

# The Journal of Theologic Academy

year: 2017 issue: 6 a bi-annual international journal of academic research

## ISLAMOPHOBIA

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## İSLAMOFOBİ



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Publication Principles

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## Editörden/ Editorial

The Journal of Theological Academia is excited to present its new issue to its esteemed readers. We have been making efforts to publish the issues without minding the difficulty of publishing a journal with specific topics. We have acted sensitively in determining the topics and papers to be published and to fill important gaps in this field in Turkey, and we have selected socially important topics. Accordingly, the topic of *"Islamophobia"* was reviewed through different aspects by the significant figures of the literature in the sixth issue of our journal.

Islamophobia threatens the coexistence of different cultures and religions. The recent studies on Islamophobia indicate that the problematic ideology has been seen more in many fields ranging from employment to education, media to law and politics to daily life. Fears and hatred toward Islam and Muslims sometimes become more than what they are and turn into physical assaults against Muslims and their properties. The increased number of Islamophobic incidents in Europe and Balkans makes it necessary to review the topic of Islamophobia seriously.

*"Islamophobia"* is an etymologically problematic concept. Associating Islam, literally meaning "peace", with fear, violence and terror is quite interesting. Moreover, considering the followers of a Prophet called "al-Amin" as "unreliable" is another interesting issue to be reviewed. Different followers of different religions have performed violent actions in the past and present time but the reasons and responsibility of the violent actions performed by Muslims have been directly attributed to Islam without regarding the political or economic factors enabling various interpretations and resulting in violence and without considering the fact that social cases are generally in mutual interaction although the responsibility for the actions that cannot be associated with any references of any religions is assigned to subjects when it comes to other religions. Islamic interpretations certainly have conceptions that cause and support violence and that need to be questioned. However, relating such conceptions to Islam and all Muslims with a generalizing attitude deserve criticism, too.

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The topic of Islamophobia, which is quite an important issue, was reviewed from different dimensions by various authors in this issue. Relevant interviews and book reviews were also included. I extend my gratitude to anyone making efforts to help our journal reach its latest issue, and I hope that this issue will help people live collectively in peace.

Asst. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erol ERKAN  
Faculty of Divinity, Gaziantep University  
Issue Editor

# Islamophobia in the Context of Prejudice and Discrimination: The Change and Continuity of Relations among Religious-Social Identities\*

Asım YAPICI\*\*

Feyza YAPICI\*\*\*

## Abstract

This study, which is based on a social psychological perspective, discusses Islamophobia in the context of change and continuity. For this reason, the phenomenon of Islamophobia which is discussed through the concepts of prejudice, stereotype and discrimination, is examined through historical and actual dimensions. This research, which is based on social identity and realistic conflict theories via theoretical grounds, is qualitative in terms of method and depends on the tradition of understanding. An analysis of the literature shows that prejudice towards Muslims began at the time of the first spread of Islam and came to the forefront with the Crusades. Today, historical prejudices, which have gained a new dimension especially after the September 11th terrorist attack, have led to almost synonymous use of the words "terror" and "Islam" and "Muslim". This situation, which is fed from different psychosocial reasons, demonstrates that the prejudices that are inherited from history are constantly updated and reproduced.

**Keywords:** Stereotype, Prejudice, Discrimination, Islamophobia

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\* This paper is the English translation of the study titled "Ön Yargı ve Ayrımcılık Bağlamında İslamofobi: Dinî-Sosyal Kimlikler Arası İlişkilerde Değişim ve Süreklilik" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Asım YAPICI, Feyza YAPICI, "Ön Yargı ve Ayrımcılık Bağlamında İslamofobi: Dinî-Sosyal Kimlikler Arası İlişkilerde Değişim ve Süreklilik", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 1-26.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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# Ön Yargı ve Ayrımcılık Bağlamında İslamofobi: Dinî-Sosyal Kimlikler Arası İlişkilerde Değişim ve Süreklilik

## Özet

Sosyal psikolojik bakış açısından hareket eden bu çalışmanın konusu değişim ve süreklilik bağlamında İslamofobidir. Bu nedenle ön yargı, stereotip ve ayrımcılık kavramları üzerinden ele alınan İslamofobi olgusu tarihsel ve aktüel boyutlarıyla incelenmektedir. Kuramsal temelleri itibariyle sosyal kimlik ve gerçekçi çatışma teorilerine dayanan bu araştırma yöntem itibariyle nitel olup anlayıcı geleneğe bağlıdır. Literatür üzerinde yapılan analizler göstermektedir ki Müslümanlara yönelik ön yargılar İslâm dininin ilk yayılış döneminde başlamış, Haçlı Seferleri ile zirveye ulaşmıştır. Günümüzde ise özellikle 11 Eylül terör saldırısından sonra yeni bir boyut kazanan tarihsel ön yargılar, “terör” ile “İslâm” ve “Müslüman” kelimelerinin neredeyse eş anlamlı kullanılmasına neden olmuştur. Farklı sosyal psikolojik nedenlerden beslenen bu durum tarihten tevarüs eden ön yargıların sürekli güncellenerek yeniden üretildiğini göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Stereotip, Ön yargı, Ayrımcılık, İslamofobi

## Introduction

The subject matter of this study is to discuss Islamophobia, from a sociopsychological point of view, together with anti-Islamic attributes and behaviors. The baseline of the study are the concepts of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination. Moving forward, the key points of analysis will be how Islamophobia should be discussed between groups, the cognitive and motivational factors that feed this process and how historical and actual processes contribute to the justification of the factors in question.

The questions addressed in this study include:

- Why and in what ways does Islamophobia, which is characterized by prejudice and discrimination, occur?
- As a product of Western thinking, does Islamophobia only feed on Western prejudice against Muslims?
- What are the similarities and differences between historical prejudice against Islam and Muslims, and Islamophobia today?
- It is actually possible to completely eradicate Islamophobia?

This study is of a qualitative nature and it employs an interpretivist method that is based on the tradition of understanding.

Data was acquired by scanning the related literature and then interpreted based on fundamental assumptions of social identity theory.

## Fundamental Concepts

### Stereotype

A stereotype is explained as a “judgment model” or “standardization” and it literally means “a stern character”. This concept was first used in printing industry as “stereotypy”. When used in this meaning, “stereotypy” refers to a mold which enables re-printing pages of text that is molded between metal lines and does not permit any text editing without ruining the page’s integrity (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 22; Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994: 130; Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 103).

According to Lippmann (1998), stereotypes, of which half is made up of one's social circles, and the other half by the person itself and which we can define as “*images in our minds*”, are the current images of pre-existing cultural representations. Moving forward from this point, stereotypes can be defined as *incomplete schematic representations which facilitate the perception of an external social reality by simplifying it to exist in our minds independently of our will* (Amossy & Pierrot, 1997: 32; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 22; Vinsonneau, 1997: 156). As reality is highly complex and too quick to perceive and define with direct observation, a human being is not equipped to deal with such a sophisticated environment. Therefore human beings have to have a subjective map of the world in their minds in order to comprehend, recognize and cope with the external social reality. In this sense, stereotypes can be construed as maps which clarify a human being's travel routes through the meandering ways of social reality, simplify their perceptions and knowledge of them so they can caricature these perceptions and knowledge, or directly create such caricatures (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 22). However, stereotypes which help an individual's perception and judgment can sometimes lead to incorrect and unwanted situations as well.

According to Lippmann (1998), once we build up a stereotypical image in our mind, from that point onwards reality does not matter. At this point, what really counts are our assumptions of reality. Our expectations, hopes and efforts are all governed by these assumptions only. However, since these are real in the context of their own, they lead to unexpectedly real outcomes (Noelle-Neumann, 1995: 172). We can explain this in these words as well: Our culture has already defined everything that we see in our environment for us. Therefore a person does not see and then describe a phenomena; rather they perceive it the way that is has been already described. This is because perceptions are directed by the collective images which reside in the cognitive structure (Amossy & Pierrot, 1997: 37; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 23). In this context, we can say that these images, which are partly constructed by the social environment and partly by our own cognitive structure, are perceived in a way that we want or believe them to exist, rather than as how they actually are. Because stereotypes are mostly defined within the public structure of perception, they serve to cognitively justify the actual situation. Actively observing social reality, human beings are formed by their environment,

while they reshape their social environment in their minds. This means that while judging the "other", the person acts on a fake reality that is the outcome of preliminary acceptances (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 14-15; Noelle-Neumann, 1995: 172-173; Yapıcı, 2004: 10-11).

Stereotypes, which define our expectations and behaviors and by doing so guide us in how to observe and make sense of specific events, persons and groups, allow us to filter objective reality in the external world. Moving forward from this point, Maisonneuve (1985: 135) defines stereotypes as mental contemplations which come between reality and our perception, and prevent us from objectively perceiving reality. This means that while judging events, other people and objects, human beings act on the previously defined schemes and representations in their minds. Therefore we need to say that these "mental lines" and stereotypes always come between the world and us, and we often need to use them while trying to get to know and describe our social environment. Stereotypes also contain incomplete and biased information, and serve to justify one's perspective, therefore remain insufficient in helping a person to objectively perceive social reality; therefore they become blind spots which prevent any objective evaluation about the "other". In fact, they are very "strict" for this reason and they resist change even if education programs which provide new information were implemented or there is negative criticism towards stereotypes (Harlak, 2000: 43; Yapıcı, 2004: 12).

When we form new realities based on the images in our minds, a situation called "self-fulfilling prophecy" occurs, which can be explained as subjective expectations verifying themselves. In other words, actions based on incorrect assumptions give way to very unexpected, and at the same time natural, realities. In this process, we perceive the individuals and groups in our social circle through stereotypes, while at the same time verifying our expectations in our selective perception. Therefore a cause-and-effect relationship is formed between stereotypes and expectations (Bourhis & Gagnon, 1994: 725; Pelletier & Vallerand, 1994: 253-255; Hilton & Hippel, 1996: 244). As a result, the human being starts to see what they expect, and expect what they see. This is also the main reason how human beings can continuously remain indifferent to change. Stereotypes, which define expectations and behaviors and by doing so guide people in how to observe and make sense of specific events, persons and groups, allow us to filter an objective reality in the external world (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 22-23; Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994: 130; 1996: 103).

Related studies demonstrate that stereotypes are implicit personality theories of an individual regarding their own group (a so called "own group" which one feels a part of) or other groups ("other groups" which one doesn't feel a part of) (Leyens, 1983: 67; Bourhis & Gagnon, 1994: 717; Vinsonneau, 1997: 163). There are two important aspects of this definition: The first aspect involves stereotypes being naive theories regarding other people. The second aspect is that stereotypes contain references and explanations regarding personal traits of all the members in a group

(Arkonaç, 1998: 87). Therefore we can define stereotypes as opinions based on over-generalization and exaggeration regarding a group (Hilton & Hippel, 1996: 240). Undoubtedly, stereotypes may be positive or negative. What really concerns us though, are the negative aspects of stereotypes. By these aspects, stereotypes are products of a rigid and dogmatic mentality, and they manifest as derogatory and pejorative labels based on incorrect opinions (Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 103). Based on this, we can say that a stereotype includes two fundamental emphases which are complementary to one another: The first is the beliefs that a group shares regarding another group, and the second is qualities evoked in mind when the name of a group is heard (Yapıcı, 2004: 13). At this point, we need to point out that Islamophobia has a dimension which is fed by stereotypes. This is due to all of the negative perceptions and evaluations by Christians and members of other religions of and towards Islam and Muslims, can be considered within this context. Beyond this, a case where a non-Muslim individual encounters a Muslim individual and evaluates them based on their social identity, rather than their individual identity, is within the realm of stereotype.

### **Prejudice**

Prejudice originally means "*a preconception which is not based on evidence and justification*" and in social psychology, it means "feeling negative, ascribing negative traits and even demonstrating negative attitude and behaviors towards members of a group merely because they are members of that group" (Billig, 1984: 450; Allport, 1954: 6-7; Capozzo & Volpato, 1994: 14). According to Şerif and Şerif's study (1996: 649) where it was pointed out that "*Prejudice in literature generally means a prejudice against a group*", the negative attitude of a group's members towards another group of a member of another group, based on settled norms, can be qualified as prejudice<sup>1</sup>. It is understood from these expressions that prejudice is the generalization of a standard attitude towards all members of a group, regardless of individual differences. Definitely, individual prejudice and group prejudice are different from each other, because individual prejudice is about liking or disliking another individual. This is a preference and it is completely of a personal nature. The affiliations and identity of a disliked person are not determining factors in this sense. However, group prejudice connects like or dislike towards a person directly to that person's affiliation, that is, their identity. Moreover, people's prejudices regarding external groups become a part of their ego system, which can be perceived as a personal preference (Şerif & Şerif, 1996: 649). In other words, many

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<sup>1</sup> The following point should be noted here: The concepts of stereotype and prejudice are sometimes confused. They are different terms despite having a strict relationship. For this reason, researchers are insistent to point out that these concepts are integral parts of an overall whole (Rose, 1951: 29; Avigdor, 1979: 87). Moreover, prejudice and stereotype are regarded as two sides of the same coin. However, there are also arguments proposing that stereotypes are of a cognitive nature, and prejudices are of an affective nature (De La Haye, 1998: 10).



people saying “this is my personal view” may often internalize group prejudices totally but may not realize the details of the case. It should be noted that hating or approaching a person negatively just because that person is Muslim is actually a form of Islamophobia based on prejudice. Even if that person says “My dislike is not related to their Muslim characteristics”, considerations based on group prejudices may be the reason in this regard.

### **Discrimination**

Stereotypes and prejudices are not just mental projections and emotional reactions that affect an individual's perception and judgment. They can also bring about certain behavioral results such as *discrimination* (Pelletier & Vallerand, 1994: 210). In fact, stereotypes and prejudices feed discrimination; and discrimination continuously feeds stereotypes and prejudices. Hence, studies demonstrated that the likelihood of negative perception and judgments against "others" to transform into behaviors are largely affected by socio-cultural and religious factors, which is followed by many factors such as ideological and economic factors, environmental factors, individual personality, expectations, fears, and the image one intends to project to their social circles, friend groups, etc. (Azzi & Klein, 1998: 33-34; Billig, 1984: 450-453; Yapıcı, 2004: 19).

Discrimination is the exclusion shown toward an external group to prevent it from approaching the internal group, assigning a formal structure to this action, or failure in displaying equal treatment to the members of different social groups on an issue (Bilgin, 1996: 98). Accordingly, if people are treated differently based on a certain social identity, this act can be classified under the title of discrimination (Capozza & Volpato, 1994: 14). However, it should also be noted that discrimination shows itself not only as excluding the members of different social groups and treating them negatively, but also as supporting the internal group or defending the self-group unfairly (Hortaçsu, 1998: 229). In addition, we need to emphasize that discrimination manifests itself in the distress arising from *ethnocentrism*, *group closure* and *resource distribution*. According to this, the acts of a social group arising from a belief that they are the decision-making clique, abstaining that social group from interacting with other social groups and restricting distribution of available resources only within that social group can also be classified as discrimination (Giddens, 2000: 229-230).

Allport (1954: 14-15) We can sort discriminatory behaviors from the mildest to the most severe as follows:

1) *Expressing objection* In this stage an individual makes conversations with other individuals who share the same opinions regarding certain social groups, openly expressing their disaffection, hostile stance and stereotypes about them.

2) *Avoidance* If the urge to oppose the target group is strong, this leads to avoiding any contact with that group. Hence the individual avoids sharing the same space with individuals and groups whom they dislike, judge and condemn through negative stereotypes.

3) *Discrimination*: Expressing objection and avoidance does not generally result in any harm to external groups. However, as soon as there is physical discrimination involved, the approach is no more a personal choice, as it could lead to very critical sociological consequences. So much so that members of the internal group will object to external group members' utilization of their rights to working, housing, education, health and political vote. Sometimes this approach is institutionalized.

4) *Physical assault* Discrimination can be merged with various other factors to develop an aspect of violence directed against the targeted social group. At this point, overt or implied discrimination can slowly turn into physical violence. This can manifest in attacks to the very members of the targeted group, their homes, business places, or prayer locations, etc. Undoubtedly, once physical assaults start, the problem in question has long transitioned from being about stereotypes or dislike, into a pathological phenomena. At this stage, many factors led by political, economic, cultural and religious factors come into play.

5) *Eradication, lynching and massacre* In this scenario the actions are beyond small scale physical assault, and are at the scale of mass eradication, lynching, massacre and genocide against targeted groups. At this point there are large-scale attacks to social groups, whom by now are regarded as the fundamental reason for every unfavorable event, or the only obstacle barring the development of a nation, or are solely responsible for any defeat. The Crusaders' massacre of Muslim nations in the past, and in the more recent history, mass murdering of Jewish people in Germany and Muslim people in Algeria and Bosnia, are examples of such massacres. As expressed in the Vanbeselaere (1999: 1) study, such processes create targets from civil society and even infant members, *just because they're members of the wrong group*.

Friction between groups can manifest in many forms such as stereotypes and discrimination leading to physical aggression, violence or even wars. The first apparent proof of this is subjective judgment. However, as determined in the experiments of the Şerif and Şerif (1996) study, stereotypes can very easily turn into physical assaults with very simple reasons. However, we can say that discrimination, in all possible forms, results from a group's desire for political and economic power. This is also true for conflicts between religious groups. However, the religious aspect that is the differentiating factor often brings a glorious and

divine aspect to a conflict <sup>2</sup> (Rose, 1951: 14-15; Yapıcı, 2004: 23). This is among the most critical reasons which led to the bloodbaths of the religious wars throughout history. Today, Islamophobia has transformed into the acts of restricting Muslims' fundamental rights and freedom, putting Muslims at a disadvantage in terms of opportunities, and even subjecting them to physical attacks. Muslims were subjected to many forms of discrimination and violence in Bosnia, Myanmar, Palestine, Chechnya and East Turkestan. What's more, Muslims living in Continental Europe, especially England and also the USA, are subject to verbal and actual assaults to their persons, prayer locations, business places and homes. Such events show that Islamophobia has now transitioned from being a prejudice, into violence.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In studies which focus on the reasons for the attitudes and behaviors of condemning, reprimanding and humiliating another person due to their social group, which can shortly be expressed as the reasons of "negative relations with the other", various theoretical approaches were followed. These approaches can be gathered under two basic categories, namely "*individual-based theories*" and "*theories prioritizing intra-group and inter-group relations*".

### **Individual-Based Theories**

Until the 1960s, the phenomena of prejudice, stereotype and discrimination had been explained by psychologists with intraindividual psychological processes such as "social learning", "inhibition-aggression", "the search for a scapegoat", "authoritarian personality" and "dogmatic personality". These approaches emphasize that subjective needs and desires, coupled with the personalities of an individual, make way for easy acceptance of prejudices and discriminating

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<sup>2</sup> At this point we need to point out: According to the general tendency determined in empirical studies, there is a very consistent relation between measures of religious behaviors and measures of prejudice and discrimination (Argyle and Beit-Hallahmi, 1975; Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle, 1997; Yapıcı, 2004). As explained in the Loewenthal (2017: 146) study, this is a huge paradox: Because the more devout a person, the more they tend to be prejudiced and demonstrate acts of discrimination. Although, we need to point out that in these studies that the phenomenon of "devoutness" is rather more closely related with "institutional devoutness". The studies of Allport (1966) and Allport and Ross (1967) determined that people with intrinsic/fully matured devoutness are less prejudiced, and therefore, more rarely tend to demonstrate discriminating actions. In a general evaluation of these studies, the Gorsuch (1988) study points out that prejudice and discrimination behaviors differ largely, based on whether a person's devoutness is sincere or superficial. In this context, it can be said that sincerely devout people are less discriminatory. This also means that religious beliefs and prayers, which more deeply penetrate the inner nature of an individual, become a major factor in developing a tolerant attitude and tolerant behaviors in a person.

attitudes which are commonly found in the society where they were raised (Allport, 1954; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996; Yapıcı, 2004).

### **Theories Prioritizing Intra-Group and Inter-Group Relations**

The inadequacy of personalist approaches in explaining the concepts of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination resulted in the search for new methods, and two different theoretical approaches highlighting the efforts to undertake analysis on a group level were developed.

The first of these approaches is the *Realistic Conflict Theory*. According to this theory developed by Şerif and Şerif (1996), groups compete with one another to reach scarce resources. This competition results in prejudices, discrimination and violence. According to this theory, which is backed up with the "Cave Robbers" experiment (Şerif and Şerif, 1996:283-284), using individual processes, that is, the processes which an individual goes through in their spiritual and mental world to explain intra-group relations and the stereotypes, prejudices, hostilities, discriminatory behaviors, actions of violence and aggression that occur in this context, is insufficient. Accordingly, explaining actions including inter-group relationships, relevant stereotypes, prejudices, oppositions, discriminatory behaviors, violence and aggressiveness with only spiritual and ideological actions of people, i.e. their intraindividual processes, is insufficient. A group is not simply a mathematical number of individuals which make a whole which consists of their total psychologies. Definitely, psychological factors play major roles in the formation of social groups. However, it would be wrong to explain the events happening in a group using psychic processes, once a group is formed. The findings of Struch and Schwartz (1989), who carried out an experimental survey of the Realistic Conflict Theory on religious groups demonstrated two major findings: *Firstly*, upon perception of a conflict of interest, harsh and hostile approaches are taken towards members of external groups. *Secondly*, individuals who strongly identify with their religious groups and identities, when they perceive a threat directed to their own benefits, take up a more negative and hostile approach towards external groups, compared to other members of their own group. This study firmly established that conflicts of interest played a major role in the occurrence of prejudices and stereotypes between religions (upper religious identities) and sects (sub religious identities). Stereotypes between Hindus and Muslims in India and Bangladesh, between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia, between Jewish and Muslims in Palestine and between Buddhists and the Muslims in Myanmar can be evaluated in this context (Yapıcı, 2004: 47).

The second theoretical approach which intends to deconstruct inter-group relations at group level is the *Theory of Social Identity* suggested by Tajfel (1972) and Turner (1979). According to this theory, the fundamental process which is responsible for the occurrence of internal group prejudice is *social categorization*, that

is, grouping. Categorization means to classify equivalent or similar events, objects or people based on shared attributes. According to this, categorization means the psychological processes of an individual's mind which enable the person to regulate their perception of their environment. The most important function of these processes is that the individual can systematize their physical and social environment in their mind. Categorization enables the individual to adjust to their environment and attune the information acquired from their environment to their previous knowledge to interpret it (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 179; Tajfel, 1972: 275). At this point, we need to point out that the categorization process is not at all unbiased; it is built on an evaluation and the consequent judgment (Deschamps & Devos, 1999: 155). This indicates that the social environment is not only classified, but also ascribes meanings. Because this process also involves *values, norms, objectives, expectations, ideologies* etc. which the Bar-Tal (1999:45) study defines as *"the elements which constitute a group's beliefs"* which define the borderline between groups which the individual is a member of or not. In a typical social categorization which would occur as "us and them", with "us" as positive and good, and "them" as negative and derogatory. Here, the motivational basis occurs which works to boost the self-respect presented by the group identity. According to this, social categorization is not merely a simplification and systematization of the social world. It is more; it generates an orientation system adjusted to an individual's definition of their "selfdom", therefore enabling that individual's place in society. Such a process enables groups to offer their members an opportunity to assume an *identity*. This largely depends on *social relationships with the other* and *social comparisons* aiming to see and self-evaluate positively. In this very process, we can see that the individual constructs their own identity through comparisons with other group identities (Tajfel, 1972: 296; Turner, 1979: 154; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 89). This is because individuals cannot evaluate themselves without comparing themselves to others. From this point, it can be said that *every group exists in contrast to, despite of and together with another group, and a person's identity does not take form in one group. Furthermore, just like how a group cannot exist as an only group, a social identity based on belonging to a group cannot take form according to relations in only one group. In fact, this identity is formed through the comparisons with others* (Bilgin, 1996: 86). However, the comparisons between two groups are not enough for the formation of identity either. For instance, categorizing one as a *"Muslim"* does not arise from comparing one with the category of *"Christian"* because the beliefs of the social group forming the identity-based values, along with the behavioral contents also play a role in this regard. Moreover, it should be noted that the comparisons made here consist of the topics that are critical for groups and the people. People acquire a positive social identity through comparisons made in relation to critical topics, which causes people to assess their own groups through positive stereotypes (Bourhis & Gagnon, 1994: 748; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1996: 89). Accordingly, *social comparison* results in *social differentiation*. In other words, if a group within a social environment is not

perceived as the “others”, “the others”, “them” etc., this group will not be regarded as a different formation with specific characteristics as it does not differ much from the others (Tajfel, 1972: 295; Turner, 1979: 153). The social differentiation based on the aforementioned social comparison is a desired and demanded concept for the people. As noted by Tajfel (1972: 293), everybody acts with the desire of maintaining their positive social identity within their social environment or achieving a positive social identity that will grant them prestige, which can be observed within the concept of Islamophobia. It is known that Christians, Jews and Buddhists position Muslims, who suffer from stereotypes and prejudice by these people, as being in a less valuable and lower category than theirs, and that they glorify their own social identities in a social status constituting and carrying universal values.

## **From Theory to Practice**

### **Phobia and Islamophobia**

The term “phobia”, derived from the name of Phobos—the God of Fear in Greek mythology—indicates extraordinary concerns and fears felt toward anything in a way that adversely affects one’s life. Any fears which extremely concerning for someone and turn into the source of anxiety become a phobia, because phobias are the irrational, extreme, intense and persistent emotions arising from a certain object, state or activity. Moreover, people experiencing such fears feel extreme desire to avoid phobic stimulants. The reactions related to concerns and panic are triggered when avoidance is not possible (Budak, 2009: 292). However, it should be noted that normal fears are healthy reactions warning people against threats and drive them to take precautions, however phobic fears indicate the meaningless, unreal, exaggerated and subliminal fears felt toward objects, or do not actually threaten in cases (Bakırcıoğlu, 2012: 364).

Islamophobia is translated into Turkish as *İslam Karşıtlığı*, meaning opposition or antagonism toward Islam, but the Islamophobia concept is not simply an antagonism. Racism consists of many exclusionary attitudes and concepts such as xenophobia, prejudice and discrimination (Karslı, 2013: 80-81). Espozito (URL<sup>1</sup>) makes the following statement in an interview published in Yeni Şafak Newspaper. *“Islamophobia basically consists of statements and actions which violate Muslims’ religious and civil freedoms or human rights, often resulting in discrimination, prejudice and hate crimes or triggers the idea of committing such violations.”* Islamophobia essentially reflects the feeling of concerns and fears toward Islam and Muslims, stating that they represent a threat.

### Historical Background of Islamophobia

Islamophobia can be dated back to the period when the first verses were revealed. Upon the first instances of revelation, the separation started as “us” or “believers of Allah” and “them” or “idolaters”. The Muslim identity in particular was formed upon this discrimination that cognitively and affectively consists of revelations. The differences from the disbelievers of Mecca in regard to the perceptions toward Allah, humans and society were stressed, but separation and differentiation from the Jews and Christians, respectively, occurred before the Madinah period, and a specific Muslim identity emerged as a result (Yapıcı, 2004: 104-105). It should be particularly noted that an identity is not formed through how a person or group perceive themselves. However, how other people or groups perceive the aforementioned person or group is also important because identity is formed within mutual interaction. If the process is to be reviewed from the perspective of Islam’s historical development and formation of Muslim identity, both Mecca and Madinah periods formed the psycho-social, political, economic and theological background of the tension and conflicts between the religious-social identities in the scope of the differentiation as “us” and “them”.

Muslims who conducted conquests with self-confidence, high morale achieved continued success through Islam (Parry, 1988: 399) and captured Christian lands such as Jerusalem, Palestine, Anatolia and Spain. Upon such conquests, Christians organized Crusades against the Muslims who they called “disbelievers” and “barbaric” as they regarded these actions as a threat to their identities<sup>3</sup> (Coşar, 2000: 51). As Muslims achieved victories against the Christian states, the prejudiced considerations of Islam being a “war-ridden” and “deviant” religion and that Muslims are “oppressive” and “barbaric” became quite severe upon the provocations of priests and peaked after the Crusades in the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Miles, 2000: 31). Milton-Edwards (2002: 33) explains the concept of Islamophobia in the context of a historical continuity that started with the Crusades, and he stresses that such continuity is also present in the modern times.

*“Let them, let the people fighting against the believers malevolently in their personal lives fight against the disbelievers now. Let them! Let the bandits of the past be soldiers against the enemy. Let them! Let those conflicting with one another conflict with the barbaric people.”* says Pope Urban II. Muslims reflected as “disbelievers”, “the enemy” and “barbaric” in this conversation, similarly call Christians “disbelievers”. As noted by Lewis (1996: 19): *Both Christians and Jewish are the people rejecting the latest and most perfect religion stupidly, although their religions are deficient and distorted for Muslims.*” The ethnocentric attitudes stressing the superiority of “us” are present in

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<sup>3</sup> Islam, the religion which was not considered as a deviant branch of Christianity and whose followers could not be banned accordingly although Islam was accepted as heresy, in the years it was revealed (Coşar, 2000: 50-51), Islam was qualified as a heretical sect of Christianity like Arianism, instead of being reflected as a different or particular religious tradition in the period that started with John of Damascus, and these discourses were united and generalized for various reasons (Aydn, 2001: 37-40).

every religious group because as noted by Watt (2002: 84), nobody believes in a religion which does not represent the essence of reality for them. However, it should be noted that both Jews and Christians comfortably lived in Islamic lands by maintaining their theological freedoms and practices without suffering from exclusion or actual attacks on the condition that *“they paid their jizya”* taxes (at-Tawbah 9/29) although they were perceived as disbelievers. Lewis (1996: 17-18) briefly explains the case as follows: *“Jews and Christians under the authority of Muslims were not forced to be martyred for their beliefs, or to have a preference between exile, religious conversion or death like how Muslims and Jews in Spain were obliged to do.”*

Martin Luther’s accusations toward Islam and the Quran reflect the historical roots of Christians’ perception toward Muslims: *“The Quran is a book full of damned, distorted, desperate, dishonest and false myths.* By indicating the falsehood of the Quran (in his words) to Christians, he aimed to blemish both Muhammad and Turks, to raise the mood and motivations of Christians (Hıdır, 2007: 154). Luther’s such attitude toward Islam and the Quran, Islam’s first source, is not theological. Instead, it is sociopolitical and closely related to the Siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Empire. His statement *“If we aim to fight against the Turks, we should start from this place (Vienna) where their number is the lowest”* is interesting in this regard (Hıdır, 2007: 166). Accordingly, it is fair to state that due to the negative atmosphere towards Islam, the religion was affected by the political incidents of the era, and influenced his prejudice.

Following the first formational period, prejudice is transferred from one generation to another, through the social learning period continuing to exist as social representations in the social collective senses. Such a case can be observed in the Christian perspectives of Muslims. Stating that there are different problems for the Western Christians in understanding Islam and Muhammad, Watt (1988:45) believes that the relevant reason arises from Christians’ failure to extinguish the influence of prejudices conveyed to them from their ancestors in Medieval Times. Accordingly, sufferings from the Crusades and other fights against Muslims caused Christians to perceive Muslims, particularly the Prophet Muhammad, as the reflection of all evil actions or as the root of evil. Stating that the propaganda from that time still influences considerations of modern Westerners toward Islam, Watt (1988: 45) explains that it is easier and more common to find positive or pleasant regards toward Buddhism than Islam in the modern Christian world.

Miles (2000: 30-31) noted that the Islamic image of the “other” in Europe is defined as “barbaric”, “corrupted”, “evil” and “cruel”, that Islam is assessed as a “false” and “deviant” religion, and that Prophet Muhammad is a false prophet stressing violence and sexuality and is a devil that opposes Jesus. Christians considered Islam as a trend that deviated from Christianity, a heretical sect or a false movement established by Muhammad upon the order of devil, the main enemy of Jesus, instead of accepting Islam as a religion followed by people obeying God. The Quran was defined as a “false, wrong and harmful product of a horrible



and evil intention" in the period when the Prophet was regarded as a liar and crook (Watt, 1991; Aydın, 2001; Adam, 2002; Yapıcı & Albayrak, 2002). As noted by Aydın (2001: 42), the basis of Christians' prejudices and stereotypes toward Muhammad and the Quran consists of Christians' plans to prevent Muslims' military, political and geographical advancements to the detriment of Christians (Eastern Rome/Byzantine Empire). A generation of insulting prejudices and stereotypes that are not based on objective information that aim to protect the Christian identity, or in other words, spread the idea that Muhammad is a false and liar prophet among Christians was first regarded as a valid and effective solution to prevent many Byzantium Christians from accepting Islam. Accordingly, the case evolved in this direction, and Christians' prejudices and hostility were reflected into the literary and artistic works in later periods. For instance, Schimmel states that Muhammad and Ali were depicted to have a place in the lowest layer of the hell in the *Divine Comedy* by Dante, and this depiction reflects the ideology of the Christian majority disapproving of the emergence of a great religion (Islam) with universal claims and numerous followers (conv. Aydın, 2001: 43-44). According to Miles (2000: 31), these depictions in Christians' minds are not the only personal considerations regarding the Prophet Muhammad. To them, Muslims were violent and sexuality-ridden, barbaric and deviant people, just like Muhammad. Islam was defined as a theological system permitting or even promoting polygamy, homosexuality and a general sexual frivolity. Their claim was that Islam had a "sacred war" (jihad) ideology where every non-Muslim would be cruelly killed or made a slave in this religious system based on "aggressiveness" and "wars", and that Muslims could do any form of malevolent acts (Yapıcı, 2004: 123; Yapıcı & Albayrak, 2002: 39). We believe that such prejudices from the early times have a great influence over the modern Christian perception toward Islam as a violent, fanatic, intolerant, undemocratic and fatalist religion (Öğütçü, 1997). Accordingly, depictions toward other religious groups are inclined to continue without easily changing following their emergence. However, it should be particularly stressed that the friendly or hostile quality of the relationships between certain groups may be affected by the positive or negative quality of the stereotypical content in stereotypes as hostile attitudes and negative assessments between religious groups are not solely related to religious ethnocentrism and the need for a positive social identity. However, the nature of relationships between the religious groups play a key role in this regard.

### **From Historical Prejudice Towards Muslims to Islamophobia**

The historical prejudices of Christians toward Muslims formed the first grounds for Islamophobia. However, Islamophobia cannot be solely explained through the stereotypical perceptions from the Medieval Times and prejudiced attitudes and behaviors. The "adequate reasons" and "necessary reasons", which are among the basic assumptions and concepts of social identity theory, should be separated here. It is without doubt that the sufficient reason is the perception of

“us” and “them”. This perception with cultural content does not mean categorizing humans simply as Christian or Muslim. The working methods of Western ideology are based on social evolutionism. According to the Christian Western ideology stressing that it has completed its evolution, “us” and “them” has dual classifications with exact lines such as humans or human-like creatures, evolved or not evolved, those with developed brains or undeveloped brains, masters or slaves, Europeans or others, modern or uncivilized, and therefore civilization establishers or civilization destroyers (Göka, 2016). For example, even André Gide, a humanist, personalist and moralist author and philosopher, made the following statement when he came to Istanbul in 1914: *“Constantinople (Istanbul) confirms all of my prejudices... The clothes of Turks are the ugliest in the world. Turks deserve such ugly clothes though. Western civilization is not only beautiful but also the one and only civilization* (conv. Kalın, 2016: 245).

The collective unconscious of the West should be considered when understanding Islamophobia. Accordingly, it is a well-known fact that Christians faced severe trauma upon having constant regression against the advancements of Muslims until the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Göka, 2016: 102; Kirman, 2010: 25-26). This concern existed for some time and was pushed beyond the collective consciousness. As known to all, such a concern generally continues to influence collective unconscious states and behaviors, which is the case in this regard. Moreover, particularly when geographical discoveries and the Industrial Revolution resulted in colonialist morals among Westerners. Following the Renaissance, Europe returned back to the Romans’ ethics (Esed, 2011), rejected the relationship between humans and metaphysics in the construction of such a world, and adopted a human to human relationship based on interests and mortal pleasures. When this approach was combined with the colonialist logic, the US, whose evolution did not yet end began to colonize the people of Africa and Asia, and to use resources on these lands under the excuse of “modernization”. Europeans pushed the torments applied both in the colonialization process and in the world wars outside the borders of consciousness. Moreover, they did not/could not face the traumas of the barbarity that emerged during the colonialism period and the two great world wars. They even made efforts to suppress their internal tensions and create a common enemy (scape goat), which was Islam and Muslims (Göka, 2016: 103-104).

Christians, particularly those from the US and Europe, first disregarded or rejected their violent incidents including their historical prejudices and colonialist policies and world wars toward Islam and Muslims, then they transferred or reflected their guilt onto Muslims (Göka, 2016; Kirman, 2010). The actual case supported them in this regard because following globalization, Muslims started to live all around the globe. The greatest religious group after Christians consists of Muslims in Europe. It is a fact that majority of Muslims in Europe have their origins from Asia, Northern Africa and Middle East. In addition, the social adaptation

process experienced by the Muslim people in Europe differs by country (Kirman, 2010).

The concepts of modest Islam and euro-Islam was developed first in Europe and the US, with the aim of taming Islam in a plainer manner. It is clear that criticism towards Muslims increased as these aims resulted in failure because according to Europeans, Islamic values do not suit Western democracy and human rights. In this case, it is inevitable to direct criticism. Muslims themselves have a role in the formation of the image, prejudice and stereotypes against them. The fact that certain rights of females are limited in certain Muslim societies and honor killings committed there support these negative perceptions (UHİM, 2005). Accordingly, the main fears of Westerners are related to the failure of Muslims, whose numbers swiftly increase in their own world, to fully adapt to Western values, or have a perception of them as enemies. According to the research entitled "Avrupa'da Yükselen Ayrımcılık Nefret, İslamofobi ve Irkçılık" (UHİM, 2005), the population of Muslims was 800,000 in Europe in the 1950s and is more than 23 million today, constituting 4.5% of the European population. Approximately a million Muslims migrate to Europe every year. The birthrate of Muslims in Europe is three times higher than that of non-Muslims. According to estimations, the Muslim population rate in Europe will be approximately 20% by the year 2050, which simply indicates the case that is more than just the increase of Muslim population. Instead, it is the increase in the rate of the European population. Thus, the increase of Muslims and those people who converted to Islam seems closely related to the rise of Islamophobia in Europe (UHİM, 2005; PEW FORUM, 2010). With the aforementioned reasons, Muslims have been the new 'others' of Europe, after Jews, since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Western anti-Semitism has evolved into Islamophobia.

### **End of History or Clash of Civilizations**

The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were the years when Muslims regressed scientifically, politically, militarily and socially, and lost their characteristics determining history. Westerners accelerated their colonialist activities (search for petroleum, natural resources and manpower) as much as possible in this period. Muslims were used as an appropriate armed power against the USSR during the Cold War years. A declaration of dominance to the entire globe by the US-based liberal capitalism, or the termination of the USSR threat resulted in the failure of ideologies and end of history in Fukuyama's words (2016). As the need to find a powerful "other" against this newly-founded system emerged, Islam and Muslims were employed. The thesis regarding the clash of civilizations is significant in this regard (Huntington, 2014). In fact, the civilizations clashing here are nothing but Islam and Christianity. The West began to define itself over the concepts of "us" and "them", upgraded its historical outdated fears regarding the collective

conscious, and made efforts to glorify its own social identity. According to us, Westerners have been making efforts to create an enemy that is not present now but that is regarded to be present in the future, and therefore making efforts accordingly. The West takes intense precautions against the reformation of an Islamic civilization, which is an alternative to Westerners.

The 9/11 attack has a particular importance for the rise of Islamophobia in the case of the clash of civilizations. However, this incident does not stress the emergence of Islamophobia, which was not even present in Westerners' minds. Instead, it reflects the update and service of the Islamophobia to the entire world (Kirman, 2010: 24). For example, the report entitled "Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All" published in 1997, confirms that Islamophobia is not solely a product of 9/11 and that it has been present for a long time. Accordingly, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism have been present in the consciousness of Western people for centuries, however this phobia has reached dangerous dimensions in the last twenty years. The Western perception towards Islam was depicted in the following report where the concept of Islamophobia was first technically used as follows:

- 1) Islam has a monolithic structure. Thus, it is both different to other religions and is closed to change.
- 2) Islam is a totally separate religion with no common values with other religions, meaning it is totally the "other".
- 3) It is "low", "banal", "barbaric", "irrational", "primitive", and "discriminatory toward genders" for Westerners.
- 4) Islam is a religion that is "hostile", "cruel", "aggressive", "violent" and a "terrorism supporter" that "causes clashes among civilizations".
- 5) Islam is a political and manipulative ideology where religious beliefs are used for political and military purposes.
- 6) The criticism made by Muslims in regard to Western culture carry no values and are rejected immediately.
- 7) Islam is a discriminatory and marginalizing religion as it excludes all Muslims except Sunnis.
- 8) Therefore, anti-Islamism is natural and normal (conv. Kirman, 2010: 24).

The fact that the negative and insulting prejudice towards Islam and Muslims in the report match the prejudices formed in the past and is conveyed to the present time is interesting as it shows the continuity of stereotypical perceptions.

Different reports indicate that Islamophobia became visible in Europe and the US following the 9/11 incident. For instance, Muslims in Germany suffered from checks or even harassment following the Friday prayer. Studies indicated that Christians regarded Muslims in Europe as potential threats and that they did want to coexist with them (Open Society Institute, 2009). Muslims in London suffer from a same case (Open Society Foundations, 2012). One of the studies examining the

sufferings of Muslims from Islamophobia is the report published by International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights in 2005. According to the results from eleven different countries, Muslims are regarded as the “internal enemies, and insults toward Islam have increased, and every one in five people with an Arabic name is not employed deliberately (Canatan, 2007: 38). Similarly, according to a study on Islamophobia conducted by Wilhelm Heitmeyer, 28.5% of Germans demand that Muslim migration to Europe be banned. This rate has increased by 4.5% in four years. Moreover, 80% of Germans associate Islam with “fanaticism” and “oppression of females” (Yavuzcan, 2007: 316). The platform called “Muslim’s Right Belgium” prepared a report reflecting that the case is not so different in Belgium. The same report listed 713 discrimination reports on Muslims in a year. The report entitled “The Report on Islamophobia and Racism in French-speaking European Countries” and published by ORIV (2014) notes that the level of anti-Muslim actions is not known exactly, that the current statistics are not adequate, and that many complaints have not been recorded. According to the results of research entitled “Religion in Media: 2010” and published by the US-based non-governmental organization called “The Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life”, Islam and Muslims were reviewed the most in the religious news of US media in 2010. Moreover, the content of the news regarding Muslims contains more violence than other news regarding other religions. Another interesting result is that 35% of the people in US have negative considerations toward Islam and Muslims (İKV Değerlendirme Notu, 2012).

This statistical evidence indicates that along with the increasing opposition to Islam, Muslims have been regarded as a threat more and more in recent years. Accordingly, it can be stated that the historical prejudices have continued following updates under new conditions.

### **Where are Muslims Located within Islamophobia?**

Westerners display perceptual selectivity in judging Islam and Muslims, and they generalize negative examples across all Muslims. They do not want Muslims in Europe and US, where Christian culture is dominant, as they do not like Muslims and consider them as enemies. The incidents that have occurred in Myanmar recently indicate that Buddhists have also succumbed to Islamophobia. In particular the media, TV and Internet have undertaken a function to increase the *informational ignorance* (Avci, 1990) toward Muslims. An analysis of the current state indicates that Islamophobia, supported by political, social, financial and psychological factors has been thoroughly embraced by Christians and that people with Islamophobia reflect cognitively and ideologically, phobic characteristics. This question should be asked at this point: Do Muslims provide the necessary content supporting the development and spread of Islamophobia among Christians? This question is, unfortunately, answered as “Yes”. The following can be stated

accordingly: Islamophobia, generated by the Western ideology and its undesired results, should be definitely criticized, but the deliberate or accidental negative influences of Muslims on this period should not be disregarded either. Solely blaming the Westerners, neglecting the chaotic states of Islamic world, and failing to realize the transformation from a religion and religiousness generating values and civilizations, to a structure consuming values and civilizations, are serious handicaps for Muslims (Yapıcı, 2009). This is, without doubt, closely related to social changes and modernization. The cultural and religious meaning codes constantly become indefinite in the globalization period where the identity system of people is totally shaken (Sayar, 2003), which results in alienation, assimilation, loss of values and erosion of values. Accordingly, two different orientations of total modernization in Western style from political, financial, cultural, theological and ethical aspects (exteriorization) or total conservation of traditions (interiorization) occur. According to Luckmann (2003: 34), the beliefs and values embracing life as a whole are now part-time norms. Moreover, religious-social identities have become blurred and people who feel oppressed apply actual resistance to post-modernity that transformed into global imperialism. This resistance emerges with actions which often include violence. In other words, Muslims challenge Western culture and imperialists through the violent and terrorist actions on different geographies. However, this challenge increases Islamophobia as it is only supported by verbal or actual reactions and as it is not conducted in science, theology, philosophy, art or literature. Moreover, the weaknesses of Muslim countries supported by their outdated qualities in terms of coexistence, democracy and human rights should be noted here. The violation of these values, accepted as the obligatory conditions of the modern world, adds new evidence to the currently-present Islamophobia. This study suggests that the fight against Islamophobia should be conducted with the question "What is our role in this regard?" instead of the following criticism to Christians: "You are wrong!"

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The following can be stated based on the questions to be answered in this study:

The concept of Islamophobia, including prejudice and discrimination, dates back to the periods when Islam beat Christianity and threatened the Christian identity. The Crusades reflected the top level of Islamophobia in this period. However, the 9/11 incident had a primary role in the reformation of Islamophobia. In fact, this incident is the visible side of Islamophobia. It only paved the way to highlight the fear that was developing in the sub-conscious for a long time.

Islamophobia, a product of Western thinking, does not only consist of the prejudice against Muslims. This concept also consists of insulting, despising, excluding, discriminating, preventing the right to live or totally considering

Muslims as enemies. Islam and Muslims are regarded as critical threats against Christianity and Christians.

There are certainly serious similarities between the historical prejudice towards Islam and Muslims, and the modern concept of Islamophobia. Moreover, the historical antagonism toward Islam and Muslims is reformed with the addition of modern prejudice and fears. Islamophobia emerged from the hatred and secret admiration toward Muslims when they were financially, politically, artistically and militarily powerful, but it evolved into a pure hatred as the Muslim world lost its old power, which arises from the Western perception that Western civilizations are unique and absolute. What is necessary for this civilization is the 'other' or Islam which actually contains the potential of being the alternative.

It is actually possible to completely eradicate Islamophobia because there are many factors forming, supporting and consolidating Islamophobia to make it unbreakable in terms of prejudice and discrimination towards Islam. These factors include historical elements, cultural traditions, family, education, books, teachers, religious authorities, religious teachings, publication, media, politicians, and internal and external policies. To fight against these factors, Muslims should work hard to reform the Islamic civilization based on love, justice and tolerance. It is obligatory to be competent in science, technology, art, literature, theology and philosophy in this regard. It is also a must to localize information without excluding the West. Staying away from the outdated religious education is highly critical. Fulfilling the unity-based human and society model introduced by Islam is a primary aim for the Islamic societies. Accordingly, all institutions and organizations should be activated to ensure unity between the mind and heart, material and essence, spirit and body, physics and metaphysics, science and religion, world and eternal life, and form and internal quality. Being politically and financially strong will ensure terminating the internal complicated issues in this regard. It should be noted that a problematic ideology with complexes cannot form a civilization.

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## Islamophobia in Context of Prejudice and Discrimination

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## Influence of Islamophobia in Islamic Research\*

Cemil HAKYEMEZ\*\*

### Abstract

This study reviewed different research in which the reconciliation between Shiism and Sunnism was discussed. Accordingly, the works written by early scholars were mentioned first. Secondly, the experience of the Kubraviyyah was emphasized. Later, the historical incidents such as the attempt of Nadir Shah to impose the Jafarite as a Sunni sect were provided, and then the politics of the "Islamic Union" of the Ottoman State were discussed. Later on, the studies of the "Dârü'd-Takrîb" institution were examined in detail. Finally, the approaches related to the subject were included and evaluations were made in this framework.

**Keywords:** Islamophobia, Islamic Research

## İslamofobinin İslâm Araştırmaları Üzerindeki Etkisi

### Özet

Günümüzde İslamofobia ismiyle anılan Batı'nın İslâm karşıtlığı meselesi, pek çok açıdan olduğu gibi Müslüman düşünürlerin çalışmalarını da olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Batı'daki Müslüman araştırmacılar, uzun süreli sömürge yaşamının psikolojisinden ancak 20. yüzyılın sonlarında kurtulmaya başlamışken birdenbire terör ithamlarıyla karşı karşıya kalmışlardır. Bu durum onlar üzerinde tekrar olumsuz tesirler oluşturmuştur. Müslüman araştırmacıların son dönemlerde yaptığı çalışmalarda, meselelere suçluluk psikolojisiyle bakan savunmacı bir yaklaşım tarzının görülmesi bunun en önemli göstergelerinden biridir. Bu psikolojik travmadan kurtulmalarına yardım edecek bilimsel ve kurumsal desteğe ihtiyaçları olduğunu düşünüyoruz. İçerisinde binlerce araştırmacı barındıran Türkiye'deki ilahiyat fakültelerinin, çağdaş bilimsel yöntemler çerçevesinde yaptırdığı yeni çalışmalarıyla bu konuda ciddi katkı sağlayabilecek düzeye gelmesi çok önemlidir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobi, İslam Araştırmaları

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\* This study is the revised form of the paper I presented in the symposium entitled *Türk Dünyasında İslami İlimlerin Yeri* and held in Kazakhstan Akhmet Yassawi University on 26-27 April 2012.

This paper is the English translation of the study titled "İslamofobinin İslâm Araştırmaları Üzerindeki Etkisi" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Cemil HAKYEMEZ, "İslamofobinin İslâm Araştırmaları Üzerindeki Etkisi", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 27-36.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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### Introduction

Islamophobia, meaning the fears related to Islam, was first used in 1991. This problematic ideology dates back to the conquest of Spain by the Muslims, and it has been in the agenda of humanity for centuries due to Muslim Turks' advancement toward the west and formation of the Crusades as a response. However, it regained its main popularity following the September 11, 2001 incident. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Islamophobia was turned into the grounds of global conflict through the discourses that are similar to *the Clash of Civilizations* by Huntington.

It is without a doubt that the global conjuncture has a great role in this regard. After the termination of the bi-polar world, the structural distortion in international relationships resulted in both the generalization of religious movements and consideration of the Islamic world as the new enemy. Muslims have made themselves the new open targets with their populations exceeding one and half million and their efforts to undertake active roles in the formation of the new world. This case, with a permanent and active appearance, directed attention to Muslims and increased the interest in Islamic movements.<sup>1</sup>

### Islamophobia and Islamic Researches

A significant number of Western researchers improperly defined the activities of the Islamic world as fundamentalist and violent trends without any analyses. The authors, who are also the right-wing supporters, such as Bernard Lewis, Huntington, J. Miller and Fukuyama, called these activities in the Islamic world "excessive, fanatic, irrational, intolerant, terrorist, foolish or a 'green threat'". They used these concepts associated with prejudices, grudge, hatred and fears, and related these to the attacks on the World Trade Center while making efforts to show these as the reflections of Islamic jihadist ideology which is a deep issue for the Westerners.<sup>2</sup>

However, the Islamic activities of the latest periods are teleological in a way that cannot be defined with the fundamentalism of the US from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and they have certain characteristics including the innocent demands of the masses. Therefore, a significant number of those included in the afore-noted religious movements rejected these metaphors which appear as the products of a political purpose. Moreover, some of them intentionally made efforts to reflect that they are not close to the internal groups which can be classified as fundamentalist or radical.

