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***SARCASTIC VIEW OF ISLAM IN WESTERN
CHRISTIANITY***

BATI HIRİSTİYANLIĞININ İSLAMA MÜSTEHZİ BAKIŞI

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa YİĞİTOĞLU

*Karabük Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi, İslam Tarihi ve Sanatlar Bölümü, İslam
Tarihi ABD*

Abstract

The topic of this article is the Christian world's view of Islam, its Prophet and Muslims from the rise of Islam to recent years. The aim of my study is analyzing the history of Christianity in general. Although my research truly focuses on analyzing a history of thought, in essence it evaluates either writings, cartoons, poetries, plays, songs or words of religion men, statesmen or any other people who are members of Christian communities and their satiric attitudes.

This work firstly contains ongoing polemique and refutations between Christians and Muslims, and subsequently texts written against Muslims either in form of prose or poetry, cartons drawn by cartoonists, arts portrayed by the artists, statues made by sculptors, movies and plays, computer games designed by the software developers, words of statesmen and clergies, and even attitudes of ordinary individuals and social groups

It's forbidden in Islam to make fun of holly values and any negative against them. This attitude forms the basis of Muslims' position and attitude against the other religions and their members in which they have respectful approach. It's important for the future generations to access the true knowledge about Islam. This will contribute to transfer of the Islamic culture.

Key Words: Islam, Muslim, Christian, Relationship, Sarcastic

Öz

Bu çalışma İslam'ın doğuşu ile birlikte devam eden bir süreci ele almaktadır. Konu itibari ile Hıristiyanlık dünyasının İslam'a, İslam Peygamberine ve Müslümanlara bakış açısını yansıtmaktadır. Bu, aslında Hıristiyan düşünce tarihinin genel anlamda analizi demektir. Gerçi araştırmanın yoğunlaştığı husus tam bir düşünce tarihi olmamakla birlikte esas itibari ile İslam üzerine gerek din adamlarınca, gerek devlet erkânınca, gerekse diğer din müntesiplerince yazılan, çizilen, konuşulan, yapılan her türlü müstehzi tutumlardır.

Araştırmada ilk olarak Müslümanlar ile Hıristiyanlar arasında cereyan eden polemik ve reddiyelere, müteakibinde Müslümanlara karşı bazı nazım ve nesir türünde yazılmış eserlere, karikatüristlerce kaleme alınmış çizimlere, ressamlarca tablolaştırılmış resimlere, heykeltıraşlarca vücuda erdirilmiş heykellere, sanatçılar tarafından sahnelenmiş oyun, piyes, tiyatro ve filmlere, yazılımcılarca programlanan bilgisayar oyunlarına, devlet başkanları ve din adamlarınca sarf edilmiş sözlere hatta ve hatta en pasif düzeyde kalan herhangi bir bireyin veya toplumun davranışlarına değinilmiştir.

Kutsalla alay etme, kutsala karşı menfi herhangi bir tutum İslam dinince yasaklanmıştır. İnsanlara kendi dinini seçme ve tercih ettiği din üzere yaşama hürriyeti tanınmıştır. Bu durum açıkçası Müslümanların başka dine ve onun müntesiplerine karşı duruşunu resmetmektedir. Bizim bu çalışmayı oluşturmamız gelecek nesillere Hıristiyanların İslam'ın ilk elden malumatlarından yoksun bırakılması probleminin çözülmesi ve İslam'ın iyi bir şekilde aktarılmasını sağlamaya yönelik bir girişimdir. Günümüzde Hıristiyanların İslam'ı düzgün bir şekilde öğrenebilmesi veya en azından doğru kaynaklara ön yargısız varabilmesi gayet ümit vericidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam, Müslüman, Hıristiyan, Münasebet, Müstehzi

Introduction

This work titled “Sarcastic View of Islam in Western Christianity” analyzes the History of Christianity up to now. There is a wide spectrum covering the Christian perception of Islam and Muslims from rise of Islam which I try to determine. My aim is to demonstrate how Christian world perceives Islam and Muslim, and highlight the topic by giving examples from some Christian thinkers and statesmen. It’s undoubtedly true that such a study requires going through literature all the concerning Christian thought in all areas but I prefer to deal with the literature that Christian world shows satiric attitude against Islam and Muslims. I firstly included the polemics that Christians wrote about Islam and Muslims. The historical process that this view has passed through can be interesting since it shows the Christian perspective of Islam.

