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ISLAMIC VISION AND SOCIAL REALITY - THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF
SUNNI MUSLIMS IN GERMANY

An underlying notion in the sociology of religion of Weber and Troeltsch is the idea that religion is a dynamic phenomenon. Religion is not to be understood as a static and coherent system of symbols but rather a constantly ongoing and never ending process of construction of a world view. The religiously inclined person in this view is conceptualized as a seeker rather than as somebody who has found an answer. The direction of the religious search is given by the attempt to relate a vision about an ideal relation of individual, society and the transcendent (an idea formulated in myths and articulated in rituals) to the experience of the other and the self in actual existing society¹.

This approach implies an analysis of the religious process in terms of problems and solutions (which again lead to secondary problems demanding further solutions). It is in this respect that I want to analyse the political culture of Sunni Turks in Germany with particular reference to the fundamentalist²

¹ For Troeltsch's approach see his: Die Soziallehren der christlichen Gruppen und Kirchen (Tübingen 1922); Weber's view is contained very clearly in the two summarizing articles: "Einleitung in die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen" and "Richtungen und Stufen religiöser Weltablehnung"

² The use of the term "fundamentalism" is disputed. When I keep using this term I do it with two reasons: (1) The term points out that movements with similar structures of thought are emerging all over the globe and therefore are not restricted to one religion or ethnic group; (2) The alludes to a characteristic feature of all these movements, namely the search for a stable "fundament" on which the edifice of an all encompassing social theory can be erected.

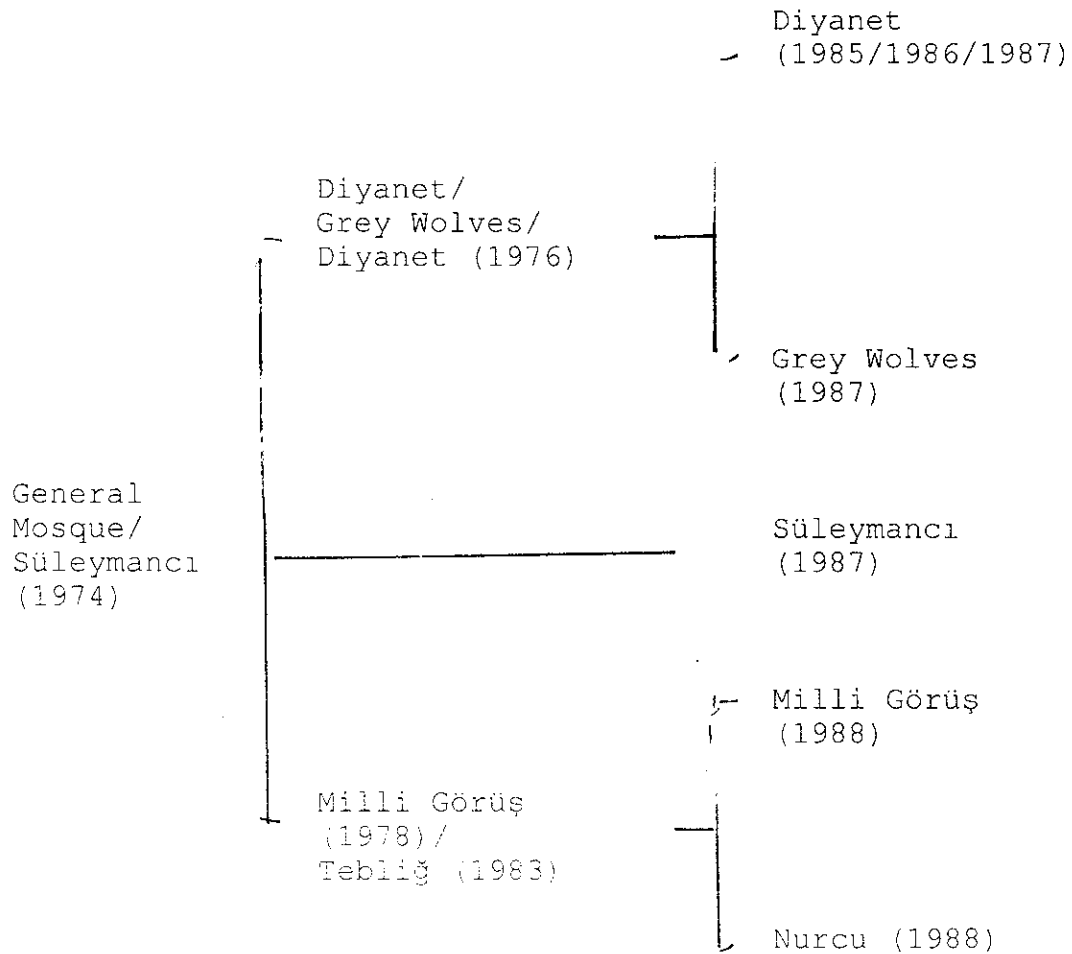
groups'.

I refer to material I collected in the Southern German city of Augsburg. In a first step I will reconstruct the history of Muslims there. This history shows a similar pattern to that in other German Cities (cf. Blaschke 1984; Mihçiyazgan 1990). After this more or less historical sketch I shall proceed to the sociological analysis and reconstruct the systematic reasons for these conflicts.

The history of Islam in Augsburg

The history of Islam in Augsburg is characterized by a continued process of fissions which can be represented in the form of a genealogy:

The inner diversity of the fundamentalist camp is usually underestimated. An exception is the study by Martin Riesebrodt (1990). He proposes a convincing classification of the different fundamentalist groups on Weberian lines. This article owes much to this analysis. The difference to Riesebrodt however lies on the stress I want to put on the dynamics of religious development. Riesebrodt tends to see the different positions in terms of logical (and basically static) possibilities whereas I am inclined to regard them as answers to problems each of them leading again to secondary problems.



