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The Integration
Of Islam and Hinduism
In Western Europe

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Preface

This book is the first of two volumes in which the edited version is published of the proceedings of the workshop on *Religion and Emancipation of Ethnic Minorities in Western Europe* held in Leiden from the 12th through the 14th of September, 1990. The organization of the workshop was an initiative taken by the Dutch national research-project on "Religion of Ethnic Groups in The Netherlands", sponsored by the Foundation for Research in Theology and Religious Studies (STEGON), in which scholars and research-assistants from the Free University of Amsterdam, the Catholic University of Nijmegen and Leiden University participate. Its aim was to create a platform for Dutch researchers to communicate directly with their colleagues active in the same field of research from other West-European countries and the United States. The workshop took place within the framework of the conference on *The Social Construction of Minorities and their Cultural Rights in Western Europe*, organized and co-sponsored by the Leiden University Foundation (LUF) to celebrate its first centenary. The editors gratefully acknowledge the support received both from STEGON and LUF in organizing the workshop and publishing the proceedings.

The materials of the workshop have been divided by us into two volumes each dealing with distinct issues. In the present volume the issue of the integration of Islam and Hinduism is dealt with in relation to several countries and from a comparative, West-European perspective. The second volume will be dedicated to *Islam in Dutch society. Current developments and future prospects*. It is to be published in the beginning of 1992.

The present book starts with an introductory article on the *structural barriers* to the integration and emancipation of Muslims in Western Europe.

This is followed by two comparative studies by Waardenburg and Nielsen, on the role of Muslim organizations in Western Europe (Part I). In the second part various aspects of the processes of integration and institutionalization of Islam are discussed with reference to three West-European countries (Sweden, The Netherlands and France, by Sander, the editors and Leveau respectively) and the United States (Haddad). The emergence of various forms of Islamic education in Western Europe, as well as the obstacles hampering its development, are discussed in two studies, in Part III (by Wagtendonk and Elsas). Then follows a separate section with three articles on the position of Hinduism in Western Europe, with two contributions with regard to Great-Britain (by Barot and Tylor), and one dealing with The Netherlands (by Van der Burg). The book concludes with an epilogue by the editors, discussing some future prospects of Integration and Change of Islam and Hinduism in Western Europe. The reader will find a complete bibliography and an index at the very end.

Several authors of contributions to this volume have made valuable suggestions for future research. Obviously, this field of research cannot yet boast of a long tradition of scholarship. This fact may account for some of the lacunas and blind spots still existing. Apart from France, the attention of scholars seems to have focussed mainly on the institutional and organizational aspects of Islam and Hinduism in Western Europe. The religious life of the Muslims and Hindus as a whole, and especially of Muslim and Hindu women, seems, to a certain extent, to have been neglected so far. An ongoing international discussion of research results, also involving eventual changes in research strategies, will therefore be urgently needed. The exchange of experiences between scholars from various European nations with Muslim and Hindu minorities no doubt will improve our understanding of the actual situation of these minorities and may also be helpful in eliminating the manifold obstacles they are still facing in their daily lives.

Leiden, February, 15, 1991

W.A. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld

INTRODUCTION

Structural Obstacles for Muslims in Western Europe

Blaming the system or blaming the victim?

Structural barriers facing Muslims in Western Europe

W.A. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld

Muslim migration to the industrialized West European countries took place mainly during the fifties through the seventies as a result of the economic and demographic policy of those countries. Since the second half of the seventies, however, labour migration to Europe has become almost impossible due to restrictive measures. Nowadays, migration to this part of the world is only possible for refugees or in the context of family reunion. The migration pattern that has led to ethnic concentrations of Muslims in some European countries was caused, on the one hand, by the colonial past of those particular countries and by their bilateral agreements for the recruitment of labour migrants, on the other. The colonial past of England, for example, has caused an over-representation of Muslims from Pakistan, India and East-Africa. France has stimulated migration from its former colonies both for economic and demographic reasons. The inhabitants of some colonies were allowed to settle down in France without any restrictions. For this reason large numbers of West- and North- Africans, especially Algerians, are living in this country. In the same context The Netherlands have a large group of Surinamese and Antilleans. Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Sweden recruited labour migrants from Turkey and Morocco in the sixties and the seventies. England, on the other hand, made use of labour supply from the Commonwealth countries.

As a result of the complex nature of this migration process the nationalities and hence the legal status of Muslims in the various European countries differ considerably. Those having a "colonial background", like the Muslims from the Commonwealth countries in England, the Algerians in France and the Surinamese in The Netherlands usually possess the English, French or Dutch nationality, often in addition to their nationality of origin. The majority of the

remaining Muslim migrants are still merely foreigners, only. In France "One million of the young Beurs have two nationalities, which only complicates their situation without increasing their opportunities. These are Algerian children born in France after 1 January, 1963. They are claimed by Algeria, but also by France, which does not want to lose her nationals".¹

Accurate figures with respect to the number of Muslims in Western Europe are lacking. In several of these countries there exists no general, obligatory registration of the religious affiliation of citizens and a great percentage of the second generation of the migrants was born in the host countries. Roughly estimated figures indicate that there are 360,000 Muslims residing in The Netherlands, 2,800,000 in France, 200,000 in Belgium and 45,000 in Sweden. The estimated number for England varies between 750,000 and 1.5 million. Germany has 1,8 million Muslims, of which 80% originates from Turkey.²

A considerable proportion of Muslims in Western Europe had been recruited as labour migrants for an initial period of one or two years. However, due to the structural shortage of unskilled labour in the host countries in the fifties and sixties, as well as to their legislation concerning foreigners, the stay of these workers became more permanent. The increasing length of the period the individual labourers stayed and the process of family reunion that took place in the seventies are the main indications of the permanent character of their settlement. These facts resulted not only in a growing pressure on the existing infrastructural provisions in these countries, but also made the creation of specific provisions such as mosques and mosque-centered organizations, Islamic schools and Islamic religious education indispensable. The immigrants manifested themselves as Muslims and *de facto* started to constitute an integral part of the social structure of their host countries. This development also had an impact on the view Muslim migrants held with respect to the part Islam played in their lives. To them Islam no longer was, first and foremost, a religion individually practiced, but increasingly became a factor contributing to a distinct social identity as well, and as such the basis of an Islamic community outside the Muslim world.

The permanent settlement of ethnic minorities in Western Europe also stimulated the discussion on the possibilities and desirability for these minorities to integrate in European society, while at the same time retaining the distinctive traits of their original culture, including their religious heritage. In this respect recommendations have been made by scholars, and policies have been formulated by Governments concerning the concept of a multi-cultural society. A multi-cultural society can be defined as a society in which both native and foreign ethnic and religious groups, together with the essential elements of their culture, are accepted as constitutive parts, and in which this view is reflected in the official Government policy, both in theory and practice.

However, in all of the industrialized West European countries ethnic minorities experience a situation of deprivation. Their low socio-economic and cultural position is reflected by a high rate of unemployment, a considerable percentage of school drop outs, and by poor housing conditions and religious provisions. In explaining the deprived situation of these and other groups, social scientists have developed different approaches such as the "achievement-oriented" versus the "transformation-oriented", and the "colour-blind" versus the "colour-conscious" approach. The controversies resulting from these conflicting approaches, have led to the well-known methodological dichotomy of the "blaming-the-victim" versus the "blaming-the-system" perspective. The former explains the socio-economic situation of deprived groups by emphasizing their inability to compete for the scarce goods and services in society because they do not possess the necessary intellectual, economic and psychological capacities. Since rewards are directly proportional to the contribution made to society, these groups perforce remain deprived. In the latter perspective the situation of deprivation is primarily seen as a result of the inequalities existing in the existing power relations between majority and minority, which is thought to be characterized by exploitation, oppression and racial discrimination of minorities, resulting in a vicious circle of deprivation. Because the power relations are out of balance, it is believed that this situation, which is basically of a purely socio-economic nature will be transferred to the ensuing generations, unless fundamental changes are brought about in the dominant system, as well as in the power relations between majority and minority resulting from it.

In our point of view, however, the deprived socio-economic and cultural position of minorities in Western Europe has to be explained by the existence of structural barriers which are caused both by the system and by the groups concerned. We thus opt for an intermediate position between the "blaming-the-system" and "blaming-the-victim" approach.

In this chapter we shall attempt to present an overall analysis of the most important social and legal barriers which are encountered by Muslim minority groups in Western Europe in relation to the observance of their religious duties. Needless to say that other important structural barriers, especially those of a more explicitly socio-economic and political nature, fall outside the scope of this chapter, even though they also play an essential part in the daily life of the groups concerned, as well.

Structural barriers

Structural barriers are defined here as obstacles which are neither accidental nor temporary and which restrain equal participation in the host society, including socio-economic mobility as well as the possibility to observe

essential religious duties. In other words, structural barriers are factors standing in the way of the emancipation of and of equal opportunities for ethnic and religious minorities and therefore contribute to their economic, social and cultural marginalization. These barriers then serve as a plausible explanation of this marginal position of minorities and of the reasons for perpetuating the dependency of them on the majority.

Structural obstacles are inherent to *society*, on the one hand, as well as to the *individuals* and the *groups* concerned, on the other. The former are reflected in interethnic relations and especially in the form of prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination of ethnic or religious minorities. Furthermore, barriers can be found within the institutional and legal sectors of society, in particular in the discriminating practices and guide-lines of certain institutions and organizations. Barriers inherent to the individuals and groups concerned are traditionalism, deficiency in education and language skills and uncertainty with regard to settlement in a host country. At a group level, factors such as intra- and interethnic and religious diversity and discord, and a lack of organizational unity on a national level, can be considered as structural barriers as well. These factors also play a part in the process of marginalization.

Barriers in society

The relation between State and Church

In order to understand the possibilities and obstacles which Muslims encounter in Europe it is of the utmost importance to pay attention to the relation between the political and religious powers in these countries.

In The Netherlands the principle of freedom of religion and the separation of Church and State are enshrined in the Constitution. The State has no jurisdiction to interfere in any way in the internal matters of communities based on religion or on a philosophy of life. The next important constitutional principle of importance to be taken into account is that of equality and non-discrimination which does not apply to individual citizens only, but to various kinds of groups and institutions as well. Also the religious and philosophical communities and their organizations and institutions have, in principle, an equal status in their relationship to the State. Thus, the marked constitutional separation of the political and religious powers is counterbalanced by the constitutional duty of the State to continue treating religious groups on a basis of equality as well as of neutrality, even though they do remain separated. This balance of constitutional principles crystallized in the so-called "pillarization system". This typically Dutch system was founded at the end of the 19th century, mainly as a result of a long ideological, political and social struggle between Catholics and Protestants. This system, among others, grants religious groups the right to establish their own infrastructural provisions, such as

schools, universities and hospitals, using public funds, but not unconditionally. Non-Christian religious communities can also make use of the possibilities offered by this system.

The Belgian Constitution, on the other hand, offers the opportunity to recognize separate forms of religious worship (*erediensten*) and the state is then obliged to finance specific costs needed for the maintenance of their infrastructure, in particular the salary of the ministers of religion. The Belgian Government, like that of The Netherlands, also pays the salary of the ministers of religion contracted to offer pastoral support in state institutions such as the army and prisons. In 1974, Islam was recognized as a religion by the Belgian Government. For various reasons, however, the Royal Decree of 1978 for the formation of a committee for the benefit of the management of the religious community has not yet been effectuated.

In England there is no strict separation between Church and State and there exists no system by which the state can "acknowledge" religious communities. On the contrary, the Church of England is the dominant church and plays a central part in the country. The combination of political and religious powers manifests itself in multiple facets of British society. The Queen is both the Head of State and of the Church of England. Religious education of an outspokenly Christian nature is compulsory in state schools and a minister of religion can celebrate marriages which are legally recognized.³ The same applies more or less to Sweden and Denmark where the Lutheran and the Evangelical Lutheran Churches respectively occupy central positions. In France, in contrast to the countries just mentioned, a strict separation of Church and State is enshrined in the Constitution. This, however, does not apply to three of the departments under German rule from 1871-1918. The state is completely neutral (*laïque*) in religious matters. Just as in the countries previously mentioned freedom of religion is guaranteed by the German Constitution as well. Religious organizations, such as churches and synagogues, are dealt with in German Constitutional Law as Bodies of Public Law (*Körperschaften des öffentlichen Rechtes*). It is only on the basis of that legal capacity that they can deal with the central State as well as with the *Länder* and make use of the privileges granted to them by law. This implies, among others, a representative organizational structure.

However, in spite of the separation of State and Church and the secularized political systems, the Governments of all the countries mentioned contribute financially in one way or another to the maintenance of the infrastructural provisions of the religious communities. The form and the amount of this contribution, as well as the goods and services which may be financed, vary considerably from one country to another and in some cases even vary by county or federal state within the same country. In general, the financial contributions entail the defrayment of pastoral activities, a possible tax-rebate

or exemption, and subsidies within the framework of the conservation of monuments. In order to be able to make use of such financial contributions and tax-facilities it is necessary in Germany to be recognized as a body of public law, in Sweden as a Free Church and in England as a charity organization.⁴

Though all of the West European countries stress the freedom of religion in principle, they stress, at the same time, that this freedom may be limited by law. In fact, the actual space granted to religious freedom varies from country to country. And it is clear that norms and values of a Christian background (e.g. feast-days and days of rest) are in a privileged position, whereas those devired from Islam have to fight themselves in. The definition of religion is also deeply influenced by the history of each country. In Sweden, for example, Muslims cannot refer to the Freedom of Religion Act, in order to observe Islamic rules concerning dress, slaughtering and the like. Such aspects have nothing to do with religion, according to the Swedish concept thereof.⁵ In Holland the situation is completely different.⁶

As far as Islam is concerned, freedom of religion, in practice, is used in Europe more or less in the sense of tolerance towards the believer(s) observing his/their own individual religious duties. This implies, among others, that there is little or no social and legal space for collective ceremonies such as prayers on Friday and the two main annual Festivals. In most European countries the possibilities in principle existing for Muslims to obtain public funds for various aspects of their religious life, have not been realized yet, due to a number of obstacles to be discussed below. Most of these communities and many of their politicians still consider Islam a foreign religion. They are not yet ready to accept the fact that this religion has become embedded in the social, cultural and political life of their countries.

Guidelines and legislations

Structural barriers for Muslims in European countries differ also with respect to the division of responsibilities between the national and local Governments. The most centralized administration is to be found in France, whereas the other countries to various degrees have decentralized systems. It is therefore possible that in some municipalities the wishes of Muslims will be met with while in others to a lesser extent or not at all.

The naturalization laws are the first obstacle that can be mentioned. The status of foreigner forms a barrier to the emancipation of Muslims in Western Europe. It seriously hinders their participation in some parts of society and impedes them in appealing to some provisions. Some countries, such as England, have even begun "to institute classes of citizenship with less than full rights. On the other hand some countries have sought to involve immigrants by extending to them various forms of voting rights".⁷

Political participation and the right to vote for foreigners on a local level exists in The Netherlands and Sweden only, while in Belgium this participation is limited to advisory councils on a local level. Governments of the host countries can also prohibit the formation of political organizations by foreigners if they fear that these organizations will create a disturbance of public life. Neither is it possible for foreigners in these countries to hold public offices or to have jobs with vulnerable bodies of the administration such as the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Defence and the like. In Belgium a law of 1921 prescribes the registration of an organization, such as a mosque, as an ASBL (*Association Sans But Lucratif*) and requires that the majority of the founders should possess the Belgian nationality.⁸ In Germany it is forbidden for foreigners, except for a few exceptions, to even start a business of their own.⁹

Furthermore, beside the differences in legislation with regard to family law between the host countries and the countries of origin, Muslims in Europe have to cope with other barriers which will be discussed below.

Where education is concerned, there are hardly any Islamic schools except in The Netherlands and Denmark. In these countries, 13 and 20 Islamic schools respectively have been founded with public funding. In Belgium only one such school exists, which was established by the Islamic Cultural Centre.¹⁰ There is also no specifically Islamic religious education in public schools in Britain, Sweden, Germany or France. Some of these countries do allow this however if it is given within the framework of supplementary education in the language and culture of origin. However, in The Netherlands and Belgium Islamic religious education at primary public schools has been made possible and is already being provided in a number of municipalities.

Most of the countries have adjusted some of their regulations in order to enable dressing rules at school as they apply to Muslim girls, but at the same time England, France, Belgium and The Netherlands each have recently had their own headscarves-affair.

National and local rules and legislative measures frequently cause difficulties in founding mosques or providing Muslims the opportunities for Islamic burials and their own cemeteries. In this respect, however, it is worth mentioning that the adjustment of some of these guidelines have already been accomplished here and there in each European country. Yet, there is still a need for legally sanctioned guidelines guaranteeing these adjustments and allowing Muslims, for example, to take a day off on their religious holidays. None of these countries offer them the necessary spiritual or pastoral care on a formal basis in state institutions, such as the army and prison. A special committee in The Netherlands has recommended, in this respect, the establishment of a centre of services for Muslims, with four Imams for the

army and prison.¹¹ It is worth mentioning that Sweden is the only country that forbids ritual slaughtering without pre-stunning.

Policy of national and local governments

As has been indicated before, European Governments were forced to adopt a restrictive migration policy for economic and social reasons. This policy has been supported by various political parties and pressure groups in society, including those for foreigners. Furthermore, many negative statements have been made as well as measures proposed concerning the position of foreigners in these countries. In this regard the restrictive immigration laws and measures, and despite the terminology used, the policies of assimilation are the most important ones. The statement of the French Minister of the Interior that Algerians should be considered "as foreign workers and not as immigrants, and that consequently the children born in France should not get French citizenship automatically" is also indicative in this direction.¹² Other measures which have affected the views of the indigenous population on foreigners unfavourably are the remigration and assimilation policies of these countries. These policies and statements reflect a signal of the non-acceptance of foreigners and tend to create problems for them in the encompassing society.

The negative attitude of local authorities to foreigners can be illustrated by their hesitation towards and their refusal to permit the foundation of Islamic schools in The Netherlands and Britain respectively. Though the Constitution in both countries permits the foundation of such schools, local authorities in The Netherlands have formulated many doubts in this respect, while the British local authorities have not allowed them at all so far. It is argued that such schools will inhibit integration of the second generation of immigrants with the result that their possibilities to emancipate in society will be minimalized. The fact that so far 13 Islamic schools in Holland have become operational is due to the constitutional freedom of education. Local authorities had no legal possibilities to stop such schools. Moreover, the refusal of the German authorities to recognize two Turkish Muslim organizations as a 'body of public law' can also be considered a structural obstacle and an indication of the negative attitude of local authorities. This refusal makes it impossible to give specific Islamic religious education at the German schools, other than that which is incorporated in the supplementary lessons on the children's own language and culture.¹³

This negative attitude of local authorities in Western Europe is not merely a consequence of the existing prejudices and stereotypes regarding Islam. The attitude of some political parties and civil servants towards religion in general also plays a vital part. The integration of Islam within the regulations and legal structures of European countries largely depends on the general attitude of

these secular civil servants. Their secular attitude, however, is hardly a hindrance to the infrastructural provisions for Christian groups, because the rights and privileges of the churches have been fixed in the course of a long historical process resulting in various kinds of direct and indirect financial assistance from the Government. These agreements and responsibilities are the result of a long historical process and are enshrined in the Constitutions of most of the countries mentioned.

Another factor of importance in explaining the negative attitude of officials towards Islam is their lack of knowledge of this religion, in general, and of the structure of Muslim communities in their host countries, in particular. This lack of knowledge stands in the way of an adequate reaction to the wishes of and the developments within Muslim communities. In this respect we should mention the decision of Dutch local authorities to accommodate a club for homosexuals in the same building where a mosque had been accommodated, as well as their reaction to the wish of Muslim girls to wear Islamic dress at schools.¹⁴

Prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination

Direct and indirect discrimination may be the major obstacles impeding the emancipation of ethnic minorities despite the fact that the constitutions of all of the European countries include laws against racial discrimination. Although techniques are lacking which measure to what extent institutional and direct discrimination are detrimental to religious minorities, the influence of such discrimination is obvious. The nature, origin and interrelations between prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination have been approached from various perspectives and numerous theories have been formulated.¹⁵ In this context it is more important to pay attention to the question why discrimination against ethnic minorities, in general, and against Muslims in Europe, in particular, has increased rapidly in the last decennia. This process is evidenced by protests against the foundation of mosques, Islamic schools and the rise of fascist groups and parties. The answer to this question has to be sought in a combination of a number of factors.

First of all, there is the drawback in the economies of Western countries. Even if there is enough to share with 'outsiders', latent discrimination still exists. It becomes more manifest, however, when in various sectors of society scarcity emerges. Ethnically different citizens are then considered unlawful competitors.

A second factor, in this respect, is the ever increasing visibility of Muslims and their infrastructure in the encompassing society due, among others, to the emphasis they put on maintenance of their social and cultural identity. It is beyond any doubt that feelings of superiority of Western norms and values are

in conflict with this goal expressed by Muslim groups and generates anti-foreigner feelings, not only in those economically threatened but also in other groups in society. Research in Germany at the beginning of the eighties pointed out that 50% of the Germans have anti-foreigner feelings. This group consists mainly of retired persons, housewives and poorly educated people.¹⁶ The increase of anti-Islamic pamphlets and the defacing and destruction of mosques as a reaction to the so-called Rushdie affair in The Netherlands and during the Gulf War in Britain are also obvious examples pointing in this direction. The cry for a mono-cultural society was heard more loudly, without any resistance worth mentioning. Islam and Muslims were considered a danger and a threat for Western principles and democracies.¹⁷ With respect to Belgium it should be mentioned that the fear of Muslims is caused by the fact that "public opinion obviously does not make a fine distinction between that which derives from the cultural and religious traditionalism of the population of Muslim origin, and that which derives more explicitly from a religious radicalism with political overtones that could be classified as 'fundamentalism', or better as 'Islamism'".¹⁸ However, it is not primarily the fear of fundamentalism that causes the negative feelings against Muslims in Western Europe. It is above all the clash between the feelings of superiority of the Western cultures held by the indigenous population and the signal that originates from the desire of Muslims to retain their identity which creates negative feelings and discriminatory practices. Common people by referring to militant and violent activities of Muslim fundamentalist groups try to rationalize their negative feelings, which have thus become manifest. By referring to the worldwide acts of violence caused by Muslim fundamentalists, the manifestation of negative feelings becomes socially acceptable. Where Sweden is concerned, the present anti-Islam reactions are sought in the history of Swedish society. Up to a few decades ago, this country was ethnically and culturally, as well as religiously, a homogeneous society that tried to protect itself from foreign influences. Despite their modern secular image Swedes still view Christianity as being central to their national identity.¹⁹

The negative image of Islam in European countries is partly caused and maintained by education at schools. Research on the image of Islam in school-books in Germany has pointed out that the views expressed are inadequate and ethnocentric. "There are some major types of unsatisfactory and defective statements, omissions of basic and essential historical facts and above all misleading interpretations and opinions".²⁰

Research in The Netherlands and England also indicates that school-books present an unfavourable view of the Third World, in general, and of Islam and Muslims, in particular. The information given is often partial, irrelevant, ethnocentric and stereotyped. The same is true of France. The image of Islam presented in France is often caricatural and creates an obstacle to

understanding and dialogue. Islam is considered as a new religion "with a God: Allah who would be just as much a stranger to the Jewish-Christian tradition as the Roman Jupiter..."²¹

Racist groups and parties

A clear indication of the increase in the informal discrimination of foreigners in European countries is the electoral success of the ultra-right groups and parties in the past few years. These parties have elected representatives not only to the national parliaments but also to the European Parliament. Furthermore, violence against foreigners and their infrastructure is becoming a frequent phenomenon in most of the European countries. For a general view on these groups and parties and their history we refer to the existing literature.²² These groups advocate a propaganda of hatred against foreigners. In this context they use the ancient policy of the scape-goat in which minorities are held responsible for the problematic economic situation in Western Europe. Nowadays, the slogan 'our country is ours alone' is heard in all of the European countries. One of the ultra-right groups in The Netherlands has in its propaganda created a view of Islam as a system of norms and values that is hostile to and totally inconsistent with the Dutch tradition.²³

In the long run, and if appropriate measures against the ideas and practices of such groups are not taken, discrimination of Muslims will no longer be a taboo, a situation which will result in a further increase in discrimination. Moreover, the institutionally and structurally adverse effects on minorities, in general, will then increase considerably, especially if other political parties should tolerate these groups or use some of their ideas for electoral reasons.

Barriers inherent to the groups concerned

Barriers which impede the emancipation of Muslim groups and maintain their marginal position in European countries are not only imposed on them by host societies but are also caused by the individuals and groups concerned. Some authors consider the wish of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture in host societies to be a structural barrier to the socio-economic emancipation of these groups. In this connection reference is made to Muslim parents who do not allow their daughters to acquire a higher education because the educational structure in Europe is not in accordance with Islamic guide-lines. It is questionable whether Islam and Islamic rules can be held responsible for the attitude of these parents. Other factors such as traditionalism, social environment, socio-economic motives and an interest in education in general, and in particular for girls, are more important in explaining this attitude. These factors indeed form an obstacle to social mobility. However, preserving their

own culture, as such, can also be a barrier to the socio-economic mobility of individuals, if the society they live in is intolerant. In this context it is rather a system-bound barrier. The solution should then not be sought in rejecting the group's culture but in taking effective measures to reduce intolerance in society. Intolerance, actually, is an 'ongoing' process, which means that an intolerant society will always find a negative characteristic to justify its intolerance. Referring to the preservation of culture as an obstacle to the emancipation of ethnic and religious minorities, therefore, fits in with the ideology of the perspective of 'blaming the victim' while the 'blaming the system' approach is more appropriate in this context.

In the following paragraphs attention will be paid to a number of structural barriers which are inherent to the groups concerned and which impede their emancipation in Western Europe. Such barriers are, first of all, their ethnic and religious diversity and, secondly, the lack of adequate representative organizations.

