



## The dangerous discourse of the 'Judaean-Christian' myth: masking the race-religion constellation in Europe

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# The dangerous discourse of the ‘Judaean-Christian’ myth: masking the race–religion constellation in Europe

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**ABSTRACT** In this contribution, Topolski argues that the erasure and denial of Europe’s race–religion constellation can help us understand how it has been possible to resurrect the divisive, exclusionary and problematic myth of a ‘Judaean-Christian’ tradition in Europe. While this term can be, and has been, used in diverse and contradictory ways in the past few decades, Topolski is most interested in how it masks Islamophobia. To do this, she turns to Europe’s denied race–religion constellation. She contends that we cannot understand European racism, past or present, without making the race–religion constellation visible, and that its invisibility today is not accidental. Next, Topolski wants to show how the current resurrection of the term ‘Judaean-Christian’ serves to mask and conceal the race–religion constellation. The focus is thus on the exclusion of religions that have not assimilated to the accepted secularized norms of white Christianity, particularly its Aryan/Protestant form, and how this exclusion is connected to the race–religion constellation. In the final part, Topolski explains how the latter might serve the collapsing European project, as well as struggling nation-states, as a scapegoat mechanism to blame Europe’s Others for problems Europe has itself created. This leads to their further exclusion and a lack of tolerance in terms of practice and rituals (which might be connected). For these reasons, Topolski argues we need to reject the use of the term ‘Judaean-Christian’ and make visible the hidden race–religion constellation.

**KEYWORDS** Europe, exclusion, Islamophobia, Judaean-Christian, nation-state, race, religion, secularism

*Problems concerning integration and mutual acceptance are centred on the relation between the dominant Judaean-Christian humanistic culture on the one hand, and Islamic culture on the other. I consciously speak in the broad terminology of culture rather than of religion. One can leave a religion, as we can see happening massively in our country, a culture, however, one cannot leave behind.<sup>1</sup>*

1 Pim Fortuyn, *De verweesde samenleving* (Uithoorn: Karakter 2002), 183. Translations, unless otherwise stated, are by the author.

Academics and activists often struggle with whether to engage or ignore intentionally polemic and problematic claims, such as the one cited above. Engaging means repeating and thus potentially further normalizing these views: is this then indirectly legitimizing them? On the other hand, ignoring them allows them to remain in the public sphere unchallenged. This might not only further harm those injured by the claims; it might also mislead the public into minimizing their falseness. Is this perhaps where the political philosopher may be of service to the political activist? Does the former, who has time and space, have a responsibility to analyse such claims thoroughly? While I cannot answer this question, I am curious about how it is possible to invoke an explicitly religious term such as 'Judaeo-Christian' while implying an association with humanism and secularism and, at the same time, masking Islamophobic racism as a form of cultural critique.

In this contribution, I argue that the erasure and denial of Europe's race-religion constellation<sup>2</sup> can help us understand how it has been possible to resurrect the divisive, exclusionary and problematic myth of a 'Judaeo-Christian' tradition in Europe.<sup>3</sup> The term 'race-religion constellation' refers to the connection or co-constitution of the categories of race and religion. More specifically, the term 'race-religion constellation' refers to the practice of classifying people into races according to categories we now associate with the term 'religion' (such as Jews or Muslims).<sup>4</sup> While the latter phrase can, and has been, used in diverse and contradictory ways in the past few decades, I am most interested in how it masks Islamophobia. Next, I turn to Europe's denied race-religion constellation. It is my contention that we cannot understand European racism, past or present, without making the race-religion constellation visible, and that its invisibility today is not accidental. In the third part, I want to show how the current resurrection of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' serves to mask and conceal the race-religion constellation. The focus is thus on the exclusion of religions that have not secularized according to the accepted norms of Protestant, Pauline or Aryan Christianity, and how this exclusion is connected to the race-religion constellation. In the final part, I explain how the latter might serve the collapsing European project, as well as struggling nation-states, as a scapegoat mechanism to blame Europe's Others for problems Europe has itself created. This leads to their further

2 Anya Topolski, 'The race-religion constellation: a European contribution to the critical philosophy of race', *Critical Philosophy of Race*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2018, 58–81.

3 Emmanuel Nathan and Anya Topolski (eds), *Is There a Judeo-Christian Tradition? A European Perspective* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter 2016).

4 The term 'religion' has a very specific Christian genealogy; for more, see Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1993); Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 2005); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2007); and Topolski, 'The race-religion constellation'. As such its use is suitable when referring to Catholicism and Protestantism but less so for other monotheistic or non-monotheistic practices.

exclusion and a lack of tolerance in terms of practice and rituals (which might be connected). For these reasons, I argue we need to reject the use of the term 'Judaean-Christian' and make visible the hidden race-religion constellation.

### The myth of 'Judaean-Christian' Europe

The first appearance of the signifier Judaean-Christianity can be dated to an 1831 publication by Ferdinand Christian Baur, the founder of the German Protestant Tübingen School. Baur, who saw his theological contribution as an essential supplement to German idealism, coined the term 'Judaean-Christianity' as part of a crude Hegelian dialectic. The thesis was a combination of Judaism and paganism, its antithesis Judaean-Christianity. By the latter, he specifically meant Catholicism that was still tainted by Judaism. Its synthesis, lastly, was Pauline or Gentile Christianity akin to the Protestant theology espoused by scholars of the Tübingen School.<sup>5</sup> This was a Pauline (Gentile and Aryan) Christianity purified of all subservient and material traces of Judaism, paganism and Orientalism. In this regard, Baur declared that 'the relation of [Pauline] Christianity to heathenism and Judaism is defined as that between the absolute religion and the preparatory and subordinate forms of religion. We have here the progress from servitude to freedom ... from the flesh to the spirit.'<sup>6</sup>

In essence, Baur—like Hegel—had a strongly supersessionist view of the relationship between paganism, Judaism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism. Supersessionism was by no means new to Christianity, which had defended this position since its institution in the fourth century. What was new was Baur's *secondary* supersession, that of Protestantism, or Pauline Christianity, over and against *Judaean-Christianity*. This secondary supersessionism was necessary, according to Baur, as Catholicism was contaminated by its interactions with paganism, Judaism and Islam (though still salvageable if purified). Baur saw Judaean-Christianity standing in the way of the spirit of Pauline Christianity. His conclusion was that, in order for Pauline Christianity to guide history, it must be freed from all traces of Judaean-Christianity. His views were by no means unique at the time; they 'justified' and inspired the work of many other prominent scholars—from Herder and Schlegel to Humboldt—who sought to fuse theological and philological categories.

