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und Flüchtlinge

Muslim Organisations and the State - European Perspectives

Beiträge zu Migration und Integration, Band 1

Axel Kreienbrink
and Mark Bodenstein (eds.)

Muslim Organisations and the State - European Perspectives

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Introduction

Axel Kreienbrink and Nilden Vardar

Muslim communities in Europe have a long history. Their origin can be traced back into the 8th century when Al-Andalus started to become a centre of global economic and cultural significance. In the South-Eastern part of Europe the history of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims shaped today's Muslim life in Bosnia. The diversity among Europe's Muslim communities emerged along different historic circumstances like the colonial past of some European countries, immigration for economic reasons (the so called „guest workers“) and more recently the increased arrival of asylum seekers/refugees or students and highly skilled professionals. Today it can be stated that Muslims belong to one of the fastest growing population groups. Hence, their societal and political significance in European societies is steadily increasing, albeit the forms of coexistence differ across Europe.

Only in the last decade awareness of the need for conscious integration efforts for the Muslim communities in Europe rose as, after September 11, non-existing or failed integration policies were identified as a problem. Questions on Muslim societal and political participation and representation as well as Muslim self-organisation became more important. Subsequently, this resulted in respective discourses on specific problems and issues connected to the relationship between the State and religious minorities.

In 2006 the German state started an official dialogue with „the Islam" or better saying with Muslim communities, and thus institutionalised the dialogue on a broad basis. As institutional frame the former Federal Minister of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, launched the German Islam Conference *(Deutsche Islam Konferenz)*. In doing so, Germany followed a path which, in one form or another, several European states like Italy, Spain, Austria, France, Belgium, the Netherlands or the United Kingdom had chosen earlier. All these countries, each with its different State-church laws, policies on religion and societal frameworks, undertook the task to institutionalise a dialogue partner on the national level.

In Austria, for example, Muslims had the possibility to revert to the so called "Islam Act" of 1912, which facilitated the constitution of the *Islamische Religionsgemeinschaft in Österreich* as a public corporation in 1979 enormously. Belgium recognised already in 1974 Islam as religious community and thus created the legal base for religious education. After the failure of the Islamic cultural Centre in Brussels, dominated by Saudi-Arabian influence, as single dialogue partner the *Éxecutif des Musulmans de Belgique* evolved in 1998. In France the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulmans de France* was elected in 2003 on the initiative of the Interior Minister and with the support of the four biggest Muslim organisations in the country. The national council is supplemented by 25 regional councils. In Spain Muslims are represented by the *Comisión Islámica de España*, which was funded under considerable pressure from the State in 1992 out of two rival associations and which concluded – parallel to the protestant church – a cooperation agreement with the Spanish State.

But also in Germany the efforts on the federal level had been preceded by such on the regional or Länder level. Most of them emerged from attempts to regulate the question of religious education. In Lower Saxony, for example, round tables have been installed. In other places such as Baden-Württemberg so called steering groups were set up together with most of the relevant Muslim corporations and associations. These approaches had in common that the representatives of the state tried to create an institutionalised dialogue partner and to emulate to a certain degree an Islamic religious community.

Meanwhile, the Muslim communities themselves undertook some attempts to create a nationwide umbrella organisation, like in 1988 with the *Islamischer Arbeitskreis in Deutschland* (Islamic Working Group in Germany), to which belonged all the major Turkish-Islamic corporations plus the Islamic Centres of Munich, Aachen and Hamburg. In 1994 this working group was transformed into the *Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* (Central Council of Muslims in Germany). Endeavours to use a judgement of the Federal Administrative Court of 2005[1] as "instruction for the building up of an Islamic community under the conditions of German constitutional law" (Graulich, judge at the Federal Administrative Court) can be seen in the same logic. Regional associations (e.g. called Schura) try to reach a federal association *SCHURA Deutschland*, though negotiations with in the Muslim communities did not prosper until today.

1 Judgement BVerwG 6 C 2.04 of 23 February 2005 concerning the entitlement of religious communities for implementation of religious education (cf. www.bundesverwaltungsgericht.de/media/archive/2857.pdf).

The different initiatives in Germany and other European countries give some reason to believe that one of the core problems of acceptance of a central representation lies in the plurality of Muslims and associations and it seems that a reasonable cooperation is apparently hampered due to ethnic, religious and political differences. It is always a crucial question who forms the representations and who feels represented by them. In the given examples across Europe this problem arose several times, be it for ethnic-religious differences between believers of Turkish and Moroccan origin like in Belgium, be it because of the exclusion of secular Muslims due to the fact that the representation is based on the mosque communities like in France, or be it for differences between newly created Muslim immigrant communities and established representations led by native converts like in Spain. If the problem of coming to terms lies within the Muslim communities, then the fundamental question arises whether it should be always only one representation representing the diversity of Muslim tendencies. But if for reasons of constitutional law only one representation is necessary, how can it be organised in a pragmatic way to represent at least a majority of Muslims? The solution of such problems is necessary if a single umbrella organisation shall be functional and shall really reach the Muslims allegedly represented.

To achieve the objective of identifying adequate representatives by the dialogue process of the German Islam Conference, a differentiated look at the experiences of other European countries is worthwhile. But to classify the experiences it is necessary to have a look into the institutional structures of each society, because they predetermine forms of political mobilisation of migrants. It is likely that self-organisation will only take

place within the frame set by expectations of the respective states in the field of State-church laws and policies on religion. Taking this as starting point it is import-ant to have a look on existing Muslim organisations under the perspective whether their structures follow their own Islamic concepts of corporation or whether they are geared on other "successful" organisational forms in the field to get acceptance. What are the respective outcomes on the feeling among Muslim populations of being represented? Does a specific form of representation affect the willingness of the State to accept the body and its speaker as dialogue partner? And eventually there is the question why migrants at all want to (or should) organise themselves in form of religious communities and what the interest of the States could be to have an institutionalised religion?

These and other questions constituted the frame for an expert seminar with European Scholars and Government officials involved in the German Islam Conference, organised by the Research Group of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and held in November 2007 in Nuremberg. Based on presentations given at the seminar the articles of this book provide insights into different approaches for coming to terms with a form of self-organisation which is able to establish a solid basis for interlocution with the State. In presenting the different experiences in European countries this volume wants to provide an overview of approaches and policies in Europe not only referred to Muslim self-organisation in Europe but also to the relationship between state and religious groups in general.

Sabine Riedel opens the comparative part one of the volume with a chapter on the role of state and civil society. She

states that it was the lack of appropriate institutional/public support and efficient integration policies that led to the emergence of migrant Muslim organisations and their increased role in European countries. She argues that even engaged self-organisations remain limited when there is no or hardly any support by state institutions. The role of civil society for the integration of Muslim communities in Europe is seen as crucial, but it remains a central question how and to what extent Muslim representatives can and should be involved in political decision-making processes. Any answer depends on the relationship between state and church in the respective state. Comparing the cases of Great Britain, where the perspective is shaped by the idea of multiculturalism, France with its etatist State-church relations and Germany with a more socio-cultural approach, lines out the contrasting character in the different understandings of State-church relations and the accompanying concepts of Muslim self-organisation (closely linked to the historical, political and societal background of each state) and weighs up advantages and disadvantages of each approach with regard to their effects on Muslim self-organisation.

Given the European diversity of concepts to Muslim Self-Organisation, each type of State-church-relationship bears opportunities and challenges for social cohesion. In this context, **Sara Silvestri** analyses the challenges of state intervention on Muslim self-organisation. She identifies a profound structural and institutional disruption of Islam as religion in European public sphere. Hence, a process of "institutionalising" Islam in European societies aiming at the official recognition of Islam seems inevitable for the author. Such a process is already taking place and it will face challenges not only due to differing

concepts of religious leadership, different notions of integration and various mechanisms of representation but also due to specific characteristics of Islam as a religion. In this regard the emergence of "national Muslim councils" in European countries at the beginning of the 1990s is identified as a new form of institutionalisation, often evolved through intervention of governments. Three different types of councils are categorised based on the mode and degree of state intervention, which are exemplified again by experiences in Great Britain, France and Germany. Silvestri argues, inter alia, that European States are compelled to rethink their ways of addressing religious minority groups, such as Muslims. The awareness that Islam in Europe is a plural and versatile entity, which comes along with a great diversity of opinion, is crucial for this revision.

The second part of the volume is dedicated to some country studies to give a deeper insight into the specific approaches to Muslim self-organisation as well as their distinct challenges.

Mark Bodenstein elaborates especially on the organisational developments in Germany. After a short historical overview of Muslim presence in Germany, Bodenstein describes the legal framework of German State-church relations within which religious communities are entitled to gain official recognition. While no specific legal provision for the general recognition of religious communities exist in Germany, any form of official recognition is connected to the application of certain laws with regard to distinct issues such as mosque building or halal-slaughtering of animals. The only more general reference is given in Article 7, Section 3 of the German constitution *(Grundgesetz)* with regard to the introduction of religious in-

struction in public schools. Although Muslim self-organisation has developed along the requirements of this Article and with regard to the (requirements of the) introduction of religious education, Bodenstein points out that existing organisations are yet far from meeting these conditions, such as a high degree of organisational structures and transparent decision-making. This holds true for all three types of Muslim organisation in Germany which the author classifies according to their underlying approach as "Top-Down", "Bottom-Up" and a mixed form of both as "In Between". The author describes the two main forms of state interaction with Muslim organisations and communities, which are taking place at federal (German Islam Conference) and state level (Round Tables). Bodenstein concludes that the common aim of religious education in public schools has strongly furthered the organisational structure of Muslim groups in Germany. However, he states that there are still provisions to be made with regard to the alignment/adjustment of Muslim self-organisation to an equal status with Churches and Jewish communities.

Subsequently, **Markus Kerber** clarifies the aim of the German Islam Conference and the role of the German Government within it. The Conference initiated by the former Federal Minister for Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, aimed at creating a forum as well as starting a process "for more dialogue, better understanding and growing cooperation" between the Government and the Muslim communities. At the same time the Conference also enhanced the dialogue among Muslims themselves. The (then)[2] preliminary results of the Conference proved that it had

2 The contribution was written before the official end of (the first) German Conference on Islam in mid 2009.

evolved as an instrument of productive dialogue strengthening social cohesion in Germany.

In the case of Spain, presented by **Elena Arigita**, Muslim presence in the country is relatively recent, irrespective the historical presence of Islam in *al-Andalus* in the Middle Ages. The case of Spain is an example of how the institutionalisation of Islam was enforced by government. As a result of self-organisation processes two major Muslim associations had arisen in 1989 and 1991, which had contrasting ideology and profiles – dominated, on the one hand, by native Muslim converts and, on the other hand, by nationalised Muslim migrant groups. But as the government stipulated only one single umbrella organisation as interlocutor, the two organisations were forced in 1992 to constitute the *Comisión Islámica de España* (CIE) as a single representative body and official voice of the Muslim community, being this a prerequisite to sign the cooperation agreement between the Spanish Muslim community and the Spanish state. The agreement of 1992 was perceived as a success, given the rather early stage of recognition of Islam as a religious community (in comparison to other European countries). However, as a result of this top-down process internal fragmentation within the CIE still prevails today and Muslim representation remains only as a institutionalisation at state level with little repercussion on local Muslim communities. According to Arigita, the process of state-driven institutionalisation can be questioned since genuine representation cannot be achieved. She argues that only the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004 led to a paradigm shift with regard to the public debate on Islam, bringing about two major effects: on the one hand, the Spanish government has started a new phase of interlocution with the

Muslim community by launching a renewed dialogue not only with the CIE but also other Muslim organisations. On the other hand, these new steps taken by the government after 2004 led to a change within the landscape of Muslim self-organisation. An authentic awareness of genuine representation among the Muslim community seems to grow and subsequently, the search for new ways of participation can be observed, especially among the recently immigrated Muslims. According to Arigita, this process may well constitute new forms of leadership among Spanish Muslims.

In contrast to Spain, the institutionalisation and self-organisation process within the Muslim community in Italy took place almost a decade later, as described by **Claudia Mantovan**. The diversity of Islam in Italy, which was primarily fed by immigration in the 1980s and 1990s, generated several Muslim organisations and associations. One of the ways Italy is regulating its official relations to other religious groups (beyond Catholics) is an agreement called *Intesa* (similarly to the Spanish model). Despite attempts made by several Muslim organisations to reach such an agreement, the initiatives failed due to their internal discord. Subsequently, as in the aftermath of 9/11 the need for communication with the Muslim community became urging, the Government took the initiative for identifying a representative interlocutor. The result was the creation of the *Consulta per l'Islam Italiano* in 2005, a body which can be described as an advisory board to the Ministry of the Interior. In this top-down solution the members were nominated by the Minister (following in a certain way the French model). However, the effort remained unsuccessful due to its limited representativity of Muslim life in Italy, given the multilevel heterogeneity and compet-

ing structures within. But Mantovan goes further and questions the whole struggle for a single representation proposing a resources orientated approach, which would enable Muslims at the basis to accumulate necessary resources essential for social participation. The result would be the capability to better represent themselves and pursue their interests. Concomitantly, there would be no essential need for an *Intesa* if already existing laws were applied more effectively.

In contrast to Catholic dominated Italy or Spain, discourse on Muslim representation in France is heavily influenced by the idea of laicité, as **Franck Frégosi** elaborates in his contribution. He argues that despite strict separation between religion and state being proclaimed, the state is regularly interfering with religious affairs when it comes to Muslim-related issues. The reasons for this exclusive intervention are rooted in several factors: first, like in many other countries Muslim communities are fragmented and no central representation does exist. Secondly, there is (apparently) a struggle for influence going on among the governments of countries of origin of Muslim migrants in France. Eventually, the security question after the events of 9/11 has also been a crucial reason for tackling Muslims as an exceptional case apart from other religious communities. Considering this, state intervention seems to be a legitimate means to create a "necessary interface" between the various Muslim organisations and public powers in order to enable Muslim representation on the grounds of freedom of religion. Frégosi criticises state intervention, which is aimed at a tailor-made representation in the name of the Muslim interlocutors. But in reality, he argues, the government tries to create a tailor-made Islam as a means of social control of the Muslim population in France –

severely putting religious neutrality of the state at stake. Thus, Frégosi favours an alternative, putting forward that any modernisation or adjustment of Islam to modern conditions needs to evolve from within the Muslim community and should not be state-induced.

The last of the country studies is dedicated to the United Kingdom. **Seán McLoughlin** examines the New Labour government's emphasis on civic renewal and the related emergence of what he calls the "faith relations industry". In this context the engagement of Muslim organisations with the state shifted over the past few decades. The nature of Muslim organisations developed from a more ethnically-oriented local level representation in the 1960s to a "professionalised" national level representation of Muslims as "Muslims" from 1989 onwards. After elaborating on the implications of this trend McLoughlin exemplifies the difficulties in developing a nationwide diasporic Muslim leadership in the context of global conflicts and challenges of the "War on Terror" after 9/11, which holds also true for most other European countries. Dispersed authority structures within the Muslim community impeded the efforts for public and political recognition. The author argues that the British approach of facilitating the self-organisation of Muslim representative bodies (instead of state intervention into their affairs) was accompanied by two further processes: On the one hand, anti-Western imaginaries of the diasporic Muslim public spheres were put under greater critical scrutiny. On the other hand, Muslim groups/representatives critically questioned their avoidance of secular politics and began to engage within the secular frame in order to gain religious leadership.

The final part of the book comes back to the specific situation in Germany. A deeper insight into the question of identity of migrant Muslims and its organisational implications in Germany is given by **Martin Engelbrecht**. Taking into account the national and historical background of Turkish migrants, the overwhelming majority of Muslim migrants in Germany, the author describes the circumstances under which Turkish dominated religious life and organisations have evolved. Engelbrecht points out the correlation between religiousness on the one hand and factors such as education, language and integration on the other hand. He argues that there are distinct patterns in Turkish migrant's convictions, which either help or hamper integration: tradition versus traditionalism, universalism versus fundamentalism, nation versus nationalism. The difference between tradition and traditionalism refers to religion being perceived/expressed either in a constructive and integrative way (tradition) or in a reluctant and destructive way (traditionalism). The second pattern of universalism vs. fundamentalism towards the understanding of religion is described by the phenomenon in which "universalistic" Muslim migrants try to find new ways between modern and traditional values. Within the context of nation vs. nationalism, the national bonds of Turkish migrants to their country of origin – which are natural and necessary up to a certain extend – can take shape in a sectarian way, if there is no constructive commitment to the new state and society. Hence, Engelbrecht sees Turkish nationalism as a destructive factor, when combined with religiousness and a traditionalist understanding of religion. He concludes that tendencies towards a universalistic Muslim identity, which embraces German society, ought to be strengthened in opposition to Islamist and Turkish nationalist positions. Nonetheless, he

states that Muslims in Germany are making considerable efforts to develop a self-reliant Islam – a trend that could be supported/promoted best at the individual level (identity building) as well as at the organisational level by bottom-up processes.

Further research is needed in order to better understand integration processes and the creation of adequate structures and conditions for operating Muslim self-organisation. A great leap towards this aim has already been taken as **Jörn Thielmann** can show in his final look at the current state of research on Muslim migrants and Islam in Germany. He identifies "a Turkish bias" as an obstacle for comprehensive research on this issue because most of the studies conducted on Muslims in Germany – no matter whether quantitative or qualitative – mainly concentrate on the majoritarian population of Turkish background. Such studies therefore do not reflect the existing diversity within Muslims and Islam in Germany in leaving out the dynamics of small Muslim migrant denominations with different ethnic backgrounds. But these non-Turkish Muslims account for a share of almost 40 percent of all Muslims in Germany, so that such a Turkish bias can distort results crucially. Eventually, Thielmann identifies some blind spots that need to be explored by further research: Muslim organisations, institutions and networks and Muslim diversity as such, intellectual production and perception of Islamic knowledge, Muslim media, religious practices and conversion from and to Islam.

As the contributions in this volume show, European societies have made considerable progress in organising their relationships towards their Muslim communities. Nevertheless, there seems still a long way to go in order to optimize Muslim

self-organisation and representation in the respective countries since Europe can not be imagined without the Muslim presence anymore. Here, effort and creativity with regard to attaining pragmatic and efficient solutions are needed from both state institutions and Muslim religious organisations. Keeping this in mind, further research on the relationship between Islam and the state in Western societies will remain a crucial task. By presenting the European state of the art on this issue the volume aims to give suggestions and thereby contribute to this task.

I. Comparative Perspectives

Muslim Self-Organisation Between Etatism and Civil Society: Countries and Concepts

Sabine Riedel

In the 70s of the last century various Muslim immigrants living as guest workers in different European countries decided to stay in the new host countries for giving their families a better perspective of life. Little by little, new non-governmental organizations founded by Muslims became a part of the so called civil society. Their activities today are not focused only to religious services but also to socioeconomic engagements in founding educational, cultural and business associations as well as self-help groups. Today nearly all Muslim umbrella organisations – for example in Germany the Turkish-Islamic Union (DITIB), the Muslim Council as well as the Central Council of the Muslims in Germany (ZMD) – have their own associations or working groups for Muslim youth or Muslim women, for special social services, research and educational centres.[1]

1 See for example the Centre for Social Support (Zentrum für Soziale Unterstützung) of the DITIB: www.ditib.de/ [Accessed 25 March 2009]; or the Women's department an Youth department of the Islamic Community Milli Görüş (Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş - IGMG), which is the greatest Organisation of the Muslim Council (Islamrat): www.igmg.de/verband/islamic-community-milli-goerues.html [Accessed 25 March 2009]; see also the Central Council of the Muslims in Germany (Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland – ZMD): www.zentralrat.de [Accessed 25 March 2009]; in: Lemmen (2000).

Because of the lack of sufficient public support and a consistent integration policy in the last decades these networks of Muslim organisations became more important and at least indispensable for Muslim immigrants. They give them further information or assistance for managing the demands of everyday life, education and working environment and on this way gained an essential influence over key questions of social integration and finally of political participation. After the September 11 attacks European governments have realised the consequences of their failed integration policies as there are the low level of education under Muslim population, the high rate of illiteracy and unemployment and the appearance of parallel societies which are at risk of poverty. It is obvious that the best engagement of self organisations is limited if there is no additional backing by state institutions.

1. Concepts of Civil Society and Models of Church-State Relation

Therefore the starting point of the discussion about better integration measures is the question how far Muslim representatives of the civil society could or should be involved in the process of policy making. The answer depends primarily on two factors: the meaning of civil society and the relation between state and church. Firstly we have to take into consideration different definitions of civil society from which two are the most important: Civil society could be understood either as a third sector between state and market, between the political and economic system or on the contrary as a social movement which became a part of the political system. In the first case civil society is defined as a corrective element enabling the control of state representatives of democracies as well as authoritarian

regimes. This definition allows us to explain the beginning of the transformation processes in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe in the late 80s of the last century (Rieger 1998: 736). In the second case organised parts of the civil society are cooperating with state institutions and at least are able to substitute them in some public spheres. This concept became popular under the name cooperative or deliberative democracy which aims to incorporate base policy and arise the legitimating of lawmaking.

The question how far political integration concepts are also seeking the participation of Muslim Civil society is above all connected with the existing models of state-church relations and the acceptance of an equal treatment. Whereas all EU-member states are engaged to guarantee religious freedom and equal treatment by the European Convention on Human Rights and by the European anti-discrimination legislation so that Muslims as individuals are well protected against any form of disadvantages[2], Muslim communities do not enjoy the same rights as Christian religious groups. The reason for that is well known but mostly neglected by the current interreligious dialogue: Up to the foundation of modern European democracies at the beginning of the 20th century, state and church institutions were closely intertwined. For European monarchs Christianity was an ideological source to justify their absolute power over state and society. By the so called divine right they defined their rule by the will of God which enabled them to control the

2 See details of the EU's Equal Treatment Directives and the progress in implementing in: European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 2006.

public as well as the spiritual sphere. The secularisation process which started in various European countries about hundred years ago has brought different results so that state institutions and Christian churches today are more or less separated or independent. The three main models in Europe are the state-church model, the cooperationist and the secular model (Riedel 2008: 252). It is obvious that integration measures for Muslim immigrants concern these current church-state relations in the sense that they are able to support a development in interest of a future equal treatment of religious communities or, in the opposite, to defend existing privileges of Christian churches seeking to prevent any changement.

2. The Multicultural Approach in Great Britain

The case of Great Britain shows us how the political approach of integration policy depends on the model of church-state relations and the understanding of civil society. After the British parliament in 1965 has adopted its first Race Relations Act to prevent discrimination the idea of a multicultural society became more and more popular under the influence of Canadian and US-American philosophers. Their theory of communitarianism assumes that the society is divided into different communities by culture, language, ethnicity or religion and that their recognition could lead to solution of interethnic tensions or conflicts. Firstly conservative politicians regarded this approach as an instrument against nationalism which demands from immigrants a totally cultural assimilation. Finally in the 90s, the concept of a multiethnic British society was completed by New Labour in regarding religious consciousness as important as ethnic or racial identity (McLoughlin 2005: 58). The government of Tony Blair initiated the amendment of the Equality

Act in 2006 which protects people against any form of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief (Equality Act 2006).

With its multicultural approach the British government supported representatives of the Muslim community to concentrate their activities on integration measures appealing on their social autonomy and their own responsibility for a stronger engagement of "their" part of civil society for a better education, employment and social welfare. The result was not only the institutionalisation of Muslim organisations in the United Kingdom but also the affirmation of the current church-state relations with an established church. As Seán McLaughlin shows us in his publications, "Muslims have benefited from the presence of a Church of England which not only legitimates space for religion in public life but has also been hospitable to sharing that space with others" (McLoughlin 2005: 57). On the other side we can realise that also the established church has benefited from an increasing importance of Muslim identity. The statement of the archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, saying "the adoption of certain aspects of Sharia law in the UK ‚seems unavoidable'" [3], can be interpreted as an attempt to defend the existence of religious law in general and privileges of the established Church of England in particular.

After the London bomb attacks of July 7 and 21, 2005, the multicultural approach of the British government got a lot of stick. It was said that the four Muslim immigrants founded guilty of plotting are naturalized as British citizens although

3 Sharia law in UK is 'unavoidable', in: BBC News, 7 February 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7232661.stm [Accessed 25 March 2009], also: Entrüstung über Scharia-Ideen des Erzbischofs von Canterbury, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 9.2.2008, p. 2.

they lived in parallel societies influenced by so called hate preachers. New research publications are pointing out that multiculturalism has demanded for Muslims the right to be different so that religiosity is growing amongst the younger generation and "Islamist groups have gained influence at local and national level by playing the politics of identity" (Mirza/Senthilkumaran/Ja'far 2007: 6). The multicultural approach ignores the fact that British Muslims are not a homogenous group but individuals with a diversity of opinions. Other critics are coming from British liberals accusing the government of disregarding basic civil rights by its new anti-terror-laws (Riedel 2005: 3). The consequence of the bomb attacks should not be the closure of mosques and bookshops but a discussion about alternatives measures of integration.

