

**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN TURCO- EUROPEAN  
RELATIONS**

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**EZGİ GENÇ**

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Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

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Prof. Dr. Atilla Eralp  
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

---

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Bağcı  
Co-Supervisor

---

Assoc.Prof. Dr. A. Nuri Yurdusev  
Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members**

Assoc. Prof.Dr. Mehmet Okyayuz

(METU,ADM)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. A. Nuri Yurdusev

(METU, IR)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Fulya Kip-Barnard

(METU, IR)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Ezgi Genç

Signature:

## ABSTRACT

### THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN TURCO- EUROPEAN RELATIONS

Genç, Ezgi

MS. Department of International Relations

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. A. Nuri Yurdusev

Co- Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Bağcı

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This thesis analyzes the role of the religious identity in Turco-European relations in terms of historical and perceptual levels. Within this context, ways in which an enriched understanding of the concept of religion, as a principal element of culture and identity and as one of the main and oldest concepts in European identity which may contribute to a better comprehension of contemporary Turco- European relations, especially within the framework of Turkish candidacy to the European Union will be explored. For this aim, the notion of identity, the bases and components of identity, the role of the *other* in identity formation, the historical evolution of European identity, European religious identity, the role of religion in European identity, the historical development of Christianity and its impact on Europe, the Turkish identity from the European perspective and the impact of Muslim Turks on the formation and strengthening of the European identity, Christian Europe and Muslim Turkey relations, the role and the importance of their religious identity and the reciprocal effects of it to the current relations will be studied. Lastly, the current perceptions of the Europeans towards Turkey, especially contemporary image of Turkey from European perspective in terms of religion and culture will be examined. Within this framework, the conclusion will be the analysis of the effects of cultural and religious elements in foreign policy and taking political decisions, such as the accession of Turkey into the European Union.

Keywords: Identity, Religion, Turco-European Relations.

## ÖZ

### TÜRK- AVRUPA İLİŞKİLERİNDE DİNİ KİMLİĞİN ROLÜ

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Bu çalışma, tarihsel ve algısal açılarından Türk-Avrupa ilişkilerinde dini kimliğin rolünü incelemektedir. Bu bağlamda, özellikle Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne adaylığı çerçevesinde günümüz Türk-Avrupa ilişkilerinin daha iyi anlaşılmasına katkı sağlayacak olan Avrupa kimliğinin en temel ve en eski kavramlarından biri olan ve kültür ve kimliğin başlıca unsuru olan din kavramının daha geniş bir şekilde anlaşılabilmesi için yollar aranacaktır. Bu amaçla, kimlik kavramı, kimliğin temeli ve bileşenleri, kimlik oluşumunda *ötekinin* rolü, Avrupa kimliğinin tarihsel gelişimi, Avrupa dini kimliği, Avrupa kimliğinde dinin rolü, Hristiyanlığın tarihsel gelişimi ve Avrupa'ya etkisi, Avrupa perspektifinden Türk kimliği, Avrupa kimliğinin oluşumu ve güçlenmesinde Müslüman Türklerin etkisi, Hristiyan Avrupa ve Müslüman Türkiye ilişkileri, dini kimliklerinin rolü, önemi ve bunun mevcut ilişkilere etkileri çalışılacaktır. Son olarak, Avrupalıların Türkiye'yi bugünkü algılayış tarzları, özellikle dini ve kültürel bakımdan Türkiye'nin Avrupalılar gözünde mevcut imajı incelenecektir. Bu çerçevede, çalışma, Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne kabulü gibi siyasi kararların alınmasında ve dış politikada kültürel ve dini unsurların etkilerinin analiz edilmesiyle sonuçlanacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kimlik, din, Türk- Avrupa İlişkileri.

To My Mother

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The problem of identity is almost as old as recorded history and it is one of the most serious issues that was under discussion and still remains to be a disputable matter in Turco-European relations. Identity was a severe concern between the Muslim Ottoman Empire and the Christian Europe and it is still the case between the secular Turkey and post-Christian Europe. As it is stated by Yurdusev, it is generally assumed that, although not explicitly stated, Turkey and European countries have not only different but also irreconcilable identities and between Turkey and Europe, there is an incompatibility of values.<sup>1</sup> Europeans and Turks have been in close contact and confrontation for a very long time, which has contributed to the formation of their modern identities. In European identity formation, Turkey has been one of the most influential *others*. Although a perception of the “Turk” as one of the *others* is more clearly visible in modern European identity, the modern Turkish identity too, has been formed in relation to the modern Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Since 1095, with the first Crusade, the fate of Turkey has been bound to her relationship to Europe. This nearly a thousand-year-old relationship is certain to keep its importance in the near future. It was the Crusaders who first called this land “Turchia”, because the people they fought here called their language “Turkish”. This land was known as “Asia Minor” before, and was called “Anatolia” by the Byzantines. Nine hundred years before the Turkish Republic was founded, the concept of “Turkey” was developed by the Europeans, without distinguishing between the ethnicities of the peoples that populated this particular

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<sup>1</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations” in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.77.

<sup>2</sup> Mustafa Aydın, “The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey's European Vocation”, in *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, Winter 2003, p.326.

geographical space. To stop the heritage of the Romans passing on into the hands of the barbarian Asians, Europeans called the new overlords of Anatolia simply “Turks.” Similarly the Turks, who, since the time of the Crusades, regarded the Europeans as “infidels,” named them as “Franks.” Thus came into existence of the clash between the “Barbarian Turk” and the “Infidel Frank.”<sup>3</sup> It is even argued by some that the Crusades were not against Islam but rather against the Turks and hundreds of books may be written on the prejudices that the Europeans acquired against Turks from then on.<sup>4</sup>

It is obvious and accepted by many circles that the Turks and the Europeans reciprocally had a great role in shaping each other’s identity. Just as Europeans have greatly contributed to the formation of the Turkish identity, so the Turks have also been the cause for the search for a common “European” concept. Halit Refig writes in his article “Should Turkey Look East?” that the Europeans alienated themselves from the Turkish lifestyle and culture, which they characterized as “alla turca.” On the other hand, although it did not fit with their everyday lives and culture, the Turks have done the opposite, making European culture- which they called as “alla franca” – a part of their lives. They even elevated it to an elite status. Turkey has faced Europe, as the inheritor of the Romans, for a thousand years, seeking equality within its ranks, but always refusing to accept its political supremacy. All the while, doing everything in their power to restrain the control of Europe over Asia, Turks also have not regretted their Asian roots.<sup>5</sup>

The British political historian Lord Acton stated that modern history and European self-awareness emerged as a consequence of the pressure caused by the Ottoman

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<sup>3</sup> Halit Refig, “Should Turkey Look East”, in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 18, Issue 4, 2001, p.85.

<sup>4</sup> Alaattin Diker, “Avrupa Birliği Yolunda Türkiye ve İmajı”, in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.20.

<sup>5</sup> Halit Refig, “Should Turkey Look East?”, in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 18, Issue 4, 2001, p.85.

victories.<sup>6</sup> Again, according to some historians, the discovery of the American continent was a direct result of European land access to Asia being sealed off by the Turks. As a result, the Europeans started to search for new routes across the seas.

There are, of course, several components of this discussion like geography, politics, economic relations, civilizations, values and traditions. However, in my dissertation, I will try to focus on the one that has been under discussion for centuries until today: Religion. Why such a discussion on this subject is taking place in International Relations? Because religion seems increasingly intruding into international affairs- or rather to reintroduce itself there, for in past centuries it played a central role in relations between states as well as in their internal life.<sup>7</sup>

In the past, the mediaeval Catholic Church played a great role in the anti-Turkish propaganda. The hostile preachings were reinforcing the European prejudices against the Turks. This propaganda is resembled to the ones that were applied between the Catholics and the Protestants. The European ruling class had used the fear against Turks as a propaganda tool in order to keep the society under control.<sup>8</sup> In an era when the religious wars were at its zenith in Europe, the only point that the Catholics and the Protestants had in common, was that the Turks was a heresy, tyrannical and despotic race. It is claimed by Diker that the phrase “Türkenhund” was not created in the streets but rather in the churches.<sup>9</sup> The aim of this was to foster the Christian identity by using the Turkish threat. Erasmus who is regarded as one of the architects of Catholic Christianity, had said that “God has sent Turks in order to punish the sinful Christians; however Turkish race cannot be wiped out

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<sup>6</sup> John Acton, *Lectures on Modern History* (London: Mac Millan, 1950), p.49.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Mortimer, “Christianity and Islam”, in *International Affairs*, 67, Issue 1, 1991, p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Quated from M.Küchbach, “Der Kern des Goldenen Apfels”, in *Academia*, Issue 3, 1983, p.17 in Alaattin Diker, “Avrupa Birliği Yolunda Türkiye ve İmajı”, in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.20.

<sup>9</sup> Alaattin Diker, “Avrupa Birliği Yolunda Türkiye ve İmajı”, in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.20.

without moral purification”.<sup>10</sup> The founder of Protestantism, Martin Luther, in his pamphlets “Prayer against Turks” and “On War against the Turk” calls Turks as “the agents of the Devil” and calls the Devil as “the head-commander of Turks”.<sup>11</sup> Despite the close contact and mutual influence in each other’s identity, the Ottomans were not considered as part of Europe until the late eighteenth century, because Europe was still defined in terms of religion and the Turk had a different religion, the heresy of Islam. Cemil Meriç tried to make an emphasis on the different identity values, especially on the religious differences between Europe and Turkey by these words. “Even if we burn all the Qur’ans and tear down all mosques, we are still the Ottomans in the eye of the European. Ottoman to them means Islam: a dark, dangerous and hostile mass”.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, according to some scholars Turkey and Europe have been highly engaged with each other throughout history, and it doesn’t always have to be in negative terms. Yurdusev explains that a re-reading of history reveals that the confrontations between the Turks and the Europeans were no more confrontational than those among the European nations. The so-called religious difference, too, reflects a one-sided reading of the texts and history. He also adds that historically conflicts between the Muslims and the Christians have not been bloodier than the internal conflicts of these religious groupings.<sup>13</sup>

In the amidst of all these discussions, the declaration of Turkey’s candidacy in the European Union brought new discussions, such as the borders of the Union, the political order and the bases on which this order will be built and the discussions on the political and cultural identity of the European Union gained a different

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Cemil Meriç, *Umrandan Uygarlığa* (İstanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 1979), p.9.

<sup>13</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations” in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today’s Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.88.

dimension. At this moment, religion as an irreconcilable difference is put as a major obstacle for Turkey on the way of Turkey's accession to the European Union by some circles not only in Europe but also in Turkey. In fact, the words of Jacques Delors, a former head of the European Commission, "You will not be able to become a part of the European Union with that flag of yours," voiced to Mr. Erdal Inonu while he was the foreign secretary, were clear indicators of the historical "crescent-cross" clash.<sup>14</sup> In "Thesenpapier Report" prepared by the CSU party group, the grant of candidacy status is regarded as an irresponsibility that is committed towards Europe.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the Christian parties draw the discussions to a cultural and religious basis. It is normal to experience an identity problem in a European Union that is transforming itself from an economic club to a political one. Accordingly, the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted "European Identity Politics Document".<sup>16</sup> The fundamentals of this document are "common heritage, common interests, special obligations and the responsibility to act in harmony towards third countries. Especially the concept of common heritage underlines the traditions and values that have their roots in Greek, Roman and Christian history. However, the religious side of European identity is not explicitly stated. In 1997 EU Convention, the European identity is taken into consideration within a framework of secular understanding: "... to follow common foreign and security policy and thus foster the European identity and independence".

The European Constitution that has been signed in Rome on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2004 does not specifically mention Christianity, but rather cultural heritage. However, this issue has been and still is under discussion among Europeans and especially has been severely criticized by the Vatican. Although the Constitution has been signed by the European governments, some European countries are planning to have a referendum on the issue and still fighting to include references

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<sup>14</sup> Halit Refig, "Should Turkey Look East", in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 18, Issue 4, 2001, p.85.

<sup>15</sup> Alaattin Diker, "Avrupa Birliği Yolunda Türkiye ve İmajı", in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.21.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

to the God of the Bible. The result will demonstrate the borders of European identity, whether Europe represents a civilization that is based on religion and Christian tradition or a geographic-political unit that is based on secular worldview. The most agitated debate at the Convention that produced the draft Constitution of the European Union focused on the preamble, specifically whether God in general, and Christianity in particular, ought to be mentioned among the sources of the "values" that produced a common European culture and heritage. Though the Vatican did not have a representative at the convention in Brussels, Pope John Paul II has been the most outspoken of the European churchmen who have argued that Christianity should be listed among the inspirational sources that have shaped European culture. Speaking at a conference, Pope Jean Paul II said that while adopting the European Charter, the European Union must not forget that Europe is the cradle of the notions of individuals and liberty and these ideas have reached through its long impregnation by Christianity.<sup>17</sup> Opponents have argued that a reference to God misrepresents the Constitution's secular purpose, and that a specific reference to Christianity would alienate Western Europe's 15 million Muslim immigrants — and of course Muslim Turkey, which is eager to join in the Union's eastward expansion.<sup>18</sup> After heated debates, delegates voted to leave out of the preamble of the constitution all references to God or to Christianity. Secularist forces led by delegates from France prevailed over dissenting votes from Germany, Italy, the Vatican, and a few other countries. The section of the preamble that deals with the sources of Europe's values now merely mentions "the cultural, religious, and humanist inheritance of Europe."<sup>19</sup> Woodward, in his article published in New York Times describes this as a dishonest behavior. He underlines the words of Christopher Dawson, the great historian of medieval Europe, "At the center of culture is cult," and he adds that for more than a

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<sup>17</sup> Marcin Libicki, "Collective Identity: The Conjunction of Philosophical, Psychological, Mythical, Historical and Legal Elements", in The European Identity, Colloquy in Three Parts Organized by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 17-18 April 2001, Strasbourg, p.39.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.apostle1.com/europe-without-christianity-06142003-3.html>

<sup>19</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/futurum/constitution/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/futurum/constitution/index_en.htm)

millennium, the cult or "worship" of Europeans was clearly Christian. On that basis alone, Christianity has an unrivaled claim to a privileged place among the sources of European culture.<sup>20</sup> For him and for many Europeans, Christianity has an immense contribution to the core of European values and not mentioning Europe's Christian heritage is a big failure. Woodward also strongly criticizes "the central role of the human person, and his inviolable and inalienable rights, and of respect for law" expression in the draft Constitution. He states that it was not just "religion" that shaped Europe's heritage; it was a specific religion with its own unique, transforming set of values. According to Woodward, "Surely it was Christianity that made the human person, as a child of God, central to European values. And it was the principle law of the Catholic Church, the oldest legal system in the West, that nurtured respect for law long before the rise of Europe's nation-states."<sup>21</sup>

Another argument on this issue comes from Keith Barton, who supports the inclusion of Christianity in the European Constitution more strongly than Woodward, believes that the ideas that made Europe a great civilization were born out of the Christian faith and the heritage of the West is like none other the world has ever seen and that Christian faith affects every area of their lives. In the words of Barton, "It gave us new concepts of law, government, and human rights—based on biblical values. Its artists and composers created masterpieces that have lasted for centuries—to glorify God. In the sciences, in literature, in mathematics, in medicine, and in so many other areas, the story is the same. He argues that if Europe ignores the essential role of Christianity in the development of its culture, no wonder Europe is losing its moral authority in the world."<sup>22</sup> Some circles even assert that European victory over the communist regimes in 1989 were not the results of a miracle, but of strong social resistance to communism, based on the

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<sup>20</sup> Kenneth L. Woodward, NY Times, June 14, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/futurum/constitution/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/futurum/constitution/index_en.htm)

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.chronwatch.com/content/contentDisplay.asp?aid=3342&catcode=11>

2000 year old foundations of European culture: Christianity, which offered the support needed to defend human dignity, private ownership, freedom of religion and so on.<sup>23</sup>

Since all identities identify the *other* before itself, the question of the external borders of European identity acquires crucial importance. Within this framework, the most important problem for the European common identity project is how to locate Islam and Turkey in the European identity, which has been regarded as the *other* of the Western world throughout history.<sup>24</sup>

There are various reasons put forward against Turkey's membership to the E.U, however most of the people in Turkey including intellectuals believe that the main argument is very simple: Turkey does not belong to the cultural and religious identity of Europe. This idea is also expressed by the Europeans nowadays since the time to make a decision for Turkey approaches. According to the historian Hans-Ulrich Gehler, Turkey cannot accede into European Union simply "because of the wars that took place between the Muslim Ottoman Empire and the Christian Europe for 450 years."<sup>25</sup> The Jewish-Christian tradition as the foundation of European civilization has consistently been emphasized by many intellectuals. When Turkish membership to the European Union, namely being a part of the European cultural geography comes to the agenda, the Europeans always consider the "cultural differences". However, under the term "culture", the religion has an extremely important role and is implied tacitly and directly. For Kalın and Kösebalaban it is difficult to understand how come the European philosophy, which is claimed to exclude religion from the public area, takes religion (Islam) as a significant element of analysis and uses this as data for a political decision. The

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<sup>23</sup> Marcin Libicki, "Collective Identity: The Conjunction of Philosophical, Psychological, Mythical, Historical and Legal Elements", in The European Identity, Colloquy in Three Parts Organized by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 17-18 April 2001, Strasbourg, p.39.

<sup>24</sup> Ibrahim Kalın and Hasan Kosebalaban, "Avrupa'nın Kimlik Arayışı ya da Dünya Tarihine Karşı Avrupa Tarihi", in Yarın, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.28.

<sup>25</sup> Tageszeitung, 10 September 2002.



Europeans, who are less devout than an average American citizen, gets a more devout point of view when the religion is taken into hand as a social and cultural concept. They explain this as the demonstration of the strength of the *other* created to foster European identity.<sup>26</sup>

Within this context, it is observed that one of the most important others of the European identity is still Islam as a socio-cultural and geographic unit. In line with this, Turkish membership to the European Union is discussed on the basis of culture, religion and history that is represented by Turkey and it is thought that it should be kept excluded. The fear in many circles in Europe is that if Turkey were admitted as a member state, this would mean to accept the fact that the main idea behind the European common identity is not religion and culture but rather geography. Such an acceptance would be difficult to tolerate even by the intellectuals who usually make an emphasis on the Christian-Jewish tradition and secular worldview.<sup>27</sup>

This thesis analyzes the role of the religious identity in Turco-European relations in terms of historical and perceptual levels. Within this context, ways in which an enriched understanding of the concepts of religion, as a principal element of culture and identity and as one of the main and oldest concepts in European identity which may contribute to a better comprehension of contemporary Turco-European relations, especially within the framework of Turkish candidacy to the European Union will be explored. For this aim, first of all, an introduction to the notion of identity, the bases and components of an identity and the role of the *other* in identity formation will be considered. After that, the historical evolution of European identity, European religious identity and the role of religion in European identity will be explored. Having studied the historical development of

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<sup>26</sup> Ibrahim Kalin and Hasan Kosebalaban, "Avrupa'nın Kimlik Arayışı ya da Dünya Tarihine Karşı Avrupa Tarihi", in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.28.

<sup>27</sup> Ibrahim Kalin and Hasan Kosebalaban, "Avrupa'nın Kimlik Arayışı ya da Dünya Tarihine Karşı Avrupa Tarihi", in *Yarın*, Year 2, Issue 18, 2003, p.29.

Christianity and its impact on Europe, the Turkish identity from the European perspective and the impact of Muslim Turks on the formation and strengthening of the European identity, Christian Europe and Muslim Turkey relations, the role and the importance of their religious identity and the reciprocal effects of it to the current relations will be studied. Such a study will definitely focus on historical events that took place between the two communities/religions. Lastly, the current perceptions of the Europeans towards Turkey, especially contemporary image of Turkey from European perspective in terms of religion and culture will be examined. Within this framework, the conclusion will be the analysis of the effects of cultural and religious elements in foreign policy and taking political decisions, such as the accession of Turkey into the European Union.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE NOTION OF IDENTITY

Recently, culture and identity have been staging a dramatic comeback in social theory and practice. An increasing interest toward culture and identity is strikingly evident in the post-Cold War International Relations (IR) theorizing. Lapid explains two sets of dramatic transitions for such a trend in the IR domain- one in the realm of the global situation and the other in the realm of IR scholarship. Starting with the former, he says that the global outbreak of separatist nationalism set in motion by the abrupt ending of the Cold War has directly and inescapably forced the IR scholarly community to rethink the theoretical status of culture and identity in world affairs. On a larger scale, however, the IR discipline seems to be responding also to a broader perception that “a new, somehow profoundly globalized, era is being born.”<sup>28</sup>

Neumann writes that the book-length study to address world political concerns did not appear from inside the International Relations discipline. It was the work of a literary critic, Tzavan Todorov, who as a Bakhtinian of Bulgarian background, was also part of the “Eastern excursion.” His book *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* treated the early sixteenth century Spanish legal-clerical debate about the status of “the Indians” of the New World. Todorov’s monograph was the first fully-fledged application of the self/other problematic to a historical discursive sequence, but the monograph that extended this kind of analysis to the discipline of International Relations was arguably James Der Derian’s genealogy of diplomacy (1987). The human collectives that served as Der Derian’s selves and *others* were states and the focus of his analysis was their mediation of separation.

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<sup>28</sup> Yosef Lapid, “Culture’s Ship: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory”, in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, (ed.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), p.3.

Another theorist who introduced self/other theorizing to the discipline was Michael J. Shapiro. He had remarked in 1988 that foreign policy generally is about making an *other*, he also applied a number of the insights discussed earlier to the questions of war and peace.<sup>29</sup>

In the recent years, political realists- who under the impact of their Waltzian move to neorealism have harshly marginalized culture and identity- are cautiously involving themselves in this trend. Similarly, following a period of hostile indifference to “ideational explanations” the time for “ideas” seems to have come around once again in International Political Economy and foreign policy analysts, who have been long satisfied to treat culture as “an explanation of last resort seem now determined “to move forward in the study of cultural effects in foreign policy”. Whereas most mainstream perspectives have only recently and reluctantly begun to acknowledge the significance of culture and identity, reflectivist/ constructivist/ postpositivist/ postmodernist/ poststructuralist and feminist challengers have derived much of their energy from a sustained interest in precisely these factors.<sup>30</sup>

As it is known, in the context of International Relations, realism and neorealism are based on the unsurpassable centrality of the state as the clearing room for diverging interests and as the place of supreme decision making; in other words an entity whose interests are defined once and for all by its functions of authority and security. However, Cerutti believes that unlike these positions, literature on identity has revealed that before observing it and its effects, it is necessary to understand in what form of group behavior the actors become the subjects of the

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<sup>29</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: “The East” in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p.21-23.

<sup>30</sup> Yosef Lapid, “Culture’s Ship: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory”, in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, (ed.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), p.3.

action in question.<sup>31</sup> We should also figure out how the actors' self-perception often changes in the course of action or how they disaggregate. In other words, since identity is an explanation and qualification of existence, the concept explains whether an actor feels himself as a part of a certain social group in which he shares certain values and norms. According to Cerutti, in order to understand the claims of ethno-national or ethno-religious movements, and in general, civilizations or cultures, we should investigate these on the basis of how a group's members share certain cultural values. Such sharing, the nucleus of identity, provides a basis of meaning to the actions of the group, creating an element thanks to which the actions of the group make sense in the eyes of the group's members. From this point of view, a sense of unity through the sharing of certain values is a prerequisite for the legitimacy of a political group, especially if it has or would like to form itself into an institution. Namely, the establishment and intergenerational transmission of the identity of a group creates a source of meaning for the life and decisions of every person and this gives a sense of legitimacy and unity to that group's existence. Thus, identity has drawn out attention from the structure to the agents and their ways of behavior.