Much like today, religion was central to politics and questions of identity in most European nation-states. From at least the seventeenth century, Europeans used religious categories to organize the world.<sup>7</sup> Until the French

5 Anya Topolski, 'A genealogy of the "Judeo-Christian" signifier: a tale of Europe's identity crisis', in Nathan and Topolski (eds), *Is There a Judeo-Christian Tradition*, 267–84.

6 Baur, quoted in David Lincicum, 'F. C. Baur's place in the study of Jewish Christianity', in F. Stanley Jones (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Jewish Christianity from Toland to Baur* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2012), 137–66 (158).

7 Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*.

Revolution, Europe was a Christian continent, and Europeans organized the world in terms of four nations (groups, peoples, tribes or races): Christians,<sup>8</sup> Jews, Mohammedans and the rest (heretics, pagans, heathens, idolaters, polytheists). It was only during the eighteenth century that these categories came under scrutiny and theology was forced to compete with other sciences for the privilege to organize or categorize humanity. It is in this competition that the nineteenth-century usage of the term 'Judaeo-Christian', with its explicit anti-semitism, Islamophobia and anti-Catholicism, connects or became connected to the race–religion constellation. Baur's contribution was an attempt to return theology—specifically Protestant biblical criticism—to its rightful position as the 'queen of the sciences'. However, his importance cannot be relegated to the realm of academic theology. His work, and that of his many students of the Tübingen School, was immensely influential beyond academia in the long nineteenth century.

What went on in the course of reshuffling the old categories—seemingly a purely conceptual exercise—was in fact part of a much broader, fundamental transformation of European identity. ... undoubtedly reflecting a sea change in the European relationship to the rest of the world ... but most immediately it was facilitated by an influential new science of comparative philology ... This strong drive to hellenize and aryanize Christianity paralleled another tendency that originated around this time: to semitize Islam.<sup>9</sup>

In the nineteenth century, theology and philology both sought to play a critical role in terms of the idea of Europe. While Christendom had always been the unspoken identity of Europe,<sup>10</sup> this was challenged with the rise of atheism and its appeal to the sciences. Philologists did not, however, begin with a *tabula rasa*; they in fact borrowed the categories created by nineteenth-century theologians such as Baur. The most compelling example is that of Ernest Renan, who was trained as a theologian before becoming a philologist and diplomat. In his early years as a student of theology in the 1840s, he was a strong advocate of Baur's claims.

8 While internal distinctions were made between Christians by the sixteenth century (such as Catholics, Lutherans, Orthodox and so on), this was secondary to the most important dividing line between Christians and non-Christians.

9 'Preface', in Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*, xii–xiii.

10 Denys Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (New York: Harper & Row 1966); J. G. A. Pocock, 'Deconstructing Europe', *History of European Ideas*, vol. 18, no. 3, 1994, 329–45; Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (Basingstoke and London: Palgrave Macmillan 1995); Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002); Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization* (London and New York: Routledge 2005); Geraldine Heng, 'The invention of race in the European Middle Ages I: race studies, modernity, and the Middle Ages', *Literature Compass*, vol. 8, no. 5, 2011, 315–31.

Renan's major contribution to scientific Orientalism came by way of philology, which had recently taken to classifying human languages into large families. Renan explored the links between language, culture, and human development, producing a picture which, for all its positivism, is remarkably close to that of Hegel.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, by separating Pauline Christianity from Judaeo-Christianity, Baur enabled theologically inclined linguists to associate Pauline Christianity with the Indo-European or Aryan languages that they 'proved' to be superior to the Semitic languages.<sup>12</sup> In this vein, Baur's secondary supersessionism of Judaeo-Christianity was translated by scientists into linguistic *cum* identity markers for particular groups of people. According to Renan, only philology could provide solid evidence for such supersessionism.

In this manner Baur's Judaeo-Christian v. Pauline Christianity dichotomy was translated into an Orient–Occident division. While Baur never made such claims, it was believed that 'the Orient to Baur represents closed, nationalistic systems, whereas the Occident, Europe, especially Greece, is the origin of freedom'.<sup>13</sup> This misreading of Baur was especially problematic as these political theological struggles occurred while colonialism and antisemitism were on the rise at the end of the nineteenth century. What was taken from Baur, among other scholars, was his highly influential teleological Protestant history of ideas, and a particular notion of progress and of history being 'hindered' by Judaic, Oriental and pagan influences. In a nutshell, these views, which found many resonances in the work of other scholars, were used to prove that Europe would return to its rightful place in the civilized world once the pure idea of Europe, to be found in Pauline Christianity, was free of the chains of Judaeo-Christianity.<sup>14</sup>

## Europe's hidden race–religion constellation

As previously mentioned, it was in the competition between religious and philological categories that the nineteenth-century usage of the term 'Judaeo-Christian', with its then explicit antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-Catholicism, connected to the race–religion constellation. In this section I would like

11 Shawn Kelley, *Racializing Jesus: Race, Ideology and the Formation of Modern Biblical Scholarship* (London and New York: Routledge 2002), 85.

12 Bill Ashcroft, 'Language and race', *Social Identities*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2001, 311–28; Maurice Ollender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. from the French by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press 2009).

13 Anders Gerdmar, *Roots of Theological Anti-Semitism: German Biblical Interpretation and the Jews, from Herder and Semler to Kittel and Bultmann* (Leiden: Brill 2009), 113.

