

*IMISCOE Working Paper*

## **Muslims in Europe: The state of research**

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### **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in Europe today. A massive influx of workers and other migrants from the Middle East and former colonial territories in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean region led to a growing presence of Muslim residents within Europe. Next to that, relatively large communities of indigenous Muslims can be found in Eastern Europe, especially in Albania, former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular), and Bulgaria, and smaller pockets in Greece, Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland. However the overwhelming majority of Muslims – approximately three quarters of the total in Europe – are living in Western Europe, and they are predominantly first and second generation immigrants.<sup>2</sup>

Although Muslims have been in Western Europe for ages – including as foreign traders, diplomats and students<sup>3</sup> – they have never before been present on such a large scale as they are now. There is therefore talk of the *New* Islamic presence (Gerholm & Lithman 1988). This representation is incorrect from a historical point of view (see for instance Nielsen 1999: 1-10) and also somewhat Eurocentric, especially if applied to postcolonial societies such as Britain, France and the

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<sup>1</sup> This is a slightly revised version of an essay originally prepared for the Russell Sage Foundation and then presented to a planning meeting of the Social Science Research Council and the Russell Sage Foundation on ‘Islam and Muslims in the United States and Europe: Processes of Mutual Accommodation’, held at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York City, on April 10-12, 2003. Various researchers, Thijl Sunier in particular, supplied us with advice and we thank them for this help. Finally, we are grateful to Aimee Rindoks for her linguistic editing.

<sup>2</sup> Cesari (1999) estimated the total number of Muslims in *Western* Europe at ‘nearly seven million’. There is, to be sure, no European equivalent of the category of African American Muslims.

<sup>3</sup> Nielsen (1999), for instance, mentions to the case of the Yemeni who have constituted a Muslims community in the United Kingdom since 1870. Rath et al. (2001) refer to students from the Dutch East Indies – today’s Indonesia – who temporarily resided in the Netherlands way before the Second World War. See Nielsen (1999) for more cases.

Netherlands. Until the demise of the colonial project, millions of Muslims were subjects of the British, French or Dutch regimes, albeit domiciled outside Europe. The migration of Muslims to the European centers is part and parcel of the same historic process (Haddad 1998; van der Veer 1995: 188-189). Seen from the migrant's perspective, the situation basically boils down to the phrase: we are here because you were there. However, the presence of Muslim subjects in colonial areas had relatively little impact on the local situation in Europe. At best, it constituted a pretext for the development of particular schools of scientific research, schools that mainly served the needs of the colonial powers. Whatever position one takes with regard to these matters – even if one acknowledges the significance of historical continuity – it is clear that we are now dealing with a situation that is historically unique in many respects. Muslims exhibit a variety of ethnic, linguistic and cultural characteristics, and have multiple network links with other major regions of the Islamic world. As immigrants, they may find themselves in an unfamiliar and sometimes even hostile environment in which the expression of their faith is not a matter of course. It has involved, and continues to involve, discussions and occasionally conflicts with representatives of the receiving society, while the introspections of Muslims themselves about the meaning of their religion and its practices have changed or evolved.

A growing number of articles, books, and reports have been dedicated to these developments. The study of Islam and Muslims in Europe, admittedly, has not always kept abreast of actual developments. Much research only took off when the establishment of Muslim communities was already underway or when public concern about the presence of Muslims was voiced more vigorously. Some research projects fed off changes in the political mood and went with the populist flow; others tried to correct or even counteract 'false' representations of Islam and Muslims; and again others were primarily curiosity driven and embedded in pure theoretical debate. The development of the study of Islam is to a certain extent contingent on the local situation. Amiraux, for instance, concentrating on two national contexts, the German and the French ones, found remarkable differences with regard to the scientific and political attitudes towards Islam within each territory.<sup>4</sup> More concretely, she identified a plethora of knowledge about Islam in France, and until very recently a quasi silence in Germany. Whatever issues, motives and interests have been at stake and whatever goals have been pursued, a variety of scientific researchers have now built a large body of literature. This literature includes attempts to describe, understand, and explain phenomena commonly associated with the presence of Muslims, as well as the emerging body of Islamic knowledge produced by Muslims themselves (for further details, see Iqbal 2000; van Bruinessen 2002; Eickelman 2002). The scholarly production evidently reflects the specificity of the situation in Europe and of

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.uni-erfurt.de/islamwissenschaft/amiraux.html>.

individual European societies. Following from this, most of the contemporary studies discuss 'Islam in migration' rather than Islam *per se* (Etienne 1990; Haddad 1998; see also Höffert & Salvatore 2000).

This essay deals with this body of literature. Our objective is to describe the state of the field of existing research on Islam and Muslims in (Western) Europe. This bibliographic essay, however, will be selective for various practical reasons. First, the focus is on *social scientific* literature only. We are aware of the existence of an extensive literature about a whole gamut of theological issues, but decided against exploring the field of theological study. Secondly, the focus is on studies of Islam and Muslims who have arrived in (Western) Europe in the post Second World War period as well as their offspring. While acknowledging the relevance of scientific work on Muslims in Eastern Europe or the work (by European researchers) on Islam and Muslims outside Western Europe, we will not cover the literature on these related fields in detail. Thirdly, as has already been indicated, we are dealing with an extensive literature – possibly a few thousand publications or more. It is impossible to carefully discuss each and every paper and, therefore, we confine ourselves to a number of key publications. Fourthly, the scientific literature in Europe is not only vast in its size but also in its scope, covering a wide array of topics and written from a multitude of theoretical perspectives. It is, moreover, clear that researchers have been influenced by ideological positions and debates regarding the role of religion in public life and/or the integration of minorities in the mainstream as well as by particular political or research agendas that prevail in their country (Bovenkerk et al. 1990; Favell 1999; Ratcliffe 2001). The literature, therefore, is rather heterogeneous, and this heterogeneity obviously hampers an unequivocal portrait of the state of the field. Although we endeavor to give a fair overview of the state of the art, we cannot rule out the possibility that this essay reflects some of our own research interests.

The paper will be structured as follows. We start the paper with a brief description of the scene. We briefly outline the general history of the emergence of Muslim communities in Europe. We will then focus on the study of Muslim communities in a number of Western European countries. First, we summarise the historical development of this field of study, thereby giving information about the disciplinary profile of the scholars involved as well as the central topics of their study. Next, we discuss a number of relevant issues on the basis of review of some key publications. This will compose the main part of the paper. We will conclude the paper by assessing the collective research agenda of scholars in Europe, and give our own thoughts on the applicability of this research for the United States. We will also explore the possibility of establishing trans-Atlantic linkages in this field.

## Facts and figures

Leaving aside the indigenous Muslim communities in the Balkan and other Eastern and South Eastern countries, the bulk of the Muslim population has arrived in Europe since the 1950s. For the record, details about Muslims in Eastern Europe can be found in various chapters in the Eastern Europe section of Maréchal 2002; Nonneman et al. 1996; Norris 1993; Popovic 1994a,b. There is, furthermore, a number of books on Albania and the former Yugoslavia, among others Allworth 1994; Bougarel & Clayer 2001; Cigar 1995; Friedman 1996; Glenny 1999; Kepel 2002; Malcolm 1994; Mazower 2000; Pinson 1996. Short introductions can be found in the *ISIM Newsletter*, especially the articles by Bougarel 2000; Chukov 1999; Clayer & Popovic 1999; Detrez 2000; Duijzings 1999, Grigore 1999; Mendel 1999; Sells 1999; and Szajkowski 1999.

Many Muslim immigrants were recruited under the *guest worker scheme* that was implemented in most Western European countries (until the mid 1970s). Afterwards, most Muslim immigrants entered the country as family members of the guest workers. In recent years family reunification has been the dominant form of immigration. The bulk of Muslim migrants from Mediterranean countries have come from Turkey, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. These immigrants are not equally distributed over European countries, due to political-economic or historical trajectories. Belgium, the Netherlands, France, the Nordic countries and especially Germany have been labour catchment areas for (ethnic Turkish or Kurdish) immigrants from Turkey, while the Benelux and France have also received large number of Moroccans, Algerians, and other North Africans. Within these countries, these labour migrants gravitated to the heart of the manufacturing industry, either in big cities or in small towns with old industries, and within these European cities and towns often to underprivileged neighbourhoods.