First confrontation of Islam and Christianity was during early rise of Islam, when Prophet Mohammed began reveal Islamic messages. First discussions between Necran Christians and Prophet Mohammad can be seen as the first meeting of Christians with Muslims. The conflict between members of these two religions starts with the conquest of Christian territories by Muslims in the proceeding periods. The underlying reason is that the principles introduced by Islam directed Christians to the opposite way from their holly books that they had already believed in. This led to confusion, astonishment and disturbances in the Christian world. Naturally, Christians had to defend their religion against the new principles introduced by Islam. Since western Christendom did not see Islam as a political and religious threat for itself until eighth century, the conflict between Islam and Christian world was only in the religious disagreement. Whereas, Medieval Europe viewed Islam as an aberrant thought, and Mohammad as a cribbler.¹ According to Eastern Christendom, Islam was formed as a movement against Christianity and a separatist communion within itself.²

As long as Christians got in touch with Muslims and knew more about them, they realized that Muslims had a faith which was different from what they thought. For this reason, they made a great effort to protect Christianity and its members from Islam and Muslims, which they misunderstood. Instead of trying to understand Islam and its principles, they have always preferred to advocate their faith. In modern time, the situation has changed direction towards consensus, clash of civilizations, coexistence and “reconciliation” culture. Moreover in the west, coexistence and reconciliation culture has been adopted as a value by the help of some prominent thinkers like Goethe, Henry Stubbe, Swedenborg, Carlyle. Those who carry this idea see Islam as sister religion, and as we see in Swedenborg and Goethe, many believe that possibility of coexistence of Islam and Christianity will increase the possibility of living together because both of these religions are part of Abrahamic tradition.³

Discussions between Muslim and Christian thinkers began with Jean Damascene (675-750) who was a high ranking statesman in the palace of Umayyad dynasty. Jean Damascene considered Islam as a fake religion and Prophet Mohammad as a liar learning something from

¹ İbrahim Kalın, “Batı’daki İslam Algısının Tarihine Giriş, *Divan İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi*, İstanbul 2003, c.8, sayı:15, s. 2.

² Mustafa Yiğitoğlu, *Türkiye’de II. Vatikan Sonrası Müslüman-Hıristiyan İlişkileri*, Bayem Ajans, İstanbul 2006, s. 17.

³ Kalın, “Batı’daki İslam Algısının Tarihine Giriş, s.2.

ariusian clergymen, who had little knowledge about the New Testament.⁴ He was the first Christian cleric designating Prophet Mohammad as a fake prophet. Another Christian cleric Theodore Abu Kurra, Pastor of Harran Melkit (750-825), characterized Prophet Mohammad in his writings as a cribbler controlled by the elf. A Byzantine author Nicetas de Byzance argues in his book “Rejection of Koran” that Koran is not a revelation by God but a satanic fake far away from reliability. According to de Byzance, Mohammad is a fake prophet, Koran is a bogus book, Islam is a fake religion and Mohammad and other Muslims are Satanist people. Many Christian thinkers like Evode, who lived in the ninth century, a Byzantine monk Georges Hamartolos, who lived in the tenth century, Euthayme Zigabene, who was influenced by Jan Damascene and Nicedas, Theophane le Confesseur and Barthelemy d’Edesse didn’t approach Islam, its Prophet and members of this religion in an objective and scientific way. These people saw Mohammad as a liar, cribbler, sick and epileptic man who appeared with a new false religion, and considered Islam to be an unrealistic religion.⁵

During the 11th and 12th centuries, when crusades took place, Western European authors were not much different from their predecessors. The authors of this period like Robertus Ketenensis and Petrus Venerabilis approached Islam in satiric way by characterizing Koran as a baleful book, prophet as a faithless and irreligious man, and Muslims especially Turks as people who hold satanic powers.⁶

