

BOOK REVIEW

SOPHIE BESSIS AND POLITICAL OCCIDENTALISM: DENOUNCING THE POLITICAL HYPOCRISY OF WESTERNERS

La Civilisation Judéo-Chrétienne: Anatomie D'une Imposture

(Judeo-Christian Civilization: Anatomy of an Imposture)



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ABSTRACT

The historian and journalist Sophie Bessis has published in 2025 a new work entitled: "La civilisation judéo-chrétienne: Anatomie d'une imposture". For Bessis, this concept of Judeo-Christian values or else is a myth that tries to hide the real economic and political projects and activities of Westerners. For those who are suspicious of this ideological framework, Bessis has tried to depict clearly and intellectually the ideological concept that promotes and justifies the unity of Christian and Jewish believers into a Western political project of domination over the Middle East. For her, this ideological serves the purpose of justifying the Europeans and the Americans in their quest for supremacy in the Near East. This critic is an analysis of the thought of Bessis, who has developed an expertise on the ideological precepts of Western dominance.

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Sophie Bessis is a Frenchwoman born in Tunisia in 1947. She is a feminist historian and journalist who works for the well-known analytical news magazine, "Jeune Afrique." This Sephardic Frenchwoman has written a few books on Westerners and their political ideologies. Academically, she is an intellectual who has worked primarily in the field of public media, having served as the former editor-in-chief of the weekly and serious French magazine "Jeune Afrique". In addition to this, she is currently a research associate at the Institute for International and Strategic Relations (IRIS) in Paris, and she also serves as the Deputy Secretary General of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). It is worth mentioning that she has taught courses on the political economy of development at La Sorbonne and the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO). In 2015, she was the recipient of the "Paris Liège Literary Prize" for another great work,

“La double Impasse: l’universel à l’épreuve du fondamentalisme religieux et marchand¹.” In 2016, the government of Tunisia, through its President, Beji Caïd Essebsi (1926-2019), offered her the insignia of “Commandeur de l’Ordre de la République” for her fierce promotion of international human rights.

To begin with, we would like to discuss the West and its economic and political supremacy. What we will first address here is the Occidental state of reality and its ideological consequences. The basis of this will be the thought of Sophie Bessis through two of her wonderful works: firstly, “L’Occident et les autres (2001)”, and secondly, “La civilisation judéo-chrétienne (2025).” These two works are intertwined with international violent events: the first event coincides with 9/11, and the second one with the Palestinian surprise attack in October 2023 in Israel. These two works have two academic foundations: the first one is history, and the second one is philosophy. Bessis is a historian who writes philosophical and historical thoughts by establishing her intellection on historical facts, in other words, on what really happened.... The philosophical part means that historical events are to be analyzed through concepts and values. In other words, we are talking about interpretations that may allow some subjectivity but are limited by solid and verifiable information and facts. Clearly, Bessis is basing her interpretation of the current political realities on the serious school of thought of several intellectuals and academics. She not only claims things; she examines and even looks for scholars who have written on the topic. Since she understands that some people who would not have read the texts would complain or vehemently criticize her, she has developed a technique of resorting to other great thinkers to support her political and philosophical views on the behaviors of Westerners, including Israeli politicians.

According to Sophie Bessis, the Occident is an impostor because it believes and acts as if it is its legitimate and fundamental right to manage the Earth and its dwellers. Westerners constantly express their “supremacy” in several ways, although in 2025, it tends to disappear slowly. To the point that many Westerners cannot believe that they might pass to a lower level in terms of political and economic might. Psychologically, Americans often have an attitude of rejecting the ideas of people who claim that the USA

¹ The double impasse: the universal at the mercy of religious and commercial fundamentalism.

is in decline². In fact, they do not want to lose their political power in the management of world affairs³. Westerners are great liars! They promote ideas that they do not follow or that they simply do not believe in! To this effect, voila what Bessis wrote on the claims and ideology of Westerners:

The paradox of the West lies in its ability to produce universals, elevate them to the status of absolutes, violate with a fascinating systematic spirit the principles it derives from them, and feel the need to elaborate theoretical justifications for these violations. The planetary nature of its hegemony, the constant and obstinate construction of its justification, erected over the centuries into a sophisticated cultural apparatus where the universal is constantly invoked: this, it must be admitted, is a double singularity that deserves close attention.⁴