Secondly, since the 1950s, Britain, France and the Netherlands have experienced *postcolonial immigration*. Large numbers of Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Caribbeans came to stay in the United Kingdom, among them many Muslims. France has received many immigrants from Morocco, Algeria and other North African countries as well as immigrants from various other territories in the world. In the Netherlands the empire strikes back as well – among the postcolonial immigrants were relatively small pockets of Muslims from Indonesia and the Moluccans and a somewhat larger community from Surinam. The latter, like other immigrants from the Caribbean who migrated to Britain or France, were descendants of indentured labourers that originated from former British India. Their arrival in Europe coincided with the economic boom in the 1960s and 1970s. They were not formally recruited under a guest worker scheme, but their socio-economic and political positions nevertheless show many similarities to those of Mediterranean

guest workers. Their migration was often induced by economic factors,<sup>5</sup> and they ended up doing the same kind of work and settled in the same neighbourhoods. Yet, there are various important differences. As former colonial subjects they were eligible for British, French or Dutch citizenship, had often enjoyed some form of education in the language of the receiving country, and were somewhat more familiar with values, norms, and practices in the postcolonial centers. People from higher social classes were also among the postcolonial immigrant populations, so their communities have not solely consisted of working class people from the onset. This has obviously affected their organisational capacities and their ability to develop political clout (cf. Sunier 1996).

Finally, and more recently, Western Europe has experienced an influx of a fairly heterogeneous category of immigrants from a variety of countries. Some have arrived as *asylum seekers or refugees*, including large number of Muslims from Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, and Afghanistan; others have come as *professionals* or *students*. Their socio-economic and political positions vary enormously.

By now, the Muslim communities have developed in such a way – in most countries they encompass a number of generations – that the use of the term ‘immigrant’ becomes increasingly debatable. Particularly in Britain, the term ‘immigrant’ is no longer current; instead the term ‘ethnic minority’ has become *de rigueur*, and notably since September 11, 2001, ‘Muslim’ has increasingly been pinpointed as one such ‘ethnic minority’ group.

It has been said that Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in Europe today, and according to some observers, Islam has already become the second largest religion in terms of the number of believers (Hunter 2002). The latter claim is somewhat exaggerated as Muslims are actually outnumbered by the immense population of Christians (of various denominations) and nonbelievers. At a very rough estimate there are thirteen million or more Muslims living across Europe – ranging from Portugal to Finland, and from the Ireland to Bulgaria (Maréchal 2002) – in comparison to well over half a billion Europeans.<sup>6</sup>

Whether any significance should be attached to such figures regarding the current population and growth of the Muslim community in Europe remains to be seen. First, there are no authoritative maps of the distribution of Muslims in Europe or counting systems that warrant reliable statistics about the precise number of Muslims. Hence, any estimate is preliminary.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, the boundaries of ‘the Muslim

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<sup>5</sup> This does not apply to the Surinamese in the Netherlands who migrated primarily for political reasons: many feared social and political instability after Surinam’s independence in 1975.

<sup>6</sup> This figure does not include the European parts of the former Soviet Union.

<sup>7</sup> Go to <http://cgem.unn.ac.uk/eumuslim/volume6/volume6.htm> for a discussion about these matters. (This web page is the result of the international comparative project

community', if such a *sociological* entity exists at all, are unclear and occasionally subjected to heated debate. Muslims themselves do not have a common perception about the precise location of the boundaries and, consequently, the membership of some believers within the Umma (Muslim community) is contested. The *Ahmadiyya* – a strongly internationally oriented tendency that originates in nineteenth century British India – is a case in point (Friedmann 1989; Landman 1992: 23-31). The Ahmadi consider themselves as Muslims, but others put them outside the *Umma* for theological reasons. Further, boundaries easily shift under conditions of political dissension, as the case of Cemaleddin Kaplan's *Caliphate State* – a radical movement within the Turkish diaspora community in Europe with its headquarters in Germany – demonstrates. In 1996, just after the death of Cemaleddin, a counter caliph named Ibrahim Sofu challenged the position of Cemaleddin's successor, his son, Metin, and both parties brandished each other as *deccal* (meaning impostor or 'Antichrist'; Schiffauer 2000a,b). Definitions of 'community' can also shift over time. Some people, for various reasons, have either explicitly renounced Islam and opted for another creed or have gradually renounced their faith. Whether or not the latter are still to be regarded as Muslims is a matter of debate, although many Muslims would probably still count the secularised as belonging to the *Umma*.

The point is that Muslims demonstrate a diversity of affiliations to Islam, varying from 'negative' ones such as a refusal to proclaim the faith, silent agnosticism or indifference, to culturalist ones, or to more 'positive' ones. Dassetto and Nonneman (1996), who presented this typology, subdivide the latter, 'more central' type of belonging into i) types that stay at a distance from organised forms; ii) types that show a more or less utilitarian attitude towards established forms of religious organisation and authority; and iii) types that have organised missionary and militant affiliations. These affiliations may change over time in response to external social pressure. Individuals who at one point disassociate themselves from Islam may at another point turn into devout Muslims and *vice versa*. Non-Muslims – unaware of the intricacies of the formation of Muslim communities and the making of boundaries between who belongs and who does not – regularly overestimate the size of the Muslim community and increase the imprecision. Further, in most European countries there is no central registration of residents by religion, and the statistics are therefore based on rough estimations of the number of migrants from countries where Islam is the most important religion.<sup>8</sup> A recent overview by Maréchal (2002) gives the following picture:

'Muslim Voices in the European Union' coordinated by Pandeli M. Glavanis from the University of Manchester).

<sup>8</sup> The case of the Iranians show how easily inaccuracies creeps in: most immigrants from the Islamic Republic of Iran are refugees from non-Muslim minorities.

**Table 1** Estimates of the number of Muslims in Europe

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Muslims</b>
Austria	8,102,600	300,000
Belgium	10,192,240	370,000
Bulgaria	8,487,317	1,110,295
Denmark	5,330,020	150,000
Finland	5,171,302	20,000
France	56,000,000	4,000,000 – 5,000,000
Germany	82,000,000	3,040,000
Greece	10,000,000	370,000
Hungary	10,043,000	20,000 – 30,000
Italy	56,778,031	700,000
Luxemburg	435,000	3,800
The Netherlands	15,760,225	695,600
Poland	38,667,000	15,000
Portugal	9,853,000	30,000 – 38,000
Romania	22,500,000	60,000
Spain	40,202,160	300,000 – 400,000
Sweden	8,876,611	250,000 – 300,000
Switzerland	7,304,109	310,000
United Kingdom	55,000,000	1,406,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>450,702,615</b>	<b>13,15,0695 – 14,318,695</b>

*Source:* Maréchal 2002.<sup>9</sup>

In light of the fuss sometimes made over the presence of Muslims and their impact on everyday life, these figures seem relatively low: no more than two to three percent of the total population can be counted as Muslims. It should be noted, however, that at the local level the proportion of Muslims may rise way above this average. In the English city of Bradford, for instance, a 350,000 white majority coexists with 85,000 Asians, mostly Pakistani Muslims. Furthermore, there is often noticeable growth of the Muslim population. It so happens that Muslims in Europe are relatively young – in Amsterdam today, the most common name for newborn boys is Mohamed – and this demographic characteristic makes a steady growth of the Muslim population quite probable. The high fertility rates of recent immigrants, however, show a steady decline over the years.

There are not only immigrant (or ethnic minority) Muslims, there are also (native) converts and reverts ('born again Muslims'). Intermarriage, a spiritual quest, or a combination of these factors may account for conversion. In each country there is a small number of converts, and they are of particular interest for a number of

<sup>9</sup> This estimate draws from different sources, refer to different years, and show different degrees of accuracy. Maréchal's overview, moreover, is incomplete: countries such as Former Yugoslavia, Albania or the (European parts of the) former Soviet Union have been left out.

reasons. First, they are the product of Islamic missionary work and are regarded by some as the living proof of the superiority of Islam over other religions (Roy [2000] discusses this delicate aspect of Muslim identity). Secondly, as native citizens, converts often assume a leading role in the promotion of the interests of local or national Muslim communities. They act as self-appointed spokesmen and often accomplish quite a lot due to their familiarity with the political system and its operating principles (Allievi 2000).<sup>10</sup> Individuals such as Abdulwahid van Bommel (the Netherlands; see LAKAF 1980 for a more cynical comment) or Yusuf Islam (formerly known as pop singer Cat Stevens, in Britain, see Rath et al. 2001 about his role in the establishment of Muslim schools in Britain) are well known examples of such converts (Allievi 1999a,b,c; Allievi & Dassetto 1999; Assouline 1982; Beckford 1998, 1999, 2001; Beckford & Gilliat 1998; Beckford & Gilliar-Ray 1999; Dassetto et al. 2001; Daynes 1999; García-Arenal 1999; Köse 1994, 1996, 1999; Luckmann 1999; Rambo 1999; Setta 1999; Sultán 1999; Wohlrab-Sahr 1996, 1999a,b). There are indications, however, that they are losing political clout following the emergence of (highly educated) second generation Muslim immigrants.