In the 13th and 14th centuries, humiliating attitude about Islam and was at the highest level. Hence, Muslims in Christian countries were obliged to carry a symbol which describes them as separatist under the decision taken by the Pope Innocent the III during the Lateran Council gathered in 1215.⁷ Among the prominent personages Alexandre du Pont, Jacques de Voragine and Chanson de Roland described Prophet Mohammad as an idol like Jupiter or Apollo. They also reflected him as an epileptic sick man, a cardinal who affiliated to the Roman Church, and who was interested in being a pope but couldn’t manage that.⁸

Satiric attitude of Christians about Muslims was not only shown with the words and writings, but also demonstrated through the art. The best example to this is seen on the Mohammad figure fresco called “Mahomato nell’inferno medievale” (Mohammad Medieval Hell) decorating the canopy of San Petronio basilica in Bologna. This fresco shows Prophet Mohammad as a tiger or a giant creature with hair, attacking and eating naked women running around him.⁹ A painting, made in 1350, displayed in a Museum of History in Norway, describes crucifying Jesus. One of the persons on the painting who is crucifying Jesus is shown as Muslim and there also is a crescent which symbolizes Islam.¹⁰ An Italian artist Francesco Traini’s painting hanging in 1340 in St Catherine Church shows that Jesus sitting at the top,

⁴ Daniel J.Sahas, *John of Damascun on Islam: The Heresy of Ishmaelites*, Brill Academic Publishers, Netherlands 1972, s.58-63.

⁵ Daniel J.Sahas, *John of Damascun on Islam: The Heresy of Ishmaelites*, Brill Academic Publishers, Netherlands 1972, s.58-63.

⁶ Norman C. Cohn, *Persuit of Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism in Mediaval and Reformation Europe and its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements*, Mercury Books, London 1962, s.58-74.

⁷ Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, JPS, Philadelphia 1961, s.302.

⁸ Ö.Faruk Harman, "Asrımızda Hıristiyan-Müslüman Münasebetleri: Hıristiyanların İslam'a Bakışı", *İslami İlimler Araştırmalar Vakfı (İsav)*, İstanbul 2005, s. 95-110.

⁹ Özlem Kumrular, “Erken Klasik Dönemden XVIII. Yüzyıl Sonuna Kadar Osmanlılar ve Avrupa-Seyahat, Karşılaşma ve Etkileşim: İslam’ın Kılıcı-Hıristiyanlığın Kalkanı: XVI. Yüzyılda Avrupa’da Türk, Müslüman ve Hz. Muhammed İmgesi”, Seyfi Kenan (ed.), *İslam Araştırmalar Merkezi (İSAM) Yayınları*, İstanbul 2010, s.98.

¹⁰ Martin Blindheim, *The Stave Church Paintings: Mediaeval Art From Norway*, Unesco Publisher, Collins 1965, s.18

Thomas Aquinas below him and famous Muslim thinker Ibn-i-Rusd at the bottom carrying non-Christian necklace.¹¹

Oliver de Paderborn (d. 1227) sees Koran as a book written by devil and Thomas d'Aquin (d. 1274) talks about Islam as a part or communion of Christianity which deviated from it. Italian Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) criticizes Mohammad with a satiric fashion in epic poem's part called Limbo puts him in the very bottom of hell.¹² 14th century witnessed some works which led to spread of more knowledge about Islam. Many writings in this period characterize to investigate Islam and get more knowledge about it but it didn't carry a good intention. Hence, writings in this period also characterized Mohammad as a new Arius, a decal, a cribbler or a human shaped devil. In next century, Martin Luther who is the founder of protestant movement (1483-1546) about Koran and Prophet Mohammad, has significance for our context. According to him Koran was written by someone who enjoyed kidding God and humanity. It's quite interesting that Luther criticized Mohammad by the verses in the Holy Book under the influence of Erasmus, Carione and Melancton. Luther described one of the two horns that Prophet Daniel talked about which the texts he used mentioned as Mohammad¹³ and the other as decal.¹⁴ Such ideas shared by Luther's successors had also a great impact in the Christian world. Later their descendants would advocate these views. Statements of a Catholic Christian Willamont which he made during his visit in Cyprus has substantial significance for us in which he humiliated members of Islam by saying that "These people I see here, as a rule, never eat at the high tables, but they eat by sitting cross lagged on the floor like pigs." So he described Muslims as pigs.¹⁵