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<sup>1</sup> John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, Oxford University Press, 1995, s. 4

<sup>2</sup> Kayhan Delibaş, "İslami Fundamentalizmden İslam Fobisine: Batı Dünyasında Gelişmekte Olan İslamofobia Yeni Bir Eşitsizlik Kaynağı Olarak Görülebilir mi?", *Bilgi* (9) 2004 / 2: 1-41, p. 7-12.

The outdated religious discourses and approaches of certain Muslims and Muslim groups, in other words, their practices under the name of Islam, may support the reactions or Islamophobia toward Muslims.<sup>3</sup> However, this does not justify the actions of afore-mentioned authors who reflect Islam and Muslims as the enemy of the West and make efforts to manipulate them.<sup>4</sup> If a similar attitude is displayed against them, or in other words, if such assessments are made against Christianity based on the practices in the Christian world, it is clear that the result would be more severe and tragic. Thus, it is not proper to judge Islam and all Muslims through the method of particular to general, while creating an irrelevant meaning out of this context. Islamophobia is still used as the means of oppressing and overwhelming Muslims in the present time. This ideology is not so different from the Crusades, and it still exists in a modern form.

The Runnymede Report prepared to justify Islamophobia in England<sup>5</sup> and entitled “*Islamofobia: A Challenge For All Us*” reports certain points which will justify the ideas in this regard. The claim of the West is that Islam is close to changes, and it does not have common values with other cultures while it is irrational and sexist. To them, Islam also includes violence, is a manipulative religion suiting the political purposes, inconsistently criticizing the western ideology, and accepting the non-Sunni formations as deviant. Therefore, Islamophobia is justified.<sup>6</sup> In addition, the western media indicates the Muslims as a group under a single identity and as a society sharing the same ideas, forms a historical image, and triggers the Islamophobic image in their own societies. Accordingly, the historical issues, such as the Crusades and the Siege of Vienna by the Ottomans, are always kept in mind.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Nuri Yılmaz, “Din Tanımları ve İslamofobiye Etkileri”, *İslami Yorum (İnternet Dergisi)*, Fall 2010, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> “The differentiation of the church and state in a Western style is not based on any historical grounds in Islam. Therefore, making efforts to unite religion and public areas is perceived as the religious extremism and conservatism before many Westerners.” İbrahim Kalın, “Batı’daki İslâm Algısının Tarihine Giriş”, *DİVÂN İlmi Araştırmalar*, issue: 15 (2003/2), p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> Mehmet Evkuran, “Bir Kimlik Politikası Olarak İslamofobi”, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> [www.runnymedetrust.org](http://www.runnymedetrust.org)

<sup>7</sup> Hossein Godazgar, “İslâm Korkusu-Islamophobia- ve İngiliz Basın-Yayınında Müslümanların Muammalı İmajları”, Trans: Nuri Tınaz, *II. Uluslararası Dini Yayınlar Kongresi*, 05-07 November 2004, Ankara 2005, p. 206. It is without a doubt that consideration of the Muslims living in Europe and the US, as the new Jews of the West, caused great trauma on them. However, as a result of these sufferings, certain indications, which will pave the way for new opportunities and advantages, have emerged. A recent study demonstrates that the number of mosques significantly increased in the US despite the protests regarding 9/11 and the targeting of Muslims’ temples. “The officers of national statistics reported that the number of Islamic centers, which was 962 in 1994 and 1209 in 2000, reached 2106, and that approximately a quarter of these centers were opened between 2000 and 2011 although Muslims suffered from certain prosecutions from official bodies. There were almost no protests in this regard in 2010, but even a few of them were transformed into discussions related to national Islam, extremism and religious freedom. Protests against mosques emerged in Tennessee, California and other states. According to Professor Ihsan Bagby, the director of the study, this evidence indicates that Muslim people still managed to find a social place for themselves despite opposing attitudes. Ihsan Bagby said the following: ‘This indicates that the Muslim society, which was integrated to United States (US), has grown properly. I believe this will be the most important message we can give to the entire, or at least the Islamic world.’ <http://www.timesofummah.com/2012.03.03/American-mosques-increased-dramatically-by-74-after-september-11>.



There are people who believe that the roots of the issues between the Western and Islamic worlds are ideological rather than being historical. In accordance with this dualist approach as the reflection of an ideological perception, the West is associated with the concepts of ration, science, civilization, sophistication, tolerance and freedom while the Islamic East is related to irrationality, primitivity, intolerance, discrimination between genders, lust, hypocrisy, emotionality and pressures.<sup>8</sup>

According to certain Western researchers, in addition to the historical and ideological reasons, the main factor behind the concept of Islamophobia is the certain theological approaches among Muslims. For example, John Kelsay claims that the 9/11 attacks and conflicts in Iraq are related to Islam or jihadist ideology of Islam. According to him, Islamist militants refer to the Islamic law based on the Quran, Sunnah and ideas of the scholars from the early periods in their activities. These Islamic scholars formulated their ideas when Islam was an Imperialist power in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, and when Muslims did not suffer from the invasion of foreigners. Therefore, they focused on an unilateral legislation form that included violence in styles and discourses. Regarding present times, most Muslim administrators are not legitimate; Muslims live all around the globe; and Muslim states are weak. Modern Muslim militants experience the obligation to adapt the legal provisions from early times into a different radical scope.

According to Kelsay, the first serious conflict between Muslims and the West dates back to *Kitabu as-Siyar* by Shaybani in the eighth century. This is also the first work separating the world into two regions as "Daru al-Islam", the place of Muslims, and "Daru al-Harp", the place of non-Muslims. This work also determines the statuses of residents based on their relationships with Islam.<sup>9</sup>

The Western criticisms toward Islam are based on Muslims' "jihad" ideology and their anger, hatred and revenge desires against non-Muslims, which is also noted by Bernard Lewis. According to Lewis, extremism and radicalism arises from the history and cultural roots of Islam. Therefore, Muslims have emotions and desires based on anger, hatred and revenge against the disbelievers in relation to Islamic jihadist discourse.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Mehmet Evkuran, "Bir Kimlik Politikası Olarak İslamofobi", p. 4; İbrahim Kalın, "Batı'daki İslâm Algısının Tarihine giriş", *DÎVÂN İlmî Araştırmalar*, issue: 15 (2003/2), p. 33-34; Kayhan Delibaş, "İslami Fundamentalizmden İslam Fobisine", p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam*, Harvard University Press, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990, ss. 47-60.

The Muslim population, whose number is increasing in the West every passing day, is actually the group that suffers from Islamophobia the most. These Muslim people are quite disturbed from local Westerners' marginalization as "outdated, barbaric and despotic" with a reductionist approach. However, there are certain but a few Western people who find Islamophobia meaningless and nonsense. They conduct certain activities to support Muslims. For instance, in a report prepared by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), certain precautions to prevent Islamophobia are particularly suggested. Accordingly, the studies in this regard include the "Islamic Forum" held by the Christian non-governmental organizations that constitute the majority in Germany, and the activities such as conferences, seminars and "Forum of Three Religions" collectively held by Muslim, Jewish and Christian leaders in Britain.<sup>11</sup>

There are such efforts to prevent Islamophobia but a significant part of the Western public still has negative ideas and attitudes toward Muslims, which inevitably affects the psychological and social state of Muslims.

These negative aspects arising from Islamophobia show some of their greatest influences over the studies related of Islamic sciences. Muslim scientists perform many Islamic studies particularly in Western universities thanks to their newly-acquired self-confidence. However, as a result of these incidents, their concentrations were disrupted and they were forced to become introverted. The negative discrimination against the Muslims causes problems for their psychologies, and creates deficiency of self-confidence, aggressiveness and diffidence, which is the reason for their defensive attitudes in their new studies. They often make efforts to prove the otherwise of the despotic, terrorist or aggressive images regarding Muslims and to state that Islam is against terrorism and homicide, that Islam values human rights, and that Islam is sensitive in terms of protecting other religions and cultures. Moreover, topics such as "Islam and terror", "Relationships of Islam with the followers of other religions", "Islam and human freedom", "Islam and peace", "Place of women in Islam", and "Islam and economy" have been commonly examined in this period. In addition, the subjects of "inter-religious or cultural dialogues" and "Islam and modernity" are both promoted, and researchers are recommended to focus on this subject more.

The efforts to reject the approach that regards Islam as a post-modern, outdated anti-modernity element<sup>12</sup> have increased recently. Accordingly, many works were written to explain that Islam is not against industrialization, scientific

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<sup>11</sup> "Avrupa Birliđi'nde Müslümanlar: Ayrımcılık ve İslamofobi", Issued by: European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> It is clear that various reflections of Islamophobia that began with Crusades continued in the Age of Enlightenment. Many Western philosophers, particularly Ernest Renan, wrote works against Islam. The claims in these works caused great reactions in the Islamic world, and many Muslim philosophers responded to these claims. (Dücan Cündiođlu, "Ernest Renan ve "Reddiyeler" Bađlamında İslâm- Bilim Tartışmalarına Bibliyografik Bir Katkı", *Divân: İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Yıl: 1996, Issue: 2, p. 1-94, 3).

advancement, modernism and modern life.<sup>13</sup> For instance, in "So That You May Know One Another: A Muslim American Reflects on Pluralism and Islam", Ali S. Asani reviewed and examined the mutual hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims in US society in line with Quran following the 9/11 incidents. He reflected that the Quran gives particular importance to religious pluralism and that the Quran's message was misinterpreted by the non-Muslims. Moreover, he made efforts to explain that the Quran considers the differences between people as a richness and accepts the cases reflected both in Jewish and Christian sources, and that Islamic history is full of tolerant examples.<sup>14</sup>

Certain authors suggest the conservative works from certain western philosophers such as Swedenborg (1688-1772) and Goethe (1793-1832) as the theological grounds for mutual tolerance in a period when anti-Islamist attacks increased and tension between the Muslims and Christians reached to a higher level.<sup>15</sup>

It is natural for Muslim scientists to have more concerns regarding the future of their publics than the plans regarding their academic careers. They inevitably prioritized the defense of Islam against the ever-increasing pressures against Muslims. Accordingly, the topics that are referred to more in the practical life are highlighted. It is especially inevitable for the fiqh-related topics to be stressed more. For instance, making certain statements about Muslims such as "limb cutters" increases their sensitivity in this regard, meaning the punishments and interpretations of cutting limbs in Shariah are focused more.

We witness the formation of literature that is similar to the one formed as a response to the teasing approach of Ernest Renan from one and half century ago. Scholars, such as Namık Kemal, Cemaleddin Afgani, Muhammed Abduh and Said-i Nursi, made serious efforts to prove the otherwise of the following statement by Renan: "Islam is an obstacle before science."<sup>16</sup> The attacks against Muslims were related to this scope in the period when positivism was dominant with the influence of the Enlightenment Philosophy. The West defines itself using the concepts that have been made mottos using the terms of democracy, human rights and gender equality, and westerners make efforts to oppress others using these mottos.

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<sup>13</sup> As noted before, efforts to respond to the claims of Western philosophers date back to earlier times. As the scientific and cultural developments of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries created an effective pressure in the West, Muslim philosophers attempted to revive their spiritual experiences with the highest degree of civilizational aspects. These attempts, which can be considered efforts to find a solution to the problems of the time, based on the basic principles of Islam, can be assessed as a transformational program or social mobilization declaration. See: İsmail Bulut, *Nübüvete Çağdaş Bir Yaklaşım*, Berikan Yay., Ankara, 2016, p. 7-11.

<sup>14</sup> Ali S. Asani, "So That You May Know One Another": A Muslim American Reflects on Pluralism and Islam", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 588, July 2003, pp. 40-51.

<sup>15</sup> See: İbrahim Kalın, "Batı'daki İslâm Algısının Tarihine giriş", *DİVÂN İlmî Araştırmalar*, issue: 15 (2003/2), p. 22.

<sup>16</sup> For more details, see: Süleyman Gezer, *Kur'an'ın bilimsel yorumu: Bir Zihniyet Tahlili*, Ankara Okulu Yayınları, Ankara 2009, p. 113-121.

Muslims who are politically and culturally harassed in this way naturally aim to prove the otherwise of the accusations directed to them. For example, it is a fact that Abdülaziz Sachedina, a multi-directional Islamic scholar, performed numerous studies on the historical development of Shiite and significant Shiite concepts such as imamah or Mahdi. However, he has recently focused on Islam and democracy, Islam and human rights, and Islam and ethics, which is another example in this regard.<sup>17</sup> Another similar case is also valid for many other Muslim researchers such as Abdullahi Ahmad an-Naim.

Abdullahi Ahmad an-Na'im, a Sudanese intellectual and legal authority who is maintaining his studies in US, believes that the reforms to make Islamic law concordant to universal human rights are needed. He claimed in *Islam and the Secular State*, where he discussed the approaches of Muslim societies in legal, governmental and religious topics, that legal systems should suit the human rights laws and modern laws. He suggested an American secularism model reflecting that religion only concerns ethical topics and is not an authority in the legal issues. Moreover, he opened the models of Turkey, Indonesia and India to discussion and claimed that Turkey is a good model as the Turkish government managed to establish a successful synthesis between secularism, human rights and Islam.<sup>18</sup>

As noted before, fiqh-based topics are focused more as Westerners' criticism toward Islam and Muslims is related to their practices, and the responses are within the borders of Islamic law. We are in a period when certain fiqh-related comments regarding human rights and discrimination against different followers of different religions and genders are reexamined and reassessed. Accordingly, certain ideas that belong to certain Muslim ideas and that are forgotten and not adopted much can be highlighted. The Muslims of modern times have the necessary backgrounds to say "These are actually the basic values of Muslims stressed by the Quran and Sunnah" based on the ideology of "Wisdom is the lost property of believers. Get it at wherever you find." However, the question of how a religious perception with a more stress on cutting corners and adopting traditional fiqh influences the modern Islamic ideology seems to create new discussions.

These statements regarding the entire Islamic world also concern the theological studies in Turkey in relation to the recommendations for solutions. The occasional pressures on the religious people in Turkey and other countries due to Islamophobia affect both the society and scientific activities. The recent activities of

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<sup>17</sup>The books published by Abdülaziz Sachedina are as follows: *Islamic Messianism* (State University of New York, 1980); *Human Rights and the Conflicts of Culture*, co-authored (University of South Carolina, 1988); *The Just Ruler in Shiite Islam* (Oxford University Press, 1988); *The Prolegomena to the Qur'an* (Oxford University Press, 1998); *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (Oxford University Press, 2002); *Islamic Biomedical Ethics: Theory and Application* (Oxford University Press, February 2009); *Islam and the Challenge of Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, September 2009). Sachedina currently works on "the rational role in the formation of traditional Islamic morals".

<sup>18</sup>Abdullahi Ahmed an-Na'im, *Islam and the Secular State*, Harvard University Press, 2008.

terrorist organizations, the subcontractors of super powers, increase the pressure on Muslims, which increases reactance and causes the emergence of a quality directing educated Muslims to question others. The coexistence of Islam and democracy as the regime in Turkey, which occurred as a result of the scientific and political experience from the last two centuries, can be considered as a significant advantage. With the self-confidence from such an advantage, the presence of theological faculties combining modernity with traditions can provide significant contributions to the termination of deficiencies in Islamic studies and formation of a discourse free from reactance.

One of the greatest dynamics regarding great changes and transformations is generally divinity or theology. The most basic element affecting societies' perceptions toward all human sciences such as, art and literature, which are the instruments of development for humanity, is theology. In other words, theology is the primary field needed for the development of positive sciences or the generation of a more severe scientific policy. Accordingly, it is fair to state that keeping the field of theology within the borders of science is highly critical. However, an attitude to prevent the authentic ideas which will affect the development of all social and human sciences, and which will deviate Muslims from the reactance-related approaches would be focused in this regard.

Another negative effect of Islamophobic attitudes on Muslims is the reactance formed toward the innovative discourses. The anti-modernity formations arising from the concerns that the society may go through secularization and even immorality create great pressures on scientific activities. For instance, some believe that the curricula of theological faculties should be the same with the curricula of traditional madrasahs to suit the beliefs of people. However, these faculties, which are certain units of universities, have been configured based on the practical needs and in relation to the functions of madrasahs from the past, which may result in the loss of instruments that can enable a discourse which has no relationships with the reactance obliged by Islamophobia on Muslims. These concerns of many theological authorities should be considered and amendments should be made more meticulously in the studies on the institutions providing religious education. The criticisms directed toward the curricula of the madrasahs, which is regarded as one of the reasons for the regress of the Ottoman Empire, should be analyzed well because scientists working in the relevant institutions in Turkey make significant contributions to the development of modern Islamic ideology as much as the Muslim researchers in the west who are about to lose their self-confidence. It can be stated that the academic formation of theological faculties that completed their institutionalization stages will provide such solutions and serve as an exemplary model.

### **Conclusion**

Islamophobia is among the greatest problems for the modern Muslim researchers. After a short period of time from the emergence of pressures on Muslims, the new incidents in the Middle East open Islamic studies to questioning. The fact that certain radical religious movements used as a pawn by the global and regional powers transform the region into the field of sectarian clashes causes people to focus on this issue more. Accordingly, the theological faculties in Turkey are among the institutions providing significant contributions to the development of modern Islamic ideology. These institutions can support the Muslim researchers, who are introverted and defensive due to Islamophobia, in the west.

Muslim scholars, who know Islamic ideology and the West well, have been raised approximately in the last 150 years. A significant number of them maintain their studies in the West and feel the pressure as if they are the responsible people for the terrorist activities following the 9/11 incident, which decreases their self-confidence and causes them to reflect a defensive approach. However, these Muslims need to maintain or even improve their old studies by disregarding the social and psychological pressures. The theological sciences which have a particular place in the formation of scientific ideology will be able to overcome these and similar modern problems if the afore-noted concerns are terminated. The theoreticians such as Imam al-Azam Abu Hanifa, Abu Hasan al-Mawardi, Abu Hamid Gazali, Badraddin Ibn Jama'a, Namık Kemal, Jamaladdin Afgani and Ahmad Jawdat Pasha who understood the issues of their times provided theoretical support to the severe crises of the era. Regarding the present time, new solutions can be generated with the competent and conscious theologians and scientists who know the problems of Muslims and others well.

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## The Muslims in the Islamophobic Game\*

Ejder OKUMUŞ\*\*

### Abstract

The Islamophobia game, or the Islamophobic game, is a concept of game/play of the hatred, opposition and hostility against Islam and Muslims. In other words, it is an anti-Islamist concept implemented, especially in the West and United States. Western actors and powers have organized this game against Muslims so that Muslims are supposed to be extrinsic in this game, which is conducted outside their own will and does not attribute a role to Muslims in the establishment of rules. Islamophobia has become increasingly institutionalized and industrialized in the modern and postmodern era although its origins go back to earlier times, and it has grown in accordance with the fact that Muslims have come to the point where they and their influence can be said to be sensible inside, outside and for the West. However, following the 9/11 incident, Islamophobia has become much deeper. Regarding the statuses of Muslims, the approach of pluralism and multiculturalism abstains, especially in the United States and Europe. This study reviews the problematic concept of Islamophobia, for which Muslims are the subjects, based on the views of the game. It also aims to examine the position of Muslims in the Islamophobic game played by global Western actors and to attribute a meaning to their statuses.

**Keywords:** İslamofobia, İslam, anti-Islamizm, game, terror, global powers.

## İslamofobik Oyunda Müslümanlar

### Özet

İslamofobi oyunu veya İslamofobik oyun, özellikle Batı'da ve ABD'de İslam'a ve Müslümanlara karşı nefreti, karşıtlığı, düşmanlığı, yani antiislamizmi konu edinen bir oyundur. Batı temelli küresel aktörler ve güçler, bu oyunu Müslümanlara karşı düzenlemişlerdir. Öyle düzenlemişlerdir ki, Müslümanlar, kendi iradelerinin dışında kurulan ve kurallarının konulmasında rol sahibi olmadıkları bu oyunda figüran olmak durumunda kalmaktadırlar. Tarihsel kökenleri çok gerilere gitse de, modern ve postmodern dönemde gittikçe kurumsallaşan ve endüstrileşen İslamofobi, Müslümanların Batı'da, Batı dışında ve Batı için güçlü, gücü/etkisi hissedilir denilebilecek düzeye gelmesine paralel olarak artmış, derinleşmiştir. Fakat 11 Eylül olaylarından sonra İslamofobi, çok daha

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derinleşmiştir. Müslümanlar söz konusu olduğunda özellikle Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde ve Avrupa'da çoğulculuk ve çok-kültürlülük yaklaşımından uzaklaşmaktadır. İşte bu çalışma, Müslümanların muhatap kılındığı İslamofobi gibi bir kötülük problemini oyun bakışı temelinde konu edinmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, küresel Batılı aktörler tarafından oynanan İslamofobik oyunda Müslümanların durumunu anlamak ve anlamlandırmaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobi, İslam, antiislamizm, oyun, terör, küresel güçler.

### **Introduction**

Islamophobia reflects the prejudices, hatred, racism, and hostility against Islam and Muslims, while anti-Islamism indicates hostility or opposition toward Islam. Fear and hatred toward Islam and Muslims pave the way for the prejudices, discrimination, marginalization, stigmatization, exclusion, alienation, bearing a grudge, humiliating, aggression, violence, absence of multi-culturalism, failure in adopting a pluralist approach, hostility etc.

The Islamophobia game, or Islamophobic game, is a trick played against Islam and Muslims and the concept of phobia felt toward them in the west, the United States (US), and other countries hosting people or groups who oppose Islam and Muslims. Western actors and powers have organized this game against Muslims so that Muslims are supposed to be extrinsic in this game, which is conducted outside their own will and does not attribute a role to Muslims in the establishment of rules.

Islamophobia has become increasingly institutionalized and industrialized in the modern and postmodern era although its origins go back to earlier times (al-Shaikh-Ali 2015), and it has grown in accordance with the fact that Muslims have come to the point where they and their influence can be said to be sensible inside, outside and for the West. However, following the 9/11 incident, Islamophobia has become much deeper. Regarding the statuses of Muslims, the approach of pluralism and multiculturalism has abstained, especially in the United States and Europe.

Muslims have been recently facing the issue of Islamophobia, which reached its peak level in the US and Western Europe. Accordingly, it is fair to state that Islamophobia is a great malevolent issue hurting the feelings of Muslims. Moreover, it should be noted that Islamophobia is actually a reality in the Islamic and other non-western countries imitating the western Islamophobic powers, and considering and making efforts to implement the process of modernization as westernization in their own countries. Muslims have actually become a part of such a game in this regard.

The Islamophobic game creates a new form of relationship. The west and westerners reflect themselves as the primary/central actors while Muslims are positioned as the others.

This study aims to examine the position of Muslims in the Islamophobic game targeting Muslims (See: Metin 2014; Özarı, Turan and Ulusoy 2016). It also aims to examine the position of Muslims in this game played by global Western actors and to attribute a meaning to their statuses.

The number of German, French, Dutch, Serbian, Italian, Danish, Spanish, and particularly English pieces of literature regarding Islamophobia is increasing, which also indicates that Islamophobia is a significant topic and a reality in non-Islamic countries. Therefore, Islamophobia has naturally become a subject reviewed and studied in Islamic countries and other western countries.

### **Islamophobic Game**

Islamophobia may technically date back to earlier times when Muhammad (p.b.u.h) began to reveal and spread Islam in Mecca, Islam became dominant in Andalusia, and Crusades started, but it refers to the opposition, fears, hatred, discrimination and marginalization toward the Muslims in the modern times. It should be noted that incidents such as 9/11 (US) and January 7 (Charlie Hebdo incident in France) are like earthquake waves spreading and deepening the Islamophobia ideology, culture and industry. This problematic concept, which was developed and launched by the westerners and worsened upon the efforts of certain Islamic groups and organizations, spread the fears related to Islam first in the western countries, turned this fear into hatred, and transformed this hatred into hostility, violence and aggression. It can be said Islamophobia was institutionalized, marketized and industrialized due to cases, reasons or factors such as the cinema sector (reflected in many films), media products (newspapers, journals, television, internet etc.), speeches and writings, academic studies (as indicated by Huntington's thesis on the international conflicts and by Lewis' studies reflecting Muslims as associated with terror), military, political and cultural interventions on Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, various attacks on mosques in western countries, the German Pegida movement founded in August 2014 (Batı'nın İslamlaşmasına Karşı Vatansever Avrupalılar: Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes: Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West), anti-Islamic attitudes in European countries such as Netherlands, Denmark etc. (See: Younes 2016) (Okumuş 2015a; Okumuş 2015b; Said 2001).

Islamophobia can be regarded as a sort of game. The parties of this game are western non-Muslims and Muslims, but the creators of it are the western and global participants. Therefore, Islamophobia has contents and dimensions, which can be examined through the perspective of game theory.

Islamophobic game is a concept established by the parties with conflicting ideologies and theories before and after Huntington. Islamophobia is implemented by these conflicting parties and the afore-noted game is a violence-based work set by the same people.

### **The Case of the USA in the Islamophobic Game<sup>1</sup>**

The recent industry of Islamophobia in the United States has been operating and managed more strongly and intensively than ever. Thus, certain points opposing Islamophobia and anti-Islamism should be mentioned here.

### **Islamophobia Before 9/11**

Islamophobia in the US dates back to the periods earlier than the incident on 11 September 2001. One of the best pieces of evidence in this regard is the films produced by the media (Said 2001) and Hollywood. Muslims are reflected as evil, dangerous, violent and deadly people or terrorists in some movies, which serve the purpose of generating Islamophobia. Accordingly, American media plays the primary role in the production of Islamophobia due to the disinformation regarding Islam and Muslims and due to the malevolent news in this regard.

Moreover, the policy applied by the American governments toward Muslims reflects the anti-Islamic approach employed along with the concept of Islamophobia.

When we look at the historical background of anti-Islam in America, it will be possible to see what kind of situations Muslims face (Okumuş 2007).

Historically, Arabic Americans have become marginalized and turned into an oppressed minority whenever an issue has arisen in the Middle East. Following the Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973, Arabic Americans realized that they were deprived of the equipment, which they could use to fight against the Anti-Arabic racism movements arising from both American media and American people. The attacks were socialized in the forms of anti-Arabic movements, ethnical suppression, racial stereo-typification, stigmatization and occasionally physical assaults (Terry 2006: 117).

Following the Munich incident in the 1972 Olympics<sup>2</sup>, the Nixon government issued directives, including certain precautions under the code "Operation Boulder." These directives brought certain negative results for Muslims, including visa restrictions, and it is claimed that these directives were enacted upon

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<sup>1</sup> This part of the study was derived from the author's published article entitled "ABD'de İslamofobi ve Anti-İslamizm: 11 Eylül Öncesi ve Sonrası." (2007)

<sup>2</sup> The incident where 11 Israeli athletes who were held captive by a group of Palestinian terrorists were killed during the rescue operation by German law enforcers in Munich during the 1972 Olympics.

the demand or pressures of Zionist powers and Israel (Hagopian, 100-101). It can be said that the Nixon administration's "Operation Boulder" was an early attempt by the US government to target the Arabs in the United States and to block their political activism on the Middle East issues. The official governments of the US, including that of President Nixon, were doubtful toward the Arabic-speaking nations in the US. Attempts were made to form a negative relationship with Muslims, particularly the Arabic citizens and residents in Arabic countries and the US, based on these approaches. A pro-Israeli policy was adopted and attacks of Palestinian Muslims were defined as "Islamic terrorism". Upon such a definition, violation of the constitutionally-protected rights of Muslims who were American citizens and residents with Middle Eastern origins, was justified. The aforementioned principles gave the authority of investigating the potential relationships between the people of Arabic origins and terrorist acts regarding the conflict with Israel to the FBI. Moreover, the FBI immediately questioned Abdeen Jabara, a well-known lawyer from Detroit, and the head of the Association of Arabic-American University Graduates (Akram and Johnson, 2002; Hagopian, 1975-76: 101-102).

In the 1970s, President Carter took various steps toward Iran and Iranians as a response to the crisis where American citizens were held captive in Tehran. Other Muslims had their shares from these steps.

The external policy of Reagan included the fight against "terrorism" in the 1980s. The claim was that Libya conducted terrorist activities and Libya was bombed for this reason. Vandalism and violence toward Muslims in the US and the places where they gathered, such as centers, mosques, workplaces and houses were attacked in various forms (Akram and Johnson, 2002).

Another example is that an Arab-American political activist was killed upon the hijacking incident by a Shiite Lebanon in 1985 and that cultural and religious centers were vandalized, which reflected the waves of violence toward Muslims. In this hijacking incident, the Shiite Lebanese person was actually protesting the interventions toward Lebanon by the US and Europe and the bombing on Libya by Reagan's government in 1986. The centers, mosques and organizations founded by Muslims were attacked in this period. For instance, a mosque in Houston was wrecked and set on fire. A bomb was detonated in the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee office in Boston and two police officers were severely injured. Similarly, another office of the same committee was bombed and the local executive director of this office was killed.

Following the invasion of Kuwait by the USA in the 1990s, the policy of "fight against terrorism" employed by the US government focused on Iraq and its leader. In this period, Muslims suffered oppression in different forms. Moreover, leaders, activists, rioters and similar people were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The Immigration and Neutralization Service (INS)

aimed to deport Muslims, who had Palestinian origins and were not US citizens; at the same time, the federal government closed the offices of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the US (Akram and Johnson 2002). Moreover, workplaces and social organizations of Arabs and Muslims were bombed and looted and had to suffer from violence (Akram and Johnson 2002). The Islamophobic and anti-Islamist policy developed by the US against Muslims continued at certain levels following the 1991 Gulf War.

Following the bombing on a federal building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995, although the incident was performed by a non-Muslim American, all Muslims were declared guilty, which triggered the Islamophobic attitude and anti-Islamist approaches in the US (Heck 2007).

How the philosophy or secret evidence of the US government, which is related to “the right to conceal what the crimes of the people arrested as a terrorist or criminal are” and which has often been used by the government, triggered the pressure over the Muslims should be noted. By using the secret evidence, INS particularly targeted Muslims. There had been 25 secret evidence-based trials in the US up to 1999. Accordingly, the cases of Mazan Najjar and Anwar Haddam can be regarded as an example. These two experienced the longest period of arrests regarding the secret evidence attitudes. Najjar was first imprisoned in May 1997 and kept there for 3.5 years. Haddam was imprisoned for 4 years. Najjar was the editor of the Journal entitled *World and Islam Studies Enterprise*, a think-tank organization located at the University of South Florida. INS arrested Najjar. The arrest and investigation were based on secret evidence. Anwar Haddam was a physics professor serving at the University of Algiers and a selected member of the Algerian Parliament. He was a candidate as a member of the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF) in the elections in Algeria, which resulted in the victory of ISF. However, the afore-noted incidents occurred later. Haddam went to the US with a non-immigrant visa in 1992 and demanded to take refuge. INS arrested him and investigated based on the secret evidence. Unreliable evidence was used in both cases. They were set free following the period mentioned earlier. It should be noted that there are similar cases in this regard (Akram and Johnson, 2002).

### **September 11 and Islamophobia**

The September 11 incidents can be regarded as a milestone in American history. Incidents of the period had a significant role in the changes regarding the internal and external policies of the US. The primary interlocutor of this change was Muslims. The American government held the so-called “Islamic terrorism” responsible for the 9/11 incident and began to develop a policy based on “doubts”, “pressures” and “violence” toward the Muslims inside and outside the US.

Generally, violence and particularly conflicts, terror and aggressiveness have become the most serious dimensions of globalization in the modern world. The September 11 attacks cannot be evaluated without the concept of globalization. The concepts of globalization, violence and terror started to appear more influentially following the implications of “international violence” or “international terror” (Okumuş 2007).

As a requirement of the policy followed after the 9/11 incidents, Muslims and Islam began to be mentioned along with the concept of terror more than ever. The policy directly indicating or indirectly hinting that Islam is a religion of violence and terror was followed in this period. Islam and terror were used collectively to form the concept of Islamophobia in the US, according to the last analysis. A significant portion of the population in the US is now trapped by this problematic concept, which negatively affected the relationship of the American public with the Muslims. The American government, the primary actor in the formation of this phobia, followed an oppressing policy toward Muslims as a result of Islamophobia (Okumuş 2007).

As noted by the studies regarding the post 9/11 period, the American public had a greater phobia toward Islam and Muslims. This Islamophobia is at such a great level that they regard Muslims as worse and greater threats than Nazis and as murderers and terrorists. Moreover, they consider Islam as an evil religion (Cainkar 2004).

### **The Greatest Result of Islamophobia: Anti-Islamism**

The American government of the era covering the post 9/11 period took certain internal precautions related to legislation, administration and jurisdiction under the title of national security and terrorism. It can be stated that the US followed an Islamophobia-based policy. The fears related to Islam, which arose from the Islamophobic policy followed by the administrators and non-administrators on a formal and informal level in the US, became a reality among the people of the US and yielded the development of disturbing results by the American government and people such as anti-Islamism, disturbing/stigmatizing/threatening Muslims in the country, performing discrimination against the Muslims, developing racist attitudes toward them and showing malevolent behaviors, attacking mosques, insulting/harassing or even attacking hijab-wearing women,<sup>3</sup> ending the relationships with neighbors or preventing children from playing with Muslim children. It is fair to state that the most important result of Islamophobia is anti-Islamism. Another important

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<sup>3</sup> In an incident witnessed by a Muslim in New York, an American man harassed and shouted at a group of Muslim women who were traveling in a car while driving his car. While escaping the scene in fear, the women thought they got rid of him, parked the car and got out, but as soon as they did, they were physically attacked by the same man who then scratched the face of one of them and pulled her hijab.

dimension of anti-Islamism is racism toward Muslims, particularly the Arabs (Akram and Johnson 2002: 301-313 et al.). Islamophobia caused discrimination and a negative attitude toward Muslims in formal bodies. The US implemented discriminatory approaches and certain practices and actions toward Muslim Americans such as registration system, taking fingerprints, visa process, monitoring,<sup>4</sup> dismissing, canceling work permits, visiting houses and workplaces, arrests, or unpleasant attitudes<sup>5</sup> (Cainkar, 2004). The attitudes of law enforcers are clear in this regard. Following Muslims who were found suspicious and questioned, checking their IDs, imprisoning them, trespassing on Muslims' property,<sup>6</sup> oppressing, exiling or applying violence to them, controlling mosques are among the malevolent attitudes toward the Muslims. Evidence indicates that certain officers of certain institutions occasionally maltreated Muslims, that they caused problems for the hijab-wearing woman,<sup>7</sup> that certain teachers displayed discrimination toward Muslim students, that they interfered with their hijabs, and that certain students had negative attitudes toward the Muslim students. Moreover, certain Americans attacked Muslims, which sometimes resulted in death.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the attitudes shown toward the Muslim passengers before they board a plane, procedures and investigations that are stricter than ever, forcing people to leave planes stating that they are suspicious, and behaviors of passengers who say "There are Arabs on this plane, so I will not board!" can be among the anti-Islamist attitudes and behaviors. In short, malevolent attitudes and behaviors are developed based on racism and discrimination against Muslims in religious, educational, transportation, military, law enforcement, financial, political and social field (Stewart 2003). "Otherness" of Muslims is consolidated through these.

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<sup>4</sup> The work permit of a Turkish academic (who was not much religious or religious according to the popular belief) who was in Las Vegas, a city of Nevada, in 2007 was canceled as this academic worked or stayed with a Palestinian (who was also not much religious or religious according to the popular belief), and many difficulties were formed for the Turkish academic in the process of issuing a new work permit. As this academic's work permit was canceled, the job at the university was also terminated.

<sup>5</sup> Such precautions have been experienced by at least 100,000 Arabs and Muslims in the US (Cainkar, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Two people came to the house of a successful Arabic doctoral student living in Ohio in April 2007, introduced themselves as officers, and checked the identity and passport of the student before leaving. The results of this process are actually quite clear. Moreover, the student returning to his office in the university was still under the influence of the incident.

<sup>7</sup> This incident occurred in Baton Rouge, the capital province of Louisiana, in 2004. A hijab-wearing Turkish Muslim woman who applied to the relevant institution to receive a driver's license was unpleasantly treated by a female officer who stated that she could not have a license as she wore a hijab. Having been affected negatively by the incident, she and her husband reflected the issue to the superiors of the institution and were apologized to instantly, and their applications were accepted. This incident may look ordinary but the fact that such a case occurred in the US, where freedoms and democracy are of the utmost importance, where Muslims can pray freely despite all these, and where there is no such prohibition related to wearing a hijab cannot be explained easily, which leaves a negative effect on people.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, an American citizen who aimed to take revenge for his country in Arizona killed a Sikh from India wearing an imamah and a beard as he thought the Sikh was an Arab (Akram and Johnson, 2002: 296).

Certain relevant points should be mentioned to understand the dimensions of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism. For example, *the particular registration system* adopted after 9/11 is a particular measurement against the Muslims. This system of the US government is also known as National Security Entry and Exit Registry System (NSEERS). This system was employed in INS on 11 September 2002 first and later in the Department of Justice. According to this system, non-immigrant foreigners have to accept certain procedures alongside relevant American authorities such as registering fingerprint, having a photo taken, answering questions and showing no resistance to routine reports. The effect of the special registration system on the relevant people has been extensive. According to The Department of Homeland Security, up to June 1, 2003, 82,880 people in the United States were privately registered. A significant number of them were deported, some of them were treated differently, and some were even arrested (Cainkar 2004).

The *non-immigrant visa* practice is among the Islamophobic and anti-Islamic treatments toward Muslims following the 9/11 incident. Muslims, particularly students, visiting researchers or academics, scholars, medical and chemotherapy patients, artists, musicians and business people, were negatively affected by these malevolent visa practices applied by the government (Cainkar 2004).

Other bad news for Muslims was the hate crimes based on *grudge, hatred* and *prejudices*. Muslim American societies were exposed to unpleasant incidents such as hate crimes, accusations and business discriminations. Arabs and Southern Asians reported 645 “prejudiced and subjective hate crimes” to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in the first seven days following the 9/11 incident. These hate crimes continued in 2003 and in the following years. For instance, a Muslim woman was attacked from behind in Springfield, Virginia, on 5 October 2003. The young, Caucasian attacker ran away saying “you terrorist pig”. An arsonist attacked a mosque in Georgia in September 2003 (Cainkar 2004).

It should be noted that anti-Islamism arising from Islamophobia caused anxiety, fears and stress on American citizens. Moreover, due to the negative attitudes of Americans toward Muslims, certain Muslims living here for years returned to their home countries. Anti-Islamism affected the Arabs most in the US. Pakistanis and Iranians followed Arabs in this regard. Arabs’ image is so disturbing and distorted for the US public that even the non-Muslim Arabs suffer from the negative results of this image.

Due to the anti-Islamist attitudes of the American public, certain Muslims changed their names. Americans show their doubtful attitudes toward Muslims in their neighboring relationships or workplaces. Through the concept of anti-Islamism generated by Islamophobia, Americans affected and stigmatized Muslims, which is highly important for understanding the current state of Muslims in the US. The stigmatization and negative attitude in this regard were called New-McCarthyism by certain authors (Cole, 2003). As noted by John le Carré, just like



the times of McCarthy, the US has been systematically losing the freedoms, which make the country unique for the globe (Le Carré 2003).

Through the policy followed under the ideology of “fight against terrorism” after 9/11, the American government spread Islamophobia among the people, enacted new legal amendments bringing certain restrictions on Muslims’ rights, and made decisions in this regard. Historically, the stereo-typification of Muslims, including Arabs, had a dramatic effect over the immigration law and policy. The policy of “fight against terrorism”, which was developed following the 9/11 incident, was first based on anti-terrorist precautions (Akram and Johnson 2002: 355).

Severe incidents disturbing the Muslims in the US occurred following 9/11. To reflect some of them collectively, 700 violent incidents targeting Muslims and including deaths occurred in the first nine weeks after the 9/11 attacks. 165 violent acts had been committed between 1 January and 11 September 2002. These acts included malevolent stances, verbal attacks, assaults resulting in injuries and deaths, and attacks on workplaces and cultural and religious centers. As the cases are detailed, they become various and a number of them even reached 1000 incidents. 80 cases occurred in regard to illegal and discriminatory passenger procedures (boarding and deplaning) based on passengers’ ethnicity. More than 800 employment-based discriminatory acts occurred to the detriment of Arabic Americans (Stewart 2003; Heck 2007).

It can be said that women are among the Muslims who were affected by the post 9/11 incidents in the US. As their dresses catch attention, they also reveal their identities! (Cainkar 2004). This period affected not only the women but also all Muslims because Muslim women actively serve, especially in Islamic centers and other Islamic organizations.

One of the most important results of anti-Islamism is associated with the mutual relationships of various Islamic groups in the US, members of which come from different countries. The movement of Fethullah Gülen prefers to keep its distance to Arabs and many other Islamic groups. The observations of the author in the US in 2004 and 2007 indicate that avoiding acting and being seen alongside Arabs was a policy for the Organized Parallel Religious Formation. Although all Muslims, in general, are adversely affected by Islamophobia in the United States, Arabs were the ones who were affected the most and therefore, their image is not good for the American people. Accordingly, the afore-noted movement preferred to be away from them and stressed the concept of “Turkish Islam”. Thus, it is understood that they do not prefer going to mosques unless it is necessary. Various observations and meetings of the author reflect this policy. It is fair to state that Arabs are aware of such approaches by the movement. In the interviews conducted in places where the congregation was influential, some Arabs said that members of the Parallel Structure pursued such a policy.

The issues mentioned so far are related to the consequences of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism in America. One of the most important results of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism is the policies followed by the US government under the ideology of global war in countries such as Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan against terrorism on the global level. The important results also include chaos, violence, terror and fights caused by the same government in the Islamic world. As noted before, it is not possible to separate the internal Islamophobic policy of the US from the external policy of the government toward the Muslim countries.

Muslims in the US began to establish non-governmental organizations and to organize around these formations and to make efforts to defend their rights against what they saw and experienced in the US. Moreover, it can be said that they attributed more importance to the organization following the 9/11 incidents.

Islamophobia and anti-Islamism affected the relationships between the Muslims in the US and policy, law enforcers and investigation officers, and these issues forced Muslims to develop new methods. Muslims started to value the efforts in inter-religious dialogues, particularly upon the afore-noted period.

Another important result of Islamophobia is the Muslimization of people in the US at a faster rate following the 9/11 attacks. Anti-Islamist movements and malevolent treatment and discrimination toward the Muslims, particularly at intellectual and academic levels, and the rate of adopting Islam based on researches have significantly increased.

It should be noted that the external policies of the US government played a key role in the hatred and hostility toward Islam, and decisions, directives, oppression, preventions and restrictions regarding Muslims.

In addition, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism in the US were grounded through different periods before 9/11 or efforts were made in this regard. The case was clarified, deepened or even institutionalized after the incident. Institutionalization of anti-Islamism caused certain formal US bodies and people to take an opposite stance against Muslims, to treat them unpleasantly, to regard them as potential enemies, and take precautions against Muslims accordingly. Concepts of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism in the US, which cannot be assessed separately from the external and Middle East policy of the US, drag Muslims into the fear-related psychology, marginalize them, and make their lives in the US difficult. The American government and people are also harmed by this process because the US deviates from its own historical democratic and liberal line and conflicts with its own values due to anti-Islamism. The distant relationship between Muslims with different ethnical roots is not good for Muslims and American society in the long run.

In the final analysis, islamophobia and anti-Islamism in the United States have violated the civil rights not only of Muslims but of all Americans and residents of the United States. Freedoms in the US society were remarkably restricted during the process of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism. Muslims in the US were exposed to financial and mental losses in this regard.

It should be noted that following the 9/11 incident, Muslims believed the following: "More rooted and permanent efforts should be made to live in the US." Through this ideology, they aim to organize more and to develop activities around non-governmental organizations.

Moreover, they feel the need to change their remarks in their social lives and sermons in mosques. Accordingly, they make efforts to explain Islam properly to the non-Muslim people of the US and to show that Muslims are not dangerous.

### **Latest Developments**

The number of Islamophobic cases has increased in the US recently. In the U.S. state of California, three mosques were sent threatening letters containing Islamophobic, xenophobic and racist statements. The interesting points in the insulting letters to Muslims are that Trump, the President of the US, said the US would be cleaned by starting from Muslims and that what Hitler did to Jews would be done by Trump to Muslims, which are among the actions to be taken by him. (<http://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/hitlerin-yahudilere-yaptigini-muslumanlara-239416.html>) (Date Accessed: 27.11.2016)).

### **The Case of Israel**

The policy, war-based policy, grudge and hatred, hostility, exiles, occupations, confiscations on lands etc., which have been applied and performed by Israel toward Muslims as soon as it was established, indicate the Islamophobic culture and industry against the Muslims (See: Lean 2015).

The latest efforts in preventing adhan in Israel are important for understanding the dimensions of Islamophobia. However, Islam has serious and enriched Islamophobic experiences and industries in the fields of culture, policy, economy, art and cinema.

Ahmad at-Tiybi, an Arabic parliamentarian who recited adhan from the pulpit of Knesset to protest the Israeli resolution on preventing broadcasting adhan from the speakers of mosques in Israel, stated that he would not take a step back from protesting the statement of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, that "they would not take a step back from their resolutions."

Tiybi stated that the resolution could be brought to Knesset, and he added: "Netanyahu will try to enact this law once again. However, he will also attempt to terminate the concerns of certain religious Jews that laws may also prevent the religious rituals of Jews. Concerns of Yakup Litzman, Israeli Minister of Health and the leader of the Jewish Party Yahudot HaTora, can be ended, rights of Jewish people are guaranteed, and adhan prohibition may be implemented."

Stating that this resolution called "listin" will be enacted if it comes to Knesset, Tiybi added: "I was quite upset upon hearing the words of Litzman 'I support this prohibition (on adhan) if it does not affect the sacred Saturdays (Shabat) of Jews' yesterday morning. They just plan to use this law only on Muslims. Therefore, to me, Netanyahu is an Islamophobic person."

Reciting adhan from the pulpit of the Israeli parliament and opposing this law, Tiybi said he wanted to give a message to the world and added: "I wanted to show the whole globe that we can recite adhan wherever we like and this cannot be prevented. If you try to prevent it, we can even recite it from the pulpit of the Israeli parliament."

He said he did not plan to recite adhan there and he added: "But I knew that I would recite adhan soon as I stepped on behind the pulpit. These words arose from the depth of my heart and touched the hearts of people all around the world. I sent a message to the world, shouting "Allahu Akbar in the Israeli Parliament."

Also serving as the Deputy Head of the Israeli Parliament, Tiybi also made the following statement: "We are tolerant people. I am a tolerant person as a Muslim. I respect other religions. I respect the rituals of other religions, so Jews should respect our adhan."

Stating that adhan is not a religious ritual but also a symbol and part of Palestine, Tiybi said: "It is forbidden to use a vehicle during Yom Kippur day of Jews. We respect this as Muslims. We also respect Jews when they declare the beginning of Saturday by playing trumpets loudly. Yes, these trumpets are played loudly, but we do not call officials to enact a law against this. We have to be tolerant of us."

Tiybi stated that Turkey has a particularly important place in the region and the country can put the pressure on Israel for abolishing the law on prohibiting adhan, and he added: "The relationships between Israel and Turkey have been reestablished. I believe this relationship can be used to persuade Israel to abolish this law." (<http://www.haber7.com/ortadogu/haber/2216937-turkiye-israile-baski-yapabilir>).

### **The Case of Europe**

A strong Islamophobia culture has been developed in Europe. The hatred and opposition toward Islam are at serious levels in European countries (Cesari 2015; Cherribi 2015; Abbas 2015; al-Shaikh-Ali 2015).

European history has a rich historical experience in this regard. According to the 2015 Europe Islamophobia report published by Seta and edited by Enes Bayraklı and Farid Hafez (2016), Islamophobia is a critical issue and reality seen in the countries such as Germany, France, England, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Australia, Holland, Sweden, Greece, Spain, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Czech Republic, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Macedonia. Prejudices against Muslims have become common in Europe (Kalin 2015). European countries have hosted many Islamophobic incidents such as psychological pressures, unpleasant political cases, verbal assaults, insults, physical attacks, insulting statements and letters, comics, psychological and physical violence, assaults on streets, media pressure, and attacks on mosques, houses and graveyards. These countries with common Islamophobic incidents include Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Italia, Denmark and Austria. The Netherlands has a major role in the spread of Islamophobia in Europe. Many Islamophobic discussions have emerged in the Netherlands and copied to other European countries, including Germany and Austria. In the Netherlands, Islamophobia has developed under the influence of some politicians and the media, and from there it has spread to other European countries. It should be noted that there are European organizations such as "The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance" against Islamophobia (Cherribi 2015). Pegida, founded in Europe against the Muslims, is among the organizations that come to mind first when Islamophobia is mentioned (<http://www.takvim.com.tr/dunya/2015/06/07/islamofobi-danimarkada>; <http://www.dw.com/tr/danimarka-islamofobi-konusunda-uyar%C4%B1lm%C4%B1%C5%9Ft%C4%B1/a-2522459>).

### **Concepts Used in the Islamophobic Game**

There are certain concepts used in Islamophobia. They are used as functional terms in the process of legalizations regarding the justification of Islamophobia. For that purpose, the concepts of Islamophobia, fundamentalism, religious fundamentalism, radicalism, extreme fundamentalism, Islamic terrorism, the terror of Islam, Islamofascism, or jihadism.

### **Islamophobia: Multi-Culturalism and Marginalization of Muslims**

Islamophobia has many effects on many various levels in social fields. Muslims are adversely affected by Islamophobia in business, education, policy, media, law and so on. Muslims are marginalized in many social fields. Westerners actually open the way for justifying the process of marginalizing Muslims through Islamophobia. Islamophobia is a form of a defense mechanism of Western hatred and hostility to Islam. Although Muslims lived in peace with non-Muslims in the same environments and provided proper examples at a sociological level in this regard, various western philosophers, intellectuals, academics, political actors and global powers formed Islamophobia and indicated that they do not accept Muslims and Islam as valuable and worthy for sharing the social life through a pluralist approach. One of the greatest inconsistencies or contradictions of the west in the modern times is that it supports the efforts related to the generalization of postmodern multi-culturalism and coexistence of people with different beliefs, lifestyles and cultures while it justifies the formation of emotions and practices regarding fears, hatred, discrimination, hostility and aggressiveness toward Islam (Okumuş 2015a; Okumuş 2015b). When multi-culturalism is mentioned in the western context, Islamophobia comes to mind first and the topic turns into negative discussions on Islam and Muslims (Taylor 2007). The modern concept of multi-culturalism in Taylor's (2017) approach is a suspicious term for the entire globe, particularly in Europe. Degradation of tolerance or adverse associations regarding tolerance is associated with Islam (Kalin 2015).

In fact, the forms of relationships based on multi-culturalism and tolerance turn into intolerance when Islam is mentioned in the west, which results in discrimination, intolerance and racism toward Islam and Muslims. Moreover, extensive rates of Islamophobic attitudes and behaviors in Europe confirm the afore-noted statement (Kalin 2015).

### **The West is the Generator of Islamophobia.**

Islam has always enabled various religions, beliefs and cultures to coexist. It is hard to claim that there is a general Islamic discourse and practice, which will support the Islamophobic approaches of non-Muslims in general and westerners in particular. Certain partial or local incidents might have been done by Muslims, but Islamophobia cannot be explained and grounded based on these incidents. In addition, it is a fact that the discriminatory acts of Jews and Christians toward Muslims are not new (Okumuş 2015a; Okumuş 2015b).

### **Phobia Industry Targeting Muslims**

It is fair to state that there is an industry, culture or culture industry of generating phobia toward Muslims under the name of Islamophobia. (See: Okumuş 2015a; Okumuş 2015b).