## Development of scientific research

Like the rest of society, most researchers paid little attention at first to the religious aspects of migration and their sociological significance. They saw immigrants primarily as guest workers, foreigners, blacks or ethnic minorities, depending on the specific point of view adopted in the country. When a study was directed at religion, it was mainly about the development of Muslim identity, the formation of their organisations, and other aspects of the 'internal' culture or structure of their religious communities. More recently, researchers shifted their focus to the way in which societies create opportunities for the development of Islam or restrict them. They start with the premise that Muslims and the society around them maintain dynamic relationships, and do not exclude the possibility that some Muslim institutions have sprung up at the encouragement or even instigation of the surrounding society itself. In any case, in virtually every Western European country researchers from a wide range of academic disciplines have taken an interest in Islam and the emergence of Muslim communities and started describing, analysing and explaining the phenomenon. Some scholars focus on processes of modernisation in the Muslim diaspora or the formation of transnational communities, others examine matters of Muslim

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<sup>10</sup> Sara B. Miller writes in the *Christian Science Monitor* (October 2, 2002) how Muslim converts in Spain reach out to Moroccan immigrant women and children. See <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/1002/p07s01-woeu.html>.



morality, Sufism, or the emergence of Muslim associations, and still others are interested in the interaction between Muslims and the state, the interrelationship between radicalism and citizenship, or anti-Islamism. The body of scholarly knowledge is therefore extremely varied and the product of a multitude of different research perspectives.

In some cases, research was rooted in a tradition of Orientalism or the study of Arabic language and culture, but in others it sprung from interests from the sociology of religion, the sociology of migration, or the anthropology of ethnicity (Driessen 1997). The disciplinary heterogeneity brought diverse research paradigms, each focusing on particular structures and processes and using its own jargon. Meanwhile, an increasing number of researchers have crossed disciplinary boundaries and engaged in interdisciplinary work.

This notwithstanding, there is still some confusion or debate with regard to the object of study. Which phenomena warrant the study of Islam and Muslims? First and second generation Muslim immigrants in Western Europe obviously face particular problems and challenges with regard to their integration in the host society. The formation and articulation of their religious identities are logically contingent on integration processes. The question then is to what extent we are dealing with processes typical for any category of immigrants versus processes specific for Muslim immigrants. Some researchers are inclined to take the position that Turkish or Pakistani immigrants are Muslims by default and that the study of their labour market position, political aspirations or social life must be lumped together under the denominator of Muslim studies (cf. Nauck 1994; Shadid & van Koningsveld 1992).<sup>11</sup> Others, however, argue that this should be demonstrated rather than taken for granted, but this position calls for a theoretical and empirical discussion of the relationship of religion or Islam with ethnicity, nationality, class and gender (see for instance Douwes 2001; Modood 2002; Sunier 1996). A related issue concerns the question whether the incorporation of these newcomers is a process that revolves around individuals or collectivities (Buijs 1998, 2000).

One way of identifying the development of Muslim communities outside the core areas is by looking at Islam itself. Islam is then perceived as a system of norms and values providing direction for everyday life. According to this view, wherever Muslims, both in the Muslim world and in the diaspora, may be and whenever they live, they will constantly strive to arrange their lives in accordance with this normative system as much as possible, because that is the way of Islam. It is hardly surprising that the adherents of this scripturalist view of Islam are primarily concerned with the formal aspects of religion. However, this point of view is open to a great deal of criticism: it is deterministic, ahistoric and static, and isolated from the social context.

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<sup>11</sup> Go to <http://cgem.unn.ac.uk/eumuslim/volume2/Netherlands%201.htm> for another example.

An alternative way of looking at Islam itself is by studying its internal dynamics. The focus then is on the development of the Muslim project. This approach meets some of the critique, albeit the focus is still largely on internal factors and processes.

Another approach is possible, one that concentrates on the interaction between Muslim immigrants and the host society. Practicing Muslims do not shape the development of Islamic religious communities in isolation; the society around them also influences the process. The final form, which Islam – with all its variants – assumes, can be viewed as the result of consultation and conflict between all the different parties involved. Many factors play a role in this interaction, including some which in and of themselves have little to do with Islam. The capacity gained by Muslims to practice their own religion and to build up their own institutions is the byproduct of political decisions – today or in the past – regarding the recognition of religious institutions. While acknowledging the existence of a universal Islam (and also the dynamic character of the receiving society), these researchers focus on the emergence of local Islams in Europe (Rath et al. 1991). We will touch upon these issues hereafter.

We are evidently dealing with a remarkably lively branch of research, a branch that has undergone a steady process of professionalisation. A number of research centers have been established involving a variety of researchers,<sup>12</sup> among them the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM, in the Netherlands with its headquarters in the City of Leiden, the Dutch center for Islam studies from time immemorial), the Centre for Islam in Europe (CIE, Gent, Belgium), the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (Bergen, Norway), the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (CSIC, Birmingham, UK), the Belfast Islamic Centre (Eire), and others. Next to these centers, there are a variety of departments and institutes with a more general research mission, but with the study of Islam and Muslims in Europe among their objectives. These centers include the University of Amsterdam (Research Center Religion and Society), the University of Frankfurt-Oder (Institute of Comparative Cultural and Social Anthropology), Oxford University (Transnational Communities Programme), and various others. Researchers from these and other centers have embarked on local research programmes and increasingly also on international programmes and networks. Some of the centers regularly publish electronic or printed newsletters, such as the *ISIM Newsletter* or the *CIE Newsletter*, providing free information about theoretical and empirical research findings, new literature, lectures and conferences, and so forth, and this greatly helps foster the institutionalisation and internationalisation of this field of research.

The internationalisation of the study of Islam and Muslims is also visible in the growing number of edited volumes about Europe. Initially, there were mainly

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<sup>12</sup> Go to <http://www.isim.nl/resources/institutes/reluniv.html> for an overview.

motley collections of essays, merely the proceedings of conferences, but such books have an increasingly sharper focus (Abumalham 1995; Antes & Hewer 1994; Anwar 1983, 1984, 1985; Anwar & Garaudy 1984; Bistolfi & Zabbal 1995; Garaudy 1984; Gerholm & Lithman 1988; van Koningsveld 1995; Lewis & Schnapper 1994; Maréchal 2002; Metcalfe 1996; Nielsen 1987b, 1992 and 1999; Nonneman et al. 1996; Renaerts 1994; Shadid & van Koningsveld 1991, 1995, 1996a,b; Speelman et al. 1991; Vertovec & Peach 1997). Most books cover a wide range of topics varying from continuity and change in the making of Muslim identities, the establishment of mosques, the development of Muslim associations, or the struggle for Muslim schools to the question of Muslim run-away girls. Some focus on specific social and institutional aspects, such as Muslim youth (Vertovec & Rogers 1998), political participation (Shadid & van Koningsveld 1996a), legal issues (Borras & Mernissi 1998; Ferrari 1996; Ferrari & Bradney 2000; Foblets 1996; Nielsen 1979, 1987b), education (Wagtendonk 1991) or Muslim lives in the diaspora (Seufert & Waardenburg 1999).

Full-fledged international comparisons, i.e. studies that empirically investigate similar phenomena in different countries on the basis of one and the same research design, are still thin on the ground. The few existing comparisons cover specific topics such as conversion (Allievi 1999b), the establishments of Muslim organisations (Doomernik 1991), the social responses to the establishment of Muslim institutions (Rath 2005; Rath et al. 1996, 2001; Sunier & Meyer 1996; Waardenburg 1991, 2001); the *hijab* (Coppes 1994), religious education (Esch & Roovers 1986; Karagül 1998), and other topics (Pedersen 1999; Pratt Ewing 2000), or are general overviews (Nielsen 1992, 1999).

Some publications deal with the specific question of a European Islam (Amiriaux 1997; Dassetto 1996, 2000; Douwes 2001; Ramadan 1999; Alsayyad & Castells 2002), or entail political philosophical discussions about the interrelationship of citizenship, multiculturalism and Islam (Alsayyad & Castells 2002; Bader 1999, 2002, forthcoming; Dassetto 1996; Parekh 2000; and Roy 1999).

A number of journals have dedicated special issues to aspects of Islam in Europe including: 'Islam in the Netherlands' (in *Migrantenstudies*, see Gowricharn & Saharso 1997), 'Conversions to Islam in Europe' (in *Social Compass*, see Allievi & Dassetto 1999), 'Muslims in Europe' (in *Cahiers d'Etudes sur la Méditerranée Orientale et le Monde Turco-Iranien*, see Cesari & de Wenden 2002), and 'Religious Pluralism' (in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, see Bader forthcoming).

