

Seeing the Old in the New The Coloniality of the Liberal-Populist Marriage

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Abstract

This essay explores the epistemological implications of the hermetic Euro-American comparative political sociology that treats the centers of geopolitical power as the origin, theater, and motor of world history. The author argues that maintaining hierarchical “area studies” silos makes it difficult to understand that certain political developments in centers of power are not new, but rather a continuation and adaptation of projects implemented years, decades, or even centuries before in the bodies and knowledges of non-Europeans in Global South/East locations. Following Afro-Caribbean, Arab, and Latin American scholarship, the author argues that this hermeticism led to misunderstanding the Holocaust as an “aberration” instead of a historical “norm,” misnaming the post-WWII confrontation as a “Cold War” as it was boiling in heat outside the centers of power, and now may be occluding the antecedents that enable the “new” marriage between “right-wing populist” and “altruistic” inclusive liberal discourses. The author explains the implications of this exploration for the study of racism in general, and antisemitism and Islamophobia in particular, and shows how current scholarly trends are moving toward a broader relational project connecting decolonial and inter-imperial studies that can offer a more accurate account of current political developments.

1. Ending European Hierarchical Hermeticism

Between the early summer of 2019 and early spring of 2020, a group of global critical intellectuals met under the auspices of the University of Notre Dame’s Contending Modernities Project co-led by Atalia Omer, R. Scott Appleby, and Ebrahim Moosa. During the first event, one of our common readings was a recent article entitled “Between Nationalism and Civilizationism” by the acclaimed UCLA sociologist Rogers Brubaker. The essay is a sharp and incisive analysis of the European “populist” movements from a comparative perspective. Brubaker explains, probably better than the vast majority of scholarship, the transformations that have enabled a threatening phenomenon: the emergence of extreme “populist” movements throughout “the” continent in the first decades of the 21st century. This movement takes a religious, generic

Christian, civilizationist identity and brandishes it as a banner to unify their xenophobic nationalist aspirations throughout Europe and, with distinctive particularities, in the U.S. In the European case what seems particularly remarkable is the adoption of liberal inclusive social values for extreme “right-wing” programs. Today, perhaps for the first time since their defeat in the Second World War, these alternatives are actual regional options for state power.¹

There is, however, one striking feature of this reading that should make us interrogate the scope of Brubaker’s method. The political landscape seems to be changing globally. From the rise to power of Narendra Modi in India in 2014 to the electoral success of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil in 2019, we have seen parallel phenomena taking over key spaces across the Global South. Some of the best analyses, by Brubaker among others, interpret the sociology of European politics only in light of internal European (or Euro-American) dynamics. While bold readings may explain the repercussions that these developments have on the rest of the world, the possibility that the rest of the world could influence the development of European politics is scarcely contemplated. This hermetic reading of the sociology of Euro-American politics invariably ends up identifying the Global North as the uncontaminated origin, theater, and motor of world history.²

In order to interrogate this phenomenon, I would like to reflect on Aimé Césaire’s advice for geopolitical caution postulated in his *Discourse of Colonialism* at the outset of the 1950s. This

¹ Rogers Brubaker, “Between Nationalism and Civilizationism: The European Populist Movement in Comparative Perspective” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 8 (2018): 1191–1226.

² For a challenging trajectory of texts offering a variety of rich proposals to decolonize European and Global political sociology see Immanuel Wallerstein, *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Glubenkian Comission of the Restructing of the Social Sciences* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), Edgardo Lander ed, *La Colonialidad del Saber: Eurocentrismo y Ciencias Sociales* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2000), Encarnacion Gutierrez Rodriguez, Manuela Boatca and Sergio Costa eds, *Decolonizing European Sociology: Transdisciplinary Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2010), Ramon Grosfougel, “Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political Sociology” in *Transmodernity* 1.1 (2011): 1-38, Manuela Boatca, *Global Inequalities Beyond Occidentalism* (London: Routledge, 2016), Julian Go, “Decolonizing Sociology: Epistemic Inequality and Sociological Thought” in *Social Problems* 64.2 (2017): 194-199 and Ali Meghji, *Decolonizing Sociology: An Introduction* (London: Polity Press, 2021).

text was written during the emergence of area studies, the very same field that enabled definitions of the Cold War as “cold” when it was boiling hot in southern and eastern locations. The Martinican social theorist identified an epistemological problem in the exclusive use of a geographically bounded European history to explain developments on the continent. He argues that what will be known as the Holocaust, unarguably a landmark for Euro-American self-understanding from at least the 1960s to our days, is interpreted erroneously when it is situated only within the bounds of Europe. While Eurocentric intellectuals interpret the annihilation of millions of human beings as an aberration to Europe, adopting a longer-term and wider view from the rest of the world (populations in colonies, settler states, as well as migrants in the metropolis) illustrates how this genocidal bloodshed is actually the norm. For over four hundred years Europeans developed and perfected philosophies and programs of mass murder and annihilation of entire populations. These patterns of domination date from well before National-Socialism/Fascism, but Eurocentric epistemologies limit the comprehension of this phenomenon.³

Some intellectual movements never abandoned the importance of advising such geopolitical caution. To mention just one current example, today as part of the “Bandung of the North” grassroots project, Algerian-French Houria Bouteldja, an intellectual heir of Aimé Césaire, explains that not only Afro-Caribbeans in the colonies but also the descendants of Muslim colonized people in the metropolis, recognize “Hitler” well beyond the history books or the programs of the new right-wing emergence. They find the national-socialist logic in the very same

³Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Dakar: Présence africaine, 1955), 30–31; Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. John Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review, Press, 2001), 35–36.

policies of the liberal imperialist republics that preceded the Holocaust, informed the genocide, and endured after it.⁴

The novel features of the current populist transformations are undeniable. But the relation between liberal inclusive values and genocidal programs, at least from a broader perspective that includes experiences of Afro-Caribbeans and Maghrebi-Muslims, is not necessarily new. It has in fact been the norm, not the exception. I am not proposing that we discard intra-European analysis because of its reductionist geopolitical perspective. We may recall that Edward Said frequently criticized Michel Foucault for the very same issue, but still identified as a Foucauldian.⁵ But it is necessary to interrogate these perspectives within a broader framework. I would like to ask what we are missing when we read the political sociology of the new “right-wing populisms” exclusively according to Euro-America’s internal developments. As some Eurocentric interpreters may have missed the boiling heat of the Cold War in other parts of the world or the historical genocidal programs that enabled the Holocaust, today we may also be missing systemic continuities. The fact that a particular connection (in this case the marriage between inclusive values and genocide programs) is not seen with clarity from within Europe and North America does not mean that it does not exist or does not affect the majority of the world outside the North Atlantic. Furthermore, what we consider to be “new” may be part of a longstanding tradition that unfolded elsewhere and ultimately influenced the “center.”