Ethnic and religious diversity

Beside the enormous ethnic diversity, we find among Muslims in Europe a religious diversity which is similar to that in the countries of origin. Apart from the major, Sunnite and Shi'ite, streams we find adherents of 'sects', such as the Ahmadis and the Alevis, whose beliefs are rejected by those of the major streams. Moreover, among Muslims in Europe a distinction can be made between mystical orders (*tariqa's*) and religio-political movements. The former are represented by orders such as the Qadiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Darqawiyya, Alawiyya and the Chistiyya. The religious-political movements, on the other hand, emerged before and during the decolonization process of some Muslim countries and aimed at reintroducing Islam as a foundation for the state. Some of them originate from the reformistic movement that was introduced in Egypt under the influence of scholars such as Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. One of these movements is the so-called *Salafiyyah*, whose goal is to modernize Islam by renewed research into its classical sources, viz. Quran and Tradition, and which still plays a prominent role in the official policy of the Moroccan state. Both the modernistic and conservative offshoots of this reformistic movement play an important role among Muslims from North Africa and the Arab world in general, living in Western Europe. Other religious-political movements are the Nurci's, Sulaymancis and the Milli Görüs from Turkey. These movements have been forced into opposition as a result of the secular state introduced by Atatürk and they are represented in most of the West European countries, with head quarters in Germany. The Deobandi and Barelwi movements as well as the *Jamaat-i-Islami* from South

Asia, are the most important ones among Muslims from India and Pakistan in England and elsewhere.²⁴

The ethnic and religious diversity and rivalry leads to a disruption of the initiatives aiming at the realization of the infrastructural provisions needed by Muslims. In each West European city there are numerous mosques and mosque-associations which were founded on private initiatives, in some cases with the help of international Muslim organizations or of the Governments of the countries of origin. It is not only the theological differences that play a fundamental part in this diversity of mosques and organizations. Political as well as regional differences are also of great importance. The development of organizations is influenced significantly by the regulations for subsidies and specific legislation in the individual countries.²⁵ Estimates indicate that there are 300 mosques and prayer-halls in The Netherlands, 130 in Belgium, 600 in England, 912 in France and 800 in Germany²⁶ Each mosque is based on and administered by a local organization. The local organizations are mostly clustered on a national level in so-called master-organizations based on ethnical origins, theological streams or political affiliations or a combination of these. In the course of time many initiatives have been taken in the various countries to cluster these diverse organizations into one central representative body for Muslims. For France it is stated that "In recent years, Muslims have struggled for the creation of a central representative body of all the Muslims in France [.....] Up to now, however, this enterprise has not been successful, the Muslims being separated in several rival tendencies".²⁷

In The Netherlands such a central organization, the National Islamic Committee, which combines 90% of all Muslim organizations, has been founded as a result of the developments around the so-called Rushdie affair. The Dutch Government has not recognized it as such. However, this Committee has been dissolved recently in order to pave the way for a *National Islamic Council*.²⁸

Belgium is in a slightly different situation because of the existence of the 'Islamic Cultural Centre of Belgium', which maintain ties with the Muslim World League and is mainly financed by Saudi Arabia. The Belgian Government granted this centre a monopoly position as the organization representing all the Muslims in Belgium, when Islam was recognized in 1974. Because of "the existing rivalries concerning the exercise of religious leadership within the Muslim community", this recognition has resulted in the foundation of other central bodies, and the same pattern of a plurality of central bodies is to be observed in England, Germany and France.²⁹

Activities of the Muslim organizations

The majority of the Muslim organizations is mainly of a religious and socio-cultural nature. Their activities primarily aim at creating a more or less stable religious and social infrastructure for Muslims, and in that respect at adjusting the national legislation in host societies in order to allow Muslims to comply with Islamic requirements. In the majority of these countries this has been achieved to a certain extent, insofar as ritual slaughtering, mosque-schools, religious education and the like are concerned. Even though these organizations undeniably provide necessary activities, their diversity and one-sided orientation limit their prospects in achieving socio-economic and religious emancipation within the various societies.³⁰ The ethnical and religious diversity of these organizations, as well as their being focussed on their countries of origin, not only weaken their position in relation to their host Governments but also impede these particular Governments in applying one and the same policy with regard to Islam. The negative impact of this ethnic and religious diversity is most evident in Belgium. The law by which Islam was recognized has not yet been effectuated due to the lack of consensus among the different Muslim communities in this country. "The diverse national origin of the Islamic immigration to Belgium, as well as the contemporary ferment throughout the Islamic world and the struggle for power in various Muslim states, may be seen to have repercussions in Belgium principally in the form of tendencies which deny sufficient legitimacy to those Muslim leaders with whom the Belgian Government has had its dealings. Together, these difficulties seem to have brought about a paralysis of the legal process".³¹ In other European countries the situation is just about the same, which, to a large extent, explains the fact that the Governments of the countries of origin still extant their influence on Muslim communities and their welfare in Western Europe.

Only through unified initiatives and the formation of their own politically conscious organizations extending across the ethnic boundaries will Islamic communities be able to succeed in improving their socio-economic and religious positions in the host communities. In practice we see, however, that initiatives to unify organizations with different goals, of a political, cultural and religious nature, under one and the same master organization do not succeed. The foundation of the Turkish Community in Berlin, may be mentioned as an example. "Internal disputes at the beginning of 1986, however, led to the withdrawal of the Islamic Centres and the Islamic Federation from the Turkish Community. As a national organization, the Turkish Community has taken a laicistic and pluralistic stand on religious issues".³²

The lack of qualified potential and financial means

Another barrier is found in the lack of financial means and qualified potential for the creation of an appropriate infrastructure. Because Islam in Europe is a relatively new phenomenon and Muslim communities consist mostly of members of a low socio-economic status, there still remains an enormous need for money to set up a complete infrastructure and to catch up with the Christian religious provisions which have existed for centuries. Some larger Muslim religious organizations receive financial support from the countries of origin as well as from other Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Libya. However, this financial aid is meant mainly for the establishment of new mosques. The salaries of the imams and costs of other needs have to be paid from the contributions of the individual members, which is minimal. It is only the Turkish Government which sometimes pays for the imams. In some cases, such as in Sweden, Muslim religious organizations receive financial aid from the host Government. In The Netherlands such organizations on a local level obtain a small subsidy from the authorities for their socio-cultural activities.

Furthermore, the Muslim communities, especially in The Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden lack qualified leadership for the administration and management of their organizations. The majority of the contracted imams, with the exception of those who are sent by the governments of the countries of origin, have a modest religious education. The same is true of the imams working as volunteers. In Belgium 18 of the 23 Moroccan imams have only the Quran-school. Furthermore, the rector of the 'Big' mosque for Algerians in Paris, who has been sent by the Algerian authorities, does not speak French.³³ Because of these shortcomings the imams are mainly confined to performing their 'internal' functions and are incapable of establishing intercultural and interreligious contacts. Another shortcoming is the fact that the management committees of these organizations consist mostly of volunteers who have neither the time nor the capacity to formulate a broader policy and to keep up functional contacts with the society they live in. The maximal use of the possibilities offered by the legislation of a host society is moreover impeded due to ignorance of their existence. The lack of qualified leadership forms also a structural barrier to the flexibility in theological thinking and knowledge of the various interpretations and possibilities that to be found in Islam itself.

The 'temporary' character of settlement

Another structural barrier is the type of migrant one is dealing with. As has been previously stated, Muslim religious groups display an enormous variety in their legal positions and, as a consequence, also in their orientations towards and future prospects within their host communities. Labour migrants, in particular, are more oriented towards their countries of origin and usually

consider their stay as being temporary, whereas the actual situation indicates a permanent settlement. Because of this attitude they shrink from considering the host society their own and from associating with political and other organizations. Consequently, their participation in the decision-making process, which is necessary for their socio-economic and religious emancipation, is often lacking. This idea of temporary settlement also constitutes a major impediment to taking long term initiatives regarding the creation of their own religious infrastructure; for their willingness to apply for citizenship and for reducing the aforementioned influence of their Governments.

To illustrate the impact of this barrier we may refer to the comparison between Algerians, on the one hand, and Tunisians and Moroccans in France, on the other hand. Where the latter are concerned we are dealing "with a more recent immigration, less integrated into the French system and more marked in various ways by the culture and society of the country of origin. The Tunisians seem, to a larger extent, to have been single migrants, to have a strong belief in the return to their country and to share, at the same time, a certain secular view of society which makes the French model more acceptable".³⁴ The same is also true of the Turks in Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands and Sweden. For the next generations of these migrants in Europe, a secularization process may be expected. This will not automatically imply that the value of Islam will vanish for them. On the contrary, it can be argued that despite the existing differences in the perception of Islam, their Islamic background will increasingly become a common-identity symbol to these migrants, differentiating them from the hostile society surrounding them. In other words, Islam will come to the foreground, not as an entity of religious rituals and behavioral rules, but as a symbol of a separate identity.

Influence of the countries of origin

The countries of origin, in particular Morocco and Turkey, are trying to retain their grip on their citizens in host countries. The influence is directly maintained through the 'Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs' and 'The Cultural Mission of the Moroccan Embassy'. The former also has an attache for religious and social affairs at the Turkish Embassies in some countries. Their activities mainly entail the appointment of teachers for religious education and supplementary education in the language and culture of origin, support in founding mosques and the appointment of imams. Both countries have tried to retain their influence and grip on their citizens abroad, also through other organizations such as the Moroccan 'Amicales' and the Turkish 'Grey Wolves'. Because both Turkish and Moroccan law prohibit the

formation abroad of political parties or branches of those in existence, cultural or religious associations are founded as a substitute.³⁵

The Turkish Government therefore creates or promotes specific cultural and religious associations abroad in order to reduce the influence of these oppositional movements. The Turkish Islamic Foundation in The Netherlands (ISN) and The Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation (STICF) are the kind of organizations which advocate Islam as furthered by the Turkish Government. Their main activities are focussed on the emancipation of the Turkish community in the receiving countries with emphasis on the Islamic-cultural identity. These goals are reached through activities such as the foundation of mosques, the appointment of imams and teachers for Islamic religious education and the foundation of the so-called Islamic schools in The Netherlands.

The groups abroad are moreover influenced directly and indirectly by international Muslim organizations, such as the Muslim World League, as well as by religious and political developments in their countries of origin. The re-islamization process as a resistance ideology, spreading among Muslim intellectuals in the countries of origin as well as abroad, leads to greater interference from the governments of these countries. To a certain extent, the re-islamization process is responsible for both conflicts and heterogeneity among the religious organizations abroad.

The direct influence of the Governments of the countries of origin can also be illustrated by the interference of the King of Morocco who requested the Moroccan community not to participate in the municipal elections in The Netherlands in 1986.

Conclusion

In the previous paragraphs an attempt has been made to systematize structural barriers at various levels and to elaborate their impact on the deprived position, of Muslim groups in Western societies, as far as religion is concerned. It is, however, far from easy to draw general conclusions regarding these structural barriers and their impact on the emancipation of Muslims in Europe. Muslim communities meet with different situations in these countries, some of which are the result of long historical processes. They have to fight their way into various legal frameworks and to deal with all kinds of guide-lines and legislation. Therefore, they cannot make use of the experiences of similar Islamic groups in other countries and sometimes not even of experiences in the same country. The major differences between the individual host countries concern the following:

1. The relation between the political and religious powers or between Church and State. The responsibilities the governments have towards religious communities and their infrastructure show considerable diversity.
2. The extent of decentralization of the political power. There are differences in the relations between national, local or federal governments and in the distribution of administrative and political responsibilities.
3. The legal status of migrants in the host countries and the opportunities granted by legislation to foreigners also show considerable differences where the various countries are concerned.

The comparative approach presented in this chapter clearly indicates that in order to stimulate the emancipation process of minority religions in Western Europe, first of all activities will have to be undertaken to eliminate the influence of barriers existing in the system or in society at large. We see that in countries where system-bound barriers are less prominent the process of emancipation is in progress more than in other countries where similar or comparable group-bound barriers exist. This justifies the conclusion that the society-bound structural barriers form the main impediment to the emancipation of minority religions in these host communities.

We agree with the statement that "It is only in considering Islam as one of the permanent constituents of the social, religious and political system of Europe that it will be possible to escape from the ambiguities characterizing the present situation of immigrants".³⁶ But whether the inevitable outcome, namely violence "which has already occurred in some reactions and practices of a socially marginal nature- violence on the part of the immigrants as well as the dominating society"³⁷ can be avoided is doubtful because of the other above-mentioned barriers. The elimination of these society-bound barriers is in our point of view a necessary but not a sufficient condition to effectuate the emancipation of these groups and to realize a multicultural society or a variant of it.

In order to achieve the emancipation of ethnic minorities host countries will have to adopt specific policies to fight prejudice and discrimination and to adjust legislation, while Muslim communities will have to strive for oecumenical processes of unification of their initiatives.

On the other hand, the impact of the other, group-bound, barriers will, we believe, decrease considerably in the next two or three decades to come. Ongoing naturalization will decrease the influence of the countries of origin and these groups will be increasingly oriented towards their new fatherlands. A comparison between the educational level of the first and second generation of Muslim migrants also justifies the conclusion that in the long run they will acquire a significantly qualified potential. Moreover, many initiatives have been taken to change the system-bound barriers, and a number of these changes have actually been realized in different countries. From past and

present situation we can learn that the emancipation of the various Catholic and Protestant groups in Europe was guaranteed best by constitutional measures.

Notes

- ¹See Krieger-Krynicky: 1988,124.
- ²See Gerholm and Lithman (eds.): 1988; Van Esch and Roovers: 1987; Nielsen: RP35,1987; Anwar: 1984,3.
- ³See Joly: 1988,32.
- ⁴For an extensive elaboration of the relation between State and Church in Europe see Hirsch Ballin: 1988.
- ⁵See Sander in this volume.
- ⁶See Shadid en Van Koningsveld in this volume.
- ⁷Nielsen: 1987: 22.
- ⁸See Dassetto and Bastenier: 1985, 68-69.
- ⁹See Anwar: 1984: 17ff.
- ¹⁰See also Nielsen and Wagtendonk in this volume.
- ¹¹See Hirsch Ballin: 1988.
- ¹²See Krieger-Krynicky: 1988:124.
- ¹³See Shadid and van Koningsveld: 1989; Nielsen: 1984:14; Thomä-Venske: 1988:81ff; see also the contribution of Shadid and van Koningsveld and that of Wagtendonk in this volume.
- ¹⁴See Shadid and van Koningsveld: 1985, 1986 and elsewhere in this volume.
- ¹⁵See Elich and Maso: 1984, Essed: 1989.
- ¹⁶See Kreiser: 1985,14.
- ¹⁷See Van Koningsveld and Shadid: 1989,12.
- ¹⁸See Bastenier: 1988,141.
- ¹⁹See Sander in this volume.
- ²⁰Tworuschka: 1986:16.
- ²¹Garaudy: 1984:27; see also Van Dijk: 1986; Klein: 1985; Van den Berg en Reinsch: 1983; Reinsch: 1987.
- ²²See Anne Frank Stichting: 1985,1988.
- ²³See Van Koningsveld and Shadid: 1989,134.
- ²⁴See Shadid and Van Koningsveld: 1990,23.
- ²⁵For further motivations of the development of such organizations see Nielsen in this volume.
- ²⁶See Kepel: 1987,228; Joly: 1988,37; Bastenier: 1988,136; Anwar: 1984,19ff; Krieger-Krynicky: 1988,128.
- ²⁷Nielsen, *Research papers*, no. 35,1987,29.
- ²⁸See Shadid and Van Koningsveld elsewhere in this volume.
- ²⁹Bastenier: 1988,139ff; Van Esch and Roovers: 1987,50; Nielsen: 1984,12; Thomä-Venske: 1988,82. See also Sander, Nielsen and Waardenburg in this volume. For a list of Muslim organizations in West Europe see Gerholm and Lithman, 1988. For the Muslim organizations in The Netherlands see Shadid en Van Koningsveld 1990 and their chapter on Holland in this volume.
- ³⁰See also Waardenburg in this volume.
- ³¹Dassetto and Bastenier: 1985,8.
- ³²Thomä-Venske: 1988,82.

³³See Dassetto and Bastenier: 1985, 104; Kepel: 1987, 313ff; see also Sander in this volume.

³⁴See Leveau: 1988, 110.

³⁵See also Dassetto and Bastenier: 1985, 17ff; Van Esch and Roovers: 1987, 79.

³⁶See Leveau: 1988, 121.

³⁷*Ibidem.*

PART I

Muslim Organizations

Muslim Associations and Official Bodies in some European Countries

J.D.J. Waardenburg

Introduction

The Muslim presence in Holland has left some interesting traces. In Rembrandt's impressive painting of "The Turk" the rich attire and dignity suggest a wealthy merchant visiting his trading partners in Amsterdam and perhaps representing some imperial interests of the Sublime Porte in the mid-seventeenth century Lower Countries.¹ Somewhat earlier a diplomatic mission arrived in the Hague to consult with the States General of the Dutch republic, not only about political but also commercial affairs.² In our century, between the two World Wars Muslim students from Java came to Holland for their studies. And after the second World War Muslim Moluccans who had fought on the side of the Dutch colonial army settled in Holland, more and more diplomats from Muslim countries were accredited in the Hague, traders from Muslim countries settled down and students from Asian and African countries enrolled at the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague and in Dutch universities. The sixties saw the start of the great migration of Turkish, Moroccan and other workers, hired through the intermediary of Dutch consulates, often followed by their families in the seventies. During the same years a great number of Surinamese of different backgrounds, including Muslims of Indian-Pakistani background, settled in Holland before Surinam achieved complete independence.³

The purpose of this paper, however, is not to trace the various waves of Muslim visitors and immigrants Holland has received in the course of time but to show the relative open character of the country and to discuss the increasing role of the state in the growing migration of people from Muslim, and other Third World countries, to Holland. The same phenomenon seems to be perceptible in other European countries. When looking into the

historical contacts between European countries and Muslims I was struck by the role played not only by the churches, when it came to religious issues, but also by kings, political leaders and subsequently the states. Prussia enrolled Tatars in the army;⁴ Austria like some German states had Turkish immigrants, taken prisoner in wars against the Ottoman empire, or Muslim subjects as a result of the annexation of Ottoman territory. France opened a mosque in Paris as a sign of gratitude to the Muslim combatants in the French lines in the first World War;⁵ during the second World War Churchill likewise signed the decree by which Great Britain granted the land for a mosque in London in recognition for what Muslims had done for the Empire during both World Wars.⁶ And the movement of Algerian workers to France, which started already before the first World War, happened under French official auspices, dictated more and more by the need for male manpower for reconstruction work after the two wars, just as during the wars it had been needed for the opposite purpose.⁷ The role of the European states in organizing the conditions of life for Muslim immigrants here has not been much less than the role they played in organizing life in the colonies some decades earlier. Of course this has also to do with the growing interference of the state in all areas of life in Europe.

This paper is concerned only with *Muslim* minorities, but I think that other cultural and religious minority groups in Europe receive about the same treatment from the state as the Muslim ones, precisely because the European states are hardly concerned in their minority policies with specifically cultural identities and religious denominations. Much of what is said about Muslim associations is equally valid for, for instance, other non-western cultural and religious associations, and to some extent also for Jewish ones.

Neither the norms and values of non-western minority groups in the West nor the concentrations of power in the West which we call "states" are realities which should be made light of. The *state*, as the body which governs a society in order that life in that society may go well, implies not only that it has to be concerned with the general welfare and justice, but also that it is equipped with force to impose sanctions on decisions taken. The state, then, is a coercive institution even if not all people, for instance the majority represented by the state, experience it as such. At certain moments all residents of a country become aware of the state's coercive power: economic policies which entail taxes in budget restrictions, military service and the course of justice, and very often a particular framework of thinking, an underlying ideology, not to speak of the petty coercion exercised by individual politicians or civil servants. Again, these powers are not normally felt by everyone but only by those most sensitive to them, for instance minorities possessing a foreign nationality and culture or adhering to a

different religion, whose survival as minorities with their own identity is largely dependent on appropriate measures taken by the state where they live.

It is true that the state in western countries, in principle, is controlled by a parliament and that political parties, constituting parliament after due elections, have access to the state and can determine, again in principle, policies to be implemented. It is also true that organizations representing sectional interests, including trade unions and associations of religious and other minorities, can convey their particular concerns to the state which, in turn, in principle has to take them into account in so far as they touch the general interest of society. Notwithstanding these democratic constraints on its development, on the whole the state has increased considerably in power over the last fifty years or so. There are nuances, of course: certain states (like France) are more centralized than others (like the United Kingdom), certain states (like Germany) have a more hierarchical structure whereas others (like The Netherlands) rather function by participation.

If it is not an easy thing even for educated citizens to know and understand what is taking place in their own state, to the immigrant groups with which we are concerned here (generally poorly educated, of different culture and religion, and of very different political traditions) European states must be wholly opaque, more or less symbolized by the Prime Minister or certain cabinet ministers they know the names of. Hence they depend greatly on oral information and advice given by benevolent citizens of the country concerned.

We cannot enter here into questions about particular organizations set up to defend particular Muslim interests. How are such organizations constituted, is their leadership elected or appointed and what are their aims and purposes? Are there structures and procedures in place which enable relations between the state and these minority interest organizations to be articulated, and who created such structures and procedures? To what extent are these interest organizations ultimately subject to state control through a system of state subsidies, because of lack of funds, qualified leadership, etc?

Need of research

Looking at the literature published,⁸ one is struck by a certain paucity of fundamental studies dealing with relationship between Muslim organizations and the European states in which they are established. There are, of course, evaluations and policy reports about various measures taken or planned by particular states with regard to certain migrant problems. But as far as I know, most of these reports take the state, its structure and

ideology, as it is for granted and there is a certain lack of critical studies with regard to the states themselves. Research needs to be done on particular states and their relations to the Muslim organizations established there; we also need comparative studies analyzing and comparing these relations in different countries. There is a certain urgency for such studies, given the fact that the European scene will rapidly change in the years to come and that certain state structures will determine the overall structure of the European community.

In view of the research needed, this paper cannot but be of an exploratory nature, drawing attention to our relative ignorance about the relations between Islamic institutions and European states. But we can perhaps open up a perspective for future research. Not only are the problems with which Muslim immigrants find themselves confronted in Europe largely identical, or becoming more and more similar, but also the problems of immigration and immigrant policies with which European states find themselves confronted are largely the same. Are pragmatic state policies then identical and do divergences on particular points simply arise from differences in the organization of the state, different histories, or different visions of the future? Are differences, for instance, between British, French and German policies towards migrants due to differences in concepts and practices of public authority, the degree of separation between state and churches, the experience of colonial empires, the way of attracting cheap labour from abroad when needed? Or do such differences depend rather on the political priorities of the governments led by Mrs Thatcher, Monsieur Rocard or Herr Kohl?

Such questions are less academic than they seem to be, or used to be even ten years ago. It is precisely in the course of the last decade that the Turkish, Moroccan and Algerian governments have been developing their own policies towards their nationals living in Europe, in whatever country they may be domiciled. And it is in the course of this decade that networks between Muslim associations in Muslim and in European countries have been strengthened. The questions under consideration will become still more relevant during the next decade when European policies become more coordinated, if not integrated, on areas including immigration from outside Europe, the status of non-European residents, their rights and duties, and even perhaps Islamic social and religious institutions in Europe. We shall come back to this perspective at the end of this paper.

By *Muslim associations* I mean here largely but not only associations (or foundations, as the case may be) along the western model, with membership lists and regular contributions, but also looser types of social grouping, in which the Muslim world is so rich, so far they identify themselves as "Islamic" or "Muslim". And by *official bodies* I mean not only government

departments and agencies on the national or local level, but also those subsidized bodies bound to express existing official policies and consequently not really critical, of the state.

Migrant experiences of Muslim states

The first generation of Muslim settlers in Europe and subsequent generations who keep in touch with their country of origin will have their own ideas about relations between religion and state.

First of all, in all countries with a large Muslim majority it is inconceivable that the state would act expressly against Islam; in certain cases, however, such as Turkey, the state, supported by a number of religious scholars may put forward its own interpretation of Islam. Moreover, *de iure* there is no independent religious institution like a church in Islam, so that most Muslims have great difficulty in understanding what can be meant by a separation between their own state and religion (Islam), or by the statement that a church is not a political body. In general, they attribute the separation of state and religion in Europe, in so far as they see it, to the nature of Christianity. Most immigrants, moreover, only have a very limited knowledge of their religion and will be prepared to accept, in addition to the fundamental rites and doctrines, whatever religious leaders who present themselves in Europe tell them is Islamic, and whatever they say about the relation between religion and state according to Islam.

The experience of the state, too, is different from that in Europe. For centuries the state in Muslim countries has been very far from the people, at least outside the cities. Its existence made itself felt mainly in taxation and possibly war; later also in military service, compulsory school attendance and often the presence of an official political party not to contradicted in public. This psychological distance to the state has been diminished by elections and by the media, especially radio and television. But the state probably evokes a psychological reflex which will take time to disappear in Europe; according to this the state is perceived as a power permitted by God and necessary for public order but essentially to be feared, since its authority, whatever the laws, is tainted by a certain arbitrariness linked to persons. It is through personal channels, through influential friends, that the citizen may obtain access to the state authority and obtain some advantages for his personal or group interests; the higher the connections, the more chance that life will become bearable.

There is a general pattern of experience of the state in Muslim countries, deeply rooted in history, which is different from the experience of the state in Europe at the present time. The relationship between religion and state varies significantly however, in the different countries of origin. *Turkey*,⁹ on the

one hand, is officially a secular state with a secularist ideology where religion and state have been separated since Mustafa Kemal's establishment of the Republic. Until the end of the second World War Islam was recognized only as a strictly private religion and could not manifest itself in public life; during those years and afterwards a tough nationalism was hammered home. At present there is a Presidium for Religious Affairs which organizes, administers and controls official Islam and its representatives; Turks are supposed to be Muslims as part of their national identity. Not only the salaries of religious officials and teachers of religion at school but also mosques and their upkeep are now largely paid from public funds.

In *Morocco*,¹⁰ on the other hand, a separation between religion and state is *de facto* unknown. Rather a kind of mystique has been created and upheld about their unity in the office and person of the king who is both head of state and protector of religion, and who assumes absolute power. When addressing his subjects in Morocco and abroad, the king may appeal to the religious, national and personal loyalties of his subjects and the state demands that he will be obeyed. In this sense Moroccans are supposed to be Muslims as part of their national identity.

Algeria,¹¹ the third Muslim country from which many immigrant workers have arrived in particular in France, set out on a course of separation between state and religion in the years after independence (1962). The state became heavily centralized and made great efforts to achieve national reconstruction along a socialist model. But in the course of time the need to strengthen the links with Islam made itself felt and Islam was stressed ideologically and religiously, as well as being affirmed in activist movements among the people. And *Pakistan*,¹² which has a great number of citizens in the United Kingdom, was for ten years subjected to the official "Islamisation" programs of Zia ul-Haqq and the military.

In all these countries of origin, notwithstanding important differences in the distance between state and religion, the state can never disavow Islam, and Muslim groups can appeal to the state in a thousand and other ways to bring about changes in society in accord with Islam. Both the democratic experience and the experience of religious plurality in these countries are poor and migrants have to learn them in Europe.

Areas of encounter between Muslim migrants and European states

Where do Muslim migrants and potential immigrants, whatever their cultural or religious background, encounter state authority in Europe? I would just like to note three areas where state authority makes itself felt:

- 1) The procedure of obtaining an *entry visa*, passing the immigration authorities and obtaining a residence permit, including the conditions which

must be complied with to have family members join the immigrant. Or conversely: avoiding the loss of the residence permit. Different countries have different immigration laws, but if I assess the overall situation correctly, since the seventies Europe has been tending to become a territory where no one can settle down of his or her free will or just on a friendly invitation.

2) The procedure of obtaining the necessary *work permit* in a time of great unemployment precisely for unskilled workers. Without a promise of work no permit will be given, and there is no guarantee that unemployment and social security laws, with the right to provisions from social legislation will be applied in all cases of unemployed immigrants. As the statistics show, immigrants are the first victims of unemployment.