Various attempts have been made to make the hotchpotch of publications accessible to a larger readership by compiling bibliographies. Some are just enumerations of titles, others provide further details; all are useful (see Dassetto & Conrad 1996; Joly & Nielsen 1985; Nielsen 1992: 169-180; Ooijen et al. 1992; Strijp

1998; Shadid & van Koningsveld 2002; Haddad & Qurqmaz 2000; Waardenburg 1986; Westerman 1983 on *Qu'ran* instruction).<sup>13</sup>

## Islam as religion

Among immigrants in Western Europe, Islam is an important mobilising force. From the start Muslim immigrants have set up institutions in the private and public spheres, in order to enable the profession of their faith in the long term. They did so at the local, national and transnational levels, thereby partly following their own agenda or one from the Muslim world at large, and partly responding to the local opportunity structure (Rath et al. 1997, 1999, 2001).

One can discern various approaches in the analysis of Islam. One approach is characterised by the attempt to reduce the various manifestations to a nucleus of 'authentic' concepts and practices (cf. Driessen 1997). This approach has been criticised as *Orientalist*, or more generally defined as *essentialist*, implicating that Islam is thought to be eternal and unchangeable, untouched by social developments. In the *Sociology of Islam*, Ernest Gellner advanced the argument that 'Islamic society' constitutes a unitary entity with a common and consistent history extended to the present and underlying the current 'Islamic phenomenon'. The *ulama* and the *Shari'a* are thought to play a central role in this constant pattern of Muslim history and society (cf. Zubaida 1998). Orientalism, according to Krämer (2000),<sup>14</sup> 'is a project that presents, or as many would say "constructs" or "represents" Islam as a distinct, homogeneous and timeless entity that is essentially defined by its normative texts, i.e. the Qu'ran as divine word and the Sunna, or tradition of the Prophet Mohammad. For the unreformed Orientalist, Muslims are sufficiently defined by their being 'Muslim'. Orientalism constructs Islam as the ultimate Other, using it as a negative foil against which the achievements of Western civilisation appear all the more glorious. Islam is depicted as a 'cluster of absences', lacking the notion of liberty, a spirit of scientific inquiry, et cetera. Instead of 'joining the ritual denunciations of Orientalism', Krämer advocates 'to pay more attention to the dynamic and plural nature of Islam'. By fixing all eyes on the rich variety of manifestations of Islam, we run the risk of ignoring references to the common sacred sources of belief. These references, however, should not fade away. Indeed, one of the big questions of Islam-studies Krämer raises, concerns the relationship of the various manifestations of

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<sup>13</sup> See also J.M. Gaudeul's bibliography on 'Islam in Europe' at <http://www.lesri.com/bibeurop.htm>, or the *EU Muslims Bibliography* at <http://les1.man.ac.uk/cgembib/>.

<sup>14</sup> Gudrun Krämer is professor of Islamic Studies (Chair), Free University of Berlin, Germany. We quote her in extenso as she is a prominent and influential European scientist.

Islam with its doctrine. 'Is it possible to distinguish a stable core of Islam, constituting its essence and foundation, from its more malleable elements that can adapt to the most diverse circumstances in order to make Islam, as the well-known formula has it, relevant to all times and places?'

We will start this section with a discussion of the concept of Muslim unity as well as some recent *manifestations of diversity* in Europe's Islam – in migration. Next, we examine the organisational development of Muslims. In so doing, we pay special attention to the development of a Muslim leadership that is capable of reflecting in an autonomous way on the position of Muslims in Europe. In the third part, we will sketch the ideological development of Europe's Muslims.

### ***Unity and diversity***

The Muslim community, the *Umma*, is thought to be the bearer of Islam on earth and that is the reason why the *Umma* is highly revered. It is based on divine initiative and thus towers above all other kinds of community. Muslims share a notion of basic unity, and the rich diversity of Islam is seen as secondary (cf. Hoebink 1997). Fundamentalists (i.e. orthodox Muslims) stress this unity and interpret it as a commendable uniformity. Paradoxically, Orientalists, who speak of 'the' Islam, use this concept of unity as uniformity too while underestimating its diversity.

Some researchers claim that today's *Umma* is undergoing thorough changes. Many people in the Muslim World see *globalisation* as a natural process, but fear that it will bring an invasion of American culture to Muslim societies and relinquish both Muslim and national identities. Only radical discourse proclaiming a return to the original *Umma*, like Islamism, might be able to withstand this tendency (cf. Levine 2002). The spread of Muslims in Europe changes the borderlines of the Dar al-Islam and changes the geography and the culture of the traditional *Umma*. Today English is the second language of the *Umma*. This supports the broader tendency of reduction in the influence of the traditional heartland of Islam and a shift in the relation of center to periphery. The background of the changing character of the unity of the *Umma* colours the actual diversity.

Islam's diversity is layered, and the various stratifications differ in importance. About 90 percent of all Muslims in the world belong to the Sunnite tendency, whereas about 10 percent follow the Shiite tendency (Khalid 1989). The latter has its base in Southern Iraq and Iran and is represented in various pockets of the Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Central-Asian republics, Turkey, Bahrain and the coastal areas of the Arabic Gulf-states. Shiite migrants have settled in Western Europe, especially in Germany and Britain. On average, approximately ten percent of the Muslim population in Europe is Shiite. In diasporic situations, Sunnites and Shiites often show the tendency towards rapprochement, but there are also reports of interconfessional clashes; it happened that Sunni extremists tried to

rally against Shiites and Alevites. On the whole, most studies in Europe concentrate on Sunnite Muslims; reports about the Shiites are rare.

Differentiations of *Islam in migration* are to a large extent rooted in the immigrants' cultural and ethno-national backgrounds. Local, national and international organisations of Muslims in Europe are stratified along the ethno-national lines; each subcategory has established its own associations and built its own mosques. This is obviously related to the immigrants' propensity towards looking for a traditional grip in their new, non-Muslim society. There were various attempts to enhance the co-operation between Muslim organisations, sometimes even by the local or national government of the receiving society, but these attempts were hampered by ethno-national particularities and the concomitant inclination to form ethno-national clusters (Landman 1992). Case studies in this field often concentrate on the development of one specific ethnic group of Muslim immigrants (e.g. Sunier 1996). National agencies from the country of origin often try to get involved or even interfere in the organisations of Islamic compatriots. The Turkish department of religious affairs, the *Diyanet*, is a case in point (den Exter 1990). One might argue that their eagerness to be involved actually underscores Islam's fragmentation along national lines.

There are not just ethno-national cleavages, but also cleavages based on interpretations of Islam. Mainstream Islam is predominantly traditional, showing a conservative ideology. Watt (1988) describes five aspects: the concept of an unchanging, static world, both in religious and worldly questions; the claim to be a final religion, containing all the essential religious and moral truth required by the whole human race from now until the end of time; the supposed self-sufficiency of Islam; the concept of inevitable tensions between the *Dar al-islam* and the *Dar al-harb*,<sup>15</sup> resulting in an Islamic victory; and the idealisation of Muhammad and early Islam. This conservative feature does not implicate an overall seclusion. Through the centuries *ijtihad*, the autonomous search for sources of legal rules, alternated with *taqlid*, the bondage to tradition (Hoebink 1997; Peters 1980, 1997; Waardenburg 1994). Two rather small oppositional movements counter mainstream Islam ideology. At the left wing there is a tiny minority of modernist Muslims propagating an interpretative approach of the *Qu'ran* and advocating man's freedom and responsibility (Brown 2000). Some of today's modernist scientists have developed a broad audience in Europe, like Arkoun (1992) and Abu Zaid (1996), but they are always hovering between being popular among Western intellectual circles and being loyal to their Muslim roots. At the right wing, there is a minority of fundamentalist Muslims, purporting a strict interpretation of the Holy Book and a return to the idealised origins of early Islam. This varied movement includes quietist and reformist tendencies, but in the mainstream European reception it is often wrongly identified

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<sup>15</sup> The *Territory of Islam* and the *Territory of War*.

with the Islamic radicalism and extremism and goes back to Mawdudi and Qutb (Buijs 2002).

It also should be noted that many Muslim political movements express global religious differentiation between traditionalists, modernists and fundamentalists. Many of those movements operate in a complex field of shifting impulses: contradictions exported from the homeland glide into ensuing phases, while the adaptation to the new society results in new contradictions. The various Turkish Muslim organisations offer a rich illustration of these developments, which furthermore show considerable national varieties inside Europe (Canatan 2001).