Islam was brought to Augsburg by Turkish migrants arriving at the beginning of the sixties. This generation of workers - all young men with the intention to stay only for a short period in Germany - was not very religiously inclined. There were only very few believers who met for the Friday prayer in rooms set apart in the worker's homes. This changed in the beginning of the seventies: In these years the workers started to bring their families to Germany. A growing concern for the religious education of the next generation, as well as the possibility of a prolonged stay in Germany may have led to an increased interest in the institutionalization of Islam. In 1974 a general mosque was founded in Augsburg. This was

somewhat later than in Germany's other cities - and there had been the declared intention to avoid the split that already had occurred in other places. As one of the founding members explained:

"When we founded that mosque here we said: 'We do not want any politics (siyaset) here, we want to restrict ourselves to religious services. We will install coran courses, and offer religious services'".

This proved to be an illusion. In the same year (1974) the general mosque was taken over by the Süleymancı brotherhood by an action which can only be called a coup:

"Among the believers there had been one or two friends who had connections to the Islamic Cultural Centre (i.e. the Süleymancı) in Munich...We of course did not know about that. There had been a certain Ali Hoca (hoca: preacher, teacher) in Munich...With the help of this Ali Hoca they brought a constitution. They said: 'Let us make it official'- 'Alright', we said, 'let us make it official'. But we did not know that they would thus align us officially to the Islamic Cultural Centres. We just thought that it would be helpful. Well and with time passing they only brought Hocas of the Islamic Cultural Centres to Augsburg...They tried to develop the Süleymancı teachings here...We could not agree with that"

There are two reasons for the seeming naivete of the majority of the believers: (1) the statute which turned the mosque into a "Verein" was written in German and probably only very few of the believers were able to understand its bureaucratic and juridic language; (2) the idea of organizing a religious group in the form of a corporate group was very alien to the Turkish believers (and to the Islamic tradition in general) - they

probably just thought "that it would be helpful" without spending much thought on the implications⁴.

The fact that the general mosque was now in the hands of one particular group triggered off a process of segmentation. In 1978 a mosque of the *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* ("office of religious affairs") representing the official Islam in Turkey was founded. This mosque was taken over by the Greywolves (a fascist movement fighting for a kind of synthesis of Islam and Turkism) by shifting majorities and was later taken by the *Diyanetçiler*. This again led to the setting up of a mosque exclusively for the Greywolves in 1987.

Also in 1978 a mosque had been founded by the National Sight, i.e. the European branch of the Religious Salvation Party/Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan. Under the impact of the Islamic Revolution in Iran there had been a growing radicalization among the followers of this group in the beginning of the eighties; a radicalization which finally led to a split in 1983: The *Tebliğ* movement (Annunciation Movement)⁵ headed by Cemaleddin Kaplan which favored an Islamic

⁴ It seems to me that this necessity to organize in corporate groups implies a strengthening of the borders vis a vis the other groups. Thus the different groups appear more clearcut in the diaspora than they would in Turkey even if they were not under political pressure there. In Turkey a loose and overlapping network could be expected. This implies also that the processes of fission which we discuss here takes place more clear cut in the German diaspora than at home. The astounishment about this is reflected in an article by Uğur Mumcu: "The mosques and the prayer houses abroad are split up among the sympathizers of the Süleymancı, the Milli Görüşçü, the Diyanetçi, the Ülkücü [Grey Wolves] and of Kaplan hoca. Different associations, different mosques, different communities" (CUMHURİYET, March 10 1987, p.6)

⁵ The organization has been known officially as the *İslami Cemaatlar Birliği* - The union of the Islamic communities. As will be described below the name was changed in "*Türk Federe İslami Devleti*" - "The Federal Islamic State of Turkey" and

revolution on the lines of the Iranian model broke away from the National Sight. In the Augsburg community these dissenters were in the majority and took over the mosque. The group which remained loyal to the National Sight set up its own mosque in 1988. In the same year a group of mostly young people, migrants of the second generation whose fathers had been in the *Milli Görüş/Tebliğ* movement set up a little *Nurcu* lodge. This was the only foundation which did not result out of a conflict.

This short sketch shows that the history of Islam in Augsburg is conflict-ridden, a history characterized by coups, by fissions and takeovers through shifting majorities.

In turning now to the structural reasons for these conflicts I want to restrict myself to the four "fundamentalist" groups, i.e. to the groups which fight for the reintroduction of the *şeriat* in Turkey⁶: The National Sight, the *Süleymancı*, the *Nurcu*, and the Annunciation Movement. These groups are a sort of religious revitalization movement which always cropped up when the gap between religious vision and actual society grew too big (at least for a certain part of society) - when the religious model (to put it in Clifford Geertz terms) could no longer be related to actual society. In such moments there is a desire to guard (or to regain) a feeling of one's identity in society. As individual identity and collective legitimacy are closely related to each other this has direct political

into "Anadolu Federe Islami Devleti" - "The Federal Islamic State of Anatolia" . Among the other communities they are known as "Kaplancı" - the followers of Kaplan. For reasons of clarity I shall use the programmatic term *Tebliğ Cemaatı* - "Annunciation movement" (a term which was coined by Kaplan in a programmatic sermon) throughout the article.