## **2.1 THE PRINCIPAL FEATURES AND COMPONENTS OF IDENTITY**

Identity is a complex concept that is made up of many components and layers interacting at different and changing levels. At this point, I would like to emphasize some principal features of identity before passing to the concept of religious identity.

When we study the literature on identity, such as Freud, Mead, Erikson, Parsons and Habermas, the first common point is that, identification- the mechanism of internalizing the attitude and behavior of significant *others*- is a psychobiological

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<sup>31</sup> Furio Cerutti, "Political Identity and Conflict: A Comparison of Definitions", in Furio Cerutti and Rodolfo Racionieri, (ed.), *Identities and Conflicts* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.9.

imperative based in the earliest infantile need to survive.<sup>32</sup> For William Bloom, identification is an inherent and unconscious behavioral imperative in all individuals. Identification theory is a psychological theory, which holds out the possibility of providing a psychological key to the problematic of integration and mobilization. It holds out this possibility because it states that in order to achieve psychological security, every individual possesses an inherent drive to internalize –to identify with- the behavior, attitudes of significant figures in her/his social environment; i.e. people actively seek identity. Moreover, identifications can be shared, with the result that individuals who share the same identification will tend to act in concert in order to protect or enhance their shared identity.<sup>33</sup>

To begin with, it should be mentioned that there are different and common identities. First of all, there are some features that the human beings all have in common. This leads to the formation of a universal identity, namely humanity. Added to this, there are some values that people share with some other people and these features make someone belong to a group of people. We may also call this as group consciousness. Group consciousness describes the collective feelings or attitudes of individuals who regard themselves as belonging to nations, sub-nations, social classes, religious sects or any other identity types with a sense of distinctiveness of their own.<sup>34</sup> A person may also have very special characteristics that only belong to him and this forms the individual, personal identity.<sup>35</sup>

Group consciousness thus imports a sense of *us* or of *we-ness* with a corresponding sense of distinctiveness from others regarded as *them* or the *other*. Just as the individual acquires an individual identity under his own name in relation to other

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<sup>32</sup> William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.50.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>34</sup> W A Elliot, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), p.3.

<sup>35</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Avrupa Kimliğinin Oluşumu ve Türk Kimliği”, in Atila Eralp, (ed.), *Türkiye ve Avrupa* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1997), p.24.

selves, so too social identity requires the awareness of belonging to a distinctively named group in contrast to other groups. The individual then becomes aware of *what* he is in group terms. From such awareness also stem particular examples such as national, racial, class or religious group consciousness. These are all the end product of the collective identification of individuals.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, group names are important for indicating what people are and for serving as labels or symbols of identity. Collective names are only labels of distinctiveness, designating *us* or *own* people from others. They do not usually cause identification in the first place.<sup>37</sup> The words ‘my’ or ‘own’ people also import a sense of belonging, which is crucial to *we-ness* and *they-ness*.

This leads us to the importance of the existence of the *other* in identity formation. Huntington writes: “We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know who we are against.”<sup>38</sup> The theorist who specifically relates the question of identity formation to the conceptual pair of *self/other*, however, is Hegel. He redefines the idea that by knowing the *other*, the self has the power to give or withhold recognition, so as to be constituted as self at the same time.<sup>39</sup> Post-structuralists such as Derrida, problematized identity, for example, by arguing that identity presupposes difference and the subject becomes a subject only by inscribing itself in a system of difference.<sup>40</sup> Difference, he says, is not either an identity, nor is it the difference between two identities. In its simplest form, difference is both itself and identity. He argues that for any identification

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<sup>36</sup> W A Elliot, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), p.6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>38</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon&Schuster, 1996), p.21.

<sup>39</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: “The East” in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p.3.

<sup>40</sup> Eli Zaretsky, “Identity Theory, Identity Politics: Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Post-Structuralism” in Craig Calhoun, (ed.), *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell,1994), p.212.

process, there is a need for the *other*. Identity, it seems, is constructed from the outside- from those things that as individuals influence and affect us- culture, language and environment. It is those “outside” influences combined that define us and compose our identity.<sup>41</sup>

In the words of Emile Durkheim, the lineation of an “in-group” must necessarily entail its demarcation from a number of “out-groups”. For Durkheim, the creation of social boundaries is not a consequence of integration; rather it is one of its necessary a priori ingredients.<sup>42</sup> Thus, for any unit of identity and identification process, there is a need for the *other*. This means that identification needs distinction and they are ontologically dependent on relations to others. For example in order to define someone with the university he is attending, there should be other universities than the one he is attending. For someone to identify himself with Christianity, there should be other religions like Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, etc. If there were no religions other than Christianity, it would be meaningless for somebody to define himself with it. It means that a Christian may not be a Muslim or a Jew. The identity of something depends upon the existence of something else. We may also observe the importance of the role of the *other* in naming identity units. Even the names of religious adherents, such as Christians, Jews or Muslims all started as nicknames given by the outsiders. In each case, however, the particular name has become the hallmark of a strong and widespread social identification.<sup>43</sup>

Added to this, different identities strengthen a specific identity. There are differences in the way the *other* is perceived. The *other* may just be seen as unfamiliar or stranger, however if it is regarded as a threatening force that identity

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.louisville.edu/a-s/english/babo/raia/identity.html>

<sup>42</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: “The East” in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p.3.

<sup>43</sup> W. A. Elliot, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), p.8.



is largely formed in negative terms. This also shows that by negating the *other*, you strengthen your own identity. For instance, we experience throughout the history that a common Christian identity was fostered by the existence of the Muslim Ottoman Empire. It is obvious that the existence of *other* is crucial as a category of classification and the *other* as a category of classification is perceived in pejorative terms. This means that an external threat usually helps the affirmation and unification of an identity. The mobilization against common enemies or threats can be an especially strong force in the creation of new collective identities, as was very much evident at the beginning of the Cold War and the emergence of collective identities such as “the West” and the “Free World”. For instance, the Hundred Years’ War had a great impact in the determination and strengthening of the British and French national identities. For Trevelyan, it was this prolonged conflict which brought England “strong national self-consciousness; great memories and traditions; a belief in the island qualities...”<sup>44</sup> However, an identity may not only be formed by the differences it has from the *others*. There should also be a process of the identity formation itself. Collective identity is a social construction rather than a natural gift, which consists external and internal friends and enemies. In other words, it is a process of inclusion and exclusion. While including the similar values, it also excludes the differences someone has with *others*.

Identities, however, can take on a pathological form when they are constructed against a category of *otherness*.<sup>45</sup> Instead of identity being defined by a sense of belongingness and solidarity arising out of sharing, it becomes focused on opposition to an *other*: the *we* is defined not by reference to a framework of shared experiences, common goals and a collective horizon, but rather by the negation of the *other*. Identification takes place through the imposition of *otherness* in the formation of a dual typology of ‘us’ and ‘them’. The defining characteristic of that

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<sup>44</sup> G.M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (London: Longman’s, 1943), p.232.

<sup>45</sup> J.Fabian, *Time and the Other* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983)

specific group is not what its members have in common but in what separates them from other groups. This difference is formed in two ways: self-identity by the recognition of *otherness* or by the negation of otherness: solidarity or exclusion. This dichotomy between *self* and *other* has been critical in the making of European identity and also is of crucial importance in Turco-European relations.

Thirdly, the process of identification is a multilateral, dynamic and continuous process. Since identities are social, a person is always open to encounter and adopt new identities. This shows us that identification is an ongoing process, which is always open to novelties and changes. Identities historically and socially emerge, exist and may disappear. The identity of communities and nations may change due to innumerable factors; it is affected by events, leaders, political mobilization and counter-mobilization. This also leads us to the idea that identification process is time and space bounding. The impact of a certain identity may also change in time. In a specific time in history, an identity may be more important for people to identify themselves. For instance, while before the modern times it was more common for the Europeans to define themselves with religious identity, in the modern times national identity became more efficient in identification. As it is emphasized by Bloom, to avoid citizenship and national identity is extremely difficult- so difficult, in fact, that in the contemporary world, to be without national identity is to be perceived as almost without identity.<sup>46</sup>

Fourthly, human beings have a wide variety of possible collective affiliations- economic and occupational groups, class or social status, leisure and welfare associations, age and gender categories, territorial and political organizations, as well as families and cultural communities. With all of these, individuals can simultaneously identify, moving with relative ease from one to the other, as circumstances demand. We may be wives or husbands, manual workers, members of a religious community, ethnic group, regional association, or whatever, each of

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<sup>46</sup> Willam Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.74

which may become relevant in certain situations and for certain purposes. As a result, we may have multiple identities, ranging from the most intimate family circle to the widest, the human species.<sup>47</sup> However, it also calls attention to the fact that multiple identities may complement each other, but there are also situations where they come into conflict. While there are unexpected situations where multiple identities are in harmony and may even complement and enrich each other, there are other contexts where they conflict. It should also be added that, identity, as a sense of belonging to a group, does not exclude ties with other groups: in fact it may exist in the form of a hierarchy of identities with one dominant identity and other ones of lesser importance. An individual may imagine his/her identity to consist of various levels: he/she may think of him/herself as a member of his/her nationality, and also as a European, for example.<sup>48</sup>

Smith states that certain varieties of these multiple identities have always exerted a special power. These are the specifically cultural types of collective identities. Examples of such collective identities include castes, ethnic communities, religious groups and nations. Other collective identities, such as classes, regions and gender groups, may also have cultural dimensions, but they function mainly as interest groups, answering to particular collective needs. They have often been overshadowed in history by more intense and pervasive cultural identities, because the basic cultural elements from which these communities have been formed are more persistent and binding than the shared needs and interests that characterize other kinds of collective identity.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "The Formation of National Identity" in Henry Harris, (ed.), *Identity: Essays Based on Herbert Spencer Lectures Given in the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp.130-131.

<sup>48</sup> Rasma Karklins, "Collective Identity: The Conjunction of Philosophical, Psychological, Mythical, Historical and Legal Elements", in The European Identity, Colloquy in Three Parts Organised by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 17-18 April 2001, Strasbourg, p.32.

<sup>49</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "The Formation of National Identity" in Henry Harris, (ed.), *Identity: Essays Based on Herbert Spencer Lectures Given in the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.131.

Fifthly, it is mentioned by Bloom that mass mobilization is possible when the individuals in the mass share the same identification. Bloom explains the reason of this capacity to direct people to a common action with the following proposition. He states that through a shared identification, individuals are linked within the same psychological syndrome and will act together to preserve, defend and enhance their common identity.<sup>50</sup> Yurdusev makes a contribution to this statement by arguing that the wider the scope of an identity is, the less effect it would have on the people for common actions. He proves this by comparing the potential to mobilize people for common action within a national or ethnic identity and within civilizations or empires.<sup>51</sup>

Sixthly, in the formation and identification of a social identity, there are both objective and subjective elements. Objective elements are the ones that are shared by all the members of that social identity; symbols, myths, language, religion, ethnic roots, geography, life style, common history, customs and traditions. A collective social identity begins to appear when the members of the said collectivity internalize the objective elements and the dominant character of a social identity is formed with the emphasis on one of these elements. Added to this, the members of a common social identity should also have the subjective consciousness that they “belong” to that specific social identity. In fact, the objective elements of a social identity lead to the consciousness of belonging to a social identity, namely they are interrelated to each other. If the members don’t share anything in common, they wouldn’t feel themselves as the members of a certain social identity. When social scientists try to measure identity, they quite often use the question: “To what extent do you feel that you belong to the following group?” A sense of belonging is basically a cognitive process, but emotional components also affect self-identification. Among such components is

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<sup>50</sup> William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.26.

<sup>51</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Avrupa Kimliğinin Oluşumu ve Türk Kimliği”, in Atila Eralp, (ed.), *Türkiye ve Avrupa* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1997), pp.25-26.

emotional elation, pride in one's ethnic group or nation, esteem for a professional group, etc. Therefore, to measure how identity is valued, many surveys such as the World Values Survey implemented by Ronald Inglehart also asks: "Are you proud of (specific group identity)...?" From this, Inglehart and other political scientists construct scales and rankings of types of political and national identities.<sup>52</sup>

Seventhly, the identities a person has may be classified in two categories: identities gained and identities by birth. Family, ethnic group, nation and civilization are the types of identities that are gained by birth with the effect of social environment that people are living. On the other hand being a member of a sports club, being a scientist or an engineer are the identities that are gained in time in by preferences. However in time both kinds of identities may change, as identification process is a dynamic and multilateral one. For example, a Muslim person may change his religion into Christianity and vice-versa.

Lastly, the perception of identities depends on their mutual positioning. As it is mentioned before, the differences that the members of a society have from the *others* consolidate their own identity. History and experience shows that the negation of the *other*, especially when it is a threat or a competitor, has a great role in the internal consolidation of a certain identity. For instance, Smith writes that Greek ethno-religious identity was heightened by Latin and Islamic Turkish threats in the last years of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>53</sup> The same case may also be seen in the formation of Islamic Turkish identity and Christian European identity. In order to comprehend this, the historical formation and the effects of these two identities to each other should be studied.

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<sup>52</sup> Rasma Karklins, "Collective Identity: The Conjunction of Philosophical, Psychological, Mythical, Historical and Legal Elements", in The European Identity, Colloquy in Three Parts Organised by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 17-18 April 2001, Strasbourg, p.32.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "The Formation of National Identity" in Henry Harris, (ed.), *Identity: Essays Based on Herbert Spencer Lectures Given in the University of Oxford*" (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 147.

## 2.2 CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

The term culture has both individual and social applications. The roots of the concept for individuals go back to classical antiquity. For Greeks, as seen in the writings of Plato (428-347 BC), it was a central concept in personal development, directed towards intellectual development. In Latin, the term *cultura agri* (taking care of the land) was similar to Cicero's use of *cultura animi* (forming of the mind). Montaigne has a comparison between educating children and cultivating plants. 'Culture', which is originally an agricultural term, is used by Montaigne in metaphorical sense in the sixteenth century. In English, too, the term culture is found in the metaphorical sense. The seventeenth century philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) writes in *Leviathan* that the labor given on the earth is called culture and the education of children is the culture of their minds. Alongside with this personal development there was also politeness (French *civilité*) and in higher levels of society courtliness. Outward behavior thus implied a social dimension. This was also the case with customs and manners, which are associated with towns and courts of princes. However, culture had always been related to individuals until the late eighteenth century; it is only then that the word begins to be used to refer something collective. The social dimension of the concept of culture is in fact a product of Enlightenment and it was the French word 'civilization' which came into being to describe it.<sup>54</sup>

Culture in Clifford Geertz words is a "historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life."<sup>55</sup> According to Derrida, we come into this

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<sup>54</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.62.

<sup>55</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretations of Cultures* (Basic Books: New York, 1973), p.89.

world as a blank sheet and we are written on by culture, language, etc.<sup>56</sup> When culture is considered, it covers not only life style conceptions, artistic, literary, musical traditions but in broader terms it also includes political, economic, institutional, scientific, technological formations and values. Culture is dynamic in character and multidimensional by nature. Loizides explains culture to have at least three dimensions all carrying important, although not equal, explanatory value. He writes that in order to avoid misrepresentation of reality, social scientists should not equate culture exclusively with one of its three aspects. The higher level deals with those aspects of culture that stand above the nation such as transnational religious solidarity. The second level deals with the concept of national culture. Finally, the third level deals with regional and within national culture variation.<sup>57</sup>

In recent years the role of cultural identity is coming to the forefront. For instance, one of the most eminent theorists Samuel Huntington, has put forth this issue in one of the most prominent, controversial and highly publicized 1993 *Foreign Affairs* articles and subsequent publication, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. In his famous essay, *Clash of Civilizations*, he argues that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Moreover, the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. He claims that the clash of civilizations will dominate the global politics and the fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future. He also says that it is now meaningful to group countries not in terms of their political or economic systems but rather in terms of their culture and civilization. He explains that civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, and tradition, and most important, religion. The people

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.louisville.edu/a-s/english/babo/raia/identity.html>

<sup>57</sup> Neophytos G. Loizides, "Religion and Nationalism in the Balkans", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.2.

of different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife as well as differing views of the relative importance of the rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy. He states that these differences are the products of centuries and will not soon disappear. They are far fundamental than differences among political ideologies and political regimes. Over the centuries, differences among civilizations have generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts. As he continues, he stresses the importance of religion in today's societies. He believes that the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities. They also weaken the nation state as a source of identity. In much of the world, religion has moved in to fill this gap, often in the form of movements that are labeled "fundamentalists". This is called by Huntington as the revival of religion in the twentieth century. Even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim.<sup>58</sup>

In order to comprehend the role of religion as a component of identity and its place when we consider it in terms of cultural identity, it is better that we have a look at what Reverant Father Laurent Mazas from the Pontifical Council of Culture of Holy See, has reported in the Latvian Chair of the Council of Ministers organized by the Council of Europe on the European Identity:<sup>59</sup>

*The identity of a given people can be traced back to a whole series of characteristic traits, which, although the emphasis may vary, are always*

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<sup>58</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations", in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, Issue 3, Summer 1993, pp.24-26.

<sup>59</sup> Reverend Father Laurent Mazas, "Collective Identity: The Conjunction of Philosophical, Psychological, Mythical, Historical and Legal Elements", in The European Identity, Colloquy in Three Parts Organised by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 17-18 April 2001,Strasbourg, p.15.



*made up of components that complement each other: art, science and technology, language and moral code, customs and laws, and religion. And all of these public forms of expressions are rooted in the different dimensions of human life. The first dimension is that of homo faber, capable of producing beautiful or useful works of art or technology. Another is homo amicus and homo politicus, capable of establishing contacts with others, and of relating to them in a way governed by customs or laws and on the basis of particular languages and codes of morality. In addition, there is homo sapiens, capable of knowing and with a desire for wisdom. Knowledge is an undeniable and essential part of a people's identity. Lastly, there is homo religious, capable of opening up to a transcendent relationship expressed in religious practices and rituals and explained in terms of specific knowledge that can itself have a profound influence on the other areas of our lives and therefore determine our identity. We only have to look at the world as a whole, at history and sacred art to see the civilizing role of religion. However, religion is more than simply another aspect of culture. The tendency in some places is to regard religions, primarily those rooted in the Abrahamic revelation of a transcendent God (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) as no more than systems of cultural ethics. To a certain extent, sociologists can point to a real weakening of the influence of a particular religion in a given society or in the fringe of a specific population, but that can be no justification for refusing a culture and civilization the very possibility of religious fulfillment. This is a point made by the English historian Arnold Toynbee "So far there has never been a civilization that was not religious".*

In order to understand the role of religion for societies, we can analyze the formation of ethnic societies, modern nations and modern national identities. The word ethnic derives from the Greek word ethnos for people, leading later to ethnikai or people of other religions. The writings of Miroslav Hroch and Anthony Smith suggest that religion had a decisive role in the formation of modern nations.

Miroslav Hroch acknowledged the need for linguistic or religious ties enabling a higher degree of social communication within the group than beyond it, in the formation of modern nations.<sup>60</sup> He argued that ethnic identity was stronger whenever it was supported by ecclesiastical institutions and recorded in many occasions the role of clerics in the formation of patriotic groups in Europe.<sup>61</sup> Anthony Smith insisted on the importance of pre-modern ties including religion in the formation of modern nations. He gives the example of the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s, which was performed on religious not linguistic basis.<sup>62</sup>

Religious belief gives meaning, social ceremony and moral support to the daily lives of millions, especially in time of stress. Group consciousness and the religious impulse in man only happen to coincide when the attachment trait of religious believers is aroused against those of contrary faith and hence into identifying religiously. Normally, the different religious customs and beliefs of different nations need no antagonism. But they may all too easily be stimulated into so doing. Religious fundamentalists are the worst in this regard with their inflamed sense of *us* and *them* and that God is behind their atrocities.<sup>63</sup> For example, according to Richard A. Falk, Western cultural legacy has been nurtured and evolved over the centuries by dominant religious institutions and traditions and in this legacy there is a deeply embedded sense of “chosen people” as privileged vehicles of progress entitled to exert dominance on the *others*. However when this biblical myth is interpreted, it provides a basis for both a cult of superiority and a mandate to impose one’s cultural forms upon all those that resist,

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<sup>60</sup> Miroslav Hroch, “The Nature of the Nation”, in John A. Hall, (ed.), *The State of the Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.93.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96.

<sup>62</sup> Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth, 1971), p.245.

<sup>63</sup> W. A. Elliot, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), p.152.

whether they are within their territorial space (inquisitions) or without (holy wars).<sup>64</sup>

Loyalty and adherence to the Faith thus indicate social identification by religion. While contrary to the concept of brotherly love, cruelty too often occurs when religious outsiders come to be regarded as opponents. For instance, both the Crescent and the Cross were originally popularized as battle emblems. Cruelties then committed against religious *others* are as bad as any committed in the name of class, race or nation. Indeed, due to religious fanaticism, they are frequently worse.

Different religious sects within a faith, in trying to maintain its distinctiveness, may prove even more antagonistic towards each other than to members of a completely different faith, because the element of distinctiveness is the most important element in the maintenance of religious identification. This moral dichotomy resulting from group identification is as old as history. History witnessed how the enemies of the people can come to be viewed as the enemies of God. A strong sense of group identity with feelings of *us* and *them* removes any sense of contradiction and has always tended to eliminate humanitarian feelings towards an enemy, once group fear or anger is aroused. Then the foes are not regarded as being 'true' human beings at all. This may, indeed, like stereotyping, be a part of a primitive defense mechanism.<sup>65</sup> However, it should be noted here that no founders of any great religious faith ever intended to inspire group antagonism.

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<sup>64</sup> Richard A. Falk, "Culture, Modernism, Postmodernism: A Challenge to International Relations" in Jongsuk Chay, (ed.), *Culture and International Relations* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), pp.268-269.

<sup>65</sup> W. A. Elliot, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), pp.96-97

## CHAPTER 3

### DISCOURSES ON EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The term 'Europe' has a long history, but the idea of Europe is a recent phenomenon. It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that this idea, as a result of a new outlook on the nature and origins of Europe, came to have clear outlines. Until that time the history of the idea of Europe should largely be seen as a history of separate concepts. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, after the revolutionary change, the notion of the history of European culture as an idea itself came into being. Within this context, the idea of Europe became the subject of political debate and took an ideological dimension while liberty, Christianity and civilization played a crucial role within this process.<sup>66</sup>

Explaining the notion of Europe Delanty writes that "it is for sure that Europe is more than a region and polity; it is an idea and identity, a historically fabricated reality of ever-changing forms and dynamics".<sup>67</sup> The name Europe had existed for thousands of years and for centuries it had been something more than a neutral geographical expression. The idea of Europe existed long before people actually began to identify with it and see themselves as Europeans. What is important to know is how Europe became established as a reality for a cultural idea. According to Wilson and Dussen, until the end of the eighteenth century, Europe was a notion covering implicit and explicit assumptions rather than a concept with clearly defined meaning. Linguistic usages in various historical contexts suggest a certain European self-awareness, that is to say an awareness of Europe being the

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<sup>66</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.13.

