberal-globalist elite are determined to initiate the "controlled Balkanization" of the continent into a constellation of identity-centric statelets so as to ultimately satisfy their long-held goal of implementing a "federation of regions. There is no place in Europe more symbolically significant than Belgium, and especially its [jihadist dystopian capital](#) of Brussels, so if the European power structures "allow" Flanders to separate from "the First Bosnia", then it's all but certain that the rest of the bloc will feel the geopolitical reverberations within their own borders sooner than later.

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare.

All images in this article are from the author.

The original source of this article is [Oriental Review](#)
Copyright © [Andrew Korybko](#), [Oriental Review](#), 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Andrew Korybko](#)

About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca