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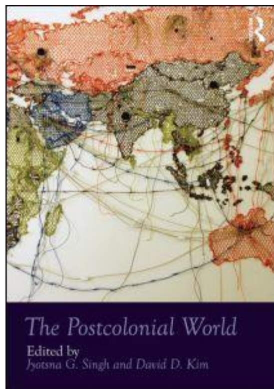

The Postcolonial World

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Inhospitality, European style

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PART V

HUMAN RIGHTS AND POSTCOLONIAL CONFLICTS

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

INHOSPITALITY, EUROPEAN STYLE
The failures of human rights[1]

Ali Behdad

I have chosen a rather general title for this essay to signal my broader theoretical interests in the issue of immigration as a *node* for cultural and political forms of identification in Europe. Instead of focusing on a particular immigration issue, text, or national context, I wish to discuss the broader cultural politics of Muslim immigration in Europe and the relationship of Muslim immigrants with their European hosts by way of elaborating a specific form of postcolonial alterity and the failures of human rights in Europe more broadly.[2] I am interested as much in the question of postcolonial representations of otherness as I am in the historical question of amnesia with regard to Muslim immigration, an amnesia that has enabled an exclusionary and disciplinary attitude toward Muslim immigrants. Hence, I begin with a theoretical discussion of the paradoxical nature of so-called "European hospitality" towards its immigrants and Muslim minorities and the historical disavowals that Europe's inhospitable treatment of its immigrants entails. Then, I explore the politics and implications of academic, journalistic, and popular representations of Muslim immigrants within the context of Orientalism and European colonialism.

In "From Communist to Muslim: European Human Rights, the Cold War, and Religious Liberty," historian and legal scholar Samuel Moyn argues that the recent cases brought before the European Court concerning religious liberty, especially the cases involving the Islamic headscarf, have drawn "not solely upon the exclusionary legacy of Western secularism but also upon the exclusionary legacy of Western hostility to secularism."[3] In light of this counterintuitive observation, Moyn maintains that contemporary treatment of Muslim immigrants and minorities in Europe has its origins in how Europeans dealt with the ideological "threat" posed by communism during the Cold War. The bias against Muslims in the European Court cases, he explains, are

> unsurprising, since it does not seem that easy to separate European secularism from the Christian legacy it ventriloquizes. On this view, precisely because of religious freedom's long-term links to the creation of a secular political space, it has proved discriminatory in practice. (64)

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According to Moyn, the conceptual basis for banning Muslim religious symbols and marginalizing Muslims in general has nothing to do with religion in general or with Islam in particular; rather, its source "lies in Cold War anxiety that secularist communism would topple Christian democracy" (67). Put otherwise, European powers during the Cold War feared communism as secularism incarnate and they used the second clause of Article 9 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, which gives the right for certain governmental agencies to override religious beliefs for the "protection of public order, health, or morals," to protect Christianity from the secularist influences of communism (65). Moyn claims: "Muslim has taken the place of the communist in the contemporary European imagination – and above all in the history of the religious liberty norm" (66–67).

Although Moyn is right to suggest that in today's Europe the so-called "threat" posed by Muslim immigrants has displaced that of communism in the mid-twentieth century, and that the "ideal of religious freedom originated in, and long remained tethered to, the self-conscious attempt to preserve an explicitly and pervasively Christian society" (79), I want to take issue with his broader claim that the current disciplining and policing of Muslim immigrants and minorities in Europe originates from "cultures, laws and doctrines once crafted to stave off secularism" (80). The exclusionary attitudes and disciplinary policies toward Muslim immigrants, I argue, must be understood within the context of a broader and historically deeper ideological othering whose origin lies in the discourse of Orientalism and the project of European colonialism in the nineteenth century. The cultural workings and production of immigration politics in postwar (Western) Europe are marked by a profound historical disavowal of Europe's colonial project and its need for cheap labor since decolonization that brought its former colonized subjects to the metropolis. Though attentive to the historical and sociological differences in the immigration debate in various European nations, my focus in the following pages rests on how Muslim immigrants are collectively represented by politicians, academicians, political pundits, and journalists throughout Western Europe, representations that are simultaneously produced by and are productive of inhospitable policies towards them. More specifically, my interest lies in the cultural and political implications of such views with regard to the everyday lives of Muslim immigrants as postcolonial subjects, and in what this might mean for the prospect of harmonious co-existence in an age of globalization. What do representations of Muslim immigrants reveal about the broader politics of immigration in postcolonial Europe? How do these representations contribute to contemporary political debates about immigration ideologically? And how do these representations prevent Europeans to live harmoniously with their Muslim neighbors?

EUROPEAN HOSPITALITY

Even a cursory glance at the ways in which European politicians and media portray the continent's relationship with Muslim immigrants reveals that Europe, especially Western and Northern, uses the model of hospitality and tolerance to describe this association, a model that obscures in a disavowing fashion the economics of immigration, the history of European colonialism, and a deep-seated racism in Europe, all

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of which limit the boundaries of hospitality and claims of tolerance. Hospitality, as Derrida reminds us, is

> an insoluble antinomy, a non-dialectizable antinomy between, on the one hand, *the* law of unlimited hospitality (to give the new arrival all of one's home and oneself, to give him or her one's own, our own, without asking a name, or compensation, or the fulfillment of even the smallest condition), and on the other hand, the law*s* (in the small plural), those rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional.[4]

The notion of hospitality constitutes an aporia in which the claim of absolute hospitality always clashes with hospitality by right, that is, a more conditional form of hospitality in which the alien other is subjected to a broad range of restrictive immigration laws and forces that adhere to new cultural norms and social values through assimilation and "integration."[5] The incommensurable difference between juridico-political laws of hospitality and the absolute law of unlimited hospitality renders the relation between host and guest constitutively ambiguous, making it constantly teeter between discourses of xenophilia and practices of xenophobia, claims of reception and instances of rejection, appearances of inclusion and cultures of exclusion.[6]

The contradictory nature of Europe's relation with its Muslim immigrant is symptomatic of a broader contradiction in the way democracy is imagined with the establishment of the European Union. As Étienne Balibar explains, the notion of a European community or people encapsulates both the idea of *ethnos* (or people as imagined community) and *demos* (the people as a collective with certain rights and representational power), a "double-faced construction" that interpellates the individual both at the level of universality – "the right to education, the right to political expression, the right to security and at least relative social protections" – and at the level of a particular national belonging which is exclusionary in nature.[7] The complex contradiction posed by a democratic composition of people in the form of a nation, he further explains, leads "inevitably to systems of *exclusion*: the divide between 'majorities' and 'minorities' and, more profoundly still between populations considered as native and those considered foreign, heterogeneous, who are racially and culturally stigmatized" (8). Balibar coins the concept of "European apartheid" to describe the contradictory and opposite movement of inclusion and exclusion, which results in the "reduplication of external borders in the form of 'internal borders,' stigmatization and repression of populations whose presence within European societies is nonetheless increasingly massive and legitimate" (x). While the idea of "Europe" demands inclusion and universality, the notion of a nation-state – "France" or "Germany" or "Netherlands" – implies exclusion and national identification, which often, if not always, are defined along ethnic, racial, and religious lines. To the extent that "everywhere that nations exist nationalism reigns," the nation-form is a "*structure capable of producing determinate community effects*," effects that are always exclusionary in nature (23, 21). In other words, the idea of "nation" rests "upon the formulation of a *rule of exclusion, of visible or invisible borders*, materialized in law and practice" (23). What makes Muslim immigrants the excluded community *par excellence*, I would add, is the fact that they are considered neither "ethnically" European, having been marked as racially other since the age of Empire, nor "politically" European

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in light of the Western perception of Islam as being "incompatible" with democracy. Muslim immigrants constitute the quintessentially differential "others" for European countries both at the universal level and at the level of national belonging.

DISAVOWING HISTORY

In defining immigration as a matter of conditional hospitality, Europe denies that its everyday practices of hostility and exclusionary attitudes towards immigrants have always accompanied its sanctimonious discourse of tolerance, communitarianism, and human rights in the postcolonial era. Here, disavowal ensures the coeval existence of hospitality and hostility, the enlightenment discourse and claims of tolerance and human rights, as well as the "intolerant" laws that regulate and restrict Muslim foreigners/immigrants. My notion of disavowal is akin to the Freudian notion of negation – in this regard, I should add in passing, Europe's relationship with its immigrants shares certain cultural and ideological tendencies similar to those of the United States in its treatment of new immigrants. In contrast to repression in which what is repressed has no access to our consciousness, Freud explains that in negation "the subject-matter of a repressed image or thought can make its way into consciousness [but] on condition that it is *denied.*"[8] Negation, Freud elaborates, "is actually a removal of the repression, though not, of course, an *acceptance* of what is repressed" (214). In negation, one may acknowledge an event, but the subject either denies its significance or refuses to take responsibility for it. As such, negation is a split perception of what constitutes our reality, a perception vacillating between denial and a supplementary acknowledgement.

Europe's relationship with its Muslim immigrants entails a negative acknowledgement of what is historically, politically, and collectively suppressed. Forgetting here is a deliberate form of disavowal in which one consciously decides to keep certain knowledge *unacknowledged* – unacknowledged, partly because acknowledgment requires a certain amount of reflexivity and taking responsibility, but largely because disavowal is both politically expedient and ideologically convenient: "To deny something in one's judgment is at the bottom the same thing as to say: 'That is something that I would rather repress'" (Freud, 214). Although the structure of disavowal in Europe's postcolonial relationship with its Muslims resembles that of the United States with its immigrants, the mechanisms by which amnesia works are different as are the political struggles with immigration. It helps to describe briefly the differences in Europe's deliberately forgetful relationship with Muslims and specify further my broader theoretical notion of amnesia within the context of postcolonial immigration to this radically ambivalent continent.

