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Good Jew, bad Jew ... good Muslim, bad Muslim: “managing” Europe’s others

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ABSTRACT

In this contribution, I examine the Catholic political practice of “intercessions” (*shtadlanut*) as a means to control and manage relations between state power and Jewish communities by means of a privileged elite. While governmental techniques or mechanisms of minority management are only part of a broader question of majority–minority power relations, the theological-political roots of such “management” strategies are often overlooked because the problem is assumed to be secular. In my analysis of *shtadlanut*, I show how Jewish communities were internally divided between “good” and “bad”, “managed” by the ruling powers, and homogenized. It is precisely this type of enforced collaboration with power, in combination with reduced agency and depoliticization, that I claim goes beyond the “Jewish Question”. Rather, we must turn our gaze on Europe and consider how, and why, it continues to make ‘others’ into problems. By doing so, we can challenge the frame of the contemporary “Muslim Question”.

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Framed in terms of “managing transnational Islam”, much of the current European research on the “Muslim Question” espouses a comparative approach (Haddad and Golson 2007; Laurence 2006; Loobuyck, Debeer, and Meier 2013; Meer 2012; Norton 2013; Rane and Ewart 2012). This comparative approach emphasizes the integration of Muslims and the tolerance of the majority. This frame scrutinizes the “minority” rather than the system itself as well as promoting a simplistic binary between “us” and “them”. In this frame, it is the government and its state apparatus that decides who is Muslim, what it means to integrate, and which Muslims can/have *successfully* integrated. This “top-down” application of power has a significant impact on

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the lives of Muslims. As a result, it is of the utmost importance to understand how the state, whether national or trans-national, “manages” minorities.

With the exception of the Iberian Peninsula, Western Europe did not have a substantial Muslim population until after 1945. This fact seemingly justifies the limited temporal scope of much of the current literature. However, this temporal restriction limits the frame of the political analysis to the modern “secular” nation-state. Jonathan Laurence’s comparative research on the character of State–Islam relations in six European countries ranges from 1974 to 2004. He is surprised by his own findings that there is such *similarity* with regard to institutional practices given such *distinct* state–church regimes in Europe (2006, 261). The question Laurence – among others – does not explore is whether these *similarities* might have a pre-modern (or pre-secular) *theological* origin. It is my contention that the limited post-1945 focus that accentuates the different national identities of these European states obscures the previously hegemonic theological horizon of Christianity in Europe. It is this assumption I explore by examining the “European Question” in terms of *temporality* and *political-theology*. Political theology analyses the secularized, previously Christian, theological concepts that structure contemporary politics (e.g. sovereignty) (Schmitt 2010). Its aim is to examine and expose how theological forms and models of power continue to operate, often inconspicuously, in politics today. This article attempts to recover the genealogy of one aspect of political theology in contemporary Europe, namely the origins and regulation of the Muslim council as a political form. I use the term genealogy rather than history to identify the intellectual roots of a certain political tradition which does not presuppose a direct line of continuity between European history and present. My aim is to recover the kernel of a European political structure, in which theology played a critical part. Specifically, it is my contention that Europe’s “minority management system” is by no means new but has its roots in the politico-theological framework of intercessions instituted by the Catholic Church.

The crux of this paper is a genealogically structured political account and analysis of this “minority management” framework, an important component of the historic and contemporary state surveillance apparatus. As my reason for returning to the past is to consider what structural traces remain present today with regard to Europe’s “new” “Semitic” others, this paper focuses on the similarities – a focus which of course comes at the cost of studying differences. While some of these differences will be mentioned in the conclusion, the purpose of this paper is not to discount the substantial differences between Europe’s “others”, but to recover some critical commonalities that have been missed in the literature. The inclusion of Islamic groups in European political institutions, in particular those that communicate with governmental institutions, is arranged in a manner analogous to the earlier “inclusion” of other “religious” minorities. It is my contention that this method is similar to that

previously used to manage the Jewish minority (and to a lesser extent to that of other “minority” religions). Quite problematically, the “white-washed” history of the inclusion of Jews in Europe, as evidenced by the problematic reference to Europe’s “Judeo-Christian” tradition (Topolski 2016), is used to silence Muslims who voice their dissent regarding the state’s “management of Islam”. No mention is made of the role the Shoah, and specifically Europe’s responsibility or shame, had in this “integration” process. By turning the gaze towards Europe, I am not suggesting that neither Jews nor Muslims do not have agency in this process – but rather to analyse how this agency is often reduced by the state. My aim is to highlight Europe’s often hidden responsibility and role in the structural process of othering. Nonetheless, both groups do continue to play an important role, whether by challenging this process or by internalizing it, and, as such both are *partially* responsible for the structural relations between the state and their respective groups.