3. The Etatistic Approach in France

The French approach to Muslim self-organisations is the exact opposite to the British policy of multiculturalism. The political system of France is characterized by a strict neutrality of state institutions concerning cultural, ethnic or religious consciousness. One important legal basis is the "Law on the Separation of the State and the Church" (1905) which emphasises in its first paragraph that "The Republic neither recognizes, nor salaries, nor subsidizes any religion".[4] This indifferent attitude of the French state to the cultural, ethnic or religious affiliation of its citizens can not be described as a doubt about the existence of such differences or their communities. It is more a symbol for the republican principle of equal treatment which has to avoid

4 See: "La République ne reconnaît, ne salarie ni ne subventionne aucun culte", in: Loi du 9 décembre 1905 concernant la séparation des Eglises et de l'Etat. Version consolidée au 01 janvier 2006.

and persecute any form of social discrimination. Therefore, the French government affirms that its prohibition of wearing religious symbols like the headscarf at schools is in accordance with the European anti-discrimination legislation.[5]

The neutrality in cultural, ethnic or religious matters concerns also the understanding of civil society, which is defined by various French researchers as something which is in opposite to state institutions: "[...] le terme de société civile est opposé à celui d'Etat" (Daucy 1986: 117). In this meaning, civil society could become a competing power for the ruling elite, not as a part of the political system but as a social movement with an anti-etatistic orientation. This is an explication for the etatistic approach of the French authorities in creating its forms of dialogue with Muslims in France. Their greatest fear is that the activities of Muslim self-organisations in the long run could undermine the existing political system. Franck Frégosi shows us in his contribution in this volume on the situation in France how this perception of a anti-etatistic or "subversive" Islam has produced a "preacher state syndrome" and the illusion that a state control over the building of Islam institutions and their financing would reduce this danger.

Under the impression of the civil unrest among immigrants in October and November 2005, the increasing state influence by the former home secretary Nicolas Sarkozy in founding the French Council of the Muslim Faith (*Conseil Français du*

5 See: Loi n° 2004-228 du 15 mars 2004 encadrant, en application du principe de laïcité, le port de signes ou de tenues manifestant une appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, collèges et lycées publics.

Culte Musulman, CFCM) met with criticisms. On the one hand this etatistic approach is contradictory to the principle of neutrality of state institutions in religious matters. Furthermore it was argued that an institutionalisation of the Islam in France has produced the opposite result activating only the organised part of the Muslim civil society which is dominated by Muslim associations with an islamist orientation and foreign financing (Riedel 2007a: 21f.). This critical remark was affirmed in June 2008 when the CFCM has elected new representatives and its new leader Mohammed Moussaoui. The imam and mathematics lecturer at the University of Avignon is the vice president of the Moroccan Federation of French Muslims (*Rassemblement des musulmans de France*, RMF) which won about 43 percent.[6] More influence with about 30 percent gained also the Union of French Islamic Organisations (UOIF) which is closely linked to the Muslim Brotherhood.

4. The Socio-Cultural Approach in Germany

The German concept of a political approach to Muslim self-organisation was created in 2006 by the minister of interior Wolfgang Schäuble. It was the first attempt of a German government at all to initiate a long-term dialogue with Muslim communities and followed the new immigration and integration policy. Since this time all political parties had accepted the fact that Germany is an immigration country and "Germany needs immigrants" for its future (Independent Commission on Migration 2001: 1). The reforms started in 1999 with an amendment

6 Tom Heneghan: New French Muslim Council leader pledges reform, in: Reuters News, 22 June 2008; Moussaoui nouveau président du CFCM, in: Le Figaro, 23 June 2008.

of the nationality law (1999) giving immigrants better conditions for naturalization and acquirement of the same rights and duties as all German citizens (Federal Ministry of the Interior 2005a: 87). German nationality today depends no longer on cultural criteria like heritage, ethnic or religious consciousness but is determined by political preconditions confirmed by law and the constitution. For avoiding discrimination on grounds of religion or belief German policy is oriented to the European Convention on Human Rights and integrated in the European anti-discrimination legislation.

In contrast to France and Great Britain the German approach to Muslim self-organisation could be described as a socio-cultural approach. It is distinguishable on the one hand from a culturalism based in German history on the linkage between ethnicity and nationality and on the other hand from the multicultural concept which divides society in different cultural, ethnic or religious communities. Like in France the German state institutions are also neutral concerning the religious consciousness. As the publication of the German Ministry of the Interior "Welcome to Germany" underlines: "Germany is a secular state and does not have a state religion" (Federal Ministry of the Interior 2005b: 54). In reality the German church-state relation is more complicated because of the specific role of churches in civil society: Faith is defined not as a private but as a public affair, so that some churches (mainly the Protestants and Catholics) are enjoying the legal status as a public body or corporation with their own social and educational institutions. In this point the German socio-cultural approach like the British multicultural one allows church organisations to become in some spheres a part of the political system.

The new initiative of the German Ministry of the Interior for integrating Muslims has established a special form of dialogue in form of the "German Islam Conference" (*Deutsche Islam Konferenz*, DIK) (Federal Ministry of the Interior 2007; Kerber in this volume). This national framework aims to avoid the negative affects of the French etatistic approach in rejecting any support to institutionalise an "Islam of Germany" and the dominance of organisations influenced and financed by foreign countries. In answer to the question, who represents the Muslims in Germany, the DIK includes in its dialogue not only representatives from the five largest Muslim umbrella organisations, but also ten so called "secular Muslims", that means immigrants without a special religious or political affiliation but with an cultural islamic background. The other fifteen German state officials of the Islam Conference are acting as mediators. The socio-cultural approach is criticized by Muslim organisations as well as by politicians and the public opinion. Whereas the representatives of the organised Islam are calling for recognition of their leadership, some critics are asking, how far these Muslim organisations are connected to the Muslim bases (see the contribution of Mark Bodenstein). Another problem is that the socio-cultural approach is missing an open dialogue with the Islam as a religion so that a greater audience of the German society is not able to know that a separation of state and religion could be also possible and acceptable by Muslims (Riedel 2007b: 36-45).

5. Pros and Cons of the Various Political Approaches

The comparison of the various political approaches to Muslim self-organisations has to take into consideration that they have been developed under specific historical, political and social conditions. As explained above, the regarding European countries have different understandings of civil society and models of church-state relation. Therefore it would be quite difficult to transfer a successful approach from one country to another. Furthermore, we have to be aware that there is not one straightforward solution for the integration of Muslims in European societies. Under these circumstances, why an analysis nevertheless could makes sense? The unassuming answer is that we must learn from each other to prevent negative results. As the following country studies illustrate a careless disregard of these experiences could, in the worst case, produce the opposite affect that means a strengthening of islamist ideas and their political actors. This paragraph intends to give some statements provoking a fruitful discussion.

The most convincing pro argument for the British multicultural approach is its engagement to evoke more sensibility and tolerance for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity in our modern societies. This liberal position that every individual has the freedom of cultural, religious or political consciousness has been changed by the ideas of communitarianism. Reviewing the lack of social cohesion this concept offers us the binding power of culture or religion. But at least a contradiction of multiculturalism remains: it postulates cultural communities as the main principle of social cohesion whereas their representatives are tending to oppose an integration of "their community" into

common society. One obstacle for questioning the produced deficits is that state institutions have come to an arrangement with their communities: They are respected as a part of civil society but have to bear more responsibility for social affairs supporting the withdrawal of public support. Some researchers are pointing at the experience of other countries where the absence of functioning state institutions constrains the development of civil society at all, so that there is no hope for any further democratization (Hillebrand/Birle 1997). A last contraction concerning the multicultural approach has to be mentioned: The unsolved integration deficits have recently produced an increasing fear of terrorist threat so that Great Britain as the country of origin of liberalism is going to restrict fundamental human rights and to refuse the "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" which prohibits also "Any discrimination based on [...] religion or belief".[7]

In contrast to Great Britain, the French approach is oriented to strengthen the anti-discrimination policy on European level. This consequent course for a policy of equal treatment is the most convincing aspect of the etatistic approach, because it makes no allowances for any restriction of human rights. But we have to notice a greater difference between this normative framework and the French social reality which is the reason for civil unrests among young immigrants. In this context Nicolas Sarkozy recommended a so-called "rupture" that means a break of the existing political system in favour of a new church-state relation. He wants to finance the great churches by state giving

7 See the Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in: Official Journal of the European Union, 14 December 2007.

also Muslims the same public support. As it was discussed above, the great disadvantage of this idea is the problem that state institutions could abuse such a new financial dependence for a political control over faith-based organisations. Therefore official representatives of the French Catholic church are not convinced remembering the state dominance over religions during the rule of absolutism and the authoritarian regimes. Whereas the "Law on the Separation of the State and the Church" (1905) has broken with this tradition, the political rule in the French colonies of the Muslim world continued in controlling the religious institutions and organisations. So the French etatistic approach to Muslim organisations is actually in danger to fall back in this period of state dominance.

In opposite to France and Great Britain the German sociocultural approach respects the independence and autonomy of religious groups on grounds of the recently history of Nazism. The self-determination of churches and other organisations of the civil society is one of the key benefits of the democratic system after the National Socialist dictatorship and the socialist regime of the former GDR and therefore the most convincing argument for this approach. But like in other countries, there are also in Germany contradictions producing social tensions. The great Muslim umbrella organisations for example are demanding an equal treatment with the status as a public body or corporation. Behind the negative answer of state institutions stands the juridical problem that many Muslim self-organisations are more cultural associations than religious groups so that they

have no legitimacy for calling such an equal treatment. Nevertheless, German officials cannot avoid this sensitive topic and have the duty to verify this question for every single Muslim organisation. An interesting example for Germany could be Austria where the Islamic Religious Community is recognised as a representative body. Another way for guarantee equal treatment between Muslim organisations and Christian churches could be a reduction of church influence on spheres where public interests are concerned. As other European countries like Spain, Italy, Sweden and the Netherlands demonstrate, the models of church-state relations are in motion and could be changed in favour of the autonomy and self-determination of faith-based organisations.

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Muslim Self-Organisation in Europe: Risks and Odds of State Intervention

Sara Silvestri

1. Introduction

This paper examines the risks and odds of state intervention in the recent process of institutionalisation or self-organisation of Islam in Europe. In order to do so it first looks into the reasons that make Islam important to European governments. Second, it considers the implications of the crisis of leadership in Islam for the development of Muslim representative bodies in Europe. Third, it examines the process whereby Muslim councils were semi-artificially created in Europe and, fourth, it tries to categorise and compare them in order to assess their effectiveness and the different roles states play in these organisations.

2. The Concern with Islam

The first decade of the 21st century has been characterised in Europe by increasing attention, on the part of state and international institutions, as well as of the general public, to the issue of Islam. This concern has been essentially driven by five factors:

1. The awareness that European legal and political systems should be adjusted in order to fully implement the principles of equality, anti-discrimination, free-

dom of religion and that this does better govern diverse and interconnected societies where ethnic and religious pluralism is growing.

2. The acknowledgement that a transnational religion with a strong universalist message – Islam – is not just increasingly "visible and assertive" in Europe, but has obviously become a "feature" of Europe since large numbers of Muslims have settled permanently in Europe and are in fact "European citizens".[1]
3. The need to respond to the causes and consequences of terrorism and violence stemming from Islamist groups and ideologies.[2]
4. The appearance of discussions around the application of Sharia law in Europe and its implications for Muslim believers and for secular society.

1 The Muslim inhabitants of European countries with a large Muslim demographic presence (like Great Britain, France, Belgium or Holland) tend to hold the legal status of "citizens". The majority of Muslims living in Italy and Spain (two countries that experienced only recently large influxes of individuals coming from Muslim regions of the world) and quite a few Muslims in Germany are still "immigrants" although naturalisation is increasing.

2 I use interchangeably the terms "Islamism" and "political Islam" to indicate political movements that resort to a narrative and symbolic repertoire based on the history and key doctrinal concepts of the religion of Islam. Such movements originated in North Africa, the Middle East and Asia at the beginning of the 20th century, in the context of a political and ideological confrontation with the West and the consequences of decolonisation. Although several groups borne out of these movements ended up implicated in bloody situations, it would be inaccurate to establish a direct correlation between faith-based political engagement and terrorism.

5. The emergence of pro-democracy reform movements in the Middle East and North Africa coming from the Islamist tradition.

This attention to Islam and Europe's Muslims has been articulated in various ways. These include: general calls for the "integration" (whether social, economic, cultural, or juridical) and "political participation" of Muslim minorities; endeavours to steer existing Islamic institutions (e.g. mosques, schools, sharia councils) and other forms of "Muslim self-organisation" (e.g. ethno-cultural associations, advocacy groups, networks providing social services, Muslim media) and incorporate them fully into European society; dilemmas as to whether to engage in political dialogue with Islamist parties in the Muslim world (cf. Asseburg/Brumberg 2007); attempts to strengthen "Muslim-Government relations" in Europe, both by looking domestically and internationally; initiatives in the field of intercultural dialogue. In order to tackle the issue spelt out in the title of this paper, it is important to start by expanding a little on these last two concepts of Muslim-Government relations and of intercultural dialogue.

In the decade spanning the late 1990s and the early 2000s the idea of "Muslim-government" relations often translated into attempts to establish in Europe, in a rather artificial way, "representative" and "consultative" Muslim bodies. Such entities – made up of Muslims who are either European citizens or long-term immigrants – were expected to function as official Islamic "interlocutors" with European state authorities as well as with other religious and civil society groups. However, the idea of "Muslim-Government" relations can also refer to a different

thing. For about two decades before the idea of national Muslim councils came up, establishing official relations with Muslims based in Europe – especially as long as these individuals were simple "immigrants" and not "citizens" in the countries where they were residing and working – almost automatically implied diplomatic contacts. Such contacts were either with these immigrants' countries of origin or with prominent political actors like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), i.e. three major poles of attraction in terms of religious authority and of economic influence for the Muslim (Sunni and Shia) population across the globe. This means that the Muslims of Europe did not have a chance to engage with or express directly to European society their own concerns and claims, which were instead filtered by non-European governments.

As the notion of "intercultural dialogue" gained currency in the run up to 2008 (established by the EU as the "Year of Intercultural Dialogue"), a current of opinion developed in certain European countries according to which engaging in "intercultural dialogue" at the end of the day meant establishing formal mechanisms for governments to relate to Muslim communities, for instance by promoting the creation of national Muslim councils. Whereas it is important to include such initiatives as one of the many facets of intercultural dialogue it is nevertheless crucial to realise that intercultural dialogue is not just about developing institutional and political relations that are sensitive to issues of culture, religion and identity. Intercultural dialogue entails a broader effort implying a change in mentality directed towards a more "human" or ethical dimension of politics (beyond concerns with power, economic interest, and

security); it means adopting an "intercultural mindset" in whatever individuals and institutions do. We could argue that intercultural dialogue helps to refocus both on individual and on societal responsibility in a way that is in line with the concepts of "cosmopolitan citizenship" and "cosmopolitan democracy (cf. Archibugi/Held/Köhler 1998).

3. Structural Difficulties that Hamper Easy Engagement

Before looking into the pros and cons of establishing Muslim councils in Europe let us explore the difficulties that hamper or delay the engagement of European institutions with the Muslim communities of Europe. The following pages show how most of the problems are actually due to historical developments and "structural" difficulties rather than to a clash of values or civilisations, as the Huntingtonian thesis would like us to believe.[3]

The emergence of Islam in the European public sphere is evident but is happening in a disorganised way and across an ummah (the global community of the faithful) that is fractured. This is because, as with Protestantism, Islam is a faith focused on the direct relationship between the believer and God, and without significant intermediary figures and hierarchical structures comparable to those of the Catholic or Orthodox churches. Moreover, Muhammad left no instructions as to how to select his successor to lead Muslims (religiously and politically) after his death. In the absence of Muslim institutions with a wide recognition and legitimacy from across the variety of Muslim

3 The following two paragraphs draw on Silvestri 2007: 170ff.

communities, European governments have experienced considerable difficulty in relating to and addressing the needs of their Muslim populations.

The nature of these difficulties is rooted in a combination of legal, structural and political issues, as well as perceptions. The socio-political dominance exercised by the Church in Europe throughout the centuries, combined with Enlightenment-driven notions of secularism, has also shaped the way bureaucracies, public authorities and legal systems all over the continent have dealt with, and still relate to, religion in general and with Islam more specifically. On the one hand, European states enthusiastically support equality and religious freedom whilst operating within the framework of the separation between private and public sphere. On the other hand, the way states have developed their relations with religious groups is still shaped by corporatist models and by the traditional pattern of church-state relations, which still reflects, if anything in this very terminology, the privileged position enjoyed until recently by the Christian churches in this part of the world.

4. The "Normalisation" of Islam and the Establishment of National Muslim Councils[4]

Before the presence of an increasingly strong, and yet multiform, unstructured and a-cephalous Islam in the public sphere, European states found themselves facing two options. Either they had to rethink altogether the way they relate (through their legal and administrative provisions) to this growing minority religion; or they could engineer and speed up

4 This section draws on Silvestri 2007: passim.

the process whereby state agencies grant official recognition to minority religions by proactively "institutionalizing" Islam, i.e. by promoting the establishment of Muslim representative institutions, whether from scratch or by drawing upon existing resources and forms of self-organisation.

There is an expectation that such institutions should be in place if Muslims want to "earn" a place in the complex mechanisms of governance in EU institutions and member states. This is, first, because Muslims are perceived – and often tend to present themselves, by insisting on the unity of the ummah – as a bloc, as a community sharing fundamental values, sensitivities, and perspectives which are often discriminated against or ignored. Second, a structural problem comes into play when we talk of Muslim engagement and representation with European states and societies; that is, the idea that Islam should "fit in" with the criteria that regulate relations with the dominant faith groups. Such criteria are rooted in at least three basic expectations:

1. Islam should behave like an "organised" belief, with mechanisms of representation and religious leaders in clear positions of power. This is based on the assumption that the traditional church-state model within the secular framework of the separation between public and private sphere would work for Islam too.
2. There is a somewhat abstract notion of "integration" which de facto differs between various multicultural, assimilationist, or mixed practices adopted by European states.

3. Muslim organisations should be representative both of the demographic and of the doctrinal characteristics of the Muslim populations of Europe.

In short, Muslim communities are implicitly expected to adopt and adapt to the existing pattern of relations between the state and ethnic and religious communities in order to engage with the social and political context where they live. As a consequence, new forms of institutionalisation of Islam (other than mosques and Islamic schools) have begun to appear in Europe, often through the direct intervention of European governments.

Elsewhere I have illustrated the emergence of "national Muslim councils" (Silvestri 2005: 101-129; Silvestri forthcoming 2009). These bodies are created with the expectation that they constitute official interlocutors available for consultation and capable of representing the Muslim community and acting as bridges between the grassroots level and the state. This process inaugurates a "domestication" or "normalisation" of a European version of Islam shaped around the idea that a "moderate" (and artificial) form of Islam should be supported in order to do justice to Muslim minorities, but also to stem radicalisation.

The two decades bridging the 20th and 21st centuries have witnessed the establishment and spreading of this common pattern of institutionalisation of Islam within the borders of the EU. This has been mainly a top-down, state-driven dynamic, although a mutual interest in formalising relations is clearly visible among many Muslim groups and individuals living in Europe too. There are various motivations behind this move and

security concerns are certainly top of the list. However, beside the necessity to maintain law and order and to counter terrorism (i.e. to control specific social, ethnic and religious groups at risk of "radicalisation"), there is also a genuine intention to facilitate communication between state institutions and Muslim individuals in order to do justice to the principles of freedom of religion and non-discrimination. In this way, the state seeks – or at least claims to be able – to respond better to the needs of European Muslims and to protect them from abuse and discrimination. Several Muslim individuals and organisations, for their part, though critical of the security aspect of this exercise and of the continuous use of the words "moderate" and "Islamic extremism" and "Islamic terrorism" seem to welcome the prospective of a platform (with money and public visibility attached to it) to channel their concerns.

5. Typologies of Muslim Councils

Islamic "commissions" and "councils" started to emerge in Europe from the early 1990s: the *Comisión Islámica de España* in 1992, the *Exécutif des musulmans de Belgique* in 1996, the Muslim Council of Britain in 1997, the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman* in France in 2003, the Italian *Consulta* in 2005; the *Deutsche Islam Konferenz* in Germany in 2006.

Although many similarities can be found in the motivations of Muslim individuals and of state institutions to establish these bodies, their functioning, the structural conditions of the specific countries, and the strategies adopted by each country and Muslim group differ slightly. Factors that determine these

differences include: the variety of versions of Islam that exist across Europe; ideologies; the geographical and national origins of the people involved; the socioeconomic circumstances of the local Muslim population; cultural and historical features that characterise specific European countries and their approach to secularisation; national and EU provisions concerning immigration and citizenship; patterns of church-state relations; and attitudes towards foreigners and minorities in individual countries.

Another major difference is due to the role of the state behind the establishment of these Muslim councils. Broadly speaking one could categorise them into three types:

a. Councils that came into being thanks to a hard top-down approach of the state (typically where in the country concerned there were little or weak forms of self-organisation).
b. Councils that were essentially the outcome of a strong civil society – bottom-up – mobilisation and where the state remained officially behind the scenes but encouraged the initiative.
c. Councils that were the outcome of a mixed approach, that is where the state openly encouraged the formation of a representative Muslim body and even offered some logistical structures.

To clarify this categorisation let me give some examples.[5] The Italian experience falls under (a). As organised Islam there was both fragmented and weak, the Minister of the Interior established the *Consulta* by decree and personally appointed the few worthy of becoming members.

The British case appears to fit into example (b) because the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), a large and well-run umbrella organisation but not a "representative" one in demographic or theological terms, was never officially endorsed by the government and yet was regarded for quite some time as a privileged interlocutor and as a protégé of New Labour. With time, and especially after the London bombings of 2005, however, the MCB increasingly lost its appeal and credibility (many ordinary Muslims began to accuse its members of being self-appointed political opportunists not caring for the young who were ending up in terrorism circles) and other competing Muslim organisations emerged, like the Sufi Council of Britain, which allegedly has stolen the support of the government. However, the only time the British government attempted to coordinate somehow the different Muslim groups and movements that exist in Britain was in the post-crisis context in the summer of 2005, when it called for a task force on British Islam composed of a variety of people with the most diverse backgrounds to reflect upon the various aspects of Islam in Britain and on the prevention of radicalisation.

Although membership into the French Muslim Council works by election and membership into the German one takes

5 These issues are tackled more in detail in Silvestri, forthcoming 2009.

place by a careful system of appointments and proportional representation, both models actually appear to fall under category (c). In both countries a number of separate groups were already "self-organised" and each government simply provided a platform to bring them together by allowing a degree of independence to the organisations involved and their members but at the same time by restricting the membership (through elections in France, through quotas destined to each organisation in Germany). The Ministry of the Interior is behind both cases, as also in Italy.

None of these models is perfect or provides the right recipe to proceed. I would even argue that these councils are useful only in the short term and un-necessary in the long-term because they promote a segmentation of society. However it is important to note their existence and they should be appreciated as "experiments" of governments and of Muslim individuals that are trying to explore the appropriate method to govern religious pluralism. In addition, what is particularly interesting and innovative in the German case is that the architects of the *Islam Konferenz* made sure that ordinary individuals of Muslim faith (and in some cases even simply of Muslim "background"), not affiliated to any Mosque or Islamic organisation are involved.

In general four caveats should spelt out in relation to these Muslim councils initiatives. First, not all Muslims might want to identify themselves with such bodies. In particular individuals who are already fully "integrated" into European society might regard these initiatives as steps backs that propose sectarian identifications.

Second, governments should be aware that these councils are vulnerable to the monopolisation of Islamist groups who are better organised and resourced than ordinary individuals and civil society associations. The problem here would not lie in the fear that Islamist groups involved in these councils could support terrorism (in fact the Islamist groups who are involved in these councils tend to be quite liberal and have quite modest agendas, typically focused on combating discrimination and promoting religious freedom, whereas hardline Islamists are not involved altogether as they reject a priority engagement with a Kufr political system) (cf. Silvestri 2006; Klausen 2005). The problem is more that of guaranteeing diversity of views in these Muslim councils. Vocal groups with a clear political agenda may in the long term put to silence less politicised individuals in the council and may impose their own ideological or prescriptive religious views on the others and pretend to speak on behalf of all the Muslim population.

Third, there is a risk that political parties and coalitions jump on the boat of Islam for political opportunism, whether to support or to condemn Muslims, as it is evident in Italy, from the left's strategic support of Muslims in order to undermine the Catholic forces, or the vitriolic opposition to Islam from certain wings of the right and from the Lega Nord. Vice versa, political opportunism can also appear when Muslim individuals aspiring to power, visibility, and leadership enter into political compromises driven by personal gains rather than in the interest of the community.

Fourth, the amount of attention (and resources) Muslims have received on the part of European policy-makers recently

could in the long term cause societal tensions. The issue of competition between ethnic and religious groups in Britain for instance was matter of great concern for the representatives of non-governmental organisations and local authorities that attended a major conference in Manchester, in November 2008, on the future of social cohesion in Britain. Black minority communities in particular felt that now their own voice and concerns were not heard and that all the attention and public money was going to Muslims or to faith-based initiatives. Although one would have to check whether these complains are a reality or a perception of it, it is important to be aware of the emergence of these perceptions and to try to prevent the emergence of such polarisations in society.