3) In the absence of participation in political power immigrants cannot *defend their interests* directly in the political domain and can easily feel, and be, terrorized by indigenous groups hostile to foreigners. The feeling of insecurity, paralyzing as it is, will also extend to the state: no one can foretell what parliament will decide in five or ten years' time. In several countries there exists a system of consultation on the local or national level, but often the parties to the discourse are not on an equal footing and only one of them can take decisions. Experiences of discrimination or simply of the misinformation all too common on the media tend to enhance the immigrants' defenselessness in society and with respect to the state.

I would like to mention three areas of encounter between Muslim immigrants and European states where *Islam* is in question.

4) The establishment of *religious institutions* like mosques and corresponding religious associations. Only Belgium and Austria have the legal possibility of declaring Islam a "recognized" religion, but everywhere establishing and maintaining prayer-halls, not to speak of mosques, is a risky affair (mosques have been demolished or burnt down). Religious associations, moreover, run the risk of being taken over by small groups who want to use them for political purposes.

5) The spectrum of *subsidies* available from public funds varies from country to country. Subsidies can often be obtained locally or nationally for certain social and educational activities. In many cases, however, Muslim associations applying for them have greater difficulty than others in obtaining them, sometimes simply because they have not been informed how to make an application correctly. In all cases it is a real battle to acquire subsidies from public bodies, even if equal treatment is guaranteed in principle to Christians, Jews and Muslims.

6) *Religious education* (Islam) for Muslim pupils at state (as opposed to private) schools is a third area where Muslim immigrants meet the state and where often they have to engage in a battle against local opposition in order to enjoy the right to religious instruction. The private schools, of course, have

their own rules, which hardly ever favour religious instruction for Muslim pupils. I leave here out of consideration problems connected with girls' education, headscarfs and so on, which indicate that the encounter with local public authorities is not always easy and that there exist certain ideological fixations in western societies.

There are, of course, other domains where Muslim immigrants have appealed to the state for facilities such as the access of imams to *hospitals*, *prisons* and the *army*, or access of Muslims to *radio* and *television*.¹³ Here as elsewhere the principle of equal rights continuously needs to be fought for.

Muslim associations

Specifically Muslim associations, which characteristically identify themselves by means of Islam or Islamic culture, are nearly always organized according to the country of origin of their members. It is still rare to find Muslim associations whose members are drawn from different Muslim countries and language groups in Western Europe, at least among the workers. Such associations have, of course, certain features in common with the rich panorama of groups and associations in Muslim countries themselves: promoting worship and religious life, encouraging fraternal links in Muslim communities, providing assistance and moral support to people under continuous constraints.¹⁴

But the differences, given with the western context, are also striking. Instead of working within a broader Muslim society which fundamentally supports them (though preferences for certain kinds of associations may differ), in Europe these associations work in a sometimes hostile and distrustful but in any case neutral and uncooperating society to which individual Muslims and Muslim groups are exposed. Much less social regulation of possible tensions and conflicts takes place here and there is much more place for individual ventures and possible demoralization. In fact, among the immigrants there are those who, when unemployed, lead an extremely precarious existence, risking becoming drug addicts and even criminals. Muslims are under constant pressure, too, because of the continuous defamation of Islam, discrimination in social relations and economic marginalization. Muslim associations have to struggle to keep their members' self-respect.

The activities, even if they resemble many of those of non-Muslim associations, are concentrated on the Muslim group and there is little attention or energy over for others. Like many Jewish, Catholic and Protestant groups, Muslim associations mostly keep to themselves and are not in a position to share much with others except the proverbial hospitality.

They are under financial stress and have to look for support to be able to carry out their activities, even to survive.

If we take social activities as the main variable, Muslim associations can be classified in four categories.

1) The *more spiritual* associations, unconcerned with political power, such as *turuq* and *ahl al-hadith* associations, or the *tabligh* association. Their main concern as professed by themselves is the spiritual well-being of the members and a better knowledge of religion; this corresponds more or less with the concept of religion as something to be pursued for its own sake and the sake of God and the soul. Such associations tend to keep at distance from politics and the state.

2) Associations intent on improving the *social, cultural and educational conditions* of their members and Muslims at large, at least those from the same country of origin. Such associations will be keen on obtaining subsidies from the state in which they live and may also be keen to receive aid from the government of their country of origin or other Muslim sources. The activities of these associations fall within the framework of what is sometimes called the "established" order. That is to say they are loyal to the existing state of affairs in the country of origin and of course to the state in which they live.

3) Associations which are equally concerned with the improvement of social cultural and educational conditions as the former category but which, moreover, in their appeal to Islam express *dissatisfaction with public affairs and government policies in their countries of origin*. Such associations normally will not ask for aid from the government of their country of origin and may very well be in touch with Islamic protest or opposition movements there which may want another government policy, more in conformity with what they consider to be essential prescriptions of Islam, or even another state structure altogether. Such associations, accordingly, will have a more "Islamicist" interpretation of Islam, that is to say they strive for the concrete application of a number of Islamic prescriptions in the social domain. As a consequence, they cannot but feel themselves foreigners in a Western country where Islam is not taken into account in the public order. In the media such associations are readily characterized as "fundamentalist", "integrist", "activist" and so on but in reality they show many nuances and variations in aims and purposes, means and methods.¹⁵

4) A fourth kind of association is concerned with *bringing about more than incidental changes* in laws existing in the European country in which they exist. They may ask, for example, for official recognition of Islam as a religion, or acceptance of parts of the *Shari'a*, in particular those to do with personal law -marriage, divorce and inheritance. Such associations are active politically not only in the country of origin but also in their European

country of residence. Their concern with Islam, not only as a religion, way of life and ideology but also as a particular social structure which entails political realization, is particularly strong and is generally encouraged and supported by similar groups in the Muslim world itself, especially the country of origin.¹⁶

It may be assumed that there is a certain connection between the nature of the activities which Muslim associations favour, and the attitudes which they take to the governments of their country of origin and their country of residence. Any study of particular Muslim associations needs to pay close attention to these connections, as they are expressed not only in words and ideas (including their interpretation of Islam) but also in practice and action in general (including their application of what they hold Islam to be). It must be stressed, however, that the fact of an association being Muslim does not itself determine its attitude to the state any more than an association's being Jewish or Christian does. Not only are there various kinds of Muslim associations, as we have just shown but there are also many other economic, social and personal factors which help to explain particular attitudes taken by religious groups (in this case mostly minority groups) towards the state.

To many outside observers, social scientists, journalists and those who have to deal with Muslim associations practically, it is a cause of surprise, if not irritation, that these associations are usually so *loosely structured*, and they may feel inclined to work with those few associations which are well organized, even if they show an exceptionally authoritarian structure. It is well-known, however, that traditionally Muslim groups in the Muslim world have hardly ever been formally organized with rationally formulated aims and means, lists of membership, annual dues and the like. Rather, people used and use to gather round individuals, with the least of formalities possible. Although rationally organized associations with an internal discipline are now to be found in Muslim countries (first of all the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt since the thirties and forties), and although in the expressly Islamic states the state imposes a particular kind of discipline on anything Islamic (as in Saudi Arabia or Iran), there is still a strong tradition of forming groups and associations on the basis of personal ties and friendships, or adherence to particular leaders whose position rests on family or tribal links, their ability to represent society in a particular region, or just their personal authority and even charisma.

In Europe, for the sake of survival, most Muslim associations adopt a legally recognized form, as societies, associations or foundations with an official legal status; the practice within them is often, however, at variance with what their status prescribe. The lack of high degree of formal organization lays these organizations open to all kinds of attempts at manipulation, from within or without, for personal or political purposes. But

it also makes it difficult for the state to control them or even discover what is going on in them, so that the lack of rational organization enables them to preserve a certain freedom vis à vis the authorities.

I would suggest that associations which are well organized ought to be suspected of being manipulated in an authoritarian fashion not only from within but especially by outside forces and that European governments should be wary in their dealings with Muslim associations which are too well organized. But one consequence of the low degree of rational organization is that on the whole Muslim groups and associations have a limited capacity to unite in democratic umbrella federations. Consequently, they have great difficulty in adopting common attitudes towards the state, except in critical questions such as the request to ban a book like *The Satanic Verses* and its translations.

The history of the various *federations* of Muslim associations, or at least of the Muslim associations with a common country of origin will be difficult to write; it is a history of ups and downs, incidental successes (mostly thanks to particular personalities) and many failures. On particularly vital issues, like the protest against *The Satanic Verses*, Muslim associations have shown themselves to be able to unite, but this turns out to be very difficult on a more permanent basis, even if unity, or close co-operation, is the only way to achieve efficient action. Even Western states, for whatever reasons, just like Western institutions and personalities including Western Muslims, press hard for Muslim associations to organize themselves, in order for instance to be able to represent common interests to the government and to receive government aid or assistance on an equal and representative basis. I do not think that proverbial personal and other rivalries between Muslim groups in European countries have much to do with Islam. They are due, above all, to socio-psychological forces within and between minority groups: struggles for leadership, the reflex of self-defence against outside interference, fear that a rival group may enjoy more privileges from the state or other institutions. The pressures of unemployment, discrimination and economic and social *déclassement* intensify such conflicts, in which Islam plays no real role but rather hides what happens from outsiders. This accounts at least in part for the fruitlessness of so many efforts to create more cohesion between the many Muslim associations which exist in European countries, on the basis of Islam.

European state policies with regard to Muslim associations

Each European country has its own particular history of relations with Muslims and Islam.¹⁷

France is unique in its centralized state system and its official doctrine, or ideology, of *laïcité* (the secular state). This involves not only an institutional and legal separation between state and churches but also an ideological dualism (if not opposition) between the *Etat laïc* (secular state) and all religious organizations, activities and other manifestations. Muslim associations have been recognized as "associations" in France for some ten years and as such they enjoy an official legal status. The membership of practically all Muslim associations is made up of North African immigrants. The failure of the old government policy of cultural assimilation, both in Algeria, where it resulted among other things in the disastrous Algerian war (1956-1962), and until now in France itself, explains in part prevailing negative attitudes towards North African *immigrés*, involving discriminatory behaviour among a large sector of population. The French state's attitude to Muslim immigrants living in France seems not yet to have crystallized even after the rise of the National Front led by Le Pen and the turbulence around the wearing of headscarves by Muslim girls at school, as the ambiguities of French party politics even under a socialist government show.

The *United Kingdom* distinguishes itself by its decentralized system of government. Most decisions about policies towards ethnic minorities in Britain are taken in the local communities; the immigration and naturalization laws, on the other hand, which are a product of central government, are harsh. Most Muslim immigrants here have an Indian or Pakistani background; a smaller proportion comes from Africa and other former colonies like Malaysia. Present policies both on the national and the local level intend to bring about a maximum of integration of these immigrants present in Britain, with recognition of their own culture and religion.

In *Germany* the policies towards Muslim and other immigrants (mainly Turks) are evolved by the different *Länder*; although the Federal government in Bonn makes certain general recommendations. For a number of years now several Muslim associations have been asking to be recognized as Public Law Bodies (*Körperschaften des öffentlichen Rechts*) in the same way as churches and synagogues. The answer given is that such recognition can only be accorded to a representative body of all Muslims, something which is difficult to realize, in Germany as elsewhere. Here too, the Federal government makes a concerted effort to integrate Turkish immigrants into German society, while recognizing their own religious and cultural identity, and it has to fight discrimination in particular by Neo-Nazis and reactionary groups of the population. The recent unification of Germany makes further immigration of Turkish workers improbable.

So there are important differences between the policies of the various European states with regard to immigrants in general and the integration of

Muslim immigrants in particular. Yet on closer view a *common pattern* emerges, for instance, in the practically identical responses of European authorities to Muslim protests against the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. This pattern, which does not so much apply to Austria and Belgium, has certain specific features:

1) Because of the separation between state and religion there cannot be a question of Islam or any other religious community being recognized as "religion" in any legal sense, nor of a concerted government policy towards Islam or any other religion. Muslims are not and cannot be considered as a separate *millet* in European countries analogous to the *millet* system in Muslim countries in the past. In several European countries religious adherence is no longer registered at all and not even subject of inquiry during a census.

2) Muslims are free to organize themselves on the legal basis of "associations" or "foundations", recognized by law, and they enjoy the same freedom of expression as others, provided this does not disturb public order. Consequently, the *Shari'a* as religious Law can have the status of moral but not legal rules; in civil as well as in public law Muslim immigrants are subject to the same rules as all other inhabitants of the country concerned. Any wish to see the *Shari'a* applied in Europe is illusory.

3) The state does not subsidize *religious activities* of Muslim associations. There are no schemes to subsidize the renting, renovation or construction of prayer halls and mosques. This does not necessarily exclude individual towns or regional authorities making contributions or providing favorable arrangements for payment, for instance to acquire land or cover part of construction costs in particular cases which cannot constitute precedents. By contrast, most European states give subsidies for social work, education and similar non-religious activities undertaken by Muslims which may further the cause of their integration. Of course, private citizens may donate money for such purposes just as money may be given by outsiders, for instance by the already legendary Muslim oil states to international Muslim organizations.

4) It has become easier for immigrants in most European countries, in particular the third and later generations, to acquire the *nationality* of the country of residence. This, of course, has nothing to do with Islam but is a measure to favour the *integration* of those who have been admitted to the country in question. For the same purpose, some countries have taken measures to fight unemployment among immigrants, in particular unskilled workers, which is disproportionately high compared with the unemployment rate of the population at large, itself already high since the 1970's. Another such measure is the promotion of education of immigrant children, girls as well as boys, and initiatives aimed at stimulating the

development of qualified leadership. In every country extensive *studies* have been made about all kinds of aspects of immigrants, though mostly from the point of view of the general interest of the host society and certain requirements of government policy, neglecting the study of culture and religion of the immigrants. The policy of integration, distinct from that of complete assimilation, is nourished, among other things, by the fear that immigrant communities may become small or large enclaves or "ghettos" in European cities and that attitudes of *apartheid* and racism may spread further among the population where it has increased significantly during the last twenty years.

5) It is noteworthy that judgement in certain *law suits* and criminal court cases are attenuated by taking into account the laws and customs prevailing in the country or region of origin of the immigrants concerned. In some specific cases existing laws, for instance on burial, have been modified in certain countries in order to accommodate for particular Islamic prescriptions. Sometimes new jurisprudence had to be developed, for instance to establish the legal status of an *imâm* attached to a prayer-hall or mosque. Rules of international private law decide, of course, in conflicts between the law of the country of origin and that of residence.

6) A last common feature in European government policies towards immigrants, including Muslim immigrants, is what, in Ronald Reagan's time, was called a "*no-nonsense*" policy. The economic recession at the beginning of the eighties meant mostly the transition from a welfare state to policies of privatization, which meant that possibilities for state or public subsidies to provide for the pressing needs of the immigrant communities, as for the poor in general, were drastically reduced. Restrictive admission policies and re-emigration facilities became dominant. Moreover, in response to what was perceived as the threat from Khomeinism, including terrorist actions often connected with Middle Eastern conflicts and blatant forms of injustice, European parliaments became more careful in matters of Muslim immigration. The Rushdie affair has strengthened the growing aloofness to Muslim immigrants among parliamentarians. The very fact that great numbers of Muslims in Europe who were hardly able to understand what was going on could be mobilized to demonstrate and publicly support not only a ban on the book but also a possible assassination of its author has alienated a number of persons and instances which until then had an open attitude to Muslim immigrants and to further Muslim-Christian dialogues, and supported what might be called an "ethical", more enlightened policy than the "no-nonsense" policy with regard to Muslims and things Islamic.¹⁸ To set against this situation, the ignorance prevailing in European populations about the life of the Muslim immigrants in their midst, and the desire in certain quarters in Europe and elsewhere to depict Islam as a

religious and political danger for western civilization, one can only hope for a growing sense of responsibility among European leaders.

So much for the identification of a common pattern in European state policies towards Muslim immigrants. But it is important to note some *exceptional cases* in which Muslim associations have been accorded special privileges, in contrast to the general pattern dominating in France, the United Kingdom and Germany. The countries concerned are small.

In the first place, some largely Catholic countries which "recognize" Catholic Christianity and subsequently Protestant and Anglican Christianity and Judaism as religions according to their legal possibilities, decided to *recognize Islam as a religion* too once the Muslims in the country could constitute a body to represent them to the government.¹⁹

Austria accepted a Law of Recognition of Islam in 1874 which was subsequently enlarged in 1912. This made it relatively easy for Islam in Austria, mainly represented by Bosnians from Yugoslavia, to be recognized in 1979 as a religion side by side to twelve other recognized religions. As a result, the Muslim community in Austria is a public body comprising all Muslim residents on Austrian territory. Instruction in Islam at schools is paid for by the state, and there are special tax exemptions for Islamic institutions and tax relief provisions for contributing members of Muslim associations. On the national level there is an Assembly of fifteen members representing eighteen Muslim associations, with an *Oberseniorat* as its executive and a mufti as the official interpreter of Islamic law. There are also assemblies, executive committees and imams at the regional level.

Belgium recognized Islam officially in 1974; the main Muslim communities are Moroccans and a somewhat smaller number of Turks. Committees were to be organized subsequently to take charge of the administration of practical matters including the prayer-halls and mosques of the recognized Islamic communities. Notwithstanding high expectations the system has not worked until now, and the fault seems to lie not with the Muslim associations but with the Belgian state which has not recognized any Islamic community until now nor appointed any committee; no mosque has even been recognized officially as yet. Only the large mosque with its Islamic and cultural Centre in Brussels was recognized in 1968 as an "international" association. The Imam-Director of this international mosque, who is not of Belgian, Moroccan or Turkish nationality, nevertheless enjoys the right to appoint teachers of Islam to give religious instruction to Muslim children at Belgian schools, and they are paid by the Belgian government. As a consequence the official recognition of Islam as a religion in Belgium comes down to attributing to an essentially foreign body, financed by Saudi Arabia and other Islamic states, excessive authority over the Muslims living in the country. As a counterweight to this construction, some 59 mosques and

prayer-halls in Belgium constituted the *Fédération des Mosquées de Belgique* in 1986. Shortly afterwards a *Ligue des Mosquées* was founded bringing together another group of mosques.

A very different situation obtains in *The Netherlands*.²⁰ Here, for some nine years (1975-1983) a small budget was made available for subsidizing part of the cost of prayer halls and a few new mosques for migrant workers from Turkey and Morocco as well as for earlier Moluccan Muslim immigrants. The state recognized certain obligations towards the wellbeing of foreign workers who had been brought to the country through the intermediary of the Dutch consulates in Turkey and Morocco. One may speak here of an enlightened cultural policy, falling under the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, and there was a precedent for it. After the second World War and during the years 1962-1975 the state had given subventions towards the (re)construction of churches; by analogy subventions to prayer-halls and mosques could be legally defended since the masses of Turkish and Moroccans workers needed places for worship but at the time were unable to pay them. The state recognized a responsibility here but this enlightened if not "ethical" policy (somewhat comparable to the "ethical" enlightened policy towards the colonial population of the East Indies at the beginning of this century) came to an end with a decisive vote of parliament and a general revision of the welfare state policies, mainly for budgetary reasons and announcing the "no-nonsense" policy.²¹ As far as I know, such a system of subventions, modest as it was, existed only in Holland where it was drawn into the ongoing discussion about the implications of separation between state and churches for government subsidies to organizations with spiritual aims.²²

Other features of Dutch minorities policy are, for instance, public funds made available for an Islamic TV and Broadcasting Corporation (IOS), the voting rights which immigrants enjoy in the municipal elections, and a system of representation of the various national immigrant groups by means of consultative bodies (*inspraakorganen*) paid for by the state, through which the ethnic minorities according to their nationalities can put questions to the government, behind closed doors. Since these consultative bodies have no political power whatsoever, everything depends on the assumption of good will and in practice the communication between immigrants and state is far from satisfactory, even if a number of official bodies take a more open attitude towards immigrant groups. The official government policy toward ethnic minorities has in fact had rather poor results when it comes to the hard sectors of employment, economic take-off, housing and schooling.²³

Generally speaking, in most European countries during the last thirty years new *channels of communication* have established themselves or been consciously created between the governments and their immigrants. In this

communication the associations play an important part both on the national and on the local level. In most countries the way has been opened in principle for negotiations between government policy makers on the one hand and associations defending Muslim interests on the other hand. Such negotiations concern problems of an immediate practical nature, facilitating the integration of Muslim immigrants in European societies, something that is the officially stated goal of nearly all European states concerned at the present time. Those Muslim associations which accept the European states as they are, and Europe as it is, will probably carry out their part of the negotiations with the greatest success.

Any real improvement in the situation of minorities, however, depends on their possibility to work. Unemployment of those fathers and grandfathers who were lured to come and work in Europe is the greatest evil one can think of. Among the human rights figure also economic rights: the *right to work*, to have a decent material existence. The same holds true for the *social rights* of men and women, which include freedom from oppression, political or otherwise, from whatever source. More than before we should envisage the realities of Muslim and other ethnic minorities not only on a national but also on a *European scale*, including the need for their essential rights to be implemented beyond the national states on the level of the continent. Guaranteeing these rights will also improve the image of this region in the Asian and African countries from which these immigrants came.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages I have tried to show the need for critical studies of the relations between Muslim associations and governmental and other official bodies. Such studies have to be carried out both on a fundamental level and comparatively, since the relations vary considerably per country. They have to be carried out with a critical eye both to the existing practice of policy making and government administration on the national and local level, and to the aims and practices of the Muslim associations themselves. Such studies should, of course, neither try to promote Islam or any other religion, nor defend the current state of affairs in the domains of legislation, the executive and the administration of justice. The relationship between Muslim associations and official bodies in Europe can very well be studied in the broader perspective of the relations between religion and state in various European countries, anticipating those relations in the European community as a whole.

I started by reviewing the relationship between state and Islam in a few of the countries from which Muslim workers in Europe originate. Moving to the European scene, I then identified the most important points of contact

between Muslim immigrants and the authorities of their new country during their first years. I tried to show that, perhaps in contrast to former times, immigrants nowadays have much to do with the state on whose protection, *dhimma* as it were, they are dependent. Likewise the state is concerned with them not only as a labour force but as groups with a very definite cultural-religious identity, in permanent relationship with Muslim immigrants elsewhere and Muslim states outside Europe.

Next I inquired into the kind of activities and degree of organization of the Muslim associations in Europe, and the possible relationship between their activities and current movements in the Muslim world and, of course, the European societies where they are living. Turning to European state policies towards immigrants in general and Muslim immigrants in particular, I tried to identify a common pattern in such policies but I took also into account two special cases: two European states which recognize Islam officially as a religion, and one state which, in an age of enlightenment now past, provided partial subsidies for the establishment of Muslim prayer-halls.

At the end I observed that on both a local and a national level a new type of negotiations is developing between European policy makers and Muslim associations, in order to discuss which measures serving the interest of both Muslim immigrants and the European societies where they have settled are feasible. Finally I put the new presence of Islam in the broader perspective of the European community (and Europe at large) rather than in the narrower perspective of nation-states. For various reasons I urged that the human rights of immigrants, including Muslim immigrants, be taken most seriously and further comparative research be carried out in the relationships between Muslim associations and European governments, in the broad context of religion-state relations in these countries.

The presence of Islam has been an important factor in present-day reconsiderations of religion-state relationships. I think that, as far as Islam is considered, the relations between religion and state as well as between state and religion are, and will remain, indirect. Since there is no body which represents Islam as a religion, it is through Muslim associations of various kinds that the interests of Muslim immigrants in Europe and their rights, including their religious rights, will have to be negotiated with the state and where necessary defended.²⁴

Notes

¹On the early relations between the Ottoman empire and The Netherlands see De Groot: 1978; Bosscha Erdbrink: 1975, especially Ch. 1, "Ottoman-Dutch relations from 1600 to 1726, origin and development of commercial and diplomatic contacts", p.1-39.

²On the early relations between Morocco and The Netherlands see Obdeijn: 1988. The whole volume is of interest for a better knowledge of Moroccan-Dutch relations.

³See Waardenburg: 1988.

⁴See Abdullah: 1984.

⁵See Ch. VIII, La mosquée de Paris: fraternité d'armes et question d'Orient. In Sellam: 1987, p.257-277. Compare the leaflet *Institut musulman & Mosquée de Paris*, Paris: Impr. Machard-Longis, n.d., 16 pp.

⁶See Tibawi: 1981, p.193-208.

⁷Nouschi: 1984. The whole volume is of interest for the study of North African immigrants in France.

⁸During the last twenty years the study of Islam and Muslims in Europe has become a distinct area of specialization in several disciplines: sociology, anthropology, Islamic studies, etc. See the bibliography at the end of this volume.

⁹On Turkey see for instance Blaschke and Van Bruinessen: 1984; Oehring: 1984; Compare in Dutch Van Bruinessen and others: 1982.

¹⁰On Morocco see for instance Vedel (ed.): 1986. But see also Parrault: 1990.

¹¹On Algeria see for instance Sanson: 1983. See also Rouadjia: 1990.

¹²On Pakistan see for instance Ahmed: 1985. See also Khan: 1985.

¹³The *Islamitische Omroep Stichting* (IOS, Islamic Broadcasting Station), paid by Dutch public funds, prepares Islamic TV and radio programs for Muslims in The Netherlands.

¹⁴One should notice that mostly Islamic associations in Muslim countries are perfectly peaceful social and spiritual groups, who do not indulge in political action and are horrified by violence. The image given in western media that Islamic associations are by nature militant and aggressive is completely false and only serves anti-Islamic interests.

¹⁵As an introduction to activist movements in three selected Muslim countries, see Hussein: 1983.

¹⁶Most publications dealing with the contacts between Muslims in Europe and those in Muslim countries concentrate on political and economic influences and forms of support which Muslims in Europe receive. Most contacts, of course, are of an informal nature and the networks resulting from them are largely unknown but very important for long term developments in Europe as well as in Muslim countries.

¹⁷For literature on Muslim associations in France, the United Kingdom and Germany, see the bibliography at the end of this volume.

¹⁸Any no-nonsense policy à la Reagan simply makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. Since the immigrants under consideration for the greater part belong to the poor, a no-nonsense policy is immoral according to my sense of social justice and human rights.

¹⁹The following data on Austria and Belgium draw on personal information.

²⁰For literature on Muslim associations in The Netherlands, see the bibliography at the end of this volume as well as the chapter by Shadid and Van Koningsveld.

²¹There is indeed a parallel between the "ethical" policy with regard to the colonies in the first decades of the century and the "enlightened" policy with regard to the cultural and religious values of immigrants in Holland in the late seventies. Just as the "ethical" policy was followed by a renewed policy of exploitation and political domination in the East Indies, the "enlightened" immigrant policy was followed by a policy of austerity without much consideration for the immigrants' own demands and needs. See also Note 18.

²²See Hirsch Ballin: 1988. Chapter 4 deals with ethnic minorities (p. 62-85).

²³See for instance Roelandt and Veenman: 1990. See in Dutch Bovenkerk: 1986.

²⁴In the same line are other contributions by the present author on Muslim immigrants such as: 1982; 1983a; 1986a; 1986b; 1987; 1988; See also 1983b, together with the critical remarks of P.S. van Koningsveld: 1987.