In this contribution, I turn my gaze to “the European Question” (Anidjar 2012) by investigating one particular “minority management” practice. This intercessory practice, known in Yiddish as *shtadlanut*, was imposed upon Jewish communities in Europe in order to govern them since the Middle Ages (taking different forms over time). This management practice, and its informal institutionalization in Europe, is conceptually well charted, was not only part of Europe’s internal legacy as many Jewish minority management practices were imposed across the globe by means of colonialism (Mufti 2007). By describing the theological structure of intercessions that led to the practice of *shtadlanut*, I analyse how Jewish communities were “accommodated”, internally divided between “good” and “bad” Jews, and “managed” or institutionalized by the ruling powers. While this political-theological structure is no longer overtly in place, it is my contention that the structural mechanism of exclusion it produced reappears in an adapted form today in the form of top-down managed Muslim councils in many European nation-states. After providing an account of this practice, I focus on the power dynamics of this practice (noting of course that it was by no means homogeneous). In structural terms, *shtadlanut* is a process that forces a heterogeneous population into a controlled vertical homogenized power structure thereby encouraging internal conflict. An adaptation of the Roman *divide et impera*, this political-theological structure depoliticizes and fragments marginalized groups, prevents resistance and struggle, and regulates subjectivity by limiting agency. By way of conclusion, I return to the context of Europe today to consider how the traces of this structure and practice function in relation to Europe’s “Muslim Question”.

An account of *shtadlanut*

Arendt’s account of *shtadlanut* arises in the context of her analysis of antisemitism. As such, it is essential to address her highly controversial claim that

antisemitism's "source must be found in certain aspects of Jewish history and specifically Jewish functions during the last centuries" (1973, 9). Without denying the reality of centuries of persecution, oppression, and exclusion of Jews, Arendt refuses to deny Jewish agency; Jews, albeit with reduced options and agency, were still actors – they had the possibility of making choices about how to act/react. It is for this reason that she criticizes scapegoat theories, which deny Jews, as individuals and as a collective, possessing political agency as well as the view that antisemitism is "natural". This highly controversial position, often inaccurately described as "blaming the victims", is rooted in her concept of the political, which is based on the importance of relationality and shared responsibility for the world (Topolski 2015). Arendt is not blaming Jews. The language of blame fails to understand her political concern which is to understand and demonstrate how inter-related, and as such, inter-responsible we *all* are for politics. To deny that Jews played a role would be, in her view, to further deny their agency and humanity and, as such, further feed antisemitism.

Paradoxically, what enabled these asymmetrical power relations (e.g. anti-semitism, imperialism, totalitarianism) – the need for human interaction – also inspires people to act politically. Her claim is that by way of violence and oppression, antisemitism and colonialism create bonds between people that bring order to a world all too often experienced as chaotic and meaningless. While the exploiter may set the stage, and limit the possibilities of the exploited, the exploited nonetheless has a "forced" choice to internalize this role, or refuse it.

Only wealth without power or aloofness without a policy are felt to be parasitic, useless, revolting, because such conditions cut all the threads which tie men together. Wealth which does not exploit lacks even the relationship which exists between exploiter and exploited. (Arendt 1973, 5)

That Jews were perceived as parasitic because they seemed to avoid interacting with broader society brings us to her analysis of *shtadlanut*. By turning to historical and theological sources, we can examine how this (miss)perception arose.

From Roman times onwards, with very few exceptions, Jewish communities under Christian rule viewed changes in the dominant society with uncertainty and fear (Nirenberg 2013). For the vast majority of Jews, who had little interactions with those outside of their community, political change had the potential to lead to violence, increased poverty, forced relocations, and fatalities. Yet this political realm, which many Jews equated with persecution rather than emancipation, could not be completely avoided, as it was necessary to have input with regard to affairs that would affect their own community. The theological structure that was politically imported to permit such communication was that of intercessions. According to Catholic practice,

to intercede is to go or come between parties, to plead before one of them on behalf of the other ... in ecclesiastical usage [intercessions] are taken in the sense of the intervention primarily of Christ, and secondly of the Blessed Virgin and the angels and saints, on behalf of men.¹

This theological structure of intercessions was the model used to permit select Jewish men, as well as other non-Christians, to communicate with those who ruled over them. After (most often) having paid a stipulated financial sum, a Jew – acting as spokesman for his community – was permitted to approach the authorities, to prostrate himself (as Christians did before the altar in their personal intercessions), and beg (pray for Christians) for them to intercede in a particular affair of importance to the Jewish community.