14 Johannes Zachhuber, *Theology as Science in Nineteenth-Century Germany: From F. C. Baur to Ernst Troeltsch* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 2013).

to explore the race–religion constellation, which I contend is hidden today. This notion has its origins in the sixteenth-century struggles over true religion as Europe supposedly moves out of the Dark Ages towards a more scientific world-view associated with the Enlightenment. Prior to this period, the term *vera religio* (true religion) was synonymous with the Church and Christianity. All Christians (the majority of people living in Europe) had souls and all non-Christians (the minority) did not and, as such, would be damned. The theological and political conflicts around true religion thus symbolized the exclusionary binary between humans and non-humans, which is central to all forms of racism.<sup>15</sup>

The conflicts over true religion were fought on several fronts, the first of which was in terms of language by way of humanism. From the sixteenth century onwards, there was a strong movement to make the Bible available in the vernacular. With the invention of the printing press, it was possible for every literate person to access personally the truth of salvation, the salvation that was at the heart of the true religion debates. As such, what humanism sets in motion in the sixteenth century cannot be disconnected from the political and theological attacks on the Church. Making the Bible accessible to lay people, without the need for a priest as mediator, challenging the vertical structures of access to truth, was a way of challenging the Catholic Church's hold on knowledge and power. This also had repercussions for the formation of political communities. The priest, who by means of Latin had sole access to the truth and thus could unify a community, was now challenged by vernacular linguistic ties. Translations accessible to lay people were thus a direct political challenge to the Catholic hierarchy and the centralization of power. Language was a first step towards the eventual democratization of power. These challenges spread throughout Europe from Erasmus in the sixteenth century in the Lowlands and Lefevre in France (between whom there was great tension) to Luther in Germany and Calvin in Switzerland, as well as across the water in England. This struggle for linguistic justice with regard to access to the truth of salvation, while preceding the religious wars of the seventeenth century, re-emerges in the eighteenth century via what I refer to as the philological detour taken by the race–religion constellation.

The conflicts over who possessed true religion, and would thus be saved, took on a more explicitly political turn in the early seventeenth century when true religion became the centre of a more symmetrical (in terms of numbers and power) struggle between the Catholic Church and 'Protestant' Reformers.<sup>16</sup> Both groups claimed to possess the one and only true religion and, as such, the term was politicized. The crux of this intellectual debate, that equally manifested itself in physical violence across Europe, was which form of Christianity was true to Christ and would lead to salvation: the

15 Ramón Grosfoguel, 'What is racism?', *Journal of World-Systems Research*, vol. 22. no. 1, 2016, 9–15.

16 Graham Ward, *True Religion* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers 2003).



Catholic work-based hierarchically institutionalized Church or the Lutheran faith-based bottom-up challenges (now associated with different Protestant denominations).<sup>17</sup> A solution to the political and physical violence was found by means of the Peace at Westphalia signed in 1648 and first conceived of in Augsburg in 1555 (as *cuius regio, eius religio*). Protestant and Catholic rulers agreed to cease violence against each other, thereby bringing an end to the religious wars of the previous centuries (such as the Protestant Reformation and the Counter-Reformation). This so-called political peace, which created sovereign states with distinct theological-political constellations, enabled many of the non-Catholic denominations of Christianity to be accepted, at least in theory, as forms of true religion. This theological solution was also the basis of the now hegemonic Westphalian political community composed of religious states, each homogeneous in terms of religion.

Things, however, were not so simple for those groups in Europe that were definitely not in possession of either acceptable form of true religion: in other words, for non-Christian peoples such as Jews and Mohammedans.<sup>18</sup> The view that non-Christians were human beings to be considered as subjects in any sense equal to Christians was itself highly contested. Non-Christians were most often viewed as heathens, barbarians, uncivilized and lesser beings. This slowly began to change in the seventeenth century in certain societies, often due to the influence of exceptional Jews, Mohammedans or Africans, and yet the view propagated in Europe among theologians, whose political influence was still strong, was that non-Christian peoples had no religion (and were thus inferior to Christians).<sup>19</sup>

This view of non-Christians also applied to Christians outside of Europe engaged in colonialism, missionary work or trade (which included the Atlantic slave trade that was framed as a commercial project). One early link between so-called biological phenotype, these religious categories and colonialism was the Hamite justification for slavery. Canaan's descendants are cursed because their father Ham sees his inebriated father Noah naked. Their curse, which is to be the 'lowest of slaves' (Genesis 9: 25), was linked to the phenotype of darker skin as a sign of inferiority to the sons of Japheth (with whom Europeans identified). The curse of Ham, who was symbolically designated as the forefather of all Africans, was used to 'justify' much

17 'Work' here refers to good deeds, most often publicly visible, such as rituals, and is not to be confused with the Protestant work ethic outlined by Max Weber.

18 Many distinct words were used to describe these non-Christian groups, such as peoples, tribes, groups, nations and so on. For example, in 1614, Edward Brerewood referred to Jews and Mohammedans as 'species'. Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries Touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions: Through the Chiefe Parts of the World* (London: Printed for Samuel Mearne, John Martyn and Henry Herringman 1674).

19 Anya Topolski, 'Good Jew, bad Jew . . . good Muslim, bad Muslim: "managing" Europe's Others', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 41, no. 12, 2018, 2179–96 (a special issue on *Islamophobia and Surveillance: Genealogies of a Global Order*, ed. James Renton).



of the barbarity of colonialism, especially to those who saw their Christian mission as one of 'civilizing' the continent.

