

UC Santa Cruz

UC Santa Cruz Previously Published Works

Title

Europe's "New Jews": France, Islamophobia, and Antisemitism in the Era of Mass Migration

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8x65849b>

Journal

Jewish History, 32(1)

ISSN

0334-701X

Author

Bell, Dorian

Publication Date

2018-11-01

DOI

10.1007/s10835-018-9306-4

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Peer reviewed



Europe’s “New Jews”: France, Islamophobia, and Antisemitism in the Era of Mass Migration

DORIAN BELL

University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA

E-mail: dbell1@ucsc.edu

Abstract Are Muslims the “new Jews” of Europe? The spectacle of Middle Eastern and African refugees shuttled by train from camp to squalid camp has understandably drawn parallels to the darkest pages in twentieth-century continental history. Such a historical comparison between Islamophobia and antisemitism, however, risks missing their ongoing interrelation. This article examines that interrelation, arguing that Islamophobia and antisemitism now most resemble each other as complementary mechanisms for diverting the anxieties bred by the global economic order. Antisemitism has long scapegoated the Jews for capitalism’s tendency to produce outsized winners. But there has been no comparably global shorthand for the anxiety prompted by capitalism’s losers—until now. Muslim refugees help give a name, Islam, to the masses seemingly encroaching from the margins of the world system. The result, I argue, is the hardening of Islamophobia and antisemitism into the inextricable poles of a reactionary worldview. Taking France as a case study, the article reads the burkini bans prompted by the July 2016 terror attack in Nice as an expression of middle-class fear about downward mobility. Targeted at both internal Muslim leisure and external Muslim encroachment, the bans evoke how European unease about globalization increasingly takes Islamophobic form. Such intolerance threatens not only to lodge Islamophobia at the heart of a reconstituted Europe but also to erode the vigilance against antisemitism once characteristic of the postwar European project.

Keywords Antisemitism · Islamophobia · France · Migrant crisis · Terror attacks · Income inequality

For the January 2015 *Charlie Hebdo* attacks to go by that name says much about how three days of coordinated shootings in and around Paris are often remembered: as a fundamentalist Islamic assault on free speech—embodied by *Charlie Hebdo*’s satirical cartoons about the Prophet Mohammed—rather than as a targeted murder of Jews by one of the gunmen at a kosher market. One could be forgiven for discerning, in this collective neglect of the attacks’ antisemitic quality, an antisemitic tinge to the Islamophobic passions stoked by the shootings.¹ The grand European tradition of understanding Muslims

¹Emmanuel Todd, for one, makes this argument in his controversial response to the French demonstrations that followed the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks. Todd, *Who is Charlie?: Xenophobia and the New Middle Class*, trans. Andrew Brown (Cambridge, 2015), 84–89. I return to Todd’s book below.

and Jews in terms of each other here receives a twist, with Islamophobia and antisemitism both emerging paradoxically reinforced by a representation of events that otherwise uncouples the Muslim question from the Jewish one.² I intend to recouple those questions now—though not, I hasten to add, by interrogating the antisemitic motivations of the attacks themselves. Instead, I want to chart the evolving planetary relationship between Islamophobia and antisemitism. Bound up, I argue, in the global response to economic insecurity, that relationship threatens to harden both prejudices into the inextricable and enduring poles of a reactionary worldview.

It is instructive to begin with the devastating July 2016 events in Nice, the southern French coastal city where an ISIS-affiliated attacker used a cargo truck to kill eighty-six and injure hundreds more along the beachside Promenade des Anglais. Like the *Charlie Hebdo* shootings, which prompted the largest public demonstrations in France since World War II, the Nice attack's aftermath kept the global spotlight bright. Only this time the world proved less solidary, with many observers looking on critically as Nice, Cannes, and over two dozen nearby coastal municipalities moved to ban the full-body burkini swimsuit worn by Muslim women in accordance with Islamic standards of dress.³ The ban certainly suggests an acute case of literal-mindedness. If July's gruesome truck attack made a beach the latest target of ISIS-inspired horror inside France, then it was on the beach, reasoned officials, that local municipalities should launch countermeasures against fundamentalist Islam. But proponents of the ban were of course also keen to deal in its obvious symbolics. There is, after all, no greater anti-Islamist metaphor

²On European representations of Muslims and Jews in terms of each other, see Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford, CA, 2003); Jonathan Boyarin, *The Unconverted Self: Jews, Indians, and the Identity of Christian Europe* (Chicago, 2009); Anouar Majid, *We Are All Moors: Ending Centuries of Crusades against Muslims and Other Minorities* (Minneapolis, 2009); Tudor Parfitt, "The Use of the Jew in Colonial Discourse," in *Orientalism and the Jews*, ed. Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Waltham, MA, 2005), 51–67. For careful recent accounts pushing back against historical caricatures of the relationship between French Muslims and Jews, see Ethan B. Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (Cambridge, MA, 2015); Maud S. Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict* (Princeton, NJ, 2014).