### ***Organisational developments in Europe***

Muslims have organised themselves in many ways and established institutions varying from mosques, halal butchers, schools, press agencies, broadcasting organisations, and cemeteries right through to political parties, and have worked for the routine appointment of Muslim spiritual advisers in hospitals, prisons, the armed forces, and similar mainstream organisations. Several particularities impede this process, such as the lower-class position and strong transnational orientation of the vast majority of these immigrants, the spread of racist anti-immigrant ideologies and exclusionary practices, and the fact that public life in the receiving societies are currently undergoing a process of secularisation.

Many of these organisational efforts revolve around Muslim associations of all sorts. The formation of a tier of leaders has been undermined by the working class migrants' lack of human and religious capital. In practice, Muslims pursued three kinds of strategies: i) seeking the support of native (non-Muslim) minds or advocates; ii) seeking input from sympathisers from the homeland; and iii) fostering their own leadership. As the last strategy consumes a lot of time, the first two strategies predominate in the initial stages. The role of non-Muslim minds often diminished when Muslims themselves were able to carve their way into the host country's relevant social and political circles. The input from the homeland is very diverse: some Muslim associations have gradually become relatively autonomous, while others continue to be influenced by forces from the homeland or elsewhere. In their struggle for elementary provisions, Muslim associations have usually evolved from a primarily internally orientated organisation to a pressure group capable of operating under the prevailing social and political conditions. The social and political environment, which also encompasses governmental policies regarding the practice of religions and the integration of immigrant ethnic minorities, strongly influences the process of democratic incorporation. Both the environment and policies of the European countries show a great variation in this respect (Canatan 2001; Dassetto & Bastenier 1984; Feirabend & Rath 1996; Landman 1992; Rath 2005; Rath et al. 2001). We will return to this topic later.

Both Muslim self-organisations and their relation to the society at large are the subject of research and debate. Three conceptual models can be identified. The prevailing model in a particular country is contingent on the particularities of the development of that nation-state. European countries show a tendency to project their own national socio-political history on immigrant organisations. The *collectivist or group-pluralist model* regards the establishment of Muslim organisations as a necessary precondition for emancipation and integration rather than a sign of reluctance to integrate (cf. Penninx & Schrover 2002). The *individualist model* criticises the collectivist view as a romanticist plea for *Parallelgemeinschaften* (or parallel communities) and as the denunciation of cosmopolitanism and the continuation of pre-modern suppression of the individual (cf. Tibi 2002; Roy 1996). A third model acknowledges both weak and strong aspects of the previous antagonist models and holds that the migrating individual has a dual relationship of support and suppression with the collectivity (cf. van Gunsteren 1998; Buijs 2000).

### ***Ideological development***

As migration involves a long process of building new social relations often through confrontation with the new society, it is understandable that the first generation of immigrant Muslims in Europe tend to emphasise traditional aspects of Islam. The inclination to orthodox views might then be related with the uncertainty of newcomers. Religious leaders sent from the homeland and not acquainted with the Western European way of living support or even promote this tendency. Pressure by (non-Muslim) actors to give up the traditional Islam and embrace a more 'Western' or 'European' Islam only serve to bolster up traditional views (Höffert & Salvatore 2000).

On the other hand, a surprisingly small number of Muslims advocate fundamentalist reform. With the rise of the second and third generation of immigrant Muslims, the conditions of ideological development are changing thoroughly. Individual Muslims show cosmopolitan tendencies and the various Islamic communities create their own new leaders, willing to discuss the adaptation of the traditional Islam-reception to the changed circumstances, not as a result of pressure but as a result of its own momentum.

Some researchers predict the formation of a *Euro-Islam*, in which Islam would adapt to the classical characteristics of European civilisation. Other researchers express the opinion that 'Europe' as a political and cultural entity is rather weak, whereas national identities, however disputed, constitute a decisive point of reference (cf. Alsayyad & Castells 2002; Nielsen 1999; Shadid & Van Koningsveld 1995). It is unclear as yet what a future 'European' or 'national' Islam would look like. Nevertheless, some authors such as Canatan (2001) and Sunier (1996) predict a radical change in the personal attitude of European Muslims towards religion- from culture



and tradition to conviction. Cesari (1998, 1999) discusses a related theme. She positions Muslims in a secularised context (notably France), which seems to nurture the tendency by some Muslim youngsters to individualise and privatise their religion. On one hand, one can observe Muslim youngsters grasping the opportunity to make their own choice of tenets and rules, but on the other hand one can observe that individualisation sometimes leads to more fundamentalist orientations and the embracing of Islam as a global system of resistance to Western political and cultural imperialism.

Many researchers take the view that Islam refers to a religious identity and not an ethnic one. Yet, Muslims foster a variety of ethnic identities – especially true in situations of ‘foreignness’ – and this affects the development Islam. In response, various attempts have been made to construct a kind of Muslim identity that could replace the ethnic differentiations within the Muslim community and would enhance the ethno-cultural divide between Muslims and European non-Muslims (cf. Haddad 1998). These attempts failed most of the time, however. As Roy (2000) formulated this (in terms of French individualism): ‘The real processes at work among the Muslim are that of individualisation and reconstruction of identities along different patterns, all phenomena that undermine the very idea of ‘one’ Muslim community in Europe. There is no Western Islam, there are Western Muslims.’

### **Interactions with the non-Muslim environment**

The development of Islam in Europe is not just the result of activities by Muslims themselves, but is also shaped by the structure of the (predominantly Christian or secular) environment in which they exert their religion. This environment shows several remarkable characteristics. The first characteristic is that about half a century of mainly economic co-operation of some Western European countries has not produced even the beginnings of something like a ‘European identity’. Without any doubt the common inheritance of Enlightenment strongly influences today’s European countries, but it is a long way from the roots of that comprehensive movement of civilisation to the current political and cultural arrangements of the various national states. Admittedly, Europe encompasses a European Union with 25 countries today, and perhaps more within a few years, but Europe is *not* a unity in social, political or cultural terms and the EU is *not* something like a crescent United States of Europe. A ‘United Europe’ *may* develop, but thus far it seems that this process only serves to destabilise traditional concepts of national identity without offering new ones on the European level instead. In order to understand Europe one has to analyse individual countries – indeed an unfeasible task – but an overview of the particularities of some countries offers a good start.

The second characteristic is that the various countries of Europe themselves are confronted with a phenomenon that could be called a crisis of identity as the result of globalisation and integration. In fact, the unexpected and unwanted immigration of millions (many of them Muslims) has revealed that many native citizens lost bonds with their ethnic, cultural and historical roots. The usual references to the Enlightenment have become somewhat petrified and do not sufficiently reflect upon the current situation. This has resulted in uncertainty that hinders the acceptance of Muslim newcomers.

In this section we address four themes. The first concerns the constitutional and political preconditions that the European countries offer the Muslim immigrants and that are constitutive for many integrative concepts and activities. The second concerns the debate about the political positions of 'Islam as such' in relation with the given preconditions in Europe; 'democracy' and 'human rights' are the pivotal topics in this field. The third theme is Muslim radicalism – an issue that causes great concern in Europe today. The fourth theme concerns the actual process of institutionalisation, which is realised by Muslim immigrants and their organisations.

### ***Constitutional and political preconditions***

One important aspect that conditions the position of Muslim immigrants in the European countries concerns the concepts of citizenship and nationhood that are applied. As Bovenkerk et al. (1990), Miles (1989), Brubaker (1992) and various others have pointed out, every nation-state has a specific set of ideas regarding the fundamentals of citizenship and the admission of new citizens. This ideology reflects concepts about the character of the nation in relation to the state and consequently defines the national view on identity and diversity. France has a long tradition of assimilation and inclusion and the public manifestation of diversity is strongly discouraged. In Germany the traditional concept of *ius sanguinis* results in a restrictive policy of admission and a broad skepticism about social and cultural incorporation of non-Germans. The Netherlands pursues a policy of restricting admission, accepting low-key multiculturalism and stressing the social-economic aspects of integration. Most newcomers strive after the preservation of their identity and religion and for protection of the family (Shadid & van Koningsveld 1996). They express various opinions about diversity in society and the way to construct their own identity (cf. Rath et al. 2001; Buijs 1998). Admission to citizenship does not take away feelings of exclusion (cf. Aries 1996); Western society is mostly perceived as strongly assimilationist and thus threatening the Muslim identity, and this often results in far-reaching criticism of the established society and a strive for a turnover of the social order. Feelings of foreignness and exclusion contribute to a wide normative cleavage between Muslim believers and non-Muslim authorities, which hinders dialogue and deepens existing conflicts (cf. Barkun 1995).

