BIPOLAR DISORDER
"The West and the Rest"

A Master's Thesis

by

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by

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I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Political Science and Public Administration.

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ABSTRACT

BIPOLAR DISORDER
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September 2002

The current 'War on Terror' has revitalized the language of friends and enemies, us and them, good and evil. The whole world has been forced to choose sides: are you with the terrorists or are you with the 'freedom loving democracies'? This bipolar construct of west/rest dates back to the European expansion in the 16th century. Despite shifts in political conjunctures and alliances since then, it has persisted as an organizing principle operating on a variety of levels, as an idea, an ideology and an identity. Consistently privileging the west's role in defining itself in opposition to its Others, the west/rest construct is a political tool with a powerful impact on how we perceive ourselves and the world. The main question this thesis poses is: can the divide inherent in the west/rest

construct be reconciled? With the current war dividing us yet again into friends and enemies, and with Islam silently targeted as the alter-ego of terrorism, understanding the ways in which 'the west and the rest' dynamic has determined the boundaries of 'us versus them' in the past, allows us to appreciate the current role it plays in orchestrating the present. Turkey is used as an illustrative case, by examining how the construct of Islam as Other functions politically within an Islamic democracy. A tentative conclusion this thesis offers is that alternative conceptions of Islamic identity, originating from within civil society, may well provide an opportunity for reconciling the deadlock of 'the west and the rest' as it is expressed both inside Turkey and in the international arena.

ÖZET

ÇİFT-KUTUPLU DÜZENSİZLİK
"Batı'ya Karşı Diğerleri"

Rachel Johnston

M.A, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

Tez Yoneticisi: Doç. Dr. Banu Helvacıoglu

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Gündemdeki 'Teröre Karşı Savaş' dostlar ve düşmanlar, bizler ve onlar, iyi ve kötü söylemini yeniden canlandırdı. Dokunulmadık hiçbir ülke kalmadı; bütün dünya taraf seçmeye zorlandı: Siz teröristlerden yana mısınız yoksa özgürlük aşığı demokrasilerden mi? Sözü edilen 'batıya karşı diğerleri' çift-kutuplu yapılanması Avrupa'nın 16. yy'daki yayılmasına kadar gerilere uzanır. O günden bu yana oluşan politik ortam ve ittifaklardaki yer değiştirmelere rağmen, değişik seviyelerde işleyen bir düzenleme prensibi, bir düşünce akımı, bir ideoloji ve kimlik olarak süregeldi. "Batıya karşı diğerleri" yapılanması, batının mütemadiyen kendisini diğerlerine karşı tanımlama rolüne ayrıcalık göstererek bizim kendimizi ve dünyayı algılamamız üzerinde güçlü bir etkisi olan bir politika aracıdır.

Bu tezin ortaya attığı temel soru şudur: "Batıya karşı diğerleri" yapılanmasına özgü bu bölünme uzlaştırılabilir mi? Bizi yeniden dostlar ve düşmanlar olarak bölen gündemdeki savaşla, ve sessizce terörün öteki benliği olarak hedeflenen İslamla, "batı ve diğerleri" dinamiğinin "bize karşı onlar'ın" geçmişte sınırlarını belirlediği yolları anlamak bize bu yapının bugünü düzenlemedeki oynadığı mevcut rolü takdir etmemizi sağlar. Bu Tezin Türkiye ile ilgili bölümünde araştırdığı muhtemel soru, sivil toplum içinden çıkabilecek İslami kimlik arayışları kimlik anlayışları Türkiye'de ve uluslararası siyasi ortamda "batı ve diğerleri" çıkmazına ne ölçüde uzlaşmacı bir çözüm getirebilir?

Anahtar Kelimeler: 11 Eylül, Teröre Karşı Savaş, "Dost ve Düşman", Güç Tartışması, Oryantalizm, Medeniyetler Çatışması, İslam, Devlet, Sivil Toplum İlişkisi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On September 11th 2001, two commercial planes crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York City and another into the Pentagon in a carefully orchestrated terrorist attack that killed thousands of people, shocked millions more and changed the compass direction of international relations from peace to war.

No country has gone untouched by the 'War on Terror' launched in retaliation by the United States and its allies against the terrorists deemed responsible for the September 11th attacks. It is a far reaching and ambitious war, with the aim to not only bring the attackers to justice, but also to target their so called 'networks of evil' and wipe the world clean of terrorism altogether. The world has been forced to choose sides: are you with the 'terrorists'? Or are you with the 'freedom loving' democracies? In other words, are you with 'the West' or are you with 'the Rest'?

The unfolding discourse accompanying this war has revitalized the full implication of the language of friends and enemies, with its emphasis on 'us and them' and 'good and evil'. The problem with these clear-cut distinctions however, is that your 'terrorist' might be my 'freedom fighter' and your freedom might mean my oppression. Who ultimately decides on the definitions and parameters of these discourses and demarcations? How can one determine who the Other is exactly?

These questions, born from a personal intrigue and dismay at the dichotomous and inflammatory rhetoric of the 'War on Terror', ultimately formed the genesis of this thesis. Arriving in Turkey one week after the terrorist attack, added to the intrigue. Turkey, one of the first countries to offer its support for the U.S led alliance against terrorism, is both Islamic and secular, and is often promoted as the only successful Muslim democracy in the world. Where does it fit into the bipolar language of 'us and them'? Is it possible to be a freedom loving Islamic country? How does the west/rest construct operate within Turkey's borders? At the outset of my research while these questions remained uncertain, what was certain was the shocking juxtaposition of a world heading in the progressive direction of a global community, suddenly plunged into war.

The launching of the 'War on Terror' represented an international volte-face from a peaceable age of globalization where, following the divisive nature of the Cold War, theorists were testing the boundaries of a possible cosmopolitan citizenship (Held: 1998: 22-25), where European countries (once arch enemies) were convening under one political roof and sharing a common currency, to the stark antagonistic bi-polar version of 'us' versus 'them' in the 'War on Terror'. I started my investigation with this bi-polar construction in mind. However, tackling the epistemic and ontological dimensions of the formation of 'us' versus 'them', is obviously a vast endeavour, spanning most disciplines and encompassing any number of great thinkers. Given the vastness of the topic and the time constraints involved, it was necessary to tackle the issue in a manageable manner. To this end, I have problematized my inquiry within the framework of 'the west and the rest' construct.

The objective of this thesis is consequently an inquiry into the dynamics of this west/rest construct and how it is currently operating in the unfolding of international events and the construction of a political rhetoric. Of particular interest is the role it plays in defining the concepts of 'us' and 'them' in terms of delineating the ally and enemy camps in this 'War on Terror', as well as distinguishing the morally defined good from evil.

Islam, arguably terrorism's alter ego as far as the U.S administrators are concerned, is precariously and ambiguously placed within these strict dichotomous distinctions. How does the construct apply to a country like Turkey, which appears to straddle both worlds? Perhaps most important of all is whether or not a binary equation such as this, which divides the world into two monolithic distinct and oppositional categories, is even tenable in our increasingly multicultural, hybrid and integrated world.

To address these questions and uncover the nature of 'the west and the rest' construct, this thesis is divided into three chapters. Chapter one examines the underlying historical and political foundations upon which 'the west and the rest' construct is built. The chapter is divided into five sections each dealing with particular aspects of pivotal conjunctures and main historical developments that have shaped the various dimensions of the west/rest dynamic, from colonialism, to nationalism, to the cold war, to globalization. Beginning with European expansion in the 16th century and moving through to the current 'War on Terror', this chapter provides an overview of international relations through the lens of 'the west and rest' construct. It does not follow the format of a historically descriptive analysis, but

focuses rather on specific historical turning points, longstanding interactions and global developments directly influencing the evolution and expression of 'the west and the rest'.

Chapter two explores the power of discourse and the ways in which a discursive dynamic is embedded in sustaining 'the west and the rest' construct in its position of accepted truth and global authority. The objective of this chapter is to reveal the multifaceted ways in which 'the west and the rest' operates as an ideology, whereby the west's position of power is not a simple product of historical circumstances or technological development. Instead its privileged position of power is directly dependent on a specific discourse embedded in its existence, which provides it with a consistent underlying superior control in the overall equation of 'the west and the rest' as it plays out in international politics.

This chapter is based on Foucault's theories of discourse and his emphasis on knowledge, power and truth. It draws upon Edward Said's arguments and insights in his groundbreaking book *Orientalism*, in order to explain the power of discourse as it applies to 'the west and the rest' dynamic. It uses Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis in order to expose the ways in which a 'discursive formation' operates in framing and understanding the enemy construct in the 'War on Terror', whereby Islam is constructed as Other and looms as the shadow target of the war.

Chapter three explores the ways in which 'the west and the rest' construct and discourse applies to Turkey, which is largely accepted as the country where west and east converge. Dissecting the truth of this claim in light of the overarching ideology

of 'the west and the rest', this chapter poses the question: can the west and east actually meet? If so, what does this meeting imply in terms of 'the west and the rest' construct?

The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first is devoted to a historical overview of Turkey's developments as a Republic, particularly as it pertains to the expression of 'the west and the rest' construct. Interestingly the west/rest dynamic manages to duplicate its discourse in official terms in Turkey, providing us in many ways with a miniature version of the larger west/rest discourse in all of its trappings. The result is a mutually suspicious relationship between Kemalism (state) and Islam (society), which in the end is locked, in a binary division of opposing forces. By adopting the specific discourse of the west/rest dynamic, Turkey has inadvertently(?) laid the foundations of an irreconcilable divide, where Islam and Kemalism are in constant tension, operating along the principle of 'us versus them'.

The second section focuses on the possibility of transcending this division by challenging 'the west and the rest' construct with alternative discourses from within Turkish civil society. If it is true that the two forces of Kemalism and Islam are bound for a collision course within the framework of official discourse, then perhaps a possible way to reconcile this inevitable antagonism is to look outside the official discourse.

To this end, this section highlights two particular groups within civil society: the Alevis, and Fethullah Gulen's movement. Both manage, in their own ways, to reconcile elements from the two sides of the bipolar divide, such as secularism and

religion or traditionalism and modernity. In this way they illustrate the possibility of challenging both the primacy and logic of 'the west and the rest' construct, thereby offering a tangible option in terms of cultivating a more tolerant society that encourages pluralism and diversity.

CHAPTER II

THE WEST AND THE REST

"Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."(Bush: 2002)[1] These words of George Bush defining his friends and enemies in the launching of the 'War on Terror', signify more than a retaliatory challenge in response to the attacks of September 11th. They echo with the perennial power struggle of human history between opposing political ideas and identities striving to survive, defining their allegiances and overthrowing their enemies. This history has shaped the contours of both our physical and mental maps of the world, ultimately constructing the power dynamics of international politics today.

For Carl Schmitt this distinction of 'us versus them' lies at the very heart of what constitutes the political. Writing during the inter war years of the 1920s and 30s, Schmitt was fundamentally intrigued by the jurisdiction of politics, particularly in the nature, duty and sovereignty of the emerging European state.

Schmitt convincingly reduces 'the political' to its most basic precepts: friend and enemy. This apt analysis and succinct definition is as relevant today as it ever was, where the world finds itself yet again divided along a distinct 'us versus them' axis in the 'War on

Terror'. Schmitt defends his rationalization of what constitutes 'the political' in the following way:

> "The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives
> can be reduced is that between friend and enemy. This provides a definition
> in the sense of a criterion and not as an exhaustive definition or one indicative
> of substantial content. Insofar as it is not derived from other criteria, the anti-
> thesis of friend and enemy corresponds to the relatively independent criteria
> of other antitheses: good and evil in the moral sphere, beautiful and ugly in
> the aesthetic sphere, and so on. (Schmitt:1996: 26)

It is important to understand from this definition that the realm of the political is not specified in terms of particular concepts, events or people, but rather in terms of an antithesis reaching a particular level of conflict. "Every religious, moral, economic, ethical or other antithesis transforms into a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy." (Schmitt:1996: 37)

The most extreme level of this friend/enemy conflict is of course war, which for Schmitt, was always a lurking possibility. He saw war, and the possibility of war, as the starkest most intense form of the political: "For only in real combat is revealed the most extreme consequence of the political grouping of friend and enemy. From this most extreme possibility human life derives its specifically political tension." (Schmitt:1996:35)

Schmitt's overall analysis of the political, of state sovereignty and friends and enemies, ultimately laid bare the constitutive elements of power politics and realism, which would

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[1] George Bush's Presidential Address to the Joint Session of Congress, Sept 20th, 2002.

come to dominate the international political arena throughout the remaining 20th century and beyond, prompting George Schwab to claim that *The Concept of the Political* was "undoubtedly one of the most important tracts of political thought of the twentieth century." (Schwab in Schmitt: 1996: 5)

Evidently then George Bush's 'us versus them' language is not new, but contrary to Schmitt, these words following the attacks of September 11th, are neither philosophical nor abstract. Not only do they target those responsible for the attacks, but the language of 'us versus them' when spoken from the heart of the western world, cannot help but reverberate with the complicated histories of the west's friends and enemies colliding along this axis for centuries past.

Within this larger context it becomes clear that George Bush's 'us versus them' is not without its ideological baggage. 'Us versus them' reflects a historical dimension, which represents a deep-seated division that can be traced back to the earliest days of European exploration. Understanding its historical trajectory and inherent power dynamic is a starting point for understanding the much larger picture of global politics today. It is a formative dividing line and a fundamental piece of the puzzle in terms of present-day tensions, where the international community stands yet again at a defining crossroads in relation to the west/rest political construct.

The current 'War on Terror' has divided our world into new groups of friends and enemies, battling along new divides. As a result, 'the west and the rest' takes on a new meaning, both implicit and explicit. Understanding how this construct has evolved over

time allows us to better understand the dimensions of this war, and the forces that are currently shaping the new juxtaposition of 'us versus them'.

This chapter does not follow a historically descriptive analysis, but instead examines the construct of 'the west and the rest' in relation to particular moments and events in history which significantly impacted the west/rest dynamic. It is divided into five sections that together aim to demonstrate how the basic construct of 'the west and the rest' has been maintained throughout the ages, despite shifts in political conjunctures as well as the changing themes and alliances in the international ordering of the world.