As maintained by Bessis, the first ideology is the creation of a Western world concept. What is the Western world? How was it born? Is there a Western cultural system in the world? The first element of their ideology is to cut itself off from the Eastern and African origins of its civilisation⁵. There was a whitewashing process that eliminated the brown and black nations from her history books. The Chaldeans, Babylonians, Indians, and Egyptians disappeared from history by accounting them, even though ancient Greek and Latin authors had written about the influence of these ancient nations on themselves since antiquity. Europeans wanted to make the world believe that they were blessed by God for being “White”! This is not a pleasantry! Through the rejection of the Islamic and Jewish religions during the Reconquista, the Spaniards had to prove that they were “pure blood” Europeans, “Iberians”; they had to show that they had no biological ties with the Jews, Afro-Berbers, or Arab Muslims. It was a new process in effect: “la limpieza de sangre.” By 1535, Spanish inhabitants needed to prove their pure origins to obtain civil servant positions in Spain. Religion, in this case Catholicism, was not enough; you had to prove that you were not

² Sophie Bessis, *L'Occident et les autres: histoire d'une suprématie*, Paris, La Découverte/Poche, 7.

³ Ibid., 8.

⁴ Le paradoxe de l'Occident réside dans sa faculté à produire des universaux, à les ériger au rang d'absolus, à violer avec un fascinant esprit de système les principes qu'il en tire, et à ressentir la nécessité d'élaborer les justifications théoriques de ces violations. Le caractère planétaire de son hégémonie, la construction constante et obstinée de sa justification, érigée au fil des siècles en un appareillage culturel sophistiqué où l'universel est sans cesse convoqué: voilà, on en conviendra, une double singularité qui mérité qu'on s'y attarde. Ibid., 10.

⁵ Ibid., 17-18.

“contaminated” by Muslims and Jews for at least four previous generations⁶. With those concepts and attitudes, the genocidal mentality of the Europeans becomes understandable to even a profane of the Western world... The West, beginning with Spain, decided to make itself culturally lobotomized to believe that it had created everything that came into existence. Asia and Africa were in the tow of civilization. Europeans were on the march to conquer the world after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and they had no intention of letting other civilizations know that they owed them culturally. If the law of physics states that white is the addition of all colors at high speed, then white is not pure, as European chauvinists would like to claim. Nevertheless, Europeans made the color white a sign, a symbol of purity, since it is a “pure” color. White became a “heavenly” color, too, especially when mixed with all the colors at high speed. That scientific aspect is known to most of us, but for the European supremacists of the time and today, this dimension is foretold! Whiteness was mixed with Christian religious identity, and it became a very powerful ideology. These two ideological aspects became the pillars of European world conquest. These factors must be remembered by us, since the violence of the men and women from Europe caused the “brown people” to be victims of these “White” Christians. 1492 signifies the European discovery of the Americas and their future military conquest by the Spaniards and Portuguese. This meant the takeover of the land and the genocide of the landowners through war, guerrilla warfare, and massive enslavement of the original possessors. Bessis reminds us that the expropriation of American lands was based on the genocide of the autochthons of this “new” continent⁷. For instance, in 1519, there were 25 million Amerindians in Mexico; by 1580, only 1.5 million remained⁸...? Yes, the bacteria have done a lot! What were the conditions of existence of the Indigenous Americans since the arrival of Europeans in the Americas? The Autochthones were eliminated through wars, diseases, and slavery. The arrival of Europeans meant constant involvement in continental and international political violence beyond their volition. This involvement was appalling since it meant an almost permanent demographic loss for the Americas and humanity. We cannot remain silent before these historic facts: in the Americas, the ethnocide of Amerindians meant that Europeans had to look for new people to replace the original

⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁷ Idem

⁸ Ibidd., 20.

American inhabitants' workforce. The two new costless laborers were poor Europeans and, of course, African pastoralists or agriculturalists.

Beforehand, the Arab Muslims were the leaders and even the forerunners of the African slave trade (VII-XIX A.D). We can speak of twelve centuries in which nearly 40% of the total enslavement figures of Africans were done by Arabs or Arabo-Muslim traders. Sophie Bessis vehemently denounced the attitude of the North African scholars or intellectuals for their lack of historiographic seriousness when it comes to their role in the African slave trade⁹. Following the steps of the Arabian-Berber slave traders, the Europeans, principally the Portuguese at this point, began their involvement in the African slave trade, which later became an international slave trade. The Renaissance era is not good news since it will mean the massive enslavement of Africans and the upcoming era of European colonialism. This era led Europe to China, India, Japan, Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Colonization meant that the world was Westernized through a process known as globalization¹⁰.

