**The Visible Hand of the State**

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**I**

The dominant narrative for understanding the murderous attack on Charlie Hebdo’s office in January 2015 has insisted that this is a war – a war between two rival civilisations. On the one side stands a free, tolerant, secular, progressive and advanced civilisation that is increasingly under siege by another, a violent, backward, bigoted and inferior civilisation. In a statement released immediately after the murder of Charlie Hebdo’s staff, François Hollande declared that the attack on Charlie Hebdo was an attack against the Republic as a whole:

# The Republic equals freedom of expression; the Republic equals culture, creation, it equals pluralism and democracy. That is what the assassins were targeting. It equals the ideal of justice and peace that France promotes everywhere on the international stage, and the message of peace and tolerance that we defend – as do our soldiers – in the fight against terrorism and fundamentalism. (Hollande, 2015)

# Comparing the struggle to protect the Republic’s value with what ‘our soldiers’ do in the fight against terrorism and fundamentalism reanimated the narrative of war. The language of war became more explicit after a second terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015. The French president immediately declared a state of emergency and promised to wage a ‘merciless’ war. But against who and which enemy state, and who will suffer from this ‘pitiless war’?

The model that emerged to explain and motivate the response to the catastrophe of September 11 has become the universal model to explain all atrocities that have taken place on European shores since 2001. All acts of terror are now domestic 9/11s. The US government misleadingly compared the violence that was unleashed on September 11 to the bombing of Pearl Harbour. If that attack in December 1941 precipitated the United States entry into World War 2, the declaration of a ‘war on terror’ after September 11 paved the way for the disastrous invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The promise of simple repetition in this historical analogy ignores some important and uncomfortable details, not least that the attack in 2001, unlike the bombing of Pearl Harbour, could not be identified with a single recognised state.

The ‘war on terror’ has taken many forms, gone through many phases, unleashed many forces, and turned many countries into battlefields with enormous human costs. If wars are not simply rhetoric, and the ‘war on terror’ has been deadly, then the declaration of war is about allocating resources and mobilisation to defeat the enemy. France’s declaration of war is no exception. Immediately after the Charlie Hebdo tragedy the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls announced that more than 700 million euros ($990 million) would be spent over the next three years on ‘the fight against terrorism’, and 2600 more jobs would be created to monitor and prosecute 3,000 people that, according to the French prime minster Manuel Valls, had ties with jihadis. (Lichfield 2015) Valls also indicated the direction of his government by declaring that his goal was to fight ‘Islamofascism’, a term which has been used by neo-cons and the far right. Real wars, no matter how horrific, have a beginning and an end. The ‘war on terror’, however, has no end, no clearly identified enemy and, very much like terrorism itself, is not bound by any international law or national border. Targeting a loosely defined enemy scattered over loosely defined territories has allowed the declaration of war to be used as a mandate for the expansion of a form of state power that is increasingly defined in terms of its security function. The security state can do what it wants, attack who it wants, and accepts no limits on its power.

If the attack on Charlie Hebdo was an attack on the Republic as a whole, then the state of emergency and the constant state of the war is dismantling the very values that Hollande claims the Republic stands for. The call and march for ‘unity’ in the aftermath of the attack against Charlie Hebdo echoes the rhetoric of Bush and Blair but such calls paradoxically also mimic the terrorist language of ‘profane’ versus ‘holy’ while charging those who call for reflection with ‘treason’. Is this merely a coincidence or are we seeing two fundamentalisms, the imperial and the religious, converging and colliding? But there is more. The biggest paradox is the transformation of the word ‘terrorism’ itself. As Badiou has pointed out, ‘it is remarkable that the word “terrorism”, which clearly qualified a particular figure of exercise of the state power, has succeeded, little by little, in coming to signify exactly the contrary” (2006:18).

It is the state, the ultimate body with monopoly over the legitimate use of force that is designating violent acts as terrorism precisely because they are committed by non-state adversaries/actors. The term Islamic fascism, as Katha Pollitt (2006) has pointed out, has also received a linguistic makeover. The term was used for the first time by Malise Ruthven in 1990 to describe the authoritarian states in the Middle East. A decade later and after 9/11, the term was employed to cover a diversity of political practices by a broad swathe of Muslims. Yet this is not a mere linguistic makeover. ‘Culture’ has always, and even more so now, been used to legitimise power, oppression and domination while veiling that very function, and in particular the violence and coercion of the state.