Muslim Organizations in Europe

Integration or Isolation?

J.S. Nielsen

In any consideration of the development of Muslim organizational activity in Western Europe, three main processes of establishment can be identified: groups which arose out of the community and its own perceptions of its needs, groups set up as extensions of organizations and movements in the country of origin, and groups set up by governments or government-related agencies.

During the first phase of Muslim immigration, the migrants were mostly men on their own coming for a limited period. The fact that they were men on their own meant that requirements of religious practice were minimal - it was usually sufficient to be able to pray. This minimal religious practice was further marginalised both by the expectation of imminent return home and by the sense that the family at home remained the focus of cultural and religious identity.¹ The situation changed fundamentally when the migration of Muslim workers became an immigration of Muslim families in the early and mid-1970's (earlier in Britain). Firstly, the sense of temporariness began to weaken to be replaced by a sense of permanence. Secondly, the presence of wives and children critically widened the scope for interaction with the surrounding society, especially in education, health and social welfare. As a result, large areas of traditional culture came under question, creating a need for the construction of institutions which could either help defend tradition or lower the level of tension.

In this paper I shall attempt to present an overall perspective on the processes involved in establishing Muslim organizations in Europe and an identification of the factors, both in origins and in the European environment, which have affected the nature of organizations. Certainly in Britain, and

probably elsewhere in Europe, these elements have been a major force in determining the balance between and the character of the institutional integration or isolation of Muslim communities.

I should make it clear that I cannot approach this topic as a sociologist, nor yet as a theologian. If I bring any particular disciplinary expertise to it, it is as an historian -and, as I once heard someone suggest, what kind of discipline is that? This does, however, also suggest that I should perhaps explain what I mean by the terms *integration* and *isolation*, as their use here may not coincide with that which is standard in the literature of sociologists and anthropologists.

In the context of organizations I am using the term *integration* to signify the willingness and ability of community organizations -in this instance those of the Muslim communities of Western Europe- to participate in the organizational life of their environment. Such participation can, of course, be expected to have the aim of improving the lot of the organization and of its followers and members. It must therefore reflect their agendas and priorities while at the same time seeking to function in ways which achieve success in the general organizational environment -while not offending against its adherents' sensibilities and expectations of the organization's structure, often itself part of the agenda, so far that legitimacy is lost: an extremely complicated challenge.

This is, I believe, a useful counterweight to much of the current use of the concept of *integration*, which appears to operate within an expectation concentrated at the individual level. The literature on multicultural education, employment, and residence patterns, possibly also in other areas, seems to assume, at least implicitly, that the process of integration of ethnic and religious minorities will take place through individual adaptation. Therefore, in this view, a strong adherence to organizations and movements which insist, for example, on the distinctiveness of Islam and Muslims is against integration because it prevents individuals from fitting, chameleon-like, into their surroundings. My implicit argument here is, I suspect, the opposite: By adhering to organizations and movements which emphasise the distinctiveness of Islam and Muslim cultures -however these may be defined is fundamentally a matter for the Muslims themselves- and which, at the same time, mobilise their constituency for campaigning and lobbying within the organizational and political environment in which they live, Muslims, just like other ethnic and religious minorities, will have devised a way of providing for themselves a sound individual and social base from which they may construct a place in their new setting, whose objective is to ensure a valid future for their children and their community. *Isolation* means everything which the above argument does not!

The context of origins

In any consideration of the growth and role of Muslim organizations in Europe, it would seem to be absolutely essential to consider the situation in the countries from which the relevant communities have come. This is not a simple matter, since all of these countries, by the era of major emigration, no longer lived in the more or less stable and integrated cultural complex which had developed through the Islamic phase of their history. Even in the Anatolian part of the Ottoman Empire (roughly modern Turkey), arguably the most recently islamised major region of emigration to Europe, a cultural *modus vivendi* had been reached between Islamic, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and long-standing folk cultures, which justifies the application of the epithets stable and integrated. The disruption in stability had been caused to a great extent by the expansion of European influence, which imported a new set of criteria and constraints, initially of an economic and military nature, but which quite quickly became cultural, intellectual, and even civilizational.

Consequently, the Muslim organizational tendencies, which have formed the roots of those we see about us in Europe today, are the product not only of traditional Islamic processes but also -and very significantly- of the Muslim organizational reaction to the expansion of European influence during the last several centuries. This is most clearly the case in the Indian subcontinent, where various reform movements appeared to defend and reassert Islamic ideals in the context of expanding European power. The earliest of these appeared in the eighteenth century as the Mogul Empire weakened after the death of Aurangzeb. A second phase, which has led directly to many of the organizations of the present, arose in the context of direct British rule. More recently, much of the Muslim organizational activity of Turkey has arisen out of the dramatic change of circumstances associated with Kemal Atatürk's policies during the 1920's.

Such contexts have contributed to influencing the nature of organizations as well as their language and agendas. Barbara Metcalf has analysed this well in her study of the Deobandi movement in India, as has Sharif Mardin in his recent study of Bediuzzaman Nursi and the Jama'at al-Nur movement.² The impact of political and economic change has meant that many of the organizations in question have selected for emphasis aspects of Islam which are perceived most to differentiate Islam from the foreign influence. Usually, such aspects have tended to be based in the Islamic law, the Sharia, and the training of cadres well-qualified in Sharia has been high on the agenda. In some movements, this has been extended to a programme of re-Islamicising the state. The availability of new organizational structures has often been

exploited, as in the case of the early Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and, perhaps more remarkably, by the Jama'at-i-Islami in the Indian subcontinent.³

In some ways such "modern" organizations, almost always of Sunnite background, resemble the traditionally more hierarchic and structured forms of Shi'ite sects. On the other hand, the looser forms of the Sunnite tradition also continue to be found. These are so loose that they deserve the term movement rather than organization. They tend to be held together by some form of loyalty to or identification with the personality and ideas of a founder, and to that extent there is a similarity even with the Sunnite law schools, the *madhahib*, where there is a continuity of teaching rather than of structure.⁴

The traditional Sufi orders cannot be ignored. Traditionally they have exhibited a wide range of organizational forms, some so loose that they hardly can be considered orders in any meaningful sense, others tightly structured and controlled with a hierarchical leadership.⁵ These orders have shown a remarkable ability to survive, even as their social base, especially in towns and cities, has disintegrated with economic and social change. A variant on this are the village and tribal based spiritual orders, where authority is vested in "holy men", such as those described by Gellner⁶ or the pirs and their shrines in the North Indian countryside.⁷

Whatever the social base or nature of such organizations and movements, they have in common a foundation in some form of Islamic legitimacy.⁸ Gellner identifies three types of such legitimacy, namely the Book, including its extension with reference to the Tradition (*Sunna*), the consensus of the community (*ijma'*), and the line of succession. Different organizations and movements derive their legitimacy from one or more of these sources in varying proportions. Gellner's assertion that the Book sits in ultimate judgment is, in my view, overstated, as it is possible that the Book may become the property of a particular tendency and that in this manner the interpreter gains control of the Book, at least so far as his adherents are concerned. In such a case the consensus would seem to have an equal role to play. Within certain Shi'ite sects, and according to some of Ayatullah Khomeini's statements, the line of succession, i.e. the *imams*, have an authority surpassing that of the Book. With this proviso, it is possible to identify the functioning of these three types of legitimacy continuing in the movements of the modern Muslim world as well as in the movements and organizations to be found in Europe. One question which will have to be considered in due course, however, is the extent to which the balance among the three types may be different in the European setting.

The establishment of organizations

The immediate and critical change brought about by the reconstruction of forms of community life among Muslims in Western Europe was that organization became necessary. However much movements and organizations in the Muslim countries of origin may have been thriving, there was not an intrinsic necessity for specifically religious organizations with particular goals for ordinary Muslims to be able to lead their daily religious life. The mosque was available as a community facility and did not have to be linked to a particular organization, although many were. In fact, during this century in many countries the government has taken over responsibility for this service through its ministry of religious affairs or of *awqaf* -much like the government in Denmark is responsible for the church there. The Islamic religious education of children tended to be something naturally available, whether in formal classes in school or mosque or to be imbibed through the general Islamic content of the culture -all of this without individual families having to make any particular effort to make the facility available.

The one exception to this picture has, of course, been Turkey where, in a sense, this migration from effortless Islamic practice to a situation where conscious efforts had to be made to create facilities took place already as the result of Kemalist reforms. In consequence, a movement such as the Süleymanî with its vast educational activity is in some sense a much more "European" movement than most of those originating outside the Turkish experience.

The context into which Muslim families settled in Europe was one where nothing could be taken for granted in terms of access to Islamic facilities. In fact there are indications that many Muslims perceived the non-Muslim environment as being actively inimical to things Islamic: a recent study of the Pakistani community in Oxford suggests that many wives saw themselves as joining their husbands to "save" them from being estranged from their culture and religion.⁹ The provision of facilities for prayer, teaching Islam to children, access to *halal* food and proper burial, these and many other matters which had been taken for granted at home now had to be consciously sought out.

The needs were met by the formation of Muslim organizations primarily through two routes. Certainly during the earlier phases the most common process was local community initiative, often the work of a few individuals only who identified a particular requirement which they then proceeded to meet. The kinds of organizations being created thus were not necessarily explicitly Muslim; most were probably ethnic, regional or village based. The Muslim organizations were especially related to mosque projects and, in parallel, to the establishment of some form of Islamic instruction for children. However, from a comparatively early stage organizations and movements from the countries of origin began to set up agencies or branches in Europe. With time they have come to dominate the scene, as the smaller local groups

have found it useful to have access to the power, resources and prestige of these larger movements.

Beyond such general remarks, the detailed process of organization has to be considered in relation to the constraints imposed by the European context, and those constraints vary significantly according to the circumstances of individual countries. The most influential element has been the particular legal system governing association, with funding sources being a further factor. In most of Europe the public authorities offer financial advantages to organizations with educational, cultural and, sometimes, religious aims. But to take advantage of this the association has to have a form which the public authorities will recognise. This usually means registering under a law of associations and meeting the criteria laid down by the law. Thus Muslim organizations have had to adopt committee structures, the concepts of membership and officers, regular subscriptions, annual general meetings, voting, etc.

Such forms of organization have traditionally been alien to Islam, at least in its Sunni variant, with its absence of church and hierarchy. It is perhaps no coincidence that the few organizations which already had aspects of such structures in their countries of origin were among the earliest to find success in transferring their activities to Europe. As obvious examples one could point to the *Jama'at-i-Islami* from Pakistan and the Süleymanî from Turkey.

The variations in the European legal context have resulted in significant differences in the extent and nature of organization. In Britain the criteria in law for setting up an organization are minimal. No registration is required, although there are tax advantages in satisfying the requirements of the Charity Commissioners, as there can be legal advantages in registering as a company. A consequence of such lack of definition has been a proliferation of organizations, many with ambitious titles and consisting of a private address, a letter head, and little else. Belgian and French requirements that organizations needed to have a minimum number of Belgian or French citizens in their leadership have been an important obstacle in the way of such proliferation.¹⁰ When France in 1981 abolished the special requirements for associations of foreigners, the consequence was a major growth in the number of associations although still not on the British scale.¹¹

Continuing development

Once established, the elements influencing the further development of such organizations become more complex. Funding becomes a major consideration as does the continuing earning of legitimacy. Related to these aspects are developments both in the countries of origin and in the country of settlement.

Settlement in Europe has not entailed the cutting off of relations with the country of origin. Primarily, of course, family relations have been preserved and with them links to the locality of origin. Local developments thus retain a direct effect on the immediate interests of the migrated communities.

Wider developments -political, economic, social- in the countries of origin, however, also continue to have a major effect on the Muslims in Europe, through a variety of channels. For individuals and groups with political ambitions, the emigre community represents an arena for operations free of the constraints at home. This was very evident during the 1970's in West Germany, when various Turkish political groupings, banned in Turkey, could raise resources and support. France had experienced something similar during the Algerian war of independence and arrested thousands of Algerians in France to deprive the revolution of support. More recently, the Pakistani community in Britain has been used by both Benazir Bhutto and her opponents in this manner. A similar process is taking place among the Kurds in Sweden.

Such political developments also affect the European environment in which Muslims have to operate, usually in a constraining manner. Perceptions of Islam and Muslims in the wider European society have been determined much more by international political events than by the settled Muslim communities themselves. The Iranian revolution, the Lebanese civil war, and the activities of the Palestinian resistance have all tended to strengthen the inherited anti-Muslim bias of centuries, a sentiment which has often easily been reinforced by racism and racist movements. The current crisis over Iraq's occupation of Kuwait has served to bring out such feelings more strongly. The effect of such hostile public opinion has consistently been to limit the space in which Muslim organizations can constructively manoeuvre, and some have adopted the only other alternative, namely aggressive self-assertion.

Developments of European origin impose their own influence on Muslim organizations, either directly or indirectly by changing the context in which they operate. Thus immigration policy affects organizations both indirectly, through context, and directly. On the one hand, they are forced to move immigration policy higher up their agendas and find difficulties in recruiting staff, while on the other hand immigration policy has tended to encourage a more strongly racist or xenophobic atmosphere. Policy statements made by prominent politicians seeking votes usually ignore the negative impact on the minorities whose votes are not deemed worth seeking. Major policy changes, as with Britain's educational reform since 1988, can have a significant impact on Muslim organizations which were not intended, even if they were considered. Events like the affair of *The Satanic Verses* have had quite dramatic effects on the whole scene of organised Islam in Britain.¹²

There is little doubt that questions of funding are interlinked with all these various factors. Very few organizations, other than the smallest and least

ambitious, are not dependent on funding sources outside their own membership or circles of sympathisers. There are a few organizations which, as branches of government to some degree, are funded by a government to perform the functions determined by that government. The best example of this is the West German branch of the *Diyanet*, DITIB. In most cases, however, organizations have to form and to formulate themselves in such a way as to attract the necessary funding.

Much has been speculated about the extent of funding by wealthy Arab states, but very little research has been done either about the actual extent or the possible concomitant influence. In Britain it was noticeable that the number of annual mosque registrations grew suddenly between three and four fold from 1974 (OPCS). There is little doubt that this was associated with the rise in oil prices, but there is equally little way of knowing how much of that growth was based on Arab money, how much on hopes of Arab money, and how much simply on growing self-confidence.

In very few of the cases where mosques and organizations are known to have received substantial gifts from the oil economies, can one show a direct correlation between funding source and subsequent policy. The fact that DITIB in Germany, through the Turkish *Diyanet*, or the *Islamic Foundation* in Britain have theological lines and adopt policies which are roughly in harmony with those of Saudi Arabia, even if not in total coincidence, are evidence of an initial mutual sympathy and common interest rather than of a Saudi-dominated relationship. Iraqi funding for a mosque in Birmingham has not made that mosque a mouthpiece for Saddam Hussein, nor does the *Muslim College* in west London take its orders from Libya, nor can the same necessarily be said about the *Muslim Institute* in relation to Iran.

There is little doubt that some imaginative presentation work is done in relation to funding sources as well as some judicious selection. Organizations with explicitly Sufistic, or pir-related, or other "unorthodox" tendencies simply do not bother to approach official Saudi sources. The fact is that most funders, private or governmental, are simply insufficiently aware of the specific circumstances of their applicants and are seldom in a position to assess the use to which their gifts are put. There is, of course, a degree of interrelationship as regards general theological and political tendency, but the mediating and interpreting role played by the personalities directly involved ensures that interrelationship is usually open and flexible.

While the degree of influence of Muslim funding sources remains open to question, the influence of European funding sources is much more direct, both on agendas and on organizational structure; again, this is an area which has seen little research.

European funding of Muslim activities has come either from governmental agencies or from trusts. As indicated previously, to get access to such sources

organizations have had to adopt structures which are recognizable by the potential funder, structures which are often a break with traditional forms. Sometimes this remains an outward form, as in the case of a number of Belgian associations where the Belgian non-Muslim committee members have become essentially "sleeping partners", or where a hierarchical, family-based association continues its hierarchical ways behind the guise of an elected committee.¹³ In other situations, the desire to obtain public or trust funding has constrained informally constituted, charismatically led Sufi groups to adopt a formal structure. Of itself this has been a contradiction with past practice, and it has granted the potential, at least, to committee members to challenge the charismatic leadership by resorting to the courts.

In Sweden and Denmark, one has seen quite direct effects on the very process of the formation of organizations produced by the nature of specific funding provisions. In Denmark the free school legislation entitles any group of parents over a certain number to establish their own school with public funding. As a result, perhaps as many as ten such Muslim schools have been formed.¹⁴ But in Copenhagen, the largest of these schools has occasionally had the problem that a splinter group of parents has grown sufficiently large to break away and form its own new school. In Sweden the government makes provision for state support for "free church federations" to parallel that granted to the state Lutheran church. Again there is a minimum size threshold which has at least once contributed to the splitting of a successful federation of Muslim congregations.¹⁵

In some ways more serious, has been the effect that the conditions of public funding has had on the public language and the aims and goals of Muslim organizations. With the short-term exception of The Netherlands and the peculiar case of Belgium,¹⁶ the general attitude of public authorities in Europe has been that state support for cultural and educational purposes is legitimate while that for religious purposes is not. The most obvious consequence of this is the spread of the concept of the "Islamic cultural centre", a concept which, if it is found in the main parts of the Muslim world, has a completely different import. Programmes are prioritised and presented in such a way as to emphasise the preservation of the culture of origin, including language, arts and crafts, with religion taking the status of a footnote. One Turkish Muslim association in Denmark first constituted itself as a sports and cultural association, partly to encourage local authority funding and partly to avoid the attentions of the *Diyanet*, and then found that it could not obtain an entry permit for an imam because it was not a religious community.

At this juncture it may make sense briefly to consider the constraints imposed on Muslims and their organization by British society particularly, since this paper is being written from the 'heart of England', to quote our municipal image makers. The ethnic and national origins of Muslims in Britain

are probably more diverse, also in their relative demographic weights, than in any other western European country. Of all the major countries in question, Britain is identified with Muslims from the Indian subcontinent, particularly Pakistan. My own assessment¹⁷, which formed the basis of the one published earlier in the *UK Christian Handbook*¹⁸, suggests that about two thirds of the Muslim population of Britain originates in the Indian subcontinent. Some of these people are of Indian or Bangladeshi origin directly, many are East African Asians. In fact, estimates suggest that only half of them are of Pakistani origin, i.e. one third of the total Muslim population. The remaining one third come from West Africa, the Caribbean, south east Asia, Cyprus, Iran and the eastern Arab world and Morocco. In total this makes for a mixture of origins which in its relative components is much more diverse than any other major European country. On the other side, the British social and political structures have also traditionally been among the most decentralised and flexible in Europe. The centralising tendencies of the 'Thatcher years' changed this traditional pattern somewhat but not so far as to impose a permanent qualitative change. For a long time, many Muslims assumed that power in Britain lay in the centre, in Whitehall- this was their experience previously under British rule as well as under the centralised independent successor regimes. The *Union of Muslim Organizations of the UK and Eire*, founded in 1962, therefore made its mark on the national scene through its lobbying of annual party conferences and hosting of leading political figures at annual receptions for the Prophet's birthday and the like. On the side of the British national 'establishment' this implied no obligations, because the locus of decision making affecting the daily life of Muslims lay in local government, not in Whitehall.¹⁹ The consequence of these two very diverse 'sides' coming together could be characterised as total confusion, except that it has not been quite that. More correctly, it might be described as a policy and experience of 'ad-hocery'! Central government has generally not laid down policy, only guidelines, and where specifically Muslim concerns are relevant guidelines have been useful: they delineate a direction or trend, but they do not dictate. Thus the guidelines issued by Birmingham's department of education in the late 1980's regarding the treatment of Muslim children set an 'atmosphere' or expectation -they did not lay down policy dictates.²⁰

It can be argued that, of course, this dissipation of authority on the British side together with the variety of the Muslim community combined to the satisfaction of the British authorities: Britain shares the deep-seated European ambivalence about Islam and the Muslim world. On the other hand, it must be confirmed that, whatever the motives may have been, and still continue to be, at the top of the political establishment, this decentralization of authority -and therefore scope for initiative- provides room for local authority structures to

adapt and react to local political pressures without too much constraint by central government.

While British society may continue to hold the kind of prejudices and stereotypes about Islam and Muslims, which are well-known from the medieval and imperial eras, the decentralization of authority provides political space for pressures to be placed on the structures where it matters. This has practical effects on the programmes of constituency parties -Labour or Conservative- on local government, on local health authorities, individual school governing boards, etc. In other words, at the public national level -Whitehall, the national media etc.- the stereotypes and the ideological tensions may be visible. But at the local level the practicalities of everyday negotiations over detail, with give and take, are a major determinant in the decisions which affect the everyday life of all the community, Muslim or not.

However, even within a British compromise such as that outlined above, the institutional environment arises out of a European history, in which Muslims have had no part and which they are only just beginning to try to influence. The pressure imposed on Muslim organizations by European official legal, political and bureaucratic expectations, is such that Islam has to become an ethnic identity. This may not be too serious a problem for Sikhs or Gujarati Hindus, but it is serious for Muslims who throughout Europe come from a variety of ethnic background, even if they in some countries may have the same nationality of origin. It is also serious, and perhaps more so, in inadvertently imposing an ethnic restriction on Islam, which is as contradictory to its nature as a universal religion as it is to Christianity.

Questions to be asked

So far this has been necessarily an impressionistic survey of the establishment and development of Muslim organizations with an emphasis on the factors contributing to determining the directions they have taken. Specific details about the situation of particular organizations or particular countries would take too much space and, in any case, would duplicate the data being presented in other papers in this volume. The purpose of the exercise so far has been to present sufficient background to be able to identify the kinds of questions and issues which need to be asked to determine the extent to which Muslim organizations represent a process of integration into or isolation from the wider European society.

First, we must look at the *origins* of the organization or movement in question. Has it arisen primarily out of a local European situation, or is it in some way a branch or agency of a movement based in the country of origin or another Muslim area? Whatever its origins, has it retained those first links or has it subsequently changed allegiance?

Second, what is its *theology*, understood in the widest sense also of political and legal theology? There is a question here of relating the subject to the wider pattern of Islamic debate, both in relation to traditional Islamic trends and also in relation to the various "modernistic" trends. The declarations and policy stances of the European branches need to be compared with their origins: do the various tendencies amend the main stream views of their movement to accommodate the European milieu, as one has seen an increasing flexibility in the attitude to the role of women among *Jamaat-i-Islami* people in Britain compared to the teachings of Maududi. To that extent do their spokesmen adapt to the "ignorant" views of their European based sympathisers so as to retain their allegiance? It is not unusual for groups of Muslims without advanced Islamic training to present Mu'tazilite views on the createdness of the Qur'an -is Mu'tazilism in this way sneaking in by the back door in Europe?

Third, what is the *nature* of the *structure* of the organization? This has to be answered both in relation to the country of origin (in terms of formal to informal, hierarchical to consensual, charismatic to scholastic) and in relation to the country of settlement. On this latter point it is no insignificant point that since 1980 a number of West German mosque associations have changed legal status from *eingetragter Verein* (e.V) to *Stiftung*, where the first is a democratic association structure and the latter is controlled by the appointed trustees. A similar development has been taking place in The Netherlands, and both are associated with the increased influence of the Turkish *Diyanet* (DITIB) at the expense mainly of the Süleymanci movement (*Islamische Kulturzentren*).

Fourth, and related, is the crucial question of *internal authority*. This operates at two levels which are interrelated, namely Islamic and social. Anthropologists would here distinguish between ascribed and earned authority. One of the problems of Muslim organizations in Europe is that, due to their being transplanted out of an environment with the continuity of tradition, leadership has usually to be earned. Very few leaderships, collective or individual, can move into an ascribed position; they can take over or be appointed, but to retain an effective position they constantly have to earn and defend their gains. This means compromise with the followers and the exploitation of all available resources to be able to provide them with the services which they expect.

This relates again to the question of Islamic legitimacy, in the terms which Gellner identified. Organizations are in competition with each other both for resources and for adherents, and a balance has to be found between legitimization by distribution of benefits (dependent on access to resources) and legitimization on Islamic grounds (Book, consensus, and/or line of succession).

Fifth, the purpose of amassing resources is to respond to needs by providing *programmes of activities*. Most widely this has tended to be instruction for the young through the so-called Qur'an schools. Thus a number of movements which have met with little popular support in the country of origin have been able to attract a wider circle of sympathisers, at least on a temporary basis, by providing that service. Perhaps the best example here is the work of the UK *Islamic Mission*, related to the *Jama'at-i-Islami*, a movement with little intrinsic popular support among the immigrant generation in Britain. Other activities are not insignificant: publishing, preaching (witness the work of the multinational *Tabligh-i-Jama'at*), provision of halal food and burial, and organization of the *hajj*.

Sixth, what is the *social base of recruitment*? The vast majority of organizations still recruit on primarily an ethnic/national basis and many on a more narrow base than that: clan, caste, region, craft, etc. I have deliberately not used the term class at this point, although it may become relevant with the coming-of-age of the European born generation and their children. One cannot ignore, either, the small but growing number of professional associations, over which there is a certain amount of competition by the larger, traditional religious-political movements. In recent years a number of attempts to start Muslim youth movements have appeared both from young people themselves and from the older organizations, and there is no doubt that one aspect of the internal Muslim dynamics in Britain around the Rushdie affair was the matter of control over such youth groups.

Seventh, there is the question of the *personnel of an organization*. What kind of people does an organization seek to recruit for its salaried positions? Many mosques have only limited choice because they depend on secondments either by the *Diyanet* or by a government agency from their own country or from another country, such as Saudi Arabia (not necessarily of Saudi Arabs). Other mosques have imported officials, especially in the early phases of establishment, from their regions of origin and meeting the traditional criteria of a village imam. The character of the particular person involved, the circumstances of recruitment, and the nature of the importing organization, all combine to determine the point at which a new appointee starts his functions: does he start from zero and have to earn every step of his way to respect and spokespersonship for his community? Is he dependent on the management committee which employs him, and how far does that open him to exploitation and manipulation, ultimately with the threat of redundancy and expulsion under immigration regulations? Or has he come at the behest of a sending authority, whether this be a centrally directed structure like the *Diyanet* or the *Jama'at-i-Islami* or an inherited structure like a Sufi order or a Pakistani pir-based group?

Eighth, is the matter of the *language* or *idiom* in which a particular group expresses itself. This is probably the least researched area of all, since it requires an intimate knowledge not only of what is going on in Europe, both in terms of the internal communications of Muslim organizations and their presentations publicly both to their own community and the wider society. It also requires an extensive experience of those movements and communities' forms of expression in the countries of origin currently and historically. The comparison in time and geographical and cultural space is absolutely essential for any valid evaluation to be made. This requires familiarity with such a variety of disciplinary tools that only some form of team work can achieve results. Areas which have to be researched are the differences in spoken and written expressions of the organization's aims and activities, an analysis and comparison of expressions in the various languages used by the organization concerned. If one takes as a simple example of the latter point, the Islamic declaration on human rights, issued by the *Islamic Council of Europe* about a decade ago, included the regular proviso in the English edition that a general principle was subject to the provisions of the law, a terminology which one is familiar with from European democratic constitutions. In Arabic those general provisions were subject to the provisions of the *Shari'a* -a very different implication to be drawn!