An interesting political question, explored at length by Arendt in her essay “Privileged Jews”, is which Jews could intercede and on whose behalf – the question of representation, a question that is as topical today. Not surprisingly, most Jews shied away from such direct contact with authority (Guesnet 2007, 232). For both pragmatic and existential reasons that the vast majority of Jews were more than happy not to have to take up this intercessory role. While this clearly undermined their own ability to develop political agency or horizontal solidarity, it seemed a safer option for those whose lives were already defined by precarity. Nonetheless, it was important for some Jews to intercede, to speak in the name of the larger community, as this was the only means permitted by the authority. The *shtadlan*, a member of the elite, was selected by the Jewish community to maintain contact with the authority, as a means to exert influence from below (without actually engaging in political action) in a practice known as *shtadlanut* (השתדלות/שתדלנות). Lobbying, as epitomized by organizations such as AIPAC, is the secular translation of this term.

As historian François Guesnet has observed, forms of *shtadlanut* existed since the beginnings of the Diaspora. And for centuries, the story of Esther, re-enacted each year on the festival of Purim, “served as a master narrative to those acting on behalf of a Jewish community in a Gentile environment” (2005, 355). In the story, Mordechai, Esther’s uncle, explicitly and repeatedly tells her not to reveal that she is Jewish, and to act as a parvenu (to assimilate at all costs), so that she can prevent harm to the Jewish community by literally prostituting herself (the latter of course opens a whole string of gender issues we must set aside here) (Esther 2:10). Esther thus consciously denies her Jewish identity, avoiding the public realm and choosing rather to lobby in the private realm, in order to be able to *intercede* on behalf of her people. The practice of *shtadlanut* was a common one from the Middle Ages until modernity when there were even “professional” *shtadlans* who interceded on behalf of several different Jewish communities. With roots laid down in feudal times, when Jews often governed their own internal affairs but had to comply with whatever rules and demands imposed by the non-Jewish

authorities, the *shtadlan* had an important role in terms of communication. The practice of *shtadlanut* called for intercessions with regard to taxation, accusations of blood libel, and other accusations of religious transgressions – problems that affected the entire Jewish community (Guesnet 2005, 2007).

Whereas in medieval times the Jews, with the approval of the external authorities, often appointed the *shtadlan*, this changed drastically by the seventeenth century. From this time onwards, the *shtadlan* was designated by the authority, most often without consultation from the Jewish community he “represented”. This change is a fundamental one with regard to the governance practice of minorities. By the time of absolute monarch, the choice of *shtadlan* was made not in the best interests of his community but based on criteria determined by the authorities such as his linguistic skills, social adeptness, politics (or lack thereof), and his economic assets. The main reason for the latter was that the *shtadlan*, and his international network, were required to raise funds for the sovereign. This change further added to the precarity of the Jewish community, for if the *shtadlan* failed to keep the favour of the monarch, the Jewish communities were often denied all rights and/or residency.

The shift to a *shtadlan* chosen by the state also affected how the *shtadlan* was perceived by the Jewish community he “represented”. By the eighteenth century, the prominent or “court Jew” served the prince or lord in exchange for privileges and special protection. Yet these privileges/protection slowly became more and more limited to individuals (most often extending to immediate family), which led to the *shtadlan* being viewed by the wider Jewish community as “a tool of the government” who only sporadically acted in their best interest. This led to a significant division within the Jewish community between on the one hand, the educated “enlightened” and economically independent Jews (who were often permitted to reside within the walled city centres), and the majority of Jews who were financially limited and who lived outside the city proper. Over time, *shtadlans* were assigned symbolic roles as dignitaries and functionaries in legislative or representative bodies and thus became more influential in the non-Jewish community than among Jews. In the end, two Jewish communities existed that slowly grew apart from each other and failed to see themselves as politically connected.

There were different historical forms of *shtadlanut* in Europe, from the medieval period to modern times, each of which produced different types of *shtadlans* (or privileged Jews). These were the “court Jews”, “the protected/useful Jews”, the *Schutzjude*, the Rothchild family, etc., all of whom (to different degrees) developed close relations with the ruling authorities. Most of these relations were also economic in nature. By the end of the eighteenth century, certain wealthy Jews were able to find a place for themselves as the first financiers of the new states. This lasted until the new nation-states

were so large that no single *shtadlan* could finance it, which led to the first trans-national financiers. Arendt's understanding of the specifics of these developments is too simplistic, as Guesnet's analysis makes clear (2005). Nonetheless, her insights into the overall mechanism of intercession are compelling. One example she highlights was the Rothschild families, whom she claims allied themselves with authority *as such*, never limiting their relations to a particular government or political position. They were willing to switch allegiances overnight, expressed by means of financial support, as power shifted (Arendt 1973, 25). While this certainly offered certain Jews, whose families had prominent *shtadlans* as members, state protection and special privileges, this only applied to a limited number of highly visible Jews who symbolically became the "financial arm" of the sovereign, but who were often seen as disloyal to the state by nationalists, as they were willing to work across national lines. Anna Zuk analyses this phenomenon in the eighteenth-century Poland in terms of the Jews being misperceived, and stigmatized, as "a mobile class" based on the economic-based mobility of a few select Jews (Zuk 1993).