6. Conclusions

So, faced with the vocal presence of Islam in the public sphere, European states are compelled to rethink the way they relate to minority religious communities such as Islam. Muslim communities, for their part, can decide whether to adapt to the existing pattern of religion-state relations in order to engage with the social and political context where they live, or whether to adopt the more market-driven and perhaps more effective path of remaining "disestablished" actors in the world of pressure groups, which is perhaps the option that would give them more leeway. We should also always remember that Islam in Europe is a plural entity, and that the possibility of disagreement between the Muslim actors is high. Hence the scenario of Muslims splitting into two or more strands, some working through the state, some remaining independent associations, and both claiming and fighting for authority and recognition, is not unthinkable. Should the preferred path be that of insti-

tutionalising Islam through the state, both the state and the Muslim communities involved should be aware of the following considerations: 1) evaluate the feasibility of the enterprise, in terms of economic and human resources; 2) be aware of and reflect on the complex variety of interpretations that exist in Islam within and outside Europe and the influence of transnational movements; 3) remember that governments and coalitions wax and wane and that the priorities and approaches (including towards Islam) of political parties can also change. But, above all, the short and long term benefits as well as the consequences of establishing such an institution should be taken into consideration.

To summarise, the crucial questions are: What is the ultimate purpose of these Muslim institutions? What are the consequences of establishing them? Once governments have created these institutions and raised expectations among Muslims to be able to influence the political process, will governments be able to maintain their neutrality and to listen to and to stand the weight of the empowered Muslim bodies that they have produced?

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II. Country Studies

Organisational Developments towards Legal and Political Recognition of Muslims in Germany

Mark Bodenstein

1. Historical Context

Muslim historiographers trace the presence of Muslims in Germany back to the 18th century at least (Abdullah 1981; Abdullah 1993).[1] But the first really noticeable and vivid Muslim community can be located in Berlin during the Interwar period. At that time several smaller Muslim associations were established, among these, the German branch of the Islamic World Congress. Due to the political involvement of some Muslims in the Nazi era, and the instrumentalisation of the Muslim associations during the Second World War, all associations were dissolved after the war. The few remaining Muslims in Berlin, who gathered around the oldest mosque in Germany in Berlin-Wilmersdorf, were in the subsequent years as isolated as Berlin was.

Although we have first postwar communities around the Shiite Islamic Centre in Hamburg in 1961 and in the following years with the Islamic Centres in Aachen and Munich, which were at least personally connected to the Muslim Brotherhood, the so called 'New Islamic Presence'[2] was primarily a conse-

1 Differing on this: Lemmen 2002: 15.
2 This concept was introduced by Gerholm/Lithman 1988; and currently revived by Tiesler 2006: 36-72, and Tiesler 2007.

quence of the immigration of so called 'guest workers' from countries with relevant Muslim population like Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia, during the 1960s and 1970s.

As late as in the middle of the 1970s, with increasing family reunification and thus changing perspectives, which lead to the necessity of organising cultural and religious affairs, Muslim immigrants started increasingly to establish mosque associations and organisations. These associations have been mainly organised along boundaries of ethnicity, culture, or language until today. We do not want to focus on the shift in the general perception of immigrants with a Muslim background to Muslims with an immigration background. This 'emergence of "Muslim" as a political category' (cf. Adamson 2005) or the process of 'constructing Muslims as ethno-racial outsiders' (cf. Bleich 2006) has been mentioned and sociologically analysed a few times before. In our context we might shed some light on the consequences for their self-organisation.

To give a short impression of the statistical data on Muslims in Germany, we can state that as far as we can estimate now, around 4 million Muslims live in Germany. Herein Muslims with a Turkish origin are by far the largest group, followed by Muslims from Southeast Europe, Middle East, North Africa and Muslims from South/Southeast Asia. Thus, Muslims form the second largest group after Christians, who mainly consist of Roman Catholics and Protestants. But Muslims for their part can be roughly classified as Sunni (2,964,000) - the majority -, Shiite (284,000), Alevi (508,000) and Ahmadi (68,000). Looking at the latter two groups, there are more than theological debates in their respective countries of origin, as well as in Germany, about

whether they belong to Islam any longer. Put this aside, of all these Muslims only a small number of about 20 per cent are organised in mosque associations (cf. Haug/Müssig/Stichs 2009: 80, 96f., 167).

2. Muslim Self-Organisation

Since the 1980s we could notice that most Turkish mosque associations joined organisations on the national level, such as the Association of Islamic Culture Centres (VIKZ), the precursor of todays Millî Görüş, and the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), in order to represent their common interests towards German authorities and politics. Later on, the Islamic Council of Germany and - as successor of the Islamic Working Group - the Central Council of Muslims in Germany followed. These two can be described as umbrella organisations, with organisations like Millî Görüş as members.

But what are the intentions and necessities leading to the establishment of such a nationwide religious association? Surely, the acceptance and recognition of Muslim presence in Germany plays a certain role in this process, beside the formal access to various fields of the public sphere.

As example serves here - and perhaps it is the main battlefield - the introduction of Islamic religious instruction in public schools. According to the German constitution (*Grundgesetz*, GG) "religious instruction shall be given in accordance with the tenets of the religious communities concerned" (art. 7 sec. 3 GG). Although there is a kind of consensus on the necessity of Islamic religious education as a step towards integration and equality of Muslim immigrants - besides the expected effects

on security issues -, it leads automatically to the question about who the concerned religious community on the Muslim side is. Religious community in - at least - two meanings: 1. in a legal sense and 2. in a more general sense, asking for the potential members of such a community.

2.1 Legal Framework

At this point, we have to look at the legal framework of German state-church-relations.[3] First of all, no legal provisions are made for a general 'recognition' of religious communities, and there is no legally prescribed, fixed organisational form. Any such recognition is connected with an application of certain laws, e.g. a quite abstract Muslim religious community without any organisational structures has been recognised in the sense of para. 4 a of the Law on the Protection of Animals in the question of halal-slaughtering.

But with reference to the recognition of a Muslim religious community in the sense of the previously mentioned art. 7 sec. 3 GG on religious instruction in public schools, there is obviously the demand for a high degree of organisational structure and inner constitution, usually applied for the recognition as corporation by public law according to art. 140 GG in conjunction with art. 137 WRV.[4] This organisational and legal form of a public corporation provides various far-reaching rights, which require clear structures including transparent procedures for decision making and one or more reliable bodies which authen-

3 For an overview with reference to Muslims, see Rohe 2004; Rohe 2001.
4 Constitution of the Weimar Republic. The articles of this constitution referring to State-church relations are implemented into the Fundamental Law (GG).

tically and authoritatively decide about doctrine and order (cf. Vöcking 1993: 100, 103).

Muslims in Germany are by now quite far from fulfilling these prerequisites. Additionally, one should notice that especially for religious instruction in public schools, these requirements must be met on state-level.

2.2 Top-Down

To meet these demanding requirements for recognition, several attempts were made on the Muslim side to come to an united (umbrella) organisation for the whole of Germany. Starting in 1988, all larger Turkish-Islamic Associations and the Islamic Centres in Munich, Aachen and Hamburg besides others were members of the 'Islamic Working Group in Germany' (*Islamischer Arbeitskreis in Deutschland*, IAK), which was transformed into the 'Central Council of Muslims in Germany' (*Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland*, ZMD) in 1994, but fragmented at the same time.

In recent history, the decision of the Federal Administrative Court from February, 23 2005 (BVerwG 2005) on religious instruction and umbrella organisations as religious communities, provided 'a manual for reconstruction of the Muslim community under the conditions of the German constitutional law', as one of the judges put it (Graulich 2005: 80). This pushed on with the efforts to come to a national association, called *Schura Deutschland*, which should reach down to the individual members of mosque associations via state (Bundesland) associations. The internal negotiations went on since January 2005, without any signs of visible success. Rather, the largest organi-

sation, DITIB, did not officially cooperate at all, whereas the Süleymancis (VIKZ) resigned from this ambitious project in the beginning of 2006. This might serve to illustrate the seemingly insurmountable difficulties to come to a single, institutionalised interlocutor on state level, eventually nationwide.

Alternatively, during the festivities on the occasion of the birthday of the prophet Muhammad in the Cologne Arena, April 2007, thousands of Muslims could witness the announcement of the newly formed 'Coordination Council of Muslims in Germany' (*Koordinierungsrat der Muslime in Deutschland*, KRM), an umbrella group combining the leading Muslim organisations, namely the Islamic Council (IR), the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (ZMD), and the Association of Islamic Culture Centres (VIKZ) (Spiegel Online: 2007a; Spiegel Online: 2007b).

Since the headquarters of all these organisations are situated in Cologne, one of their foci is the installation of Islamic religious instruction in state schools in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) according to art. 7 sec. 3 GG. In this matter, the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia had proposed to install local models of Islamic religious education preferably in Cologne and Duisburg in accordance with local Muslim communities, consisting of Round Tables of numerous mosque associations. Herewith bypassing the larger organisations and especially the new Coordination Council.

With a look at the media coverage on this new umbrella organisation and its development, one could assume that this approach could lead to one representation of at least those

Muslims, who are organised in mosque associations. If we would take – as it was proposed by the speakers of the KRM – the number of organised mosques and the number of Muslims visiting these mosques, e.g., for Friday prayers, as base for our estimations up to 80 percent of all active Muslims were represented (Köhler 2008). In contrast to the KRM-statement, the recent representative study "Muslim Life in Germany" conducted by the research group of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees finds that only just over a third of the interviewed Muslims attend religious events or worship several times a month or more frequently. At the same time results show that Muslim associations in Germany do not represent the majority of Muslims in Germany. Less than 25 per cent of all Muslims feel that their interests are represented unreservedly by Muslim umbrella and head associations represented in the German Islam Conference. (Haug/Müssig/Stichs 2009: 161, 175f.) But as a decisive negative factor we still have to notice that the necessary linkage of the Coordination Council with state-based religious communities reaching down to individual members, according to the before mentioned ruling of the Federal Administrative Court, is still missing.

2.3 In Between

But, as mentioned before, the attempt for a nationwide representation like *Schura Deutschland* included plans to reach down to the individual members of mosques associations via association on state level. This level is necessary because religious and cultural affairs, e.g. religious education in schools, are matters of the Federal States. This has led and still leads to the creation of umbrella organisations in various Federal States, or is based on previously founded ones respectively. But also

the Islamic Religious Community in the state of Hesse, which is based on individual membership, but also suspected of islamist tendencies, could not succeed, after several years of litigation, to be recognised as religious community in the sense of art. 7 sec. 3 GG to become co-responsible for Islamic religious instruction in state schools there.

2.4 Bottom-Up

Beside these examples for the top-down approach, last manifested in the KRM, we can notice several examples of a bottom-up approach, of establishing religious communities on local level. The most prominent example seems to be the 'Islamic Religious Community Erlangen', just a few kilometres from Nuremberg. They succeeded in the establishment of Islamic religious instruction in two schools now, in close cooperation with the respective parents, the local authorities, and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. The latter could finally set up an institute for Muslim teacher training. This local approach seems to be widely accepted - also by the appropriate state ministry - and recommended as example worth following for communities with similar prerequisites, such as Nuremberg itself.

Additionally, mosque associations in some other cities like Dortmund (islam.de 2007) and Bonn (Lyffyt 2006; Rashid 2006) have unified to local councils or umbrella organisations to speak with one voice in questions of common interest.

3. State Interaction

With the intention to establish Islamic religious instruction in its state schools, the states of Lower-Saxony and Baden-Württemberg convened so-called Round Tables, which should

represent more or less the majority of the respective Muslim population. The difficulties showed up, as the Alevi group left the Round Table in Hanover (Lower Saxony), because it could not comply to the basics of Islam agreed upon for the curriculum. Also in the case of Baden-Württemberg, the Round Table dissolved, so that further steps had to be postponed and new cooperation partners to be found.

On the federal level the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the German federal state has started an official dialogue with Muslim Organisations and individuals in September 2006. Although its official aim is not to organise a Muslim Representation on federal state level, it did, as a side effect, catalyse the formation process towards the nation-wide 'Coordination Council of Muslims in Germany'. Additionally, several Muslim functionaries expect and demand from the Islam Conference to provide the Muslim organisations with a set of guidelines for official recognition. This happened, because some German politicians questioned the quality of the new umbrella organisation with regard to possible recognition (Spiegel Online 2007c). A speaker of the Federal Ministry of the Interior even added that they had no need of talking with the council, because all included organisations also took part in the Islam Conference (WDR 2007).

With a look on Muslim media, we can see obvious criticism on the process itself, but also on the non-information policy of the Muslim organisations (Özkan 2007). This leads to the conclusion that the proclaimed representativeness of the Muslim representations is not connected to the Muslim basis.

4. Résumé

Muslim self-organisation has made a great leap forward, caused to a high degree by advice from the legal sphere, and soft pressure from the political sphere. Although, none of the attempts shown leads to an 'official' recognition, mainly for reasons like the missing individual membership in a relevant number, and the suspicion of islamist tendencies inside Millî Görüş and others. One common aim, the introduction of Islamic religious instruction, leads to the necessary organisational forms and structures for a rather virtual recognition as religious community, according to the respective opportunity structures in the counties, and according to the personal and organisational possibilities of the Muslim groups involved.

Looking especially at the question of religious education in public schools, we can theoretically explain for what reasons the state - at various levels - is interested in Muslim self-organisation: The German Federal State has recognised and accepted the presence of Islam in Germany, and has to make provisions for the Muslim participation in the public sphere now. Because the religious communities have the duty to lay the ethical-moral foundations of the state, due to its concept of secularity, also the Muslim religious community should take part in this corporatist system. Thus we might understand the reluctance to accept organisations, suspected of islamist tendencies, as part of this system.

Looking at these developments through the glass of the neo-institutionalist theory, we find the Muslim associations inside the organisational field of Churches and mostly Christian and a few Jewish communities, most of them 'recognised' as re-

ligious communities or even as corporations by public law. To be on equal footing with these organisations seems to demand the imitation of their structures, in the sense of 'mimetic isomorphism'. But just the imagination of so-called church-like structures has led to vivid disputes within Muslim communities. Due to this unease, Muslim Organisation unintentionally resisted the normative and coercive isomorphism, just by their inability to find a consensus among all organisations. To what extent the institutional framework, according to the theories of neo-institutionalism, has relevant influence on further self-organisation, which leads to more than virtual recognition, will be revealed in time and has to be in the focus of further research.

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Furthering Muslim Self-Organisation: The Task of the German Islam Conference

Markus Kerber

Muslim self-organisation, or – it seems – a lack thereof as compared to other religions in Europe is indeed a good starting point to explain the German Islam Conference (*Deutsche Islam Konferenz*, DIK). The German Islam Conference has been deliberately set up by the Federal Interior Minister Dr. Schäuble to engage with Muslims living in Germany, most of whom are not members of one of the Islamic umbrella organisations. In a situation where we as western societies and governments clearly need to better communicate and interact with our Muslim communities, the Islam Conference is a necessarily imperfect response to a dissatisfactory situation:

- First, although most Muslims live well integrated and quite happy within our political, economical and social framework, clearly a growing number – mostly of the second or third generation – finds it difficult to settle into our society.

- Second, while Muslims have grown in numbers as a part of our population, until now there has not been enough interaction between community leaders and

the State to tackle the negative trend in terms of integration and cohesion.

- Third, Muslims live their faith freely and under protection of our democratic constitution but have not yet organised themselves in a coherent manner – a form of organisation that would qualify for the kind of partnership the German state is engaged in with other religious groups, especially the Christian denominations.

Our response to that situation is a pragmatic one. It acknowledges the existence of each of these factors rather than ignoring it and builds a platform for debate and joint action on the challenges mentioned above. It accepts Muslim diversity rather than neglecting or even denying it. By doing so, the Islam Conference is creating a venue for dialogue also among Muslims themselves. In fact, the German government does not adhere to any single narrative of what is Islam, who is Muslim and hence who should be excluded from contacts between Muslims and the State they are living in. With the German Islam Conference, we have created both a forum and a process for more dialogue, better understanding and growing cooperation.

A brief outline of how the conference actually works will highlight and explain that complexity. The DIK convenes on two levels: First, in a plenary made up of 15 Muslim representatives and 15 State representatives from the federal, the Länder and the communal level of government. Second, in three working groups and one discussion group, each of which is staffed by Muslim and State representatives as well as scientists and experts on the issues dealt with.

These issues range from general to specific aspects of Muslim life, integration and cohesion, from the foundations of our society to the question of Islamic religious tuition and also the threat from extremist tendencies within Islam. In short, the Islam Conference deals with all issues of concern to those who need to be willing and able to foster a positive and lasting relationship: the people.

This has certainly slowed down the process and made it more difficult for all participants to agree upon joint positions. There are, however, not only steps forward, by real results. At the plenary session in March of 2008, the Islam Conference agreed on recommendations concerning issues central to our co-existence, from building and using mosques to the introduction of Islam classes at state schools. All participants in the Islam Conference have declared their allegiance to Germany's system of democracy and to the values enshrined in our Basic Law. The Muslim organizations also recognize their responsibility to work with the state and German society to fight extremism.

These results demonstrate how productive the dialogue is for social cohesion. There is, however – as one might expect – also criticism for the process. One is, that the Islam Conference is mixing issues of politics and religion. Indeed it is obvious that there is no way of overlooking that exact politicization is one of the challenges we need to confront – not by ignoring it, but by sorting out the issues and fostering common sense.

Another point of criticism, and that will also not come as a surprise, has been the choice of participants in the Conference, especially the plenary session. One could argue: what is

the legitimacy of individuals to speak on behalf of their fellow Muslims or even Islam? The simple answer is: No more than that of other individuals, except if they can offer expertise and insight on the issues debated and if they, as a group, represent the plurality and diversity of a community that has simply not yet organized itself in a representative way.

The question of organization then, it seems, is both an impediment and a rationale one for a structured intercultural dialogue that aims at furthering Muslim self-organization rather than exploiting diversity. While all the criticism mentioned will be directed at the Islam Conference time and again, no one can credibly deny that the very forum and process has led to a very fruitful and productive debate in our society, one – as Minister Schäuble envisioned in his declaration opening the conference – in which Muslims are welcomed as a part of this people and also one in which Muslims tend to identify themselves more with the society they are living in.

Summing up the personal experience I have gained by listening and talking to many Muslims, participants of the DIK or not, I could not agree more with what one of them recently said: It should be one of the goals of this process, that Muslims will be represented differently in five years from now than they are today.

Muslim Organisations and State Interaction in Spain: Towards a More Pluralistic Representation?

Elena Arigita

Visibility of Islam in contemporary Spain is a relatively recent trend, compared to other Western European countries. When measured against its neighboring countries however, Spain has one of the first institutional arrangements in Europe that recognises Islam as a minority religion and establishes an official representation. In 1992, a time when the presence of Muslim communities was not considered very relevant in terms of statistics, or visible in the public sphere, Spain provided a legal frame for religious practice that continues today.

This early institutionalisation of Islam may be explained by a progressive government policy that was following with interest the growing relationship between Muslim communities and the State in other European countries. More importantly, this meant another big step in the process of democratisation in Spain and the consolidation of civil rights. For the Spanish collective imaginary, 1992 is a key year. Spain celebrated several different historical events during that year but possibly the most outstanding was the 500 year anniversary of the "discovery" of America (now renamed "The encounter"). But there was one other significant commemoration that the country could not

forget: the decree of expulsion of the Jews signed by the Catholic Kings. With the Agreements of Cooperation signed with the three main religious minorities, Jews, Evangelicals and Muslims, the Spanish government was re-reading and re-writing an age-old legacy[1] in the light of the new democratic system, completing a process of 20 years of development of religious liberties that had begun at the end of the 1960s.

Broadly speaking, the process of institutionalisation of Islam through the recognition of religious liberty had been determined as a first step at a time when visibility of the Muslim community was almost non-existent. The law of Religious Liberty in 1967 opened the door to the constitution of the first associations in Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish cities in North Africa with large Muslim populations, as well as in Madrid and Andalucia. Thus, the various associations were at a very formative stage at the beginning of the 80s and were being stimulated by nationalised Muslims from the Middle East and Spanish converts that had mainly known Islam through the teaching of the Morabitun movement, whose influence was extending to different European countries.

At this time, another trend determining the actual configuration of Spanish Islam was taking place. A decade later, an

1 It was a condition for the recognition of the Muslim minority that it fulfilled the legal condition of "being clearly established" (*notorio arraigo*). This means that the Muslims needed to prove that they had a certain organisation in the country as well as a significant number of members. As this was not the case for the Muslim community at the end of the 1980s, in 1989 the clear establishment of Islam in Spain was legally approved by taking into account the Muslim legacy as "one of the spiritual beliefs that has formed the historic character of Spain" (Jiménez-Aybar 2004: 68ff.).

economic boom made Spain a new destination for immigrants, mainly from North Africa and more concretely from Morocco due to its close proximity. The immigration law of 1985 opened borders to reunite immigrant workers with their families. This in turn facilitated an associational fabric which became the answer for community necessities such as education, religious practice, etc. through to the next decade. This economic immigration allowed the Muslim community to acquire a demographic weight and to become the visible force in Spain that it is today.

The process of institutionalisation that took place from the end of the 80s until the signature of the Agreement in 1992 is far from being representative of this new reality. From the beginning, the contacts between the State and the Muslim community were the result of political desire more than a real process of interaction. In other words, the priority of signing an Agreement lacked a real process of interlocution with the communities. The Agreement was organised in accordance with the recognition of the other two religious minorities, following a model used for all three. Discussions were conducted at a very institutional level, meaning that only the associations inscribed in the official Register of Religious Entities were present in the process. The government also made it a condition to have one unique interlocutor, leading to the constitution of the Islamic Commission of Spain. This action provoked internal conflicts among the Muslim associations involved that were organised since 1989 in one umbrella organisation, the Federation of Religious Islamic Entities of Spain (FEERI), from which split a second federation, the Union of Islamic Communities of Spain (UCIDE)

in 1991.[2] Both entities have shown irreconcilable positions since the establishment of the Commission. Thus, the twofold nature of the Islamic Commission, with two General Secretaries, and even two legal addresses, was a very significant reason for the fragility of this representation. For 15 long years, representation was left in the hands of the same outstanding personalities who monopolised interaction at the national level and were the only authorised official voice of the Muslim community to the State. On the one hand, this official leadership led to a paralysis that precipitated important changes that began to take place post March 11. On the other hand, it responded to a very specific and contested profile based mainly on ideology and with which the larger Muslim immigrant community does not identify.

This model of official representation in front of the State is often perceived very negatively by those who are outside of the official structure of the Islamic Commission. Their positions indicate that the reason for this failure is perceived as a result of the internal fragmentation of this representative body that has lead to a situation of inability to coordinate the needs and claims of the communities at the local level.

From the government's perspective, the Agreement of 1992 was not a beginning but an end to its interaction with the

2 This second federation arose from the split of the Muslim Association of Spain, which had delegations in various cities around the country. With the aim of counteracting the power of the FEERI, this Association registered all of its branches as independent associations and so created this second organisation. The first Federation was in the hands of Spanish converts, although the associations ascribed to it are very heterogeneous. The second one also represents a varied group of associations, and it has been, since its creation, headed by a nationalized Syrian.

Muslim minority. The signature was felt as a success by both sides, but at the time of the implementation of the law, it was obstructed mainly due to the internal problems that emerged within the Commission during the process, but also because the signature of the Agreement had somehow fulfilled the ultimate aim of completing the process of recognition of religious liberties for minorities. Thus, the legal arrangement was – and still is – considered very positive and advanced at the time of its signing. This idea remains not only in academic literature (Ferrari 2006: 14), but also among the Muslim leaders that witnessed the process. However, its implementation with regards to the needs of a growing immigrant community was almost non-existent to the point that we find several criticisms regarding the arrangement among Muslim leaders at large today.

On top of all of this, the events of 9/11 and more strongly the terrorist attacks in Madrid on March 11, 2004 have deeply influenced the public debate about Islam in Spain due to issues of security and immigration control. But, there has also been an effect inside the Muslim community which is more and more aware of its visibility in Spanish society and its need for representation. And with representation comes the issue of who is speaking in the name of Muslims, i.e. who has the authority to represent Islam and respond to challenges to Islamic belief and practice in Spain.

1. The Setting Up of Muslim Organisations During the 80s and 90s

The fabric of Muslim associations began in the late 1960s as an immediate consequence of the granting of religious liberty. Although the first groups were set up in Ceuta and Me-

lilla, leadership at the national level was lead by associations established first in Madrid at the beginning of the 1970s and then spread across to other cities around the country. Initially, it might seem that ethnicity was the decisive feature for the establishment of Muslim associations and prayer rooms as distinctions were made between the associations formed of Spanish converts and those organised by students originally from Middle East countries (mostly from Syria but also from Jordan and Palestine). While ethnicity was an issue, a complex set of other features such as ideology, culture, identity, economic reasons, personal relations and charismatic leadership also played an important role in the formation of these associations. The memories of those who participated in these very first associations and prayer rooms show how ethnicity was viewed at the very beginning to be only a minor obstacle for relations between converts and Arabs. Arabs were often perceived by converts as the portrayers of Islamic knowledge and the "purest" Islam. In the Arab's view, conversion was more important than sectarian discrepancies in worship. However, ideology and identity seem to be the main reasons for the subsequent rupture or distance. Today, witnesses on both sides remember reasons going beyond the ethnicity factor to underline sectarian differences and overall a diverse idea of Muslim-Spanish identity (Rosón Lorente 2005).