Ninth is the *unspoken language*, the *symbols* used by a given organization and its followers. These symbols can take the form of pictorial expression, like the posters, illustrations, cartoons, and diagrams which figure so widely in Muslim publications and buildings. Some of these are comparatively easy to interpret for the outsider, such as the persistent coincidence between Turkish-Ottoman history and Islamic slogans in many mosques in Germany -the absence of such historical symbolism in Pakistani mosques, where otherwise the national flag is often as prominently displayed, is a point worth exploring further. Others are much more difficult to interpret, including the beards of young men and the head scarves of women. I had one Syrian student who was constantly being assumed to be a Muslim Brotherhood activist by both Europeans and non-Arab Muslims; he was a Syrian Orthodox priest! The headscarf of the elderly peasant woman in Bavaria or Kashmir means something completely different from that of the young French Algerian or Dutch Muslim university graduate.

Tenth, and finally, is the question of *effectiveness*. This is very much a question of the perspective from which the matter is approached. European circles have expectations that at least some of these organizations are seeking to achieve improved circumstances of their communities. On the one hand, there may be very different perceptions of what is meant by improved circumstances -as in the area of education, where Europeans tend to see this linked to and dependent on educational "integration", while many Muslims

judge the question with reference to the preservation of Islam.²¹ On the other hand, the kinds of considerations which have been outlined earlier mean that for many organizations, effectiveness, i.e. at achieving spoken or unspoken purposes, is related to questions of preserving legitimacy, authority and power. Whatever the public statements of purpose of, say, the Moroccan *Amicales* in France, for many their effectiveness will be judged by their ability to retain the influence of the Moroccan government over its emigres. It is also often clear that the followers or members of a particular organization may have a different perspective from the leadership. Their is, thus, coincidence but not congruence between the perspectives of the core leadership and the general following of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* related groups in Britain. Because the organizations are able to provide services desired by the community, their followings are larger than they would be were the organizations more explicitly and exclusively devoted to the party programme.

Conclusions

In evaluating and analysing Muslim organizations and movements, we have to be aware of the biases and limitations of the observer, who is usually from outside the community -there are still very few participant observers in this field. I have suggested that our agendas and priorities for the organizations often tends to be different from theirs. Clearly, one also has to take into consideration the purpose of observation: is it a matter of extending and refining sociological or anthropological models? Is it policy oriented, in which case and in what kind of political context? The perspective of the observer -secular, Marxist, religious (and then which), etc.- must also be considered.

But perhaps in an area like this, an even more important question regards the ability to see, which is determined by the equipment at the disposal of the observer, not only the acquired academic discipline but also the inherited cultural patterns. Informal Sufi groups are virtually invisible to those who look only for formal organizations. The female half of community life is likely to be invisible both because observers are often male and because the tools and models of the relevant academic disciplines have been developed by generations of male observers with access only to male society- a fatal weakness in relation to traditional Islamic cultures. The very choice of my topic reflects this, in the light of the fact that formal organizations are characteristically a feature of the male sector of society.

However, the ability to see is also affected by what the observed allows us to see. All the communities we are dealing with have long experience of some degree of European contact under empire -this is true to some degree also of the Turks. They learned to adapt the communal defence mechanisms, designed to minimise interference from their Ottoman, Mogul or other rulers, to mitigate

the interference of British and French colonial and military officers. They learned how to manipulate their European collocutors, not always successfully, but often sufficiently to maintain some degree of autonomy. This experience is now being adapted and used in Europe itself. Thus, an older generation of Naqshabandi leaders in Britain, with some success at organising and obtaining public funding, turn out to have been NCOs in the British Indian army. One wonders how much of the observations which we make about Muslim communities, their processes, aspirations and organizations are coloured by this process.

This leads finally to the question of integration or isolation. One is tempted towards a conclusion that organizations, like the community as a whole, are tending in both directions. The continuing prevalence of imported leadership, priorities being set by factors outside Europe, the ambivalence of idiom and symbol all point towards, if not isolation, at least a strong degree of separateness. On the other hand, that same ambivalence of idiom and expression, changes in the nature and means of recruitment and, above all, the outer forms which organizations are adopting suggest a degree of adaptation to a new environment which indicates integration in the terms which I have suggested in the introduction.

Indeed, it is possible to argue that developments around the Rushdie and head scarf affairs in 1989 create a strong impression of a quite extensive integration at the organizational level. One part of the Muslim debate during those events was internal, directed by organizations at each other in a competition for legitimacy and support. But a significant part was concerned with communicating with the wider society. Certainly, what was being communicated did not often please that wider society, which responded negatively and wondered about Muslim isolation. But the organizations clearly thought it worth their while to engage in this controversy publicly and with stated demands put to the wider society, an attitude which puts them on a par with the majority of our traditional organizations.

Notes

¹Barton: 1982, 12f.

²Metcalf: 1982, and Mardin: 1989.

³Mitchell: 1969; Bahadur: 1983.

⁴George Makdisi's detailed argument that the *madhahib* were a network of institutions and not just a continuity of teaching (Makdisi 1981), if accepted, applies to the classical and medieval periods, not to later periods in my view.

⁵Trimingham: 1971, Ch.6.

⁶Gellner: 1969.

⁷Troll: 1989.

⁸Gellner: 1972.

⁹Shaw: 1988, 44-49.

¹⁰Bastenier/Dassetto: 1984,68f.

¹¹Legrain: 1986,5f.

¹²Modood: 1990

¹³Bastenier/Dassetto: 1984, 68f.

¹⁴Jensen: 1987.

¹⁵Sander: 1989, 23-35.

¹⁶The Dutch government provided support for the establishment of places of worship for Muslims and Hindus during the late 1970's but refused to resume the policy when recommended to do so by an official working party (See Waardenburg: 1983b).

¹⁷Nielsen: 1987.

¹⁸Holway: 1986.

¹⁹Nielsen: 1986.

²⁰Joly: 1989.

²¹Council of Mosques: 1986.

PART II

Integration and Institutionalization of Islam

The Road from Musalla to Mosque

The process of Integration and Institutionalization of Islam in Sweden*

A. Sander

Background

Sweden as a host country - the historical heritage

Only a few decades ago Islam was a virtually unknown phenomenon for most Swedes. Up to the Second World War Swedish people's contacts with and interest in Islam and Muslims were very limited and mainly indirect. Thereafter, and especially beginning in the 1960's and 1970's, they have steadily increased.

There are two main factors behind this increase in interest and contact. One is the increased economic and political (including religious) strength and activities of many countries in the Islamic world over the last few decades, with the "oil crises" of 1973 and 1976, the revolution in Iran 1978/79, the "Rushdie affair" 1988/89 and currently Saddam Hussein's activities in the Gulf area as the most note-worthy examples. The other factor is that Sweden, like the western industrial world in general has seen, since the mid 1960's, but particularly during the 1980's, a relatively large number of Muslims coming as immigrants and refugees.

These facts have been clearly reflected in the Swedish media. Issues concerning Islam and Muslims in general, and Islam and Muslims in Western Europe and Sweden in particular, have received increasing attention and coverage during the last 15 years. The media have, as Edward Said phrases it, "portrayed it, characterized it, analyzed it, given instant courses on it, and consequently they have made it 'known'".¹ Unfortunately, much of the coverage has been from a rather one-sided, ethnocentric, sensationalist, emotional and negative point of view. It has, if I may play on words, to a large

extent covered rather than uncovered Islam; more confirmed than questioned our old inherited Christian-western stereotypes, prejudices and clichés about Islam and Muslims. And this negative trend has been increasingly notable in the last few years. The mass media have focused more on a confrontational perspective in their reports on Islam. The "Islamic danger" has become accepted as an implicit and rarely questioned background to much of what is written about Islam and Muslims.

This has been very clear in the debate about whether or not the Muslims in Göteborg should be granted a permit to build a mosque in Biskopsgården², as well as in other discussions about the Muslim presence in Sweden. In this context it has, for example, been argued that Islam is a threat to the Swedish culture in general, as well as to our basic Swedish principles of democracy and to our views of the status of women and children. As the Muslims in Sweden are a socio-economically marginalized group, geographically dispersed and internally split, and as even if they were united, they would be too few to have any real -political or other- impact on mainstream Swedish society, all arguments that credit the Muslims in Sweden with the power to influence prevailing basic Swedish political, religious or moral norms, values and attitudes in the direction of Islam must be considered very far-fetched -if not outright- ridiculous. Despite this, many Swedes seem to take the "Islamic peril" seriously. This reaction to the Muslims is of interest, despite its irrationality, as it highlights important facts about our society and its ways of controlling religious (and other) deviations.

One of the best ways of understanding these sometimes irrational and bewildering Swedish reactions to immigrants in general and to Muslims in particular is to know some basic facts of Swedish history.

One such fact is that up until the last few decades Sweden has been an unusually ethnically, culturally, religiously and socially homogeneous society which has, since the end of the sixteenth century, consciously tried to protect itself from foreign influences with the aid of *highly restrictive* legislation, particularly on religion. The formula on which Sweden was built and governed was: "One nation, One people, One religion." Dissidents from the "Right Faith" could, for example, be expelled from the country up to the end of the 19th century, and the Swedes were not formally granted a Freedom of Religion Act until 1951. Evangelic-Lutheran Christianity has, for almost 500 years of Swedish history, exercised a tremendous -in principle absolute and unrestricted- influence on Swedish culture and the manners and customs, norms and value systems of the Swedes, as well as their ways of thinking. And we do not need to look very deeply to see that -despite the preconception that Sweden is a highly secularized society- it is erroneous to think that religion does not still largely exert its influence today. This notion of a common cultural heritage and language has strongly hampered making space for, and

establishing positive relations with, foreigners. As it also includes a common religion, law and political system as well as a common outlook on morals, gender, etc., large sectors of the public have, despite the official Swedish policies on immigration and freedom of religion, come to view third world foreigners as threats to "the" Swedish culture. One major reason for this is that Christianity is still viewed as central to the national identity. Despite society's having moved toward secularism and although most Swedes no longer go to church, Swedish culture and the life and thought patterns of the Swedish people are, despite our modern image, still highly saturated by Protestant Christian thought patterns, norms and attitudes. A Rabbi in Sweden, for example, recently went so far as to claim in a newspaper article that Sweden is the most religious country in Europe.

It has only been since 1945, and particularly in the last 20-25 year, that the situation in terms of unity and homogeneity have changed in any relevant respects. And this is mainly owing to the arrival in Sweden of a relatively large number of immigrants and refugees. As a result, the number of people *with foreign backgrounds* living in Sweden today is estimated at about 1.1 million.³ Of these, a little over 100,000 are from countries dominated by Muslim religious and cultural traditions, i.e. Muslims in the ethnic sense of the term.⁴ In a total Swedish population of roughly eight and a half million and with a total immigrant population of over one million, the Muslims would have remained an unimportant group if their presence had not evoked controversial issues far surpassing their real influence. And this is largely due to the fact that in the public opinion they have become associated with the historical military, political and religious confrontations between *Dar al-Islam* and the Western World and with the more recent Islamic (largely fundamentalist or integrist) revival and the events in the wake of that revival in many Muslim countries.

Swedish immigration policy and Freedom of Religion legislation

The Swedes generally believe that Sweden is a globally aware, free, open, secularized and unprejudiced society with progressive and generous immigration policies. This picture is also largely accepted outside Sweden. The "spirit" of these policies⁵ can be roughly summarized as: ethnic minorities with cultures different from the majority shall be given the possibility of (creating the institutions necessary for) maintaining central, important characteristics of their own cultures (language, basic norms and values, religion, food, dress, manners and customs, for example) *at the same time* as they shall have equal opportunities to participate in Swedish political, economical, social and other institutions and in Swedish society and social life in general *and* obtain equal return on this participation.⁶ This is what is normally referred to as a policy of *integration* (as distinguished from *assimilation*).⁷

This idea worked relatively well up to the mid-1980's, when the large majority of the refugees and immigrants came from countries dominated by thought and life patterns similar to those in Sweden. Thus the likelihood of *real* cultural conflicts⁸ were limited.

During the last decade, with the immigration of a relatively large number of people with backgrounds in countries dominated by a Muslim cultural tradition, the situation has changed. The new situation has made it obvious that "freedom of choice" as well as "freedom of religion" has limits. What these limits are, or ought to be is, however, unclear.⁹ Most popular, political and administrative reactions to demands from the Muslims¹⁰ have clearly shown that the ideal underlying the immigration policies, despite their official terminology, is the old historically based and deeply rooted idea of unity and homogeneity rather than heterogeneity and multiculturalism (i.e. assimilation to the majority culture rather than integration).

This is also reflected in the Swedish *Freedom of Religion Act*, according to which we have freedom of religion in Sweden. What does this mean? A quick glance at the Act makes it clear that the key word in the expression "freedom of religion" is *religion*. It is likewise easily seen that the legislators' opinion of what the term is supposed to mean is heavily colored by ideas arising from Sweden's historical heritage and Lutheran-Christian tradition concerning the tasks, scope, function, area of competence and so on of religion; of what a religion is. (Protestant) Christianity is taken as *the* paradigm for what religion and religiosity is (should be) and what its areas of competence and function are (should be). It is an anthropocentric¹¹, individualist, subjectivist and secularist notion of religion. The legislation builds without discussion, for example, on the distinction between a sacred/religious and a secular/profane sphere, assuming that the first is concerned only with private matters within the "existential sphere" -problems of individual and private moral sentiment and behaviour, solutions to problems of the meaning of life, salvation, etc. Within *this* area we have freedom according to the Freedom of Religion Act. In relation to the rest of society, the "secular" area, we are all, irrespective of religious beliefs and affiliations, equal, and must therefore *all* follow the same laws, rules and basic cultural norms and values. Society *is* secularized and is *therefore* the same for all.

It is clear that this view of religion differs substantially from the (traditional) wide or cosmocentric Islamic view, according to which religion is a total code or way of life which cannot be fragmented into specialized areas. Religion is *Din al-fitra*, the natural religion (or order) for mankind as well as for the rest of creation. *Everything* is the domain of an omnipotent God who has full control over *all* spheres of nature (including man as part of nature). *No* part of man's life can be exempt from (the need for) divine guidance or free from the writ of divine sovereignty (*tawhid*). Islam is not, in other words,

merely comprehended as a religion in our western sense, but as a "total way of life" for *all* human existence. This is why Islam, from our horizon, can be described both as a political order and as a culture, as something that penetrates deeply into every aspect of human existence, as concerned with government as much as with faith. It can, I think, safely be said that Islam still strives to create, as well as *de facto* to have, both a wide and strong influence over the cultures it dominates and the consciousness of its adherents.¹² These different concepts of religion lead to different expectations of what should be meant by "freedom of religion".

A Muslim in Sweden cannot, for example, refer to the Freedom of Religion Act as a basis for being able to practice the rules of the *shari'a* in matters of dress, slaughter, marriage, divorce, custody of children or inheritance. Such matters have *nothing* to do with religion, according to the Swedish concept of religion! Such questions are completely regulated by secular law, or individual secular authorities' regulations, such as the transportation authorities' regulations on uniforms, the regulations for protection of animals, etc.

This situation reflects, I believe, a double standard in our Swedish ideas of freedom of religion and thus in freedom of choice as reflected in our immigration policy as well. This policy both states explicitly that immigrants are allowed to freely maintain and develop their cultures and religions, at the same time as it assumes implicitly that this has to be done solely on our Swedish terms. A strict demarcation line has to be drawn between confessing to a religion and its performance, particularly in "everyday life situations", i. e. in situations outside specifically religious occasions and cult-places. Religion must not have practical consequences in everyday life which go against generally accepted Swedish manners and customs, norms and expectations. In reality, freedom of religion in Sweden boils down to including only the individual's free expression of an emotional-existential relationship with a largely personal God, preferably only on specific religious occasions and in separate cult-places, being for the rest democratized and privatized away. Obviously this creates problems for the Muslims, not least those under the influence of "popular Islam", as they generally tend to see or "interpret" their religion primarily in behavioral terms -as a (total) way of life for gaining respect and honour.

This means, among other things, that Sweden¹³ does not have the freedom of religion many Muslims -or Hindus or Sikhs- would expect. From the Muslim point of view the Swedish Freedom of Religion Act is, in many respects, arbitrary and illusionary. Bluntly, according to the Swedish Freedom of Religion Act, one may have whatever religion one pleases as long as it is "religion" according to the definition of religion given in the Act; i. e. as long as your religion is, at least structurally and functionally, "(another) kind of Christianity". In Sweden there is freedom of religion within the area which,

according to *Swedish* official opinion, constitutes religion.¹⁴ Against this background there are several differences of principle, and even possible areas of real conflict, between Islam (in Sweden) and Swedish official and "popular" society.¹⁵

Many of the problems the Muslims in Sweden are facing can be largely attributed to the notion, nature and place of religion in our society which includes, as we have seen, the notion that it should not be allowed to affect your behaviour outside your very private sphere.¹⁶ To allow religious considerations to affect your public life is considered both irrational and wrong. Society, its institutions and representatives should be impartial and objective, i.e. secularized. This ideal has saturated the general consciousness of the Swedes to an amazing extent in recent decades. The result is that religion has disappeared almost totally as a factor in our way of seeing and understanding other people and their ways of thinking and acting, including the ways we see and understand immigration. Religious aspects of immigration have been almost completely neglected in Sweden until very recently. Immigrants have been seen as people without religion, or, at best, with a religion as secularized and privatized as we have in our modern post-Christian era.¹⁷ Until quite recently immigrants have also almost exclusively been viewed in terms of secular labels such as nationality, language, ethnicity, political opinion or socio-economic class, and their identities and loyalties have been considered to be almost exclusively tied up with one or a combination of just mentioned categories. It has been largely ignored that "religion" from the Islamic horizon means something different than from the Western-Christian horizon. It has also been ignored that Islam is for many Muslims a very important factor in how they think, what they do and why they do it; in many cases perhaps *the* most essential aspect of their identity and "cognitive universe".¹⁸ When Muslims have pointed out and insisted upon the fact that they are Muslims first and foremost¹⁹ this has normally been met without understanding or with negative attitudes.²⁰ I do not think it is a great exaggeration to say that the discovery of the Pakistanis, Iranians, Turks, etc. *as Muslims* (in more than in the historically stereotyped and massmedial sense) has just begun.²¹

Against this background it is not strange that Muslims claim that they and *their* religious rights and needs are violated and discriminated against by Swedish society.

Islam and Muslims in Sweden

In 1950 the number of people in Sweden from countries dominated by Muslim cultural and religious traditions (i.e. ethnic Muslims) was only a few hundred, and in 1960 it was only marginally larger. In 1970 it had increased to roughly

10,000, in 1980 to close to 30,000, and in 1985 to around 50,000. I estimate today's total figure to around 115,000, of which the largest numbers have come from Iran ($\approx 37,000$), Turkey ($\approx 20,000$), Yugoslavia ($\approx 10,500$), Iraq ($\approx 8,000$), Lebanon ($\approx 6,500$), Ethiopia ($\approx 3,500$) and Morocco ($\approx 2,500$).²²

At present it is impossible to make a qualified statement about how many of these at least 100,000 ethnic Muslims are Muslims in a religious sense.²³ My own research among the Muslims in Göteborg indicates that some 50-60% of them can be said to be religious using a relatively inclusive definition of the term.²⁴

The Swedish Muslims are heavily concentrated in the Stockholm area, where about 50% of them live. The other two metropolitan areas in Sweden, the Göteborg area and the Malmö area, have roughly 15% each, which means that these three areas together are the homes of 75-80% of the Muslims in Sweden.

Another important aspect relating to the Muslims in Sweden is the relative sizes of the different groups. Organizationally as well as for other reasons²⁵ it is reasonable to speak of them as roughly constituting four groups: the Turkish Muslims, the Arabic-speaking Muslims, the Persian Muslims and the Pakistani Muslims.²⁶

The Turkish Muslims were the first Muslim group of any size to come to Sweden. Up to approximately 1980 they were by far the largest group. For a long time they were even larger than all the other groups together. This has given them a rather special position. For many Swedes, both individuals and authorities, they were *The Muslims*. They represented the Muslims in both official and unofficial contexts, their opinions were heard, they received, or at least directed, almost all financial or other "help" to minorities of Muslim background, etc. And this was no problem as long as they *were* by far the largest group.

But by 1985 their relative size was down to roughly 33% of all the Muslims, and today it is only around 16%. This, in combination with the fact that they have succeeded to quite a large extent in retaining their status as *The Muslims*, has begun to create problems. These problems have been minimized, as the Muslims have realized that unity in itself has a high "lobbying" value for such a small group.

The process of Muslim and Islamic institutionalization in Sweden

In discussions of the process of institutionalization of the Muslims in Sweden and elsewhere, it is useful to make a distinction between Muslim and Islamic institutions.²⁷ Islamic institutions are those institutions considered by the Islamic authorities as absolutely vital to people being able to practice Islam as a religion in a correct way, and thus for people to live a life as real, true or

good Muslims. The absence of these institutions makes it impossible, or at least extremely difficult, for Muslims to fulfill what the *shari'a* (the Quran and the *Sunna*) prescribes as necessary duties for a correct religious life. Examples of institutions in this category include: mosques, prayer halls (*musalla*) and the essential conditions for the proper performance of *salat*, *sawm*, *zakat*, *hadjj*, slaughter, circumcision, weddings, funerals, etc. according to Islamic Law and ritual, as well as the necessary conditions for the availability of religious leaders (*mullas*, *imams*, *khojas*, *molvis*) and the possibilities for them to operate and exercise their duties as they are supposed to.

Muslim institutions are institutions of a much wider nature than Islamic ones. They are institutions which (at least traditionally) constitute important parts of life in Muslim societies at the same time as their existence *cannot* be derived from the obligations of the *shari'a* -they cannot be said to be either *obligatory* or *recommended*. These are institutions which normally have their origins in various local, regional or national, sometimes even pre-Islamic, historical traditions and cultures. These kinds of institution would be more correctly called Moroccan, Turkish, Persian, Pakistani, etc., than Islamic. They include a wide range of customs and practices concerning for example the status, behaviour, dress, etc. of women as well as customs and practices in connection with birth, circumcision, name giving, weddings, sickness, funerals and other *rites de passage*.

It goes without saying both that the distinction is not sharp, and that opinion is divided among the religious scholars within the Islamic world about what falls more exactly within one or the other category. Islam is a far from uniform and homogeneous phenomenon.²⁸ In spite of this the Islamic/Muslim distinction is an important distinction, for non-Muslims trying to understand Islam and for the Muslim communities themselves.

When we talk about the Muslim and Islamic institutions and institutionalization in Sweden we have to take the history of Muslim immigration to this country into consideration. For simplicity, it can be summarized into the early and the later history.²⁹

The early phase begins with the immigration of labour during the early 1960's and goes on to the early to mid-1970's when, with the introduction of strong legal restrictions on labour immigration, such immigration more or less ceased (1972). Muslim immigration in this early phase was primarily characterized by immigration of young single Turkish males who came to Sweden with the intention of working for only a few years to make money and then going "back home" when they had enough to buy a house, a little business or the like "at home" in Turkey. Their migration was undertaken with a clear sense of being temporary, and was also seen as temporary by most of the Swedish authorities.³⁰ The main frame of reference for the immigrants during this period was that of their culture of origin. The need for Muslim and

Islamic institutions and organizations was therefore not experienced as very strong. The actual very slow and provisional process of institutionalization reflects this.³¹

The "meeting places" of these early Muslim immigrants were almost invariably a room in somebody's flat or shop, or some small premises rented for the purpose, that was "converted" into a "house mosque". These early "house mosques" were as a rule, rented on temporary contracts in "drafty, damp and smelly" parts of houses that were to be renovated or torn down. The function of these places were at least as much to offer "cultural retreat", "psychological security" or "a home away from home" as to provide traditional Islamic religious services. One natural reason for this was the almost total lack of "religious professionals" at the time. The religious observances actually conducted were led by the ablest among those who happened to be there.³² The early "house mosques" can thus be said mainly to have fulfilled extrinsic, rather than intrinsic,³³ religious functions: they functioned primarily as "homes away from home", and as places where the Muslim immigrants could make contact with a network of other Muslim immigrants with whom they could share and talk about their often bewildering experiences in Sweden, reaffirm their "old" beliefs, norms, values and culture as well as legitimize their deviations from them in their new lives in Sweden, and from whom they could get help with various practical issues pertaining to such things as finding a place to live or a job, get help and advice as to how to deal with the Swedish authorities, etc.

The late phase began around 1973 with the stop for labour migration. I would like to divide this phase in two sub-phases. The *first*, roughly 1973-1980, was characterized by a) the growing realization among many of the Muslim immigrants that their dream of returning home, for various reasons -mainly financial- was becoming more and more illusory; and, as a consequence, b) a strong increase in "family reunion" migration.

As a result of the growing presence of women and children in what the Muslims themselves regarded in many respects as the hostile and decadent Swedish society, new problems became pressing. Perhaps the most important³⁴ can be stated as that of reaffirming and legitimizing their "old" culture and religion for themselves and, even more important, transmitting them to the future generations.

For the Muslims who were interested in their children becoming and remaining Muslims in more than the ethnic sense, it was necessary to create more stable institutional structures within which Islam could be upheld, taught, protected, legitimized and transmitted. Another important reason for their wishes to build more "real" and permanent mosques was that such buildings also symbolized Islam's becoming rooted in Sweden. Activities aimed at creating religious and cultural institutions³⁵ also increased dramatically from

the mid-1970's and onwards. Lack of good entrepreneurs, educated religious functionaries, good "socialization agents" and a lack of general knowledge and competence, in combination with national, linguistic, political and religious differences and splits in the group made the process slow and difficult, and the resulting institutions were often poor at fulfilling both their intended internal and external functions.³⁶ A major problem with the institutions has been that an unreasonable amount of the time and efforts on the part of their leadership has been devoted to various internal disputes over facilities, influence, power, money, political and religious aims, goals and strategies which, given the situation, are of secondary importance. This has not only led to neglect of the organizations' primary goals and functions but also to organizational splits and a growing alienation of the members from the organizations and leadership.³⁷

The *second sub-phase* has primarily been one of immigration of refugees from the revolution in Iran, the war between Iran and Iraq, and the Palestine conflict, and of Kurds from Turkey, Iraq and Iran. The Muslims who came during this period had different backgrounds: they were not mainly poorly educated people from rural areas, but to a large extent educated middle-class people with urban backgrounds. Many of them were also Shi'ites. The Swedish Muslim population, in other words, became more heterogeneous. The number of "congregations" with house mosques or *musallas* also increased dramatically, as well as the number of people attending them.

