

The Importance Of Identity Building In Avoiding The Clash of Civilisations In The Age Of Globalisation (With Some Reflections On Turkey - EU Relations)

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Introduction

The end of the Cold War, which had been the symbol of division in Europe for almost half a century, is commonly associated with the fall of the Berlin Wall on 3 October 1989. The fall of the Berlin Wall also meant the fall of the ideological walls dividing Europe for so many years. Within a short span of time in its aftermath, one-party Communist states disappeared throughout Central and Eastern Europe, new independent states were established in the break-up republics of the former Soviet Union that then ceased to exist, and the Warsaw Pact was dissolved.

The Cold War was a relationship between two opposing military blocs, based on ideological confrontation, working on a balance of mutual deterrence in the two polar system. A clash - at least potentially - between these blocs was evident throughout the Cold War era. In fact, the two ideological blocs, the West and the East, had long identified themselves against each other. For the West, the 'other' was the East representing 'anti-democratic, tyrannical Communist expansionism', whereas for the latter, the West was the 'other' representing 'capitalist imperialism'.

Against this background, the end of the Cold War led indeed to a moment of uncertainty when the East became extinct in a very short span of time. This seemed to have created a vacuum in international relations not only for states and politics, but also for academics and theoretical discussions. It was the years where the end of the Cold War would mean the end of everything regarding the past. This hysteria even led to discussions on the end of history.¹

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¹See F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, USA, Free Press, 1992. Fukuyama's thesis is that liberal democracy has finally overcome all other ideologies, literally putting an end to history seen as a series of confrontations between ideologies. This does not mean, however, that Fukuyama welcomes without qualification the West's victory in the Cold War. He is not so optimistic about the world that will come after the 'end of history,' as indicated by his use in the title of the expression 'the Last Man'. Fukuyama's proposition is that liberal democracy, which first developed in the cradle of Western civilisation, is a universally acceptable concept, and that the world is now moving in a fundamental way toward embracing it.

Under such circumstances came the famous article of Samuel P. Huntington 'The Clash of Civilisations?' appeared in 1993 in the renowned periodical *Foreign Affairs*.² Although the title ended with a question mark, the main presupposition of Huntington was of a clash that would occur this time not among ideological blocs but among 'civilisations'. The main thrust of that argument, which was later elaborated by him in the book on the same subject published in 1996,³ was that clashes would continue to be witnessed in world affairs, but this time among 'civilisations'. The inter-civilisational clash would be more likely between 'Western' and 'Islamic' ones. Since then, this has created an arduous and never-ending debate both in political and in academic circles.

This discussion has later particularly turned out to be an issue of clashes between the 'Christian' world represented by, and attributed to, western countries and the 'Muslim' world mainly attributed to all other countries whose populations were predominantly of the Islamic faith, mostly associated with 'rouge states'. Naturally, in this process, the mindset of populations in the countries of both worlds, that had been shaped throughout history, became determinant. For, in the minds of Muslims, socio-cultural traces of Christian crusades have always been alive, whereas similar traces of first Arab and then Ottoman dominance in the European continent have also been always kept alive. These elements have always been influential in the formation of their identities in both camps of the world that were constructed on the basis of socio-cultural historical background. Identities are particularly important because they function as the lenses through which peoples see and perceive the outside (material) world. In other words, as argued by constructivism,⁴ a theoretical approach of the critical school, peoples, on the basis of their identities, construct their understanding of the outside world.

²See Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilisations?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, No.3, Summer 1993, pp.22-49.

³See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon Schuster, 1996.

⁴Constructivism basically claims that the world is a product of social construct in the sense that there is material world out there but actors see and perceive this world differently due to their identities that are constructed through their socio-cultural norms, values, experiences etc. The term 'constructivism' was initially introduced by Onuf. In simple terms, it means that 'people and societies construct, or constitute, each other'. It has two core assumptions. First, the fundamental structures of international politics are social rather than strictly material. Second, these structures shape actor's identities and interests, not just their behaviour. Constructivism takes the world to be emergent and constituted both by knowledge and material factors. Far from denying a reality to the material world, constructivists claim that how the material world shapes, changes and affects human interaction, and is affected by it, depends on prior and changing epistemic and normative interpretations of the material world. Based on this, it is argued that constructivism uniquely brings an understanding of world politics to theories. See N. Onuf, *World of Our Making : Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), A.Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics', *International Security*, 1995, Vol.20(1), E. Adler and M. Barnett (ed), *Security Communities*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), T.Hopf, 'The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory', *International Security*, Vol.23(1), Summer 1998, p.172 and as well as E.Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', in *Handbook of International Relations* ed. by W. Carlsnaes (et al), (London: SAGE Pub., 2002), pp.95-119.