By describing Europe's postcolonial relationship with its Muslim immigrants in terms of disavowal, I wish to make several interrelated arguments. First, I suggest that such a relationship disavows the colonial context within which it is inscribed. Although in countries like France, Holland, and England the majority of Muslim immigrants are from postcolonies, discourses and policies of immigration often ignore cultural and political implications of the histories that have produced migration from the former colonies. It is not that French, Dutch, or British citizens deny their colonial past, but that the effects and implications of their colonial history on immigration are often ignored. In making this general claim, I am not claiming that there are no

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differences in how these countries view Muslim immigrants, but I want to underscore how their relations with immigrants express a similar form of historical disavowal about the colonial roots of postwar immigration. As Balibar and Maxime Silverman have cogently argued in regards to France, the juridical structures of former colonial states "were largely formed in the context of management of the colonies abroad and immigrants at home, and which are still the source of modern forms of exclusion today."[9] Contemporary discourses of immigration in Europe tend to obscure how the new postcolonial ordering of social relations between European citizens and Muslim immigrants are formed and informed by European colonialism. In the context of France, for example, Elisa Camiscioli has thoughtfully demonstrated how the myth of "colorblind" France and its "universalist claims of French national belonging" obscure how policymakers and social scientists around 1900 "employed racial hierarchies to judge the quality of foreign labor, and its prospects for citizenship" (11).[10] Contrary to the claims of many scholars, politicians, and popular commentators that "race played no role in constructing French national identity," in France, Camiscioli's archival research shows that "in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, racial discourses were elaborated and deployed with reference to both immigration and colonization" (11). What universalist claims of national belonging and human rights eclipse are highly conditional and calculated terms of French hospitality. The productivity studies of Jules Amar, a prominent theorist of work science, during the first decade of the twentieth century compared, contrasted, and eventually hierarchized labor performance by immigrants from the colonies with that of white Europeans from Poland, Italy, and Greece. Although France, unlike the United States, never implemented quota laws that would deny "colonial immigrants the 'right to migrate,' " the pseudo-scientific theories of work by scientists such as Amar nonetheless played an important role in how employers and representatives of government ministries considered and recruited foreign labor and immigrants in France.

Second, Europe's postcolonial relation with Muslim immigrants is marked by a disavowal of the neo-industrial revolution throughout Western Europe after WWII, which led to the importation of immigrant labor from North Africa, Turkey, and Southeast Asia. During the boom years of the 1950s and '60s, Western European countries imported hundred of thousands of these migrant laborers who were indispensable to economic prosperity of countries such as England, France, the Netherlands, and Germany. These immigrants, however, were and are still socially marginalized and politically denied full participation, as they have been treated as temporary migrants, as *Gastarbeiter*. The violent uprising by immigrant youth in Paris and other French cities' *banlieux* in 2005 were indeed an expression of the depth of such economic, political, and social disenfranchisement that continues to this day, especially in the case of children of those migrant workers. In fact, as many activists and immigrant rights advocates have pointed out, unemployment among the immigrant youth hovers well above 23 percent according to official statistics.[11] Balibar observes:

> What "national preference" means today is that immigrants, beginning with foreigners in irregular situations or who can easily be rendered illegal, are deprived of fundamental social rights (such as unemployment insurance, health care, familial allocations, housing, and schooling) and can be expelled as a function of "thresholds of tolerance" or "capacities of reception and integration" that are

> arbitrarily established according to criteria of "cultural distance" – that is, race in the sense the nation has taken on today. (37)

Moreover, the racial and social discrimination against Muslim immigrants compounded by high unemployment and poverty have produced a profound sense of resentment and anger among these disenfranchised communities. Although European discourses and practices of immigration acknowledge some of these historical facts about Muslim immigrants, they refuse to consider the implications and consequences of policies that have brought these now "unwanted" immigrants to Western Europe in the first place. Instead, government officials and political pundits resort to a discourse of blame that views Islam and Muslim cultural practices as the cause of their socio-economic disenfranchisement. That Nicolas Sarkozy, the Interior Minister at the time of uprisings, referred to the immigrant youth as *racaille* (scum), a term with implicit racial and ethnic connotations in French, testified to this mode of historical disavowal, not to mention racism, toward Muslim immigrants.[12]

Third, Europe's relationship with Muslim immigrants entails what Stanley Cohen calls "contemporary denial" in which a "perceptual filter is placed over reality, and some knowledge is shut out."[13] The pretense of tolerance in Europe eclipses both a deeply rooted form of racism whose genesis dates back to European colonialism and underlies the relation between Europeans and immigrants *and* the disciplining and policing of Muslim immigrants by a complex network of state apparatuses. According to Balibar, "the current development of a true *European apartheid*" means "European citizenship" is conceived "as a postcolonial isolation of 'native' and 'nonnative' populations" (170). The fear of terrorism since 9/11, compounded by the later events of Madrid and London bombings, not to mention the murder of Theo van Gogh in Holland and Muslims' angry reaction against the Danish cartoonist portrayal of Prophet Mohammad, has broadened the anti-Muslim sentiment while legitimizing the extent of disciplinary power throughout the European Union, as Muslim immigrants are now routinely viewed as political menace and are subjected to surveillance, interrogation, incarceration, and deportation. Europeans fail to acknowledge how ironically the very construction of Muslim immigrants as intolerant is itself productive of an ideology of intolerance towards them. Europeans constantly demand and European states perpetually impose strict, if not repressive, conditions and rules upon immigrant populations in the name of integration. To deal with the avowed intolerance of Muslim immigrants, their so-called rejection of Europe's liberal democratic culture, Europe ironically becomes intolerant towards them, keeping them in a "status of legal tutelage," as Balibar points out (40). This is the contradictory logic that underpins discourses and policies of immigration throughout Western Europe today.

