Multiculturalism: The Culturalisation of What is Social and Political

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Abstract

This paper is critically engaged in the elaboration of the ideology of multiculturalism in the European context, which is currently constrained by the securitisation and stigmatisation of migration and Islam. In western nation-states migration has recently been framed as a source of fear and instability in a way that constructs 'communities of fear'. This article claims that both securitisation and Islamophobia have recently been employed by the neo-liberal states as a form of governmentality in order to control the masses in ethno-culturally and religiously diverse societies at the expense of deepening the already existing cleavages between majority societies and minorities with Muslim background. The article will also discuss the other side of the coin by referring to the revitalisation of the rhetoric of tolerance and multiculturalism by the Justice and Development Party rule in Turkey, the origins of which date back to Ottoman times.

Key Words

Migration, multiculturalism, tolerance, integration, Islamophobia, Muslims, governmentality, securitisation, stigmatisation, JDP.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to elaborate on the different techniques of governmentality employed by various western states in managing the diversity that has resulted from the migration and mobility since the 1960s. These techniques of governmentality are multiculturalism, securitisation and tolerance. The paper will first argue that the ideology of multiculturalism in European Union countries has failed due to the ongoing processes of securitisation, stigmatisation and culturalisation of migration. Secondly, the paper will also argue that multiculturalist policies of integration, coupled with the rhetoric of *tolerance*, have failed in politically mobilising migrants and their descendants. To put it in another way, this work will argue that coupling migration with terrorism,

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violence, crime and insecurity, as well as drug trafficking and human smuggling, is likely to result in the birth of a popular Islamophobic discourse and the culturalisation of what is actually social, economic and political in the everyday life of migrant-origin individuals in a way that invalidates the multiculturalist policies of integration in the west. The article will conclude with a section on the revitalisation of the rhetoric of tolerance and multiculturalism by the Justice and Development Party - JDP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) rule in Turkey, the origins of which date back to the Ottoman times. I believe that this may shed light on how the JDP rule perceives immigrants residing in Turkey.

The Failure of Multicultural Models of Integration

During the 1960s, migration was a source of happiness in Western Europe. More recently, however, migration has been framed as a source of discontent, fear and instability for nation-states. What has happened since the 1960s? Why has there been this shift in the framing of migration? The answers to such questions obviously lie at the very heart of the changing global social-political context. Undoubtedly, several different reasons, such as deindustrialisation, unemployment, poverty, exclusion, violence, supremacy of culturalism and the neo-liberal political economy turning the uneducated and unqualified masses into the new "wretched of the earth", to use Frantz Fanon's terminology, can be enumerated to answer such critical questions.[1] After the relative prominence of multiculturalism debates both in political and scholarly venues, today we are witnessing a change in the direction of debates and policies about how to accommodate ethno-cultural and religious diversity.

As Will Kymlicka rightfully asserts, when states feel insecure in geopolitical terms, when they are fearful of neighbouring enemies, they are unlikely to treat fairly their own minorities.[2] More specifically, states are unlikely to accord powers and resources to minorities that they view as potential collaborators with neighbouring enemies. Today, this is almost no longer an issue throughout the established Western democracies with respect to autochthonous national minorities, although it remains an issue with respect to certain immigrant origin groups, particularly Muslim-origin groups since September 11. Ethno-cultural and religious relations have become securitised under these conditions. Relations between states and minorities are seen not as a matter of normal democratic debate and negotiation, but as a matter of

state security, in which the state has to limit the democratic processes of political participation, negotiation and compromise to protect itself. The securitisation of minorities is likely to lead to the rejection of minority political mobilisation by the larger society and the state. Hence, the securitisation of ethno- cultural relations erodes both the democratic space to voice minority demands, and the likelihood that those demands will be met.

Coupling migration with terrorism, violence, crime and insecurity, as well as drug trafficking and human smuggling, is likely to result in the birth of a popular Islamophobic discourse and the culturalisation of what is actually social, economic and political in the everyday life of migrant-origin individuals in a way that invalidates the multiculturalist policies of integration in the west.

The situation with respect to immigrant groups is more complex. In the European context, the same factors that push for multiculturalism for historic minorities have also generated a willingness to contemplate multiculturalism for immigrant groups.[3] However, immigrant multiculturalism has run into difficulties where it is perceived as carrying high risks with regard to the national, societal and cultural security of the majority society. Where immigrants are connected with violence, honour crimes, drug use and drug and human trafficking, are seen as predominantly illegal and as potential carriers of illiberal practices or movements, and as net burdens on the welfare state, then multiculturalism also poses perceived risks to the shared moral principles of the nation, and this perception can reverse the forces that support multiculturalism. Accordingly, multiculturalism bashing tends to become a popular sport, often revisited in times of social, political and economic turmoil. In moments of societal crisis, the critique of multiculturalism turns out to be a form of governmentality employed mostly by Christian Democratic parties and public intellectuals to mobilise those segments of the society that have an inclination towards right-wing extremism due to growing feelings of anomy, insecurity and ambiguity.[4]

Europe and the other parts of the world, including the USA, Canada and Australia, have experienced increasing tensions between national majorities and ethno-religious minorities, particularly with marginalised Muslim

communities. Already in the 1990s, Arthur M. Schlessinger and Robert Hughes were very vocal in criticising the policies of multiculturalism in the USA, and claimed that US multiculturalism would result in the dissolution of the United States as long as minorities, such as the Hispanics and Afro-Americans, are granted the right to celebrate their ethno-cultural distinctiveness.[5] On the other side of the Atlantic, Dutch society was struggling with what Paul Scheffer, a social democratic figure in the Netherlands, called the Multicultural Drama, which was allegedly leading to the dissolution of Dutch society.[6]