³The *New York Times* editorial board deemed the bans "farfical." "France's Burkini Bigotry," *New York Times*, August 18, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/19/opinion/frances-burkini-bigotry.html?_r=0. "So this is what liberation looks like: four armed officers ordering a woman to undress in public," lamented the *Guardian*, referencing widely circulated photographs of a Muslim woman in Nice being forced to remove her burkini. "The Guardian View on France's 'Burkini Bans': Ugly Politics on the Beach," *Guardian*, August 24, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/aug/24/the-guardian-view-on-frances-burkini-bans-ugly-politics-on-the-beach>.

available to the French imagination than outlawing the hijab, niqab, and related Muslim vestimentary modesties understood to threaten secular republican norms. The redness of the resulting herring fueled international ridicule, so plain was the dissonance between the epochal troubles besetting France—systemic failures in social integration, monthly terror attacks—and the petty political opportunism they bred.

Yet like the burkini-clad body, another potent metaphor remains hidden here in plain sight: the beach itself. The timing of the Nice attack, coinciding as it did with Bastille Day festivities, seemed a calculated affront to the universal values of liberty, equality, and fraternity with which many measure their ideological distance from fundamentalist Islam. Perhaps more psychologically jarring for the French, however, was the eruption of carnage into so paradigmatic a scene of middle-class Gallic leisure. Nice's summertime beachgoers epitomize over a century of labor gains that, beginning in the late nineteenth century and accelerating with the 1936 reforms of the Popular Front, ultimately produced four weeks of paid vacation and an accompanying run on southern sun. When Far Right National Front party leader and presidential candidate Marine Le Pen supported the ban, then, in a blog post about how French beaches should remain "those of Bardot and Vadim," she was not just contrasting conservative Muslim practices with Brigitte Bardot's star-making and skin-baring turn in Roger Vadim's 1956 film *And God Created Woman*.⁴ She was also invoking a halcyon vision of fifties-era mass leisure at the ocean and the cinema. A year earlier, over one hundred thousand local residents had signed a petition decrying the "privatization" of a popular nudist beach temporarily lent to the Saudi royal family near its summer compound a few miles from Cannes on the French Riviera. Inflected, no doubt, by the politics of skin, the protest nevertheless hewed largely to a characteristically French egalitarian denunciation of perceived aristocratic privilege. But if there was a privilege at stake in Nice, it was that of a hard-won middle-class leisure, and this time it was under attack from below.

As much was suggested by the beachfront politics of a ban disputed on subtly different terrain than that of recent battles over French secularism. France's 2004 law banning "conspicuous signs" (*signes ostensibles*) of religious affiliation from public schools had failed to distinguish, at least nominally, among various modes of sartorial religiosity (the Jewish kippah, the Muslim headscarf, large Christian crosses) deemed anathema to the republican school's mission of fashioning secular citizens.⁵ In insisting, though,

⁴Marine Le Pen, quoted in Alissa J. Rubin, "Fighting for the 'Soul of France,' More Towns Ban a Bathing Suit: The Burkini," *New York Times*, August 17, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/18/world/europe/fighting-for-the-soul-of-france-more-towns-ban-a-bathing-suit-the-burkini.html>.

⁵Law no. 2004-228, March 15, 2004, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2004/3/15/MENX0400001L/jo/texte>.