⁶ The *şeriat* was abolished during the Turkish revolution in a series of legislative measures starting 1924 with the abolishment of the caliphate and ending in 1928 with the declaration of the secular character of the Turkish state.

implications: The question refers as much to the aims of the individual life as to the aims of modern society as a whole. Religiously inclined persons tend to answer this question, as Troeltsch (1922) has brilliantly shown, by an orientation "back to" the origins. This also holds true for the fundamentalists who seek an answer to the question of identity in modern society by way of a mythical regress (Riesebrodt 1990), i.e. by the attempt to revitalize the social order of a golden age, which in this case would be the early phase of Islam. "A holy and universal system of law was revealed to Muhammad which serves for all needs of mankind before doom." (Kaplan⁷) This system of law was put into practice during the age of Muhammad and the four caliphs: In this time Islam conquered the whole Middle East and reigned in three continents. According to this concept all problems of mankind result from the departure from this divine order. This philosophy of history is reapplied in a generative way to the modern history of Turkey: With the introduction of a laicist order the Republic of Turkey in a way repeated the early Fall of Man.

Seeing that all these convictions are held in common - what then are the reasons for the conflicts among the fundamentalists?

The Hypothesis

With the declared intention to fight for the şeriat a central question arises immediately: One has to decide how to fight

⁷ All quotations are from Kaplan in this article refer to his programmatic sermon: Hicret Konuşması (a sermon in the emigration). Like the other sermons of Kaplan this sermon is distributed on tape and can be bought in the mosques of the movement.

for şeriat.

The hypothesis I want to formulate is:

1. There are different answers to this problem: The four groups in the fundamentalist camp differ on the question about how to organize for the fight and how to conduct the fight.

2. These are only seemingly mere questions of strategy. I want to show in the following that the answers given to these questions are related to deep seated convictions about the (actual and ideal) relation of individual to society - they imply certain concepts about the self and the other. This may explain why questions of strategy are so seldom settled at the green table - and why they are so bitterly disputed. It may also explain why the fractions do not disappear when the aim is reached (i.e. when the revolutionary groups are successful). By reconstructing the ideas about the relation of individual to society I hope to get down "to the real questions" which divide the fundamentalist camp.

3. Every position concerning strategies implies further characteristic consecutive problems - which again can be assumed to structure future religious search and - possibly - future fissions. I want to reconstruct these problems by quoting the comments the groups make on each other. This has the advantage of giving an impression of the views held by those involved (and not only of the sociologist's construction).

In order to arrive at a description of the different ideas of the relationship of the individual to society I want to divide this relation into two aspects: (1) The relation of the individual to secondary groups (in our case the religious community) and (2) the relation of the secondary groups to the

society in general (which in our case implies the question of the kind of political action they should take). These two dimensions are independent from each other, which allows for the following scheme:

	COMMUNITY : SOCIETY		
		Ethics of conviction (methodists)	Ethics of responsibility (stategists)
INDIV.	Mystics	<i>Nurcu</i>	<i>Süleymancı</i>
..			
COMM.	Ascetics (Scripturalists)	<i>Tebliğ</i>	<i>Milli Görüş</i>

One might add that when talking about "society" the point of reference is "Turkish society". The four groups are strictly oriented toward Turkey. Germany for them is seen as "country of emigration" and sometimes explicitly paralleled to Muhammad's stay in Medine. The institutionalization of Islam in Germany is of only secondary importance to the fundamentalist believers - it is more or less a defensive measure. It seems to be more important not to loose Islam in that intermediary phase of diaspora rather than to develop permanent institutions which negotiate the continued presence of Islam in Germany. This correlates with a marked desinterest with regard to German society. It is telling that in the bookstores of the Isalmic Communities in Augsburg I was not able to find one single (tape recorded) sermon which discusses the problems of Muslim migrants in Germany (e.g. with regard to Islamic education). It is also striking that (at least in Augsburg) there are no initiatives directed to building up

Islamic institutions (like Kindergarten for example)⁸ while in the same time money is collected for the foundation of Islamic schools in Turkey. So the interest in Germany is mostly strategic - it is the interest of having a base abroad in order to fight at home and one does everything in order not to threaten the existence of this base.

I shall now proceed to describe the two dimensions and show how the four fundamentalist groups differ in these aspects.

The relation of the Individual to the Religious Community

There are two models of the religious community in the Islamic tradition: On the one side there is the tradition of orthodox, scripturalist, ascetic Islam of the mosque community. On the other side there is the tradition of the mystical, charismatic, esoteric Islam of the Sufi brotherhoods with the central institution of the tekke (convent) ⁹. The opposition between the two traditions should not be overstated: Most of the time they existed side by side. One can show however that *şariat*, the law, and *tarikât*, the mystical way were put into different structural relations to each other in different phases of Islamic history.

This is also true for the groups discussed here. On the one hand the two groups which are referred to as mystics in the

⁸ Augsburg might be somewhat extreme in this regard. There are reports about more initiatives in other places however, in particular in Berlin and the Ruhr Region (cf. Gür, M. 1993:37)

⁹ The opposition of these two models has been repeatedly referred to (Kissling 1954, Gellner 1981, Trimmingham 1971)

scheme, the Nurcu and the Süleymancı are no pure mystics anymore. One might characterize them as "reform mystics": Said Nursi, the founder of the Nurcu movement and Süleyman Hilmi Tunalı, the founder of the Süleymancı movement both reacted to the challenge of the establishment of the laicist Turkish republic by giving up the inimical or indifferent attitude to the world (Max Weber's *Weltfeindlichkeit*) which was characteristic for the classical brotherhoods. They stressed the need to work for the *şariat* within the world. Süleyman Hilmi Tunalı did that by establishing coran courses: The intention was to answer to the need of training hocas, a need which was created with the destruction of the system of religious education¹⁰. Whereas the Süleymancı still have the classical structure of a mystical brotherhood (they consider themselves to be part of the Nakşibendi)¹¹ it is questionable whether this still holds true for the Nurcu. Said Nursi's intent was to interpret the coran in order to propagate Islam in a changed and modern world and thus to reestablish the Islamic spirituality and influence¹². He was building up his own organization for the distribution of his works during his exile in Isparta (1925-1934) (Spuler 1973:134). He himself called this organization a "school" (rather than a brotherhood) and never considered himself to be a *şeyh* (i.e.