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This debate has been circulating in Europe for a long time. For instance, back in the 1990s, following the Huntingtonian paradigm of clash of civilisations[7] and Wilhelm Heitmeyer et al. argued that it was the Turks who were not willing to integrate and incorporate themselves into German society.[8] Their main criterion in declaring the self-isolationist tendency of the Turkish-origin youths was their perceived contentment to live with Islam and Turkishness. This polemical debate around the work of Heitmeyer et al. parallels the debate revolving around Thilo Sarrazin's book, which has engaged high-level politicians, including the chancellor and president of Germany.[9] A similar debate took place in England immediately after the 7 July 2005 London bombings. "Multiculturalism is dead" was the headline in Britain's *Daily Mail* on the first anniversary of the London bombings.[10]

Thilo Sarrazin, a politician from the Social Democratic Party who sat on the Bundesbank board and is the former finance senator for Berlin, has argued in his bestselling book that Germany is becoming "naturally more stupid on average" as a result of immigration from Muslim countries.[11] In his critique of Thilo Sarrazin's highly polemical book, *Germany Does Away With Itself* (*Deutschland schafft sich ab, 2010*), Jürgen Habermas states that German *Leitkultur* (leading culture) has recently been defined not by "German culture" but by religion: "With an arrogant appropriation of Judaism- and an incredible disregard for the fate the Jews suffered in Germany- the apologists of the *Leitkultur* now appeal to the 'Judeo-Christian tradition,' which distinguishes 'us' from foreigners".[12]

It seems that the declaration of the "failure of multiculturalism" has become a catchphrase of not only extreme right-wing political parties, but also of centrist political parties all across the continent, although it is not clear that each attributes the same meaning to the term. Angela Merkel for the first time publicly dismissed the policy of multiculturalism as having "failed, failed utterly" in October 2010, and this was followed swiftly by David Cameron's call for a "more active, more muscular liberalism"[13] and Nicolas Sarkozy's statement that multiculturalism was a "failed concept". Geert Wilders, leader of the Freedom Party in the Netherlands, has made no apologies for arguing that Christians "should be proud that our culture is better than Islamic culture".[14]

So far, I have only discussed the criticisms of multiculturalism by right-wing politicians and public intellectuals. One should bear in mind that multiculturalism has also been criticised by several left-wing scholars with the claim that multiculturalism has become a neo-liberal and neo-colonial form of governmentality, imprisoning ethno-cultural and religious minorities, migrants and their children in their own ghettoes. Due to the lack of space in this article, I will only refer to the ways in which Slavoj Žižek perceives multiculturalism:

> multiculturalism is a disavowed, inverted, self-referential form of racism, a "racism with a distance"- it "respects" the Other's identity, conceiving of the Other as a self-enclosed "authentic" community towards which he, the multiculturalist, maintains a distance rendered possible by his privileged universal position. Multiculturalism is a racism which empties its own position of all positive content (the multiculturalist is not a direct racist, he doesn't oppose to the Other the *particular* values of his own culture), but nonetheless retains this position as the privileged *empty point of universality* from which one is able to appreciate (and depreciate) properly other particular cultures- the multiculturalist respect for the Other's specificity is the very form of asserting one's superiority.[15]

Security concerns are not only about protecting states against ideological and military threats: they are also related to issues such as migration, ethnic revival, religious revival and identity claims.

The ideology of multiculturalism aims to provide minority cultures with some platforms whereby they may express their identities through music, festivals, exhibitions, conferences etc. However, multiculturalism has lately been criticised by many scholars.[16] In fact, the representation of a wide variety of non-western cultures in the form of music,

fine arts and seminars is nothing but the reaffirmation of the categorisation of 'the west and the rest'. The representation of the cultural forms of those 'exotic others' in multicultural venues broadens the differences between so-called 'distinct cultures'. Based on the holistic notion of culture, the ideology of multiculturalism tends to compartmentalise cultures. It also assumes that cultures are internally consistent, unified and structured wholes attached to ethnic groups. Essentialising the idea of culture as the property of an ethnic group, multiculturalism risks reifying cultures as separate entities by overemphasising their boundedness and mutual distinctness; it also risks overemphasising the internal homogeneity of cultures in terms that potentially legitimise repressive demands for communal conformity.

The Securitisation and Stigmatisation of Migration by States: A Form of Governmentality

There have been several events in modern times that have radically changed the ways in which migrants with Muslim background in the west have been perceived by the autochthonous societies: the Arab-Israel war leading to the global oil crisis (1973), the Iranian Revolution (1979), the Palestinian *intifada* (1987-1990), the Rushdie Affair (1989), the *affaire des foulard* (headscarf affair) in France (1989), the Gulf War (1991), the Bosnian War (1992), the first World Trade Center bombing in the USA (1993), the second Palestinian *intifada* (2000), Paul Scheffer's polemical book *Multicultural Drama* in the Netherlands (2000), September 11 (2001), the Afghanistan War (2001), the violence in northern England between native British and Asian Muslim youth (2001), the rise and death of Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands (2001-2002), the second Gulf War (2003), the murder of Theo Van Gogh (2004), the Madrid bombing (2004), the 7/7 London terrorist bombing (2005), the banlieue riots in Paris (2005), the Cartoon Crisis in Denmark (2006), the provocative statement by Pope Benedict XVI[17] regarding the "brutal nature" of the Prophet Mohammad (2006), British Cabinet Minister Jack Straw's speech about his wish to see women not covering their face (2006), the Swiss minaret debate (2009), the nuclear debate with Iran (2010), Thilo Sarrazin's polemical book (2010), an Imam beating up the students in class in Birmingham in the UK (2011), the burning of Quran by an American pastor in Florida (2011), the official ban of the *burqa* in France (2011), the release of the fragment of the

video film in the USA, "The Innocence of Muslims" (2012), and the Boston Marathon bombing by two Chechen-origin brothers (2013).