Beside these prevailing mindsets of the peoples in both camps, the local wars that erupted immediately after the demise of the Cold War in the Balkans and the Caucasus gave strong indications to the argument that they were products of not only ethnic and national conflicts but also of religious ones. In other words, these wars also had a religious dimension beside their ethno-nationalistic dimensions. In fact, religion has always been an indispensable part in the formation of these ethnicities that are indeed collective identities composed of common ties, i.e. primordial ties⁵, in terms of religion, language, race etc. among certain groups of people called 'ethnie'. In this respect, the war in Bosnia between three ethnic groups of three different religious faiths, i.e. Catholic Croats, Orthodox Serbs and Muslim Bosnians, and the war over Nagorno Karabagh between the Christian Armenians and the Muslim Azeris can be seen as a clear manifestation of this phenomenon.

Despite these indications, in a clear political stance against the notion of clashes of civilisations, governments have joined each other in rejecting such clashes, at least in their official rhetoric. Even, the year 2001 was declared by the United Nations (UN) 'the Year of Dialogue and Tolerance among Civilisations'⁶. Yet, quite ironically, 2001 became the year that the September 11 terror attacks hit the USA. The fact that those responsible for these attacks directed against this leading country of 'Western civilisation' were discovered to be the al-Qaida network, led by an Islamic fundamentalist, Osama bin Laden and its sanctuary, the Taliban regime, brought to the fore again discussions on the 'clash of civilisations'.

Osama bin Laden in an interview televised worldwide claimed that this was a war between Islam and the West. This led to further degrading of Islam as an enemy in the eyes of the West. On the other hand, Muslims were not helping their case. There was jubilation in some parts of the Muslim world where people even distributed sweets in celebration of the terrorist attacks and chanted slogans against the USA⁷. Yet, after this period of emotional hysteria, during which the world witnessed a sort of clash of civilisations at least in words, between the Muslim and the Christian worlds, common sense has prevailed. Islamic countries reacting to the argument of Osama bin Laden that the attacks were made in the name of Islam, earnestly denied any complicity in that horrible terrorist act, and the Christian countries refrained from identifying that action with Islam in general.

In this regard, Turkey, too, acted in a responsible manner in rejecting such

⁵ See A.D.Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, p.143.

⁶ See United Nations web site. (www.un.org)

⁷ See A. Ahmed, 'Ibn Khaldun's Understanding of Civilisations and the Dilemmas of Islam and the West Today', *Middle East Journal*, Vol.56, No.1, Winter 2002, p.23.

prayers of civilisational clashes between the 'Western' and 'Muslim' worlds. Representing a country that is an indispensable part of this Western world with its population of predominantly Islamic faith, Turkey took the initiative to organise the OIC-EU Joint Forum 'Civilisation and Harmony: the Political Dimension' in February 2002 in Istanbul, between the countries of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the European Union (EU) at the level of Foreign Ministers⁸. At the which provided an important opportunity to express their rejection of the argument on the 'clash of civilisations' in the post-September 11 era, the Ministers all underlined that Islam could not be associated with terrorism, and the EU Ministers additionally expressed the view that the West did not oppose Islam. At the end, all the Ministers called for dialogue among civilisations.

Having mentioned Turkey, one should also note that Huntington's arguments not only about the clashes of civilisations but also on the place of Turkey among these civilisations have been heavily discussed in Turkey. Huntington asserted that Turkey was considered to fit none of the 'civilisations', and that in a sense it lacked civilisational qualities and suffered identity problems. He claimed that 'historically Turkey has been the most profoundly torn country'⁹. This argumentation has been strongly criticised by both academic and political circles in Turkey. Yet, what Huntington said was nothing new, given the mindset of the western people, even including scholars and academics, towards Turks and Turkey. He in fact seemed to follow the lines of conceptualisation developed earlier by other noted European historians of the study of civilisations, such as Spengler and Toynbee. The former regarded Turks as one of the 'non-cultured' peoples¹⁰. The latter did not even mention the word Turks in his list of civilisations but only referred to the Ottomans as one of 'the arrested civilisations'¹¹. So, it was obvious that Huntington's understanding of Turkey was a product of a mindset filled with the prejudices prevalent in Europe that have been developed throughout history.

Despite all the rejections and criticism directed at his views, one can still see, particularly in light of recent experiences in the international arena, that Huntington's arguments on the 'clash of civilisations' continue to occupy the minds of people¹². Particularly after the US-led military campaign to topple the Saddam

⁸ See, for details, the special section on this Forum at the official web site of the Turkish MFA (www.mfa.gov.tr).

⁹ Huntington states in his article that 'other countries have a fair degree of cultural homogeneity but are divided over whether their society belongs to one civilisation or another. These are torn countries. Their leaders typically wish to pursue a bandwagon strategy and to make their countries members of the West, but the history, culture and traditions of their countries are non-Western. The most obvious and prototypical torn country is Turkey.' Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 2, p. 30.