Concerning ideology, it is believed that the first Muslim associations were organised mainly by Syrian students influenced by the Syrian Muslim Brothers. This early relation to the movement is still unclear. The negative image of the Muslim Brothers that prevails today in the media (they are often referred to as a fundamentalist, extremist, or even terrorist organ-

isation) makes Muslim leaders reluctant to discuss any current or past links with the Brotherhood or if their associations were at one time officially attached to its international organisation in Europe. While this may be the case in most instances, many leaders will admit to a certain intellectual influence by outstanding scholars linked to or members of the Muslim Brothers.[3]

Ideology, together with ethnicity and doctrinal differences, could be used to explain the fissure between first generation Muslim leaders from Arab countries and converts. When asked about the possibility that converts could bridge the gap between Muslims and Spanish society, a nationalised Spaniard of Syrian origin who has been involved in Muslim associations since the early 1970s, referred precisely to what he describes as "heterodoxy" of Spanish converts as an obstacle for leading Muslim immigrants of Arab origin in Spain. He does, however, acknowledge that they were better prepared at the time than immigrants (meaning those established within society for decades and with a consolidated leadership) to interact with State administration. The same objection was discussed during interviews by other Arab leaders with similar profiles and also by converts who participated in the development of communities during the 70s.

Dietz (2004) has described how within the last two decades converts have created small and stable communities

3 This and following information about associations and leaders is based on interviews conducted during 2004-2006 with a varied number of Muslim leaders in Madrid, Valencia, Granada, Ceuta and Melilla. (The main conclusions of this field research were published in Arigita 2006).

integrated in transnational networks[4], which he relates to the process of conversion or a (shared) 'voyage' in the company of other fellows following the same path. These communities are closer to other similar organisations abroad than to Muslim immigrants in their own cities. As a result of their particular experience, they believe immigrant Islam includes a cultural and historical legacy which contrasts with the 'universality' of Islamic belief. Therefore, what was once perceived by them as the 'purest' Islam (Islam of the Arabs) is today addressed as a cultural weight or political and ideological distortion of what they consider the "true, universal message of Islam".

Besides these two mainstream beliefs that were prevalent during the first decade after the acquisition of religious freedom, a completely different scenario has emerged since the end of the 1980s that sets a more complex and varied picture of Islam today. The growing presence of Muslim immigrants has not only had an impact on statistics, but it also has stimulated new trends in Muslim self-organisation and acted as a catalyst for an emerging leadership which aspires to modify the rules of the official representation towards the State.

2. A New Political Agenda for State Interaction With Muslims After March 11

The impact of March 11, 2004 on public opinion about Islam in Spain, and the change of government three days later,

4 In spite of the internal splits suffered by the first group of Morabitun, the first association founded in 1976 as the Islamic Community of Spain, the Sufi influence and the claim of Muslim heritage in Spain (which were the main characteristics of this first organisation) remain as marks of identity for Spanish converts at large, which they often portray as the future of a successful integration of Islam in the West.

called for a reestablishment of relations with Muslim representatives. On a different level, the events of March 11 also stimulated a renewed interest in Islam on different fronts and with different purposes, sparking internal debates within Muslim associations and creating a shared sense that Muslims and Islam were being questioned.

Various debates on Islam and Spanish identity had previously existed for many years, linked to issues such as the Muslim legacy of *Al-Andalus*, the colonial experience in North Africa, and the growing visibility of Muslim immigration since the 1980s (Martín Muñoz 2002). Nevertheless, the influence of the events of September 11 and March 11 in the global public sphere have reinforced in Spain the claim of a supposed "culture clash", assuming that a certain Islamic specificity makes integration impossible. During the last few years media as well as political and intellectual debates have increased sharply: Polemics and new understandings of the Muslim legacy in Spain renewed interest in how Muslim communities are organised in other countries and, most especially, sparked a deep interest by the media in features and goals of the Muslim population settled in Spain.

Muslims became a new focus of attention (and concern), in the middle of a polarised debate on reasons and responsibilities for the attacks in Madrid. During the weeks that followed March 11, leaders of both federations contributed to the discussion with statements to the press condemning the attacks and expressing their concern about the possibility that Muslims at large could suffer a negative impact from these acts in their daily lives. Leaders also acknowledged the generally positive response of Spanish society. The associations also encouraged

their members to donate blood and to actively participate in the demonstration against terrorism that took place two days after the attacks. Apart from this, the presence of Muslim representatives in the media was restricted to their personal willingness to participate in debates. In spite of these very specific initiatives to become more visibly involved, a lack of participation of Muslim voices still exists in the Spanish public sphere.[5]

In addition to the Muslim representatives, the Association of Moroccan Workers in Spain (ATIME) quickly responded to the debate after the attacks in Madrid by encouraging all Muslim citizens to denounce racial bias and Islamophobic attitudes and actions. It also questioned openly the role of imams and referred to the danger of spreading radical ideas among the followers by uncontrolled preaching. The Association suggested to the government the formation of a democratically chosen Islamic council based on the pre-existing French model in order to counteract the negative influence of radical preaching.

Since 2004, the issue of controlling imams has often been made the center of attention by the media and is usually coupled with stories about radicalism and the influence of donations through Saudi Arabia. Concerning imams, great significance was attached to their responsibility and influence upon the Muslim population during the months that followed the attacks. In some cases, they are acknowledged as a point of reference for Islamic religious authority within the communi-

5 The 2003 appointment of a Muslim deputy in the Parliament of Catalonia seems to be a prominent exception to this absence. Deputy Mohammed Chaib publicly points out the exceptional character of his position when reflecting about his political career and Muslim identity.

ties owing to their role as leaders of prayer in the mosque. In other cases, they are being held responsible for cultural or social mediation with the host society.[6] A sort of a stereotyped and uniform image of imams as leading Islam in Spain contradicts the diversity of their religious knowledge as well as the variety of their responsibilities within communities. In 2004 and 2005 the Ministry of the Interior made different proposals concerning strategies to control radical preaching in prayer rooms throughout the country, but each of them provoked much controversy.[7] An early proposal to explore the possibility of finding a legal framework that would enable the State to control religious preaching (the Minister included all religious beliefs in order to avoid discrimination) resulted in protests by certain Muslim representatives. Criticisms by experts questioned the effectiveness of the proposals in counteracting terrorism and drew attention to the negative consequences that such initiatives could have for Muslim citizens when Islam is perceived as potentially dangerous in essence.[8] As a result, some of the larger mosques started to publish the *khutbas* (sermons) on their websites in Arabic, and in some instances translating them into Spanish.

6 This is the viewpoint of deputy Mohammed Chaib, who, in a book on immigration issues stated that "it is necessary to recognize that imams, as citizens and religious leaders with duties and rights, carry out work in the neighbourhoods and in the town. We should know how to make use of their role in these areas in order to reach the community we should learn to make the most of their influence since the message they transmit to their communities is crucial, and obviously, this message is not the same when they transmit it in their countries of origin or in Catalonia" (Chaib 2005: 176).

7 El Gobierno estudia una reforma legal para el control de mezquitas e imames. El País, (08/05/2004) http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Gobierno/estudia/reforma/legal/control/mezquitas/imames/elpepiesp/20040508elpepinac_3/Tes [Accessed 10 April 2008].

8 Possibly one of the most outstanding declarations was that of Gema Martín Muñoz, who appeared in front of the March 11th Commission pointing to the fact that controlling imams and mosques would not be an effective way of tackling terrorism but in turn would provoke a deeper sentiment of discrimination against Muslim citizens.

In relation to the influence of Wahhabism through the founding of cultural and religious activities, an economic support system by Saudi Arabia has certainly existed for a long time. This can be seen mostly through the distribution of translations of outstanding works of Saudi *ulamas* (scholars), grants for Muslim students to complete their degrees in Spain, and, above all, in endowments to establish large scale mosques.[9] Both the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) and the Muslim World League, two international organisations based in Saudi Arabia which have official status as NGO's, have been among the principal donors to Muslim associations in Spain. Apart from that official support, private donations coming from the Gulf States through informal contacts continue to partially finance the establishment of some prayer rooms and cultural activities. Although this economic influence is visible in some of the big mosques, it is less evident when it comes to local associations and prayer rooms. With regard to the suggestion that this financial support has led to an ideological influence on the spread of radicalism among young Muslims and linking this trend to mosques with Saudi links, interviews with Muslim leaders both at local and national level either dismiss this ideological influence or refute it completely.

Within an atmosphere of insinuations and mistrust, the government elected in March 2004 launched a new phase in the dialogue with the Islamic Commission (as well as with the

9 Worship is performed mainly in small prayer rooms. Some of them have improved their premises through the years and since the end of the 80s, several big mosques have been set up with private funding and endowments from Muslim countries, mainly Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. The cultural events and activities organised alongside religious worship attract varied groups of people.

other two minorities involved in the same process in 1992). Paradoxically, this did not gain as much attention by the media as the control policies proposed by the Interior Ministry. The result of this new discourse resulted in the formation of the Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence in April 2006. With the aim of "promoting religious liberty", the main task of this new institution is to guarantee and coordinate the funding of religious minorities specifically for socio-cultural initiatives. It seeks to overcome lack of funding as the core obstacle to the implementation of the Agreement of Cooperation.

However, the crucial issue during this new phase of interlocution is the lack of authentic representation on the Islamic Commission, a decision which has fallen to the hands of Muslim leaders. It is not by chance that the above mentioned request of ATIME stressed the necessity of democratic elections to form a new Islamic Council, completely ignoring the existence of the present Islamic Commission. In fact, the major difficulty in the process of talks between the State and the Muslim minority is representational gridlock caused by the Islamic Commission acting as the representative body for all Muslim communities. As a result of this gridlock, the Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence has established a system of financing the activities of the associations directly without the mediation of the Islamic Commission. This may be understood as an implicit acknowledgment by the administration that the leading role attributed by law to the Islamic Commission does not work anymore.

3. Towards a Changing (and Challenging) Landscape for Muslim Self-Organisation and Official Representation After March 11

The new steps taken by the government since 2004 have lead concurrently to changes within Muslim organisations. This can be easily linked to the unprecedented public interest in Islam and Muslims in Spain after the Madrid train bombings and the obvious concern by Muslim leaders about the consequent negative and schematic image that was being portrayed about Islam. However, the revitalisation of self-organisations would not have been possible without the demographic growth of the Muslim population and the sociological changes that have taken place since the 90s.

A very recent demographic study commissioned by UCIDE[10] estimates the number of Muslim citizens based on figures from the 2007 census combined with data about nationalisations, education statistics (students attending Muslim religious education) and data from the Islamic Commission. Its findings corroborate more general estimates putting the population of Muslims to be more than one million, most of them established in Madrid (196,689) and the South–East regions of Catalonia (279,037), Andalusia (184,430) and Valencia (130,471). The official census (www.ine.es) also shows that Moroccans (621,295) constitute the largest Muslim population, followed by

10 Demographic Study about Muslim fellow citizens", available at http://mx.geocities.com/hispanomuslime/estademograf.doc [Accessed 05 April 2008]. However, these figures keep being problematic since the main parameter used to obtain them keeps being the nationality of origin. During the last few years different researches point to a figure that fluctuates between one million and one and a half million.

Algerians (50,383), Pakistanis (42,929) and Senegalese (35,875). According to the study presented by UCIDE, Muslims originally from Spain would constitute the second largest group. This includes descendants of immigrants and Spanish converts, the largest majority of them being second generation sons of immigrants, followed by the Muslim population of Ceuta (30,537) and Melilla (34,397).

What does this growing Muslim population mean in terms of public visibility and organisation? If the revitalisation of Muslim self-organisation cannot be understood without taking into account demographic and sociological changes within the Muslim community, the opposite also holds true. The current context in which public opinion is heavily influenced by a negative, stereotyped image of Islam also influences new modes of mobilisation and leadership. Thus, it has a two-fold effect with regard to the issue of Muslim representation and self-organisation: on the one hand, as previously shown, an increase in the Muslim population has had an impact on political statements and has urged a new relationship between the government and Muslim representatives. On the other hand, this new scenario has compelled Muslim self-organisations to mobilise, creating new modes of organisation and representation. However, these types of renovations also lead to questioning whether these new modes are truly innovative or, on the contrary, validate the rationale of the Agreements of 1992.

During the last four years, alternatives to the current blockage of the Islamic Commission are finally emerging. These are in part due to new efforts made by public authorities to recognise and tackle the situation, but are mainly the result

of internal processes taking place within Muslim communities at the local level and the emergence of a new leadership.

Concerning leadership at the local level, Martín Muñoz has showed how, since the 1990s, there is an emerging leadership among Moroccans resulting from the economic immigration of the 1990s which does not participate at the national level. These leaders are described as "new, 'decentralised' and autonomous" (Martín Muñoz et al. 2003: 113), responding to a long established profile of immigrants, from a fairly good economic situation, having families (children schooled in Spain), and relations or contacts with the host society through their work. In short, they are able to solve the difficulties that an individual immigrant or a community has to face in daily life and, as Martín Muñoz points out, "their leadership was informal at first, and then became institutionalised through the creation of an association" (Martín Muñoz et al. 2003: 116). Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that this new leadership among Moroccan immigrants has followed the same pattern of first phase communities with a more established history within the country, in which leadership was based on social and organisational abilities rather than on religious authority. This leadership was in fact filling a gap in the absence of better qualified leaders.

Nevertheless, imams are still predominantly perceived as the main reference for Islamic authority in Spain. Following this assumption, specific immigration policies have been put in place with the aim of reorganising Muslim representation, combining religious authority with a communitarian profile intended to lead to a successful integration of Muslim immigrants. This is the primary goal of the Cultural and Islamic Council of

Catalonia, founded in June 2000. Although officially registered as a socio-cultural association inspired by a political will, its goal is to unite imams whose internal leadership in mosques is considered a positive role in developing strategies of social integration. Therefore, the Council would serve as a mediator between the Muslim minority and the autonomous government of Catalonia as well as – with city councils - the administration at the local level. On a more national scale, it would play an active role in the politics of immigrant integration. This new approach recasts the role of imams as internal leaders stepping in as mediators of immigration issues rather than religious affairs.

Besides this top-down organisation, other initiatives are taking place at the regional and national levels and have definitely opened debates on the failure of the Islamic Commission as it was created in 1992. While UCIDE maintains its stability, FEERI has gone through a process of complete renewal which has resulted in a leadership change in 2006.[11] Not only has FEERI been affected by this type of restructuring, but three new federations[12] have also been assembled in different regions with large Muslim immigrant communities and are currently claiming their legitimacy to represent Muslims to the State by taking part in the Islamic Commission. The profile of these new organisations, in terms of leadership, ethnic and ideological background is very heterogeneous and has attracted a large number of associations (130 out of about 600 inscribed in the official register of the Ministry of Justice). All three, together with the Islamic

11 http://www.webislam.com/?idn=4508 [Accessed 01 February 2006].
12 The Muslim Federation of Spain (FEME), the Islamic Federation of Baleares and the Islamic Federation of Murcia. See El Mundo 02 December 2007 http://medios.mugak.eu/noticias/noticia/123280 [Accessed 14 April 2008].

Council of Catalonia, are demanding democratic elections in the Islamic Commission in order to broaden official representation of the Muslim community. This means that one vote would be designated for each separate, participating association with the declared aim of ensuring a more pluralistic participation. Despite sharp criticism and internal roadblocks the Islamic Commission has experienced in the last decade, it remains the legitimate interlocutor and representative body to the State. Ultimately, the proposition for democratic elections must endure the stability and continuity of the Commission, no matter how (in)effective it might be, through to the next leadership change.

In addition to these steps at the State interaction level, post-March 11 has also revealed emerging groundwork for new forms of social participation and public visibility for Muslims, once again relating to the catalyse of the events of 2004 and from the new sociological features of the Muslim population in Spain. So, for example, the demographic study by the *Observatorio Andalusí* pointed out the rise of a significant and growing number of young Muslims with a university-level education.[13] In spite of the difficulties to get an accurate estimation, there is in fact a growing visibilisation of urban, educated groups which are mobilising in response to what is felt as a very negative public opinion of Islam and their identity as Muslims. This phenomenon is only at its preliminary stages and is still clearly considered marginal when compared to the leadership of more

13 According to Riay Tatari, president of UCIDE, "contrary to what happened in France, many [of the young Muslims] have completed a University degree or have a professional qualification. They will not face difficulties to find a job [...] and are well integrated into the Spanish society". See http://www.elfaroceutamelilla.es/content/view/9689/67/ [Accessed 11 April 2008].

established religious associations with a longer history of participation in state representation issues. Nevertheless, the importance of this phenomenon derives from the groups' purpose of exploring new forms of public action and social engagement that transcend religious practice to interact with society at large (Téllez forthcoming). Thus, although their capacity to intervene in public debates is very limited (or even nonexistent today), their member profiles and socio-cultural activity points to new forms of Muslim public visibility and new demands beyond state recognition and regulation of religious minority practice. This new form of mobilisation might mean, consequently, a rather qualitative shift for Muslim mobilisation and its public visibility in the next few years.

All in all, 1992 and March 2004 constitute the two key dates in the process of institutionalisation and increased visibility of Islam in Spain. While the events of 1992 were the consequence of a political will, post March 11 shows not only the consolidation of Muslim self-organisation but also a timid opening for new forms of public participation. In spite of the sharp criticism of the agreements by Muslim leaders, the new steps that followed after 2004 seem to indicate a continuity in the institutional arrangement of 1992 simply through a new shift in leadership.

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Muslim Self-Organisation and State Interaction with Muslim Organisations in Italy

Claudia Mantovan

From the late 1800s, indeed until the 1970s, Italy was a country of emigration. It became a country of immigration only during the 1970s. However, since then, immigration has increased rapidly: there are currently 3,690,000 legal immigrants resident in Italy, about 5.6% of the total population of Italy (Caritas/Migrantes 2007). As regards their country of origin, these immigrants come from 191 different countries. This "migratory polycentrism" (Caritas/Migrantes 2003) has been constant over time and would seem to be a permanent feature of immigration into Italy. Muslims constitute one third of the Italian migrant population, i.e. about one million people. The two largest national groups of Muslims are people from Albania and Morocco followed, in this order, by immigrants from Tunisia, Senegal, Egypt, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The fact that migrants in Italy come from so many different nations explains not only the religious pluralism found among them, but also the pluralism within Islam practised in Italy. There are not only both doctrinal and ideological differences within Islam, such as those between the Sunnis and Shi'ites, but also other differences due to the wide variety of geographical and cultural origins of these migrants, a variety that

has produced many diverse ways of living and concretely interpreting Islam. For example, Albanian people in Italy rarely go to the mosque and do not follow Islamic practises within their daily lives, largely because, although about 70% of the members of this national group are considered to be Muslim, they are in reality almost completely secularised, having largely lost their religious roots during the 50 years they spent under a communist government. Furthermore, for both Albanian people and for other Muslims living in the Balkan area, being defined as Muslim is more a question of national identity than of religious identity (Pacini 2001). On the other hand, Muslim migrants from the Indian subcontinent, for example from Bangladesh or Pakistan, tend to organise their religious practises separately, among themselves, while the Islam practised by people from sub-Saharan Africa is mainly expressed through the Sufi confraternities, which differ from codified official Islam as they lay great importance on the personal, emotional elements within the relationship with god as preached by the founders of the confraternities. This spiritual cohesion is matched by a strong organisational cohesion among the members of the confraternity, which is usually expressed by opening its own place of prayer. Many Senegalese (the fourth largest national group of migrants in Italy who come from a country with a Muslim majority) are further sub-divided: most belong to the Muridiyya, some of them belong someto the are Tijaniyya and some, far fewer, belong to the Qadiriyya and to the Layennes Movement (Mantovan 2006). Daa'ira[1] (especially mourid and tijan) have been set up in all Italian cities where there are communities of Senegalese migrants (Schmidt di Friedberg 1994). This religious

1 Daa'ira are regular, collective prayer meetings of members of the confraternity living in the area.

self-organisation is largely unnoticed by the autochthonous population probably because the Senegalese tend to present themselves in lay terms, preferring to profess a national rather than a religious identity within the public space, a habit they most likely acquired during the period when their country was under French colonial occupation.

But now let us consider the main "visible" Muslim organisations in Italy.

1. The Representation of Islam in Italy: the Main Muslim Organisations

The Muslim religious field (Bourdieu 1971) is characterized in Italy by a conflict among some organisations. These organisations may differ both in their interpretation of the religious traditions and in the way in which they see the relationship between Islam and institutions. The fact that there is no central authority within Islam, one which can offer a definitive religious interpretation acceptable to all, has favoured the emergence of internal differences, that are often amplified by the migratory experience, in which the traditional, local points of reference of religious authority are lacking (Guolo 2005). The main Muslim organisations in Italy are:

- UCOII (*Unione delle Comunità e delle Organizzazioni Islamiche in Italia*, The Union of the Islamic Communities and Organisations in Italy), set up in 1990. This is the most important Muslim organisation in Italy and mainly draws in migrants from North Africa and the Middle East. The leading members of the UCOII are close to the Muslim Brotherhood, a neo-traditionalist

current within the Islamist movement. UCOII controls most of the mosques and the Muslim associations in Italy, above all in North and Central Italy. The pre-eminence of UCOII within organised and "visible" Islam is due to the dynamism of its leadership, which has not only a strong religious identity but also excellent organisational skills. The leadership is mostly made up of young educated immigrants, usually originating from urban backgrounds, who have grown up during a period of an "awakening of Islam" that has often taken place over the last three decades in their countries of origin (Guolo 2000). They are not the traditional socio-religious figures, nor are they part of the religious organisations of the various "Islam of the States"; rather they are the expression of a new phenomenon: that of European Islam (Dassetto 1994). The reason why these new socio-religious figures have been able to win positions of leadership within the Muslim community lies in their ability to "build Islam" at the organisational level within the host society. In other words, it lies in their ability to construct relations, to negotiate and mediate with the society that surrounds them and to gain recognition within that society (Guolo 1999). Thus the neo-traditionalist leaders have organised themselves so as to be able to respond to the demand for Islam that has developed in Italy ever since the majority of immigrants became or saw themselves as permanent, stable, residents and started to offer, through their organisations, health, educational and food supply services (e.g. distribution of halal meat). In a religion "without a central authority", where the first

to organise in an area automatically assumes leadership within that community, it has not been difficult, for this "active minority" (Crespi/Mucchi Faina 1988), to assume control over a silent and passive majority which has no real means for, or experience of, conflict management. In order to understand that this is a minority, one merely has to note that only about 5% of the Muslims in Italy attend the mosque regularly (about 10% during periods of the major festivals particularly important for Muslims, for example *Id al Fitr*).

- The Rome Mosque and the "Islam of the States" – The great Mosque in Rome is directly linked to the diplomacy and governments of the Muslim States. The Mosque is the seat of the Islamic Cultural Centre in Italy. The council of administration at the Centre is mostly made up of the various ambassadors of Sunni Muslim States, accredited either to the Vatican or to the Italian State itself. The cost of building the mosque, as for other great mosques in Europe, has for the most part been covered by Saudi Arabia, acting through an NGO, the Islamic World League.

- Both the Muslim States and the Islamic World League are involved in many other initiatives that offer support to smaller Mosques and Islamic centres scattered throughout Italy. Here, participation is indirect, simply a response to initiatives already set up at the local level. Often these mosques and associations have a national basis and allow that State to offer help and religious support to immigrants from there; it also allows the

State to keep a check on and even control the type of Islam being practised by its citizens. The State of Morocco is particularly active in supporting Islam among its emigrants, often through prayer rooms, linked to the many Moroccan associations that have been founded throughout Italy in both large and small towns and cities, especially in the North Italian area. Tunisia, too, exercises control over its emigrants, especially in Sicily where, through an agreement drawn up with the Regional Government of Sicily, it has taken over control of the mosque in Palermo: the Tunisian ambassador nominates the Imam for this mosque and oversees all activities through an organisation, the *Associazione Culturale Islamica di Palermo* (Islamic Cultural Association of Palermo). Egypt maintains a degree of influence over immigrants of Egyptian origin through Italian-Egyptian friendship associations. Egypt promotes a non-politicised Islam and often comes into conflict with its emigrants who are affiliated to, or sympathise with, the various movements within political Islam.

- AMI (*Associazione dei Musulmani Italiani*, the Association of Italian Muslims) – was founded in 1982 and is the heir of the *Associazione Musulmani del Littorio*, an organisation of Somali Muslims who became Italian citizens during the period when Somalia was an Italian colony. The association essentially supports the idea of the relationship between religious identity and citizenship and argues that Western democracy offers the best guarantee to safeguard the Muslim religion.

It considers the other structures and organisations to be inadequate to be representatives of Islam in Italy, either because these latter do not take citizenship into consideration, or because the AMI defines them as "heretical sects" (amongst whom they include Shi'ites and Wahabiti), or because they belong to an Islamic movement, including the Italian neo-traditionalist groups, which the AMI considers to be extremist (Guolo 2005).