All these events have, in one way or another, shaped both the ways in which Muslims have been perceived by the western public, and the ways in which Muslims have comprehended the west.[18] In what follows, firstly, I will be scrutinising the ways in which migration and Islam have been securitised and stigmatised in the west. Subsequently, I will discuss how Islamophobia has been generated by the neo-liberal political elite and public intellectuals as a form of ideology to control the masses at the expense of creating further hostilities between majorities and minorities with Muslim background.[19]

The present usage of the term "security" goes beyond its conventional limits. During the Cold War period, the notion of security was defined in political/military terms as the protection of a state's boundaries, its integrity and its values against a hostile international arena.[20] Nowadays, however, security concerns are not only about protecting states against ideological and military threats: they are also related to issues such as migration, ethnic revival, religious revival (Islam, Christianity, and etc.) and identity claims. Lately, migration has been presented in the Western public space as a security threat that must be dealt with. One could argue that modern states tend to extend the fear of "migrants" and "others" by categorising, stigmatising and coupling migration together with major problems, such as unemployment, violence, crime, insecurity, drug trafficking and human smuggling. This tendency is reinforced by the use of racist and xenophobic terminology that dehumanises migrants. One can see this racist tone in terms, such as "influx", "invasion", "flood" and "intrusion", which have been used to mean large numbers of migrants.

Issues have recently become *security issues* through a process of social construction, namely "securitisation". As the main rationale of the security discourse seems to have shifted from protecting the state to protecting society, culture, and sometimes "race", so the protection of societal, cultural, ethnic and religious order against any kind of "evil" has become the pillar of the security discourse in a way that has popularised the term, security, in all spheres of life. The securitisation of migration or, in other words, the stigmatisation of migrants, became a vital issue after the September 11 attacks in the United States and related events, notably the bombings in Madrid (11 March 2004) and London (7 July 2005).

Much of the response to these attacks has focused on immigration issues even though the perpetrators of the bombings were mostly product of the "society" they attacked.[21] The categorisation of those responsible as migrants seems to be a systematic attempt to externalise the structural failures produced by the social-political order.

The security discourse conceals the fact that ethnic/religious/identity claims of migrants and their reluctance to integrate actually *result from* existing structural problems of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, xenophobia, nationalism and racism. To put it differently, the public perception of migration as the principal source of present disorder masks the actual causes of the globalised social-political discontent. It is likely that modern states tend to employ the discourse of securitisation as a political technique that can integrate a society politically by staging a credible existential threat in the form of an internal, or even an external, enemy- an enemy that is created by security agencies like the police and the army.[22]

Immigration resulting from poverty and anti-democratic regimes in the countries of origin has become one of the principal worries of western countries. The constructed fear of migration and Islam brings about what Campbell calls the "discourses of danger", producing an "us" versus the "others".[23] The key principle of societal and cultural security is identity, and societal and cultural *in*security is defined as the identification of *communities of threats* to the survival of their community. Such discourses of danger seem to prevent migrant communities from incorporating themselves into the political, social, economic and cultural spheres of life of the majority society in a way that prompts them to invest in their ethno-cultural and religious identities.[24] Ethnic and/or religious resurgence, which appears among some migrant groups as a reaction to poverty, unemployment, insecurity and institutional discrimination, seem to be decoded by the neo-liberal states as a challenge to societal, political, cultural, economic and religious security, a challenge that must immediately be restrained.

There are evidential data indicating that the negative attitudes of the western public partly spring from the ways in which the so-called illegal migrants are perceived and framed by western states. Recent research on the securitisation of migration draws our attention to the fact that, at an official level, modern state institutions address only an insignificant correlation between undocumented migration and the problems of global poverty, debt, health, environment and

unemployment fostered by the neo-liberal economic model.[25] The issue of the so-called "illegal migrants" has lately been picked up by Western political elite and state administrations as the very source of some endemic problems, such as unemployment, violence, terror and some other social and cultural problems.

The way illegal migration has been perceived also shapes the public perception of regular migrants. William Walters eloquently reveals that nowhere in the official programmes of anti-illegal immigration appears the complex history of Fortress Europe's economic, geopolitical, colonial and postcolonial entanglement in the regions and borderlands, which it now designates as "countries of transit" and "countries of origin".[26] Instead, we are presented with an external force of "illegal immigration", which is rooted in regional disorder, for which the EU is then positioned as a benign framework of protection and prevention. In this regard, the securitisation of migration and anti-illegal immigration activities, techniques and programmes serve as a form of *governmentality* in the interest of the political authority. *Governmentality* refers to the practices which characterise the form of supervision a state exercises over its subjects, their wealth, misfortunes, customs, bodies, souls and habits.[27] Didier Bigo eloquently explains the ways in which the act of governmentality operates in relation to the foreigners:

> Proliferation of border controls, the repression of foreigners and so on, has less to do with protection than with a political attempt to reassure certain segments of the electorate longing for evidence of concrete measures taken to ensure safety.[28]

Roxanne Doty rightfully argues that the immigrant, the stranger, the excluded, the one who does not belong to the prescribed national unity, is ideologically portrayed by conventional and culturalist elite as the "enemies within".[29] This is a kind of neo-racism, "which functions as a supplement to the kind of nationalism that arises from the blurring of boundaries and the problematizing of national identity that the deterritorialization of human bodies gives rise to".[30]

The exclusion of culturally and religiously different migrants and their descendants from the prescribed nation is also visible in the ways in which the EU has been recently managing migration. EU policies regarding justice and home affairs, described first in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and then in the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997, have indeed contributed to a "discourse of othering". The EU has created an area of "Freedom, Security and Justice" in order to protect member states from the increasing "intrusion" of so-called

illegal immigrants.[31] Referring to Jacques Rancière and Slavoj Žižek, Walters states that the leaders of EU countries engage in a kind of "ultra-politics", which frames anti-illegal immigration activities as a battle between "us and them", and which is sometimes in a struggle to death.[32] Framing the issue as such puts it outside the space of dialogue and forecloses the possibility of politics and citizenship.[33]

Tolerance as a Form of Governmentality

Tolerance is another form of governmentality that is coupled with the ideology of multiculturalism. Tolerance contributes to the culturalisation of what is social, economic and political in a way that conceals the social, political and economic sources of ongoing structural problems, such as poverty, unemployment, exclusion, racism, institutional discrimination, illiteracy and the deprivation of various social, political and civil rights. This section of the article will argue that the rhetoric of tolerance was actually coined in the 16th century by the absolutist state regimes in Europe to resolve religious conflicts: Ottomans using the *millet* system to accommodate Christian claims in the Balkans, and, say, the French and the Spanish using the same rhetoric to accommodate Protestant claims. However, the revitalisation of the rhetoric of tolerance in the contemporary world by the neo-liberal states is nothing but an attempt to present socially, economically and politically constrained conflicts in *cultural and religious* forms at the expense of deepening ethno-cultural and religious borders and of not making any progress in the resolution of ongoing structural problems.