By the end of the long nineteenth century, this relationship slowly began to crumble as imperialism offered a new source of capital. This turn beyond the borders of Europe, which occurred in combination with the decline of the Church and thus its prohibition on money-lending, led many Christians to recognize the riches that colonial adventures offered and to take over the Jewish financial niche. It was only when this particular group of wealthy and highly educated Jews were no longer of instrumental use to the state that they realized their own lack of power. This powerlessness was further amplified by the fact that the vast majority of Jews did not know how to act politically (with notable exceptions such as the Yiddish socialist Bund and certain Zionist groups), as centuries of *shtadlanut* had led them naively to believe that this type of intercession was the sum of all politics. Furthermore, the perception in non-Jewish society that most Jews failed to express a political position led to the association of all Jews (even though only certain privileged Jews were publically known) with the nation-state, an association which was at the basis of modern antisemitism (approximately 1870s). This is one aspect of the depoliticizing aspect of the practice of *shtadlanut*, a devious form of minority management.

The other aspect of Arendt's thesis is the internalization of this powerlessness, a form of normalization, which leads subjects to deny their political agency, as subjects of power rather than helpless objects at the mercy of the authorities. She develops the distinction between political agency and powerlessness in terms of conscious pariahs and social parvenus (Arendt 1968, 1973, 1978). The pariah is a "bold spirit who tried to make the emancipation of Jews *as Jews* to the ranks of humanity, rather than a permit to ape the gentiles or an opportunity to play the parvenu" (Arendt 1978, 68). The

latter are those who have accepted the role forced upon them by the model of *shtadlanut*, during “modern Jewish history, having started with court Jews and continuing with Jewish millionaires and philanthropists” (Arendt 1978, 65). By contrast, the conscious pariah is the minority of Jews who refused to assimilate, allowing themselves to become objects to be controlled by the ruling powers, and who chose the only alternative which was exile – both from their own people and from the authorities.

Writing both as a phenomenologist and based on personal experience, the majority of Jews during the *interbellum* period acted as parvenus and accepted their powerlessness (Arendt 1973, 20–25). The fate of the Jews, which they accepted until it was too late to fight, assisted by rampant antisemitic political rhetoric (left and right), was sealed by the growing discontent with the state – across Europe – developing in the late nineteenth century, which slowly began to erode at nationalism, to which the Jews were tied by the masses, a link fully exploited by the Nazis. This claim is further evidence that while “Arendt never lost sight of the disabling conditions imposed by the history of anti-Semitism that made it impossible for Jews to participate as *human beings* in the political life of modern Europe” (Spanos 2012, 149), she refused to treat Jews and Jewish communities as objects who were not agents of their own (tragic) stories. What Arendt describes in terms of *shtadlanut* should, therefore, be understood as a theologically inspired political and structural mechanism of depoliticization and subjugation that seeks to deny agency and the possibility of resistance to the other. While she limits her analysis to the management of Jews, it is essential to consider the broader implications of this theological-political practice.

From *shtadlanut* to Jewish councils

This account of *shtadlanut* allows us to understand the political aspects of this minority management practice, how it changed over time, as well as its intertwinement with political economy. I now wish to connect this analysis to the creation of the *Judenrat* in the twentieth century. It is noteworthy that while there is a prominent *Islamrat* in Germany today (www.islamrat.de), the parallel organization for Jews in Germany is named *Zentral Rat der Juden* (www.zentralratjuden.de). My aim in making this link is to consider a particular twentieth-century manifestation of a “secularized” and institutionalized form of *shtadlanut*. As Schreiber has observed, “For centuries, Jewish communities throughout Europe were self-governed by a council known in Hebrew as *kahal* or *kehillah*, and so the introduction of the *Judenrat*, seems to flow naturally from this historical continuum” (2015, 91). The *shtadlan* was generally the leader of the *kahal*. While the practice of *shtadlanut* during the nineteenth century was justified in the name of emancipation (a euphemism for assimilation) in the twentieth century, it eventually led to “a justificatory

discursive regime that paradoxically rendered the collaboration of the Jewish leadership with antisemitism indispensable, first with the European powers and later with Nazi Germany" (Spanos 2012, 182). It is precisely this type of enforced collaboration with power in combination with reduced agency, powerlessness, and depoliticization that I claim goes beyond the "Jewish Question" and should be understood as central to the "European Question".