From the Renaissance until the end of World War II in 1945, the planet Earth was under the garb of Westerners. We must keep in mind that the first sign, and the most obvious one, to remind you of the fact that you have been dominated by a European power or an offshoot of it is that you end up speaking the language of someone who has overpowered you politically and economically. Oh! Yes! Speaking French, English, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Italian, and Dutch blatantly signify that you have been dominated by the European nation that owns that language. Sometimes, those who have been colonized forget that the language they speak is a European language, the idiom of someone who might have originally oppressed them. In addition, one can say that most of the time, oppressors never speak the language of those they are oppressing. However, the oppressed most of the time speak the tongue of those who took their land and their spirit! An example of this is that in the Province of Quebec in Canada, French Canadians want everyone to speak French, while occulting the fact that they never learned to communicate

⁹Ibid., 24-25.

¹⁰ Globalization: to make global or worldwide in scope or application. *The American College Dictionary*, 2004.

in an Amerindian tongue. They never spoke any native North American dialects, but they wanted them and whoever came into their territory to speak French. Clearly, this is a game of domination and power. Forget about morality here. Westerners have imposed themselves on several people on the Earth, and sometimes, some of the colonized people tend to believe that it is normal.

With the end of World War II, the prism of European colonialism did not instantaneously disappear; it simply obtained a new brand. The new concept is neocolonialism, which means that there is a new form of colonialism. Before going any further, let us define neocolonialism: it is the political control of a country by an outside force, even though the country is theoretically sovereign and independent¹¹. The Cold War era saw the promotion of a neocolonialist project towards the colonized nations, but it could also be said that there was a counteraction from them against the undertakings of the Westerners. The globalization of the Blue Planet means that the world has been taken over by the Europeans and their offshoots; in this case, the offshoot is nobody else but the United States of America. Geopolitically, geoeconomically, and geoculturally, the world had become an Occident, with English as its global language, and often the American dialect with all its structural weaknesses. Facing the power of the Westerners after World War II, several colonial subjects decided to be involved in a new political and economic process: decolonization. Asians, Africans, and South Americans decided that Western political domination had to stop. The process is often violent and economically harsh. Finally, the supremacy of Europeans and Americans was challenged in many ways. For the historian and journalist Sophie Bessis, this means that her works denounce the thoughts and ideas of Western colonial nation-states in their attempt to maintain their domination of Asia, Africa, and South America. Bessis is essentially criticizing the myth of colonialism as an excellent cultural endeavor since it was for the common good of humanity. Regardless of what happened in that process, it was profitable for those who ended up being dominated by Westerners. Europe and its cousins on the globe brought overall progress and prosperity to the “barbarians” of Asia, Africa, and the Americas¹². Europeans and Euro-North Americans

¹¹ Neocolonialism: *Collins English Dictionary*, 1986.

¹² Bessis, op.cit., 106.

would like to make everyone forget their horrible actions against many ethnic groups¹³. Europe and the United States of America have completely lost the respect of most citizens of Earth. Their political and economic undertakings have caused the loss of any favorable sentiment among the members or citizens of any nations or nation-states; when they speak about an issue in the media, nobody, frankly, cares about what they are saying or what they believe. Since they see and understand that non-Western nations do not believe in their lies and hypocrisies, Europeans and North Americans are questioning themselves about the future of their civilizations. The Western world is still in pole position economically and democratically, but not in tranquility. Western civilization is currently challenged by India and China, and to a lesser extent by South America, Africa, and Russia. The Occidental influence diminishes every day¹⁴. In reality, Americans and Europeans are not sure about their political comfort. Since the 1970s, Europeans and Americans have tried to portray themselves as the world's political might, but in reality, the economic, political, scientific, and military growth of China, India, South America, and Russia has annulled the longevity of the political and economic leadership of the Westerners.