In 1973 the first Swedish national Muslim organization or federation was created. In 1977 it organized eight local "congregations". Today there are three national federations, organizing over 40 local "congregations", with over 100 "external branch offices". All in all, there are roughly 150 places in Sweden today where, according to Muslim leaders, their 70-75000 "registered" members meet for prayer on a relatively regular basis. Of these "congregations" only three have mosques built especially for this purpose: an Ahmadiyya mosque in Göteborg, a primarily Sunnite mosque in Malmö and a primarily Shi'a mosque in Trollhättan. The rest of the "congregations" have facilities more or less rebuilt. Many of them are in basements which are in poor condition and ill suited for their purpose. Of the *musallas* in Stockholm, "not one of them have facilities above ground level", as one Muslim leader expressed it.³⁸

Despite the fact that most Muslims profess to consider it of utmost importance, it is to a large extent the above mentioned inter-communal split and rivalry that has delayed or blocked the various attempts and projects to build a "real", or *masjid jami'*-type, mosque in both Stockholm and Göteborg. Thus while this kind of project is considered by many Muslims to be one of the best or even the only way to overcome the "infighting" and further split among the different fractions and to bring the community together, effective progress to this end has been hampered by conflicting groups competing for

influence and control over the projects. Right now, however, there seems to be a possibility for a change from split to co-operation and unity in Göteborg.

I will now go on to describe some of the noteworthy points and difficulties of the course of events in the history of two such mosque projects in Sweden: the one in Malmö and the one in Göteborg.

History and problems of two mosque projects in Sweden. The examples of Malmö and Göteborg

A short history of the mosque project in Malmö

The first vague plans for a mosque were formulated as early as 1965 when the first Muslim "congregation" was established in Malmö. Neither the Swedish authorities nor the Muslims of Malmö seem to have taken the plans very seriously at the time. In 1971 the plans gained a foothold in the Muslim community and the first attempts to find a suitable building site took place. By the autumn of 1973 the "congregation" had its first "real" *imam*, and their activities -*salat*, Quranic teaching etc.- took on more stable and continuous forms. Three years later, in 1976, they were assigned a building site, fund raising began, architects were tied into the project, etc. The resulting plans were, given the number of Muslims in the Malmö area, etc., of a grand nature: a building of almost 3,500 m² with a dome, minarets, arcades, an atrium, a school, etc. The grandeur was motivated by the fact that the Muslims wanted a "worthy and dignified symbol for and representation of Islam in Sweden and Scandinavia as a whole." In 1979 the original "congregation" split in two owing to disputes over how the mosque project should be organized, and internal accusations of embezzlement and other financial improprieties.³⁹ In 1983 the actual building of the "first stage" of the mosque began. It was completed a year later, with space for 1000 praying Muslims.

Thus far the project had, compared with most other European mosque projects, been both relatively fast and easy to complete,⁴⁰ but it was not opened yet.⁴¹ According to the construction company it was "in the contract" that the Muslims would "get the key" when they had paid, and that the "foreign Muslim financiers" had agreed to pay upon completion. However, "the Muslims", according to the builders, refused to pay, and after some time the construction company took the necessary steps to have the building put up for sale by compulsory auction. The scandal was a fact. In the media the mosque was commonly described in terms of a "true" rather than "worthy and dignified" representation of Islam and the like. There were many stories of how prospective buyers were planing to turn it into everything from a parking garage to gambling (bingo) hall. In the end (1986) "the financiers" took their responsibility and *The Islamic Centre* "got the keys" to the mosque. During this difficult period the "original congregation" again (1985) split in two.

The most common explanation for these problems is that representatives of *The Islamic Center* had secured financial support from (at least) both Saudi Arabia (*al-Rabita*) and Libya (*al-Da'wa*) on the pretence that each of them alone was to have a strong influence over the activities. When they found out about one another, both refused to fulfil their obligations. Later they realized that, "to save the reputation of Islam", they had to work out a solution. Since 1986 the mosque has been in operation and the majority (> 90%) of the various costs connected with running it, including its *imam*, have been absorbed by a foundation called *The Muslim World League Islamic Centre of Malmö*, which is closely affiliated with *The Muslim World League* in Mecca. *The Councils of Swedish Free Churches* also contribute to its budget. Happy ending?

As usual the question has both a "yes" and a "no" answer. The "yes" answer is that the mosque seems to function reasonably well when it comes to *salat*, celebrations of *eid*, Islamic instruction, etc. It also functions well as a provider of information about Islam for the Swedes. It reports having around 15,000 non-Muslim visitors every year. The "no" answer is mainly that it has not succeeded in uniting the Malmö Muslims. Today there are three other "Muslim congregations" with their own house-mosques in Malmö, and each is a member of a different national federation. *The Islamic Center*, no longer a religious "congregation" but an economic association, is not affiliated with any of the Swedish Muslim national federations. They stand, as they say, directly under *The Muslim World League*. So, from one "congregation" without a mosque in 1979, the Muslims in Malmö now have three "congregations" without mosques and one mosque without a "congregation"!

The history of the Malmö mosque project was a success in that a mosque was built in a relatively short time. But from the point of view of becoming a uniting force for the Muslims in Malmö (and Sweden and Scandinavia as was also hoped) it has, at least so far, been almost a total fiasco. It has also, according to many Muslim leaders, had the additional negative effect of making "financiers in the Muslim World" very negative towards further involvements and investments in Sweden. It has, in short, given the Swedish Muslims "a bad name" in the Muslim World.

A short history of the mosque project in Göteborg

The first Muslims, mainly of Turkish origin, came to Göteborg during the second half of the 1950's. Up to the early 1960's there were no organized religious activities in the group. The gatherings that took place now and then in someone's home on Fridays, major holidays (*Eid*), festivals, etc. were of a rather spontaneous and "private" nature. In the early 1960's a Turk with a rug business (who later became Turkish consul), made a room in connection with his business facilities available for Friday prayer, *Eid* celebrations, and the

like. On a "normal Friday" there were around 10-15 participants. In the late 1960's the Turkish Cultural Association (*Turkiska Kulturföreningen*) acquired its own facilities in the center of town. The Muslims, still formally not institutionalized, rented the second floor in the premises ($\approx 250 \text{ m}^2$) as prayer hall.

In the mid 1970's the number of people who visited the prayer hall (*Musalla*) "at least a couple of times a month" had, according to my informants, grown to around 1,000. It was at this time the first vague plans for "a real mosque" began to take shape. Soon thereafter (1977) a formal religious "congregation", *The Islamic Centre, Göteborg* was also founded. In the late 1970's the first application for a building site was also filed with the local housing & building committee (*Byggnadsnämnden*). The authorities responded by suggesting a possible building site. The next step was to get a planning and building permit, one of the conditions for which is that the site be accepted for the proposed project by the local politicians and local government. With reference mainly to very negative opinions against the project from people living in the neighborhood of the suggested building site, the politicians rejected the request for the building permit, while wholeheartedly supporting the idea that the Muslims should be able to build and have a mosque despite this unsuitable proposed location.⁴² This "of course the Muslims should have a mosque, but not here" argument has since then been used in connection with almost every proposed building site.

The number of attempts to build a "real" mosque previous to the present one, which I soon will turn to, is about ten. Of these, three have resulted in the city building authorities suggesting building sites, on which they were later refused building permission by the local housing & building committee.

Not all the blame for the failures of the various mosque projects can be placed on the majority society, its bureaucracy and negative attitudes towards Islam and Muslims, however. The other major factor in Göteborg, as in most other places in Sweden and Western Europe, is Muslim intra- and inter-community rivalry. In Göteborg perhaps more than in most other places this has been augmented by the fact that the group has suffered from a serious lack of knowledge and competence and, more specifically, from a lack of competent and entrepreneurial leadership.⁴³ The Muslim leaders in Göteborg had little or no previous experience of planning, starting and running such a complex organization as a mosque, particularly not in the context of a society so saturated with bureaucratic and administrative routines as Swedish society. Their knowledge about and experience of Swedish city planning departments, their "ways of thinking" and their administrative routines were, if possible, even more limited than the Swedish authorities' equivalent knowledge of the Muslims. And to the extent either has learned anything relevant about the other over the years, the Muslims have learned about Sweden. It is obvious that a

situation in which both parties are basically ignorant of each other's ways of thinking, demands, expectations, requirements, etc., is not conducive to good results.

One example of intra- and inter-community rivalry is the official split of the originally unified "congregation" into two different branches, each with its own house mosque, in 1978. The reasons for this split, in addition to the "traditional" sources of conflicts between "Turks" and "Arabs", were disputes and conflicts regarding leadership, influence, power, money, political and religious aims, goals and strategies, i. e. disputes of more "personal kinds". The creation of a new "congregation" did not end this kind of conflict, and both "congregations" have since been through a surprisingly large number of more or less dramatic internal power struggles and changes of leadership. These conflicts and frequent changes of leadership have not only resulted in a considerable alienation of "the normal Muslims" - "the clients"- from the organizations, but also, and more seriously, prevented the necessary build-up of knowledge and competence in the "congregations". Each new mosque project has, for all practical purposes, been run by "rookies". This lack of continuity -in personnel and aims and methods- has of course also led to difficulties in the relationship between the Muslims and the Swedish authorities.

One of the main results of the formal division of the original "congregation" can, in summary, be said to be that it added inter-congregational rivalry to the already existing intra-congregational rivalry.

A good example of the intra-congregational rivalry can be seen in the failure of the penultimate attempt to build a mosque. At the turn of the year 1985/86 a larger building, owned by the city of Göteborg, in the area where the Muslims had expressed a wish to acquire a building site became vacant. In early 1986 the city offered it to *The Islamic Centre* (the "Turkish congregation") for conversion into a mosque. The price was considered very reasonable. Soon fund raising started, architects were engaged, etc. In October a local newspaper published an article about the project, including a picture of the planned building with minarets, archways, etc. That was followed by the "normal" public "outcry". The local media were "flooded" by letters to the editor, petitions were signed, protest meetings arranged, etc. For once the politicians did not seem bothered, and in November the board of the *I.C.* formally passed resolution to buy the building. At this time the project was also economically secure. In early 1987 a deed was set up and accepted by both parties. Representatives of the house owners signed the deed. The chairman of the *I.C.* was to sign it after their next board meeting, a pure formality, it was said. However, before that meeting part of the board went to Turkey. While they were there a "revolution" occurred in the *I.C.*, and the chairman and his supporters were removed from the board. In early June 1987

the new board claimed they could only buy on the condition that they did not have to pay any interest on borrowed money, as it was against Islam to do so. As the old board, according to the house owners, had already explicitly assented to buying the house "according to accepted Swedish laws and customs" they could only interpret this as a pretext for calling the deal off. And it was duly cancelled.⁴⁴

A year later, in 1988, *I.C.* was sent its first "real" *imam*⁴⁵ as well as a new proposal for a building site for a mosque in the same part of town (*Biskopsgården*). They accepted, and submitted an application for a building permit to the local housing & building committee in early 1989. The first application was rejected. It stated that the proposed area was not planned for that kind of building, and that they therefore, even to be able to consider the application, would first have to revise the plans for the area. Such a revision was estimated to take at least two years.

At the end of 1989 the *I.C.* nonetheless submitted a new application for a building permit. This application was preceded by an arrangement between the two "congregations" in Göteborg during the early fall 1989 to work together for the project, and to form a joint building committee. They also engaged a retired Swedish politician as chairman of the committee. With a united front and with someone who knew the "ins and outs" of the Swedish bureaucratic systems as its representative, their clout increased dramatically. The result was that the housing & building committee was told by the city building authorities in February 1990 to do the necessary planning for a decision on the building permit. Later that month the question was submitted to the district council (SDN) in *Biskopsgården* who suggested that an investigation should first be made to see whether there were other "more suitable" sites for the mosque. This resulted in six new proposals in other parts of town. The Muslims rejected them all. In April 1990 the district council (SDN) in *Biskopsgården* submitted their opinion on the proposed site. Of the almost eight page long document, roughly 1/2 page dealt with "the issue", the rest was a long tirade against Islam and Muslims in combinations with far-fetched speculations about a large number of negative effects a mosque would bring to the area. Again the conclusion was: "Of course the Muslims should have a mosque, but not here".

This "no" resulted in the Muslims deciding to hold a "protest action".⁴⁶ On the 11th of May they arranged Friday prayers on a major square in downtown Göteborg. Over 200 people attended, and prayed in front of TV cameras, journalists and bewildered Swedish shoppers. The result was a large number of interviews, debate articles, letters to the editors, public hearings, etc. in the media throughout the summer. Most of the coverage was negative. A (State church) priest in the neighborhood, for example, claimed on TV, radio and in the newspapers that the mosque had to be stopped as Islam -beside

representing all the traditional negative western stereotypes- seduced and corrupted the young Swedes, particularly the women. Representatives of many other local Swedish organizations came out with basically the same message. The "old picture" of Islam as a danger to our basic Western-Christian Swedish manners and customs, norms and values, especially concerning our attitudes towards women and children was voiced again. The "debate" soon reached the level where the Bishop of Göteborg, as well as high level politicians and organization leaders, felt they had to go out and denounce the opinions of their "local representatives" and claim that the church, their political party, etc. was not for discrimination, racism and the like, but stood behind and defended the official Swedish policies on immigration, freedom of religion, etc.

One of the net effects of the debate⁴⁷ has been that the politicians in the local government, who are the ones who will finally decide the issue, have been placed in the position (unpleasant for them) of either accepting the project or being considered to give in to, or to take side with, discrimination and racism. Although their final decision has continually been postponed, it seems⁴⁸ that they -if they cannot find another politically less problematic building site acceptable to the Muslims in the very near future- will feel that they have to grant the Muslims their building permit. But there is a long way to go from a building permit to a mosque!

The main threats to the project, if the permit is granted, are, as usual, intra- and inter-"congregational" rivalry and lack of money. There are already clear signs of tension of the traditional kinds between the "congregations" as well as within them. It is also not unlikely that the critics are right in saying that the plan for the building has been too ambitious both in terms of size and in achieving an "Islamic architecture". This concern about size and costly Islamic symbols contributes, on the one hand, considerably to making the costs high, and on the other to give rise to misunderstandings and negative feelings in the majority society. The grandeur of the project is especially problematic as most Swedes seem unable to comprehend that a mosque is not (only) a place of prayer or worship (a temple, a chapel, a church) in the Christian sense -but something far more. If what you expect (as reasonable) is something like a chapel, the grandeur of the projects must, of course, be striking. This has also led to suspicions that what it "really" is, is an attempt by "the Muslims"⁴⁹ to try to "cover up" social and political as well as religious subversive activities behind the facade of a "temple", i.e. "to fool" the Swedes. And as the stereotype of Islam includes a preconception that it is meritorious for Muslims to fool "unbelievers", that idea germinates easily.

What all this shows, I believe, is that much of the debate about the mosque can be seen in light of the question of privatization vs officialization of religion in society, and, thus, as a debate about the place, function, role and sphere of competence of religion in society which, of course, is a variation on the

historical debate about the concept of religion to be used and applied in discussions of "freedom of religion". This is, I believe, one reason why the Swedes are so bothered by questions about what rights and degrees of freedom and autonomy individuals and groups can claim in the name of religion, and by questions about how far arguments grounded on religious considerations are valid when it comes to an individual's official public life (behaviour, dress etc.). The core of the problem, I think, is that the (presence of) Muslims and their "demands" on Swedish society have actualized the long dormant question in Sweden about the demarcation line between, and relative power of⁵⁰, the religious and the profane spheres and "their" respective organizations and representatives. The Swedish reaction to the Muslims' raising of, or giving rise to, those questions is basically a refusal to discuss them in those terms, and instead attempt to "rename" them as a "conflict" between the Western-Christian and the Muslim-Islamic cultures. There is also a strong tendency to polarize the issue to the extent that people are led to believe that it is actually a decision between "them" *or* "us", between "their" culture and ways *or* "ours".⁵¹

Concluding remarks on problems in connection with mosque projects in Sweden

As can be seen from these case descriptions, it is, at least in a schematic overview, defensible to divide the problems and obstacles the Muslims in Sweden are facing in their attempts to institutionalize themselves into the two commonly used categories "dominant society-bound" and "minority group-bound". It is also defensible to divide those categories into structural (and long-term) and non-structural (and short-term) obstacles, and at least the former, into the two commonly used categories "formal" and "informal" obstacles. I will follow that division in the remainder of this paper.⁵²

The main dominant society-bound obstacle in the process of Muslim institutionalization in Sweden

Given the way in which the Swedish policies on immigration, freedom of religion legislations and policies etc. are officially formulated,⁵³ one would not expect to find too many structural dominant society-bound obstacles to the Muslim process of institutionalization, at least not of a formal nature. As I have tried to indicate in the first part of this paper, I nonetheless think that there are reasons to consider the historic ideals of unity and homogeneity, deeply rooted in the consciousness of most Swedes, as an important barrier of this kind. Even if these barriers are not -at least yet- officially formulated as part of existing legislation, they are clearly part and parcel of the way in which

the legislation is normally implemented. Reformulated in terms of the formal/informal distinction, the barriers the Muslims meet, even if not *strictly* of a formal kind, in reality -in implementation- to a very large extent work as if they were formal(ized). This is mainly due to the way the legislation and policies interact with informal factors, such as the prevailing deeply-rooted (positive) images among the Swedes of what Swedish culture and religion is (ought to be) and of the corresponding deeply-rooted (negative) images of Islam, Muslims and Muslim cultures.

One factor making this obstacle possible is the vagueness with which the policies are formulated. Nonetheless, the way many representatives of various Swedish political, bureaucratic and administrative institutions and agencies, when creating difficulties for, or saying "no" to, various Muslim demands and institutionalization projects, such as preschools, schools and mosques, often do so with reference to "existing laws and regulations", i. e. with purely formal arguments. Much of the debate around, and the Swedish authorities' reactions to, the mosque project in Göteborg stands as good examples of this way of transforming informal barriers into formal ones.

The formula on the basis of which most of Swedish society and its political, etc. authorities and agencies work *de facto* is: as long as a religious (or any) movement, group or organization fits in with, accepts and sustains the Swedish ideals and pattern of what Swedish culture, and more particular what a religion (ideally) is, how it should be organized, what they should claim in the name of religion, etc., society is willing to support it with a relatively wide range of official privileges, both economic and others. But faced with alternative religious ideas and practices, ideas which, it might be feared, were not compatible with basic Swedish manners and customs, norms and values, etc., society reacts with bureaucratic rigidity, *ad hoc* administrative sanctions and difficulties, as well as with negativity and distrust in general. All this, of course, behind a veil of objectivity and official detachment!

It is important to see, though, that it is a misconception to view this "repression" or "discrimination" of the Muslims *only* in terms of a "witch-hunt" against Muslims, grounded in negative stereotypes, attitudes etc., as many Muslims have a tendency to do. The "Muslim problem" must also be seen in a wider perspective. This includes the realization that the various political, etc. agencies representing the Swedish state, on both national and local levels, have a long history as bodies of state control. The general functions for which they were intended, therefore, had little to do with religion, and even less with Muslims, but were of a much more general nature. They were intended to be objective, impartial and non-religious administrative agencies to safeguard the Swedish unity and homogeneity by marginalizing, limiting and solving all kinds of controversies in society, in the best interest of society at large. It should therefore not be seen primarily as a more or less

conscious intention to suppress Islam and Muslims that the Muslims now *happen* to be their main target, but mainly as an "indirect" effect of the contingent fact that the Muslims are the main deviant group in Sweden today and that they are viewed to a large extent as a threat (at least potentially) to the traditional Swedish notion of Sweden; Muslims are seen as problem people with problem cultures. The intention of the bureaucrats is, in other words, not primarily to discriminate against people with any particular religion or culture, but rather (only) to try to minimize disputes and conflicts in society. Safeguarding and upholding the (traditional) unity and homogeneity is considered to be the basis of a good and prosperous society. This is considered to be in the general interest of most Swedes. And so far society has admittedly succeeded very well in its efforts to achieve this aim, and also thereby prevented a "real" multiculturalization of Sweden to date.

My claim, made above, that the historic Swedish ideals of unity and homogeneity can be seen as structural obstacles, obstacles that have to be made explicit and changed before we can achieve a (truly) multicultural Sweden needs to be understood against this background.

When it comes to *this* kind of deeply-rooted obstacle to Muslim integration and institutionalization it seems clear to me that Sweden, compared with many other countries in Western of Europe, is lagging behind. From what I have learned of the situation in Britain, for example, it is now (has become) possible for the Muslims to do things that are not possible to do in Sweden. Whereas we are still seriously debating whether or not to allow the Muslims to build a mosque, have access to *halal* food in the canteen at schools or work places, etc. -as well as whether it would be a threat to Sweden and its culture, way of life, etc. if we granted them this- as questions of principle, the situation in Britain seems to have moved to the level of practicality. In Britain the discussion now revolves around whether a particular solution is practically possible and effective, rather than, as in Sweden, around whether or not the underlying principles and the motives of the Muslims are acceptable from a traditional Swedish point of view, or whether or not their motives are compatible with traditional Swedish manners and customs, norms and values.

The main minority-group-bound obstacles in the process of Muslim institutionalization in Sweden

Before turning to the topic in the title of this section, I would like to mention a more general problem with an attempt to present a short summary of minorities problems (of integration and institutionalization). Every attempt to separate and isolate "their problems"⁵⁴ into some kind of "catalogue", although always necessary for analytical purposes, does violence to reality in several ways.⁵⁵ Such listing, for example, easily gives rise to the idea that the pro-

blems singled out are independent, separate, isolated phenomena that can be treated, and perhaps even solved, in isolation, independent of one another. In "reality", however, it is necessary to realize that they constitute *one* highly interconnected web of problems in which different, but strongly interrelated, aspects for analytical purposes can be singled out for individual discussion. Any serious attempt to solve them presupposes that the totality be taken into account.

The Muslim community in Sweden and its presence in and relation to Swedish society constitutes a highly differentiated, complex and interrelated reality. How an analyst views, conceptualizes or describes "the whole", how s/he decides, for analytical purposes, to break it down into "parts", how s/he views the relationships between these "parts", thinks about the problems of cause and effect, justification and evidence in the area, etc. are contingent upon a number of scientific (theoretical, methodological and conceptual) considerations and decisions as well as on "extra-scientific" ones; many of which are normally not made clear by the analysts, either to themselves or to their readers.⁵⁶

With this in mind, I think that the main minority-bound problem for the Swedish Muslims is their cultural, national, linguistic, religious/theological and political heterogeneity and the consequent intra- and inter-community rivalry and split.⁵⁷ This is also generally recognized by the Muslims themselves.

Another problem of importance is that the group -including many of its leaders- suffers from lack of knowledge and competence. This is true both in a general way -in that the first generation of Muslims, particularly those who came before the 1980's, mainly came from rural areas and had a relatively low level of (formal) education in combination with a conservative view on most matters, including Islam- and also in more specific ways. Above all, they often had a deficient knowledge of Islam in general, and the knowledge they did have was often heavily colored by local cultural, political and religious traditions. Added to this, they also often had poor knowledge about and competence in the Swedish language and culture. The number of Swedish converts who could give the Muslims effective help as competent and authoritative "bridge builders" between themselves and the Swedish society was and is also very limited.⁵⁸ This has, of course, made the Muslims very dependent upon sympathetically inclined non-Muslims in their various relations with Swedish society. This is not always conducive to producing the best results.⁵⁹

From what I understand of the situation in, for example, the U.K. and France, this lack of knowledge and (cultural) competence problem is far less accentuated there than in Sweden. Of the Muslims who have immigrated to the U.K., for example, many already spoke English, a fair number had university

or other higher education, often within an educational system that, from colonial times, was influenced by the British educational system. Some had also gone through higher education in the U.K. Something similar also, *mutatis mutandis*, seems to hold true for France, while nothing of this nature applies to the Swedish Muslims.

As many of the Islamic and Muslim leaders in Sweden still belong to the first generation, this has often resulted in that they and the (other first generation) "members" of their "institutions" have shown a tendency to isolate themselves from the surrounding society. In some cases this isolation has also led to conflicts of various kinds with what they are trying to isolate and defend themselves from. And this, unfortunately, also includes conflicts with young dynamic Muslims who try to take an active part in the activities of the mosques in order to "reinterpret" or "redefine" Islam and what it is to be a Muslim to fit the new Swedish situation.

This is especially serious as i) the young people are as a rule better educated and have better Swedish cultural competence than their parents, and also often better than their teachers in Islam and "home culture". At the same time they ii) realize that they are Swedes and have to live in Sweden. They cannot, and do not want to, become "little Turks" for example, which is often what their parents and religious leaders at least appear to want. If they want to become, and continue to be, Muslims in more than ethnic respects, they must find a way to become "Swedish Muslims". Most of the people in the second generation who are involved in religious Islamic activities also try to find a formula by which they can create both an Islamically acceptable or legitimatable, and, to use Goffman's term, a "passable" form of Islam for Sweden. In this process in many cases, the older generation loses their authority over the second generation. The older generation blames this on the young being Westernized and secularized, and become even more conservative and "stuck in their ways". In short: the generation gap grows.

One result is that many of the young Muslims become alienated from, and lose (all) interest in, the older generation and also often in their culture and religion and the organizations representing them. Many religious Muslims of the first generation describe the second generation as "lost".⁶⁰

The more recent Muslim immigrants have, as a rule, come from more urban areas, are of more middle class background, have better educations, etc., but they are also primarily refugees, rather than immigrants. One result is that, as a rule, they intend to return "as soon as (politically) possible" which makes them, among other things, less inclined to become deeply involved in institutional build-up and other long-term oriented minority culture activities. Those who do become involved in institutional activities, even the explicitly religious(ly practicing) ones, are more inclined to engage in politically rather than (purely) religiously oriented organizations. Furthermore, many of them,

on top of an immigrant's "normal problems", also suffer from various problems related to experiences of war, persecution, jails, torture, etc. In many cases, therefore, they need more help than they can give.

A final minority-bound obstacle is the problem of leadership. Most "congregations" today, as indicated, lack both religious and "other" leaders who have the necessary double knowledge of and competence in Islam *and* the Swedish language and the way Swedish society and culture function. Many "congregations" even seem to lack leaders with sufficient knowledge and competence in one of the two areas. This lack of good leadership is also one main reason why many "ordinary Muslims" have lost interest and confidence in the "congregations". This is clear from my field work.

It is in my opinion, however, a misconception for several reasons that this problem can be solved by "importing" a "real" *imam*, as is still believed in many "congregations". One reason is that the "imported" *imams*, because they lack competence in Swedish and Swedish culture can at best only fulfill one of the functions expected and needed of a "congregation's" leader. Another is that these *imams* normally see their roles too much as "guardians of the true faith", which, among other things, includes the aim of purging the members of their "congregation" from syncretism, instilling in them the concept of Islam as a complete code of life, and preventing them from becoming secularized. In short: they usually work on the basis of the assumption that a purified Muslim community is a strong community able to expand, and that, conversely, the reason Muslims are weak is that they do not know and practice "true Islam" and are therefore "corrupt" in their faith. One of the main tasks these *imams* normally set for themselves is also to educate their "congregations" in "true Islam" in order for them to observe Islam correctly.