- CO.RE.IS (*Comunità Religiosa Islamica italiana*, The Italian Islamic Religious Community) – is a small group of Italian converts to Islam who follow Sufism and the esoteric Islam of René Guenon. Their leader is Abdel Wâhid Pallavicini, a traditionalist Catholic who converted to Islam in 1951. COREIS too is in conflict with other Islamist groups in Italy and opposes the ideological Islam of these groups through their support and promotion of Sufi spirituality, of the common Abrahamite roots and the relationship between the great monotheistic religions. Notwithstanding the fact that this organisation has good relations with State institutions, to the extent that it represents Italy in international Muslim meetings, CO.RE.IS, like AMI, is a minor organisation, when compared with UCOII and the Mosque of Rome in terms of number of adherents and of centres in Italy and, consequently, of influence (Guolo 2005).

2. Conflict About the Intesa[2]

The regime that controls relations between the State and confessional religions in Italy is made up of, on the one hand, the *Patti Lateranensi*, Lateran Pacts (stipulated on the 11 February 1929 and revised in 1985), wherein the Catholic Church re-established peaceful relations with the Italian State, reiterated in Article 7 in the Italian Constitution; and, on the other, by individual *Intese* drawn up between the State and other religious organisations or bodies (Pace 2004), as defined in Article 8 of the Constitution (which also guarantees freedom of worship). Those religious groups who have not drawn up an *Intesa* with the State are subject to Law no. 1159 of 24 June 1929, which deals with minority religions. Currently, a new law regarding freedom of worship is under discussion in the Italian Parliament, but it has yet to be approved, partly because of doubts and resistance on the part of the Lega Nord (Northern League, a xenophobe political party).

Intese have been concluded by the Valdese Church, the 7th Day Adventists, Baptists, Pentecostals, Jews and Lutherans. Muslims however have not, as yet, stipulated an *Intesa* with the Italian State, largely because of the difficulty of identifying one organisation that represents all people in this religious group, given that it is a "religion without a centre", i.e., one with no central authority. That there is competition between the various Muslim organisations to win the right to represent Islam in Italy can be clearly seen in the fact that applications to draw up an *Intesa* have been made to the *Presidenza del Consiglio* (the Government) autonomously by all the main Muslim organisations.

2 *Intesa* is the technical term, in the Italian Constitution, to define an official agreement between the State and a religious group.

The first draft for an *Intesa* was submitted in 1992 by the UCOII, and was followed, almost immediately, by an official letter from the *Centro Culturale Islamico di Italia* asking for the same thing. In 1993, the *Associazione dei Musulmani Italiani* too, drew up and sent a draft thus offering itself as the main interlocutor with the Italian State. Lastly, in 1998, CO.RE.IS sent in its draft for an *Intesa*. It is emblematic of the divisions that each draft proposal presented the applicant organisation as being the only Muslim organisation that should be considered the true representative of Islam in Italy (Pacini 2001).

Since then, the desire to reach an *Intesa* has encouraged the two main organisations, the "Islam of the Mosques" of the UCOII and the "Islam of the States" of the Rome Mosque, to try to come to some agreement. So, in 1998, the UCOII and the *Centro Culturale Islamico di Italia* tried to unite. They set up the *Consiglio Islamico d'Italia* (Islamic Council of Italy) and submitted a joint proposal of agreement to the Italian government. But relations between the UCOII and the Centro were strained from the outset, both because of disagreements regarding the criteria upon which the various posts on the Council should be rotated, and because the Centro, which seeks to present Islam as a force for peace and is only concerned about freedom of worship, feared that the political attitudes and activities of UCOII could damage the case of Muslims in Italy. The Islam Council of Italy does still exist, formally at least, but has never been operational. The events of 11 September 2001 only served to exacer-bate the differences. Furthermore, international questions - Afghanistan, Palestine and Iraq - have both further divided the two main actors within organised Islam in Italy and further reduced the likelihood of reaching an agreement about a common, accepted *Intesa* for Islam (Guolo 2005).

3. The Consulta for Islam in Italy

The growing mistrust of Muslims that developed in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, created a pressing need, by the Italian institutions, to find an interlocutor, to establish communication with Muslims. The attempts to draw up an *Intesa* had all come to nothing, as had the proposals for a law on freedom of worship. Giuseppe Pisanu, Italian Interior Minister in the Berlusconi government, took the initiative and issued a ministerial decree on 10 September 2005 in which he stated his intention of setting up the *Consulta per l'Islam Italiano* which can be roughly translated as an Advisory Board, or Committee, for Islam in Italy. According to the decree, this *Consulta* is "set up with advisory functions within the Ministry of the Interior, which will chair the board" and "should meet at least three times a year". Its main task should be "to carry out the research and in-depth investigations required by the Minister, doing studies and making suggestions, for improving offering on how to improve the dialogue between the institutions of the State and the Muslim community in Italy and for addingshould add to knowledge about the problems of integration, in order to identify the best solutions for a harmonious insertion of Muslim communities into Italian society, while respecting the Constitution and the Laws of the Italian Republic".

The decree also established that the members of the *Consulta* were to be nominated by the Interior Minister in a subsequent decree, and would be chosen both from among "people, who belong to the Islamic culture and religion and who, given their experience, would be able to offer expert, informed advice" and from among "scholars and experts". On 1st December 2005, the Ministry published a list of 15 persons who

would be part of the *Consulta* (the President was to be the Minister himself). Most of the people nominated are from the first category, from the Muslim world. About half of those nominated are Italian citizens. Some of them simply belong to the world of culture and communication, but there are also representatives of various associations, including the leaders of UCOII, CO.RE. IS and the Mosque of Rome (among the organisations that had presented a draft of an *Intesa*, only AMI was missing), but also of other organisations, such as the *Associazione Donne Marocchine in Italia* (Association of Moroccan Women in Italy) and ANOLF, the *Associazione Nazionale Oltre le Frontiere* (National Association beyond Frontiers), which is linked to the CISL, one of the larger Italian Trade Unions.

The decision to try to facilitate the development of a single representative voice for Muslims in Italy by setting up this *Consulta* through a top down approach, i.e. by the institutions co-opting committee members, is in line with the approach adopted in Italy to find representatives of migrants in general, since the beginning of the phenomenon. The need to identify interlocutors within the varied and fast expanding world of migrants in Italy has led to the setting up of consultative bodies at national, regional and provincial levels. All these experiments have already clearly shown their limitations, and they are currently in crisis, since the logic of institutional cooptation, which mainly focuses on the needs of the society of arrival (such as reducing complexity and choosing interlocutors functional for dealing with the institutions and for legitimising them) has tended to reduce migrants' level of participation, thus exacerbating divisions. (Mantovan 2007).

The aims of the *Consulta per l'Islam Italiano* are much the same, but related to a particular target: reassuring the public about the "Muslim threat", by obtaining the help of people of Muslim religion and culture in setting up a commission the main purpose of which would be to solve problems relating to public order and security. One of the main tasks of the Ministry involved is, in fact, the maintenance of public order and, tellingly, it is the first issue mentioned and dealt with in the preamble to the decree which set up the *Consulta*. The Italian State is seeking to create an "Italian Islam" which will include only the "moderate" Muslims, i.e. individuals who are far from Islamist circles, willing to cooperate with the government, and personally chosen by the Minister (Silvestri 2005), reasoning in line with the model of the minority which is tolerated because it can be better incorporated into our rules of the game (Pace 2004).

Both the fact that Islam is essentially perceived in terms of "a problem of public order" and the "reassurance" function ascribed to the *Consulta*, are confirmed by the fact that, especially during the first three meetings, convened by the Minister Pisanu, attention often focused on condemnations of terrorism. During the second meeting (9 March 2006), for example, the members of the Consulta were asked to approve a *Manifesto dell'Islam in Italia* (Manifesto of Islam in Italy), in which it was stated, among other things, that there was a "rejection of all forms of extremism, fundamentalism, violence and discrimination" and "rejection of terrorism as a means of struggle in the name of religion or political beliefs and ideology". The majority of the *Consulta* approved the document, only two members did not. One was the President of UCOII, who had proposed another document with a series of demands, some general and some

specifically relating to Muslims. Demands about, for example, changes that should be made to the laws on immigration and citizenship; the possibility for Muslims to set up private schools; offering an hour of religion instruction in schools not only for Catholic students but also for Muslims; and for changes to the hours of work in order to meet the needs of practising Islam.

In May 2006 the centre-right government, led by Silvio Berlusconi, was replaced by a centre-left coalition led by Romano Prodi. The first time the new Minister of the Interior, Giuliano Amato, convened the *Consulta per l'Islam italiano* (19 June 2006), he declared that he wanted to give a "new lease of life to the work of the *Consulta*" and directed the discussion towards more social questions, announcing that he wished to form a working group within the *Consulta* that would formulate concrete proposals for the reform of the norms regarding citizenship (one of the objectives of the Prodi government).

In August 2006 however, a statement was made by the UCOII regarding Israel's attack on Lebanon wherein it compared the "Israeli massacres" with "Nazi massacres" and served to re-focus the attention of the *Consulta* on questions directly connected with terrorism and security. The Minister, Amato, immediately convened the Committee against Discrimination and Anti-Semitism and strongly criticised what had been done. He called another meeting of the *Consulta* (28 August 2006) in which he insisted that "it was time that all members of the *Consulta* signed a charter which clearly stated the values and principles upon which Italian Islam could and would be built" saying that those who would not sign would be expelled from the *Consulta*. The Charter, called *Carta dei Valori, della Cittadinanza*

e dell'Integrazione (Charter of Values, Citizenship and Integration), was presented by the Minister of the Interior on 23 April 2007. The first section, entitled *"L'Italia, comunità di persone e di valori"* (Italy, community of people and of values), opened with the statement that: "Italy [...] has developed within a Christian tradition which has permeated its culture and which, together with Judaism, has laid the foundations of modernity and the principles of freedom and justice". Among the principles listed in the document, particular emphasis has been laid on the importance of the human being and of his/her dignity, the prohibition of any "mutilation of the body that is not necessary for medical reasons", equal rights for men and women, a ban on polygamy, the right of freedom of worship, and Italy's commitment to working for peace, especially in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, where Italy has always been "in favour of a solution which allows Palestinians and Israelis living in two States and two democracies". This latter is a clear response to the position taken by the UCOII a few months earlier, which had appeared to challenge Israel's right to exist.

4. Concluding Observations

Given what has just been said above, the *Consulta per l'Islam Italiano* does not seem to offer the best means of representing Muslims in Italy. Some scholars have noted that the criteria of the constitution of the *Consulta* are very like those of the CORIF - *Conseil de réflexion sur l'Islam en France* (Council for Reflection upon Islam in France), set up in France fifteen years ago but which collapsed after three years because it was not truly representative. Some observers have said that the decision to set up a *Consulta* for Islam within the Ministry of the Interior should be seen in relation to the fact that Muslims in Italy have not yet

stipulated an *Intesa* with the government: this failure to sign an *Intesa* should be attributed not only to the divisions within organised Islam in Italy, but also to the lack of any real effort on the part of the Italian government to solve the problem, a reluctance that is in part the result of the fear that Muslims might gain too much power. This has led to a sort of "dual regime": agreements, *Intese*, which confirm formal recognition of that confession by the State have, so far, only been drawn up with the Judeo-Christian confessions, while the State's relationship with Islam, given that it is seen as also being a question of public order, is still being managed by Ministry of the Interior. *Intese* with both Jehovah's Witnesses and Buddhists are also currently blocked (Colaianni 2006).

One should also ask oneself whether seeking a united representation of Islam in Italy, either through a *Consulta* or with an *Intesa*, is indeed the right thing to do, at least at the moment. Quite a few representatives of Muslims have said that the real problem is not the lack of an agreement with the State, but the system of relations between the State and the religious groups itself: this system tends to impose a degree of homogeneity within Islam that simply does not exist, also because the pluralism within Islam is enhanced in Italy by the extreme variety of migrants' country of origin. The desire to conduct negotiations with just one representative is more a convenience for the State than an accurate reflection of the needs of the diverse Muslim communities, and also serves to reinforce the idea of a monolithic Islam (Open Society Institute 2002). Furthermore, immigration is still a fairly recent phenomenon in Italy, and most immigrants are still more occupied with concrete, everyday economic and legal (residency, work permit) problems, which

means they have little time and energy left to participate in other actions (Mantovan 2007).

Probably, the best path to follow is to operate at a more "basic" level, acting on the elements that determine a situation of material and symbolic marginality for the majority of migrants in Italy[3], and thus helping an increasing number of migrants to acquire the resources which are essential for participation, leaving time and space for discussion and debate both within the various Muslim organisations and within the Muslim migrant community in general, so as to allow a more representative leadership to emerge, one that is really able to reflect the needs of Muslims in Italy.

Furthermore, the need for an *Intesa* would, in any case, be less pressing, when the existing laws are applied more efficaciously and also if the law on freedom of worhip is passed, as this law would probably create the conditions required for a juridically precise and clear recognition of the Muslim communities as regards both their rights and their duties (Pace 2004). This would offer a short-term solution to the most pressing problems of Muslims in Italy today, and would give the State authorities more time to study and discuss further measures with representatives of the Muslim population and even, perhaps, to draw up an *Intesa* or even a *Consulta* that would be acceptable to both parties.

3 I.e. the lack of political rights, the difficulties with the residence permit linked to the law 189/2002, the difficulties in accessing citizenship linked to the law 91/1992, the negative image of migrants in general and Muslims in particular in mass media and political discourses.

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From a Regulation of the Religious Landscape to the "Preacher State": The French Situation

Franck Frégosi

In this paper, I want to analyse critically the link between the state and the Muslim religion in France. Is the French Council of Muslim Worship (CFCM) a means to represent the Muslim form to public powers and authorities? Or, on the contrary, does the CFCM represent public powers to practising Muslims? Is this organ able to take up the various challenges underlined by the settling of Islam in a both non-Muslim and secularised society? In other words, is the CFCM limited to be nothing else but a grain of sand in the organization of Islam in France, or can it be considered as a key point in a process as delicate as necessary?

I do not pretend to answer all those questions but to underline and put in question the legitimacy of the secular state intervention into the way the Muslim religion works and is organized. The progressive settling of the Muslim religion in France becomes more and more controversial, especially when it tackles Islam's ability to integrate into a secular setting or, like some wish, to disband into the Republic.

1. The "Preacher State" Concept

For the purpose at hand, I will consider the preacher state concept as an ideal in order to clearly deal with the inclusion of the public powers in the religious landscape. In other words, it is about imagining a paradigm that would emphasise the public powers' temptation to play a part in the religious organisation on a long-term basis to transform it. Indeed, the preacher state syndrome seems more operating than other concepts like the "jacobin-cesaro-papist" (Etienne 1989: 19) or the Gallican State (Frégosi 2004: 79-99). These two concepts may be seducing and carry both a historical and a rhetorical background. But they can be seen as thrown off centre on a geographical ground. The first one takes us back to the particular interaction between religion and policy in the Byzantine Empire (Dagron 1996) (the imperial holiness), while the second one embodies the Gallo-centrism ideology. The perks of the preacher state lie in the similarities between political actions in administration and the working-out of the legitimate religious figure on both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, between the secularised country of France and the Muslim states.

The question of universality is also very interesting: what we consider as universal cannot always be found where it was used to. In other words, laicity is nothing but a juridical experience among others which is not about to use up all its interactions between religion and policy, the sacred and the social link. Its institutional establishment could not be a reason for the public power to define a religion politically compatible with a republican model (Liogier 2006). The preacher state concept seems to be more universal than laicity because it underlines the natural tendency of all political power, to interfere in reli-

gious matters, in order to get control on religious administration (cleric's nomination, religious buildings) and even on producing religious knowledge whatever the cultural and religious background is. Far from the ideal representation of laicity, the present situation of Muslim-related policy in France shows us an hybrid situation in which on the one side the official ideology is still proclaiming separation between religion and state while on the other side the State is interfering regularly in islamic affairs (organising Muslim worship, banning out headscarf from public schools). This situation is more or less common to several European states (Belgium, Greece, Spain, etc.).

2. The State as the Main Control of the French Islamic Stage

The settling of Islam in France and the fact that this religion has no clear centred organisation are two vectors of the emerging role played by the State in the religious landscape. First of all, it is because Islam in France is atomised, the different Muslim organisations being unable to define a clear representation of the religious worship, but also because several states where immigrants are from involve themselves in considerable struggles for mosques. That is the reason why French public powers have made the Muslim question to their exclusive field of intervention and why they have imagined a process able to organise this religion. The question of safety has also been a determining reason and has led the government to consider Islam as a religion apart from the others. Thus, in the past few years, French public powers have given up their necessary religious neutrality, impulsing a structure of the Muslim religion. Either the example of the CORIF, created in 1994 on the initiative of Pierre Joxe, the Muslim charter in France in 1996, supported

by Charles Pasqua, or the national consultation of Muslims of France (*al 'istischara*), initiated by J.P Chevenement in 1998 (Frégosi 2001: 63-71), the past 20 years have reflected a State more and more involved in the internal administration of the Muslim religion (Frégosi 2006: 133-162).

In my mind the State intervention does not seem to be illegitimate in so far as its will is to make easier the emergence of a necessary interface between different Muslim structures and public powers, and to accommodate Muslim practices, or to guarantee freedom of religion. After all, the first article of the 9 December 1905 law requires the Republic to ensure the free exercise of worship.

But a critical point has come when public powers try hard to leave them only room for a tailor-made representation and intervene in the naming of their interlocutors. Nevertheless, this line has been passed in December 2002 at the Nainville-les-Roches seminary. The Ministry of the Interior prompted the three groups of the consultation of the Muslims in France (national federations, regional mosques and qualified representatives) to confirm the distribution of posts within the future French Council of Muslim Worship before the elections. Accordingly, the CFCM was headed by non-elected people designated by public powers and supported by foreign chanceries such as Algeria, Morocco, etc. While it would be hard to imagine an intervention of public powers in the election of the French Chief Rabbi, it seems to be normal with Islam. Public powers chose the rector of the Great Mosque of Paris to be at the head of the CFCM in order to not displease Algerian authorities who are in control of the venerable institution, but also to preserve a refined and

almost consensual vision of Islam. The minister said that the rector Dalil Boubakeur was the right man for the job because he was considered as the best representative by non-muslims. All the governments have looked for a Muslim church. It seems that they finally found an "ad vitam aeternam" pontiff. The two vice-presidencies were given to the general secretary of the UOIF (the orthodox powerful federation, close to the Muslim brothers linked with the conservatives Gulf States and settled in France) and to the president of the FNMF, close to Moroccan interests. Concerning the secretariat of the CFCM, it was entrusted to a representative of the official Turkish Islam care (CCMTF). Ironically, the first CFCM elections would be marked by the collapse of the Great Mosque of Paris to more orthodox and traditionalist elements of the UOIF and the FNMF. Such legislation was supposed to change at the end of the first CFCM mandate. But it is still on, and has not been contested.

This phenomenon does not take place in an isolated manner. We have to keep in mind that, in the colonial times, public powers always refused to encourage the independence of the Muslim worship. The 1905 act was passed over in silence in Algeria: the imams in charge of mosques annexed to public domain were named and paid by the government. The latter also forbade interventions by anyone who would be unknown to the religious personnel in the places of worship. What is questionable here is not the involvement of the State in the organisation of a worship representation but its will to weight on the composition of the representative organ. One has to wonder if, ironically, the current organization supported by the Government finally is not an institution representing public powers to Muslims. If this is the case, the CFCM would become a legal re-

flection of an official Islam (Zeghal 2005: 97-113), but that would be an unbelievable statement in a secularised and neutral State!

The veil has also been a turning point insofar as it has explicitly revealed the public power's will to work out a both pragmatic and republican Islam. When he was in Cairo on 30 December 2003, Nicolas Sarkozy, like his left-wing predecessors, Pierre Joxe and Jean-Pierre Chevènement, paid a visit to the Grand Imam of the Al-Azhar Mosque, Sheik Mohamed Saïd El Tantawi. The latter is known to embody a rather pragmatic Islam, conciliatory with public authorities, without being liberal. He was asked to talk about the headscarf issue, and more precisely he was asked if the head-covering was an obligation in a non-Muslim country. He confirmed that women have to cover their heads, but he also said that if the head-covering would put the women living in non-Muslim countries in a socially difficult position, they could do without wearing the headscarves and wouldn't comit a major sin (Zeghal 2005: 97-113). On 3 January 2004, the French Minister of Interior called a meeting with the office of the CFCM and the presidents of the 25 CRCM, to come to an agreement on the headscarf issue in public schools. Even if the minister personally was not favorable to pass a law banning the head covering, he still wanted the locally elected Muslim officials to play a part by asking the girls to take off their headscarves. But could we have imagined the same minister calling a meeting of the national conference of Roman Catholic bishops of France, enjoining them to disagree with the Vatican on the question of the ordination of women?

3. Organising Islamic Worship or Reforming Islam?

These never-ending discussions between public authorities and Muslim organisations underline the Republican dilemma, especially nowadays when the world expresses scepticism about Islam. The Government is torn between the necessity to help the creation of a body to represent the Muslims, and the temptation to completely change Islam.

Scholars and intellectuals (Muslims or not) agree to say that Islam has to change, especially after 9/11 and the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London. It is time for those who read the founding scriptures as timeless, often with a political motivation, and those who have a more contextualised and critical reading of those texts without neglecting their spiritual significance, to have an intellectual debate. The question of the relations between violence, Faith and Reason, needs to be asked as well, as Pope Benedict XVI awkwardly suggested in Regensburg, on 12 September 2006. But it does not mean that it has to become a *sine qua non* condition to the amelioration of the conditions of worship. Especially since the principle of Laicity does not allow the Republic to express an opinion on the internal elaboration of a religious doctrine, or to organise worship instead of those to whom it matters. The time when Napoleon the Great was called "the Lord's anointed" is over!

Public authorities have to make sure that worship does not lead to public order offences and in particular, that sentiments against republican institutions, or against State officers are not expressed in places of worship. That is clear and has to be understood. If Islam needs to change, it is a decision that can-

not come from the government. The reform has to come from the Muslims, even if it can be counter-productive. That is what happened when the Caliph Al Ma'mun, in order to impose the rationalist doctrine of the Mutazilite School, created an inquisition, the *Mihna*. Then why do we not create a religious police for the Republic or even better, why do we not write a Psalter or a republican Islamic ritual with an invocation to Marianne? When he was in office, Pierre Joxe had imagined that, on top of the obligation of speaking French during the Friday Prayers, a prayer for the Republic would be included in the Islamic worship. We still have something like that, in the synagogues of France, for the Shabbat worship. Why then, don't we make the Muslims take an oath of fidelity and adopt a civil constitution of the clergy, the way the revolutionaries did with the Catholic clerks? That would be the end of the religion-neutral government and therefore the end of the freedom of worship.As long as the legal framework is respected, the State, being secular, does not have the tools to judge how individuals practice or not their religion.

Is it justified then to ask Muslim authorities a series of crucial and even uncomfortable questions, the way Napoleon did when he reunited the Sanhedrin in 1807? Yet that is what some intellectuals suggest should be done (Zeghal 2005: 97-113). That is a great idea! But then those questions should be asked to all the religious collectivities, and the application of the decision should be broader, because the religious collectivities change. Generations of believers come one after the other and their points of view can evolve, either they become more liberal, or they become more orthodox with doctrinal reinforcements. In

1807, when the members of the Great Sanhedrin were asked if marriages between Israelites and Christians were permitted by Judaism, they just answered that such marriages when concluded in accordance with the civil code are valid but they cannot be celebrated with religious forms (Gutman 2000: 41). Their answer was in accordance with civil law but it did not really affect their religious practice. That is really far from the idealised vision of a reformed Judaism that would not follow the laws of the *Halakha* anymore and adopt a vision of marriage that would go beyond the religious differences. But today nobody would say that Judaism does not embrace republican ideals, then why ask more to Islam?

The way we describe and live laicity has a lot of common points with what happens in the Maghreb. It is the question of Islam that links the two situations. There, administrations follow a policy of containment of the various political movements that use Islam; the State controls the religious sphere. In France, the government is supposed to help Islam to be in accordance with the institutions of a religion-neutral State. It is also for security reasons that the government is worried about the integration of Islam. A lot of right-wing elected representatives, as well as left-wing representatives, would agree to change the 1905 French Law of Separation of Religion and State, in order to allow local authorities to finance the construction of prayers rooms. That would allow them to have a role to play in the local configuration of Islam. The perspective would then be the development of subsidised municipal Islams. – Neither in Alger, nor in Tunis, nor in Paris, do the Governments seem ready to give back to God what belongs to him.

But all of that does not only concern Islam. Indeed, if we look at the debate on the question of sects in France, it is easy to see that public authorities have a tendency to say what is religiously correct and what is not. There is a real wish to create tailor-made religions, and the parliamentarians are usually more maximalist than the Ministry of the Interior. Indeed, the Ministry of the Interior has to protect public freedoms, and freedom of conscience is one of them. That is where we can see a difference with Islam.

What seems to be logical and acceptable in a system that recognises several religious groups (Germany, Belgium, Austria, Spain, etc.) or in a country that has a state religion (Norway, Denmark, etc.) is questionable in the case of a religion-neutral state. At a time when the European Court of Human Rights, in several of its decisions, deals with the idea of a religion-neutral Europe, it reaffirms the primacy of state rights, the neutrality of the state on religious matters and the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of religion. But the fact that, at the same time, the European Court of Human Rights puts forward the free exercise rights of religious groups "without any arbitrary interference of the State" (European Court of Human Rights 2000) shows, that the problem does not concern France only, but Europe as a whole.