In a globalized world, there are many topics at stake. For instance, who will be the producers? Who will be the buyers? Where can we obtain natural resources at a low price without violence? What are we going to do with stateless people or weak nation-states? What is the future of the Western world and its economic and political well-being? What are we going to do with poor countries like Haiti? What is the future of the Middle East without petrol? What will happen to the Jews of Israel in the long term? What can Africa do to improve itself politically and economically, since it is stuck in the political and economic arena of the global world, which might not be led by the Western world anymore? The immigration of Asians, Africans, South Americans, and Caribbean people into the politics of Westerners is a serious economic, political, and social debate. Two questions need to be addressed: First, do we still need migrants in our economic and financial world? Second, do we realize what it means to live and exist with foreign people within our society? Are we ready for the cultural, political, and economic challenges that come with economic-based migration within society? Considering that we are not yet massively

¹³ Ibid., 107.

¹⁴ Ibid., 108.

robotized, we might need a huge quantity of laborers. Consequently, if they come or are already among us, what are we going to do with the social and cultural problems that come with them? Westerners cannot only be calling the shots; they want the natural resources of Africa and sell them the finished products from those natural resources extractions without helping African societies in stabilizing themselves politically, or by refusing the massive incoming of Africans within the European continent. Westerners want to be in control of the North-South exchange, but this is not a clear endeavor yet. We should not forget, as Bessis has written, that Europeans have migrated all over the world without visas, and then once again, taken power all over the world without visas. After the fact, they are now requesting visas and legal status, whereas they were often illegal when they migrated all over the world. This is another example of Western “hypocrisy.” Bessis affirms that in less than a hundred years, more than 60 million Europeans left Europe. Where did they go? North America, Europe, and Oceania are constantly trying to control their immigration, even though their birth rates are very low.

Many Westerners certainly know that a total halt of South-North flows belongs to the realm of pipe dreams and that such a prospect is not even desirable, at least for countries whose demographic decline can only be offset by a resumption of immigration. They also know that they will have to make do with the presence of populations already settled on their soil, while asking them to be invisible by blending into a majority that daily reminds them of their otherness.¹⁵

The Cold War's problems have not disappeared because Russia failed to succeed in its communist political project. Capitalism, under the name of globalization, is still a problem that needs to be remedied. Countries with weak economies must be helped, and we may need to transform our international economic system. We must develop a new way to enrich and empower weak nations. Real ethics must be promoted, not one to implement one's domination over others. Bessis opines that we need a serious ethical code to manage

¹⁵ [Free English translation from French] Nombre d'Occidentaux savent certes que l'arrêt total des flux Sud-Nord relève du registre des voeux pieux, et qu'une telle perspectives n'est même pas souhaitable, au moins pour les pays dont le déclin démographique ne peut être enrayer que par une reprise de l'immigration. Ils savent aussi qu'ils devront bien s'accommoder de la présence des populations déjà installées sur leur sol, tout en leur demandant d'être invisibles en se fondant dans une majorité qui les renvoie quotidiennement à leur alterité. Bessis, op.cit.,197.

our collective problems. We shall also need the real implementation of international law to improve the political relationship between nations. We now know that the USA does not want to be the men-at-arms of the world because it has a serious financial and political cost. Every nation should be involved in this process. The right to intervene should be used to implement a lawful society with an ethical governing body for every society. Overall, the governments of the world should have the International Human Rights of 1948 as a basic law or legal guide. These should be the guiding laws, even in international economic affairs. We must keep in mind that most of our problems have an economic origin. By controlling our economics and transnational economics, we allow ourselves the right to improve our collective existence on Earth. There is an international necessity for evolving peacefully. It seems that moral ideals are not shared by all societies. This is why we might still need to defend and organize our policies on interventionism. Situations like those in Israel or Haiti could have been avoided or managed better. One thing is certain, the concepts promoted by the United Nations still make sense even though people will claim that that institution is a Western political tool. Then we should address that problem thoroughly and systematically. It is up to the members of all societies to implement measures that will respect a collective morality and international law. But to be done, the Occident needs to learn to compose with other civilizations¹⁶. It must be done in a friendly way not as a primal Leviathan. The Western world is still revered as the best because in our world in 2025, there is no other alternative. In reality, where in the world do we really have individual rights, good collective rights, the right to think, to talk, the possibility to go to school to study the humanities and democracy? Where? Without ambiguity, it must be said, it is the West. The number one imperialist in the world remains the best as the civilizational model for Humanity. China is not a model of freedom. Most Muslim countries are not into individual freedom or a democratic regime. Democracy is not a North Korea or Cuba's project. Russia behaves like a bully with its own citizens and the neighboring nations and, adamantly, rejects democracy and the fundamental human rights of 1948. The worst is that many wealthy persons from these totalitarian regimes, comprehensibly, preferred to spend time, or their vacations, or even migrate in Western Europe or the United States of America. Again, there is only one credible model: the Occident. Russia, China, North Korea, and several other countries refuse to establish a democratic regime as their political and social