In doing this⁶¹ the *imams*, however, normally misjudge, or misunderstand, the effect this will have on the "members" of their "congregation", who live and believe outside the context of a living (traditional) Muslim community, separated from the context which normally mediates their faith and the various ways in which it is expressed. As Geertz, among others, has noted⁶² the crisis facing Muslim communities in the modern world -and thereby notoriously the Muslims in the diaspora in Western Europe- is not so much one of knowing *what* to believe, as *how* to believe. When the context of a (traditional) Muslim society/community with its traditions is no longer available or powerful, the way people believe, or *are* Muslims, or perhaps the way they express their Islam/faith, must be modified or replaced if religious faith is to survive at all. These are some of the reasons that the solutions the "imported" *imams* often propose for solving the problems in the Swedish Muslim communities tend to be counterproductive or dysfunctional. The effects of their teaching may thus be different from what they intend, and it is not unusual for such *imams* to create more problems than they solve. This is extremely unfortunate, as the

imams are central figures, not only in Islam historically but, in my opinion, for the future of Islam in the diaspora. The Muslim community must find some way of solving this problem if it is going to succeed with its institutionalization projects and survive in Sweden in the long run.

Notes

*The research on which this paper is based is being done in a project sponsored by *The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation*. The empirical research - questionnaires, deep interviews and participant observations - has been done almost exclusively in the Göteborg (Gothenburg) area. My knowledge of local conditions in the Muslim communities in other areas of Sweden is, with the exception of interviews with Muslim leaders, limited mainly to existing written material, of which there is little.

¹Said: 1985,XI.

²I will return to this topic later.

³Given this figure, immigrants make up around 13% of the Swedish population.

⁴For a more detailed description of immigration to Sweden, its different phases etc. see Sander, forthcoming, 1991a.

⁵The central part, on freedom of choice, runs as follows: "The goal of *freedom of choice* implies that public initiatives are to be taken to assure members of linguistic minorities domiciled in Sweden of a genuine choice between retaining and developing their original cultural identity and assuming a Swedish cultural identity." (SOU 1974:69 s. 25) *Regeringsformen* (the Swedish Constitution) Ch. 1. § 2. says: "The ability of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities to retain and develop their own cultural and community life should be reinforced."

⁶A case in point is that foreign national immigrants have the right to vote in local elections after five years of legal residence in Sweden.

⁷Various problems in connection with determining how this goal of integration can and ought to be interpreted in detail is discussed in Sander, forthcoming, 1991b.

⁸For the distinction between real and spurious cultural conflicts see Sander, forthcoming, 1991a and 1991b.

⁹For a discussion of the problem touched upon here see Sander, forthcoming, 1991b.

¹⁰See Sander: 1988c, 1989a.

¹¹For the distinction between anthropocentric/cosmocentric religions see Skorupski: 1976, 25-29.

¹²It has, to use Geertz's (1968: pp. 111f) terminology, both high *force* and wide *scope*. This being so should make us expect that the influence of religion (Islam) on the consciousness and life-world of the Muslim immigrants (on their thought and life-patterns) should be rather great. In other words, phenomena related to religion (Islam) can be expected to be both important and sensitive parts of the identity of the Muslim immigrants.

¹³But, of course, not only Sweden. This concept of religious liberty is, to varying degrees, shared by the whole western world. Cf for example the United Nations Declaration on the Freedom of Religion 1981. (*Declaration of the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief* adopted by the General Assembly 1981 (Resolution 36/55).

¹⁴See Sander: 1981 and 1988b, for a more detailed discussion of the problems touched upon here.

¹⁵See Sander: 1989a, forthcoming 1991a, and 1991b, for an inventory and discussion of these problems and conflicts.

¹⁶If you want to be, and to be considered, objective, that is. And that is one thing Swedes want very much!

¹⁷Thus, for example, there are no statistics on religious affiliation among immigrants.

¹⁸Arguments for why it is preferable to describe and discuss Islam within a phenomenological (in the Husserlian sense) framework as a "cognitive universe", a "pattern of interpretation" or the like rather than in any kind of "empiricist" framework are given in Sander: 1985, and especially 1988a.

¹⁹For example, when they have argued that according to our immigration policies, as they see it, they should be able to get religious/Islamic instruction on similar conditions as they have home-language instruction.

²⁰Of course there are other reasons for this neglect of the religious factor in our dealings with and studies of the Muslim immigrants. One is that when we make it an object of study we are faced with our old inherited images, stereotypes and myths of Islam and Muslims. And given the fact that they are very deeply rooted in our Western-Christian consciousness and thereby deeply internalized in ourselves and charged with negativity and hostility to a degree incompatible with any other world religion or group of people, it is psychologically much easier to deal with them in a secular framework.

Another reason for the neglect is, I think, that the majority of the Muslim immigrants to Western Europe come from rural areas and represent "popular" or "low" forms of Islam, and that most western scholars of Islam have been mainly interested in the "classical", "high" or "Great" traditions of Islam (preferably older than the fourteenth century) -this mainly goes for the historians of religion- or, when we talk about scholars interested in "living religion," i. e. primarily anthropologists, their main interests seem to have been in village or microlevel studies of places as far away as possible from their own country. Add to this that many, if not most, sociologists seem to have had a rather "materialistic" inclination in the sense that they have focused on secular categories (as exemplified above) and problems, such as racism, economic exploitation, unemployment, and poor living, working and education facilities. This is not said primarily as a criticism, but as an explanation for why the area in question is neglected.

²¹One of the many "proofs" of this is the agendas of, and the reports following from, the "immigration councils" the Swedish government has been organizing together with the various immigrant organizations, researchers on immigration, etc. over the years. The first time religion in any form appeared in these contexts was at the 1990 council, where it was one of the four major topics of discussion.

²²Their are, of course, different ways to estimate the number of Muslims in Sweden. All of them involve methodological, theoretical and empirical problems. How I reached my figure, various uncertainties connected with this approach in general, as well as with the figurers for individual countries, are discussed in Sander: 1988c, 1989b, forthcoming 1991a, and 1991b. In spite of all the problems, and the naturally following considerable margin of error, the figures reached this way agree surprisingly well with other estimates made on the basis of other principles. Today's figure on ethnic Muslims in Sweden can therefore safely be estimated to a bit over 100,000.

²³All estimates depend, of course, ultimately on how you define "religious Muslim", i.e. which criteria or variables you decide to define and use to measure religiosity. The problem of determining how many of the Swedish Muslims are religious therefore -as the problem above of how to determine how many Muslims there are in Sweden

-includes both theoretical and empirical parts. As far as the theoretical issue goes, there are several "indexes" for measuring religiosity, or religious conformity, in general (normally within a Christian context) as well as specifically for Islam (and other non-Christian religions) to be found in the literature in the fields of philosophy, sociology, psychology and anthropology of religion. This is not the place to review that literature. I will only say that when it comes to Islam, variables like Koran recitation, daily prayers, visiting mosques, fasting, observing food and drink regulations, observing *purdah* and the like are the most commonly named or suggested.

²⁴People are, according to this definition, counted as religious if they claim to believe in God, consider themselves to be religious, claim that religion (Islam) is very important to them *personally*, visit a prayer hall at least once a month, practice *salat* on the average at least once a week, fast for (at least some part of) Ramadan, wish they were, and aim to be, "better Muslims" and wish their children to become "good (practicing) Muslims".

²⁵Including the fact that the Muslims have a tendency to do so among themselves.

²⁶In more specific and detailed discussions, of course, it is necessary to make further specifications and distinguish among the Alevi, the Kurds, the Isma'ilis, the Yugoslavian Muslims, the Ahmadiyya, and so on, as separate groups.

²⁷This distinction is in line with the normal use of the terms *Muslim* and *Islamic*. The first term is usually used to indicate traditional and cultural *de facto* conditions under which Muslims live, and the second to indicate conditions that have to do with (normative) Islam as a religion, legal system and social and political order. Turkey is a *Muslim* country, about 98% of its population are Muslims. Iran is an *Islamic* republic: the shari'a is the foundation for its legal, political etc. systems.

²⁸For a discussion of the importance of realizing this diversity, particularly in a migration situation, see Sander: 1988c, 1989a and, forthcoming, 1991a.

²⁹For a more detailed discussion of this topic see for example Sander, forthcoming, 1991a.

³⁰Or, more correctly, they were expected either to go home again relatively soon or to realize "how good" Sweden was and assimilate quickly.

³¹The strength of this "myth of the return" is still clearly visible in that nobody until very recently made any arrangements for the burial of non-Christians in Sweden. This neglect has now turned into a major problem for the Muslims in Sweden.

³²No wonder many of them at the time considered themselves "to be on journey" while living in Sweden, thereby, among other things, legitimizing their non-conformity *vis a vis* their religious duties.

³³For this terminology see Robertson: 1970 pp.54 ff, 133 ff.

³⁴That they also faced the whole range of other problems the Muslims in Western Europe normally have to face -from the more general problems in connection with their legal status and recognition in Sweden, unemployment, housing, education, etc. to more specific problems such as being able to pray at work, find *halal* food, being able to take time off from work for the major *Eid*, etc.- goes without saying. For a more detailed account of these problems see Sander: 1988c, 1989a, and, forthcoming, 1991a.

³⁵I limit the discussion to the religious ones here.

³⁶I discuss the various internal and external functions the religious institutions (the mosques) are supposed to satisfy according to their leaders -as well as those my research indicates they satisfy *de facto*. The problems of satisfying them and related questions are discussed in greater detail in Sander: 1988c and 1989b.

³⁷I return to this issue below.

³⁸I discuss these figures and development, as well as the main causes behind it, in some more detail for example in Sander, forthcoming, 1991a.

³⁹The "new" congregation created at the time now has its own plan to build a mosque.

⁴⁰To mention just a few examples: the London City Mosque took about 25 years to complete, the one in Birmingham 20 years, the one in Liverpool 15 years. The mosque projects in Berlin, Stockholm and Oslo have been going for 15-20 years and there are still no mosques there.

⁴¹What follows is *one* version of the story reconstructed from several different more or less (in)credible, incoherent, inconsistent and even contradictory accounts of it. What *really* happened nobody, at least nobody outside the "inner Muslim circles", knows. And the people who (might) know tell different stories. The same people also tell different stories at different times.

⁴²A Christian church was later built on the site.

⁴³I return to this below.

⁴⁴The Muslim accounts of the matter are both many and divergent.

⁴⁵From the *Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi*.

⁴⁶This was the first time the Muslims of Sweden made a public demonstration of protest in Sweden.

⁴⁷It is still ongoing (November 1990).

⁴⁸From my sources.

⁴⁹Read: the world Muslim conspiracy.

⁵⁰Power over their adherents as well as over the surrounding society at large.

⁵¹I discuss these tendencies to polarize the question and the (possible) results of such polarization in a little more detail in Sander, forthcoming, 1991b

⁵²In doing this I want to emphasize that I do not claim that there are any clear boundaries between the categories, particularly not in the case of the formal/informal distinction. On the contrary, a little reflection soon reveals that there are numbers of problems, and that on both the conceptual/theoretical and empirical levels. As long as we are aware of that, and do not consider what is being said as more than a highly schematic description, I do not think that such simplifications cause any harm.

⁵³As well as normally perceived to be implemented by the vast majority of non-immigrants.

⁵⁴They are, of course, not only "theirs" in isolation. They are, for one thing, very much tied up with Swedish society and its reactions to "them". Many of "their problems" should instead be considered "our" problems as it is "we" who create them with "our" attitudes, reactions, etc. to "them". As one Muslim leader expressed it: "Sweden would be a beautiful place to live in if it was not for the natives."

⁵⁵This is not, of course, the place for a detailed discussion of this problem. My general view of the problem of the relationship between "whole" and "parts", of "structure" and "content", of "atomistic" and "holistic" descriptions and analysis within the social sciences can be found in Sander 1988a, especially part III. These and other dangers of this approach are also discussed in Sander, forthcoming, 1991b.

⁵⁶This is said here primarily as a warning to the reader vis à vis this text, not as critique of other writings.

⁵⁷I discuss this problem, as well as others, in a little more detail in Sander: 1989a and forthcoming, 1991a.

⁵⁸Some Muslim leaders claim that up to 5,000 Swedes have converted to Islam. This is, as far as I can judge, an overestimate. Between 2,000 and 3,000 is rather more likely. The major part of these are also females who have married Muslim men, and one might suspect that the said conversions are sometimes of a rather "formal" nature, and that their subsequent degree of involvement in knowledge and practice of Islam is rather low.

⁵⁹Many Muslims also resent or distrust non-Muslim "Islamexperts".

⁶⁰A phrase, interestingly enough, also used by Swedes about the same group with regard to their *insufficient* assimilation!

⁶¹Which, of course, is not wrong in itself.

⁶²Geertz: 1968, pp. 60, 104-107.

Institutionalization and Integration of Islam in The Netherlands¹

W.A. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld

Prayer-halls and mosques: the development of their functions

In The Netherlands Muslims have organized themselves primarily in communities centered around prayer-halls or mosques. In some cases it is difficult to make a clear distinction between these two institutions. A mosque can be defined as a building in which each of the five daily prayers prescribed by Islam are performed collectively and on a regular basis under the guidance of an imam who has been entrusted with that task by the community. He need not necessarily be the only person of the community to perform this task, but may share this function with other members, according to a scheme of rotation. All other places, even though destined for the performance of Islamic prayers as well, which do not fulfill the aforementioned requirements, can be called prayer-halls.

The history of Islam in The Netherlands shows many examples of local communities moving from the initial stage of a prayer-hall (often being nothing more than a room set apart for the collective performance of the salat) towards the more advanced stage of a mosque, e.g. by appointing an imam and by having found a more suitable accommodation. In the early days of the presence of Islam in Holland communities often rented accommodations to be used for religious worship, on a temporary basis. Later on, more permanent solutions were found, e.g. in acquiring empty buildings (sometimes churches, school buildings or old factories) and, finally, also in founding completely new ones.

Based on the information provided by the existing Muslim umbrella organizations, the total number of mosques and prayer-halls in Holland may presently be estimated at circa 300. A list of the addresses of these mosques, compiled in the spring of 1990, shows that they are distributed over a total number of 128 towns.² In the three big cities of the country one finds rather high concentrations of mosques, which is in accordance with the demographical distribution of the Muslims in Holland: 29 in Amsterdam, 26 in Rotterdam and 21 in The Hague. Most mosques and prayer-halls are organized on an ethnical basis. Thus, 134 of them are Turkish, 104 Moroccan, 21 Surinamese, 6 Pakistani, 4 Surinamese-Javanese, 2 Moluccan, 1 is Indonesian, 1 Egyptian and 1 Dutch. The number of mosques and

prayer-halls organized on a multi-ethnic or "international" basis may be estimated at 18, only. With rare exceptions, these multi-ethnic places of worship are to be found in smaller towns or villages with no more than one mosque or prayer-hall. Apparently, in these cases the limited number of Muslim inhabitants did not allow for the establishment of organizations based on one single nationality only. In towns with two mosques or prayer-halls one usually finds a splitting up of the Muslims along ethnic lines. In larger communities a further step in the splitting up-process according to doctrinal "denominations" within a single ethnic group becomes a possibility feasible. This can generally be observed in towns with three or more mosques. Thus, in the town of Helmond there exist two Moroccan and two Turkish mosques, both of these pairs representing distinctive religious denominations. Obviously, then, there does exist a causal connection between the numerical basis of the Muslim community in a given town on the one hand, and the degree to which it splits up in the founding of mosques and prayer-halls based on ethnic and denominational patterns, on the other. The greater the number of Muslims, the more diversified the basis of its religious organization may become.

Parallel to the development from prayer-hall to mosque, and from multi-ethnic and multi-denominational towards mono-ethnic and mono-denominational organizations, runs an increase in the functional aspects of these basic religious institutions of the local communities. At the very beginning the first and foremost function of this form of institutionalization of Islam was to take care of the need for religious services, first of all during Ramadan and other important moments in the Islamic calendar, later on on Fridays and on the other days of the week as well. Quite logically, the foundation of these places of worship, where scattered Muslims would join in prayer, at the same time implied the creation of social spaces where new contacts could be made on the basis of a common religious identity. It seems that the value of performing religious services collectively, on the one hand, and the need to create social networks based on a common identity, and especially within the new, non-Muslim environment, on the other, were in fact the two most important factors stimulating the initial phases of the institutionalization process.

To the aforementioned basically religious and social functions of these places of worship the task to cater for elementary religious education of the communities' children was soon to be added, especially -as in the case of the Turkish and Moroccan migrants- when women and children were being reunited with their fathers within the framework of the official family reunion schedule, which from the end of the seventies onwards formed part of the official policy of the Dutch Government. However, Muslims settling in The Netherlands from former colonies, such as Surinam, usually arrived together with their families and, in contrast with the migrant workers from

Morocco and Turkey, settled in Holland on a permanent basis right from the start. The case of these Hindustani and Javanese Muslims from Surinam is therefore a different one from that of the Moroccans and Turks. First of all, they are more familiar with the language, institutions and values of Dutch society. Secondly, many of them, especially from among the Hindustani Muslims, have a trader-background. Their long-standing experience in organising and administering their own affairs has made them well-equipped for the task. In their case, therefore, processes of religious institutionalization were far less gradual, the need for elementary religious education of their children also existing right from the start of their immigration.

Obviously, one had to find persons qualified to perform these educational tasks. In many cases the initial religious instruction provided by the communities was given by volunteers, e.g. by qualified persons from various Muslim countries, already having lived in The Netherlands for some time, for a variety of reasons. Soon, however, solutions had to be looked for on a more structural and permanent basis. The best way to provide for these needs was, of course, to appoint an imam who, apart from his tasks during the daily religious services, could function as a teacher to the children as well.

The increase in community life stimulated by the mosques, not only in the course of religious services but also as the result of the religious instruction offered during weekends and days off, were but to enhance the central role played by the mosque as a place of gathering in the daily life of the community. In the countries of origin many culturally defined institutions used to exist in complete or nearly complete separation from the mosques. These institutions were, however, lacking completely in Holland. Endowing the mosques in Holland with some of the functions of this absent infrastructure, was not only a logical but also a constructive solution, because in doing so one was in fact granting further material support to the maintenance of the mosques, and therefore of Muslim community life. As a result, mosque buildings in Holland were to be used for various kinds of religiously coloured feasts and ceremonies not usually celebrated in or around mosque buildings in the Muslim world itself, such as wedding parties, circumcisions and mourning ceremonies. In addition to this, attached to many mosques (especially the Turkish ones) there are shops owned by the Muslim organization which are selling religious objects (including books) and products from the countries of origin. Obviously, these shops add to the social and financial basis of the community life centered around the mosque.

The Dutch Government and Islam

A factor stimulating the development towards an even greater plurality of functions of mosque buildings was and still is the general policy of the Dutch

Government to abstain from subsidizing purely religious activities, while at the same time granting financial support to various social and cultural activities of a more or less "general" nature, such as courses in all kinds of subjects, even when taking place in the buildings of churches or mosques. By initiating many of these activities Muslims could, just as in the case of Dutch church communities, indirectly strengthen the financial and social basis of their community life. In addition to this, Dutch mosque communities, in analogy to churches and synagogues, are exempted from paying taxes on their real estate.

In its *Note of Minorities* of 1983 the Dutch Government says to strive for a society in which the members of the minority groups living in Holland, individually and as groups, will have equal opportunities and full chances of developing. Its policy is to aim at creating the conditions required for emancipation and participation in society. At the same time this policy aims at reducing the social and economic arrearage as well as at preventing and fighting the discrimination of minority groups. The Government acknowledges that in the process of constructing a "multicultural society" it is necessary to take into account the cultural, including the religious, background of minority groups. Its policy implies an equal respect for the religious convictions of the various groups in Dutch society, including the Muslims. In conclusion, as a general starting-point of its policy, the Government stresses that "Religion fulfills a function in developing and enforcing the self-respect and hence the emancipation of many members of ethnic groups".³

At the same time, however, it is clear that the Government must put this policy into practice within a constitutional and legal framework which, as far as the official place of religion in Dutch society is concerned, is the result of a long and complex historical development in the relations between Church and State. First of all, the fundamental principle of the separation between Church and State tends to play an increasingly central role in The Netherlands. Secondly, there are the major constitutional principles of the freedom of religion and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis, among others, of religion. These principles in fact qualify, to a large extent, the real space available to the Government in translating its political principles into actual measures. This will become clear in various sections of the present chapter, just as in the case of the issue regarding the subsidizing of mosques.

The national Government actually did subsidize the foundation of a certain number of mosques and prayer-halls, be it to a limited extent. In 1976, the *Global regulation with regard to the subsidizing of prayer-halls* was issued, by which Muslim communities consisting of a membership of at least a 1000 could claim a subsidy of 30% of the costs of foundation, the maximum amount of the subsidy per mosque having been set at fl. 30.000.

This regulation followed the abolition, in 1975, of the *Bill of Subsidies for the Building of Churches* of 1962, which, in its turn, had been a sequel to previously existing laws providing for subsidies regarding the founding of churches (including synagogues). The abolition of the subsidizing of the foundation of churches by the state, in 1975, in itself was the result of the increasing value attached by Dutch politicians to a full application of the principle of separation between religion and the state. At the same time, however, Government circles realised that a growing need for houses of worship existed among Muslims, who, in view of their recent coming to Holland, with one exception only, had been unable to profit by subsidy regulations that had been available to the Church for an extended period of time. Here lies the origin of the already-mentioned "Regulation" of 1976 which right from the start was to be a temporary one, its date of expiration having been set at the beginning of 1981. A new "Temporary regulation" which was to expire on January 1, 1984, was issued at the beginning of 1981. It differed from that of 1976 in that the latter no longer stipulated that the Muslim community filing a request should consist of at least a 1000 members. The two regulations have provided subsidies for 31 and 69 places of worship respectively. In addition to the already mentioned conditions, both regulations, however, were exclusively meant for "Muslims from among the foreign workers", thus excluding, among others, the numerous Muslim communities from Surinam.⁴ However, the Moluccan Christian and Muslim communities, consisting of expatriate soldiers and their families from the former Dutch East-Indies who had been brought to Holland by the Dutch Government after the decolonization on a temporary basis and with the promise to be taken back after the establishment of a free Moluccan Republic, received full subsidies for the construction of houses of worship granted them by a special regulation which, apart from a number of churches, has yielded two new mosques, in 1984 and 1990.

The subsidizing of mosques by the national Government was brought to an end by two motions in the Lower House, in 1984 and 1986, filed by representatives of the Labour Party (P.v.d.A.) and of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (V.V.D.). First of all, in 1984 a motion by an MP of the Christian Democratic Party (C.D.A.), inviting the Government to study the possibility of continuing the subsidizing of places of worship for minority groups, while at the same time respecting the principle of the separation of Church and State, was rejected. This was followed by a counter-motion in which the two previously mentioned parties argued, things, that "the task of the Government with regard to religion should be limited, whereby all emphasis should be lying on guaranteeing the freedom of a philosophy of life"; and also "that a selective policy to stimulate particular religious groups [viz. the Moroccan and Turkish Muslims] is unacceptable". When in 1986 the Minister of Culture proposed to create the possibility to subsidize the

foundation of buildings which could be used both for sociocultural as well as for strictly religious purposes this was explicitly judged to be contradictory to the principle of separation of Church and State.

However, this was not to be the end of the debate. The advisory committee, called after its president the Hirsch Ballin State Committee, in its report published in 1988 again advocated a new, temporary regulation for the subsidizing of houses of worship for minority groups. It was argued that these religious groups, in contrast to the established churches, had hardly been able to profit by any support of the State so far. The elimination of this form of arrearage of these groups was simply to be looked upon as a matter of equal treatment and justice. According to the committee the principle of the separation of religion and state would not necessarily be infringed upon by such a regulation, as long as the independence and confessional freedom of the religious societies were respected and all religious or philosophical convictions were treated on a strictly equal basis.⁵ So far, however, the Government has not put into practice the advice of the said State Committee.

In an address of 14 September 1990 the Minister of the Interior, explaining the Government's policy towards minorities, their religions included, quietly passed over the recommendations of the Hirsch Ballin Committee but stressed the fact that "in matters of religion and religious observance the Dutch Government pursues a policy of non-involvement". Nevertheless, she suggested at the same time that "account could be taken in [municipal, Sh-vK] development plans of sites for places of worship and other buildings intended for use by Muslim or Hindu organizations, but that is not to say that a municipality should renounce its policy on leasing out land in such cases".

The policy the Minister was advocating in this address was that of the equal treatment of all religious groups, as the municipalities are already used to taking into account the needs of churches when drawing up their development plans. They are also used to leasing the land for the foundation of churches and other religious buildings, a policy which in the case of the construction of mosques has incidentally created some difficulties, viz. when Muslim organizations insisted upon buying the land on grounds derived from Islamic law. Sometimes, as in the case of the establishment of a Turkish mosque in The Hague, a compromise was found with the city indeed selling the land, but while stipulating the right to be the first buyer in case of any future transaction. In addition to this it should be mentioned that many local authorities have been helpful, in one way or another, in establishing places of worship. In 1983 the Waardenburg Committee advised, among others, that the local administrations should place some of the premises owned by them at the disposal of Muslim organizations and enable them to establish a place of worship there. A survey of 1988 shows that many local administrations did so. In the majority of the towns concerned (77 out of

118) Muslim organizations rented or, in some cases, made free use of premises of the municipality.⁶

Notwithstanding these numerous efforts of the municipalities, the attitude of the Minister of the Interior towards the renewed subsidizing of the foundation of mosques, proposed by the Hirsch Ballin Committee, has however remained in the dark so far. But even if the Government should decide to carry out the committee's recommendations, then such a measure would still be primarily symbolical. The amounts of funds at stake are rather limited, and the bulk of the finances needed for the foundation of mosques will continue to remain the burden of the communities themselves.

The institutionalization of the mosques within the Dutch legal system was also crystallized in jurisprudence resulting from conflicts concerning the transformation of existing buildings into mosques. In some cases local authorities and individual citizens have tried to prevent this. Various objections have been raised. Thus, it was brought forward that a mosque did not belong in old, densely populated areas at all. It was also said that the mere presence of a mosque would imply a disturbance of the peace in residential areas. Local authorities have sometimes based themselves on the existing municipal development plans, in which no room for a mosque had been envisaged. So far, however, all the verdicts of the Dutch courts known to the present authors have been in favour of the Muslims, on the basis of various considerations. In one case the verdict stated that a municipal development plan could not prohibit acts of religious worship within a building. In another case the verdict stipulated that the establishment of a mosque could not be said to cause any disturbance of the peace nor to entail any deterioration of the residential environment. In these cases the interests of the Muslim communities wanting to establish new mosques in existing buildings were obviously protected by the constitutional principle of religious freedom.⁷ The same holds true for the official acknowledgement of the right to publicly perform the Muslim call for prayer, in the *Bill of Public Manifestations* issued in 1988.

All this does not imply, however, that the foundation of mosques and the public performance of prayer-calls are easily accepted by the surrounding neighborhoods or by Dutch society as a whole, including, in some cases, local governments. By far the majority of the conflicts in fact never do reach the courts, as could be illustrated by many examples. To mention just one case, in 1986 a conflict arose between the municipal authorities of the city of Zwolle and the local Surinamese Muslim community. The authorities did not want to take the objections of the community into consideration against their decision to house a local branch of the Dutch Gay Society in a room, to be used as a club, adjacent to the rooms of the Muslims which were in use both as a prayer-hall and a class-room for the religious education of the children.