2.1 European Expansion

To best understand what is meant by the different groupings of 'west' and 'rest', requires a historical overview of the major developments in Europe, particularly from the 16th century onwards. The 'west' at this stage, was synonymous with Europe in particular and stayed that way up until the 20th century, when the United States would emerge as the torchbearers of that title after World War II. Until that time however, the 'west' was confined to Europe alone and refers to the ways in which she was beginning to relate to other cultures of different countries and continents around the world.

"In the Age of Exploration and Conquest, Europe began to define itself in relation to a new idea - the existence of many 'new' worlds, profoundly different from itself." (Hall: 1992: 289) The discovery of these 'new' worlds marked an important development in the history of Europe's identity. From the 15th to the 19th century, Europe engaged in

extensive overseas exploration, colonization and exploitation. These experiences had both tangible and abstract influences that together were seminal in shaping the relationship and understanding of who and what the 'west' and 'the rest' would come to be and mean.

The conquests, and colonization in general, were of great economic success for the imperial powers; conversely the native peoples of these colonies suffered great losses, from losing their people, their land and resources, their social and religious practices as well as their cultural autonomy. The imbalance that emerged between ruler and ruled defined Europe as all-powerful: she was economically stronger than the colonies, had more advanced technology, saw her religion as supreme and her culture as more civilized. The colonies were automatically juxtaposed against this all-powerful civilized European world and determined to be its opposite: weak, backwards, pagan, uncivilized and to some, even sub human. (Perry: 1993: 265-267)

The contrast between the two allowed for Europe to see herself not only as different but also as superior. Here we see the origins of the idea of the 'west' taking shape. It was the Enlightenment period in particular that helped to solidify the dynamic and encouraged the idea of European superiority, for it encouraged the conviction that Europeans had reached the apex of civilization. Having evolving from inferior stages of superstition and ignorance in the Middle Ages, Europe now saw herself as a developed and civilized society, an enlightened people, eschewing superstition, tradition and rural subsistence, relying now on rational thinking, science and industry, whilst upholding the civilized and liberal ideals of freedom and liberty.

It is important to understand from this that the emerging concept of 'the west and the rest' begins to operate on several levels: as an idea, an ideology and an identity. The idea of Europe is represented in terms of a concept of development in the form of industrial growth, technology, liberalism and capitalism. It is simultaneously operating as an ideology, whereby Europe - the west - is understood to be the one desirable standard to which everything else - the rest - is compared, and politically evaluated.

Consequently, the world is conveniently divided into two identities: European and non-European. If you are not one, then you are automatically the 'other'. Perhaps most importantly is the understanding that if you are the 'other', than you are automatically the opposite of everything Europe represents, both as an idea and an identity. Being different from Europe or the west is not understood to be a neutral circumstance, but is imbued with an instant uncivilized identity: one of exclusion and inferiority.

> "The concept of idea of 'the West'…. provides criteria of evaluation
> against which other societies are ranked and around which powerful
> positive and negative feelings cluster. For example, 'the West'=developed=
> good=desirable; or the 'non-West'=under-developed=bad=undesirable.
> It produces a certain kind of *knowledge* about a subject and certain
> attitudes towards it. In short, it functions as an *ideology*. (Hall: 1992: 277)

This power dynamic imbedded in the then emerging 'the west and the rest' construct, is surprisingly unchanged in its current form today. The powerful ideological influence of 'the west and the rest' (despite historical shifts and changes over the years) still sets the standard and determines the membership of each group. Today the 'west' no longer refers to a geographical Europe, but has extended itself to include all those countries

who reflect to varying degrees, a developed, modern, urban, secular democratic, capitalist society, and who actively take part in and promote the original ethnocentric position of the 'west' in world affairs, from commerce and culture to politics and sports.

Unequivocally excluded from this group, are those countries that either refuse to see the 'west' and its values as the standard and benchmark of comparison, or fail to attain them (sometimes despite their greatest efforts). They are consequently banned to the outer realm of the 'rest', while the 'west' continues to evaluate itself as the centre, the standard and the enviable model of progress and civilization.

2.2 Islam and the West

Academics have argued that the ultimate emergence of a unified 'European' identity was not in fact due to any new cooperative or cohesive internal development, but was rather triggered by the presence of an outside threat. In the case of Europe, that outside threat took the form of an Islamic presence.

John Roberts, in his influential book *Triumph of the West*, claims that Islam played a crucial role in Europe's evolution. He explores in particular, how the geographical maps changed significantly after the Middle Ages to reflect an evolving idea of the synonymous relationship between Europe and Christianity, during the Ages of Discovery and Enlightenment:

> " 'Europe' slowly became inter-changeable with the concept of 'Christendom', and 'European' with 'Christian'. In common parlance, Christendom no longer extended to the Christians under Ottoman rule, who were not regarded as Europeans. Maps, which had begun in the fourteenth century to distinguish symbolically between political authorities in different places, began…to mark off a Christendom confined to Europe, from the area dominated by Islam." (Roberts: 1985: 194)

Perhaps not surprisingly, historical documents reveal that the term Europe and European only took official shape as an identity in response to this outside Islamic threat. "The word 'European' seems to appear for the first time in an eighth-century reference to Charles Martel's victory (over Islamic forces) at Tours. All collectivities become more self-aware in the presence of an external challenge, and self-awareness promotes cohesiveness." (Roberts: 1985: 122)

According to William Connolly, difference is actually the prerequisite for identity formation: "The definition of difference is a requirement built into the logic of identity, and the construction of otherness is a temptation that readily insinuates itself into that logic…" (Connolly: 1991: 9) It would seem that the crystallization of one's identity can perhaps only come when juxtaposed with an 'other'. This process to some degree, defines the epistemic function of difference in our world as a whole. To paraphrase de Saussure, it is only by having day that we can know night. It is the difference between them that gives them each a meaning. Serif Mardin summarizes it this way:

> "Difference is what allows us to classify the world around us…Communities have names, because otherwise communities would not know what they are and how to operate. But from the very beginning, there were more than one community. And therefore, where there is a community, there is a name; and since then there is the other, the other is the barbarian." (Mardin: 1999: 23)

To identify with a community as one, which you belong to, immediately juxtaposes you against other group or groups, which you conversely do not belong to. It is this distinction with the barbarian that allows us to simultaneously know who we are and who we are not. In the case of Europe, is was the marauding Muslims who constituted the 'other', helping disparate groups in Europe to define themselves as a collective group under the common heading of Christians.

This idea of difference and belonging is the basic building block upon which the historical division between Islam and Christianity has been built. With its beginnings dating from the 7th and 8th century, this division has undergone varying degrees of animosity and clashes throughout the ages, the nature of which can be classified as unveiled power politics. Majid Tehranian describes this Islamic-Western interaction in terms of "changing power relations" and broadly divides this history into four more or less distinct periods.

The first begins with the expansion of Islam and "Islamic ascendancy" and spans several hundred years, from 622 AD to 1492 when the Spanish Muslims were expelled from Spain following their defeat at Grenada. "This period witnessed the remarkably rapid expansion of Islam from the Arabian Peninsula into the entire expanse of North Africa and Asia". (Tehranian: 2000: 204)

The second period is characterized by a counter-movement from the Christian world in the form of the Crusades in an effort to recover the Holy Lands from Muslim occupation and roughly spans the 11th century to 1683 when the Ottoman Muslim attack on Vienna

suffered defeat and the European Empire asserted its might. The third period begins with the end of the Crusades and saw the ascendancy of the Western world in its "domination of the Islamic world in the 19th and 20th centuries." Both the Industrial revolution and the superior technology of the 'west' along with its economic success facilitated this domination, which extended from the Islamic world into colonial occupation on almost every continent.

The final period of this Islamic-Western history is one we are currently experiencing and is characterized by Muslim "resistance to the west". The Iranian Revolution in 1979 is often seen as having triggered this resistance, but the 1990s have perhaps witnessed more and varied forms of this resistance as a new surge of active Islamic extremists have organized themselves politically, and socially from Algeria to Afghanistan.

Political decisions out of Washington, most notably the Gulf War, as well as the United states perceived failure to rescue Bosnian Muslims in Kosovo, helped to galvanize resistant forces and have heightened tensions between the US and many Islamic countries. Moreover, the on-going conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians, remains a focal point and battleground for these tensions to express themselves.

Attacks and bombings on US bases as well as the 1996 bombing of the World Trade Center demonstrate to what extent certain extremist groups are willing to express their frustration at US hegemony through violent means. (Tehranian: 2000: 201-218) And of course, the attacks of September 11th marked a turning point in these rising tensions, as

Al Qaeda and Islamic extremists emerge as the most dangerous enemy of the United States today.

This brief historical overview demonstrates to what extent these two groups, have been perceived, and perceive themselves, in opposition to each other. Today's environment of hostility and 'resistance' is not without its historical context. As this 'War on Terror' demonstrates, the 'changing power relations' between Islam and 'the west' are evidently still at work. Perhaps, as Schmitt suggests, this war is the natural outcome of an extreme expression of the friend/enemy divide, a divide that evidently reaches far back in history and that has to some extent, always been present.

2.3 The Role of the Nation State

In light of the 'us versus them' construct and the identity/difference dialectic of belonging, the development of the nation state can perhaps best be described as the political outgrowth of this logic, providing a model for organizing the various communities of the world along a multitude of 'us' and 'them' boundaries. For nation-states are in essence built and destroyed on the 'us versus them' distinction. It is in fact this very idea that constitutes the thematic cornerstone of nationalist ideology. Consequently, the evolution of nation states as the unit of analysis for domestic and international politics, represent an important chapter in the construct of the 'us versus them', 'west and the rest' mentality.

The idea of nation states established itself as the fundamental underpinning of international relations at the end of the WWI, and has since dominated political interactions and conjunctures ever since. As the organizing principle for world politics throughout the 20th century, it is impossible to understand the landscape of today's political world without appreciating the full impact that nation states have had on our perception of self and other.

With their roots dating back to the 13th century, the essential components of the nation state culminated in the French Revolution. Egalite, fraternite and liberte, were championed as the rational principles of popular sovereignty and the future of France. They challenged the last remnants of medieval politics based on tradition, hierarchy and feudalism. However, it was not until after World War I that the nation state as the universal unit of political sovereignty, would finally rise to the ranks of global norm.

It was perhaps inevitable that the 'us versus them' construct, upon which the nation state is built, would be tested to its limits. The rise of nationalist ideology in the interwar period is testament to what extremes nationalist sentiment can reach, and to what extent it can be manipulated. Fascism was born directly from nationalist doctrine and the principles of state sovereignty, yet it directly attacked its originally concomitant core liberalist ideals of reason and freedom.

> "Fascism marked the culmination of dangerous trends inherent in the extreme nationalism and the radical conservatism of the late nineteenth century….It was an expression of hostility to democratic values and a reaction to the failure of liberal institutions to solve the problems of modern industrial society."
> (Perry: 1993: 547)

In the end, World War II would see democracy triumph over fascism, and the United States emerge as the victorious new leader of the democratic world. England, France and Germany, hitherto the three great power centres of Europe, would take a back seat to the might of the USA, which now stood out as the almighty protector of western values of democracy and freedom, and the new leader of 'the west'.

What is important here in terms of the evolution of nation states, is that ultimately, at the end of World War II, they would once again find themselves engaged in another battle, but this time, one that transcended borders and would give birth to a new configuration of friend and enemy. The new 'us' and 'them' divided the world along a new schism separated by an ideological divide. One side was represented by the democratic United States and the other side was represented by the communist Soviet Union. Together these two superpowers defined the parameters of a new bipolar world, locked in a battle of ideas and ideals, which came to be known as the Cold War.

Consequently, the nation-state level of autonomy and its sovereignty to decide between its friends and enemies, became subject to a larger dominant force: the tension between superpowers. It would be this overriding principle that for the next fifty years would organize the world into a new 'us and them', defining a new understanding of who was 'the west' and who was 'the rest'.

2.4 The Cold War

The Cold War saw the world definitively partitioned into two, in a powerful antagonism that would last almost half a century, passing through two phases before it ended: one 'hot' and one 'cold'. The 'hot' period directly followed the end of World War II and was characterized first by a flurry of military alliances established on both sides, followed by serious confrontations in the form of wars, in Korea and Vietnam and then in the form of a showdown with the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Running parallel to these events was a significant arms race between the two countries, characterized by an inflated defense budget of billions of dollars, as both countries scrambled to defend themselves against potential threats from the other side. The 'cold' period of the Cold War began in 1972 when the US and the USSR agreed to limit antiballistic missiles; it marked the beginning of a détente that would slowly decompress until the end of the Cold War in 1989.

Spanning both the hot and cold periods, and less officially recognized, were the guerilla wars in Central and South America, which were by and large backed by the United States who was determined to block and uproot any communist supporters in its hemisphere (Cuba being the obvious and enduring exception). The US consequently supported and financed many anti-communist forces, from Chile to El Salvador, in an effort to overthrow parties and peoples who were seen to support communist principles.

In this way the new 'west and the rest' distinction of the Cold War, spread throughout the world. It pivoted on ideological differences and was the overarching principle under which nation states now collected themselves. Ultimately these ideological differences were reduced to a basic loyalty: those loyal to the principles of 'the west', meaning the United States, democracy and capitalism, and those who were loyal to the principles of the 'rest', meaning the Soviet Union and communism.

Although the first half of the Cold War gave birth to a climate, initially, of paranoia and suspicion (both internal and external), the latter half of the Cold War was characterized primarily by an accepted static tension between the two superpowers, ironically succeeding inadvertently in providing a certain stability for the world. As one U.S administrator put it: "We knew who the enemies were."

This definitive aspect of the 'us versus them' divide helped to establish a predictable world order. It even allowed certain hitherto mutually suspicious countries to forge new relationships. Countries previously affiliated with the 'rest' group, were now able to be affiliated with the 'west' group. "Ironically, in the 1950s and 60s the United States hoped to build an alliance of Islamic states with sufficient prestige to counterbalance 'godless communism'…U.S policy was driven by cold war considerations and strategic calculations, not by history." (Gerges:1997:69) Consequently, Islamic countries such as Turkey for instance, given her important geostrategic position between the two superpowers, was solicited from the United States and invited to join NATO in the effort to curb communism from spreading southward.

In retrospect the frozen antagonism of the two superpowers helped to balance the distribution of power in the world and thus (despite the ever present threat of a nuclear war) provided us with an unexpected certainty and a sense of self and other that was reaffirming: the west was the west and the rest were communists.