¹⁶ Ibid.,335.

foundation. We are forced to recognize that Westerners are still the world's hegemony, although it is seriously challenged by nations that reject the philosophy of liberalism and democracy. There is a rejection of human rights. Those living in the Western world are bearers of some happiness. Still, they know that they cannot be entirely happy thinking about what is going on in the world. The world has remained a jungle, and we can say that it is somehow more dangerous than during the Cold War. Bessis is right when she says that the bluffer, the Occident, has military power, wealth, technology, and the assuredness of itself, meaning here, its values and objectives. We ought to keep in mind that socio-political freedom and the economic well-being of individuals are the bedrocks of the Western political system. She has recognized all the historical mistakes or faults of the Western colonizers in the history of the world. Except for this omission: she forgot to say that the greatest political virtue of Westerners is their "hypocritical" democratic political system.

Judeo-Christian Civilization...?

A not so "new" concept has been, mentioned several times in the media by the politicians, from the right to the far right: the Judeo-Christian civilization. Sophie Bessis has just published a small treatise in French language entitled: "*La civilisation judéo-chrétienne: anatomie d'une imposture*". It was published during the summer 2025 at the publishing house, "Les Liens qui Libèrent". It must be said that this theme had been approached already by her in her precursory work, "L'Occident et les autres". This being said, let's continue with what she has said on the Judeo-Christian concept in her previous work entitled, "L'Occident et les autres". Bessis understands clearly that the Judeo-Christian concept is an ideological tool for those who will not allow themselves to think more profoundly on the relationship between the Jews and the Christians. This ideology, which may sound correct and accurate, does not make her forget that for nearly 2000 years, Christians have oppressed hardly the European Jews. The apogee of this hatred was the ethnocidal enterprise by Germany in the 20th century. This genocidal undertaking is known as the Shoah in Hebrew and the Holocaust in the Christian world. Bessis sees in the recourse to this terminology a political manipulation because suddenly the Christians acknowledge their religious origin in the faith of Jesus of Nazareth (c. 6 to 4 BC – AD 30 or 33), who

was also born a Jew and died as a Jew! Truthfully, Yeshuah was a Jew who followed until his death, the religion of Abraham and Moses. In a globalized world and a world that has become multicultural and often cosmopolitan, we see Western politicians claiming their religious affiliations as a political identity. Since immemorial time, there have been European Christians affirming their Jewish identity as Jewish Christians. We cannot forget or omit that Christianity is an offshoot of Judaism. To the point that this reality has caused the Roman Catholic Church to distance itself from Judaism. For instance, Saturday, the Sabbath day, became a Sunday. The Roman Catholic faith never said that Christianity was not from Judaism. Nevertheless, it remained that the main political objective of the Roman Catholic Church was to stop or annul the Judaic faith because it was a direct competitor to Christianity and a serious philosophical and theological challenger to the Christian theologians. Consequently, Judaism historically became a target of persecution. This persecution became pure hatred and fratricidal. Jews, as religious people, are the brothers and sisters of all Christians. Among the apostles, the only one who was not a Jew by faith was the apostle Luke (1 AD?- 84 AD?). All the others were Jews. The verity here is the fact that Christian authorities, since antiquity, wanted to be perceived as reformers of Judaism and the bearers of a “new” and “genuine” faith! Another essential aspect is the historical and theological fact that Christianity, especially the Orthodox and Roman Catholic faith, has never denied its Abrahamic filiation, as Bessis has written¹⁷. We shall not forget that the history of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism has been based on hatefulness and violence. Jews have been the scapegoats of the Judeo-Christian West. So, why are they trying to avoid or mask the historical truth? Judeo-Christian faith concept is a means to block or extract the psychological guilt feeling from the hearts and minds of Christian Westerners¹⁸. That expression is, as a matter of fact, a “medical tool”; it serves as a cultural and psychological ideology to justify politically the Western Christians. Precisely, the abstraction of Judeo-Christian is nothing else but a cultural and psychological lobotomy to alienate the Christian people on the historical reality of their relationship with all the monotheists. By being alienated, they still can maintain their pride and their love of themselves as followers of Yeshuah. After World War II, the winners were ashamed of themselves; racism in Europe and its violence had become unacceptable

¹⁷ Ibid.282.