As mentioned earlier, the organizational system at the end of the seventeenth century was based on what we now refer to as religious categories.<sup>20</sup> By the early eighteenth century, the notion of *world* religions took its place; it was a more global way to organize and classify the inhabitants of the world without denying Europe its central role, both geographically and hege- monically. In this respect, the social construction of religious categories served to further affirm the universalism and supremacy of Christianity and of Euro- pean civilization. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, with the rise of a revolutionary anti-clerical spirit, theology and Christianity itself were subject to mounting social critique. The former religious categories and the necessity of Christianity itself were being questioned. The religious categories, which had long served to bring order and meaning to the world (from a European perspective), were replaced by a philological classification system. In acad- emic terms (including, for example, Herder, Humboldt, Renan and others), this challenge led to the loss of authority of theology and the rise of the new science of philology: a field that was very much formed by the general scien- tific developments of modernity and that also played a fundamental role in the founding mythologies of many new states.<sup>21</sup> While contested, both among philologists and other academics, this new system ordered people as Semitic (Hamito-Semitic), Aryan (Indo-European) or Turanian. Given the pol- itical context of the late eighteenth century, the importance of these categories extended, with great speed, beyond the confines of academia. As national communities throughout Europe sought to differentiate and unify themselves, shared cultural bonds—in which language played a critical role—became of primary importance.<sup>22</sup> Philology played an essential role in scientifically jus- tifying these new nations:

... although initially a term referring to a certain cluster of languages, 'Aryan' increasingly was taken to mean an ethnic or, purportedly, racial grouping of peoples. It is singularly ironic that by the time the name 'Aryan' had taken on the virulently racist connotation familiar to us today, the noble Persians and Indians of yore were all but expunged from its meaning, as the term came to signify a certain idea of European identity, that is, the 'whiteness'

- 20 Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York: Macmillan 1963); Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*; Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*.
- 21 Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (New York: Cambridge University Press/ Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute 2010).
- 22 Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, trans. of Balibar from the French by Chris Turner, 2nd edn (London and New York: Verso 2011); David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2001).

that excluded, above all, the Jews, who in turn were deemed—though not for the first time—‘Oriental’.<sup>23</sup>

This category shift is the first, of many, that depicts itself as moving away from religion towards science and secularism, an act of translation that naturalizes the hierarchical distinction of religious classifications. It is the first step in the masking of the race–religion constellation. Although they were said to be scientific and free from theological influence, these new philological categories incorporated the previous religious categories.

As mentioned earlier, representative of this rather muddled nineteenth-century fusion of theology, philology and nationalism, both racial and civic models, is the career of Ernest Renan (1823–92). He began his studies in theology, switched to philology—which he took to be the ‘queen of the sciences’<sup>24</sup>—and then went on to pursue a career in politics during which he wrote a highly influential pamphlet, ‘What Is a Nation?’ (1882) on the relationship between nations and race. Two of his earlier writings, *General History of Semitic Languages* (1847) and *The Life of Jesus* (1863), also extremely popular, illustrate the shift from religious to philological categories and also provide an early ‘scientific’ explanation for the inferiority of the ‘Semitic’ people. What is clear is that Renan saw language as the critical means by which to create a political community, a nation, based on a shared identity.

Renan was convinced that the study of language held the key to unlocking the inner secrets of culture and history. Language, in his assessment, ultimately shaped society. ... Renan wrote that religion came second to language in separating Aryans and Semites—they were, after all, linguistic categories. However, it was religion that lay at the heart of Renan’s conception of the Semite, and that sustained his fascination with the subject. It would be a profound error to judge that he had a secular approach to his research due to his abandonment of his early studies for the Catholic priesthood, and his disenchantment with the Catholic Church.<sup>25</sup>

It was thus the discipline of philology that first provided Europe with the category of the Semite—which included both Jews and Arabs—a category that began to gain popularity around the 1840s.<sup>26</sup> Both the category and its appellation (such as designation/name) were fashioned by the previously

23 Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*, 152.

24 See James Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2014).

25 James Renton, ‘The end of the Semites’, in James Renton and Ben Gidley (eds), *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe: A Shared Story?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2017), 99–140 (105).

26 Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, *Orientalism and the Jews* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press/ Hanover, NH: University Press of New England 2005); Ivan Kalmar, *Early Orientalism: Imagined Islam and the Notion of Sublime Power* (London and New York: Routledge 2013).

dominant religious categories. First used in 1781 by a German Orientalist, August Schlözer, the term 'Semite' comes from Shemite, that is, relating to the three languages spoken by Shem's sons (Noah's grandsons): Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Schlözer relied on a popular classification of the world's peoples based on which of Noah's children they descended from. Japheth was associated with Aryanism (which included parts of Asia) and European civilization, as the name means to expand (or enlarge), an association used to justify missionary activities and colonialism. Shem, the second son, was the father of the Semites and settled in what would today be the Middle East.<sup>28</sup> Ham, the third son cursed to slavery without salvation, now known as the 'curse of Ham', was associated with Africa (Ham being Hebrew for 'hot') from approximately the first century CE.

It is also at this exact time that Baur coins the term 'Judaeo-Christianity'. This originally theological term is associated with the Semite and Orientalism and is opposed to the now Aryanized Pauline Church. While Baur and his students were primarily focused on returning Protestant theology to its rightful seat on the throne of wisdom and truth, his scientific research into the origins of Christianity and the life of Jesus would serve well in gathering Christians to the new German nation-state. Exemplary of this was his student Albrecht Ritschl, who saw Protestantism as the cement that could bind the different classes and factions. The new state was established in 1871 (the same decade the term 'antisemitism' is coined), with a distinct Protestant identity and with Otto von Bismarck being hailed the national hero of political Protestantism.<sup>29</sup>

Susannah Heschel refers to this process as racializing Christianity, a process that began in the mid-nineteenth century and culminated in the Third Reich, specifically in institutions such as the Institut zur Erforschung und Beseitigung des jüdischen Einflusses auf das deutsche kirchliche Leben (Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life) founded on 4 May 1939, the same date, in 1521, when Luther completed his translation of the New Testament into the vernacular. This date was intentional as the Institute's members, Protestant professors and priests, saw their task as completing the unfinished reformation by ensuring the supersession of Pauline Christianity over Judaeo-Christianity, the spirit over the flesh, the Aryan over the Semite. In its opening lecture by Walter Grundmann, its goal was declared to be the supersession of Judaism by Protestantism, and its guide was to be Luther, who had ensured the supersession of Catholicism (what Baur referred to as Judaeo-Christianity).

27 Ron J. Bigalke, 'Anti-Semitism', in George Thomas Kurian (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, 4 vols (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2011).