There are other ways of putting this. The ‘Republic’ is staring at itself in the mirror of terror. If ‘Islamofascism’, as Valls puts it, is the enemy, then mobilising for war is a mobilisation against those who ‘essentially’ carry that ‘identity’. If Islam is the ‘identity’ of those who carried the hideous and calculated acts of terror on French soil in January and November 2015 as well as in July 2016, the responses by the state in France (and elsewhere in Europe) leave no doubt that anti-Muslim identity has become one of the core values of the Republic. It is precisely in such a climate that anti-Muslim racism and campaigns against immigrants has made the battle for protecting ‘real’ European and citizens as a key battle between the far right and mainstream political parties in France and elsewhere. Some examples of the violence against Muslims in France are discussed in the first section of this book. Such acts of violence of course not considered as terror. Neither is the imperialist aggression which François Hollande, without a hint of irony, labels as ‘the ideal of justice and peace that France promotes everywhere on the international stage’.

It is precisely this transformation in the use of the word that has made it possible to designate that only one horrific act of violence committed on September 11 is considered as terrorism, given that the CIA planned and sponsored a coup against the democratically elected government of President Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973. It was also on September 11 that Anwar Sadat surrendered to the United States and Israel in 1977 by accepting the Camp David Accords. (Wright, 2014) A year later Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin received the shared Nobel Peace Prize while Palestinians, who had no voice or representation in the negotiations, remained - and continue to remain - at the mercy of Israel. It was also on September 11 that George Bush Sr made his ‘New World Order’ speech to a joint session of Congress and announced the war against Iraq in 1990. This history of this date alone requires to ask if it is only jihadis that target ‘democracies’ and make no distinction between civilians and non-civilians in their violence?

**II**

Asserting the anti-Muslim identity of the Republic is extending and expanding anti-Muslim racism across Europe. Situating and justifying racism in relation to cultural difference is nothing new and neither is the statement that ‘they are not like us’! But today this coincides with a wholesale attack on multiculturalism and a drive towards assimilation. Since September 11 all European countries have re-aligned their ‘race’ policies towards an assimilationist, monocultural approach to integration. In the drive towards ‘assimilation’ , racism is justified in terms of cultural ‘values’, and this in turn justifies an increasingly violent and authoritarian state. As the regressive attacks on public spending and the increasing gap between rich and poor eat away at the existing legitimacy of the state, the image of a ‘great nation under threat’ has been nurtured in the media and in the world of politics in order to attach the public to a new authoritarian state by providing an anti-Islamic ‘common purpose’. Throughout history various communities have served this purpose; Muslims are simply the latest of such ‘suspect’ communities.

There is an undeniable link between the domestic and foreign interests of imperial states. Indeed, it is worth remembering that when Huntington pointed at Muslims and Islam as the principal threat to what he calls ‘Western Civilisation’ he was in fact concerned not only with Muslims and Islam in the Middle East and North Africa but also large Muslim communities (of all nationalities and ethnicities) who were living in the west. That his next major project, *Who Are We? America's Great Debate* (2004), turned to immigrants in the United States, and specifically to members of its Hispanic communities, should thus be no surprise. And one of his admirers, Francis Fukuyama (2006), was similarly disturbed by demographic changes within North America and Europe. Indeed, even when he began to distance himself belatedly from the disastrous invasion of Iraq he argued: “Meeting the jihadist challenge needs not a military campaign but a political contest for the hearts and minds of ordinary Muslims around the world. As recent events in France and Denmark suggest, Europe will be a central battleground.” The clash of civilisations was no longer going to take place ‘out there’ but at home!

In evoking the essence of the Republic as one uninterrupted history, Hollande and others not only skate over the reality that cultures and identities are less than a stable or fixed, but more crucially that the so-called clash of cultures is deeply rooted in a material history. ‘National characters’ are constantly constituted and reconstituted by selective readings of ‘tradition’ and images of social memory. Nations and states have historically been each other’s projects and this most recent attempt at regulating ‘cultural diversity’ demonstrates the contradictions in the attempts of neo-liberal states to impose a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence (symbolic or otherwise). How nations and cultures (as ideologies) are produced and reinforced, who are identified as enemies, and what classed, racialised and gendered groups are visible in or absent from this new attempt at managing ‘difference’ and drive for social legitimacy are significant issues.