In liberal democracies, the political equality of citizens is primarily defined on the level of the individual; group-rights are not commonly recognised. Yet, this traditional view is disputed and the relation of the individual and the community needs rethinking (cf. van Gunsteren 1992, 1998). The communitarian concept starts from the idea that all citizens need a safe cultural context that should be supported by the polity and consequently sees political freedom and equality in terms of collective rights and group recognition (Taylor 1995). Though communitarianism runs counter some tenets of liberal democracy that are dominant in Western Europe, it may gain ground as native political elites may – for reasons of political efficacy – wish to have organisations rather than individuals as partners to discuss and implement their policies vis-à-vis the population (Bauman 1996; Rath et al. 1999). In France and to a lesser degree in Germany, there is a strong individualist tradition with little space for expressions of group pluralism. The Netherlands and Belgium have a long tradition of group pluralism based on consociationalist principles: over a long period, an extensive system of legislation, regulation, and institutions was developed within which the state distributed financial and other provisions among the various religious or ideological ‘communities’ – the pillars. Since the seventies, however, this system of pillarisation has been eroding, while liberal individualism has gained ground.

Most Muslim organisations in Western Europe propagate some kind of communitarianism and there is a protracted conflict with the state about its range of applications (cf. Rath et al. 1996; Buijs 1998). However, a small but influential number of Muslims feel threatened by collective concepts and prefer an individual cosmopolitan concept of integration. In the resulting discussion religious radicalism might manifest itself in a form that denies the right of individual Muslims to follow their own way in non-Muslim countries and risk the danger of contamination. Radicals might use this supposed danger to claim that only their all-encompassing interpretation of Islam can be seen as the rightful foundation of Muslim life in Western countries.

After a long and protracted struggle of anticlerical powers against Christian conservatism, the overwhelming majority of Europeans now support secularity as a safeguard for religious liberties, free and equal access to political debate, and state neutrality. Modern Christianity’s support of secularity contains the danger of a ‘baptised secularity’ that might exclude Islam (cf. Bielefeldt 1998). France is a laic republic in which the state neither recognises nor finances any religious sect; yet, the state is prepared to enable citizens to enjoy their right to religious freedom. Church and state in Germany are separate and the state is neutral, but it nonetheless acknowledges the importance of co-operation with religious communities, some which obtain special privileges (Shadid & van Koningsveld 1995). In the Netherlands, the doctrine of separation of church and state – highlighted in the new Constitution of 1983 – has been used to dispute the responsibility of the state to create material provisions in order to safeguard religious freedom (cf. Rath 2005; Rath et al. 1996; Buijs 1998). Yet, the freedom of education grants religious movements (including

Muslims) the opportunity to establish confessional schools, hospitals, broadcasting stations, et cetera. All democracies of Western Europe are secular to a certain level (Rath et al. 1991) but in specific conflicts (like those about wearing headscarves in schools) it becomes manifest that the separation of church and state can take various shapes, which thoroughly influence the process and outcome of religiously inspired conflicts (cf. Coppes 1994; Kepel 1997).

Mainstream Islam sees secularisation as a sign of Westernisation, but also here we see differences. Some Muslims hold that the secular state is a Christian project, others equate secularity with political atheism. The moderate criticism of modern secularity aims to restore the traditional central position of religion in social life without directly interfering in the democratic process. In its radical form the criticism rejects the secular foundation of state and society, denies the relative independence of the political level and claims to be able to design society directly with the supposed imperatives of religion (cf. Kepel 1994; Bielefeldt & Heitmeyer 1998). Traditional Muslims may evaluate this politicising of religion as a reduction of religion to a system of social instructions, which negates its essentially transcendental character (cf. van Vucht Tjissen et al. 1991).

European societies show consensus on the principles of political equality of citizens, acceptance of individuality, plurality and diversity of opinions. They also agree on some essential values like tolerance towards dissenters, readiness to reasonable debate and the pursuit of compromise. Finally, they all maintain that the democratic state has to prevent abuse of power and arbitrariness, protect individual privacy, ensure possibilities for political participation, protect minorities, respect human rights and be careful and reticent in the use of violence (cf. Backes & Jesse 1993).

European governments diverge in terms of the level of centralisation, flexibility, consultative traditions, practices of participation, and accessibility to new actors. Furthermore, the cultures of the political governance and debate vary greatly, especially on the aspects of principality versus pragmatism and politicising versus de-politicising. A politicising culture may escalate ethno-religious contradictions, but may also strengthen mutual understanding (cf. Heitmeyer 1996). The pragmatic approach can take away the sharp edges of political mobilisation on religious themes, but it also can strengthen the marginalisation of Muslims (cf. Buijs 1998). To return to the examples of the Netherlands, France and Germany: the first one was characterised by 'de-politicising' and pragmatism (cf. De Mas & Penninx 1994; Hoppe 1987), France has a long tradition of politicising debates, whereas Germany tends to combine principality and de-politicising.

Things may change, however. In the Netherlands, a new political movement led by Pim Fortuyn revolted against the unspoken agreement to refrain from mobilising the anti-immigrant vote, and since the 2002 parliamentary elections, a tougher 'integration policy' is being implemented, placing increasing emphasis on native norms, values and behaviour, and on disciplining the Other. The 'neo-realism'

that has informed this shift has been accompanied by fierce criticism of Islam and, what many people believe to be, the Muslim way of life. The terrorist actions in various places in the world, the war against terror, the slaying of the maverick moviemaker Theo van Gogh and so forth have nourished the distrust of Muslims and furthered governmental interference in the lives of Muslims.

Muslims in Europe show a great variety in their views on political participation and loyalty to non-Muslim governments. According to Shadid & Van Koningsveld (1996b) the classical dichotomy of the *Dar al-islam* and the *Dar al-barb* is dealt with in at least four ways: pragmatic, idealistic, re-interpretative and traditionalist. Analogous views are manifested by themes like staying in a non-Muslim country, naturalisation, political participation and military service. Islamic radicalism may originate from various views. It can result from the traditionalist view that Europe is a 'Territory of War' and also from the idealist concept which stresses the importance of a well-organised Islamic enclave in an otherwise fallen world. The resulting radicalism defends an exclusive and integralist interpretation of religion, claiming superiority and thus threatening plurality (cf. Almond et al. 1995c).

### ***Islam and European concepts of democracy and human rights***

Some researchers claim that Islam is essentially anti-democratic – the sense of democracy is thought to be part of the 'cluster of absences' – at best democracy constitutes a source of fear of mainstream Islam (Brugman 1998; Mernissi 1992; Watt 1988). Other researchers try to construct 'democratic impulses' in traditional Islam, which might be called an awkward operation, as the origins of Islam (like the other religions of the Book) lie in a patriarchal, non-democratic era (Noordam 1998; Sachedina 2001). It is hardly surprising that these attempts are object of criticisms (Peters 1998). A third category of researchers holds that democracy and human rights are the result of social struggle, not only in the past, but also today. They may refer to the extended wrestling of democracy and Christianity in Europe, resulting in a struggling but steady democratisation of religion (Kalyvas 1998, Bielefeldt 2000), and some refer to democratic impulses in modern Islamic countries as well (Vaner 1997). The secular design of democracy evokes a lot of resistance from various Muslim movements and is intensely debated in the academic world (Pratt Ewing 2000; Westerlund 1996; Esposito & Tamimi 2000). It turns out that secularity is narrowly associated with modernity, a cultural-political concept that in the Muslim world often is equated with liberal colonialism and imperialism (cf. Bader 1998). Most researchers upholding the inheritance of Enlightenment do not construct an essential conflict of Islam and democracy (as the Orientalists tend to), but stress the possibilities of both Islam and Enlightenment to modernise and enrich themselves (Tibi 1998; Tibi 2002).

### ***The rise of Muslim radicalism: causes and effects***

The rise of Muslim radicalism in the past three decades, has given new impulses to the study of Muslim fundamentalism and radicalism. In Europe, Islam is sometimes equated with fundamentalism and the religious category of fundamentalism is sometimes equated with the political categories of radicalism and extremism. This induced some authors to discuss the broad question of the Muslim threat as myth or as real threat, with the focus on the Western reactions on Islam as such (Auernheimer & Bukow 1999; Esposito 1999; Shadid & van Koningsveld 1992). The political uneasiness in Western Europe resulted in a report to the European Parliament, in which the actual threat clearly was put into perspective (Commission for Public Liberties and Internal Affairs 1997). Other authors preferred to differentiate between the various Muslim movements and study Muslim radicalism as a historic and recent phenomenon (Watt 1988; Brown 2000; Choueiri 1990; Kepel 1994, 1997, 2000; Bielefeldt & Heitmeyer 1998). Particularly the authors embracing the tradition of Enlightenment draw the attention to Muslim radicalism as a political project and stress its failure. In this school of research, we find among others Buijs, Kepel, Roy and Tibi. Apart from the debates about the political perspectives of Muslim radicalism we find the different domain of the causes of Islamic radicalism as such and in Europe especially. This field of research is still in its infancy, though some important first steps have been made (Almond et al. 1995; Bielefeldt & Heitmeyer 1998; Schiffauer 1998; Buijs 2002b).