¹⁰ In Turkey the *medreseler* were closed in 1924. In their place *Imam Hatip* Schools and a Faculty of Theology were established. The *Imam Hatip* Schools were again closed in 1930, the Faculty in 1933.

¹¹ The Nakşibendi Tarikat is one of the most important mystical brotherhoods of Islam. It is characterized by a strict adherence to the Islamic law and by the value it attaches to simplicity. For the Nakşibendi see Algar (1976, 1985). The sociological structure of a modern mystical brotherhood has been described by Michael Gilson with regard to the *Hamidiya Shadhiliya* (1973). The structure of the Süleymanlı is very similar.

¹² This spirit guides his successors who try to reconcile Islamic teaching and the findings of natural science.

the spiritual leader of a brotherhood). Still there are so many parallels with the classical brotherhoods that it seems justified¹³ to treat the Nurcu as a developed (or transformed) mystical brotherhood: The inner hierarchy of "student", "brother", "friend" and "beloved" (Spuler 1981:428) closely resembles the structure of mystical groups; the central ritual, the *ayin* (a meditative contemplation of the works of Said Nursi) was explained to me to be a structural correlate of the Sufi *zikr*¹⁴; the spirituality of the movement finally clearly has its roots in the pantheist outlook on nature in mystical Islam (which sees God reflected in all things, cf. Ritter 1955:601) but transforms it too by extensively taking note of the results of modern science¹⁵.

The relevance of this innerworldly turn of the mystical tradition can hardly be overstated: The mystical exercises are no longer seen as an end in themselves but rather as a source of strength or an additional source of knowledge (Dinçer, 1983:20). The two groups thus intend to use the (original or transformed) *tarikât* (mystical way) for the reintroduction of the *şeriat* (the law).

¹³ The discussion about these structural characteristics is obviated because of the political relevance of this point - the *tarikats* are forbidden in Turkey: So one finds an exaggeration of the continuities among the opponents of this movement; whereas sympathizers tend to play the parallels down and stress the differences. The best characterization is still Spuler 1981.

¹⁴ *zikr* is the mystical practice of the repetition of the name of God in order to achieve knowledge by way of contemplation

¹⁵ This stance again is characteristic of the group. The classical mystics did not show a marked interest in natural explanations: They rather saw God's working directly reflected in nature and tended to reject causal explanations as *şirk* - polytheist tendencies (cf. Ritter 1956:596 ff.)

The two scripturalist groups do not reject mysticism altogether. Their position is that mysticism can be a beautiful exercise once the *şariat* is established. Under the present circumstances however mystical exercises would only distract from the principal task which is to fight for the introduction of the Islamic order. These groups do not see mystical exercises as a source of strength but rather as a source of weakness. The following quotation of a leading member of the *Tebliğ* Community in Augsburg is characteristic of the attitude in this camp:

"Today we have despotism because nobody, starting from the head of the government down to the head of the family, practices Islam any more. One of the most important *hadiths*, however, states that he who proclaims the law in opposition to a despotic government and in doing so risks prison, torture, death...has the strongest faith. This man has the strongest faith, the strongest moral, he is a man of the law, a man of God. We do think that this is the task of the day, and that a scholar has to put that into practice....and that it is a sign of weakness to put this aside and to occupy oneself with the *tarikāt*."

The decision for or against the mystic tradition has several implications for the organisation of the community. The first difference refers to the social structure of the groups: While the two reform mystic groups tend to be hierarchical and allow for different degrees of initiation the two scripturalist groups tend to be egalitarian. Among the latter an idea is prominent which may be referred to as the *hocalık* (priesthood) of all believers: Or as they would put it themselves: Everybody is a *hoca* according to his degree of knowledge.

A second difference is closely related to that: Whereas

leadership in the mystical groups is charismatic (or traditional) leadership in the scripturalist groups tends to be rational. Whereas the former tends hardly to be questioned the latter is subject to evaluation or criticism. The incidences which lead to a split of the Milli Görüş in the early eighties are telling. As mentioned above there had been a growing radicalization among the members of Milli Görüş during these years. At the same time the party establishment in Turkey came under considerable pressure from the military government. The establishment tried to calm the believers and threatened with expulsion. The result was increasing unrest. In this situation the party decided to send the *müftü* of Adana Cemaleddin Kaplan to Germany. The following quotation shows how this was received by the common followers:

"Well it was not only me personally, there had been several person who worked within Milli Görüş, among them several *hocalar* and scholars. They were thrown out by the executive committee...At that time the movement started..When they realized that they could not suppress the movement they brought Cemaleddin Kaplan from Turkey in order to appease them...When they brought him here we watched him exactly: Is he a true scholar; will he be a master of his Islam, will he master them? [They went to Munich in order to listen to him] Judging from our experience we said to some of our friends: 'He is not like the other sholars, he will not conform...He puts Islam in the first place, he will not agree with them."

This quotation reflects a remarkable self confidence. The believers in the scripturalis camp feel that they are in a position to judge their spiritual leaders. It is *they* who decide whom to follow. The same spirit can be seen from another quotation: There were several believers in the Tebliğ Community in Augsburg who said that they would definitely

leave Kaplan if they ever realized that he did something wrong.