¹⁰ See the chapter 'Oswald Spengler and the life of Civilisations' in Christopher Dawson, *The Dynamics of the World History*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1957, p.384.

¹¹ A. N. Yurdusev, *The concept of Civilisation and the Study of International Relations: With Special Reference to the Work of Arnold J. Toynbee*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Leicester, 1995, chapter.7, p.7.

¹² His first article 'The Clash of Civilisations?' still ranks first among the most popular on-line re-prints on the periodical 'Foreign Affairs'. See the web site of this periodical at htm: www.foreignaffairs.org.

regime in Iraq, the consequent occupation of the country seems to have laid a very fertile ground for the proponents of such clashes between the 'Christian West' and the 'Muslim East'. Even if the declared cause of this military campaign had nothing to do with a clash of these civilisations, its consequences have given a strong impression of such a clash or, at least, they have been manipulated by extremist circles to support their case for such a clash, i.e. 'Christians killing Muslims and in revenge Muslims doing vice versa'.

Similarly, it appears that the process of Turkish membership in the European Union cannot escape the effects of such arguments on the clash of civilisations. Mainly Christian Democrat circles in the EU countries continue to oppose the eligibility of Turkey for EU membership, questioning its European identity on the grounds that 'Turkey is a Muslim country'¹³. Naturally, this has led Turkish politicians to react to such rhetoric with counter-arguments to the effect that the EU should accept Turkey if it is not a 'Christian club' or if it really wants to deny the clash of civilisations.

In view of the foregoing, it is still evident that the argument of clashes among civilisations has always been denied and rejected by politicians and governments. Yet, the academic discussion on this argument is not that clear-cut. Here, this constitutes the main theme of the present study. It attempts, by no means, to be exhaustive as regards the analysis of the related theories as well as of the academic literature, but it rather aims to be thought provoking and to provide food for thought.

The Concept of Civilisation(s)

The concept of 'civilisation' is not easy to be defined clearly. This is not solely due to etymological and semantic ambiguities in defining the concept. Even the root word of 'civilisation', which comes from Latin does not relate to one single but two concepts, *civis* (citizen) or *civitas* (city)¹⁴. Yet, the concept also differs in meaning due to the duality of its use. In other words, civilisation has different meanings depending on its singular and plural uses. The term civilisation is also mixed with the term culture. In fact, it is understood that in practice the two

¹³ Recent history abounds with several statements made either officially or informally by such circles. Even, the former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing while wearing the hat of the Chairman of EU Convention, claimed in November 2002 that Turkey was not European and the accession of Turkey would mean the end of Europe that was the house of Christians. See the French daily *Le Monde* on 9 November 2002. Even if he later denied this statement, it is still evident that he continued to defend his views even in 2004 after the completion of the EU Convention stating that 'Turkey is not a European country' in an interview given to the Greek daily *Kathimerini*. See the Turkish daily *Aksam* on 2 August 2004. See Yurdusev, *ibid.*, in note 11, chapter 4.

¹⁴ See Yurdusev, *ibid.*, in note 11, chapter 4.

words have had a close association, and are sometimes referred to as the same thing¹⁵.

Conforming to the general argument, that the meaning of a concept lies in its usage, it is accepted that the concept of civilisation was first used in its singular form. The literary evidence of this word dates back to 1752¹⁶. In the singular use of civilisation, the concept seems to generally refer to a level of development of mankind superior to other levels where human beings experience a lower quality of life in both the material and intellectual sense. In other words, civilisation consists of the idea of progress, of development, elevation to superiority. In this form of use, civilisation is endowed with a positive connotation.

It is seen from relevant studies that the concept of civilisation moved to its plural use in the early 19th century¹⁷. In its plural use, a civilisation seems to refer to a mode of life among a certain group of people. Yet, again similar to its singular use, this mode of life, i.e. civilisation, is regarded as superior to other forms of life such as savagery, barbarism etc.

Considering civilisation in terms of quality as a better one than others is the common feature seen in both forms of usage. Similarly, again in both uses, civilisation seems to be the state of being related to, of pertaining to, of belonging to a collectivity of people in an organised form¹⁸. It is a collectivity of multiple cultures which are constitutive of civilisation¹⁹. Here, the concept is of a collective (social) identification²⁰.

As history shows, the dual use of the concept of civilisation has always been prevalent - throughout the ages. Plurality of civilisations is a fact of life. As we talk of 'Western civilisation' or 'Islamic civilisation' we refer to a distinct form of lives, which are distinguished from each other due by their differences. Thus, the plural use of civilisations inherently seems to recognise that civilisations are different from one another. The plurality of civilisations, as a form of social identification, is related to the question how civilisations are formed distinctive of one another. This relates to the issue of the identification process.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.82-83.