### **The Responsibility of Fighting Against Islamophobia as a Malevolent Issue**

Islamophobia is a malevolent issue and theodicy for both Muslims and westerners. Islam is nothing but a problem for many Americans and Europeans (Said 2001). It is just a social disaster. Western nations did and are actually doing their best to understand Islam in this way, but the limits of the case reached beyond the planned borders and became their nightmares. An Islam-free world is not possible for westerners or anybody (Fuller 2012), so the West has to do whatever is necessary to get rid of Islamophobic pathology (Ahmed 2008). Considering the sufferings of Muslims, this case is a serious social disorder, test and malevolent process for Muslims.

They have to think about how they can overcome this concept, instead of how westerners can do so, and they have to develop strategies. No power, ideology or policy can justify the insults on the Prophet Muhammad and Muslims' sacred values. Muslims need to protect their values without having any affiliations with terrorism or doing anything illegal, but they have to fight the issue of Islamophobia and its malevolence. It is fair to state that one of the most urgent tasks for Muslims today is to think about how to cope with the disaster of Islamophobia (Okumuş 2015a; Okumuş 2015b).

### **Orientalism in Islamophobic Game<sup>9</sup>**

One of the most important and rooted instruments of Islamophobia is orientalism. Orientalism is actually Islamophobic. Fear, hatred and hostility toward Islam are academically supported and grounded by orientalism. Edward Said (1982) reflects this in his well-known work. The relevant language, discourse, style and methodology used in relation to Islam and Muslims in western universities and other centers reflect the current status of orientalism in regard to Islamophobia (Turner 2002; Okumuş 2008; Okumuş 2002).

In his article titled "Güncelliğini Yitirmiş Bir Oryantalizmden Global Sosyolojiye Geçiş İmkânı", Okumuş (2002) makes efforts to indicate how orientalism has been effective in forming prejudices against Islam and Muslims and

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<sup>9</sup>This part of the study is derived from the author's previous article titled "The Possibility of Transition from Outdated Orientalism to Global Sociology" (2002).

in marginalizing Muslims in scientific studies through a book by Turner (2002), through the sociological example and through the approaches of sociologists such as Marx or Weber.

From a careful perspective, it is clear that there are certain cases justifying the claim that social sciences, particularly sociology, are the inheritors of orientalist discourse. "Orientalism is criticized by stating that it is an ideological concept or it is related to imperialism, and the dominant patterns of orientalism are easily and commonly used in social sciences. The basic ideological approach that is dominant in orientalism also exists in many theories such as modernization, underdevelopment or addiction, all of which are still discussed in modern social sciences. These theories guarded with the armor of 'science' are reflected as the valid solutions of non-western societies." (Bulut 2002: 10).

Indications of accepting social sciences as the inheritance of orientalism may include the formal abolishment regarding the concept of orientalist in "29<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Orientalists" held in Paris in 1973 and formal adoption of the title "International Human Sciences Congress on Northern Africa and Asia" (Lewis, 1982).

Turner (2002) makes the following statement in accordance with the book entitled *Oryantalizm, Postmodernizm ve Globalizm'de Marks ve Oryantalizmin Sonu* (1985): "The critical essence of my study and Marx's Orient is to reflect that the western heritage, which is characterized status quo partisanship, absence of social change, deprivation of modernization and absence of a civil society, and which includes considering the case as a holistic system is majorly shared. From this critical point of view, both Marx and Weber reach beyond the borders of western analysis toward the east. The Marxist notion regarding the Asian type of production and Weber's patrimonialism share common assumptions." This indicates the presence of orientalist heritage in social sciences (Turner 2002).

Turner (1991) discusses the same points in *Max Weber and the Sociology of Islam*. The Asian type of production, which was conceptualized by Marx and Engels to review western societies, reflects one of the basic characteristics of Orientalism. This and similar approaches indicate that Marxist ideas on eastern societies have been developed based on Eurocentric ideology, but on the contrary of the objectivity of historical materialist administration used to reveal the social and financial roots of capitalism (Boztemur 2002).

Negative discourses of Karl Marx and Engels on Islamic societies and their considerations toward the western imperialist actions, such as English imperialist actions in India or exploitation of Algeria by the French, as positive actions in terms of fulfillment regarding their own assumptions (Turner 1985), which supports the afore-noted ideas, should be something which can be explained through orientalist ideology



The perception of Max Weber toward Islamic society as a sociologist can be easily regarded as a grand total of all historical, financial, religious and sociological analyses forming the orientalist ideology regarding the Middle East. Weber's orientalism arises from efforts to explain the birth of western capitalism in regard to a couple of inter-cultural, inter-religious or inter-civilizational comparisons, in other words, in the scope of cultural sociology, religious sociology and inter-civilizational sociology. Weber uses the main differentiation between the western feudal economies and eastern patrimonial economies to make such comparisons. Unfortunately, Weber has two conflicting concepts, which are the review of the afore-noted Islamic patrimonialism with two additional concepts, Islamic ethical philosophy and absence of interventionist urban bourgeois, which are the raw material for the internalist developmental interpretation. Weber's thesis that Islam does not have dynamic and ascetic demands on personality and it positively supports the acceptance of this world does not seem persuasive. The Sacred Law of Weber and his other observations on the ways of preventing the rationalization of commercial development, trade and moneylending capital are equally problematic. However, weak points of the limited ideas reflected by Weber in relation to Islamic culture did not prevent the following academics from determining the similarities of Protestant morals in various Muslims societies (Subaşı 1999).

Following these general remarks, certain points from the reflection of orientalism in sociology can be mentioned to detail the topic. The main point in the orientalist discourse of sociology is the thesis that there are two societies. Accordingly, western societies have different characteristics than the eastern societies. As with all other scientific branches based on differences, traditional orientalism as an ideological system reviewing the external world canalizes anthropological ideology as east and west throughout modern history. This orientation is the essence, theory and practice of orientalism (Sid 1982: 84). The difference in this regard is accepted as a concept stressing the superiority of the west by stating that Christian societies have superior qualities over the Islamic societies in the context of Islamic approaches constituting a great section or orientalism.

Accordingly, it is fair to state the following: "The essence of Weber's idea regarding the Islamic society consisted of an opposition between the rational and systematic characteristics of the west in regard to the fields of law, science and industry, and arbitrary and unsteady political and financial conditions of the eastern nations, particularly the Islamic states. While making such a comparison, Weber repeated and meticulously processed the east-west differences that are common for the political theoreticians, philosophers and classical economists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century." (Turner 1991: 27) The same is actually the case for Marx.

Based on the afore-noted differences and separations, Orientalism (Pruett ty.: 61) regards the east and Islam as follows: "A powerful enemy, a deviant and exotic structure formed by the near east, a semi-stable and introverted group of

people, a civilization that failed to reform itself, and a fanatic or suicidal reaction to the modern times." It can be stated that such a perspective is almost present in the classic sociology.

The important aspect of orientalist and sociological discourse, which is related to this difference, is the stress on the absence of independent cities, autonomous bourgeois class, rationalist bureaucracy, legal responsibility, the journal of rights covering the private properties and legal bourgeois culture, and relevant civil society in the Islamic societies.

The point that is emphasized the most in the orientalist point of view is possibly the despotic aspect of the east and the absence of civil society. Eastern Despotism is dominant in the eastern discourse of the west. The west often used the hypothesis of eastern despotism as an image reflecting the Ottoman Empire (Mardin 2002: 113-14). The same hypothesis was also used by many western sociologists, particularly Weber and Marx, in regard to the eastern and Islamic societies.

The orientalist mosaic social perspective, supporting the discourse of *oriental despotism* and phrase of *stable east*, is regarded as an eastern comment regarding orientalism and orientalist sociology. Accordingly, Islamic society reflects a structure consisting of the mosaic of social groups. The eastern and Islamic society hosts the unity of different united groups, and therefore, it is difficult or almost impossible to see opposition in this society. The mosaic variation of social structure paves the way for a despotic leader who divides or unites the society and manages the society without any concerns of opposition.

It is clear that the model of mosaic Islamic society is far from being persuasive like other orientalist perspectives (Subaşı 1999: 94-97). According to Turner (2002: 63), the orientalist rhetoric regarding the absence of civil society in Islam is a reflection of the basic concerns in terms of political freedom in the west. Accordingly, the problem of orientalism was not the orient but the occident. These problems and concerns were later transferred to orient. Therefore, orient became the comics of the west instead of being a representative of the east. Eastern despotism was just the sacred command of the western monarch. Thus, the crises and contradictions of the contemporary orientalism is just a fascicle of the continuing western crises that were transferred in the global context.

Another example regarding the orientalist aspects of sociology is that the east and Islamic society are close to the social changes, meaning they are stable. In the classic sociological perspective, the east normally reflects a *static* and *lazy* sense of communism.

Another example is related to the concepts of *sexuality* and *sensuality*. The Orientalism themes in the forms of afore-noted concepts are also claimed in the sociology of Max Webber. Weber reflects a global asceticism theory comparing the

sensuality in Islam with the rejection of luxury and ascetic demands by the Protestant priesthood. Rational discipline of emotions established the infrastructure that is necessary for the formation of capitalism because rejection or denial formed the psychological basis of financial experiences. The sensuality of the Orient made similar disciplines invalid and removed the chance of transition from a traditional economy to a society where the conditions for a free market are dominant. The rationality theory, one of the important components regarding the orientalist structure of eastern society, is significantly related to asceticism evidence and approach of Weber's sociology. The rationalism theory in Weber's sociology paves the way for all sociological perspectives of Weber as a cultural change process specific to the west (Turner 2002: 152-154).

Oriental society emerges as a total concept full of *deprivations* in the classical orientalist and sociological perspective. It is possible to see the same in the sociology of Weber. Accordingly, the eastern society hosts absent cities, missing middle class, missing autonomous urban institutions, missing properties, absent changes, and absent classes (Turner 2002: 70-71). It is clear that western society, on the contrary, has the afore-noted characteristics. Orientalism, as the most significant instrument for the western achievement of self-awareness, can be understood as the efforts reflecting the western characteristics, which the west does not like or criticizes and plans to see/display in the east. Accordingly, if the east had not existed, the west would not have existed either. West makes efforts to create an eastern image through orientalism, to marginalize the east, to make east more eastern, and to get to know itself (Bulut 2002: 25). Accordingly, it is fair to state that the orientalist rhetoric and approach was actually related to the roots of the west rather than east. Social theoreticians either preferred or accepted various perspectives in this regard in the 19th century. It is a fact that Weber defined the roots of rationality in the western culture and Christian traditions and that he clearly indicated these definitions as occidental (Turner 2002: 154).

### **September 11, Inter-Civilizational Conflict, Globalization and Orientalism**

Attitudes and behaviors of the US and Europe following the 9/11 incident reflect that classic orientalism continues in a postmodern form. US immediately declared that the terrorist enemy was from the Islamic society, although there were many opponents or violence supporters within the country. Accordingly, the other was among the Muslims. Intervention to Afghanistan or preparations for the assaults on Iraq is actually a product of terrorism and postmodern orientalist perspective. The efforts of US, which acts in accordance with the motto of global fight against global terrorism, to seek the source of terrorism in the east inevitably cause people to think that they face another version of classic orientalism.

The policies formed on the global scale, along with the discrimination of us and others following the 9/11 incident, made the thesis of inter-civilizational conflicts popular and turned it into the dominant discourse. Acting on this rhetoric, the West has shown that there is no fundamental change in its view of the East by choosing the strictest and most negative way of dealing with the East, such as war, or has chosen to send a message to show that there is no fundamental change in its view of the East.

Moreover, the thesis of the war between the civilizations by Huntington, a sociologist, shows such a relationship between orientalism and sociologists. The policies and war-based approaches followed after 9/11 caused these doubts to increase toward globalization that has been the subject for various suspicions. The attitudes shown toward the east and Islam in the efforts to become globalized contributed to the process of making the negative image of globalization more negative and paved the way for establishing a relationship between globalization and orientalism.

In short, what was experienced following 9/11 evokes the following question: "Are not these at a level justifying what E. Said said about the western imperialism in regard to orientalism?" In other words, the afore-noted points regarding orientalism and classical sociology did not prevent Turner from seeking alternatives to orientalism. Turner preferred Marxist analysis ideology instead of the orientalist method, but he also stressed that the orientalist elements within this ideology should be cleared. Accordingly, Turner suggests an approach that will pass the borders of classical Weber sociology, historical Marxism and orientalism methodologies, which are the dominant concepts in the studies on the Middle East (Nyang and Abed-Rabbos y.: 206-207).

According to Turner (2002: 63), the end of orientalism requires the extensive formulation of perspectives and paradigms once again. However, reformation of such information occurs through great shifts in the political relationships between the orient and occident because the transformation of rhetoric also necessitates the transformation of power.

### **Islamophobia in Culture, Art and Literature**

Islamophobia is generated through studies with multiple aspects in multiple fields, and it is supported and deepened by these fields. Cultural, artistic and literary works are among the most important fields where Islamophobia is formed and supported. Said (1998) reviews this issue through certain novels in one of his studies. Al-Shaikh Ali (2015) stresses that certain western cultural, artistic and literary works (for instance, certain poems, novels, stories or pictures) have prejudices, languages and discourses showing Islam as a negative religion and marginalizing it. Al-Shaikh Ali (2015) states the following: "Many people

underestimate the influence of literary and artistic works shaping the popular approaches and mentalities and relevant policies. The newspaper named *Washington Times* published an article entitled "Relieving Fears from Fiction" by Arnaud Borchgrave on 4 October 2004, reflecting the developments regarding Turkey's entrance to European Union (EU) and interpreting the statements of politicians and media. This article referred to a best-selling and award-winning novel entitled *Le Camp des Saints* (1973), which was translated to English under the title *The Camps of Saints* in 1975 and to other languages since that date, and written by a French author. According to Borchgrave, the novel/short story continues selling many copies every year. The possible reason is the fears of Europeans that Europe is being made Muslim or Islamic gradually by approximately 20 million Muslims from Northern Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, Southern and South-East Asia. The author believes that Many Europeans oppose Turkish entrance to the EU, stating that 71 million Muslim Turks can reside anywhere in Europe and occupy the Christian civilizations of Europe. (...)"

### **Islamophobic Industry and Media**

Islamophobic industry does anything and uses the media as an instrument to spread its messages, products or discourses supporting Islamophobia among people. Moreover, the media channels or broadcasting networks spreading the products of the Islamophobic industry are the partners of the game of triggering the Islamophobia. This process does not indicate a buyer-seller relationship where different people advertise their products through panic marketing. Instead, it is based on the mutual benefit relationships where ideological and political orientations agree on bringing the same topic into attention (Lean 2015).

The most important and powerful instrument used to spread Islamophobia in the west is media and press organs. Many television channels, radio stations, newspapers, websites etc. undertake important roles in advertising the products of the Islamophobic industry (see. Said 2007; al-Shaikh Ali 2015). "Review of Islam in Europe by the populist media is possibly the primary element creating Islamophobia." (Cherribi 2015: 95).

### **Islamophobia in Globalization Process and the Terror Attributed to Islam and Muslims**

The terror attributed to Islam and Muslims in regard to the west and actors supporting the Islamophobic industry is considered or even employed as an instrument of justifying Islamophobia, but it is also regarded as the means of fighting against Islamophobia for some groups.

The problem is actually quite complicated. Islamophobia shows itself with terror, conflicts, wars and violence through different styles, contents, discourses, languages, claims and theses, which occurs in relation to the actions, strategies, plans, policies and commercial activities of global actors or powers in the process of globalization.

Islamophobia has turned into a culture and industry that have become more common through the globalization periods. As a result of globalization, it is now possible to mention the concept of global Islamophobia. Considering the presence of Islamophobia, even in certain Islamic countries, the malevolent aspect and problematic side of Islamophobia is clear for Muslims.

Global Islamophobia and terror have made the fears, hatred prejudices and hostility toward Muslims global. It is fair to state that many societies or even the global powers face a "problem of the global state". The most important characteristic of the problem of the global state is possibly the inequality, discrimination, violence, conflict and terror. Accordingly, the state and peaceful approach of Islam should be detailed and reflected against the violence and terror from the problem of the global state (Okumuş 2008).

"It is a fact that Muslims established peaceful environments, which cannot be compared with other religions. This assumption does not aim to reflect that Christianity, Judaism, or any other popular religions are malevolent or violent against Islam. The claim here is that through the social and political orders Muslims established, people understood that Muslims could actually bring peace to the world. Accordingly, mentioning Islam, along with terror is a result of an illusion and certain ideological and political incidents. Terror and violence are associated with Islam due to the policies of including Muslims to the globalization process by the main actors of globalization. It should be noted that the actors here are those who mention Islam with violence. Those who capture the photos of Muslims in the frames of violence in the Middle East actually ensure that they stand before the cameras. There are two important points here: The first is that the terrorist actions performed by certain Muslims in certain places of the world are malevolently exaggerated by the media and internet and reflected in a way that this can be done by all Muslims around the globe, although there is no question that terror is terror or violence is violence, regardless of the dimensions in this regard. The second point here is that attention should be given to the question of what sort of criteria were effective in naming these actions as terrorist acts. It is clear that the aforementioned criteria are quite relative. If the west stigmatizes Muslims' all sorts of defense actions with violence and terror by making a specific or subjective definition regarding terrorism or reflects such a definition in its actions, would it be possible to achieve an anti-terrorist environment based on the global ethical grounds? It is a fact that Muslims still should take lessons from the current state in the world. They have to show the whole globe that they are not terrorists or violent. From any perspective, they can reflect that Islamophobia is totally wrong by using their

practices in line with their historical missions and earning people's hearts. In addition, to contribute to this process, westerners should not form any obstacles before the emergence of peace and Muslims' efforts to show that they are peaceful, and they should accept that Muslims deserve the attitude westerners show one another and efforts should be made to empathize and understand Muslims without forgetting that the greatest issue in the modern times is the tension between the West and Islamic countries<sup>10</sup>." (Okumuş 2008).

Benevolent and correct observations will help realize the role of Islam as a universal religion in the efforts to overcome the violent and chaotic environment of the world against global issues as problems. Associating Islam with terrorism in the Islamophobic game that emerged in different forms in the globalization processes is wrong. Therefore, it should be noted that Islam has had no dominant terrorist and violent aspects historically and that the association between Islam and terror has been founded based on the reflection of uneasiness in Islamic societies as a terror to other countries (Okumuş 2008).

Moreover, the association of universal religions with violence and terror in the global state can be explained with the claim that these religions are the alternatives to the negative qualities of global state. Accordingly, the violent and terrorist aspects of the problematic acts from the religious actors can be said to be temporary. A transitional or painful period is happening for the religions and the world. Religions play a key role for people to overcome this period. The most important role will be played by Islam through the dimension of *domestic-global*. Global powers apply certain policies, which result in violence against Muslims, as they realize the primary roles of Islam. Certain people or groups from Muslim societies may show different reactions or acts under the title of religion or any other concepts, which does not justify mentioning Islamic terrorism, indicating terror is common among Muslims or saying that Muslims are integrated into violence and terror. Reviewing violent and terrorist acts with no relation to their original contents, and defining these acts as terrorist incidents from Islam and Muslims do not suit science. There is no question that terror is terror, and violence is violence. These are wrong and malevolent regardless of who conducts. However, defining the violence reflected by a couple of weak people as pure violence or terror and making efforts to oblige Muslims before the entire globe, particularly the European and American societies, prevent people from understanding and terminating incidents in an arena where complicated incidents and games take place. This helps the process of deepening and making the violent and terrorist extensions of globalization and new world order more layered." (Okumuş 2008).

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<sup>10</sup> According to Gunter Verheugen, "The greatest issue of the 21st century arises from the tension between the West and Islamic countries." (<http://www.tercumangazete.com/hoku.aspx?id=10661>, 07 October 2004 Thursday).

“The US and other effective political actors of the west should give up defining terrorism subjectively. They define terrorism based on their characteristics, policies, ideologies, powers and authorities, calling anybody terrorist or hero as they wish. This results in double standards and unreliability toward the west. It is inevitable for the state and relevant actors to make necessary efforts to develop universal approaches in regard to terrorism. Moreover, it is a must for US to teach its public about Islam and Muslims in the best way possible. Unfortunately, Americans have negative prejudices against Muslims, although they do not know much about Islam. Accordingly, I would like to stress an interesting point I witnessed in the US, a couple of states of which I visited between January 31 and April 19 of 2007. There is serious propaganda in the US that Islam is the religion of violence, while Muslims are just terrorists. In fact, certain political powers, academics, churches and media in the US mention Islam, along with terror and violence based on prejudices and ideological and political purposes (Davidson, 2003: 71) which causes US people who are already quite ignorant in terms of Islam to have negative ideas toward Islam and Muslims, to consider Muslims highly dangerous for US, and to show hatred to Muslims. This fact is realized by the Muslims in the US and affects them adversely. Moreover, certain books in this regard spread disinformation about Muslims. Certain media groups consider associating Islam with terror as a duty for them. Moreover, it is hard to state that this case is different in Europe. Accordingly, the following questions become significant: 1. Terror and violence are constantly mentioned. Is terror virtually produced in advance and made more real later? Is it commanded by certain international or global centers? 2. Is it possible to overcome terror without analyzing the complicated relationships in the places where terror is mentioned the most or to state that those who conduct terrorism are actually the terrorists? Associating Islam and Muslims with violence and terror by mixing Islam with terrorism, fundamentalism, radicalism, extremism and religiousness deliberately or unintentionally is an obstacle before reflecting the peaceful aspects of Islam. The west should avoid this while Muslims should defend themselves in the correct way. They should explain that Islam and Muslims are actually not anything or anybody to be feared. In conclusion, Islam has great potential and experience in stopping the current violence and terror, thanks to its domestic-global approach. By turning the global state into the domestic-global form, Islam will be able to spread its values to the whole globe thanks to its universal characteristics, to protect its local qualities, and to prevent the violent and terrorist dimensions of the world thanks to its experiences enabling it to coexist with different beliefs, which will maintain their own states based on pluralism. It is important for the global powers to leave Islamic countries to themselves to ensure that Islam can reflect its potential and experience in time and pave the way for peace in the entire globe. Accordingly, Muslim societies will establish liberalist structures in their societies. It is without a doubt that Muslims should avoid violence and terror in a way set by the basic Islamic rules regardless of which state Muslims are in.” (Okumuş 2008).



### **Conclusion: Islam as the Solution to Islamophobia**

This study focuses on understanding the state of Muslims in the Islamophobic game found the following results:

1. Islamophobia or hatred, opposition and hostility toward Islam is a common concept, culture and industry in the west.

2. Accordingly, it is effective in many western countries and even in certain Islamic countries.

3. Historical periods of Islamophobia can be divided as Prophet Muhammad's (p.b.u.h.) efforts to spread Islam in Mecca, the spread of the religion to different geographies and cultures following the Madinah era, Islamization of Andalusia, Crusades, orientalism, and modern and post-modern times.

4. Media, cinema, culture, art and literature are the most important and effective instruments of Islamophobia.

5. At the point of combating Islamophobia, efforts should be made to declare Islamophobia as a crime all over the world and to make legal arrangements for this crime as far as possible in all countries.

6. Westerners should understand that Islamophobia is essentially a serious malevolent issue for them and fight against it. Moreover, they should help the Muslims in their own countries. They should do so to prevent Islamophobia.

7. The Islamophobic game established and set by the western powers evokes the phrase "to be on the horns of a dilemma" for Muslims. The rules of this game are determined in such a way that it becomes meaningful with a "run and catch" ideology. Accordingly, termination of this game for Muslims can happen only through distorting the rules and setting personal rules. In conclusion, understanding the rules of the Lion and Rabbit metaphor reflected by Mawlana can indicate the way for ending this problematic concept for Muslims.

8. Muslims should remember that they should reflect Islam against Islamophobia while playing their game against the game of westerners. These verses should be remembered and what is necessary should be done:

"O you who have believed, believe in Allah and His Messenger... (an-Nisa 4/136).

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (ar-Ra'd 13/11).

9. One of the most important dimensions of the fight against Islamophobia is related to Muslims' unity and acts in line with the Brotherhood ideology. As done by the Organized Parallel Religious Formation and some other groups, Muslims should not place themselves in the core of the global society, support the

Islamophobic games and strategies of the west, and exclude, stigmatize and marginalize other Muslims.

10. Moreover, they should show a clear attitude toward the groups of formations, which are interested in terror or oppression, act contrary to or harm Islam and Muslims, and they should never support or protect them. Western powers should never intervene in whatever happens in the Islamic countries.

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## The Muslims in the Islamophobic Game

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# Islamophobia as an Invented Language of Anti-Islam in the West (Conflict-Based Sociological Perspective)\*

Hüsni Ezber BODUR\*\*

## Abstract

Theoretical frameworks such as clash of civilizations, orientalism, xenophobia, discrimination, and hate discourse and crime have played important roles on the way to Islamophobia evolving into Islam antagonism. According to Pierre Bourdieu, articulating anti-Islam and Muslim antagonism as Islamophobia could be regarded as symbolic violence, which is actually more dangerous than physical violence. This study has a qualitative approach based on Bourdieu's symbolic violence by gathering data from two different sources. The first type of data is composed of books, articles, studies, and discourse and statements of mainstream politicians. The second type of data is collected from the periodical reports released by civil society organizations and think tanks. Symbolic violence is used as an analytical instrument in this study. Moreover, this study is based on the conflict theory, which is one of the two perspectives examining the role of religion in society at the macro level, and religious conflict thesis. According to these perspectives, competitive struggle on scarce resources is maintained with religious and ideological discourses. This study demonstrated that the conflict based on religious and financial reasons affected the rise of Islamophobic ideology defining Islam and Muslim antagonism. In conclusion, the importance of expert theologians and intellectuals' defensive discourse in preventing the rise of Islamophobia both in the Western world and all over the world without wasting energy was emphasized and the conveyance of basic Islamic principles to humanity was suggested.

**Keywords:** Symbolic violence, hatred speech, cultural racism, Islam antagonism.

## Batı'da İslâm Karşıtlığının İcat Edilmiş Dili Olarak İslamofobi (Çatışmacı Sosyolojik Perspektif)

## Özet

İslâm karşıtlığına ve İslâm düşmanlığına evrilen İslamofobiye giden yolda, oryantalizm, medeniyetler çatışması, ırkçılık, yabancı düşmanlığı, ayrımcılık ve nefret

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söylemi gibi ideolojik yaklaşımlar önemli rol oynamıştır. Anti-İslâm ve Müslüman karşıtlığının İslamofobik ifadelendirilmesi, Pierre Bourdieu'nun yaklaşımıyla fiziksel şiddetten daha tehlikeli olan sembolik şiddet olarak görülebilir. Bourdieu'nun sembolik şiddet tezine dayandırılan ve sosyolojik perspektiften ele alınan bu çalışma iki tür kaynaktan toplanan verilere dayanarak kalitatif yöntemle yürütülmüştür. Birinci tür kaynakları, konu ile ilgili yazılmış kitaplar, makaleler ve söyleşiler ile ana akım siyasetçilerin söylem ve demeçleri oluşturmuştur. İkinci tür very kaynakları ise çeşitli sivil toplum ya da düşünce kuruluşlarının periyodik olarak yayınladıkları raporlardan meydana gelmektedir. Çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini, dinin toplumdaki rolünü makro düzeyde inceleyen iki ana perspektiften biri olan çatışmacı teori ve dini çatışma tezi oluşturmuştur Bu yaklaşıma göre, temelde kıt kaynaklar üzerindeki hâkimiyet mücadelesi dini veya ideolojik söylemlerle yürütülmektedir. Bu çalışmada dini, sosyal ve ekonomik temelli çatışmanın İslâm ve Müslüman karşıtlığı anlamında İslamofobik bir ideolojinin doğuşunda etkili olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Batı'da ve dünyanın her yerinde İslamofobinin yükselişini engellemede savunmacı söylemlerle enerjiyi tüketmeden, alanında uzmanlaşmış teolog, bilimadamları ve entelektüellerin İslâm'ın temel esaslarını insanlığa aktarmalarının önemli olacağı görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sembolik Şiddet, Nefret Söylemi, Kültürel Irkçılık, İslâm Karşıtlığı.

### Introduction

Concepts are used as important analytic instruments in sociological studies. However, it is a fact that concepts are also shaped in the socio-cultural contexts where they are produced, and they are exposed to semantic shifts in time. In addition, certain concepts are used within an orientation based on their ideological essences along with their inconsistent structures. Accordingly, it is fair to state that the concept of Islamophobia was invented as the ideological language of blemishing Islam and Muslims under political, religious, cultural and financial conditions.

The western Christian world based its cultural development on a dualist ground and made efforts to create a marginal foreign actor with whom it has always fought. Therefore, the west has developed the language and discourse of "we" and "they" since it met Islam for the first time. It should be noted that the theoretical frame of this process was actually set by orientalism and intercivilizational clashes. In other words, roots of hatred and antagonism toward Muslims date back to the times when Islam spread to Europe for the first time. A theological, political and cultural antagonism was developed toward Islam as a response to the successful position of Islam over the Christian West (Roald, 2004:57). Moreover, Islamophobia was also developed along with the concepts of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, prejudices and stereotyped conclusions.

The afore-noted concept of Islamophobia was defined as a groundless antagonism toward Muslims living in England and toward Islam in the report

entitled *“Islamophobia: A challenge for us all”* and published by Runnymede Trust, an English ideological institution, to reflect the hatred and fears toward the Muslims in England (Runnymede Trust, 1997:4). After the report had been published, this term was employed in the sociological studies on Islamophobia. Academics superficially used the complications and dilemmas in this concept instead of criticizing these. The concept of Islamophobia is actually a new term, although some claim that it was used first in United States (US) in the late 1980s or that it was heard first in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Runnymede Trust, 2017:13). It is clear that adverse attitudes and feelings were obviously developed against Muslims in the 1980s before the publication of the report in Europe and many other regions of the world. The visible reasons include an antipathy, which was formed against Islam along with the relevant doctrines and practices, and discrimination and cultural racism against Islam and Muslims. These problematic concepts that are closely related to one another caused people to dislike all Muslims upon fears and hatred toward Islam, which is actually Islamophobia (Runnymede Trust, 1997:2). Almost all studies reviewing the concept of Islamophobia after the 9/11 incident referred the aforementioned report where Islamophobia was used first (see: Canatan, 2007). This concept has been recently defined as the language of negative attitudes and feelings toward Muslims. However, it should be noted that Islamophobia, reflected as the discrimination toward Muslims in various socio-economic contexts, has different forms and variations.

Although the afore-mentioned note is commonly indicated in the relevant literature, it is clear that such a concept is used to build an antagonism toward Islam by making Muslims an object of hatred and fear. Thus, through this concept, it is obvious the aim is to justify all sorts of hatred and violence toward Muslims.

Although there is no agreement regarding a definition of the quality of Islamophobia, the initiatives to analytically make this concept usable should be considered. In addition, a review on the literature of Islamophobia indicates that Islam and Muslims have been made the objects of fear and targets of prejudices, hatred and zealotry. The Islamophobic prejudices are shown as negative attitudes and emotions toward Muslims without making discrimination pave the way for anti-Islam and anti-Muslim approaches in the west (Akyol, 2017, June 20). In fact, this concept should not be used regardless of the meanings it has because Islamophobia or Muslimophobia is actually meant to be prejudice and hatred toward Islam and Muslims. Through this concept, there is a malevolent purpose of making Islam and Muslims a fear object or making human fears and concerns, such as solitude, darkness or feelings when passing nearby graves alone at night, more ontological (Subaşı, 2017). However, the fears generated toward Islam and Muslims are sociological rather than being analytical.

It is a fact that Islamophobia evokes an antagonism within the context of fears toward Islam and Muslims. It has been used by the entire globe, particularly the western countries, as a concept to reflect the antagonism toward Islam

following the 9/11 attacks. The increase of Islamophobic attitudes and emotions and promotion of antagonism toward Islam by the people with Islamophobia or antagonists accelerated the process of conducting studies, analyses and reports. This study used the sources on Islamophobia and resulted in the relevant reports prepared by the active ideological institutions and organizations in Turkey and the west.

Studies on Islamophobia reflect that Islam is generally represented through prejudices and stereotyped clichés and that efforts are made to make anti-Islam and anti-Muslim approaches more developed and rooted in public life. Analyses on theoretical frames and concepts such as cultural racism, orientalism, inter-civilizational clashes, exclusion, xenophobia and hate crime, which support Islamophobia, are remarkable. Moreover, while referring to the hinted and clear ideas in the report on Islamophobia published by Runnymede Trust in 1997, it is claimed that Islamophobia can be overcome by improving Islam. Such analyses remind the variables of patterns A and B created by Talcott Parsons, an American functionalist sociologist, to indicate the behavioral characteristics of traditional and modern societies.

An Islamic perception solely based on the traditional and ideal type supports the stereotyped historical considerations regarding the Muslims and forms the sociological basis of Islamophobia or antagonism toward Islam. Another aim of Islamophobic actors is to develop hostility toward Islam based on Islamophobic attitudes and feelings through the symbolic violence applied to restrict the visibility of Muslims who live in various European countries and make efforts to integrate themselves into the society where they live. Opposition to Islam is created over the topics regarding certain concepts or objects such as minarets, hijab or halal food, which should be examined within the context of religious and conscientious freedom. Relevant discussions and approaches of administrative units toward religious practices are assessed in a way to support the prejudices regarding Islam. Media institutions from various European countries marginalize Islam and Muslims through the perspective of “West against Islam”. Through the conflict theory or conflict-based religious perspective, one of the approaches analyzing the religious role from a macro level, the anti-Islamist approach of the west, is regarded as a reflection of the clashes based on financial interests (Roberts, 1990: 61-70).

The development of Islamophobia was analyzed as the ideology of symbolic violence in relation to the historical background of Islamophobia in the first section of this study while the second section of this study discussed how Islamic and Christian efforts generated Islamophobia in regard to the theory of religious clash, and the third section aimed to reveal the fact that the clash performed through scarce sources supports the Islamophobic discourse and ideology. In other words, the desire to prevent Muslims from appearing as financial and political actors in the public sector and use of every precaution has been effective in the emergence and development of Islamophobia. The suggestions regarding the fight against

Islamophobia were included in the conclusion section. Results indicated that the demands of taking part in financial activities, policy, education, and social and cultural fields would enable pluralism, that all sections of the society might experience a more dynamic interaction, and that a multi-cultural environment might be effective in the fight against Islamophobia.

### **The Ideology of Symbolic Violence: Islamophobia**

Many concepts and terms were used to reflect negative attitudes and emotions toward Islam and Muslims. The concept that is used the most as the current expression of antagonism toward Islam and Muslims is Islamophobia. However, different terms were also used in particular scopes, countries, international organizations and academic environments. Racism against Muslims, intolerance to Muslims, prejudices against Muslims, violence against Muslims, hatred for Muslims and, opposition toward Islam and Muslims, Muslimophobia and demonization of Muslims are among these terms (Richardson, 2012). The concept of Islamophobia used to reflect the anti-Islamist discourse and ideology helped relevant actors build the language of alleviating or even justifying the violent crimes, including hate crimes against Muslims, all sorts of assaults, discrimination and exclusion toward Muslims in public places, and physical attacks against Muslims.

This concept was used in the article by Edward Said (1985), indicating that the western antagonism toward Islam, which is Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism have been interchangeably used (Richardson, 2012). However, a common use of the concept in social studies, policy and media has occurred after the report published by the English ideological institution called Runnymede Trust in 1997. Islamophobia as a threat to the coexistence of different cultures in Europe and an obligation to fight against this threat boosted the academic interest on this subject and created literature on Islamophobia. Both ideological institutions aiming to fight against Islamophobia and the report mentioned in the academic studies have become a significant source of reference. In reference to this report, analyses were made about the historical development and fundamental qualities of the definition of Islamophobia. The article by Canatan (2007), conceptually and historically examining Islamophobia, was written by referring to the Islamophobic characteristics in this report. Similarly, the article entitled "İslamofobi İle Mücadele Kapsamında İslamofobiye Karşı Örnek Bir Müslüman Toplum Oluşturmalı" by Ali Murat Yel (2017) and "İslamofobive İnsan Hakları" (2017) by Hakan Taşdemir referred to the afore-noted report. Therefore, Islamophobia turns into nothing but the current stereotyped considerations regarding the old antagonist approaches, which have become rooted in the psychic world of Europe toward Islamic.

As an ideology regarding the anti-Islam approach, history of Islamophobia can be dated back to the periods, Islam emerged for the first time. A hostile

approach was initiated toward Islam by the religious and political authorities aiming to maintain their statuses and interests after Islam was rapidly spread among the disbelievers from Mecca, Pagans, Jews and Christians who were committed to their religious values.

The intense contacts between Muslims and Christians arose from the Crusades lasting from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (1095-1291). Non-Muslims attacking Muslims made efforts to marginalize Islam and Muslims in a hatred discourse and antagonist theology. Moreover, Andalusia Umayyads, Fall of Istanbul and Islamic Influence on Europe through Sicily are among the historical incidents affecting the formation of the antagonism toward Islam (Ataman, 2017:16). The church always made efforts to trigger and organize people against Islam during the periods when the Ottoman Empire and western Christian countries contacted. Islamophobic concepts such as Turkophobia, which has been rising in many European countries recently, and Erdoğanphobia, which has become a major topic of discourse among the mainstream politicians and media members, are used to prevent Turkey's achievements. The fact that the Ottoman Empire had been the representative and defender of Islam in Europe for centuries brings Turkey to westerners' minds when Islam is mentioned. Thus, a concept of Turkophobia has been emphasized as Islamophobia has been rising in Europe, which is not coincidental. The mainstream politicians of Europe claim that Turkey does not belong to Europe due to its Islamic characteristics, marginalizing Turkey by stating that the country does not fit the western characteristics (Yanarışık, 2015:104). A neo-orientalist discourse is formed by referring to the World Values Survey and indicating that there have been no changes in the conservative and anti-feminine characteristics of Turkey in the last 20 years, and the purpose of justifying the Islamophobic approaches is followed. The perception that Islam is a threat to democracy, equality of women and men or western values has been formed in the process called orientalism by Edward Said (YelveNas, 2014:568).

Considering the Islamophobic attitudes and ideologies formed by dangerous approaches such as cultural racism, xenophobia, discrimination, clash of civilizations or orientalism, western actors make attempts to twist certain Islamic concepts such as jihad, form prejudices and associate Islam with terror. Antagonism toward Islam has been continually created through a religious marginalization formed artificially by the west, aiming to protect its financial and political interest. The Evangelist Protestant Fundamentalism, which was founded by the western media institutions in the early days of the previous century, was turned into Islamic fundamentalism by referring to the Iran Islamic Revolution of 1979, which was remarkable and interesting (Kedikli and Akça, 2017:74). Muslims were classified as Islamist and jihadist in this period, and Islam was regarded as a totalitarian religion through an integralist, essentialist and reductionist approach. Therefore, upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the termination of Cold War era, Islam and Muslims were quickly reflected as another enemy, and the theoretical frame of

this reflection was set by the thesis entitled *Clash of Civilizations* (1993) by Samuel Huntington (Bayraktar, 07 February 2017).

Evangelism, reflecting the essence of “new right” movement that has been rising in the west with a strong emphasis on the marginalization of Muslims with an Islamophobic approach, making the world more Biblical, fundamentalism set by different cultic environments, and neo-conservationists represented by them were actually reflected by Trump, the current president of US (Göka, 2016).

The commitment of Islamophobic hate crime by Trump, who disregards the international laws can be regarded as his adaptation to Islamophobia invented in the west. Efforts should be made by the Islamic world, particularly the Muslim intellectuals, to conduct a fight against Islamophobia, a problematic concept that has been getting quite dangerous.

A remarkable example indicating how prejudices are activated toward Islam and Muslims through Islamophobia is as follows: A terrorist action took place in Oklahoma City in June of 1995, and many people, including children, were killed as a public building was bombed. All Muslims were blamed in the newspaper called “Today”, stating that the perpetrators committed the crime in the name of Islam. After a short period of time, officers declared that this terrorist action was conducted by Christian militants. An antagonist approach was clearly displayed toward Islam in the media, aiming to associate Islam with terror, and Muslims were reflected as threats to the security and values of the west.

It is clear that antipathy and anti-Islamic approaches are supported by repeated clichés, stereotyped expressions, and hate discourses based on discrimination and racism. Thus, human fear is constantly triggered and manipulated in line with Islamophobia and efforts are made to maintain the antagonism towards Islam and Muslims. In addition, the concept of Islamophobia is also used as the instrument of relieving or justifying the symbolic violence, which is applied to Muslims, through the fears related to Islam (Ataman, 2017:15). Accordingly, efforts are made to mystify and sacralize Islamophobia, and anti-Islamic ideology is made permanent by making this ideology a popular agenda topic through different instruments and methods. Through the concept of Islamophobia formed out of emotions and cognition, a spirit full of fears toward Muslims and Islam is built and perception toward Islam is formed, reflecting that Islam opposes Christianity. The cognitive period formed through orientalism, which is supported by fears and hatred, serves as the motivational source of anti-Islamic approaches. Sociologists and social psychologists indicate that prejudices are turned into stereotyped statements including, strong emotions. (Borell,2015:411). People with Islamophobia, i.e. the antagonists of Islam, use the concept of Islamophobia to reflect their fears toward Islam and Muslims. However, Islamophobia is not solely a fear and hatred concept. Instead, it also reflects the

malevolent campaigns against Islam and Muslims and playing active roles in this regard (Roald, 2004:53).

Hate discourse and crimes, prejudices, discrimination and social exclusion against Muslims are among the primary themes catching attention in the Islamophobia literature. These attitudes and stereotyped statements with the traces of vandalism, physical assaults, injuries, killing, psychological pressure and symbolic violence have a strong relationship. In strengthening this bond, politics and media work hand in hand with all their power. Islamophobic violence continues against Muslims in the fastest way possible within the frame of subjective and twisted Islamic images created and made a myth by the orientalist discourse. Making themselves unique in the discourse of cultural racism, the westerners thought that they could justify Islamophobic attitudes and behaviors upon the problematic belief that they had rights over Muslims (Sambur, 2016:11). It should be noted that stigmatizing Muslims as terrorists is a hate crime against this religion with a great number of believers. According to the data of the US-based PEW institution, the great majority of Muslims condemn terrorism. Similarly, most of the Muslims have no problems with democratic values. However, claims from the west that Muslims will make the Europe Islamic in the upcoming decades as they have a high birth rate and that they display Islamophobic attitudes to prevent Europe from becoming Islamic are totally wrong and fail to match with scientific facts.

Dissolution of Soviet Unions, establishment of communism, and selection of Muslims who have conflict-based relationships with the west as the others within the thesis regarding the clash of civilizations, which subjectively declares the end of time, are regarded as the reasons for the emergence and rise of Islamophobia, the new form of racism in Europe, which is not surprising. In fact, along with the religious, political, financial and cultural racist factors, extreme right wings have contributed to the rise of Islamophobia. However, claiming that Islamist ideas are the threats to the ideas of westerners is more explanatory as the main reason related to the rise of Islamophobia in Europe within the frame of conflict-based religious theory reflecting that establishing dominance over the scarce sources is possible through religious or ideological discourses.

### **Religious/Social Islamophobia**

Islamophobia may arise due to religious, social, cultural, political and financial reasons. Christian westerners' perception of Islam and Muslims as a threat in the efforts to establish dominance on scarce sources through the conceptualization of religious-social Islamophobia reflects a meaningful ideology within the search for dominance via any religious or ideological discourses for the material or spiritual benefits. As Islam has been developing rapidly on a global scale, Christian westerners have created their anti-Islamic approaches in the form of

Islamophobia while referring to the stereotyped expressions rooted in the cultural codes under the leading of the church.

Following the powerful periods for Islam, particularly after the 18<sup>th</sup> century, western colonial powers began to reflect Islam as a war-ridden, violent and anti-feminine religion through the racist cultural assessments to justify their attempts to exploit the Islamic geography. They built the Islamophobic discourse to justify their violent acts and attempts to establish dominance over the scarce financial energy resources. Europeans' demands to achieve an economic advantage in the colonization process become their main motivational source and priority. They aimed to form the legal grounds for achieving their domination by acting alongside the church and showing that Christianity is more advantageous than other religions.

Invaders conducted their violent actions by benefiting from the church officials or missionaries and made efforts to justify colonialism in this way. Bartolome de Las Casas (1484-1566), a Spanish missionary performing missionary activities in America, was among the first priests reflecting the violent acts of Christians. Indicating gold as the motivational resource for the European colonialist acts on newly-occupied lands, Las Casas reflects an exemplary story in this regard. Las Casas states that invaders told the leader of a local tribe to adopt Christianity, stating that if he did so, he would go to paradise, but if he avoided accepting Christianity, hell would be his destination. Christians' violent practices, such as killing natives or selling them as slaves, are remarkable. The number of internal critics, such as Las Casas, criticizing Christianity is not that many. Expressing the conflict of dominating scarce resources such as gold through religious discourses is still common in the Christian culture.

It is fair to state that Christian west has preferred a more conflict-based relationship, due to the dualist philosophy, in the efforts to dominate the society and nature since the first days Islam and Muslims faced Christianity and Christians for the first time. In order to understand the main reasons for this, we need to compare the institutional framework of the two religious traditions and look at the reflections and practices in real life, especially in the early stages of development. Islam is a balanced religion setting the balance between this and the eternal world through the idealization revealed to the Prophet and transformation of this idealism to realism under the guidance of the Prophet. In other words, the Prophet showed how to implement the basics of Islam and acted as a role model reflecting how a society can be sustained properly by employing the relevant principles if the balance between both worlds is distorted. However, it is hard to say the same for Christianity. Jesus was unable to be a model in transferring a revelation-based religious idealism to realism as he was crucified at an early age. The absence of such a role model has a share in the failure in setting the balance between idealism and realism in the materialistic trend, limitless colonialism and positive perception toward all sorts of extremism by the Christian West.



Islam etymologically means peace and obeying Allah's will. With the pattern exhibited by the Prophet, has had the chance to spread peace and justice among the people from various religions since the day it was revealed. However, the principle that the return can only occur toward Allah and that salvation can be achieved by obeying Allah's will enabled people to develop a will to escape from the dominance of despotic kings and empires in the Medieval Times. Solely seeking help from Allah and obeying nobody but Allah in all actions played a significant role in the spreading of Islamic belief over a wide geography. Losing all sorts of restricting limits enabled people to have freedom of will and use their minds. Seeing such basic characteristics of Islam, Christian westerners preferred using the hate crime against Islam, committing a crime and using terrorist excuses within the efforts to blemish Islam.

The statement with negative, prejudiced and insulting words toward Islam and the Prophet Muhammad by Pope Benedict XVI in a conference in Regensburg University, Germany, on 12 September 2006 created rightful chaos in the Islamic world. Pope stated in this speech that Islam has not brought anything new and that Islam means violence. Christian westerners have always made wrong and twisted statements about Islam and Islamic history and maintained their hostile attitudes. Attempting to sustain such a conflict-based environment, Pope apologized to the Islamic world upon the protests from Muslims. Actually, he did not apologize to Muslims, stating that those words do not belong to him and that he referred to a text from the Medieval Times (Yanarışik, 2015:108). Conveying the referred ideas without making a criticism, refutation or comment and choosing the September 12 anniversary as the right time means these Medieval ideas are totally adopted. Moreover, the language used by the Pope is not so different from the language of the church that conducted the Crusades. Christian west regarded any other religions or beliefs as Pagan or idolatry and followed a religious policy to make these Christian through the "sacred war" (Abdul Hamid, 2010:157). The concept of jihadist generated by the West against Islam and the Christian stress that Islam is a violence-ridden religion does not go beyond the groundless claims used by western Christianity to justify the western discourse. The attempts to make all non-Christian people Christian through the sacred war are nothing but religious reflections of the Eurocentric ideology. Developing an Islamocentric view and mentioning the exemplary approaches of the Prophet in every platform would be suitable. Accordingly, practices in Islam and by the Prophet are totally different to the Christian western actions performed to ensure that people change their religions obligatorily.

The Islamophobic provocations of the present time are conducted through all sorts of instruments, including the church, cinema, media, books and popular culture. As all sorts of provocative actions of the West against Islam and Muslims are literally watched by the political authorities and no preventive actions are taken, Islamophobic actions and attitudes continue everywhere (Yanarışik,

2015:109). The efforts to point the migrants, the majority of whom are Muslims, as the source of many social problems contributed to the process of preparing an environment that is ready to justify any actions insulting and blemishing Islam and Muslims.

The Prophet respected the Jewish and Christian societies, and many people from these societies preferred Islam due to their admiration and love toward the strong characteristics of the Prophet. The legal amendment is known as the certificate of the Madinah urban state founded after the migration of the Prophet to Madinah assigned equal citizenship statuses to the people from different religions such as Judaism. The principles, such as the rule of law and following justice in the governance actions, are at the top of the chart indicating Prophet's personal values. The principle of justice was never neglected regardless of financial, hierarchical or social classes. Let alone discriminating against the Jews and Christians; qualified non-Muslims were employed as bureaucrats upon the principle of 'competent work for competent people'. The sincere attitude of the Prophet toward the people and his strong characteristics catching the attention of humanity reveal the prejudices of the Medieval Christianity and Europe reflecting Prophet as a malevolent person. The groundless and fake claims of the westerners that the Prophet spread Islam through wars have been assessed for a long time and reached the present times.

Despite the numerous numbers of attempts to blemish Islam in England, Islam is the religion developing at the highest rate, which is among the important reasons for the increase of the hatred and antagonism toward Islam. According to a study, the estimated number of educated, Caucasian Muslims in England is higher than 20,000. Referring to the life stories of Muslim English people, it is clear that many factors have been effective in their preferences. Accordingly, domestic life, closeness to the elderly, commitment to the society rather than individualism, and sharing the same feelings with Muslims in the rejection toward certain modernity elements triggering or promoting selfish approaches are among the significant motives in the acceptance of Islam (Soutar, 2010:13-14).

Fears or Islamophobia generated as a response to the spread of Islam is conducted or reflected through symbolic violence. Symbols are among the significant elements establishing the religious institution. In the West, the visibility of Islam and Muslims in the public sphere is tried to be blocked through symbolic violence. I would like to point out the necessity to discuss the issue in relation to the temples, which, to me, will contribute to the development of multi-culturalism that will enable the cultural visibility in the public area and form the frame of cultural visibility. The existence of societies is based on the ability of people with pretty different ideas to act concordantly (Soutar, 2010:14). Muslims are transformed into fear objects by preventing their visibility through relevant religious symbols such as mosques or minarets, i.e. applying symbolic violence on them. The marginalization of differences will prevent the sustainability of social presence. The presence of a temple in public areas, looking just like a museum that is artistically and

aesthetically displayed, will play a key role in the development of a new cultural interaction channel (Göle, T24).

The west generally consists of homogeneous societies (Roald, 2004). Therefore, groups as the minorities within the majority are treated less pleasantly than the others. Homogeneity shows itself in the architecture of temples. For instance, the cathedral constructed in the place of a great Aztec pyramid in Mexico City is no different than the cathedrals in Spain. The Christian ideology of intolerance to difference lies behind this construction. However, Islamic countries had no problems regarding the construction of temples of different religions on the condition that these temples have no elements that could distort the tawhid belief and that they suit the general architecture of the country. The design of the mosque built by the Presidency of Religious Affairs in Cologne was planned by a non-Muslim German architecture in a form that will meet the needs of both Muslims and non-Muslims. It is without a doubt that such a case should be regarded as another communicational channel for the emergence of a public culture that will enable mutual interaction (Göle, T24). The importance of multi-culturalism, which will enable people with different ideologies to act collectively in sustaining the activity of the society properly, can be clearly seen once again.