on the “overt” or “ostentatious” (*ostentatoire*) nature of the proscribed beachwear—“beach clothing that manifests overt religious belonging” (une tenue de plage manifestant de manière ostentatoire une appartenance religieuse), to cite the Cannes ordinance⁶—the burkini ban harked back to a language of ostentatiousness familiar from other French attempts at labeling the Muslim headscarf an outsized provocation against secular liberal principles like gender equality.⁷ The intensity with which the burkini registered as a provocation evidently corresponded to the intensity of emotions unleashed by the Nice attack. Yet one wonders whether the perceived ostentatiousness, in the English sense of the word shared by its French cognate, might have given additional offense as an economic, and not just a religious, display. Commentators worldwide were quick to point out the paradox of French authorities policing women’s bodies in the name of women’s rights. The burkini “symbolises leisure,” wrote the garment’s Australian-Lebanese creator Aheda Zanetti, “and now they are demanding women get off the beach and back into their kitchens?”⁸ But as a matter of economic anxiety, I would argue, it is precisely in the burkini’s symbolization of *Muslim* leisure that the burkini drew special ire from those hesitant to grant Muslims the visible fruits of upward mobility. Sending Muslim women “back into their kitchens” hardly squares with French secularism’s purportedly egalitarian aims. From the standpoint, however, of those for whom a Muslim on vacation suggests one fewer middle-class job for everyone else, returning observant Muslim women where they “belong”—if not outside the country, then at least back to the informal economies of domestic servitude—makes perfect symbolic sense.

Let us also not be misled by protestations of religious tolerance from the architects of the ban. “Neither the veil, nor the kippah, nor crosses are being banned,” explained the mayor of Cannes, David Lisnard, clarifying that he was “simply banning a uniform that symbolizes extremist Islam.”⁹ The 2004

⁶“Burkini: Le maire de Cannes interdit les vêtements religieux à la plage,” *Le Monde*, August 11, 2016, http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2016/08/11/le-maire-de-cannes-interdit-les-vetements-religieux-a-la-plage_4981587_3224.html.

⁷The replacement of *signes ostentatoires* with *signes ostensibles* occurred in the lead-up to the 2004 public school law. Alec Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France: Immigration, Politics, Culture, and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2007), 114–15. For detailed histories of the French veil debates, linguistic and otherwise, see John Bowen, *Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space* (Princeton, NJ, 2007); Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham, NC, 2014).

⁸Aheda Zanetti, “I Created the Burkini to Give Women Freedom, Not to Take It Away,” *Guardian*, August 24, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/aug/24/i-created-the-burkini-to-give-women-freedom-not-to-take-it-away>.

⁹“Burkini: Le maire de Cannes interdit les vêtements religieux.”

public school law's vague language regarding religious "signs," designed to forestall accusations that Muslims were its central target, had made the Jewish kippah "accidental collateral damage"—to cite one observer¹⁰—of an effort to make the law appear unbiased. The kippah would seem even more of an afterthought in a burkini ban taken by few as anything other than a rebuke of French Muslims. Relative to a French secularism increasingly defined by its reaction to Islam, Jewish religiosity enters less and less into the conversation. From the wider polemical vantage point I want to develop here, though, the reaction against the perceived ostentatiousness of Muslim leisure has everything to do with Jews. That is because, as I will be proposing, European Islamophobia's economic dimension is indissociable from the anti-semitism still plaguing the continent. Viewing the burkini affair as the latest risible aberration of a *sui generis* French secularism therefore risks missing the larger implication, for Europe and the world, of the growing symbiosis between a new Islamophobia and its abiding antisemitic counterpart.

Appreciating this means understanding the equally indissociable relationship between terror and economic anxiety. The *anno horribilis* of 2016 brought unprecedented intrusions, after all, into the Western middle-class quotidian of a shadow reality lived every day by the global underclass. Metropolitan terror attacks have in common with the European refugee crisis that they bring Western society face to face with chaos previously confined abroad.¹¹ And while the resulting nativism and xenophobia sometimes seem either to ripple through whole societies or to bubble up from the backwaters of postindustrial working-class *ressentiment*, certain analyses have begun to locate the real driver of Western prejudice in a very specific class experience: that of a certain middle class deeply anxious about its own economic insecurity.

Take the formulation offered by French philosopher Alain Badiou, who notes that the wealthiest 10 percent of the world's population control 86 percent of its resources; the next wealthiest 40 percent share the remaining 14 percent; and the bottom 50 percent of human beings own effectively nothing. Left to dispute a meager, potentially dwindling 14 percent of the economic pie, Badiou argues, the middle 40 percent of the Earth's inhabitants—concentrated chiefly in the developed world—worry increasingly about joining the ranks of the global dispossessed. The more they

¹⁰Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 114.