¹⁶ See Ibid , chapter 4, and also F. Braudel, on History, trans.by Sarrah Matthews, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ ibid, p.78.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.86.

²⁰ Ibid., p.104.

Identification is accepted as a social concept.²¹ The process of identity formation develops within a social unit. 'Any identification requires a distinction, just as any distinction necessitates some identification'²². This brings us to the dichotomy of the self/other.²³ The self is identified in relation to its position vis-à-vis the other . In other words, all identities exist only with their otherness. Without the other, the self actually cannot know either itself or the world because meaning is created in discourse where consciousness meets.²⁴

Identification is of an exclusionary nature for the non-identified. In other words, in the identification of a group of people as a civilisation, this unit is externalised or disassociated from the values, myths, symbols, attitudes and mores of those (non-identified) with whom the unit does not identify.²⁵

It is also argued that the existence or the perception of threats from the other inevitably strengthens the identity of the self.²⁶ Yet, the formation of the self is inextricably intertwined with the formation of its others and a failure to regard the others in their own right must necessarily have repercussions for the formation of the self.²⁷

As can be seen above, civilisations are forms of collective identity that exclude each other on the basis of their distinctiveness.

It is also argued that the plurality of civilisations as a fact of life does not deny the existence of a general concept of civilisation in the singular form.²⁸ Even Toynbee, known as the most persistent and ardent advocate of the plurality of civilisations, accepts the existence of civilisation - with a capital C .²⁹ The concept of Civilisation in this singular use refers to an ideal stage to be reached by societies (civilisations) as the ultimate goal. Here, one can see that the singular use of the concept of civilisation is of an abstract entity, an ideal.

Theorists assert that the identity gaining process is a multi-directional, dynamic and enduring formation.³⁰ This leads us to the plurality of identity. In other

²¹ A. N. Yurdusev, 'Avrupa Kimliğinin Oluşumu ve Türk Kimliği', in Atilla Eralp (ed) Türkiye ve Avrupa, Ankara, İmge Kitabevi, 1997, p.18.

²² Yurdusev, op.cit., in note 11, p.105.

²³ Yurdusev, op.cit., in note 21, p.20.

²⁴ I.B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other*, UK, Manchester University Press, 1999, P.13.

²⁵ Yurdusev, op.cit., in note 11, p.107.

²⁶ Yurdusev, , op.cit., in note 21, p.21.

²⁷ Neuman, p.35.

²⁸ Yurdusev, op.cit., in note 11, p.101.

²⁹ Yurdusev, op.cit., in note 11, chapter 7, p.9.

³⁰ Neuman, op.cit., p.22.

words, a person living in a state, can possess different identities.

In this context, following the discussion on identity building, one can argue that civilisation in its singular form can also be regarded as an upper-form collective identity that can be shared by civilisations, which have their own collective identities. This leads to the concept of universal civilisation.

Having briefly dwelled upon the concept of civilisation(s) and the role of identity in this respect, one can now focus on the views of Huntington on civilisations.

Views of Huntington on Civilisation

Samuel P. Huntington, a noted thinker with a long standing academic background, came to the fore of attention in the international arena not only among scholars but also governments in Summer 1993, when his article ‘The Clash of Civilisations?’ appeared in *Foreign Affairs*. In this article which questioned the direction international relations might follow in the post-Cold War era, he stated his famous arguments as follows:

‘The fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilisations. The clash of civilisations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future. Conflict between civilisations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world³¹.

This argument came at a time when the world was jubilant over the demise of the long term ideological confrontation between the East and the West, which subjugated the world nations under the yoke of fears of nuclear war. Thus, this argument, together with generalisations he made in the article about states and nations provoked severe criticism on various grounds. This criticism was so relentless that he was compelled to formulate a response to it. In his response, published again in the same periodical in fall 1993, he tried to justify his arguments on the basis of a need to develop a new paradigm to understand the post-Cold War. He argued that ‘the Cold War paradigm could not account for everything that went on

³¹Huntington, op.cit., in note 2, p.22.

in world politics³². So, the 'Clash of Civilisations' with a question mark (?) was an effort to lay out elements of a post-Cold War paradigm.³³

He went on to defend his arguments as a paradigm by stating that as with any paradigm, there was much that the civilisation paradigm did not account for³⁴. Moreover, as a reply to criticisms against his generalisations, he argued that exceptions (anomalous events as defined by him) did not falsify a paradigm. Such exceptional events can be observed in world affairs and as long as they do not change the pattern of the paradigm, they are accepted only as anomalies.³⁵ 'A paradigm is disproved only by the creation of an alternative paradigm'³⁶ he said, by backing his argument on the clash of civilisations as he claimed - criticisms did not seem to form such an alternative.³⁷ Yet, perhaps due to the magnitude of reaction that arose in the world against the idea of inter-civilisational clashes, he needed to defend himself, by stating that the idea of such clashes was put not as an assertion but as a question³⁸. Even, in an attempt to defuse any misunderstanding as if he was calling for clashes of civilisations, he seemed to feel the need to underline that in a world of different civilisations, each would have to learn to coexist with the others, instead of learning how to fight each other.³⁹