Less than a month after the start of World War II (WWII), Heydrich issues a letter stipulating the formation of the *Judenrat* in all occupied territories. The Nazis party leadership explicitly chose to use this "management" strategy as it was taken to be an integral structural component in the daily controlling of the ghettos which also required the least "cost" in terms of Nazis/Gestapo manpower (Hilberg 2003, 125). "Composed of twenty-four male Jews, preferably influential personalities and rabbis, its duties were prescribed as 1) executing German [Nazis] orders, 2) taking an improvised census of the Jews in their areas, 3) evacuating the Jews from rural to urban locations ... " (Klein 1960, 27).

This is the same criteria previously used to appoint *shtadlans*. Once the plans for the "Final Solution" were fixed, the *Judenrat* was also required to register all valuable property (which was a significant source of income for the Nazis) and most unsettling – selecting those who would board the next train to the camps. The Jewish council members, thus, had to decide who would live and who would die.

To a Jew this role of the Jewish leaders in the destruction of their own people is undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story ... In Amsterdam as in Warsaw, in Berlin as in Budapest, Jewish officials could be trusted to compile the lists of persons and of their property, to secure money from the deportees to defray the expenses of their deportation and extermination, to keep track of vacated apartments, to supply police forces to help seize Jews and get them on trains. (Arendt 2010, 117–118)

While *shtadlans* were often rewarded with privileges, such as extra rights and recognition, members of the *Judenrat* had much more limited power and authority and their daily existence was a precarious one; their lives, as well as those they loved, were on the line. Most often, they did not choose their roles, as was the case with *shtadlans* after the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, most believed – like *shtadlans* – that they were acting in the best interest of the larger Jewish community by assisting the Nazis in managing the ghettos and organizing the deportations (Trunk 1972, xvii). This not surprisingly led to a great deal of internal strife and discontent within the Jewish community. Hilberg's analysis shows how the Nazis used the *Judenrat* to regulate what was previously a heterogeneous population of European Jews by way of terror, thereby encouraging internal conflict and further depoliticization (Hilberg 2003). While there were courageous exceptions, such as Adam

Czerniakow (Warsaw) who chose to commit suicide rather than send another of his fellow Jews to death, following Socrates' ethical code that it is better to die than to kill, there were also council members like Chaim I (Lodz) who created a ghetto currency and stamps with his picture on it to reaffirm his power. At the Nuremberg trials, several members of the *Sonderkommandos* stated they "had committed criminal acts in order to save themselves from the danger of immediate death", and drew an analogy to the Jewish Councils who stated that they "cooperated because they thought they could avert consequences more serious than those which resulted" (Arendt 2010, 91). This does not imply that either were collaborators. Many "cooperated" because they thought it would buy time or avoid worse violence – which at certain points was effective. Though it cannot be denied that death loomed over every Jew during the Shoah, and every decision was one of life and death, Eichmann repeatedly remarked during his trial how surprised he was by the willingness of the Jewish Councils to cooperate and even streamline the process, in the hope that such enthusiasm would be rewarded by privileges or protection.

There can be no doubt, without the cooperation of the victims, it would hardly have been possible for a few thousand people, most of whom, moreover worked in offices, to liquidate many hundreds of thousands of other people ... (Arendt 2010, 117)

Based on the research done by Hilberg, Arendt concludes that councils that cooperated with the Nazis occasioned much higher deportation and extermination rates than in ghettos and cities where they refused to do so or were simply less organized. While her numbers and facts have been questioned and challenged for the past fifty years, her tragic thesis has yet to be invalidated (Bauer 2002; Hilberg 2003; Klein 1960; Trunk 1972). A parvenu, willing to cooperate, aided no one. The pariahs who resisted, those who refused to assimilate, were more likely to save lives and almost as important, to retain their self-respect. The latter is worth dwelling on. As scholars who reject Arendt's conclusion, such as Yehuda Bauer, conclude – Jews were doomed no matter how they acted. Yet, if this was the case, didn't resistance and maintaining one's self-respect make a meaningful difference? Other scholars, such as Trunk, who support a modified version of Arendt's conclusions, nonetheless stress the fact that we cannot judge. Without using the moral language of blame, which is inappropriate here, it is essential we learn to judge political choices and actions (and not people themselves); to fail to do so leads to further powerlessness and depoliticization.