The roots of liberal tolerance date back to the Enlightenment in the 16th century, when the newly rising nation-states were trying to simultaneously accommodate Catholicism and Protestantism. The history of how practices of toleration emerged and how the related ideas were thought up, experimented with and transmitted in response to the religious diversity and religious strife of 16th, 17th and 18th century Europe has been written about in various ways.[34] Accounts reflect the preoccupations of their time, among them a narrative of triumphant liberalism that presented a storyline of how universal persecution gave way under the pressure of Enlightenment ideals. The "persecuting society"[35] of medieval and early modern Europe is thus contrasted with contemporary liberalism, and the narrative of change that suits the contrast places strong emphasis on the role of public intellectuals, *philosophes* and *hommes de lettres* spreading Enlightenment ideas in an emerging

public sphere.[36] Seventeenth century ideas are seen to provide the early-modern point of departure for a journey towards the *status quo* of contemporary liberal tolerance. On the other hand, the other perception of tolerance, namely tolerance without recognition and respect, will be used in the text to refer to the paradoxes of tolerance in the sense that it is likely to establish a hierarchical relationship between the tolerating and tolerated parties. This kind of relationship, which is based on the benevolent tolerance of the tolerating body, makes the tolerated party subject to the patronising gaze of the former.

So far, there have been several different scientific works to discuss the act of toleration of the modern states, ranging from John Locke's (1689) *Letters Concerning Toleration* to Wendy Brown's *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (2006).[37] Some of these works praise the notions of toleration and tolerance; some find them inadequate to remedy the socio-economic and political problems of contemporary societies. Michael Walzer defines toleration as a continuum extending from a minimum to a maximum: "resignation, indifference, stoicism, curiosity and enthusiasm".[38] Rainer Forst proposes four conceptions of toleration along a similar continuum, from less to more demanding motivations grounded in permission, coexistence, respect or esteem.[39] Forst, however, is concerned with retaining the balance of reasons for rejection and acceptance that marks toleration and thus qualifies the extent to which *esteem* can be seen to support a position of tolerance. Esteem needs to be constrained and qualified, as it would otherwise run the risk of exploding toleration and substituting its conceptual core with that of unqualified and enthusiastic endorsement.[40] Hence, according to Forst, tolerance is the space between affirmation, rejection and indifference.

Redefining society in an inclusive and egalitarian manner is expected to generate a Levinasian ethics of responsibility and respect among those who were previously excluded from the public space.

Andrew Jason Cohen defines an act of toleration as "an agent's intentional and principled refraining from interfering with an opposed other in situations of diversity, where the agent believes that she has the power to interfere".[41] Cohen tries to define what toleration is not: toleration is not indifference, not moral stoicism, not pluralism, not non-interference, not permissiveness, not

neutrality and not tolerance. Toleration is the activity of enduring, while tolerance is the virtue (attitude) itself.[42] Agreeing with Cohen on the difference between toleration and tolerance, I will, however, use these terms interchangeably for the sake of simplicity. On the other hand, distinguishing negative or weak toleration from positive or strong toleration, Amy Gutmann goes beyond mere toleration by separating toleration from respect, where the latter performs the proper, positive role that some ascribe to positive toleration.[43] Those, such as Habermas, who define toleration in deliberative democracies, argue that toleration should be extended to all persons as bearers of human rights, including the right of self-expression.[44]

Other theorists have been concerned with a more wide-ranging redefinition that indeed goes to the core of the toleration concept as a balancing act. The aim is to respond to the challenge of post-immigration diversity and the suggestion is that this challenge to traditional conceptions of toleration as non-interference is inadequate. Elisabetta Galeotti has come out to argue for an understanding of toleration not as non-interference but as recognition:

> [P]eople marked by differences which are tolerated in the private sphere but which are invisible or marginalized in public life, and subject to prejudice, stigmatization, and discrimination in social interactions, cannot be fully participating members of social and political life on the same footing as the majority.… Public toleration should reverse the invisibility and marginality of different identities which public blindness, far from dispelling, in fact reinforces.[45]

This idea of public toleration, which is at the core of Galeotti's argument, refers to the public recognition of identities. Tariq Modood suggests that identities and cultures are important because they are important to the bearers of those identities, people who are members of our society, fellow citizens, and so have to be included in the polity in ways consistent with respect and equality.[46] As Galeotti puts it: "[d]ifferences should be publicly recognized not because they are important or significant per se, though they may well be, but because they are important for their bearers and because expressions of public contempt for them, on the grounds that they depart from the social 'norm,' are a source of injustice".[47]

Jürgen Habermas, on the other hand, draws our attention to the fact that the constitutive principles of the nation should not be prescribed as it should tolerate the attempts of those culturally and religiously different from the majority to enter into the public space.[48] One needs to redefine what is social, which was prescribed earlier in a way that excluded the others. The redefinition of what is social requires

the members of the given society to recognise, respect and accept ethno-cultural and religious differences of those as free and equal citizens so that the addressees of this egalitarian form of society are able to understand themselves simultaneously as its responsible bearers. In other words, redefining society in an inclusive and egalitarian manner is expected to generate a Levinasian ethics of responsibility and respect among those who were previously excluded from the public space. This is what Habermas calls political acculturation. Habermas finds toleration to be one of the main pillars of modern inclusive society.[49]