<sup>67</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.3.

discriminating element existed, but the term itself has covered a variety of meanings, which have changed with the changing historical circumstances.<sup>68</sup>

The name Europa comes from Greek mythology. Some scholars have asserted that it was derived from the Phoenician, in which it might mean ‘the land of the setting sun’, while others have claimed a Greek origin for the word meaning the dark looking one. However, the origin of the name of the continent is still not exactly identified. In the Greek myths the Phoenician princess Europa, having been seduced by Zeus disguised as a white bull, abandoned her homeland in present day Lebanon for the western island Crete, where she later married the King of Crete. This suggests that Europe was not a Greek discovery but Phoenician and may even have had Semitic roots. The idea of Europe had little meaning for the Ancients. “Long before it became a geographical expression, the idea of Europe belonged more to the realm of myth than of science and politics”.<sup>69</sup>

Certainly at that time the geographical boundaries were not clear either. Europe’s boundaries were vague and subject to variation. In the South, the Mediterranean was serving as the dividing line between Europe and Africa; in the East the Sea of Azov and the River Don were often considered to mark the boundary between Asia and Europe; in the West the rocks of Gibraltar and Ceuta indicated the start of the ocean. It is claimed by Delanty that Europe is not a natural geo-political framework but is composed of a core and a number of borderlands which are all closely related to the eastern frontier. He says that, much of the unity of Europe has been formed in relation to the eastern frontier and it has been possible only by violent homogenization. Unlike the western frontier, which has been a frontier of expansion, the eastern one has been a frontier of defence and has played a central role in the formation of European identity. He supports his idea with the persistent

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<sup>68</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.13.

<sup>69</sup> Denys Hay, *Europe; the Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press , 1957), p.5.

conflict between West and East, Christendom and Islam. For him, because of these conflicts, Europe failed to devise a geo-political framework capable of uniting European civilization with a common set of values. He also adds the interesting fact that ever since the Muslim expansion of the eighth century, much of Europe lay under non-European rule. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453 as much as one quarter of the European territory lay under Muslim rule and after the advance of the Red Army in 1945, one third of Europe lay under the Russians, who have traditionally been perceived as non-European.<sup>70</sup>

The neutral, geographical expression 'Europe' obtained a special connotation as a result of the confrontation between the Greeks and the Persians. Greek colonists settled in the West coast of the Asia Minor, the Ionian Coast. The Aegean Sea had been a connecting road for centuries which made possible intensive commercial contact. Colonization increased the awareness of differences between Hellenes and non-Hellenes. It was just at this period that the word 'barbarian' began to be used by the Hellenes for the non-Hellenes. It is in this historical context that Greek authors from the fifth century BC began to connect the geographical concepts of Europe and Asia not only with differences in language, customs and characteristics but also with distinct systems of government. The city-state of Athens became the symbol of Greek freedom while Persia was seen as the immense empire of an absolute ruler who respected neither law nor god. The opposition between Greece and Persia was viewed by the Greece as representing that between Europe and Asia and stood for freedom as opposed to despotism.<sup>71</sup> For much of Antiquity, Europe did not encompass what we associate with it today. It was at most a region and not a continent in the geo-political sense of the term. The ancient idea of Europe did not signify the western continent but rather expressed a vaguely defined Occident, the land of darkness, the land of the evening sun. While the

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<sup>70</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.7-11.

<sup>71</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.17.

word 'Europe' did exist, the term 'Europeans' was rarely used in ancient times. In time, a broader concept of Europe emerged and came increasingly to refer to what is essentially Asia Minor and included Greece, but with Asia still being the focal point of otherness. However, the notion of Europe was at most a geographical idea and was not yet a cultural idea of significance, still less a political identity. The idea of a European identity had yet to be formed. Ethno-culturalism was in general focused on other reference points: Hellenism, Rome and the Christian church after the fourth century.<sup>72</sup>

With the division of the Roman Empire into two parts in 286, Occident and Orient evolved to refer to the two halves of the Roman Empire. The term Occident, along with Europe, tended to be used increasingly for the western half of the former Roman Empire, which came gradually to rest on Latin Christianity. Europe and Occident became synonyms for Christendom. The splits of the conflict between Europe and Orient were slowly becoming apparent in these far-reaching developments. The Orient was no longer merely Persia, but was gradually coming to designate Asia Minor. With its advent the idea of Europe began to take shape as a cultural idea.<sup>73</sup>

During the Dark Ages, from the fourth to the ninth centuries, 'Europe'- by which of course Christendom is meant- was unable to defend itself against Islam. From the seventh century the idea of Europe came increasingly to be pronounced against Islam that continued for many centuries later on. The unity of the Mediterranean was broken up, mainly because of the enormous Arab expansion, which started in that century. After the death of Mohammad in 632, his followers spread out from Arabia and conquered the Persian Empire of the Sasanids and annexed the lands of Iraq, Syria and Palestine. Egypt and the whole north coast of Africa were conquered. Muslim power spread over Anatolia, Persia and Mesopotamia and

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<sup>72</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.22.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23.

eventually reached India. Damascus became the centre of power of the Arab Empire of the Umayyad dynasty from which the eastern Roman Empire was attacked. In 711, Tariq ibn Ziyad, and his forces crossed into Spain which then came to be known as *Jebel al-Tariq* (the mountains of Tariq), which is the source of the name Gibraltar. After 711, until the Christian reconquest of Spain, the effective frontier of European Christianity in the West was the Pyrenees. The Moors advanced across the Pyrenees and the Muslim conquest of Spain was almost extended to France until the Arabs were decisively defeated by a coalition army led by Charles Martel, the mayor of the palace of Austrasia in 732. A contemporary chronicler, originating from Cordoba, referred to Charles Martel as the consul of Austrasia and used the term *europeenses* to describe the coalition army. Significantly, the army which defeated the Muslims is one of the first references to Europeans. Wilson and Dussen regard it as a striking fact that the term is used in relation to an external threat, but they state that too much value cannot be attached to it, since the word is not encountered until very much later.<sup>74</sup> According to Delanty, this battle was of major significance for the future of Europe. If the Muslims had not been defeated, Christianity would have been wiped out in Europe. Above all, the symbolic significance of the battle, as opposed to its possible military implications, is of greater importance in that it underlines the emergence of an adversarial identity in the West. It was an indication of Europe as a proto-cultural idea. The clash of Christianity and Islam was crucial in the formation of the Eurocentric world-view.<sup>75</sup>

Under the Abbasid caliphate, which emerged after the overthrow of the Umayyads in 750 and lasted until the mid-thirteenth century when it was thrown out by the Mongols, became transformed into an Islamic political system whose centre had moved from Damascus to Baghdad, which was the new centre of a vast trading

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<sup>74</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.26.

<sup>75</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.23-24.



network and linked up the entire Middle East. With the rise and consolidation of this Muslim world-system, the West was put on the defensive. Charlemagne failed to defeat the Moors in Spain in 778. The threat was no longer from the northern barbarian tribes who had been attacking the Roman Empire since the fifth century, but from Islam. Many of the barbarian tribes, of which the most significant were the Franks, had been converted to Christianity and became the backbone of Christendom. The profile of Christendom became increasingly those of Europe, so that the two ideas came to express the same cultural model. The Orient was thus determined to become the new image of hostility for the European Christian West.<sup>76</sup>

With the expansion of the Islamic empire, the boundaries of the Graeco-Roman civilization shrank to the Pyrenees and the Bosphorus. Delanty explains that the Muslim civilization that emerged in the seventh century was more advanced than the cultural remnants of the Graeco-Roman civilization that had survived the fall of the Roman Empire in the West. He argues that the Muslim civilization absorbed more of Greek culture than did the post-Roman West.<sup>77</sup>

The West was shaped by the Muslim attacks in the one hundred years from about 650 to 750. This period is regarded as the turning point as far as the formation of a European identity. After the Roman Empire had left behind the barbarian threat by shifting to Constantinople, and later the Persian threat, it was confronted by Islam. The battle of Tours and the sieges of Constantinople marked the limits of Muslim expansion in the West. The Byzantine Empire had also reached the limit of its expansion and was unable to prevent Islam from intruding upon its territory. The Byzantines were only successful in pushing the Muslims back but could not defeat them. After 700 the Byzantine Empire had shrunk to Constantinople itself, parts of Asia Minor, Greece and parts of southern Italy. Christendom was disturbed by

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

Muslim power in the east in Asia Minor, in the south from the southern shores of the Mediterranean and in the West in the Iberian Peninsula. Since Islam possessed some strategic islands, it virtually controlled the Mediterranean in the ninth century. The spreading of Christianity was not only halted but was put on the defensive and within Europe itself there was a fragmentation between the Latin West and the Greek East. Moreover, later conflicts between Persia and the Byzantium exhausted both empires, preparing the way for Muslim dominance in the peripheries of Europe. In the wake of the rise of Islam a new idea of Europe began to emerge while Europe came to refer to the north-western continent. With the loss of much of the Mediterranean to Islam, the Occident began to embrace the barbarian lands of the north-west.

In time Charlemagne subdued the Saxons and Italy conquered the kingdom of the Lombards. The Pope, who was in conflict with the Lombards, placed Rome under his protection. In Rome, on Christmas Night in the year 800, the Pope's protector Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor. The expression *pater Europae* was used for Charlemagne, however it still was a little more than a term indicating territory, with no emotional connotations.<sup>78</sup>

In the ninth century the Vikings pressed southwards, the Magyars advanced from the east and Muslims from the south. It was in this context that the idea of Europe gained currency. The idea of Europe's historical uniqueness and autonomy begins to emerge in the face of opposition. The Islamic invasions along with the barbarian and Persian invasions gave a sense of a European identity to Christendom, which served as a safeguard against the non-Christian world. It was a siege mentality, an identity born in defeat, not in victory. But with the gradual acceptance of Christianity by the northern tribes, from the Franks to the Vikings, the barbarian threat to Christendom was over and something like a European order was consolidated. The development towards a European civilization centered in the

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<sup>78</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.26.

north-west was enhanced by the ascendancy of Charlemagne who styled himself the 'father of Europe'. Europe had abandoned the Mediterranean for the Baltic. In this retreat it was to acquire a new identity.<sup>79</sup>

With the disintegration of the Carolingian Empire and the end of its short-lived absolute monarchy, the term Europe ceases to be used to indicate a sphere of power. The collapse of the Carolingian empire led to the emergence of a number of independent Christian kingdoms from the ninth century. With the Saxon Emperors, when in the tenth century Otto the Great defeated the nomadic Magyars at the Battle of Lechfeld (955), he was called the liberator of Europe. Once again, it required an external threat for the term Europe to be used rather than merely providing a geographical reference.<sup>80</sup>

Even after the death of the Magyars the dangers facing the Latin Christian world had by no means disappeared. Most of the Western Mediterranean, greater part of Spain and North Africa was in the hands of the Islamic communities. In the struggle against Islam, the Byzantine Empire, inheritor of Roman imperial power in the East, was indeed an ally of the Latin Christians, but in other ways it was a rival. In the East, Constantinople was under pressure from the Muslims, while in the West, the Serbs and the Bulgarians and later the Russians of Kiev came within the sphere of influence of the Greek Christians. In the tenth century the Byzantine emperors had driven the Muslims back in the East as far as the river Tigris. In the following century the rise of the Turkish Seljuks had changed the situation radically. Led by Alp Arslan, who had been crowned caliph in Baghdad, they wrested Syria and Jerusalem from the caliph of Egypt and Armenia and Asia Minor from the Byzantine Emperor. The situation in Constantinople became desperate. Only the coasts were still in Greek hands and their fleet had been

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<sup>79</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.26.

<sup>80</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.26.

destroyed. In 1095 the Byzantine Emperor sent a diplomatic mission to the Pope, the head of Latin Christendom, to request military assistance. This request led to Pope Urban II's famous call for a Crusade to liberate the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The Church initiated an extensive propaganda campaign and military operations were carefully prepared. Filled with religious devotion and worldly greed, warriors from Flanders, Lorraine, Normandy, southern France and Italy assembled in Constantinople. On 15 July 1099, Jerusalem was taken and a number of small Christian princedoms were founded on the French model.<sup>81</sup> The First Crusade, which was followed by several others, was instrumental in establishing the spirit of the long history of hostility and mistrust between Muslims and Christians.

As it is explained by Pim Den Boer, Pope Urban II's appeal is remarkable for the way in which the dangerous situation of Christendom is connected with the classical tripartite division of the world. The Pope is said to have stated that the 'enemies of God' had taken possession of Syria, Armenia and the whole of Asia Minor. 'The enemies, furthermore, have a much greater part of the world in their possession: Asia and Africa. For him, only a small part of the earth, Europe, belonged to the Christians and even that small portion was threatened by the Turks and the Saracens.'<sup>82</sup>

As it can be seen, despite all the internal differences between East and the West, Christians had some interest in common. Unity was often hard to find, but there were at least communal symbols, gestures, spiritual ideals and earthly motives. The leader of the Latin Christendom states that the geographical location for this form of communal identity was to be formed in Europe. Within Europe, the northern barbarians were considered as being excluded. But at this stage, despite some association between Europe and Christianity, there was no question of a

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p.27.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p.28.

precise identification between Europe and Christendom.<sup>83</sup> Throughout the twelfth century, there was a growing self-awareness in Europe which was linked to religious issues. An example of this can be seen in a traditional round map produced by Andreas Walsperger, a Benedictine monk from Salzburg in 1448. In this map, the small Christian community, which was shown within the boundaries of Europe, was demonstrated to be surrounded by the unbelievers who inhabit the major part of the world.<sup>84</sup> Between the years of 1000 and 1250 a whole new civilizational pattern based upon feudalism expanded as far west as Ireland and as far east as Jerusalem, bringing with it a uniform society. This new framework is what we call Europe: the watchword for the expansion of Franco-Latin Christendom.

Until the late fifteenth century the idea of Europe was principally a geographical expression and subordinated to Christendom, which was the dominant identity system in the West. It was only in the course of the fifteenth century that the word Europe came to be used by a large number of authors. From then on, the identification of Europe with Christendom became usual. Europe was considered to be a Christian continent and the eastern boundary had been shifted a considerable distance west. During 1400s, all attention became to be focused on the threat posed by the Turks. On 29 May 1453, Constantinople fell to the hands of Ottomans, which marked a definitive end of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Christian world, both the Latin and Greek hemisphere, felt seriously threatened. The authority of the Pope in Rome increased, because at that time he was seen as the sole defender of Christianity. Pope Pius II (1458-1464), tried to organize a joint defend against the Turkish threat, but without effect. After the fall of Constantinople, Pius II worked hard for Christians to respond to that event with proper action. It is also argued that Pius II wrote a letter to Mehmed II inviting him to convert to Christianity in return for the Pope's legitimizing his conquest of

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.28.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p.33.

Byzantium.<sup>85</sup> He portrayed the Turks as destroying Greek and Latin culture, the source of European learning and arts. In a large number of works, Pius II had called for the Christian world to be defended. It was no longer a question of crusades to conquer Jerusalem, but rather of the defense of Europe. The Pope used the terms 'Respublica Christiana' and Europe interchangeably, also speaking of 'our Europe', our 'Christian Europe'.<sup>86</sup> The idea of Europe itself became the focus for the construction of a specifically European identity by means of the encounters with non-European peoples and the resistance to Ottoman expansion.

It is specifically within the context of the Turkish threat in the East that Europe becomes a synonym for the Christian world. Belgrade fell in 1521, Rhodes was conquered in 1522 and lastly the triumph of the Turks in Mohacs (1526) put an end to Hungarian independence and opened up the way to Vienna, which the Turks besieged for the first time in 1529. Especially, at this time period the home of Christendom had come to be Europe. One of the major humanists Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540) drew a parallel between the advance of the Turks and the distinction made by the classical Greeks between Asia and Europe, long before the Christian period. In his dialogue about the disputes in Europe and the war against the Turks, he relates how every Asiatic invasion of Europe has always ended in the complete defeat of the invading forces.<sup>87</sup>

During the course of the fifteenth century, the overseas explorations led the Europeans understand that Europe was taking up only a small part of the world. The texts of the *Atlas Minor* published by Hondius in Amsterdam in 1607 takes Europe and Christendom to be synonyms. Similarly, when the word 'christiani' appears in the *Thesaurus geographicus* (1578) of Abraham Ortelius, it referred to

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<sup>85</sup> G. Toffanin, *Lettere a Maometta* (Naples, 1953), pp.xxiv-lvii. Quoted in Robert H. Schwoebel, "Coexistence, Conversion and the Crusade against the Turks", in *Studies in the Renaissance*, Vol. 12, 1965, p.179.

<sup>86</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.34.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

‘Europeai’: this is clearly identified in the index, where the instruction ‘vide Europeai’ is given under ‘christiani’. The expansion of Europe is thus seen as equivalent to the expansion of Christendom. Hondius’ *Atlas Minor*, mentioned above contains an interesting map of the world on which the spread of Christendom is indicated by symbols. In the French edition, Islam, Judaism and idolatry are also indicated with symbols. This is the first map that attempts to visualize the distribution of the world’s religions by means of symbols. Although the position of the Christian Church and Europe on maps of the world is represented in more modest proportions, the accompanying texts reflect a growing pride and arrogance, based on European expansion. Christianity, trade and colonization were the elements in European expansion which formed the basis for explicit feelings of superiority. Europe and Christendom are frequently considered to be entirely identical.<sup>88</sup>

It was in the sixteenth century that irreconcilable religious differences started to appear in Europe. This was not only the result of Protestant Reformation but of other religious groupings and minorities. There was little or no peaceful coexistence between the various religions. This division, fragmentation and disunity began to make a simplistic identification of Europe with Christendom become increasingly difficult to sustain.

Christianity continued to play a role in the self-image of Europeans during the eighteenth century. But d’Argenson in 1859 says that “The first revolution that is likely to happen in Europe, will be the conquest of Turkey. This will be a true crusade, which will make us dear to God as well as to people...[.] This will be the interest of both Heaven and Earth. This will be the great and glorious fruit of the establishment of the European republic.”<sup>89</sup> In spite of these views, Christianity started to lose its dominant force that it had been in the previous centuries. By the

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46.

<sup>89</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in *CSD Perspectives*, No. 4, Autumn 1994, p.15.

end of the eighteenth century Europe and Christendom were no longer used as synonyms. European feelings of superiority were based on accumulation of ideas proceeding from the Enlightenment, which, in turn, came to be associated with the notion of civilization. Christianity would form a part of this civilization but European civilization was nevertheless more than Christendom alone. This is a remarkable change, for the concepts of Europe and Christianity were previously more or less associated. In this process, the ideas of several philosophers and political theorists, such as Montesquieu, Voltaire and Adam Smith came to the forefront. While Montesquieu regards Europe as a secular concept unconnected with the notion of Christendom and identify Europe with the idea of freedom, Voltaire writes that ‘Christian Europe’ can be viewed as a large commonwealth of different states, some of them monarchies and others having a mixed system of government, but all of them interconnected. For him, all European states have the same religious background, despite this being divided into a variety of sects and all have the same principles of civil law and politics, which are unknown elsewhere in the world.<sup>90</sup> At this point, it should also be kept in mind that the advance of Enlightenment did not imply the decline of the crusading mentality. Just like his contemporaries, Voltaire also desired to annihilate the Turks. He regarded Turks as the greatest curse on earth. “It does not suffice to humiliate them, they should also be destroyed” he said. He even told Catherine II that if Turks were overcome, he would die in content and wished he could help in killing a few Turks.<sup>91</sup>

The French Revolution marked a turning point in social and political thinking and its impact was felt all over Europe in the late eighteenth century. The concepts of freedom, liberty and fraternity were pronounced everywhere in Europe. It is claimed by Pim den Boer that the most important result of the Revolutionary turmoil for the concept of Europe was that it received an historical credibility,

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<sup>90</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.61-62.

<sup>91</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in *CSD Perspectives*, No. 4, Autumn 1994, p.16.



which had previously been lacking. Since the incredible break was difficult to comprehend, the chaotic succession of the regimes were regarded as historical necessities and a result of historical development after some time. This historical way of thinking is said to have enriched and deepened the concept of Europe and the concept began to be used more consciously. However it is also argued by some scholars that the universalist ideas of the French Revolution both gave to Europe a sense of common identity and at the same time took it away. From about 1793, the Revolution had transformed itself into a French imperialist program. Russia, Prussia and Austria turned into an eastern-based power bloc with the Rhine as its western frontier. The Roman Empire was revived in the form of the French Empire. The idea of Europe began to enter the discourse of international politics precisely as a result of the collapse of unity of Europe as a geographical framework. The eastern regions of Europe did not experience the same degree of revolutionary upheaval that Western Europe did. Added to these, the spirit of the Revolution had let out new ideas of territorial imperialism and the foundation of a European order based on nation-states had been laid. During the first half of the nineteenth century, there was a detailed awareness of the history of Europe emerging, however, there were still disparities on the idea of what Europe had been or ought to be. Christianity and liberty were used as sub-subjects and civilization as a kind of all-embracing concept.<sup>92</sup>

The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by national liberation movements. Between 1789 and 1848 nationalism in the form of republicanism was generally associated with liberalism and its hostility to the Old Order. More than ever before, Europe came into the grip of nationalism and fragmented into the particularism of the national ideal. It was not only the unification of Italy and Germany, but also the rivalry among the individual European nations, when the idea of belonging to a European community was pushed background.

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<sup>92</sup> Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen (eds.), *The History of the Idea of Europe* (London: Open University, 1995), p.68-69.

Throughout the nineteenth century, two factors shaped the modern idea of the unity of Europe as a cultural model. The first one is the notion of Europe that evolved in the movement from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment: Christian humanist ideal and the belief in a universal value system based on Reason, Progress and Science. These ideals lie in the core of European identity and are embodied in the idea of modernity. The second one is the ideal of European political unity, which was essentially an adaptation of the national ideal.<sup>93</sup> In the late nineteenth century romanticism, a longing for the past was also influential in the European identity. In the romantic ideas of Europe that prevailed in the nineteenth century nostalgia played a major role.

### 3.1 THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The interplay between the notions of religion, culture and identity is particularly relevant in light of post-Cold War heightened awareness of ethnic and religious difference. Current struggles toward separatism, sovereignty and minority rights have drawn increased international attention, academic and political, to conflicts that involve religious identity. For the purpose of my thesis, the religious identity of Europe, as one of the oldest and fundamental concepts will be taken into hand.

In the words of Effie Fokas:

*Though the terms ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ are vague and the political and cultural identities of Europe indistinct, this is hardly an obstacle in everyday conversation about distinctively European practices or institutions. We can usually tolerate a wide margin of ambiguity and imprecision about things European. Is this true for religion in Europe? Indeed, though ambiguity surrounds so much of what we discuss as ‘European’ and though religion in Europe is no more a precise*

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<sup>93</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.75.

*phenomenon, yet discussion about it does tend to assume an air of precision. This phenomenon has given rise to the scholarly opinion that, in spite of a general decline in religious practice and the extent of religion's significance for public life in Western Europe, the continent's boundaries are becoming more sharply defined in religious terms.*<sup>94</sup>

In European history religion and culture are deeply intertwined. The term 'Europe' is not to be found in the Bible and for the patriarchs, prophets and apostles a concept of Europe did not exist. Nevertheless, Europe became a Christian notion or at least a part of the Christian way of thinking. A scholar of European history has noted that 'the interweaving of the notions of Europe and Christendom is a fact of history which even the most brilliant sophistry cannot undo'. It should be noted that as recently as A.D. 1500, the faith and culture remained very nearly synonymous, with Christianity confined almost exclusively to Europe.<sup>95</sup> It is believed that two concepts largely shaped the idea of Europe: Western Christendom and Western civilization. Norman Davies, in his work, *Europe: A History*, suggests that geographical Europe has always had to compete with notions of Europe as a cultural community. Where common political structures were absent, he asserts, culture provided the criteria by which European civilization could be defined and Christianity especially filled this cultural role.<sup>96</sup> It is mentioned by Jordan that of all the human traits that define "Europe", the single most important is Christianity. Delanty's *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity and Reality* explores religion in its role as 'definer' of Europe. According to him, while the Reformation divided Europe between a Protestant north and a Catholic south, Christianity continued to be the principal source of cultural identity.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Effie Fokas, "Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.1.