Of course, much of these reflections come from hindsight, as we look back on the solid determinate world of 'us versus them' during the Cold War, from the liquid indeterminate world of the 1990s where identity would become malleable and often contradictory, and where uncertainty reigned in an atmosphere of "ambivalent fear".

2.5 The Post Cold War

Referred to as the Year of Liberation, 1989 marked the collapse of the Soviet Union and the official end of the Cold War. It came as a surprise to many and was greatly rejoiced by the victorious 'west'. Democracy and freedom had once again demonstrated their inherent resilience over lesser ideologies, and liberalism was evidently the favoured model for the entire world: there were no more enemies, apparently we were all friends.

Francis Fukuyama attempted to theorize this sense of western triumph in his now famous thesis *The End of History*. In it he claims that the fall of communism was testament to the triumph of liberalism and democracy and signaled the end of evolutionary or revolutionary politics:

> "…the century that began full of self-confidence in the ultimate triumph of Western liberal democracy seems at its close to be returning full circle to where it started….to an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism. The triumph of the West, of the Western idea, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism…What we may be witnessing…is the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of government."
> (Fukuyama:1989:3)

If we recall the logic of Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* however, the improbability of Fukayama's claim - no matter how optimistic - becomes obvious, since a world without the 'us versus them' distinction is one where politics would be not so much universal, as simply non-existent. As Schmitt explains: "A world in which the possibility of war is utterly eliminated, a completely pacified globe, would be a world without the distinction of friend and enemy and hence a world without politics."(Schmitt: 1996: 35) Clearly Fukayama spoke too soon, since the world after the Cold War, was definitely not devoid of politics. In fact if anything, it became all the more political.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar power system, unleashed a decade of ethnic antagonisms and a general uncertainty and searching, referred to by some as 'the interregnum' The decade would see the rise of unprecedented international interdependence in the form of 'globalization', through increased technology, affecting all facets of society, from finance, to politics, to culture and music. International trade also increased and institutions like the WTO emerged as the accepted vehicle for promoting liberal capitalism and free trade worldwide.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism saw the US emerge as the surviving superpower, constituting the beacon of the new unipolar system. Soon however, the initial optimism and friendly celebrations of a world united would fall prey to the reality of politics, or in Schmitt's words "the political". Ethnic conflict was on the rise and resurgence in religious radicalism apparent. (Monshipouri & Petonito: 1995: 773)

The sovereign nation state - still the primary political unit for international politics - was experiencing new challenges from the effects of globalization, which threatened both its jurisdiction and relevance in a new world order, increasingly dominated by emerging political actors in the worlds of global finance, business and crime. In addition, issues such as immigration and refugees, were challenging the definitions of who was who and who belonged where.

New theories and ideas emerged as academics, analysts and policy makers from all fields, addressed the phenomenon of globalization and began probing the limits of its impact. From the "End of History" thesis to "the Clash of Civilizations" to "Jihad vs McWorld", theorists grappled to make sense of the evolving post cold war world.

Implicit in many of these attempts was the underlying curiosity: who now was the enemy? After decades of knowing exactly who the "other" was, the world experienced a certain amount of ennui, as the opposing other dissolved and the identity was no longer fixed.

David Held addresses this issue by promoting the possibility of a cosmopolitan citizenship. He postulates that a cosmopolitan world order, could operate within a framework of overlapping loyalties bound to different bodies and institutions - national, regional and international - thereby reflecting our increasingly multicultural multiethnic world where belonging and identity are increasingly multifaceted. (Held: 1998: 22-25) In this way, the varied cosmopolitan allegiances born from a cosmopolitan citizenship would ultimately transcend the logic of 'west and rest' by challenging the very essence of 'us versus them'.

Most theorists however were neither as bold nor as optimistic as Held, and the question lingered: We knew who the west was, but did not know what or who were included in 'the rest'. In many ways, attempts to explain the trends and developments throughout the 1990s in all areas of society, from finance to physics, were each in their own way, addressing this void. Who would come to fill the ranks of the "other" in international politics?

2.6 September 11th

If the end of the Cold War sparked the search for a new world order, then the events of September 11th marked the bookend on a decade of searching. With the dubious distinction of being 'the first world war of the 21st century', the attacks and subsequent retaliation, demarcated the new 'west and rest' membership in world politics and international relations. Filling the void of "other" in opposition to the United States and

the 'west', were now 'the terrorists'. The former 'godless communists' were replaced by the new 'evil terrorists' and a new war had begun.

The shock that the world suffered at the hands of the attacks of September 11th cannot be overstated. The world-over people mourned, not only for the deaths of innocent people, but also for the loss of innocence for us all, as the battlefield of war and weapons expanded, graduating to a level of random and careless barbarianism where commercial airplanes could be conceived and used as weapons of attack and destruction. Everywhere people were justifiably terrified, and not only by the events themselves, but also by what they represented in our daily lives: calculating one's safety in the world from this day forth, could no longer be assured.

"This is a different kind of war" explained President George Bush. "This is a war against terror…against evil doers". Evidently it is also a war that is difficult to define - the US administration has consistently kept the definition of the enemy loose and broad, speaking in generalities. In an article entitled *Who is the Enemy?* Daniel Pipes pokes fun at President Bush's now famous reference to the terrorists as "the evil ones" saying: "This odd and somewhat comical-sounding phrasing seems to have been chosen deliberately so as not to offend anyone, or any one group." (Pipes: 2002: 21)

In many ways, the launching of the 'War on Terror' was as vague as possible, so as not to alienate or offend anyone who might not be a terrorist, while simultaneously making sure to not leave anyone out who was. The 'terrorists' were 'evil', they were the enemy,

and we (the west - all those who stood in solidarity with the United States) were good, standing up as ever, for the principles of freedom and democracy.

The US administration's cautious approach to defining those responsible for the attacks however, could not obscure the fact that lurking behind the rhetoric was the very real face of a more tangible enemy, one that political officials were being careful to sidestep. It was Silvio Berlusconi, the Prime Minister of Italy, in a blunt public relations gaff, who finally publicly addressed the elephant in the room when he said the following:

> "We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it and guarantees respect for human rights and religion. This respect certainly doesn't exist in the Islamic world."[2] (Brett: 2002: 7)

The obvious association between the attacks and Islamic fundamentalism was already being made, but associating these violent acts as the natural expression of Islam as a whole was a dangerous and erroneous leap of logic. Despite having withdrawn his comments a few days later, Berlusconi succeeded in expressing what no doubt (if the random attacks in innocent Muslim-Americans is any indication) many people in the United States, as they looked for answers and someone to blame, were questioning: was Islam responsible?

It didn't help of course, that the only definite enemy to emerge in the 'War on Terror' was Osama Bin Laden, a Muslim, an avowed fundamentalist and leader of the Al Qaeda network, who openly despises the United States and had demonstrated his hatred by

bombing US embassies and killing innocent people. Combined with the previous decade of the growing association of terrorist attacks with Islamic fundamentalists, people, leaders alike, were inevitably led to link the 'War on Terror' with Islam as a whole. According to Fuat Keyman: "The war against terror turned into a war against Islam, in which the Islamic self in its plurality was essentialized and totalized as the "generalized other" conducive to violence and sacrifice." (Keyman: 2002: 2)

2.7 Islam as the Shadow Enemy

The construct of 'the west and the rest' has been with us now for centuries; built on the basic 'us versus them' divide, it will likely be with us for centuries to come. History demonstrates that this fundamental axis of friend and foe runs throughout the ages, and as the world changes, so too do the political conjunctures that turn on this axis. From colonialism, to empires colliding, to the Cold War, to the 'War on Terror', the form of friends and enemies may change, but the bare construct of an 'us and them' or 'west and rest' dynamic is maintained.

The fact that, as Schmitt contends, the political defines itself along this us/them, friend/foe axis, is perhaps not surprising. That 'the west and the rest' construct should create itself along this same divide is therefore logical. What begs further examination however, is HOW the west manages to maintain a consistent power position in this dynamic. For it is clearly the west who remains the focal point and the desirable model

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[2] Berlusconi later retracted his comments, claiming he had been misquoted.

for the 'rest' to emulate, while the 'rest' is always peripheral, and understood to be unenviably backwards.

In addition it is the west who decides from decade to century, who the enemies are: who is 'good' and who is 'bad', as it orders the world not only into friends and enemies, but into the west's friends and enemies. Today, we stand yet again at the dawn of a new reordering of the divide, where the enemy is the terrorist. The 'west and the rest' now translates into 'the west and terrorists'.

As Berlusconi demonstrated and Keyman confirmed however, underneath this indeterminate enemy is the implicit association of terrorism with Islam, misleading people to ultimately equate Muslims with intolerance and violence. While arguably certain terrorist activities of the past decade explain to some degree the reason people may be primed to make that association, there is still the question as to why people are not equally as primed to differentiate between Islamic extremists and ordinary Muslims.

The reason for this lays bare the more insidious level of power politics operating within the west/rest dynamic, where evidently the west's monopoly of power is not the natural outcome of being inherently and simply more powerful in practical terms, but rather points to a particular discourse of 'othering,' that constructs a world where identities between west and rest are simplified, represented as embodying simple basic ideals and ideas in opposition to one another.

> "Far from the discourse of "the west and the rest" being unified and monolithic, splitting is a regular feature of it. The world is first divided, symbolically into good-bad, us-them, attractive-disgusting, civilized-uncivilized, the West-the Rest. All of the other, many differences between and within these two halves are collapsed, simplified, stereotyped. By this strategy, the Rest becomes everything the West is not - its mirror image. It is represented as absolutely, essentially different, other: the Other."(Hall: 1992: 385)

Consequently, erroneously associating terrorism with Islam is not based on a generalization elaborated from a few terrorist incidents by Islamic fundamentalists in the past decade, rather this kind of simplified definition of 'other', is born from the very context, history and paradigm of 'the west and the rest'. It is this logic that directs the discursive level of the west/rest understanding of the world, and as Roberts' chronological overview indicates, is perhaps particularly potent when applied to the Christian/Muslim, West/Islam relationship.

In order to fully appreciate the impact of this discourse, we turn now to chapter two, where we will explore the impacts of Orientalism in the 'War on Terror' and the ways in which it is influencing the common perception of the contemporary relationship between Islam and terrorism.

CHAPTER III

DISCOURSES OF POWER

The power dynamic embedded in 'the west and the rest' division of the world, impacts all levels of international relations. It is a dynamic that has become an increasingly invasive hegemonic force, as our communities become more and more interdependent and interactive, and some say homogenized. More often than not, what 'the west' sets as a standard, automatically becomes the standard for the world at large; what 'the west' perceives as important, is likewise often mirrored by other cultures and societies worldwide.

In some ways this is a predictable outcome for a world operating within the framework of a unipolar system. The country 'in charge' logically leads the way. However, as the previous chapter demonstrates, this power imbalance did not begin when the unipolar system emerged after the Cold War. Rather this privileged position has been the defining feature of the west's role in 'the west and the rest' construct since its inception.

It begs the question: what contributes to the west's consistent position of control and power? This chapter argues that it is not a result of coincidence, nor of a natural superiority, rather it is the result of a particular discourse, a discourse of power, whereby

the identity of both 'the west and the rest' is discursively constructed within a defined framework.

In order to appreciate what this means, we first briefly examine Foucault's notion of discursive formation whereby particular forms of knowledge are constructed as the truth. We then turn to Edward Said's seminal work *Orientalism* in order to explore the ways in which this discourse operates in global politics and influences cultural perceptions. Given the consistent and relevant impact that this west/rest construct still has today, Said's thesis is as relevant to our contemporary world as it ever was.

In it he explores, through an incisive and original critique, the ways in which Europe maintained its hegemony as an imperial power during post colonialism. He argues that European domination, (especially over the 'Orient'), was perpetuated by promoting a specific discourse, with profound implications that still influence the ways in which we relate to different norms and cultures today. Understanding the dimensions of this discourse is an important step in appreciating the ways in which 'the west and the rest' model is not only historically formed, but has in the past and continues today, to operate at another level altogether, what Foucault refers to as the level of discursive formation.

Said's ideas are useful at this contemporary juncture when Islam, however ambiguously, is being construed as the "other" in opposition to the 'west' in the 'War on Terror'. Equally important in this chapter is the examination of Samuel Huntington's popular *Clash of Civilizations* thesis, which has helped to fuel this revitalized neo-

orientalism and added legitimacy in framing Islam as the enemy, by encouraging the perception that our current situation is quite simply the inevitable result of a 'clash' between the incompatible civilizations of Islam and the west. His thesis has (perhaps due to both its Islamic focus and the simplicity of his analysis) gained currency with the general public as an explanation behind the attacks of September 11th, inadvertently lending support to a broader universal discursive 'othering' trend accompanying the 'War on Terror'.

An analysis of Huntington's theory reveals the ways in which a discourse of power maintains a western dominance within 'the west and the rest' dynamic. It is in relying on this west/rest ideology, that his work and logic embody the principle elements of Orientalism, thereby providing us with a contemporary example of what Said is most critical of in Islamic studies, and with Orientalists in general.

The aim of this chapter, with the help of Edward Said's analysis and by exposing the Orientalist logic in Huntington's theory, is to explore the ways in which this Orientalist discourse operates and continues to influence our collective thinking in contemporary global politics. Said's ideas are especially helpful in dissecting the ways in which discursive 'othering', so prolific in the 'War on Terror', succeeds in constructing misconceptions and pitting essentialist concepts such as 'good' against 'evil' in binding divisions of 'us versus them'.

3.1 Discursive Formation

It was Michel Foucault who gave new meaning to the term discourse and coined the term 'discursive formation' in his work on the relationship between knowledge and power. A social theorist, he was the first to articulate the political dimension of the ways in which we come to "know" common social knowledge through discourse, and the power that accompanies this process.

According to Foucault, a discourse is concerned not only with language itself, but also with a series of statements constructed within an exchange, formulating knowledge within a specific framework. This discourse might (and often does) draw on previous discourses, taking pieces that reinforce the newly proposed idea of 'knowing' something, where certain terms are deemed to mean, and represent particular things.