Another author Voltaire (1694-1778) talked about Prophet Mohammad by describing him as a charlatan, and described Koran unrealistic satiric book in Dictionary of Philosophy's entry "The Koran".¹⁶ In the 16th century on the pictures drawn by the artist Hans Burgkmair there are four people bending in front of a king and pope, one of them symbolizing Muslims.¹⁷ A figurine made by Mettehuz van Beveren which has been exhibited in Our Lady Church in Flanders Belgium describes Islamic Prophet holding Koran in his hand treated underfoot by two female angels.¹⁸ In the 17th century one of the prominent Christian scientists Pascal perpetuated the same negative attitude about Islam and Prophet Mohammad. We understand his view in his work in which he compares his own religion with Islam. In his work like his predecessors, Pascal also saw Islam as fake religion and describes Mohammad as a person not

¹¹ Louis Finkelstein, "The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion I-II", *Jewish Publication Society-JPS*, Philadelphia 1949, , c.I, s. 645.

¹² Paul A. Cantor, *The Uncanonical Dante: The Divine Comedy And Islamic Philosophy*, JHU Press, Baltimore 1996, s.138-153. Ayrıca bkz. The Uncanonical Dante, (ty), <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/tud.htm> (14.01.2012)

¹³ Daniel, 7/24.

¹⁴ Özlem Kumrular, "İslam'ın Kılıcı-Hıristiyanlığın Kalkanı", ss.124-126.

¹⁵ Claude Deleval Cobham, *Excerpta Cyprus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1908, s. 174

¹⁶ Voltaire, "Alkoran; or more properly, The Koran" *Philosophical Dictionary*, E.R. Dumond, New York 1901.

¹⁷ H. Cutler, *Medieval Roots of Anti-Semitism*, Notre Dame 1986, s. 114-115.

¹⁸ Mohammed "Statue" in Belgian Church, 2006, The Brussels Journal, <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/982> (14.01.2012)

a prophet, but a liar under the influence of decaying moral values.¹⁹ Peter Bayle, one of prominent thinkers of enlightenment (1647-1706) thought that Mohammad should not have been criticized so much, though he carried on accusatory attitude about Prophet. Yet such attitude perpetuated the path that his predecessors followed. According to Bayle, Mohammad was a pervert, an aggressive and a cribbler man. He was using the religion for his own interests.²⁰ Even in the 19th century William Muir an academic at the University of Edinburg characterized Mohammad as a psychopath.²¹

Christians' satiric attitude to Islam, which began at early rise of Islam, has been continuing even in the 21st century, which is the age of tolerance. The evidence of this attitude is ongoing negative behaviors, satiric rhetoric and calumny about Islam, its prophet and members of this religion. For example, a cartoon humiliating Mohammad and was published in a newspaper demonstrates this attitude and perception. A pig in this cartoon is described as Mohammad.²² Various events and publications such as cartoons which are humiliating Prophet Mohammad, and a model of Qaba showing that there is a pink bed in it, and on the bed are some woman underwear was shown in a French exhibition Charlie Hebdo, a Swedish artist Vilk's cartoons kidding Islam and Muslims, drawings describing Mohammad burning in the fire of the hell just like Dante's Divine Comedia were published on Catholic Church's monthly journal *Studi Cattolici* and so many other humiliations²³ are considered as freedom of expression. But an animated movie broadcasted on MTV called *Pope Town* making the fun of Pope²⁴ and SONY's using Manchester Cathedral as a background in a video game led to big anger in the West, all of them are banned and such events are considered as a crime. In order to prevent broadcasting and publications against Christian values, Catholic Church created an organization called *Croyances et Liberte*²⁵ in 1997 that has been very active so far.