<sup>95</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), p.81.

<sup>96</sup> Norman Davies, *Europe, A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.9.

<sup>97</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1995)

Prior to the early modern period the idea of Europe was always pronounced through other discourses, of which the most significant was Christendom. The idea of Europe when it emerged was embedded in Christendom having become virtually equal with the notion of Occident, which preceded the idea of Europe. It was this latter notion of the Occident or West that provided continuity between Hellenism, Christendom and the idea of Europe. For the civilizations of antiquity the idea of Europe was relatively unimportant and did not come to indicate the continent of Europe until the rise of Islam in the seventh century. Throughout the Middle Ages, the idea of Europe was linked to the idea of the Christian West and served as a hegemon against the ascendancy of Islam. The limits of Europe in the crucible of Christendom were set by the Muslim advance and Christianity became the territorial identity of medieval Europe. From a very early stage in its history Europe failed to develop a geo-political framework capable of integrating Latin and Greek Christianity into a unitary civilization. This geo-political split was reflected in the emergence of the two cultural frameworks in which the idea of Europe tended to become interchangeable with Latin Christendom.<sup>98</sup>

One of the most colorful figures on the English literary scene between the two world wars, Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), the son of a French father and an English mother, a confident and aggressive Roman Catholic apologist, in his book "Europe and the Faith" argued that "The faith is Europe and Europe is the faith. He claims that those who are not Roman Catholics look upon the story of Europe externally, as strangers, but the Catholic, as he reads the story does not grope at it from without; he understands it from within. He argues too that the church assumed and continued the tradition of Greco-Roman civilization. The Faith is that which Rome

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<sup>98</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.16-17.

accepted in her maturity; it was not the cause of the decline, but rather the conservator of all that could be conserved.<sup>99</sup>

A view to the historical development of the 'idea of Europe' and 'European identity' reveals religion as a key concept in these. Inherent in the EU's current efforts to establish a 'European identity', which the Commission deems 'the result of centuries of shared history and common cultural and fundamental values' is the potential problem of exclusivity on the vague grounds of culture and values.<sup>100</sup> As it is mentioned before, religion has a central role in the historical development of a cultural and political entity understood to be 'Europe'. For instance, it is an acknowledged fact that the struggle of Christendom against Islam in the Middle Ages helped to produce a greater sense of common European identity. According to Jordan, the Christian heritage, more than any other single characteristic, still today provides the basis for the European image of *we versus they*. Christianity underlines and inspires both the good and bad aspects of Europe: its great art, literature, music and philosophy as well as its religious wars, genocides and inquisitions. He also points out that for many centuries, the Church was Europe and Europe was the church. All Europeans and their overseas offspring, regardless of their present religious beliefs, bear the permanent stamp of Christianity. Even today, to depart the Christian lands and enter the bordering Muslim districts is to leave Europe. Christian Europeans had been in combat with Muslims in the Mediterranean for seven centuries, strengthening their sense of cultural identity. Pope Jean Paul II, in 1982, expressed his opinion concerning the tie between Europe and the Church told that European identity "is incomprehensible without Christianity" and the faith "developed the civilization of the continent, its culture, its dynamism, its activeness, its capacity for constructive expansion on other

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<sup>99</sup> Roger Greenacre, "Europe and the Christian Faith", in *Contemporary Review*, 263, Issue 1531, August 1993, p.57.

<sup>100</sup> Effie Fokas, "Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.1.

continents.” The Pope then criticized a much secularized Europe to “revive those authentic values that gave glory to Europe’s history.”<sup>101</sup>

For Wintle, Christianity has been the direct cause of horrifying infighting, intolerance, war, torture and attempted genocide over the centuries. Many wars took place in the name of Christianity, which were conceived as the Holy Wars against the infidel. Nevertheless, it has been the majority religion of the continent for nearly two millennia, and at times the geographical extent of *Roman* Christianity has closely approximated to the boundaries of what was called ‘Europe’. For example, in the late eighth and ninth centuries, the Carolingian empire was identified with both concepts (Latin Christianity and ‘Europe’). In 870 Pope John was called ‘Rector Europae’. It has also been stated by Wintle that one of the great scholars of the history of the idea of Europe, Denys Hay, has established the virtual identity (in the sense of sameness) of the terms ‘Europe’ and ‘Christendom’ for more than two hundred years from the end of the thirteenth century. Despite the fact that the Reformation seemed to tear the unity of both (Latin) Christendom and Europe to pieces, not a few prominent Europeans dreamed that peace in Europe might allow the way to open for the reunification of Christendom. Furthermore few Europeans would deny the importance of Judeo-Christian ethics in European civilization today, and the strength of Christian-Democrat centre-right parties in European countries and indeed the EU Parliament are further proofs to the lasting influence of Latin Christianity in Europe.<sup>102</sup>

No other religion than Christianity can claim to have marked so profoundly the European consciousness or to have had the same European influence. On the other hand, it should be admitted that Europe itself has never been totally Christianized. Scholars like Greenacre remind that the history of Judaism from the fall of the

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<sup>101</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), p.81.

<sup>102</sup> M. Wintle, “Cultural Identity in Europe: Shared Experience”, in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), pp.13-14.

Jerusalem in A.D 70 to the Return to Palestine is largely (not exclusively) European and Jews have played a prominent role in its intellectual and cultural history. He says that one has only to think of the contribution of such figures as Spinoza, Mandelsohn, Marx, Freud, Bergson, Buber and Chagall.<sup>103</sup> In our own time too, Islam is surely on the way to acquiring a European context and therefore a European development which it has not had since the so-called “re-conquest” of the Iberian Peninsula. In fact, Spain can celebrate 700 years of Arab civilization, a civilization which has contributed so much to Europe, both directly and through its preservation and transmission of some of the lost masterpieces of classical Greek literature.

Moreover, it is believed that religiously, Europe displays an overarching unity, however there are many internal contrasts regarding Christianity in Europe and there is no homogeneous Christianity throughout Europe from the very beginning. In fact, monolithic Christianity has never existed in Europe. The split of the Roman Empire into western and eastern halves, Roman and Greek, signified religious schism. In a separation that finally became official in A.D 1054, the western church became Roman Catholicism, the Greek Church Eastern Orthodoxy. The Greek or Byzantine, church became increasingly identified with the Orient. This enduring division, which has shaped the face of Europe until the present day, was also reflected in the schism within the Christian church itself, whose two halves spoke different languages and eventually acquired different cultural and religious customs. Even today the dividing line between Catholicism and Orthodoxy remains the most fundamental religious border in Europe. The second great schism occurred in the 1500s, when western Christianity split, the southern lands remaining Roman Catholic and the north becoming the geographical focus of Protestantism. As a result of the two Christian schisms, Europe is now divided into three major religious regions.

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<sup>103</sup> Roger Greenacre, “Europe and the Christian Faith”, in *Contemporary Review*, 263, Issue 1531, August 1993, p.57.

On the one hand, some of the scholars argue that there have been more bloody wars among the Christian nations. For instance The One Hundred Years War (1337- 1453) between England and France prevented the unification of the two countries and the formation of a mega-bloc in Western Europe. On the other hand, it is also argued that cultural diversity within Christendom ensured that the unity that Europe was to find was in foreign conquest and a focus of hostility beyond its frontiers. For instance, a chronicler called the forces of Charles Martel at the battle of Tours in 732 AD ‘the Europeans’ in the context of Muslim Arab invasions of the Middle East and North Africa in the seventh century, and of Spain and southern France in the eighth. It was written in the chronicle that ‘Europe was small, shrinking, and surrounded by the hostile forces of another religion.’<sup>104</sup>

### **3.2 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIANITY IN EUROPE**

Christianity has been the most essential element of the European identity during the Middle Ages. The word Europe, however, was rarely used until the fifteenth century. This was not surprising because Christianity, with which Europe was usually associated, was not a territorially unified culture. This inevitably led to the ambiguity since Christian unity transcended European unity and was in its early phase a universal religion that was not specifically European. In time, the notion of Europe as a geographical term became increasingly applied to the Christian parts of the West. Europe became identical with the notion of a Christian commonwealth, with the emphasis being on the northwest. Delanty explains the role of Christianity as a tool which provided the western monarchies with a powerful myth of legitimation that became increasingly consolidated with the advance of Islam. The need for cultural cohesion became all the more necessary because there was no central political authority under the system of feudalism that had emerged in the West under the Carolingian Empire in the tenth century.

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<sup>104</sup> Denys Hay, *Europe; the Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press , 1968), pp.21-25.



Christianity, with its ethic of obedience and hierarchy of power, was more adaptable to the settled agrarian world of feudalism than to the urban and secular world of trade and commerce. With the rise of Islam, the ancient links between East and West took on the character of an enduring hostility and in this great and far-reaching shift in the formation of the identity of modern Europe, the northern and southern parts of Europe, for long-separated by the Alps, merged to form the medieval Christendom. A new border emerged, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. From then on the greater division between West and East took on the character of a moral-religious divide with the Occident signifying civilization and goodness and the Orient barbarity and evil. The identity of Europe was constructed out of a sense of spiritual superiority in the rejection of its own very origin in the Orient. Delanty argues that without the image of hostility afforded by Islam, the Christian West would have been unable to attain a single and high culture capable of unifying the diverse elements of European society.<sup>105</sup> Islam was essential for the formation of European identity and remains so for its maintenance.

This sense of western Christian superiority is expressed in some of the early ideas of Europe. In early Christian times the idea emerged that the peoples of Europe, Asia and Africa were the descendants of Noah's three sons: Japheth, the originator of the Greeks, Gentiles and Christians; Shem, the originator of the Jews and Arabs and Ham, the descendant of the Negroes. In the Christian mythology Japheth, the father of the Europeans, was given superiority over Shem, which meant Asia and designated primarily the Jews and Shem was given superiority over Ham, meaning Africa and referred to Africans. This idea survived into modern times as a conceptual tool in the service of Eurocentric philosophies of history for dividing the peoples of the world into races.

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<sup>105</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.26-27.

Christianity, of course, was not native to Europe. In pre-Christian times, Europeans had a polytheistic culture, as was typical of all Indo-European tribes and also the more ancient, pre-Indo-European inhabitants. Pre-Christian Europe was religiously chaotic and it seemed to be very difficult that the entire culture area had been converted to a radically different, monotheistic religious faith. Perhaps the key figure in the remarkable diffusion of Christianity to Europe, the Apostle Paul, bridged the Semitic and Greek cultures; he presented monotheism in understandable and appealing terms to Europeans. Christianity also proved, throughout the centuries of conversion, skilled in absorbing elements of the native religions of Europe. Sunday, devoted to a Roman God of the sun, became the Christian Sabbath; the Virgin Mary annexed the devotion to the Roman Mediterranean Magna Mater- the great mother (a mother-fertility-love goddess).<sup>106</sup>

Christian diffusion initially advanced hierarchically in the Roman Empire. That is, Christianity spread from city to city, leaving the intervening rural areas pagan. Early in the Christian era, the Romans dispersed most Jews from Israel, in attempt to suppress their tendency to rise up against imperial authority. Jews came as refugees to almost every Roman city throughout the Empire and they gathered in ethnic neighborhoods. It is believed that those neighborhoods often housed the first Christian congregations.

The spread of Christianity remained slow until A.D. 313, when the Roman emperor Constantine issued a declaration of toleration for Christianity, which led eventually to its status as state religion. In the centuries that followed, two major centers directed the diffusion of Christianity from its Mediterranean base- Latin Roma and Greek Byzantium. The Roman Church spread rapidly in the western

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<sup>106</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), p.84.

empire, Italy, France and Iberia became converted, and the Germanic tribes who subsequently overran these areas were quickly won over to the church.<sup>107</sup>

By the sixth century, Latin Christianity stretched from the Middle East to western Spain and northern Britain, however the impressive gains in the north were partially offset by losses to Islam in the Mediterranean area. North Africa, where the Roman Church was well-established, became permanently Muslim in the 700s and much of the Iberia remained under the control of the Muslims for many centuries.

Christianity was effectively 'Europeanized' from the eighth century onwards. From its origin as an Asiatic religious group it became the imperial ideology of Rome and finally evolved to be the universal and legitimating myth of medieval Christendom under the protection of the German Reich. The word Christendom was used from the ninth century, but was not common in usage until the eleventh century. The idea of a universal empire was taken over by the Church, which cultivated a historical memory based on nostalgia for the imperial past: the universal empire became the universal church and the cult of emperor worship was transferred to the papacy. In this transformation the Roman citizen became a Christian subject.<sup>108</sup>

With the decline of Rome, the notion of the Christian civilized world emerged and Europe became closely associated with the Christian religion and its global aspirations. For over a thousand years, the dualism of civilization versus barbarism as an antithesis between Christians and infidels was maintained. Christianity began

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<sup>107</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), pp.85-86.

<sup>108</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.26-27.

to be identified with cultural superiority and civilization while the non-Christian was seen as uncivilized and barbarian.<sup>109</sup>

By the eleventh century Christianity had spread to much of central, eastern and northern Europe, and Scandinavia as well. But there were deep defects in this unity: there was the great division between Latin Christianity and Constantinople, and even in the West, Latin Christianity needed political leadership and will to bring it together. That will and leadership was first in evidence under the Frankish kings.<sup>110</sup>

Charlemagne was certainly called ‘the King of Europe’ by his aristocrats and other sycophants. Geographically, the Frankish empire covered most France and Germany, the Low countries and the Alpine states, and much of Italy. Britain, Scandinavia, most of Spain and Portugal, southern Italy and all of central and south-eastern Europe were not included. Nevertheless, an external threat, that powerful catalyst in the formation of group identity, gave Frankish Christian Europe additional cohesion. And the threat came in the shape of Islam, which brought the Frankish monarchy’s territories together in a unique way. The papacy, as the centre of Latin Christianity, was an essential player in this first moving of European unity and solidarity in the face of an external religious and military threat, for the Europe of the eighth century was ‘a wholly religious idea’, even if it was enforced by the secular arm of the Frankish kings.<sup>111</sup>

‘*Christianitas*’, or Latin Christendom continued to provide the rationale for ‘Europe’ under a different set of secular princes. As the Seljuk Turks took over in the eleventh century from the Arabs as the main threat from the East, ‘Europe’ was

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> M. Wintle, “Europe’s Image: Visual Representations of Europe from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century”, in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.54.

<sup>111</sup> W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London: Methuen, 1969), pp.135-139.

no longer dominated by a single ruling house, but nonetheless consolidated its unity and identity as civilized, Latin-Christian, anti-Turk, anti-Islam. The Crusades are the symbol of this unity, but as Robert Barlett has shown, the sense of European identity went much deeper and further than an appetite for military adventure or fear of danger.<sup>112</sup> 'Europe' and 'Christendom' were interchangeable concepts by the fourteenth century, and remained so until the seventeenth: the last Turkish siege of Vienna was only beaten off in 1683.<sup>113</sup> The identity of Europe as the Christian West found its focus of hostility in Islam. Until the late fifteenth century the idea of Europe was principally a geographical expression and subordinated to Christendom which was the dominant identity system in the West. 'Europe' was held together by faith and religion, set against the threat of the unbeliever.

The political energy of the feudal kingdoms in Western Europe was transformed into an easternward movement towards colonization. This was also Christendom's counter-offensive against Islam and the idea of a Holy War against the infidel was born. The crusades were able to take advantage of a period of crisis in the Islamic world in the tenth century when the Abbasid dynasty was overthrown by the Buyids. This period of disintegration and renewal lasted until the twelfth century, when a new center of power emerged, based on the Seljuks, an ascending Turkish dynasty who adhered to Sunni Islam and who established themselves at Baghdad in 1055 and expanded into Anatolia in Asia Minor. The Seljuk victory over the Byzantines at the battle of Manzikert in 1071 won them most of Anatolia and precipitated four centuries of crusades. The entrenched Byzantines, who now had lost most of Asia Minor, sought the help of Gregory VII, whose successor, Urban II, responded with the First Crusade (1096-1099) which he preached at Clermont in 1095. Though there are no records of Urban's famous speech, an English

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<sup>112</sup> R. Barlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* (London: Allen Lane, 1993)

<sup>113</sup> M. Wintle, "Europe's Image: Visual Representations of Europe from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.55

chronicler reports one of the first references to Europe, which is positively identified with Christianity in the context of Islamic threat.<sup>114</sup> The Latin West therefore concentrated on its eastern frontier in the confrontation with the Orient.

The dominant power in the West was no longer Byzantium. Its age had passed and in 1071 it suffered a double defeat, one by the Turks at Mantzikert and the other by the Normans, the ascending power in the West. After the fourth Crusade ended with the pillage of Constantinople the empire never really recovered its former glory. Greek Christianity, like its Roman counterpart, lost ground in the south while winning converts in the north. Soon after 1200, their Byzantine Empire collapsed under Turkish pressure, eventually causing the loss of Asia Minor and even the Christian center at Constantinople to Islam.<sup>115</sup> The hostility of the eastern empire to Christendom was enhanced by the crusades. The Byzantines regarded the crusades, not as a Christian counter-force against Islam, but a dreadful power which threatened their own existence. It was this divide that outlived the crusades which had effectively divided Europe internally as much as externally.<sup>116</sup>

The idea of a Christian community provided not only a legitimating myth for medieval kingship, but also served as a medium of cultural cohesion for groups otherwise separated by language and ethnic traditions. Europe evolved a new counter-offensive against the Muslim Orient. The ensuing crusading ideology that emerged became the integral component of the identity of the European. The importance of the crusades is that they shaped the formation of an ethno-culturally homogenizing identity, which subsequently became a core component of European

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<sup>114</sup> Denys Hay, *Europe; the Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1957), p.32.

<sup>115</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), p.88.

<sup>116</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.35.

identity.<sup>117</sup> The Crusades are interpreted by Mastnak as a crucial formative condition of what was to become Europe and see them as having had a profound impact on western ideas and institutions. He focuses on the formation of Western Christianity and Europe as a unity that developed a “collective identity”, which was articulated in relation to Muslims as the enemy. From this point of view, the crusades appear as “the first Western Union” and the creation of a crusading army marks “a spectacular advance toward European peace and unity.”<sup>118</sup>

The crusaders were also unable to overcome the differences that existed between them. The unity of Christendom was only a unity in the face of a common enemy. The crusaders were also disadvantaged by the revival of Muslim military power in the twelfth century. By 1187, Jerusalem had been recaptured by the Muslims. The subsequent crusades that were launched failed to reverse the fortunes of the West. The feudal states that the crusaders set up did not stand the test of time and by the late thirteenth century their lands were recovered by Muslims, with Acre, the last Christian state in the Holy Land, falling in 1291.<sup>119</sup>

The crusades were a collective mobilization of Christendom and gave a strong sense of territorial identity to medieval Europe. Christianity was the principal identity of the crusaders. The symbol of the crusades was the transnational symbol of the cross, not a national emblem, and they were known as the ‘the army of God’ or ‘the host of God’.<sup>120</sup> The crusaders preserved the political identity of their respective kingdoms but their collective identity was that of Christian pilgrims taking the cross and the sword. However, the term ‘Frank’ was in more common use than the notion of ‘Europeans’. While Europe was in the process of becoming

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

<sup>118</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in *CSD Perspectives*, No. 4, Autumn 1994, p.1.

<sup>119</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.34.

<sup>120</sup> R. Barlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* (London: Allen Lane, 1993), p.261.

a clearly defined entity, 'Europeans' still hardly existed. Apparently, the Byzantines like the Muslims labeled any westerners 'Franks' regardless of their origins. The dualism of Christians and infidels was more significant than the later opposition of Europeans versus barbarians. But the terms of reference for the construction of an adversarial system of contrasting identities had been created in what was to be an enduring notion of difference, of otherness. The emphasis on Christendom rather than Europe was not surprising since between 1099 and 1187 when Jerusalem was occupied by the crusaders, Christianity extended beyond its European frontiers.<sup>121</sup>

The Ottoman Empire established by the Turks in the northwestern part of Anatolia, became the principal military power in the East in the early fourteenth century. In 1354 the Turks crossed the Dardanelles to Gallipoli and then they began their conquest of the Balkans with the famous battle of Kosovo in 1389 at which the Serbs were defeated and the whole of Christendom was put on the defensive. A further Turkish victory over a crusade that was sent to halt their advance at Nicopolis in 1398 confirmed their power on both sides of the Straits. The Latin West, weakened by the Black Death and destabilized by peasant revolts, was helpless to stop the Islamic revival of the fourteenth century. The fifteenth century saw the consolidation of Ottoman supremacy in the Balkans, Anatolia and the Aegean. In 1453 the Sultan Mehmet II seized Constantinople and with the death of Constantine XI, the last eastern emperor, brought an end to the Byzantine Empire.<sup>122</sup>

The fall of Constantinople was a turning point and one of the really decisive events in the formation of European modernity. According to convention, the European Middle Ages came to an end in 1453 when the eastern empire fell to the Turks. Sunni Islam had finally won a major victory over the Christian world.

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<sup>121</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.35.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36.



Constantinople, renamed Istanbul, the city of Islam, was now the capital of the Sunni Empire of the Ottomans. The capital of the greatest Islamic civilization in the world was located in Europe, giving birth to what for centuries was to be known as 'Turkey in Europe'. Within a decade the last Christian enclave in Asia Minor had fallen to the Turks. From then on the Latin West was put on the defensive: with the disappearance of the Greek Christian Empire of the East, the Latin West was directly exposed to Islam which was very near to the heart of Christendom and had occupied about a quarter of the territory of Europe. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Latin West began to look westwards. The great defeat that the Turkish seizure of Constantinople signaled for the West was compensated for within four decades. The year 1492 was symbolically an important one in the formation of a European identity. In that year the Reconquest begun in the twelfth century was completed with the seizure of Granada from the Muslims, their last stronghold in the West. The Jews were expelled from Spain and the Muslims were forcibly converted to Christianity. This event in the history of Europe is believed to give rise to the doctrine of the purity of the blood, which became the core of European racism in subsequent ages and a major legitimization of 'ethnic cleansing'. The destruction of the mosques, the burning of Moorish libraries and the establishment of the Inquisition in the late fifteenth century further enhanced the homogeneity of western civilization as a Christian polity. It should also be reminded that prior to the Age of Discovery, the West as the Occident was defined by reference to the eastern frontier, that is, in opposition to Islam. After 1492, the ground had been prepared for the discovery of the outside world; the notion of the West became transformed into an outward movement. Another important thing in the Turkish seizure of Constantinople was that both Europe and Islam had to compete for control of the same territory, which became the eastern frontier of the West. Lewis states that the danger was not always military but there was also the fear of mass conversion to Islam.<sup>123</sup> The events of 1453 gained momentum in the following decades with the expansion of Ottoman

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<sup>123</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.13.

supremacy over the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, culminating in the conquest of Syria and Egypt in 1517.