In essence a discourse is a 'system of representation'. It is this representation that defines the parameters of what is said or not said, what is acceptable and unacceptable, what is true and not true. Foucault refers to this as a 'discursive formation', and it is here that the issue of power emerges. For whoever is directing the discourse, determines the terminology, meaning and language, thereby controlling the ways in which people come to learn about the topic, and come to learn about themselves in relation to that topic. In other words, discourses are not arbitrary nor are they innocent. They are the constructedand chosen vehicle by which knowledge is transformed into power. (Foucault: 1984: 51-75)

Foucault was especially interested in the concept of exclusion and prohibited behaviour, since it directly reveals a power dynamic, whether institutionalized or internalized. With this in mind, Foucault was fascinated with the identity, dynamics and expression of sexuality, and would work on his ideas in this area until his death. He was also intrigued by the concept of sanity, and insanity, particularly in terms of the power dynamic involved in policing behaviour and defining the acceptable. "From the depths of the Middle Ages, a man was mad if his speech could not be said to form part of the common discourse of men" (Foucault: 1971: 9)

His overarching concern however, was understanding the nature of truth. Accordingly the consistent underlying theme throughout his studies, which he classified as a type of "archeology" or "genealogy", was the way in which truth is constructed. He saw this construction as embedded in knowledge and was determined to dissect the power knowledge assumes in the form of a discourse, by delineating the acceptable from the unacceptable, the truth from the untruth. "In appearance, speech may well be of little account, but the prohibitions surrounding it soon reveal its links with power and desire." (Foucault:1971: 8)

For Foucault the relationship between these three, knowledge, discourse and power, is fundamental in understanding subjectivity. By this he refers to the ways in which we are subjected to being 'known'. In other words, those who deem to know - based upon knowledge necessarily formulated within a particular discourse - also deem to control

the subject of what they know, within the limits of how they know them. This relationship constitutes a fundamental power relation, where the one is subjected to the other. (Foucault: 1982: 208-226)

Foucault's work has been instrumental in understanding the nature of truth and power, and the potency of discourse, language and knowledge. His ideas have transformed the ways in which social theory problematizes issues of subjectivity and power relations and his work has impacted various academic fields from critical theory to gender studies to medical ethics and politics.

Edward Said applies Foucault's idea of a 'discourse of power' to the case of Europe in the context of post colonialism. In his groundbreaking book *Orientalism,* he exposes the ways in which Europe developed a particular discourse in its relationship to its colonial 'subjects' or 'others' in the Orient, operating within a power dynamic that Europe controlled and orchestrated. His analysis is still relevant today and bears consideration, especially at this particular political juncture with the 'War on Terror'.

3.2 Orientalism

Said's *Orientalism* is characterized by an examination the process of "othering" and the ways in which Europe has come to 'know' the Orient. He argues that European culture designed and controlled a limited and specific image of what the Orient was, what Islam was about and who the people were who lived there. For Said, this was a purely

constructed identity, one that was neither correct, nor the result of an innocent mistake.

Rather the European discourse and treatment of the Orient was and is still, about power.

> "..without examining Orientalism as a discourse, one cannot possibly under
>
> stand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was
> able to manage - even produce - the Orient politically, sociologically, military-
> ily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlighten-
> ment period. Moreover, so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that
> I believe no one writing, thinking or acting on the Orient could do so with
> out taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by
> Orientalism" (Said: 1995: 3)

According to Said, it is 'the west' who constructs the Orient from the powerful position of the imperial hegemonic force and director of the discourse; thus formulating a specific inferior and backwards Orient 'other', which serves to highlight the contrasting superiority of the West. What emerges is an interdependent relationship within a confined discourse of what is and what isn't 'known' about the Orient.

Even the term 'the Orient' is indicative to what extent this discourse is based on fabrication, construction and imagination, since it refers to no one place in particular, yet somehow encompasses everything from China to Morocco. Said referred to the term as operating within 'an imaginative geography.' Ashcroft elaborates saying: "Imaginative geography legitimates a vocabulary, a representative discourse peculiar to the understanding of the Orient that becomes the way in which the Orient is known." (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia: 2001: 61)

Said sees this discourse as a kind of 'intellectual power', where the west defines not just WHAT is known about the Orient, but also HOW it is know. In the process, it ensures that its own representation in the relationship is always superior and in control. The distinction between the two reveals the fundamental ways in which identities in general gain their essential elements and distinctiveness by contrast as much as by inherent values, but even more interestingly, it reveals the ways in which Europe proposes to 'know' these 'others'. For it is in the development of this knowledge that she creates and recreates her own image. For Europe: "..the Orient is one of its deepest and most reoccurring images of the Other…the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the west) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience…European culture gained its strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient." (Said: 1995: 1-3)

Said's method of analysis was based primarily on textual analysis, in that Said saw the text as replacing the word or direct testament of the Orientals themselves, and thus played the role of 'truth sayer' in the discourse between Europe and the Orient. Like Foucault, Said was highly suspicious of representations of the 'truth' and he saw textual renditions of events, people and cultures, as necessarily unavoidably biased, "…we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is *eo ipso* implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the 'truth' which is itself a representation." (Said, 1995, 272)

Consequently, Said encouraged, in fact pioneered, what he called a 'contrapuntal' reading of the text, meaning that the reader should not only be aware of just the text's

particular version of something, but should also take into account the broader spectrum of events, relationships circumstances and influences, shaping the perspective of the narrator as well as the reality within the text. "Contrapuntal reading takes both (or all) dimensions…into account, rather than the dominant one, in order to discover what a univocal reading might conceal about the political worldliness of the canonical text." (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia: 2001: 93)

In this sense, Said was concerned with the ways in which the text was situated within a larger worldly context where political, cultural and social relationships necessarily influenced and shaped the ways in which 'knowing' something or someone came about. Said claimed that in terms of the European's knowledge of the Orient, the process was bound within a larger discourse that consistently privileged the European position as superior .

The purpose of the discursive formation dominating the text was therefore to provide an "other", acting as counterpart to the West's self-image and hegemonic political vision. Said contends that ultimately explaining or 'knowing' the Orient, had less to do with a European desire to understand than a desire to control, and is more about hegemony than about an equal exchange. To understand it differently is to miss the political component altogether.

> "Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structures promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East 'them').This vision in a sense created and

> then served the two worlds thus conceived…The vision and material reality propped each other up, kept each other going. A certain freedom of intercourse was always the Westerner's privilege; because his was the stronger culture.…"
> (Said: 1995: 45)

It is important to recognize from this, that this identity of 'them', is not only different but inferior and not only inferior but opposite. In this way it is the repository for all that which Europe does not represent, absorbing a range of undesirable characteristics that she eschews. Consequently, Europe or in contemporary terms, the west, is able to consistently maintain its position of superiority and actively sanitize its' self image by denying its faults, and projected its shadow onto the Orient (the rest). In this way the rest absorbs the west's darker side as if it were her very own natural identity.

Furthermore, this inferior Orient is seen as operating within "a closed system in which objects are what they are because they are what they are, for once, for ontological reasons that no empirical matter can either dislodge or alter." (Said in Keyman: 2002: 13) In this way, it is transfixed in a timeless design, stuck in its apparent backwardness despite whatever ways in which it actually develops and changes. The Orient is therefore constructed through various prisms, none of which are accurate and each of which in fact obscure its true identity, forever binding the Orient within a pattern of servitude to the western discourse of power.

Said's work was seminal because it presented both an original theoretical way of deconstructing post colonialism, and was also the first attempt at a political intervention in terms of criticizing the construction of the west's self image, and its relations to its

"others". His ideas have forever changed the ways in which both cultural and international political relations are viewed and continue to challenge us today, in how we interpret and relate to events, people and history.

3.3 The Clash of Civilizations

Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis claims that the wars of the next century will be fought not between nations, but between civilizations. He foresees an inevitable clash between them in the years to come, predicting that civilization incompatibilities will replace the fight over territories and border disputes. These clashes will not be based on resources or materialism, but on ideas, fundamental discordant beliefs and divergent worldviews. He argues that the reason they will emerge as the source of future conflicts is that they are both "real" and "basic".

> "The fundamental source of conflict in the new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economical. The greatest divisions among mankind and the dominating sources of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations.
> The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics."(Huntington: 1993: 22)

Huntington's theory has provoked debate and criticisms. Among them the most common criticism is aimed at his seemingly slippery definition of civilization. Initially he appears to equate civilization with culture, defining it as "the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species." (Huntington:1993:24). He then however, highlights

religion as the primary marker of civilization and collective loyalty, saying " Even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim." (Huntington:1993: 27).

In fact, Monshipouri and Petonito in their critique of Huntington's theory, argue that despite his efforts to include other criteria in his understanding of civilization, religion consistently stands out as its prime "determiner", prompting them to suggest that the title of his theory is a misnomer. Rather, it "is more a clash of religions than about a clash of civilizations." (Monshipouri & Petonito: 1995: 3)[1].

> "To Huntington, religion has supplanted ethnicity as the innate definer of self.
> This notion is evidenced in his categorization of the Asian world with its panoply
> of cultures as the "Confucian" civilization, and the vast regions of Eastern Europe as the "Slavic-Orthodox" civilization, and the diverse areas of North Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia as the "Muslim" civilization." (Monshipouri & Petonito: 1995: 3)

Ultimately however, Huntington ends up reducing everything, civilizations, religions, and cultures, to fit the bipolar model of the familiar west/rest division, saying that: "the central axis of world politics in the future is likely to be, in Kishore Mahbubani's phrase, the conflict between "the West and the Rest." (Huntington: 1993: 39-41)

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[1] This article was downloaded from the internet; the page numbers correspond to the internet pagination of this article and not the print version.

Apparently Huntington seems to see no contradiction in arguing for the distinct power of civilization identity, and then simply collapsing the multitude of multicultural diverse peoples from ALL civilizations who are non-western under the catch all classification of the 'Rest'. It is a fatal flaw in his reasoning, which undermines his entire thesis, indicating to what extent he actually perceives these worlds as homogenous entities.

In line with this reductionist thinking, is his singling out of the 'Islamic civilization' as the most likely antithesis to the west. He characterizes it as a civilization "with bloody borders", primed for a momentous clash in the not so distant future. But the religious marker used to gather the various disparate Muslim cultures under a grand rubric, does not apparently apply to what would logically be referred to at the very least, as the 'Christian' west. Instead the west stands on its own and is referred to as simply that: "the west".

In this way, the west and Islam are perceived as homogenized groups, denying the obvious differentiations, fissures and internal diversity within. Consequently both sides are locked in a grand narrative that defines the one against the other as monolithic entities, immutable and opaque. Katzenstein warns of the dangers inherent in this categorical misperception of self and other:

> "Unsurprisingly, contemporary Islamic civilization is not a homogenous actor on the world stage. Saudi Arabia and Iran express clashing visions of tradition-alism and radicalism are deeply divided over the social and cultural purposes of Islamic Civilization. Static and totalizing wholes such as "Islam" and "Christ-ianity"…do not offer fruitful ways for analysis and harbor the risk of seriously misleading public policy." (Katzenstein: 1996: 512)

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Despite this warning, it would appear that this 'misleading of public policy may already be underway, as the west/rest discourse absorbs Huntington's concepts and language. In a recent conference for instance, on security and stability in Central Asia held in Istanbul, Wayne Merry, a representative from the American Foreign Policy Council, demonstrated to what extent Huntington's theory has (consciously or unconsciously) influenced the official United States position in interpreting the events of September 11th.

Mr Merry described the attacks as representing the most aggressive example of a "clash" between Islamic fundamentalism and the West. He claimed that this kind of attack was in no way related to the United States foreign policy, but that the United States was targeted quite simply because it represents the greatest exemplification of Western ideals such as liberty, equality, human rights and democracy. (Merry: 2002: 2) This statement directly echoes Huntington's own words when he states the following:

> "Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures." (Huntington: 1993: 40)

The ultimate implication here is that not only do these western values have "little resonance" in other cultures, but are in fact presented in opposition to their values. They are the "other" with which the west compares itself, inevitably emerging as the superior, more enlightened of the two.

This process of 'othering' pivots on the use of language and discourse. For instance, the power of Huntington's argument, as reflected in Merry's claims, is as much in the statements and language used, as in the argument itself. For it is the language that constructs the reality, and in this case in particular Huntington is relying on language and concepts (of a superior west as compared to an inferior rest), that has been shaping the parameters of the discourse for hundreds of years. So much so, that in many ways, and certainly for many people, it sounds today as though it is a basic ontological truth.

3.4 The Whole Truth and Nothing but the Truth

Said's insight into the specific ways in which discourse operates within Orientalism, transfers into the ways in which the contemporary west/rest discourse works to maintain cultural hegemony in general. Perhaps the most compelling part of his analysis, based again on Foucault's ideas, is how truth comes into being, how it has no ontologically fixed standard, but is shaped, produced, and reproduced by whomever constitutes the most powerful and persuasive actor in the given discourse of the day.

What is taken to be true, to be real, is therefore dependent on power, not truth itself. In our contemporary experience of the 'War on Terror' for instance, 'their freedom fighter' is 'our terrorist', and 'freedom' for 'us', means 'domination' to 'them'. The question is, whose truth prevails?

If we examine Huntington's thesis in light of this question, we can better discern the strategies that have promoted his particular construction of the 'truth' to the level of a broadly accepted dominant ideology. First he establishes his claim (of an inevitable civilization clash and of a world divided between west and the rest, Christian and Islamic) within an ahistorical context, making no distinction between what the world was like one hundred years ago, compared to how the world operates today. Undeniable changes, such as our increased multicultural world and an unprecedented general exposure to other cultures, religions, science and technology worldwide, apparently have had no impact on the essential aspects of civilizations, whereby despite our overlapping cultures and identities, civilizations still stand unaltered in opposition to each other.

Second, Huntington's theory of Islam as the 'other' or enemy to the west doesn't conflict with the former discourse between these two groups and is not entirely new. In this way it resonates with the west's familiar understanding of 'us and them' drawing support from centuries of an already established discourse that privileges his theory. In other words his ideas don't challenge the paradigm, but build on it (the construct of the other as the enemy) and legitimize it in a politically explosive international conjuncture.

Furthermore, Huntington's personal social and professional position cannot be ignored. In fact, his position demonstrates the power element at work since he is a Harvard professor, an eminent scholar and an influential person within the academic world. These credentials ensure that what he writes is both published and widely circulated.