His views on that subject matter were expressed also in his book 'The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order' published in 1996. Here again, he stated in the preface that 'Clashes of civilisations are the greatest threat to world peace, and an international order based on civilisations is the surest safeguard against world war'⁴⁰. Yet, in his book too he seemed to defend the main thrust of his argument, i.e. the clash of civilisations, by discussing all his arguments in greater detail, to which he brought some minor modifications as he felt necessary, without changing the substance of this argument.

As argued by him, the paradigm of a clash of civilisations is a response to the fact that the study of international relations needs a new paradigm to explain and predict conflict in the post-Cold War world.⁴¹ In order to better understand his argument of inter-civilisational clashes, one needs first to examine his views on the

³² S. P. Huntington, 'If Not Civilisations, What?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.72, No.5, Fall 1993, p.186.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.187.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.186.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.187.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.191.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.194.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ See Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 3, preface.

⁴¹ Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 32, pp.186-187.

concept of civilisation. According to Huntington, 'a civilisation is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have, short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people'.⁴² Here, one can find the traces of the general concept of civilisation, both in singular and in plural use, that is discussed in the preceding chapter. He considers civilisation as the highest form in the progress of mankind and does not deny the existence of plural civilisations at the same time.

Another interesting argument that seems to be noteworthy in the context of his understanding of the concept of civilisation(s) is related to the concept of a 'universal civilisation' to embrace all other civilisations as an upper identity. He believes that such a universal civilisation can only be created by a universal power⁴³. In this sense, he implies that creating an upper identity to embrace all civilisations, which are different from each other and thus are bound to clash at least potentially, can only be made by the use of force, not by natural progress. In this regard, he also warns that Western civilisation should not seek to dominate others in an attempt to assume the role of a universal civilisation⁴⁴.

According to Huntington, there exist at present six major civilisation groups⁴⁵: Western civilisation built upon Catholicism and Protestantism (Western Europe and North America); the civilisation built upon the Orthodox Church (Russia and Eastern Europe); the Islamic civilisation; the Hindu civilisation; the Sinic (Chinese) civilisation; and the Japanese civilisation. Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa exist as 'candidates for civilisation,' with the implication that they have the potential to become distinct civilisations of their own. As argued, these groupings are formulated by him on the basis of a division among themselves by their beliefs and values on fundamental matters such as human rights, democracy, liberalism, free markets etc⁴⁶. Here, it is evident that civilisations are seen as collective identity forms that are defined on the basis of differences from each other.

The classification employed by Huntington has been criticised. The main argument in his definition of civilisations is that the most important defining feature of a civilisation is the unifying culture that it represents. Culture is, however, an

⁴² Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 2, p.23.

⁴³ Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 32, p. 194. See also, for details, Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 3, chapter 3.

⁴⁴ D. Skidmore, 'Huntington's Clash Revisited', *Journal of World Systems Research*, Vol.4, No.2, Fall 1998, p.181.

⁴⁵ See Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 3, chapter 2.

⁴⁶ A. Macmillan, 'Culture on Conflict in the Post-Cold War World', in M.J. Davis (ed), *Security Issues in the Post-Cold War World*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 1996, p.59.

indistinct and multifaceted concept. What are the core elements of a culture?

Huntington relies most heavily upon religion, although not in a consistent fashion. Language, ethnicity and a common history are invoked in some cases but not in others. In general, Huntington offers no standard criteria for identifying civilisations or distinguishing them from one another.⁴⁷ Although this criticism is justified for his classification of civilisations, the study of civilisations shows that Huntington is not alone in this difficulty. Here, the problem is linked to the delimitation of civilisations. As rightly stated, 'the problem of the delimitation of civilisations is one which the work of historians projects but hardly attempts to solve.'⁴⁸ Although some criteria have been developed for objective classifications, such as language, religion, common descent, territory and geography, history and even style⁴⁹, the history of civilisations seems to attest to the fact that a mixture of these criteria has been used by historians. In this sense, Huntington's classification, which consists of no clear criteria, seems to follow that of other thinkers of civilisations such as Toynbee⁵⁰.

Despite this academic problem in the definition of civilisation, the most controversial part of his ideas of civilisations is the clash among them as stated earlier. Here, he gives particular emphasis on differences among civilisations as the main cause of clashes, be it potential or actual. He argues that over centuries differences among civilisations have generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts⁵¹. He even asserts that 'the interactions among peoples of different civilisations enhance the civilisation-consciousness of people that, in turn, invigorates differences and animosities, stretching or thought to stretch back deep into history'⁵². Here one can clearly see that Huntington considers interactions among civilisations as a negative factor rather than a positive one in preventing clashes.