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, there was an epochal break between the Orient and the Occident. A sense of European identity existed by the fifteenth century, but this was an identity shaped more by defeat than victory and was structured by the image of the Orient as its common enemy. According to Hay, there is a significant increase in the use of the word Europe in connection with the Turkish advance. Pope Pius II frequently used the word Europe in the context of the Islamic advance, though the traditional notion of Christendom was more frequently employed.<sup>124</sup> He also adds that we find such expressions commonplace in the language of diplomacy: ‘the common enemy, the Christian Republic, The Christian world, the provinces of Christendom’.<sup>125</sup> Burke points out that when Pius II first heard of the fall of Constantinople he remarked: ‘Now we have really been struck in Europe, that is, home’.<sup>126</sup> He was also one of the first to use the adjective ‘Europeans’ which he did in the context of Turkish threat.<sup>127</sup> His concept of Europe was not only that of Latin Christendom, but in the wake of the Turkish advance, it also included Greece, the Balkans and the Byzantium. There has been a proliferation in such thoughts and expressions even in the sixteenth century. Erasmus, who has often been called as ‘the first European’, believed that the Christian princes should stop quarreling in order to be able to form a united front against Ottoman power. He thus pushed the ‘nations of Europe’ to a crusade against the Turks.<sup>128</sup> Luther, too had hoped that Latin Christendom would be able to heal its self-inflicted injuries and take up the mission of the cross against the Muslim infidels. In his “War Sermon”, Luther pointed out the ‘Great Fear’ of

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<sup>124</sup> Denys Hay, *Europe; the Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1957), pp.86-87.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.96.

<sup>126</sup> P. Burke, “Did Europe exist before 1700?”, in *History of European Ideas*, 1, 1980, p.23.

<sup>127</sup> M.E. Yapp, “Europe in the Turkish Mirror”, in *Past and Present*, 137, 1992, p.141.

<sup>128</sup> P. Coles, *The Ottoman Impact on Europe* (London: Thames&Hudson, 1968), p. 148.

peasants in Germany and central Europe that they would be overrun by the Turks in the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy.<sup>129</sup>

With the limits of Europe being set by the Muslim advance, Christianity had effectively become the territorial religion of medieval Europe. Christ was Europeanized and the crucifixion, after the tenth century, became the universal symbol of European mastery. To be a Christian was to be no longer merely a Roman or an imitator of Rome, but to be a member of the universal Christian polity. Europe was the secular identity of Christendom which was for long associated with the Frankish empire. The idea of Europe gave to medieval Christendom a certain territorial unity with which it could confront the Orient. But this was a unity constituted only in confrontation and did not succeed in concealing the real divisions within the western system of medieval kingdoms. The rise of Christianity in the West, in effect led to the equation of the Occident with Europe.<sup>130</sup>

According to Philip Morgan, the starting point is the period from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, when there evolved in Europe a system of what we now call 'modern' states. These states, of which the models were the kingdoms of France and England, emerged as a result of the long and mutually exhausting rivalry between Papacy and Empire, and in resistance to their universalist pretension to rule or have authority over Western Christendom. These claims to universal dominion kept on after their proponents had lost the power and authority to sustain them. The princes of Europe gradually extended, consolidated and centralized their sovereign rule over a given demarcated territory, attempting to

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<sup>129</sup> R.W. Southern, *Western Views on Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp.104-109

<sup>130</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.29.

replace with a single authority, law and administration, the overlapping, multiple and territorially indeterminate obligations of medieval feudal society.<sup>131</sup>

Once sovereign states were emerging, independent from each other and of the Pope and the Emperor, then the issue of international politics became the ordering of the relations between them. At that time an international political organization of or between states was one way of managing inter-state relations. When the French King, Philip the Fair and the English King, Edward I were having disputes with the predatory and universalist Pope Boniface at the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Pierre Dubois proposed for a Council of Christian princes of Europe in about 1306. The declared purpose of the League of Christian rulers was to secure peace between them so that united; they could prosecute the holy war against the Turks. It is stated by Morgan that this was a constant justification of all proposals for political unity, which was resting on the defense of the common European interest of religion.<sup>132</sup>

Turks have never been a part of the universal peace projects. All the people who proposed universal peace projects have always based their proposals on the Turkish threat. One of the examples of this is the famous Grand Design for the unification of Europe which was designed by a French statesman Sully and presented to the king Henry IV of France, who aimed to establish a French hegemony in Europe. According to his project the countries of today's Eastern Europe should be excluded by Europe. For him these countries belonged to "Asia at least as much as to Europe" not only because of their religion but also their contacts with the Turks and Tatars and thus, they were regarded as barbarians. It is also added by Morgan that the apparent aim of the one of the most famous plans for a European political organization, the so-called 'Grand Design' of the Duc de

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<sup>131</sup> Philip Morgan, "A Vague and Puzzling Idealism..." Plans for European Unity in the era of the Modern State", in M. Wintle, (ed.), Culture and Identity in Europe (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), pp.33-34.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

Sully, was a war of Christian states to expel the Turks from Europe, however it was impossible to regard religion as being a source of unity or common purpose. The most important aspect of this idea was the concept of a united western alliance against the Turks. It was true that Sully excluded the Turks from his 'Grand Design' because they were not Christian.<sup>133</sup>

It is stated by some scholars that the origins of the European identity can be found in the sixteenth century resistance to the Turks.<sup>134</sup> It is evident that preoccupation with the Turks in a way led to the Age of Discovery and thus shifted to overseas conquest. Since the Europeans were blocked on the East by the Turks, this was often seen as the only means of 'saving' Europe. It was this initiative that survived the demise of Ottoman sea supremacy after Lepanto in 1571 and provided the keeping of the racial notion of European identity in the age of imperialism. The victory of the Holy League over the Turks at the great sea battle of Lepanto in 1571 secured the conditions for western expansion. According to Toynbee, the West had still not abandoned its desire to defeat Islam but decided not to make a fresh frontal attack in the Islamic world, which was far from defeated after 1571.<sup>135</sup> Instead, the West hoped to encircle Islam by conquering the ocean and opening up a new East Asian frontier between Christendom and Islam.

With the decline in Turkish supremacy after Lepanto in 1571 and the completion of the conversion of Europe to Christianity, the idea of Europe tended to lose its strictly religious meaning and acquired a secular character. The term 'barbarian', for instance, rather than infidel tended to be increasingly applied to the inhabitants of the non-European parts of the world opened up in the age of exploration. It is believed that the Age of Discovery, which started with Portugal and then was

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., pp.33-36.

<sup>134</sup> R. Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk, 1453-1517* (Nieuwkoop: de Graaf, 1967)

<sup>135</sup> A. Toynbee, "Islam and the West", in *The World and the West* (London: Oxford university Press, 1953), p. 21.

followed by Spain, was the transformation of the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula into a movement towards world domination and with that the crusading ideal was revived in the making of a new European identity. The Portuguese explorer, Henry the Navigator, for instance, had been a crusader and a member of the Order of Christ. Within few decades the 'discovery' of the America imposed itself upon European consciousness to the extent that Europe began to find its identity more in westward expansion than in defensive positions against Islam. The idea of Europe began to replace Christendom as a cultural frame of reference for the construction of new forms of identification. Christendom was not so much abandoned but transformed from the eastern frontier into a western crusading movement. In this the idea of Europe was linked to the formation of a specifically 'western' identity. While the eastern frontier was a frontier of defense, the western frontier was one of expansion. The Christian myth was simply transferred from the eastern frontier to the western in the substitution of the Islamic 'infidel' with the new construct the 'savage'. In this transformation Europe no longer signified a geographical area but a system of values. The idea of 'civilization' became associated with Europe, which gradually began to replace Christendom and became an absolute value. It also made sense to replace Christendom with the word Europe since it was obvious that not all of Europe was Christian. In the sixteenth century, a shift is evident that Europe was in the process of replacing Christendom, but the idea of 'Europeans' seems to have been a later development. So by the early sixteenth century we can speak of the creation of a discourse of Europe, which did not become a self-conscious identity until the late seventeenth century when the wars of religion diminished.

The age of discovery was a renewal of the crusading idea but with the difference that it was primarily western bound and the product of the new absolutist regimes and Counter-Reformation Roman Catholicism. In this transformation a new being was born: Europe. The acquisition of the New World greatly strengthened a sense of European superiority at a time when the West had failed to defeat the Muslim Orient. Europe, as the Old World, became the cultural repository of the New

World. The myth of European civilization was thus given substance. In the Middle Ages the discourse was Christianity against Islam; in the early modern period it was the victory of civilization over nature. It is also noteworthy that these developments coincided with the Galilean revolution in science, which enhanced Europe's secular identity.<sup>136</sup> European mastery passed to the control of the sea with the decline of the old agrarian based economies of the Middle Ages. It is asserted by Delanty that it was this mastery of the sea that helped to shape modern Europe, which the Muslims had never been able to manage in the way that the Europeans did.<sup>137</sup>

In the high Renaissance, however, the significance of besieged Christendom became weaker and a new triumphalist version of Europe emerged. By the sixteenth century, the idea of Europe as the community of believers threatened by Islam had given way to a much firmer vision, strengthened by overseas explorations and discoveries, and notions of European 'civility' and sophistication.<sup>138</sup> The idea of Europe as the West began to be consolidated in the foreign conquests of the age of 'discovery'. Europe then begins to shed itself of its association with Christendom and slowly becomes an autonomous discourse. As a result of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 and the subsequent colonial expansion of the Western European powers after 1492, the idea of Europe became linked to a system that was coming to be regarded as specifically European values, though these did not become fully articulated as a European identity until the late seventeenth century. It was thus in the encounter with non-European peoples and in resistance to Ottoman expansion that the idea of Europe itself became the focus for the construction of a specifically European identity. The year 1492 was also the year of the discovery of America, actually it was finally recognized that a new

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<sup>136</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.31-46.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> J. Hale, "The Renaissance Idea of Europe", in S. Garcia, (ed.), *European Identity and the Search for Legitimacy* (London: Pinter, 1993), pp.52-56.

continent had been discovered. It was at this time that the concept of continent entered the consciousness of Europe, which then became a mental image. In 1566 the first book in any modern language having the title of *History of Europe* was published by a Florentine historian. Europe became an entity defined in space as well as in time: the Continent had finally arrived.<sup>139</sup>

Between the eleventh century A.D and the beginning of the seventeenth century A.D. we witness the transformation of the idea of Europe into a European identity whereby Europe refers not merely to a geographical area but a system of 'civilizational' values resting on to different kinds of identity. The first was shaped by the conditions of the eastern frontier in the confrontation with Islam during the crusades and the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The second was formed by western frontier after 1492 when the European world system was consolidated by the ascending sea powers. In this movement the idea of Europe superseded Christendom as the cultural frame of reference for new processes of identity formation and the rise of new centers of power. During this process, however a tension emerged between the cultural idea of Europe and the geographical framework to which it referred. As a cultural framework Europe became the normative idea of a civilization that was in the process of expanding overseas, but as the name of that civilization's geographical territory, it was faced with the problem that a considerable part lay under Ottoman dominance. This tension could not easily be settled and the idea of Europe tended to be overshadowed by the hegemonic notion of the West, which became the driving force of the ascending European powers in their conquest of the America. The older ambivalence between Christendom and Europe was thus replaced by a new one with Europe and the West as the shifting indicators of a rapidly expanding world-system with its epicenter in Western Europe.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.30-44.

<sup>140</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.30-31.



It was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that Europe entered into its own as a secularized version of Christendom. The Reformation and the wars of religion destroyed the unity of Christendom. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment provided the basis for a new secular identity. The idea of Europe from this time forth became the cultural model of the West and served as a unifying theme of modernity. But this did not mean that Europe signified a radical break from the Christian worldview. What happened was that the idea of Europe simply became less obedient to the old nexus of Christendom and its alter ego Islam. The new polarity was one of civilization versus nature: Europe versus the non-European world, which now covered the 'New World' and signified the 'barbarity' of uncivilized nature. The idea of Europe became increasingly focused on the idea of progress, which became synonymous with European modernity. This was above all an achievement of the Enlightenment.<sup>141</sup> The French Revolution also played an essential role in the idea of Europe, which came to signify the civilized polity of nation-states. The idea of Europe became closely linked to the emergence of a western European polity of nation-states and gradually came to take the character of a normative idea. It should also be kept in mind that the secularized remnants of the Christian worldview, having survived the transition to modernity, continued to provide substance for new forms of European identity based as much on Christian humanism as on 'occidental rationalism'.

In this gradual transformation, the first step was taken by the Renaissance with its ideas of humanism. The Renaissance can be seen as offering an integrating worldview which became the basis of a European identity in the modern age. It was the Reformation that undermined the idea of a universal Christian order and created the space for the emergence of a secular notion of Europe, but one which nevertheless remained tied to the remnants of the Christian worldview. Christian unity was severely damaged after the Reformation, so it is not difficult to see how it made sense to use the word Europe instead of Christendom. But this, however,

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65.

did not mean that Christianity was not important. What happened was that the old antithesis of Christian versus Muslim was replaced by the new polarity of 'civilized Europeans' versus 'uncivilized barbarians'. The contrasting *other* shifted from Asia Minor to the America, Africa and the newly won Asia. While the vision of the Turkish menace still remained a powerful motive in western political culture, it gradually ceased to be the dominant one. It was not, in fact, unusual for western powers, especially France, to make alliances with the Turks in order to defeat opponents, which in the case of France were the Habsburg Empire. Relations between the Ottoman and the European powers became increasingly more secular by the end of the seventeenth century when Europe replaced Christendom as the accepted frame of cultural reference.<sup>142</sup> In the seventeenth century a new element was added to the idea of Europe, along-side the age old *Christianitas*, and the more recent assertiveness of the expansion of Europe, and that was the idea of resistance to a single dominant political or military force from within. It was the beginning of the Enlightenment concept of Europe, of which the essence was a balanced system of sovereign states, with no single dominant force. The developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries favored nation-states with maritime and mercantilist economies rather than feudalist-agrarian and polyethnic empires.

After 1648 Christendom was divided between several competing forms of Christianity: Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, Lutheranism and Calvinism and its Puritan sects. Christianity in the period after the Reformation was very different from before. What had effectively come to an end was the unifying vision of Christendom. Evidently, Christianity had not lost its importance but ceased to be the territorial identity of the European system of states and became a purely religious value-system surviving in a rationalized form. It should also be stressed that while the Reformation divided Europe between a Protestant North and a Catholic South, Christianity continued to be the principal source of cultural

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp.66-67.

identity. Moreover, Latin Christianity was still united in fear of the Muslim threat, though this became increasingly less significant after Lepanto in 1571. In fact, we find that the great representatives of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Luther, Calvin and Loyola, rarely used the word Europe. It was still to Christendom, which they hoped to reform, that they appealed. But Christendom, after the Reformation and the wars of religion, was no longer capable of providing the western polity with a uniform political culture. The idea of Europe represents the secularized equivalent of Christendom and is not a break from it. According to Delanty, the unresolved tension between Christianity and humanism shaped European identity for centuries. The Christian humanist myth of man and the civilizing nature of the new bourgeois value system provided the foundation for a European identity that had reconciled itself to its Christian heritage. The principal components of European identity were the ideas of progress, civilization and Christian salvation.<sup>143</sup>

Despite all these developments, it was still proposed in the seventeenth century by the Quaker William Penn, who was a pacifist; that European unity was necessary in order to preserve the integrity of Christianity and unite Christendom against the Turks. The connection between Christianity and Europe appears to have been quite clear to him for he argued that before the Turks could be allowed to join a future European association they would first have to renounce Islam and convert to Christianity.<sup>144</sup>

In the eighteenth century the notion of a distinct European identity was consolidated by the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment thinkers were the first to perceive the spirit of the age to be secular and dynamic. Church and state were no longer seen as symbiotic unity but as separate spheres. The idea of the Christian Occident, or Christendom, began to lose its former significance and slowly

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<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.67-68.

<sup>144</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.33.

replaced by the more secular notion of Europe. In the Latin West, the pattern of cultural and political identity formation rested on a separation of state and church. This was to be to the long-term advantage of the West, which was able to undergo a more differentiated logic of development. In this, it is possible to see how the idea of Europe would become the secular identity of the West while Christendom would be its religious identity. The Enlightenment can be seen as the expression of a fully-fledged European identity. But secularism does not necessarily entail a movement against religion. Chadwick argues in his classic study on secularism in the nineteenth century that the separation of church and state was a political necessity and was not entirely due to a new outlook. Its ultimate function was not simply to protect the state from clericalism but to protect the Christian Church from the anti-clerical ideologies which were gaining a hold over the state.<sup>145</sup>

Moreover, the secularism of the age did not extend to a rejection of the prejudices of Christianity. It simply accommodated them in a differentiated worldview by which religion was only one cognitive dimension among many others. In many countries- Scotland, England, Germany and Holland- the Enlightenment found a home within the Christian churches. While science, formal law and art underwent their own independent logic of development; the Christian worldview remained as the dominant cultural motif by which European civilization could identify itself. So, while there may have been an increased differentiation in society between church and state, religion- with its missionary preachers and attacks on pagan popular religion- penetrated the social network to a far greater extent than ever before and became an agent of modernization. Though the churches lost power over the state, they gained it over the family and school in the formation of a new repressive system of power. In other words, Christianity in the nineteenth century

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<sup>145</sup> H. Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.135.

was not a residue of the medieval age but was itself product of modernity and a process of re-Christianization: religion was internalized.<sup>146</sup>

The idea of Europe as a cultural model began to take shape in the eighteenth century. Voltaire believed that Europe was replacing the nation-state: Today there are no longer Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, even Englishmen: whatever people say there are only Europeans. All have the same tastes, the same feelings, the same customs, because none has experienced any particular national formation.<sup>147</sup> However, Delanty argues that the notion of Europe as an alternative to the nation-state had little meaning for contemporaries, because the conflicts between the nation-states were too strong. The ideas that the Enlightenment gave rise to were the products of a small group of intellectuals to whom most statesmen gave little attention. He thinks that the reality underlying the utopianism of the European Enlightenment was limited peace within Europe for empire-building.<sup>148</sup>

As it is mentioned before, the nineteenth century was shaped by the nationalist movements throughout Europe. However, Christianity still played an important role in this process. The embodiment of the Christian humanist ideal of the West was secured in the nation-state, which is the agent of European modernity. Thus, while the culture of the West crystallized in the idea of Europe as a cultural model, it is the nation-state that is the carrier of European modernity. The national idea was supposed to be the expression of historical communities whose definition depended on language, and by the early twentieth century religion and ethnicity were added to the list of national attributes.

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<sup>146</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.67-70.

<sup>147</sup> O. Dann and J. Dinwiddy (eds.), *Nationalism and the French Revolution* (London: Hambledon Press, 1988), p.14.

<sup>148</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.71-72.

The nineteenth century was not only the age of nationalism but also the age of romanticism. Nationalism was a political idea that frequently looked to the future while romanticism was essentially a non-political movement that looked to the past. Given the politically divisive nature of the European polity, the idea of Europe as a culturally homogenizing notion made sense only on the level of culture. In this sense, then, the European cultural tradition has been invented retrospectively. Europe became identified with its cultural products: the great cathedrals, opera houses and royal houses. One of the most famous expressions of romanticism was Novalis's *Christendom or Europe* written in 1799. For Novalis medieval Christianity was a utopian alternative to European modernity and its secular ideologies, which he associates with the Reformation, philosophy and the Enlightenment. Novalis believes that Europe suggests something divisive while Christendom symbolizes the unity of tradition. The rediscovery of the Middle Ages through Catholic romanticism served as a cultural compensation for the divisions of the Reformation and the disenchantment of the Enlightenment.<sup>149</sup>

Later, in the age of imperialism, the identity of Europe as a Christian civilization became more pronounced than in the age of Enlightenment. The nineteenth century rediscovered the Christian identity, which the eighteenth century had struggled with. It was in the confrontation with non-Christian civilizations that Europe sought to construct a hegemonic Christian identity. By portraying the Orient as morally backward, the Christian West was able to justify its imperialist drive with moral and religious arguments. The renewal of the crusading ideal by missionary evangelism and Roman Catholicism in the later half of the nineteenth century contributed to the new imperial identity of Europe. The nineteenth century was the greatest century for the spread of Christianity since the first century and its diffusion ensured the spreading of a 'Christian, legalistic Europe'. Between 1876 and 1902 there were 119 translations of the Bible, compared to 74 in the previous

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.80.

thirty years. Added to this there were many Protestant missions in Africa during this period. Delanty calls this process as the re-Christianization of Europe.<sup>150</sup>

The diffusion of Christianity throughout Europe proved almost complete, leaving almost nothing in the way of a religious residue. Today, the only substantial non-Christian presence is intrusive and consists of Muslims, or Islamic peoples. For the past 1200 years, the southern and southeastern borders of the European culture area have coincided with the Christian/Muslim religious divide, a boundary that has shifted back and forth in the middle of frequent warfare. In modern times, the border has taken on a First World/ Third World meaning. Christianity in the Eastern Hemisphere correlates geographically with Europe, prosperity and high living standards, while Islam connotes non-Europe, the *other*, widespread poverty and increasing resistance to dominance by Europeans. This is also the fact for the Muslim immigrants living in Europe. The almost instinctive European reaction to such minorities is prejudice, hatred, or worse. Many Europeans view Muslims as a threat to their cultural identity and for them Muslims cannot be Europeans. The Medieval intolerance and hostility still persists in the minds of many Europeans. This is why Jordan says that we should not expect an early entry of Turkey into the European Union.<sup>151</sup>

### 3.3 CONTEMPORARY IMAGE OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY

Voltaire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century could praise Europe as a great republic, embracing several states with the same religious foundation, the same principle of public law and the same political ideas. However, it is still being discussed by many circles whether there is such a thing as European identity, which is not easy to locate and define, although several shared experiences from the Roman Empire through to

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96.

<sup>151</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Idea*, (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996), p. 104-106.

Industrialization, are shown to have had a formative influence.<sup>152</sup> For instance, in a recent study, M. Wintle states that if the triumphalism can be left to one side, there is a long history of shared influences and experiences, a heritage, which has not touched all parts of Europe or all Europeans equally, and which is therefore dangerous to define in single sentences or even paragraphs, but which is felt and experienced in varying ways and degrees by those whose home is Europe.<sup>153</sup>

There is still a great confusion of what is meant by the word 'Europe', whether it is a geographical term, a historical one or whether there is probably a European culture and a European identity. It is also discussed that these terms, even the geography of Europe, are constantly changing. For Wintle, there is no such thing as Europe in the sense of a universally agreed objective reality, Europe is one of those words which means just what you choose it to mean.<sup>154</sup> It is thought by many scholars that the unity of Europe is a mental construct and its identity is a collective social production over time. Even if the discussions regarding the European identity is going on and the generally accepted view is that the identity at European level is weak compared with national identity, it is also recognized by many circles that there are several shared influences and experiences.

For Wintle these influences and experiences may be summarized in terms of 'Roman Empire, Christianity, the Enlightenment and industrialization' together with the geological and geographical environment and the issue of languages.<sup>155</sup> In another article he puts forward the "unifying experience of Roman hegemony" and

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<sup>152</sup> M.Wintle, "Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Identity in Europe", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), pp.1-2

<sup>153</sup> M.Wintle, "Cultural Identity in Europe: Shared Experience", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.13

<sup>154</sup> M.Wintle, "Europe's Image: Visual Representations of Europe from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.52.