Western world has shown its satiric attitude to Muslims with the computer games too. Especially after the voting for banning the Muslim Minarets in Switzerland, a lot of anti Islamic games were designed in one of which player has to stop azan and, hit the minarets and muezzin calling azan in order to win the game. Similarly, in a British game the player lands in the Middle East with parachute and kills all Muslims and in the end the player has to fight with Mohammad and Allah that Muslims believe in.²⁶ In recent years the written and verbal satiric attitudes of Christians has begun to turn into violence. The clearest evidence of the violence is attacks to the mosques in many European countries especially in France. Different parts of pig bodies are left in mosques, Molotovs are thrown, and some extremist groups write humiliating

¹⁹ L. M. Heller, *Anti-Islamic Polemic in Pascal's Pensees with Particular Reference to Grotius' de Veritate Religionis Christianae*, University of Western Ontario, s.248, <http://www.springerlink.com/content/r500017675117u98/> (16.02.2012)

²⁰ Peter, Bayle, "The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter Bayle", *Garland Publishing*, New York 1984, c.IV, s. 29-30.

²¹ Kalm, "Bati'daki İslam Algısının Tarihine Giriş", s. 10. Ayrıntılı bilgi için bkz. Jabal Muhammad Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West: A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*, The Islamic Foundation, Leicester 1996.

²² NORWAY: Muslims threaten another 9/11 over 'Muhammad the Pig' cartoon (2010) *Endtimestoday*, <http://www.endtimestoday.com/2010/02/15/norway-muslims-threaten-another-911-over-muhammad-the-pig-cartoon/> (14.01.2012)

²³ Manuel Sánchez Hurtado, *Opus Dei, On the "Studi Cattolici" cartoon*, 2006, <http://www.opusdei.us/art.php?p=15087> (14.01.2012)

²⁴ BBC pulls controversial Popetown, (2004), *BBC News*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3684464.stm> (14.01.2012)

²⁵ *Zaman*, 08 Şubat 2006.

²⁶ *Zaman*, 14 Eylül 2008.

words on mosque walls.²⁷ In Denmark, Islam is dealt with in chapters of school books under the chapter of radicalism and Muslims are described as terrorists. Moreover, in America and some European countries, Muslims are not admitted to the airport terminals prevented to get on planes. If any Muslim is detected on a plane he or she might be sent back with badly treatments.

September Eleven attack in the United States constitutes the height of negative attitude against Muslim. September Eleven has inflamed the historical satiric attitudes once again. By targeting some Muslims, Islamic world has been blamed responsible with such attacks and all Muslims are described as terrorist. Besides this, Koran is seen as the source of fundamentalism.²⁸ As a result of September 11, Muslims are seen as pro-violence and Islam is shown as faith that allows and supports violence.²⁹ The idea of “anti Islamism” which always exists minds either before or after September eleven manifests itself as the idea that all Muslims should be killed, and Islam should be eradicated. Even this idea has been brought to the Clash of Civilizations which would give rise of the conflict between civilizations.³⁰

The wars which took place between 1096 and 1291 aiming at taking back the territories which was concurred by Muslims and securing access holy places near and in Jerusalem, are called “crusades.” Crusades, seen as movement against “jihad” in Islam by the western historians which had devastating effect on the Muslim world, is implicitly continuing. British Professors Rosemary Reuther and Richard Roberts address the main point of this in the anti Islamism with changing colors and forms, and western Christianity’s definition of its own identity as other.³¹

Obviously, in the age of dialog, although many mention “alliance of civilizations, The War of Iraq ,leaving a big catastrophe behind,was committed with crusade mentality. The speeches of former US President George Bush and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld for invasion of Iraq are particularly important. George Bush said that “God told me to end the tyranny in Iraq” and Donald Rumsfeld described the operation as a religious crusade during a daily briefing about the proceeding of the invasion. But as Rumsfeld’s statement causes anger of Muslims that a Christian superpower wants to destroy a Muslim nation, Mr. Rumsfeld had to change his statement by saying they would combat the terrorism.³² Robert Fisk notes in an article that number of troops that western powers hold in the Muslim territories a few times higher than the number of troops participated historical crusades.³³