Today, neoliberal states in Europe are pushing for even more deregulation for corporations and are attacking welfare systems and public services under the banner of ‘downsizing the state’ whilst at the same time invoking the idea of a great nation with a glorious past. Under neoliberalism many of the state’s responsibilities has been removed and privatised. Indeed as Wendy Brown (2005) has argued, in contrast to classic market liberalism, neoliberalism starts from the state itself. But in the process ,the state ‘rather than being provider and guarantor of public welfare, becomes “a parasite” on the population, concerned only for its own survival, demanding more and more and giving less and less in exchange’ (Bauman and Bordoni, 2014: 17-18). It is important to remember that the period between the end of the World War 2 and the ascendancy of neoliberal states was marked by two significant factors: a period of economic growth and prosperity that enabled and maintained welfare systems, and also a period in which the world witnessed the rise of anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle and liberation movements across the world. Internationally many of the movements for liberation and independence either became co-opted into the structures of capital and/or were defeated.

By the 1980s, a shift to the right in European and North American politics deepened the attacks on the welfare aspects of the state. How do states deal ideologically with their attempts to eradicate those social institutions upon which they have based their legitimacy? David Harvey argues that in such climates neoliberal states face a major dilemma. They must simultaneously take a back seat and ‘simply set the stage for market functions’ and they must also act as a collective corporation in order to promote their competitive edge. For Harvey ‘nationalism is an obvious answer’ to the problem of ensuring citizen loyalty (2005: 79). Similarly Liz Fekete suggests that ‘neoliberalism and the promise of abundant riches and freedom no longer provide a plausible script…Hence the comfort of the sticking-plaster of nationalism and the narrative of anti-multiculturalism and anti-immigration’ (2017:5). Paradoxically, and perhaps not surprisingly, the perceived threat of immigration is used, on the one hand, to introduce measures and policies (structural adjustments) that have until now been imposed predominantly on developing countries (Swenson, 2015), and on the other, to impose colonial-style emergency laws (Fekete, 2017).

In a country such as France in which minority ethnic communities have never been treated as equal citizens, the history of colonialism still weighs like a nightmare. Was it a mere coincidence that one of the attackers of Charlie Hebdo was a French-Algerian? The current crisis is not just an economic crisis in exactly the same way that neoliberalism is not just an economic project. This crisis is also a crisis of the state and nationalism. Far from challenging neoliberalism, it is a path through which the final transformation of a ‘social state’ to a fully-fledged neoliberal market-state is taking place. Nationalism ‘far from representing a break with neo-liberalism, provides the climate that allows for its break from democracy’ (Fekete, 2017:18).

One significant outcome of this transformation has not only been a form of statism without the state, at least in terms of welfare, but also an increased emphasis on the main historical function of the state, that is disciplining its subjects. The incorporation of social democracy into a neoliberal project has paved the way for a more authoritarian rule. Such a shift, as Jessop has argued, ‘…could be explained in terms of the logic of capital (requiring more state intervention) and/or the logic of class struggle (requiring more state repression and legitimation measures) (2007:238)’. More repressive measures are needed in order for the state to maintain and control an impoverished and weak citizenship. It is exactly this re-configuration of state power that should be the focus of attention including the basis on which these newly reconfigured states claim legitimacy.

**III**

The unity of the state under a nationalist or nativist flag will not be complete without ‘national unity’. Indeed the survival of the state depends on homogeneity from within. We know that nations are imagined communities (Anderson 2006) and yet historically the state has been crucial in offering ways of imagining nations. Communities, imagined or otherwise, are necessarily bound up with borders and states and, despite a significant discursive erasure of place in much of the literature on globalisation (Dirlik, 2001), borders are proliferating and there are more demands for sovereignty and recognition. Equally problematic is the thesis which claims the power of the state has declined with the formation of ‘Empire’. Hart and Negri’s prophecy that capital, in its latest incarnation, has neither a centre nor a periphery, neither home nor an abroad exist (2001: 239) merely echoes a variant on the theory of globalisation.

There have been changes in the priority of the state, including surrendering some of its economic functions to the private sector (such as making its central banks ‘independent’), restricting the role of the parliament and representative institutions, and the undeniable growth of state authoritarianism. However, rather than representing the decline of state power, this reflects a shift in the balance of power and the fact that states are declaring war against their own citizens and democracy. This expansion of the repressive dimension of the state has happened in tandem with an amputation of its welfare functions.