In order to put into practice this broader perspective, a relational methodology may be more helpful than a comparative strategy. As Ella Shohat and Robert Stam propose, we may need to

⁴ Houria Bouteldja, *Les blancs, les juifs et nous* (Paris: La Fabrique éditions, 2016), 56–59; Houria Bouteldja, *Whites, Jews and Us*, trans. Rachel Valinsky (Boston: MIT Press, 2017), 58–62.

⁵ See Edward Said “Michel Foucault, 1926-1984” in *After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges*, ed. Jonathan Arac (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 3–5.

explore how discourses on race have been translated beyond the strict geopolitical units which were defined by area studies and frequently reproduce hierarchical patterns of influence.⁶ This would allow us to trace how different political programs have traveled across continents and nation-states, and even used—as first happened during colonialism and imperialism, then the Holocaust, and finally the Cold War—spaces in the Southern/Eastern hemispheres to test and “perfect” extreme political programs with pernicious impunity. As such, what happens in the Global South/East may not be exclusively a consequence of developments in the Global North; rather, it may be well at the root of what will happen in Euro-America years, decades, or even centuries later. A relational method, then, enables a dynamic understanding of the navigation of ideas and political programs beyond the confines of area studies or unidirectional pathways. It also enables us to identify other locations as sites from which to interrogate the position of the Global North as the uncontaminated origin, theater, and motor of world history.

2. Coloniality, Religion, and the Liberal-Genocidal Marriage

I would like to explore in greater historical and conceptual depth two questions posed in the previous section. First, if we insist on the existing continuity of the relation between “right-wing” genocidal programs and liberal agendas for inclusion, how do we account for the beginnings and transformation of this discourse that fuses two seemingly opposed positions? And second, what theoretical tools do we have at our disposal to unveil and confront these discourses, especially as they pertain to two kinds of racisms that are central to the our current volume, Islamophobia and philo/antisemitism? Here, I will argue that some key features of current European discourse

⁶ See Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars Around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York: NYU Press, 2012), xiii–xv.

took shape outside of the continent. They were part of a program of global domination that was established in the sixteenth/seventeenth centuries and helped shape the current political stage. This is to say that the current situation was deeply influenced by coloniality. By “coloniality,” I mean neither colonialism, which generally denotes the power of one political system over another, nor neo-colonialism, which largely describes the multiple levels of dependency that follow actual political decolonization. Coloniality refers to the matrix created by the patterns of hierarchical domination that were developed during colonialism in colonial locations and are reproduced to structure and order global relations of power (knowledge, race, sexuality, labor) well after nominal political colonialism has ended.⁷

Since its inception, coloniality has woven an intimate relation between (what today we refer to as) “right-wing” genocidal practices and seemingly altruistic liberal discourses of inclusion. Here, I intend to discuss one influential trajectory that contributed to shaping the current context, but this is by no means the only one. In the seventeenth century, colonizing powers divided the world according to a tripartite system emerging from theological discourses. The first group was comprised of people with the “right religion,” namely European Christianity. Their mandate was to spread this truth across the world through the use of redemptive violence, which they posited as necessary to accumulate the epistemological and material resources required to bring this plan to fruition. The second group initially comprised Jews and Muslims and was described as having a “false religion.” These communities were portrayed as rival projects to the first group’s aims. They were seen as representatives of regressive traditions that were permanently plotting to destroy the advance of truth through open war or secret conspiracies that corrupted the body politic

⁷ Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 95–110.

from within. It was precisely the alleged conspiracy, part of their supposed inability to fully overcome their impurified ancestry or blood, that made even those who submitted and were formally accepted (and/or forced) into the first group, to remain permanent subjects of mistrust, persecution, and genocide.⁸ The third group included people who were described as having “no religion,” and whose humanity was thus questioned because religion became, in Catholic and then Protestant contexts, constitutive of selfhood. This group, initially identified with “Blacks” and “Indians,” was forced to achieve an ever-elusive humanity by recognizing European superiority and becoming pawns in its project. Yet, neither courageous opposition nor aspirational submission would result in spiritual redemption or political liberation. Those who opposed “the truth” would most often be exterminated in “just wars.” And those who submitted or were forced to submit would die under the duress of labor/sexual pawnship, or as a “collateral damage” of these just wars.⁹

It is precisely in the discourse about this last group that we see with clarity the connection between genocidal practices and liberal values. The altruistic dictum, “Convert—for your own good—or I will kill you,” highlights the monopoly of the path toward salvation (then, that path

⁸ For an erudite explanation of the role that conspiracies played in the construction of early modernity, see Francoise Soyer, *Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories in the Early Modern Iberian World: Narratives of Fear and Hatred* (Leiden: Brill, 2019). The existence of forgeries, from the Letter to Constantinople of 1489 (where allegedly Turkish Jews recommended European Jews under threat to convert and infiltrate Christianity to destroy it) to the Great Conspiracy in Peru and Mexico in the 17th century (where Jews were allegedly gathering slaves kidnapped in Africa and colonized Natives to expel Spaniards from the continent), show the relation between the construction of race and the creation of conspiracies from the very beginning of modernity.