What the analysis above of the *Judenrat* makes clear is that many European Jews internalized and justified this imposed representative structure, playing a role in their own depoliticization. This further divided Jews into pariahs and parvenus, exiling the former, and destroying the possibility of horizontal

bonds,² at times preventing resistance and empowerment – making real their sense of an absence of power. Such practices end in catch-22s. If one conforms to the expectations of authority, a parvenu or “good Jew”, reinforces the fact that being Jewish is unacceptable. If one refuses to be a parvenu, you are a “bad-Jew” or pariah, politically or socially exiled to loneliness. In either case, a potentially powerful community is internally divided, depoliticized and fragmented. This type of schism led to tragedy for the Jewish community in the years prior to the Shoah. The “good” assimilated, rich and educated Western Jews saw themselves as disconnected from the fate of the “uncivilised irrational and poor” East European Jews, as is clear from their failure to respond when so many were illegally deported a week before *Kristallnacht*. It was only after they themselves became victims of such illegality that the “good” Jews began to realize that their internalization of these divisions was politically destructive.

While Arendt was branded an antisemite and a self-hating Jew, her analysis was not meant to blame or attack the Jews but to understand the political mechanisms of power in a totalitarian regime. The importance of the story of the *Judenrat* is to show how exclusionary, controlling, and depoliticizing structures can lead to practices that – especially when internalized – can have devastating effects. This fact, when put into the historical context of the theological-political practice of *shtadlanut*, understood in terms of a structural mechanism of power, sheds light on similar mechanisms used to communicate and control other minority religious communities. Many of its features, such as its disempowering and depoliticizing effects, are part and parcel of most majority–minority political struggles (Mufti 2007).

The “Muslim question”, or better yet, the “European question”?

Until now, I have considered how *shtadlanut* was transformed into a depoliticizing minority management practice with regard to the Jewish community in Europe. However, as my intention is to turn the gaze away from the victims – neither of whom are to be blamed – towards the system of oppression, which should bear the brunt of responsibility. It is now essential to demonstrate how this practice goes beyond the “Jewish Question”. In this vein, Said’s reference to the shared roots of European discrimination provides the broader framework for this exploration (Said 1979, xviii). Although Said does not identify this common root as arising from Europe’s political-theology, he does describe several parallels between the “management” of these two minority communities. In addition, his work reminds us of the shared frame used by Europeans to “other” both Jews and Muslims. “Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, ‘us’) and the strange (Orient, the East, ‘them’), (Said 1979, 43). While until this century Jews were framed as the

internal other and Muslims the external other, the Shoah and post-WWII migration have changed this reality.³ Moreover, with the assistance of framing, a political strategy that cannot be underestimated in the twenty-first century when the media has come to define reality, it is possible to accelerate a mechanism that previously might have taken centuries to institutionalize itself. The continued presence of this orientalist frame is evident today.

The Orientalist discourse ... dominates current representations of Islam, which are reductive and predominantly negative. ... Muslims are homogenized as backward, irrational, unchanging, fundamentalist, misogynist, threatening, manipulative in the use of their faith for politics and personal gain. (Lacey 2014, 96)

A dominant prejudice against Muslims in Europe is that there is a bond between "all Muslims" (Kundnani 2014). When someone, labelled by the media as a Muslim, commits a misdemeanour – it is seen as seems normal to turn to the nearest mosque and ask the "representative" to denounce the perpetrator. All differences – linguistic, ethnic, religious, and gender – disappear to be replaced by prejudicial perceptions much like the false homogenizing perceptions of Jews created by the practice of *shtadlanut*. This tendency to homogenize and reduce the other is, according to Said, part and parcel of the common roots of antisemitism and orientalism, and more specifically the many forms of Islamophobia that are to be seen across Europe and in the media. Likewise Said, influenced by both Arendt and Foucault, notes how Muslims have internalized this frame, an internalization which is normalized and further leads to internal divisions and depoliticization (Said 1979). This homogenization is thus part of the discursive association of Jews and Muslims/Arabs in the European social imaginary, an association that is implicitly propagated by such management practices as *shtadlanut*.

Many contemporary scholars of Islam in Europe have begun to investigate a new rhetoric of "good" and "bad" Muslims (Hajjat 2010; Mamdani 2002) as well as tighter control and regulation of Muslim Councils (Amir-Moazami 2011; Kundnani 2014). What is clear from our analysis of the practice of *shtadlanut* is how these two effects are related. Much like the discussions in the past about Jews having divided loyalties, Muslims in Europe are being essentialized as "a single block and homogeneous entity" (Ajala 2014, 131) who are equally divided in their loyalties. According to Lacey, "the orientalist discourse has been further adapted, particularly since 9/11, where both politicians and academics introduce provisos into their discourse, creating a dichotomy between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims" (Lacey 2014, 97). The former are "moderate" Muslims who like Arendt's parvenus wish to be "accepted"; the latter are the "fundamentalists", "radicals" or "terrorists" because they refuse to conform to the demands of authority. These good Muslims, like the good Jews of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, are "integrated" or "assimilated" individuals, secularized liberals who have "become" law-abiding

Muslims (not law-abiding citizens). The “bad Muslims” cannot be trusted, are all potential terrorists and disloyal to the state. Most recently with the rise of ISIS and the terror attacks, all Sunnis have been unjustly framed as “bad” Muslims and are under suspicion solely because of their origins.