A third organizational difference refers to limits: The two reform mystic groups keep a tight hold on information. With regard to the Nurcu Spuler remarks, that while it is quite easy to establish a first contact it is very difficult to establish a closer relationship (1981:426); this holds even more true for the Süleymancı. It is extremely difficult to get reliable information about them - when contacting the group one is immediately referred to official spokesman or even trained public relation officers¹⁶. The two scripturalist groups on the contrary are much more accessible; the notion is expressed that secrecy is irreconcilable with the Islamic spirit.

A fourth implication of the difference between the reform mystics and the scripturalist camp refers to political practice. The reform mystics tend to take the position that consciousness raising should come first and political institutions next whereas the scripturalists tend to the position that one should not separate consciousness raising from political action (Kaplan) or that one should reach out for political institutions and do consciousness raising on the basis of political power (*Milli Görüş*). Both mystics and the scripturalists refer to the *sunna*, to the practice of the prophet.

¹⁶ This is confirmed by Metin Gür's experiences (1993:57) One of the few documents giving inside information is the typoscript by Dinçer (1983). Dinçer was one of the leading members of the brotherhood in Germany. The writing of the text was evidently a private initiative with the intention of introducing the Süleymancı to the German public. However the text seemed to have been too outspoken; it caused disputes and the leadership of the Brotherhood decided not to distribute it.

For the Süleymancı Dinçer (1983) argues:

"When our Prophet (S.A.V.) started to propagate the Islam among the Polytheists in Mecca he provoked a strong reaction by them. He decided to withdraw into a certain quarter of the city where he could pray calmly and preach Islam. *The fundamental task of all prophets consists in passing on the divine revelation they received, in teaching their followers and in passing judgements* . Our Prophet chose the apartment of Erkan bin Ebü-l Erkam bin Esed one of the first Muslims.....He lived in this apartment, prayed, taught Islam to the visitors and trained the Muslims up to the time that Hz.Ömer converted to Islam. In this house the Muslims experienced his spiritual guidance." (Dinçer, 1983:17, emphasis added)

The message is clear: In a situation of relative weakness (which is comparable to the one of the true believers in present day Turkey) one should withdraw from society and teach the true Islam in clandestine meetings. The aim of these courses is nicely in an image:

"While there is fierce fighting in front of the castle of the infidels these courses are underground tunnels leading right into the core of the castle. [The tunnels] are an extremely great invention... comparable only to the invention of Sultan Mehmed with which he had his war ships pass the mountains and glide into the Golden Horn (Dincer 6)

The success does not lie in the open battle but rather in the (very literal) underground operation! It may be mentioned that the image of the mines is very familiar to Turkish school children who are taught extensively about Ottoman warfare strategies in their history lessons.

The counter position is formulated by Kaplan in a sermon which is distributed on tape under the title "Sermon in the *hicret*":

"The Arab's say: If you don't jump into the sea you will not learn to swim. Without practice you will not become fighters for the faith. There is no necessity to build up a special cadre with special methods. For this is a question of method, of belief, of courage and of capabilities. The preachers who were sent out by our master and prophet - did they have a special training? No: The islamic belief is in itself a school. It is an educational institution. It is the perfect educational institution. Abu Bakr, Omar, Ali Musa - did they go to a university? That is why all practice appeasement politics who say: Let us first train a cadre, let the cadre get occupation in state service and let us then speak of state, of proclamation and politics. That is nothing but laziness and fear."

Three aspects seem to me to be remarkable in this passage:

1. Esoteric spirituality is here confronted with spirituality of the fight. One does not become a *mücahit*, a fighter for the faith by a special training (i.e. coran ocurses or esoteric exercises) but by going out into the street and taking up the fight: By doing this one learns to believe, to love, to be courageous and one acquires competence.

There is another passage in the same sermon where Kaplan takes up the mystics' motive of the love to a girl¹⁷ and gives it an activist turn: This passage can thus be read as a direct reply to the mystics.

¹⁷ To this topic see also Ritter 1955:347 ff

"You have to believe in our matter, you have to love our matter. A young man loves a girl; he feels a deep affection to her. Day and night, while waking and dreaming he thinks of her. He, who believes in the movement and identifies with it, must have a feeling toward this faith which is comparable to this love. Even while eating, while sleeping, while working he has to think: "O what could I do, how could I behave to promote my affairs - even if it is by a minute detail."

2. The task is not education: A recurrent theme of Kaplan is that everything is manifest. The task of the day is open preaching and political action. Those who preach that one should first educate and then become politically active, will get nowhere.

3. A third aspect is hinted at in the double usage of the word "special". It is not the question to build up with *special* methods a *special* cadre. In this usage the particularist aspect of mystical brotherhoods is referred to. The argument was more explicitly stated by a leading member of the Augsburg branch:

"We can committ all Muslims to the Quran; that is easy. But it is not possible to committ all believers to the Risal-i-Nur of Said Nursi - he was an *alim* but he was not a prophet. For that reason mass mobilization is impossible with Nurcu or Süleymanci. The Süleymanci have that tarikat (Brotherhood) thing. If somebody does not join the tarikat he is not accepted. We cannot committ all Muslims to one Tarikat."