<sup>155</sup> M.Wintle, "Cultural Identity in Europe: Shared Experience", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.13



the Latin Christianity as “the foundation layer of successive European civilizations”.<sup>156</sup> In a recent book N. Davies criticizes this scheme by emphasizing the neglected “outside” cultural influences on Europe’s development such as the impact of Egyptian and Phoenician civilizations on ancient Greece and the impact of Islam on later Europe. Yet, he does this in such a way that these influences from outside and the endogenous social and cultural dynamics from within happen to consolidate, differentiate and enclose ‘Europe’ culturally. For instance, with regard to the relationship between Islam and Europe he says that Islam’s impact on the Christian world cannot be understated. Islam’s conquests turned Europe into Christianity’s main base. At the same time the great surround of Muslim territory cut the Christians off from virtually all direct contact with other religions and civilizations. The barrier of militant Islam turned the Peninsula in on itself, cutting or transforming many of the earlier lines of commercial, intellectual and political intercourse.<sup>157</sup>

Moreover endogenous dynamics of Europe performed the same function of demarcating it as well. For instance, with regard to Renaissance Davies says that traces of the Renaissance were slight in countries absorbed by the Ottoman Empire and in Muscovy they were limited to a few artistic imitations. Indeed by giving a new lease of life to the Latin West, the Renaissance only deepened the gulf between East and West.<sup>158</sup> In a parallel fashion, S. Garcia’s list of the “decisive influences on Europe” sublimates certain political, social and cultural values and institutions out of this historical scheme. He lists these influences as Hellenism, with its search for discipline, rationality, perfection, beauty and justice; Roman law and institutions, which created ‘a model of organized and stable power’ and Christianity (with elements of the Judaic tradition), which has contributed so

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<sup>156</sup> M. Wintle, *Europe’s Image: Visual Representations of Europe from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century in Culture and Identity in Europe*, 1996, p.54.

<sup>157</sup> Norman Davies, *Europe, A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1996), p.257.

<sup>158</sup> Norman Davies, *Europe, A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1996), p.473.

powerfully to the universalisation of spiritual, moral and human principles as well as deeds.<sup>159</sup>

The well-known scheme of the historical development of 'Europe' on a unilinear and progressing line from ancient Greece and Roman Empire through Latin Christendom, Renaissance, Enlightenment and Industrial modernization to the contemporary Europe, is the main context in these recent works and discourses on European identity. In this framework, this process ends up with a culturally differentiated, particular, geo-political actor; 'Europe'. Furthermore, scholars like Delanty believe that the idea of Europe in the modern period never emancipated itself from the challenger East-West nexus with its roots deep in Christendom.

This historical and cultural scheme has also been reiterated by the representatives of the E.U. J. Santer in a speech he made as the president of the European Commission in Brussels on 25 June 1996 says that "European culture should be defined rather in terms of a common cultural heritage of the Western mind and tradition. Its sources are Greek, Latin and Judeo-Christian. It is on these foundations that Europe has built a civilization which bears the imprint of humanism, reason, science, democracy and social welfare."<sup>160</sup>

When we take the common points in the above-mentioned lists concerning the ingredients of the identity of Europe, it can be seen that they are all elusive and subjective matters when compared to geopolitical, institutional/legal, transactional issues.

According to Wintle the Roman Empire is really shorthand for certain values of the Ancients, including especially the Greeks and the Roman Republic. The Roman rule of law survived from the end of the Empire in small pockets but was

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<sup>159</sup> S.Garcia, "Europe's Fragmented Identities and the Frontiers of Citizenship", in S. Garcia, (ed.), *European Identity and the Search for Legitimacy* (London: Pinter, 1993), pp.5-6

<sup>160</sup> Obtained from <http://www.europa.eu.int>

rediscovered together with much of the rest of Ancient civilization through the Renaissance. Greek ideas of art, philosophy and politics were transmitted through the Roman experience, together with the more specifically Roman legacy of military, bureaucratic and infrastructural organization.<sup>161</sup>

Although Enlightenment was not strictly limited to Europe, but was a critical influence elsewhere, especially in North America, it would be hard to deny that in the eighteenth century there was a Europe-wide change in thinking, building on the influences of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century scientific revolution, which we call the Enlightenment. It was confined in the main to the elite, and did not affect all parts of Europe equally, but it was a truly multinational and international intellectual movement with profound consequences. The scientific and skeptical spirit of the Enlightenment felt Europe to be superior to the other continents.<sup>162</sup>

Taking industrialization into hand, it is obvious that it can no longer be confined to Europe, but the early experience of industrialization was critical for the kind of self-image which Europe was to acquire from the late eighteenth century onwards, and which it has retained in the late twentieth century. Early industrialization generated the wealth, technology and military power which put Europe in a world-dominating position for one and a half of the two most recent centuries and according to Wintle it must be one of the most formative influences on the people and nations of Europe.

Wintle believes that language is a problematic one. Firstly, there are a very large number of different languages in a relatively small place: some forty-three, in three different alphabets. Many of the languages in Europe come from Latin or

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<sup>161</sup> M.Wintle, "Cultural Identity in Europe: Shared Experience", in M. Wintle, (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996), p.13.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14.

Germanic roots, however the issue is not clear about Europe's shared linguistic heritage, and there is certainly still enormous diversity.

The recent discourses, representations and works that are devoted to the aim of delimiting the title of "Europeanness" have proliferated from the early nineties onwards. In other words, the end of the Cold War has re-introduced the difficult issue of how to understand and where to draw geographically, the distinction between the two spheres. NATO and EU expansion plans have politicized the issue and the deeper questions of division, taking into account history, culture and religion, have come to the forefront of popular consciousness. This increased the attention to such issues, however it has also been stimulated vividly by select often radical theories which have emerged since the end of the Cold War. As it has been mentioned before, at that time Samuel Huntington has defined civilizations as cultural entities which are based on villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities and religious groups, Huntington identifies seven or eight major civilizations, two of which exist in Europe: 'Western' and 'Slavic Orthodox'. In his assumptions, emphasis on religion is one of the most important factors shaping the civilizations. For him, the other factors listed alongside with religion as distinctions between civilizations such as history, language, culture and traditions are far more fundamental than differences among political ideologies and political regimes. He even relates the possibility of establishing economic blocs to the shared religion and culture. For him, the European Community rests on the shared foundation of European culture and Western Christianity. He believes that cultural and religious differences would impede such a regional economic integration and he gives the example of Economic Cooperation Organization, which brings together 10 non-Arab Muslim countries, founded originally in the 1960s by Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, which he calls as the realization by the leaders of several of these countries that they had no chance of admission to the European Union. He states that where identity is defined in ethnic or religious terms, an *us* versus *them* relation emerges in popular consciousness between peoples of different ethnicity or religion. Differences in culture and religion create differences over policy issues, ranging

from human rights to immigration to trade and commerce to the environment. Decreasingly able to mobilize support and form coalitions on the basis of ideology, governments and groups will increasingly attempt to mobilize support by appealing to common religion and civilizational identity.<sup>163</sup> Huntington cites Jacques Delors, speaking as president of the European Community, as support for his civilizational paradigm: “future conflicts will be sparked by cultural factors rather than economics or ideology”.<sup>164</sup>

Throughout this period there has been abundance in the works on the ‘identity’, ‘making’, ‘history’ and ‘idea’ of Europe. In these works EU turned out to be the ‘representative’ and carrier of this ‘peculiar’ history and the idea. Thus, for better or worse, the EU is increasingly viewed as the indicator of what is ‘European’. Accordingly, the extent to which religion plays a role in contemporary ideas of Europe, particularly with reference to the EU project to create a common European identity, carries major significance for those nations which lie outside particular narrow definitions of such an identity.<sup>165</sup>

A sociologist who was very much attuned to the processes of the formation and deformation of culture and the complex range of cultural unities and diversities, Georg Simmel, expresses the view that Europe is a symbolic representation, a historic idea which has developed above that of the nation-state and is perfectly compatible with any individual national life. He also adds that Europeanization, in the sense of a self-conscious thematization of European identity, is less likely to occur when Europe considers itself to be “the world”, and is more likely to occur when it perceives its hegemony threatened by outside parties who themselves begin to formulate Europe as an entity and project an image of Europe which

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<sup>163</sup> Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations”, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, Issue 3, Summer 1993, p.25-28.

<sup>164</sup> Samuel Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What?”, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, Issue 5, Nov/Dec 1993, p.194.

<sup>165</sup> Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations”, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, Issue 3, Summer 1993, p.25.

clashes with the taken for granted and unformulated assumptions about Europe held by Europeans.<sup>166</sup>

According to Delanty, today, more than ever before, the discourse of Europe is taking on a strongly ideological character and in this transformation Europe becomes part of a hegemonical cultural discourse. The most important task for Europe today is the expression of a new idea of Europe which would be capable of providing an orientation for a post-national European identity and this idea should be the basis of a new politics of cultural pluralism.<sup>167</sup>

As it has been stated before, culture is a “dimension” of the boundary-construction through the construction of an identity. The idea of cultural identity expresses how the individuals interpret their relationship to the community they inhabit and how thereafter the person considers that their community relates to the wider world. It is put forward by Kursad Ertugrul that in the case of “European identity”, which is claimed to be represented by the European Union, the cultural boundary is becoming more and more important although the forms of boundaries other than “cultural dimension” are also important and they constitute the criteria of eligibility for the membership to the EU.<sup>168</sup>

According to the analysis of M. Smith “four types of boundaries exist or can be constructed between the Union and its environment: geopolitical, institutional/legal, transactional and cultural. In this conception geopolitical boundary has to do with the concerns of security and stability and institutional/legal boundary defines the position of EU in the international context as a “community of law” and as “the promoter of an image of civic statehood”.

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<sup>166</sup> Mark Featherstone, “The Formation of a European Culture”, in Paul Dukes, (ed.), *Frontiers of European Culture* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), p.34.

<sup>167</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.3-9.

<sup>168</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, “Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization” in *Central European Political Science Review*, Vol.2, No 6, 2001, p.158.

The transactional boundary is relevant to the “creation of a customs union and common external tariff”. With regard to the concept of “cultural boundary” it is said that “the construction of the EU is in many ways the construction of difference between the assumed culture of the insiders and the outsiders”.<sup>169</sup> These concepts of boundaries would interact and depending on the conjuncture, one or some of them would be more important for delimiting the boundaries of the Union. For instance in the Cold War era, it was the geopolitical conception of boundary that mattered most. However, with the end of Cold War and with the transformation of the European order since 1989, this boundary which seemed permanent lost its significance. Together with this, the cultural boundary, which had been in a sense considered by the geopolitical realities of the situation, became a significant independent factor. The “Copenhagen Criteria” would include the conceptions of transactional and institutional/legal boundaries which are the “formal” or rather “official” preconditions for accession to the Union.

In this context, it can be said that the cultural dimension of the European identity would be the most contested one as culture is the realm of different and interacting images, ideologies and discourses. It would also be the most elusive (as it is not described as a “formal” boundary) and the most divisive (as cultural boundaries cannot be altered or transcended as easily as other boundaries) dimension of European identity. The roles that would be assigned to the concept of “cultural boundary” within the integration process would inevitably shape the ongoing enlargement process.

As a result, Kursad Ertugrul concludes that there is an external-internal dialectic in the significance of the works, attempts and policies on advancing a “European identity” incorporating the “cultural” dimension in contemporary Europe, which are basically centered in the concerns of the consolidation of EU. This identity is

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<sup>169</sup> M. Smith, “The European Union and a Changing Europe: Establishing the Boundaries of Order” in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.34, Issue 1, 1996, p.24.

expected to provide an environment of legitimacy and a center for popular acceptance and at the same time a concept for delimiting this area by constructing an “inside” and “outside”.<sup>170</sup>

In this context ‘culture’ has been given a central place in describing, delimiting and identifying Europe.<sup>171</sup> It can also be said that there seems to be a need for cultural integration in the contemporary stage of European integration. In a recent work on European culture, P. Rietbergen writes that “Jean Monnet, one of the architects of ‘modern Europe’, at the end of his life is said to have remarked that if he had to start building the ‘European House’ anew, he would begin with culture instead of economic or political life”.<sup>172</sup> So it can be said that the main reason for the emphasis of a European identity stems from the progress of unification in Western Europe in the form of the ECSC, the EEC, the EC and now the EU. Interestingly, the conception of Europe as having a distinctive cultural identity has gained a certain prominence within the expressions originating from the EU. As Shore reveals, the concept of ‘European cultural area’ has been frequently used in official EU documents. According to Shore, this concept “echoes the old culture-area concept in early anthropological writing; the idea of a distinctive, bounded region set apart from others by race, religion, language and habitat”.<sup>173</sup>

The process of a common European project shows us that from an economic integration, it is continually moving to a political one, which indeed led to the problem of “essence” behind this unification. Up to the early nineties the process of European integration was carried out in accordance with the premises of functionalism and neo-functionalism built on the “spill-over” effects of the issue-

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<sup>170</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, “Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization” in *Central European Political Science Review*, Vol.2, No.6, 2001, p.159.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> P. Rietbergen, *Europe, A Cultural History* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.458.

<sup>173</sup> Cris Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.62.



specific technical integration, which was supposed to be the basic dynamic of the integration process. According to these premises, European integration is an apolitical, utilitarian, liberal and economist process, which is carried out through the “efficient work of experts, bureaucrats and pioneering leaders”.<sup>174</sup> In line with these premises this process has been presented as modernist and rationalizing. Hanzen and Williams stress that this was “the myth of Europe” constructed by functionalism.

However as EC evolved towards a ‘Union’ and an ‘economic bloc’ having regulatory capabilities of social and economic relations, and towards a ‘part-formed polity’, the problem of the ‘legitimacy’ of the Union has come to the fore and an attempt to give a “soul” to the Union has gained an important role in order to stimulate popular support for the EC. The “identity” was seized upon as the solution to the problems and from the mid-eighties onwards several proposals and reports have been prepared and attempts were made to generate a sense of ‘European identity’, which would provide a locus of legitimacy for the Union in the ‘new Europe’. It is claimed by some scholars that identity has emerged in 1970s to repair the deficiencies of the integration project.<sup>175</sup>

It is interesting to see how themes were echoed by the EC-EU in terms of the projections of their “identity” and “culture”. For instance, in June 1985 Council of Europe described the twelve yellow stars in the flag of EC (later EU) as the “symbol of perfection and plenitude, associated with the apostles, the sons of Jacob, the tables of the Roman legislator, the labours of the Hercules, the hours of the day, the months of the year, or the signs of the Zodiac.”<sup>176</sup> Another example of

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<sup>174</sup> Lene Hansen and Michael C. Williams, “The Myths of Europe: Legitimacy, Community and the ‘Crisis’ of the EU”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 2, June 1999, p. 237.

<sup>175</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, “Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization” in *Central European Political Science Review*, Vol.2, No 6, 2001, p.161.

<sup>176</sup> Cris Shore, “Usurpers or Pioneers? European Commission Bureaucrats and the Question of European Consciousness”, in A.P. Cohen and N. Rapport, (ed.), *Question of Consciousness* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.221.

EC's efforts in strengthening European identity is the "Origins of European Identity" sponsored by the Commission of the E.C and the European Cooperation Fund. The book aims to present a privileged way to promote the emergence of a true European identity. As it is claimed there is a fundamental basis of European personality which derives from the common cultural fund of Europe, which is claimed to be tempered by the classical heritage, Christianity and the individual genius of its people. It is followed that the legacy of this culture was apparently transmitted to classical Greece through Cretan cultures. The pre-history of Europe is given brilliance through this diversion and linked with ancient Greece where the progressive success story of Europe begins. Then follows the familiar story by ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. After them comes Christianity which represents a fundamental revolution in the formation of European man. Feudalism, cities and towns universities and parliaments continue to cultivate the "European man". In this framework the *other* exists in so far as their "contributions" are absorbed or received by the European culture.<sup>177</sup>

Kursad Ertugrul states that one significant aspect of the image of European identity is that the political, social and cultural "difference" of Europe, that is Western Europe as the dominant core- the centre- not only from "non-Europe- but also within the wider Europe is strongly emphasized. In this sense, it can be said that this cultural frame expressed by the works and initiatives on the affirmation and promotion of European identity would constrain the relations of EU with the central, Eastern and south-eastern Europe in different degrees. Because the countries in these geographies are already getting incorporated to the institutional/legal, transactional and geopolitical boundaries of Europe. However, he asserts that certain conflicts would occur between the imagined European cultural identity and the presumed cultural differences of *other* Europe. It remains

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<sup>177</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, "Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization" in Central European Political Science Review, Vol.2, No 6, 2001, p.162-163.

to be seen how these types of boundaries would interact in different stages of the European integration.<sup>178</sup>

As it is explained above, construction of an identity involves the construction of boundaries which would create, reflect or embody an affirmed “difference”. In this sense attempts and/or processes of constructing a European identity coincides with the affirmation and/or construction of certain boundaries. The components of European identity, which establish the borders of the European Union, play a significant role in Turco-European relations and in Turkey’s claim for EU membership. In fact, most of the people believe that these informal criteria will determine whether Turkey is eligible for EU membership as well as the formal political and economic Copenhagen criteria.

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 4

### MUTUAL POSITIONING OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM TOWARDS EACH OTHER

The relationship between Christians and Muslims over the centuries is a long and complex one. Christianity and Islam have been in contact for over fourteen centuries. Geographically the origins of the two communities are not so far apart- both of them arose in the Middle East- and travel south almost anywhere in Europe and the first non-European (or non-Christian) society you meet will be a Muslim one. As the two communities have grown and become universal, the relationship between them has sometimes been one of hostility, sometimes one of rivalry and competition, sometimes one of mutual influence, and sometimes one of cooperation and collaboration. Different regions of the world in different centuries have therefore witnessed a whole range of encounters between Christians and Muslims. False images of the *other* developed in both communities usually have resulted in fear and misunderstanding. Both Christians and Muslims have often inherited ideas, images and stereotypes, mostly negative, which marked their mutual perceptions.<sup>179</sup> For instance, Delanty says that the term ‘Cold War’ was first applied to the resulting tension between Muslims and Christians in the thirteenth century and the dichotomy of *self* and *other* that it claimed for remained a determining force in the European identity for centuries.<sup>180</sup>

Muslims and Christians do share a unity of faith and destiny. As the religions of the Book they have so many things in common. Both Christianity and Islam claimed from the beginning to bring a universal message, which expressed an

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<sup>179</sup> Hugh Goddard, “Christian-Muslim Relations: a look backwards and a look forwards” in *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol.11, No.2, 2000, p.202.

<sup>180</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.34.

absolutist claim to truth. Both have the missionary character to spread their own religion to the all humankind. Each religion, Christianity and Islam, competes with the other in the claim to be the final message to the humankind. Christians have often perceived Islam as a political, economic and theological threat and have painted Islam in negative manner, in contrast to their own positive self-image. Many Muslims, likewise, have been tending to regard Christianity and Christendom- often identified with each other and the West- as engaged in an ongoing crusade against the Muslim world.<sup>181</sup>

Christian views of Islam have been shaped, transmitted and brought about since the seventh century, sometimes through direct encounter but also, especially for those who do not interact routinely with Muslims, through polemical and apologetic literature. Islam is viewed by some Christians as inherently intolerant, violent and menacing. Christians also tend to assume that Islam is monolithic- the same in Morocco and Malaysia. In fact, both historical and contemporary Islam present considerable diversity in theological, philosophical and legal schools of thought.<sup>182</sup>

As a religion which began after the time of Christ, and therefore after the New Testament had been completed, Islam has always presented a theological challenge to Christians, especially in relation to Mohammad's status as Prophet and the Qur'an's status as Revelation. Islam was conceived as another expression of the Abrahamic faith, however it was not limited to Abraham; rather it was the faith of all prophets before him, including Jesus. This long period has been marked by both confrontation and times of fruitful cooperation. However, the dominant pattern of relationship between the two faiths has been hostility and prejudice rather than friendliness and understanding. The negative and positive aspects of this

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<sup>181</sup> <http://www.wcc-coe.org/>

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

relationship stemmed for the most part from the deliberate emphasis of certain biblical and Qur'anic texts on the part of adherents of both religions.

Since the Koran was translated into Latin in 1143, western society was familiar with Islam, but it was an unclear version that disturbed the Christian mind. There were many different interpretations. For instance, Pope Innocent III characterized Mohammad as the east of the Apocalypse. This was the view that presented legitimacy on western counter-offensives against Islam throughout the Middle Ages. If we look at the scriptural texts, first of all, there are no biblical texts which refer explicitly to Islam, given that the Islamic community had not yet been established when the various Jewish and Christian scriptural texts were being compiled. This has not, however, prevented various scriptural texts being interpreted by later Christians as having somehow references to Islam, and a wide variety of scriptural texts came to be used this way. The situation is rather different in the Muslim community, since the Qur'an does include a number of specific references to Christians, along with rather more references to Jews, reflecting both Mohammad's contacts with and wider knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. These specific references to Christians, however, still need interpreting, since some of them appear to be more positive and commendatory, while others appear to be more critical and condemnatory.<sup>183</sup>

Later texts, both Muslim and Christian, have also come to widely differing conclusions about the other faith. Among Muslim writers too, widely-differing judgments may be found in their texts about Christianity. On the one hand, Qur'an recognizes Christianity as essentially a true faith, Christians as a legitimate faith community and considers Christians to be the nearest in affection to Muslims and on the other hand, it is also asserted that it commands its followers to wage war against those of People of the Book who reject the faith in God and the Last day. It

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<sup>183</sup> Hugh Goddard, "Christian-Muslim Relations: a look backwards and a look forwards" in *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol.11, No.2, 2000, p.202.

can be said that misconceptions and distortions have continued to damage their perceptions of each other to the present day.

Most of the Europeans ask whether Islam can be brought to accept the rules of a secular society, as Christianity after so many long and painful struggles had been, or whether it was a religion so firmly implanted in the political and social sphere, so contrary to any distinction between those things which are God's and those which are Caesar's that it would never allow its adherents to become reliably law-abiding citizens of a secular and tolerant democracy.

According to Edward Mortimer, the Western world is biased when the issue is the Muslim world and he tries to prove his theory by giving concrete examples. The changes in Eastern Europe happened to coincide with a sudden increase in anxiety about the presence of large Muslim communities inside Western Europe associated with the controversy over Muslim girls wearing headscarves at state schools in France. These 'immigrant' communities have been present for 20 or 30 years and are therefore no longer strictly immigrant, since they include at least one generation of adults born in the countries where they now live. Friction between them and the 'host' country is certainly not new, but before 1989 resentment did not focus primarily on their religion; and on the whole they enjoyed at least the moral support of the liberal intellectual establishment against the prejudice and discrimination to which they were exposed. In 1989, however, they largely were deprived of that support because their religion was seen as being unfavorable to some traditional bulwarks of Western freedom: in Britain the freedom of expression and publication; in France *la laïcité*- that is, the religious neutrality of the state, and more especially of the state school system.<sup>184</sup>

Recently, the Muslim communities within Western Europe are seen as potentially the front line of a much larger wave of immigration resulting from the population

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<sup>184</sup> Edward Mortimer, "Christianity and Islam", in *International Affairs*, 67, Issue 1, 1991, pp.11-12.

explosion and the lack of economic development in their countries of origin- North Africa, Turkey, the Indian subcontinent. North Africa especially has become something of an obsession for the governments and political parties of southern Europe, some of whom find themselves obliged for the first time to take seriously the closely connected issues of immigration and of racial tension within their borders. Mortimer claims that the thought of a tide of East European migrants on the whole inspired less alarm, precisely because it is assumed that their Christian heritage would make them assimilable in Western Europe in a way that Muslim North Africans or Turks are not and there can be little doubt that this belief lies behind many of the more technical and circumstantial reasons given for opposing, or at least delaying, consideration of Turkey's candidature for EU full membership.<sup>185</sup>

Mortimer asserts that all these factors are pushing Europe to define itself in terms, not perhaps of Christian belief, but certainly of Christian heritage, and to emphasize as sharply as possible the distinction and the frontier between itself and the world of Islam. This may be unavoidable. It may in some respects even be desirable: if Europe is to function as a political entity its members will need some sense of a common heritage and some criterion for deciding where Europe begins and ends. But he says that the implications need to be considered very carefully. If the price to be paid is to make every Muslim resident in the Community feel that he/she is at best a tolerated alien, and every neighboring Muslim state feel that it is looked on by Europe as an enemy, than that price is certainly too high. A more constructive and harmonious way to define Europe needs to be found.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p.13.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid



## TURKISH IDENTITY FROM THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

“Isolated by Ottoman history, language and culture from the West and by its Republican history and political choices from the East, it is very difficult to place Turkey into any neat geographical, cultural, political or economic category” writes Mustafa Aydin. He explains the dilemmas and the complexity of defining Turkish identity in the following way. Although about 97 percent of Turkey’s land mass lies in Asia, Turkey’s progressive elite consider their country as part of Europe. About 98 percent of its population is Muslim and yet Turkey is a secular state by choice and its religious development has taken a different route from that of other Muslim states. Culturally, most of the country reflects the peculiarities of Middle Eastern culture, but with an equal persistency it participates in European cultural events. It claims to have a liberal economic system, but the features of the planned economy are still encountered. In the religious, historical and geographical senses it is a Middle Eastern country, yet any development impinging upon the *status quo* of the Balkans, the Caucasus, Caspian and Black Sea regions and the Mediterranean directly affects Turkey just as much.<sup>187</sup>

As mentioned above, there are many objective elements, such as the Graeco-Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage, Renaissance and Reformation, Enlightenment and Industrialization. These categories, which non-Europe does not have, are used to define Europe. It is clear that the European identity is mostly shaped by the differences that it has from the *others*. It is argued by many scholars critical of the Eurocentric heritage that the self-constitution of Europe has been made possible through the construction of the *other* which has been conceived as being inferior to Europe.<sup>188</sup> Among all the *others*, the most obvious and the most threatening has been the Islamic Near East, represented from the fourteenth

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<sup>187</sup> Mustafa Aydin, “The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey’s European Vocation”, in *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, Winter 2003, p.306.