This argument seems particularly to have been exposed to heavy criticism. He is criticised for ignoring other international theories, which stress the potential for cooperation between peoples⁵³. In this regard, one can cite some of these approaches arguing the positive role of interactions among civilisations, as follows: the international society approach speaks of a potential among states to live and interact together peacefully, regardless of differences in their internal structure⁵⁴.

⁴⁷ Skidmore, *op.cit.*, p.186.

⁴⁸ A.L. Krober, 'The Delimitation of Civilisations', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol.14, No.2, 1953, p.264.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* and also see, for details on criteria, Yurdusev, *op.cit.*, in note 11, pp.119-126.

⁵⁰ In fact, Huntington himself accepts that his methodology follows what is of Toynbee. See Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 2. Toynbee counts 21 major civilisations, what is the basis of such delimitation seems unclear. See Yurdusev, *op.cit.*, in note 11, chapter 7. ⁵¹ Huntington, *op.cit.*, in note 2, p.28.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Macmillan, *op.cit.*, p.63.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Similarly, theories of 'global society or 'world community' argue further that forces of globalisation foster a global consciousness and the development of a world community. According to this approach, particular loyalties need not disappear, but may continue to coexist alongside global ones. Local differences within global limits are possible⁵⁵.

Here, perhaps, as a response to these non-confrontational views of inter-civilisational relations, he argues that although the concept of clash is inherent in such relations due to differences among civilisations, it is not inevitable that they would lead to actual clashes⁵⁶. Here, one can understand that clashes are always present, at least as a potentiality, in relations among civilisations.

Moreover, for him, the concept of clashes is not a phenomenon only for inter-civilisational relations. He also argues that 'conflicts and violence will also occur between states and groups even within the same civilisation⁵⁷. Yet, he further states that 'such conflicts are likely to be less intense and less likely to expand than conflicts between civilisations⁵⁸. He recognises that 'common membership in a civilisation reduces the probability of violence in situations where it might otherwise occur⁵⁹. Here, one can see that his views of clashes not only among civilisations but also inside civilisations are consistent with the general argument of identity formation, which explain the formation of an identity in contrast to other identities on the basis of the self/other dichotomy.

Huntington's theorisation, not only in its arguments of the understanding of civilisation(s), but also in its stress on clashes of civilisations, was criticised by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars almost immediately after his first article's appearance. Among them one such valuable work was published by John Esposito⁶⁰, who wrote *The Islam Threat: Myth or reality?*, shortly after Huntington's work. Another example 'Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East 'was written by Fred Halliday⁶¹, challenging the foundations of the debate on the clash of civilisations. Other examples came from Graham Fuller⁶². Muslim scholars, too, including Edward Said also countered the views of Huntington.⁶³

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See Huntington, op.cit., in note 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 31.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.32.

⁶⁰ See J.L. Esposito, *The Islam Threat: Myth or Reality?*, New York, Oxford Uni. Press, 1993.

⁶¹ See F. Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East*, London, I.B. Tauris, 1996.⁶² See G. Fuller, 'the Next Ideology', *Foreign Policy*, No.98, Spring 1995.

⁶³ E. W. Said, 'The Phony Islamic Threat: Islam is a Cultural Identity', *New York Times*, 21 November 1993.

Conclusion

The idea of clash of civilisations has been strongly rejected by the international community. General observation shows that in practice the term ‘civilisation’ in its both singular and plural sense is associated with positive connotations or is at least something better in comparison to other forms of the life of mankind. In this context, the idea of a clash of civilisations would seem to be not fitting.

Many initiatives, such as the UN declaration of 2001 as the ‘year of dialogue among civilisations’ or the OIC-EU Joint Forum in Istanbul, were undertaken to publicly deny such ideas and avoid such clashes of civilisations. Yet, even the need that was felt for these initiatives, alluded to the potentiality of such a clash among civilisations.

In this sense, it can be argued that despite his arguments, the bulk of which are both academically and politically flawed, Huntington was nevertheless right to draw the attention of the world to such potentiality.

As already discussed in the previous chapters, this potentiality can be better understood within the context of civilisation-building and identity formation. In other words, civilisations are in fact units of collective identities formed on the basis of commonalities and shared values in socio-cultural terms throughout history. And, identities in this regard, are products of a process of formation against their otherness. That is to say, each identity, being a self, is constructed against and in contrast to another identity, being its other. Therefore, each civilisation can be identified in relation and contrast to another civilisation that is perceived by the former as its other. Given this process of identification based on self/other dichotomy, one can easily see the presence of potentiality of clashes between these civilisations identifying themselves against one another. According to the self/other dichotomy, each civilisation is identified against others on the basis of the existence of differences among themselves. Yet, there seems to be no direct determinism, at least in practice, that these differences would ultimately lead to clashes among civilisations. It is natural that a clash is potentially inherent where differences exist, but it is only potential, and thus not certain, that clashes would erupt due to differences among civilisations.