⁹ These conceptions are largely based on the school of modernity/coloniality interpretation of Sylvia Winter’s contributions, especially in “1492: A New World View,” in *Race, Discourse and the Origins of the Americas*, ed. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1994), 5–57. The most insightful and influential exploration of the implications of this structure for the study of religion can be found in Nelson-Maldonado-Torres’s, “Religion, Conquest and Race in the Foundations of the Modern Colonial World,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83, no. 2 (2014): 636–65. A further exploration of this trajectory can be seen in the introduction to An Yountae and Eleanor Craig, eds., *Beyond Man: Race, Coloniality and the Philosophy of Religion* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 1–31. I explored this issue in Santiago Slabodsky “It is the Theology, Stupid! Coloniality, Anti-Blackness, and the Bounds of Humanity,” in *Anti-Blackness and Christian Ethics*, ed. Andrew Prevot and Vincent Lloyd (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2017), 19–40.

was Christianity, and in the next centuries civilization, development, and finally democracy). Not only were Europeans the exclusive owners of the “right path,” they were responsible for bringing others to salvation. Religious, cultural, economic, or political liberation—modern symbols of liberal values—would ultimately end in permanent control under the threat of genocide or in genocide itself. The particularity of modern racism is that it was constituted through the interaction between two forces: 1) Evolutionism (or forced inclusion) that operates when Europeans arrogate to themselves the ownership of the only “right path,” define this path as a condition for achieving humanity, and “altruistically” force everyone to follow it; and 2) dualism (or forced exclusion), which is at work when non-European populations, no matter how much they try to achieve the goal forced upon them, always remain suspect of not being Christian/civilized/developed/democratic enough and end their lives as terrorists, exhausted laborers, or as collateral victims in the advancement of the only truth. The altruism of modern liberation, then, is premised from a very early stage on a genocidal program.¹⁰

The religious dictum from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, “convert—for your own good—or I will kill you” lived on in subsequent translations: during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in a cultural key, “civilize—for your own good—or I will kill you,” and, in the (late-) nineteenth and twentieth, in an economic-social format, “develop—for your own good—or I will kill you.” Finally, the overtly political dimension was added in the (late) twentieth and twenty-first centuries: “democratize—for your own good—or I will kill you.”¹¹ These were programs of forced inclusion (which “altruistically” saves, civilizes, develops, and finally democratizes non-

¹⁰ Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,” *Nepantla: Views from the South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533–80.

¹¹ Ramon Grosfoguel, “The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic Racism/Sexism and the Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16th Century,” *Human Architecture* 11, no. 1 (2013): 73–90.

Europeans) but were predicated on complete control of bodies and knowledges under the threat of—or under actual—genocide. Many resisted and were killed in scores. Others submitted (or were forced to submit) and died generating profit, from early modern accumulation to neoliberal capital expansion, for the centers of power and knowledge. But the promise of “liberation” did not, as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno would posit within the North-Atlantic, dialectically “turn into barbarism.”¹² It was a genocidal project from the outset, premised on the partnership between liberal inclusiveness and right-wing exclusiveness on a genocidal spectrum of coloniality.

3. *Anti/Philo-Semitism & Islamophobia*

The marriage between liberal inclusive values and genocidal programs eventually, or some may say in parallel and relationally, included Jews and Muslims. It is important, therefore, to interrogate the silos that are constructed between the multiple paths to describe the non-Europeanness mentioned above. From academic circuits currently dominated by Protestant English-speaking perspectives, it is possible to argue that there is a transformation in the 16th century that divorced the modes of “the people with no religion” and “the people with the wrong religion.” After all, in the latter mode others would be objected to for holding the wrong “beliefs,” while in the former mode they would be objected to for who they are in their very “being” (or lack of) thus transforming a discriminatory theological difference into an ontological anthropology that will constitute one of the most influential, enduring, and cruel paths of modern racism. There is little doubt that this analytical distinction is important and has played an important role in the generation and reproduction of coloniality in some geographical spaces.¹³ This is why the first-

¹² Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Amsterdam: Fischer Verlag N.V., 1947), 15–18.

¹³ It is important to point out, for example, the role that some Jews played in the constitution of “western frontiers,” especially in Dutch and English colonization (and to a limited extent French colonization, until they were formally

generation of Latin-American decolonial theorists—Walter Dignolo, building on the idea of coloniality of Anibal Quijano, for example—make an excellent case when they point out how the distinction among racialized populations in the Occidental and Orientalist projects generate what Dignolo calls “colonial” and “imperial differences” respectfully.¹⁴ When decolonial theory was emerging as an epistemological scholarly option in the North Atlantic, this distinction was necessary to show the influential role Spanish and Portuguese discourses and practices in and about the Americas played in the global construction of race.

Now, over two decades later, when this contribution is undeniable and is deeply influential beyond Latin-American scholars, we can explore whether the sharp distinction may not limit our view. The path to see beyond analytical silos is already existent in the authors mentioned above. Anibal Quijano, already in his above-cited landmark text on coloniality, points out that Jews and Muslims suffered the “first experience of ethnic cleansing exercising the coloniality of power in

expelled) in the Atlantic. See, for example, Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering, eds., *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450-1800* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001). If one wants to see this as a precursor of the normative Jewish relation with the west post-World War II, this can be very helpful. See, for example, the work of Eli Rosenblatt, “Creole Exegesis: Jewish Theopolitics in Suriname, 1860-1960,” forthcoming in *Studia Rosenthaliana*. But if one intends to generalize the role of a small minority to explain the portrayal of all Jews before this time across colonial experiences, its anachronism runs the risk of reproducing antisemitic conspiracy stereotypes. Furthermore, it may naturalize a relatively recent narrative that constitutes a “Judeo-Christian tradition” that fails to account for the discourses about and status of the majority of Jews before 1945 and the diversity of colonial experiences, especially in the large part of the American continent under Spanish and Portuguese colonization where Jews were generally forbidden until the mid-19th century and even those who were able to overcome the purity of blood test, they were under the threat of an Inquisitorial society. If one were to analyze these largely Protestant spaces it is interesting to see how paths have crossed, even in these unequal spaces, and yielded populations that will hold, for example, creole Jewish and African-descendent identities. See for example, Aviva Ben Ur, *Jewish Autonomy in a Slave Society: Suriname in the Atlantic World, 1651-1825* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020). A further exploration of entanglements beyond the Atlantic especially in North and South Africa can be found in Ethan Katz, Lisa Moses Leff, and Maud Mandel, *Colonialism and the Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); Mitchel Joffe Hunter, “Dirty Subjects: Shaping Jewish Colonial Subjectivities in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa,” *Decolonial Horizons* 7, no. 1 (2021): 7–39; in terms of history see Heidi Grunebaum, “Between Nakba, Shoah, and Apartheid: Notes on a Film from the Interstices,” in *Memory and Genocide: On What Remains and the Possibility of Representation*, ed. Fazil Moradi, Ralph Buchenhorst, and Maria Six-Hohenbalken (London: Routledge, 2017): 122–37.