The reasons behind the negative attitudes of Christianity toward Islam includes considering the latter as an opponent. Positioning Islam as the other actor that will always cause conflicts is performed through Islamophobia, an ideological discourse. The activities of scientific and secularist actors who are the successors of the 68 generations that fought with the church as anti-Islamic voices increased in the west are among the other relevant factors. As the public visibility of Islam increased in the 1990s in France, people sustained their anti-religious approaches through Islam (Göle, T24). Certain new-generation intellectuals who are believed to have made efforts in defending basic rights and freedoms, including the rights of minorities through the left views, suddenly have Islamophobic emotions when Islam and Muslims are mentioned, which reflects the activity of this dualist structure from the dominant Christian culture in the social life.

### **Economic Islamophobia**

The anti-Islamic approaches can be clearly seen in the western world, particularly Anglo-Saxon and Northern countries and other countries where Buddhism and Hinduism are lived. If an explanation is to be made in regard to the generality of anti-Islamic ideology on a global scale, this point can be analyzed in relation to the conflict-based religious theory. This approach reflects that the establishment of dominance over scarce resources with financial, political and social content can be explained through religious or ideological discourses. The religious-financial conflict can be witnessed within the relationships among the Christians in Europe and non-Christians (e.g. Jews).

As mainstream Christianity has been the dominant ideological system since the late Roman era in the west, this hegemonic structure determined the quality of the relationship with the Jews. Catholic Christianity ignored the commercial topics or questions due to its sensitivity regarding the issue of the prohibition on interests and therefore, Jews were permitted to reside in western cities to perform many sorts of commercial activities, including interest-based actions. However, attitudes of the Catholicism (or Christianity in general) regarding the topic of interest has changed. Following the Protestant Reformation movement, which is one of two concepts believed to have been effective in the birth of Weber's capitalism, a misconception that lending money (for a certain sum of interest) is not wrong has been developed among the Protestants. A conflict emerged on the scarce resources as Christian merchants started to take part in the financial activities of the Jews. Christians used their advantages to be the dominant group and pushed Jews out of economic life through the anti-Semitic ideological discourse. The religious, ideological discourse here serves as the cover to hide the conflict regarding the scarce resources.

The religious discourse was totally transformed into an ideology used to justify totally discriminatory behavior. In other words, those outside the majority were positioned on a lower level religiously and spiritually, and efforts were made to justify every non-human attitude without feeling any sense of guiltiness. The Jewish-Christian tradition in this new period accepts no limits in terms of benefiting the blessings in this world. Peter Berger, a well-known American sociologist, regards these developments as some of the important reasons behind the concept of secularization. The significant factors behind the afore-mentioned negative incidents include the efforts and greed of the Christian west to control the world and consume the resources, their consumption-based trend of profanation through science and technology, and absence of an exemplary character that will set the balance between idealism and realism in the process of becoming Christian.

Christian westerners' efforts to make Islam and Muslims the others with whom conflicts are to arise in the issue of capturing many forms of raw material such as petroleum in the countries where Muslims represent the majority have a share in the development of an Islamophobic discourse based on prejudices and discrimination. It is clear that there are three variables which have particular importance in the rise of Islamophobia and the increase of prejudices toward Islam accordingly:

The first is related to the efforts to cover the western intention of dominating petroleum in the Middle East by creating a negative image of Islam and Muslims. For instance, as a result of the energy crisis and following petroleum wars after the 1970s, the search for legitimacy becomes clear, considering the increase in the number of anti-Arabic and anti-Islamic prejudices. The efforts to justify the occupation of Iraq by the US to capture petroleum sources in this country through

the ideological discourses such as human rights or democracy are actually quite clear without the need to perform deep analyses.

The second reason is related to jealousy and concerns regarding the success of Muslims in western social life. The western countries, particularly the US, uses cultural racism, a hate crime, to justify the Islamophobic discourse. Accordingly, after Muslims started to be visible in the professional and educational areas of the west, cultural characteristics such as dressing, beliefs, or languages were highlighted, and prejudices and discriminative acts increased, which are not confidential.

Muslims' demands regarding theological issues such as halal food, hijab, mosque and minaret consumption are prevented through Islamophobic discourses. Moreover, a strong sense of "we-them" is founded through symbolic differences and various theological indicators are prohibited due to the antagonism toward Islam. Another aim is to prevent the manpower from Islamic countries from getting into vertical mobility. The reason or factor behind the development of Turkophobia which is present in many western countries within the context of Islamophobia includes the employment and higher professional positions of many Muslim Turks who moved to the west to meet the manpower deficit, to benefit from educational opportunities and to achieve a social status there. As the main factor in the development of antagonism toward Islam is financial concerns, the claims that Muslims will make the Christian world Islamic in the near future and that Christianity is protected for that reason do not match the reality in this regard.

The third reason in this regard can be explained as the globalization of discrimination. Countries that want to take control of scarce and valuable resources by force want to globalize discrimination and prejudice (Roberts, 1990:277). It is fair to state that stereotyped prejudices regarding the non-western groups (particularly the Muslims) were developed to justify discriminatory acts or to claim that this is morally correct based on the afore-noted factor as the third reason for the development of cultural racism. In addition to the important role played by the economic benefits in the increase of anti-Muslim emotions, prejudices or Islamophobia are formed through the physical characteristics, visibilities, languages, cultures and religions of the people who are from the marginalized or regarded as enemies. The reason behind the increase of Islamophobic attitudes due to the activities of various social actors, particularly the church, includes the approaches aiming to block the ever-increasing success of Muslims in every field of the social life.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that Islamophobia is a sort of discrimination with all kinds of prejudices and stereotyped expressions against Islam and Muslims. Moreover, this

concept includes groundless fears with a social exclusivist approach and oppressive practices against Muslims, hate crime and discourse, and cognitive and emotional efforts to form a negative image. Islamophobia was turned into a mystified and sacred term, and efforts were made to internalize this concept based on fears. Therefore, attempts were made to justify anti-Islam and anti-Muslim emotions and attitudes through the comprehensive concept of Islamophobia. Accordingly, the phrase of antagonism toward Islam and Muslims should be used instead of Islamophobia.

Muslims were neglected, insulted and excluded from all areas of social life and they suffered from discrimination, which means that they suffered from symbolic violence that is more dangerous than physical violence. These are the results of Islamophobic activities. Considering the negative perceptions toward Islam and representations regarding Muslims, intellectual people have important duties in reflecting the basic principles and values of Islam, which is literally the religion of peace, which means obeying nothing but the will of Allah, and which makes humans the most honorable creature. Raising Muslim intellectuals, who make efforts to improve themselves specifically against the activities of anti-Islamists, is a must. Adopting the principle of being successful in all fields of social life, including economy, politics, culture and education, which is one of the forms of contact between the Muslim and non-Muslim Europeans, is also a must (Göle, T24). Being visible in society occurs through being in a mutual interactive relationship with the majority and increasing the integrative relationship channels. In addition, this new Muslim intellectual class should organize itself within various ideological organizations against the anti-Islamic approaches, use the communicational channels, and increase its social visibility. It should be noted that the terrorist actions from Muslims have a major share in the formation and the increase of Islamophobic emotions. Accordingly, sociological acts of terror organizations such as al-Qaeda and ISIS should be detailed more (Akyol, 2017; Göle, T24).

As an “ethos” (value system) is formed and antagonism toward Islam is adopted in the west, it can be stated that using this concept is problematic, and therefore the concept of antagonism toward Islam can be preferred. Muslim intellectuals and scholars should make efforts to reflect the main values of Islam, the religion of peace, to people as a response to westerns who neglect, insult, exclude Muslims from all social fields, and apply cultural racism and symbolic violence on the Muslims. Muslims have to increase their reputation or visibility by organizing themselves within certain ideological institutions or using certain communicational channels in this regard. Attention should be given to the efforts to increase the number of Muslim intellectuals who have an awareness of staying at the top level against the unpleasant activities of anti-Islamists. Thus, academic studies in different western universities should be supported with grants. It is a fact that the studies and efforts of Jewish scientists who work in different western

universities have had a key role in transforming anti-Judaism, which was highly common until the recent periods, into friendly relationships. However, it is hard to change such negative attitudes with a history toward Islam and Muslims in a short period of time but it is without a doubt that patient efforts to terminate anti-Islamist prejudices will yield results considering the divine tips in Quran that reviving a person's mind means reviving the ideology of the entire humanity (al-Ma'idah, 5/32). We have to work hard to fulfill what is ordered in these divine words as a response to those with Islamophobia aiming to associate Islam and Muslims with terrorism (Çağrı, 2017, February 08).

"O you who have believed! Upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided. Together, to Allah you'll return; then He will inform you of your deeds (al-Ma'idah, 5/105)."

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# Islamophobia and anti-Islamism as an Attempt to Create a Demon by the “Western” in the “East”: A Historical Approach\*

Kadir CANATAN\*

## Abstract

Islamophobia and anti-Islamism, often mentioned in the western world today, seem conceptually and factually new. In fact, they are the historical facts that have a long history. Islamophobia dates back to the days when Islam was born and encountered Christianity. Christianity first created anti-Semitism and then anti-Islamism as a form of hostility against the Jews and Muslims.

This study reviews how Christianity demonized Islam in the historical process. In fact, anti-Islamism and Islamophobia are products of marginalization and polarizing logic. Christianity has declared the religions it encountered before (Judaism) and after (Islam) its oppositions and enemies. The examination of historical and cultural backgrounds clearly demonstrates that anti-Islamism is historical and cultural fiction and that it is reproduced today.

**Keywords:** east-west, Islamophobia, anti-Islamism, demonization

## “Batı”nın “Doğu”da Bir Şeytan Yaratma Girişimi Olarak İslamofobi ve Antiİslamizm: Tarihsel Bir Yaklaşım

### Özet

Bugün Batı dünyasında sıkça konuşulan İslamofobi ve anti-İslamizm, kavramsal ve olgusal olarak yeni gibi görünse de aslında tarihsel temelleri ve uzun bir geçmişi olan bir vakıadır. İslamofobi'nin tarihini, İslam'ın doğduğu ve Hristiyanlıkla temasa geçtiği günlere kadar geri götürebiliriz. Hristiyanlık, ilk önce Yahudilere karşı bir düşmanlık şekli olan antisemitizmi, sonra da anti-İslamizmi yaratmıştır.

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Bu çalışmada nasıl olup da Hristiyanlığın İslam'ı şeytanlaştırdığı tarihsel süreç içinde ele alınmaktadır. Gerçekte anti-İslamizm ve İslamofobi, ötekileştirici ve kutuplaştırıcı bir düşüncenin ürünüdür. Hristiyanlık hem kendi tarihsel arkaplanı olarak Museviliği, hem de kendisinden sonra gelen bir din olarak İslamiyet'i kendi karşıtı ve düşmanı ilan etmiştir. Tarihsel ve kültürel arka planın incelenmesi, anti-İslamizmin tarihsel ve kültürel bir kurgu olduğunu ve bugün de yeniden üretildiğini açıkça göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Doğu-Batı, İslamofobi, Anti-İslamizm, Şeytanlaştırma.

## Introduction

Although it is hard to set an exact date, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism were used first during and after the last days of the Cold War, which is not coincidental at all. The western world needed to create a new enemy itself after the Communist Bloc, its ideological opponent, was dissolved, and it initiated a new period of cold war while indicating certain issues in the Middle East as excuses. In other words, the "scarlet threat" was replaced with the "green threat".

The Iranian Islamic Revolution constitutes the beginning point of the actual Islamophobia concept. John Laffin, an English author, gave an interesting name to his book published in 1979: "The Dagger of Islam".<sup>1</sup> This book was translated into many languages and served as an inspiration and source for the anti-Islamist movements. Anti-Islamism was not transformed into a movement in the era when racist and xenophobic political movements were just weak and the Cold War was continuing. However, Anti-Islamism started to become an intellectual and political orientation after the fall of the Berlin Wall, which is the second breaking point.

The article entitled "Clash of Civilizations"<sup>2</sup> (1993) by Samuel Huntington, an American author, and his thesis in this article are important as these reflect the situation following the Cold War in the United States (US) and the western world. This article and the thesis here certainly have played a key role in revealing the contradictions which are present or believed to be present in the near future. The internal anti-migrative and anti-migrational movements and unstable international balances of the era generalized the conflict discourses. However, anti-Islamism and Islamophobia became the main issue and created a tension between Muslims and local groups in the multi-religious and multi-cultural western societies after the 9/11 attacks.

This three-phase development of the actual Islamophobia makes it possible to reveal and clarify a point that has been left conceptually unclear in the literature thus far. The concepts of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism, which are interchangeably used in the international literature, reflect different cases. The former is a sociological reality, while the latter is a political and ideological fact.

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<sup>1</sup> The Dagger of Islam, Sphere Books Ltd, Aylesbury, Bucks.

<sup>2</sup> The Clash of Civilizations?, Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993, p. 22-49.

Anti-Islamism was a political and intellectual orientation a short time ago, which served as an independent variable in the emergence of the latter. In simpler words, Islamophobia is significantly the product of anti-Islamism. If this fact is neglected by paying no attention to the past and present, Islamophobia cannot be understood thoroughly, which should not be regarded as reductionism aiming to explain Islamophobia through a single factor. Islamophobia is a more complicated phenomenon than it seems. This concept, which is believed to cover the last 20-30 years, has a long past. If the historical background to be reflected in the upcoming sections had not existed, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism as the promoter of the former had not spread so swiftly. In fact, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism are the updated versions of an old reflex that has been socially and culturally reproduced in the western world. If Islamophobia is a product of anti-Islamism, these two concepts are the new forms of expression regarding the polarization or a conflict category between the east and west.

Islam was an anti-Christ, evil and heretical branch of Christianity for Christianity and the Church of Medieval Times. This approach associating Islam with the devil has distorted the relationships between Muslims and Christians, and the East and the West, making them clash. Such an approach was the source of Crusades in the past, which ideologically and politically justified the incidents following 9/11 in modern times. The statement by the President of the US "We are going for another Crusade" after the 9/11 incident is not a misconception, as explained later. Instead, it is a significant indicator reflecting the subconscious of western people.

### **Certain Considerations Regarding the Devil**

According to the Quran, the devil protested Allah as it did not follow the order of bowing down to humans, making efforts to justify its protest through a thesis of superiority. The Quran reflects this story as follows:

"And We have certainly created you, [O Mankind] and given you [human] form. Then We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was not of those who prostrated. [ Allah ] said, "What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?" [Satan] said, "**I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.**" [Allah] said, "Descend from Paradise, for it is not for you to be arrogant therein. So get out; indeed, you are of the debased. [Satan] said, "Reprieve me until the Day they are resurrected." [Allah] said, "Indeed, you are of those reprieved." [Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful [to You]." [Allah] said, "Get out of Paradise, reproached and expelled. Whoever follows you among them - I will surely fill Hell with you, all together." (al-A'raf, 7:11-18).

Soil, air, water and fire are regarded as the main ingredients of existence in ancient Greek ideology and Islam. These four concepts are not only the basic elements of existence. Instead, they also reflect different meanings in the symbolic language. In other words, soil represents modesty, humbleness or normality. Attributing meaning to the afore-noted objects is not an innocent act. The devil believed it was superior to fire and to the material used to create humans, showing an example of so-called elitism itself, and it founded a hierarchy among the creatures. It is the first creature that ontologically claimed to be superior, established a hierarchy among the creatures outside the order set by Allah, and committed racism in other words. However, it was still freed because he has a function. Creation is performed based on a dialectics or the contradiction between benevolence or malevolence. Benevolence is only meaningful wherever there is malevolence. Virtuousness of humans cannot be present without this dialectic. True virtuousness is to select and defend benevolence in the environments where there are malevolent acts. A world consisting of only benevolence or malevolence would not be a world of tests for humans. Life in such a world would be nothing but an obligation. Human life would be meaningless and purposeless in an environment when there is no option to select.

The devil does not oppose God in monotheist religions. Such a belief would terminate the tawhid ideology as it results in an understanding of dualist God. The devil was created by God and assigned a function. Opposition is not present between God and the devil. Instead, it is between benevolence and malevolence. When did the devil, who has a function and meaning in the creational order become a problem? One of these problematic periods was mentioned earlier. If the devil is perceived as the opposition or equal to God, a deviation from monotheism occurs. Another problem is the generalization of the devil as an adjective and using it as the title for other creatures.

Shaitan is the Hebrew equivalent of the devil in Islam, meaning maligner, hell-raiser, enemy, opposition and wanderer.<sup>3</sup> Linguistically, it is used as an adjective, rather than as a noun, which is interesting. Christians and Muslims mention the devil as a creature and a name of a creature. The devil represents malevolence and directs people to malevolence. Generally, the devil is the representation of anything evil. Therefore, the devil is not solely a secret and extraordinary creature. Instead, it is the performer of various evil acts seen anytime and anywhere. It is clear that generalization and demonization are applied here. Demonization is the action of assigning devilish actions and characteristics to other creatures. What is assigned can be a human, animal or object. Explaining the devil as an adjective facilitates this process. If the devil is mentioned along with certain

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<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia, “Satan” article,

<http://www.wikizero.org/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9ubC53aWtpcGVkaWEub3JnL3dpa2kvU2F0YW4> (27-12-2017). See also: Derveze, İ. (1989), Kur’an’a Göre Hz. Muhammed’in Hayatı, C. I, p. 355, Yöneliş Yayınları: İstanbul.

titles such as a rioter or a hellraiser, anybody with such characteristics faces the risk of being a devil.

The philosophical background of this concept should be reviewed specifically to understand what racism is and how it works as a demonization ideology. Albert Memmi indicated that racist ideology has three significant postulates.<sup>4</sup> First of all, racism assumes that there are pure races in the world. Not only does this assumption contradict with the rooted ideology in the sacred texts that all people come from the same origin, but it also neglects the mix of different races in history. Secondly, racism establishes a hierarchy between the races. In other words, it claims that some races are superior, while some are inferior, which is where racism starts. This approach contradicts the traditional ideology based on human equality and opposes the modern equality approach. The main misconception here is that ethnical and racial differences are based on the concept of value through the terms of superiority or inferiority. The organization of differences in hierarchical order is nothing but arbitrary efforts. The difference between languages is a different topic, but making efforts to find a superiority between them is totally something else. The categorization of differences as superior or inferior has no scientific grounds.

The second postulate of racism and the devil's claim of being superior to humans have a common point. The devil set a hierarchical relationship between soil, the archetype of humans, and fire, the ingredient of its existence. In other words, the devil claimed that fire is superior to soil. However, these archetypes are different objectives. There can be no such superiority or inferiority between them. As how apples and pears are different fruit and cannot be superior to one another, soil and fire are different objects. Moreover, it is possible for the objects to reflect a figurative meaning in religious texts. Soil, as the basic ingredient in the creation of humans, indicates the normality, mortality and inferiority of the human body in other cultures. However, humans are not solely made of a body. People are spiritually superior. Accordingly, people are like the unity of oppositions. They bodily belong to this world, but their spirits are from eternal life. He is a servant before Allah and a master before other beings. Such a position provides the opportunity to reach the top spot to people and causes them to fall to the bottom. "And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it, and inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness, He has succeeded who purifies it. And he has failed who instills it [with corruption] (ash-Shams 91:7-10).

The logical result of the secondary consideration is that superior race does not deserve the same treatment with the others and that the superior establishes dominance over the others. This is the third principle of racism. Accordingly, the purpose of a racist policy and authority is not an ideological or abstract idea of

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<sup>4</sup> Memmi, A. (1983), *Racisme hoezo? : ontmasking van een onderdruk kings mechanisme*, Masusa, Nijmegen.

superiority.

On the contrary, it is an ideological basis used to establish and justify dominance over other people. Moreover, racism was used by the European colonialists as a functional ideology in modern period of racist colonialism. Different continents were occupied under the motto of bringing civilization, and hegemony was established over the people.

### **Separation Between the East and West**

The concepts of east and west were far from the negative scopes and connotations until the emergence of Islam. As noted by the Quran, "And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing" (al-Baqarah, 2:115) However, the "polarizing" ideology has made these two worlds opposite to one another. "The method commonly used to explain anything unknown is the method applied through opposition. In other words, it is to find the antonym of a known concept. Islam is defined as a concept totally opposite to Christianity in the west. In other words, Christians are peaceful, while Muslims are belligerent. Jesus was a clergy while Mohammad was married to many women. The Bible is original, while the Quran is a copy, and so on. These are the westerners' ideas on Islam. They do not regard Islam as a continuation of the religions revealed by the previous prophets. They initiate Islam in Mecca and Madinah. To them, Islam is a materialist religion with no spiritual aspects. It is the name of conquests and forcing people to embrace a religion. Accordingly, westerners push Islam and Muslims to the position where they defend themselves, and they aim to maintain detailed conflicts with Muslims."<sup>6</sup>

When and how did this polarization between east and west or Islam and Christianity start and develop?

Historically, Islam emerged almost 600 years later than Christianity and spread rapidly. Christian theologians and scientists had difficulties in explaining the emergence and spreading of Islam as a new religion. The most important difficulty in explaining the emergence of Islam is related to Islam as contradictory to central Christian beliefs. "One of these central theological values is the idea that revelation to humans was completed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, which certainly paved the way for the question of how the emergence of a new prophet is possible. Certain Christian theologians asked this question saying that the emergence of Islam as a new religion is quite devilish. God permitted the devil to reveal Islam to test Christians and punish them for their rebelliousness. Muhammad, the Prophet of

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<sup>5</sup> The phrase "Allah's face" is a metaphoric concept meaning "Allah's mercy, permission and blessings." Wherever creatures do anything in this world, they can find the mercy and blessings of Allah there.

<sup>6</sup> Van Bommel, A. (2005), "Müslüman Doğu" ile "Hristiyan Batı'nın Birbirleri Hakkındaki İmajları, p. 264, Beyan Yayınları, İstanbul.

Islam, is a fake messenger. He is the messenger of the devil. The revelations he reflected are false. He is a fraud with an ambition to have power. He is the leader of the anti-Christ movement. In other words, Islam has devilish characteristics.”<sup>7</sup>

The concept of the anti-Christ, translated as the opposition to Jesus, is a concept from the Bible. This letter from the first and second letters from the Revelation of John has been used to qualify certain people. The Greek term “anti” means both opposition and replacement. Accordingly, the anti-Christ will emerge in the last hours of the world, refute Jesus Christ, and aim to replace him (Revelation of John, First Letter, Section 2:18-23). This figure is actually the ad-Dajjal in Islam literature.<sup>8</sup> Speculations regarding the identity of ad-Dajjal emerged in both the Christian and Islamic worlds. Many historical people were labeled as ad-Dajjal. Neron, a Roman emperor, Roman priests (to certain Protestants), Martin Luther, a church reformist (to certain Catholics), Napoleon and Hitler are among these people. The Roman-Catholic Church expects that the last test will take place during the final years of the world and that many religious people will deviate after this test. The worst religious deviation theory is the ad-Dajjal belief, according to Christian theology, because humans will glorify and bless themselves instead of God in this belief.

The fact that Muhammad was indicated as the leader of ad-Dajjal in an early period of Islam by the Christian theologians, which indicates that such a problematic approach was used as an ideological weapon not only toward the political leaders having the authority in this world and oppressing Christians for their beliefs but also toward the religious leaders who might be the opponents of Christianity. This is an important aspect that should be considered in the interpretation of religious texts. On the contrary to what most people know, religious interpreters are never independent of the political and social developments of their eras. They read and review religious texts within a historical-social and cultural scope, which is valid not only for Christianity but also Islam and other religions. If the Christian theologians had been committed to the theological texts and made textual comments, they would have meticulously thought over the phrase of the Messiah’s opponents “They are from our environment but not one of us” in the first letter of the Revelation of John and know that ad-Dajjal would come from their society, not any other societies. Moreover, the Bible indicates ad-Dajjal as multiple creatures to us. It is clear that many Dajjals will emerge in the last days of the world.

Christian theologians and other scientists having difficulties in explaining the emergence and spread of Islam also developed a conspiracy theory according to what P. S. Van Koningsveld, an Islamologist, wrote. According to this theory, the

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<sup>7</sup> Van Koningsveld, P. S. (1993), *Sprekend Over de Islam en de Modern Tijd*, p. 12-13, Prometheus&Teleac, Amsterdam.

<sup>8</sup> Due to this similarity, “Anti-Christ” by Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher, was translated as “Deccal” in Turkish.



similarities between the Quran, the Torah and the Bible texts are not coincidental because Muhammad had a secret master who has religious knowledge of him. This person is nobody but a Christian religious person who was discharged from his religious position. He went to the Arabic peninsula to take his revenge from the Church and raised Muhammad as a fake Prophet. Accordingly, Islam is nothing but a conspiracy theory prepared to destroy Christianity from inside. Islam is briefly the illegal child of Christianity.<sup>9</sup>

The difficulty in understanding the emergence of Islam and Muhammad as a new Prophet was also reflected in the statements. Christianity rarely uses the titles of Prophet or messenger for Muhammad. Arabs, considered as the "barbarians" from the desert, are named "Hasar's Sons," and "Ismael's Sons" meaning those from the lineage of Ismael and Hajar. Assyrian authors refer caliphs and Muhammad as "kings" to indicate that their dominances in this world are just mortal; Muhammad is the first Arabic king... The concepts of Islam and Muslims are almost unknown to the Latin Christian authors of Medieval Times, despite a couple of exceptions. They used ethnical concepts such as Arabs, Turks, Mors or Sarazans to indicate the Muslims just like how the religious people in the east did.<sup>10</sup>

A resistance to avoid using the concepts of "Muslim" and "Islam" has continued almost until recent times. After the 1960s, the term "Muhammadian" was used to call the guest workers migrating to Europe from Muslim countries in the Mediterranean region such as Turkey or Morocco, while "Muhammadianism" was used to mean their religions. Not only does this concept indicate that Islam was perceived as a religion established by Muhammad, it also reflects Muslims as his followers. However, Muhammad is a messenger assigned by God to reveal Islam for Muslims. He did not establish a religion subjectively. These statements actually reflect the ideology of Christians rather than Muslims. This approach is a product of ethnocentric ideology. As Jesus is a central figure for Christianity, Christians believed that Muhammad is the central figure of Islam. However, God is the central figure of Islam, which was revealed by Muhammad, the messenger of God. This point was clearly reflected in the Islamic creed.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the incidents in the later periods, the discrimination between the modern and barbaric people in the ancient Greeks was redefined in relation to the east and west, and west was indicated as modern while the east was barbaric in this regard. Not only did the historical competition between Islam and Christianity make the relationship between these two worlds problematic, but it also paved the way for developing a polarized ideology. "Christian theologians consolidated their

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<sup>9</sup> Van Koningsveld, P. S. (1993), *Sprekend Over de Islam en de Modern Tijd*, p. 13-24, Prometheus&Teleac, Amsterdam.

<sup>10</sup> Aydın, Fuat (2011), *Bati İslam Algısının Arkeolojisi*, p. 19-20-24, EskiYeni Yayınları, Ankara.

<sup>11</sup> Islamic creed is as follows: "I witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's messenger."

commitment to moral monism due to the greater pleasures from the limitless differences in the natural world, just like Plato and Aristoteles. God could easily create a monotonous universe. The fact that God had not done so reflects the importance of differences for God. Augustine asked why God did not create everything similarly and replied as follows: "If everything had been similar, nothing would have been remarkable..." Every creature in this world has a unique nature and different place in the universe, and they contribute to the impeccability and concordance in the world by achieving their own perfectness."<sup>12</sup> Aquinas improved this thesis, saying that perfectness dominates the world. The perfectness of this world arose from the "regular variety of the things" reflecting God's characteristics based on these things' dimensions.

These two important philosophers of Christianity, who produced ideas regarding the variety and difference in the universe, somehow became the representatives of merciless criticism and intolerance to the religions and groups other than Christianity and Christians. Augustinus (354-430), standing between the borders of Ancient and Medieval Times, is the greatest father of churches. He dedicated his whole life to the church after accepting Christianity and died as a bishop in Northern Africa. This philosopher who lived before the emergence of Islam regarded Christianity as the only real religion and considered the Catholic church as the only representative of this religion, stating that there is no means but the church for salvation. Not only did he fight against Manicheism, Donatism, Pelagianism and Arianism, which are four great deviations according to him, but he also reflected Jews as a malevolent power. "Jewish laws and all Jewish history just meant a preparation period for Christianity for Augustin. Moses and other prophets in the Old Testimony knew that the laws were too inadequate and nothing but the reflections of the truth to be revealed as Jesus. Therefore, the real heirs of Moses were the Christians and Jewish people who did not accept Christianity were guilty and accused of deviating from the religion. Augustine stated that Hebrew texts or Moses' Laws could be terminated upon the emergence of Messiah and that these laws were valid for a limited time. Following his orders, Jews were spiritually blind, persistent, "non-spiritual" and idolater. They were corrupted to such a great degree that they rejected the salvation offered by Jesus to them, and they crucified him, acting in line with the devil."<sup>13</sup>

Augustinus claimed that the church conducted a hearing based on love to justify the hearings against Donatists. This claim was based on a story in the Bible of Luca. Accordingly, a rich man prepares a flamboyant dinner and wants to give a great feast to the people in the city. However, rich people of the city do not attend, stating different excuses. Upon this attitude, the host tells his housekeeper to call any poor or disabled people in the streets of the city. The housekeeper says there are still

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<sup>12</sup> Parekh, Bhikhu (2002), *Çokkültürlülüğü Yeniden Düşünmek, Kültürel Çeşitlilik ve Siyasi Teori*, p. 30-31, Phoenix Yayınları, Ankara.

<sup>13</sup> Parekh, Bhikhu (2002), *Çokkültürlülüğü Yeniden Düşünmek, Kültürel Çeşitlilik ve Siyasi Teori*, p. 35, Phoenix Yayınları, Ankara.

places for more people in the table. Accordingly, “hit the road and force whoever you see to come to my house so that this place gets filled with people.” (14:23). This study was narrated through a symbolical style and forcing people to accept the invitation was accepted as evidence to the true path. The host reflects God while the housekeeper is the messenger; food is the divine message and true path, and invited are the addressee.

Augustinus defended Christianity in his book entitled *De Civitate Dei* and he proposed a historical philosophy. Accordingly, the history of humanity was reflected as a cruel war between two spiritual trends. God’s city was on one side while the mortal city with fallen people was on the other side. The dualist ideas reflected in this book indicate why he took part in the eastern sect of Manichaeism for a certain period. Accordingly, there is an eternal fight between the light and darkness. God represents the light and benevolence, while the devil indicates the darkness and malevolence.

Augustinus had monist ideas in relation to the government and religion, like how he was dualist regarding malevolence and benevolence or God and the devil. His ideas influenced King Constantine the Great in declaring the church as privileged and making Christianity the religion of the state by King Theodosius in AC 380. From then on, loss of church membership also meant the loss of citizenship rights. Disbelievers and Jews inevitably became second-class citizens in the governmental structure, and Christians ‘fake teachers’ were punished by beating. Social monism consisting of political and religious unity, excluded tolerance in the religious policy.<sup>14</sup>

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), the most competent Christian philosopher of the Medieval Times, followed the path of Augustinus and continued defending the thesis “Christianity is the only real religion. The Catholic church is the only representative of this religion. There is no means but the church for the salvation”, displaying nothing different against the Jews. It is without a doubt that Thomas is among the first people reflecting anti-Islamist ideas. His work entitled *Summa Contra Gentiles* is a theological handbook guiding the discussions between the missionaries in Spain and non-Christian people. As the book was written to make sure non-Christians accept Christianity and as the theses from the Bible provided no assistance in this regard, Aquinas based his on the objective (to him) philosophical considerations. Ancestors were, for sure, not objective. They accepted that Christianity was not correct almost in advance. Aquinas was not interested in understanding Islam, let alone getting in a dialog with Islam. His main purpose was to show that Islam is a fake and amoral religion.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Hoogerwerf, Andries (2002), *Wij en Zij, Intolerantie en verdraagzaamheid in 21 eeuwen*, Damon, p. 56, Budel.

<sup>15</sup> Parekh, Bhikhu (2002), *Çokkültürlülüğü Yeniden Düşünmek, Kültürel Çeşitlilik ve Siyasi Teori*, p. 35, Phoenix Yayınları, Ankara.

The Catholic church and religious people maintained their fights against Islam both practically through the Crusades and theologically through the ideological assaults. However, Crusades enabled Christians to get to know Muslims more closely. "Europeans wanted to examine Islam as a religion more and more during the Crusades. They knew a couple of things about Islam partially through Byzantine sources and through the conflicts between the Muslims and Christians in Spain. However, this knowledge was full of complicated mistakes. They reflected Muslims as the idolaters obeying Muhammad. Moreover, they called the Prophet wizard. They called the Prophet a devil, twisting his name (Muhammad) and making it Mahound. They thought Islam permitted prostitution and illegal relationships."<sup>16</sup> However, due to the conflict-based relationships in Medieval Times and tensions arising from these relationships, Christian scientists could never present Islam considering their own sources and suiting the original messages.

They developed these Islamic ideas, which influenced Medieval Times or even modern times from certain aspects, in this period. As noted by Watt, the Islamic perception of Medieval Christianity was determined through these four claims.<sup>17</sup>

- 1) Islam is superstitious and the opposite of reality.
- 2) Islam is war-ridden and belligerent.
- 3) Islam teaches fondness of the self.
- 4) Muhammad is the opponent of Jesus.

The first point is concordant to the idea generated about Christianity. As noted above, all religions and religious institutions had to be superstitious and unreal as Christianity considered itself as the only real religion, regarded the church as the only official institution and believed no other means of salvation but the church. The second point is both a response to the question of why Islam spread quickly and an excuse to justify Crusades. However, as noted by many sociologists, this is nothing but the Christian act of projecting the Christian actions and efforts to Islam (or another religion). Therefore, this claim gives an idea about the Christian Catholic Church instead of reflecting anything about Islam.

The third point is closely related to the perspective of Christianity in regard to the topics of sexuality and marriage. The only relevant data provided by the Christians are related to Islam's permission to marry four women and Muhammad's multiple marriages. Polygamy is a controversial topic in Islam: Islam did not bring polygamy forward; what Islam did was to limit the number of unlimited marriages to four and to order the establishment of justice among the spouses. As indicated by Surah al-Nisa, the main priority of Islam is actually monogamy. Polygamy is

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<sup>16</sup> Watt, Montgomery (1989), *İslam Avrupa'da*, p. 28-29, Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.

<sup>17</sup> Watt, Montgomery (1989), *İslam Avrupa'da*, p. 28-29, Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.

performed when Muslims protect or even marry the orphan girls who lost their fathers in wars. In a period when social assurance and wealthy states were not present around, marriage meant assurance. Moreover, Muhammad's multiple marriages arose from social and political reasons instead of being fond of the self. It is almost impossible to understand these matters thoroughly as long as one considers the anachronical perspectives aiming to understand the historical events from the perspective of the modern times. However, the more important point here is the problematic structure of the Christian ideology related to sexuality in that era. According to Christianity of Medieval Times, sexuality is an obligatory sin committed to have a child and sustain the lineage. Divorce, on the other hand, is a taboo. Religious people should regard being single as a great virtue and never marry. A strict and negative approach toward sexuality certainly cannot understand the positive and tolerant aspects of Islam. The ethnocentric approach shows itself here.

The last point here is more significant than the creation of Islamic antagonism. Burada, "İsa aleyhtarlığı"ndan maksat onun bir "Deccal" şeklinde resmedilmesidir. most effective weapon in the religious societies of Medieval Times and other claims and accusations should be regarded as its results. Assigning the label of Dajjal to Islam and Muhammad directly, makes them the opposite and opponent of the Christian west. The polarization between the east and west is the spatial concretization of the fight between the benevolence and malevolence. The reality in the following verse was therefore twisted: "And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing." (al-Baqarah, 2:115). Accordingly, the period following the emergence of Christianity reflects the time when the concepts of east and west, which were once positive or neutral at least, were made negative and when a conflict was created between the east and west.

The number of common elements was quite high in a study comparing the Islamic perceptions of eastern and western Christianity.<sup>18</sup> This just shows that western Christianity is based on the eastern sources because the eastern Christians with close ties regarded Islam as an opponent and were surprised seeing the rapid spread of Islam. A perception operation was particularly made in these points:

- 1) Muhammad is the opponent of Messiah (he is ad-Dajjal);
- 2) Islam is the religion of idolatry;
- 3) Muhammad is not a prophet because he had no miracles.
- 4) Islam is spread through wars.
- 5) The Quran is not a divine book. Instead, it was written by Muhammad with assistance from others.

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<sup>18</sup> Aydın, Fuat (2011), *Batı İslam Algısının Arkeolojisi*, p. 41-54, EskiYeni Yayınları, Ankara.

- 6) Muhammad is fond of lust and he has a paradise concept where sexuality is dominant.

The effect of these stereotyped considerations among the Muslims indicated itself as the hatred and hostility toward the Muslims, causing Muslims to develop extreme defense literature. An example regarding the second point is that the Quran states Prophets were sent to many nations with miracles, but this caused Prophets to be stigmatized as wizard and sorcerer. Accordingly, regarding the absence of miracles from the Prophet, Muslims almost compared him with other prophets to find and assign a miracle to the Prophet. One of the typical examples is as-Suyuti's (1445-1505) work entitled "Our Prophet with his Extraordinary Characteristics".<sup>19</sup> The author made extreme attempts to prove that there is a miracle in all organs of Muhammad.

The relationship between Christians and Muslims was not military in Medieval Times. Transactions were also initiated in the fields of commerce and culture after the Crusades. Accordingly, the Latin Catholic world had an intense relationship with the Islamic world and culture. European intellectuals started to migrate to the places captured from Muslims and learned Islamic sciences through the Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews. This relationship meant discovering ancient Greek heritage. Texts translated from Arabic mostly reflected the fields with high practical value such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy and philosophy. This cultural interaction paved the way for the "Thirteenth Century Renaissance" in Europe.

After the mid-fifteenth century, news and stories about Turks were written in reports and books. The literature about the Ottomans and Turks was called "Turcica", and these works were published in countries such as Austria, Germany, Italy and France, which have intense relationships with the Turks. Ottomans' political and military power increased as the negative news and information regarding Turks increased as Ottomans advanced toward Europe. The term "Turkish" evoked fears and hatred, particularly after the fall of Istanbul. Moreover, the concepts of Turkish and Islam were interchangeably used in Europe. The Christian world of Europe created a negative image about the Turkish people and triggered the public, and aimed to unite all Christians under the dominance of the Roman church.<sup>20</sup>

Turks are reflected as the main enemy of Christians in the reports and books written by the church, while Ottoman sultans were stigmatized as the opponents of Jesus (ad-Dajjal). The central theme in these works was based on the barbaric characteristics of the Turks. Turks were the people who cruelly killed innocent Christians, destroyed the Christian environments, and stole whatever valuable Christians had. A style of conveying news based on such propaganda is, of course,

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<sup>19</sup> İzyayıncılık-Gerçek Hayat, İstanbul 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Canatan, Kadir (1995), *Avrupa'da Müslüman Azınlıklar*, p. 309-310, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul.

deviated from reality. What was cruel was the war and its conditions. Christians were also cruel under these conditions.

The reforms of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century and Islamic image in the west during the Enlightenment Age conveyed certain classical concepts to the new period and caused partial changes. The image of the enemy increased and continued in Spain. Because of the inquisition here, Muslims and Jews were prosecuted and tortured for their beliefs. Accordingly, Muslims were exiled to Northern Africa in 1609. The Turkish image was also highly negative in these years. The information about the Turks was based on the traditional Christian prejudices. The term "Turk" is nowadays used to scold and blemish someone in Europe, which is a result of those years.

The Islamic image of the intellectuals was not clear in the significant reforms of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the Enlightenment Age. Hugo de Groot, a remarkable Dutch author, theologian and lawyer of the era, defended the unity of Christians and directed criticisms to disbelievers, Jews and Muslims in one of his books he wrote in the penitentiary. The sources about Islam, which was used by him, were old Medieval books and works, so they kept the concepts regarding the old Islamic image. Professor Adriaan Reland, another Dutch intellectual, stated that Islam should be scientifically reviewed as a Calvinist. He criticized the western prejudices and drew a better Islamic image based on Arabic sources in his work entitled "About Muhammad's Religion" and published in 1705. Not only did he know the western languages, but he also considered the specific characteristics of religions as a theologian. Accordingly, assaults of religions toward one another arose from emotionality rather than rationality. When the follower of a religion drew negative images about another religion, that follower reflected his/her own dark dimensions.<sup>21</sup>

Enlightened intellectuals did not have positive ideas about all religions. However, their criticism of Islam had another meaning. They considered Islam as the primary religion deserving all sorts of criticisms, and they judged Christianity in relation to Islam because attacking Christianity directly, was risky. According to dominant ideology of the era, religions meant a fanaticism drawback against development and bigotry. Voltaire's work is a good example in this regard. He performs the psychological analysis regarding the concept of religious fanaticism in his drama work *Mahomet*. While selecting Islam, he thought about detailing the religious qualities that generally cause fanaticism instead of performing a contextual discussion. Voltaire took his sources from Medieval Times. His criticism of the religions was so severe that even the church could not accept the work and prohibited any plays on this work.

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<sup>21</sup> Kadir Canatan, (1995), *Avrupa'da Müslüman Azınlıklar*, p. 314, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul.

Medieval Islamic image was resurrected in the Colonialism period. Rudolph Peters, an academic from the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Amsterdam University, makes the following statement: "This Islam and Muslim image from Medieval Times gained new momentum and energy in the period of European imperialism. Muslims were indicated as reactionary, fanatic and aggressive people, and colonialist expansion was justified upon the claim of contributing to the spread of civilization. This was also a justified excuse for the colonialists to use force over the local people."<sup>22</sup> A general review of the historical relationships between Muslim and Christian worlds indicates that the negative Islamic image served as a legal cover for the western attacks and inhuman actions conducted by the western actors in the Islamic world. The interaction between aggressiveness and image was always mutual. The image became negative in the war and expansion moments, and aggressiveness was justified on this ground.

The western orientalism never managed to get rid of the accused identity. The main paradigm of orientalism reflects the uncompromising opposition between the east and west. Accordingly, the western world is dynamic, innovator, open, tolerant and active while the Islamic world is traditional, static, fanatic, passive and opposes development. An American scientist says the following about the Islamic image generated by orientalism: "A powerful enemy, a deviant and exotic structure formed by the near east, a semi-stable and introverted group of people, a civilization that failed to reform itself, and a fanatic or suicidal reaction to the modern times."<sup>23</sup>

The Medieval image of "Scary Turk" with a long shirt and shiny machete who is ready to kill any people who reject accepting Muhammad's religion was replaced with the image of "Arab terrorist" with a war uniform and AK-47 on his shoulder who is ready to kill innocent Jewish and Christian women and children in the western literature due to the Middle Eastern approaches in the period following the colonialism.<sup>24</sup>

As noted by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, Orientalism is not an extreme European dream regarding the east. Instead, it is the discourse completing the authority-based relationship between the east and west. This discourse is an ideology based on the ontological and epistemological discrimination between the east and west (1999:12). If any ordinary westerner considers a *barbaric* Greek person, the *idolater-disbeliever* from Medieval Times, *uncivilized-aborigines* during the colonialism period, *cultural-uneducated* people following the Enlightenment period, the *communist-devil* in the Cold War era and *Muslim fundamentalist* as the same

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<sup>22</sup> Peters, R. (1989), *İslam ve Sömürgecilik, Modern Zamanlarda Cihat Öğretisi*, p. 31, Nehir Yayınları, İstanbul.

<sup>23</sup> Pruet, Gordon E. (1989), "İslâm ve Oryantalizm", *Oryantalistler ve İslâmiyatçılar, Oryantalist İdeolojinin Eleştirisi*, p. 61-62, İstanbul.

<sup>24</sup> Peters, R. (1989), *İslam ve Sömürgecilik, Modern Zamanlarda Cihat Öğretisi*, p. 30, Nehir Yayınları, İstanbul.



malevolent and threatening enemy,<sup>25</sup> this is related to the traditional reflexes generated by their historical heritage.

### **Conclusion**

The image, perception and prejudices of society toward the other are the phenomena that are reproduced and transferred from one generation to another. Accordingly, the Islamic image we find in the western world today significantly reflects the historical experience generated under new conditions. The most important evidence in this regard is the continuity of the elements constituting the afore-noted image. Islam is often defined as a deviant, fake, opposite, violent and threatening concept by the west. Characteristics and behaviors of Muslims are often reflected as essential and stationary structures. This essential approach aimed to associate anything with Islam and make relevant explanations. The inferior quality of Islamic countries, the secondary status of women, and violent acts of various groups are associated with Islam. Financial, political and demographic concepts are just the auxiliary instruments in the formation of these issues. Islam is such a great power that it stigmatizes anything.

This perception created the following motto among the racist and Islamophobic groups: "We love Muslims but we hate Islam." Muslims are actually western, good and innocent, but Islam changes them and makes them unpleasant creatures. In this case, Muslims should also be saved from the claw of Islam because the real Dajjal was not the Muslims figure. Instead, it is Islam and Muhammad, the establisher of Islam!

However, if the westerners had considered their own histories and could have criticized this history in regard to the image of Islam, their considerations regarding Islam and Muslims could have changed significantly because the image of Islam is affected not only by the negative developments in the Muslim world but also by the perspectives meticulously separating these negative aspects from the positive ones. The paradigm determining their perspectives is a dualist and polarizing approach based on the separation between "we" and "others". Accordingly, the east is reflected as the world of darkness while the west is the place of enlightenment. To them, Islam is violence and hatred of religion, while Christianity brings love and mercy. The western world is advanced while the eastern is far behind. However, the world has such a complicated structure that cannot be reduced to the dichotomy of black and white. As noted by Bergson, "Life often goes beyond the mind."

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<sup>25</sup> Bulaç, Ali (1997), *İslam ve Fundamentalizm*, p. 49, İz Yayıncılık, İstanbul.

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## Intifada in Europe: On Islamophobia and Future of Islam in Europe\*

Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN\*\*

### Abstract:

Islamophobia is becoming both increasingly prevalent and societally acceptable in the contemporary world. Islam is seen as a threat to civilization and is connected to terrorism through all channels of society. However, it should be added that the issue is not a new concept but rather the continuum of historical anti-Islam. With the new catastrophic events, it has gained new dimensions. Texts regarding Islamophobia consider 9/11 as the essence of this issue and treat the Muslims' Holy Book, i.e. the Quran, as the main source of all malign incidents. This study proposes the opposite. Muslims, rather than Islam, are to be analyzed with all their economic, cultural and political background, and studies should be transformed into anthropological ones rather than theological papers. The majority of Muslims would want to live in a peaceful environment that is in harmony with the multicultural world. However, they often face the dilemma of dealing with the blasphemous acts of non-Muslims towards their religious values and tolerating them. It should be noted that Islamophobia is increasingly becoming a human rights issue with rage and fury against Muslims worldwide. This violation starts with the identification of anything problematic from Muslims. A sui generis McCarthyism is in the process against them. To some extent, unfortunately, this phobia has its own right ground. There are at least two requirements in this regard: To get rid of the sources of this phobia first, and then to develop new strategies considering the plans that misuse all malign incidents to condemn Muslims and Islam. And the following terms should be fostered among all: pluralism and tolerance; to interact on the basis of rights and responsibility; to respect the independent existence of human kind, i.e. to treat people irrespective of their religion, race, gender, etc.; and to focus on the basics of law, i.e. to live an honest life (*honeste vivere*); not to violate others' rights (*alterum non ledere*) and give every single people their rights (*sum cuique tribuere*).

**Keywords:** Islamophobia, Pluralism, Basic Rights and Responsibilities

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\* This paper is the English translation of the study titled "Avrupa'da İntifada: İslamofobi ve Batı'da İslam'ın Geleceği Üzerine" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN, "Avrupa'da İntifada: İslamofobi ve Batı'da İslam'ın Geleceği Üzerine", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 105-112.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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## Avrupa'da İntifada: İslamofobi ve Batı'da İslam'ın Geleceği Üzerine

### Özet:

Çağdaş dünyada İslamofobinin gittikçe zemin kazandığı görülmekte, İslam her türlü mecraada medeniyete düşman ve terörle bağlantılı bir din olarak anılmaktadır. Bu tutumun yeni olmadığını tarihsel köklere sahip olduğunu biliyoruz. Bununla birlikte günümüzde yaşanan 11 Eylül benzeri bazı feci olaylar İslamofobiye yeni boyutlar kazandırmıştır. Bu olayların tetiklediği ilk refleks, bütün bu şiddetin kaynağı olarak Müslümanları değil, Kur'an'ı görmek şeklinde kendini ortaya koymuştur. Bu yaklaşımın yanlışlığından hareket ederek, meselenin İslam değil Müslümanların içinde bulunduğu kültürel, dinsel ve sosyopolitik şartların analiz edilmesiyle elde edilecek verilerin daha sağlıklı değerlendirmelerde bulunmayı mümkün kılacağını düşünüyoruz. Başka bir ifadeyle tartışma teolojik bir zeminden antropolojik bir zemine kaydırılmalıdır. Müslümanlar tartışmasız kendileri dışındaki insanlarla barışçıl bir yaşam sürmek isterler. Ama dinlerine ve kutsal değerlerine yapılan hakaretler ve hak ihlalleri onları kendilerini savunma ve başkalarına tolerans gösterme gibi bir ikileme sürüklemektedir. Müslümanlara karşı biriktirilen öfke sebebiyle İslamofobinin bir insan hakları meselesine dönüştüğünü söylemek gerekir. Meydana gelen her kötülüğü Müslümanlarla irtibatlı düşünmek bu ihlalin ilk şeklidir. Bu fobinin bir dereceye kadar haklı sebepleri olduğunu biliyoruz. Bu da bizi iki şeyi yapmaya yönlendirmelidir: İlk olarak bu fobinin kaynaklarını kurutmak, ikinci olarak da bunu kullanarak İslam'ı ve Müslümanları mahkûm etme stratejisi geliştirenlere karşı bir strateji geliştirmek. Aşağıdakiler bu stratejinin bir parçası olarak görülmelidir: Çoğulculuk ve başkasına tolerans; ilişkileri temel hak ve özgürlükler temelinde yürütmek; insanın bağımsız varlığına saygı duymak başka bir ifadeyle dinden, etnik kökenden, kültürden, coğrafyadan bağımsız olarak insana sırf insan olduğu için saygınlığını koruyacak muamelede bulunmak ve hukukun temel normlarını evrensel bir hâkimiyete kavuşturmak: Dürüst bir yaşam sürmek ve bunu herkes için talep etmek (honestevivere); başkalarının haklarını ihlal etmemek (alterumnonleadere); herkese hak ettiğini eksiksiz vermek (suumcuiquetribuere). Doğu'da da Batı'da da insan ilişkilerine bu kavramlar hayat verdiğinde, İslamofobi gibi bir marazı ortadan kaldırmak için iyi bir başlangıç yapılmış olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobi, Çoğulculuk, Temel haklar ve sorumluluklar

### Regarding the Source of Anger Feeding Islamophobia

An analysis regarding the reasons causing Muslims to become militants as a result of anger bursts toward internal and external factors and to be the sources of fear for others should be performed. Briefly reviewing the reasons feeding the concept of Islamophobia in the Western or Islamic world will help analyze the relevant factors in this regard.

The malevolent image deliberately formed by the West toward the characteristics of the Prophet causes Southern Asia Muslims to show an emotional

reaction. The Muslims' anger is triggered more and more seeing that each of three monotheist religions is treated specifically in the Western countries. According to them, laws prohibiting blasphemy protect Christians and Jews, but they do not observe the rights of Muslims. The exclusionary and oppressive political environments there direct political Islamists to a universal radicalization process where they witness many protests.

Although Western countries reflect a minor Christian quality today, Muslims still regard them as Christians. For more than a thousand years, since Prophet Mohammad, Islam has experienced a great history of victory, cut only by the Crusades. Conquests continued until the unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1683. After then, Islam was put aside during the era of Western colonialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which was among the sources of anger for the modern jihadists.