The second noted change concerns the creation and regulation of Muslim councils both at the national and trans-national level. As this article has demonstrated, there is a shared genealogy between present Muslim councils and those, both past and present, used to manage Jewish minorities in European nation-states. As each nation has its own particular history and position on state–church relations, there are undoubtedly many differences. One important difference is the fact that Jews were often, though not always, stateless minorities. By contrast, Muslims in Europe today are not stateless (some even have dual citizenship). Likewise, with the birth of the EU, the trans-national aspect also requires further analysis (Bunzl 2007). Nonetheless, there is still a parallel worth considering on both levels as Jews were also seen as loyal to their trans-national religious brethren and not to their state. “The creation of Islam Councils reflects [the] governments desire to mold Islam into an organizationally homologous shape” (Laurence 2006, 257). This demand is by no means a new one and was made repeatedly in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries by governments on the Jewish communities.

The past few years have seen an unprecedented flurry of state-sanctioned incorporation of Muslim councils, high-profile consultations with Muslim representatives, exclusive patronage of “moderate” Muslim groups in Western Europe. Throughout ... the final stamp of approval, however, continues to lie with the state. (Haddad and Golson 2007, 499–500)

Without any pretence of being exhaustive or scientific, let us consider some of the parallels between the practice of *shtadlanut* and the proliferation of Muslim councils and other such representative institutions in different European nation-states. While prior to the 1960s there were many overlapping and disconnected organizations ranging from Turkish guest workers associations to house-mosques, most were free of government intervention. This changed first in the 1970s, and in a much more restrictive manner in the post 9/11 period (Kundnani 2014). The government has taken on a “more proactive strategy: the repositioning of the state as arbiter and chief architect of a ‘moderate’ European Islam” (Haddad and Golson 2007, 488). What were once primarily horizontal social and cultural organizations is now being regulated through a religious prism in which members are required to register (which itself raises many red flags) in order to create top-down umbrella organizations that can speak directly to the government as representative of all Muslims. There is also a growing intolerance communicated by means of repeated criticisms of Islam’s un-hierarchical organization – often cited as evidence of the fundamental inability of Muslims to integrate (Rémond

1999; Warner and Wenner 2006). The top-down demand for one Muslim voice has also led to increased tensions and schisms within a very diverse Muslim community. And as was the case for the Jews of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this has led to the construction of two kinds of Jews: modern vs. inassimilable or in today's terms "good" and "bad Muslims", the former of course being docile political subjects.

Europe domesticated Judaism and Christianity to the point where these faith communities became integral to the civic fabric of the secular state. Their domestication, however, took place long ago ... government officials seemed convinced that a moderate Islam of Europe *will* be created with or without the total cooperation of the continent's Muslims. (Haddad and Golson 2007, 514–515)

Furthermore, the rising tension and struggle for a voice on these representative councils, which often have the power to allocate spaces, funds and other privileges also plays into the orientalist frame of Muslims (or Arabs) as primitive, tribal, and aggressive. A similar frame was imposed on Jews especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – as prone to irrational, undemocratic, violent, and pro-anarchy – a frame that has in the post-Shoah era been completely sanitized. These internal power struggles for resources and recognition have also made the possibility of collective action and alliances between different Muslim constituencies much more difficult leading to a general depoliticization and relegation to the private realm.⁴ Much like the powerlessness internalized by Jews in the period up until the twentieth century, it is clear that:

It does not help that the fledging Muslim councils have had little to show for their high profile state patronage ... not able to overturn ban on hijabs, push blasphemy laws to protect Islam ... kosher ... circumcisions ... (Haddad and Golson 2007, 513)