However, tolerance involves an asymmetrical, paternalistic relationship between a sovereign party and a subaltern in such a way that the former unilaterally grants tolerance to the latter as an act of benevolence. Habermas seeks to ground tolerance in the symmetrical relations of public deliberations.[50] For some scholars, there is a paradox embedded in toleration that requires the drawing of boundaries between what is tolerated and what is intolerable and, as such, fashions positions of evaluative authority that place the tolerator in a position of power. This has led political theorists to consider toleration as a device that not only resolves moral conflict, but also produces social arrangements and defines agents and groups. The concern is, as Wendy Brown puts it, to "reveal the operations of power, governance, and subject production entailed in particular deployments of tolerance" and to puncture "the aura of pure goodness that contemporary invocations of tolerance carry".[51] Brown, in particular, makes suggestions on the practices of boundary drawing that she sees at the core of such deployments of tolerance: "Its invocation involves drawing spatial boundaries of dominion and relevance, as well as moral boundaries about what can and cannot be accommodated within this domain".[52]

Islamophobia as a Form of Ideology

The revitalisation of the rhetoric of multiculturalism and tolerance as well as the securitisation and stigmatisation of migration and Islam in the west has occurred in parallel with the rise of heterophobic discourses, such as the "clash of civilisations", "culture wars", "religious wars" and "Islamophobia", as well as with the reinforcement of restrictive migration policies and territorial border security vis-à-vis the nationals of countries outside the west. Richard W. Bulliet eloquently criticises what the clash of civilisations thesis has implicitly advocated:

> Since Jews, Christians, and Western secularists have named themselves as

> charter members of the civilisation club, the ideological or behavioural shortcomings, from the majority's point of view, or this or that Jewish or Christian group do not impugn or threaten the civilisational inclusion of those religious traditions as a whole. Christianity and Judaism pass by definition the civilisational litmus tests proposed for Islam even though some of their practitioners dictate women's dress codes, prohibit alcoholic beverages, demand prayer in public schools, and persecute gays and lesbians, and damn members of other faiths to hell. Muslims of every stripe, on the other hand, stand accused of being party, by reason of religious belief, to the worst behaviours manifested by some groups of their coreligionaries.[53]

Hostile and offensive language, racist statements and anti-immigrant policy propositions or real measures are aired everyday in the news. Conversely, the language of hatred has replaced the language of dialogue.

Muslims are increasingly represented by the advocates of the same thesis as members of a "precarious transnational society", in which people only want to "stone women", "cut throats", "be suicide bombers", "beat their wives" and "commit honour crimes". These prejudiced perceptions about Islam have been reinforced by the impact of the previously stated events ranging from the Iranian Revolution to the official ban on *burqa* in France in 2011. Recently, it has become inevitable for quite some people in the west to have the urge to defend western civilisation against this "enemy within" that is culturally and religiously dissimilar to the "civilised" western subject.[54] Silvio Berlusconi, the former Italian prime minister, is one of those to have this urge:

> We are proud bearers of the supremacy of western civilisation, which has brought us democratic institutions, respect for the human, civil, religious and political rights of our citizens, openness to diversity and tolerance of everything…. Europe must revive on the basis of common Christian roots.[55]

American President George Bush's speech regarding the "axis of evil" (29 January 2002) was also perceived by the American public in particular as an attempt to demonise "Islamic fundamentalism" and the "enemies of freedom".[56] Although Bush, as well as some European leaders such as Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac, repeatedly stated that the war did not represent a fight against Islam, the US public especially was highly engaged in deepening the Islam-bashing that was displayed very explicitly in the following speech of George Bush:

> Our military has put the terror training camps of *Afghanistan* out of business, yet camps still exist in at least a dozen

> countries. A terrorist underworld- including groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, Jaish-i-Mohammed- operates in remote jungles and deserts, and hides in the centres of large cities…. First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice…. Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction. Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September the 11th. But we know their true nature... *Iran* aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom. *Iraq* continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror… States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an *axis of evil*, arming to threaten the peace of the world….[57]

The aim of Islamophobia as a form of governmentality is to make the majorities believe that Muslims and Islam are an "enemy within" in the European context, and an "outside enemy" in the American context.

Similarly, Italian journalist and novelist Oriana Fallaci is another disputable figure, who generated a very contested discourse in the aftermath of September 11 *vis-à-vis* Muslims:

> I say: Wake up, people, wake up!... You don't understand, or don't want to understand, that what is under way here is a reverse crusade. Do you want to understand or do you not want to understand that what is under way here is a religious war? A war that they call *Jihad*. A Holy War. A war that doesn't want to conquest of our territories, perhaps, but certainly wants to conquer our souls…. They will feel authorized to kill you and your children because you drink wine or beer, because you don't wear a long beard or a chador, because you go to the theatre and cinemas, because you listen to music and sing songs….[58]

This right-wing stream of reactions also echoed in other parts of the western world. Pim Fortuyn, Dutch media presenter and politician, published a book entitled *Against the Islamization of Our Culture*, in which he simply claimed that Islam was a threat to western civilisation in a way that contributes to the othering of migrant origin individuals residing in the west.[59] Islam-bashing has become a popular sport among ministers, politicians, media and even prime ministers in the EU as well as in other parts of the world. Today, hostile and offensive language, racist statements and anti-immigrant policy propositions or real measures are aired everyday in the news. Conversely, the language of hatred has replaced the language of dialogue.

As Chris Allen very eloquently revealed, Islamophobia is not really a "phobia", it is rather a form of governmentality, or an ideology "similar in theory, function and purpose to racism and other similar phenomena, that sustains

and perpetuates negatively evaluated meaning about Muslims and Islam in the contemporary setting in similar ways... that inform and construct thinking about Muslims and Islam as Other".[60] The aim of Islamophobia as a form of governmentality is to make the majorities believe that Muslims and Islam are an "enemy within" in the European context, and an "outside enemy" in the American context, so that the unity of the nation can be protected against the national, societal, and cultural security challenges coming from inside, or outside.[61]