¹⁴ Walter Dignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 57–65.

the modern period.”¹⁵ Mignolo, years later, argued that the simultaneous conquests of the so-called south of Spain and the Americas led to genocides that while in some regards were “analytically distinctive” in practice, were “logically linked to the colonial matrix of power.”¹⁶ Current scholarship has followed these early insights that open the scope of analysis. Javier Garcia Fernandez complements Quijano when he explains the economic transformations that led to the colonality of power and labor imposed over former Muslim regions and inhabitants of what is today Spanish Andalusia.¹⁷ And Manuela Boatcă and Anca Parvulescu challenge the uniform description of Europe and complement Mignolo by describing the usefulness of “inter-imperiality” as a framework for recognizing the role that economic structures and different racializations in peripheral and semi-peripheral locations across the world play in an entangled global matrix.¹⁸

This is a productive path for a comprehensive understanding of the racism generated in what Enrique Dussel calls “the first modernity,” a historical period in which the leading powers were culturally permeated by Catholic theology even when retrieving Greek political philosophy and setting up the genocidal ground for altruistic humanist thought. This helps explain the fluidity of racial tropes that traveled with Europeans to distinct populations who then enacted persecution with relation to practices and not just beliefs.¹⁹ For this reason, I ask us to start interrogating whether considering religion only as a matter of faith—as main branches of Protestant theology might—instead of a cultural phenomenon that includes, but is not limited to, faith, may not open

¹⁵ Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,” 558.

¹⁶ Walter Mignolo, “Dispensable Lives and Bare Lives: Coloniality and the Hidden Political /Economy Agenda of Modernity,” *Human Architecture* 2, no. 7 (2009): 69–87, at 77–79.

¹⁷ Javier Garcia Fernandez, *Descolonizar Europa: Ensayos Para Pensar Históricamente desde el Sur* (Madrid: Editorial Burmaria, 2019), 47–96.

¹⁸ Manuela Boatcă and Anca Parvulescu, “Creolizing Transylvania: Notes on Coloniality and Inter-imperiality,” *History of the Present* 10, no. 1 (2020): 9–27. The authors repurpose Laura Doyle’s term and show the entanglements with decolonial frameworks. See also *Creolizing the Modern: Transylvania Across Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022).

¹⁹ Enrique Dussel, “World System and Transmodernity,” *Nepantla: Views from the South* 3, no. 2 (2002): 222–44.

up broader dynamic spaces of inquiry that blur geographical and identity boundaries. In other words, I am asking whether the more comprehensive Catholic understanding of religion that persecuted people because of their practices can explain why racialized conceptions—which transformed theological discrimination into anthropological ontological difference—traveled with such ease across spaces, identities, and categories. This does not downplay the importance of the ontological change in the modern construction of race. On the contrary, it demonstrates its full reach across the globe which led to different but entangled statuses of non-Europeans on both sides of the Atlantic. This may give us the potential to talk about beginnings in the plural, exploring the multidirectional traveling of ideas, and putting into question the existence of one and only one origin and development of modern racism.²⁰

Fortunately, some scholarship, especially in the last fifteen years, has started exploring key aspects of this dynamic relational possibility. Irene Silverblatt, an even earlier pioneer in her book

²⁰ This multidirectional and relational proposal, in addition, has the potential to enter into non-competitive dialogue with multiple trends that explore the relation between religion and race from different geopolitical, disciplinary, and epistemological perspectives. This includes, for example, four provocative trajectories in scholarship today (some that are already in nourishing dialogue). One is the exploration of European proto-racist and racist discourses and practices, the connection to coloniality of which still needs to be explored further. See, for example, Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Matthea Westerduin, “Questioning Religio-secular Temporalities: Medieval Formations of Nation, Europe and Race,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 54, no. 1–2 (2020): 136–49; and Jonathan Boyarin, *The Unconverted Self: Jews, Indians, and the Identity of Christian Europe* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2018). A second includes critical race studies outside the Americas that explore the “constellation” between religion and race which emphasizes the former while occluding the latter. See, for example, Anya Topolski, “The Dangerous Discourse of the ‘Judeo-Christian’ Myth: Masking the Race-Religion Constellation,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 54, no. 1–2 (2020): 71–90, which discusses the European context that includes the usually occluded antiziganism or anti-Romani discrimination; and Josias Tembo, “Race-Religion Constellation: An Argument for a Trans-Atlantic Interactive Relational Approach,” *Critical Research on Religion* 10, no. 2 (2022): 137–52. The latter extends the conversation to Africa. A third trend, which is interrelated with the latter article, is the exploration of features of pre-modern anti-Black racism in North Africa and the Middle East that were fully crystalized through the expansion of coloniality in the Americas. See Jesse Benjamin, “North Africa and the Origins of Epistemic Blackness” *UNESCO History of Africa V.X* (Berkeley, CA, forthcoming); and Iskander Abassi, “Anti-Blackness in the Muslim World: Beyond Apologetics and Orientalism,” *Maydan*, October 14, 2020, <https://themaydan.com/2020/10/anti-blackness-in-the-muslim-world-beyond-apologetics-and-orientalism/>. The final trend is the theological exploration of the construction of race in the US. See Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); and J. Kameron Carter, *Race: A Theological Account* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Modern Inquisitions, reads Inquisition documents against the grain to show how in one of the central locations of the Spanish Americas, the Viceroyalty of Peru, the persecution of allegedly unassimilated Jews and Natives was discursively interrelated because of the assumption that their presumptuous actions (that may include but are not reducible to the narrow and compartmentalized conception of religion as faith) were perverting the purity of the body politics in the colony. She explores, for example, not only the parallel persecution of alleged anti-Catholic actions of Jews and Natives but also how the blueprint of modern conspiracies (connecting secret Jewish hidden organization and Native/Black rebellious labor) already existed in the colonial world of the 17th century. Silverblatt, therefore, offers a ground-breaking framework that intersects with Shohat and Stam's proposal of relationality.²¹