The 9/11 attacks made certain non-Muslims believe that Islam is a religion that does not suit democratic values. Moreover, certain Muslims strongly believed that Westerners rejected Islam as a religion and identity concept. Standardizations and prejudices began to be dominant over most of the relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, which created an environment where people do not help understand one another and trigger the distrust among them. This process had negative effects on both sides and culturally and geographically created a ghetto environment for Muslims. Muslims were positioned in the categories of "foreign", "different" and "abnormal" citizens even if they are not totally rejected in Western countries, institutions of which started to consider them "a population to be randomly positioned somewhere in the new world order."

G. Kepel states that the September 11 attacks created an anaphor which would catch the European Muslim youth instead of detracting young people from political Islamist organizations.<sup>1</sup> As a result, Muslims in Western countries formed a "Western" perception which they related with a standardized ideological pattern, and they created a single-type Muslim perception. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that the concept of jihad is regarded as the means of developing an independent lifestyle that is different from the traditional conceptions.<sup>2</sup>

Aiming to solve this issue, politicians and academics considered the issues from a political aspect and began to focus on certain themes such as the so-called clash of civilizations, failure of multiculturalism, occupation of Iraq, alienation of Muslims, social ghettoization of young Southern Asians, radical imams and preachers. This evidence indicates why the mosaic we have consists of various pieces, but they still do not explain why we have such a human mosaic. Why do some people calling themselves Muslims decide to kill themselves and innocent people

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<sup>1</sup> Kepel, G., *The War for the Muslims, Islam and the West*, Cambridge, MA: Melnap Harvard, 2004, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Marranci, Gabriele, *Jihad Beyond Islam*, Oxford and New York: Berg Publishers, 2006, p. 9.

under the excuse of jihad? Why do certain Muslims call such a form of jihad a murder, while such a consideration is rejected by others?

An interesting planning has been executed in the Islamic world to ensure that these movements are perceived as a single type. Alternatives of mosques where traditional Islamic information is spread and promoted, which are also known as parallel mosques, were generated and excessive acts of non-Muslims were reflected in these mosques to ensure that jihad is understood as the political means rather than a religious and spiritual element. Hasan al-Banna in Egypt and Mawdudi in Pakistan can be the best examples in this regard.

Hasan al-Banna felt that the traditional mosque sermons would not be enough for overcoming the ever-developing malice groups from Cairo. Thus, he warned young people in cafés and made efforts to deliver more rooted statements to the people. These young people later formed the basis of the organization called *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brothers). Mawdudi explains why he had to perform an alternative formation in Pakistan as follows:

*"We had to form such an organization as a last option. I have been inviting Muslims to stop all wrong acts and to make efforts to fulfill what God ordered them to do. If all Muslims had accepted this invitation, they could have formed a single organization with congregation status."*<sup>3</sup>

Islam seems to let people use such an authority without adding the "religious" title. The absence of a differentiation between the concepts of clergy and non-clergy in Islam paves the way for the interpretation of religious texts by anybody, which caused people to perform this action to gain authority and twist the meanings of verses to support themselves. Most of the imams in Europe and United States perform other duties along with the classical religious missions. Duties such as teaching Islam, leading the congregation which does not follow the foreign culture, visiting the ill and bereaved, and conducting familial supervising created a broad field of activity for imams. Mosques must undertake many untraditional duties due to the relevant deficiencies in Muslim countries, and imams have to perform many activities for which they have not been trained. A masjid in the US serves as an organization with multiple functions. They have sections to pray, educational areas, political and social sections, unofficial hearing rooms, and a medical clinic. An imam both leads people in praying and conveys religious information. He also serves as an educator, accountant, charity officer, political preacher, unofficial judge, and a supervisor. Considering that every mosque has one imam, these imams should not be expected to perform such activities effectively.

Transformation of mosques into an Islamic center helped people meet some of their needs, but it also caused mosques to have weakened religious characteristics. Certain Muslim institutions in the US cannot be separated from a local club or lodge.

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<sup>3</sup> Mawdudi, *Witnesses unto Mankind: The Purpose and Duty of the Muslim Ummah*, trans. By Murad, Khurram, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1986, p. 73-74.

These institutions draw people from the same ethnical background and strengthen images related to that club or lodge. In certain cases, dance halls are added to these institutions.<sup>4</sup>

Termination of caliphate as the single authority administering Muslims helped form this structure with multiple aspects. If caliphate had still existed, a mosque configuration like the monastic structure of Roman Catholic bureaucracy could have been formed and the Muslim world could have been controlled. Absence of such a central authority directed Muslims to create their own organizations.<sup>5</sup>

### **Presence of Islamophobia and Muslims in the West**

Presence of Islam and Muslims in the West, particularly Europe, has been controversial for any related or unrelated parties. There have been different opinions from those, which compare the Quran with *Mein Kampf* by Hitler and aim to terminate it, to those which reflect the longing for a Muslim-free Europe. A similar and modern form of the mission undertaken by a journal of comics named *Der Stürmer* (Attacker), which blemished Jewish people and brought the level of hatred toward them to another point before the massacre applied to Jews in Hitler's Germany, is applied toward the Muslims across Europe. This reflects that all discourses triggering hatred toward Muslims should be reviewed seriously, and that we are living in a period when Muslims need to fight against this hatred.

A significant part of this fight appears to continue over a semantic ground through the words suiting the spirit of time. This is called *semantic fight*. How people make efforts to harm Islam and Muslims on the global scale through the semantic perceptions is obvious to all. According to the report by *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* (EMCRX), Muslims have been suffering from increasing number of physical attacks in England, Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark as a result of these perception operations. It is reported that attacks against the foreigners increased by thirteen-fold in Europe following the 9/11 incident. If the fight between civilizations will continue through words, Muslims should revise their historical experiences and present Islam to the people with a discourse attracting the interest of the modern world. The statement by the Minister of the Interior of France, the European country with the highest number of Muslims, "Secularizing the tradition of Jewish-Christian extensively, France will help its Muslims build an identity ..." (*Le Monde*, Paris, 13.09.2005) indicates the traces that Europe has such an expectation from Muslims.

However, it should be noted that this will not be easy. The deep wounds in the collective memory of Muslims, who sacrificed millions of victims of colonialism,

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<sup>4</sup> Poston, Larry, *Islamic Da'wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> Poston, Larry, *op.cit.*, p. 97.



naturally complicate European integration. The massacres conducted by the US and Western countries in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Bosnia add new wounds to these memories. However, there are still some prudent Western people who object these western negativities aloud and prioritize understanding Muslims instead of judging them. These words from Ken Livingston, the ex-mayor of London who related radicalization of Muslims with Bush's attacks on Iraq and severely criticized neo-conservationists, reflect the ideology of rational Western intellectuals. (BBC News Online, London -13 September 2005). However, Western ideology needs a methodology passing the borders of this discourse. The relevant categorical differentiation from the past as Islam and the West or Muslims and the West should be replaced with an integrated concept such as Islam in the West or Muslims in the west. Western academics who regard Muslims as a minority in their own lands and examine their religions from an orientalist aspect must swiftly focus on anthropological studies. It should be noted that they should not use a sardonic language used by Andrew Hussey in *French Intifada*. Hussey's work which aims to reflect how France and Arabs exploited by France settled, is important for basing the issue on an anthropological ground. However, the language he uses is extremely repulsive and provocative. Western intellectuals should regard understanding Muslims, rather than judging them, as the backbone of the relationship to be founded. Analysis of anthropometric socio-economic and political issues would yield no results. The Western countries which have defined Muslims as foreigners or migrants thus far should consider them one of the founding members of their civilizations. A Muslim presence lasting 800 years in Andalusia and 250 years in Sicilia and its permanent effects over the characteristics of European civilizations should not be forgotten. *God's Crucible: Islam and the Making of Europe, 570-1215* by David Levering defines Muslims as the first primary members of the European civilizations for a reason.

### **Conclusion**

Islamophobia of the Western countries started to be a violation of human rights and a hate crime along with the anger shown toward Islam and Muslims. In a period where perceptions passed the limits of reality and assessments regarding Islam and Muslims became shallow and artificial, anything "good", "correct", "nice" and "beneficial" are not associated with Muslims, and all "malevolent" acts are discussed in line with Muslims. As the phrase goes, a McCarthyism is conducted against Muslims. As understood from the analysis of the concept of islamophobia, the question "*Are these irrational or groundless phobias or is there a reality?*" should be honestly answered. Unfortunately, this phobia has a source. This study does not discuss whether this source is right or wrong. However, it is clear that there are two prioritized issues: The first is related to terminating the sources of this phobia while the other is associated with focusing on counter strategies developed to disappoint the power which plans other strategies to fight against

Islam and Muslims using this phobia. Analysis toward the informational basis of a long-term fight appears as the most important aspect. The analysis of this basis can occur only through these concepts: Pluralism and tolerance toward others, managing relationships based on basic rights and freedoms, respecting one's free presence or treating one properly and deferentially just because one is a human regardless of ethnical roots, culture and geography, and providing a universal authority to the basic legal norms: Living an honest life and demanding this for everybody (*honest evivere*); avoiding from violating others' rights (*alterum non ledere*); and fully providing people whatever they deserve (*suum cuique tribuere*). A proper beginning to the activities of terminating an issue such as Islamophobia can be set when these concepts are used within the human relationships in the East and West.

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## References of the Prophet Made to Create Islamophobia\*

Recep TUZCU\*\*

### Abstract:

With the end of the Cold War, while international policy was the scene of significant changes, Islam was substituted as the most important enemy, instead of communism, and the theory of the Clash of Civilizations was used as one of the most important means for advocating conflict between the West and Muslims. Today, Islamophobia in the West and in other parts of the world and the analyses made has brought up this issue as an even more important one. The Western Orientalists allege that the claim that Muhammad was not a prophet and spread Islam by sword, portraying him as a terrorist, violent and lustful person. In these claims, they refer to some verses of the Qur'an and Hadith and criticize them. It is seen that they subject the verses and Hadiths referred to as a specific method and a literal interpretation. In addition, it can be said that criticisms are directed towards the Prophet without reference to the difference between the historical context and cultural codes.

**Keywords:** Islamophobia, Hadith, Prophet, Terrorism, Women.

## İslamofobi Oluşturmada Hz. Peygamber'e yapılan Atıflar

### Özet:

Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesi ile birlikte uluslararası politika önemli değişimlere sahne olurken İslam, komünizm yerine en önemli düşman olarak ikame edilerek, Medeniyetler Çatışması tezi, Batı ile Müslümanlar arasında çatışmayı savunan en önemli araçlardan biri olarak kullanıldı. Günümüzde Batı'da ve dünyanın diğer bölgelerinde oluşan İslamofobi ve yapılan analizler bu konuyu daha da önemli hale getirmiştir. Batılı müsteşrikler Hz. Muhammed'in peygamber olmadığı ve İslam'ı kılıçla yaydığını iddia etmekte onu terörist, şiddet yanlısı ve şehvet düşkünü olarak resmetmektedirler. Bu iddialarında bazı Kur'an ayetlerine ve hadislere atıfla onu eleştirmektedirler. Atıf yaptıkları ayet ve hadisleri, tikel yöntemle ve lafzi yoruma tabi tuttıkları görülür. Ayrıca tarihi bağlam ve kültür kodları farkı dikkate alınmadan bu yorumlara dayanarak Hz. Peygamber'e eleştiriler yöneltildiği söylenebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobia, Hadis, Peygamber, Terör, Kadın.

\* This paper is the English translation of the study titled "İslamofobi Oluşturmada Hz. Peygamber'e yapılan Atıflar" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Recep TUZCU, "İslamofobi Oluşturmada Hz. Peygamber'e yapılan Atıflar", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 113-156.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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## Islamophobia

Islamophobia<sup>1</sup>, as seen in the juxtaposition of the words “Islam” and “phobia”, refers to a fear that Islam does not actually cause, nor originates from Islam, in other words, a fear that has been “created” or “invented” by others. Islamophobia can be defined in general as: A grudge, hatred or hostility towards Islam and/or Muslims, or not trusting them, doubting them, or being afraid of Islam. The basis of this fear, which was invented by people outside the circle of Islam because of what they heard about Islam, lies in the fact that a much simpler and basic fear of the “other” has been reproduced under new forms. This situation expresses the attitudes of non-Muslims in Western societies such as fear, hatred, condemnation and disdain towards Islam. These feelings are rooted in historical and cultural prejudices that are transmitted and reproduced through institutions such as family, social environment, education and media. In this case, it is possible to distinguish the two dimensions of Islamophobia: The “current” dimension that becomes visible in attitudes, opinions and behaviors (so-called current Islamophobia), and the second aspect of historical and cultural sources that feed these visible phenomena. This dimension can also be called as prejudice or stereotypical judgments.<sup>2</sup>

Islamophobia was used for Salman Rushdie, who claimed in the book *Satanic Verses* (first printed on September 1988 in England) that Muhammad included the Satan’s compliments to idols in order to gain the support of the pagan community in which He was present. The granting of a knighthood by the Queen Elizabeth II to Salman Rushdie was understood as clear Islamophobia on the Iranian side. Khomeini issued a death fatwa on this British author of Indian descent. This book was first banned in Iran by Khomeini and many other Islamic countries followed the policy.<sup>3</sup> The concept of Islamophobia was first used after the Iranian revolution in 1979, the hostage crisis, by Iranian Islamists in an attempt to describe women who refused veiling as “evil Muslims.” It was discussed in the press that these women were accused of creating ‘Islamophobia’. According to Fourest and Venner's claims, this concept was brought up again with the Salman Rushdie incident and the book burning events that were issued in the media in 1989.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This anti-Islamism, called Islamophobia, is derived by adding the word phobia to the word Islam. Phobia (phobie or phobia), derived from the word “phobos”, known in Greek mythology as the God of terror and fear, generally refers to fear and attributes the meaning of fear to the words to which it is added. Phobia describes an unusual state of fear that arises in the face of a situation or object that would not be feared in normal circumstances. See. Orhan Öztürk, *Ruh Sağlığı ve Bozuklukları*, Ankara, Hekimler Yayın Birliği, 1st Edition, 1992, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Kadir Canatan and Özcan Hıdır, (eds.), *Batı Dünyasında İslamofobi ve Anti-İslamizm*, Ankara, Eski Yeni Yayınları, 1st Edition, 2007, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> By Lawrence Pollard *Satanic Verses’ polarising untruths*. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/7889974.stm> (3.10.2017); see. Hilal Barın, *Tedirgin Nefret İslamofobi*, İstanbul, Tezkire yayıncılık, 1st Edition, 2016, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Caroline Fourest and Fiammetta Venner, “Islamofobie?”, *Prochoix*, No: 26-27, Paris, Automne Hiver, 2003, p. 28; Christopher Allen, *Islamophobia*, England, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010, p. 9.

### History of Islamophobia

The criticism of polytheists against believers and their claims that declared the Prophet as a magician,<sup>5</sup> see a traitor and a false prophet that converted their children from their religion to his own<sup>6,7</sup>, This was intended to keep people away from the religion of Islam which was taught by the Prophet. While the polytheists reject the revelation that came to him, not the Prophet himself, Allah states that the Qur'an is the word of a noble Messenger (Gabriel).<sup>9</sup> In response, the Qur'an challenged the polytheists, saying "And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful"<sup>10</sup> and silenced them.

John of Damascus (Yuhanna al-Dimashqi), who authored anti-Islamist texts during the 8th century, describes the Prophet as a "liar", claims that Muhammad was partially aware of the old and new Testament, even learned lessons from an Ariusian priest, presented the Qur'an as a holy book, set some "ridiculous" rules, and gained the trust of the people by appearing religious. He considers the views of Islam regarding God and Christ, saying that the divinity of Jesus is rejected by this religion, and asserts that there is no evidence to prove the prophethood of Muhammad. It also criticizes the way in which the Qur'an is revealed, Muslims attribute Christians as idolaters, claiming that they worship the cross, and their irreverence of the Kaaba, and criticise some of the Qur'an's surahs. In this context, he mentions the provisions regarding polygyny as stated in an-Nisa and the fact that the right to divorce is given only to men, narrates the case of Zayd-Zeyneb, and in this regard, blames the Prophet.<sup>11</sup> For the Islamic world, "the West" is a two-century-old phenomenon. There is no such thing as "the West" for an artist or intellectual living in Islamic geography of the 11th or 16th century. There appears to be a continuity that we cannot ignore between Jerry Falwell's, an American Evangelist, claim that "the Prophet was a terrorist" and these claims of al-Dimashqi. Similar problems are encountered when we look at the Western perception of the Islamic world.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> al-Isra', 17/47.

<sup>6</sup> al-Tabarani, Sulaiman bin Ahmad, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*, ed. Hamdi 'Abd al-Majid al-Salafi, Mosul, Maktabat al'Ulum wa al-Hikam, 2nd Edition, 1983, V/61.

<sup>7</sup> al-Anbiya' 21/7; az-Zukhruf 43/90-94.

<sup>8</sup> at-Tur 52/29; al-Haqqah 69/41-42; Abu Lahab used to describe the prophet as a poet and a madman, to those who ask about him. See. al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*, I, 266.

<sup>9</sup> al-Haqqah 69/ 40.

<sup>10</sup> al-Baqarah 2/23; al-Isra' 17/88; Hud 11/13; Yunus 10/38.

<sup>11</sup> Harman, Ömer Faruk, "Yuhannâ Ed-Dimaşki", DİA, İstanbul, İSAM, 2013, XXXXIII/581.

<sup>12</sup> Karen Armstrong, *Islam*, Modern Library, USA, 2000, p. 141; *İslam*, (Transl. Selim Yeniçeri), İstanbul: Koridor Yay., 2008, p. 161.

Islamophobia, institutionalized and gained an academic identity in the 19th and 20th century, with the emergence of anthropology, sociology and similar branches of science. The Orientalists, who were determined to show the Prophet, the guide for social lives of Muslims, and his words<sup>13</sup> as worthless, accelerated their studies. The founder of the Chair of Arabic Language at Cambridge University describes the target of Orientalism as follows: "Our actual goal is to provide a useful service to the state and the King through trade relations with Eastern countries and to glorify Allah by expanding the boundaries of the Church through inviting people who currently live in darkness to join Christianity."<sup>14</sup> In the last two centuries, 60,000 academic studies were conducted on the history of the Hadith, Hadith procedure and Hadith literature. Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1921), Reinhart Dozy (d. 1883) Alois Sprenger (d. 1893), William Muir (d. 1905), Leon Caetani (d. 1935), Arent Jan Wensinck (d. 1939), Snouck Hurgronje (d. 1940), Arthur John Arberry (d. 1969), Hamilton A. R. Gibb (d. 1971) and many other orientalists researched the Hadith field. Alfred Von Kremer (d. 1889), Aloys Sprenger (d. 1893) and Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1921) criticized the Hadith based on prejudices in terms of reliability by developing an explicit skepticism. John Voll admits the derogatory efforts against the Prophet and his words, saying: "The Sunnah, as illustrated by the Hadith collection, was the greatest strength of Islam against changes. For this reason, the most fundamental ground for the 'militant, activist and fundamentalist' movements to rebuild the social-moral values they want to realize in the whole Islamic world was formed by the Prophet's Hadith and engagement with its science. The Prophet's Sunnah was the only common denominator for the cultural unity among Muslims living in different geographies. This made it mandatory for Orientalists to conduct research on the Hadith."<sup>15</sup>

The Orientalist studies showed the effects of skepticism on the Hadiths, first in India and Egypt. Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1316/1898), Sayyid Amir Ali (d. 1347/1928), Abdullah Chakralawi (d. 1914) and Fazlur Rahman (d. 1409/1988), given the title of Sir by the British in India, are considered the pioneers of this movement. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who had a close relationship with Orientalists in India, was influenced by Western scientific research techniques after finding the opportunity to meet with Orientalists such as William Muir and Alois Sprenger, who were missionaries. In Egypt, the article of Rashid Reza (d. (d. 1354/1935) and Muhammad Tawfiq Sidki (d.1920) titled as "Islam Huw Al-Qur'an Wahdehu" and published in *Al-Manār* magazine, had great impacts in the country. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Ahmad Amin (d.1954) and Taha Hussein (d.1956) and the common discourse,

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<sup>13</sup> It is emphasized that Islam, as a religion, has established a rooted culture based on Hadiths. See. Wensinck, "The importance of Tradition for the Study of Islam"; Margoliouth, "On Moslem Tradition".

<sup>14</sup> Said, Edward, *Oryantalizm*, (Transl. Nezh Uzel), İstanbul 1998, p. 280-306, 365-366.

<sup>15</sup> For more information about the factors that have driven orientalists to conduct studies on Hadiths, see. Mehmet Görmez, "Klasik Oryantalizmi Hadis Araştırmalarına Sevk Eden Temel Faktörler", *İslamiyat* III (2000) Issue. 1, p. 12-30.

claims of today's Sunnah deniers who defend the Islam of the Qur'an can be summarized as follows.

1- The verses that command obedience to the Prophet are limited to the Qur'an.

2-The Sunnah is a temporary variable and has an initial nature.

3- It is voluntary to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet.

4- There is a small quantity of true Hadiths attributed to the Prophet.

The target of all these efforts is the deification of the Prophet and Islamic Civilization. The claim of the Orientalists is that most of the words and practices of the Prophet have not reached the present day, and even if they have, jurisprudence based on narrations is primitive and voluntary. If the Sunnah, which established the common life of the Prophet and Muslims, can be removed, the way will be opened to make the jurisprudence however they want, and the Islamic Union will be a dream forever.

We see that the East-West or Islamic-Christian conflicts are perpetuated based on some economic reasons, rather than religious, by political forces. American political scientist Samuel Huntington's theory of Clash of Civilizations, which makes the West and Islamic civilizations confront each other, gained acceptance as American think tanks and media outlets were seeking a new enemy. Islam was replaced by the collapsed communist bloc as the opposition to Western civilization, and ideas to support it began to be produced. According to Huntington, there would be an inter-civilization war in the future. There are social, cultural, philosophical principles and values unique to the West. Enlightenment principles such as "democracy", "rule of law", "human rights", "people's sovereignty" and "secularism" belong to Western civilization.<sup>16</sup> Samuel Huntington's thesis of *Clash of Civilizations* and Francis Fukuyama's thesis and works such as *End of History* provide theoretical material for these contradictions and even provide a kind of legitimacy and respect for terrorism by laying the groundwork for acts of terrorism in the intellectual world.<sup>17</sup>

September 11, 2001 was critical in creating fear of Islam. The anti-Muslim sentiment, which began to increase in the United States especially after the September 11 attacks, has also spread increasingly in European countries such as Germany, Austria, Britain, the Netherlands and France. It can be suggested that the

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<sup>16</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Tercih, Küresel Hâkimiyet mi? Küresel Liderlik mi?*, Transl. Cem Küçük, İstanbul, İnkılâp Yayınevi, 2nd Edition, 2005, p. 14; Samuel Huntington, *Medeniyetler Çatışması ve Yeni Dünya Düzeninin Yeniden Kurulması*, Transl. Mehmet Turhan and Cem Soydemir, İstanbul, Okyanus Yayınları, 2006, p. 237-268.

<sup>17</sup> Fulya Atacan, "Radikal İslam'ın Küresel Bir Tehdit'e Dönüşüm Süreci: Afganistan Deneyimi", *YDU Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Volume I, Number 1, April 2008, p. 35-52.



concept of Islamophobia was more used after this incident. Doesn't the former U.S. President George Bush's formal acceptance of the Clash of Civilizations' theory by declaring a new crusade of dividing the world into two parts, namely, friends and foes, mean a personal declaration of this theory by a state president? When America was hit by terrorists on September 11, 2001, the British and many countries of the world quickly accepted and supported the American declaration of war against terrorism on a global scale.<sup>18</sup>

What was brought forward during the fear of September 11 is that Islam and terror form an integral unity. In this regard, a few negative opinions regarding the personality of Prophet Muhammad were also expressed with increasing frequency in the press and publications. Although there is an impression that Islamophobic discourse should be identified more with terrorism and violence, we should not overlook the fact that it is not only violence mentioned in the West but also some other dimensions of the issue. Accordingly, in addition to the attempts to caricature the Prophet in the form of Osama b. Laden like a bomber, there were some other attempts claiming that he was excessively interested in women, all of which aimed to increase Islamophobia. It was at this point that he was claimed to have been a lustful misogynist and owner of the most negative convictions about women. It was apparently a smear campaign against his personality.

In Germany, on the other hand, the media is responsible for almost eighty percent of Islamophobic attitudes. Der Spiegel, which claims to be a high-level publication, made significant mistakes in Germany and put those who came from Islamic countries in the same category, as terrorists. In the media, the concept of 'Islamic terror' was often used and everyone was put in the same position.<sup>19</sup> The 1997 report also highlights three titles in the dominant representation of Islam: Sexism, street gangs and terrorist/extremist groups.<sup>20</sup> It is proved that the views suggesting that "Islamic cultures are uniform, stereotypical and therefore closed to change"<sup>21</sup> and that "Islam is dangerous and threatening" are still dominant in these countries. The belief that anti-Islamism does not constitute a racist discourse was valid at the time when both reports were written.<sup>22</sup>

They used digital games of our times as another important way to make Muslims be perceived as evil and keep people away from Islam and the Prophet. The following are the most popular games with an emphasis on anti-Islam audio effects, visuals and characters in digital games played by millions of people every

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<sup>18</sup> Brzezinski, "Tercih, Küresel Hâkimiyet mi? Küresel Liderlik mi?", p. 13-14, 178.

<sup>19</sup> Cihan haber Ajansı "Medya İslamofobiyi Körüklüyor" <https://www.uhim.org/medya-islamofobiyi-korukluyor.html> (2.10.2017)

<sup>20</sup> Runnymede Trust, *The New Muslims*, London, 2013, p. 6.

[https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/Runnymede\\_The\\_New\\_Muslims\\_Perspective.pdf](https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/Runnymede_The_New_Muslims_Perspective.pdf) (October 6, 2017).

<sup>21</sup> Runnymede Trust, *Islamofobia: a challenge for us all*, Great Britain, 1997, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Runnymede Trust, *The New Muslims*, London, s.6; Runnymede Trust, *Islamofobia: a challenge for us all*, p. 4.

day. *Resident Evil*: In this game with millions of users, the gate of Muhammad's tomb is touted as the source of the chaos of evil, where enemies come in armies. *Counter Strike*: In this world-famous video game which is based on a war between soldiers and terrorists, terrorists used to shout as 'Allah Akbar' and 'La ilaha illallah' when they were captured or shot. Due to the intense reaction of the Islamic world, the owners of the game updated the game and these sound effects were removed. *Muslim Massacre*: This game is based on killing fully-veiled women and men with beards. At the end of the game, the player is commanded to kill Muhammad.<sup>23</sup>

It is obvious that these games arouse prejudice against the Prophet and Islam as well as fear, grudges and hatred. These actions aims at preventing Islam from spreading rapidly among Christians in Europe and America, and to discredit the Prophet.

Therefore, it is meaningful that European countries and the United States support terrorist organizations, such as ISIS, which have recently emerged under the name of Islam. For example, after the invasion of Iraq, ISIS militants have become the most recognized terrorist organization in the world with the brutal decapitation of US journalist James Foley and the release of its video record to the world.<sup>24</sup> It is clear that these images increased anti-Islamism in Europe. After 12 deaths in the Charlie Hebdo attacks (January 7, 2015) and 130 deaths in Paris attack (November 13, 2015), the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls stated the following words in a TV program: "What I want to say to the French is, 'we are at war'. (...) Yes, we are at war and we will act and shoot down these jihadist enemies, to destroy them in France, in Europe, in Syria and in Iraq. (...) We're going to win this war." The Prime Minister's tough attitude affected the daily life in France, as a special rule was declared throughout the country, soldiers proliferated in the streets and inspections were at the highest level. Police raids were carried out on Muslim associations and indirectly put Muslims as the targets.<sup>25</sup> Slavoj Zizek, a racist in Europe who immediately linked the Syrian refugee crisis to ISIS, expressed the following views on free movement in his call to Europeans: "Fundamentalist Muslims find blasphemy of Islam and lesbians unbearable and reckless caricatures intolerable, while we consider them our freedoms. As traditional French citizens, we find it impossible to keep silent by accepting a woman dressed in a veil as an attack on her French identity. It is imperative to do two things to prevent this trend. In order to protect individual freedoms against group oppression, it is necessary to set out a set of norms and apply them legally, without fear that these norms will

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<sup>23</sup> [Dijital oyunlarda "İslamofobi" tehlikesi -infografik- Anadolu Ajansı, http://aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/dijital-oyunlarda-islamofobi-tehlikesi/660381](http://aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/dijital-oyunlarda-islamofobi-tehlikesi-660381). (October 5, 2017)

<sup>24</sup> Barın, Tedirgin Nefret, p. 225.

<sup>25</sup> See: Sümeyye Gedikoğlu, "İslamofobia", Kamuda Sosyal Politika, Issue: 34, January-February-March 2016, p. 72.

appear to be European centrist.”<sup>26</sup> In Europe, a 2013 report stated that anti-Muslim attitudes are on the rise.<sup>27</sup> A phone helpline used for reporting Islamophobic incidents reported that 58% of physical assaults during the 12-month period were carried out against Muslim women. The target of most of these attacks by the West is the Prophet. Allegations about the Prophet of Islam being violent, lustful and a false prophet stand out among others.<sup>28</sup> According to Orientalists, violence and sexuality are at the forefront of Muhammad’s religion, which he created for his own purpose, and those who believe in this religion inevitably behave in the same way. Islam is portrayed as a religion based on aggression and war, which spreads on this basis and allows polygyny, homosexuality and promiscuity. It is alleged that Islam created the idea of a ‘holy war’ in which anyone who is not a Muslim would be brutally killed or enslaved, and described heaven as a garden of sexual passion and pleasures.<sup>29</sup>

Based on Daniel’s statement above, the claims attributed to the Prophet can be expressed in three titles:

1. The claim that Muhammad is a false prophet and Islam is a superstitious sect of Christianity.
2. The claim that Islam is a religion of violence and terror.
3. The claim that the Prophet was a lustful person.

#### **a. False Prophet Perception**

At the top of the criticisms directed to the Prophet, the claims of Yuhanna al-Dimashqi, who states that Muhammad was a false prophet, he had some knowledge of the Old and New Testament, and even took lessons from an Ariusian priest, were repeated in certain tones by Orientalist such as Thomas Aquinas,<sup>30</sup> Leone Caetani (d. 1935),<sup>31</sup> Cardini Franko<sup>32</sup> and Emile Dermanghem (d. 1971).

The Qur’an states that the birth of the Prophet Muhammad was mentioned by Jesus and the Jewish did not even accept the prophecy of Jesus and considered it

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<sup>26</sup> Slavoj Zizek, *In the Wake of Paris Attacks the Left Must Embrace Its Radical Western Roots*, <http://inthesetimes.com/article/18605/breaking-the-taboos-in-the-wake-of-paris-attacks-the-left-must-embrace-its> (October 2, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Trust, *The New Muslims*, London, p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> Norman Daniel, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*, London: Longman, 1975, p. 109, 220, 229, 314-17.

<sup>29</sup> Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of the Image*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960, p. 123-125, 136-154.

<sup>30</sup> Montgomery Watt, *İslam’ın Avrupaya Tesiri*, (Transl. Hilmi Yavuz), İstanbul, Boğaziçi yayınları, 1986, p. 82.

<sup>31</sup> Leone Caetani, *Maometta profeta d’Arabia*, Roma 1910, , I, 7, 156-157, II, 61, 76, 77; *İslâm Tarihi* (Trans. Hüseyin Cahid), İstanbul 1924-27, I, 310-322, 374-379, see. Mahmut H. Şakiroğlu, “Caetani, Leon” *DİA*, VI, 545.

<sup>32</sup> Cardini, Franko, *Avrupa ve İslam*, (Transl. Gürol Koca) İstanbul, Literatür Yayınları, 2004, p. 175.

as magic.<sup>33</sup> When they asked the Prophet for evidence, he rejected this request of the polytheists of Mecca by saying that people had previously rejected miracles as magic. The Qur'an is a miracle in itself and offers to those who have doubts about the Revelation and Prophethood that they should seek help from humans and Jinn in creating the like of it. In the Gospels, and especially in the Gospel of John, the future coming of Paraclete is mentioned in four places:<sup>34</sup> The revelation stated in Chapter 16, Verse 13 of the Gospel of John corresponds to the third and fourth verses of An-Najm: "Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed." Ahmed, one of the names of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad, also means "praised". For this reason, by some Islamic scholars, the word Parakletos is the same word as Periklutos and corresponds to Ahmed in the same meaning.<sup>35</sup> In the Gospel of Barnabas, Jesus says, "For I am not worthy to unloosen the ties of the hosen or the latches of the shoes of the messenger of Allah whom ye call "Messiah," who was made before me, and shall come after me, and shall bring the words of truth, so that his faith shall have no end."<sup>36</sup> and this is interpreted as someone who will be the descendant of Ismael and whose name will be Mohammad.<sup>37</sup> As a result, in the words of the prophet and the Qur'an, the people of the book were better acquainted with them than their own sons, but they turned their backs on them, despite their affirmation and support.<sup>38</sup> The Christians of Najran, who knew this, did not resort to conjecture.<sup>39</sup> Contrary to the claim that the Prophet falsified proof of the Torah and the Bible, the people of the Qur'an say that they have corrupted the original of the book.<sup>40</sup> The suggestion exists that everybody becomes happy with what he has applied to this situation.<sup>41</sup> The claims that Islam is a heretical Christian sect and that Muslims also worship the Kaaba are unexplainable. If worshipping towards Al-Aqsa was heresy, all divine religions had to be accepted as pagan beliefs. However, as the Angels are commanded to prostrate to Adam,<sup>42</sup> humans are also commanded to pray to Allah, not the Kaaba.<sup>43</sup>

There is no evidence for the claim that the Prophet learned Islam from a priest belonging to the Arius sect. The claim that the Prophet received all the information from Bahira in a meeting during his childhood journey to Syria is also not in an acceptable consistency. This small monastery where Bahira lived always

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<sup>33</sup> as-Saf 61/6.

<sup>34</sup> Bible (Incil) Turkish Translation, Istanbul, Yei Yaşam Yayınları, 1996, Yuhanna, Chapter: 14: Verse 16, 26 Chapter: 15, Verse 26-27 Chapter: 16, Verse 7-13.

<sup>35</sup> Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kuran Dili*, İstanbul, Eser, 1971, VIII/12-17.

<sup>36</sup> Barnabas, Chapter: 42: 13th Verse (Trans. Halil, Saade), Matbatı Menar, nd., p. 41-2.

<sup>37</sup> Barnabas, Chapter: 43-44.

<sup>38</sup> al-Baqarah 2/146.

<sup>39</sup> Ali 'Imran 3/61.

<sup>40</sup> an-Nisa, 4/46.

<sup>41</sup> al-Mu'min 23/53.

<sup>42</sup> Sad 38/73.

<sup>43</sup> an-Najm 53/62.

had a book, and every priest who read it became the most knowledgeable of Christians. Ibn al-Nadīm says that there may be translations of the religious texts kept by Bahira.<sup>44</sup> Bahira saw Muhammad shadowed by a cloud, and when he sat under a tree, its branches bent over him. So, he immediately prepared a feast and invited members of the caravan to dinner. The Quraysh accepted this invitation of Bahira, who had never been interested in them until that day, with a bit of amazement. They left Muhammad by the caravan and went to the monastery. However, Bahira asked him to come to dinner and he took care of himself, asked him various questions, and he looked at his back and saw the seal of Prophethood (Khatam an-Nabiyyin). Bahira then asked Abu Talib whose son Muhammad was. When he learned that he had been orphaned, he advised to take good care of him and to protect him from the Jewish. So, Abu Talib ended his affairs in Syria and took him to Mecca. At the end of this narration, it is also mentioned that three people from the people of the book tried to harm Muhammad but Bahira stopped them from doing so.<sup>45</sup>

Some scholars say that the Hadith about the Bahira incident is not authentic, that none of the narratives witnessed it, and that 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Ghazwan, who was one of them, used to narrate "suspicious"<sup>46</sup> Hadiths, criticizing the narrators claiming that it was impossible for Abu Musa al-Ash'ari to witness this incident. In addition, the Prophet's brief meeting with Bahira at that early age, as Christians claim, is contrary to reason and logic to learn some of the principles of the religion of Islam. Accordingly, they have either completely rejected this incident or they not even considered it worth to dwell on. Ibn Hisham stated that he did not take into his own work "some poems that Ibn Ishaq chanted, but which those who engaged in poetry did not accept as true", which is reasonable enough to doubt that these poems belonged to Abu Talib. In addition, it is also clear that whether the Bahira incident is true or not cannot be decided by simply looking at these poems. In fact, accepting or rejecting the Bahira incident has no importance in terms of the Prophet's personality or the religion of Islam.<sup>47</sup>

As a result, aside from the criticism of the narrations related to Bahira, it is possible that the Prophet may have gone on such a journey in history. However, it is impossible that the Prophet received Islam or the Qur'an from Bahira during this meeting.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibn al-Nadim, *Kitab al-fihrist*, p. 24.

<sup>45</sup> At-Tirmidhi, Muhammad ibn 'Isa, *Jami' at-Tirmidhi*, (Ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shakir) Beirut, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, nd., "al-Manaqib" 3; al-Bayhaqi, *Dala'il an-Nubuwwa* (ed. 'Abd al-Mu'ti Amin Qal'aji), Beirut 1405/1985, II, 24-29; Al-Suyūṭī, *Al Khasais-ul-Kubra*, (ed. M Khalil Harras), Cairo 1386-87/1967, I, 206-213; al-Nabhani, *Hujjat Allah 'ala'l-'Alamin*, Beirut 1316, p. 157-160; Maulana Shibli, *Islām Tarihi, Asr-i Saadet: Peygamberimizin Sireti*, (Trans. Ömer Rıza [Doğrul]), İstanbul 1346/1921, I, 198-202.

<sup>46</sup> Abu Nu'aym, Ahmad ibn Abdullah, *Al-Du'afā'*, Ed. Fārūq Hamāda, by., Dar ats-Tsaqafah, 1984, I, 144; al-Daraqutni, 'Ali ibn 'Umar, *Sualatu'l-Hakim*, Ed. Muhammad ibn Abdullah, Riyad, Maktabat al-Ma'arif, 1st Edition 1984, I, 123.

<sup>47</sup> See. Mustafa Fayda, "Bahîrâ" *DĪA*, İstanbul, İSAM, 1993, IV/487.

## b. The Perception of Terror and Violent Inclinations

The U.S. invasion in Iraq, Iran's abuse of instability in Iraq and Syria, the brutality of dictators such as Bashar al-Assad, and the ensuing sectarian insecurity have spawned organizations like ISIS. Even if terrorist organizations name themselves using Islamic words, it is wrong to associate their actions with Islam. Terror is a multi-headed monster and cannot be reduced to a single cause.

According to the Pope Urbanus II, who declared the first Crusades in 1095, Muslims were the servants of Satan. For that reason, war with Muslims was actually considered a war between God's enemies and his friends.<sup>48</sup> According to Luther, La Noue, Abercromby, Francis Bacon it was brutal, tyrant, savage and barbarian<sup>49</sup>, while for Voltaire believers were "head hunters"<sup>50</sup>, and according to Montesquieu, Botero and Lewis, the Islamic religion itself was the main factor in violence and despotism. They also claim that Ali and Muhammad were tyrants, by Western standards.<sup>51</sup> On September 30, 2005, published by a newspaper called *Jyllands Posten* where a Danish cartoonist depicted Muhammad as a suicide bomber and in the shape of Osama bin Laden, who used to say that terrorists would go to heaven after death. In Muslim countries, where it is forbidden to portray their Prophet in any normal manner according to their beliefs, this situation has caused a great disruption and hundreds of people died as a result of the events.<sup>52</sup> The Muslim state missions in Denmark, especially the Turkish Consulate, explained that the cartoon in question would not bring beneficial relations between ethnic and religious groups. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Prime Minister of Denmark at the time, was asked for an appointment, but the requests were turned down; he was forced to express his respect for religious beliefs and disapprove of the depiction of religious figures in a way that offended Muslims.<sup>53</sup>

In Norway, which is considered one of the safest countries in the world, people have experienced the most horrific massacre to rock Europe since the Second World War. Immediately after the Oslo massacre, Western terror experts at the agencies likened the attack to September 11, claiming that it was one of the

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<sup>48</sup> Dominique Schnapper, *Sosyoloji Düşüncesinin Özünde Öteki ile İlişki*, (Transl. Aşegül Sönmezay), İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005, p. 45.

<sup>49</sup> Francis Bacon, *Denemeler*, (Transl. Elif Günçe), İstanbul, Morpa Kültür Yayınları, 2004, p. 45111.

<sup>50</sup> Voltaire, *Candide ya da İyimserlik*, (Transl. Server Tanilli), İstanbul, Cem Yayınları, 1994, p. 242.

<sup>51</sup> Galen Johnson, "Muhammad and Ideology in Medieval Christian Literature", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, XI-, 2000, p. 336-338; Albert Hourani, *Avrupa ve Orta Doğu*, (Transl. Ahmet Aydoğan, Fahrettin Altun), İstanbul 2001, p. 60; Alain Servante, "Batılıların Gözünde Türk İmajının Geçirdiği Değişimler", (Ed. Özlem Kumrullar), *Dünyada Türk İmgesi*, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2nd Edition, 2008, p. 59; Aslı Çarkman, *Avrupa ve Öteki: Avrupa İmgesinin Osmanlı Aydınlanmasından Yansıması*, (Ed. Fuat Keyman), Türkiye'nin Yeniden İnşası, İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013, p. 55-58.

<sup>52</sup> Barın, *Tedirgin Nefret İslamofobi*, p. 137; Canatan, *Batı Dünyasında İslamofobi*, p. 422.

<sup>53</sup> Vinocur, J., and Bilefsky D., "Dane Sees Greed and Politics in the Crisis", *Newyork Times*, October 02, 2006. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/10/world/europe/dane-sees-greed-and-politics-in-the-crisis.html>. (October 03, 2017).

Islamic terrorist organizations, whereas the massacre was planned by Anders Behring Breivik of Norway. Breivik killed eight people with a fertilizer bomb in central Oslo, behind which he massacred sixty-nine people on the island of Utoya.<sup>54</sup> Breivik admits himself to be a “templar”, a crusader, and fighting in the name and good of Christianity. The media described every terrorist act that took place after September 11 as Islamic terror, thus creating Islamophobia. If the killer were a Muslim, the media would immediately name it as Islamic terrorism, putting religious identity in the fore front. But when it was understood that the killer was not a Muslim, his mental health was brought to the fore.<sup>55</sup> The attempt to identify the concepts of Islam and terrorism, especially after the September 11 attacks, has made Muslims who are already discriminated against in Europe “usual” suspects. The challenges faced by Muslims in the Western world are exacerbated by the perception that regards the religion at the center of conflicts. In the U.S. State of Texas, shots were fired at the crowd at the First Baptist Church during Sunday Mass. According to primary reports, 26 people were killed and 30 wounded in the attack.<sup>56</sup> When Devin Patrick Kelley, the killer who carried out the church raid and killed dozens of people, was understood to be a Christian, the Trump claimed that there were many people in the country whose mental health was impaired.<sup>57</sup> If he were a Muslim, the world would certainly rise up.

Today, 1.7 billion people believe in the Prophet and Islam. The problem is not caused by Islam’s theology. Islam, like every divine religion, offers peace, justice, brotherhood, love and solidarity. Within groups of believers, in all religions, there are people who resort to violence. Today, Israel's attacks and violent acts against the Palestinian people are the most vivid examples of the state terror in the eyes of the international public. In Myanmar, there are acts of state terrorism committed by the Arakan Buddhist communities against the Arakan Muslims, the Christian anti-Balaka organization carries out genocidal violence against Muslims in the Central African Republic, and there are conflicts between Catholic and Protestant Christians in Ireland and the UK. None of these is or should be considered relevant to religious beliefs, and perpetrators should not be named as Christian, Catholic or Protestant terrorists. The same respect and consistency must also be adopted for Islam. The West and the United States, which gave birth to organizations such as the Taliban, Hezbollah and ISIS, are understood to have staged and orchestrated the September 11 attacks with violent extremist groups to validate the thesis of a Clash of Civilizations. The background of this lies in subtly preventing those who choose Islam, as well as pursuing their interests in the

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<sup>54</sup> K  c  kcan, T. (2009). Avrupa İslamofobiye teslim mi?, Ankara, SETA Vakfı Yayınları, 2009. <https://www.setav.org/avrupa-islamofobiye-teslim-mi/> (October 3, 2017).

<sup>55</sup> Barın, *Tedirgin Nefret İslamofobi ve DAES*, p. 119.

<sup>56</sup> November 05, 2017, Sunday 22:18. <http://www.posta.com.tr/abd-de-kiliseye-saldiri-cok-sayida-olu-ve-yarali-var-haberi-1349257>. (November 6, 2017).

<sup>57</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/05/politics/trump-texas-shooting-act-evil/index.html>.

Islamic geography in a climate of turmoil. In order to achieve this, they identify the Prophet and Muslims with terror.

The courts of many European countries have ruled that these publications target only those who support terrorism, not all Muslims, and therefore they are within the limits of freedom of thought and criticism. However, the Prophet, portrayed as a terrorist and a person with moral weaknesses, is not only the symbol of so-called perpetrators of terrorist attacks but also a person who is praised and accepted as a model by all Muslims. These publications offend all Muslims. This is also a clear violation of the rule of respect for religious sensitivities and non-blasphemy, which is enshrined in the European legal *acquis* as a fundamental human right.

“Islam” literally means “peace”. The Qur'an has forbidden deliberate and unjust killing and stated that the murderer's punishment is to stay in hell forever. The Book regards killing one person equal to killing all people and declared that saving one person's life equals saving all people's lives. O you who have believed, enter Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy”.<sup>58</sup> The Prophet fought in wars when necessary. However, he prohibited the killing of children, women<sup>59</sup>, the elderly, and religious people engaged in worship as long as they did not fight against Muslims during the war, as well as the destruction of places of worship, the killing of animals, and the cutting of trees.<sup>60</sup>

Considering these divine principles of Islam, it will be seen that terror, violence, depression and anarchy have nothing to do with it. Just as those in the West who claim to be “templars” should not be considered representatives of Christianity; in the Islamic world, the mistakes that some terrorist groups make in the name of Islam cannot be referred to the Prophet or to all Muslims.

Watt's findings on this subject are as follows: “Many Christian scholars believe that Muhammad spread his religion by military force; and killing the enemies of the Prophet and Allah and doing all kinds of cruelty to them are orders of the religion. The image that Europe has devised about Islam is far from the truth. It was not specifically asked of Jewish, Christians, or other people of the book to choose Islam or the sword. The military activities of Muslims are only used to grow in political terms. The image that Islam is a violent religion is at odds with the image that Christianity is a religion of peace spread by persuasion. Those who participated in the Crusades believe that their religion is a religion of peace, while that of their opponents is a religion of violence.”<sup>61</sup> Although the Muslim conquests

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<sup>58</sup> See: an-Nisa 4/93; al-Maidah 5/32; al-Baqarah 2/208.

<sup>59</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Ed. W. Jounboll), Leyde, 1862-1908, “*Al-Jihad wa As-Siyar*” 145; Abu Dawud, “*Kitab al-Jihad*” 121.

<sup>60</sup> Al-San'ani, 'Abd al-Razzaq ibn Hammam, *Musannaf*, (Ed. Habib al-Rahman A'zami), Beirut, Al-Maktabah Al-Islamiyyah, 2nd Edition, 1403, IV, 453.

<sup>61</sup> Montgomery, *Islam in Avrupa Tesiri*, p. 82.



were proven to have legitimate and justifiable reasons for Muslims, they have been perceived as a threat to the other side and this has led to “Islamophobic” and “anti-Islamist” sentiments.<sup>62</sup>

By these words, Watt reveals that there is a deliberate perception operation against Muslims. However, the second important point is that the word “jihad” in the Qur’an and Hadith does not always mean war. The word “jihad” refers to effort and struggle besides meaning “war”. In this sense, it is seen that the terrorist groups that identify themselves as Islamic have taken evidence by drawing the verses and Hadiths out of context. The fact that this concept is interpreted as a call to war in every verse and Hadith poses another concern. Certain groups take the verse of an-Nisa, “Allah has preferred the mujahideen through their wealth and their lives over those who remain [behind], by degrees”<sup>63</sup> and “And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good” from Al-‘Ankabut<sup>64</sup> as their bases. According to ISIS, fighting until the “Islamic State” prevails on Earth is the core duty of Muslims. ISIS supporters suggest that the activity, which refers to concepts such as jihad, *qital*, *Amr bil Ma’ruf wa Nahy an al Munkar*, will bring people to Allah’s pleasure and heaven, and to fight and struggle against everything that is an obstacle to the survival of the “Islamic State” is obligatory. The organization considers young people who are not primarily supportive of its spread to be opposed to Islam and apostates. ISIS considers it as a duty to fight against almost all Muslims who are not beside them. Including many innocent people who do not attack them, they harass or punish people based on the jihadist revelations by keeping them apart from their cause and historical context.<sup>65</sup>

The last verse of Surat al-Ankabut was revealed before jihad was allowed. According to the explanations of the commentators, al-Ankebut was one of the chapters revealed in Mecca. For this reason, the verse cannot be specific to those who fight on the battlefield. What is meant by jihad here is to fight against all forms of disbelief. Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 751/1350) interprets the verse on this subject as follows: “That is a struggle against the torments of the disbelievers with the soul. It means patience for emigration and similar incidents. It was also said to be fighting. This is a weak possibility. Because at the time of the revelation, war had not yet been ordered for the believers.”<sup>66</sup> It is narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Abbās that the verse “Allah will guide you to the path of guidance” refers to the following: “We will guide those who strive to obey us to the path of reward.” This exegesis contains all the obedience and words. A similar interpretation is narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr. According to Al-Qurtubi (d. 656/1258), this means “strive in our way

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<sup>62</sup> Canatan, *Batı Dünyasında İslamofobi ve Anti-İslamizm*, p. 83,70.

<sup>63</sup> An-Nisa 5/95

<sup>64</sup> Al-‘Ankabut, 29/69.

<sup>65</sup> İmadüddin Haytî, *şübehât tazîmi ‘d-devleti’l-İslâmî ve’r-red aleyha*, yy., Heyetü’ş-Şamî’l-İslamiyye, 1st edition. 2015, p. 70, 71

<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-Jawzi, Muhammad ibn Ahmad, *Kitāb al-Tashîl li-’ulūm al-tanzîl*, (Ed. Muhammad Salim Hashim), Darul Kutub Al-İlmiah, 1995, II, 129.

against the infidels”, or, “strive in the will to attain our mercy”. Al-Suddī (d. 127/745) and other interpreters also stated that the verse had been revealed before war was ordained.<sup>67</sup> According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi, Allah relates the verse “strive in our way” to the struggle against desires. Those who are superior to others in truth are those who strive harder. The most significant type of struggle is the one against desires, Satan, and worldly things. Whoever strives for the cause of Allah in these four things, Allah guides him to the path he has pleased. Whoever leaves jihad, has missed the guidance. Junayd of Baghdad (d. 297/909) interprets this verse as: “Fight against your desires and repent with us (in our school). Let us lead you to the path of righteousness.”<sup>68</sup> Muadh ibn Jabal: “It is jihad to research to achieve knowledge. Allah chooses whom he will, and guides to his path.”<sup>69</sup>

Although some groups who interpret the Qur'an with a piecemeal approach and dissociate it from its context think that there should be a constant war against non-believers, the Qur'an gives doesn't give space to hostility against anyone other than the wrongdoers. The same false perception about the word "jihad" is also seen among non-Muslims. Some non-Muslims claim that jihad is a significant element that threatens them, so that Muslims should be prevented from spreading to other countries. Basing Islamophobia on the verses of jihad, it is understood that there is a perception based on misinterpretation by dissociating these verses from their context.