The rapid expansion of the repressive apparatus, and upgrading colonial measures and policies with digital and biometric technology, are justified by the imperatives of the fight against terrorism. The various pieces of anti-terrorism legislation and ‘Patriot Acts’ implemented in the name of providing ‘security’ for domestic society (Khiabany and Williamson, 2012), pigeonholing citizens into the binary of patriots and terrorist sympathisers, limitation on civil and democratic rights, and the subordination of everything and everyone to the perceived ideals of the ‘free world’, ‘the Republic’ or ‘Western civilisation’ are all part of a process which Frances Webber (2016) has aptly called ‘the inversion of accountability’. The state has not only imposed monitoring obligations on education, welfare and health professionals, but also has promoted the act of citizens spying and informing on each other as the very definition of good citizenship and patriotism. Having designated a number of regimes (including many in the Middle East) as ‘rogue states’ which threaten the very fabric of the progressive, tolerant and free world, imperial states themselves have ‘gone rogue’ and actively become failed states in relation to the welfare of their own population.

The formation of nations is a colonial process; those that do not fit in the ‘imagination’ and those who are not part of a defined homogenous population are marginalised, suppressed and excluded. All states are keen to determine ways - perhaps a singular way - of imagining a community. The name of the nation is also the name of the state, and questions of who belongs, who is excluded, what are the boundaries and what are accepted cultures, customs and languages, are all determined by the state. That does not mean that a nation cannot exist without a state as such. That the Kurds, Basques and Palestinians, for example, can mount such a struggle to be recognised and to have their own state is clear evidence of the significance of the state. However only a narrow nationalist concept can imagine the imagined community as an abstract entity that is beyond and above the state.

If the nation is the name, the state is the body that bears it; if the nation is the end, the state is the means of achieving it. A nation without a state would appear to be a name without a bearer, without anyone worthy of bearing it with the requisite glory and splendour, and so it remains a damaged name, which may well dissipate, becomes assimilated among the languages or scattered among the peoples of the world. (Ophir, 2010:90)

The state not only actively reconstructs the past but also imagines the present and attempts to set the scene for the future. Jessop insists that nation and state are distinct concepts and that conflation of the two in the ambiguous concept of the nation-state is confusing. As far as the question of nationhood is concerned, it is important to remember that national imaginaries have always involved “more than the question of nationality” and that they are shaped by other type of ideal and material interests including class, gender, and race (Jessop, 2016:156). For Bourdieu, the state is a concentration of different forms of capital, including physical force as well as economic, informational and symbolic capital. The concentration of a symbolic capital of recognition, or legitimacy, goes hand in hand with the concentration of armed forces and financial resources. He suggests that parallel with a unified army and unified taxation, there has to be a unified ‘culture’.

It is in this process of promoting a ‘particular’ culture and language to the status of ‘universal’ that all others fall into particularity. As such any serious discussion of ‘national’ culture needs to avoid ahistorical analyses of certain ‘characters’ and realise the importance of the state in constructing that sense of a ‘national character’. It is usually the case that when the advocates of ‘authentic culture’ refer to the notion of collective identity, they fail to address exactly whose identity is being defined and by whom. It is precisely this imposing of ‘norm’ (the so called ‘universal’) on a whole population that “enables the state to separate certain groups from collectivity”. (Badiou, 2012:92) According to Badiou those who do not resemble the fictive identitarian object can range from Muslim to Islamist, immigrant to Roma, or simply youths from the *banlieues* - ‘identity politics’ par excellence!

**IV**

The state has been central to paving the way for the emergence and articulation of racism. The history of racism is also the history of state policy on race relations (Sivanadnan, 2008, and Kundnani in this volume). Lentin and Lentin also argue that racism and state are interdependent and that racism in its historical formation and present ‘is inextricably linked both to the policy instituted by states and to the political climate engendered by governmental leaders playing the proverbial “race card”’ (2008:2). For them racism, rather than being a pathological problem or an aberration of the politics of democracies, is in fact inseparable from the modern project. The reified notion of national cultures is the product of modernity which has from the beginning produced and sustained, under the banner of ‘universalism’, different variations and forms of parochialism.