Finally, he addresses the issue of security, war and conflict, which after September 11th have become the watchwords of international relations. Perhaps most importantly he offers a readymade answer to a complex situation where people are willing, in fact searching, for an explanation of the attacks. His ideas become an easy explanation, responding to a large audience wanting tangible answers.

In this way the 'clash of civilizations' thesis helps to legitimize U.S foreign policy as Huntington's conflation of Islamic extremism with Islamic culture and religion, along with his sweeping generalizations, become our own conflation of the same. The result is the reign of a misinformed and simplistic truth for a broad community of people, from foreign policy analysts, to local community leaders, to a number of groups and individuals exposed to the mass media within an international context.

It is this truth, whether as a contested truth or accepted truth, that gets airtime and attention, based on the fact that Huntington is an influential powerful person whose thoughts and theories have the potential to discursively formulate public opinion. Indirectly and directly, this idea of an unavoidable 'clash' therefore seeps into people's vocabulary and understanding of the September 11th events and inadvertently informs the association that is made between Islam and terrorism.

In this way, the 'truth' is formed and informed by people in positions of power and often of inherent bias, not from people in marginal positions outside the accepted discourse. In this 'War on Terror', to echo Katzenstein's warning, Huntington's thesis, risks

misleading both public policy and public opinion regarding Islam by offering it up as an entity and making it impossible to separate out ordinary peaceable Muslims, from the Islamic fundamentalists and Al Qaeda extremists.

Anatol Lieven of the Carnegie Endowment for Peace issued a policy brief a month after the attacks in New York. In it he argues that the 'War on Terror' could learn some lessons from the Cold War, namely in avoiding strategies built on false information, ignorance and paranoia. "…the Vietnamese situation would have been better appreciated and the U.S intervention leading to the deaths of 59,000 U.S soldiers and millions of Vietnamese avoided (if) U.S leaders had listened to real experts on that country." (Lieven: 2001: 2)

He goes on to emphasize that the real problem facing the U.S government in this 'War on Terror' is a lack of area specialists, people who are Muslims themselves, who can speak Arabic, Farsi and Turkic languages and who can navigate the "opaque world of radical Islam".

He also emphasizes the important role of nationalism, pointing out that "the failure of U.S planners in the early 1960s to understand the role of Vietnamese nationalism in fueling the North Vietnamese and Vietcong struggle led them to misunderstand the entire nature of the conflict and grossly to underestimate the resilience and mass support for the communists." (Lieven: 2001: 3)

According to Lieven it is the national antagonisms within the 'enemy camp' and the fissures within Islam itself that are the places where the 'War on Terror' can garner unexpected support. But he warns: "Know thine enemy. Instead of positing some undifferentiated general threat, learn to distinguish between different strands in Islamic radicalism, whether religious, national or political. Listen to those area specialists who understand those differences and exploit the splits whenever possible." (Lieven: 2001: 7)

Contrary to Lieven's strategic advice, it would appear that the US administration is doing just the opposite. The administration has consistently kept the definition of the enemy vague and porous, by referring to them as "evil" and "evil doers", operating within "malignant networks" constituting a "global network of terrorists" responsible for "great acts of evil". These attempts at defining the threat, are clearly more interested in promoting a discourse of good versus evil, than in outlining the true dimensions of this war, and the specificities of the enemy.

Accordingly, the broad and loose references to the terrorists, have inadvertently encouraged people to gravitate to the likes of Huntington's argument as they search for a more definite and satisfying definition of the enemy. As Fuat Keyman comments: "Islam has been targeted both because it is real and because of people's need to define the enemy." (Keyman: 2002: lecture notes)

It would perhaps be of greater benefit to us all, if there was an effort on the part of the administration to clarify and not obfuscate, the nature of this war. We know who our allies are: the west and those who stand for democracy and freedom. But as it is, the enemy remains ambiguous and vague. It is precisely the vague definitions that have given rise to a shadow enemy, where Islam itself lurks behind the rhetoric as the target of the war. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* has been all too helpful to this end, supplying us with a thoroughly inadequate but compellingly simple understanding of friends and enemies, with a monolithic West on one side and an undifferentiated Islam on the other.

3.5 The Limits of a Binary Discourse

This chapter has attempted to explore the fundamentals of "othering", as expressed by Said in his groundbreaking work Orientalism, and exemplified in Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis. The purpose has been to relate Said's ideas on the inherent dangers of Orientalism to the organizing principles of this war, and the creation of a worldview coloured by a misrepresentation of the "other".

It is easy with this 'War on Terror', not to see that behind the rhetoric of the 'other' of the 'evil ones', lurks the tangible face of Islam; easy because the desire for answers and a tangible understanding of the attacks and this war often outweigh the rigour and uncertainty involved in uncovering the layers of truth (or lies) and the power politics

orchestrating the grand rhetoric of the political discourse directing the media and this war in general.

However, as Said demonstrates in *Orientalism*, the image of the 'other' should never be taken at face value. Clearly, the European Orientalist discourse has produced and reproduced a specific image of the Orient, derived from certain ideas, myths and fears, from every domain of European life, that had more to do with Europe than with the so called Orient itself.

This discursive process of 'othering' continues to operate in constructing our understanding and expectations of the world and of ourselves. It now operates as a political vehicle from within the framework of the United States, having transferred itself from its original European context. It is always however inevitably tied up in political maneuverings and in fact constitutes the core of what politics and the desire to control is all about. It is ultimately the power of this discourse that maintains and perpetuates the west/rest construct's influence in societies worldwide, in politics, economics and culture.

This time however, in the 'War on Terror' it is perhaps even more dangerous than before, since in our ever interconnected world, millions of people from apparently diverse and even 'enemy' civilizations live and work within the domain of the west: in the United States, Canada and Europe. The kind of insidious revival of neo-orientalism promoted by Huntington therefore risks to create great fissures within the fabric of

social peace and cohesion worldwide. This is already evidenced by the increased violence against Muslims in the United States, particularly following September 11th. Instead of promoting multiculturalism, the kind of thinking and logic promoted by the *Clash of Civilizations* induces fear, intolerance, reductionism and racism.

The problem with the idea of 'the west and the rest' in Huntington's thesis, is that it doesn't provide a framework for any alternative versions other than that of an inevitable clash. When in reality there are many forms of interaction between cultures that are peaceable and reflect a reciprocal relationship in integrating ideas and cultures into hybrid forms of their original selves.

The next chapter explores the ways in which this process of Islamic 'othering' occurs within an Islamic country such as Turkey. We examine the extent to which there exists alternative ways of approaching the apparent chasm between the west and the rest. It is perhaps time to turn our attention to more constructive examples attempting to reconcile these differences, instead of perceiving these two realities through the eyes of Huntington and the logic in this 'War on Terror', which present them in an antagonistic equation of one versus the other.

CHAPTER IV

THE CASE OF TURKEY

Turkey is a country full of contrasts and contradictions. Straddling Europe and Asia, it has always been valued for its geostrategic position and often referred to as the country where East meets West in an atmosphere of accommodation and exchange. It is also promoted as the only Islamic democracy in the world. For many people in the west, the case of Turkey represents a crucial example and ideal model for other Muslim countries to emulate. Accordingly, Turkey is a valuable case study in relation to 'the west and the rest' construct, particularly in its 'west versus Islam' variation.

Focusing on Turkey as a leader, both in and for the Muslim world, has gained a renewed emphasis in the aftermath of September 1 1th. In May of 2002, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz in a speech to the World Affairs Council, had this to say in his speech entitled *Bridging the Dangerous Gap between the West and the Muslim World* :

> "One possible model for the aspirations of the Muslim world for democratic progress and prosperity can be found in a country that has interested me for some 25 years now, a country that straddles the strategic crossroads between East and West - that country is Turkey. Our strong ally and friend faces challenges, but forges ahead based on Ataturk's vision in which the old world accepts the new, and each is enriched."(Wolfowitz: 2002: 2)

This description of an apparent smooth transition from the "old world" of the Ottoman Empire to the "new" model of a western nation-state, glosses over the more salient elements of Turkish politics and the fault lines of this changeover merger. It is arguable to what extent the meeting of the old and the new is and has been an equal exchange, and how this exchange has translated into an enrichment for both parties. Anyone familiar with 'Ataturk's vision' knows that it was not so much "new" as decidedly western, resulting in what is often referred to as a militant secularism, where reforms were enforced rather than accepted, and the western ideals imposed 'from above' in an elitist attempt to transform Turkey into a secular civilized Republic, eschewing Islam in its 'backward' ways. (Mardin:1983:142-150)

In the process of adopting western ideals and institutions, Ataturk and his supporters also invariably adopted a western perspective of Islam. In this way, Ataturk's "new world" vision succeeded in reproducing the same European biases in Turkey, embedding a predominantly Orientalist discourse into the founding Republic's state/Islamic relations, laying the foundations for future ideological clashes over what Turkey was or wasn't, could or could never be.

Understanding how the dynamics of this Orientalist discourse operates today in Turkish politics and society requires an examination of the evolution of the two forces of Kemalism and Islam. To this end, this chapter, using Turkey as a case study, examines the historical and discursive contexts in which the Orientalist construct of west/rest operates in this country.

Beginning with Ataturk's reforms during the founding days of the Republic, it traces the trajectory of political events that have since shaped the relationship between Islam and the state, and ends with an overview of two particular Islamic groups within Turkish society. These groups, in their own ways, defy the binary constraints of Orientalist discourse by incorporating elements from both sides of the west/Islamic divide, proving that it is in fact possible, if not within the official discourse, then outside of it, in civil society.

4.1 In the Beginning

It is often suggested that the birth of Turkey as a Republic represents a radical rupture with its Ottoman past. However, the ideals of Kemalism, which shaped the new nation-state in the mold of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's vision of a modern and secular Republic, have their roots in Ottoman reforms dating back to the 1800s during the Tanzimat period.

> "Kemalism, which took its cue from Western positivism, did have an Ottoman intellectual precedent: this was the pragmatism and relative secularism of the Ottoman official. It was this pragmatism, which enabled Ottoman statesmen to understand that they needed a policy of reforms to strengthen the institutional foundation of the Ottoman Empire. It was the same background, which made them introduce 'positive science' into a program of military schools. These schools produced Ataturk and his generation." (Mardin:1983: 155)

These Tanzimat reforms, whether in the military or the judiciary, were ultimately based on the conviction that the key to modernization lay in emulating the Europeans. This desire to 'Europeanize' can be traced back to the 17th century. Contributing to it was the

humiliating defeat of the Ottomans by the Europeans in 1683 at Vienna. It was this defining battle that would expose the weakness of the Ottoman army, not only to the Europeans, but also to the Ottomans themselves, who after centuries of enjoying "the upper hand" (Heper: 1993: 8) were forced to recognize their inferior military capacity in comparison with Europe's.

Consequently, in the years to follow, the Ottomans came "consciously to adopt European ways in order to arrest their decline and put an end to the conquest of their realms by the Europeans." In fact, apparently in 1719 an ambassador "was sent to Paris with instructions to "make a thorough study of the means of civilization and education, and report on those capable of application' in Turkey." (Heper: 1993: 8)

This interest in mimicking western civilization as the way to progress, was however not shared by everyone at the time (nor would it be in the future). There were those, particularly within religious circles, who voiced the opposite opinion, preferring to attribute the decline of the empire not to the Ottomans' failure to modernize alongside the Europeans, but rather to their collective failure to uphold the core Islamic principles.

> "Ever since speculation of the Empire's decline had been initiated, there existed a theory that had currency primarily in religious circles. This idea was that the Ottomans had regressed because they had not observed their religious duties. During the nineteenth century, this theory, now reinforced by historicist elements,
> was transformed into one which argued that the religion and the culture of the people were one and that the Ottomans could not, therefore, devise social institutions which denied the role of Islam." (Mardin: 1983: 141)

These divergent views, on how to address the apparent regression of the Ottoman Empire - whether to westernize or Islamicize - represent the beginnings of what today constitute the fundamental tensions between pro-west and pro-Islamic groups in Turkey. They find their expression in the ideologies of Kemalism and Islamism respectively, whereby Kemalism sees itself as the agent of western Enlightenment ideals, such as rationalism, secularism, freedom and progress, and Islamism sees itself as the moral answer to the corrupt and degenerative nature of all things western.

Understanding how these two ideological stances imitate the larger west/rest and west/Islamic discourse requires an understanding of the ways in which Turkey was first formed in the image of the west.

4.2 The Whole West and Nothing but the West

Arjun Appardurai describes the process of nationalism as creating "an artificial collective form" (Appardurai: 2000:129). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of Turkey. Having inherited an adulation for western ideals and a general positivist outlook on progress and modernity from the Tanzimat period, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk would inspire these 'Kemalist elite' to undertake the grand national project of 'making' Turkey in the image of 'the West'. His ultimate goal was for Turkey to: "…reach a 'contemporary level of civilization' by establishing political, economic and ideological prerequisites such as the creation of an independent nation-state, the fostering of

industrialization and the construction of a secular and modern national identity."(Keyman:1995: 96)

To this end, Ataturk, along with the support of a small elite entourage, set about dismantling what was perceived to be the main impediments to achieving 'a contemporary level of civilization', namely the pillars of Ottoman identity targeting in particular, historical Islamic and Ottoman structures of power. Beginning in 1922 he abolished the Sultanate, and in 1924 the Caliphate. Dissolving the Caliphate was a particularly bold move and met with both shock and criticisms. Serif Mardin describes it as a "momentous step" and suggests that despite Ataturk's public explanations for the decision: "the real thrust behind the move had been the secret conviction of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk that Islam was one of the primary causes for the 'backwardness' of the Ottoman Empire." (Mardin: 1977: 587)

It is this conviction that would constitute the underpinning logic of many of Ataturk's reforms whose collective focus was to secularize as well as modernize the Republic. The nature and extent of these reforms, which touched all areas of society, illustrate the breadth of the nationalist project and the ambition of Ataturk's vision. They not only entailed the dismantling and replacement of Islamic and Ottoman institutions with European ones, but also included social and cultural reforms such as the introduction of the Latin script, the adoption of western dress, the banning of traditional headgear and the adoption of the Western calendar.