¹⁸ Idem.

because they saw what it could do to European humanity! Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) had done to Europeans what the European colonizers had done historically too, to Asians, Africans, and North Americans¹⁹. Nothing was new underneath the sun. At the end of the war, what was new was the creation of a Jewish nation-state. Israel was officially born in 1948.

Israel, even though it has a solid number of Oriental Jews, it is conceived and perceived as a “Western nation-state”. With the concept of Judeo-Christian values and civilization come the foundations of a state for the protection and the well-being of the Jewish nation. From then on, Jews had a homeland which was supported, not wholeheartedly, by the USA and the Western European nation-states. Nazis Germany and its exactions had, indirectly, created Israel! This nation is so connected to Europe and North America that the expression used to make them part of a political collectivity is the “*Judeo-Christian*” one!

Undoubtedly to Bessis, this political conception -the Judeo-Christian civilization- is an imposture²⁰. A chimera! She also claims that this expression is dedicated only to North Americans and Western Europeans. Africa and Latin America, although they have millions of Christians, are not entitled to this assertion. This concept has three objectives: one, to occult; second, to appropriate; third, to exclude people²¹. Bessis really dislikes this conception since it is a lethal weapons in the hands of politicians of the far right, who are trying to seize the political mechanism of power in Europe, Asia, and North America. She even denounced Benjamin Nathanyahu, the current Prime Minister of Israel, lethal actions

¹⁹ Yes, it would be worthwhile to study clinically, in detail, the steps taken by Hitler and Hitlerism and to reveal to the very distinguished, very humanistic, very Christian bourgeois of the twentieth century that without his being aware of it, he has a Hitler inside him, that Hitler inhabits him, that Hitler is his demon, that if he rails against him, he is being inconsistent and that, at bottom, what he cannot forgive Hitler for is not the crime in itself, the crime against man, it is not the humiliation of man as such, it is the crime against the white man, the humiliation of the white man, and the fact that he applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the "coolies" of India, and the "niggers" of Africa.

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, New York, 2000, 36.

²⁰ Sophie Bessis, *La civilisation judéo-chrétienne: anatomie d'une imposture*, Paris, Les Liens qui Libèrent, 2025, 7.

²¹ Ibid., 11.

against the Muslim “barbarism”²².

In her book entitled “La civilisation judéo-chrétienne”, Bessis talks about racism against the Jews, and she reminds Westerners of this hatred of the Jews and its consequences on the Israelites of the 20th century, living in the Western world. For instance, we are reminded that Jewish people used to live in Europe without being citizens of any European nation-states²³. The country that acknowledged the Jews as being part of the nationals of a nation-state was France under the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821). By becoming a European citizen, the Jews were “not vile Asiatic anymore”! This recognition allowed them to become even more European than they were, since they went through a process of intense Europeanisation, to the point that they often forgot about the Jews living and existing in the Oriental world²⁴.

In her previous great work, “L’Occident et les autres”, Bessis wrote that the Judeo-Christian concept is a cultural and psychological tool to exclude Muslims from the Occidentals. This conception excludes the Muslims from the virtuous Christians and Jews. The Westernization of the Judeo-Christian concept makes the Muslim diabolical²⁵. For the Sephardic Tunisian Jewess Bessis, it is unacceptable to reject the Muslims in the 21st century. She knows that Islam is founded on Judaism and Christianity²⁶. She explains that the rationalism that was developed in Spain in the feudal age came from the work of Muslims such as Ibn Rushud (1126-1198) and Ibn Sina (980-1037). The near eight hundred years of Muslim presence in Spain cannot be occulted even if several Europeans would like to²⁷. This rejection is an attempt to exclude the Islamic civilization from the Western political and cultural identity. Historically, Islamic civilization has been a redoubtable foe! From the Middle Ages, the Muslims have been the “others”²⁸. Although there is a lot of research done in Europe on the Islamic religion and theology, it remains that Europe still despises the Islamic faith and social values. Islam is considered an enemy of democracy

²² Ibid., 12.