Indeed, modernity has always been described using the language of progress, creativity, freedom and emancipation. Hollande and others, in the aftermath of the attacks, merely fell back on this myth. Such formulations always ignore what Walter Mignolo has described as ‘the darker side of Western modernity’ (2011) which has been and continues to be responsible for the historical devastation wrought by exploitation, insecurity, intolerance and genocide. When examining racism, an historical approach to modernity is crucial for interrogating not only the hegemonic assumptions of Euromodernity but also new forms of cultural reification and competing nativisms.

Racism (of various kinds) is not just a product of economic crisis nor does it arise simply as a response to immigration, although these are used to justify it. Rather, it is linked to the very core of European modernity and the colonial project. In fact the very ‘modernity’ that is constantly lined up against the ‘uncivilised’ was also about contempt towards the ‘Other’. This Other of course was not always racialized as it is understood in contemporary sense and neither did the contempt against the ‘Other’ begin with colonisation. Indeed, as Balibar has suggested, the contempt and discrimination against ‘labouring classes’ was (and is) similar with those of categories of blacks. He demonstrates this by showing that the white/native working class can also be victims of racism, *class racism*. It was much later that the ‘notion of race was “ethicized”, so that it could be integrated into the nationalist complex, the jumping off point for its successive subsequent metamorphoses. Thus it is clear that, from the vey outset, racist representations of history stand in relation to the class struggle” (1991:207-8).

Balibar is right to insist that the narrative of the modem nation-state and modernity cannot be separated from capitalism and the organization of labour. Anna Curcio similarly argues that under capitalism racism and class domination have always been intertwined; “to talk distinctly about race means both calling up a whole system of historically constructed inequalities and highlighting the *material* and *structural* nature of racism – that is to say, its strong connection to the relations of production and their transformation” (2014). In her examination of state formation in Italy she shows that Italian racism (and indeed European racism) was developed along two paths.

On the one hand, within Europe, Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal, for example, were racialized; considered as primitive and explained in precisely those terms of exoticness and backwardness that were later used to describe the colonies (The recent coverage of economic crisis in Spain, Portugal and in particular Greece leaves no doubt that southern Europe has remained the ‘Other’ within Europe [Bickes, Otten and Weymann, 2014]. In portraying Greeks in particular as lazy, corrupt and incapable of governing themselves, the political and media elites pushed the debate away from structural concerns towards a ‘culturalization’ of crisis that generated hostile and racist sentiments against Greek population. What this crisis shows again is that the so-called Western civilisation and culture is itself torn between the hollow universalism and the narrow particularism of the ‘culture’ of capital. The ‘unity’ of the West crumbles under the disastrous weight of ‘market competition’).

If southern Europe was the racialized ‘Other’, Sothern Italians became the racialized, inferior, and ‘negroid’ to the “Aryan and Caucasian” in the North. The modern nation-state in Italy from the outset was founded on the idea of ‘Two Italies’. “As a result”, argues Curcio, “the existence of “Two Italies,” each one inhabited by a different racial group, signified the existence of two different moral and socio-political inclinations, where the “Negroid” ancestry of southern Italians becomes the evidence of their inferiority and criminal behaviour, as well as the justification for brutal repression of social uprisings in the South” (2014).

The particular case of France gives us more insight. The very idea of modernity is explicitly linked with the ‘bourgeois revolutions’ in general and the French Revolution in particular. The French Revolution, by highlighting the issue of political rights for masses, generated a significant problem for the idea of ‘natural’ differences between individuals. Yet the equality of birth was and is contradicted with the structural inequality which has continued to naturalise social divisions and antagonism in capitalist modernity. There are two important issues that are worth highlighting. First, the much celebrated 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, a foundational Enlightenment document, did indeed define the individual and collective rights of all the estates of the realm as universal. These ‘rights’ were qualified as ‘natural, unalienable and sacred’, and the first article proudly announced that ‘Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.’ Yet the declaration neither revoked slavery nor recognised the equal rights of women. Why were the calls and petitions for recognising equal rights not applied to all people? Was this a simple accident or omission? How compatible is the universalism of liberal ideology with the system of hierarchies that is preserved and maintained in contemporary capitalist societies? How do we understand these significant exclusive clauses in such a highly regarded and era-defining historical document?

Another significant exclusive clause can be seen in article 11 of the same document: “The free communication of thoughts and of opinions is one of the most precious rights of man: any citizen thus may speak, write, print freely, *except* to respond to the abuse of this liberty, in the cases determined by the law.” That *except* has proved a major problem for throughout this document the right appears as a bundle! This bundle and its ‘universal’ gloss have historically been used to camouflage the particularism of liberal ideology and to take away the very political liberty against state. The law and the very definition of that little ‘except’ is determined not in a vacuum but by the state. Witness the French government clampdown on the internet in the aftermath of Charlie Hebdo’s tragedy.