In a narrative mentioned in Sahih al-Bukhari and some other Hadith books, the Prophet says: “I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform that, then they save their lives and property from me except for Islamic laws and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah.”<sup>70</sup>

The information given at the end of the narrative suggests that it is more appropriate to refer the word “jihad” to “fighting”. However, most of the narrations in the well-accepted Hadith sources do not include the part stated at the end. Only the first part of the narrative, which is “I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah” is mentioned and attributed to the Prophet while the rest is described as words of Abu Bakr.<sup>71</sup> It is understood from this narrative that anyone who accepts the basic principles of Islam will be considered a believer, and cannot be declared

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<sup>67</sup> al-Qurtubi, *al-Jamiu li-Ahkami al-Qur'an*, XIII, 264; -5

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Qayyim, *Al-Fawa'id*, I, 59.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, *Jami' al-tahsil*, VI, 82.

<sup>70</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari, “Kitab Al-Iman” 15; *Sahih Muslim*, (Ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, Cairo, 1955-1956, “Iman” 8.

<sup>71</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī “Kitab Istitabah Al-Murtaddin” 3; “Jihad” 101; “T'tisam”2; Sahih Muslim “Iman” 8; Abu Dawud, Suleiman ibn Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, (Ed. Muhammad Muhyiddin Abd al-Hamid), Cairo 1935, “Kitab Al-Zakat” 1; “Jihad” 104

otherwise. We can say that this Hadith narrated from Abu Bakr was used against those who did not give tax to the state during his time, but still claimed to be Muslim. It can be said that the cause of this war was more of a rebellion against the state, than taxation. It is also forbidden in the Qur'an to use force on people to convert them into Islam. The verse "So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder."<sup>72</sup> is an obstacle to fight. There is no compulsion in religion after the truth is separated from falsehood.<sup>73</sup> It is obvious from these verses that those who do not convert to Islam will not be forced, but a Muslim is responsible for carrying out the duties of Allah, his state, the nation of Islam, his family and himself.

### c. Perception of Women

The following statements of Watt shows significant determinations about the Western perception of Muhammad. "In the eyes of medieval Europe, Islam was a religion of self-indulgence. It was supposed that a man could marry as many women as he wanted and that nothing could affect the number of ladies except the bulge of the purse. Although some authors knew that no more than four were allowed, they were often misinterpreting the verses of the Qur'an to say that the limit was seven or ten. It was said that the Qur'an even allowed homosexuality. According to some, Islam's permission for illegitimate sexual relations had reached its final point with the descriptions of paradise in the Qur'an. The criticisms are generally based on false claims and exaggerations, Muhammad's family life was also subject to much criticism. In this respect, the sensuality in the image of Islam drawn in the Middle Ages was to make Islam nonsense in many ways. According to Europeans, Muslims were self-indulgent in other aspects also..."<sup>74</sup> Leone Caetani (d. 1935), Emile Dermanghem (d. 1971) and some similar modernist Orientalists suggest that Muhammad's success was due to his proclamation of sexual freedom through polygyny. The Prophet's marriage with Zaynab bint Jahsh was distorted through misinterpretations and they accused and slandered Him in this way.<sup>75</sup> The fact that the Prophet married Aisha when she was nine years old was one of the first claims mentioned as criticism. This marriage of the Prophet with Aisha, who was nine years old then, was described as "the marriage of a man of fifty-four years of age to a child of the age of playing with toys"<sup>76</sup> and defined it as lustfulness and even as "pedophilia" by exceeding the limits of tolerance.<sup>77</sup> They also described it as a "strange marriage" of an old man with a virgin girl.<sup>78</sup> Those trying to criticize the

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<sup>72</sup> Surah Al-Ghashiyah 88/21-22

<sup>73</sup> al-Baqarah 256

<sup>74</sup> Montgomery, *İslamın Avrupaya Tesiri*, p. 83.

<sup>75</sup> Caetani, *Maometta profeta d'Arabia*, II, 61, 76, 77.

<sup>76</sup> Reinhart Dozy, *Tarih-i İslamiyet*, (Transl: Abdullah Cevdet -Osmanlıca metin-), İstanbul 1908, I, 105

<sup>77</sup> See. Ebu'l-Ala el-Mevdudi, *Tarih Boyunca Tevhit Mücadelesi ve Hz. Peygamber*, (Transl: Ahmet Asrar), İstanbul, Pınar Yayınları, 1984, II, 533

<sup>78</sup> Aisha, Abd al-Rahman, *Rasulullahın Annesi ve Hanımları*, Transl: İsmail Kaya, Konya 1987, II, 72.

Prophet brought up the age of Aisha when she got married and claimed that the Prophet married a child, a girl “playing”, as He was too much fond of women.<sup>79</sup>

### 1. Claims Regarding His Being Lustful

The Prophet brought important changes and regulations regarding the covenant of marriage. But the age of marriage, the marriage ceremony, etc. were not changed as traditions were dominant in these issues. He even followed this tradition. Some of his actions, due to being a member of Arab culture in the 7th century, have been the subject of criticism from time to time. Polygyny and marrying Zainab bint Jahsh and Aisha were the most criticized topics among others. Some Orientalists went further in their criticism by comparing the traditions of the Arab tradition and culture of the period to their own cultures and perceptions of the period in which they lived.

#### a. His Polygyny

There were social and political reasons behind polygyny, especially polygyny of kings, during the Prophet's time. The Prophet also married 12 women of different tribes and nationalities. Five of them were from Quraysh and Aisha was a member of Banū Taym, a sub-clan of it. Besides Aisha, the Prophet also married Khadija bint Khuwaylid, Sawda bint Zam'a, Hafsa bint 'Umar, Zainab binti Khuzaimah, Ummu Salamah binti Abi Umayyah, Zainab bint Jahsh, Juwayriya bint al-Harith, Safiyyah bint Huyayy, Umm Habiba bint Abi Sufyan, Maria bint Sham'un and Maymunah bint al-Harith.<sup>80</sup> Most of His marriages were after the death of Khadija, when He had two children already, and in the period He lived in Medina as the leader of the Islamic state.

The Prophet's marriage to more than one woman was biasedly criticized by Western scholars, without considering that polygyny was a part of the social system of that period and was a necessary phenomenon for solving many moral, social and economic problems.<sup>81</sup> The fact that the Western scholars who directed these criticisms made no criticism of marriages of prophets David and Solomon points out that they were not neutral in their criticism.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Turan Dursun, *Din Bu*, İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2000, I, 26, IV, 97–98.

<sup>80</sup> Hamidullah, Muhammed, *İslam Peygamberi*, (Transl. Salih Tuğ), İstanbul, İrfan Yayıncılık, 1990, II, 676–691; Ziya Kazıcı, *Hz. Muhammed'in Eşleri ve Aile Hayatı*, İstanbul, Çağ Yayınları, 1991, p. 73–331; Aisha, Abd al-Rahman, *ibid.*, p. 399–400.

<sup>81</sup> For relevant allegations, see. Abdülaziz Hatip, *Kuran ve Hz. Peygamber Aleyhindeki İddialara Cevaplar*, İstanbul 1997, 164 et al.

<sup>82</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Siret Ansiklopedisi*, (Transl. Heyet), İstanbul 1990, II, 197 et al.

The Prophet married Khadija, who was five years older than Him, and stayed with her until He turned to fifty, and only after her death married Sawda, who was at the same age with the Prophet. Most of his marriages took place in Medina after the age of fifty-three and during his time as the head of state. In addition, all but one of the women he married are either widows or women with children from previous marriages. This suggests that the main motive of His marriages was not "lust". It is seen that political aims weigh heavily on the Prophet's marriages. For instance, He improved his relations with Abu Bakr and 'Umar by marrying Aisha and Hafsa. Through His marriage with Ummu Salamah from Bani Makhzum, He prevented the enmity of Abu Jahl's tribe, which had the greatest hostility to Islam. By marrying Umm Habiba, who was the daughter of Abi Sufyan, the leader of Mecca, He tried to soften her relations and ensured that He would never face him again in a battle. With His marriage to Safiyyah, the daughter of the leader of Banu Nadir, he reduced the enmity of the Jewish and by marrying Juwayriya, who was the daughter of the leader of Banu Mustaliq, He encouraged this tribe to convert to Islam. He became a brother-in-law to nine famous tribal leaders, of whom Maymunah's nine sisters were married, and maintained an affinity with them, after His marriage to her. Allah wanted the Prophet to marry Zainab bint Jahsh to destroy a tradition of the age of ignorance and revealed verses to Qur'an about this. His other wife, Zainab binti Khuzaimah, was a member of a very powerful tribe called Hawazin.<sup>83</sup>

Like the other state leaders during this period, His marriages had political aspects. Moreover, these marriages of the prophet were not in the youth but relatively old period of Him. In addition, the polytheists of Mecca offered the Prophet the most beautiful woman of every tribe, besides presidency and money. He refused all of these offers although He was in his forties, which correspond to an earlier period of His life.<sup>84</sup> This is a clear evidence that He married for political reasons and not for sexuality.

### ***b. His Marriage to Aisha***

Marriage age, marriage form and rules, customs and practices vary according to cultures, societies and religions. The Prophet's marriage to Aisha is a subject of criticism today due to the age of Aisha. While the Prophet was over fifty, Aisha was younger than ten, which makes this marriage a matter of criticism. Although some scholars declare Aisha's marriage age as 17-18 through interpretations, the sources from the first period seem to agree that the engagement was when she was six and the marriage was when she was nine years old. The mistake in these scholars'

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<sup>83</sup> Mehmet Azimli, "Hz. Aişe'nin evlilik yaşı tartışmaları ya da savunmacı tarihçiliğin çıkmazı", *İslami Araştırmalar*, Ankara, Volume XVI, Issue 1, 28, 2003, p. 2-3.

<sup>84</sup> Al-Māwardī, Abū al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad, *Kitāb Alām al-nubuwwa*, (Ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'tašim bi-llāh al-Baghdādī), Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1st Edition 1987, I, 100.

interpretations is that they tried to raise Aisha's age to the range 15-20, which was the average age of marriage in their culture. They argued the prophet could not have married a 9-year-old girl and that this was a slander and a mistake that needed to be corrected. Accordingly, they expressed the view that He married Aisha when she was 17-18 years old.<sup>85</sup>

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an atheist, called the Islamic Prophet a pervert in Western criteria as a part of an Islamophobic campaign. What she refers to is his marriage to Aisha, who was nine years old when the Prophet himself was fifty-two. At the first night of that marriage, "they gave toys and dolls to this little girl who went to her husband's house. This girl, who liked to play, became the wife of the aging prophet of Allah." "Even though Aisha was the wife of the Prophet, she was still a child and was not ready to abandon childish things. The Elder Muhammad understood this and left it to its own course. When the prophet came home, He saw his "child wife" busy with her toys, and sometimes He himself played with her."<sup>86</sup> İlhan Arsel approaches the subject with a different perspective: "Girls who marry older men take a step into slavery at an early age by seeing their husband as a father and blindly adhering to him." Moreover, "the marriage of a girl at a very young age, depriving her of much, oppressing her, destroying her personality, is a requirement of social order according to the Sharia and one of the reasons why Muslim societies remain behind. The fact that the girls are married early and kept away from social life constitutes an obstacle to the progress of the Society" argues İlhan Arsel and criticizes the Prophet's marriage to Aisha, claiming that He was a model for society and encouraged that kind of marriage.<sup>87</sup>

Before analyzing explanations regarding Aisha's marriage age, mentioning women's age of marriage in the ignorance period of Arabs, Judaism, Christianity and some other societies would give better insights in this regard. Marriage ceremonies, marriage ages and duties of the family that form the basis of each society vary from one culture to another, and may even differ among the strata of the same society. The customs and traditions of each community related to the family have been formed according to their own cultural structure. Based on this fact, the Arab society in which the Prophet lived must be evaluated within the framework of its own unique way of marriage, customs and traditions. The Meccans used to dress their adolescent daughters in *Dār al-Nadwa*, meaning that they had reached the age of marriage.<sup>88</sup> In this region, girls were usually married before they turned 12; however, after giving birth, they were included in the family, and if they died without giving birth, their condolences would not be offered to her

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<sup>85</sup> See: Al-Aqqad, Abbas Mahmoud, *Al-siddiqa bint al-Siddiq*, Cairo Dârü'l-Ma'arif, 1963, 39.

<sup>86</sup> Toket, "Kadınların Peygamber Algısı Müslüman Kadınlar ve Hz. Muhammed", p. 139.

<sup>87</sup> İlhan Arsel, *Şeriat ve Kadın*, İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 1995, p. 145, 151

<sup>88</sup> M. Şemseddin Günaltay, *İslam Öncesi Araçlar ve Dinleri*, Ankara, Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 1997, p. 56; Ramazan Altıntaş, *Bütün Yönleriyle Cahiliye*, Konya, Ribat Yayınları, nd., p. 37.

husband.<sup>89</sup> Most of the time, the father or guardian could give the girl to the man he wanted, regardless of whether the girl wanted this marriage or whether the man was old or young.<sup>90</sup> As for the people of the book, in Judaism, girls must be 12 and boys must be 13 years old for the marriage to be legitimate, which is the age of puberty in Jews. <sup>91</sup>In Christianity, the age of marriage varies according to time and countries. In Rome and the Old Church law, the age of marriage was 12 for the girl and 14 for the boy, while in the new church law it was 14 for the girl and 16 for the boy.<sup>92</sup>

The marriage of the 10-year-old daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Iōannēs to Halil, son of Orhan Gazi,<sup>93</sup> can be regarded as an indication that women in different societies and cultures throughout history were married at an early age. Moreover, the marriage of women at an early age is a practice that can still be seen not only in the past, in some societies and religions, but also today in Asia, Europe, especially Portugal and Spain, and even in the remote, mountainous regions of the United States.<sup>94</sup> In early period sources of Islam, it is generally stated that Aisha was married at the age of six and had her wedding night<sup>95</sup> at the age of nine. After Khadija passed away, Khawlah bint Hakim suggested the Prophet to marry Sawda, who was a widow, and Aisha, who was a virgin. The Prophet approved these two proposals and sent Khawlah as a messenger on his behalf.<sup>96</sup> First, Abu Bakr hesitated considering that it might not be appropriate to marry the daughter of His brother, then when he realized that this brotherhood was a “brotherhood of religion” and that marriage was not haram in this case, He let her daughter marry the Prophet for five hundred dirham.<sup>97</sup> This marriage/engagement, which took place two years before the Hijrah, was completed with marriage life after the Prophet and Muslims of Mecca settled in Medina. Seven to eight months after the Hijrah, Abu Bakr asked the Prophet why he did not take Aisha with him, and when he realized that He could not afford a dowry, he lent Him some money. The dowry for Aisha was paid with this money and the marriage was realized.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Abdülkerim Özeydin, “Arap”, *DİA*, İstanbul, İSAM,1991, III, 321.

<sup>90</sup> Ateş, Ali Osman, *İslam'a Göre Cahiliyye ve Ehli Kitap Örf ve Adetleri*, İstanbul, Beyan Yayınları, 1996, p. 281; Neşet Çağatay, *İslam Dönemine Dek Arap Tarihi*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1989, p. 35–36.

<sup>91</sup> Asife Ünal, *Yahudilikte, Hıristiyanlıkta ve İslam'da Evlilik*, Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1998, p. 22.

<sup>92</sup> Ünal, *ibid.*, p. 80-81

<sup>93</sup> İsmail Hakkı Uzun Çarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, Ankara, Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Yayınları, nd., I, 139

<sup>94</sup> Aisha, Abd al-Rahman, Rasülullah'ın Annesi ve Hanımları, p. 240

<sup>95</sup> Muhammad ibn Ishaq, *Al-sira al-Nabawiyya*, (Ed. Muhammed Hamidullah), Konya, Hayra Hizmet Vakfı Yayınları,1981, p. 239; Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad, *Kitāb at-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, Tunis, Dār al-Garb al-Islāmi 1st Edition, 2009, VIII, 58–60; Sahih Al-Bukhari, “Kitab Al-Nikah”, 39–40; Sahih Muslim, “Kitab Al-Nikah”, 69–72; Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Jabir (279/892), *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Beirut, Dar al-Fikr, 1996, II, 38; Ibn al-Athir, 'Izz al-Din Abu al-Hassan ibn Abi al-Karam (630/1233), *Ussd al-Ghābah fī ma'rifat al-ṣaḥābah*, Beirut 1996, V, 205.

<sup>96</sup> Aisha, Abd al-Rahman, *ibid*, p. 235

<sup>97</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 59

<sup>98</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 63

As her father was the first man who accepted Islam, Aisha was educated according to Islamic thoughts from a very young age. She was a child who loved to play games. "The Messenger of Allah gathered with some men and women from the Ansar in our house. While I was swinging on swing between two date palms, my mother took me, straightened my hair, wiped my face, and let me in, and took me to the prophet, saying that they were my new family". If we consider this narrative above according to those who accept her marriage age as nine, it is an age of play. Based on the same narrative, if we accept Aisha's marriage age as older than nine, it will mean that Aisha was a young girl who liked to play games. Accordingly, Aisha continued to play with her friends and toys<sup>99</sup> even after she married to the Prophet. The Prophet, who knew that Aisha enjoyed playing games, ran together with her and watched the slaves from Abyssinia<sup>100</sup>, who were playing a war game around Al-Masjid an-Nabawī.<sup>101</sup>

They argue that due to the climatic conditions in hot areas, Arab women develop quickly in their own way, they become adolescents at an early age, and grow old quickly in the years following the age of twenty. Based on these narratives, they even claim that there is no problem for a girl to get married at six and live a marriage life at nine, and that marriages at a young age are appropriate and normal in that society. According to the proponents of this view, if the Prophet's marriage with Aisha went against traditions, the society in Mecca, being the most notorious enemies of the Prophet, would clearly state that they did not approve that marriage. However, in that period and society, as there was no aspect of Aisha's marriage to be vilified or accused, they did not react anyway.<sup>102</sup>

Regardless of the narratives mentioning that Aisha's age of marriage was nine, when we take the other narratives into account, we will see that, besides those arguing that she was 17-18, there are scholars who argue that the narratives about Aisha being engaged at the age of six and married at the age of nine are not true and are completely contrary to historical facts.<sup>103</sup> Those in this group are trying to prove their claims by basing them on narrations. According to them, before her engagement with the Prophet, Aisha was engaged with Jubayr ibn Mut'im. When Mut'im ibn 'Adi's family refused Abu Bakr's daughter, who was Muslim, for their son, Abu Bakr offered her to the Prophet. It could be useful to convey the assessment made by Yaşar Nuri Öztürk on this issue: "Thinking that Aisha was six years old when the Prophet married her, she must have been born four years after the prophethood was revealed. How could it be possible under these circumstances that Abu Bakr, who became a Muslim in the early days, agreed to offer his daughter

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<sup>99</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 61-62

<sup>100</sup> Aşık, Nevzat, *Hiz. Aişe'nin Hadisçiliği*, İzmir, Öğrenci Basımevi, 1987, p. 1

<sup>101</sup> Fayda, Mustafa, "Aişe", *DİA.*, İstanbul, İSAM, 1989, II, 20.

<sup>102</sup> Aisha, Abd al-Rahman, *ibid*, p. 239

<sup>103</sup> Konrapa, Zekai, *Peygamberimiz İslam Dini ve Aşere-i Mübeşşere*, İstanbul, Fatih Yayınevi, nd., p. 478.



to a pagan family as a bride? It is understood that long before Abu Bakr became a Muslim, Aisha had been asked by a pagan family and her father had accepted it. If this request had happened after Abu Bakr's acceptance of Islam, as a firm follower of the Prophet, Abu Bakr would never have tried to offer his daughter to a pagan family. Therefore, Aisha was born before the advent of Islam, and even at that time, she was in a condition to be asked by a family to be her bride. It is necessary to accept that Aisha was born at least five or six years before the advent of Islam. According to this, Aisha must be at least 14-15 years old at the time she was asked by the Prophet."<sup>104</sup> Another claim put forward by this group is the age and date of death of Aisha's older sister Asma. Asma died in Mecca at the age of 100, in 73 Hijri, a few days after her son, Abdullah, was killed. If Asma died in 73 Hijri, at the age of 100, she could be 27-28 years old during the Hijrah and Aisha, ten years younger than her, had to be 17. Since she married the Prophet eight months after the Hijrah, it is argued that Aisha was about 18 years old when she married. Rıza Savaş, one of the proponents of this view, approaches the issue in terms of migration to Abyssinia and says the following: The narrative from Aisha, "I have known my parents as religious people since I began reasoning. The prophet would come to us almost every morning and evening. When the Muslims were trapped, Abu Bakr set out to emigrate to Abyssinia" tells about the period of Mecca before the migration of Abu Bakr's family to Abyssinia. If it is assumed that Aisha was 8-9 years old at the time of the Hijrah, she must not have been born at the time of the Hijrah to Abyssinia. On the other hand, if it is true that she talked about this incident, she must have been born before the migration to Abyssinia. This would mean that Aisha's age of marriage to the Prophet was not nine but older.<sup>105</sup>

Rather than giving an exact figure for Aisha's age of marriage, we should know that this was certainly a case of marriage at an early age. This age, however, was not countering society's marital culture. If the age of marriage of Aisha had been contrary to the traditions and customs of the Arab community, especially by the Jews and hypocrites in Medina, the Prophet would have heavily been criticized by His most notorious enemies. Accordingly, the Prophet's marriage to Zainab, the change of the Qibla and the bloodshed during sacred months committed by the army commanded by 'Abd-Allāh ibn Jahsh and similar other incidents were causes of heavy criticisms by the polytheists and the Jewish community against the Prophet and His companions. The Prophet and the Muslims, at almost every step was observed by others, faced criticism when they acted against the custom of that society. Based on these facts, it can be concluded that Aisha's age when she married to the Prophet was accepted by the society.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Öztürk, *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>105</sup> Rıza Savaş, "Hz. Aişe'nin Evlenme Yaşı ile İlgili Farklı Bir Yaklaşım", *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, İzmir, 1995, Issue IX, p. 140-141.

<sup>106</sup> Suzan Yıldırım, Hz. Aişe'nin Evlilik Yaşı Etrafındaki Tartışmalar, *İstem*, Year: 2, Issue: 4, 2004, p. 237 - 245.

In Arab society, the age of a person was generally known as estimated. Aisha's birth, according to those who accept her age of marriage to the Prophet as nine, was four years later than the prophecy<sup>107</sup>, while it was before that for those who accept the marriage age as 17-18.<sup>108</sup> Her age can be estimated taking her age and date of death into consideration. It is also said in the sources that she was married at the age of six or seven and began to live a marriage life at nine.<sup>109</sup> There are also narratives claiming that she was married at the age of nine or seven and became a wife at the age of 10.<sup>110</sup> Sources of Islamic historians suggest 56-59 Hijri as the estimated period Aisha died within, while estimating her age of death between 65-67.<sup>111</sup> When we deduce the age of Aisha at the time of her death, the date of her death (66-58 = 8), it is revealed that Aisha was eight during the Hijrah. Since he married one year after the Hijrah, the age of marriage will be nine.<sup>112</sup> When Aisha's age of death is accepted as 67 and the year of death is taken as 56 Hijri, the age of marriage will be counted as eleven. Given that the girls were married immediately after puberty and that they became adolescents earlier due to the hot weather, it is seen that the Orientalists are true in their claims about Aisha's and the Prophet's ages of marriage. However, the problem is to criticize the past based on today's values.

### c. Zainab bint Jahsh

Another criticism against the Prophet is His marriage with Zainab bint Jahsh. In Arab society of the age of ignorance, the adopted and biological sons had the same position in some matters. According to the traditions of the society, the men were not allowed to marry wives of their adopted children. This would cause adultery. However, it was stated that the admissions on this issue were wrong and had to change. With the clear approval of Almighty Allah<sup>113</sup>, the Prophet and Zainab got married. But as the criticism and discontent of society continued<sup>114</sup>, all the criticisms were answered with the revelation.

Some Orientalists, such as Leon Caetani, Emile Dermenghem and Savary, falsified this historical and sociological aspect, and blamed the Prophet for wishing Zaid ibn Kharisah's wife, Zainab bint Jahsh. To do this, they resorted to narratives mentioned by Ibn Ishaq (d. 151), Ibn Sa'd (d. 230), al-Tabari (d. 310), Ibn Abi Hatim

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<sup>107</sup> Kasım Şulul, *Hız. Peygamber Devri Kronolojisi*, İstanbul, İnsan Yayınları, 2003, p. 138.

<sup>108</sup> Yaşar Nuri Öztürk, *Asrı Saadet'in Büyük Kadınları*, İstanbul, Yeni Boyut Yayınları, 1998, p. 33

<sup>109</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 60; 'Ibn Hābīb, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn *Kitāb 'al-muḥabbar*, Beirut nd., I, 80–81; Ibn al-Athir, *ibid*, V, 501–502

<sup>110</sup> Ibn Hisham, Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Malik, *As-Sirah an-Nabawiyah*, Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifah, nd., IV, 644

<sup>111</sup> Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat Al-Kubra*, Beirut, nd., VIII, 80; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi at-Tarikh*, Beirut, 1979, IV, 363; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya*, Beirut 1974, VIII, 94; Al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, Beirut 1987, I, 60; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, by. nd. I, 308; Azimli, "Hız. Aişe'nin Evlilik Yaşı Tartışmalarında Savunmacı Tarihçiliğin Çıkması", p. 30.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya*, 131; Ibn Hajar, *al-Isaba fi tamyiz al-Sahaba*, Beirut 1328, IV, 230

<sup>113</sup> Al-Ahzab 33/37

<sup>114</sup> Al-Ahzab 33/40

(d. 327) and some other Islamic historians, without any scientific evaluation. The enemies of Islam, the polytheists, the Jewish and the hypocrites also relied on these narrations and directed arrows of criticism at the Prophet.

It is clearly seen that the additional information given in Caetani's criticism against the Prophet in this regard were intentionally falsified. "His wife, Zainab bint Jahsh, who was very well dressed, invited the Prophet to come in. As the father of her husband, she treated him very sincerely. Muhammad was astonished by the attraction of this famous woman. He expressed this in the form of perseverance that turned hearts upside down. Although he said these words slowly, they could not escape clever Zainab's ear." The second comment is "Muhammad's love began when he entered Zaid's house, and by chance a wind blew, the curtain in Zainab's door lifted, and showed the woman as almost naked to the Prophet. Muhammad was surprised to see the beauty of this woman. The impossibility of this marriage flamed this love. However, Zaid divorced Zainab when he learned Muhammad's love".<sup>115</sup> He claimed that the Prophet had fallen in love with his adopted son's wife, and that he had coveted her, based on some trivial and worthless narrations in some sources related to Islamic history.

It should be noted that John Davenport, Montgomery Watt, Maxime Rodinson, and some of the other relentless Western researchers approached this topic with sounder facts and within the limits of fairness.

This incident narrated by Caetani is narrated by Ibn Ishaq (d. 151) by Yunus, who heard it from Abu Salama al-Hamadani, who was Sha'bi's slave: "The Prophet visited His adopted son Zaid ibn Kharisah when he was sick. His wife, Zainab bint Jahsh sat beside Zaid. Zainab left the room for some reason. Meanwhile, the Prophet leaned toward him and said, "Blessed is the one who changes the hearts". Upon this, Zaid Ibn Kharisah said, "Let me divorce her for you, O Messenger of Allah." For this reason, Allah Almighty revealed the 37th verse of al-Ahzab."<sup>116</sup>

As the Sahaba did not agree on that, the narrative is considered weak. Scholars of the Hadith record that Abu Salama Al-Hamadani, who received the Hadith from Sha'bi, was an "unknown" person, and that the other narrator Yunus was a "Munkar" (denounced).<sup>117</sup> This Hadith is very weak due to the gaps in terms of the science of the Hadith and cannot be taken as evidence.

Secondly, Ibn Sa'd reported the narrative from his teacher, Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Waqidi, Abdallah ibn Amir al-Aslami and Muhammad ibn Yahyā ibn Habban. Accordingly, no one from the Prophet's Sahaba is among the narrators. This chain of the narrations is weak due to the gap in the Hadith, as is the

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<sup>115</sup> Leon Caetani, *Islam tarihi*, (Transl. Hüseyin Cahid), İstanbul 1924-1927, IV, 169-171; Emile Dermenghem, *Muhammed'in Hayati*, (Transl. Reşat Nuri), İstanbul 1930, p. 367-370, 402; Savary, *Mahomet Le Koran*, Paris, nd., 46-47.

<sup>116</sup> Ibn Ishaq, *Al-Sira*, p. 244.

<sup>117</sup> Al-Dhahabi, *Mizan al-i'tidal*, Egypt 1382, IV, 481-53

narrations of Ibn Ishaq. In addition to this, Imam ash-Shāfi‘ī, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī, Abu Hatim, Ishaq ibn Rahwayh, Al-Bukhari, Al-Nasa‘i and other Hadith scholars stated that, one of the narrators mentioned by Ibn Sa‘d, namely, Muhammed ibn ‘Umar al-Waqidi, had fabricated such narrations to justify the Abbasids’ immoral actions. Therefore, he was declared as a “liar” and his narratives were considered “suspected”. Abu Zur‘a, Al-Uqayli and Abu Bishr al-Dūlābī stated that the scholars of Hadith did not take al-Waqidi’s narrative seriously. Al-Dhahabī expressed that there is no narrative from al-Waqidi mentioned in the six biggest Hadith books, except for one in Ibn Mājah’s Sunan (Hadith no: 1095), and this proves that his narratives are considered weak by the scholars.<sup>118</sup> The scholars also agreed upon the weakness of narratives conveyed by Ibn Sa‘d from Amir al-Aslami, who is the second narrator of this incident.<sup>119</sup> The third narrator, Muhammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Habban, was known for conveying “disconnected” Hadiths.<sup>120</sup> For all these reasons, this narrative of Ibn Sa‘d’s is regarded unreliable. It is not true to rely on the content of a weak narrative in such an important matter.

Al-Tabari (d. 310), on the other hand, explains in his interpretation that Ibn Sa‘d narrates this incident in the same form as his teacher, al-Waqidi. In his narrative through Yunus, Ibn Wahb and Ibn Zaid, al-Tabari states that when the Prophet visited Zaid ibn Kharisah, His adopted son, Zaid was not at home and the wind lifted the curtain when the Prophet saw Zainab bint Jahsh half naked. The Prophet liked Zainab bint Jahsh and then Zaid ibn Kharisah came to the Prophet to say that he would divorce his wife, Zainab bint Jahsh.<sup>121</sup> However, it is understood that this narrative, to which the Orientalists resort, is the same narrated by Ibn Sa‘d through al-Waqidi. And the scholars’ thought about al-Waqidi are mentioned above. Also, among the narrators mentioned by al-Tabari there are some unauthorized and unknown people. The previously recorded narrations cannot be trusted, nor can this narration of al-Tabari be. This unsubstantiated narrative has also been conveyed by people other than al-Tabari. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī said, “there are some narrations that Ibn Abi Hatim and Tabari convey, even if most of the commentators narrate the same, it is not worth engaging with them.” Similarly, Ibn Kathir stated, “although Ibn Abi Hatim and Tabari conveyed some strange news from the *salaf* here, we did not see the need to convey them because they were not authentic.” The great Hadith imams, such as al-Bukhari and Muslim, have not included these narrations in their books; therefore, these narrations are not true.

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<sup>118</sup> Abi Muhammad ‘Abdul Rahman Ibn Abi Hatim, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Razi, *Al-Jarh wa Al-Ta’dil*, Hyderabad Deccan, 1372, VIII, 21; Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abdallāh, *Tadhkirat al-huffa*, Hyderabad Deccan 3. Edition, 1375, I, 348, *Mizan al-i’tidal*, III, 662; *Siyar A‘lam al-Nubala*, Beirut 1402, IX, 457, 462-464; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, Beirut nd., IX, 364, 366-367.

<sup>119</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Mizaan-ul-I’tidaal*, II, 448-449

<sup>120</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *ibid.*, IV, 590.

<sup>121</sup> Al-Tabari, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, XXII, 13

The reason also reveals that these are fabricated narratives. Because it is not possible for anyone to have seen a relative's daughter, whom he grew up with, months after they got married. Even if it is assumed that he saw her before marriage, it is still not possible for him not to like the woman with her youth and beauty, but to love her at one sight after years have passed.<sup>122</sup>

In the first narration, it is understood that the Prophet goes to visit Zaid, who is sick, and that Zaid is at home when he arrives. In addition, there is no evidence in terms of the methods of Hadith incitement regarding these narratives and Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd and Al-Tabari, without subjecting these narrations to criticism, conveyed them in their works and passed on to future generations. In this respect, not all the narrations in their works have the same degree of credibility.

As can be seen from the verse on the subject, the Prophet may have thought as a human to marry Zainab if Zaid and Zainab would keep on arguing and having disagreement. As a human being, these feelings and thoughts may have passed through his heart because, He regarded her as worthy of it.<sup>123</sup> The marriage continued in unrest and discord, as both were reluctant. Thus, it is narrated that Zaid ibn Kharisah came to the Prophet and complained about Zainab. It is not far from predictions that this dissension would bring about separation and divorce. Accordingly, it is reported that Zainab prostrated when she was told that Zaid ibn Kharisah was planning to divorce her and the Prophet would marry her and have dedicated two months for fasting.<sup>124</sup> It is clear that she did it as she didn't want Zaid, didn't see him equal, and considered the Prophet worthy and equal to herself. When they got married, Zainab was thirty-five years old, which was not a young age for Arabia of the time.<sup>125</sup>

In order to justify their resistance against the wish of the ignorant society to change its way of life, customs and traditions in accordance with the divine message presented to them, the Qur'an informs them in various verses that they say "we found our ancestors in this state, they were doing so".<sup>126</sup> Allah has also abolished the custom of not marrying the wives of the adopted children, which was a settled tradition within an ignorant society, and in order to repeal this tradition, which was ingrained and extremely difficult to remove and dispose of, the practice contrary to this was carried out personally by the Prophet and He married His adopted son's, Zaid ibn Kharisah's former wife, Zainab bint Jahsh. Thus, the Qur'an states the following for such a behavior which could only be abolished by the Prophet Himself, as only He could have the courage to resist the common social

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<sup>122</sup> Ibn Kathir Abu al-Fida' 'Imad Ad-Din Isma'il, *Tafseer al-Qur'an al-'Azeem*, (Ed. Ibrahim Muhammad Salih al-Banna et al.), Istanbul 1985, VI, 420; Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, VI 3901.

<sup>123</sup> Al-Ahzab 33/37.

<sup>124</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 102-103, Ibn al-Athir, *ibid*, VII, 125

<sup>125</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *ibid*, VIII, 11

<sup>126</sup> Al-Ma'idah 104; Al-A'raf 28; 10. Yunus 78; 21. Al-Anbiya' 53; 26. Ash-Shu'ara 74; 31. Luqman 21; 43. Az-Zukhruf 22-23.

behaviors and the possible results it would brought about: "And [remember, O Muhammad], when you said to the one on whom Allah bestowed favor and you bestowed favor, "Keep your wife and fear Allah," while you concealed within yourself that which Allah is to disclose. And you feared the people, although it was more convenient that you fear Allah. So, when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the command of Allah accomplished."<sup>127</sup>

Qatadah, Ibn Abbas and Muhajid narrates that the Prophet asked Zaid bin Haritsah, His adopted son, to marry Zainab bint Jahsh, who was his cousin. Zainab thought that the Prophet would ask her hand for Himself. But when she found out that He wanted marriage for Zaid, she did not like it and refused that marriage, saying that she was a noble and that Zaid was not worthy and equal to her. Zainab's brother, 'Abd-Allāh ibn Jaḥsh also did not approve of this marriage proposal, claiming that they were from the Quraysh tribe and that Zaid was a freed slave. Upon this incident, the verse that means *"It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error."*<sup>128</sup> According to this verse, they had to make their own choices subject to the choice of Allah and his Messenger. After this command of the Qur'an, which wants to abolish the classification and discrimination in society, Zainab, one of the elites of the Quraysh, said upon the Prophet's wish that: *"Then I am fulfilling the wish of the messenger of Allah. However, I wanted to marry myself to Him (the Prophet)"*<sup>129</sup> and agreed to marry Zaid. After this approval, the Prophet arranged their marriage. Zainab bint Jahsh's marriage to Zaid is important for the declaration of equality between people and the elimination of tribal differences. Because superiority among people is only possible through piety and righteous deeds.

Cemil Sena, like Caetani and others, claims that the Prophet was in love with Zainab using ambiguous and sarcastic words: "Clearly it is understood that in this marriage brought an innovation that allows fathers to marry wives of their adopted son's and this complies with the modern law also"<sup>130</sup>. John Davenport, on the other hand, states the following in this regard: "Meanwhile, as the Prophet was subject to unjust treatment and slander as He married his adopted son's, Zaid's divorced wife, the following suggestion has been put forward to defend the Prophet and refute the claims: According to a custom common among Arabs long before Islam,

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<sup>127</sup> Al-Ahzab 33/3

<sup>128</sup> al-Ahzab 33/36

<sup>129</sup> Al-Qurtubi, Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ansari, Al-Jami al-Ahkam al-Qur'an, Cairo 1987, XIV, 186-187.

<sup>130</sup> Cemil Sena, *Muhammedin Felsefesi*, İstanbul 1975, p. 23

if a man said to a woman, "be my mother," he could no longer marry that woman. Just as she would say to a child, "Be my son," that the child would be adopted and indeed earn all the rights of a child. The Qur'an abolished both these customs. Thus, if a person said to a woman, "Be my mother," the bond of marriage would not break, or he could marry a woman who had been divorced by a foster child. The Prophet Muhammad had married Zainab to Zaid, a young man whom he loved very much, because he was moved by respect for that woman. But since these husband and wife could not be happy, Zaid decided to divorce his wife, without asking the Prophet's opinion. The Prophet Muhammad wanted to resolve the problem by marrying her, thinking that he would be criticized as the facilitator of that marriage, especially after hearing Zainab's effective complaint. The Prophet, according to the above-reported custom, knew that when he married that woman, he would be considered guilty. However, He resisted these rules and customs as He had a purpose to do so."<sup>131</sup>

Watt asserts the following realistic views on this issue: "Of all the marriages of Muhammad, the most controversial one happened towards the end of March 627. It was the marriage of Zainab bint Jahsh and the Prophet. This event was condemned by Muhammad's contemporaries and was instrumental in the poisonous attacks of European scholars. Zaynab, unwillingly, was asked to marry the adopted son of Muhammad, Zaid ibn Kharisah. In 626, Muhammad went to his house to talk to Zaid, Zaid was not at home, but Muhammad saw Zainab as half-clothed and according to some, fell in love with her. The essence of this short story cannot be doubted, but many of its details are not reliable, and the meaning is a matter of debate. As with all the marriages that Muhammad arranged for himself and his relatives, there was a political purpose in this marriage. Zaynab was a relative of Muhammad by her mother, and for this reason, the prophet considered himself somewhat responsible. Zainab's father was a protégé of Abi Sufyan or was once so. When Abi Sufyan led the Battle of Mecca against Muhammad, this side of the marriage did not escape his sight and thought. Within the same period, Zainab's two sisters had married two of the foremost men of the emigrants. Her marriage to Zaid also indicates that he was considered an important person. Because Zaid was a man who Muhammad valued greatly, and if he had not died prematurely, he would have succeeded him. Unfortunately, we don't know why Zainab didn't want Zaid. She couldn't have thought he was no match for her. However, she was a woman wishing to be respected, and she may have wanted to marry Muhammad. It is also possible that she wanted to marry someone whom Muhammad did not approve of for political reasons. In any case, Zainab had almost certainly found a way to marry Muhammad before the end of 626. The story of the Prophet's encounter with Zainab when Zaid was not home and his losing himself in the face of her beauty is not worthy of serious attention. These are not mentioned in the first sources. Moreover, Zainab was thirty-five or thirty-eight

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<sup>131</sup> J. Davenport, *Hiz. Muhammed ve Kur'an-ı Kerim*, (Transl. Ömer Rıza Doğrul), Ankara 1967, p. 25-26

years old when she married Muhammad, which was an old age for an Arab woman at that time. All of Muhammad's wives, apart from Khadija, were younger at the time of their marriage, and most of them were younger than Zainab's age of marriage. Zeyneb may have benefited from the rest of her beauty, but even if there is a true basis to this story, there is no doubt that it has undergone some later interpretations. At first glance, the theme of love in this marriage evokes that Muhammad's biographers are the product of feelings developed in their imaginations. It is inconceivable that a man of fifty-six would have such a passion for a woman of thirty-six, perhaps older. The unpopular part of this marriage was that it was considered adultery among those privately. A man's marriage to a woman, separated from his own son, was adultery among the privations, and adoption was considered as your own son. It was this concern that turned many people of Madinah against Muhammad... It is very likely that this kinship was closely tied to the matriarchal and consequent looseness of the institution of marriage. In another verse about this incident, it is said that people should only be considered children of their own true fathers. This is for the same purpose as the principle of clear understanding of who is the father of a man under the obligation of "waiting period". There's no way to say anything more than that. This point of social reform was desirable, but was it something irrecusable? We can't say anything about that. But the idea of both political and social reform prevailed, and romantic love, at least, could only have a small share among others."<sup>132</sup>

Radinson accepted Watt's claim, insisting on the non-sexual nature of the incident. Zeyneb was thirty-five years old and had no freshness to desire. This marriage was more based on the goal of securing a political compromise."<sup>133</sup> This is because Muhammad would be a relative to Abi Sufyan by this way. He also corrected the legal confusion of adoption which could lead to misinterpretations and created a valid example.

Kamil Miras, one of the scholars of the last period, also records the following: "Zainab, most honorable daughter of a family, was harrowing and could not get along with Zaid, claiming that he could not be equal to her. Eventually, Zaid decided to divorce Zainab and offered her to the Prophet. Therefore, the Jewish and hypocrites began to say, "Muhammad married his son's wife". Thereupon when the verses of Surat Al-Ahzab were revealed, and it was reported that there was no family or a genuine foster child in between, but that it was a habit of ignorance. Henceforth, adoptions were ordered to be called by the name of their father. At the same time, the legal relations of these traditions of ignorance were also abolished. Instead, religious brotherhood and friendship were substituted."<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Montgomery Watt, *Hiz. Muhammed*, (Transl. Hayrollah Örs), İstanbul 1963, p. !64

<sup>133</sup> Maxsime Rodinson, *Hiz. Muhammed*, (Transl. Atilla Tokatlı), İstanbul 1968. p. 209-210

<sup>134</sup> Kamil Miras, *Sahih-i Buhari Muhtasan Tecrid-i Sarih Tercümesi*, Ankara, nd., XI, 261



Among the narrations concerning the prophets of the Children of Israel in the Holy Book, some events that humiliate prophets may lead them to be regarded as no different from ordinary people. Among these, the fact that David fell in love with Bat-Shava, the wife of his commander Uriya, ensured his death by sending him to battle, and then married Bat-Shava bears a great resemblance to our case.<sup>135</sup>

In conclusion, these stories told by Caetani and Emile Dermenghem are unsubstantiated and intentional. The narrations on this subject in some Islamic historical sources are also unsubstantiated. The Prophet meets Zainab bint Jahsh, who is the most beautiful woman of the tribe, falls in love with her, that is to say, Zainab's beauty affects the Prophet. All these claims are untrue, and all of them are fictitious slanders, like the *harem* stories of Westerners. Because the Prophet himself is the one who offered Zainab bint Jahsh for Zaid ibn Kharisah as wife. Zainab bint Jahsh is his aunt's daughter. Eventually, The Prophet's marriage to Zaynab binti Jahsh made some of the Orientalists to distort this fact. And unfortunately, the unsubstantiated narrations in some Islamic sources are the basis for this.

## 2. Perception that He Humiliated Women

Some female researchers also attempt to present Muhammad as a role model for today's violent men in the Middle East by claiming that the Prophet was against freedom of thought, and that He punished anyone who did not act as He said.<sup>136</sup> The claim that He humiliated and mistreated women does not reflect the facts. In this regard, Muhammad is said to have uttered such words about women as follow. Barlas, in reference to Grunebaum, states that the Hadiths refer to formulation of ancient cultural influences. According to this, many ideas and traditions connected with Judaism, Christianity, as well as Arab and Mediterranean culture have manifested a deeply entrenched misogyny. They have become part of the Islamic discourse on women as a result. Barlas, based on this background, explicitly states that the source which creates a woman image that is "religiously and morally" deficient, "seductive for men, the great tribulation", "dirty due to menstruation", "the people of hell because of their disobedience and ingratitude to their husbands", "people with weaker minds" and thus not suitable for political duties through the channel of Hadiths.<sup>137</sup> Kecia Ali reports that most feminist and pro-change Muslims have started to prefer conducting their research without resorting to these Hadiths in an attempt to rethink the issue of Islamic marriage, largely because of the prominence of Hadiths which have negative content on women. They, instead, focus on the reinterpretation of the Qur'an. For example, Amina

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<sup>135</sup> Torah, Genesis, II: 1-27; in the continuation of the story it is recorded that this child was Solomon.

<sup>136</sup> See: Ali İhsan Toker, "Kadınların Peygamber Algısı Müslüman Kadınlar ve Hz. Muhammed", *Usul, Usûl*, 7 (2007/1), p. 139.

<sup>137</sup> A. Barlas, "Believing Women" *In Islam. Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002, p. 45

Wadud believes that the difficulties in Hadith literature are important enough to require the interpretation of the Qur'an without recourse.<sup>138</sup>

Tuksal also concludes that the narrations that have become Hadiths are human processes that result from patriarchal structures that date back thousands of years, rather than being religious dogmas. According to her, this is due to deliberate abuse on the one hand and the understanding and interpretation that has been shaped by patriarchal acceptance on the other. Although the reasons are varied, in these narrations "the female personality is underestimated in the face of the male personality and she is treated as an object rather than as a 'responsible subject/caliph', thus she is wronged."<sup>139</sup>

We can list the criticized narratives as follows: "I have not left a more harmful sedition to man, after me, than the women."<sup>140</sup> "People who choose a woman as their head will never prosper."<sup>141</sup> "If the husband invites his wife to his bed, and she refuses, and the husband sleeps angry, the Angels will curse her until the morning."<sup>142</sup> "I saw hell, most of those there were women."<sup>143</sup> It is stated in a narrative conveyed from Ibn 'Umar that a woman asked the Prophet the following question: 'O Messenger of Allah, what are the obligations of a wife to her husband? The Prophet said that the woman's obligation to her husband was not to leave the house without his permission, and that if she did, the Angels of mercy and wrath would bring her regrets or curse her until she returned home. In response to the woman's question whether this would be valid even if the husband was persecuting the wife, the Prophet's answer was "even if he was unjust".<sup>144</sup>

It is necessary to evaluate the narrations mentioned above from the point of view of Hadith science.

1. The first true narrations are in mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: "I have not left a man after me a more harmful sedition than his wife, his children, and his neighbors." In fact, as stated in the interpretation of the verse "man is weakly created", scholars understand this as a sign of the weakness of man's nature to the general weakness of woman. Thus, the claim that women are the object of seduction for men is a general observation. This observation expresses the necessity of rules and

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<sup>138</sup> Kecia Ali, "A Beautiful Example": The Prophet Muhammad as a Model for Muslim Husbands', *Islamic Studies*, 43:2 2004, p. 286

<sup>139</sup> For these types of approaches, see. Toker, *ibid.*, p. 144-152.

<sup>140</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, "Nikah" 17; Sahih Muslim, "Kitab Al-Dhikr" 97, 98; at-Tirmidhi, "Adab" 31; Ibn Mājah, Muhammad ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan*, (Ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī), Cairo, 1952-1953, "Kitab al-Fitan", 19, Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad, *Musnad*, (Ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shakir), Cairo, Dar al-Hadith, 1st Edition, 1949, V/100, 210.

<sup>141</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, "Kitāb al-maghāzī" 82, "Kitab al-Fitan" 18; At-Tirmidhi, "Al-Fitan" 8; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, 43, 47, 5.

<sup>142</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, "Ba'd al-Khalq" 7; Abu Dawud, "Nikah" 41; at-Tirmidhi, "Rada" 1.

<sup>143</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, "Kitab Al-Iman" 21; Sahih Muslim "Kitab Al-Dhikr" 95.

<sup>144</sup> Al-Tayālīsī, *Musnad*, I/263, no.1951; Ibn Abi Shaybah, *Musannaf*, III/557, no.17124.

regulations in the relationship between men and women for people to overcome these weaknesses. The conceptual distinction that should not be ignored here is whether women are the subject or the result or the cause of sedition.

It is also seen that the understanding of the word sedition is related to the cultural context, whether in the form of seduction or test. Sedition is historically understood as both seduction and test. However, many Arabic-speaking Islamists tend to interpret sedition sexually, and emphasize the seductive aspect of the term. In contrast, examples of interpreting the term in the context of sexuality reveal a meaning that derives from a view on the 'Western cultural base model'. This contrasts with the former, which has been called the 'Arab cultural base model'. Because in the former, sedition is conceptualized in a way that ignores the last part of the Hadith and reminds of women.

2. The Hadith, which states that "*communities that choose women as their heads will not prosper*", is described as accurate by Bukhari and other Hadith scholars.

It is known that the Prophet uttered these words when the daughter of the Kisra of Iran ascended the throne.<sup>145</sup> This Hadith has been criticized by many and claimed to be denigrating women in general. Again, according to him, the scholars of fiqh did not agree on the applicability of this Hadith regarding the relation between women and politics. The existence of those who use this Hadith to keep women out of decision-making processes is certain. Al-Tabari did not find this Hadith as an enough of a basis to deprive women of their decision-making powers and exclude them from political life. Abu Bakra, the narrator of this Hadith, who views women's presidency negatively, has been expressed by a thought that he should have regarded as unreliable. Because, according to him, one of Abu Bakra's life stories describes that he once was found guilty and flogged for false testimony. Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal also points out that during the time of the Prophet, women fought like men throughout the Islamization process, took similar responsibilities, migrated together, participated in wars when necessary, swore allegiance to, ensured security and expressed their political preferences. During the time of the Prophet, women, as Tuksal put it, "exceeded the stereotypes regarding the 'secondary status' of which the status quo of ignorance regarded themselves as worthy" and "considered themselves equivalent members of the Islamic Society".<sup>146</sup> According to Cihan Aktaş, women were active in the political, military and cultural aspects of Islamic history only during the reign of the Prophet.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Şahîh al-Bukhârî, "Kitâb al-maghâzî" 77.

<sup>146</sup> Tuksal, *Kadın Karşısı Söylemin İslam Geleneğindeki İzdüşümleri*, p. 237.

<sup>147</sup> Cihan Aktaş, *Sistem İçinde Kadın*, İstanbul: Beyan Yayınları, 3rd Edition, 1991, p. 128.

3. It is suggested that Roald was greatly influenced by what he called the “Arab cultural basic model” as “*women should not leave the house except without the permission of their husbands*”.<sup>148</sup>

4. It was identified in discussions of gender regarding a Somalian group living in Scandinavia that the Hadith, which states that “*women are lacking in religion and reason*” have been referred to. This is probably due to the influence of Somalian scholars who studied in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, geographical and cultural differences or different regions of influence can affect the circulation and role of Hadith.

5. The Prophet likens them to crystal vases and rib bones to draw attention to the fragility of women. There are also those who interpret such narrations as women are crooked and reject them.