THE ORIENTALIST ORIGIN OF "L'AFFAIRE DU FOULARD"

The structure of disavowal in Europe's postcolonial relationship with Muslim immigrants is discursively and ideologically indebted to Orientalism – and here is where the issue of the stereotype as an ideological form of "othering" becomes significant as a mechanism of forgetting.[14] I contend that disavowing discourses of immigration are *discursively* indebted to Orientalism because current perceptions of Muslim

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immigrants in Europe are linked to how European travelers, writers, and artists have traditionally represented the people of the Middle East – "the Orient" – since the late eighteenth century. Not only are such discourses peppered with Orientalist stereotypes in their depictions of Muslim immigrants, but the stylistics of these new representations function in a similar fashion to make these Orientalist statements seem factual and objective. And I say new discourses of Muslim immigration are *ideologically* indebted to Orientalism because they display similar ideologies of ethnocentrism, progress, and race to differentiate European citizens from Muslim immigrants.

Nowhere is the discursive indebtedness of contemporary discussion of immigration to Orientalism more evident than it is in the debate about Islamic *hejab*. Indeed, the veil is the most culturally and politically powerful trope in contemporary European discourses of immigration, a trope whose origins can be located in the vast archive of Orientalism. It is worth noting here that the notion of veil is often used in a generalizing fashion, which conveniently conflates several articles of clothing associated with *hejab* (the Muslim dress code for women marked by modesty) such as *rosary* (or "foulard" in French meaning headscarf), *abaya* or *rupush* (which is a loose, long robe), *chador* (a long square piece of often black cloth, worn mostly by Iranian and Iraqi Shi'a women, that covers the whole body), and *niqab* (the extremely conservative square of black material that completely covers a woman's face with a small slit for the eyes which is popular among Wahhabi Sunnis). Considered a signifier of Muslim women's oppression and religious backwardness, the Islamic *hejab* offers a crucial site to construct and reaffirm a hierarchical and "civilizing" relation between Europe and its Muslim immigrants. As Joan Scott notes in the case of France, the veil has become a "screen onto which [are] projected images of strangeness and fantasies of danger – danger to the fabric of French society and to the future of the republican nation."[15] The veiled woman is considered the embodiment of what stands against the ideals and principles of the Enlightenment, and as such functions both to single out Muslims as the enemy and to secure a "mythic vision" of a secular and enlightened Europe, as I elaborate below.[16]

At least since 1989, when three North African female students were thrown out of school for refusing to remove their Islamic *hejab* in a town near Paris, "l'affaire du foulard" has served as a critical site for drawing a clear line between what is European (i.e., secular, progressive, free, democratic, equal, and rational) and what is Muslim (i.e., religious, backward, despotic, undemocratic, unequal, and irrational). The debate over headscarves culminated in the passage of a law in France, a court ruling in Germany, both banning the Islamic *hejab* in schools, and the demand for banning the *niqab* by Jack Straw and Tony Blair in England. As in the colonial era, such a construction of the veil is strategically deployed to provide a marker of cultural difference, a sign of Muslim intolerance, a signifier of Muslim women's oppression, and consequently as a rationale for the exercise of disciplinary power over the Muslim other. The affair has been traditionally constructed, as Maxime Silverman and Scott have described, in terms of a binary between secularism and difference which pits Islam against the secular Republic: "Islam is obscurantist and anti-rational whereas the secular Republic is founded on the rationalist principles of the Enlightenment" (Silverman, 112). Silverman's remark holds true in other European countries as well regardless of republican or monarchical traditions. The headscarf controversy provides a context in the postcolonial Europe to mark the Muslim immigrant as fanatic,

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repressed, backward other who needs to be rescued from her Islamic fanaticism/radicalism, enlightened with notions of democracy and freedom, and assimilated into the more evolved European civilization and community.[17] "By outlawing the headscarf," as Scott argues in the case of France, "the state declared those who espoused Islam, in whatever form, to be literally foreigners to the French way of life" (149). Throughout Western Europe, the driving force behind the banning of Islamic *hejab* has been the preservation of a mythical and universalist notion of a secular and enlightened European identity.

While the veil as a sign of the Muslim other's intolerance and backwardness has offered radical rightwing parties a useful tool with which to pronounce and justify their anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant positions, its function is broader in its cultural scope and more general in its political application. The veil, "as a system of symbolic and material marking," proves useful not only politically but also culturally and economically in a more general and generalizing fashion, as Minoo Moallem elaborates within a different context.[18] Commenting on "l'affaire du foulard" and the banning of headscarf in schools, Pierre Tevanian has cogently remarked that "[t]here exists in France a cultural racism, which targets the descendants of the colonized, and primarily picks upon their Muslim Identity."[19] The passage of the ban on headscarf, he goes on to argue, reaffirms "a symbolic order . . . which we can call colonial, where certain people were considered sub-human primarily due to their Muslim identity, dedicated to remaining docile and invisible servants or targets and scapegoats" (23). While in the colonial context such a differential mode of identification was mobilized to dominate and exploit the colonized, today the binary enables the production and maintenance of Muslim immigrants as docile and invisible servants. The binary of colonizer and colonized is thus rearticulated as the modern and secular European citizen and religious and traditional Muslim immigrant, while the discourse of a civilizing mission is replaced with a more ambivalent discourse of assimilation and integration, one which is committed to universal secularism while insisting upon the unassimilability of Muslim others.