Current scholarship in Sephardic studies has also taken these lessons. For example, Jonathan Schorsch eruditely explores the "horizontal relations" that emerge from reading with deep care the archives portraying the "hidden lives of Jews and Africans" in the Spanish Americas. He makes a helpful distinction between the Spanish/Portuguese Catholic and the Dutch/English Protestant experiences. The lives of members of the explored communities sometimes run parallel, sometimes historically or discursively intersect, and usually occupy conflicting spaces within "underground societies in the Iberian World." Schorsch explores "alliances" and crossovers, both "real" and "imaginary" between and within these groups without dismissing verticality and difference but by explaining that the latter is not the full account of a fluid context.²² Dalia Kandiyoti, in one of the most innovative works of the field, explains that, with all their differences, one of the key overlaps between Natives and Jews is that they were meant to "disappear" in a

²¹ Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 141–86.

²² Jonathan Schorsch, *Hidden Lives of Jews and Africans: Underground Societies in the Iberian World* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2019), 143–68.

unifying and allegedly pure Catholic body politics of both colonialism and coloniality. Since the disappearance of bodies and knowledges are intimately connected, these lessons did not make it to legitimized western archives. Instead of just lamenting the “missing archives,” she ingeniously draws from the field of literature, memory, and cultural studies (including Silverblatt, Shohat, and Michael Rothberg’s work, which is described below) and interrogates the extreme positivism and limited deconstructivism of Eurocentric historical analysis, proposing to make current narrative “archives” for the future instead of limiting ourselves to creating narratives from documents already legitimized by the system.²³

Other frameworks and innovative research allow further exploration of the transatlantic multidirectional traveling of ideas among populations that can be divided in positivistic ideal types, but are entangled in practices of systemic building. José María Perceval, for example, shows how the anthropological attempt to define some people as being “without a soul” (*desalmados*)—which was arguably first employed to interrogate the humanity and justify colonization and enslavement of Africans and Natives—was quickly transported back to Europe to describe (sometimes in a phantasmagoric manner conspiring against the purity of the body politics) Jews and Muslims in the metropolis.²⁴ In another example, Maria Elena Martinez explores the transformation of the conception of the “purity of blood” (*Limpieza de Sangre*), from, first, its aim to limit the assimilation of Jews and Muslims in the European metropolis; second, in its attempt to manage Natives and Africans in the colonies; and then, third, its re-deployment in both the metropolis and

²³ Dalia Kandiyoti, *The Converso’s Return: Conversion and Sephardi History in Contemporary Literature and Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2020), 6–10. Interestingly, one parallel effort was recently made across borders to find alternatives to the current oppression of Palestinians in a Jewish State by Gil Hochberg in *Becoming Palestine: Toward an Archival Imagination of the Future* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021). This shows the fruitfulness of this novel approach.

²⁴ Jose María Perceval, “Animalitos del señor: Aproximación a una teoría de las animalizaciones propias y del otro, sea enemigo o siervo, en la España imperial (1550-1650),” *Areas: Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 14 (1992): 173–84.

colonies to describe “New Christians.”²⁵ Martinez convincingly argues that the genealogical construction reproduced a binary conception of gender that Maria Lugones and Ann Stoler argue is one of the axes of the modern/colonial system emerging in the first modernity and in the imperialism and colonialism of the second modernity.²⁶

We can now return to Shohat and Stam to understand why the Portuguese saw “mosques” when arriving to the coast of Brazil. Given the “Orientalist unconscious” in the Occidental project we call the Americas we can still witness yearly rituals that reproduce Christian crusader triumphalism over Islam.²⁷ Gil Anidjar has already shown with his usual powerful insight that the western construction of Jews and Muslims has been necessarily entangled in the construction of a Christian European political theology (or better said Christianity as a political theology).²⁸ It is thus important to learn the lessons and question the strict practical distinction between what is classified as interior to Europe and what is classified as exterior. In other words, while the projects of Occidentalism and Orientalism have differences (between but also within) they are mutually constituted.

This is not to say that critics have always recognized one another, and that the system has maintained the same role for the same populations in every space and time. In the context of coloniality, there are evolutionist systemic incentives that populations ontologically racialized in

²⁵ The term “New Christians” refers to those Jews and Muslims who were forced to convert to Christianity by the Spanish and Portuguese empires. Maria Elena Martinez, *Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

²⁶ Maria Lugones “The Coloniality of Gender,” in *Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise 2*, dossier 2 (Spring 2008): 1–17; and Ann Stoler, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule.” See a superb proposal to integrate these distinctive trends for a decolonial understanding of revolutionary Feminism in Nefertiti Takla, “Feminism and Revolution” in *The Routledge Global History of Feminism*, ed. Bonnie Smith and Nova Robinson (New York and London: Routledge, 2022), 339–413.

²⁷ Ella Shohat, “Genealogies of Orientalism and Occidentalism: Sepharadi Jews, Muslims and the Americas,” *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 35, no. 1 (2016): 13–32.