An Historical Account of Multiculturalism in Turkey

Now, let's have a look at the other side of the coin and see how JDP rule in Turkey has essentialised the paradigm of the Alliance of Civilisations in a way that revitalises the rhetoric of tolerance and multiculturalism as opposed to the conservative state apparatus in the EU of the last decade, which has invested in the paradigm of the clash of civilisations. Since the beginning of JDP rule in Turkey (2002), there has been a growing discourse in the international community portraying Turkey as a bridge not only between continents but also between civilisations. The so-called "moderate Islamic state of Turkey" has been praised by contemporary western political elite in a way that also embraced the JDP. The instrumentalisation of Turkey as a model for other Muslim countries in the Middle East and elsewhere has also been welcomed by a majority of the Turkish political elite. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and several other politicians as well as academics have played this new role, expecting that it would bring Turkey into a more favourable position in the European integration process.[62] Turkey's role as a mediator between the Muslim world and the non-Muslim world was also accredited by the United Nations, as Erdoğan was appointed, together with the former Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, to launch the Alliance of Civilisations initiative.[63]

The Alliance of Civilisations paradigm has so far implicitly accepted that civilisations, religions and cultures have fixed boundaries and that they are bound to remain so. In this regard, it is actually very much identical to the clash of civilisations paradigm. The former advocates dialogue between civilisations/religions, whereas the latter underlines the impossibility of communication between them. Now the question to answer is whether Turkey is still pursuing its Kemalist civilisational goal to become a part of western civilisation or whether it is locating herself within one of the rival civilisations of the East. The reduction of

civilisation, which used to have material, industrial and urban connotations in the past, into culture and religion in the contemporary world has an impact on the ascendancy of religion-based civilisational discourse in contemporary EU member states in a way that dialectically leads to the rise of the same kind of civilisational discourse in Turkey that is argued by the JDP elite.[64] The public debates in Turkey are very much related to the aforementioned debates in the European space revolving around Islamophobia, enlargement fatigue, clash of civilisations, and migrantphobia.

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It is evident that the JDP has revitalised various notions, such as multiculturalism and tolerance, in its attempts to manage diversity in Turkey. Essentialising the term "tolerance", a term that is specifically mentioned in the textbooks of religious culture and morality courses with reference to the Medina Covenant, which was formulated by Prophet Mohammad in the age of happiness (*asr-ı saadet*) wherein a kind of multiculturalism based on religious differences was experienced.[65] This covenant was meant to regulate relationships with non-Muslims and Mohammad's "tolerant attitude" towards the Christians of Yemen.[66] Furthermore, in September 2010, the Ministry of National Education released a public statement in the first week of the school year to underline the need for the "education of values". Accordingly, the education of values, which entails issues such as citizenship, hospitality, solidarity and tolerance, aims at empowering individual students against the challenges posed in everyday life by globalisation.[67] In what follows, as I discussed elsewhere in detail, I argue that the revitalisation of the terms, tolerance and multiculturalism, has a historical legacy originating from the Ottoman times.[68]

The management of ethno-cultural and religious diversity in the Ottoman Empire was mostly accomplished on the basis of the ideology of multiculturalism, which was literally called the *millet* system. *Millet* is an Ottoman Turkish term which refers to confessional communities in the Ottoman Empire.

The word *millet* comes from the Arabic word *millah* (nation). Subject populations, such as the Christians, were classified by their religious affiliations. Their civil concerns were settled by their own ecclesiastical authorities who were delegated powers by the sultan. This was the way the government secured access to the non-Muslim populations.[69] In the 19th century, with the *Tanzimat* reforms (1839-1876) that replaced religious law with statute law, the term *millet* started to refer to legally protected religious minority groups other than the ruling Sunni Muslims.[70] Besides the Muslim *millet*, the main *millets* in the Ottoman Empire were the Greek, Orthodox, Jewish, Armenian and Syrian Orthodox populations.[71] The *millet* system somehow efficiently worked until the age of nationalism when the Ottoman Empire started to lose its integrity. Around that time, Muslims encountered non-Muslims in the market place in everyday life; however, there was not a deep-rooted kind of interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims due to ethno-cultural and religious boundaries essentialised by the *millet* system.

Although the *millets* were permitted to govern themselves with regard to internal affairs, their relations with the ruling Muslims were tightly regulated. For instance, non-Muslims, though they were allowed to maintain their own religious and cultural heritage, were subject to certain rules such that they could not proselytise, they could only build new churches with a license and they were required to wear distinctive dress so they could be recognised. There were limits on intermarriage and they had to pay special taxes in lieu of military service.[72] Therefore, the system relied on tolerance of the *millets* provided that they were willing to abide by the regulations of the empire, which encouraged conformity. Consequently, the system did not perceive the members of the *millets* as individuals, but rather as a part of the collective non-Muslim identity. Tunaya illustrates the principle of equality during the *Tanzimat* era (1839-1876) as follows:

> The most emphasised issue during the *Tanzimat* had been equality. Certainly, equality was not recognized in terms of the legal doctrine, but rather in terms of being Ottoman.... The principle of equality amongst the Ottomans from multiple religions was established. According to a popular saying of the time, the land-fellowship principle was anticipated to become the main policy principle. Everyone was "the child of one father", with that father being the sultan. Accordingly, the Islamist Empire formula was accompanied by the perception of a cosmopolitan community. The consolidative component of this plural community was being Ottoman. As a result, Islamism was accompanied by Ottomanism [author's translation].[73]

The benevolent reforms of Abdulmecid II (1839-1861) introduced laws providing some egalitarian guarantees for Muslims and non-Muslims, such as the prohibition of bribery and uniform taxation.[74] However, the *Tanzimat* laws and the attempts to introduce a European-type constitution were more or less shelved in the conservative sultanate of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909). However, the Ottoman Empire was a multiculturalist state with a sharp division between the ruling elite and the mass of the population which played almost no part in the governing of the Empire. According to Schmuel N. Eisenstadt, the most distinctive character of the Ottoman ruling elite was

> the military-religious rulers who emerged from tribal and sectarian elements, and from the system of military slaves, which created special channels of mobility such as the *qul* (slave) system in general, the Memluk system and Ottoman *devshirme* in particular, through which the ruling group could be recruited from alien elements.[75]