In a statement, the Prophet states that women should be treated kindly: “*Treat women nicely, for a woman is created from a rib, and the most curved portion of the rib is its upper portion, so, should you try to straighten it, it will break, but if you leave it as it is, it will remain crooked. So, treat women nicely.*”<sup>149</sup>

Tuksal says the following about the Hadith: “*It states that the male-dominated understanding has prioritized the man and insulted the woman since a long time in human history, and it also emphasizes that it has been implicated in the narrations attributed to the Prophet. To him, this is no coincidence. Because, like everywhere else, the established mindset here has resorted to religion in order to justify its own stereotypes. This has led to some narrations that contradict the content of the previously mentioned framework in terms of the Prophet's views and attitudes regarding women. These opposite narrations paradoxically benefit from the legitimization of the religious position of the Prophet. The group of narrations, which is mentioned, has a completely anti-women attitude.*”<sup>150</sup>

It is narrated that the Prophet regards women, half of humanity, as beings that cause unrest and states that they are their husbands’ sexual commodities and that when they refuse their husbands’ sexual desire, it will cause them to be cursed, that the society in which the woman is a ruler will not prosper, and that the woman cannot leave her house without permission, even though her husband oppresses her. If these narrations are moved out of their respective contexts and based on today's discourse advocating the equality of men and women, it is inevitable to characterize the Prophet as a tyrant. However, these narrations need to be addressed in the environment and context in which they were said. Otherwise, reading their literal meanings would lead to the claim that Muhammad was a

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<sup>148</sup> A. S. Roald, *Women in Islam. The Western Experience*, London and New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 14

<sup>149</sup> Şahîh al-Bukhârî, “*Kitab al-Anbiya*” 5; Sahih Muslim, “*Rada*” 65; at-Tirmidhi, “*al-Talâq wa-al-Li’ân*” 12.

<sup>150</sup> Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal, *Kadın Karşıtı Söylenin İslam Geleneğindeki İzdüşümleri*, Ankara: Kitabiyat: 2000, p. 236-237

misogynist, a despot or even claim a defensive approach claiming that these narratives do not belong to the Prophet, and do not have any scientific basis.

According to Barlas, the Prophet is a role model for both men and women. It is an irony that the legacy of a prophet known for his kindness towards women reminds the people of the Sunnah, who claim to follow him most closely, something that can be concluded neither of the teachings of the Qur'an nor of the Prophet's behavior to women. Barlas considers that only about six Hadiths, from an accurate collection of seventy thousand, express misogyny, and in turn, it is ironic that men, while there are dozens of positive Hadiths, assert these six against gender equality.<sup>151</sup>

In regard to the interpretation of these narratives, Roald says: "In some cases, men and women's relationships are treated based on love and privacy, while in other cases, these relationships are portrayed in words that people born and raised with the strong concept of gender equality as a whole can negatively characterize and demean women."<sup>152</sup> Roald actually meant that the word would be perceived differently in its context and history.

The the narratives which state that the Prophet's approach to women is kind, polite and within the framework of his consent should not be ignored. Understanding his statements regarding the creation of women and their special situations or personal descriptions would mean malevolence. The responsibilities and practices the Prophet assigned to His wives are mentioned in the narratives below: "*The best of you is the one who is best to his wife, and I am among the best of you to the wives.*"<sup>153</sup> "*And indeed I order you to be good to the women, for they are but captives with you over whom you have no power than that, except if they come with manifest Fahishah (evil behavior). If they do that, then abandon their beds and beat them with a beating that is not harmful. And if they obey you then you have no cause against them.*"<sup>154</sup> "*A man asked the Prophet: What are the responsibilities of a husband to his wife? He said: A husband should feed her as he feeds himself. and clothe her as he clothes himself; he should not strike her on the face nor use bad language...*"<sup>155</sup> "*You cannot whip your wife like a slave, then lie with her at the end of the day*"<sup>156</sup> "*The best of you is the one who is best to his wife, and I am among the best of you to the wives.*"<sup>157</sup> Aisha said: "*The Messenger of Allah never beat any of his servants, or wives, and his hand never hit anything. And he has not*

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<sup>151</sup> A. Barlas, "Believing Women" In *Islam. Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002, p. 45

<sup>152</sup> Roald, *Women in Islam*, p. 146.

<sup>153</sup> Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 50.

<sup>154</sup> at-Tirmidhi, "Rada'at " 11; Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 3.

<sup>155</sup> Abu Dawud, "Nikah" 42; Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 3.

<sup>156</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, "Nikah" 93; Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 51.

<sup>157</sup> Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 50.

*done anything with his hand except for those who consent to Allah or to avoid prohibitions; for his anger is for Allah.*"<sup>158</sup>

Mernissi takes the issue further and mentions the existence of a project of the Prophet himself regarding gender equality, which is valid for the Medina period.<sup>159</sup> The words in this second group are clearly pro-women or have content that places them in a positive social framework. Ibn Sa'd states that the Prophet never raised his hand to his wives, to a slave, or to any person. In the only instance in which the Prophet encountered a rebellion in his house, he not only did not use violence against them, but he left his house and moved to a room adjacent to the mosque for a month.<sup>160</sup>

Fatma Ünsal also underlines that women were encouraged to join the mosque community, which was the university of the Prophet's era, as opposed to today's understanding that shows them their houses or even their bedrooms as a suitable place to be isolated from the community. The Prophet's dream is a society in which women can roam freely. He advised the women to travel with relatives during journeys and emphasized the future of the environment in which women would move freely.<sup>161</sup> It is noted that he was tough and unyielding about justice, but was also a man of kindness, politeness, honesty and humility, had a gentle and forgiving temperament, and disliked unpleasant behavior and cruelty.<sup>162</sup>

A common attitude in the field of Hadith because of this situation is to be selective among the narrations. This applies to both male-centric and feminist approaches. In other words, while male-centered Muslims who read religious texts choose these texts around their own gender, women who approach them from a female perspective make this choice according to their preferences. Muslim feminists tend to be selective in reading religious texts in a similar manner to Muslims with male-centered perspectives. Muslim feminists take the Hadith in favor of women, and in turn criticize and reject those which recognize women with negative qualities.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Sahih Muslim, "Kitab Al Fada'il" 79; Ibn Mājah, "Nikah" 51; Al-Darimi, Abdullah ibn Abdur Rahman, *Sunan*, (Ed. Fauad Ahmad), Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Arabi, 1st Edition, 1407, "Nikah" 34; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 229, 232.

<sup>159</sup> Mernissi, *ibid.*, p. 184

<sup>160</sup> Mernissi, Fatima, *The Veil and Male Elite. A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, (Transl. Mary Jo Lakeland, Reading), Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991, p. 156 et al.

<sup>161</sup> Fatma Ünsal, 'Türkiye'de Kadın Hareketinin Parçalı Yapısı', speech record, 'Kadın Sorunları Bağlamında Örnek Bir Eş ve Baba Modeli Olarak Hz. Peygamber (s) Paneli, *İran İslam Cumhuriyeti Büyükelçiliği Kültür Müsteşarlığı*, Ankara: March 17, 2007.

<sup>162</sup> Toker, *ibid.*, 145.

<sup>163</sup> Toker, *ibid.*, 151.

As a result, those who have no hesitation in declaring Muhammad a misogynist based on the narratives that, allegedly, humiliate women, prefer an exaggerated abstraction when it comes to positive Hadiths, which manifests itself as creating busts of women or monumentalizing them. This cannot be justified. It is necessary to evaluate the Prophet with the norms of his own time and to read the narrations in the framework of the basic principles of Islam, instead of the literal distorted interpretations.

### **Conclusion**

In the face of the cultural trends, brought about or expressed by globalization, Islam maintains its social and cultural presence as a strong competitor. In this context, within the framework of attempts to compete with Islam, attacks against the Prophet are aimed directly at Islam itself. Islamophobia, which is intended to be created with reference to the Prophet, involves distorting history based on modern norms, besides the malevolence in evaluating today's events. The Western mindset, which depicts the Prophet as the source of terror and as a lustful person, is not a clean understanding. In addition, Orientalists distort verses and Hadiths and provide data for this purpose. Worst of all, the Western press and politicians try to gain favor through this approach.

Under the pretense of claims that define Islam as a heretical Christian sect learned from a priest and the prophecy as false, there are political, economic and religious reasons. Most important is the effort to prevent Christians from converting to Islam and to prevent them from learning about Islam. It is clear that the claims about the Prophet's and Muslims' war-centric approach to proselytize religion and Islam's so-called position as a basis for terrorist attacks that have happened recently are fabricated to cover up the sedition and slander that the West has produced for the sake of the system of exploitation. The main goals are to keep humanity and especially Jews and Christians away from Islam by putting Islam and all Muslims, especially the Prophet, into this category.

The claims about Prophet's polygyny and those based on his marriage to Zainab bint Jahsh that regard him as a lustful person. It is necessary to evaluate the Prophet and his words in the conditions and understanding of the period in which he lived. Some Western scholars mentioned above follow this pattern and find these criticisms against the Prophet unwarranted and rejects them. It is necessary to understand the life of the prophet and within the framework of the narrations related to the subject instead of distorting and understanding the narrations to conclude that he humiliated women throughout his life. When narrations are separated from the context by fragmentary and literal readings and read with the admissions of today, it is inevitable that the Prophet will be declared a misogynist. Muslim women are not passive or docile creatures, nor do they see any religious harm in developing active attitudes in the world in which they live. This attitude of

women, including the wives of the Prophet, has been the case from the early years of Islam until today. Aside from the limit of activities that can be performed by women due to their nature, the thought that limits and humiliates them in all matters in the name of custom, is not based on religion. The common point reached by women on the subject discussed here is that Muhammad was a model of high morality and a female-friendly human.

As a result of the research, it is seen that the references directed at the Prophet are removed from the relevant context and acceptance of his period and have falsified and interpreted based on today's conditions and acceptances to create misled perceptions about the Prophet and Islam.

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## References of the Prophet Made to Create Islamophobia

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## The Obsession of Linking 'Phobia' to Islam as an Irrational Fear\*

Mehmet Sabri GENÇ\*\*

### Abstract

Islamophobia is the concept of perception which occurs through media, public relations, education etc. This concept is managed by global powers and Capitalism. Perception managers first determine a name or devise a term, and then they twist or manipulate the meaning of the term. This study examines the issue of Islamophobia in the framework of the Intentionality Concept, which emerged in the 19th century and deeply influenced the modern psychology, and it analyzes how people's fear phenomenon is manipulated by inverting this theory.

**Keywords:** Intentionality, Manipulation, Perception Management, Fear, Psychological Phenomena

## Akıl Dışı Bir Korku Olarak 'Phobia'nın İslâma İlintilenme Obsesifliği

### Özet

İslâmofobi, küresel güçlerin ve sermayeciliğin tek rakip olarak gördüğü İslâm'a ve Müslümanlara karşı, tüm dünyada; medya, halkla ilişkiler, eğitim-öğretim, siyaset vb. gibi unsurları kullanarak; oluşturmaya çalıştığı bir algının kavramıdır. Algı yöneticileri, evvela ad koymakta ve daha sonra da bu adın ya da kavramın altını türlü manipülasyonlarla doldurmaktadırlar. Bu makalede, İslâmofobi meselesi, 19. Yüzyılda ortaya çıkmış ve modern psikolojiyi derinden etkilemiş olan Yönelmişlik Teorisi çerçevesinde ele alınmış, insanların korku fenomenlerinin mevzubahis teorisinin tersyüz edilmesiyle nasıl manipüle edildiği analiz edilmeye çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yönelmişlik, Manipülasyon, Algı Yönetimi, Korku, Psikik Fenomenler

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Concepts of a philosophical or social issue should be examined thoroughly to understand the roots of that issue. It is not possible to understand or perceive an issue fully without knowing the conceptual or formed meanings, in this regard. Therefore, to understand the logic behind the title "Islamophobia" and the qualities of the issues arising from this title, the base of the concept "phobia" should be focused to clear the issue. The subject will be reviewed from various aspects after the roots of the concept, or the "etymos" of it in Greek, is explained.

The concept of *phobia* means "extraordinary fear, fear and hatred".<sup>1</sup> This term was derived from the Greek concept of "phobos" and conveyed to Latin first and then French and other Western languages. It essentially means "fear in the state of panic or anxiety" or "fear object". The social and cultural meaning of *phobia* is "to fear excessively and generally for no reason". The term is added to the name of any phenomena in certain texts from the late 18th and early 19th centuries.<sup>2</sup>

Theoretical roots of psychic phenomena should be examined to understand the theoretical basis of *phobias* within the discipline of psychological philosophy. Phenomena, such as fearing, loving, believing, or hating, are the psychological elements that are in the nature of humans. Each psychological phenomenon has to focus on a fact or object. This is called intentionality by the Italian-Austrian philosopher Franz Brentano (1838-1917), who was born in Germany.<sup>3</sup> He is regarded as the central person of modern philosophy. Brentano affected not only the field of psychology but also contemporary Western literature, philosophy and sociology. He was not much visible or a well-known philosopher who deeply influenced literature artists such as Franz Kafka or Robert Musil, philosophers such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger or Alexios Meinong, and people such as Sigmund Freud who prepared the psychological background of capitalism order.<sup>4</sup>

The literary, economic and social paradigms, transformations and motions have been reviewed within the circle of 'Psychology', which emerged as a result of Western philosophical developments since the Industrial Revolution. In other words, what determines the world of the current time is the psychological transformations or motions of people. Psychology is actually related to the self of people.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, it is not even science based on our logic, science and experiences.<sup>6</sup> Objectification of people while neglecting their metaphysical

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<sup>1</sup> See: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, Boston, 2005, Phobia Article.

<sup>2</sup> See: Editor: John McHardy Sinclair, *Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 3rd Edition*, 1994, Phobia Article

<sup>3</sup> See: Franz Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt Band I*, Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, 1973, p. 111

<sup>4</sup> See: Mehmet Sabri Genç, "Franz Brentano'nun Çağdaş Batı Felsefesine Etkileri", İstanbul, *Kutadgubilig Felsefe Bilim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Issue 12, Dergâh Yay., October 2007, p. 109-119.

<sup>5</sup> See: Ahmet Yüksel Özemre, *Türkçe Kur'ân Çevirilerinde "Nefs - Rûh", "Resûl - Nebî", "Yakıyn - Mevt" Kelime Çiftlerindeki Kavram Kargaşası*, ozemre.com, 31.12.2006

<sup>6</sup> See: Ş. Teoman Durallı, *Sorun Nedir?*, İstanbul, Dergâh Yay., 2006, p. 37.

characteristics contradicts with our scientific ideology. As the world rotates around the discipline of psychology, it is necessary to be fully competent in this field to resist any external abstract threats or to have an idea, in this regard. Accordingly, the US delivered *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx to its soldiers during the fight against communism, which is interesting. Soldiers read the work of Marx upon the statement, "Know Your Enemy!" It is irrational for a person or society to fight against somebody or something they do not know. Those who defend or criticize Marx in our country do not know him well. Similarly, there are not many people competent in regard to *Christian Theology*. A civilization aiming to dissolve, separate or destroy us today hosts the broadest Islamic studies in many fields and leads us and the world following the concepts or problematic definitions made in these studies, all of which have been done for a reason. After communism fell as a power against capitalism, Islam and Muslims were regarded as the new enemies of capitalism. Canatan reflects the results of this issue as follows:

"The idea of 'new enemy' developed after the fall of communism matches with this conspiracy theory. The myth of Islamic threat is just a false concept made to meet the social, psychological and political needs of the west in the new era. This myth adversely affects the Muslims in the west and prevents them from integrating themselves into Western societies. Islamic threat, in this regard, creates concerns and worries toward the Muslims while causing Muslims to isolate themselves from society. These issues and processes do nothing but strengthen this myth."<sup>7</sup>

Learning the *Intentionality Theory*<sup>8</sup> is a must to determine and analyze what the concept of islamophobia exactly indicates and the socio-cultural and psychological basis of this concept. This theory was an approach inverted by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) through Edward Bernays (1891-1995), Freud's nephew and founder of the discipline of public relations and "Art of Public Manipulation"<sup>9</sup>, to manipulate the capitalist order and self-related concepts and statuses of people. Bernays is the founder of modern propaganda under the title of *Public Relations*. He is one of the greatest evils of the 20<sup>th</sup> century or a malevolent person who deviated people from the true path and directed them to the consumption culture. Bernays, Freud's nephew, moved from Austria to New York with his family when he was just a year old. He did not prefer the term propaganda as it was used by Hitler earlier. Instead, he used the concept of Public Relations and conducted the most terrific propaganda of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He initiated the process of translating Freud's books into English and making them well-known across the globe. He is the person causing people's ideologies to be overwhelmed by media (TV, cinema, radio, newspapers etc.) and merciless capitalist activities performed through policy

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<sup>7</sup> Kadir Canatan, Özcan Hıdır, *Batı Dünyasında İslâmfobi ve Anti-İslâmizm*, Ankara, Eskiyei Yay., 2007, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Ger *Thorie der Intentionalität*.

<sup>9</sup> Eng *The Art of Public Manipulation*.

by considering or manipulating Freud's ideas. The idea of conveying the capitalist culture to the whole globe through media from the United States<sup>10</sup> was reflected by him. He is also the one who caused Hollywood cinema culture to be used as a propaganda instrument. For instance, upon a tobacco company's complaint that it lost half of its customers as women did not smoke, he called one of Freud's psychoanalyst students living in the US and found a solution. He pre-organized some attractive women who walked on New York streets with cigarettes in their hands and mentioned the concepts of "freedom" and "equality". Moreover, there were also journalists pre-organized by him. All newspapers published this incident the next day for a sum. He caused women to smoke under the mottos of "freedom" and "equality" and earned millions doing so. He is the person who proposed the concept of "consumer" and caused people to consume more than necessary and to use the concept of democracy in the US against the other countries in the most malevolent way possible.<sup>11</sup> He manipulated the psychology and ideology of people, transformed them into pure biological creatures and formed monsters that only consume and have a specific consumption culture. Many objects and subjects such as cinema, literature, policy, music, females, males, children etc. were used for that purpose. Self-help books were written, in this regard. Even proses and poems were written for this. All these manipulation methods were developed based on Brentano's "intentionality theory". Brentano had no responsibilities, in this regard, but Freud, who took his classes in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Vienna, changed his approaches and conveyed them in a different manner. According to the Intentionality Theory, phenomena of fear, love, belief and hatred, which are among the natural psychic phenomena of humans, have to focus on a specific fact. For instance, when one says, "I am afraid", one is asked, "what are you afraid of?" In this case, one may reply as "I am afraid of snakes, my boss or God." The concepts indicated by the phenomenon of "fear" is "snake", "boss" or "God." In other words, each of our psychological phenomena has to focus on a fact. There is no fear without a phenomenon. In other words, one does not say, "I fear" without focusing on a phenomenon. As noted before, the concept of phobia means "fearing for no reason", which is interesting. The emergence of a psychic phenomenon for no reason or without focusing on a fact indicates a psychological and mental disease. The same case is also valid for the phenomena of "loving", "hating", and "believing." All great divisions, which started in the 1800s after the Industrial Revolution and the Western people who knew the obligation of people's psychic phenomena to be directed into any facts, actually played with these facts, made people feel that they are freer, and captured their freedoms. People were told "Do

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<sup>10</sup>From *Fast Food* culture to clothing, family, entertainment, sports and consumption culture.

<sup>11</sup> See: MÜCAHİT GÜLTEKİN, *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, İstanbul, Pınar Yay., 2016, p. 23-25.

not fear X!", "Fear Y!", "Love X!" or "Hate Y!" through advertisements or suggested lifestyles and manipulation.<sup>12</sup> This can be reflected in a chart as follows;

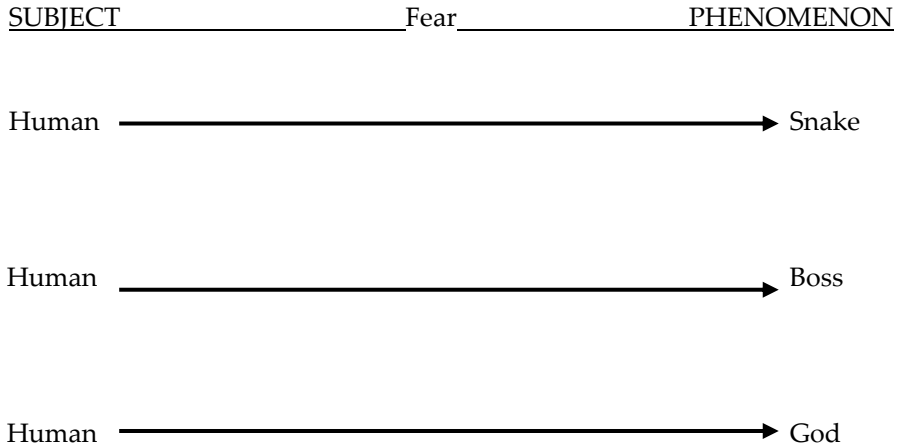


Chart I: *A Brief Chart of Intentionality Theory*

The phenomenon of "fear" among the phenomena of fearing, loving, hating or believing, which are called "Psychic Phenomena" by Brentano and which we naturally have, was selected to understand the issue better. The phenomenon of fear should be focused on any facts, just like other psychic phenomena. In other words, when one says, "I fear snakes," the phenomenon of "fear" is directed to the fact of "snake". When one says, "I fear the boss", the phenomenon of "fear" is directed to the boss, or When one says, "I fear God", the phenomenon of "fear" is directed to God. This is a brief explanation of Brentano's "Intentionality Theory." In other words, "Every psychic phenomenon has to focus on a fact."<sup>13</sup>

This statement or reflection by Brentano is not problematic. The problem is this statement of reflection is manipulated to direct people or societies. The concept of "fear" as the meaning of "phobia" is interesting, in this regard. "Fear" is maybe the weakest psychic phenomenon of humans. Most of the mind manipulations are performed through the phenomenon of "fear" because a person who has fears bows down. Global Order based almost all of its domination on a fear atmosphere consisting of both concrete and abstract ways. *The Islamophobia Industry* by Nathan

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<sup>12</sup> For more details, see: Mehmet Sabri Genç, "Modern Batı Edebiyatı'nın Felsefî ve Psikolojik Arka Planı", İstanbul, *Karabatak Dergisi*, May-June 2016, Issue 26, p. 66

<sup>13</sup> See: Franz Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt Band I*, Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, 1973, p. 111-112.

Lean is an insignificant revelation of this atmosphere.<sup>14</sup> In this work, Lean reflects how the phenomenon of “fear” is created and marketed. This phenomenon of fear is directed toward Islam under the concept of “Islamophobia”. How are the psychic phenomena mentioned above manipulated? The answer is actually clear: The obligation of psychological or psychic phenomena to focus on any facts is manipulated. What does manipulation mean in this case? It is defined as follows:

“It means changing facts by directing, selecting, adding or omitting anything. It is the method of using or changing information for personal interests or affecting or directing people without making them aware of the situation.”<sup>15</sup>

The concept of manipulation has developed a route for itself to follow. This is called perception management. According to Gültekin:

“Manipulation is an integral part of perception management. Perception management requires manipulative information, while truth/facts can be made a part of perception management. In other words, perception management is not solely a process including twisted, hidden, added or changed information/news/comments. It may require a more complicated, progressive, comprehensive and longer-term organization.”<sup>16</sup>

The theoretical basis of the issue of manipulation should be sought in the intentionality theory. One of the most important concepts of intentionality theory is “perception”. Brentano divides this concept into two categories: *Internal Perception*, *External Perception*.<sup>17</sup> Perception is also among the important concepts and topics of psychology and informational theory. The phrase “field of perception” reflects the concrete and perceivable area, which we can sense through our sensory organs on the universal axis. The positive area that we can experience that appeals to our sensory organs, and that can be proved is perceivable. The perception toward the negative “non-concrete and extrasensory” area that we cannot perceive through our sensory organs is called comprehension. We perceive reality and comprehend the truth. In this case, “perception management” blocks all paths to “comprehension”, deviates people from the truth, and limits people’s borders on the reality axis. Not only does it limit, but it also changes the facts on which the psychic phenomena have to focus.

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<sup>14</sup> Nathan Lean, *İslâmofobi Endüstrisi*, Diyanet Yay., Ankara, 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Mücahit Gültekin conveying from (Özer, 2011), *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, İstanbul, Pınar Yay., 2016, p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> See: Mehmet Sabri Genç, “Franz Brentano’da İç Algı ve İç Gözlem Arasındaki Fark”, İstanbul, *Kutadgubilig Felsefe-Bilim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Issue 11, Dergâh Yay., March 2007, p. 109–119.

Manipulation of intentionality can be explained through the previous chart as follows:

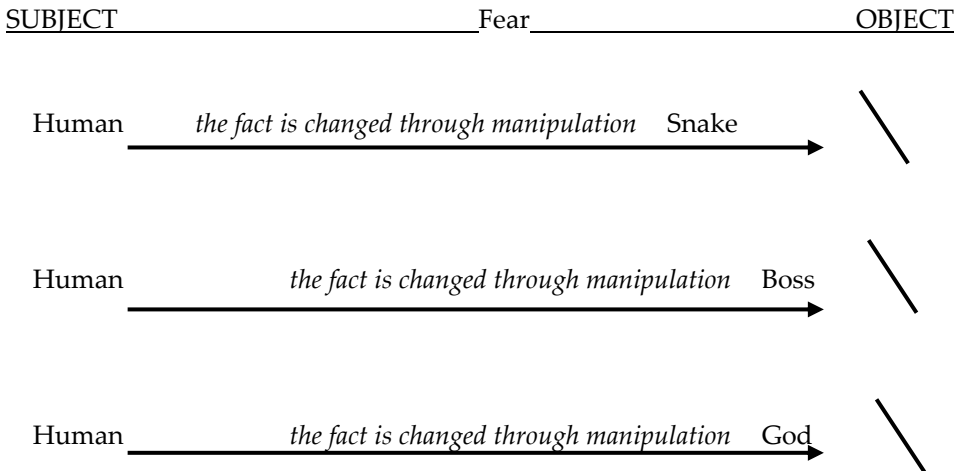


Chart II.: *A Brief Chart of Intentionality Manipulation*

What should be understood from the chart above is that the facts focused of every psychic phenomenon are changed. Masses are directed about what they should or should not fear, love, believe or hate through media, internet<sup>18</sup>, fashion, public relations, policy, education and training, intelligence, certain groups or even books. For instance, while the fact feared and hated before World War II was Jews and Judaism, it is Muslims and Islam now. Anti-Semitism was the name of the anti-Judaism movement then. The fear felt toward Islam and Muslims is simply called “Islamophobia” now.<sup>19</sup> While “Anti-Semitism” indicates hostility against a race or races, “Anti-Islamism” reflects a political doctrine.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the fact, in which the fears of masses are directed on the axis of issues, included the manipulations “Do not fear X!” and “Fear Islam and Muslims!”, and Islam and Muslims. Therefore,

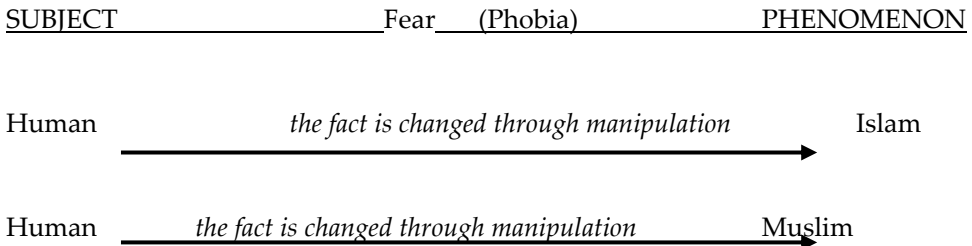


Chart III.: *Formation of Islamophobia through the manipulation of intentionality*

<sup>18</sup> Nathan Lean, *İslâmofobi Endüstrisi*, p. 79-119

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.* p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> See: Kadir Canatan, Özcan Hıdır, *Batı Dünyasında İslâmofobi ve Anti-İslâmizm*, p. 95.

One of the main aims of perception management and manipulation is not a temporary emotional or characteristic transformation, but the transformation of personalities and attitudes in the long run.<sup>21</sup> *Perception management or manipulation of intentionality* is less expensive for the enemies, in this regard. The destruction they cannot do through classical wars, which are performed with weapons, is done by the ideological and characteristics-related manipulations which cause long-term or even permanent harms. Gültekin indicates the following, in this regard:

“Books on wars and military strategies indicate that classical and psychological wars should be conducted simultaneously. Classical wars target bodies, fronts, arsenals, strategic locations and lands while psychological war targets minds, ideas, perceptions, interpretations and hearts. Psychological war is less expensive but it yields more permanent results. The defeated parties in the classical wars may stand up once again, but the defeated sides from psychological wars whose minds are trapped cannot free themselves.”<sup>22</sup>

*Phobia*, the “irrational fear”, is a mental disorder. According to intentionality theory, every psychic phenomenon has to focus on a fact, but getting dragged into the influence of “fear” is a personal or ideological disease. Fear is directed toward Islam as a phobia in Islamophobia because, according to the Intentionality Theory, every psychic phenomenon has to focus on a fact. Meaning of *phobia* as *irrational fear* and directing the irrational fear toward a fact do nothing but strengthen the influence of irrationality. Accordingly, both the facts and minds of subjects, who are the addressee of intentionality, are played, and an inappropriate psychic is formed. Regarding the issue of islamophobia, this bipolar manipulation was directed and dragged into an obsession on a global scale. Moreover, “perception management and manipulation is a long and difficult process aiming to replace the unwanted goals of the target section.”<sup>23</sup> The fear spread through the Islamophobia propagandas is artificial. A fear generated first, and then the fact on which this fear will focus is formed later. People with proper mental health do not fear without a fact. In other words, fears have to focus on a fact. One does not say, “I am afraid” for no reason. If one does so, one has a mental disorder. Therefore, the dictation of the phobia phenomenon and this phenomenon through various ways deepened irrationalism. Okumuş stated the following, in this regard:

“This fear is just an artificial or apocryphal phobia and has the quality reflected with the phrase ‘cowards die many times before their deaths’. As noted by Krishnamurti in *On Fear*, it is a fear which is groundless before we experience, and which becomes nonsense after we feel. A real, natural fear can yield positive results. It may direct you to learn

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<sup>21</sup> See: Gültekin, *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.* p. 16.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*: p. 17.

about what you fear and take action if it is really dangerous. The second type of fear is morbid. It may cause people to get stuck in nonsense and unreal obsessions.”<sup>24</sup>

Islamophobia has not turned into an industry. It has evolved into a logical pathology. Implementers of perception management and ideological manipulation use their experiences covering 200 years and regarding psychology and sociology to manage the field of “social psychology”. This manipulation process has four elements. Gültekin reflects these four elements as follows <sup>25</sup>:

- I. Deceiver
- II. Deceived
- III. Topic of Deceit
- IV. Scope

Gültekin claims that the most critical one among these four elements or the most important element for the perception managers is “deceived”, i.e. the “subject”. As a natural result of deceiving, certain mistakes may be included in this process and the possibility for the deceived to realize these mistakes may have an important role in reversing or changing the result. Therefore, experts in perception management on a global scale have to hide their purposes all the time. Hiding the purpose to prevent the deceived from understanding is among the main responsibilities of the deceiver. Thus, the question “why” is not allowed to be asked during the manipulation process. The purpose and future are hidden in the question of “Why?”. Moreover, the past of the incident involved in this question is also hidden. Therefore, differences that may emerge between the targets and purposes facilitate the works of perception managers, and solely focusing on the reasons may turn into a wall preventing us from realizing our goals. A reason that will appear realistic and prevent people from realizing their “targets” is used as a curtain to hide the purposes, in this regard, which is among the tricks used.<sup>26</sup>

The concept of propaganda aims to market phobia, i.e. the “fear”, and maintain the relationship of “deceiver-deceived” in this marketing process. “Fear” may not always be marketed through propaganda, but if Islamophobia is the concept reviewed, it is known that the psychic phenomena that are marketed or manipulated through its facts are “fear” and “hatred”.<sup>27</sup> The word propaganda was first used in a declaration issued by Papacy in 1622 to reflect the meaning of Latin term *propagareyanic*, meaning “to expand and spread”. The title of missionary and

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<sup>24</sup> Kadir Canatan, Özcan Hıdır, *Batı Dünyasında İslâmfobi ve Anti-İslâmizm*, p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Gültekin, *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, p. 21.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*: p. 21-22.

<sup>27</sup> See: Nathan Lean, *İslâmfobi Endüstrisi*, p. 41-79.



concept of propaganda were used to reflect the same. After the French Revolution, it was used to spread political ideas, which is also the case now.<sup>28</sup>

The reflection regarding the historical experiences and subconsciousness of the Western countries, which have propaganda-related experiences over the domination ground of the global civilizations, is just an aspect of the issue of "Islamophobia". The imperialist experiences of the Europe and historical process of orientalism revealed the "Islamophobia Industry" and "global/imperial Islamophobia policy".<sup>29</sup> Prof. Dr. Mehmet Görmez, the ex-Head of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, made a significant statement, in this regard.

"Islamophobia is just the visible aspect of a long and great process. It has never been independent of international policy, economy, interest-based relationships, claims of showing superiority and global hegemony targets. It is a fact that those who form the Islamophobia industry are actually afraid of themselves. They fear that the orders they found through occupations, invasions, colonies, tyrannies, injustices and torments will disappear one day. Just like the polytheists of Mecca. Those who use the industry of fear implicitly know that Islam is a religion of rights, law, justice, morals and wisdom. It was revealed to establish peace and faith in this world, It is based on protecting life, goods, generations, minds and itself. The only remedies which will help humanity achieve salvation are included in the messages of Islam, the latest religion, the Quran, the latest divine book, and Muhammad (p.b.u.h) the latest Prophet. Therefore, they keep their Islam-related fears alive."<sup>30</sup>

The contradiction between the meanings of the concepts of *Phobia* and *Islam* is meaningful. The reverse occupation method that is always used in ideological occupation methods is also used, in this regard. Reversion of concepts, meanings, indications and facts is among the primary works of perception managers. It is a must to know that the concept of Islamophobia does not have a religious and conceptual meaning and that the efforts to attribute a political meaning to this concept are reflected along with all related aspects in the *World of Psychological War*, and to make every scientific effort in this regard.

Intercultural differences are natural for nations. No nation is equal to another nation. Efforts and oppression of global powers to stereotype all social concepts are objected by all societies with particular qualities, which caused these powers to take sides against these societies. The fact that they emerged through such a psychological war method is a result of the hostility approach. The war fought against all societies without order is more than a classical war. Instead, it is a

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<sup>28</sup> Mehmet Sabri Genç, "Propagandaya Karşı Edebiyat", İstanbul, *Karabatak Dergisi*, March-April 2016, Issue 25, p. 62.

<sup>29</sup> See: Deepa Kumar: *İslâmofobi, İmparatorluğun Siyaseti*, İstanbul, Pınar Yay., 2016, p. 19-65.

<sup>30</sup> Mehmet Görmez, "Korku Endüstrisi İslâmofobia", Ankara, *Diyanet Dergisi*, May 2017, Issue: 317, p. 4-5.

psychological war. Media, internet, education-training, public relations, video games<sup>31</sup>, cartoons, banks, groups abusing others religiously, formations, and certain cults are the pawns or raiders of psychological war. Negligence or failure in learning the methods of this war means the termination of the factors constituting the nations that are exposed to manipulations. Global powers defeat their enemies not only through classical wars but also via psychological war. The same global powers perform the classical wars through terrorism with religious motives.<sup>32</sup>

Joseph Nye, one of the strategists of global order who recommends psychological war based on perception management, calls this war “soft power”, and states that the use of this power by the US will be less expensive while yielding exact and permanent results.<sup>33</sup> Even the concept of “soft power” suits the tactic of ideological occupation. The term “soft” actually refers to “hard”. The main purpose of this power is the transformation of attitudes instead of behaviors because “change of behaviors does not indicate the change of attitudes. However, change of attitudes creates emotions, ideologies and behaviors.”<sup>34</sup> Our attitudes cannot be changed easily, but our decisions and behaviors can be changed. If our attitudes change or transform, this will reflect onto everything we own.<sup>35</sup>

In conclusion, the psychological war continues not only through the concept of Islamophobia but also via many other concepts. One of the main and most definitive weapons of psychological war is to load many non-understandable concepts to people’s minds through suggestions and repetitions. Although all organizations causing problems for Turkey have different goals and work in different fields, they have applied and continue to apply this method. One who tries to load the words that are not used every day into one’s mind becomes astounded and *mankurt*, a senseless slave in Turkish mythology. That person becomes the pawn of an organization or dominant global powers later. Everything unfolds in minds where concepts are present and in facts on which the psychic phenomena are focused. One of the ways of objecting to this for us is to strengthen our rational structure and keep our minds alive. When a problem occurs in a computer program, for example, that computer becomes problematic. Similarly, when one has deficiencies or senseless worlds or concepts in mind, one loses one’s sense and becomes a slave. Humans are free, rational, and strong-willed. Perception

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<sup>31</sup> Henry Kissinger’s old statement “We are looking forward to seeing when the war games we generated will be played”, and the evidence that the most of the young European people who took part in the civil war in Syria are addicted to video gaming are interesting. Most of the scenes in the games, such as *Call of Duty*, which have high budgets and income levels, seem to have fulfilled the wish of Kissinger.

<sup>32</sup> See: Osman Şen, “Küreselleşen Terörizm Stratejisi”, Ankara, 2017, *Diyanet Dergisi*, Issue 317, p. 22-24.

<sup>33</sup> See: Gültekin, *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, p. 16-17.

<sup>34</sup> Gültekin, *Algı Yönetimi ve Manipülasyon*, p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, the terrorist organization named FETO, which had been occupying different governmental and public sections of Turkey since the 1960s, is a total example of “ideological manipulation organization”. The aim was to turn the abstract occupations into concrete ones. The July 15 Failed Coup Attempt is a clear example, in this regard.

management captures people's freedom and will through its concepts, lifestyles, fashion, education and training activities, media, etc., and it fills people's minds with prejudices and problematic concepts. As also noted by Görmez, those who use perception management actually know that Islam is actually the religion of peace, that Muslims have knowledge, and that they are in peace with their metaphysical beliefs. This is actually the main issue, which is the objection to all aspects of global power overwhelming people. Whatever stands against global power should be terminated. Therefore, they dear Islam and fill the basis of Islam by playing with the ideological and moral elements of Islam. Muslims should not let anything or anybody to consolidate this fear and be a model for humans/humanity in their every state. Quickly solving the rational and moral issues away from emotional approaches and awakening ourselves will determine the future of the entire globe. Otherwise, the future will be determined without us, and issues will just increase. The obsession of relating an irrational fear to Islam can only be overcome through an ideological revolution that will arise from a set of ideological ethics and approaches. We have the power for such a revolution. To be aware of this power, we need to get rid of ideological and ethical occupations after determining their characteristics and to purifying ourselves.

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## The Obsession of Linking Phobia to Islam as an Irrational Fear

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## Responsibility of Muslims Against Islamophobia (A Self-Critical Inquiry of Identity and Personality)\*

Salih AYDEMİR\*\*

We are Ottomans, or the representative of Islam, even if we burn all the Qurans and demolish all mosques. A dark, dangerous mass of enemies!

Europe is Christian despite materialism; all right or left-wingers are Christian. We are the only enemy of Christianity. We are the fearsome and mysterious power defeating Crusaders repeatedly.

(C. Meriç, *Umrandan Uygurluğa*, 1.)

### Abstract

There have been conflicts and controversies, which have arisen at different dimensions and at different times since the revelation of Islam. The last of these conflicts is "Islamophobia," which ultimately determines the way the Western world behaves against the Islamic world. Nowadays, the Westerners portray Islamophobia as the origin of Muslims' tendency to terrorism, tyranny, pro-violence, and intolerance to freedom of opinion and freedom of the press. Muslims, on the other hand, treat Islamophobia as fears forcefully produced by the West to reflect its prejudices against Islam and Muslims as discrimination, racism, alienation, hostility and hatred. This attitude, which is based on mutual accusations toward other sides, is not adequately questioned in the form of accepting culpability or lack of reason or subjecting the case to self-criticism. This study aimed to reflect a trial of a self-critical approach for Muslims.

**Keywords:** Islamophobia, confidence, violence, hatred

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This paper is the English translation of the study titled "İslamofobi Karşısında Müslümanların Sorumluluğu (Öz Eleştirel Bir Kimlik ve Kişilik Sorgulaması)" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Salih AYDEMİR, "İslamofobi Karşısında Müslümanların Sorumluluğu (Öz Eleştirel Bir Kimlik ve Kişilik Sorgulaması)", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 171-182.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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## İslamofobi Karşısında Müslümanların Sorumluluğu (Öz Eleştirel Bir Kimlik ve Kişilik Sorgulaması)

### Özet

İslâm âlemi ile Hristiyan dünyası arasında İslâm'ın doğuşundan beri farklı zamanlarda farklı boyutlarda ortaya çıkan çatışma ve çekişmeler olmuştur. Bu anlaşmazlıkların en son şekli Batı'nın İslâm dünyasına karşı tutumunu belirleyen "İslamofobi"dir. Günümüzde Batılılar, islamofobinin Müslümanların terörist ve zorba eylemlerinden, şiddet yanlısı oluşlarından, fikir ve basın özgürlüğüne tahammülsüzlüklerinden kaynaklandığını düşünmektedirler. Buna karşın Müslümanlar ise islamofobiyi, Batı'nın İslâm'a ve Müslümanlara karşı nefretlerinin, önyargılarının, düşmanlıklarının ve ötekileştirmek için zoraki ürettiği korkularının bir sonucu olarak değerlendirmektedir. Karşılıklı muhatabını suçlama üzerine kurgulanan bu tutum, taraflarca öz eleştiriye tabi tutulup '*Bizim kabahatimiz veya eksiğimiz nedir?*' biçiminde yeterince sorgulanmamaktadır. Bu çalışmada Müslümanlar açısından bu özeleştirel yaklaşımın denemesi yapılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobi, güven, şiddet, nefret

Islamophobia is a misconception arising from the combination of "Islam", meaning peace, and from the Greek term of "phobos" or "phobia", meaning fear or fearing and used to reflect irrational fear-based psychiatric disorders. Islamophobia is defined by some as the irrational fear felt toward Islam and/or Muslims, but this definition does not totally cover the meanings attributed to the concept. What should be understood when Islamophobia is mentioned is as follows: Islamophobia is a concept reflecting the prejudice, hatred, hostility and (nonsense) fear felt toward Islam and/or Muslims, insulting and making them sound like an evil, and indicating a discriminatory context (Kirman, 2017).

Terminologically, Islamophobia was first used by Runnymede Trust, a philosopher from England, in the report prepared in 1997 in regard to the negative effects of Islamic perception, which was based on the Islamic trend rising in the world, among the members of western public.<sup>1</sup> The concept became popular and was often included in the media following the 9/11 attacks conducted by al-Qaeda on World Trade Center in New York, which is also known as Twin Towers, on 11 September 2001. In addition, incidents that occurred in various European countries were called the 9/11 of the specific country. With these assessments, Islam was deemed relatable to violence, and hatred and hostility toward Muslims were promoted. Brutal killing of Theo Van Gogh, the director of the short movie *Submission* which was created to blemish Islam in Netherlands, by a Moroccan

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.yenisafak.com/yenisafakpazar/dun-barbar-turkler-bugun-islamofobi-2065935> 23.03.2017

attacker; Charlie Hebdo incident which occurred in France on 7 January 2015; and the explosion which occurred in Manchester Arena in 23 May 2017 turned the fear of western people toward Muslims into hatred and hostility. An extensive analysis of these incidents, the actions regarded as the reasons for these incidents, and perpetrators in this regard indicates that these are just nonsense efforts to relate these to Islam and Muslims.

Although Islamophobia was mentioned first in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the anti-Islam approach, along with the hostility toward Islam, the orientation of marginalizing Islam and competition between Islam and Christians in this context, can be associated with the beginning of Crusades. The most prominent forms of this orientation, which has shown itself in different ways throughout history, have been developed with the concepts of orientalism and islamophobia (Lean, 2015).

People have lived with their opponents in line with the principle of “one exists with one’s opponent” since the day the first human emerged. This dichotomy has been maintained in the concepts related to our spiritual worlds such as mortal-eternal world, devil-angel, benevolence-malevolence, sins-good deed etc., and in the dilemmas regarding the presence of people and society such as Abil-Khabil, Abraham-Nimrod, or Moses-Pharaoh. Western countries have been maintaining the approach of assessing the world from the western perspective, which became obvious after the Age of Enlightenment following the Renaissance, since the 16th century (Amin, 1993: 457; Wallerstein, 2003; 527).

After the Soviet Union and the United States became superpowers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world kept its presence with opposite concepts or groups such as communist-capitalist/liberal, Warsaw-NATO, or Iron Curtain-Free World. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989, the US-based western ideology needed to create an opponent for itself in case followers of this ideology might be left without an opponent or enemy, and this opponent turned out to be Islam and Muslims.

Justifying the Islamophobic approach of the west through a couple of violent acts and interpreting Muslims’ reactions as intolerance to ideas and artistic activities will be wrong and inadequate. Although western countries are sensitive regarding basic human rights, particularly the freedom of belief, all respected principles may be put aside when it comes to Islam and Muslims, or the environment where anti-Islamic acts are justified may be created. Such western attitudes are briefly but properly assessed by Kadir Canatan as follows:

These approaches have a simple scenario. First, a literary or artistic work is published or formed to insult Islam or Muslims in a sensitive topic, and attackers then consider their theses “proven” referring to Muslims’ reactions to these attitudes (Ataman-Er citing from Canatan, 2008; 760).



The incidents reflecting Muslims as attackers in the last 25 years, which is the case for certain European countries, indicate that this western scenario has been fulfilled and followed. For instance, the crisis of awful comics in Denmark, the republication of these comics in France, relevant incident of Charlie Hebdo from Paris, and short movie by Theo Van Gogh from the Netherlands are nothing but the implementation of this simple scenario. Likewise, the Salman Rushti incident, which took place long before these events, was an insult to the values that Muslims were sensitive to and considered sacred, but they did not hold back from considering insults as freedom of opinion. Moreover, the knighthood title was granted to Salman Rüşdi by the English Government when Islamophobia was a controversial topic in the West (June 2007), so insults to Islam were governmentally rewarded, and Muslims were triggered once again to commit violent acts.<sup>2</sup> All brochures used in the Swiss referendum related to minarets aim to insult Islam and Muslims. For instance, a minaret was depicted as a missile in a brochure while another one reflected a minaret as a bayonet tearing the Swiss flag apart (Çebi, 2015). Defending these practices full of insults under the idea of ideological freedom or freedom of the press is nothing but insincerity and hypocrisy.

If a religion and its followers are perceived as a threat element and source of fear and concern by a large group of people, the reasons for such fears should be examined and reviewed to reach a solution. European public, institutions and media should question the reasons and reality behind these concerns and make efforts to overcome their fears. Perception of Muslims, who live as large groups and constitute a part of the unity in European countries, as a danger and living a life with concerns due to this perception blemish the image of European countries that value modern, contemporary and democratic laws and human rights. Well, what happened today is that Muslims with a deep cultural heritage are being viewed as a threat to Europe (Miller, 2010).

Stating that this is nothing but a prejudiced, one-sided approach by western countries would mean nothing but running away from the severity and responsibility of the case. Islamic world/Muslims had suited such positioning and been insufficient and passive for a period. These conditions resulted in western imputations and acceptance by Islam/Muslims. In conclusion, Muslims welcomed such imputations and roles assigned by their opponents, rivals or others as they forgot their essential characteristic, which is “the reliable society”, when they were considered as a dishonorable group of people.

However, this religion revealed by God and declared by the Prophet is totally based on the concept of trust. Following concepts would help perceive the case better;

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkish/news/story/2007/06/070619\\_rushdi\\_update.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkish/news/story/2007/06/070619_rushdi_update.shtml) (date accessed: 20.03.2017)

- ✓ **al-Mumin:** One of God's names: Confidential, making others sure, protecting.
- ✓ **al-Amin:** The primary title of the Prophet (Atay, 2007); he was a person called *Muhammadu al-Amin*" even before he was assigned the duty of Prophecy. After he was assigned as the Prophet, his enemies could not blemish this title, although they fought with him and did not hesitate to do anything malevolent toward him. Let alone making a negative statement; they agreed to entrust their goods to him or determine him as a judge for a conflict between them.
- ✓ **Mumin:** This is the most basic quality of one who declared that one is a Muslim, and it has the same meaning with the base of the term "amin". In other words, people trusted the Prophet, considering his characteristics called *al-Mumin* and *al-Amin*, and he did not disappoint in this regard.

The Prophet ordered the following to form a society of trust:

\* الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ \*

"A Muslim is a person whose actions and statements are trusted by others."<sup>3</sup>

The Prophet's conception regarding the society of trust consists of these points, which are al-Mumin, al-Amin, mumin, or the one trusted, believed, followed or obeyed. The concept of "trust" among these titles is specific or associated to Islam, the religion integral to the concept of trust. Moreover, the ideology that trust is integral to Islam is also adopted. This title belongs to God, Prophet, Islam or Muslims. The Prophet's life indicates that the adoption of Islam and his attitudes before or during the revelation process are based on the concept of trust or in coordination with trust. The Arabic society called him *al-Amin* before the duty of Prophecy. After the revelation of the divine role, his enemies continued calling him *al-Amin* and showed their actual trust to him by entrusting their lives and properties to the Prophet. One of the most significant examples in this regard can be seen during the Hijra of the Prophet. As known to all, the Prophet did not only order Ali to lay on Prophet's bed the night before the Hijra. He also told him to prepare a list of goods and properties disbelievers from Mecca entrusted him and to issue a list of owners, and he ordered him to deliver the goods and properties back to their owners.<sup>4</sup> The main attitude in this regard can only be explained with the Prophet's unique characteristic called *al-amin*. He made efforts to save himself and others from the malevolence of his opponents who were planning to kill him, but he prioritized the responsibility of delivering the goods and properties of these people to them, which is second to none in the history of humanity.

The Prophet had lost nothing from his trustworthy characteristics regarding his actions throughout his 63 years of life. This case directs us to the following

<sup>3</sup> al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, "Iman", 4, 5 (10, 11); at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan* "Iman", 12, (2629).

<sup>4</sup> لَمَّا خَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى «: أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ عُفْرٍ، حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي رَافِعٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ قَالَ: قَالَ: 4 فَأَقْبَمْتُ ثَلَاثًا الْمَدِينَةَ فِي الْهَجْرَةِ أَمْرَنِي أَنْ أَقِيمَ بَعْدَهُ حَتَّى أُوَدِّيَ وَدَائِعِ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ لِلنَّاسِ، وَلِذَا كَانَ يُسَمَّى الْأَمِينِ، فَأَقْبَمْتُ ثَلَاثًا Kubra, v. 3, p. 22).

comparison despite not being true: Disbelievers' attitudes toward the Prophet and Muslims on the one hand, and Prophet's attitude and the principle of following his own characteristics and beliefs without paying attention to disbelievers' attitudes and behaviors on the other hand. Considering the attitude of western countries toward Islam and Muslims and thinking how well Muslims represent their Prophet about the concept of trust, Muslims' responsibility in terms of Islamophobia is a great issue to be solved. In other words, anti-Islamic approaches of disbelievers from Arabia during the seventh century were less severe than the anti-Islamic ideology of the Muslims from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. In other words, we cannot overcome Islamophobia by blaming the west and western people. We must question what sort of contributions Muslims make to this process.