### **Institutionalisation**

Until the late 1970s, Muslims kept a relatively low profile. The formation of their religious communities as well as the development of Muslim-mainstream relations did not cause much commotion, which is not to say that the spread of Islam to Western Europe always passed off smoothly. In the same vein, the government, political parties or other opinion leaders did not pay much attention to the presence of Muslims and the development of their religion. To the extent that they did, their attention focused on expressions that were perceived as problematic – for instance the establishment of mosques being at variance with zoning plans (cf. Nielsen 1999) – or were considered to be part of the ethnic identity of the newcomers (Werkgroep Waardenburg 1983). Dramatic events in the late 1970s and after provided concrete occasions for debates on Islam and the presence of Muslims (cf. Leman 2000; Werbner 1994). There were, for instance, the Iranian revolution that was so to speak high jacked by fundamentalist mullahs in 1979, the *fatwa* issued by the Iranian leader Khomeini against Salman Rushdie for his *Satanic Verses* in 1989, the Gulf War in

1990, the *intifada* in Palestine as of the mid 1990s, and the 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA. At the local level, there have been numerous encounters revolving around the wearing of headscarves, the establishments of prayer houses, the foundation of Muslim schools, or the right to be critical of Islam. Today, greater significance is ascribed to Islam, which does not mean that it is automatically a recognised or appreciated spiritual movement. On the contrary, some see only the specter of a 'clash of civilisations' (Huntington 1997), or of advancing fundamentalist groups who are going to engulf the achievements of West European or national culture (Fortuyn 1997). They see in Islam a danger that must be driven out or at the very least controlled by society. The government and representatives of the political class have closely scrutinised Muslim political and religious attitudes and activities, assessed their liability to public security, and engaged in fundamental discussions on the place of Islam in society. Some such as Shadid & van Koningsveld (1992) argue that this anti-Islamic mood is rooted in centuries-old anti-Islamic images and sentiments. Whatever is the case, the intensity of the moral panics (Husbands 1994; see Poole 2002 about the role of the media) that frequently break out illustrate that anti-Islamic feeling are not a minor issue. Many people experience a (not always clearly defined) fear or rejection of Islam.

This being said, it would be too simplistic to describe the reaction to the advent of Muslims and their institutions exclusively in such terms, since at the same time many people show themselves to be more amenable, and are prepared to allow Islam respectability and to facilitate its observances. Some Muslim institutions have been established almost unnoticed, others after conflict with the government or other interested parties, and at other times with their support. Occasionally, Muslims have been able to profit from the prevailing constitutional freedom of religion and the concomitant rules and regulations, the principle of equality, and the high value on respect for human rights and separation of church and state. The outcome of this historical process is inconclusive for the time being, although – as has been said – the political mood has taken a turn that is less favorable to Muslims.

In a general sense the institutionalisation of Islam is taking place all over Western Europe, but if one looks more carefully at the individual countries, important differences can be discerned. In each nation-state the process of institutionalisation and its recognition takes a different and specific form. Let us take the example of the headscarf. The supporters in France of a ban on Muslim women wearing headscarves in public places invoke the secular ideology of the French state, which has ruled supreme since the French revolution (Blaise & de Coorebyter 1990; Baubérot 2000). Consequently they take the debate to a level of principle in which compromise is virtually excluded in advance. In Germany, the government and civil servants are also expected to maintain the norm of religious neutrality (Häussler 1998). In Germany, a Minister of Education refused to appoint a teacher to a primary school. She was a practicing Muslim and wanted to wear a headscarf while she was teaching. Although she had worn her headscarf without problems during her

teaching practice, it was now judged that her behavior would breach religious neutrality. In Britain the supporters of a ban cannot invoke any constitutional ruling. There the debate is about the obligation to wear traditional school uniform. Some of the justifications for compulsory uniform are to prevent the outward signs of social inequality and to promote loyalty to the school community. There the question is less easily linked to anything as weighty as constitutional principles, and consequently is resolved in a simple and pragmatic way: headscarves are allowed, provided they are in the color of the school uniform (Poulter 1990: 90-91). In the Netherlands, finally, the Secretary of State for Education has repeatedly made clear that the objections to wearing headscarves are not important enough to impose a ban. Headscarves are in the domain of civil liberties, which does not mean that it is uncontested (Coppes 1994).

Another example is the funding of mosques. In the Netherlands, local and national leaders have debated the question of the extent to which one of the key institutions of Muslim communities – mosques – should be supported financially by the government. The supporters invoke the right of equal treatment, and point to a series of legal rulings which until the mid-1970s applied to Christian churches (Rath et al. 2001). In France, on the other hand, the question of subsidising mosques does not really arise. There have already been several cases of mayors authorising the bulldozing of mosques, although such reactions were not typical. In short, in spite of the fact that the problems are the same in the different countries, and that there is both support and opposition, it appears that the discussion, its ideological grounds and the political outcome, can all show marked differences.

Muslims try to practice their religion and build up their own institutions within the closed confines of their own community, in some cases, if need be, underground. These institutions attain no formal recognition within society; they are not adopted, accepted or integrated into the totality of society's institutions. A reason for this could be that the established society has fundamental objections to certain practices, but this is not always the case. The point is that these forms of institutionalisation occur in the private sector, and that there is no direct inducement – either for the religion's adherents or for the society at large – to draw up rules or take other kinds of action in the public sector.

Muslims also choose or are forced to work for the recognition of their institutions within the established society. Such efforts are sometimes inspired by considerations of the principle of equality, and by the desire to be treated on an equal footing with other institutions that are already accepted by society (for instance the law of blasphemy in UK, see CRE 1989). They are at other times based on material considerations: recognition can bring with it the right to support by society (as is for instance the case in Belgium, see Bastenier 1988). Finally, it also happens that established forces in society, like government, demand of Muslims that they run their institutions in a specific way, in other words more in accordance with what is



considered normal and desirable in the receiving country (for instance Muslim schools, see Dwyer & Meyer 1995). In all cases Muslims and their organisations act in consultation and negotiation with the established society. The struggle for recognition evidently has varying outcomes and is contingent, among others, on the institutional context of society: some new institutions can be integrated relatively easily, because comparable institutions already exist for other groups. For other institutions the process of recognition is appreciably more difficult, and the struggle for recognition can even result in failure.

The development of Muslim institutions is in full swing in a number of spheres of life. For this essay we distinguish seven spheres in which the process of institutionalisation is taking place, listed in random order, and briefly mention a number of references. These spheres do overlap to some extent.

*The religious sphere* This concerns the development of practices and institutions that are of key importance for the preservation and continuation of Islam, including the appointment of spiritual leaders, religious festivals, places and provisions for worship, the public call to prayer, and the prescriptions or usages based on the religion (such as ritual slaughter, diet, and funeral customs). This sphere also entails the topic of recognition of freedom of religion and of religious organisations, and the equal treatment and recognition or acceptance of key religious institutions.

The freedom of religion and the position of Islam in general are discussed by Shadid (1995). Dessing (2001) describes how Muslims reconstruct rituals of birth, circumcision, marriage and death among Muslims in a migrational situation. These rituals are performed under two, not completely compatible legal systems, namely the Islamic and host country's systems. Strijp (1998) examines the religious life of a Muslim community in a small town. Cherribi (2000) and Wagtendonk (1990) deal with the role of imams.

A matter, which receives special attention, is the *hijab*. Some regard the wearing of headscarves as a sign of belonging and religiosity, while others, feminist and liberal authors in particular, consider it as a sign of premodernity and the oppression of women. There are furthermore various interpretations about the issue to what extent headscarves should be treated as a Muslim institution or just an artifact of local culture. The *hijab* is apparently a very sensitive issue politically and is often approached as a key case of multiculturalism involving questions about the balance between individual and collective rights (Coppes 1994; El Hamel 2002; van Kuijeren 2000).