Despite this potentiality, it is politically correct to deny such clashes. Yet, today given all these observations and experiences throughout history, the concept of such civilisational clashes among those possessing different identities that are counter-constructed against each other seems to continue unabated, with their

manifestations of various nature either in reality or in the mindsets of people from different civilisations. Thus, in today's world, what is more worthwhile is to seek solutions to avoid such clashes rather than denying that they could exist.

One should not lose sight of the fact that events which were experienced in history and continue today, strongly suggest the existence of ongoing clashes, either actually or potentially, among different cultures, societies and states, no matter whether or not they are called 'clashes of civilisations'. In this respect, in the age of globalisation, it would be more appropriate to identify the present form of such clashes as a clash not between different civilisations but between those benefiting from globalisation and those suffering from it, or between those whose interests are better served by globalisation and those whose interests are affected by it. In these clashes, those, who fall victim to the negative consequences of globalisation, such as poverty, isolation and discrimination, can easily be recruited by militants of civilisational clashes between religions.

Nevertheless, possible remedies to this state of affairs, which is the product of globalisation, also lie with this globalisation. It is no doubt that globalisation is a fact of life with both positive and negative consequences. In this respect, to avoid such clashes, two possible formulas can be suggested, both of which can be better understood by taking into account the concept of civilisation and the role of identification in this process of civilisation building.

The first can be called 'vertical identification formula'. In other words, given the plurality of civilisations, the vertical formula calls for the creation of one Civilisation with a capital 'C' as an upper identity among different civilisations with a small 'c' that represent different lower identities.

As we have seen that civilisations are identified in contrast to each other on the basis of their differences from each other, creating an upper identity that would reconcile the differences of civilisations as lower identities would better serve to alleviate clashes among themselves. This formula is already applied at the level of nation states which are ethnically non-homogenous, and in which ethnic groups, as non-national identities, are embraced by an upper identity, i.e. the national identity.

Promoting commonalities among different civilisations would facilitate attaining such formulae at the level of civilisation. Here, in the sense that it leads to a gradual standardisation of almost everything in the life of mankind, be it materially or intellectually, the present age of globalisation could be a self-running process to alleviate civilisations' differences that are potential sources of a clash.

As discussed earlier, there are two main arguments contradicting each other on the impact of interaction among civilisations. Huntington, opposing also the idea of forming a universal civilisation as an upper identity, denies any positive effect of such interactions. But, on the other hand, theories of 'global society' or 'world community' stress the importance of such interactions in reaching commonalities that in turn would alleviate the risk of clashes among civilisations. Both can be held true in their own paradigms of conceptualisation. It is true that as Huntington argues, interaction among members of different civilisations also inter alia strengthens consciousness about their differences from each other, potentially increasing the likelihood of a clash amongst themselves, instead of creating commonalities. On the other hand, it is also true, that as proponents of a world community argue, such interactions do inter alia lead to commonalities, thereby contributing to a common understanding among different civilisations.

Here, one should try to take the best from these two arguments. In doing so, it seems relevant to draw on another argument of Huntington that the notion of clash also exists between states and groups within the same civilisation. This argument at first seems to suggest that the creation of a common civilisation would not eliminate the potentiality of clashes among the civilisations forming it. Yet, again following the argument of Huntington that such clashes within a particular civilisation are likely to be less intense due to the fact that common membership reduces the probability of clashes where they might otherwise occur, one can argue, that the creation of one civilisation as an upper identity can be still seen as a better remedy for alleviating the potential clashes among different civilisations coming together under a common one, than of living separately and isolated from each other.

In this context, another possible remedy to the clash of civilisations seems to lie in the creation of a 'common other' for all civilisations. This can be called 'horizontal identification formula'. In other words, this assumes that different civilisations representing different identities which are historically constructed in contrast to one to another, as being 'the other of each other', can come together and form a common self against a common 'other'. In the Cold War era, the 'other' was the East for the West and vice versa. In the post-Cold War era, as Huntington suggested, the 'other' has mostly been Islam and thus Muslim countries, in the eyes of the Western world dominated by Christian belief, whereas for Muslims, the 'other' has been the opposite. In this context, in the post-September 11 era, almost all states, as the representatives of all civilisations, seem to have found a new 'other', against which they are still identifying themselves. This is terrorism in particular and other non-conventional security threats of an asymmetric nature such as WMDs (weapons of mass destruction),

religious fundamentalism, extreme nationalism, which are either the cause or the means of terrorism. The presence of such a 'common enemy' that has been already condemned by almost all states, being representatives of their own civilisations, no doubt constitutes an important opportunity also to facilitate the convergence of different civilisations under Civilisation, despite the differences on the basis of which these civilisations have identified themselves against each other.