²⁸ Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, The Arab: History of an Enemy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); and *Blood: A Critique of Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

the matrix receive in order to, consciously or unconsciously, reproduce the system. This makes the equalization between victimhood and purity a complicated endeavor.²⁹ This is why anti-Black and anti-Native racism surely exists in Jewish and Muslim populations. And it is historically undeniable that some of those populations have contributed to diverse forms of imperial projects including settler and extractivist colonialisms, becoming at the same time victims and agents. Concurrently, other racisms including Orientalism exist among many other racialized communities. This is especially true when the system traditionally blamed Jews and Muslims collectively for global theological, political and economic open wars or conspiracies in the attempt to occlude the west's own racist perpetration (from slave-trade to racial capitalism to religious fundamentalism). Or when racialized individuals in western or westernized contexts are systemically forced to join nationalistic enterprises spreading "salvation" through participation in state policies, ecclesiastical missions, or armed forces of western "democratic liberation". This creates a dynamic and diffuse structure of permanently changing relations not only between groups but also in-between them. This is not to say that these communities cannot develop a westernized project. But it is important to differentiate between individual participation in aspirational incentives the system develops to divide and conquer and structural ownership of state power.

These systemic mechanisms that make it difficult for critics to recognize one another have multiple consequences. For example, it not only occludes the existence of threads of coloniality that connect different populations, but also solidifies intra-communal hierarchies that invisibilize those who do not fit neatly in the normative communal identity (Black Jews as a very clear but not

²⁹ I owe the interrogation of the purity of victimhood to discussions with Yonathan Listick. See his article "Barbaric Jewishness: Resistance to anti-Semitism and Judeo-Christianity," *Decolonial Horizons* 8, no. 1 (2023): forthcoming

sole example).³⁰ The socially committed critics who recognize the relations between these different forms of discrimination, some of them belonging to these communities, do not think all modern racisms are equal or that other racialized populations have not been implicated in discriminations in particular contexts. Shohat and Stam explain that the relation may include but goes beyond the recently heavily criticized “metaphoric analogy” and understand that the experiences of these multiple communities have been interwoven from the beginning and thus should be put in “productive relationality,” a methodological opening that enables us to study entanglements, overlappings, manipulations, instrumentalizations, continuities, implications, spatial/temporal reclassifications, and border/hybrid forms beyond normativity and monopolies of representation.³¹

If the diverse models of non-Europeanness have been connected since the outset of modernity, the altruism of genocidal projects are also connected, and this can be seen with particular clarity in the second modernity. This period during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw liberal programs engaged with the “Jewish Question.” Proponents of these programs argued that European Jews should be “uplifted” from their “uncivilized nature” in the metropolis.

³⁰ Lewis Gordon, “Rarely Kosher: Studying Jews of Color in North America” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 1 (2016): 105–116; and Walter Isaac, “Locating Afro-American Judaism: A Critique of White Normativity,” in *A Companion to African-American Studies*, ed. Lewis Gordon and Jane Gordon (New York: Blackwell, 2006), 512–42.

³¹ Stam and Shohat, *Race in Translation*, 154. Here it is also important to notice the brilliant critique made by Sarah Phillips Casteel about the dangers of the generalization of the US case. Casteel points out that interrelations of, for example, “Jewish and Black relations” are many times interpreted according to the particular American experience “inflected by the persistent political tensions between African Americans and Jewish Americans.” By re-centering the discussion in other spaces such as the Caribbean, the authors she explores do not dismiss the power dynamics and implications developed for five centuries, but they show how communities have interwoven their experiences to understand what Paul Gilroy calls “knotted intersection of history,” a clear example of multidirectional memories (Michael Rothberg’s important framework is referenced in the next footnote). See Sarah Phillips-Casteel, *Calypso Jews: Jewishness in the Caribbean Literary Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 5–7. Building on Casteel I would argue that many times the arguments about the clarity of Jewish participation in the colony is limited to the study of a late and reduced space occupied by Dutch, English, and to some extent French colonies (before they were expelled) since Jews (and Muslims) were forbidden in the great majority of the territories of the Americas occupied by Spaniards and Portuguese and those who were able to circumvent the “purity of blood” laws lived under the threat (or actual repression) of the Inquisition independently of the service they provided to the colonial state. As an example, see Ronnie Perelis, *Blood and Faith: Family and Identity in the Early Modern Sephardic Atlantic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016).

This altruistic program advocated a double control over Jews, first because of their age-old “rebellious” nature and now because of the new requirements for “achieving modern humanity.” Eurocentric readings may have problems in comprehending how “The Final Solution” was seeded during a time when Jews had allegedly achieved the most successful integration in Western Europe. But looking at the Holocaust through the discourses of coloniality and the dictum “civilize—for your own good—or I will kill you” we realize the genocide was not an interruption of a process. It was, on the contrary, one of continuation. The point is that even though every historical event has its particularities, this does not negate the existence of connections. This is why scholars such as Jürgen Zimmerer and the above-mentioned Rothberg continue to think through a relational integration. Zimmerer explores the connection of Holocaust history in Central and Eastern Europe with German genocides in Africa, and Rothberg challenges competitive models of memory by showing how historically the Holocaust was successfully mobilized beyond its insularity in Caribbean history and for Algerian struggles.³²

We saw previously that this connection between coloniality and Jewish persecution existed since at least the Great Conspiracies of Peru and Mexico of early modernity. Intra-European hermetic readings of the Holocaust, however, limit this exploration. One of the tragic consequences is suffered by, for example, Palestinians and non-European Jews. The Jewish project of statehood known as political Zionism shortsightedly claims that the problem of modern antisemitism is a Jewish exceptional “abnormality.” And as consequence, instead of objecting to the tropes of coloniality that deeply influenced antisemitic development, it reproduces them. The State of Israel defines itself as “culturally civilized,” “technologically/ economically developed,”

³² For historical studies see Jürgen Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz?: Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust* (Münster and Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011); for memory studies see Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memories: Remembering the Holocaust in an Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

and “politically democratic” in contrast to the forcibly excluded Palestinians and the forcefully included Arab/African-Jews. This ultimately emphasizes its ideology as “an outpost of civilization against barbarism.”³³ It remains to be seen whether, under future re-articulations of coloniality, this intention to join the ranks of western nations will be convincing in times of philo- and antisemitism in Europe and Neo-Nazis shouting “Jews will not replace us” in the U.S. Or, departing from the analysis of Atalia Omer and Alana Lentin as to how to decolonize our understanding of antisemitism, we need further critical grassroots and intellectual work to stop the re-instrumentalization of racial hatred toward Jews when it is employed to support a western agenda, a staple of post-Holocaust geopolitics.³⁴