In other words, establishing Turkey as a nation-state was premised on the idea that modernity, civilization and progress were only attainable in the western way, as interpreted in accordance with the Kemalist political motives. This bias necessarily excluded Islam from playing a role within the new configuration, as it was deemed incompatible with modernity. Nur Yalman refers to this as the "cast-iron theory of Islam" whereby Islam is evaluated as fundamentally inadaptable to modern circumstances. (Yalman in Heper: 1981: 34)

And yet, Ataturk and his Kemalist supporters were aware of the significant role Islam played for the masses that, despite the secularizing reforms of the last century, still largely identified themselves as Muslims in an Islamic Empire. Unlike the urban elite who were already quite westernized and more educated, the rural people of Turkey, had a different more traditional worldview in which Islam played a key role. It was the touchstone for many things, and impacted most areas of their lives. (Mardin: 1977: 586) Consequently, despite Ataturk's determination to uproot Islam from its foundational role in Turkey, he was also wary of its potential power and careful to avoid a head-on collision with the people whose lives were built upon this foundation.

> "In so far as they knew that religion was a multi-functional peg on which values, personalities, ideologies and power could be hung, the founders of the Turkish Republic saw it as a real impediment in their way…To achieve his goals,Ataturk thus chose to strike at the foundations of official religion, making little effort to impose the new ways in the daily lives of the peasant masses or the provincial towns. Republican laicism was therefore a Janus-like affair: on the progressive side the Caliphate was abolished in 1924, but on the other, platoon practice in officer training in the 1950s still culminated with the "storming of a hill withcries of 'Allah, Allah'!" (Mardin: 1971: 238)

This apparently contradictory treatment of Islam illustrates the very particular way in which it was incorporated into the modern structure and mentality of the Republic, whereby the state endeavoured not so much to separate itself from religion (like it was officially in the West) as much as to control it.

> "Religion in Turkey, especially during the formative years of the Turkish Republic, has been the most important centrifugal force with a potential to challenge the state. It was partly for this reason that separation of religion and the state was never attempted in its Western version as orthodox Islam was put under state control and made subservient to state authority." (Toprak: 1988 :120).

This is perhaps best illustrated in the founding of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. In charge of, among other things, appointing and paying the salaries of the imams, building of new mosques, setting the official religious holidays, deciding fatwa, organizing aspects of the Hajj, the Directorate since the founding of the Republic, has acted as the control mechanism of Islam for the new Republic. The Directorate:

> "..has offices both at the province and sub province levels. The muftus control the administration of the religious institutions under their jurisdiction and supervise all religious services. The teachers, textbooks, and curricula of all religious schools…are under the supervision of the Directorate-General of Religious Education, which is separate from the Ministry of Education. Hence, as civil servants, approximately 52 000 personnel of the PRA (Directorate) function under direct state control." (Toprak:1988:122)

This move to oversee religious affairs and to ultimately sanction an 'official Islam', provided the state with greater leverage in its efforts to thwart unofficial or popular Islam. In a speech by Ataturk following the uprising under Sheik Said in 1925, he stated:

"The Turkish Republic cannot be a country of sheiks, dervishes, devotees and lunatics. The truest and most authentic tarikat is that of civilization". (Ataturk: 1925)[1] Ataturk's swift and determined response to the uprising was followed by the abolishment of all tarikats, tekkes and zaviyes, thereby summarily dismantling the unofficial networks and traditional Islamic structural support in the rural areas.

In spite of this decisive move, the tarikats simply went underground, only to reemerge stronger than ever, after the introduction of multiparty elections in the 1950s. Perhaps a more important point however, is that Ataturk's overall condemnation of popular Islam as inherently uncivilized, along with his decisive measures to destroy the prominence of formal Islam, reflect the general Orientalist tendency embedded in assuming a western perspective of civilization and progress.

The six 'arrows' or guiding principles of the Republic also reflect this bias. Collectively seen as the conveyor belt for modernity and its values, republicanism, national sovereignty, etatism, secularism, populism and reformism together defined the parametres of the new state. They also delineated the margins of what and who were, and perhaps most importantly, what and who were NOT, recognized in the new formula of the Turkish nation-state and identity. "…embedded in the making of modern Turkey as an organic society was, to use Foucauldian terminology, the governmentality of nationalist discourse to practice inclusion/exclusion, to create identity in relation to

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[1] This is from a public speech Ataturk made in Kastamonu on August 30th, 1925.

difference, and to freeze the Other, such as the Islamic identity, into history." (Keyman: 1995: 104)

It is this delineation of who is "us" and who is defined as "other", that duplicates the Orientalist discourse of 'the west and Islam' in Turkey, since it is clearly understood that the west (represented by the state and Kemalism) is civilized, progressive and modern while the 'other' (represented by all forms of Islam) is uncivilized, backward and traditional. This discourse helped to establish a foundational binary structure in the early Republic, upon which official politics and the ideals of Kemalism and Islam grew and evolved, always in opposition to one other.

4.3 Islam: can't live with it, can't live without it

Controls and limitations on religion would relax somewhat in the 1940s when the political system opened up to multiparty elections. In 1950 the Democrat Party defeated the incumbent Republican's People Party by running on a platform highly critical of the single party's enforced laicism. Once in power they began to liberalize religion and were heavily criticized for undermining the secularist principles of the state.

In truth however, the DPs policy changes were never extreme. Revisions such as lifting the ban on the recital of the ezan in Arabic, allowing for the broadcasting of Koran readings over the state radio and establishing religious schools were ultimately minor and/or superficial changes. In fact, the DP tended to take a strong position against anti-Kemalist movements in the years that they were in power and despite their reputation of

undermining the state, it should be recognized that throughout their time in office, religion, and the expression of Islam, were still very much under state control:

> "…the accusation that the DP was soft on Islam is unconvincing. The party took an unflinchingly tough stand against the anti-Ataturk activities of the tarikat, Ticanis. It pursued court cases against reactionaries, Islamist publications, and Said Nursi, the leader of the influential and conservative Nurcu group. Moreover it closed down the Nationalists' Association of Turkey, an ultranationalist body, and passed an 'Ataturk Bill' to fight the anti-Kemalists. All these measures confirm the hypothesis that the DP's policy of giving respectability to the traditional culture and Islam did not involve any loss in the scope or intensity of state control over religion." (Sakallioglu: 1996: 237)

What was new and important about this stage in the state/Islamic relationship however, was the fact that religion was no longer excluded and ostracized from playing a role in party politics. Articulating political platforms in Islamic vernacular in an effort to garner votes and public support became a common strategy within the centre-right parties. As a result, "a religious outlook became firmly embedded in the ideology and program of the mainstream conservative parties in Turkey." (Bozdogan & Kasaba: 2000: 6)

In this way, Islam was inadvertently acknowledged as a natural part of Turkish culture and identity, as well an important political consideration. This highlights the internal contradiction in the exclusionary policy towards Islam, whereby in the end, despite great efforts to depict it as both 'other' and 'backward', it was impossible to exorcise it from society because of its fundamental and enduring role in everyday life.

Another important Islamic development during this period was the reemergence of the tarikat networks and Islamic movements. The more permissive atmosphere towards Islam allowed for an increased visibility of these groups, who not only reappeared as constitutive forces in the rural areas, but were also directly involved in national politics, by openly supporting certain parties and mandates.

In fact it is said that the final trigger for the first military coup of 1960 was Said Nursi's expression of support for the Democrat Party. The leader of the popular Nurcu Islamic movement, Said's network of support and followers was a source of concern to the state. It also lays bare the reality that despite the years of secularism, Islam still played an important role for the masses.

Serif Mardin explains this persistence as a testament to the "impoverishment" of the national culture, whereby the lack of aesthetic value in the symbolism of the state (despite great showy expressions of national devotion such as flag waving, national anthems, commemorative holidays etc…) was too anemic "to take". In the end, as Ayse Kadioglu summarizes:

> "Kemalist ideology could not replace Islam in the lives of the people. The teachings of the Kemalist doctrine were internalized only by the intelligentsia which contributed to the widening of the rift between centre and periphery." (Kadioglu: 1996: 9)

Even more worrying for the state and the Kemalists (and perhaps representing the most important development in terms of Islamic political inroads during this period) was the

formation of the National Order Party. Its creation in 1969 was the first pro-Islamic party to be founded in Turkey and represented a significant shift from the simple strategic use of Islamic symbols in the centre-right political rhetoric, to the establishment of a full Islamic party built on Islamic principles and values. Although it was shut down in 1971, (in violation of official laicism), the genesis of the National Order party marked the beginning of a political development which has continued to play a role in Turkish politics ever since.

Despite the liberalization of religion during the multiparty era, it is important to recognize that the state still controlled the way things were evolving. The state's position as the "privileged agent of rationality" remained fundamentally uncontested. (Keyman: 1995:110) And as the coups of 1960 and 1971 demonstrate, the state was not afraid to step in and assert its will when it felt that the fundamental principles of its existence and purpose were being threatened. As Hugh Poulton summarizes: "Islam could be used to bolster electoral support but it had to be subordinated to Kemalist Republicanism…overt politicization of Islam remained taboo and parties seen as too radical were banned and dissolved." (Poulton: 1999: 2)[2]

Ultimately, the real challenge to the hegemonic status of the state would come in the 1980s, when the combination of neo-liberalism and an emphasis on a Turkish-Islamic synthesis would directly undermine the historical ideals of the Kemalist state and

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[2] This article was downloaded from the internet; the pagination corresponds to the internet article and not the print version.

eventually challenge the boundaries and dynamics of the familiar discourse of power in Turkey. (Kasaba: 2000: 12)

The way in which the construct of 'the west and the rest' survives in Turkey is therefore very particular to Turkey. The construct, which is inherently based on an exclusionary policy, when translated to Turkish politics, takes a specific distortion whereby Islam is both excluded and included simultaneously. It is characterized as 'other' while at the same time being incorporated in the system under strict state guidelines. This has inevitably lead to a volatile and precarious relationship between secularists and Islamists - one which reached its full expression in the 1990's with the rise of the Refah party and the increased tensions with the state. To better understand this development it is useful to briefly examine the preceding decade.

4.4 The 1980s

The 1980's ushered in a new age for Turkey. The introduction of neo-liberal policies combined with a focus on Islamic identity would impact Turkey in unforeseen and indelible ways. The economic policies implemented during this period shifted the focus from an internally oriented economy, controlled by the state in the form of import substitution, to an external, export oriented economy with an increased emphasis on market forces.

This represented a radical shift for Turkey, not only did it ultimately diminish the state's capacity to control the country's economy as it had in the past, but the nature of economic global integration exposed Turkey to new developments, influences and ideas in all areas of society, not just economic, but cultural, social and political as well. This interactive relationship with the outside world would lead to a re-interpretation of Turkish identity, as well as to the decline of the state's hegemonic status. In the end, it triggered a shift of focus from state to society, where the roots of an autonomous civil society were emerging.

Equally as impacting was the new Islamic focus in public discourse, not just as a unifying force, but ultimately as a special identity marker and proud heritage. It was the state itself who initiated this new interpretation of Turkish identity by emphasizing a Turkish-Islamic synthesis. The logic behind the strategy was political in nature with the aim of securing legitimacy through unification and control.

The outcome of this Islamic focus however, which was meant to be temporary, had unforeseen consequences. It inadvertently "opened a discursive space for the revitalization of language of difference", ironically establishing the basis for disunification and opposition. (Keyman: 1995: 113) This discursive space found expression in the emerging civil society, articulating itself within the framework of identity politics. Consequently, Islamic discourse and popularity found a place outside the state and government apparatus where it could respond to people's desire for a sense

of communal identity and comfort in an era of rapid liberalization, insecurity and change.

> "The rise of Islamic identity in Turkey was not without basis…it emerged at a time when the total exposure (through increased modernization of the economy based on export oriented development) of Turkish society to global modernity was radically transforming identity-conceptions and social configurations into ambivalence and uncertainty. Islamic discourse acted successfully as an articulating principle of resistance to such uncertainty by identifying ambivalence
> with global modernity and certainty with community, that is a turn to religion." (Keyman: 1995: 113)

The rise in popular support for the Refah party epitomized this trend. Erbakan, the leader of the RP, capitalized on a disenfranchised and frustrated urban population, who were both disillusioned with the corruption of the government and economically suffering from the increased economic disparity brought on by the neo-liberal policies, by promoting a clean and dependable party, one which directly intervened to help out the 'little man'.

However, as much as the rise of Refah demonstrated an increased Islamic influence within the electorate, its demise equally demonstrated the enduring power of the state. As Sakallioglu contends: "Although the post-1980 period may at first seem to have been a revolutionary break with the traditional political management of Islam by the state, it only represents another mode in the state-Islam relationship, which has not changed in its basic secular orientation or in the primacy of the role of the state." (Sakallioglu:1996: 247) This was clearly illustrated by the 'soft coup' of February 28th in 1997, when the

state successfully pressured the Refah party to step down and banned the party from politics.

Clearly the dynamic between Islam and the state, despite the many political changes in the last fifty years, operates along the binary structure of west versus Islam, which the state has the consistent privileged role of orchestrating. What underlies this enduring primacy is the fundamental nature of identity/difference and the powerful nature of this binary logic. Having frozen the Islamic identity into the role as the 'other', immune to change and alterity, the state could never accept Islam acting within the polity, which was reserved for a decidedly western expression of politics and ideals. It would be impossible for the state to accommodate Islam with having reached a new level of enlightenment and status allowing it to participate equally within the system, since its own definition of self is dependent of Islam's consistent role as the 'other'.

This juxtaposition relies on stereotypical mutual perceptions in order to survive as an identity distinction. In other words it cannot help but collapse each side into a reductionist model derivative of the larger west/rest discourse, thereby promoting an irresolvable equation. It is founded, to use Helvacioglu's term, on a logocentric principle:

> "A logocentric analytical framework, which problematises political opposition along the lines of dichotomous choices (eg. Secular vs Islamicist, secular nationalism vs Islamic fundamentalism) does not address the ambivalence of the past and the present. It is founded on a binary interpretation of history, and of the
the
> political and cultural formations of oppositional politics." (Helvacioglu: 1996:

505)

And like the larger west/Islam discourse, there is a privileged position in this formation as Helvacioglu explains: "logocentrism assumes a fixed point, or an original source from which difference as opposition arises." In the case of Turkey that fixed point is consistently the state, with Islam characterized as 'other', forever binding the state and Islam in an official expression of irreconcilable antagonisms and mutual misrepresentations.