Candidate for Presidency in 2008 US elections Senator John McCain’s spiritual guide pastor of Ohio mega church Rod Parsley called Christians to wage a war against “false religion

²⁷ Attack on Mosques. (2011), <http://europenews.dk/en/node/4947> (17.01.2012)

²⁸ Paul Johnson, “‘Relentlessly and Thoroughly’: The Only Way to Respond”, (NRO, 011015) http://kwing.christiansonnet.org/news-analysis/x_Islam.htm#_Toc231461738 (18.02.2012)

²⁹ The Guardian, 11 Ekim 2002.

³⁰ Samuel P Huntington, “Coming Clash of Civilizations?”, 1993, http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/ Acrobat/Huntington_Clash.pdf (18.02.2012)

³¹ Bülent Şenay, “Yahudi-Hıristiyan İlişkileri Tarihi ve Anti-Semitizm-Oryantalizm İlişkisi”, *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fak. Dergisi*, Bursa 2002, c. 11, sayı: 2, s. 117-146.

³² Paul Thompson, Mail Online News, (20.05.2009), <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1184546/Donald-Rumsfelds-holy-war-How-President-Bushs-Iraq-briefings-came-quotes-Bible.html> (13.01.2012)

³³ Zaman Gazetesi, 20 Mart 2008.

of Islam” with aim of destroying it.³⁴ Similarly, an Italian minister Roberto Calderoli called in 2006 Pope Benedict XVI to lead crusade against Muslims.³⁵

Killing of 800 thousand Bosnian Muslim in 1995 by Serbians militants in the city of Srebrenica can be seen another example of crusade mentality. United Nations gave the responsibility to the Dutch troops and the Dutch soldiers did not prevent Serbian massacre in front of the eyes of whole world.³⁶ Historical anti Islamism has manifested itself even in a recent event, namely in Libyan operation. President of France Nicola Sarkozy and minister of interior Claude Guéant described Libya operation as crusade and even Sarkozy declared himself as the leader of crusaders.³⁷

Obviously, crusade mentality has been continuing 1096 without any change. It’s a fact that although the names of individuals, leaders, heads of states, commanders and states and titles have changed in time, everyone knows that main goal has never changed and has always been tired to be kept alive. Actors and victims have changed but arena that they play has been the same. Recent news headlines like bad things that happens after American invasion of Iraq, scandal in Abu Gurayb prisons, American soldiers urinating on dead bodies of Afghans that they killed³⁸ many others are examples of satiric attitudes of western world against Muslims.

Conversion of may Christians to Islam following the conquest of Christian territories by Muslims, granting religious freedom to everybody whether they be Muslim or non-Muslim, on the concurred lands, spread of Islam towards west-especially the trauma caused by falling of Istanbul in to hands of Ottomans and conquest during reign of Suleiman the Magnificent led to anger of many Christians towards Muslims (especially Turks).³⁹ So they wrote negative things about Islam and Muslims to stop Muslim proceed. In that period, the “Western Killer Santiago Figure” shows that an Ottoman Turk taking his last breath under the feet of Santiago’s horse,⁴⁰ describing Muslims as disloyal and cruel animals during Cortes meeting in Walladolid on February 11th in 1527 following battle of Mohacs, poems after battle of Lepanto talking are some examples that Christians describe Turks as killers, wild dogs or deviant of religion.⁴¹

In fact, it is possible to find the fundamentals of satiric view of Islam in the past. R. W. Southern sees the reason for this satiric view as deprivation of Christians from access to correct information about Islam directly and argues that this is one of the basic problems of Christianity.⁴² As Southern emphasizes, lack of knowledge about Islam and Muslims in the Christian world has caused occurrence of a negative and false understanding of a historic approach to Islam and many people have accused incorrectly. However Hans Küng talks about he necessity of investigating the theological fundamentals of religions.⁴³ Unfortunately, this attitude which has originated from the Middle age, puts Islam in a position of being inevitable

³⁴ Rod Parsley, *Silent No More: Bringing Moral Clarity to America While Freedom Still Rings*, Charisma House, America 2005, s. 89-119.