Many authors deal with the establishment of mosques, the religious and social activities that take place within these prayer houses, as well as the interactions and negotiations with the (local) government or other parties concerned (Battegay 1995; Beck 1999; Boyer 1992; Buijs 1998; Cesari 1994; Chaabaoui 1993; Doomernik 1991; Dunn 2001; Eade 1993, 1996; Etienne 1984; Falanga & Temin 1990). Some such as Sander (1991), Sunier (1999) and Wagtendonk (1990) discuss internal processes,

while others such as Hodgins (1981), Frégosi (2001), Joly (1988), Nielsen (1988), Buijs (1998), Lindo (1999), Rath (2005), and Rath et al. (2001) focus on the encounters of Muslim communities with the (local) government, or a combination of these (Baumann 1996; Doomernik 1991; Waardenburg 1983). These encounters involve negotiations about various issues, ranging from the application of zoning laws or the building code, the regulation of parking, or the *azan* (the electronically amplified call for prayers) to government subsidies.

Another field of research concerns the application of dietary laws and the regulation of ritual slaughter (Charlton & Kaye 1985; Rath et al. 2001).

*The legal sphere* This refers to the legal recognition of practices rooted in religion or religious tradition, including such elements as Islamic family law. Some authors discuss such relatively abstract issues as human rights (Poulter 1987; Lewis 1994; Jansen 1994), the freedom of religion (CRE 1989; Koningsveld 1988; Shadid & van Koningsveld 1995) including the right to ritual (Waardenburg 1983), laïcité (de Coorebyter 1992), or the neutrality of the state (Boender 2001; Werkgroep Waardenburg 1983; Dekker-van Bijsterveld 1988; Stempel 1986). Others investigate the legal aspects of the *hijab* (especially the question whether or not headscarves are compatible with work clothes or school uniforms, see Poulter 1987), the freedom of speech and the law against blasphemy (CRE 1989, 1990; MacEwen 1990), the Muslim criminal laws (Peters 1990), or aspects of the legal status of *imams* (van Bakelen 1985). Most attention, however, is dedicated to Muslim family law, especially matters of marriage and divorce (Moors 1998; Nûrîn Shah-Kazemi 2000; Carlier 1996; Carlier & Verwilghen 1989a,b; Carroll 1986; Ferrari 1996; Ferrari & Bradney 2000; Foblets 1996; Nielsen 1996; Pearl 1985, 1986, 1987; Poulter 1987, 1996; Déprez 1996; Harpigny 1983; Nielsen 1987; Streiff-Fenart 1990; Rutten 1988; Vestdijk-van der Hoeven 1991). The British Law Commission (1982) explicitly addresses the issue of polygamy. More general studies are Rutten (1988), Nielsen (1979, 1987b) and Poulter (1986, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1996).

*The educational sphere* The central issue here is the transfer of knowledge and values (including religious ones), covering both the socialisation of children, and knowledge transfer and diffusion among adults: provisions for Islamic training and education, theological courses, religious instruction in and outside schools, and the media. A series of publications cover a variety of issues regarding Muslims in the educational system (Anwar 1988; Blaise & de Coorebyter 1990; Destree 1990; Elsas 1991; Jensen 1987; Joly 1989a,b; Jonker 2001; Karagül 1994; Lahnemann 1983; Mohr 2002; Nielsen 1981, 1983, 1989, 1999; North 1987, and various other papers from the Birmingham Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations; Otterbeck 1999; Wagtendonk 1987; van de Wetering 1991). Muslim schools have obviously attracted a lot of attention (Dwyer 1993; Dwyer & Meyer 1995, 1996; Parker-Jenkins 2002; Rath et al. 2001; Shadid & van Koningsveld 1991; Wagtendonk

1991), and so has the issue of Muslim religious education in public (state) schools (Abdullah 1979; Balic 1990; Bastenier & Dassetto 1987; van Esch & Roovers 1987; Hunt 1983; Rath & Meyer 1994; and Wagtendonk 1987, 1991). Landman (1996) delved into the delicate question of state sponsored *imam* schools (Landman 1999), while Sander (1988) and Westerman (1983) go into the issue of *Qu'ran* schools.

*The socio-economic sphere* Within this sphere we look at economic institutions based on Muslim principles, such as slaughterhouses, financial institutions on an interest-free basis (*lariba* banking), Muslim unions and business associations, and corporations or co-operatives for the building and management of housing. There has not been much research done in this particular sphere. There are a few publications about ritual slaughtering and Muslim butchers (Bakker & Tap 1985; Kaye 1993; Kloosterman et al. 1997, 1998; Pols 1998) and about the entrepreneurial activities of Islamic healers (Hoffer 1998). Van Amersfoort et al. (1989) analyse the relationship between housing patterns and the establishment of mosques, while Clark (2000) and Naguib (2001) discuss Muslim architectural influences in Britain and Norway. Anwar (1983), finally, examines the position of Muslims on the labour market.

*The socio-cultural sphere* This includes bodies for Muslim socio-cultural activities, such as those arranged for women, children and the elderly or recreation, hobby, musical and sports clubs and the possibility of their recognition, funding and support, for example by providing premises for their activities. The activities of Muslim associations are frequently covered, but the socio-cultural aspects are rarely addressed as a separate issue. Amiraux and Bröskamp (1996) describe the sports activities by Muslim associations, while Kumpfer (1993) discusses the issue of waiving the obligation of Muslim girls to practice sports. Mirza (2002) writes about Muslim stand-up comedians.

*The sphere of health and social care* This involves Muslim social work, home nursing, hospitals, homes for the elderly and suchlike, as well as the recognition of these activities by the society at large. There are various publications dealing with the rite of male circumcision. Rath et al. (2001) briefly touch upon the role of medical specialists and health insurance companies. Several publications examine beliefs and practices of Islamic healing (Hoffer 1994, 2000a,b), or the appointment of Muslim spiritual advisers in hospitals, prisons and the armed forces. Zwart and Hoffer (1998), finally, discuss the question of organ donation.

*The political sphere* This concerns the formation of Muslim political organisations or parties, the recognition of Muslim organisations as dialogue partners, and their participation in advisory and management structures at all levels. Rath (1984) looks into the participation of a Muslim party in local elections in Rotterdam, while Geisser and Kelfaoui (2001) examine how political parties in Marseille are courting Muslim

voters. Various authors – including Bauman 1996; Buijs 1998; Feirabend & Rath 1996; Lindo 1998 – give accurate analyses of the political interaction between Muslim associations and the local government, and in doing so touch upon the political dilemmas mainstream politicians are facing. Leman (2000) thereby explicitly addresses the role of the media. The politics of recognition of Islam, seen from the perspective of the receiving society's politicians, is the subject of several studies (Rath et al. 2001; Heckmann 1994). Fennema & Tillie (1999) assess the interrelationship of the civic community and the involvement of immigrant minorities in the political decision-making process. Renaerts (1999) reports about the election of the Executive Body of Muslims in Belgium. Other authors provide more general information about the political context of Muslim communities (Husband 1994) or the involvement of Muslims in transnational politics (Salzbrunn 2002).

Summing up the state of the art in these spheres, a number of recurrent themes emerge. To put it bluntly, Muslim are often associated with pre-modern attitudes and practices and this has, to some extent, influenced the research agenda. A lot of attention is dedicated to such themes as gender relations (incl. headscarves), freedom of speech (including the Rushdie affair, Muslim radicalism, and so forth), and the compatibility of Islam and modernity.

### **Final remarks**

In the past two to three decades, European researchers have been building up an extensive body of literature on Islam and Muslims in Europe. This body, which encompasses a few thousand books, reports, and papers, reflects a multitude of scientific disciplines and covers an array of theoretical and empirical topics. There is, to be sure, no dominant paradigm. On the contrary, this branch of scientific research is characterised by a variety of different research approaches that are in constant competition with each other. The fragmentation of the body of scholarly knowledge is contingent on disciplinary idiosyncrasies, on national research traditions and agendas, and on individual preferences for particular theoretical approaches. Anyone who wants to take part in Europe's research community must be aware of this heterogeneity. Collaborative work is, of course, possible on the basis of compatibility of epistemological principles and style of research. Within Europe, there are a growing number of cross-national research efforts, which in the long run could help foster the design of a more or less coherent research program.

Furthermore, there is no center of scientific research that could rightfully claim to represent Europe's research community. Consequently, there is no complete overview available of the total body of research. There is a motley collection of

bibliographical overviews, some of them almost twenty years old. A thorough on-line bibliography is badly needed.

Research of Islam and Muslims in Europe is strongly influenced by two processes: one being the fact that the establishment of Islam largely coincides with the incorporation of first and second generation immigrants, the other being the disunity in terms of nation-state formation and the concomitant allocation of citizenship rights. A great deal of the literature, consequently, revolves around issues of citizenship and multiculturalism (including their gender dimensions) and aspects of the institutionalisation of Islam. Both issues are obviously related to the characteristics of the host society.

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