As in the colonial era, the veil sanctions a paternalistic relation between European and Muslim women by enabling a discourse of rescue. Tevanian's aforementioned observation is helpful in complicating Scott's claim that what fuels the headscarf controversy today is the mythical French national identification with *laïcité* and *communautarism*, and not merely the result of French racism or Islamophobia. For disavowed in discourses surrounding the Islamic *hejab* in Europe is what Tevanian correctly calls a "colonial order." Like their English counterparts' obsession with the Hindu rite of *sati* in British India to claim a discourse of "rescuing" the brown woman from the brown man, the French view the Islamic *hejab* as a symbol of Muslim women who are oppressed by their "tyrannical" fathers and husbands, and they use it to justify their unfinished *mission civilisatrice*. We witness the residues of the French colonizers' discourse of rescue in today's debate surrounding the headscarf. Responding to "l'affaire du foulard" of 1989, the writer Bernard Henri-Lévy wrote that the most effective way to "liberate" young Muslim women in France was not to exclude them from schools but to subject them to France's secularism and republicanism: "We have young 'beurs' who arrive at school impregnated with beliefs, taboos and a form of servitude inherited from their families. The secular school must speak to them and liberate them" (285).[20] Henri-Lévy's comment, though made in order to

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actually defend the right of women to wear their *hejab*, ironically echoes the European colonizers' claim of "rescuing" or "liberating" the colonized woman from the "oppressive" colonized man. As in the discourses of colonialism, the current representations of Muslim women portray them as oppressed by their male relatives and by Islamic tradition. Sensationalist stories of North African men beating, burning, raping, and killing Muslim girls to enforce Islamic codes of dress in popular media throughout Western Europe have once again created a cultural consensus about the need to rescue and liberate Muslim women from the oppressive grip of their despotic fathers and fanatic brothers.

Let me underscore, albeit in passing, that this Orientalist perception is further perpetuated and "authenticated" by reactionary Muslim immigrants like the former Dutch official and current American Enterprise Institute affiliate Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who insists that *hejab* is a symbol of obscurantism and the oppression of women, arguing that Islam is not compatible with values of Enlightenment liberalism – it is worth noting here that she uses "obscurantism" in the same way Enlightenment philosophers used to label their religious "enemies." In countless interviews and in her writing, Hirsi Ali has described Islam as "the new fascism . . . in which women who have sex before marriage are stoned to death, homosexuals are beaten, and apostates like [her] are killed," claiming that "Sharia law is as inimical to liberal democracy as Nazism."[21] Comparing Islam to a "mental cage," she admonishes enlightened Europeans to not "prolong the pain of that transition [i.e., from "the world of faith to the world of reason"] unnecessarily, by elevating cultures full of bigotry and hatred toward women to the stature of respectable alternative ways of life."[22] Such a discourse of rescue, perpetuated by "native informants" such as Hirsi Ali, is ideologically useful because it helps to disavow the concrete social factors that have prevented Muslim immigrants from integration, factors such as racial discrimination, high unemployment rates, and inadequate education opportunities.

THE POST-9/11 POLITICS OF THE VEIL

More importantly, in the politicized atmosphere of post-9/11, the veil has been further construed as a powerful tool in the service of terrorism – the demands by Jack Straw, Tony Blair, and Nicolas Sarkozy that Muslim immigrants not wear *hejab* in Britain and France so that they can be integrated and thus saved from Islamic radicalism, or the "Islamic zeal," offer an exemplary instance of how the veil is automatically linked to violence and terrorism. Blair, for example, referred to Islamic dress as a "mark of separation."[23] Hirsi Ali has claimed that "Violence is inherent in Islam – it's a destructive, nihilistic cult of death. It legitimates murder."[24] The link between Islamic *hejab* and terrorism is evident in the following remark by Gilles Kepel, a member of the powerful blue-ribbon commission that created the French law banning religious symbols from public schools:

> The issue is not a piece of cloth. . . . The issue is building defensive citadels of identity. When you look at the people who are arrested for terrorist actions, you see how step by step, this evolution started with sporting jellabas and growing beards. Then, they severed cultural links. And then they became easy prey [for] these jihadist generals.[25]

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What is remarkable about Kepel's claim here is the way in which the Islamic headscarf and more generally any item of clothing associated with the Islamic culture is figured as a metonym for the larger political threat that Islam is thought to pose for Western democracy and civilization. The war on the veil in this way is made to seem a part of the broader "war on terror." As a result, the European states' treatment of their Muslim immigrants and citizens has become a matter of surveillance and discipline marked by racism and violence towards them. Such an inhospitable treatment, on one level, forces the immigrants to remain docile and invisible servants, while on another it rationalizes and normalizes the exercise of disciplinary power over these immigrants. The inhospitable and intolerant treatment of Muslim immigrants, however, ironically produces the very problem it aims to solve – that is religious and political radicalism among the disenfranchised Muslim immigrant youth, which in recent years has led some of them to commit violent and terrorist acts.