The best Republican ideas can sometimes hide the old dream of the "Preacher State", that is to say the idea of a State that would spread the Word of God, and that would truly be the end of the principle of laicity. Now that we have freed the State

of religion, now that we have freed the State of Islam, when we think about the future of Islam in the European Union, should we not keep in mind the idea of Mohamed Charfi (Charfi 2002: 102-103), and free Islam of the State? That is to say create new relations between the Islamic institutions that already exist, or that are being created, and the public authorities, following the logic of autonomy. The main problem is that even in a secular context as the French one, instead of facing some social and economical problems (increasing unemployment in suburbs, ethnic discrimination, etc.), most of the politicians try to use religion, Islam in particular, as a political resource, a useful means of social control of populations.

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From Race to Faith Relations, the Local to the National Level: The State and Muslim Organisations in Britain[1]

Seán McLoughlin

1. Introduction

In this paper I examine the changing relationship between Muslim organisations and the State in the United Kingdom. The first part of my analysis presents an overview of the ways in which the structure of the British State, in terms of legislation, policymaking and the existence of an established church, has provided the framework within which Muslims have organised themselves since the 1960s. In particular, my account examines the New Labour government's emphasis on civic renewal and the related emergence of what I call the 'faith relations industry' at a time of greater securitisation since '9/11' and '7/7'. I also trace a shift in the main focus of Muslim leaders' engagement with the State, from more ethnically-oriented grassroots networks at the local level from the 1960s, to a more 'professionalised' national focus for representation of Muslims as 'Muslims' at the national level since the Rushdie Affair in 1989. My paper culminates with an examination of the rise and fall of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), a Muslim

1 The main body of this article is reproduced from sections of McLoughlin 2005a although the material has been significantly updated 2007-08.

umbrella organisation which was inaugurated in 1997. Despite being courted by New Labour prior to '9/11' as a likely solution to the stated longstanding problem of finding a single Muslim interlocutor for UK government, since '7/7' especially the MCB has fallen out of favour with government. Indeed, because of its position on UK foreign policy and uncertainties about the Islamist heritage of many of its affiliates, as well as its willingness and ability to challenge the rhetoric of radicalisation, the State has recently sought to engage more plural platforms for Muslim representation.

2. From 'Race' to 'Faith' Relations: the UK State, Multiculturalism and the Established Church

As members of the Commonwealth, South Asian heritage Muslims – who make up around 70-75% of Britain's 1.6 million Islamic population - became de facto 'citizens' as soon as they settled in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s. However, immigration legislation since 1962 has progressively reproduced narrower conceptions of 'citizenship' (Husband 1994). Indeed, recalling the administration of colonial affairs, state management of non-European immigrants in Britain has been organised in terms of the pragmatic recognition of essentialised 'cultural communities' rather than individual civil rights (Baumann 1999). Anti-discrimination legislation of 1966 and 1976 established the racial and ethnic basis of this paradigm and witnessed the emergence of a so-called 'race relations industry' to oversee minority affairs. As members of 'ethnic' groups, Jews and Sikhs were afforded protection by the law, but not Muslims, given the multiethnic and transnational nature of Islam.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, 'race' relations in Britain have also been administered in terms of state policymaking under the rubric of 'multiculturalism'. As Parekh (Parekh 2000: 42) suggested in the report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, the main political debate in this respect has been between 'nationalists' and 'liberals', both of whom emphasise the importance of social cohesion over plurality. 'Nationalists' have advocated an 'assimilationism' which maintains that 'minorities' should conform to British 'norms'. In contrast, 'liberals' have posited a public space which claims to be ideologically 'neutral' but is still overwhelmingly secular and prioritises 'equality' at the expense of 'difference'. However, with South Asian heritage minorities especially advancing religion as a major basis for public recognition, Parekh (Parekh 2000: 48) concluded that if Britain was to become a more inclusive and harmonious society, it must expose itself to a conversation between liberalism and greater pluralism. Indeed, in a postcolonial age of 'transnational citizenship', he asked the radical question, could Britain recognise itself as, a 'multicultural postnation'? (Parekh 2000: 39).

Perhaps not surprisingly, Parekh's report was not well received by 'nationalists' or 'liberals'. Moreover, the possibility of any progressive debate about the future of multi-ethnic Britain was quickly overtaken by local and global 'crises' when, in the summer of 2001, there were disorders involving Pakistani Muslim heritage youth in the 'northern towns' of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, events quickly followed by the attacks of '9/11'. By the end of 2001 the New Labour government had articulated a new concern for 'community cohesion' in a series of its own re-

ports.[2] Without reference to Parekh (Parekh 2000), Home Office Minister, John Denham, proposed the need for a debate about 'shared values' and 'common citizenship' in order to 'minimise the risk of further disorder' (Denham 2002: 1-2). Denham also maintained that the aim of the new policy of 'community cohesion' would not be to revisit assimilationism (Denham, 2002: 21) but rather to promote a commitment to 'civic identity' (Denham 2002: 11-12) and 'civic renewal' (Denham 2002: 18). Here, it is possible to detect the influence of the 'communitarian' political philosophy that achieved prominence in the USA under the Clinton presidency.[3] Indeed, ironically echoing the New Right backlash against local authorities' 'multicultural' policies in the 1980s (Husband 1994), here was a UK-based communitarian critique of the 'old' Labour culture of 'rights', now said to have neglected citizens' 'responsibilities' and so reinforced ethnic 'segregation'.

In such a context, and with Islamophobia and appeals to the clash of civilisations on the rise, any remaining taboos against publicly challenging aspects of minority culture or religion understood to inhibit 'cohesion' or represent a threat to security were finally broken. In February 2002, a Home Office White Paper, 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven', proposed a new citizenship ceremony for Britain and an oath of allegiance (implemented 2004), language tests (especially for ministers of religion including imams – again implemented 2004) and a debate

2 These are available at: www.communities.gov.uk/communities/publications/reports [Accessed 25 March 2009].

3 For an assessment of the relationship between 'communitarianism' and New Labour, see Goes 2004 and Bevir 2005. This is further explored in a lecture by former Home Secretary, David Blunkett (Blunkett 2003).

on transcontinental and forced marriages (Forced Marriage Act 2007).[4] Together with a raft of new anti- and counter-terrorism measures, this means that Muslim communities have been subject to unprecedented levels of intervention and regulation by the British State. Building on the already existing Anti-Terrorism Act (2000), the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Bill (2001) and then the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2005) proscribed specific organisations, allowed for increased powers to stop and search and of detention, and created the new offences of incitement to terrorism and seeking or providing terrorist training (Birt 2005).

Of course, Britain is somewhat unusual amongst liberal democracies in that religion has an 'established' position in the structure of the secular state (Modood 1997). The Anglican Church has a pivotal place in narrations of Englishness and its complex relations with political power are reflected still in public institutions from the Monarchy to the House of Lords and the large number of voluntary-aided state schools. Another outcome of Anglicanism's historical privilege has been that no system of formally recognising 'other faiths' exists in the UK. Even in the context of growing pluralism it has been the Church of England that has brokered relations between the State and other religions. For its part, and for all its own domestication to the State, Anglicanism is distrustful of the secular and can see the advantage of ecumenical and multi-faith alliances. Indeed, in making claims for public recognition in the spaces and guises allowed and encouraged by a secularising society, Muslim organisations have undoubtedly benefited from the presence of

4 Available at: www.archive2.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm53/5387/cm5387.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].

an established Church. Thus there is Muslim support for 'establishment' both as a symbolic recognition of God's sovereignty and a more tangible critique of secularism's presumed 'neutrality' (Modood 1997). Lacking the capacities and infrastructure of the Church of England, Muslims have learned how to negotiate with the State as was the case during the successful campaign for a 'religion' question at the 2001 Census.[5]

Even beyond the specialised sphere of multi-faith relations, however, there has been a new openness to religion – or at least its more social or civic versions (Birt 2006) – in State governance over the last two decades or so. Against the context of Thatcherism's disavowal of community and riots in the inner-cities, the Church of England marked a return to social activism with the 1985 report, Faith in the City. While 'other faiths' were not a major concern of the report it did identify ways in which the Church could facilitate their engagement in the public sphere. So it was, in 1992, that still under a Conservative administration, the Department of Environment, in collaboration with the Church and the Interfaith Network for the UK (founded 1987), formed the Inner Cities Religious Council (ICRC) (Taylor 2002).[6] With a view to tapping into religious communities' resources – people, networks, organisations, buildings – as a part of urban regeneration, the ICRC provided the first government forum for establishment led multi-faith representation and consultation on a national level although it did not command significant resources.

5 See, for example, the MCB's account of the lobbying process at: www.mcb.org.uk/downloads/census2001.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].
6 See www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=524 [Accessed 25 Mach 2009].

Since 1997, when New Labour came to power, government has engaged 'faith' much more publicly and controversially so much so that it is possible to speak of a 'faith relations industry' (McLoughlin 2005a). 'Communitarian' thinking regards religious communities as a particular source of social capital, especially in deprived areas where other forms of social infrastructure may be absent (Putnam 2000). Indeed, in New Labour's first year of office, the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions issued advice to all local authorities on 'involving faith communities' in neighbourhood renewal.[7] By October 2003, 'the religious issues section of the Home Office Race Equality Unit was reconstituted to incorporate the new Faith Communities Unit' (FCU), suggesting that a civic version of 'faith' was becoming as important as 'race' in the state's management of minority ethnic affairs.[8] Legitimated by the 2001 Census, which recorded 76.8 per cent religious affiliation in Britain[9], the faith relations industry therefore exists to: i) engage the many (socially excluded) non-European minorities in Britain (especially 'Muslims') whose principal mode of communal identification and organisation has been 'faith' based; ii) facilitate government consultation with the main faith groups as stakeholders and bearers of social capital; and iii) promote 'community cohesion' through interfaith activity. In this discourse

7 www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_urbanpolicy/documents/page/odpm_urbpol_608134.hcsp [Accessed 25 March 2009]. N.B. The ICRC subsequently moved to Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

8 See the recommendations of the steering group on the engagement between government and faith communities at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/workingtog_faith040329.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009]. N.B. In May 2006 the FCU was moved to the new Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and renamed the Cohesion and Faiths Unit. Also based at the DCLG, the ICRC was renamed Faith Communities Consultative Council.

9 For the main 2001 Census data on religion see www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hors274.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].

'good' faith - which promotes integration and convergence in the context of continuing domestication by the secular state (Baumann 1996; Taylor 2002; Birt 2006) – is also distinguished from 'bad' religion – which is disruptive and divisive of this project and so can not be considered 'real' religion at all. At the same time, there are still many elements of 'harder' secularism in government and Britain's public culture per se, something reflected in continued opposition to the legislation on incitement to religious hatred which was finally passed in 2006 after two previously unsuccessful attempts.[10]

3. From the Local to the National: 'Old' and 'New' Muslim Leaderships in Britain

Various forms of communal organising have been evident amongst Muslims in Britain since the 1960s, from informal networks of patri-lineal kinship groups and regional associations to elected councillors and anti-racist Asian workers and youth organisations. However, for Muslims as 'Muslims', mosques have been the most important grassroots institutions, with numbers mushrooming especially since the reuniting of families by the 1980s (McLoughlin 2005b). Although it may not remain the case in the current climate, the British State has hitherto stopped short of officially recognising existing, or creating newly elected, 'Muslim' representative institutions or bodies as in some other European countries. Nevertheless, at the local level in the 1980s, and on the national level since the late 1990s, government has periodically leant public legitimacy to

10 The Racial and Religious Hatred Act came partially into force on 1 October 2007 having had various restrictions placed upon it by amendments imposed in the House of Lords. The previous attempts at legislation had been made as part of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Bill (2001) and the Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill (2004-5).

un-elected Muslim bodies such as Councils of Mosques, mainly through consultation but sometimes by channelling resources in their direction.

Not unlike the leaders of the Pakistan movement, leaders representing the Muslim 'community' in the public space of Britain have usually been 'lay' rather than religious specialists although, as we shall see, this is beginning to change.[11] The 'authority' of the lay leadership has drawn upon a 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu/Passeron 1977) that overlaps with, but is distinctive from, the traditional leadership associated with the '*ulama*' and Sufi shaykhs. Amongst the first generation of economic migrants, the men who emerged as the chairmen of mosque committees in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and subsequently acted as the interlocutors of local government, often shared certain characteristics. These characteristics at once reflected their South Asian cultural heritage and yet set them apart from other first generation migrants, the majority of whom were illiterate and of rural peasant farming origin: membership of a powerful and well-established regional and/or patri-lineal kinship (*biradari*) group; a reputation as a well connected and effective political operator – a 'strong man'; some limited education, including basic competence in English; and, finally, experience of engagement with members of 'wider society', perhaps through a public service occupation (for example, transport) or, more usually, a small business (for example, owning a shop or restaurant).

11 However, a number of younger Muslim '*alims*' (scholars) in the Deobandi tradition especially - who combine classical training with higher degrees from British universities - now speak on community affairs in their localities and work as chaplains in public institutions or through organisations like the MCB on a national level.

This sort of cultural capital allowed a first generation of grassroots Muslim leaders to build up mosque institutions which sustained the life-worlds, and maintained the localized hegemony, of dislocated male migrants in particular (McLoughlin 2005b). For this segment of the Muslim population, the 'resources' of the Islamic tradition were selectively employed to maintain ethnic boundaries, legitimate the authority of South Asian cultural 'norms' and reinforce conservative adaptation strategies. Moreover, within the 'doing deals culture' (Ouseley 2001: 10) operated by some local councils as they sought to recognise large Muslim populations in public institutions such as schools, the engagement of mosques and their leaders has routinely been limited to competition for scarce resources, securing 'rights' and participating as required in multicultural photo-calls to 'celebrate the community' (McLoughlin 2005b). In this context 'Islam' became encorporated as part of the dominant discourse of what Baumann (1999) calls 'difference multiculturalism' and 'engagement' was limited to a rhetorical transaction between community leaders and the state. There was limited impact on or interest in what went on behind the scenes in the privacy of the diasporic public sphere.

More than any event, however, the Rushdie Affair of 1988-89 illuminated the strengths and weaknesses of a Muslim community leadership grounded in grassroots networks and associations. If the early 1980s witnessed the local state consult representatives of Islam on questions of public recognition, by the end of the decade the numbers of 'Muslim' councillors was also beginning to rise (Lewis 1994). However, there was not a single Muslim Member of Parliament and no national body with the authority to represent Muslims to an increasingly central-

ised government. A national umbrella organisation, the Union of Muslim Organisations of the UK and Eire (UMO), had been set up in 1970, but as Nielsen remarks it was 'essentially irrelevant because all the major aspects of government which affected Muslims were based at local level until well into the 1980s' (Nielsen 1999: 40).

Having been informed of the offending passages in *The Satanic Verses* by co-religionists in India (Ahsan/Kidwai 1993), an alliance of mainly 'reformist Islamist' and 'neo-traditionalist' heritage elites recognised both the realities and the opportunities of this situation. Feeling that they possessed the professional, scholarly and social skills necessary to do business with government ministers, senior civil servants, publishers and the media, the UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA) was formed in London. However, despite the letter-writing, petitions, telephone-calls and meetings, the UKACIA's peaceful lobbying failed to make an impact on the Conservative government of the day. Indeed, this 'new' leadership was eventually outmanoeuvred by the 'old' grassroots' leadership associated with Bradford Council for Mosques (BCM) which had mobilised working class Muslims during the halal meat and Honeyford affairs earlier in the decade (McLoughlin 2002). Strategies of 'accommodation' having failed, BCM resorted to protest and publicly burned Rushdie's book, something the UKACIA's middle-class leadership neither sanctioned nor approved of.

Into the 1990s, the UKACIA took its campaigning to the legal system, arguing in the High Court that Britain's blasphemy laws, still protecting only the Church of England, should

be reformed and extended to defend Islam. While this project, too, was unsuccessful, the organisation doggedly persisted with engaged representational strategies on the national level, seeking recognition especially in terms of legislation on 'religious' (as well as racial and ethnic) discrimination (UKACIA, 1993). Indeed, all Muslim activists were disappointed by their slow rate of progress during this period. However, himself frustrated at the continuing divisions between Islamic organisations, Conservative Home Secretary, Michael Howard, advised Muslim activists to speak with one voice should they wish to exercise more influence over government (Q-News, 25 March 1994).

Within a couple of months this intervention had prompted the UKACIA to form a National Interim Committee on Muslim Affairs. Having consulted over 1000 organisations on the need for a new national umbrella body (The Muslim News, 31 May 2002), and studied the constitutions of similar organisations such as the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the committee finally inaugurated the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) in 1997. Regarding its constituency as 'British citizens with an Islamic heritage', the stated aims and objectives of the MCB included 'a more enlightened appreciation of Islam and Muslims in the wider society' and – consistent with the civic model of religion modelled by the established Church - 'better community relations and work[ing] for the good of society as a whole'.[12]

12 See www.mcb.org.uk/aim.php [Accessed 25 March 2009] and, more recently, Secretary General's Annual Report 2007-08 www.mcb.org.uk/uploads/SGAGM2008.pdf [Accessed 25 Mach 2009].

4. The Rise and Fall of the Muslim Council of Britain

Ten years after its inauguration the MCB is still run by key office bearers and a skeleton support staff who, for the most part, work on a voluntary basis.[13] Its first two general secretaries, Sir Iqbal Sacranie OBE (1998-2000, 2002-04, 2004-06) and Yousef Bhailok (2000-02), were able to assume the role only because they were prosperous middle-aged businessmen. The present incumbent, Dr Muhammad Abdul Bari MBE (2006-08), is an educationalist, and former airforce officer, with a doctorate in physics (Open Democracy, 03 July 2006). Indeed, a cursory glance at the biographies of its leadership begins to reveal the particular cultural capital of the MCB's most senior leadership all of whom were born abroad. Sacranie and Bhailok are of 'African-Asian' ('twice-migrant') and 'Gujerati Indian' origin respectively, both relatively small but significant 'ethnic' segments of the British-Muslim population exhibiting a more upwardly mobile trajectory than the larger 'Pakistani' or 'Bangladeshi' constituencies. Abdul Bari is of Bangladeshi heritage but hails from near Dhaka, the capital, rather than the more peripheral district of Sylhet where most British-Bengalis can trace their roots. All three general secretaries have experience not only of grassroots mosque institutions but also organisations with national profiles in sectors such as charity and education (The Common Good 1(2): 2; The Daily Telegraph, 10 November 2007). Notably, Sacranie –

13 My brief account of the MCB here is based mainly upon a mapping of the organization's website, www.mcb.org.uk [Accessed 25 March 2009]. The website houses general information about the MCB, its press releases, a list of affiliates, membership and committee details, news of particular campaigns, weekly updates and back copies of its occasional newsletter, The Common Good (now discontinued),

general secretary for more than half of the life of the MCB – was also Joint-Convenor of the UKACIA.[14]

While Sacranie and Bhailok have associations with the 'neo-traditionalist' Deobandi tradition - which remains well-represented amongst on the MCB central working committee - many other MCB activists are associated with 'reformist Islamist', and especially Jama'at-i Islami (JI) related, organisations.[15] These include UK Islamic Mission, the Islamic Foundation, Young Muslims UK (YMUK) and the Islamic Society of Britain (ISB). Abdul Bari is also currently chairman of East London mosque which has a similar reformist Islamist heritage to these organisations in the Bengali tradition of JI. Indeed, based on an analysis of the membership of the MCB's Central Working Committee available at www.mcb.org.uk in January 2003 (McLoughlin 2005a), I estimated that one-third to one-half of members' affiliations could be described as 'reformist Islamist' heritage.[16] This is a pattern that remains largely unchanged in 2007-08, most especially amongst nationally elected appointments. Moreover, the contents of the MCB's occasional (now discontinued) newsletter, The Common Good, revealed that it was the activities of such organisations that had the highest profile (McLoughlin 2005a).

14 A national newspaper quickly 'promoted' Sacranie to 246th 'most powerful person in Britain' (The Observer, 24 October 1999).

15 JI was founded in pre-Partition India by Sayyid Mawdudi (d.1979), one of the pre-eminent ideologues of first generation Islamism in the twentieth century. After Partition, Mawdudi moved to Pakistan and the movement developed distinctive branches in the new nations of the subcontinent.

16 N.B. 'no member body and its branches could have more than five of its members elected to the Central Working Committee' (The Common Good 1(3): 2).

Several years ago the British-Muslim magazine, Q News, labelled the MCB as 'lassi Islamists' (March-April 2002: 22-3) – a halal version of New Labour's 'champagne socialists'. Such a representation is not entirely fair. JI-related organisations may be home to a significant body of activists who have the requisite aptitude and energy for the MCB's political work but they are undoubtedly in transition in the UK even the label reformist Islamism embraces a number of developing positions. In its early days especially, the organisation also provided an outlet for a more unaffiliated, new rising middle-class of young, educated British-Muslims first politicised by events such as the Rushdie Affair, the Gulf War, Bosnia or 'the War on Terror'.[17] To some extent, then, the MCB created a space for multi-ethnic, cross-sectarian alliances which prioritised an overarching Muslim politics of identity. However, unable to distance itself entirely from the ideologies of the movements in which many of its activists first cut their teeth, it has never attracted more than a few activists with links to the Sufi and Barelwi heritage which dominates amongst British-Pakistanis.

The MCB's consolidation of a 'new', professionalized and media-friendly Muslim representative body coincided with the election of New Labour in 1997. As we have seen, the party has been committed to an important role for faith in the more general project of civic renewal at a time when social capital was perceived to be in decline. However, as the elections of 1992 and 1997 had shown, it was also no longer in a position to take the votes of traditionally Labour-voting Muslims for granted

17 Telephone interview with Sher Khan, Chair, MCB Public Affairs Committee, 26 June 2003.

(Nielsen 2001). In any case, having received a positive response to its initial enquiries, the MCB soon found itself invited to regular meetings and receptions at the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, even representing the latter as a part of delegations to Muslim countries (McLoughlin 2003). Various government departments, agencies and civil society organisations, all now required to engage multifaith (as well as multiracial and multiethnic) 'partners' as part of the 'stakeholder society', also started to consult the MCB which provided user-friendly access to the necessary Muslim 'voices'.

By May 2004 the MCB had 395 affiliates at local, regional and national levels.[18] Seeing itself as the 'first port of call' for government[19], it could certainly point to an increasing recognition of 'Muslims' on the national level since 1997.[20] However, the changing place of faith in the policymaking of the British government has been equally, if not more important, in shaping these developments. Moreover, the MCB was just one amongst many lobbies at Whitehall and was unable to significantly influence 'higher' arenas of debate such as foreign policy (Radcliffe 2004). 'Loyalty' was always going to be part of New Labour's attempt to incorporate a 'moderate' Muslim leadership. So, while the MCB supported military intervention in Kosovo during

18 See MCB Annual Report 2003-04 at: www.mcb.org.uk/downloads/agm2004.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].

19 See the Secretary General's Introduction to the MCB Annual Report 2002 at: www.mcb.org.uk/downloads/2002-3.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].

20 1998, for example, saw Muslims achieve equality with Anglicans, Catholics and Jews when the first state-aided Muslim primary schools were established. In 1999 the first civil service post directed at the Muslim community was announced, an Islamic advisor to the prisons, where Muslim numbers have more than doubled in recent years.

1999 (The Muslim News, 28 May 1999), and issued a statement of condemnation within hours of '9/11', its 'failure' to sell the war in Afghanistan to British-Muslims in late 2001[21], resulted eventually in the government publicly questioning the very 'authority' it had taken a key role in ascribing. Birt (2005), for example, argues that while attempts to 'groom' the MCB ultimately failed, this provoked 'coded' public messages from New Labour 'spin doctors' expressing 'disappointment' at the failure of the 'moderates' to marginalise an 'extremist' fringe.

For the MCB, such experiences highlighted the problems of state patronage. Indeed, all minority leaderships must strike a balance between strategies of accommodation and protest (Werbner 1991). So it was then that the organisation was to belatedly take a more public role in supporting the Stop the War Coalition. One of its own affiliates, the 'reformist Islamist' Ikhwan al-Muslimun (the Muslim Brothers) related, Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), had taken a lead in the alliance alongside the Socialist Workers' Party, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and others.[22] At the same time, despite facing huge external demands from the state and wider society, the MCB was run (and continues to be run) on 'meagre resources'.[23] From fellow Muslim organisations it was also facing further criticism of its tendency to seek to compete with, duplicate or exercise control over their work (see, for example, Q-News, June

21 See 'press releases' under 'media' at www.mcb.org.uk [Accessed 25 March 2009]: 'MCB expresses total condemnation of terrorist attacks' (11 September 2001) and 'MCB opposes War on Afghans – Insists on Justice' (09 October 2001).
22 See Secretary General's Annual Report 2002-03 at: www.mcb.org.uk/downloads/2002-3.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].
23 Ibid.

2004, in relation to the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia).[24] Certainly, the MCB had exhibited delusions of grandeur when it announced its own 'cabinet' in June 2003. Since its beginnings in the Rushdie Affair, it had played a significant role in adapting the liberal public reason of 'democracy', 'the rule of law' and 'race equality' (Modood 2002; Radcliffe 2004) to the project of Muslim identity politics. However, like anti-racism before it (Gilroy 1992), it had also contributed to the fetishising and absolutising of 'Muslim' difference in Britain.