The said two formulas seem to also suggest possible remedies to the intransigency of socio-physiological factors in hindering Turkey-EU relations. Naturally, in the process of Turkey's accession to the EU one can talk about some other factors that are, and will likely continue to be, causing difficulties in this process. These factors include not only the political and economic criteria that Turkey is requested to meet, but also on the part of the EU, there are institutional constraints and concerns, such as how to accommodate such a big country without altering the balance in the EU that always favours large countries, not to mention political disputes among and within EU members about their common strategic choice of whether or not to accept Turkey in their club.

Yet, given the role of identification in the life of societies and states, and thus the importance of the mindset of their populations that are of socio- physiological nature, one can also rightly argue that the socio-physiological factors, which hinder the eventual accession of Turkey in the Union, should be tackled and remedied as a priority.

This is not an easy process. The fact that in the formation of 'European identity' among the peoples of this old continent, the presence of the Ottoman Turks, representing a different religion, strange to the rest of Europe in history, was also a determinant. The related literature clearly supports this⁶⁴. European states long identified the Ottoman State as a Turkish Empire of Muslim denomination. It was European writers who were endowing the Ottoman State with a noble past and far from rustic splendours⁶⁵. In other words, it was the rest of Europe that shaped their 'European' identity in contrast to the Ottomans, which they perceived as the empire of Turks. They also mostly considered the Turks as not being European, but rather being in Europe⁶⁶. In other words, it was the 'Muslim Turks', in their minds

⁶⁴See, for an extensive summary of such literature, A. N. Yurdusev, 'Avrupa Kimliğinin Oluşumu ve Türk Kimliği', in A. Eralp ed. *Türkiye ve Avrupa: Batılılaşma, Kalkınma ve Demokrasi*, Ankara, İmge Kitabevi, 1997, and also G. Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, reality*, Basingstoke, Mac Millan, 1995

⁶⁵E. Kedouire ed., *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, Frank Cass and Comp.Ltd., 1970, p.49.

⁶⁶See T. Noff, 'The Ottoman Empire and the European States System', in H. Bull and A. Watson ed., *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984. This understanding is still reflected in the minds of important European politicians and officials such as former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing while wearing the hat of the Chairman of EU Convention. See dipnote 13 for details.

considered as ‘the other’, against which the rest of Europe of predominantly Christian faith, constructed their ‘European’ identity as being ‘the self’. This was due to the socio-physiological lenses, through which they saw and perceived the Ottoman Turks and later modern Turkey. It is hard to deny the existence of these lenses today, too, even if such a socio-physiological mindset is never spelt out.⁶⁷

Naturally, it is politically correct to deny such a mindset. But this should not prevent all EU countries and Turkey from making efforts to cure it. Here, talking about such healing, one can utilise the afore-mentioned formulas, i.e. vertical and horizontal identifications.

Vertically, creating an upper identity to reconcile the differences between the Turkish identity and those of the other European societies would be the first remedy in this respect. In this context, a true ‘European identity’ that can be a superior one to embrace all those national identities of the EU members as sub-identities should also include the Turkish national identity.

Horizontally, Turkey and the rest of the European states of the EU should form a common self, this time not against each other but against a jointly defined new other. Identifying the self against a common other would certainly facilitate bringing Turkey and the rest of the EU together in the context of peoples’ mindset.

However, the process of such collective identification either horizontally or vertically, between the people of Turkey and those of the rest of the EU countries whose histories and memories are not immune to tragic events, such as wars, killings, occupation against each other etc. is certainly not an easy one. Yet, one can argue that the key to its success lies in creating a collective identity among such societies and peoples, through a process of collective amnesia that would focus on having the peoples forget collectively the centuries old bitter memoirs. This collective identity building which can be called ‘palimpsest identity’ has in fact worked very well among EU members that had long been historical foes and rivals, such as France and Germany. Thus, it would serve as a useful tool for Turkish-EU relations in the process of creating a collective identity between both sides, be it vertically or horizontally. The onus of proof certainly lies with both sides and their determination in this regard not only at the level of governments but also at the grassroots level.

⁶⁷Remarks of the leaders of three big EU members, France, Germany and the UK, regarding Turkey’s membership in the EU that were made in the aftermath of the Cyprus referenda, seem quite meaningful. In their remarks while they all talked in favour of Turkey’s eventual membership in (indefinite) future, they also underlined that the rejection of Turkey would serve the interests of those supporting the clashes of different civilisations. Yet, even these expressions reflect a mindset that obviously considers Turkey different from the rest of the EU members.