The “altruistic” dynamics of coloniality also created a deep rupture between Arab/Berber-Jews and Arab/Berber-Muslims. Before the nineteenth century, Jews had found refuge from Christian persecution in Muslim-ruled lands. Europeans connected Jews rhetorically with Muslims through Orientalism. But the European colonial invasion of the Maghreb, starting in late 1820s and lasting formally until the 1960s, was premised on “altruistically” saving not only Christians, but also Jews from the “tyranny” of Muslim rule. This project of “liberation” was quickly supported and backed by the European Jewish communities, who saw a double opportunity to both demonstrate their allegiance to “civilized” Europe and to “develop” non-European Jews. This was the beginning of a long nightmare for Arab/Berber/non-European Jews. Altruistic European coloniality divorced them from their millenary local networks, right-wing settlers’ coloniality permanently objected and limited their access, Nazi coloniality singled them out for actual

³³ Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat* (Berlin: Jüdische Verlag, 1920), 24; Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, trans. Jacob Alkow (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 86. I explore the role of western political Zionism in the integration of Jewish normativity to a Western project in Santiago Slabodsky, *Decolonial Judaism: Triumphal Failures of Barbaric Thinking* (New York: Palgrave, 2015).

³⁴ Atalia Omer, *Days of Awe: Re-Imagining Jewishness in Solidarity with Palestinians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 212–45; and Alana Lentin, *Why Race Still Matters* (Cambridge: Polity, 2020), 131–71.

genocide, and ultimately Zionist coloniality uprooted them from their lands and turned them into second-class citizens that needed to be “developed” and “civilized” to achieve humanity—embodied now by Israeli Euro-Judaism. The marriage of coloniality left Jews, the “eternal candidate for assimilation” for Tunisian Jew Albert Memmi, in an “impossible condition” that ultimately resulted in the exodus of thousands of hundreds of Jews from North Africa (and with some differences from the Middle East).³⁵

Muslims have not been exempt from this rhetoric either. Since the 1990s until today, most of the invasions of the MENA region have been justified with the most recent articulation of the dictum of coloniality, “democratize—for your own good—or I will kill you.” The narratives put forward about Muhammad Gaddafi in Libya, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, or the former Mujahideen in Afghanistan as regressive tyrants who needed to be defeated for the well-being of not only the security of “the West” but also of their own populations who “ought” to have a western-style of democracy, became more of a normative rather than an exceptional portrayal. This is not to say that their ruling cannot and should not be impugned from within. But the historical support of dictatorships and extremisms by the west, especially but not limited to the Cold War , shows its hypocrisy and the failure to secure durable western democracies and the reproduction of the racist structure of dualism.³⁶ In these incursions, millions have been persecuted as terrorists or murdered as “collateral damage” of a “just war.”

In Europe itself, liberal discourses have tolerated the presence of Muslims on the condition that they accept permanent state surveillance to secure their civilized/democratic status. Scholars

³⁵ See Albert Memmi, *Portrait d' un Juif* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), 227–40; Albert Memmi *The Portrait of a Jew*, trans. Judy Hyun (New York: The Orion Press, 1962), 263–67.

³⁶ The support for dictatorial regimes throughout the world and in North-Africa and the Middle East in particular is well-known. Today the most notorious case is Saudi Arabia. Yet, I point out especially the Cold War since this was an international strategy that can connect different experiences throughout the “tricontinental” Global South.

of modern Islamophobia in Europe and the US, such as Nadia Fadil (a contributor to this volume), Farid Hafez, and Nazia Kazi have pointed out the configuration of programs of de-radicalization and surveillance.³⁷ Salman Sayyid, another contributor to this volume, has been one of the pioneers presenting the role that Islamophobia plays as one of the “central vectors” of European self-constitution and the permanent interrogation of the possibility of assimilation as a way to limit the emergence of “a Muslim political consciousness.”³⁸ As happened with Jews (again, the situations do not need be to be “the same” in order to be relational and inform each other) over a century ago, right-wing populism today seems to be encouraging a “Final Solution” (transfer or genocide) for the “uncivil/terrorist” Muslim placed under the surveillance of the liberal state. This time, they argue that they support diversity, even the “liberation” of Muslim sexual differences, to create epistemological blackmail. But a longer history of coloniality determines the current situation. From the beginning of modernity, Muslims (among others) were kidnapped in Africa, stripped of their religion, and reduced to the linked identity of Blackness and slavery. Western luminaries such as G. W. F. Hegel justified this as the only path for them to achieve their humanity.³⁹ And even before the enlightenment, *Moriscos* that attempted to save their lives through conversion during times of the Spanish Inquisition were still expelled in the early seventeenth century, in a historical record that some Christian populisms may reclaim as a project. The constant among these versions of coloniality, from Iberian to Euro-American, is the marriage between liberal discourses of forced

³⁷ See, for example, Nadia Fadil et al., eds., *Radicalization in Belgium and the Netherlands: Critical Perspectives on Violence and Security* (London: IB Tauris, 2019); Naved Bakali and Farid Hafez, eds., *The Rise of Islamophobia in the War on Terror: Coloniality, Race and Islam* (Manchester: Manchester University Press and Islam, 2022); and Nazia Kazi, *Islamophobia, Race and Global Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).

³⁸ Salman Sayyid, “Topographies of Hate: Islamophobia in Cyberia,” *Journal of Cyberspace Studies* 2, no. 1 (2018): 55–73. See a further inquiry in *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism* (London: Zed Book, 1997).

³⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Berlin: Dunker and Humboldt, 1804), 116; G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. Hugh Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975), 176.

inclusion and right-wing genocidal discourses. These examples show how Islamophobia, antisemitism, and racism did not emerge from intra-European developments alone. This is why a hermetic comparative reading is misleading in attempting to understand the threats that millions suffer from today.