¹¹Slavoj Žižek puts it thus: "Both the Paris terrorist attacks and the now constant flow of refugees into Europe are momentary reminders of the violent world outside our glasshouse: a world which, for us insiders, appears mostly on TV and in media reports about distant conflicts, not as part of our everyday reality." Žižek, *Against the Double Blackmail: Refugees, Terror and Other Troubles With the Neighbors* (London, 2016), 6.

encounter those who own nothing (through migration, for instance), the more venomous the strategies (Islamophobia, etc.) mobilized by the anxious 40 percent to justify keeping these avatars of economic inequality at bay. Meanwhile, the 40 percent's status as the demographic bedrock of industrial democracies risks hardening new prejudices into institutional discriminations, apartheid even, that could take generations to undo.¹²

Does the metastatic progress of such new prejudices require new diagnostic tools to assess? Yes and no. I am particularly interested to examine the shifting role in France and Europe of Islamophobia—and to do so, moreover, in the context of that other great structuring principle of the continent, antisemitism. In fact, it would represent something of a non-sense to consider the former apart from the latter, at least from the perspective I have adopted so far. That is because to think, with Badiou and others, of Islamophobia in terms of anxieties about downward mobility is to do more than view the problem through the fundamental Marxist lens of class. It is also to retrofit a classical Marxist understanding of antisemitism. For Friedrich Engels, antisemitism afflicted a “medieval, declining” petty bourgeoisie in search of a culprit for the stagnation it endured as capital remade the world.¹³ Antisemitism, in other words, was the inchoate anticapitalism of a beleaguered lower middle class. So, too, is what we might call the new Islamophobia—except where a fearful petty bourgeoisie once mistakenly took the Jew as a stand-in for capital itself, today's precarious middle class takes Muslims as the global have-nots in which the 40 percent see their own potential dispossession incarnate.

This, then, is one key, largely overlooked sense in which Muslims have become the “new Jews” of Europe. The spectacle of Middle Eastern and African refugees shuttled by train from camp to squalid camp has drawn parallels to the darkest pages in twentieth-century continental history.¹⁴ Reaching further back, historian Esther Benbassa has noted that if France responded to

¹²Alain Badiou, *Notre mal vient de plus loin: Penser les tueries du 13 novembre* (Paris, 2016), 22–24. Though Badiou does not cite the source of the statistics he offers about global wealth inequality, they comport with figures provided by Credit Suisse in its annual Global Wealth Report. The 2013 report estimates that “the lower half of the global population possesses barely 1% of global wealth, while the richest 10% of adults own 86% of all wealth, and the top 1% accounts for 46% of the total.” Credit Suisse Research Institute, *Global Wealth Report 2013* (Zurich, 2013), 11.

¹³Friedrich Engels to a Jewish bank employee in Vienna, 1890, in *Marx-Engels Werke* (Berlin, 1963), 22:570, quoted in Robert Wistrich, *Laboratory for World Destruction: Germans and Jews in Central Europe* (Lincoln, NE, 2007), 85.

¹⁴For one example among many, see Nicholas Kristof, “Anne Frank Today is a Syrian Girl,” *New York Times*, August 25, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/25/opinion/anne-frank-today-is-a-syrian-girl.html>.

a nineteenth-century crisis of social identity with “the birth of modern antisemitism,” now “the Other is the Muslim Arab, who replaces the Jew of yesteryear.”¹⁵ The cross-century parallel raises the possibility of more than just homology: as political theorist Étienne Balibar suggests, contemporary fear of a vast Muslim conspiracy against the West likely draws on modern antisemitism’s century-and-a-half-old narrative of Jewish world domination.¹⁶ But while a reconfigured narrative of this sort may shape current fantasies about global Muslim economic and political power—witness the aforementioned outcry over Saudi intrusions on French coastal life—we might look as well to nineteenth-century ideas about antisemitism itself (rather than simply about Jews) to understand how Islamophobia both mirrors and inverts an old logic. For if Engels was right about antisemitism as a disease of the frightened lower middle class, Islamophobia and antisemitism perhaps most resemble each other today as different but functionally complementary mechanisms for diverting anxieties bred by the global economic order. Antisemitism has long scapegoated the Jews for capital’s tendency to produce disproportionate winners. Still, there has been no comparably global shorthand for the anxiety prompted by capital’s losers—until now. Muslim refugees and terrorists help give a name, Islam, to the masses permanently and necessarily relegated to the margins of the world system. In this framework, I want to suggest, these dispossessed must remain “Outside” (to borrow language from Slavoj Žižek) so that the anxious 40 percent may retain the tenuous privileges associated with living “Inside.”¹⁷