Such exclusive clauses in the ‘universal’ rights of man were also hideously and brutally applied and safe guarded inside and outside France (and other imperial powers). The abstractions of individual and nations have been the key to a distinctly French concept of universalism. The unified totality of the nation is of course fictitious and precisely it is this fictitious entity that has been regarded as the defining feature of the French universalism. To be admitted to this universal entity various groups had to relinquish their own individual and collective identity for the abstract common goal of the republic. (Scott, 2004:35)

The state refusal to expand the constituencies and scope of democratic rights is a well-known fact. Indeed the assumption of the ‘equality of men’ as a central tenet of the French Revolution has coexisted with structural inequality and the brutal exclusion of significantly large sections of the population (working class and women in particular), as well as with slavery and colonialism, and thus represents the basic contradiction of capitalist modernity The ‘ideal of justice and peace’ that Hollande claims France has promoted on the international stage is airbrushed of such colonial atrocities as those in in Indochina (1930-33), the massacre in Madagascar (1947-48), and the brutal suppression of the Algerian struggle for liberation:

“Estimates of those the French killed include a million Vietnamese and a million Algerians. As for Madagascar, estimates have it that upwards of 100,000 people were killed by the French. These are just a few examples of French colonial barbarities in some colonies and not an exhaustive list by any means. French colonialism, under the grandiose heading of a mission civilisatrice, has clearly failed to civilize, most of all, the French themselves. The mission, it would seem, remains unaccomplished!” (Massad, 2015)

The ravages of colonialism did of course rebound within European borders - the celebration of Western economic, cultural and moral superiority simply cannot acknowledge that Nazi Germany represents an essential part of the ‘West’. “Genocide is the absolute integration,” remarked Adorno. For him Auschwitz in some way was the outcome of an ‘identitarian’ logic that violently supresses the non-identical: “It is on its way wherever men are levelled off – ‘polished off,’ as the German military called it – until one exterminates them literally, as deviations from the concept of their total nullity. Auschwitz confirmed the philosopheme of pure identity as death.” (1973:362) In connecting the colonial dots of western civilisation Dominico Lousordo (2015:242) rightly suggests that Hitler’s attempt to enslave the Slav and to exterminate Jews should be seen as part of a cycle of Western colonialism that began with the genocide of Native Americans and continued with the horror of slavery. Racism is not modernity’s Other, or external to it.

**V**

In thinking about history at this time, it is impossible not to recall Walter Benjamin’s assertion that “there is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.” If state racism is a product of modernity, then there can be no innocent invoking of an imagined past and an imagined ‘culture’ that does not serve to feed reactionary nostalgia and hatred. The “Cross faced down the Crescent, the West had come to the Orient never to leave”, Said wrote in Orientalism. (1994:91) The European states in general and France in particular are now busy trying to face down a very small slice of the Crescent that took on the invitation to come and rebuild the Cross. At the time in which the sovereignty and the borders of many countries in the Middle East and North Africa are being questioned and undermined in the name of ‘war on terror’, the issue of assimilation and integration, as Lentin and Titley argue, has become “a border practice beyond and inside the territorial border.” (2011:204) It is precisely this obsession with ‘integrating’ European Muslims into ‘national culture’ and ‘our way of life’ which is used simultaneously to combat multiculturalism and demand and secure loyalty from the wider population.

Ironically, this move to make citizens into grateful dependents of the security state happens at the time in which citizens are also chided moralistically for being too dependent on the state for jobs, housing, health and education. It is within this context that by focusing on ‘culture’, the alien is transformed into an enemy. It is for that reason that Balibar suggests that the “reduction of the figure of the stranger to that of the enemy is perhaps one of the clearest signs of the crisis of the nation-state”. (2010) Yet the concerted attack on civil liberties and measures introduced by European security states has effectively meant that states have begun to suspend democracy with the excuse of saving it. The focus on ‘culture’ and the attempts by some European states to resolve ‘the Muslim question’ has been part of an effort to justify an increasingly authoritarian state by substituting cultural difference for the class divisions and antagonisms which underlie the current crisis.

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