These struggles have also led to a very turbulent history with regard to the success of these Muslims councils, many of which have had to be disbanded – more than once – or had to have been re-organized etc. The most well-known cases of this are with regard to the *French Council of the Muslim Faith* (CFCM) in which there was a bottom-up reaction to government intervention with regard to the selection of "personalities qualifiées", leading to the CFCM being defined as a "puppet of the government" (Loobuyck, Debeer, and Meier 2013). What also makes the French case special is that it has been fully translated into the *laïc* rhetoric of councils for cultural (and not religious) organizations. Likewise in Germany, what is clear though is that "minorities" are still expected to conform to the demands of the governments in order to be recognized. "With its top-down approach to Muslims as mere *re*-actors the DIK [*Deutsche Islam Konferenz*] has so far turned out to be much more a governmental technique which aims at reshaping Muslims according to liberal/secular norms" (Amir-Moazami 2011, 2). Moreover, the DIK has been required to disband in order to "de-radicalize". "The effectiveness of the DIK, which was

plagued by deep quarrels, vague results and limited time spent on the problems of racism and Islamophobia, was also criticized" (Loobuyck, Debeer, and Meier 2013, 63). Considering how distinct the UK is from Europe in terms of its history, geography and politics, it is disturbing that it too began to establish such councils in order to promote the "good" type of Islam. Many of these councils were state supported until 2001 when their leaders choose to join the "stop the war movement" and in this manner expressed criticism of the government, a political position *shtadlans* are not permitted. Muslim "citizens" are only "good" if they are depoliticized docile subject. While non-Muslims citizens are being told to engage in politics, the exact opposite is one of the aims of the Prevent Agenda. While each national context has its particularities, the similarities eclipse these national differences.

In these cases, and many more across Europe, groups or individuals that act publically and/or politically are accused of being fanatics politicizing Islam – a catch-22 that was common to Jews, such as Zionist organizations. These same "public" Muslims are accused of being disloyal to the state and are often under surveillance, excluded from membership in these councils and the target of other forms of discrimination (Kundnani 2014). A more recent phenomenon, also described by Guesnet's research, is the trend of avoiding selecting representatives for these Muslims councils who speak for larger communities preferring a more individualized council formed of business persons, "model liberal Muslims", well-known figures, etc.

Conclusions

While the governmental techniques or mechanisms of minority management are only part of a broader question – whether a Jewish or Muslim question – an aspect of this inquiry that has often been overlooked, because of the temporal assumption that its roots are secular, are the theological-political roots of such "management" strategies. By turning the gaze from Europe's others to Europe itself, I have sought to identify one possible political-theological structure, that of intercessions, which manifests itself politically – with regard to the Jewish community – in terms of the practice of *shtadlanut*. In my analysis of this practice, I show how Jewish communities were "accommodated", internally divided between "good" and "bad" Jews; and "managed" or institutionalized by the ruling powers. I then consider *shtadlanut* in structural terms a process that forces a heterogeneous population into a controlled vertical homogenized power structure thereby encouraging internal conflict. It is precisely this type of enforced collaboration with power in combination with reduced agency and depoliticization that I claim goes beyond the "Jewish Question" and should be understood as central to the "European Question", a question which has now been framed in terms of the "Muslim question", a frame that must be critically examined.

While detailed sociological investigations would be necessary to properly establish the claim that Muslims in Europe today are being “managed” by means of the secularized structure of intercessions that was previously used to control Jewish communities, I hope to have shown that there are enough parallels to consider engaging in such an inquiry. Perhaps Laurence, in his quest to understand the structural similarity of different national regimes of Muslim “integration”, throws the baby out with the bathwater. While “the state’s challenge has been to establish these nascent councils as legitimate interlocutors for public authorities” it does not “stem from a desire to impose a Catholic-style hierarchy on Islam” (Laurence 2006, 256–257). While the state may not “desire” to impose this type of hierarchy, it might nonetheless be doing so by dangling the false illusion of inclusion over these communities as it once had for other “religious” minorities. Laurence implicitly acknowledges this when he writes, “after all, Protestants and Jews do not naturally gravitate towards centralized representation either, but they were required to reorganize to obtain full legal recognition” (Laurence 2006, 257). Jews, it is worth recalling never obtained “full legal recognition”. This legal and political struggle was only partially achieved prior to the Shoah and the number of Jews in Europe after the Shoah makes this “full legal recognition” an ethical question rather than a political one. As is clear from the analysis of the *Judenrat*, it is my contention that a similar “management strategy” continues to exert its presence under the cloak of secularism. As Asad reminds us: “the concept of minority arises from a specific Christian history: from the dissolution of the bond that was formed immediately after the Reformation between the established Church and the early modern state” (as qtd in Pagden 2002, 222). In this manner, I hope to have demonstrated how a particular practice of secular “minority management” was born under the hierarchical shadow of Catholic theology.

Notes

1. Catholic Encyclopedia: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08070a.htm>.
2. This internal competition between Jews is something Guesnet analyses closely, see Textures, page 363.
3. While beyond the confines of this paper, see Gil Anidjar’s thesis on this parallel in which Jews were the theological other and Muslims the political.
4. The same applies to the tiny Jewish communities in countries such as Belgium – although these internal power struggles are not scrutinized and condemned by the media and public because of Europe’s post-Shoah guilt.

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