28 This philological distinction, between Semitic and Aryan, later provided the categories used by the Nazis.

29 Gerdmar, *Roots of Theological Anti-Semitism*, 133.

On the theological level, the Institute achieved remarkable success, winning support for its radical agenda from a host of church officials and theology professors who welcomed the removal of Jewish elements from Christian scripture and liturgy and the redefinition of Christianity as a Germanic, Aryan religion.<sup>30</sup>

According to Heschel, it was easy to racialize Christianity because there were such strong affinities between theology and racism that had been established in the nineteenth century. While my claim is that these have earlier roots in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I concur with her thesis. Exemplary of this link is Walter Wüst, a professor of linguistics who was appointed by Himmler as the director of his research centre on Indo-Germanic origins, who claimed: 'Today [1943] we know that religion is basically a spiritual-physical human activity and that it is thereby also racial.'<sup>31</sup> The religion Wüst, among others, refers to is specifically German Aryan or Pauline Protestantism, which, following Baur, focused on the spiritual aspects of faith and the need to be freed from the enslavement of the flesh, law and ritual. While even today many scholars and individuals find it difficult to separate racism from its biological manifestation, it is clear that even for Nazi theologians it was much more of a spiritual matter and that biology was just one expression of Nazi racism.

Flesh is crucial to racist thinking because the body is not simply a symbol of the degenerate spirit; rather, moral degeneracy is incarnate within the body and the two cannot be separated. The fundamental relationship between body and soul characterizing modern racist discourse is a mirror of the body-soul dilemma at the heart of Christian metaphysics, and is precisely the stamp that Christianity has placed on Western philosophy. Race additionally reinscribes the classical Christian distinction between the carnality of Judaism and the spirituality of Christianity.<sup>32</sup>

The foundation for the racialization of theology was set in the nineteenth century when theologians were focused on discovering the real Jesus. The Tübingen School, among others, played an essential part in this. For them, Pauline Christianity was—despite its origins in the East—a western religion and, as such, he set out to 'define the essence of Christianity by purging it of anything that smacks of Judaism or the Orient, of nationalism, legalism, and particularism'.<sup>33</sup> Elsewhere I have argued that the contemporary revival of Paul often masks an exclusionary project similar to all religions that reject the demands of secularism to abandon particularism, rituals and

30 Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2008), 1.

31 Wüst, quoted in *ibid.*, 21.

32 *Ibid.*, 22–3.

33 Kelley, *Racializing Jesus*, 76.

communitarian commitments.<sup>34</sup> According to Shawn Kelley, Baur's scientific theology is an attack on Orientalism that is spiritually and racially incapable of freedom because of its dependence on the law, rituals and the flesh (such as circumcision). Jewish-Christianity, or Judaeo-Christianity in its Latin form, holds Catholicism hostage as it is not free from Semitism, and thereby impedes the universalism of the Pauline Christ and Church. It is easy to see how Baur's message served the racism of the late nineteenth century and the Nazis well.

The reconciliation will always remain unstable. While Christianity will rarely return to the open warfare of Paul's day, Paul's theology will remain a constant reminder of what is essential about Christianity. Whenever the Eastern-Jewish or the Latinic-Catholic tendencies get too powerful, the Hellenistic-Pauline tendency, which will become the principle of Protestantism, will be ready to respond.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, its heirs are not limited to the realm of theology. The disciplines intersected and cross-fertilized. Kelley demonstrates the extent to which the Tübingen School determined the intellectual and political agenda for the remainder of the nineteenth century.

### **A political game of hide and seek**

Having established the connection between the coinage of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' and the race-religion constellation with its roots in the sixteenth century, I would like to consider how the current renaissance of the term Judaeo-Christian conceals the race-religion constellation. The recent usage of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' in Europe begins in the mid-late 1990s (lasting for approximately a decade) and then hits its peak in the year 2004.<sup>36</sup> Based on a closer analysis of this decade, both in terms of the popular European press and academic literature, I distinguish (at least) seven different uses/abuses of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' in (Western) European public discourse.<sup>37</sup> If we consider the highest peak, in terms of media, it is undoubtedly the years 2003–5 and the context is that of the preamble to the

34 Anya Topolski, 'The Islamophobic inheritance of the resurrected Saint Paul: from F. C. Baur's Judeo-Christianity to the event', *ReOrient: The Journal of Critical Muslim Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2017, 126–45.

35 Kelley, *Racializing Jesus*, 79.

36 Topolski, 'A genealogy of the "Judeo-Christian" signifier', 274.

37 To my count, there are at least seven different ways in which the term 'Judaeo-Christian' is being used in European discourse today: 1) as a synonym for secularism; 2) as exclusionary of Islam; 3) as a form of Christian supersessionism (often in relation to Pauline theology); 4) by Jews, as a contemporary form of Jewish *stadlanut* (mediation); 5) in terms of shared morals, either positive or negative (for example, the Nietzschean meaning); 6) as a post-Holocaust apology rooted in guilt; and 7) as a synonym for faith. *Ibid.*, 268n3.

proposed European Union (EU) constitution. Unlike most EU parliamentary debates, the one about the preamble to the draft constitution was full of politics, a rare event for Europe, which is more often than not policy without politics. After a prolonged and controversial debate, the EU Parliament voted not to include a reference to Europe's 'Judaeo-Christian' heritage in the EU Constitution. Nonetheless, the question of religion emerged in discussions about the Constitution's preamble, which sets out to define the shared values of the Union. Furthermore, a connection between religion, identity and political communities was explicit in the various national media headlines related to the intense parliamentary debates and public discourse on the draft constitution, which tied the question of religion directly to that of European identity.