What is going on here distresses for both its familiarity and its novelty. Capital has always encouraged some to secure their relative privilege against perceived threats arriving from farther down the socioeconomic ladder. Writing recently about the refugee crisis, Zygmunt Bauman credits Eric Hobsbawm for understanding years ago that industrialization turns those whose lives it uproots against even more uprooted immigrants, or “strangers,” arriving from afar.¹⁸ Hobsbawm sought then to explain nationalist xenophobia. Any number of strangers (blacks, Latinos, the Irish) have played the threatening role, crystallizing anxieties about downward mobility according to shifting local circumstances. In contrast, the Jews have been made a worldwide

¹⁵ Esther Benbassa, “Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism, and Racism: Europe’s Recurring Evils?,” trans. Paul A. Silverstein, in *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe*, ed. Matti Bunzl (Chicago, 2007), 88.

¹⁶ Étienne Balibar, “Un nouvel antisémitisme?,” *Antisémitisme: L’Intolérable chantage; Israël-Palestine, une affaire française* (Paris, 2003), 95.

¹⁷ Žižek, *Against the Double Blackmail*, 6.

¹⁸ Zygmunt Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door* (Cambridge, 2016), 63–64. See Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1992), 157, 173.

master signifier of capitalist depredation, largely displacing the various candidates (Protestants, Freemasons, the British) historically in the running. To the extent, however, that globalization, migration, and terror have made the anxious 40 percent increasingly fear the dispossessed 50 percent as a monolith, a single, synecdochic label is also emerging for those residing Outside: Muslims. Associated with moneylending since biblical times, the Jew was ready to hand as a metaphor for capital's mysteries. Now it is the Muslim, Europe's other classic Other, against whom those suffering from capital's miseries also turn. Insofar, moreover, as this Islamophobic strain of misguided anticapitalism takes aim at a Muslim Other considered historically external to Europe, it nourishes the current phantasm that those Inside might somehow fence themselves off forever from those Outside hoping to get in.

One effect could be to make the resulting variety of Islamophobia every bit as sociologically sticky as the modern, conspiratorial antisemitism that emerged in the nineteenth century. The ubiquity and persistence of that antisemitism have at least something to do, it would seem, with the global reach of capitalism and its discontents. Likewise does the new Islamophobia threaten to bake the fear of Muslims into the very fabric of a global order unconcerned with, even dependent on, rampant income inequality. The crassest of demagogues will exploit economic anxiety in fairly literal terms: Muslim refugees are coming to take your jobs. But the subtler danger resides in the self-deception of the anxious 40 percent who, perhaps unwilling to acknowledge their economic insecurity out loud, recode the defense of their economic privileges as a defense of their cultural "way of life" against Muslims deemed unwilling to embrace Western liberal values. The sociologist Emmanuel Todd sparked outrage in France by proposing something similar about the enormous French street demonstrations that took place after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks. Ostensibly a solidary show of support for secularism and free speech, the demonstrations are better characterized, in Todd's analysis, as a mass outpouring of Islamophobia intended to normalize the "right to blaspheme against the emblematic person of a *minority* religion."¹⁹ Todd connects the inegalitarian nature of the gesture to the inegalitarian state of affairs that sees the French middle classes (retirees, functionaries, etc.) benefit disproportionately from the social welfare state. Anxious about the ability of that state to continue bestowing its gifts, the privileged strata are turning against those the system has structurally dispossessed. The result, he concludes, is a simulacrum of French values that substitutes for real egalitarian republicanism a "neo-republican" inegalitarianism animated by economic uncertainty (as well as by a secularized Catholic inegalitarian tradition, or "zombie Catholicism").²⁰

¹⁹Todd, *Who is Charlie?*, 67 (emphasis in the original).

²⁰Todd, *Who is Charlie?*, esp. chap. 2.

Writ large, something like this normalizing ideological substitution could permanently lodge Islamophobia at the heart of an updated European project. Temporary antirefugee and antiterror controls eroding Europe's Schengen system of open borders have, in setting new conditions of possibility for the system's eventual reinstatement, shifted the foundations of the Schengen principle itself. A return to open internal borders would be celebrated as a victory of those liberal notions—tolerance, unfettered exchange, and so on—that Europe is held to incarnate. But the openness of those borders would now be contingent, at a bedrock level, on the relative *closedness* of Europe's external borders to additional incursions by Muslim (and other) migrants from the south.