²³ Ibid., 13-18.

²⁴ Ibid., 20-21

²⁵ Bessis, *L’Occident et les autres*, 284

²⁶ Bessis, *La civilisation judéo-chrétienne*, 35

²⁷ Ibid., 36-37

²⁸ Ibid., 40.

and the 1948 Declaration of International Human Rights²⁹. The core of this element of tension between Islam and “secular Christian” Europe is the fact that this continent is now the homeland for Islamic culture. Islam is, henceforth and in the future, a part of the European culture. The only vexation here is the fact that most Europeans considered the Muslims as “ontologically” foreigners³⁰. What reinforces that feeling among Westerners is the fact that the Muslim world despises Israel and accuses Westerners of a Judeo-Christian plot against them³¹. The numerous severe exactions against Americans and Europeans are political, social, and cultural evidence of the enmity of Islam towards them. Still along these lines of thought, Bessis does not appreciate the philosemitism of the American and European elites. She vehemently denounces the warmongering attitude of several Israelis. She is a clear partisan of the improvement of the dialogue between the Arab Muslims and the Israelis. She even criticizes the Western Jews to have monopolizing the Jewish faith and their identity. Moreover, Bessis accuses the Israelis of being Eurocentric. The result of this attitude is the existence of a constant racist view or behaviour towards non-European people, whatever it is inside or outside of Israeli society. To her, the Israeli identity crisis comes from the ethno-religious nationalism which express itself through Occidental racist views towards Asians and African Jews, Arab Israelis, Palestinians or other national Arabs. Overall, our historian fears the rise of the far-right in the Western world and within the nation-state of Israel.

Sophie Bessis, through her works that we read and analyzed so far, has us thinking about what it means to be a human being. This is true for our own selves, but also when we think of other human beings who live in a different country and who speak another language than the one currently spoken. Felipe-Fernandez Armesto, as a historian, took time to write a work entitled “Humankind” because the primary work of a historian is to tell and explain the essence and stories of those beings, the human beings. He tells us that our self-definition implies consciousness, reason, imagination, and moral passion³². These depicted elements and positive characteristics of our kind are not accepted as qualities of the entire human

²⁹ Ibid., 41.

³⁰ Ibid., 48.

³¹ Bessis, *L'Occident et les autres*, 284

³² Felipe-Fernandez Armesto, *Humankind: A Brief History*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 2004. 5.

species. For Fernandez Armesto, we do not tend to acknowledge the “others” in our own species as human beings. Our cherished national group is always considered real humans, whereas the others are not like us. The evidence of this is ethnocentrism, racism, and nationalism. Through the discourses influenced by the three previous concepts some people will be unified, others will be excluded. Exclusion is a political act setting a group into a framework of total exploitation or even annihilation. Often, the most powerful group tends to deny the humanity of the other human groups. Time and again, during periods of political tensions, the most powerful will depict the weaker opponents as an animal, especially a species that does not deserve our humanism or our good grace. They are evil, and for this reason, they deserve to be terminated. The enemy is a “lethal threat” that must be killed to allow us, me and my kind, to exist peacefully in a great abundance.

[...]: those of us who think we are human feel utter confidence in our human identity and our ability to recognize it in others; we hardly pause to congratulate ourselves on the breadth of our views, sensing common humanity in specimens of our species in spite of differences of colour and culture. Yet our present concept is a recent contrivance: most people in most societies for most of history would have been astonished by such an all-encompassing category. Most of them, indeed, would have had difficulty in understanding the word “human” or finding an equivalent for it in their own languages, except as a way of designating members of their own group. To them, outsiders would belong to some other, alien class, along with beasts or demons. The present limits of our concept of humankind are not obvious and not universal. They have been attained as the product of a long, hard struggle in the Western world to find a way of understanding humanity that embraces communities formerly excluded by racism and ethnocentrism, while insisting on a clear distinction between humans and non-humans.³³

Bessis understands very well these concepts justifying exclusion. Most and foremost, she is an accomplished intellectual. As a doctor in history and a journalist on international relations in the African world, she has a clear comprehension of the political world trends. She foresees clearly where we are going. We must comprehend that Bessis has been a victim of the “Eurocentrism of Christian Europe”. Notably, Europeans and Euro-Americans always come up with new ideological concepts to justify their world domination, which, currently, has begun to fade away. Europe and North America have not disappeared, and we do not want them to do so. Democracy is currently threatened by

³³ Fernandez-Amesto, op.cit., 6-7.