The Relation of the Religious Community to Society as a Whole

The horizontal axis in our scheme refers to the other dimension of the relation of individual to society, i.e. to the question how the community should relate to society as a whole. The scheme implies that a basic difference can be made between strategists and methodists. This distinction refers to Max Weber's distinction between *Gesinnungsethik* (ethics of conviction) and *Verantwortungsethik* (ethics of responsibility). In his article *Der Beruf zur Politik* ("The Vocation for Politics") Max Weber argues that any political action has to face the difficult (and not seldom conflicting) relation of means and ends. This is particularly true for religiously motivated politics which in a quite radical way is confronted with the problem of pursuing noble aims in a bad world. Following Weber there are two answers to the problem. The methodist (*gesinnungsethische*) answer would be: The Christian [in this case: the Muslim] does what is commanded by God - success is in God's hand. The methodist thus would not allow for any compromises with the world - he would in a way reject the position that there is a tension between means and ends. The strategist on the other hand would regard the methodist's point of view as an illusion: His position would be that it is simply not true that well intended actions necessarily show good results: Ethically doubtful actions can prove to be very effective whereas ethically valuable action can lead into a disaster. The strategist thus takes into account the world as it is. It is not implied that strategists have no conviction or that they are pleading for macchiavellist politics; but rather that they take responsibility for their actions in the world (a responsibility the methodist delegates to God).

The distinction between *Gesinnungsethik* and *Verantwortungsethik* is closely related to other key concepts of Weber's sociology of religion: In the above mentioned article he points out that these concepts are related to the

problem of *Theodizee* which he regards to be crucial for religious development and he proceeds in the same article to show how different religions have found different answers to this problem¹⁸.

It is evident from the scheme that I suggest that the distinction between strategists and methodists cuts cross the distinction between mystics and scripturalists. Let us now discuss the four different positions which result from that.

1. The *Süleymançı* very clearly have a strategical outlook. Their politics could be summed up as follows: The *Süleymançı* try to lay the foundation for a successful educational work (concentrating on the establishment of coran courses) by pursuing pragmatic politics i.e. by arranging themselves with the powers in office. In Turkey - where they are officially forbidden - it is claimed that they have good relations to the Demirels Party of the right Way (*Doğru Yol Partisi*) - which does not exclude that they do not support parties (and even the the Social Democrats) under certain circumstances¹⁹. In Germany they claim to be a purely religious having no political aims whatsoever. They are much more concerned than the other groups to stress the fact that their activities are strictly within the limits set by the German constitution. The already mentioned very strict information politics is related

¹⁸ Another key concept which seems to me to be closely related to that distinction is the concept of "routinization" (*Veralltäglicung*): In fact institutionalization and routinization of a religious movement implies a shift from *Gesinnungsethik* to *Verantwortungsethik*

¹⁹ Before elections the newspapers are full of reports of alleged meetings of Kaçar with the heads of the different right wing parties. It is speculated whether Kaçar promises the votes of this followers to one or the party (Hottinger, 1993:149)

to that.

Mystics who pursue innerworldly aims with a strategical outlook almost necessarily organize themselves in the way of a cadre party. A tightly knit and hierarchically structured inner group with a clear task is clearly distinguished from an outer group of mere sympathizers. The criticism of the other groups refers to the structure and the politics of an elitist cadre.

A first criticism refers to the arrogance of the politics. Actions, like the above mentioned coup, with which they took over the mosque created a reputation of trickiness: "They are tricky (*kurnaz*)" remarked one member of the *Tebliğ* community, "they are foxes".

A second criticism refers to the absolute loyalty the Süleymancı show to Kemal Kaçar their present leader. They would accept all twists and turns without protesting. Particularly shifting alliances are criticized. In fact the inner structure of the Süleymancı movement seems to allow for changes which in the scripturalist camp would create considerable unrest - and probably segmentation.

A third criticism refers to the separation of the inner and outer group: The exclusiveness of the inner group is regarded with suspicion. It is frequently insinuated that the Süleymancı would just withdraw in order to watch pornographic movies. Although this is extremely unlikely it reflects the scripturalists attitudes toward all kinds of exclusiveness²⁰.

²⁰ The accusation of sexual orgies is not seldom voiced against mystics. I heard similar insinuations voiced against the Bektashi. This might be related to a too literal understanding of the mystics of love.

The separation between the inner and outer group also allows for a relaxation of the demands on the "normal believers". The members of the other groups frequently mention that the Süleymancı would "make it easy on the believers" in order to be attractive. They refer in this context to decrees (*fetva*) supposedly issued by Kaçar allowing for taking interest and sending women to work for the period of stay in the *dar ul harb* ("the territory of war" as opposed to the *dar ul Islam*, the "territory of Islam").

2. The *Nurcu* have a methodist outlook. Their work does not aim at missionary mass mobilization but rather at spiritual gathering. Their educational and contemplative work is primarily addressed to intellectuals⁴¹. They do not seem to make compromises - and I personally know several migrants from rural backgrounds who feel repelled by that. To them the *Nurcu* are too intellectual:

"They only read the Coran in Arabic and there is nobody who explains it. That is good for people who have studied and know much. They do not have a *hoca*, who explains the meaning in Turkish"⁴² (Schiffauer 1991:211)

For methodist mystics who pursue innerworldly aims a secret society seems to be a particularly appropriate type of organization. The secrecy allows for single-mindedness; the strong bilateral tie (*rabıta*) between *mürid* and *mürşit*,

⁴¹ The high quality of their work in this regard was stated by Spuler (1981, 433)

⁴² This probably does not refer to the readings of the Coran but to the central aspect of the *Nurcu* meetings - that is the readings of Said Nursi, the Ottoman Turkish of which is in fact difficult to understand for a present day Turk.

mystical student and mystical teacher, allows for the setting up clandestine networks. In fact that is what the Nurcu do when they set up lodges (*nur daireleri*) with high ranking officials or officers. The idea seems to be to infiltrate the state apparatus.

The problem with secret societies is that their political efficiency is hard to measure. While sympathisers of the Nurcu claim that it is very high their opponents think that it is almost non-existent. A general criticism in the fundamentalist camp is, that the Nurcu only pay lip service to the idea of the Islamic revolution: They would betray the example set by Said Nursi.