5. The UK State and Muslim Organisations After '7/7'

In 2007-08 the MCB remains the largest Muslim umbrella organisation but since the London bombings its integrity and capability as a 'moderate' leadership has been ever more seriously challenged. Despite the organisation's denunciation of the attacks as having no sanction in Islam and its reaffirmation of a commitment to dialogue and non-separation[25], the MCB has been the subject of a number of media exposes. These include an article in The Observer (14 August 2005) and a BBC Panorama programme ('A Question of Leadership', 21 August 2005). Such investigations are not entirely new – see 'Who Speaks for Muslims', Channel 4, April 2002[26] – but they do reflect

24 Both Nielsen 2001 and Birt 2005, for example, report annoyance at attempts to assume the ownership of others' initiatives to establish a Muslim adviser on prisons (1999) and a temporary consulate in Mecca for British hajjis (2000).

25 See Secretary General's Annual Report 2005-06 at: www.mcb.org.uk/uploads/SECGEN.pdf [Accessed 25 March 2009].

26 Senior MCB officials including Bhailok were criticised for sharing a conference platform with Hamas. The suggestion was that although presenting themselves as 'Muslim moderates', the MCB actually has within its ranks many with radical sympathies. Similarly, younger MCB activists, Mahmud al-Rashid and Inayat Bunglawallah, who have come up through the ranks of YMUK and the ISB,

the way in which '7/7' has made previously hidden diasporic and transnational Muslim public spheres subject to a new level of visibility and scrutiny unknown even after '9/11'. In this respect, the MCB's failure and/or inability to challenge the moral, social and political demonisation of the West in the rhetoric of some of its affiliates was seen as especially problematic despite government itself turning a blind eye to the settlement of radicals in 'Londonistan' during the 1990s. The MCB's insistence on the legitimacy of violent resistance to occupation and injustice was also highlighted. Indeed Sacranie himself was attacked for attending a memorial in London for Shaykh Yasin, the founder of Hamas, while at the same time refusing to attend Holocaust Memorial Day because of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. In this respect the dilemmas of the MCB reflect the classic predicament of diasporas (Werbner 2002), a double consciousness of local and global political loyalties which finds expression in a constant juggling of discourses of both cohesion and dissent.

Since the election of New Labour in 1997, different departments of UK State have had quite different attitudes to, and relationships with, the MCB and other Muslim bodies. For example, with its everyday experience of overseas diplomacy, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was always seen as having a more sophisticated understanding of Muslim affairs.[27] However, following '7/7', while there was an immediate move

were challenged for their association with the popular Muslim youth magazine Trends. It was alleged that during the 1990s the publication published 'anti-Semitic', or at least 'anti-Zionist', material.

27 Indeed, with FCO approval, two MCB representatives went to Iraq in 2004 to plead for the life of British hostage Kenneth Bigley before he was eventually murdered.

to ban organisations whose revolutionary rhetoric was seen as glorifying terrorism[28], Prime Minister, Tony Blair, also eventually moved to adopt a more critical approach to the MCB (The Daily Telegraph, 24 October 2006). Shifting from an earlier position post '9/11' where Islam was clearly distinguished from terrorism in state discourse – and taking his cue to some extent from more self-critical Muslim voices[29] – he spoke publicly and deliberately of a tension between Islam and modernity, as well as the need for religious reform and Muslims' false sense of historic grievance against the West (The Guardian, 04 July 2006). Instructing Secretary of State for the DCLG, Ruth Kelly, to work with organisations other than the MCB, she subsequently made it clear that government was intentionally 're-balancing' its partnerships with, and funding of, a range of Muslim organisations ('Britain; Our Values, Our Responsibilities', 11 October 2006). Defending the accusation that UK foreign policy is anti-Muslim and pointing to the state's commitment to anti-religious hatred legislation, Kelly insisted that support would be forthcoming only for those proactively working for integration and able to tolerate offence, as well as exerting genuine influence at the heart of their communities.[30]

28 The threat to ban radical Islamists Hizb al-Tahrir (HT) was never imposed although it was on a more vehement offshoot of HT, al-Muhajiroun.

29 See Lewis 2007 for short case studies including the City Circle, Q-News and the Muslim Youthwork Foundation.

30 Groups reflecting other Muslim constituencies in Britain have also begun to organise. These include the Fatimah Women's Network, Progressive British Muslims and Muslims for Secular Democracy (Open Democracy, 03 July 2006). In Early 2008 former radicals such as Ed Hussain – author of The Islamist (2007) - formed the Quilliam Foundation (named after a well-known convert to Islam of the early twentieth century) which styles itself as a 'counter-extremism think-tank'.

Indeed, just a few months earlier, with official support and encouragement, a direct rival to the MCB – the Sufi Muslim Council (SMC) – had been launched at a high profile event attended by various mainstream politicians (BBC News Online, 09 July 2006). The SMC has links to the British Muslim Forum (BMF), an umbrella organisation for around 300 (mainly Pakistani Barelwi mosques) in the Midlands and northern England which has also featured in the work of the British Council. Supposedly representing the 'silent majority' of moderate Muslims who follow expressions of classical Islam rather than its more political (or Islamist) manifestations, in anointing the SMC government seemed ignorant of the fact that at different times and in different places Sufis, too, have been prominent in *jihadi* resistance. It is too early to say whether the SMC can succeed where others have failed in aggregating the fragmented networks of loyalty organised around particular sub-orders and shaykhs. Nevertheless, like '9/11' in America, '7/7' in Britain has been a catalyst for the specifically religious leadership of this hitherto reluctant constituency to enter the national public sphere in a bid to wrest dominant discourses on Islam from violent extremism. In the longer term, the SMC is unlikely to be able to avoid the predicaments of diasporic double consciousness exemplified by the MCB even if it is more prepared to accommodate itself to the state. Certainly, it has appeared happy to endorse the government view that established Muslim organisations have not yet done enough to counter radicalisation in their communities, seeing this above all as a problem of Muslims' access to the right theological resources and guidance. Alongside pictures of Sufi masters meeting various public figures, the SMC website includes warnings against the deviant extremism of Saudi funded

Wahhabism and variants of Salafism – movements which also happen to be known for their anti-Sufi credentials.

The State's concern to work with a range of moderate Muslim organisations and promote more wide-ranging co-operation between them has also been articulated in the initiatives emerging from various recommendations on how best to tackle extremism announced in November 2005. These recommendations were made by the seven 'Preventing Extremism Together' working groups which were established immediately following the London bombings. One such initiative seeking to reclaim the idea of radicalism for a more progressive agenda is the Radical Middle Way (RMW), a collective of multi-ethnic, cross-denominational organisations (including some of broadly Sufi and reformist Islamist heritage) which have a track record of working with Muslim students and youth.[31] Funded in large part by government through the DCLG and other means, the RMW has organised road-shows of Islamic scholars in the classical tradition to tour Britain's cities in an effort to begin to counterbalance Wahhabi and Salafi theology. However, notably, most of these scholars – including a number of converts to Islam such as the American Sufi, Hamaza Yusuf - are from overseas, a fact which the MCB considered 'colonialist'.

Another proposal of the working groups was for a Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB), an inde-

31 See the very slick and well-resourced website at: www.radicalmiddleway.co.uk/ [Accessed 25 March 2009]. Key players have been Q-News, the Federation of Student Islamic Societies and Young Muslim Organisation.

pendent, non-sectarian body for the training and accreditation of Muslim ministers of religion. On the one hand, preachers such as the 'Afghan-Arab' Egyptian exile, Abu Hamza al-Masri (sentenced 2006), have been prosecuted for soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred, as well as radicalising alienated Muslim youth. On the other, although in recent years some younger, well-educated imams have been taking up positions as chaplains in British public institutions, many more still have limited familiarity with the English language or the British cultural context. As such, they are not seen as well placed to counter the appeal of extremism. Against this context MINAB was finally established in 2007 with representation from the MCB and MAB, along with the BMF and the al-Khoei Foundation (a Shi'ite organisation). However, the future of MINAB is presently uncertain with a government appointing a council of Islamic scholars overseen by Oxford and Cambridge universities – seemingly being considered as an alternative (July 2008).

6. Conclusion

The existence of an established church as part of the structure of the UK State is such that Muslim religious institutions find a voice in the 'secular' public sphere more readily than in some other European countries. However, the dispersed authority structures of Islam do not approximate that of a church. Nevertheless, precipitated by the Rushdie Affair especially, the move beyond localised grassroots representation, first by the UKACIA and then the MCB, increased the public profile of a self-appointed lay national 'community' leadership during the 1990s. Seeking public recognition for Muslims as 'Muslims', an emergent religious identity politics has both shaped, as well as

itself being influenced by, the hegemony of the 'race' relations industry in Britain. During an initial honeymoon period under New Labour faith relations gained a new prominence in public discourse not least because of its perceived value in the project of civic integration. However, the global conflicts associated with the War on Terror soon revealed how difficult it would be to domesticate a diasporic Muslim leadership with moral investments in the idea of the *ummah* - especially one with Islamist leanings like the MCB. Both the capacity/resources and authority of the organisation amongst ordinary Muslims was also always an issue. In the wake of '7/7' new levels of securitisation further exposed the anti-Western imaginaries of the diasporic and transnational Muslim public spheres to new levels of critical scrutiny. Yet, at the same time, it has also prompted a new self-critical reflexivity and willingness to engage amongst a religious leadership which had always eschewed secular politics. Summing up UK State policy, Birt (2006) argues that, overall, there is still a preference for facilitating the self-regulation and self-organisation of Muslim representative bodies rather than direct legal intervention in their affairs. However, this approach may be tested to its limits in the coming years.

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III. Muslims in Germany: State of the Art and Open Questions

Through the Maze of Identities: Muslims in Germany Trying to Find Their Way Between Religion, Traditionalism, Nationalism and the Question of Organisation

Martin Engelbrecht

1. Introduction

Though sometimes superficial contacts with Muslims may result in a misleading impression the most critical error about Muslims is to think of them as a homogeneous group. Indeed there is a shared basic frame of unquestionable quantities, including e.g. the joint reverence for the prophet, the Koran and some forms of orthopraxy, that constitute what can be called a 'common ground' for any person considering him- or herself a Muslim. But already one level 'below' that common ground runs the endless process of interpretation, opinion and discussion that is the true core of every complex social system of meaning. Just as it is the case with people of Christian background, a considerable minority of the Muslims are "religious virtuosos", while the majority consists of "non-virtuosos" (to use Weber's terms; Weber 1980: 327f).[1] And as in any other religion

1 Weber differentiates between religious 'virtuosos' as people for whom religion builds the core of their individual lives and biographies, and 'non-virtuosos' in whose lives and biographies (sometimes even a lot of) religious elements can be found, which however do not constitute the core of these people's lives and biographies.

spiritual elements and patterns have inextricably mixed with local traditions and – since the concept of the modern nation has come to fruition in the nineteenth century (Anderson 1991) – nationalist ideas. The following article deals with the current problems of the Muslims in Germany in trying to find a common basis both on the level of identity and on the level of organisation. Since the Turkish immigrants constitute 78 % of the Muslims of Germany (Brettfeld/Wetzels 2007: 86) and thus are of formative effect for the situation, the argumentation will focus on them with selective references to the (Sunni) Muslims of German and other national backgrounds. Due to the limited space the text can give no more than a few very basic outlines of the complex situation.

2. Historical Backgrounds of the Muslim Discourses in Germany

To understand the historical roots of the current situation of the Muslims in Germany one has to start with the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire. Like in the other European multinational monarchies the loyalty of the various ethnic communities constituting its subjects was based on the double bond of dynasty and religion. After the end of World War I Atatürk and his followers succeeded in forging a modern state on the remnants of the old one in a combined political and military tour de force (cf. e.g. Seufert/Kubaseck 2006; Schiffauer 2000: 41-47). To teach the still very heterogeneous population (Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1998) of the territories now forming Turkey the new identity of a 'Turkish' nation speaking Turkish (written in Latin letters) and living in a new, secular legal framework indeed was a "cultural revolution" (Seufert/Şenocak 2006: 32) and had to be supported by a massive state-induced and propagandistically strengthened Nationalism. At first the Islamic religion was at-

tributed the role of a counterforce to modernisation and put under strict control of a federal department created specifically for that purpose: The "Diyanet Işleri Reisliği" (Schiffauer 2000: 44). Several 'private' Islamic organisations were founded in reaction to that policy, some of which later initiated branches in Germany (cf. e.g. Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1997). Yet the (Sunni) Islam soon was to return to the political stage, if only as an additional bond for the fragile new identity (cf. e.g. Seufert 1997). At the latest with the Islamic reawakening after the Iranian revolution religion returned to the political agenda to stay there as the most controversial issue to this day (cf. e.g. Haustein 2006).

In 1961 the German government initiated a state controlled work migration from several Mediterranean countries including Turkey (cf. for the following e.g. Goldberg/Halm/Şen 2004). The Turkish migrants mostly came from the country's rural and underdeveloped eastern areas. Being neither ethnically nor religiously homogeneous from the start, the only things they had in common were a background of a very low educational level, a low start in the labour market, and the repeated experiences of exclusion they had to face in their new environment. In a comparably short time, however, they began to pluralise according to their capabilities and their readiness to adapt to the situation they found themselves in. During the last decades an immigrant middle class developed and by and by names of Turkish origin became part of German cultural and political life. Entrepreneurs with immigrant background make a considerable contribution to the German economy. But not all immigrants have been able to establish themselves successfully. A significant number of them has not mastered the German language beyond a rudimentary competence to communicate verbally in everyday situations, a fact that leaves about one third of

the second generation without *any* professional training (Goldberg/Halm/Şen 2004: 31f.). Despite the structural setbacks that the immigrants are facing, a decisive subjective factor comes into effect, which obviously is closely linked to the people's worldviews and attitudes: "In modern societies a large part of the educational influence of the children is taken over by institutions that exercise an integrative effect and impart cultural competence as well as the dominating social norms and values. Turkish families tend to see this as a partial loss of educational influence, a factor that may lead to opposition on their side. Against this background parents may develop an ambivalent relationship to the German educational institutions and a higher professional qualification of their children" (Goldberg/Halm/Şen 2004: 30-31, to the motives behind this ambivalence cf. chapter 4).[2]

In the field of religion the immigrants entered a place void of any infrastructure. Gradually the majority of the improvised, mainly Turkish mosques in apartments and factory buildings joined one of the big organisations from Turkey (or were in several cases taken over, Schiffauer 1997: 190-211). These organisations (cf. for detailed descriptions e.g. Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1997 or Dietrich 2006) provided the immigrants with a broad range of services: *hodjas*, religious courses, literature (all in Turkish language), organized pilgrimages, undertakers that offered funerals in Turkey etc. A second, not so obvious effect was that they – without exception having their headquarters in Turkey – structured the discourses of the immigrants according to the Turkish political landscape.

2 If not explicitly mentioned otherwise all quotations from German sources are translated by the author.

Besides the Turkish organisations numerous others small religious groups developed, mostly organised by other immigrants and by German converts. Especially their umbrella organisations, e.g. the ZMD (Central Council of Muslims in Germany), successfully tried to act as translators and mediators of Muslim concerns to the German public and succeeded in establishing a small but influential Muslim discourse in German language, although they never were able to gain a solid foothold among the Turkish immigrants.

Since the time of the first immigration the way the German public looked upon the immigrants changed in two essential aspects. First, both public and government, almost four decades late and rather reluctantly, began to acknowledge that the immigrants had come to stay. And second, what for almost twenty years exclusively was considered to be the 'Gastarbeiter Problem' shortly after the Iranian revolution underwent an almost imperceptible change resurfacing as the 'problem of integrating Islam' (cf. Schneider 2005: 67).

3. The Present State of the Muslim Discourses

While the older surveys on German Muslims mostly restricted themselves to the Turkish immigrants (cf. Zentrum für Türkeistudien 2005) the most recent figures come from a survey that looks on Muslims of all national origins including the German converts (Brettfeld/Wetzel 2007).[3] According to that survey the degree of religiosity shows up as follows:

3 In comparison the figures of both the 2005 survey on the Turkish immigrants and the 2007 survey on all the Muslims basically point into the same direction substantiating the formative dominance of the Turkish-Islamic discourses in Germany.

Table 1: Meaning of religion in every day life in %

Item	totally insignificant	rather insignificant	rather significant	very significant
How important is your religion for you personally in your every day life?	6.1	12	32	49.9[4]

Source: Brettfeld/Wetzel 2007: 114f.

But as stated at the beginning behind this superficial uniformity a broad range of opinions about almost any substantial issue can be found, e.g. the following:

Table 2: Range of opinions to several issues about living Islam in Germany in %

Item	I disagree totally	I disagree mostly	I agree mostly	I agree totally
I believe the Koran to be God's true revelation	6.6	4.5	9.4	79.6
The threat the Western world means to Islam justifies violent self defence on the Muslim side	46.7	15	20.4	17.9
It is important to adapt the teachings of Islam to the conditions of the modern world	11.8	8.6	25.4	54.1
Suicide attacks in the name of Allah are a dreadful sin and an offence against God	4.7	2.7	7.8	84.8
It should be lawfully prohibited to make Muslims change their religion	58.7	11.5	7.2	22.3

Source: Brettfeld/Wetzel 2007: 116,118,176,177.

4 Figures like these sometimes mislead observers to categorize the majority of Muslims as religious 'virtuosos' in the abovementioned Weberian sense. This is not the case. The figures express the wish to live in a religiously ordered cosmos (not necessarily state) and to maintain the corresponding practice. But as Weber has shown one can be a perfect religious "non-virtuoso" in a completely religious world order.

Looking at the social structures behind that range of opinions several patterns show the close connection between 'religious' and other factors.

- "It is noticeable that the integration into the receiving society [...] faces enormous problems the stronger the religious bonds turn out to be" (ibid.: 139).
- A lack of integration (ibid.: 149) and a low level of education (ibid.: 147) go hand in hand with a high inner distance to the values of democracy.
- Language plays a crucial role in integration: Those who can be graded as well integrated show an intensive use of the German language (ibid.: 93-98).

Most of the Muslims still do not define themselves as Germans and maintain close bonds to the countries they came from (ibid.: 93). Yet the figures also show that this can go along with an integration in the new social environment and does not necessarily imply self-isolation:

Table 3: Key items to integration in %

Item	I disagree totally	I disagree mostly	I agree mostly	I agree totally
Aliens in Germany should maintain their culture	1.6	4	22.8	71.6
Immigrants coming to Germany should adapt their behaviour to the German culture	7.9	9.5	37.2	45.4
Different ethnic groups should live separately to avoid problems	76.4	14.6	4.9	4.1

Source: Brettfeld/Wetzel 2007: 99

4. Reference Points for the Construction of Muslim Identities

Obviously the connections between religion and integration are anything but one-dimensional. Though there is a link between a good integration and a low level of religiosity (Brettfeld/Wetzel 2007: 138-139) this must not lead one to conclude in turn that anyone who is religious necessarily is badly integrated. Religion is not an unstructured quantity and there are distinct and complex patterns in the immigrants' worldviews that help or hamper integration. Based on the results of a growing number of qualitative research projects done in the last years (cf. e.g. Engelbrecht 2006; Karakaşoğlu-Aydın 2000; Kelek 2002; Klinkhammer 2000; Tietze 2001 and others) some major 'reference points' for the continuous construction of the religious and spiritual identity[5] can be described.

4.1 Tradition vs. Traditionalism

Migrants carry with them a load of convictions, habits, customs and attitudes that 'go without saying' or at least that 'went without saying' in the country or region they left behind. To counter objections to be expected at this point: As for anyone it is perfectly normal for migrants to have a profoundly positive attitude to their own tradition(s) and to keep drawing from them to cope with life. But insisting uncompromisingly on maintaining one's traditions unadjusted in a totally different

5 It is not possible in the given frame to elaborate on the multiple theories of 'identity' both as an analytical as well as a political term (see e.g. for the discussion in Germany Meyer 1997). While very often identity is conceptualised like some sort of rare and dwindling resource that is constantly threatened (interestingly because others do *not* want it), in the context of this argumentation identity is seen as an open-ended process of integrating *and* sorting out both on the individual (biographical) and on the collective (discursive) level.

society constitutes the attitude of a traditionalist[6] and implies in the long run the need to create a museum-like parallel society. Consequently one of the central and most painful topics of the immigrant discourses is the question which traditions are useful or even indispensable and which are superfluous or even detrimental for the life in Germany. Of course there is no simple, one-dimensional direction the passing on of values to the next generation takes. The processes of building up individual worldviews and values among the immigrants of the second generation is complex. Some shake off their parents' values, some hold them even stronger than their parents and a majority tries to find compromises that in one way or the other reconcile the world of their parents with their own. It is noticeable that the range of options grows and shrinks decisively along with the language skills.

4.2 Universalism

A key pattern in this context is the universalistic understanding of Islam. Like Christianity Islam desires to be a religion for all mankind regardless of colour, language or nation. Not only numerous German converts but also a growing number of the younger generations of Turkish immigrants – mainly religious 'virtuosos' with good language skills – tend to this interpretation. Expressed in their own terms they seek the 'true' Islam under the 'traditional' one. As a young female interviewee puts it: "There is a narrow line between tradition and Islam.

6 A traditionalist 'confession' e.g. sounds like this: "The Islamic faith does not need any reforms, changes or renewals ... The theories of some radicals, converts and reformists are completely wrong. There are no reforms in Islam. ... Reforms and changes can only be carried out in spoiled religions, human ideologies and teachings". (Bundesministerium des Innern 2006: 218, quoting the "Milli Gazete" 9.9.2005: 4).

Anything that is not Koran is tradition. Many traditions of course may be good, not all traditions are rejected by the Koran. But if something obviously stands against Islam, you have to avoid it, at least for yourself" (Klinkhammer 2000: 170). For many immigrant Muslims of the second generation the concept of a 'true Islam' offers them a religious and spiritual frame, based on which they are able to construct and maintain an independent perspective on the values both of their parents (plus their organisations) and of the German society. Worldwide universalistic Muslim discourses try to find new ways between 'modern' and 'traditionalist' values and it is there where the discussions take place whether to steer a course of an ethic of "conviction" or of "responsibility" – to use the Weberian terms (Weber 1997: 328). To counter another set of objections to be expected at this point: An uncompromising ethic of "conviction" tends to lead to what usually is labelled as 'fundamentalist' attitudes. But while you can discover fundamentalist positions in traditionalist and/or nationalist Islamic discourses as well, the most promising models of how to be a religious Muslim in an open society based on an ethic of "responsibility" can be found in the universalistic discourses (cf. e.g. Abou el Fadl 2001).

4.3 Nation vs. Nationalism

The nationalist dimension of the second generation Muslims' identity constructions is likely to get lost in the continuous and agitated discussions on religious fundamentalism in Germany (for the historical roots of the Turkish nationalism see chapter 2). As in the field of tradition it is necessary to differentiate here: It is normal for migrants – even up to the third or fourth generation and longer – to maintain strong bonds to

the country of their ancestors. But if a constructive commitment to the new state and society is hampered or even stopped by the conviction that it constitutes a betrayal of the ideological bonds to the country of origin, then it is justified to talk of a harmful nationalism. Turkish nationalism in this sense exists in a secular version (resting exclusively on concepts of 'nation', 'culture', 'language' and so on) as well as in a religious one, the latter mostly combined with a traditionalist version of Islam in the aforementioned sense. This attitude has taken the shape of an ideology in the "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis". It is propagandised by Turkish right wing parties and claims that being Turkish and being a Sunni Muslim are like the two sides of a coin: You can never be one without the other (Seufert 1997: 83ff.). This fusion of nationalism, traditionalism and religion also has a forceful and damaging effect on the relationships between Muslims of Turkish and other national origin in Germany.

In a pluralising community like the one of the Muslim immigrants there are of course many more reference points for identity construction, religious (e.g. mysticism or eclecticism) as well as non-religious ones (e.g. economics, youth cultures etc.). Traditionalism, universalism and nationalism were described here in some detail because they are by far the most relevant reference points for the objective of the argumentation: The Muslim search for a collective identity and an organisational frame in Germany.

5. The Introduction of Islamic Religious Education in German Schools as a Touchstone of Identity Construction

At the very moment German Islam is entering a new stage: Islamic religious education in German language is about to be established as a 'regular' school subject in a number of German states (cf. e.g. Kiefer 2005; Bauer et al. 2006; Reichmuth et al. 2006). For several reasons this development means a momentous change both for the Muslim discourses and their relationship to the German society:

- For the majority of immigrant parents and children to find their own religion placed side by side with the religious education of two big Christian denominations as a 'regular' school subject is a long awaited signal of both public and official recognition of a substantial strand of their identity and helps to reduce the ambivalence a considerable part of the parents feels for the German educational system.[7]

- Since the subject will be taught in German it will lastingly strengthen the Muslim discourse in German language. For many Turkish speaking Muslims it will be the first time to discover that it is possible to think and talk about (their own as well as other) religion in German. The subject also brings the Turkish immigrants in a close and regular contact with the various smaller

7 The question, whether it is the 'right' education nevertheless remains a crucial problem that asks for continuous conciliatory efforts from the part of those who are working to introduce it (see e.g. Behr 2006).

groups of Muslims from other countries, a contact hitherto virtually nonexistent due to the fact that these groups did not even visit the large Turkish mosques simply because they could not understand the language spoken there.