Kepel's linking of the veil with terrorism foregrounds a second Orientalist trope in contemporary discourses about Muslim immigrants in Europe, namely the association of Islam with intolerance and violence. Although made in the context of the so-called "war on terror," Kepel's remarks speak to a broader tendency in the West to associate Muslim identity with fanaticism and despotism, a tendency that dates back at least to the early days of Europe's colonial encounter with the Middle East and North Africa. Europe's Islamophobia, as Edward Said has shown, dates back to the Middle Ages and the early part of the Renaissance, but it must be contextualized within the parameters of Orientalism as a modern discourse of power.

> Insofar as Islam has been always seen as belonging to the Orient, its particular fate within the general structure of Orientalism has been to be looked at first of all as if it were one monolithic thing, and then with a very special hostility and fear.[26]

Even a cursory glance at the title of journalistic articles about Muslim immigrants in Europe since 9/11 – for example, "Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing," "EuroIslam: The Jihad Within?" "A Growing Band of Brothers: Muslims in Europe," "Decline and Fall of the Christian Empire," and "Holy War in Europe"[27] – reveals both a monolithic vision of what Islam is and a profound antagonism toward Islam that is stereotyped as a violent and anti-democratic religion, one incompatible with Western culture and society. Such monolithic and stereotypical views of Islam dominate the themes of many recently published book-length manuscripts by so-called "experts" as well – e.g., Bruce Bawer's *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam Is Destroying the West from Within*; Claire Berlinski's *Menace in Europe: Why the Continent's Crisis Is America's, Too*; Milton Viorst's *Storm from the East: The Struggle Between the Arab World and the Christian West*; and Jytte Klausen's *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe*. Although some of these books and aforementioned articles acknowledge in a cursory fashion that the vast majority of Muslim immigrants in Europe are secular, peaceful, and have been successfully assimilated into European societies, they nonetheless go on to depict them as belonging to a fanatical and violent community, blindly identifying with a supranational *umma* that aims to create a "Eurabia," according to one writer and the title of the cover story of a recent issue of *The Economist*.[28] Minor and marginalized

groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut-tahrir ("Liberation Party"), and Tablighi Jamaat are often mentioned to make general and often unsubstantiated claims about the proliferation of Muslim colonies throughout European metropolises, colonies that are then portrayed to be vulnerable to radical Islam imported from the Middle East.

In these representations, the terrorist events of 9/11 are quickly associated with Muslims, in general, and with Muslim immigrants in Europe, in particular, as exemplified in this opening line of an article by Olivier Roy, a former research director at the prestigious Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris and currently a professor at European University Institute in Florence:

> If there were any question as to whether Middle Eastern-born Muslim radicals could wreak massive destruction in Western countries, it was answered on September 11, 2001. An important related question, however, remains on the table. Could future Islamic terror arise from within Western societies, from Muslim radicals born in the West and thoroughly familiar with its ways?[29]

The author goes on to describe a rather monolithic notion of Islam that is rapidly being transformed into a "universal" and radical faith. While in the first part of the above statement, Roy quickly and uncritically associates Islam, Middle Eastern people, and terrorism, in the second part his question intimates a further association between radical Islam and Muslim immigrants in Europe. In spite of his lack of training in Islamic jurisprudence, not to mention a solid grounding in the sociology of immigration in Europe, Roy is quick to generalize, constantly making pseudo-scientific claims about the ideological radicalization of Muslim youth in Europe who as neo-fundamentalist converts "provide fertile ground for recruiters to radical Islam" (63).

Roy's representation of Muslim immigrants in Europe embodies a profound structure of disavowal that, while marginally acknowledging certain sociological and political facts, ultimately ignores their historical effects and cultural and political implications. For example, though Roy marginally acknowledges that "Most of the approximately 13 million Muslims living in EU countries are not politically radical," he nonetheless goes on to warn his readers about the emergence of new Islamic radical youth movements in European cities, movements whose identification with a diasporic form of Islamic radicalism makes them potentially more threatening to Western civilization and democracy than Al-Qaeda itself (64). Moreover, even though Roy mentions in passing that the lower social and educational level of Muslim immigrants may play a part in their radicalization, his disavowing discourse devises a psychological explanation for the emergence of radical Islam, which ultimately blames Muslim immigrants themselves for their disenfranchisement by claiming that they are "fighting at the frontiers of their imaginary umma" (i.e., Western Europe) because "what most agitates them are the side effects from their own Westernization" (64). Roy never ponders about the history of European colonialism, nor does he consider the implications of the neo-industrial revolution in Western Europe after WWII to explain the sociological predicaments facing Muslim immigrants in Europe; instead he focuses on the ideological dimensions of "the evolution of EuroIslam" and the security threat it poses to Western democratic societies. It is worth noting in passing that Roy in his 2007 *Secularism Confronts Islam* argues that Muslim intellectuals are

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leading the masses in the Islamic world so that they could live in a secularized world while remaining "true believers."