One does in fact get the impression (at least with regard to the Nurcu in Augsburg) that their outlook is much more quietist than political. The young men who felt attracted by the Nurcu showed much more interest in existentialist than in political questions. They loved to discuss questions like the meaning of life, the inevitability of death, the phenomenon of time and to reflect on the divine wisdom in nature.

3. The strategist's position in the scriptural camp is represented by the National Sight. The aim of the Welfare Party with which it is affiliated is to reestablish by political participation the Islamic presence in Turkey. This poses several problems. In the eyes of the other groups there are four points which make this position problematic.

The first problem has been touched upon already in the discussion of the split of the National Sight in the early eighties: Political rationality forces a party to control their representation in the public sphere. Control over members has to be exercised in order to protect the party's reputation. This political rationality can easily be

interpreted as a betrayal of Islamic principles as one of the followers of Kaplan mentioned:

"We said, that we wanted to use the party for Islam but not Islam for the party. They [the party representatives] said: 'If this is the case, then we cannot work, then the party will be closed'. But why should we reduce Islam. We want to remain free."

A second problem is related to this: In order to run for elections a political party has to accept the constitutional framework. This again appears to the methodists as a compromise with an idolatrous system - a compromise which is dangerous because it serves to strengthen the system rather than weaken it:

The third problem from a fundamentalist point of view is that the political rationality of an established party does not allow for much spirituality. This at least seems to be the point made by Kaplan when he implicitly compares the Tebliğ community to the National Sight.

"Our community is a community of love and not a community of reason. He who has love sacrifices himself for the cause or for the faith. He who has only reason is satisfied with taking measures."

The most interesting criticism, however, comes from those who claim that the organisation as a party is incompatible with Islamic principles from a structural point of view. The argument is that the structure of a party stresses dissent and that conflicts are started for strategical reasons. One of the members in the *Tebliğ* Community expressed that in the following way:

"No party in Turkey has anything to do with Islam. It is politics, games, traps, deceit. But Islam is clean. In Islam there is no deceit no lie, no deception....But the work of parties consists in lying, in defamation of character. In order to strengthen the own party they cast aspersions on the characters of their opponents."

The structure of parliamentary action is here opposed to an ideal of an Islamic formation of opinion - i.e. the ideal of a discourse of scholars and specialists in which solutions to open questions can be found by means of rational discourse. This is felt to be clearly something form the majority politics which are characteristic of the parliamentary system.

4. The methodist scripturalist position is represented by the Tebliğ movement. Their basic assumption is that an islamic revolution (one which deserves its name) can only be brought about by a mass movement. The task of the day is the open proclamation, the open annunciation with the aim of political mobilization. With this outlook the Tebliğci try to avoid the pitfalls of institutionalization - i.e. (1) the separation of inner and outer circles, with its problems of control and (2) the constant need of reconciling institutional demands and political aims (which after all are their *raison d'etre*) - either by compromises (like the Süleymancı or the Milli Görüş) or by refuge to secrecy (like the Nurcu). By insisting on the organization as a *movement* the Tebliğci try to remain consequent and outspoken. Or to express it with the words of one member of the Augsburg community: "Well - I told myself the parties go only sofar as it is legal. Then they say 'Stop'. That means: You cannot put into practice there what is demanded by Islam."

Kaplan formulates his position in his programmatic sermon "in

the hicret" (*Hicret Konuşması*).

There he insists first on the fact that although Islam has to be preached as a whole it is necessary to lay stress on the issues which are particularly relevant nowadays. "Here I want to make something clear. The central area of our call [as Turks] is Turkey; and as the Turkish state is not an Islamic state we have to start with that...I draw your attention to that issue: The worship, like *namaz* (prayer), *oruç* (fast), *zekat* (alms) and *hac* (pilgrimage) are no topic today? Why? Because this is treated extensively with in any coran course...But there is one topic which is not addressed in courses and on pulpits, in schools and books - and that is Islamic politics and the Islamic state. It is the following issue: "Islam is not possible without state; and the state is not possible without Islam" (*Hicret Konuşması*)

A task like this demand three things: (1) knowledge, (2) a methodist way of life and (3) a responsibility shared by all believers.

The type of knowledge Kaplan thinks of in this passage can be inferred from his series of articles titled *İslamiyet nedir, ne değildir* (What Islam is and is not) which appeared in the periodical *Tebliğ*. The special importance of these articles can be seen from the fact that they alone have been translated into English, German and French for distribution among neighbors. In this series of articles Kaplan undertook an explicitly political interpretation of the fundamental Islamic principles and rituals. So he demonstrated how the prescriptions concerning the *namaz* prayer entail a political vision of the Islamic community (*Tebliğ* Nr.52, 15.-29.2.1988 p.12) It seems to be this type of knowledge he refers to when he says: "The ideas have to be propagated in a comprehensive way. This demands knowledge; without knowledge there is the

risk of arriving at negative results despite best intentions."

For the believers this type of knowledge frequently seems to have led to sudden insight. As one member of the Augsburg community remarked: "In Turkey we only heard that one has to pray the namaz: But nobody told us why."

The task of the call does not only demand knowledge, it also demands a methodic way of life. "One first has to live and practice oneself the ideas one invites to. You first have to live it personally. Then you can proceed and tell others about it, before one can convincingly invite to Islam." (*Hicret Konuşması*). This implies not only consistency in lifestyle but also a rigorousness with regard to public appearance. There is the feeling that one should proclaim Islam openly and publicly. It is not by chance that the Tebliğci is the most active group with regard to demonstrations.