To investigate this, I analysed the debate on the draft constitution for Europe that took place in 2003–4. This reveals some of the different ways in which the signifier Judaeo-Christianity is being used today in reference to the construction of a European identity that I argue is exclusionary. A first issue of the dispute was whether to interpret the term 'Judaeo-Christian' as symbolic or historical. The latter was quickly rejected as both a denial of the true role of Christianity and of the violent history of persecution of Jews in Europe. If the term 'Judaeo-Christian' was symbolic, it was not clear what it symbolized. Many nations argued for the inclusion of the reference to Judaeo-Christianity as a symbolic means to correct the *exclusive* reference to Europe's Christian religious heritage. Other supporters of the reference to Judaeo-Christianity saw this as synonymous to references to Europe's enlightened, secular and humanist traditions, and wanted to change the preamble to state that Judaeo-Christianity was a notable spiritual impulse. The Spanish delegation felt strongly that Europe was 'marked by the spiritual impulse of Christianity that has been encouraging and is still present in its heritage'. Accordingly, quoting Roberto Formigoni, the President of Lombardy, they argued that the inclusion of the term 'Judaeo-Christianity' was 'a pathetic attempt ... to ignore the Christian roots of the European Union'. They went on to call it

. . . unacceptable and outrageous, it is a true historical forgery, it is the expression of a deliberate attempt to eliminate Christianity in European memory. If you explicitly acknowledge our debt to the Greek and Roman civilizations and the culture of the Enlightenment, it is deeply dishonest not to recognize at the same time our debt to Christianity, Christianity having been the crucible and the unifying form of European culture, in most part of the continent, largely for over a thousand years.<sup>38</sup>

38 All quotations (translated by the author) are from the proposed amendment by the Spanish delegation, 'Proposition d'amendement au Préambule (remplace l'antérieur amendement proposé): Déposée par Monsieur: Gabriel Cisneros Laborda', available on the *European Convention* website at [http://european-convention.europa.eu/docs/Treaty/pdf/1000/1000\\_Pre%20Cisneros%20ES.pdf](http://european-convention.europa.eu/docs/Treaty/pdf/1000/1000_Pre%20Cisneros%20ES.pdf) (viewed 21 January 2020).



After a few days of debate, it was explicitly stated that this signifier was similarly exclusive of Islam. The fact that this realization took several days of discussion and debate is problematic and exemplifies, at least, an implicit bias against Muslims in the EU and, at most, its structural or explicit Islamophobia. The response to this accusation of Islamophobia stated that those who used the term 'Judaeo-Christian' actually meant Christianity, without considering that this made it both antisemitic and Islamophobic.

In 2006, Romano Prodi, the then President of the EU, identified Europe's Judaeo-Christian roots as complementary to Europe's secular humanist heritage, both of which were the foundation of Europe's political family.<sup>39</sup> The latter point highlighted the logic linking European history, religion and identity: namely a familial one or, if one wants to be provocative, a blood connection. Europe now wished to include the symbolic ashes of 'Judaeo' in its family (a Latinized form, perhaps symbolic of its decimation throughout the centuries, culminating in the Holocaust).<sup>40</sup> What was implicit in Prodi's comments had been made explicit during the third day of the discussions in 2004 (as well as by many political leaders, including many of those on the right), namely that Muslims were clearly not part of the family. It is also worth noting that, during those debates, there had been no discussion of Abrahamic or monotheistic traditions.

From this brief summary of the uses of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' in the EU constitutional debates, which are indicative of several different uses, it is clear, albeit contradictory, that, for some, the term is synonymous with Christianity and, for others, with secularism. These divergent meanings can be distinguished and understood if we recognize that what grounds the contradiction is the concealed race-religion constellation. It is evident, as the Spanish delegation claimed, that Europe has self-identified as a primarily Christian continent for much of its history. In the nineteenth century, as shown earlier with regard to the coinage of the term 'Judaeo-Christian', Europe, primarily the

39 See the 'Rome Manifesto', *For a Europe of the Citizens: Priorities of a Better Future*, adopted by the European People's Party (EPP) Congress, Rome, 30–1 March 2006, 5, available on the EPP website at [www.epp.eu/files/uploads/2015/11/Rome\\_Manifesto.pdf](http://www.epp.eu/files/uploads/2015/11/Rome_Manifesto.pdf) (viewed 17 March 2020).

40 A note on the use of the terms 'Holocaust' and 'Shoah'. Words matter: they carry histories of meaning and often violence. This is also true for the words used to describe the fate of many Jews, Roma, Slavs and LGBTQ+ people during the Third Reich. Among scholars, there is an interesting debate about the meanings and genealogies of the different terms used to refer to these events. In particular, a choice is often made between 'Holocaust' and 'Shoah'. While both terms have their problems, this journal chooses to use the term 'Holocaust'. Given the subject of my research, which attempts to investigate the race-religion constellation, I prefer the term 'Shoah'. 'Holocaust', although many are unaware of this, is a Greek theological term that means burnt offering. This implies that the six million victims 'offered' themselves up on the sacrificial altar of 'history'. Nonetheless, the term 'Shoah' also has its problems. The editors of this journal take the view that this term generally refers to the Jewish victims of the Nazi genocide specifically and therefore implicitly situates that tragedy into a continuity of Jewish history, especially the so-called 'lachrymose conception' of Jewish history.

new German nation, identified with Pauline Christianity, which required the supersession of Judaeo-Christianity. As such, it makes sense to argue that the term Judaeo-Christian can be interpreted as being exclusionary to Jews, Muslims and also, to a lesser degree, Catholics. While there is an awareness, in terms of public discourse, about the former, the latter and the tensions between Catholic and Protestant forms of Christianity in the nineteenth century (which have visible traces in terms of secularism's Protestant leanings) are much less recognized. This is also an argument for the need to make the race-religion constellation visible. Nonetheless, as the EU debate makes clear, many sought to include the term 'Judaeo-Christian' to both atone for the Holocaust and acknowledge the symbolic role and history of Jews in Europe without acknowledging this complex theological and racialized history.