Decision making was concentrated in the hands of a small group of political elites, at the centre of which stood the sultan. His power was theoretically absolute, but in practice it was limited by the existence of three major power structures, the *Ulema* (religious intellectuals), the military and the bureaucracy. The separation of the *khalifa*, as an ideal religious figure, and the sultan, as the actual ruler, which is particularly prevalent in Sunni Islam, resulted in several unique social formations, such as the establishment of a unique type of ruling group, the military-religious rulers, who emerged from the sectarian elements, and the autonomous *ulema,*[76] who created major networks that brought together, under one religious- and often also social-civilisational- umbrella varied ethnic and geopolitical groups, tribes, settled peasants and urban groups, creating mutual impingement and interaction that otherwise would probably not have developed. Through their control of education, the judiciary and the administrative network, the *Ulema* acted as agents of the state and secured the state's control of social life.[77] As a result, the *Ulema* were the umbrella under which the *ummah* was able to convene and together, the two entities, the *Ulema* and the *ummah*, constituted an autonomous public sphere. Consequently, the decoupling of an autonomous and vibrant public sphere from the political arena- or to be more precise, from the realm of rulership- which differed greatly from counterparts in Europe, especially Western and Central Europe, and was one of the distinctive characteristics of Muslim civilisation.[78]

Tolerating Difference in Turkey

Ottoman multiculturalism was usually coupled with the term "tolerance". The concept of tolerance has a very long history in the Turkish context, dating back to the early days of the Ottoman Empire. It also has a very popular usage in everyday life in modern Turkey. Turks are usually proud of referring to the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire, which is often celebrated as a guarantor of tolerance and for respecting the boundaries between religious communities. The equivalents of the term tolerance in the Turkish language are *tolerans*, *hoşgörü, tahammül, müsamaha, görmezden gelme* and *göz yumma*. *Hoşgörü* is defined in the *Dictionary of the Turkish Language Association* (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) as follows: "the state of tolerating everything as much as possible." *Hoşgörü* literally means "seeing (the other) in a good way". The term *tahammul* is derived from the Arabic root word *haml*, which literally means "to pick" or "to bear" or "to carry". For example if one picks a book or carries a load or a burden, etc. the word *haml* would generally be used; but if one patiently bears a problem or an affliction or a humiliation or an indignity or is oppressed, then *tahammul* would be used. The word *musamaha* literally means to forgive, and it is even claimed that the word *Masih* derives from this word in Arabic. Additionally, in Arabic, the word *tasamuh* transcends the realm of political toleration[79] and connotes personal virtues, such as patience and generosity. On the other hand, "*görmezden gelme*" means "pretending not to see", and "*göz yumma*" literally refers to "to closing one's eyes", or to condone or excuse.

> The intensification of Islamophobia was made easier by al Qaeda-type violence, and the radicalisation of some segments of Muslim-origin immigrant communities in several countries reinforced the societal unrest resulting from immigration.

The official discourse celebrating the notion of tolerance is still carried out in contemporary Turkey even though it is evident that tolerance is actually nothing but a myth. For instance, research conducted by Ali Çarkoğlu and Binnaz Toprak reveal that more than half of the Turkish population is intolerant of the potential of having gays and atheists as their neighbours. The same research also uncovered that around 42% of the population would be intolerant of having Greeks and Armenians as their neighbours, and 28% would not want

Kurdish-origin neighbours.[80] The myth of tolerance has been used to conceal the mistreatment of ethno-cultural and religious minorities other than the majority of Sunni-Muslim-Turks in Turkey. The term tolerance has become more viable in the aftermath of the Helsinki Summit of the European Union in 1999. Whether a cultural diversity challenge is tackled in relation to the concept of tolerance or other concepts, such as "recognition"/"acceptance" or assimilation, expulsion and persecution, depends on the historical path of a particular state.

The definition of tolerance is confined to the acceptance of Sunni Muslims and their secular counterparts under the banner of the Sunni-Muslim-Turkish nation. However, it does not embrace all kinds of ethno-cultural and religious minorities. As Karen Barkey, a famous Ottoman historian, stated, toleration in the Ottoman context as well as in other imperial contexts refers to the "absence of persecution of people but not their acceptance into society as full and welcomed members of community".[81] Toleration is actually nothing but a form of *governmentality*,[82] designed to maintain peace and order in multi-ethnic and multi-denominational contexts. The Ottoman imperial experience and the Turkish national experience have so far proved that the Turkish nation tolerates those non-Muslims, non-Sunni-Muslims and non-Turks as long as they did not, and do not, disturb or act against the Sunni-Islam-Turkish order. If ethno-cultural and religious minorities did transgress, their recognition could easily turn into suppression and persecution. Against this background, this work shall claim that tolerance is nothing but a myth in Turkey as in other countries, such as the Netherlands and the Balkans.[83]

The rise, ubiquity, simultaneity and convergence of arguments condemning multiculturalism have been striking across the Western world.

The defining feature of the early Republic was the Turkification policies, which sought to secure the dominance of Turkishness and Sunni Islam as the defining elements in every walk of life, from the language spoken in the public space to citizenship, national education, trade regime, personnel structure in public enterprises, industrial life and even settlement laws.[84] With an imperial legacy, many such new regulations and laws referred to a set of attempts to homogenise the entire nation without any tolerance for difference. It is highly probable that the underestimation of ethno-cultural diversity among the

Muslim population of the Republic was due to the preceding Ottoman *millet* system borrowed by the Republican political elite. The *millet* system did not consider ethnic differences among Muslims. All Muslims, regardless of their other differences, belonged to the one and the same "Muslim nation". Paradoxically, the successful nature of the Turkish revolution/rupture is owing to the continuity of the Ottoman notion of *millet*. Hence, the modern Turkish Republic became indifferent to the ethno-cultural differences within the so-called Muslim *millet* that has dominated the Republic.

Conclusion

To reiterate, this article first delineated the failure of multiculturalist forms of integration resulting from the fact that migration has become securitised and stigmatised in the west over the last decade. Secondly, it claimed that the ideology of multiculturalism has also revitalised the rhetoric of *tolerance* as a way of concealing the social, economic and political sources of ongoing problems in the life of migrant origin individuals, such as deindustrialisation, unemployment, poverty, exclusion and racism.