That a sophisticated researcher at a prestigious institution would portray Muslim immigrants in such an Orientalist fashion speaks to a broad and problematic consensus about the linkage between Muslim immigration and Islamic radicalism in the media and among political analysts and the general public in Europe – a consensus built, ironically, under the banner of a universalist secularism underpinned by liberal views of human rights. Such a cultural and political consensus has a crucial role to play in the politico-legal realm where the laws of citizenship and residency are more concretely defined. States and national communities throughout the EU work in tandem to maintain a consensus about the crisis of Muslim immigration and the need to regulate and restrict it.[30] Today, the anti-immigrant sentiment is not just prevalent among the nationalist politicians on the right; in recent years anti-Muslim legislations have been championed and passed by centrist and leftist parties as well – e.g., the law banning Islamic headscarf in French schools in 2004, by British politicians in 2006, and by the Belgium government in 2010. While the figure of the (radical/delinquent) Muslim immigrant provides a signifier of backwardness and inferiority through which a civilized and enlightened European identity or citizenship is construed, the juridical and administrative regulation of immigration, produced in collaborative ways with the political and economic exigencies of each nation, enable the collective sovereignty of the European Union as a unified political and cultural community.[31] The anti-immigrant Pasqua laws of France in 1993, which, as Mireille Rosello describes, turned "the *clandestine* (illegal immigrant) into an enemy of the state, the most easily identifiable national scapegoat" and the banning of headscarf in France beyond their repressive intentions, enable a sense of European collectivity through a differential mode of identification with the Muslim immigrant.[32]

CONCLUSION

In *About Europe: Philosophical Hypotheses*, Denis Guénoun argues that "Europe configures itself facing Islam," by which he means that Europe is able to define itself as a figure of the universal "in the confrontation with a determined and specific otherness, namely Islam's."[33] In claiming that "Islam is Europe's other," Guénoun aims "neither to consign Islam to an essential exteriority in relation to European history nor to exclude it from the definition of Europe as an alien outsider" (34). Rather, his goal is to "inscribe the relation with Islam into the heart and deepest place of the movement of identification of Europe as such" (34). Guénoun asserts:

> Repressing Islam, for Europe, is repressing the gesture that forms it: it is repressing that which, from its birth onward, establishes Europe as the failure of its projected universality, the interruption and reversal of its process (of the universal as expansion, bringing on Europe) – repressing that which *Constitutes* it as a return and a retreat: its *very being itself*. (34)

Guénoun views Muslim immigration to Europe as the return of the repressed of colonialism: the "Arabo-Islamic" other comes back into the heart of Europe, making

it to reveal to itself "the initial exclusion that is the foundation of Europe, its primary repression" (53). My discussion of Europe's disavowal of its colonial history and Orientalist perception of the Arabo-Islamic world is in accordance with Guénoun's philosophical hypothesis. Although Guénoun does not offer any suggestion regarding how to reckon with this fundamental misalliance between Europe and Islam, I take his final observation that "Islam is not external to our [i.e., European] history" a step further (185). The road to a more harmonious relation between Europe and its Muslim immigrants, I wish to suggest, must go through the path of *an*amnesia, a radical form of remembering that requires Europeans to "first summon up the strength to remember [their immigration history] properly," as Žižek would say.[34] By not working through its long history of immigration and its colonial underpinnings, Europe has exhibited a neurotic fixation on a particular aspect of Islamic identity that alienates its citizens from the present and prevents them from moving toward a more harmonious future with their Muslim compatriots. Rather than engaging such crucial and cogent issues as unemployment among the immigrant youths, or their alienating conditions on the literal margins of their society, or working through "the racial discourses that were elaborated and deployed with reference to both immigration and an essential exteriority in relation to European history nor to exclude it from the definition of Europe as an alien outsider," Europeans have engaged in an ideological battle of good, secular citizens versus bad, religious, Muslim immigrants, sanctimoniously disavowing any responsibility for producing a disaffected or radicalized immigrant youth (Guénoun 34).

What is needed at this historical juncture is not a monumentalizing history, one that blindly glorifies and mystifies the virtues of Enlightenment liberalism that apparently Muslim immigrants fail to appreciate and embrace, but a more critically engaged historiography that works through past traumas and injustices by way of adjudicating or "properly" forgetting the past.[35] What Europeans need to reckon with is that when Muslim immigrants are not covered by the universality supposedly afforded to all Europeans, when their basic human rights are violated, when they are racially profiled, when they are subjected to permanent surveillance, and when they are detained for their religious and political beliefs, these acts hold up a mirror to European civilization, exposing the failures of its claims to universality, communitarianism, and human rights.

ENDNOTES

1. I wish to thank Adrienne Posner for her extremely helpful research assistance, David Kim and Jyotsna Singh for their invaluable comments on the first draft of this essay, and Robert Aguirre, Roger Rouse, Marian Aguiar, and Andreea Ritivoi for their thoughtful remarks when I presented this paper at Wayne State University and Carnegie Mellon University.
2. I use the word "immigrant" throughout my essay intentionally in order to draw attention to how the word itself has been historically denied in discussion of immigration in Western Europe where other words such as migrant, guest workers, refugees, foreigners, etc. are used to describe various immigrant communities by way of disavowing the immigrant texture of Europe since WWII for cultural, political, and economic reasons. The French, for example, refer to their immigrants as *étrangers*, just as the Germans have called their immigrants *gastarbeiters*. Unlike in the United States where the nation has historically been defined in terms of its immigrant texture, immigrants in Europe are often treated as

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temporary guest workers or as perpetual foreigners, rarely acknowledging the fact that most of them do not have any intention of going back to their countries of origin.