The social and behavioral roles to be adopted by Muslims and reflected in two basic sources of Islam (Quran and hadiths) do not actually let Islamophobia inventors improve and develop their concepts:

Recommending benevolence and preventing malevolence (Ali 'Imran 3/104, 110, 114; at-Tawbah 9/71, 112; ak-Haj 22/41; Luqman 31/17); cooperation in benevolent acts (al-Maidah 5/2.); avoiding from exaggerating benevolent acts (al-Baqarah 2/264; al-Muddaththir 74/6); forgiving mistakes (Ali 'Imran 3/134, 159; al-Maidah 5/13); making sacrifices and prioritizing others over the self (al-Hashr 59/9); overcoming malevolence through benevolence and kindness (ar-Ra'd 13/22; al-Mu'minun 23/96; al-Qasas 28/54); avoiding from making fun of people (al-Hujurat 49/11; al-Humazah 104/1); and avoiding from causing disorder and corruption (al-Baqarah 2/11, 27; ar-Ra'd 13/25).

There are certain people from my ummah who may consider their prayers, fasting and alms when Judgment Day is mentioned, but if they insult somebody else, kill or injure others, or steal goods of others, their benevolent acts are distributed to others as a good deed. If their benevolent acts end before they pay their debts (or fulfill responsibilities assigned to them), sins of the creditor or beneficiary are transferred to them and therefore, they will go to hell (Muslim, Imarat 118).

Whoever gives harm (to a Muslim's life, property or honor) will be harmed by God. Whoever causes trouble (by showing hostility against Muslims for no reason) will see problems and difficulties from God (Abu Dawud, Akdiya 31).

Although the definition of a Muslim, and Muslims' morals and social relationships are clearly reflected in the basic sources of Islam, do Muslims have a responsibility in terms of the perceptions toward Islam as a fear and hatred object? If they do, what is the level of this responsibility?

This study reviews whether the actual state of the current Muslims match the orders and recommendations of Islam through a couple of examples observed and listened from the witnesses in this regard:

A friend of mine who lived in the US for a long time came to Turkey a couple of years ago and noted this anecdote while assessing the state of Muslims there: When my friend wanted to buy a second-hand car a couple of years after moving to the US, people around recommended purchasing from non-Muslims. When he/she found An American seller, the seller mentioned about the deficits of the vehicle. However, he/she stated that another friend bought a second-hand vehicle from a Pakistani Muslim considering the seller's swears regarding the car, and that friend found many deficits following the purchase upon different oaths.

Another example is as follows: When we went to Denmark to perform a study on the states of migrant Muslim females, a woman who was from Uşak, Turkey, who was 82 years old and had lived in Denmark for approximately 45 years, stated the following: *"If there were 40 people in our workplace, and if there were 39 Danish and a Muslim among them, we would have no problem staying with any of those Danish people, but we would be concerned staying with the Muslim in the same place."* This topic was brought to attention in different interviews conducted with first, second and third-generation Danish people who included at least five or maximum fifteen women and whose ages ranged from 20 to 80, and no answers from them opposed the afore-noted statement. Moreover, questionings in this regard were deepened in terms of the daily lives of Muslim males who are indirectly accused of causing distrust, and efforts were made to measure the relationship between the concepts of distrust and religiousness along with the variables of praying or fasting men or those who avoid from sinners. However, the result did not change, and the statement *"We are concerned or fear of staying with a Muslim man alone."* was received.

Another colleague of mine who stayed in England for a long period to complete the master's studies conveyed such an anecdote regarding the time-wise perceptions of Muslims. When Muslim students plan to conduct an activity, they insistently add the following note under the time-wise section of the brochure: *"Please Note: This activity is based on western timing, rather than Muslim timing!"* When we asked our friend what this meant, they said, *"The activity will start on time. If you are late, you will miss it!"* As the followers of a religion that aims to ensure the time-wise ontology through five-time prayers, you can imagine the contributions of the West when we take their punctuality as an exemplary character.

In addition to these observations and anecdotes indicating that we do not reflect the Islamic characteristic of providing trust let alone the issues and matters between the Muslims in the west and western people, there is another example that occurred in Turkey:

A retired professor from a faculty of divinity who came to Şanlıurfa in the last days of April 2006 to participate in a conference stated that when he went to Dargah Mosque for the morning prayer, he saw a middle-aged old woman who also came to the mosque alone in dawn and that it was a nice indication of the city in regard to its safety, seeing that women could come to mosques alone in dawn without having any concerns. Hearing this appreciation and nice words from him, I asked, “*Sir, should not this be natural for a Muslim society?*” and we kept talking in another environment.

The number of these examples can be increased. However, as an opposite attitude, when we mention “islamophobia”, the number of negative attitudes and prejudices against Islam and Muslims is more than you wish. However, any of these examples, regardless of whether they support or do not support Muslims in the issue of Islam and trust-distrust, do not justify the state of Islam/Muslims. Moreover, Muslims are far away from representing Islam through these examples. Terry Eagleton, the Marxist philosopher of the West who we criticize a lot, properly indicates the role of modern Muslims about calling Islam along with the concepts of orientalism, terror and phobia, and reflects Muslims’ attitudes and approaches contradicting Islam:

Islam, meaning ‘bowing down’, has the main principles of mercy, equality, compassion and guardianship toward the poor, and it requires total obedience to God... Anti-violence is at the core of Islam, which particularly prohibits congregational and social justice and theological speculations... This fascinating theological system is what has turned into the doctrine of rich autocrats from the oil sector, critics of females, fascist mollahs and villain zealots (Eagleton, 2004; 181).

In conclusion, this study reflects that it is not correct to implement the idea of defending the self to Islam through the oppositional approach used by modern Muslims to explain their states as a typical social and personal reaction. In the terminology of postmodern philosophers, explaining our problems through binary opposition and developing a defense mechanism are not possible and persuasive. Therefore, the answer to the question “*Why are we regarded as so (unreliable)?*” is not the traditional motto “*due to the western, Zionist tricks and their local pawns*”. (Atay, 2012; 16-18) The west certainly aims to build an identity and does whatever is needed for this purpose. Islamophobia is one of those. However, our contribution to this process as contemporary Muslims cannot be neglected. Accordingly, the God we believe, the Prophet we follow, and the believer we are should be reexamined, and it should be stressed that we must do whatever is necessary to build the environment of trust. As noted by İsmet Özel, we are living in a country where being unfair does not catch attention as much as eating with the left hand,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://benatalislam.wordpress.com/2016/12/22/husun-u-zan-kalemiz-ne-durumda/> (date accessed: 11.04.2017).

so the guilty side here is us instead of westerns. Instead of blaming them, we must know our own faults, and in Özel's words, we have to check "the dead bodies between our teeth" (Özel, 2016; 227-228). These bodies should "trigger" us and awaken our minds. (Özel, 2016; 167-18).

### **Conclusion**

The statement of Tomas Hobbes "One is an enemy of the other (homo homini lupus)" properly and briefly reflects the relationship between the societies as much as the ties between people. The conflicts between the Christian and Islamic worlds have been continuing for centuries. This conflict was briefly reflected by Samuel Huntington through the concept of "conflict of civilizations". Although efforts were made to develop discourses such as "alliance of civilizations" or "agreement between religions" against this discourse, the conflicts or competition between the civilizations or religions still continue secretly or obviously.

The conflict between these two groups (Christians and Muslims) forming the greatest religious sections of the world emerged in different periods in different forms. However, the most sneaky and severe form of these conflicts has been Islamophobia, occupying the global agenda in the latest century. Although Islamophobia is briefly based on the phobia of a group regarding another group, a great problem of trust still emerged between the societies. Regarding the issue of who is guilty and responsible, the concept of trust is based on mutuality. It includes the responsibility and sacrifices of whoever trusts and is trusted.

Western countries have not been trusting Islam/Muslims in recent years, and this distrust and fear called Islamophobia toward Muslims exceeded the limits and turned into the hatred toward Islam and Muslims, which is upsetting and concerning. This period is based on the competition, conflicts, prejudices and malevolent acts, or obvious or hidden plans which have been lasting for centuries. However, it should be noted that Muslims, who are to give confidence and trust to their addressee in this regard, have important responsibilities, and that Muslims' responsibility in this issue should be questioned and criticized. To overcome this issue: *i*) Administrators, media and non-governmental organizations of western countries need a questioning which will be free of the prejudices from all social sections. *ii*) Muslim societies need to seriously question how committed they are to their own cultures and whether they fulfill their religious responsibilities, and they must achieve awareness to solve their issues within legal borders without deviating from the universal human values.

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## Islamophobia and Surveillance Directed at Muslims in the West\*

Zeynep Serap TEKTEN AKSÜRMELİ\*\*

### Abstract:

Increasing surveillance directed at Muslims after 9/11 is among the mostly studied issues in the surveillance literature. Many studies show that surveillance directed at Muslims is intensified in the name of national security measures. Increasing surveillance makes the Muslims in the West live more anxiously and causes negative discrimination against Muslims. The Islamophobic practices affect the Muslims living in the West and Muslims who travel to West for various reasons.

Muslims are seen as the most “suspected” individuals especially in crowded places such as airports, shopping malls, entertainment centers. Muslims who carry Islamic symbols are searched more carefully or paid more attention in crowded places. The surveillance directed at Muslims is justified for the so-called national security necessities. Security forces and media claim that the surveillance directed at Muslims stems from “objective” reasons, however, the biased assumptions regarding religion and culture shape the sphere of surveillance. The discriminatory and accusatory “surveillance discourse” is also reinforced by the media images and populist politicians.

This study aims to figure out the intersection points of Islamophobia and surveillance practices. For this purpose, the surveillance practices directed at Muslims in the West are mentioned briefly in the article. The main axis of the study is the Islamophobic assumptions underlying the increasing surveillance of Muslims in the West. In this article, gender aspects of Islamophobia are also addressed. “Gendered Islamophobia” concept is elaborated in this context. The intensity and type of surveillance changes according to gender because of the different dressing styles. The Muslim women, who prefer to veil, become more easily identifiable because of the headscarf, hijab, turban etc. Moreover, in gendered Islamophobic discourses, Muslim women are usually portrayed as “oppressed”, while Muslim men are presented as “oppressors”.

Surveillance includes unequal power relations between the surveillant and the surveilled. Being the object of the surveillance reflects a power relation in which the person who surveils can exercise power on the surveilled. This article points out the role of Islamophobia in portraying Muslims as “threat” as well as attracting attention to hierarchical power relations embedded in surveillance practices directed at Muslims.

**Keywords:** Islamophobia, gendered Islamophobia, surveillance, terror, post-9/11 period.

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## İslamofobi ve Batı'da Müslümanlara Yönelen Gözetim

### Özet

Gözetim sosyolojisi literatüründe özellikle 9/11 saldırıları sonrasında artış gösteren çalışma konularının başında Müslümanlara yönelik artan gözetim gelmektedir. Birçok çalışma ulusal güvenlik gerekçeleriyle artan gözetimin özellikle Müslümanlara yöneldiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Artan gözetim, Batı'da yaşayan Müslümanların gündelik hayatlarını daha kaygılı geçirmelerine ve ayrımcılığa uğramalarına neden olmaktadır. Bu durumun Batı ülkelerinde yaşan Müslümanları ve çeşitli nedenlerle Batı'ya seyahat eden Müslümanları etkilediği bilinmektedir.

Batı'da Müslümanlar özellikle havaalanları, alışveriş merkezleri, eğlence merkezleri gibi kalabalık ortamlarda en "şüpheli" kişiler olarak görülmekte ve güvenlik gerekçeleriyle gözetim özellikle Müslümanlara yöneltilmektedir. Müslümanlıkla ilişkilendirilen kıyafet ve simgelerin taşıyıcılarının daha fazla "aranması", bu kişilere "dikkat edilmesi", bu kişilerden daha fazla şüphelenmesi gerektiği algısı yaygındır. Güvenlik güçleri ve medya Müslümanlara yönelik artan gözetimin "objektif" nedenlerden kaynaklı olduğunu iddia etmekteyse de din ve kültüre dair önyargılı varsayımların gözetim alanını şekillendirdiği bilinmektedir. Müslümanlara dair yaratılan dışlayıcı ve suçlayıcı "gözetim söylemi" medyanın kullandığı imajlarla ve populist politikacıların söylemleri ile de desteklenmektedir.

Bu çalışma, islamofobi kavramıyla gözetim sosyolojisi alanını birarada incelemeyi ve kesişim noktalarını belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Müslümanların Batı'da hangi gözetim pratiklerine maruz kaldıkları makalede değinilen konular arasındadır. Batı'da Müslümanlara yönelik gözetimin artmasının altındaki islamofobik varsayımlar makalenin ana eksenini oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, islamofobi ve gözetim ilişkisinin toplumsal cinsiyet boyutlarına da değinilmiştir. Literatürde "cinsiyetçi İslamofobi" kavramıyla ifade edilen süreçler de ele alınmıştır. Müslüman kadınlardan örtünmeyi tercih edenler kullandıkları eşarp, başörtü, türban ve hicab gibi kıyafetler nedeniyle daha ayırt edilebilir ve görünür olmaktadır. Kadın ve erkeklerin kıyafet farklılıkları nedeniyle günlük hayatta gözetime maruz kalma şekilleri ve sıklıkları değişmektedir. Cinsiyetçi İslamofobik söylemde Müslüman kadınlar genellikle "baskılanmış" olarak resmedilirken, Müslüman erkekler is "baskılayan"lar olarak temsil edilmektedir.

Gözetim, gözetleyen ve gözetlenen arasında eşitsiz bir güç ilişkisinin olduğu bir olgudur. Gözetimin nesnesi olmak gözetleyenin, gözetlenen üzerinde güç uygulayabileceği bir pozisyonu ifade eder. Bu makale, islamofobinin Müslümanları "tehdit" olarak göstermedeki rolünün yanında, Müslümanları gözetimin nesnesi olarak hiyerarşik olarak daha alt bir pozisyonda konumlandığına da dikkat çekmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslamofobi, cinsiyetçi İslamofobi, gözetim, terör, 9/11 sonrası

## Introduction

In September 2015, a school boy aged 14 was handcuffed and arrested in Texas, USA for bringing an alleged homemade hoax bomb to school<sup>1</sup>. His name is Ahmed Mohamed and the alleged hoax bomb was his science project, it was a homemade clock. After this tragic event, he received many invitations from politicians and public figures including Barack Obama, the President of USA, and many of others tweeted about him to give support<sup>2</sup>. He even met with the Prime Minister of Turkey at that time<sup>3</sup>. However, this event made it very visible that Islamophobia is embedded in the everyday life of the USA.

The attacks on September 11, 2001 (also referred to as 9/11) is usually stated as a turning point for Islamophobia and the surveillance studies. Especially after 9/11, one of the crucial elements defining the Muslim identity in the West has become "terror". Many individuals claiming a Muslim identity or carrying the symbols of being a Muslim (beard, headscarf, hijab vs.) feel the need to show that they are not "terrorists". The main motive of surveillance after 9/11 is "suspicion" (Lyon, 2001: 9). The fear and suspicion are closely related themes, Islamophobia as "fear of Islam" is one of the sources of the surveillance directed at Muslims. That is to say, Muslim communities living in the West are affected from 9/11 attacks in a negative way. 9/11 is the most important event that affects the Arab Americans. After 9/11, Arab community attracted a great deal of attention from public, people with Arab background needed to reconsider and reevaluate themselves in the society (Salaita 2005: 151). After 9/11, Arab and Muslim people are subjected to discriminatory practices in the USA such as detentions without charge and trial (Lyon, 2001:76). The security-based discourse regarding Islam is very much influenced from the statements of politicians and the media.

Along with this, terrorist attacks associated with Islamic State of Iraq and Syria<sup>4</sup> (ISIS) took many lives<sup>5</sup>. However, it is not just Western countries affected from terrorist attacks. In October 10, 2015 in Ankara, two bombs exploded and caused the death of 102 people, this attack is said to be associated with ISIS. In addition, in June

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<sup>1</sup> Follow the links for details: <http://time.com/4079766/ahmed-mohamed-clockmaker-president-obama/>  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/16/us/texas-student-ahmed-muslim-clock-bomb/index.html>  
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/ahmed-mohamed-texas-police-knew-he-didnt-have-a-bomb-but-arrested-him-anyway-10507254.html>

<sup>2</sup> Follow the link for details: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2015/09/16/president-obama-tweets-in-support-of-istandwithahmed/?utm\\_term=.30121cfc2b0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2015/09/16/president-obama-tweets-in-support-of-istandwithahmed/?utm_term=.30121cfc2b0)

<sup>3</sup> Follow the link for details: <http://aa.com.tr/tr/yasam/davutoglu-elindeki-saat-bomba-sanilarak-abd-degozaltina-alinan-musulman-ogrenci-ahmed-ile-bir-araya-geldi/320941?amp=1>

<sup>4</sup> "DAESH" is the acronym of the arabic phrase al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant). Some experts and the world leaders prefer to use this phrase. Since the more commonly used name of this group in the literature and the media is ISIS, ISIS is preferred in this article.

<sup>5</sup> Follow the link for details: <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/17/world/mapping-isis-attacks-around-the-world/index.html>

28, 2016, at the Atatürk Airport in Istanbul, 44 people were killed and many others were injured, again these bombings are carried out by the alleged ISIS members. Lastly, on the New Year's Eve in 2016, 39 people were killed by a shooting in Reina night-club in Istanbul. Citizens of Tunisia, Lebanon, India, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were among the victims along with the citizens of Israel, France and Belgium.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of presenting these cases is to attract attention that the fear of terror is not limited to the western world. However, there is an unhealthy tendency to fear from the Muslims in general despite the fact that Muslims are also the targets of the terror. In line with this perspective, this study aims to present a discussion about Islamophobia and the everyday surveillance of Muslims in the West. A discussion on the intersection points of Islamophobia, the everyday surveillance and discrimination of Muslims in the West are presented in this study.

### **Islamophobia in the West**

The term Islamophobia, simply meaning the fear of Islam and implying a form of xenophobic reaction against Muslims, is used frequently to describe the recent prejudice and antagonism towards Islam and Muslims (Rana, 2007: 149). In Islamophobic discourse, Islam is misevaluated as religion of terrorism and backwardness, as having an anti-democratic tendency, and a very patriarchal character.

Islamophobia emerged as a widely used concept in late 1990s with a report namely "Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All" by a British NGO Runnymede Trust in 1997 (Bleich, 2012:180). Although Islamophobia has historical roots, mostly latest developments increased its prevalence. Especially 9/11 attacks of Al-Qaeda are stated as a turning point that caused increasing discrimination acts towards Muslims and provoked biased opinion on Islam (Inman, McCormack & Walker, 2012:111; Doyle & Ahmad, 2013: 167). Today, ISIS threat further feeds the Islamophobia in all over the World. However, it must be added that although increasing terrorist attacks accelerate the Islamophobic sentiments in the West, it is not just related to terrorism but also to orientalist and ethno-centric assumptions about Islam and Muslims. Said (2016: 11-12) points out the place of East in defining European identity in orientalist thinking, stating that the East is the cultural opponent and the strongest "other" figure of the West. The East descriptions are useful in defining European identity because the East is presented as the opposite of the West (Said, 2016: 11-12). Since East and Islam are presented as the anti-thesis of the West, and the comparison of the East and West is used in the Western identity formation, blaming the "Middle Eastern" and "Muslim" for increasing terror threat becomes functional. Identification of the Islam and blaming Muslim people with organized terrorist activities become a

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<sup>6</sup> Follow the link for details: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38645787>

way of protecting “Western identity” in the face of increasing unrest in the Western society.

Since there cannot be a single origin of Islamophobia, possible compound factors can offer some explanation on the issue of rising Islamophobia in the world. Along with the identification of terror with Islam and having orientalist tendencies, some other factors are also related to increasing Islamophobia in the West.

Migration is one of the important factors related to increasing Islamophobia. Poverty and other factors have accelerated Muslim migration to Western countries and this influx of immigrants increased the xenophobic hatred and discrimination directed at migrant populations, Muslims in particular (Rana, 2007: 149,159). Especially in recent years with the war in Syria, migrant populations try to reach Western countries in search of a better life. The cultural and religious confrontation, which is experienced because of the recent migration wave, are among the factors affecting rising Islamophobia.

Another factor contributing to intensification of Islamophobia is the populist discourse in the West. Right wing conservative political movements in Europe attack Islam and misinterpret some facts to enhance their political power (Havez, 2014: 479). They develop an anti-Islam discourse at the expense of increasing hatred and discrimination against Muslim minority. Blaming Muslim migrants for increasing unemployment and terrorist attacks is a way of gaining political support. Right wing populist politicians base their arguments on a kind of “clash of civilizations” argument once formulated by Samuel Huntington in 1998. Moreover, Bayoumi (2015) states that not only right-wing conservatives but also liberals and even some groups of leftists are using anti-Islam sentiments and arguments for political purposes.

Along with the increasing migrant population and populist tendencies, media discourse is also influential in increasing Islamophobia. The media is a powerful tool in shaping the public opinion and assumptions regarding the Muslim migrant communities. Continuous broadcasts on media about Islamist terrorist groups consolidate negative image of Islam and this results in discrimination of Muslims (Von Sikorski, Schmuck, Matthes & Binder, 2017: 826-827). The images of Arabs, Muslims and people with Middle Eastern origin are usually portrayed as “wholly evil and warlike” and there are rarely positive images of those group of individuals in the media (Perry and Poynting, 2006: 5). The image of Islam is harmed through Western media by ignoring the distinction between Islam and terrorism (Perry, 2014: 76). The impact of the media on shaping the assumption of the public is huge especially after 9/11. Spigel (2004: 242-245) gives an important example, a serial namely *The West Wing*, on the importance of media after 9/11 context. After 9/11, the episode of *The West Wing*, broadcasted on October 3, 2001, was about a group of high school students who caught in the White house because of a terrorist attack. During this episode, the Middle East’s antagonism towards the West is mentioned.

Moreover, in this episode, some “cultural customs of Islamic fundamentalists” such as forced veiling of women, are confronted with the Western culture. Spigel evaluate this tendency on this important episode as “an ethnocentric celebration of American cultural superiority” (2004: 242-245).

### **Gendered Islamophobia**

Although Islamophobia affects almost all Muslims in the world, the frequencies and the nature of discrimination and surveillance directed at individuals vary according to gender. That is to say, Islamophobia has a gender side. The concept *gendered Islamophobia* is useful to understand the different impacts of Islamophobia on women and men especially in Western World. This concept reflects the intersectionality of gender, race and religion, and in some contexts class. The bans on different forms of veiling in public spaces in the West are among the most visible forms of reflection of the gendered Islamophobia. Although the definition of veiling in Islam is a debated issue, some forms of dressing are usually directly seen as Islamic symbols in daily life. The veiling practices of Muslim women are usually seen in the form of the “hijab, burqa, and nikab, headscarves and shawls” and all these forms are recognized as “veiling” (Renne, 2013, as cited in Rasmussen, 2013: 237). But, veiling also may refer to a way of dressing in which “the face and body are wholly or partially hidden” (Rasmussen, 2013: 237). The veiling and dressing practices make Muslim women more identifiable and visible, therefore, more vulnerable to discrimination and surveillance in everyday life. Moreover, as Perry points out women are even more vulnerable to violence due to prejudice (2014: 79). Although there are some codes of appearance associated with being a Muslim man and having an Arabic or Middle Eastern origin, in general, Muslim men have less differentiable dress codes compared to Muslim women.

Gendered Islamophobia also refers to the way of thinking that Islam has a patriarchal character, as a result, it should be condemned. One source of suspicion against Muslim people is so-called ‘undebatable oppression of women’ in the Muslim community. Rasmussen points out a common way of thinking in the West that all veiled women are thought as oppressed or forced to veil, which implies a cultural deficit (2013: 238). Mirza makes a similar point and argues that in the West the heterogeneity, complexity, and individuality of Muslim women are ignored and biased categories of “oppressed” and “dangerous” created to define Muslim women (Mirza, 2013: 313). These arguments ignore the feminist movements in Muslim communities as well as personal meanings attributed to veiling. Especially in the West, veiling can be a form of expressing identity. As Mirza states, the veil is an “identity site” of Muslim women in Britain and Europe (2013: 313). Jailani expresses that the anti-veiling thoughts stem from the “white savior complex” in the West, which expresses the white western people’s attempts of ‘save’ or help others with different color or ethnic origin (2016:54). However, the Muslim women, especially

those who prefer to veil, are subjected to discriminatory behaviors in the West such as the unequal access of employment and bans of veiling in public space. Stereotypes are affecting the lives of Muslim women in Europe (Mirza, 2013: 303). Muslim women, who are not in line with the Western codes of ideal women, considered as 'others' in Western World (Perry, 2014: 79).

Another aspect of gendered Islamophobia is the demonization of Muslim men. In the West, there is a tendency to see all the Muslim men as conservative, authoritarian, religious, violent, and oppressive, whereas Muslim women are seen as being oppressed in all spheres of life and always wearing a form of veiling (Sadek, 2017: 204-205). In this line of thought, two key defining elements of Muslim identity are "backwardness and danger" (Sadek, 2017: 204-205). "Backwardness" usually makes reference to alleged violent and oppressive character of Muslim men, and the strictly patriarchal culture among Muslim communities, whereas "danger" refers to suspicion towards Muslims as potential terrorists. Sadek argues that the heterogeneity and individual differences among the Muslims are ignored as well as the historical changes across time (2017: 204-205).

The discussions on Muslim women's oppression, veiling, and patriarchy in Muslim communities are very important for the transformation of Muslim women's position and community improvement. However, the discussions fed by gendered Islamophobia do not serve the positive purposes, on the contrary, it may cause reactionary responses among Muslim communities or hurt Muslim women by discriminatory practices. My aim is not to underestimate the oppression of women or ignore some problematic aspects of position of women in Islamic geography but just to express that the patriarchal practices and the oppression are not the only meaning of the veiling for the Muslim women or the problem of oppression of women is not exclusive to Islamic geography.

### **The Intersections of Islamophobia and Surveillance: Loss of Privacy, Social Sorting and Power Relations**

Surveillance is a "routine and focused attention to personal details for the purposes of influence, management, care, and control" (Lyon, 2006: 403). The increasing surveillance with the help of developed technology is a worldwide issue. However, not all citizens and migrants are subjected to same amount of surveillance. Some categories of people are seen as more "dangerous" and subjected to greater amount of surveillance. As Levi and Wall (2004: 203) state security agencies lean on the public support for increasing surveillance and the opposition to it is usually silenced. What this study argues is that one of the sources that feeds the "public support" is Islamophobia in Western societies. Moreover, there is an institutional culture in which Islamophobic assumptions are embedded in.

While some authors see developing surveillance technologies and decreasing privacy as something concerning, some others argue that increasing surveillance and data-veillance (surveillance by data) are something positive because these technologies makes the life easier (Lyon, 2010 :20). Lyon indicates that the concept of privacy itself is “historically and culturally relative”, in some cultures such as Chinese and Japanese personal space in western sense is limited (2010: 20). Although the sense of privacy is relative, the violation of privacy of individuals without their consent, is still problematic. Moreover, the cultural responses to violation of privacy in close family settings are very different from the violation of privacy by strangers or state. In this context, violation of privacy of Muslims reflects an unequal power structure based on ethnicity and religion. The unequal power relations are not only between state (and other organizations as surveillant) and the individuals (surveilled) but also between the surveilled groups of people because, individuals from different backgrounds are exposed to different levels of violation of privacy.

Privacy is the processes of “to decide when, how and to what extent that information is communicated to others” (Westin 1967, as cited in, Lyon, 2010: 20). Therefore, the context in which the privacy is discussed, is important. In some contexts, individuals can focus on the benefits in exchange for giving up the privacy. However, in some other cases, privacy is violated without any consent, as in the case of the period after 9/11. Giving up privacy on the information about the shopping tendencies does not have the same consequences with being forced to give information about the personal details in the context of terror threat. In some cases, personal information is retrieved without the knowledge of the person so the individuals even are not aware of the violation of privacy. Moreover, the only problem is not only violation of privacy of the Muslim individuals but also collection of personal details and classification of individuals into certain categories.

### **Social sorting and Reflection of Power Relations**

Personal data collected through surveillance systems are processed and these systems identify certain groups. Sometimes these categories may be certain consumer groups who are being provided certain exclusive services and sometimes certain potential “treats” for society (Lyon, 2006). The surveillance systems’ coding mechanisms use some categories fed by biased information (Lyon, 2005:2), meaning that these categories are not just technical issues. As Lyon states, power relations are embedded in all surveillance processes (2010: 3). The values prevalent in the society shape the information the assumptions of surveillance systems, and the target population from which the information to be collected. These systems and the processes are not free from the power relations. On the contrary, these are the reflection of hierarchies and power relations prevalent in the society. Race, ethnicity, class, gender and religion are the basic elements that shape the power relations in personal and institutional level. Concerning the Islamophobia debate, all these four

elements are very relevant in analyzing the power relations, and the reflection of these relations in the field of surveillance.

One reflection of the power relations is *social sorting*. Information collected through various surveillance mechanisms are sorted and some profile categories are created through this way. These categories are not merely data sets, they have social consequences (Lyon 2001), everyday life and life chances of individuals are affected by these categories (Lyon, 2005: 2), the groups which are created by social sorting “can be treated differently” (Lyon, 2006: 399). Lyon also points out the difference of the social sorting perspective from Foucault’s surveillance understanding in which surveillance affect all citizens equally (Bigo and Guild, 2005 :3, as cited in Lyon, 2010: 10). Social sorting and surveillance are not only used for terror prevention activities, but also in sorting of individuals into categories of ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’, in a sense “who needs to be controlled and who is free of that control”, the individuals who need to be controlled are usually foreign workers, immigrants and asylum seekers (Lyon, 2004, as cited in Lyon, 2010: 10).

One example of the different treatment by social sorting is ‘no-fly-lists’ which are created on the basis of information about ethnicity, religion, and country of origin (Lyon, 2010: 26-27). Lyon points out that after 9/11, Arab or Muslim travelers are paid extra attention. Especially young Muslim men’s usage of internet, phone calls, financial transactions, travelling information are monitored, and as a result, the complaints regarding discrimination of young Arab men and Muslims has increased (Lyon, 2001; 100). For example, the monetary transactions are also monitored, sending money for the remaining family members and voluntary philanthropic organizations in the country of origin, is seen as problematic especially for Muslims because of the suspicion of funding terrorists in these countries (Lyon, 2001:51). Lyon points out that it is the discriminatory practices coming as a consequence of surveillance are more problematic than the surveillance itself (2005:2).

Today, surveillance systems are using biometrical information to create “biological profiles” to regulate traveling (such as creating ‘no-fly-lists’), monetary transactions and employment information, these technologies are not free from racist and colonial ‘anthropometric’ tendencies (Lyon, 2010: 26-27). These surveillance policies create some advantaged categories such as “trusted travelers” or disadvantaged categories such as “people of Middle Eastern appearance” (Lyon, 2006: 406). That is to say, the people with “Muslim-Arab” origin are subjected to “racial’ profiling” (Lyon, 2001:50). One of the most striking examples of classification of personal data on “racial criteria” had taken place in South Africa under apartheid system, in this system population data had been used to exclude black population from opportunities in different structures (Lyon, 2010: 22). Lyon also points out that social sorting may not have an ill intention at the beginning of surveillance process, however, it still has an effect on the life-chances of the individuals (Lyon, 2010: 24). The consequences of the social sorting can be very grave especially in the field of criminal justice because the new tendencies in criminal systems are assessing



'dangerousness' (Feely and Simon 1994: 180, as cited in Lyon, 2010: 25). That is to say, new trends in the justice system are based on the 'risk assessment' rather than the hard-core evidences especially after 9/11 (Lyon, 2010: 25).

Another dimension that makes the social sorting more problematic is that the categorization codes usually are not under public scrutiny, especially when these codes are presented as national security measures (Lyon, 2010: 31-32). This dimension points out the transparency problem in criteria setting process in defining who is suspected.

Surveillance by state is just one form of the suspicion directed against Muslims or people with Middle Eastern origin. Surveillance of everyday life by neighbors, co-workers, social workers or other people with whom those individuals have face-to-face contact is another form of being under scrutiny.

Lyon states that creating "categories of suspicion" has been augmented after 9/11, this process makes all individuals "surveillors" (2001:10). Since all individuals in the society have the potential to gaze other people, the individuals who are in the "categories of suspicion" are under constant surveillance of others in the daily life. As Lyon states, any behavior and even "doing nothing" can be seen as suspicious (Lyon, 2001:51).

An example of surveillance of Muslims in the daily life by face-to-face interaction is the Prevent programme in Britain. The program, Prevent, "The Preventing Violent Extremism" is stated to aim to identifying young Muslim who are deluded and inclined to radical Islamist ideologies and groups (Lavette, 2014: 495). This program implies that Muslims, especially young Muslims, are seen as potential terrorists and they are needed to be intensively surveilled by all agents of the society who can access them. This programme is implemented by two successive governments in Britain. The "Prevent" agenda enables us to see the "institutionalized Islamophobia" in Britain (Lavette, 2014:544). The Prevent programme reflects that Muslim communities are understood as "potentially problematic" so that constant surveillance should be exercised by encouraging involvement of social welfare workers, teachers, youth workers, voluntary sector organizations and other social local community members as agents to surveil any potentially suspicious case among Muslim community members (Lavette, 2014: 491-493). This program sets targets for people who have face-to-face interaction with community members to collect information about "people who were being influenced by 'Islamic extremism'" and demands reporting the intelligence to the government (Lavette, 2014: 505). However, Lavette also adds that the definitions of "extremist" behavior are not clear (Lavette, 2014: 547). With this policy perspective, British governments make welfare workers, health and education professionals and voluntary sector workers "'soft' policers" of vulnerable Muslim communities which include poor sections of society such as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Lavette, 2014:508, 547-549). These policies have the

potential to further estrange the Muslim populations who already experience problems due to the bias directed to them (Lavette, 2014: 547).

### **Conclusion**

It is important to place the Islamophobia debate into a broader frame; this study aims to discuss Islamophobia in the context of surveillance and power relations embedded in surveillance practices. There are many Muslims who are citizens of Western countries, also, there are individuals who do not hold a citizenship status but live in the West or travel to Western countries for some reason. All these groups are affected negatively from the Islamophobic assumptions and practices. In this study, the concepts of Islamophobia and gendered Islamophobia has been addressed, and these concepts are elaborated in the context of surveillance directed at Muslim individuals in personal and institutional level.

After 9/11, increasing surveillance in the name of national security is discussed within the loss of civil liberties and loss of privacy. Increasing security measures harm the privacy of individuals, however, terrorism fear of the public is manipulated to justify the increasing surveillance. Security vs. privacy debate becomes more important for the Muslim populations in different countries because the increased surveillance mostly target Muslim population. Because of the the massive growth of surveillance systems in the world, the “end of privacy” debate became very common (Lyon, 2010:19). However, loss of privacy of Muslims individuals is more striking in the Western societies in terms of extent and prevalence. Negative representation of Islam on the media and political populism reinforce the negative images of Muslims and Muslims immigrants in the West, therefore increasing surveillance directed at Muslims is justified. In this respect, new extensive publicity is needed to renew global image of Islam.

All discussions regarding surveillance bring us to the issue of power relations. Surveillance of Muslims reflects unequal power relations and biases stemming from religion and country of origin. This perspective is very useful in catching the effects of racial, religious and ethnic differences in the society. In this article, the power dimension of surveillance practices is also addressed by making references to Islamophobia.

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## Islamophobia and Surveillance Directed at Muslims in the West

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## A Conversation of Islamophobia\*

Mehmet Ali KİRMAN\*

Erol ERKAN\*

**E. Erkan: Islamophobia is a new concept that emerged in the 1980s. It is defined in various forms. How do you define and assess this concept from a sociological perspective?**

**M. Kirman:** Islamophobia consists of two different concepts: Islam and phobia. Islam is derived from the base of "silm" meaning peace, and it is conceptually the name of the religion revealed to Prophet Muhammad in 610. In fact, it can be regarded as the common name for all religions covering the period between the births of Adam and Muhammad. Phobia is originally a Greek term that is derived from Phobos, the God of Terror in Greek mythology. Accordingly, Islamophobia means the fear felt toward Islam. However, in its general sense, it can be defined as the *irrational* fear felt toward Islam and Muslims and a phobia. The term irrational should be underlined here because fears contain a sense of subjectivity that cannot be grasped through rationality. Moreover, this fear was once in the form of fearing, avoiding or disliking Islam and Muslims, but it has become concrete in time and turned from an irrational element to a concept arising from the entirety of various discourses, attitudes and behaviors. As I noted in an article of mine, Islamophobia now reflects the opposition, differentiation and hostility against Islam. In this case, Islamophobia should be reflected properly. Anti-Islamism, i.e. anti-Islam or hostility against Islam, should be used to define the concept of Islamophobia better. Although Islamic fundamentalism and radical Islamist trends are reflected as the visible reasons of displaying Islamophobic attitudes and behaviors, the main target is Islam itself<sup>1</sup>. To prevent any misunderstandings here, I should note that we do not approve of the radical and fundamentalist movements regarding Islam as a political ideology rather than as a religion.

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\* This paper is the English translation of the study titled "İslamofobi Üzerine Söyleşi" published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *İlahiyat Akademi*. (Mehmet Ali KİRMAN, "İslamofobi Üzerine Söyleşi", *İlahiyat Akademi*, sayı: 6, 2017, s. 197-202.) The paper in Turkish should be referred to for citations.

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<sup>1</sup> See: M. Ali Kirman, "İslamofobinin Korkudan Düşmanlığa", in: *Günümüz İslam Toplamları ve Problemleri*, Akademi Titiz Yayınları, İstanbul 2015, p. 91-112.

From a sociological point of view, it can be said that the concept of Islamophobia that is believed to be a psychological issue is based on a rooted sociological issue. Thus, psychological and sociological studies were and are conducted in this regard. Although Islamophobia is known as a concept that has been included in the global literature to reflect a new and global case in the last 30 years, there may be two objections in this regard. The first objection is based on the question of whether this concept or issue arose by itself or was generated artificially. The second objection is that this case or issue may not be new, and the roots may be dated to an earlier period. This neglected or missed aspect of the case should be reviewed regarding social sciences.

**E. Erkan: What sort of factors and processes are effective in generating such a concept for Muslims and Western countries?**

**M. Kirman:** As we both noted, Islamophobia arises from a production. However, a couple of reasons can be mentioned for this production, that is also the case for other productions. Perceptions, prejudices, fears, concerns and obsessions toward the others do not emerge suddenly or emerge for a reason. Thus, Islamophobia of the West is regarded as a subjective issue that is supported by various reasons including social, political, cultural, historical and religious aspects.

As I noted in an article, I wrote with an objective and scientific attitude, which was cited by many<sup>2</sup>, factors and processes causing the emergence of Islamophobia to focus on two main points: *Western* or *external* reasons arising from the perceptions of Islam, rather than the religion itself, i.e. developing without any relation to Islam and Muslims; and *eastern* or *internal* reasons arising from the Muslims. The external reasons include the conflicts between Islam and Christianity, collective memory and stance of Westerners, Islamic image in Western countries, racism, xenophobia, discrimination, orientalism, media-policy, visibility of Islam in the West, and the identity issue suffered by Western societies. However, the internal reasons include Muslims' indifference to Westerners who show interest to the languages and cultures of other societies and therefore a relevant communicational issue, organizations against the Western societies despite living in their countries for years, and once again, being indifferent to their representation as an organized public by Western societies. In other words, Muslims are not that innocent in this issue.

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<sup>2</sup> M. Ali Kirman, "İslamofobinin Kökenleri: Batılı mı Doğulu mu?", İslami Araştırmalar Dergisi, 2010, v. 21, i. 1.

**E. Erkan:** What are the pros and cons of Islamophobia from the perspective of anthropological sciences? Do you support the use of this concept of recommending any other term considering the pros and cons from your perspective?

**M. Kirman:** As we mentioned before, this concept lost its innocence or quality of representing an innocent concept. It turned into a movement opposing Islam or hostility toward it. It should be stressed that Islamophobia is a properly planned project. It should not be regarded as a scientific or real concept. As known to all, John Esposito asks in *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, whether Islamic threat is real or a false concept. From the same perspective, it is fair to state that Islamophobia is just a myth or a fake topic of agenda created to catch attention. The point to be reflected here is that attention should be paid even while discussing this issue because concepts should be used properly in the right points. Even saying "Islamophobia is a virtual reality" may indicate that the topic has reality even if it is virtual. Therefore, if Muslims use this properly planned concept, the negative perception toward Islam is made concrete. A point to be mentioned regarding the question "*what can be done in this issue?*" should be indicated here. Muslims should write and publish studies more than those reflecting Islam along with the concepts of violence, terror, fear, hatred and others. In other words, studies that may be entitled *Islamophilia*, *Islamic Love* or *Islam and Biophilia* i.e. Islam and love for creatures.

**E. Erkan:** People object to the belief Islam reflects living in peace along with others with a pluralist approach by using the concepts of Islam and phobia. Moreover, an essentialist definition is made by neglecting the daily differences of a religion followed by more than 1,5 billion people and reducing the level of Islam to a single comment. How do you assess these as a sociologist?

**M. Kirman:** That is true. People make such assessments. The objection in this regard is shown regarding Islam and Muslims homogeneously. Thus, the aim here is to say, "There may be certain Muslim people who may evoke fear and hatred, but they do not represent all Muslims as the majority do not do so." However, the point that should not be missed with the same logic is that the Westerners are not homogeneous. The questions "What is meant by West? Europe or Northern America?" and "Who are Westerners?" await to be answered. I would like to stress that we should criticize ourselves. We should avoid using the logic and style we criticize.

It was noted that a broad literature was formed regarding Islamophobia. A significant part of this literature was produced by Westerners, while the other part was formed by Muslims. Westerners believe and show that Islamophobia dates back to early periods and that it is a subconsciousness issue clearly or secretly through their studies. Accordingly, studies by Muslims have a defensive approach. These studies indicate that Western countries do not have a multicultural past, that



they are prejudiced against Islam, that this fear with a rooted ground was just made a topic of agenda once again after 9/11, and that the media has an important role in this regard. The above-mentioned studies also have enlightening details and comments about the characteristics and emergence of Islamophobia, but it is clear that the reasons in this regard were reviewed from a single perspective and that Muslims' responsibilities were not questioned that much. However, it is difficult to explain Islamophobia that has a rooted past and that is a complicated concept from a single perspective. Just like every social incident and concept, considering the fact that Islamophobia has various reasons, it is inevitable to explain certain explanations based on a single reason through reductionism. Therefore, the attitudes and behaviors of both Westerners and Muslims should be assessed collectively to understand this issue.

**E. Erkan: How do you assess Islamophobia in regard to the reproduction of popular culture by media instruments? What do you think about the role of media instruments in shaping the cultural values of people if we review Islamophobia in relation to the concept of the culture industry?**

**M. Kirman:** The concept of Islamophobia has become the passion and point of interest for the Westerners despite being a new concept, and it has become popular in the Christian Western countries. There is a geographical difference between Europe and America regarding Islamophobia. In other words, all kinds of insulting and provocative attitudes and behaviors that equate terrorism and violence with Islam and Muslims, which have become a global phenomenon not only in continental Europe and North American countries in recent years but all over the world, have caused a great wave of crisis. Media or mass communication instruments play a key role in this issue, that is also the case for all social topics. As known to all, one of the most important instruments of globalization is mass communication instruments. Newspapers, radio, cinema, theatre, and particularly internet and social media are the most important and irreplaceable concepts of culture industry.

**E. Erkan: The perception of Islamophobia seems to have increased according to the Western studies. The issue occasionally turns into violent acts. How does Islamophobia affect international relationships and policies, and how will it result in the future?**

**M. Kirman:** There is an identity crisis in the Western world. In this regard, Islamophobia may be regarded as a project of those who take part in the decision-making mechanism of policymakers against this crisis. Islamophobia is a project in the Western world where Christianity has been seriously losing its influence and atheism supporters have been raising and increasing their ideas every passing day. What is this project related to? Islamophobia is regarded as the sole solution for preventing Western people from deviating from Christianity and focusing on atheism. In other words, the message *"You have a comfortable life, but you deviate from*

*the religion, culture or identity that makes you whoever you are. Your population is decreasing, and you are going for an inevitable end. However, Muslims are not like this. They will inevitably dominate in the near future. Pull yourselves together.*" is given to them. There is perception management in this regard. The importance of the phrase "One becomes crazy if you say so for 40 days" should be reflected here. Indicating Islam, along with fears and violence and showing Muslims together with weapons and terrorism just for a couple of times, is enough for the supporters of Islamophobia. After forming such a perception, the demand for designing social, cultural and financial fields, internal policies and international relationships along with this perception, is revived.

**E. Erkan: What are the personal, social and institutional responsibilities of both sides to establish a proper relationship with one another?**

**M. Kirman:** The presence of Islam and Muslims in the whole globe, particularly in Europe, is an undeniable fact. The total population of Muslim people who live in Europe and are the citizens of the European Union states is higher than that of many European countries. Islam is now in Europe and European. Europe, with no multicultural past or experience, must learn to live with these facts. In other words, Westerners have important duties and responsibilities in terms of showing a more emphatic approach to the concepts of culture, religion, identity or citizenship. However, Muslims have important responsibilities, too. It is clear that social groups that cannot communicate with the society, that are silent and passive, and that do not participate in administration mechanisms through legitimate channels by using the political and democratic rights will inevitably isolate themselves to their religious or ethnical identities and use a violent language. European Muslims who are concerned with Islamophobia should be aware of this fact and do what is necessary. Otherwise, it can be said that they will be marginal and deliberately or accidentally contribute to the process of forming or strengthening Islamophobic attitudes. Accordingly, it is inevitable for the Muslims to go for an image restoration process.

As I noted earlier, Islamophobia is a newly generated term. The belief that Islam is a religion of violence and terror, and Muslims are terrorists with weapons, was generated particularly after 9/11, and Muslims were marginalized. In fact, the perception toward Islam and Muslims has not been properly generated in the Western world. However, the point to be reflected here is that after 9/11, people totally and abnormally marginalized Islam and Muslims, but then they made certain emphases and aimed to form a more proper perspective in this regard. The main aspect of this process is that Islam does not consist of a single comment, that Muslims are not homogeneous contrary to beliefs, and that Turkish Muslims reflect an exemption in this regard. As I noted in a relevant article of mine<sup>3</sup>, "*Turkish Islam*"

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<sup>3</sup> M. Ali Kirman, "Küresel Bir Model Olarak Türkiye ve Türk Müslümanlığının İmkânı", KSÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi, 1(2), 2003, p. 53-68.

should be emphasized. What is this Turkish Islam? It is living Islam as a simple, clear and pure religion, away from flamboyance. This is an Islamic conception reflecting physical presence in Turkish-Islamic states and ideological presence in the entire globe. It is a concept of people who are tolerant to the others, who have no problems with the coexistence of mosques, synagogues and churches, and who are self-confident. This concept reflects a religious approach that does not use Islam as the instrument of greed and hostility toward others, indicating the mentality of “fewer politics, more peace”. This ideology contains the dynamism that enables Islamic nations to get up once again. In Islamic terms, these are the Maturidi and Hanafi traditions. In this tradition, Muslims are defined as the people who perceive Islam as a combination of religion, culture and traditions, who value prayers, rituals, sacred days and nights, who respect the values and beliefs of the followers of other religions and take the secular lifestyle as a model, who value ideology and science, who regard the efforts that are made to ensure that Islam is understood and spread from a peaceful perspective and that violence and conflicts are prevented as a jihadist activity, who support founding an Islamic government based on Quran and Sunnah, and who disapprove radical and fundamentalist groups. The fear and hostility against Islam can be regarded as a project conducted against “*Turkish Islam*”. The interesting point here is that there are certain incidents reflecting that certain threats and mechanisms which will shake the roots of this religious concept have been enabled and that certain progress has been made in this regard.

**E. Erkan:** Thank you for accepting our interview request, indicating your valuable ideas and sparing your time for us.

## Book Review \*

**Nathan Lean. *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims*. Pluto Press. 2012. 222 p.**

**ISBN: 9781849647465**

Mehmet AKSÜRMEĒİ\*\*

This book, written by Nathan Lean who holds a Master Degree in International Studies and a Master of Arts in Arab Studies from Georgetown University, mainly tries to find an answer to the question of “Why is it that ten years after September 11, 2001, fear, mistrust, and hatred of Muslims were at their highest levels ever?” (p. 9). The writer proposes that “the recent spike in anti-Muslim sentiment in the United States and Europe is not the result of a naturally evolving climate of skepticism but a product that has been carefully and methodically nurtured over the past decade and is only now in the second decade of the twenty-first century reaching its desired peak” (p. 13). In a more clear and direct way, the writer claims that the book is to examine “the dark world of monster making” and to peer into “the lives of a fear industry bent on scaring the public about Islam” (p. 13). His usage of “industry” and “Islamophobia” concepts together on the book’s title and in the introduction, while explaining the aim of the books, shows that he considers islamophobia similar to a product manufactured in a factory. In that sense, during the book, the reader witnesses the writer’s explanations on how this production processes are working.

The writer attempts to prove his claims in a structure composed of seven chapters. In the first two chapters, the theoretical infrastructure of this book is being constructed. I consider these two chapters as literature review chapters. The title of the first chapter is “Monsters Among Us: A History of Sowing Fear in America”. In this chapter, the history of otherization is held over various examples. Otherization processes of many different groups, like political religious or civic groups in America, since the 1700s have been presented as examples. The writer in that chapter tries to convince the reader that the propaganda to create monsters in America has a historical background. Moreover, this history is not restricted to certain groups of people, according to different authority relationships, different groups may be under the category of ‘unwanted’. In the second chapter, the internet, which is an important and new tool of otherization, is noted. The writer considers the internet as “a web of

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deception" that people "foment hate online" (p. 41). He points the internet's demonic power to create perceptions. The internet now is a fertile place for the ones who are "seeking to organize populist uprisings" (p. 50). While "coffee-shop gatherings and living-room meetings" were the old spaces for this purpose, now the internet substitutes such places (p. 50). The cyber-sphere provides a seat for everyone, therefore, "Shopkeepers, bureaucrats, small business owners, and even the unemployed can now transcend the traditional class divisions between them and use the Web as a way to attract a larger following and spread ideas that previously existed only within local populations to the state, national, and even international level" (p. 50).

After these two chapters, which constitute the theoretical background of the book, the writer explains the actors who use the Islamophobia industry for their benefits during the next five chapters. These four chapters shape the main body of the book. During these chapters media, the right-wing politics in America, their pro-Israel position are extensively analyzed as the actors who use Islamophobia industry. According to the writer, these actors work in coordination. He reviews numerous cases from the media, the political life of America, and religious groups' daily life to support his claims. In chapter three, the writer portrays the media as a tool serving to advertise Islamophobia. The media is not a passive tool to circulate such ideas, rather it is the indispensable part of Islamophobia industry similar to any industry in which "advertising is paramount to the success of a product" (p. 66). He points out different media channels as more responsible within these processes. In chapters four, six and five, the writer examines the relationship between the right-wing American politics and Christian groups deeply over different cases to show how they use Islamophobia industry. I should note that Ergun Caner case, presented in chapter four (p. 88-90), is important to see that how Islamophobia may be misleading for Christian groups. The discussions on right-wing politics have a core place in this book. In the subtitle of the book, the writer points out them. Moreover, during chapters six and seven, this subtitle is exemplified over the examples. In the last chapter, the topic is how the United States manufactured Islamophobia industry may have an effect on Europe in the production of Islamophobia. Although this chapter presents various cases from Europe, it mainly focuses on 2011 Oslo attack and mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik. The writer considers this attack and massacre held by Breivik as the consequence of the Islamophobia industry of United States.

Since its publication, the book has been translated and published in various languages including Arabic and Turkish. It has reached a worldwide audience of readers. This is an important indicator to see how the book is considered as a valuable one in various parts of the world to understand Islamophobia. I consider the negative point of the book as its referencing the rhetorical cases rather than the academic studies. Although this situation makes the book easier to read, it makes the book controversial in certain aspects. It may create dissatisfaction for a certain group of the reader and can be regarded as a problem in academic terms.