In short, the European Union would have subordinated its defining feature to the deeper principle that Europe considers Muslims fundamentally incompatible with continental culture. This would not require any explicit condemnation of Muslims, nor would it require any differentiation between Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants from the south. European officials need only contend, in pursuing the ever more draconian sequestration and rejection of migrants, that they are preserving a continental way of life against further social disruption. Implicit in the rationale is the presumption that Muslims and the popular backlash against them threaten the greatest such disruption, since from a basic demographic standpoint—several million refugees against five hundred million Europeans—the case for an upended European way of life fails to convince. And the tacit association of Islam with all migrants rebrands those refugees as undesirable on the grounds of their cultural incommensurability, usefully obscuring the real fear: an eventual redistribution toward southern populaces, under sufficient migratory pressure, of resources currently commanded by the 40 percent. Much as, for Todd, French expressions of republican outrage harbor an Islamophobic inegalitarianism masquerading as liberal virtue, pro-European leaders' attempted return to a precrisis status quo—consider Chancellor Angela Merkel's eventual regrets over Germany's initial open-door policy—has effectively endorsed, under the liberal guise of continued European integration, the globe's permanent cleavage in two.

Europe's Islamophobic turn sits uneasily alongside the vigilance against genocidal racism that provided the postwar "new Europe" its eventual moral adhesive. But the horror of camps again gathering refugees on European soil represents more than an opportunity for reductive comparisons with Europe's murderous past. Rather, it signals the reconstitution of Europe around a different original sin. If the old Europe was guilty of having exterminated its Jews, the new Europe seems intent on condemning another, larger group—Muslims and the dispossessed billions they metaphorically represent—to slow suffering beyond its shores. And just as Europe was once loath to acknowledge fully, in the aftermath of World War II, what the Nazis and their

sympathizers had wrought, Europe can be expected to repress the current sin for some time to come.

Will a future Europe atone by welcoming the migrants it initially rebuffed, as a chastened Europe once vouchsafed the security of those Jews remaining? We can hope. In the meantime, what is becoming clear is that a Europe reconstituted by Islamophobia risks losing interest in its Jews. Experience and polling data suggest that when Islamophobia surges, so does antisemitism. This makes sense given the role of capital's vagaries in turning mentalities against Jews and Muslims alike. It makes sense as well given how these prejudices are bifurcating along increasingly global lines. Antisemitism has taken root in a Muslim world where, for many, Jews emblemize the wealth, power, and arrogance of a privileged Inside responsible for suffering the world around. Islamophobia has, in the other direction, become the structuring principle of an Inside whose survival depends on the middle classes' alignment against the dispossessed 50 percent. Thus distributed, the two hatreds become even more symbiotic. Antisemitism among Muslims furnishes evidence of their supposed incompatibility with European norms of tolerance; in turn, Europe's growing Islamophobia exacerbates Muslim antisemitism by further marginalizing those Muslims whose marginalization significantly underlies their antisemitism to begin with.

But what Islamophobia does in this way to reinforce Muslim Jew-hatred also works, simultaneously and perversely, to screen antisemitism itself. The more Europe's long-standing post-Holocaust norms of tolerance are affirmed at Muslims' expense, the more concerns about antisemitism recede against the only real governing principle—Islamophobia—that remains. The January 2015 shootings ought to have attracted at least as much outrage, as a French and European matter, for the killing of four Jewish hostages on the outskirts of Paris as for the killings at the offices of *Charlie Hebdo*. Instead, the *Je suis Charlie* (I am Charlie) slogan that circled the globe framed the attacks as an affront to free speech—hardly a defining pillar of French liberal democracy, but certainly a tenet of Western liberalism around which to rally the anxious 40 percent, worldwide, against encroachment by the dispossessed. Rather than attend to the European significance of murdering Jews for being Jewish, French and European elites opted for a more transnational solidarity, expressed as a commitment to free speech, of the world's privileged classes against the apparent barbarians at the gate.