Migration has recently been framed as a source of fear and instability for western nation-states. Yet not so long ago it was rather a source of contentment and happiness. Several different reasons, including de-industrialisation, changing technology, unemployment and poverty and the neo-liberal political economy, can account for this discontent. Migrants have become a source of fear not only because of these structural problems leading to the supremacy of neo-liberal forms of governmentality, but also because of the ways in which migration has become stigmatised and securitised by the ethno-culturalist and right-wing political elite and public intellectuals. The process of securitising migration in the west occurred in tandem with the rise of such discourses as the "clash of civilisations", "culture wars" and Islamophobia, all of which presented societal heterogeneity in an unfavourable light.

The intensification of Islamophobia was made easier by al Qaeda-type violence, and the radicalisation of some segments of Muslim-origin immigrant communities in several countries reinforced the societal unrest resulting from immigration. The result was the introduction of restrictive migration policies and increased territorial border security *vis-à-vis* the nationals of third countries who originated from outside the European continent. However, keeping in mind the demographic deficit,

emigration in European countries is now becoming a reality of everyday life, and one could conclude that such a migrant-phobic and Islamophobic political climate is not sustainable, and that soon a common sense approach will have to become the mainstream.

The securitisation and stigmatisation of migration and Islam has mainly brought about a backlash against multiculturalism in the west since the mid 1990s. The rise, ubiquity, simultaneity and convergence of arguments condemning multiculturalism have been striking across the Western world, including in EU countries, specifically Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Denmark, France and Italy. The anxieties associated with "parallel lives" and Muslim "self-segregation" have become very visible in these countries. Muslims and migrant communities are blamed for not integrating into the western way of life. These arguments have become so popular in the west that a spectre started to appear in the 21st century: a backlash against multiculturalism. This backlash has immediately triggered the rise of right-wing extremism that promotes the homogeneity of the nation, free of the others who are ethno-culturally and religiously different. The spectre has not only targeted the Muslims, but also the proponents of multiculturalism coming from the prescribed nation. Obviously, the mass murder in Norway on 22 July 2011, which targeted multiculturalists, has given significant messages to the mainstream populist political parties competing for voters, parties which seem to be leaning towards right-wing extremism.

The discourse of security should be rephrased in a way that would free migrants and their descendants from the patronising gaze of receiving societies. In other words, migration issues should be desecuritised. Shaping public opinion in an accurate way primarily depends on the existence of a strong political will, which may convince the public that ethnic/religious/cultural revival among migrants might also be seen as a quest for justice and fairness, but not as a security challenge. In this regard, symptoms and reasons should not be confused. States should not reduce integration in the cultural sphere. Integration means more than that as it has political, economic and civic elements as well. The political integration of migrants should be prioritised in order to let them express their claims regarding their state of poverty, exclusion and self-isolation through legitimate political channels, such as the local and national parliaments and the mainstream media.

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66 Buket Türkmen, "A Transformed Kemalist Islam or a New Islamic Civic Morality? A Study of 'Religious Culture and Morality' Textbooks in the Turkish High School Curricula", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (2009), pp. 381-397. Buket Türkmen successfully reveals the changes made in the curriculum of the courses on religious culture and morality between 1995 and 2007-2008. Referring to the changes made such as the Islamisation of the human rights concept, the religionisation of education, the exposition of marriage as not only a precondition to establish a family but also as a remedy to adultery and the presentation of Atatürk as someone seeing secularism as the basis for living the real Islam, she concludes that the new curriculum is designed to re-Islamise Turkish society in a neo-liberal fashion.

67 MEB (The Ministry of National Education), "İlk Ders 2010/53 Genelge (07/12/2011-82202 Sayılı Makam Onayı ile Yürürlülükten Kaldırılmıştır)", at http://www.egitimmevzuat.com/index.php/201009091422/2010/lk-ders-201053-genelge.html [last visited 26 August 2013].

68 Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey.*

69 Şerif Mardin, "Religion and Secularism in Turkey", in Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (eds.), *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, London, C. Hurst & Company, 1981, p. 192.

70 Ibid., p. 196; Erick Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2003, p. 66.

71 Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

72 Mardin, "Religion and Secularism in Turkey".

73 Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'nin Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri*, Istanbul, Yedigün Matbaası, 1960, p. 34.

74 Robert F. Spencer, "Cultural Process and Intellectual Current: Durkheim and Atatürk", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (August 1958), p. 643.

75 Schmuel N. Eisenstadt, "The Kemalist Revolution in Comparative Perspective", in Kazancıgil and Özbudun (eds.), *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, p. 132.

76 Schmuel N. Eisenstadt, "The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies", in Nilüfer Göle and Ludwig Amman (eds.), *Islam in Public: Turkey, Iran, and Europe*, Vol. 3, Istanbul, Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2006, pp. 447- 449. Eisenstadt also differentiates the *ulema* of the Ottoman Empire from the other Muslim societies, and states that while the Ottoman *ulema* was a highly autonomous community of religious elites, it was partly organised by the state.

77 Mardin, "Religion and Secularism in Turkey", p. 194.

78 Eisenstadt, "The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies", p. 452.

79 Andrew J. Cohen defines what toleration is not: Toleration is not indifference, not moral stoicism, not pluralism, not non-interference, not permissiveness, not neutrality and not tolerance. Toleration is the activity of enduring, while tolerance is the virtue (attitude) itself. See, Cohen, "What Toleration Is", p. 77. Though agreeing with Cohen on the difference between *toleration* and *tolerance*, I use these terms interchangeably for the sake of simplicity.

80 Ali Çarkoğlu ve Binnaz Toprak, *Değişen Türkiye'de Din, Toplum ve Siyaset,* Istanbul, TESEV, 2007.

81 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, p. 110.

82 Foucault, "Governmentality", p. 5-21.

83 Walzer, *On Toleration*; Robert M. Hayden, "Antagonistic Tolerance: Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites in South Asia and the Balkans", *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (April 2002), pp. 205-231; Brown, *Regulating Aversion*.

84 Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey.*