<sup>188</sup> Banu Helvacioğlu, “The Paradoxical Logic of Europe in Turkey: Where Does Europe End?”, in *The European Legacy*, Vol. 4, No.3, 1999, p.22.

century onwards by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>189</sup> Turkish ‘other’ may be said to have the most powerful influence. Many scholars believe that the European identity is based very much on exclusion and rather than inclusion. In order to define itself, Europe needed an *other* against whom it could construct an identity of its own and for most of its history the Ottomans and Islam fulfilled this duty well. The Turks starting with the Ottoman Empire to today claimed to be a European state and it is admitted by the Europeans that Turkey has been in Europe for a very long time in history, but has never been accepted as a European state. Actually, Turks has been a perfect *other* of Europe. On the other hand, the modern Turkish identity too has been formed in relation to modern Europe.

In order to explain Turkish identity, it should firstly be stated that there has been no national identity such as the “Turk” before the twentieth century. Before that, the most fundamental component of the Turkish identity was Islam and this identity, as it has been explained throughout my thesis, was seen by the Europeans as a hostile element which should be eliminated forever in the Middle Ages. In the modern times, it is not strictly regarded as a hostile element but still negated. According to a research realized by TESEV in 1999 even though 97 percent of the Turkish population is Muslim, the Muslim identity does not occupy the forefront. While those who identify themselves first as Muslims constitute the biggest group (35.4 percent), those who identify themselves first as Turks or in terms of nationality constitute the majority of the society. It can be concluded that although the national identity in Turkey is constructed not too long ago, it is more common than the religious identity. Chisslet also draws the conclusion from this research that for the majority of the people, religious belief and worshipping is regarded as being bound by private life and religion has an influence on public life and occupying a more visible place is not approved of.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> M.E. Yapp, “Europe in the Turkish Mirror”, in Past and Present, No.137, 1992, p. 135.

<sup>190</sup> William Chislett, Turkish Daily News, ‘Turkey’s Membership to the European Union: A Rose or a Thorn?’, 30 April 2004.

Turks have been a part of Europe geographically since their arrival in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, economically since the expansion of trade routes in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and diplomatically since the inclusion of the Ottoman Empire in the Concert of Europe in 1856. As Yurdusev states the modern European identity was defined as opposed to the Turkish threat.<sup>191</sup> On the other hand, Turks have also been influenced by Europe in the formation of its own identity. Helvacioğlu explains that “Christian Europe”, “European civilization”, “Europe as a symbol of Western progress”, “Europe as a western ally” and “Europe as a threatening enemy force” have been used in shaping the national and cultural identity of Turkey.<sup>192</sup> In the glorious days of the Ottoman Empire, Europe affected the formation of Turkish identity under the role of the *other* but after the late eighteenth century onwards, when the modernization and westernization process had been launched the perception of Europe gained a positive connotation.

Ataturk has expressed that “the West has always been prejudiced against the Turks... but we Turks have always consistently moved towards the West... In order to be a civilized nation, there is no alternative”.<sup>193</sup> Arnold Toynbee, in his article *Turkish State of Mind* states that the Turks sought to be admitted as full members of Western society in order to escape from the terrible position of being its pariahs.<sup>194</sup> Kevin Robins argues that in certain respects, they have succeeded in establishing their credentials as a westernized and a modernized society. However, among Europeans the sense that Turkey is not authentically belongs to the West,

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<sup>191</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations” in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today’s Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.85.

<sup>192</sup> Banu Helvacioğlu, “The Paradoxical Logic of Europe in Turkey: Where Does Europe End?”, in *The European Legacy*, Vol. 4, No.3, 1999, p.24.

<sup>193</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000*, (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), p.38.

<sup>194</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Turkish State of Mind”, in *Atlantic Monthly*, No.136, October 1925, p.556.

the sense that it is alien, an outsider, and an interloper in the European community has always remained.<sup>195</sup>

“Throughout the history, Turks have been in contact with the Europeans, first as a conquering superior and enemy, then as a component part, later as an admirer and unsuccessful imitator, and in the end as a follower and ally”.<sup>196</sup> Relations between the Turks and the Europeans go back to the arrival of the Turks in the Asia Minor. The first Turks in Anatolia, Seljuks and others, had their initial meeting with Europeans by way of the Crusaders, before they even saw Europe. These Sultanates chose to keep their close ties with the easygoing Islamic world, rather than open up to the frightening Crusader world of the West. After the Turks have conquered Anatolian lands, the places where Turkish was spoken was named “Turkey” and this name was certainly given by the Europeans. The word “Turkey” is used in the Barborassa Crusades for the first time in 1190. We see the word frequently used by the European authors in the thirteenth century. The word is mainly used to indicate the *other* of Europe at that time. On the other hand, the Turks regarded themselves as Muslims rather than being Turkish. The language, country, ethnic sources were not as important as the element of Islam. This element was mainly emphasized against the Europeans who were regarded as the *other*. The word Turk was equal to the word Muslim in the Europeans eyes. When a European converted into Islam, they used to say that the person Turkified. The word Turk was so much identified with the word Muslim that while the expression “Christian Arab” was meaningful, “Christian Turk” was regarded as meaningless and contradictory. The element of Islam still takes its place in the twentieth century in the Turkish identity but together with language, ethnicity, nationality and geography.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Kevin Robins, “Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe”, in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p.65.

<sup>196</sup> Mustafa Aydin, “The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey’s European Vocation”, in *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, Winter 2003, p.309.

<sup>197</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “18. ve 19. Yüzyıllarda Avrupa’da Türk Kimliđi”, in Nuri Bilgin, (ed.), *Cumhuriyet, Demokrasi ve Kimlik* (Istanbul: Baglam Yayıncılık, 1997), p.101-104.

Opening to the West was an Ottoman strategy that started with Osman Ghazi. Before they had any status in Asia, the Ottomans were already an empire based largely on south-eastern Europe:

*It is an important historical fact which is not often appreciated that the Ottoman Turks started their career as a people in the extreme north-west of Asia Minor, facing Europe; that they founded their Empire not in Asia but across the Sea of Marmara in Thrace and the Balkans, in other words in Europe and that then expanded eastwards into Asia Minor a century after they had already become a European power.*<sup>198</sup>

Ottomans were the first to cross to the European side of the Straits. With the confidence they had in their own identity, they did not feel uneasy living side by side with the Europeans, even beyond the Balkans. The Turks started to be a serious threat starting from the fourteenth century for the Europeans. The Ottomans posed a very dangerous physical threat for the Europeans as it was one of the most powerful forces in Europe until the end of the eighteenth century. This danger could only be eliminated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when Turks were completely driven out of the Balkans. Religion was playing a very important role in the negative perception of the Ottomans. Since Christianity and Islam were both monotheistic and universal religions, they had common points. On the other hand, their rivalry had been severe. Islam has always been regarded by the Europeans as a threat and heresy. Turks, with the flourishing of the Ottoman Empire, were mainly regarded as the representative of Islam and came to symbolize Muslim power. In the fourteenth century, Philippe de Mezieres, the French politician, in his letter to King Richard II, wrote that Christians had to make good and mighty war against the Turks, fierce and dishonorable enemies of the faith. To converse or disperse and destroy the false sect of Mohammad and all

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<sup>198</sup> Morgan Philips Price, *A History of Turkey; From Empire to Republic* (London: Allen&Unwin, 1961), p.44

idolatry was something God willed Christians to do.<sup>199</sup> Although Islam was no more a threat for the Europeans from the beginning of the eighteenth century, this perception remained in the minds. Islam has still been refused and seen as an obstacle in the progress, modernization and civilization process. As it has also been stated by Yurdusev, the reason of the prejudices and the negation against the Turks is the religious difference and this religion-based prejudices and cultural differences form the foundation of the negative perceptions.<sup>200</sup>

In the middle of the fifteenth century, the peace plan of the Hussite King George aimed at uniting Christianity on the basis of a plurality of territorial powers in order to establish unity and peace among them for the aim of organizing war against the Turks. The Christian princes had been given their power in order to glorify peace, to uphold position of Christendom, to bring the wars against the infidel to a successful end and to guard and extend the frontiers of the Christian republic. It was believed that Christians had to love each other in order to be able effectively to hate non-Christians; they had to live in fraternal love to be able to destroy their enemies with united force. The “Turks” and the Turkish prince as the symbol of their political existence, were represented as the “severest enemy of the Christian name”, and the European princes united in peace were made to swear that they shall not cease to pursue the enemy until he is driven out of Christian territory. This space had to be cleansed of all that was seen as not belonging, above all the “Turks”. The main idea at that time was that peace had to be made between Christians so that they could go to war against the Turks. The formula of the new European policy was simple and clear: “to chase the Turk out of Europe”. It is not difficult to perceive that the political self-consciousness of the West was articulated in opposition to the “Turkish peril”, for as it has been explained before this definite geographical unit was associated with Christianity and thus what was

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<sup>199</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in *CSD Perspectives*, No. 4, Autumn 1994, pp.5-6.

<sup>200</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “18. ve 19. Yüzyıllarda Avrupa’da Türk Kimliđi”, in Nuri Bilgin, (ed.), *Cumhuriyet, Demokrasi ve Kimlik* (Istanbul: Baglam Yayıncılık, 1997), p.101-104.

under threat was “Europe”. This was not a European strategy in the sense of Europe executing a political, military and cultural program. It was a European strategy in the sense that its aim was to build Europe. Only through this program of chasing the “Turk”, of cleansing the emerging collective body politic, could Europe itself come into being. Holy war was to be the dynamic constitutive principle of Europe.

For Pius II, who had called crusade against the Turks, the threat to the political existence of Europe and the dangers to Christian religion were linked. Turkish attacks into Europe were at the same time an attack on the Christian faith. “Unless we take arms and go to meet the enemy we think all is over with religion” he warned his fellow Europeans. “We shall be among Turks in the position in which we see the despised race of Jews among Christians”. Thus he spelled out the new golden rule of the new Europe: Do not allow *others* to treat us in the way we treat others. The crusade Pius II called for had to be of a dual nature: it had to be both a war for Europe and a war for Christianity. The war for Europe was a Christian war and the war for Christianity was a European war. But this double edged holy war had a single purpose: to fight Muslims and to crush them.<sup>201</sup>

Half a century after Pius II, European humanists preached for the crusade in the name of humanity. For most of the Italian humanists, the Turk was the enemy of learning and the faith and it was the duty of the Christian princes to protect the Europeans from the infidel barbarian. For instance, in the writings of Erasmus of Rotterdam, the most influential Christian humanist, who has been much praised for his apparently uncompromising rejection of war, had different views when it came to the “Turkish question”. His condemnation of war was not at all absolute. Erasmus feared the Turks. Against the background of their military successes, his fears were not completely groundless. As critical as he might have been of the medieval past, he did not hesitate to repeat the conventional principle that the

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<sup>201</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in CSD Perspectives, No. 4, Autumn 1994, pp.5-9.

conflicts among Christians played into the hands of the Turks and that clashes between Christian rulers paved the road for the victories of the Turks. Thus war inside Christendom was unacceptable; however when it came to military missions to counter Turkish inroads into Europe, Erasmus was willing to make an exception. And yet it was not only on the ground of the need for defensive wars that he did not absolutely oppose war against the Turks. On the basis of a philosophical anthropology, he not only admitted that such war was admissible- he even recommended it. If war in general was not “wholly avoidable”, then war against the Turks “would be a lesser evil than the unholy conflicts and clashes between Christians. What Erasmus had really hoped for was that the Turks would be subdued and brought to Christ: he preferred winning them over to the Christian faith to killing them. For as wicked as the Turks might be, they were nevertheless “men”. Yet even if they were “men”, the Turks were barbarians, argued Erasmus. He called them monstrous beasts, enemies of the church, a people contaminated with all kinds of crime and dishonor. Mohammad was to him a criminal. Arguably, Erasmus needed these “barbarians” in order to see himself as European. For it was only in opposition to the Turks, only when facing the “Turkish peril”, that Erasmus considered himself European. More than that, according to him, the purification of the European heart required the cleansing of Europe by means of war against the Turks.<sup>202</sup> Erasmus’s friend Thomas Moore held similar views. For him the Turks were “a shameful and superstitious sect”, the “terrible sect of Christ’s mortal enemies representing forces of darkness”. Moore saw this power as threatening “the whole corps of Christendom” and he joined the chorus calling for peace and harmony among Christians in order to fight the common enemy, Turks, successfully and to defend God’s name.<sup>203</sup>

Throughout the 1500s a Europe of independent sovereign states whose main concern was to establish a balance of power among themselves began to take

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<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-12.

<sup>203</sup> Thomas More, *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation, The Yale Edition of Selected Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 196-198.



shape and the role of the Ottoman Empire in creating this balance was undeniable. The Ottomans played one of the most significant roles in preserving the freedom of the system of states and holding the balance among them starting from the fifteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century. The Ottoman pressure on the Habsburgs had an influential role in the spread of Protestantism in Europe. On the other hand, Ottomans was the most significant power that gave the Europeans a sense of unity. In other words, Turks and the role of Islam as the significant *other* never disappeared. The new humanists continued to think about a common European military enterprise against the Turks. Justus Lipsius, who is regarded by Mastnak as a great contributor in the restructuring of political ideas at that time, was surprisingly conventional when it came to the “Turkish Question”. He defended the thought of a crusade against the common enemy of Europe, the Turks and this European unity idea was strongly supported by the humanist movement as a whole. The spirit of the crusades especially against the Turks had remained. For instance, for Botero, war against Turks would always be just and justified and universally lawful. He did not only regard Muslims as infidels but also the most alien to the Christian faith and the worst enemies of Christianity and the state itself. Thus, he was convinced that it is worthwhile to attack the Turks in their own land instead of sitting at home and waiting for them to come.<sup>204</sup>

For Renaissance Europe, the Ottoman peril was a major problem. The fear from the Ottomans, predicted Turkish conquest and the extinction of Christian culture, had a profound effect upon the thought and feelings in the west. The Renaissance responded to the Orient with the invention of the notion of oriental despotism. For Dante, Mohammad was the evil opposite of Christ and was relegated to the depths of hell. The Orient was not only represented as despotic evil but also as cruel. This is very apparent in the case of Machiavelli, who contrasted the despotism of the Orient to the free spirit of the West. The Orient was characterized by single despotic kings while in the West there were numerous republics and many kings.

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<sup>204</sup> Tomaz Mastnak, “Islam and the Creation of European Identity”, in CSD Perspectives, No. 4, Autumn 1994, p.14.

European attitudes were mostly defensive and also reflected an intense curiosity about the East. The Islamic world was seen as a hostile politico-ideological structure, a different civilization and an alien economic region. In such ways European identity became constructed around an antithesis of East-West. Once the Orient ceased to be a threat for the West, the contrast between Christianity and Islam was replaced by the more secular one of civilization versus barbarism. The idea of Turkish infidel was replaced by the idea of the Turkish barbarian. Edmund Burke told the House of Commons that the Turks were 'worse than savages' and that 'any Christian power was to be preferred to these destructive savages'.<sup>205</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller says that compositions in prose and in verse against the Turks represent a considerable body of literary production in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that has been listed, let alone studied.<sup>206</sup> Schwoebel writes that at diplomatic congresses, the reception of ambassadors, the elevation of a pope, the marriage of a prince or almost any public occasion a speech against the Turks was 'the thing to do'.<sup>207</sup>

It was in the Balkans that the Ottoman Empire made its northernmost drive so that by the middle of the fifteenth century, as the Latin West was beginning to build up great empires in the New World, the Muslim East was rapidly gaining ground on Europe's Eastern frontier. The entire Danubian plain and the Levant were under the Turkish Sultan by the end of the sixteenth century. The climax came in 1529, at the height of the Reformation in the Latin West, when Vienna was put under siege by the Ottomans. Though the Turks were eventually resisted, the West even after the great sea battle of Lepanto in 1571, failed to put on a confrontation with Sunni Islam. It was not until 1683, when the Turks, under the leader the Grand

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<sup>205</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.87.

<sup>206</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letter* (Rome, 1956), p.112. Quoted in Robert H. Schwoebel, "Coexistence, Conversion and the Crusade against the Turks", in *Studies in the Renaissance*, Vol. 12, 1965, p.164.

<sup>207</sup> Robert H. Schwoebel, "Coexistence, Conversion and the Crusade against the Turks", in *Studies in the Renaissance*, Vol. 12, 1965, p.165.

Visir Kara Mustapha, again had reached the gates of Vienna that the West mobilized itself in an international campaign, the Holy Alliance, financed by the pope, Innocent XI. The Ottoman ambition, after attacking Vienna and enforcing Islam on it, had been to move against Louis XIV. But after Vienna was delivered from its siege, the prospect of a Muslim victory in Europe was diminished. The Habsburgs remained the only western Catholic power in Eastern Europe and their obsession with Roman Catholicism can be seen in the context of the threat that the Turks represented. Until 1918 most of the southeast of Europe remained nominally dominated by the Turkish Sultans. Even after the Ottoman advance was halted, the West remained weak particularly as a result of the seventeenth century wars of religion. The Ottoman Empire, however, had reached the limit of its power and economic capacity for sustained growth. It was crucial that this was at a time when the West was about to break its links with medieval feudalism by establishing proto-capitalism with the commercialization of agriculture and mercantilism, the basis of its future take-off.<sup>208</sup>

The age-old conflict between Europe and the Islamic East, represented principally by the Ottoman Empire led to a never ending 'Eastern Question'. The eastern frontier for Europe was never fixed. The Balkans always occupied an ambivalent position in the European imagination: while geographically they are clearly a part of Europe, politically they were close to Asia Minor. The Balkans were the dividing line of two civilizations, the point of collusion between Europe and Asia. In this mountainous land, three religions collided: Sunni Islam, Roman Christianity and Christian Orthodoxy. The Balkans and the Adriatic Sea constituted Western Europe's last line of defense against the Muslim East. When the Black Sea became a Turkish lake in the sixteenth century, the western frontier was effectively the Adriatic. Even in Antiquity, the Balkans were a borderland. When the Roman Empire split up into eastern and western parts in the late fourth century, the new border ran more or less through the Balkans, dividing them into

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<sup>208</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.49-51.

two territories. The Balkans subsequently became the dividing line- the Sava and Danube rivers becoming the northern frontiers of the rising Ottoman empire- between the Occident and the Orient. The Balkans represented the outer limits of Europe, the point of confrontation between the Latin West and the Muslim Orient.<sup>209</sup> The Ottoman advance into Europe and the European counter-offensive created an ethnic fault-line which in subsequent centuries became a frontier of civilizations. The Balkans lay at the center of this borderland. They were never fully incorporated into either of the two principal powers, the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, which competed for control of the area.<sup>210</sup> Until 1919 the Balkans were a Habsburg-Ottoman frontier society, a zone of transition between two civilizations.

The Ottomans had ruled in one-third of the European continent for about half a millennium, from the fourteenth century until the nineteenth, but had never been accepted as a European state. “Even though a significant portion of the Empire was based *in* Europe, it cannot be said to have been *of* Europe”.<sup>211</sup> In 1856 with the Paris Peace Treaty, after the Crimean War, the Ottoman Empire was finally admitted to the Concert of Europe and the ‘law between the Christian nations’ was renamed to the ‘law between civilized nations’- but this was granted in order to gain Turkey’s assistance against Russia. Mustafa Aydin takes this as “one of the ironies of history that the Ottoman Empire, whilst it had progressively become more and more alienated from Europe through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was officially re-admitted to the European legal system at the Paris

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<sup>209</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), pp.49-50.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Thomas Naff, “The Ottoman Empire and the European States System” in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 143.

Congress of 1856”.<sup>212</sup> Yurdusev adds that Ottomans’ admission to the Concert of Europe and thus her Europeanness has frequently been subject to discussion.<sup>213</sup>

On the other hand, Turks have always tried to be a part of Europe in history. Turkey’s decision to link its future to that of Europe is not a new one. Turkish national identity was constructed through and in the process of “Turkish modernization” which started in the late Ottoman Empire as a conscious program to be implemented. This program aimed to rescue the Ottoman Empire from the imminent final collapse. This process of modernization was initiated by the attempts of Westernization by early the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when a sweeping movement of modernization and Europeanization of the Ottoman Turks started to take place. The transfer and the adoption of the western military, administrative, educative and legal institutions and forms were expected to implant an impetus of modernization. In a sense modernization and Westernization coincided in Turkish experience. However, as the Empire disintegrated the maintenance of this process of modernization required the constitution of a new political unit and a corresponding social base. The project of combining Westernism with the emerging Turkish nationalism was the strategy followed by the party of Union and Progress. They monopolized the political power in 1913 by a coup. In this context, the national idea provided a possibility of the construction of a political unit and a social base which would be compatible to the modernization process.<sup>214</sup>

During and after the First World War and the National Independence War, European effect on Turkish identity formation is a complex issue. On the one hand, the Europeans were seen as the enemies occupying Turkish lands which

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<sup>212</sup> Mustafa Aydın, “The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey’s European Vocation”, in *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, Winter 2003, p.309.

<sup>213</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations” in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today’s Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.85.

<sup>214</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, “Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization” in *Central European Political Science Review*, Vol.2, No.6, 2001, p.166.

threatened the break up the Turkish national identity. On the other hand, the second objective of the national independence struggle was to break away from the political control of the Ottoman sultan and this goal could only be achieved by the following the European formula of nation-state building.