4. Conclusion: Opening Challenges

The objective of this piece has been to explore old news. In other words, the central point has been to analyze systemic continuities veiled by the use of narrow epistemological lenses that overlook the historic role coloniality plays in wedding liberal discourses to “right-wing” genocidal populisms. In conclusion, I would like to interrogate the challenges that this argument poses to our geopolitical frameworks, our methodologies, and the role of discursive altruism.

The first challenge questions the consequences of analyzing the sociology of European thought (in this case “right-wing genocidal populisms”) only through the lens of intra-European history. The proposal of Brubaker is perhaps one of the most insightful and sophisticated examples of this epistemology that while helpful in some regards, remains hermetic in its scope. Here, I want to recognize that studies like Brubaker’s have clearly identified a key element of the new populist movements, but ask: What is being occluded and even erased by adopting a narrow geopolitical conception of the modern world? As a possible answer, I propose that we take seriously Césaire’s words of caution. As we may remember, he mentioned that (what will be known as) the 20th-century European phenomenon of antonomasia, the Holocaust, is misread when analyzed only according to European history. Instead, he ponders how many of the objectives, techniques, and programs that populations suffered from in Europe were direct consequences of centuries of developments in the colonies. If we apply Césaire’s words of caution to other Euro-American

phenomena such as “right-wing populisms,” we are able to see that their marriage to liberal ideas is far from new. On the contrary, it is a refashioning of old programs that have been practiced worldwide. As such, the geopolitical relocation of seemingly European phenomena (from the Holocaust to the liberal-populist marriage) serves to question instead of re-affirm the way our disciplines treat Euro-America as the pure origin, center, and theater of world history. Above I responded to a challenge, probing how our disciplines can learn from Afro-Caribbean (and as an extension Muslim-Magrhebi in the reflections of Bouteldja) thought so that we can confront our misreading of the present.

Second, I would like to challenge the use of comparative analysis as our primary methodology. Here instead of employing the voices of Afro-Caribbean thought, I would like to recall a proposal emerging from an Arab Jewish scholar. For the past decades, Iraqi Shohat (at times with Stam) has been delving into the transmission of conceptions of racism, Islamophobia, and anti- and philosemitism in the intersectional “rainbow Atlantic.” Instead of setting a disenfranchised community to compete for primacy of victimhood, Shohat has demonstrated the usefulness of analyzing the transmission of racial categories, discourses, and techniques throughout the Atlantic. Her work questions the isolation of comparative area studies that remains one of the most enduring legacies of Cold War analysis in the U.S. and most of westernized academia. If we were to analyze the emergence of right-wing populisms in a relational framework instead of a comparative one by exploring how the conceptions are translated and/or travel beyond geopolitically constructed borders, we might realize that the current phenomena may be more intertwined than comparative analysis permits us to see. Consequently, our analysis as well as our political confrontation with the phenomena will require a broader coalition than what is imagined by traditional post-war social scientific methodology. Shohat’s proposal pushes us beyond

hermetic understandings of European politics, like Brubaker's, because it forces us to think about the multidirectional roles of "traveling" ideas. While other insightful and erudite scholars such as Bryan Cheyette have already shown us the usefulness of exploring the traveling of concepts of governmentality that emerged from Europe and then traveled to the rest of the world,⁴⁰ for example the segregation of communities, we can investigate the models, techniques, and ideologies that emerged in the context of the colony and have traveled in time and space even to the very centers of power and knowledge, i.e. Europe and the US. This is why exploring the above-mentioned contributions of Silverblatt, Perceval, Schorsh, Kandiyoti, and Martinez may break the hermeticism of European politics.

Finally, I would like us to pay special attention to the longstanding articulations of coloniality. When analyzing Islamophobia and the philo- and antisemitism of right-wing populisms, the emphasis is often placed on the exclusionary discourses and tactics of the new movements. In other words, the identitarian constructions seem to delineate clear borders of what is considered to constitute the community and what is seen as a threat when these borders are imagined. Yet I would like to challenge liberal binary conceptions that favor inclusion as the solution to confronting genocidal practices, and in doing so exclude an analysis of global neo-colonialism from the equation. Drawing from the Latin American school of modernity/coloniality, and from Anibal Quijano in particular, I challenge us to explore the relationship between the altruism of forced inclusion and the virulence of forced exclusion as partners in the construction of hierarchies of populations. Altruistic projects are not a solution to exclusion but are many times the precursor to an imagined social order that will be employed simultaneously or a posteriori by so-called "right-wing populisms" to justify their superiority. As such, global neoliberalism is not

⁴⁰ Bryan Cheyette, *The Ghetto: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

the solution but rather the partner to what we have defined above as the relationship between evolutionism and dualism. So pondering the role that “altruistic” projects of forced inclusion play in shaping the current political stage is as necessary as confronting exclusion.

Through this essay, I am inviting the fields of political sociology and religious studies to challenge the political frameworks, methodologies, and the role of global discourses of altruism that obscure the geopolitics of the liberal-“right-wing” genocidal marriage.⁴¹ By re-evaluating the role of Eurocentric epistemologies, comparative methodologies, and liberal frameworks, we can shed light on a more accurate reading of the current political stage and start a new conversation. Guided by Afro-Caribbean, Arab-Jewish, and Latinx-American thought, we can explore the forces behind an analytical misreading and offer an intellectual proposal that actively confronts the common genocidal forces behind not only right-wing populisms, but also liberal colonial altruism.

⁴¹ Given the scope of this essay I was not able to fully explore the different strategies in order to connect these two fields. But the suggestion of “critical caretaking” of Atalia Omer could provide the necessary orientation and tools to achieve this goal. See Omer, “Can a Critic Be a Caretaker too? Religion, Conflict and Social Transformation,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79, no. 2 (2011): 459–96; and *Days of Awe: Re-Imagining Jewishness in Solidarity with Palestinians*, 122–42.