4.5 Turkey's Civil Society

The interactions between the west and Islam in Turkey are multifold and reflect a wide spectrum of beliefs and values. The official political discourse does not however allow for the expression of these values; there is no place for them within the binary distinction of us/them secularist/Islamist. However, the emergence of civil society has allowed for a more permissive interpretation of these polarized ideals to exist. Understanding how these interpretations express themselves at this level is perhaps best accomplished by examining two of the more well known examples: the Alevis, and Fethullah Gulen and the Nurcu movement respectively.

4.5.1 The Alevis

The Alevis are members of a particular Islamic sect in Turkey little known outside the country's borders. In fact it is only in the last two decades that Turkey itself has been learning more about the nature of the Alevis culture and religion, traditionally known as a private and closed community. Consequently, determining the exact number of Alevis in Turkey has never been easy. Some estimates claim that one quarter of Turkey's population is Alevis. More conservative estimates weigh in at 10 to 12 million. What is certain is that the Alevis represent the second largest religious group in the country after the Sunni population.(Zeidan: 1999: 1)[3]

Sometimes called Kizilbas meaning redhead, the Alevis can be divided into four distinct communities in Turkey. The smaller two are located in the province of Kars, and the province of Hatay. Those from Hatay are closely related to the Syrian Alawites, where as the group from Kars are closer to the Shiites of Iran. The largest Alevis groups in Turkey are divided between Kurdish and Turkish origins; they are originally from south and southeast Anatolia and central Anatolia respectively. (van Bruissen: 1996: 7)

In English Alevi means 'follower of Ali'. The Alevis, like the Shiites, believe that Ali was the rightful heir to Muhammed, and that his competitors unjustly stole his place as the first Caliph. Despite this common reverence of Ali however, the Alevis are not altogether Shiite. Their religion is rather a mixture of Shia beliefs and pre-Islamic Turkic shamanism. They do not strictly follow the principles of the five pillars of Islam:

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[3] Ibid

they do not practice namaz (prayer), nor do they fast during Ramazan. Alcohol is not prohibited and the Alevis do not believe in performing the Hajj or the zakat.

Furthermore, the Alevis do not pray in mosques but in cemevis instead, which are simple houses of worship and communal gathering. Their religious ceremonies usually take place after dark and are attended by both men and women who together take part in the dancing and music of which these cem ceremonies are famous. Women are generally treated more equally within the Alevis culture and religion than their Sunnis and Shiite counterparts, participating alongside the men in religious ceremonies.

The dede is the name given to the Alevis religious leader who unlike the Sunni imam, is not appointed but born into a particular lineage of Alevis dedes. In fact, all Alevis are only considered as such if they are born into an Alevis family. One cannot directly become an Alevi, although one can join the Bektashi sect of which they are closely affiliated and become an accepted member of the order. Haci Bektashi Veli is one of the most important cult figures for the Alevis, as is the poet Pir Sultan Abdal. There are special ceremonies every year in their honour.

Historical discrimination against the Alevis dates back to the Ottoman times. Much of the animosity can be attributed to the different ways in which the Alevis and the Sunnis practice Islam, though this animosity has often translated into left/right political clashes. Historically however the mutual distrust is religiously based, encouraging the minority

Alevis to retreat unto themselves becoming famous for the practice of 'takiye' as a way of self-preservation.

Predominantly from the Anatolian region and practicing their syncretistic version of Islam, the Alevis were often regarded by the Ottoman ulema as atheists and heretics and were sometimes attacked or condemned to death for it. In general their rural Anatolian culture was seen to represent the "nomadic, pastoralist, heterodox and Turkic elements as opposed to the multilingual, urban elitist culture of the Ottomans. (Ayata:1997: 66) And they were often characterized as a threat to the Empire.

This animosity and suspicion towards the Alevis population did not die with the Empire's demise, but was carried over into the founding of the Republic. However, the Alevis seeing the possibility of protection and acceptance within a secular state (a privilege obviously denied to them under an Islamic Empire) were openly supportive of Ataturk and his reforms. The animosity did not therefore openly express itself from the state towards the Alevis, who were clearly their ally, but rather from the Sunni population in general versus the Alevis communities as a whole.

The most dramatic evidence of this tension culminated in frequent clashes in the 1970s along leftist Alevis and rightists Sunni political cleavages. The most significant and tragic of these clashes were those of Kahramanmaras in 1979 and in Corum in 1980, and more recently the arson attack in Sivas in 1993 and the riots in Istanbul (Gazi) in 1995.

It is speculated that urban migration and an increased interaction between Sunnis and Alevis played a role in these increased tensions. Having kept their distance from one another throughout much of the Ottoman Empire by living in separate spaces and forbidding intermarriage between the two sects, migration to urban centres exposed the Sunnis and Alevis communities to increased and more intimate contact. The height of the clashes between the two groups coincided with the height of the Alevis urban migration during the 1970s. (Gunes-Ayata:1992:2)

The 1970s represented an important shift in Alevis politics. They had always been ardent Kemalists, interpreting the secularist policies of the new Republic as a guarantee against persecution based on their particular religion. However, throughout the history of the Republic the Alevis became increasingly wary of the conflation of Sunni Islamic ideology and official Turkish politics. Though consistent in their support of Ataturk and Kemalism, their relationship to the state became increasingly suspicious.

This wariness took on a politically leftist tendency in the 1970s when many Alevis, especially the Alevis youth, embraced Marxist ideals, eschewing what they saw as hierarchical, traditional and outdated Alevis religious beliefs, with no apparent political relevance. The association of Alevis and leftism has since remained in the minds of many Turks, and it is this political affiliation that further politicized the Sunni/Alevis clashes throughout that decade. Some claim that it was in fact the brutal Kahramanmaras massacre of Alevis by rightist Sunnis that finally prompted the military to intervene with its coup. (Zeidan: 1999: 4)

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The early 1990s would witness another dramatic shift in Alevis politics and religious expression. The changing political environment, both international and domestic, had profound effects on the Alevis community for a variety of reasons. First the demise of the Soviet Union sent the leftist Alevis searching for another avenue through which to express their political ideals; ironically in the process they discovered the inherent political relevance of Alevism as a natural counterpoint to right wing politics with its fundamental humanistic and peaceable principles as well as its promotion of tolerance and respect for diversity. This ideology was well suited to the growing civil society in Turkey characterized by expressions of various identity claims. (Yavuz: 1998: p 30-33)

Furthermore, the rise in popularity of the Refah party galvanized the Alevis to actively and politically stand in solidarity with the state and its Kemalist and secularist principles in order to safeguard their existence and avoid the possibility of Islamic law coming into being, which could easily lead to a revived persecution of the Alevis community. "The awakening of Alevism occurred at the peak of the political struggles to preserve the laicistic legacy of Kemalism. In this situation the Alevis were in a position to present themselves to secular Turkey as a natural stronghold against Islamism and as 'guarantors' of laicism." (Kehl-Bodrogi: 1997: 177)

Another development in the 1990s for the Alevis was an internal one whereby a more delineated community emerged, as differences between and among Alevis became more obvious. A new generation of urban educated and influential elites, who were a direct

product of urbanization and migration, were transformation the Alevis community on a socio-political level. With greater contacts, affluence and political savvy than their rural fore bearers and counterparts, this group has been at the forefront of the re-politicization and articulation of Alevis principles, history, beliefs and politics. Using newly developed media sources and promoting a prolific amount of literature, this group of intellectuals have created new ways of fusing old Alevis ideals with modern ways, and have fundamentally changed the face of Alevism by transferring its oral based culture and religion to the written word. (Yavuz: 1999: 187)

The outcome of this has been twofold: first, it has dismantled the traditional hierarchy of the community, since the dedes are no longer the only ones interpreting and transmitting the meaning of Alevism but share this role with the younger, educated, urban elite who have their own ideas and political views which inevitably influence the ways in which people understand Alevis principles and religion.

Also, when Alevism was orally transmitted, a certain amount of fluidity and even contradiction were allowed to coexist, but the indisputable meaning of the written word has triggered disputes over the ultimate importance of certain ideals, resulting in the formation of particular alliances and distinctions within the Alevis community. Never a homogenized group, the Alevis are now more than ever, aware of the diversity within their culture. This translates into different political allegiances which expressed itself in four main groupings: a) Left-Alevism b) Mystical-Islamic Alevism c)Centre-Alevism d)Shiia-inclined Alevism. (Bilici in Erman & Goker:2000: 108-110)

The Left-Alevis tend to use Alevism as a type of liberation theology doctrine. The Mystical-Islamic Alevis organize themselves around Haci Bektash Veli associations and are very much tarikat based. The Centre-Alevis, associated with Cem Vakfi, are politically Social Democrats or liberals and the Shiia-inclined Alevis are the more conservative of the four, interpreting Alevism in line with the strict Iranian Shiism of the Twelve Imams doctrine.

Of the four it is the Centre-Alevism (sometimes referred to as the Republican Alevilik) that is most powerful and popular. They are organized around Republican Education and Culture Centre Foundation known as the Cem Vakfi. They are a progressive group who actively promote the message of non-violence and tolerance. Also, their monthly journal Cem, has a wide readership and they are even welcoming to secularist Sunnis members to the Cem Vakfi:

> "Within the foundation there are left-inclined writers, intellectuals, artists and academics who do not place much stress on religious aspects of Alevi and Bektashi orders, but pointout their positive relations with Kemalism, Enlightenment, Westernization, liberalism, religious freedom, tolerance. The Foundation's core body consists of Alevis (that is those who are born Alevism yet the Foundation attempts to open itself up to Sunni through Bektashlik. It further accepts into it those secularist Sunnis who support Kemalist ideals." (Erman & Goker: 2000: 111)

It is precisely this kind of bridge building and tolerance that highlights the potential of the Alevis community as an important link between opposing forces. The Alevis

Manifesto for instance, though not essential to leftist Alevis, is embraced by the Republican Alevis. Written in 1989, it is considered as a landmark document in the repoliticization of the community. While emphasizing its support of Ataturk's original reforms and vision, the Manifesto calls for recognition from Turkey for Alevis' distinct faith and culture, asking for "equal representation and opportunities in education, in the media and in receiving …religious instruction" (Erman & Goker, p 102)

This demand for religious and cultural recognition within a secularist framework forces the state and government to acknowledge the possibility of an accommodation of laicism with religion, transcending the historical binary opposition of the two. This special status of the Alevis as religious secularists can benefit the state and to some extent has already been capitalized on by the Turkish authorities at particular political junctures in the past decade. For instance, following the soft-coup intervention of February 1997, there was a surge of money and support for the building of new cemevis and Alevis festivals in order to take the emphasis away from the Islamic focus elsewhere. Although interpreted by some Alevis as pure political lip service, it does demonstrate that the state is aware of the importance in keeping the Alevis, with their message of secularism and tolerance, in the political public eye.

Though not a homogeneous group of common values and voices, the overriding sympathies of the Alevis are more supportive than antagonistic towards the state, and definitely more secular and tolerant in nature than the majority of their religious Sunni counterparts. The Alevis have the unique distinction of being predominantly supportive

of Kemalism, while maintaining their religious identity and affiliation. It is perhaps the closest Turkish example of religious pluralism the 'western way' in terms of a secular society.

The Alevis with its modernizing culture from rural origins, its strong religious beliefs and firm commitment to secularism, offer the state a rare combination of attributes that has the potential to act as a true model bridging the former cleavages of centre/periphery, urban/rural, modern/ traditional, religious/secular.

4.5.2 Fethullah Gulen

Fethullah Gulen began his career as a religious leader in his teens and took a position in Edirne as a prayer leader just before he turned twenty. He was introduced to the Nurcu movement through Said Nursi's Risale-I Nur in the late 1950s and was immediately impressed with Nursi's ideas and interpretations. Nursi's main goal with establishing the Nurcu movement was to modernize Islam and reconcile it with science. He argued that Islam and scientific reasoning as well as Islam and democracy were not in contradiction. In fact, a strong defender of freedom and constitutionalism, he used "Islamic terminology to provide a vernacular for constitutionalism, liberty and elections" (Yavuz:1999: 587)

Inspired by the Risale-I Nur books, Fethullah Gulen committed himself to educating Turkish youth in the Nurcu way, opening up summer camps for students as early as

1968. He describes the camps as follows: "These camps became like medreses because we had education in Arabic, and we read many books there. As a result, these camps became places in which the discipline of the barracks, the science of medreses, and the politeness of tekkes were united." (Gulen in Baskan: 1998: 168)

During the late 1960s, due to a combination of his religious camps, his Koran courses and his personal religious zeal and emotional sermons, Gulen became a well known Islamic activist and was targeted by the secularist authorities. He was jailed in 1971 for seven months following the military intervention. Some suggest it was a result of these early encounters that led him to pursue a "low profile…channeling his activities to symbolically less loaded projects"(Ozdalga:2000: 85)

The Turkish-Islamist synthesis promoted during the 1980s, helped to promote Gulen to a new level of leadership within the Islamic community, offering him the opportunity to openly and actively pursue his activities with renewed enthusiasm. Most importantly perhaps, it provided him with an ideology that has become his own fervent modus operandi : a nationalist-Islamic identity.

This identity, handed to the Islamic community by no one other than the State itself, allowed for a convenient accommodation of both Kemalist and religious principles, as well as allowing for reference to an Ottoman past. In many ways this stage marked his divergence from the traditional ideas of Nursi, and the beginnings of his own particular interpretation of Islamic nationalism within the Nurcu movement. Hakan Yavuz describes his brand of nationalism as follows: "Gulen is first and foremost a Turko-Ottoman

nationalist. His nationalism is an inclusive one that is not based on blood to race but rather on shared historical experiences and the agreement to live together within one polity." (Yavuz:1999: 595)

Consequently, the watchword of Gulen's philosophy is tolerance. He sees it as the bedrock of freedom and sees himself as its vanguard. He advises not to focus on people's differences but their commonalities. Advising as well, not to react with hostility to injustice, but to tolerate it in the name of moderation: "If we preserve our gentle manner towards people who criticize us severely, I believe that most of them will become our good friends in a short period of time." (Gulen in Baskan: 1998: 171)

He has even established the Journalists' and Writers' Foundation, which hands out "awards of tolerance" to businessmen, artists, politicians and scientists who Gulen judges as contributing to an atmosphere of tolerance in Turkey. He also regularly hosts events with several of the religious leaders of minority groups in the country and in 1998 he even met with the Pope: "I am attempting to embrace all humanity without discrimination. I am working to promote tolerance and reconciliation. My intention is the pleasure of Allah."(Gulen in Reed: 1999: 82)

Gulen also owns a powerful network of media outlets, consisting of magazines and journals, as well as a TV and radio station respectively. In addition his community controls a significant and growing financial institution and he has support from a powerful base of successful businessmen from all over Turkey.