3. Samuel Moyn, "From Communist to Muslim: European Human Rights, the Cold War, and Religious Liberty." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 113.1 (2014): 63–86, 64.
4. Jacques Derrida, "Step of Hospitality/No Hospitality." In Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*. Trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 77. Derrida also elaborates his notion of hospitality in his *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).
5. The European notion of hospitality as a conditional form was first articulated by Immanuel Kant whose "Third Definitive Article of Perpetual Peace" posits that "The rights of men, as citizens of the world, shall be limited to the conditions of universal hospitality (*Gastfreundschaft*)" which means that "so long as he [the stranger or immigrant] conducts himself peaceably, he must not be treated as an enemy"; see Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, Trans. M. Campbell Smith (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1903), 137.
6. Although a similar vacillation between xenophobia and xenophilia also characterizes the United States' relation with its new immigrant, the dynamics and politics of immigration is quite different; see my *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).
7. Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, Trans. James Swenson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 8.
8. Sigmund Freud, *General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology*. Ed. Philip Rieff (New York: Collier, 1963), 213–214.
9. Maxime Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism, and Citizenship in Modern France* (London: Routledge, 1992), 34. See also Balibar's "Sujets ou citoyens." *Les Temps Modernes* 452.3/4 (1984): 1726–1753.
10. Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy, and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).
11. For an exemplary study of unemployment among Muslim communities, see Evi Collins and Nani Macharashvili, "Franco-Dutch Unemployment Among Muslim Minorities: A Comparison and Analysis of the System and Policies Affecting Muslim Minorities in the Netherlands and France," 2012. http://ies.tsu.edu.ge/data/file_db/Collins/Thesis%20Fr_Nl%20Evi%20Final%20Version%201.pdf
12. "Inflammatory Language," *The Guardian*, November 8, 2005. http://www.theguardian.com/news/blog/2005/nov/08/inflammatoryla
13. Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), 13.
14. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978), 2.
15. Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 10.
16. Ibid., 10.
17. As I elaborate below, contemporary European discourse of rescue has its origin in colonial era. As Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak explains in the context of the abolition of the Hindu rite of *sati* in British India, white, male colonizers employed a discourse of rescue to "save the brown woman from the brown man"; see her seminal essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Carry Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–316.
18. Minoo Moalem, "Transnationalism, Feminism, and Fundamentalism." In *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminisms, and the State*, ed. Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcon, and Minoo Moallem (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 320–348, 338.

19. *The Guardian*, February 25, 2005, 23; for a more detailed analysis of the politics of the veil in France, see Pierre Tevanian, *Le voile médiatique: un faux débat: 'l'affaire du foulard islamique'* (Paris: Editions Raison d'Agir, 2005).
20. *L'Evénement du Jeudi*, November 9–15, 1989; quoted in Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 113.
21. These remarks are made in a 2007 interview with Allison Roberts in the *London Evening Standard*. http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/ayaan-hirsi-ali-fgm-was-done-to-me-at-the-age-of-five-ten-years-later-even-20-i-would-not-have-testified-against-my-parents-8534299.html
22. Hirsi Ali, *Infidel* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 285–286.
23. BBC News Online, October 17, 2006.
24. http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/ayaan-hirsi-ali-fgm-was-done-to-me-at-the-age-of-five-ten-years-later-even-20-i-would-not-have-testified-against-my-parents-8534299.html
25. *Newsday*, December 13, 2004, A20.
26. Edward W. Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Expert Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 4.
27. These articles appear in order in the following publications: *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2004), *The National Interest* (Spring 2003), *The Economist* (April 2004), and *The Weekly Standard* (March 29, 2004).
28. March 3, 2007.
29. "EuroIslam: The Jihad Within?" *The National Interest* no. 71 (March 2003): 63–73, 63.
30. It is worth noting in passing how the contemporary response by Western powers to the threat posed by ISIS has strengthened this cultural and political consensus, as some of ISIS's members are believed to come from south London, French *banlieues*, and other European neighborhoods where Muslim immigrants live.
31. Although the argument I am making about the productive function of the Muslim immigrant, as a differential other, in defining national identity is operative throughout Western Europe, it is particularly exemplary in the case of the French model of national-republican citizenship which, as Balibar, Scott, and others have pointed out, allows for, perhaps even requires, for its existence the singling out of differences between the French and their Muslim immigrants.
32. Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 1.
33. Denis Guénoun, *About Europe: Philosophical Hypotheses*. Trans. Christine Irizarry (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 33.
34. Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (London: Verso, 2002), 22.
35. My notion of "working through" here is based on Freud's insight that repetition is a mechanism of repression through which "the patient does not *remember* anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but *acts* it out"; see Sigmund Freud, "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. James Strachey, vol. 12 (London: Hogarth, 1958), 150 (emphasis in original).

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