What makes the revival of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' even more problematic is its Janus-like ability to signify both Christianity and secularism. While there was no explicit discussion about the nature of the connection between the Judaeo-Christian designation and secularism, a possible explanation is to be found in the work of critical secularism scholars.<sup>41</sup> As the term 'Judaeo-Christian' is used as a proxy for Christianity, the analysis of the term 'secularism' as a form of post-Christianity is equally applicable to the term 'Judaeo-Christian'. These terms also serve to obscure the reality of a continued Christian privilege, and in particular Protestant privilege, in European public spheres.<sup>42</sup> This is one of the reasons we must raise awareness about European racism and the race-religion constellation. The signifier Judaeo-Christian is politically pliable and as such it can function as a retort to those who deny that religion, and religious identities, are still respected in Europe. It can thus also support those who seek 'evidence' of religion's continued dominance while at the same time appear as innocuous to those who identify as secular (most often post-Christians) as it is non-threatening to their identities. What is problematic in both cases is that the use of the terms 'Judaeo-Christian' and 'secular/secularism' further mask the inequalities they create in terms of inclusion in the European political community.

41 Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2003); Yolande Jansen, *Secularism, Assimilation and the Crisis of Multiculturalism: French Modernist Legacies* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2013); Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2015).

42 While I would like to study the effect this has on Catholicism and other 'religious' groups in the future, my hypothesis is that Catholics, or at least Catholicism, has suffered, and had to adapt itself significantly to a more Protestant and secular public sphere (WASP-privilege), and this concretely, by putting less emphasis on collective, public and ritualistic practice. I would also like to further consider the political-theological repercussions of this Pauline/Aryan-inspired spiritualization of Europe for politics itself, which has become much more individualized and provides less and less space for public or collective manifestations, as well as its possible links to white Aryan supremacist discourse.

Concretely, each establishes a form of invisible privilege, which of course leads to structural disadvantages and exclusion for particular groups. To test this, one could ask those who identify as secular if they would tolerate Europe being referred to historically as 'Judaeo-Muslim'. Why would this be so quickly rejected while 'Judaeo-Christian' is not?

What the current usage of the signifier Judaeo-Christianity brings to light is how functional it has been in creating exclusionary identity formations in Europe and, in this regard, it is a hidden manifestation of the race-religion constellation. It re-affirms the categories, hierarchy and power of Europe as Christian, with Christianity being reshaped to prioritize secularized or spiritualized Pauline or Protestant Christianity. Semitism is taken to contaminate and pollute Christianity because of its attachment to collectives, rituals, publicity and the flesh. Pure white privatized dogma-based Protestant Christianity is privileged (see, for example, Aryan Christianity or those often colloquially referred to in the United States as WASPS, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). The meaning of the signifier Judaeo-Christianity has shifted from originally excluding Jews and Catholics to now symbolically including them in order to fortify its exclusion of Muslims. I emphasize the empty symbolism of this inclusion, as the reality of the inclusion of Jews, which is of course different in different European countries and also according to the denomination of Judaism, is that their number in Europe today, due to both the Holocaust and immigration, is less than one per cent of one per cent.<sup>43</sup>

While Muslims make up less than 10 per cent of most European countries, the perception is that they make up closer to 40 per cent,<sup>44</sup> which is similar to the real numbers and false perception of numbers of Jews in the 1930s. In addition, when there are laws that are deemed symbolically problematic for Jews, such as in relation to circumcision, kosher food or religious symbols, European governments are much more willing to make exceptions for Jewish groups than for Muslim groups. The most recent examples of this are the laws against the burqa and veil that do not affect (Jewish) women with wigs (which in theory are head coverings) or the habits of Christian nuns.

### **How acknowledging the race-religion constellation can help fight Islamophobia**

By way of conclusion, I consider why the current revival of the term 'Judaeo-Christian', which conceals the race-religion constellation, is highly problematic for Jews and Muslims (and on a political level more broadly). The signifier Judaeo-Christian in a European context is one among many political

43 1.4 million in a continent with 750 million registered inhabitants.

44 'Religious composition by country 2010–2050', 2 April 2015, available on the *Pew Research Center* website at [www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/2010/percent/all](http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/2010/percent/all) (viewed 22 January 2020).

discourses today that serves as a facade for a unity or identity marked by exclusion that at present primarily singles out Muslims. The phrase 'Judaeo-Christian' is explicitly exclusionary with regard to Muslims and implicitly so towards Jews and other non-Christians (as it once was for Catholics). I would like briefly to consider two concrete problems created by the denial of the race-religion constellation and the continued unchallenged use/abuse of the term 'Judaeo-Christian'. The first is how the denial of the race-religion constellation and the use of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' that supports that denial lead to an increased distance and potential tensions between Jews and Muslims in Europe. The second is how the use of the term 'Judaeo-Christian', especially in institutional settings, masks the race-religion constellation and thereby makes the challenge to rising Islamophobia, whether by Muslims or their allies, even more difficult.

The use of the term 'Judaeo-Christian' can be analysed in terms of discourse serving to further isolate Europe's non-Christian Others, making these minorities even more powerless. While symbolically Jews are now included in Europe's family, the cost of this inclusion means not only not dwelling on the past, specifically the Holocaust; it also means accepting a reduced form of Judaism that is more analogous to a spiritualized Aryan Protestant faith that denies its public, ritualistic collective. This may also be similar for some Catholics who have not already internalized this secular pressure. Even if only symbolic in terms of Judaism, it does mean that Jews are being played off against Muslims who are not symbolically or materially included in this European family. If Jews and Muslims cannot be in the same family, it is much harder for them to be allies (which is especially convenient for Christianity, the ruling middle child). Given the historical and practical parallels between Jews and Muslims in terms of rituals, laws and so on, such an alliance would have a much more shared foundation.<sup>45</sup> By not explicitly challenging the use of the phrase 'Judaeo-Christian', Jews are silently accepting it and their alliance with Christianity and their inclusion in Europe, even if it comes at the cost of another 'Semitic' people (as well as non-Arab Muslims).<sup>46</sup>

Second, my claim is that the masking of the race-religion constellation prevents the acknowledgement of Islamophobia as a contemporary form of racism. By tracing antisemitism as the process by which a religious category was racialized, the race-religion constellation becomes more visible. It is my

45 S. D. Goitein, *Jews and Arabs: A Concise History of Their Social and Cultural Relations* [1974], 3rd revd edn (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications 2005); Gil Anidjar, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2008); Gil Z. Hochberg, "'Remembering Semitism" or "On the prospect of re-membering the Semites"', *ReOrient*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2016, 192–223; Ella Shohat, *On the Arab-Jew, Palestine, and Other Displacements: Selected Writings* (London: Pluto Press 2017).