The third implication is a shared responsibility of all participants in the movement for the common cause: No hierarchy and no precedence is allowed for and therefore no delegation of responsibility. "One must not say: 'I am the descendent of so and so; I am the son of so and so; I graduated from that and that school; I am the student of that and that and that teacher; I belong to that and that nation or to that and that party.' Instead one has to say: 'I am Muslim and one of the Muslims'" (Kaplan) The persons addressed here implicitly are clearly the adherents of mystical brotherhoods who have very strong loyalties to their *mürüt*, their mystical teachers

It is this methodist orientation which leads to a very strong irritation about the Süleymancı who - as the Tebliğci tend to say, "make it easy on the believer." Whereas there exists some contact to other groups (including even the Diynetci) there is

a strict avoidance of the Süleymancı.

The other groups however criticize that Kaplan rigorism in the end does damage to the common Islamic course. The most explicit criticism I heard was (little surprisingly) formulated by one of the hocas of the Süleymancıs:

"One cannot just always stand up and repeat: 'I am in the right'. Even if you are in the right, there are certain times and circumstances when you should be guarded (or cautious). What did Kaplan manage to do? The only thing he managed is that one is confronted with him wherever one goes. The freedom of belief in this country allowed us to open Quran courses. This is threatened by somebody like Kaplan"

This is of course is a beautiful criticism of a methodism from a strategist's point of view.

Another difficulty is Kaplan's explicit internationalism (which is a logical derivative of his methodism). So there is the rumor that Kaplan had demanded loyalty to the army of Islamic Republic if there should ever be a war between Turkey and Iran²³. This might be consequent - but it is hard to swallow for many Turkish Muslims who are used to closely identify Turkishness and Islam²⁴.

²³ Ali Yüksel, the General Secretary of the Milli Görüş mentioned that in an interview with Uğur Mumcu (Cumhuriyet, 1.3.1987, P.13).

²⁴ The position on Iran was also a reason for a split in the Tebliğ Movement in 1986. Ahmet Polat who had been working together closely with Kaplan for four years claims that he had left the movement because of conflicts over the question whether one should make a minfestation with Chomeyni posters or not (Gür 1993:68)

A third problem might on the long run turn out to be the most serious. This is the difficulty of each revolutionary movement to cope with time. An open movement like the Tebliğ movement is dependent on a certain "drive" - it has to grow or else it vanishes. If it is in the decline it's only chance to survive is to change its particular character: It has to institutionalize and thus turn into a party or a quietistic circle. In short: It has to face the problem for which Max Weber coined the term routinization (Veralltäglicung).

New Developments

Since this text was finished considerable changes took place which - as I feel - confirm my analysis. In December 1991 the Refah Partisi made considerable gains during the general elections in Turkey. This success led to euphoria among the followers of the Milli Görüş in Europe - it was considered to be a confirmation to be on the right way. The success of the Milli Görüş must have been a particular problem to Kaplan because of the closeness of the position of the two groups - both being in the scripturalist camp. Furthermore it came at a time of slow but continued decline of the Tebliğ movement which I relate to the factors mentioned above. In this situation Kaplan evidently decided to radicalize. On April 18th 1992 he gave the speech: "Hakkı sahibine iade" (Return the right to the owner) in which he called out the Islamic State (Türk Federe Islam Devleti - "The Federal Islamic State of Turkey" later: Anadolu Federe Islam Devleti: "The Federal Islamic State of Turkey") and declared himself the acting caliph who would be in office till the real caliph was elected. This radicalization was severely criticized (and sometimes mocked at) by the other organizations; it also led however to unrest within the community. Some of the leading members of the Augsburg community left (among them those

quoted above in this article): They felt that by this move the Tebliğ movement had manouvered itself in the outside: Instead of remaining an open movement it had turned itself into a party. In fact one of the consequences was an increasing articulation of boundaries: It came to clashes between young members of the Milli Görüş and the Tebliğ movement after young activists had attached posters at the mosque of the Milli Görüş condemning the party system to be idolatrous and all who would vote and stand up for elections idolaters and therefore "melun" (damned). However this new and radicalized position proved to be attractive to young men of the second generation (most of them coming from religious families), among them many engineers and medical doctors. In Augsburg at least the young men aged between 15 to 30 nowadays occupy the leading positions in the community. Overall the number of the followers is now increasing again. It may have been the success of the radicalization which may have led Kaplan to a further step: he had himself declared caliph in Köln on March 8 1994.

The other organisations at the same time got closer to each other probably due to the success of the Islamic cause in Turkey. The differences between the different positions play less a role than 5 years ago: There is more cooperation now: One sign is that the Süleymancı, the Nurcu and the Milli Görüş were able to set up an Islamic list for the "Ausländerbeirat" (a foreigner's advisory committee) in Augsburg. The Nurcu became somewhat less methodist after they were allowed to act more openly in the Turkish public. Thus they opened Islamic boarding schools and allowed for putting up a portrait of Atatürk (this symbolic reference to the republic is a prerequisite for getting the permission for opening a school). The Süleymancı are said to be more open and cooperative than five years ago. The Milli Görüş too seem to have become more pluralist thus integrating different currents within the

party.

All these tendencies are however severely criticized by the Kaplancı who feel that they are the last to hold up the true banner of Islam.

Summary and Outlook

In this article I have tried to reconstruct the ideological reasons for the conflicts among the fundamentalist groups of Sunni Turks in Germany. Thus I have stressed the dynamic and processual nature of the fundamentalist movement.

There is one crucial problem which has only been touched so far: That is the factor of social experience - the question which position is plausible to which social group. This question will be discussed in a future article.

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