³⁵ Milliyet, 08 Şubat 2006.

³⁶ Zaman, 10 Kasım 2006.

³⁷ Hürriyet, 23 Mart 2011.

³⁸ Habertürk, 12 Ocak 2012.

³⁹ Türkler’in İslam’ın hamisi ve en güçlü temsilcisi haline gelmesiyle her iki kavram (Müslüman-Türk) Batı’da birbirine eş değer anlamda kullanılmıştır.

⁴⁰ Özlem Kumrular, “İslam’ın Kılıcı-Hıristiyanlığın Kalkanı”, s.98.

⁴¹ Özlem Kumrular, “İslam’ın Kılıcı-Hıristiyanlığın Kalkanı”, ss.102-116.

⁴² R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, Harward University Press, Cambridge 1962, s.3.

⁴³ Hans Küng, *Global Responsibility; In Search of a New World Ethic*, London SCM Press, 1991, s. 105.

enemy for Christendom. Hence there were groups of people in that period who are obliged accept the knowledge, idea and religious practices that a tyranny of church which was formed around scholastic thought. When we take this situation in to consideration, it's easy to understand the falsifying approach of history.

Conclusion

Almost all the literature about Islam in the west is based on the idea that Mohammad is not really a prophet so he is a liar and Islam is fake religion. As mentioned above, the literature reflects Prophet as a man who was mentally retarded, sick, liar, someone who had political interested or a cardinal interested in being a pope but couldn't manage that, or pervert; Islam separatist, deviant part of Christianity; and Muslims as a pervert, nomadic, fanatic community. The reason for this is to prevent Christians to convert to Islam by humiliating Islam and its Prophet, comparing both of the religions so proving that their religion is better than Islam. According to Huntington, "Islam spreads in Europe by conversion and reproduction whereas, West is in decline. The evidence of this is increasing attendance in mosques but decrease attendance in churches".⁴⁴ German newspaper Berliner Zeitung published an analysis that Germany may become an Islam country in 50 years due to increasing conversion of Christian citizens in to Islam.⁴⁵ Both of these statements makes prevention of Christians from access knowledge about Islam.

So far, I mentioned negative attitudes of Christians against Muslims, Prophet Mohammad, Koran and Muslims. However it will be interesting to include the declaration of Catholic Church as a result of second Vatican Council 1964-1965 which recognizes Muslim fellow that "The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all- powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of Judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom."⁴⁶

It's forbidden in Islam to make fun of holly values and any negative against them.⁴⁷ This attitude forms the basis of Muslims' position and attitude against the other religions and their members in which they have respectful approach. In spite of Catholic Church declaration

⁴⁴ Samuel P Huntington, "Coming Clash of Civilizations?", 1993,

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Huntington_Clash.pdf (18.02.2012)

⁴⁵ Tuba Er, Kemal Ataman, "İslamofobi ve Avrupa'da Birlikte Yaşama Sanatı Üzerine", *U.Ü.İ.Fak. Dergisi*, Bursa 2002, c.17, Sayı: 2, ss.747-770.

⁴⁶ Nostra Aetate 3, Ekim 28, 1965. Ayrıca ayrıntılı bilgi için bkz. Mustafa Yiğitoğlu, *Türkiye'de II. Vatikan Sonrası Müslüman-Hıristiyan İlişkileri*, s.52-70.

⁴⁷ The Holy Qur'an, En'am, 108.

positive approach and respectful attitude of Muslims against Jesus and his Mother Virgin Mary, some statesmen, Christian thinkers or high ranking clergymen still show negative behavior and attitude like mentioned above. It's important for the future generations as R. W. Southern noted "to access the true knowledge about Islam". This will contribute to transfer of the Islamic culture.

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