46 This of course also means bracketing the question of Israel, although one might ask whether the construction of the conflict in Palestine-Israel is being framed as theological to further support Europe's divide and conquer strategy.

contention that these religious categories, closely connected to European history and political theology, are still being mobilized and politicized, notwithstanding Europe's current identification as politically secular. In other words, the religious categories and hierarchy between Christians and non-Christians, which was masked and translated into the divisive binary Aryan–Semite, has not disappeared; rather, as with all forms of racism, it has simply changed forms and adapted. As such, it should come as no surprise that antisemitism and Islamophobia have both similarities and differences.<sup>47</sup> While the philological category of Semites does not correspond neatly to the religious category of Muslims, the race–religion constellation makes clear that what is at the roots of this distinction is the privileging of Christianity (or in today's discourse secularism) over Muslims. The category is still present, although the process of racialization is significantly different. My claim is that, by acknowledging the masked race–religion constellation, we recognize that the binary categories, Christian/non-Christian, that underpin it are, at least partially, a shared source for both antisemitism and Islamophobia.

If we can reconnect the racialized exclusion of Jews and Muslims to the exclusionary categories of the binary masked by the denial of the race–religion constellation, we also create the possibility of opening up anti-discriminatory laws and policies, which are biased towards Judaism and antisemitism, to Muslims.<sup>48</sup> By denying the reality of the race–religion constellation, it is more difficult to identify, connect and contest discriminatory practices ranging from legislation regarding the headscarf, halal and so on, to racial injustice. Muslims are limited to institutional challenges that address anti-discrimination laws with regard to religious discrimination but, as with Jews, it is evident that the category of religion is a problematic one. Given the important role fighting antisemitism has in Europe's post-Holocaust imaginary, these laws and rights are very powerful, and not only symbolically. Jews—even those who are not religious—are discriminated against, as are people who appear Arab or Muslim. In this regard, the deracialization that Jews demanded in the name of justice seems to lead to further injustice for Muslims in Europe who cannot refer to historical precedent and the fact that in Europe race and religion intersect to support their demand for justice.<sup>49</sup>

47 Nazir Ahmed, 'Islamophobia and antisemitism', *European Judaism*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2004, 124–7; Hillel Schenker and Abu Zayyad Ziad (eds), *Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publications 2006); Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press 2007); Nasar Meer, 'Racialization and religion: race, culture and difference in the study of antisemitism and Islamophobia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2013, 385–98.

48 Ruth Rubio-Marín and Mathias Möschel, 'Anti-discrimination exceptionalism: racist violence before the ECtHR and the Holocaust prism', *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2015, 881–99.

49 For more on this, see Anya Topolski, 'Rejecting the rhetoric of uniqueness: the first step towards Semitic solidarity', *Jewish Studies Quarterly* (forthcoming).

Furthermore, UNESCO's attempt to replace the pre-Holocaust category of race by that of culture is equally problematic as it leads to further confusion,<sup>50</sup> it has been abused by politicians such as Geert Wilders and Marine Le Pen who refer to Islam as a culture and not a race, or as a religion and not a race, in order to evade being called and prosecuted as racist. This claim is often supported by the 'fact' that Europeans have learned from the Holocaust that race does not exist, a logic that Jews promote as well in order to support the process of their deracialization.<sup>51</sup> In this sense, the post-Holocaust rejection of race as a category and the related masking of the race–religion constellation makes it more difficult to recognize the reality of Islamophobia as a form of racism. The analysis of the use of the signifier Judaeo-Christian makes clear that there is a rhetorical shift away from Islam as a religion to Islam as a culture that is not compatible with Europe or its Judaeo-Christian heritage.

With these concluding remarks, I hope to have demonstrated how the myth of Europe's 'Judaeo-Christian' identity (or heritage, tradition and so on), recently resurrected in political discourse, operates to incite division between at least two of Europe's Others: Jews and Muslims. To do this, I traced the genealogy of Europe's 'Judaeo-Christian' myth in order to show how it serves to exclude the non-Christian (or non-secular). Second, I demonstrated how this is intertwined with the now-hidden race–religion constellation. My normative plea is to make visible the masked race–religion constellation in Europe, which is but a first step in a much longer struggle for racial inclusion and justice. As Toni Morrison reminds us with regard to slavery, which was justified in terms of religious racism, this mask not only destroys Europe's Others, it is destroying Europe itself.

Slavery broke the world in half, it broke it in every way. It broke Europe. It made them into something else, it made them slave masters, it made them crazy. You can't do that for hundreds of years and it not take a toll. They had to dehumanize, not just the slaves but themselves. They have had to reconstruct everything in order to make that system appear true. It made everything in world war two possible. It made world war one necessary [and many other wars before, between and after]. Racism is the word that we use to encompass all this.<sup>52</sup>

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50 Alana Lentin, 'Europe and the silence about race', *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2008, 487–503 (490).

51 Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press 1998); Bat-Ami Bar On and Lisa Tessman, *Jewish Locations: Traversing Racialized Landscapes* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2001).

52 Toni Morrison, *Beloved: A Novel* (London: Penguin 1998), 193.



Islamophobia'. Her most recent books are *Arendt, Levinas and a Politics of Relationality* (Rowman & Littlefield 2015) and (co-edited with Emmanuel Nathan) *Is There a Judeo-Christian Tradition? A European Perspective* (De Gruyter 2016). Recent articles are 'Good Jew, Bad Jew ... Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: "Managing" Europe's Others' (*Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2017) and 'The Race–Religion Intersection: A European Contribution to the Critical Philosophy of Race' (*Critical Philosophy of Race* 2018). Email: [a.topolski@ftr.ru.nl](mailto:a.topolski@ftr.ru.nl)