

No Need To Play The Dhimmi

ROME – A decision to cover up nude statues from Roman antiquity during a visit by President Hassan Rouhani of Iran has drawn ridicule and scorn in Italy – much of it directed at the Italian government – and spurred a debate about the national identity.

The statues, in a corridor leading to a grand hall in Rome's renowned Capitoline Museums, were encased in tall white boxes ahead of a news conference that Mr. Rouhani held on Monday with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy. One of the statues was the "Capitoline Venus," a Roman copy of a legendary fourth century B.C. work by Praxiteles; some of the other sculptures were of ancient Greek and Roman gods, dressed minimally, if at all... "The problem is that those statues – yes, those icons of classicism and models of humanism – are the foundation of European and Mediterranean culture and civilization," the columnist Michele Serra wrote in *La Repubblica*. To conceal them, he wrote, "is to conceal ourselves." To not offend the Iranian president, he wrote, "we offended ourselves." – from the [*Jihad Watch*](#).