- In the wake of the introduction of Islamic religious education as a standard school subject an academic Muslim theology is in the process of development that will, being embedded in the academic discourses, make room for a both theologically and culturally competent self-reliant German-Muslim discourse.

All this will strengthen a tendency towards a universalistic Muslim identity based on an ethic of "responsibility" that is ready to find its place in the midst of the German society. This development has to face opposition mainly from two sides: The first are Islamist positions to be found in traditionalist as well as universalistic discourses, who are not ready to give up the vision of a state and society controlled by Islamic ideas (cf. for Germany e.g. Bundesministerium des Innern 2006).

The second and (in Germany) much more influential opposition comes from the numerically strong discourses who reject a loosening of the bonds between religion and (first and foremost Turkish) nationalism. This discourses are strengthened by two factors. The first is that a considerable minority of immigrants advocates a strong influence of the Turkish government on the religious education hoping to control Islamism that way (cf. Zentrum für Türkeistudien 2005: 59). The second factor lies in the transnational structures of the Turkish-Islamic organisa-

tions themselves. The 'structural nationalism' that is 'embedded' in the make-up of these organisations is probably the most difficult problem in the current process of establishing Islam as a self-reliant religion in Germany.

But even if it is sometimes difficult to perceive the diverging aims and strategies behind the immigrants' publicly displayed 'national unity' and their genuine emotional bonds to Turkey, things are obviously getting in motion. All over Germany Muslims are making sustained discursive and organisational efforts to develop and promote a self-reliant Islam beyond the traditionalist and/or nationalist agendas of the big Turkish organisations (cf. e.g. Engelbrecht 2006 and Johansen 2006).[8] The necessity of a constructive turn towards the German society and language is an increasingly urgent matter brought up not only by the German side but more and more by the immigrants themselves, especially the economically successful ones among them. The local functionaries of the big Turkish-Islamic organisations increasingly find themselves caught in a dilemma: Insofar as they are immigrants themselves (and not delegated from Turkey), they are experiencing the necessity for additional efforts of integration and language acquisition at first hand, but as functionaries it is their obligation to maintain the 'functional nationalism' of their respective organisations (apart from the fact that their jobs are at stake in this conflict). But they are faced constantly with the question whether they really want to remain representatives of "subdivision(s) of Turkish parties or

8 The biggest and most influential of all Turkish-Islamic organisations in Germany e.g. until 2002 held the position that "Turkish Islam can only be taught in Turkish language" (Kiefer 2005: 211).

movements" or will become part of the immigrants' "self-organisations" (Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1997: 115).

In the long run the Muslims (including the Turkish-Islamic organisations) will have to find a solution for the problem of the 'structural nationalism' both on the level of identity and organisation. As Mathias Rohe outlines, the circumstances strongly favour 'bottom-up' solutions for the construction of what eventually may be a comprehensive German-Islamic religious organisation: "The Muslims will only be able to form a comprehensive organisation if they start from the local level advancing step by step to the state or federal level" (Rohe 2006: 85). Even though their decisive position as suppliers of religious services for a large number of the Turkish Muslims in Germany is out of question, the Turkish-Islamic organisations are in no position to take on that task. Neither can they claim to represent all German Muslims[9], nor are they suited to serve as Muslim 'quasi-churches': "Turkish mosques mainly are frequented by Turkish Muslims; one will hardly ever meet people of other nationalities. [...] the reasons lie in the fact that the mosques still serve the function of patriotic and cultural associations" (Lemmen 2005: 184). For those and other reasons the signs are intensifying that a growing number of functionaries themselves is inclined to participate in the aforementioned bottom-up processes. Whether they will be able to take their organisations along is the key question of the coming years.

9 Not even all Turkish immigrants, since in fact at maximum about 50 % of them feel represented by the existing Turkish-Islamic organisations (cf. Zentrum für Türkeistudien 2005).

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The Turkish Bias and Some Blind Spots: Research on Muslims in Germany

Jörn Thielmann

After forty years of presence, Muslims in Germany enter a new stage in the relationship with their host society. First of all, a complex and very diverse field of religious actors has emerged, covering all kinds of religious orientation and more and more overcoming national, ethnic or linguistic barriers. The perception by academics, politicians, the media or the public does not yet fully reflect this diversity, due to the prevailing Turkish bias. The main argument for that is simple one of numbers: Turks are the largest ethnic group among the Muslims, thus they are considered being the most important one. But even if the study of Islam and Muslims in Germany has to an amazing degree unfolded over the last couple of years and become rich and diversified, a lot of questions concerning Muslim life in Germany are not yet answered or even not asked so far. Thus, this article tackles with the Turkish bias and addresses some blind spots in the research on Muslims in Germany. I start with some general information and remarks on Islam and Muslim presence in Germany and the research done until now, before addressing in particular the blind spots and the main issues future research should address.

1. Islam and Muslims in Germany – some notes on their perception

Even if we find some traces of Muslim presence in German territories before the 20th century (cf. Abdullah 1981: 27-31), until the early 1960s, however, the number of Muslims in Germany has been fairly negligible. Since then, through the massive labour migration following the bilateral recruitment agreements with Turkey and Yugoslavia, Tunisia and Morocco, their number has continuously increased and reaches today approximately 3.8 to 4.2 million (some 45 per cent German nationals, the other foreign nationals, mainly Turks, but also of other origins), as shown in the first nationwide representative study conducted by the research group of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF) and published recently (Haug/Müssig/Stichs 2009[1]; previous estimates ranged from 3.1 to 3.4 mill., including approx. 800,000 German Muslims[2], see Bundesministerium des Innern 2007, Deutscher Bundestag 2000: 4f.). With this study, we have far better data than before, due to the fact that the study surveyed by telephone a total of 6,004 people aged 16 and above from 49 Islamic countries (instead of 20 countries looked at until then), covering with the information provided about other household members data of nearly 17,000 people. Specific methods guaranteed the representation of all groups of Muslims present in Germany, thus comprising the diversity of Muslim life here. The

1 This study will be mentioned below as BAMF-study.

2 By "German Muslims" are understood holders of German citizenship, i.e. naturalised Muslims from various origins. Their number nearly doubled since 2000 thanks to a reform of citizenship law. The number of German converts is unknown, according to the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

overwhelming majority (98 per cent) live in the former West Germany, including East Berlin, one third of all live in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Nevertheless, a high degree of haziness still remains.

The ethnic, linguistic and social structures are not known, at least not precisely, as is their territorial distribution (nearly all research, not only qualitative, is done in bigger cities). The same holds true for converts to Islam, converts from Islam to other religions, and those born Muslims leaving religion altogether, as well as for membership figures in Muslim organisations (for figures of the distribution of mosques in North Rhine-Westphalia among the organisations see Chbib 2008: 132ff.).

Organised by Muslim organisations are up to 20 per cent only of the total Muslim population, so that we have an unorganised silent majority, visible in all quantitative surveys, but ignored so far by qualitative studies (for a notable exception see Amiraux 2006, Otterbeck 2007).

The situation of the migrant workers or "guest workers" (the "*Gastarbeiter*"), as they were called, changed significantly after the recruitment stop in 1973: Being until then mainly considered as employees and cheap labour force, the migrant workers now got their families and relatives over and settled permanently in Germany. This development is reflected in the emergence of several religious organisations in the early 1980s. However, people having had experience in organising a group in their home country, be it on political or religious terms, started already in the late 1960s local associations. In the reli-

gious field, they basically came from the same Sufi milieu of the Naqshbandiyya in the case of the Turks, and from the Muslim Brotherhood organisations in the case of the Arabs. Since the 1920s, we find a few organised Ahmadiyya groups as well.

The Naqshbandiyya milieu is divided into two streams: A political active part, represented by the *Islamische Gemeinschaft Millî Görüş* (IGMG; Islamic Community Millî Görüş), founded in 1985, but active under other names since 1973, and still linked to the Islamic Party (best known under the name of *Refah Partisi*) of Necmettin Erbakan – and to some degree also to the AKP of the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan – in Turkey. And a quietist part, represented by the *Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren* (VIKZ; Association of Islamic Cultural Centres), the German branch of the Turkish Süleymancı movement active since the early 1970s (cf. Jonker 2002), by the Nurculus (Şahinöz 2009, Yavuz 2004) or the Fethullah Gülen movement (cf. Agai 2004, Şen 2008, Yavuz 1999). But the Turkish state also tried to get hold of its (former) citizens in Germany and to control the religious scene among the Turks and established in 1984 a branch of its office for religious affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, which is part of the Prime Minister's office) under the name of "*Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*" (DİTİB), the *Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion* (Turkish-Islamic Union of the Office for Religious Affairs) (cf. Seufert 1999). All of them reflect the political situation and debates in Turkey, as rightly underlined by Martin Engelbrecht in this volume.

The legal framework for Muslim life in Germany is until today subject of debates among Muslims and German jurists

and politicians alike.[3] So far, they are organised as registered associations (*eingetragener Verein, e.V.*) or as foundations (*Stiftung*). All associations seek since the late 1970s to obtain the status of a publicly recognised corporation (*Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts*), like the Christian churches or the Jewish community. This would give them some additional rights (e.g. collection of church taxes by the state on behalf of them) and possibilities, mainly in the field of education and the state media. Therefore, they felt – and still feel – the necessity to form a united representation of Muslims in Germany, being able to speak with one voice for all Muslims. This has been the general political and public discourse over the last decades, even into the very beginning of the *Deutsche Islam Konferenz* DIK in September 2006, and still is prevalent.[4] So, the main Islamic organisations – DİTİB, *Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, *Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* ZMD, *Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren* VIKZ – formed a united body, the *Koordinationsrat der Muslime in Deutschland* KRM in March 2007. Where the Islamic organisations perceived this as a major step towards legal recognition even as a publicly recognised corporation, the reactions by politicians and media alike were reluctant. For them, these associations organised but 10 to 15 per cent of Muslims and were therefore not representative (the BAMF-study gives a figure of approx. 20 per cent). However, unnoticed by the general public and the scientific community alike, in the course of the *Deutsche*

3 Cf. for a comprehensive account Rohe (2001, 2008). Also Klinkhammer (2002), Oebbecke (2000).

4 Cf. Friedrich Wilhelm Graf: "Enge Kooperationen, radikale und hinkende Trennungen – Die Vielfalt der religionsrechtliche Verhältnisse im heutigen Europa", Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 5 July 2008.

Islam Konferenz the Federal Ministry of the Interior gave up the idea of a single representative Muslim body and is now willing to accept a polyphone and multiple representation of Muslims in Germany by several organisations.

2. The Turkish bias

It is perhaps surprising that even after more than forty years of notable Muslim presence in Germany, no research has so far been done on the inner-Muslim discourses and interactions between the various ethnic groups under the specific conditions of the Diaspora, with the notably exception of the work of Werner Schiffauer (e.g. Schiffauer 1997). Most of the scientific literature which pretend to present Muslim life in Germany (cf. e.g. Heine 1997, Spuler-Stegemann 2002, Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1995a & 1995b) give schematic presentations of the, mainly Turkish, organisations without giving any information on the religious ideas and concepts or the life worlds of Muslims.[5] Taking into consideration the overwhelming Turkish majority, Islam in Germany is mainly looked at through "Turkish lenses" (cf. e.g. Karakoşoğlu/Nonneman 1997). The basic argument for that – if one is given at all – is, as already said above, one of simple numbers. More Turkish Muslims equal more importance for the Islamic field in Germany (here again, the recent BAMF-study successfully overcomes the Turkish bias). On this point, I disagree with Martin Engelbrecht in this volume who stresses the formative effect of the number of Turkish immigrants for the situation of Islam in Germany.

5 More comprehensive and the best overview so far is Thomas Lemmen (2002).

Based on my fieldwork in Rhineland-Palatinate on the emergence of differentiated Islamic fields (cf. Thielmann 2003), I argue for taking more into account the dynamics caused by the smaller parts of the Muslim population in Germany: We observe a very strong intellectual presence of Arab Muslim leaders and German converts in the field, most of them active in supra-national mosque networks, going far beyond their sheer number. We also observe strong influences by global Muslim actors and networks that are not yet fully considered.

3. Some blind spots in the existing research

Of special interest for the German public is, of course, Islamic extremism, which is examined by Peter Heine (1990), or in a much-criticised study by Heitmeyer (Heitmeyer/Müller/Schröder 1997), also by Meng (2004). Relatively early, some studies looked at the situation of migrated Muslim women as well as of that of the daughters of the second or third generation (cf. e.g. Kandiyoti 1977, Baumgartner-Karabak/Landesberger 1978, Ahmed 1992, Nökel 2001 & 2002). The wearing of a headscarf or veil, heavily debated in German society over the last years, is perceived by Muslims and non-Muslims alike as a distinctive symbol of Islamicness, as shown by Mandel (1989), Giannone (2005) or recently Amir-Moazami (2007) and vom Bruck (2008). Conversion to Islam is also a topic for research (cf. e.g. Hofmann 1997, Wohlrab-Sahr 1999, Baumann 2003), focusing, however, on female conversion to Islam. Schleßmann (2003) looked at conversion of Germans to mystical Islam, and Hüttermann (2002) established an analytical grid for the "artificial milieu centrism" of the same Naqshbandiyya milieu. Some studies address the issue of Islamic instruction in public schools from various perspectives (Kiefer 2005, Mohr 2000 & 2002, Reichmuth

et al. 2006). It is surprising in view of the conflicts provoked by mosque building projects, that only a few studies concentrated on this issue: Büchner (2000) and Schmitt (2003) – both notably cultural geographers – analyse some conflicts, and Leggewie/Joost/Rech (2002) offer a practical guide for conflict resolution in this field, in Beinhauer-Köhler/Leggewie (2009) completed with an introduction to the institution "mosque" in Germany as well as in the Middle East. Kraft (2002) describes several projects from an aesthetical and architectural perspective. Recently, Petra Kuppinger (2008) presented preliminary findings of her study of mosques in Stuttgart and pointed at their struggling for space and recognition .

Some prevailing paradigms can be discerned, and Amir-Moazami/Salvatore (2003), Peter (2006), Salvatore/Amir-Moazami (2002), Schiffauer (2006), and Tezcan (2003) already presented them in some detail, stressing also the deficiencies and problems of the existing literature. In the early 1970s, the focus laid on integration (for a limited period of time, obviously) of workers and their assimilation (exemplary, Thomä-Venske 1981). Religion, especially Islam, was seen as an expression of backwardness and as an obstacle for integration. It was nearly common sense, that to become modern required giving up religious orientations and practices. Modernisation meant – and still very often means – secularisation. The recruitment stop in 1973 and the subsequent move of family members of "guest workers" to Germany shifted the interests slightly to the oppressed Muslim women, enhancing the perception of Islam as a pre-modern religion, and to questions of religious instruction for the children. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Islamic fundamental-

ism and radicalism were added to the paradigms for research and analysis and dominated the literature far into the 1990s. Muslim organisations like Millî Görüş or the Caliphate State of Cemaleddin Kaplan were seen as perfect examples of political Islam, without real differentiation between the two. Again, Schiffauer's remarkable study of the Kaplan movement (Schiffauer 2000) remained an exception. In the context of Islam and modernity, some scholars, e.g. Tibi (2000), demanded a specific "Euro-Islam", compatible with Enlightenment, universal values and Western way of life. However, this concept appears to a certain degree as normative, and lacks so far empirical evidence (cf. Şen 2008). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, empirical studies – following qualitative approaches – gained ground, and the focus shifted to the modernisation of Islam through individualisation. Here, studies on the individual religiosity among Turkish women (Karakoşoğlu-Aydın 2000, Klinkhammer 2000, Nökel 2002) or men (Frese 2002, Tietze 2001) offer a differentiated picture of (Turkish) Muslim life in Germany. Individual Muslims are presented as reflective, rational, but nevertheless pious individuals who seek their places in modernity and German society. That does not mean that they are – as is often supposed – liberal reformers or insular individuals with only their own respective agenda. Most of them are pretty conservative in their religious world views, and they are in their majority closely attached to a group or embedded in a network. This change in perspective, however, follows a general trend in the study of religion (cf. e.g. Gabriel 1996).

Recently, German politics discovered religion and religious instruction as tools for constructing stable identities and integrating especially Muslims into society. The related

discourses lead to a melting of religion and culture as well as to an ethnicising of Islam. Every immigrant of a (supposed) Muslim background has therefore to positioning her- or himself to Islam, being personally a believer or not (cf. Tezcan 2006). Islam becomes the kernel of identity (see, e.g. the report of the International Crisis Group on Islam and Identity in Germany 2007). Neglected are so far, following Tezcan (2003), to a large degree the specific theological and religious aspects of Islam in the German Diaspora (as exceptions, Mihçiyazgan 1994 or Schiffauer 1988). The vitality of transnational ties among the second and third generations is according to him a fact, but ignored by the thesis of a decline of being bound to the country of origin. Tezcan also points to the phenomenon of organising Islam along German traditions of association and stresses the fact that this must influence religious communication among the membership in these Muslim associations.

Religiosity and religious orientations beyond small groups in the focus of qualitative research only recently became an object of study: The study by Brettfeld and Wetzels (2007), commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Interior, focused on potential radicalisation and violence. However, its questionnaire shows a certain bias and angled questions, especially with regard to the Muslims targeted, namely mostly young pupils and students in big cities who are "by nature" more radical. The Religionsmonitor of Bertelsmann Foundation (2008a: a world-wide survey including several Muslim-majority countries; and 2008b: on Muslim religiosity in Germany) is interested in centrality and contents of religious beliefs, surveyed on a regular basis in a long-term project. According to this study, Muslims are generally more religious than members of other religions. However,

the Religionsmonitor shows a high degree of tolerance and acceptance of plurality, particularly among the religious Muslims. Thus, being a religious or even a very religious Muslim is not per se in contradiction with the values of a secular pluralistic society. The BAMF-study (Haug/Müssig/Stichs 2009) shows equally a strong sense of religiosity among Muslims, but that is not specific for Muslims and also true for adherents of other religions from the same countries of origin. With regard to everyday religious practices, the picture is more differentiated: Wearing the headscarf is less widespread in the second generation; however, it is related to being deeply religious, even if half of the deeply religious women do not wear it. As a surprise come the figures for the attendance at swimming lessons or school trips by Muslim schoolgirls: the overwhelming majority takes part in it, against the perception in the German polity (only 7 per cent do not attend swimming lessons, 10 per cent do not participate in school trips; id.: 181-193). Against Brettfeld and Wetzels (2007), cited by Martin Engelbrecht in this volume, the findings of the BAMF-study do not establish a clear link between integration and the fact of being a Muslim, due to the great differences between Muslims from different countries of origin. Difficulties exist especially in the fields of linguistic and structural integration, less in the field of social integration, where the picture appears more positive than often assumed. In education, Turkish migrants score less good than Muslims migrants from other countries, a fact linked to socio-economic factors and the low education of the Turkish mothers of the first generation. Nevertheless, there is evidence of educational upward mobility, especially among female Muslims. Unfortunately, the BAMF-study cannot answer the question, if this educational success is linked to related strategies of certain Muslim organisations and net-

works, in particular the Millî Görüş. It is noteworthy, that the study does not proof a separation in daily life between Muslims and non-Muslims, against a strong tendency in public opinion and the media, speaking of "*Parallelgesellschaften*".[6] Islamic religious education in public schools is strongly demanded by Muslims. Its introduction might help developing structural integration. This is even more needed, when considering that 50 per cent of the Muslims are Germans.[7]

4. Fields for further research

Organisations, institutions, networks and Muslim diversity in a transnational and global perspective

Thorough analyses of histories and structures as well as discourses and practices exist but for a few Muslim organisations, institutions or networks. DİTİB, the largest Turkish organisation, is so far not properly researched[8], as is not the largest Arab dominated organisation, the *Islamische Gemeinschaft in Deutschland* (IGD, Islamic Community in Germany) – suspected by the German security to be the German wing of the Muslim Brotherhood movement –, or the Shi'ite Ahl-ul-Bait movement IRAB. The same holds true for the umbrella organisations *Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* (ZMD, Central Council of Muslims in Germany), the *Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Islam Council for the Federal Republique of Germany) or the *Koordinationsrat der Muslime in Deutschland*

6 Cf. here Schiffauer (2008).

7 This expression seems to be more appropriate than the usual "with a German citizenship", because everybody with the German citizenship is German in the sense of the constitution (Grundgesetz).

8 A PhD thesis on DİTİB is actually being prepared by James Gibbon at Princeton.

(KRM, Coordination Council of Muslims in Germany), the super-umbrella organisation founded in march 2007. For the IGMG, Werner Schiffauer will soon publish the results of his long-term research project, for the Ahmadiyya, Andrea Lathan works on a Ph.D. thesis at the University of Halle. Academic studies on the mushrooming Schura-organisations — confederations of mosques and associations — on the level of municipalities and Bundesländer are also lacking.

Of particular interest are networks of various kinds, e.g. Sufi, Salafi, Nurcu, Gülen, study groups and so on, sometimes without any formal membership, often centred on a charismatic personality. Some of these networks are based on Internet platforms (websites, chat rooms, etc.). Research here is at the very beginning, if started at all. Furthermore, the transnational and global dimensions involved are rarely investigated in more than a metaphorical way. However, the exchange of people, ideas, media (books, audio tapes, video tapes, CDs and DVDs), and money between various Islamic communities in the world-wide umma (community of the believers) is obvious.

The Turkish bias, already discussed above, hinders so far proper qualitative research on the diversity of Muslim life, so visible in the recent BAMF-study: on ethnic and linguistic issues, on power struggles, on differences and varieties with regard to theology and practices, but also on the emergence of something specifically "German" or "European" in the lives of Muslims in Germany, caused by the richness and diversity experienced.

This is linked to territoriality: No proper research is done on Muslims and Muslim life-worlds in the rural parts of Ger-

many, in the villages and small towns of the countryside, and only few studies look at the role of Islam and Islamic norms and values for organising local areas in city quarters with a high number of Muslim inhabitants.

Of interest are furthermore the activities of the mosques and associations and the professionals and/or volunteers involved. Only a few studies (Kamp 2008, Tezcan 2008) concentrate on imams and their increasing professionalising, following the demand of the faithful. All other aspects of community life (activities and activists) often remain in the dark (an exception here is Spielhaus/Färber 2006). Local and regional topographies of Muslim lives and organisational activities (up to the level of a *Bundesland*) would allow for mapping Islamic fields for Germany as a whole and also enable the development of structural help for Muslim associations to foster professionalising their work and to integrate them into German civil society.

Intellectual production and reception of Islamic knowledge and sciences

To my knowledge, there exists no in-depth research into the intellectual production and reception of Islamic knowledge and sciences in the German context. With the exception of the circles of VIKZ and the Gülen movement, nothing is known about what Muslims read in the religious field, what they are interested in, where exactly they get their Islamic knowledge from and what they are producing in the field themselves. Of course, Internet is mentioned as an important source of information and a mean to disseminate knowledge and opinion, but without any detailed proof and examples. This fact might be related to the lack of the religious in the studies on Islam

and Muslims in Germany, as deplored by Levent Teczan (2003). Islamic normativities and norm producing actors in the field of Islamic law, morality and proper Muslim behaviour are under-researched, too. Here, the use of law, be it Islamic, German or European, in- and outside courts would be worth looking at, apart from studies on the so-called *fiqh al-aqalliyat*, the Islamic jurisprudence for Muslim minorities in a Diaspora situation. Related to all this, of course, are always questions of authority, legitimacy and representation.

Muslim media and media use by Muslims

Some Muslim newspapers and magazines as well as online-publications are published in various languages by Muslims in Germany and cited as sources, but hardly studied as objects in their own right. On media use by Muslims, we also find but a few studies (e.g. Pies 2008).

Religious practices

With the notable exception of Mihçiyazgan (1994) or Schiffauer (1988) and recent studies by Paula Schrode at the Collaborative Research Center 619 "Ritual Dynamics" (University of Heidelberg) on religious dietary practices among Muslims, concrete religious practices and their transformations – for example, persistence and change of so-called folk Islam in a Diaspora context – are nearly ignored.

Conversion to and from Islam – and the silent majority among Muslims

Literature on conversion with regard to Muslims focuses mainly on conversion of women to Islam, based exclusively on

biographic narrative interviews post-factum.[9] Male conversion and conversion of Muslims to other religions are – also in general, not only in the German context – not examined. Of particular interest, of course, is the silent majority among the Muslim population which is not organised, not practising, perhaps not even believing, as it becomes visible in all recent quantitative studies, but which does not show up in the existing literature on Muslims in Germany.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, future research in this still emerging field of study should try to fill the gaps with regard to institutions and networks in a transnational perspective and reflect the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of the Islamic fields. Here, religious beliefs should be taken more into account as norm-setting and action-guiding forces. Intellectual productions and receptions need strongly investigation. Quantitative studies are also needed, but should – like the recent BAMF-study or the Religionsmonitor of Bertelsmann Foundation – overcome the Turkish bias and integrate existing and already validated items on religiosity and religious practices into their questionnaires, instead of creating new ones. This would allow comparing data in more complex ways, thus creating better data bases for further research. Topographies of Muslim life-worlds could combine qualitative and quantitative approaches and produce thick descriptions of local and regional settings.

9 On studying conversion and desiderata in this field see Krech (1994).

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