France's stand against the burkini has elicited no comparable outpouring of support. Where French supporters of the ban see a principled commitment to secularism, mainstream international commentators see an Islamophobic fixation. But some such local idiosyncrasy, I would suggest, is to be expected from the new Islamophobia. The contempt for Muslims that marshals class interests across continents works equally to fortify national boundaries. For

if Europe offers an imagined interior against which to demarcate Islam's exteriority, the European Union's very nature also exposes individual member states to the planned and unplanned migratory flows—of people, capital, culture—produced by globalization. From the individual national perspective, Europe thus represents as much a facilitator of encroachment as a collective bulwark against it. Just as French labor reforms once did, Europe's open borders promised its northern, sun-seeking middle class easier access to beachside leisure along the continent's Mediterranean periphery. Now those beaches evoke unease about globalization and its vicissitudes—an unease amalgamating the Muslims who already live in Europe with those migrants risking everything to resettle there. It is on beaches where the desperate 50 percent wash up that the line between Inside and Outside comes into starkest relief; and it is on similar beaches where, simultaneously, displays of Muslim leisure by burkini-clad immigrants-cum-citizens convince some in the anxious 40 percent of their eventual displacement by the dispossessed 50 percent coming for a share of the economic pie.

Consider a September 2015 cartoon published in *Charlie Hebdo* depicting Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian refugee whose drowning, captured for the world to see when his body washed up on a Turkish beach, galvanized Europe's political response to the refugee crisis. Next to the indelible image of Kurdi lying prone in the sand and a caption that reads "So close to the goal. . .," the cartoon shows a McDonald's billboard cheerfully trumpeting "two Happy Meals for the price of one."²¹ The Europe to which Kurdi's family fled, suggests the juxtaposition, has already been corrupted by the forces of cultural impoverishment and economic insecurity for which McDonald's—but also, more subtly, Kurdi and his fellow refugees—furnish its French critics a metonym. The beach, site of middle-class leisure, is implicitly repurposed here as the lost paradise from which Europeans find themselves mentally evicted by the twin specters of globalization and immigration. From within, globalization threatens a European order already McDonald's-ized by the culturally and economically leveling forces of neoliberalism. From without, immigration threatens to compound the influx of foreign goods and capital with an influx of foreign bodies. And on the beach where, for European sun-seekers, intracontinental freedom of movement might once have harmonized with neoliberalism's continental concentrations of wealth, extra-European immigration reveals itself as the apparent ultimate price paid by Europe for a globalization run amok.

That enemies of the burkini invoke the specifically French mania for curtailment of public religious expression is therefore partially the point, since to do so marks the nationalist rejection of a European project held responsible

²¹ *Charlie Hebdo*, September 9, 2015, back cover.

for failing to stem the tide of Islam. (This is surely underscored, for some, by the European Court of Justice's 2016 decision in favor of a young Muslim woman fired by a French information technology company for wearing a headscarf.) Yet the gesture simultaneously aligns France with the numerous other European countries where Islamophobia is ascendant—and hence, by extension, with Europe itself, or at least one vision of it. Writing in 2007, the Austrian anthropologist Matti Bunzl proposed a fundamental historical difference in scale between antisemitism and Islamophobia: whereas the modern antisemitism invented in the late nineteenth century “questioned Jews’ fitness for inclusion in the national community,” contemporary Islamophobia asks “whether Muslims can be good Europeans . . . as a means of fortifying Europe.”²² Bunzl’s essay appears prescient, given the European scale on which both the refugee crisis and the Islamophobic reaction to it have unfolded. But the nineteenth century still has, I think, something to teach us about a twenty-first-century Islamophobia equally shaped by the revival of nationalisms. Balibar has described the shared principle of exclusion by which nineteenth-century European nations used antisemitism both to shore up claims of insular ethnic nationhood and to signal their participation in a European community of nations united by a shared disdain for Jews.²³ Muslims provide a new such dialectical lubricant, as the anxious 40 percent seek refuge from economic insecurity at once in nationalism and in the European collectivity. Nationalist rebalkanization ensures that European social welfare states need only defend their own native-born middle classes from mounting income inequality: the less individual European nations are beholden to European Union policies carried out, in debtor states like Greece, at the expense of pensioners and other middle-class government patrons, the more these welfare states can redistribute enough wealth at home to stave off domestic social unrest. Meanwhile, the hardening of white “European” identity, and with it of Europe’s common external border, doubly shelters the internal, national redistribution of capitalist wealth from the transcontinental redistribution demanded by immigrants. Little wonder that Mediterranean beaches, emblems of a French and European leisure equally subsidized by offshore misery, should become the latest battleground—both physical and symbolic—in a global confrontation more economic than it has ever been religious.

²²Matti Bunzl, “Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia,” in Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia*, 13–14.

²³Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, trans. Chris Turner (New York, 1991), 62.