The Republican Turkey, officially negating the imperial past, adopted a clear Western orientation and introduced swift secular reforms. For the Turkish elite and policy-makers achieving the integration with the West has been a long-standing goal.<sup>215</sup> The Ottoman past was disdained for its backwardness, particularly its religiosity and the imperial culture denounced as the source of all evils. The transition from the theocratic-oriented Ottoman Empire to a modern, secular Turkish republic was to be achieved through “Westernization” for the founders of modern Turkey. Mustafa Kemal condemned both the official Islam of the center (Seyh-ul Islam) as well as the diverse religious sects (tarikats), which were considered to be incompatible with his Enlightenment vision of progress, rationalism and positivism.<sup>216</sup> The new Turkish state initiated a series of drastic reforms, intended to erase and annul the historical legacy. These were aimed pre-eminently at the secularization of Turkish society (abolition of the caliphate; disestablishment of the state religion; closure of holy places; dissolution of dervish orders, etc), also entailing momentous changes in the way of life (the adoption of the Gregorian calendar; the creation of a western style penal code; the banning of the fez and other forms of traditional headgear; the adoption of the Latin alphabet in preference to Arabic script, etc.). It was like the annihilation of the past. Religious attachment was seen as a subversive force, also posing a threat to the modernization and nationalization process in Turkey. Kemalist ideology was conceived as a national and secular alternative, conforming to the values of ‘civilized’ world; a revolution in values, offering western-style identifications in

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<sup>215</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, “Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations” in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.88.

<sup>216</sup> Banu Helvacioğlu, “Allahu Ekber, We are Turks” in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, p.517.

place of what were regarded as the old mystifications of Muslim culture. Defined in opposition to the Islamic past, Turkey would be a secular and rational nation. Aydin states that by choosing a democratic system of government and dismissing the idea of the state as the protector of Islam, the new Turkish state ended centuries old hostility and established the basis for peaceful relations with Western Christian countries. Mustafa Aydin argues that this refusal to recognize its past did not mean that the Turkish Republic did not inherit some of the fundamental features of the Ottoman Empire. When this is combined with the westernization efforts, this gives a push to the acute identity problem of Turkey. He asserts that Turkey's sensitive location at the intersection of the 'West' and the 'East' also creates an identity crisis, both national and international. For him the tendency of the Kemalist ruling class to look towards the West has not diminished the cultural and religious affiliation to the Middle-Eastern Islamic world on the part of the general public.<sup>217</sup>

As it is pointed out by Helvacioğlu, the process of westernization that was undertaken in the early Republican years under Atatürk's leadership constructed a monolithic identity of Turkish nation as a secular counter-part to the Islamic construction of nation as a religious community. She adds that in the 1960s and 1970s, Islam was considered as a major obstacle to western inspired progress, development and civilization. Religious elements in the social structure of Turkish identity were suppressed by constitutional means and Islam was demonstrated as the symbol of a backward worldview.<sup>218</sup> However, in fact, throughout the existence of Turkish Republic, religion maintained its place in both social and political life. Islam has been used and mobilized for many different reasons by different circles, either to fill in the ethical emptiness created by the erosion of religious beliefs or to unify the society. Especially in the recent years Turks have

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<sup>217</sup> Mustafa Aydin, "The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey's European Vocation", in *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, Winter 2003, p.309-319.

<sup>218</sup> Banu Helvacioğlu, "The Paradoxical Logic of Europe in Turkey: Where Does Europe End?", in *The European Legacy*, Vol. 4, No.3, 1999, p.26.

become increasingly aware of their Ottoman past, internal differences, cultural identity and religion. The old schism between Left and Right has, to a large extent, been replaced by ethnic, cultural and religious factors of difference and disagreement. Religion has clearly been central in the developments that have occurred in the last two decades. Islam has emerged again as a dynamic element in culture and has increasingly been recognized as such. It has developed a strong presence in civil society, with religious foundations, providing support in education, housing and health and a parallel Islamic market (books, cassettes, clothing, food, newspapers, television.)<sup>219</sup>

According to Huntington, as the ideological division of Europe has disappeared, the cultural division of Europe between Western Christianity, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam, on the other has reemerged. And the most significant dividing line of the West Europe in the Balkans coincides with the historic boundary between the Habsburgs and the Muslim Ottoman Empire. He also calls Turkey as the most obvious and historically the most profoundly torn country. The late twentieth-century leaders of Turkey have followed in the Atatürk tradition and defined Turkey as a modern, secular, Western nation state. They allied Turkey with the West in NATO and in the Gulf War; they applied for membership in the European community. At the same time, however, elements in Turkish society have supported an Islamic revival and have argued that Turkey is basically a Middle Eastern Muslim society. In addition, while the elite of Turkey has defined Turkey as a western society, the elite of the West refuses to accept Turkey as such. Turkey will not be a member of the European Community, and the real reason, as President Ozal said, “is that we are Muslim and they are Christian and they don’t say that”. To redefine its civilization identity, for Huntington, a torn country must meet three requirements. First, its political and economic elite has to be generally supportive of and enthusiastic about this move. Second, its public has to be willing to agree in the redefinition. Third, the dominant groups in the

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<sup>219</sup> Kevin Robins, “Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe”, in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p.73-76.



recipient civilization have to be willing to embrace the convert. Huntington says that the first two in large part exist with respect to Turkey, but the Western countries are not willing to embrace the convert.<sup>220</sup>

By the governments in Turkey, the country is shown as a model of a western state, which combines modern capitalism and secular democracy with a moderate brand of Islam. However, it is interesting to observe that while Islamic nations tend to perceive Turkey as not being religious enough, western nations are inclined at times to view Turkey as too religious. While Turkey is not formally aligned with the West through its membership of all western organizations, its political, economic and military elites identify it profoundly with the West. Turkey is the first and the only truly secular country in the world of Islam. For Ogutcu, Turkish culture will eventually reach a new synthesis: the development of a traditional Islamic culture on the one hand and the development of a modern culture, which can be called as “western” or “contemporary” on the other. Modern Turkey has entered into a variety of clubs of states to both east and west, such as the Council of Europe, the OECD, the NATO and the CSCE on the one hand and the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) on the other.<sup>221</sup> Turkey is also in Europe with her economy largely integrated into Europe and with the Turkish community living in various European countries. However, Turks have usually been shown as the terrible and barbarian who had not only ruled large parts of the Mediterranean, the Southeastern Europe and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire for centuries, but also had carried the banner of Islam to the heartland of Christian civilization. As Yurdusev puts forward, it is widely assumed by the Europeans that the Turks and the Europeans do not share a common culture or civilization and thus Turkey is not a European country. It is therefore concluded that this is the reason why it was difficult for the imperial Turkey to enter into the European states system in the

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<sup>220</sup> Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations”, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, Issue 3, Summer 1993, pp.36-39”.

<sup>221</sup> <http://egemenlik-ulusundur.org/ustat/ulastra/ogutcu4b.htm>

past and for the republican Turkey to become a member of the European Union at present.<sup>222</sup>

Turkey has the longest association with the European Union among the past and probably future candidate countries. Turkey has an Association Agreement with the then European Community in 1963 and in 1970 signed an Additional Protocol in which the final target is Turkey's membership to the Community. The issue was not seriously taken into hand at that time due to the Cold War environment and Turkey's strategic role. However, after 1990s, the strategic and security considerations were to some extent replaced by political, economic and cultural ones. Just at that time, the Europeans started to question the Europeanness of Turkey and identity issues came to the scene. When Turkey applied for full membership in 1987, it took 30 months for the Commission to prepare its opinion on Turkey. EC finally decided on a new strategy to keep Turkey within its sphere of influence while postponing indefinitely the opening of accession negotiations. In this context, the EC regarded the Customs Union as a tool to keep Turkey pro-European while denying membership. In June 1990, the Commission proposed the completion of the Customs Union by 1995. On the eve of signing the Customs Union agreement, the European Parliament required the Turkish government to carry out some political reforms including constitutional amendments. As a response to this Suleyman Demirel argued that "the conditions required by the European Parliament create an image as is Turkey is not wanted in Europe. If the excuse is because the Turkish people are Muslim, then this does not fit well with the idea of Europe and with today's understanding of humanity".<sup>223</sup>

At this time in history, in the 1990s, there has been a great increase in the studies of European history, culture, identity, idea and formation. These studies mainly

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<sup>222</sup> A. Nuri Yurdusev, "Perception and Images in Turkish (Ottoman)- European Relations" in Tareq Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (eds), *Today's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First century: A Changing Role in World Politics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 88.

<sup>223</sup> Interview with Suleyman Demirel, Yeni Yuzyil, 22 May 1995.

aimed to elevate the European values. This period also coincides with the conversion of European Community into the European Union. European Union has been treated as the carrier and representative of this elevated idea. It is stated by Ertugrul that European Union tries to set established boundaries within this respect. Within the efforts to identify Europe and put limits to it, culture gained a very important place.<sup>224</sup>

The Luxembourg Summit in 1997 was a turning point for the future of Europe as it outlined the enlargement process of the EU as to put an end to a divided Europe. In July 1997, before the Summit, the Commission published a report, Agenda 2000, for the EU candidate states in which Turkey was excluded and the decision of the summit was not to include Turkey among the 10 candidate countries, who joined in May 2004 and two more to join by 2007. The same political and economic reasons were put forward. It was not explicitly put forward but the cultural reasons were playing an important role in this decision. When Turkey suspended all her relations with the EU, the Europeans began to consider that they should present Turkey something concrete in order to keep Turkey in its periphery. Within this context came the granting of the candidate status to Turkey at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999. As foreseen in the Helsinki European Council Conclusions, the EU Commission declared an Accession Partnership for Turkey on March 8, 2001. After the approval of the Accession Partnership by the Council, the Turkish Government announced its own National Program for the Adoption of the EU *acquis* on March 19, 2001. Each year the Commission submits Regular Reports to the Council on the progress achieved by each country. Turkey has always been said not to have fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria. In short, Turkey's inability in the realization of political and economic criteria is mentioned, without making any reference to *cultural* ones.

In December 2001, at the Laeken Summit, the EU divided candidate countries in two groups in accordance with the projection in the ending of negotiations and

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<sup>224</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, "AB ve Avrupalılık" in Dogu Batı, Vol.12, No.1, 2001, p.145

accession time. However, Turkey was again missing in this grouping. In Presidency Conclusions, the EU talked about “the prospect of opening of accession negotiations with Turkey” but the questions “when” and “how” were again left uncertain. In 1 May 2004, 10 new countries entered in the EU. As Muftuler- Bac writes “Turkey has a more developed market economy than most of these countries and its political problems are no worse than those of many of the other applicants.”<sup>225</sup> Therefore, there must be another criterion, apart from politics and economics, which explains Turkey’s uncertain position regarding the EU membership, which is *culture*. It is believed and asserted by most of the Europeans that Turkey does not have a shared culture with that of Europe. The Economist in its special section puts it this way: “The EU is expected to be a liberal organization, based on rational, nondiscriminatory principles. It cannot say to Turkey: “we won’t let you in because you are mainly Muslims.”<sup>226</sup> It is also mentioned by many circles that even if Turkey eventually meets the political and economic criteria for membership, an important bloc within the EU will continue to oppose its membership on cultural grounds. This type of understanding is further strengthened by some of the influential voices raised against Turkey’s membership on “European” grounds. For example, the former French president and the current head of the EU’s Constitutional Convention Valéry Giscard d’Estaing has told in several occasions that Turkey was not a European country and that its membership would spell the end of Europe. His remarks on the European Union being a Christian club caused a storm in the commission. In fact, his words were reflecting the thoughts of many EU politicians who did not dare to tell openly except Germany’s Christian Democrats.

Today, especially after the declaration of the Commission’s Regular Report on October 6, 2004 advising the opening of the accession negotiations with Turkey,

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<sup>225</sup> Meltem Muftuler- Bac, “Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe”, in Turkish Studies, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 2000, p.26.

<sup>226</sup> [http://www.economist.com/surveys/displayStory.cfm?Story\\_id=622829](http://www.economist.com/surveys/displayStory.cfm?Story_id=622829)

the heated debates about Turkey intensified and as it is seen in these debates the main argument is the accession of a large Muslim country into the European Union and its incompatibility with the Christian heritage of Europe. On August 11, 2004 the Catholic Church's most senior theologian, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, said that there is no place for Turkey in the European Union, Turkey should not even attempt to join the European Union because it is a majority Muslim country with Muslim roots and Turkey should seek its future in an association of Muslim nations rather than try to join a European community with Christian roots. For him Turkey could try to set up a cultural continent with neighboring Arab countries and become the leading figure of a culture with its own identity. He adds that in the course of history, Turkey has always represented a different continent, in permanent contrast to Europe. In his view, Europe should continue to debate its Christian heritage and that the EU was wrong to ignore the historical fact that its heritage was Christian.<sup>227</sup>

Although not explicitly stated in the formal documents of the EU, it seems that the cultural and religious differences are playing a crucial role in Turkey's relations with the European Union and its possible membership to the Union. The discussions on the issue are still going on among the EU parliamentarians, EU politicians and the EU citizens. I believe that when the prejudices about cultural and religious differences are overcome in the European minds, the problems on the political and economic criteria will be more easily solved.

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<sup>227</sup> <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/ECEE591F-A4ED-46BE-8784-1459F23710E2.htm>

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The issues of culture and identity have long been insignificant aspects of the general scholarship of the European Union (EU). Until recently, most academic studies of the EU have treated the thorny problems of local and national identities, loyalties, traditions, ideologies and affiliations as secondary concerns to the more important projects of creating, sustaining and understanding the EU as a political and economic entity and system. But the importance of the role of identities in the process of “Europe-building” (a phrase often used to refer to the strengthening of the institutions of the EU and to the expansion of its membership), and in Europeanization (which is a much wider and perhaps more important process implying the role of European culture in the integration of different European communities and societies), has been realized by the social scientists. It is also pointed out by Bellier and Wilson that EU is not only a collection of political and bureaucratic institutions nor simply an umbrella organization for the articulation of member state policies, but it is an arena of cultural relations, an entity creating and recreating its own culture, its own sets of representations and symbols.<sup>228</sup>

It is clear that as the Community develops further beyond strictly political and economic identity to cultural identity, religious difference will become an increasingly contentious issue. Since the European Union of Maastricht sets forth a goal of cultural, social and ideological affinity between its members, the religious ties which bind together and distinguish between the nations will play an important role. According to Fokas, regardless of the direction in which the prejudice is

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<sup>228</sup> Irene Bellier and Thomas M. Wilson, “Building, Imagining and Experiencing Europe: Institutions and Identities in the European Union” in Irene Bellier and Thomas M. Wilson (eds), *An Anthropology of the European Union* (Berg: Oxford, 2000), pp.1-4.

flowing (to or from the West), the potential result is the same: a regionalization of Europe according to religious, cultural and civilizational differences.<sup>229</sup>

Identities function at every level of the EU in ways which sometimes complement, and sometimes oppose the goals of EU decision-makers, government leaders and civil servants in EU institutions. One of the central motifs in the analysis of culture and identity in Europe today is that of “belonging”. It is mentioned by many people that Turkey does not belong to the cultural and religious sphere of Europe. Thus, it would create an obstacle in Turkey’s accession to the European Union. Added to this, as it has been repeated several times identities are never better perceived than in places and times of encounter with their *others*, within real and metaphorical frontiers. This has also been clearly seen in the discussions that took place in the European Parliament after the Commission’s report for Turkey was declared on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October. The Christian Democrats declared that they were opposed to the idea of starting negotiations with Turkey for full membership. They rather proposed a special kind of relationship with Turkey. The main reason they put forward was different cultural values of which religion constitutes an essential part between Europe and Turkey. EU had cultural, humanitarian and Christian values different from Turkey’s. It was concluded that Turkey was much more Asian than being European when it came to the cultural values. Furthermore, it was declared by one of the Parliamentarians that EU was not ready to embrace a 70 million Muslim population right at the moment.

For over a thousand years the identity of Western Europe was shaped by Christianity, while Islam has made the greatest impact in many of the peripheral regions as the *other* of Europe. Today again Islam is likely to be one of the most powerful forces in shaping the twenty-first century. Europe, in today’s world, is not defining itself in terms of Christian belief as strong as it was in the past eras, however Christian heritage is still dominant in identification and is used as a

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<sup>229</sup> Effie Fokas, “Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity”, Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.23.

distinction and frontier between itself and the world of Islam. For example, the accession of the East European countries before Turkey is also seen as a religious bias by some political circles and Islam is a great obstacle in Turkey's accession to the Union. An analysis of recent opinion polls in Eurobarometer seems to indicate that European public is against Turkey's membership to the EU.<sup>230</sup> The crucial question for Europe in the twenty-first century will be whether or not Europe can absorb such a huge Islamic community. The general sentiment of most Europeans, particularly when Turkey's possible membership of the European Union comes to the agenda is usually the same: "the Turks do not belong to us". The reason behind this statement is, although not explicitly stated, Turks are Muslims and this influences the way they think and behave. This is mainly the result of the centuries old image of the Ottoman Empire as a conquering, barbaric, Islamic threat to Europe. But unless the Union is going to say that its membership is confined only to nations of Christian faith, this does not disqualify the Turks.

Though EU claims no specific religious orientation, two particular realities signal religion as an important factor to be studied in relation to the EU: first, religion's central role in the historical development of a cultural and political entity understood to be 'Europe', and second, the post-Maastricht increased efforts towards a 'European identity' predicated on this historical development and drafted for a cultural, social and ideological affinity between its members.<sup>231</sup>

If we investigate the EU's official documents, it is difficult to argue that religion plays a decisive role in shaping EU's general attitude towards Turkey because in official documents and statements, one can hardly find any mention of religious considerations bearing an impact on the Muslim Turkey's relations with the EU's "Christian club." Most European politicians would deny that they even think about religion when making their political decisions however religious sympathy is often

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<sup>230</sup>For detailed info please see. [http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/cf/subquestion\\_en.cfm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/cf/subquestion_en.cfm)

<sup>231</sup> Effie Fokas, "Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.1.



deep-down there hidden in the Western hearts and minds whether explicitly spelled out or not. It is hard to draw a clear cut line where religion starts playing a decisive part and where politico-economic motives take precedence over all the others.

The Commission has provided no real answers to the questions of religion and European identity, as one European Commission Report admits: The term European has not been officially defined. It combines geographical, historical and cultural elements which all contribute to the European identity. The shared experience of proximity, ideas, values and historical interaction cannot be condensed into a simple formula and is subject to review by each succeeding generation. The Commission believes that it is neither possible nor right to establish now the frontiers of the European Union, whose contours will be shaped over many years to come. As it can be seen, there is no official European Union cultural-religious agenda, but real political developments are not limited to official declarations and formulated agendas. Perceptions affect policy and often the weightiest and most controversial of these are the ones which do so 'unofficially'.<sup>232</sup> Accordingly, the progression of the European Union toward a 'European identity' for its member nations should be considered in light of William Wallace's perception. He suggests that

*mental maps, imagined space define political regions and communities. Such broad concepts as 'the West' or 'the Orient' cover no well-delineated territories; their appeal is in the associations they summon, mixing geographical space with economic and social interaction and with political and cultural identity to draw an imaginary- but nevertheless effectively recognized- divide.*<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Effie Fokas, "Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.21.

<sup>233</sup> William Wallace, *The Transformation of Western Europe*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1990), p.7-8.

As mentioned before, the existence of the *other* is crucial in fostering European identity. The old questions of Europe's historical frontiers are now finding a new context in the ideological vacuum that has emerged with the ending of the Cold War. It is explained by Delanty that the West, being unable to invoke the threat of communism, has found a new trouble again in Islam. With Islam, as the focus of hostility, the West has simply transferred the image of totalitarianism from the communist bloc to the Muslim East. The East still remains the focus of European hostility, the only difference being that it has been pushed further southwards. One of the images, the leader of the French National Front, Le Pen, creates is a future in which the French will be forced to beg outside a mosque. This xenophobic view is constructed not only with the fear of a Muslim dominated world but an 'Islamisation of Europe', the enemy outside the gates, is capable of appealing to a deep European hostility to the East, a hostility, as it has been explained has a long history. An image of Islam is being shaped which emphasizes its cultural homogeneity and threatening otherness.<sup>234</sup> Moreover, in several west European countries, including Germany and Italy, the dominant political party still calls itself 'Christian Democratic' and it is unlikely that the leaders of those parties see that self-identification as completely insignificant in a foreign policy context. Most of them belong to the Roman Catholic Church, a transnational body whose spiritual leader makes frequent declarations impinging upon international relations, including many in which the terms 'Christian' and 'Europe' are closely associated. It is hardly any coincidence that the Christian Democrats in the European countries are also the most enthusiastic partisans of the European unity or that the three national leaders who laid down the foundations of the present Union- Konrad Adenauer of Germany, Alcide de Gasperi of Italy and Robert Schuman of France- were all Christian Democrats and devout Catholics. Acute awareness of the existence and reinforcement of certain divisions in Europe is echoed at many levels, even in European leadership. At a meeting of European People's Parties in Brussels in March 1997, the Belgian Chairman Wilfried Martens, declared that in

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<sup>234</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.150.

our view Turkey cannot be a candidate for EU membership. We are in favor of extensive cooperation with Turkey, but the European project is a civilizational project. Turkey's candidature for full membership is unacceptable.<sup>235</sup>

Throughout my thesis, I tried to demonstrate that the cultural and religious identities are very important for all communities be it small or large. I also believe that identity is one of the most essential elements in giving foreign policy decisions. For Europe, religious identity, namely Christianity plays a very significant role and Turks as the representative of Islam has always been regarded as the *other* of Europe as it can be clearly seen by the historical events. In today's world perceptions are still important and in the minds of most Europeans Turks are still regarded as an outsider because of cultural and religious differences. Right at the moment, EU, claiming to represent the European countries, is facing the problem of whether to accept Turkey in EU in spite of all the cultural and religious differences. According to me, these differences are creating greater obstacles in taking such a decision much more than political or economic problems. As Kursad Ertugrul puts it forward, the tendency to ground European identity in a particular historical and cultural core and to describe Europe as a mature and completed subject would lead to a cultural closure. Such a closure would limit the possibilities and the potentialities of EU for dynamism to be generated by the cultural variety and constructive dialogue in an interactive environment of multiple actors. Moreover such a cultural frame would constrain the relations of EU with "other Europe" and lead to a restricted understanding integration and enlargement.<sup>236</sup> Turkish membership to the European Union will also help the transformation of it into a truly multi-cultural, multi-religious entity, which was one of the most significant aims of the EU's founders. For the EU, claiming to be the home of secularism, letting in Turkey, whose population is officially 99.8

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<sup>235</sup> Ayhin Tarihi, Jan/Mar 1997, pp.144-145 in Effie Fokas, "Greek Orthodoxy and European Identity", Paper presented in The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, 11 February 2000, p.22.

<sup>236</sup> Kursad Ertugrul, "Contemporary Image of European Identity and Turkish Experience of Westernization" in Central European Political Science Review, Vol.2, No.6, 2001, p.167.

percent Muslim, would prove that the Union is not a Christian club but rather multi-cultural and multi-religious organization that it is open to other cultures and religions. A Union with Turkey would be more cosmopolitan and perhaps even more secular and this would also confirm that EU is not based on religious conceptions, but is a community of secular nations. Only in this way, EU can claim to be a truly pluralist union and this diversity and cultural pluralism will make EU stronger.

Lastly, to put it from another point of view, Turkey has a chief value to be an example to the region around it, a living demonstration of the proposition that a Muslim country can become a prosperous democracy, a full member of the modern world. A Turkey firmly anchored in the European Union would also disprove the stereotype notions that there is an inherent incompatibility between Islam and values such as democracy, modernity, secularism and free market economy. An embrace from Europe would also suggest that the age-old stereotypes are overcome and this would mark a decisive break with along history of conflict and confrontation.<sup>237</sup> Especially in the post-September 11 world, this would have a clear message for the other Islamic countries.

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<sup>237</sup> Stephan Kinzer, New York Times, First Question of Europe: Is Turkey Really European?, 9 December 1999.

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