China, Russia, North Korea, and from within Western societies by far-right militants. The world that Bessis is looking for is a harmonious world. Any ideal of exclusionism is a setback to more positive values such as harmony, international human rights, and democracy. Fundamentally, Bessis aspires to the improvements of the dynamic of justice for all “world” communities. No one shall be a victim of another group of human beings.

Our Tunisian Frenchwoman is a cosmopolitan. We must keep in mind that she is a Sephardic Jew from Tunisia with a French passport. Her direct political interests are Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. She is a worldly individual. A genuine cosmopolitan intellectual. Even her philosophy is cosmopolitanism. At this point, it is necessary for us to explain the multiple elements that explain the concept of cosmopolitanism. This humanistic school of thought demands that we care about others because they are as human as you. It requests that you define and teach peace and justice. It wants you to act for the well-being of all of us. It makes us suspicious of any nationalistic notions because they constantly transform themselves into racist or discriminatory values; therefore, it engenders exclusion to the point of death. The Occident ought to be a machine, a system, a philosophy, a policy for the amelioration of our social fabric. Here, we are talking about the construction of a common world, based on equality in the field of law, economics, sex, culture, education, trade, and politics. Her works are based on these important conceptions: geopoliticism, geoeconomics, and geoculture. All she explained was in the garb of these three worldly conceptions. Without a doubt, cosmopolitanism is an ethical discourse for the development of morally positive transnational politics. Even if we have already outlawed aggression and violence juristically and philosophically, we ought to act socially and politically according to our theological, philosophical, and legal values. Theories and analyses are only real when we reflect on the implementation of the praxis of peace and economic justice³⁴. The two works of Bessis are praxeological since they explain to us that we must do to include others and to bring a peaceful practice of mutual assistance among the constituents of our planet. Seriously, her monographs are asking us to clarify who we are.

³⁴ Etienne Tassin, *Un monde commun: Pour une cosmo-politique des conflits*, Paris, Seuil, 2003, 22.

To put it simply, Bessis challenged the cultural hegemony of the West. Which means that the Western hegemony has been philosophically shaken by her but also by most refractories nation-states to the prevalent political might of the Westerners. Western universalism is not the trend anymore; rather, she thinks that pluralism seems to be the way since she acknowledges that there are several cultures on Earth; de facto, it can be said too that these cultures deserve to be respected and allowed to exist freely; this attitude and perspective will permit these civilizations to participate in the political progress of humanity. In that sense, she would like Israel to show more respect to the Palestinians. Actually, she does not like to perceive her own ethno-religious group as a nation of henchmen. She feels that Israelis ought to be careful since they are indubitably perceived as international henchmen. Israel is losing the moral war, which is the most important aspect for a small and dynamic nation like Israel. This nation-state, due to its Westernism, which implies a “plethora” of Western negative elements such as racism and colonial political behavior towards the Palestinians, Israelis must be careful not to alienate too many people or nation-states. Bessis defends and promotes the idea that there are several Jewish identities, and the one from the state of Israel is just another one. Israelis and the world Jewish communities must be cautious with ethnocentrism. She fears the Israeli religious fundamentalists who are constantly ready to wage war to complete their political project³⁵.

In sum, the analytical discourse of Sophie Bessis on current political issues is a call to develop and appreciate a cosmopolitan worldview. Let's be citizens of the Earth. Citizenship that will allow every one of us to value the other. We must make sure that the other is not deprived of our common world or rejected by it! We must oppose atimia with a firm no! The duty of being a citizen on this planet demands that we act positively towards the construction of a world community based on love and respect for others. The essays of Bessis are warning against exclusionism in the Western world. This ideology leads people to act deadly towards their equals. Therefore, exclusionism must be completely proscribed because it is a lethal threat to the common good of Humanity.

³⁵ Bessis, *La civilisation judéo-chrétienne*, 88-89.

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