It is however, clearly in the area of education that he has made his most impressive achievements, and for which he is most well known. Never abandoning his original interest in education, he now oversees nothing short of an educational conglomerate with over 300 schools and 7 different universities in various countries.

Most notably he has expanded into the Republics in Central Asia. His community has now established "a university, twenty eight secondary schools and one primary school in Kazakhstan alone. There are 4803 students enrolled in these schools which employ 525 faculty members."(Baskan: 1998: 195) These educational projects are also accompanied by business investments from his Turkish community of supporters. Evidently, though Gulen is apparently deeply committed to spiritual development and education, he is also a keen businessman. He sees the Republics as " the breath of the Turkish economy".

> "All countries should build bridges between each other and open themselves to mutual investments and commercial activities. Schools opening all around the world would be very fruitful. For example, Americans will open schools here, and we should do so in the States." (Reed: 1999: 86)

Gulen's empire of educational facilities and programs, with their alluring scholarships and the sprawling communications network and financial investments is a widely known fact in Turkey. It is clear that when Birtek and Toprak discuss the increasingly important role that the brotherhoods and tarikats are playing in Turkey's economy, they are speaking specifically about Gulen's growing conglomerate and extensive influence: "The dimension of tarikat connections has become increasingly important in recent

years for getting scholarships, establishing new businesses, holding positions of political power and, for a few, building financial empires." (Birtek in Baskan: 1998: 220)

Throughout his rise to fame, Gulen has always been very careful not to offend authorities. He is generally guarded and decidedly moderate about his views in many contentious areas. For instance, when the headscarf controversy was at its height in Turkey, Gulen quite surprisingly dismissed it as a "detail". Equally level handed is the content of his papers, and TV shows. Nowhere is Gulen openly supporting an Islamic takeover. In fact he is openly supportive of the state and refrains from commenting on the role of the military or human rights abuses: "I prefer even the most anti-democratic state to the non-existence of a state. In this regard, I am opposed to the notion of erosion of the state." He adds : "The state is very important. Its absence created anarchy. " (Gulen in Heper : 1997: 40)

He was also always careful to avoid association with the Refah party, identifying himself in contrast as a moderate Muslim. A move which gained him favour from the secularists who were increasingly concerned with the emergence of Refah and some of Erbakans's radical views. "The evil people plotting to make our country go backwards will be detected and eliminated…those who politicize the religion and exploit it for their own ambitions will be separated form the pure and innocent believers." (Reed: 1998: 85)

This secular support soured however, following the "soft-coup", in 1997. The event marked an increase in surveillance from authorities and triggered a concerted crackdown

on individuals and or religious associations and movements perceived as threatening to the state. Gulen's schools came under attack as did Gulen himself in the Spring of 1999. He was accused: "…of having criticized and betrayed Ataturk, of having cooperated with the Islamic regime in Afghanistan, of having deceived and indoctrinated young pupils, and finally of having plotted against the state." (Ozdalga: 2000: 100)

Today Gulen is still defending himself. As recently as December 27th 2001, he appeared before the State Security Court, where he presented a fifty-six page defense. In it he labeled the accusations against him as "inaccurate", the result of a "campaign of slander" from "certain circles who are against national and spiritual values"(TDN: Dec 27th 2001:3)

It would appear that despite his image as an innocuous moderate Islamic scholar, Gulen has triggered widespread criticisms. The overall conspiracy theory can be summed up as follows: " The military suspects Gulen of planning to establish an Islamic state, based on sharia but for the time being applying taqiyya." (Westerlund: 1999:35)

The majority of the critics believe that Gulen is slowly but surely trying to set back the clocks and reverse all that has been achieved in the name of modernity and secularism. Faik Bulut, a Kurdish intellectual, is one such critic. Bulut believes, as do many others, that Gulen's network is a modern day tarikat whose real agenda in establishing all these schools, is to cultivate a "golden generation":

"Trained in the movement's schools, sheltered in its dormitories and study centers
where they are given religious guidance, this select cadre of top flight scientists, technocrats, academics and entrepreneurs is expected, in the fullness of time, to assume the command positions in society, not only in Turkey but in the neighboring, fledgling republics that came into being with the collapse of the Soviet Union…The difference between them and Erbakan's Refah party is that Refah wants to take power as soon as it can. Gulen believes that you cannot succeed without the infrastructure of Islam….The Fethullahcis believe it will take
at least 25 years to develop the fully Islamicized cadre they need…They cannot sacrifice the final goal for the short term goal. " (Bulut in Reed: 1999: 75)

Others are also wary of Gulen's expansion into Central Asia, fearing that his students will rise to positions of power in their respective communities and support the idea of an Islamic state in Turkey, thereby establishing a broad based international support for Sharia. Claims have also been laid against Gulen for inciting his student graduates to infiltrate state institutions. It is claimed that he openly encourages his students to apply to the Armed Forces and Police Organization, in order to make an eventual shift to Sharia easier.

Not all secularists are critical of Gulen and his work however, Elisabeth Ozdalga presents Gulen as more of an activist and ascetic than political engineer. She describes his approach as defining a new aspect of religious practice in turkey:"…Gulen's views have little to do with seeking political power or even traditional Islam but rather have more in common with Max Weber's ideas about " worldly asceticism". The perspective taught by Gulen is based on activism, stirred up, as well as controlled by pietism. This "activist-pietism" describes a new feature in Turkish religious life."(Ozdalga: 2000: 87)

Ozdalga goes on to describe his movement as an expression of civil society more than anything else, describing his true mission as "a desire to rebuild a new social order by

peaceful and constructive means."(Ozdalga: 2000:104) She calls upon other aspects and organizations of Turkish society to pick up the mantle in this effort to rebuild: "Achieving that aim cannot be left to any single community but requires concerted, non-sectarian action, a challenge not only for the establishment, but for all kinds of civil society organizations as well."

It remains to be seen how the final chapter of this personal assault will play out, but it is certain that Fethullah Gulen, despite his popularity - or perhaps because of it – definitely has his foes amongst the secularist circles of Turkish society.

4.6 Future Hope: Reconciling the Divide?

The cases of Fethullah Gulen and the Alevis provide us with examples that there do exist ways in which the division between 'us and them' in terms of secular western ideals and religious Islamic ethics can be bridged. Together they demonstrate how the realities and expressions of Islam are varied and multifold and cannot be condensed under one heading, nor properly understood in essentialist terms.

In conforming to the discourse of the west, Kemalist elites in the early days of the Republic simply duplicated its hegemonic role, branding Islam as other and highlighting its inherent incompatibilities with western ideals and the ideals of progress and civilization. The result is that each is perceived as the enemy of the other and their various identities are polarized on either side of the discourse, collapsed into

reductionist caricatures of themselves, adding to the presiding antagonisms and misunderstandings between them. In this way, a similar version of the west/rest dichotomy exists, and is in fact embedded in the country's very constitution, in what can be interpreted as the local polarised manifestation of the larger west/Islam Orientalist discourse that Said criticizes.

And yet Islam has, since the founding days of the Republic, managed to maintain a foothold within Turkish society, asserting its relevance despite the state's exclusionary policies. The state has recognized its importance as a cohesive element for Turkish people and as this chapter as demonstrated, has played this card on different occasions, in transparent moments of political self-interest. Consequently, Kemalism in its official state discourse, has in contradictory ways controlled, embraced, excluded and repulsed Islam depending on the political circumstances of the day. In this way it mirrors the west's position of power and manipulation as expressed within the larger west/rest discourse.

The emergence of civil society in the last decade has however undermined this power position enjoyed by the state, as a more permissive space has opened up where new concepts of Turkish identity can be articulated and emulated in a more pluralist way. It is within this space that we can hope to see the expression of new combinations of Islam and Kemalism, as already witnessed with Gulen and the Alevis.

This possibility is especially relevant at this political conjuncture in terms of the 'War on Terror', which despite great efforts to mitigate the targeting of Islam as the enemy, has inevitably implicated Islam and Muslims in association with the terrorist opposition, where Muslims are seen to suspiciously lurk, if not behind enemy lines, than close to them.

Turkey's civil society challenges these easy assumptions, where Islam is characterized as other, in opposition to all things western. The fact is however, that the problem is not that the ideals of Islam and the west are necessarily on a collision course. The problem is that they are bound for a collision when they are restricted within the west/rest division. The construct will simply never allow for a reconciliation of the binary model, since its very existence relies on perpetuating this structure of opposition and of 'us and them'. We must therefore look outside the structure to where new hybrid forms of identity can express themselves, transcending the extreme polar divisions encouraged by the dominant discourse. To this end civil society may well be the flagship for promoting an increasingly pluralist, democratic future in Turkey with the moderate Islamists as the captain of the ship.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The construct of 'the west and the rest' relies on a bifurcated logic. Beginning with the European expansion, it first developed in relation to Europe's colonial 'others' and has evolved into a powerful discourse dividing the world into two great monoliths under a grand narrative consistently privileging the west. This discourse is still operating today orchestrating our understanding of the current 'War on Terror' as it constructs the terms of good and evil, us and them, friend and enemy.

As Edward Said's *Orientalism* argues, our discourses of today draw on past discourses and dominant ideologies of yesterday in order to lend legitimacy to current claims and concepts. This is best evidenced in Huntington's *Clash of the Civilizations*, itself built on the language and concepts of age old religious tensions, fears and biases, it now constitutes the legitimate underpinning logic of the U.S administration's war rhetoric and understanding of the September 11th attacks. To recall Wayne Merry's analysis of the attacks: the United States was not targeted because of what it has done, but because of what it is: the centre of the west.(Merry:2002:2)

Accordingly this war is largely framed as a clash of cultures and religions where in spite of the efforts of the U.S administrators in de-emphasizing the focus of Islam as the enemy, it inevitably looms as the shadow target of the war and continues to be a source of suspicion and fear. In sum, for the west, Islam is easily characterized as terrorism's alter ego.

In its present incarnation, 'the west and the rest' construct, in keeping with its modus operandi, has created its new enemy in the form of a monolithic entity, pitted against a similarly monolithic west - both undifferentiated, the one representing good, the other representing evil. It is this reductionist thinking that has allowed the construct itself to sustain its existence throughout history as a dominant ideological tool. The ability of the west to consistently frame itself in opposition to an inferior totalized 'other' characterizes its discursive success throughout history: "In a quite constant way, Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the upper hand…" (Said:1995:7)

However, as misguided as it has been since its inception, discursively constructing a world that operates on the premise of a binary division of 'A and its opposite' no longer reflects or accurately responds to the increasingly multicultural, hybrid, globalized world we live in. People from all over the world, originating in countries historically characterized as 'the rest', live, work, interact, intermarry, and have children in 'the west'. We are living in a time of unprecedented cultural exchange as well as global

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interdependence, where the traditional boundaries of nations are blurred and identities overlap in new configurations of self and other. Resurrecting the bipolar model in the 'War on Terror' is clearly in contradiction with the multicultural nature of our world today. And while it may well be a constitutive element in defining self and other in the world, as Schmitt argues, it does not need culminate in war. (Schmitt:1996:36)

The reality is that within the 'west and rest' construct lies a range of identities and ideals that are in fact compatible with one another, if not overlapping. There is no one 'west' and no one 'rest'; ultimately, both are conglomerates of varied peoples and countries with different pasts and many cultures.

Turkey's example helps to illustrate this point in relation to Islam and its various accommodations with western ideals. Understanding the ways in which the west and Islam interact in Turkey, helps dispel the current conflation in international politics, where Islam is largely misunderstood in opposition to western ideals. Turkey is an especially interesting case since it incorporates elements from both the west and Islam. Its duplicate version of the west/rest discourse provides us with a miniature version of how the larger international discourse misrepresents 'the rest'. More importantly, Turkish history, politics and culture, while demonstrating an imitative Orientalist discourse at the state level, simultaneously testify to the perseverance of Islamic networks and identities as they exist within society. Islam's resilience as a consistent force in Turkey is self-evident and complex.

What can be ascertained by this illustrative case study is that the discourse of west/rest or west/Islam or any other variation in the future, is forever bound to remain locked in its binary structure of opposites and antagonisms. It is the west, in its consistent position of control, which time and again maintain the boundaries of 'other' in place, forcing it back in its cage should it escape.

This was clearly demonstrated in Turkey with the more recent political intervention in 1997 whereby Islam, represented by the Refah Party, was pulled back from the democratic party setting. Whether or not Refah was in fact a threat to democracy is not the point. The point, in terms of the west/rest construct, is that Refah's mere legitimate presence within the ranks of true Kemalists was a direct threat to the existence of the logic of the bipolar construct. The discourse only survives as long as everyone stays on their side of the divide. One is not allowed to be both western and democratic, and simultaneously uphold Islamic views within the official political realm.

The case of Turkey begs the question then: is there a way out of this deadlock? Here Turkey's civil society groups offer us insights and possibilities, by transcending the official binary discourse and marrying ideals and concepts from opposing sides of the divide, typically deemed irreconcilable. And it is here with the likes of Fethullah Gulen and the Alevis, that the real meeting of the two worlds can happen, where modernity and Islam are reconciled in various ways by meeting outside the dominant political discourse.

Contrary to the image that is projected to the world, this meeting of the two worlds does not happen at the official level in Turkey, but at the level of civil society. Ironically then, when Turkey is held up by the western powers as a successful model of Islamic democracy for other Muslim countries to emulate, it is simply to showcase the triumph of the west in its successful conversion of a Muslim country to the western model. It should not be understood as the west's endorsement of a marriage of Islam and western ideals, since such a union necessarily threatens the very foundations of its political identity and purpose.

In this way, perhaps the success of Turkey's civil society in bridging the binary opposition of the west and Islam is not so much a model for other Islamic countries to aspire to, as much as a signal to the west that its hegemonic status and bipolar discourse may not survive the multicultural directions the world is evolving towards.

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