Only after an emotional debate which was even discussed in the national media (including TV), a compromise was finally reached.⁸

The functions of the imam and his legal position

Most Dutch mosques have been organized in accordance with the legal form of a foundation or a society, presided over by a board of governors. The members of the board usually take care of the financial interests of the mosque, and of its maintenance. Unless special arrangements have been made with the Government of the country of origin, the imam of the mosque is appointed by the board. The tasks of the board lie both outside and inside the mosque. Those of the imam, however, are mainly internal and they are - in contrast to those of the members of the board- specifically concerned with the knowledge and application of the values of Islamic religion. Members of the board should be able to manage the mosque and to communicate and negotiate with the surrounding non-Muslim society. To this purpose fluency in the Dutch language and knowledge and an understanding of Dutch law and society are, among others, required. It is not surprising, then, that many of the board members have already lived in The Netherlands for a long period of time. The imams, on the other hand, can hardly be expected to have the just-mentioned communicative bi-cultural abilities, first of all because many of them -in the absence of a sufficient number of men in Holland who are qualified for the post- have been recruited comparatively recently in the countries of origin. (Surinamese Muslim organizations recruit imams mainly from India and Pakistan). Secondly, in view of the almost exclusively internal and traditional colouring of their tasks. Entrusted with the daily prayer services in the mosque, the religious counseling of the individual members of their community, the elementary religious education of the community's children, as well as with the performance of ceremonial tasks on various important occasions in the lives of individuals and families, the imams may be said to be the main custodians of the cultural, and especially of the religious values of the countries of origin. In the absence of the social infrastructure of the countries of origin (family, acquaintances etcetera), the function of the imam of a mosque community has increased considerably in Western Europe, The Netherlands included. The "pastoral tasks" of spiritual counseling and social care, including that of visiting community members in hospitals and prisons, etcetera, are cases in point. In conclusion, one may observe many essential similarities between the tasks of an imam and his Christian colleagues, the minister or priest.

In fact, the Supreme Court of The Netherlands, in its decree of 30 May 1986, gave the imams exactly the same legal position the law had given ministers, priests and rabbis, in the sense that they are all "persons with clerical offices" (*geestelijke ambtsdragers*) as meant in art.2, paragraph 1

under section c of the "Special Resolution Labour Relations" (*Buitengewoon Besluit Arbeidsverhoudingen*).⁹ This decree quite rightly implied a rejection of earlier pleas by lawyers and specialists in Islamic studies, that the imams (in contrast to their Christian and Jewish counterparts) did not hold clerical offices, as being "religious discrimination". This is an important decree in that it offers, among others, equal opportunities to imams in all branches of Dutch society where clerical officers are employed outside their traditional positions within local religious communities, e.g. in the army, in hospitals, prisons, etcetera.

Now that this decree has made the imam a clerical officer, the authorities can no longer interfere with labour disputes between an imam and his community, as these disputes are considered to be of a "spiritual" nature and the authorities have to take a neutral position in these matters, in accordance with the doctrine of the separation between religion and the state. Consequently, the imam (like any clerical officer in The Netherlands) lacks the legal protection guaranteed by the involvement of the Director of the Labour Exchange, which is required in other labour disputes. Therefore, the imam can no longer appeal to the law in case he is dismissed. In this respect, he has exactly the same rights a minister has. The difference between the two, however, is that a minister who is threatened with dismissal can appeal to those bodies of his church organization authorized to deal with this, whereas an imam completely lacks such a possibility of internal appeal. Consequently, the dismissal of an imam, whose appointment as an imam only gave him the right to stay in The Netherlands (temporarily), can lead to his immediate deportation. To this category of imams this means a modern kind of serfdom, which is socially unacceptable. The Dutch Government would, however, not in the least violate its neutrality in religious matters by at least providing these clerical officers with a guarantee(d) permission to stay a minimal period of time in Holland.

Some attention also deserves to be paid to the special policy of the Government with respect to the immigration of imams in The Netherlands. It is far from easy for a mosque community to have an imam of their (own) choice come over from their country of origin. In such cases the regulations in the "Letter concerning aliens" (*Vreemdelingen-circulaire*) B-11, no.6.6. ("*Godsdienstleraren*" = Teachers of religion) should be heeded. This publication contains, among others, the requirement that the imam-to-be must have, already on arrival in The Netherlands, a so-called "authorization for a temporary stay", which should be applied for in the country of origin at the diplomatic or consular representation. Following this request a special investigation then takes place "trying to answer, among others, the question whether the stay of the religious teacher in The Netherlands is objectionable from the point of view of public law and order". Concrete data concerning this investigation and the method used (for example: Dutch embassies calling

Turkish and Moroccan authorities to gain information) are unavailable. It may however safely be assumed that this investigation will in any case concern the religious position of the imam-to-be, and in certain cases also the way in which he can be expected to disseminate his religious ideas, as well as the social and political consequences this will have.¹⁰ The question remains, however, to what extent such an (at present officially required) investigation implicitly affects the constitutional religious freedom of the mosque communities in The Netherlands. For they are after all, except for their responsibility towards the law, free and therefore sovereign within the circle of their own religious organization. It is moreover difficult to see how the authorities can maintain the principle of "neutrality" in religious affairs, said to be believed in by them, if they pass judgment with respect to the religious beliefs of clergymen-to-be in order to take individual decisions on their immigration to The Netherlands. In a public address of January 9, 1991, the Minister of Justice explained that the special investigation which has to take place upon the request of the future imam to obtain a temporary authorization of residence, filed with the Dutch diplomatic service in his country of origin, is carried out by the "local aliens registration office", viz. in the municipality of the community which wants to recruit the imam. In this investigation special attention should be paid to the aspect of public order: "Will the arrival of the imam not result in the creation of tensions, because a spiritual leader whose coming is as a matter of fact not appreciated, is forced upon the Muslim group concerned?" According to this explanation the sole purpose of the whole procedure is to guarantee the religious freedom of the Muslim communities in Holland wanting to recruit an imam in their countries of origin. It remains to be seen, however, to what extent this explanation actually implies a change of policy in the admission of foreign imams.

The professional imams working in The Netherlands have usually been trained in their countries of origin only. So far only the Hindustani Muslim community from Surinam has succeeded in establishing a training course for future imams in Holland itself. The first four students graduated from this course in 1988. Various non-Muslim and Muslim groups have, for various reasons, advocated the establishment of some kind of educational institute for the training of imams in Holland itself. According to the Waardenburg Committee (1983) and to several Dutch researchers the "traditional" imam who has obtained his training in the Muslim world is far from able to fulfil his tasks adequately, because of his lack of proficiency in the Dutch language and his deficient understanding of the history and culture of Dutch society. His understanding of the day-to-day problems of the members of his community, and especially of those of the younger generation, is thought to be quite insufficient. These objections are held to be true above all of the imams sent by the Turkish Government on a temporary basis, and who

hardly have any opportunity to become acquainted with the language and life of Dutch society.¹¹ The same point of view has been defended by the Christian Democratic Party in the Lower House, witness a note on its minority policies of September 17, 1990, which states "not to favour that minorities have to recruit their [spiritual] leaders from the country of origin. Repeatedly we have advocated the possibility that people living in The Netherlands can be trained for the spiritual functions concerned. To that purpose it will be necessary to found a chair in one of the Dutch universities". In his previously mentioned address of January 9, 1991, the Minister of Justice defended this view, as well: "In order to support the process of the integration of minorities the recruitment of religious leaders from among the groups residing here deserves to be preferred. In view of the important social function fulfilled by the imams within the Muslim community it is important that they should possess knowledge of as many aspects of Dutch society as possible". To this he added that the Dutch Government does not lend direct financial support to the founding of an Islamic theological training. "That would be contrary to the principle of the separation of Church and State. The religious organizations themselves are responsible for the organization and contents of their activities and, consequently, [they] can choose their functionaries independently". This, however, does not imply that the Dutch Government would not lend financial support to an Islamic theological school in an indirect manner, on a par with the existing Christian theological schools which are fully subsidized by the Dutch State, be it in an indirect manner only, viz. without direct interference of the state and on a basis of certain formal and administrative criteria.

Even though some of the arguments in favour of the recruitment of imams in Holland itself are doubtlessly correct, it seems that these opinions tend to underestimate the intrinsic value of the traditional, essentially internal, role of the imam, especially within non-Muslim environment. One should not overlook the fact that, in the perception of the Muslims themselves, the imams, at their very best, are the exponents of the authoritative centres of religious learning which, of course, are and will continue to be situated within the Muslim world. It is to those centres that individual Muslims may and in fact do address themselves quite frequently with all kinds of questions regarding various conflicts arising between their life in Holland and the prescriptions of their Islamic faith.¹² The specifically religious authority of the imam will therefore not necessarily be increased by his studying the Dutch language and culture. Much of the criticism of the traditional imams may thus be reduced to a lack of understanding of the actual role of the imam, caused by one-sided, etic approaches from without.

A more realistic problem is posed, however, by the completely new posts for imams to be created by the Dutch Government in the army, in hospitals

and prisons -on a par with the state-appointed ministers, priests and rabbis already working in these institutions-, as advocated by the Hirsch Ballin State Committee. Obviously, this new category of imams will indeed need special training enabling them to cope with this new challenge. The suggestion put forward by the already-mentioned State Committee is that a state-subsidized service centre for the spiritual welfare of Muslim and Hindu minorities in Holland should be created which could also cater for the training of imams to be appointed in the institutions concerned. This could, among other things, be realised by organizing refresher courses aiming at making the available imams and imams-to-be familiar with the Dutch polity and society, as well as with the psycho-social aspects of spiritual care. However, no agreement has been reached as yet between the Dutch Government and the Muslims. In order to bring about such an agreement a kind of national Muslim Council would be needed which could represent the Muslims in these (and several other) important matters to be negotiated with the Dutch Government. For several reasons such a national council, however, has been lacking so far. In her already-quoted address of September 24, 1990, the Minister of the Interior has stated in this respect: "Here too, progress depends largely on the ability of [Muslim,Sh-vK] organizations to set up a broad, solid cooperative framework. I have been given to understand that current developments in this regard are encouraging. I hope shortly to be able to sit down and discuss the further elaboration and implementation of Government proposals with a cooperative body that is as large and as representative as possible". This is an interesting statement which seems to indicate some changes in the official attitude towards the conditions to be fulfilled by a national Islamic Council in order to be accepted by the Government as a mouth-piece of the Muslims in Holland, as will be set out below.

Organizations on a national level

Apart from the local organizations affiliated with one single mosque, various initiatives have resulted in the foundation of national organizations aiming at bringing together the local mosque-organizations of the same ethnic group. Several obstacles of a political and ideological nature have hampered these endeavours, resulting in a plurality of national umbrella organizations for each ethnic group. The nature of these organizations differs considerably. Some of them are mere platforms for discussion and mutual consultation of local mosque-organizations, others are more or less centralised bodies governing the local mosques as branch-units. The existence of a national organization, or the absence thereof, will now be discussed for each ethnic group.

1. Communities from Indonesia

The Moluccan Muslim community in Holland, with two mosques, has no umbrella organization of its own. The same holds true for three other prayer-halls of Muslims from Indonesia, where the Indonesian *Young Muslims Association in Europe* (PPME) plays a coordinating role. The groups worshipping in these three mosques mainly consist of Indonesian students residing temporarily in The Netherlands. The Indonesian Muslims who, with the exception of the just-mentioned Moluccans, settled in Holland during the decolonization period have not founded religiously based organizations at all.

2. Communities from Surinam and Pakistan

The ethnic and religious diversity of the Muslim groups from Surinam is reflected in their existing umbrella organizations. Muslims from Surinam consist of Hindustani (Sunnites as well as members of the Ahmadiyyah) and Javanese (Sunnites). The circa 15 small and dispersed communities of Javanese Sunnites possess mostly unofficial prayer-halls and have not been brought together in one umbrella organization. The Hindustani Sunni Muslims, on the other hand, whose religious background is that of the Qadiriyyah mystical tradition, and in particular of the Berelvi movement, have three competitive organizations at a national level. First of all, there is the *World Islamic Mission* (WIM) in Amsterdam with 32 mosques, acknowledging shaykh Nurani in Pakistan as its spiritual leader. The WIM is an offshoot of the *Islamitische Wereldmissie* (in English called *World Islamic Mission* as well), an organization in The Hague with two mosques only, acknowledging the spiritual leadership of Pir Marouf in Bradford. In addition to this there is the *Internationale Moslim Organisatie* (IMO) coordinating 28 mosque communities, recognising Abd al-Wahhab Siddiqui, living in England, as its spiritual leader. In view of the convictions of Siddiqui, the religious-mystical position of the IMO can be said to be less exclusively Qadiriyyah, having its roots also in other mystical movements, such as that of the Naqshbandiyyah. (The number of mosques of these three umbrella organizations, even though provided by the boards of these organizations themselves, cannot be completely correct in view of the total number of existing Surinamese Hindustani mosques mentioned earlier).

Hindustani Muslims attached to the Ahmadiyya movement are divided into two umbrella organizations of which the Lahori offshoot, the *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam in Nederland* (AAIIN), is the most important one. It has branches in most big cities in The Netherlands. The Rabwah branch, on the other hand, organised in the *Ahmadiyyah-beweging in de Islam* (=The Ahmadiyyah movement in Islam), has two mosques only.

Finally, the four existing Pakistani mosques representing the non-mystical orthodox salafi tradition, have not been brought together under one umbrella organization.

3. Communities from Turkey

The oldest national Turkish umbrella organization is the *Stichting Islamitisch Centrum Nederland* (The Islamic Centre Foundation in The Netherlands) (SICN) in Utrecht, founded circa 1972. The official objectives of this organization are to promote contacts between Muslims in The Netherlands in general and to provide for Islamic education on behalf of them in particular. Coordinating 26 mosque-organizations and 12 youth centres, it is a department of the movement of the Süleymancis, which has its headquarters in Cologne. This movement opposes the official Islamic policy of the laicist Turkish state. It therefore does not use the possibility of recruiting imams through the services of the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara. In accordance with its tradition in Turkey special emphasis is put on religious education, and especially on Quranic courses, also in Holland. Some 50 to 60 imams, many of them on a voluntary basis, are active within the communities of this umbrella organization.

The largest Turkish umbrella organization in Holland is the *Stichting Turks-Islamitische Culturele federatie* (= Foundation of the Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation) (STICF) in Rotterdam, which coordinates some 94 mosques and 7 youth centres. The official objectives of the STICF are to serve the interests and to promote the emancipation of the Turkish Muslim community, with special emphasis on its Muslim cultural identity, as well as to stimulate the integration and participation of this community within Dutch society at large. It has played a pioneer role in forming the state-financed the *Islamitische Omroep Stichting* (=Islamic Broadcasting Foundation) (IOS), which for some time was exclusively based on this single umbrella organization only, but widened its scope in 1989 when also representatives of Hindustani and Moroccan national organizations took seats on its board. The STICF acts in close cooperation with the *Islamitische Stichting Nederland* (=Netherlands Islamic Foundation) (ISN), an organization founded in 1982 and directly linked to the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara. The aim of this foundation is to take over the management of the mosque buildings and to put professional imams, trained at state institutions in Turkey, at the disposal of local communities. Through its offices some 75 "official" imams have been employed in mosques affiliated to the STICF. These imams, who have the status of civil servants of the Turkish Government, are working in Holland on the temporary basis of a rotation scheme, which implies that they are replaced every four years. The STICF has also founded a legally recognized Burial Fund, to which some

6,500 Turkish families pay contributions on a regular basis, thus insuring the expenses of an eventual burial in their country of origin.

Another Turkish umbrella organization is the *Nederlandse Islamitische Federatie* (=Netherlands Islamic Federation) (NIF), some 20 mosque communities are connected with. It is an offshoot of the Turkish oppositional *Milli Görüş* movement centered around the National Salvation Party of Erbakan. Just like the Süleymancı and the outspokenly fundamentalist Kaplan-group (to which some 12 mosques are linked, its headquarters to be found in Cologne also) it does not employ the imams paid by the Turkish Government either.

4. Moroccan communities

The *Unie van Marokkaanse Moslim Organisaties in Nederland* (Union of Moroccan Muslim Organizations in The Netherlands) (UMMON), founded in 1978, is the umbrella organization some 80 Moroccan mosques are affiliated with, presently employing some 65 paid imams. The education of these imams often consists of a traditional form of informal training in Arabic and Islam, for instance given by the imams of local mosques in Morocco. The board of the UMMON stresses the fact that in political matters it takes a neutral position. At the same time it recognizes, however, that members on the boards of some of its local mosques sympathise with or belong to the outspokenly royalist political organization of the *Amicales*, whose members are in close contact with the Moroccan embassy. In many, though not all, of its affiliated mosque-communities the official prayer for the King of Morocco as "Commander of the Faithful" is pronounced during Friday services.

Internal religious discussions about the political situation in Morocco have focussed on the position of the king and caused the origin of the phenomenon of the *Free Moroccan Mosques* (numbering circa 30 at present) wanting their life in Holland to be free from supervision by the Moroccan Government. Recently, a rival umbrella organization of the UMMON has been created, called the *Nederlandse Federatie van Marokkaanse Moslim Organisaties* (=Dutch Federation of Moroccan Muslim Organizations), to which some 17 local mosques are linked. The precise relation between this association and the individually autonomous *Free Mosques* remains, however, to be elucidated.

As an example of the internal religious discussions the debate may be mentioned which arose towards the end of 1983 during a visit of the Moroccan Minister of Education to Holland wishing to discuss a cultural exchange between the two countries. In the course of a religious service at the Moroccan Great Mosque of Amsterdam the imam of the mosque refused to pray for the Moroccan king, replacing this specific prayer by a more

general one in which God's support was asked for all Muslims heads of state living uprightly. Consequently, the Minister demanded the mosque board to fire the imam. This led to open conflicts within the community and the case was even brought before the Court of Justice in Amsterdam.¹³

The question whether and, if so, how this supervision of the mosques is actually exercised by the Moroccan Government has been a much-debated issue in The Netherlands. Questions have even been raised about it in the Lower House. In 1985 a Labour MP asked the Government whether it was true that during a meeting in the Great Mosque of Amsterdam, towards the end of 1984, officials from Morocco had asked all [Moroccan] imams working in The Netherlands to sign a declaration obliging themselves to work according to the norms and instructions of the Moroccan Ministry of Religious Affairs. Another question was whether all Moroccan imams were receiving the official texts of sermons dealing also with non-religious matters, which they had to pronounce under the said declaration. The Government said not to possess any specific information concerning the meeting under discussion, although assistants of the Moroccan embassy were known to be in contact regularly with the Moroccan mosques in Holland. According to the same answer the Moroccan authorities moreover did provide the texts of mosque sermons, but no evidence pointing to the obligation of the imams to pronounce these texts was available.¹⁴

5. Interethnic organizations

Repeatedly, attempts have been made to form Muslim umbrella organizations on an interethnic basis. The first of these attempts, dating back to 1974, resulted in the foundation of the *Federatie van Moslimorganisaties in Nederland* (=Federation of Muslim Organizations in The Netherlands) (FOMON). Conflicts, mainly caused by the contradictory political influences exercised by the countries of origin, caused its dissolution in 1980. The influence of the conflicting interests of some of the international mother-organizations, of which some of the national Muslim organizations are merely auxiliary branches, also played an important part. Some members of the staff of FOMON continued their work at the *Moslim Informatie Centrum* (=Muslim Information Centre) in The Hague, which has no representative pretensions. In 1981 another attempt was made resulting in the establishment of the *Moslim Organisaties in Nederland* (=Muslim Organizations in The Netherlands) (MON), dissolved after some time as well. As a reaction to the establishment of the MON some "dissident" organizations created the *Nederlands-Islamitisch Parlement* (=Dutch Islamic Parliament) (NIP) around 1980, of which hardly anything has been heard again over the past few years.

More recently a perhaps more promising initiative was taken by the founding of the *Islamitisch Landelijk Comité* (Islamic National Committee) (ILC), in which all the existing Sunnite umbrella organizations were represented by one of their leading personalities. This committee manifested itself publicly for the first time during the so-called "Rushdie-affair" in 1989 when arguing, among other things, against the death-penalty pronounced by Khomeiny. The committee presented itself to the Minister of the Interior as the only representative mouthpiece of the Muslims in The Netherlands, expressing its readiness to discuss with the Government the application of the recommendations forwarded by the previously mentioned Hirsch Ballin State Committee.

The Government, however, refused to recognise the claims of the ILC. Lacking a corporate capacity, the ILC was more or less an informal body. Moreover, the ILC represented the Sunnite Muslims only. The Ahmadiyyah organizations and some other (sectarian as well as non-sectarian) groups had no representatives in the ILC at all. Particularly the absence of a representative of the Ahmadiyyah was seen by officials of the Ministry of the Interior as a serious obstacle. One of the recommendations of the Hirsch Ballin Committee, urgently to be realised, concerned the measures to be taken in the sphere of the spiritual care of Muslim soldiers in the Dutch army. Among them the highest percentage consisted of Muslims with a Surinamese background, including, of course, followers of the Ahmadiyyah. Since then it has been brought to the attention of the Government, however, that a 100% representative body of the Muslims in Holland would not be a realistic option in view of the problematic relations between the Sunnites, on the one hand, and the Ahmadis and other unrecognized sectarian groups, on the other. In fact, also the officially recognized mouthpiece of the Dutch Christian and Jewish organizations (CIO) does not represent all the organizations in existence, the Jehova Witnesses, for example, being excluded. Why should one demand from the Muslims a higher rate of representation? The above-quoted statement of the Minister of Interior, advocating a cooperative Muslim body, which is to be "as representative as possible", seems to indicate that the Government indeed has adopted a somewhat more flexible attitude in this respect.

Some time ago the ILC was dissolved, but this time, as we have been made to understand, not as a result of internal conflicts but in order to pave the way for a well-structured organ, the seats of which are to be divided in accordance with quantitative criteria. (The same principle had already been adopted in the division of seats on the board of the Islamic Broadcasting Foundation, at the time of its being enlarged with representatives from the Surinamese and Moroccan communities). The new National Islamic Council is to have corporate capacity with legally fixed statutes governing its activities. No doubt, the coming into being of this Council would be a major

success and an important step towards the emancipation of the Muslims in Dutch society. Apart from the necessary negotiations with the Dutch Government on the recommendations of the Hirsch Ballin Committee and many other matters, the Council could also serve as a mouth-piece towards Dutch society at large. In doing so it could help to reduce prejudices, discrimination and various other forms of curtailment of the human rights of the Muslims.

Islamic prescriptions and Dutch society

Circumcision

Muslims in The Netherlands have their boys circumcised in various manners, depending on their countries of origin. Surinamese Muslims prefer to have the circumcision performed by a medical specialist, in a hospital in Holland, during the first week of the boy's life. In Surinam itself this was, with rare exceptions in the villages, already the way it was done in most cases. The majority of the Moroccans, however, (still) seem to prefer to have it done in Morocco, on holidays, either by a modern medical specialist or a traditional professional circumcisers, the obvious advantage being the presence of family and friends to participate in the festivities. In some cases traditional Moroccan circumcisers have been active also in Holland itself. Even though there is a growing awareness among the Moroccan Muslims in Holland of the sanitary advantages of medical circumcisions there are other factors, such as the lack of experience and knowledge of the Islamic prescriptions of the Dutch hospitals and medical staff, which tend to stimulate them to continue to have their boys circumcised in Morocco.

Among the Turkish Muslims, however, circumcisions tend to be given more structure. The majority of them have their sons circumcised, either in Turkey or The Netherlands, by a professional circumciser. Turkish circumcisions take place in Holland in an organised manner. In summer a Turkish circumciser who often has already visited Germany comes to Holland for some weeks. During the prayer-services on Friday, or in various other ways, the chairmen of the mosques announce that on a particular date a collective circumcision will take place, most often in a room adjacent to the mosque. The circumciser visits various places in The Netherlands and sometimes treats more than 50 boys at a time. These circumcisers enjoy a good reputation among the Turks because they have a lot of experience. They are certificated and, last but not least, they are Muslims as well.

Circumcision, both Jewish and Muslim, has religious as well as medical aspects. Just like Jews Muslims conceive of circumcision in the first place as a religious intervention. In Islam circumcision is a necessary prerequisite for boys to become a full member of the community. On the basis of the constitutional principle of freedom of religion the Dutch Government

accepts that the circumcision of Jewish boys can be performed by professional, paramedically trained, Jewish circumcisers who are examined and supervised by a committee of experts. A recent inquiry into the practice of circumcision among the Muslims in Holland, financed by the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture, led to the advice to the Dutch Government to create identical facilities for the Dutch Muslims also. The final result advocated in this study should be a plurality of possibilities, viz. medical circumcisions to be included in the standard package of services covered by health insurance, on the one hand, and professionally performed circumcisions by paramedically trained, internally functioning Muslim circumcisers, on the other.¹⁵

Islamic dietary prescriptions

The accustoming of the various relevant sectors of Dutch society to the dietary prescriptions of Islam is a gradual process which has not yet been fully completed. In fact, there have been many misunderstandings, as well as misgivings, about Muslims in hospitals who insisted on eating halal meat or who wanted to continue to fast during Ramadan. Gradually, the essential facts to be taken into account in order to deal correctly with this new category of patients have been included in the training courses of medical students and nurses, and one may expect the acceptance of Islamic dietary prescriptions for these patients to become completely normal, in the near future. Notwithstanding some conflicts in the initial stages of the presence of Muslims, the same may be said to hold for the Dutch army as well as for prisons in Holland.

In order to meet the religious needs of non-Christian soldiers a special *Regulation of the facilities for Jewish, Muslim and Hindu service-men* was set up in 1981. This regulation was based on the already existing rules enabling Jewish soldiers in the Dutch army to fulfill their religious obligations. The obligations covered by the "Regulation" include the attendance at religious services on festivals and days of rest, as well as compliance with dietary prescriptions. A study of the effects of this regulation has however shown that in many cases leading officers do not know exactly what to do when confronted with details left unmentioned in the "Regulation". Thus, there exists no clear policy regarding the fast in Ramadan. Some years ago, a Muslim soldier saw himself obliged to run away from the barracks and to go into hiding in order not to break his fast. It also still happens that meals containing pork are given to Muslim soldiers who insist on complying with the dietary prescriptions of Islam, especially during exercises in the field or when staying in bivouacs. A more detailed elaboration of the regulation and a better instruction of the responsible officers is therefore needed.

As for the Dutch prisons, so far there does not exist any special regulation yet with regard to their dietary prescriptions. In practice, things are arranged in accordance with the circular letter of the Ministry of Justice concerning Jewish prisoners, dating from October 16, 1981. However, from a study made in 1983 it appeared that the food in some institutions given to Turkish and Moroccan prisoners as a substitute for the generally distributed non-halal dishes hardly met their specific needs. In a circular letter of 1984 the Ministry of Justice believed to have found the solution to these problems, viz. by obliging the Muslim prisoners to pay for the extra expenses of halal food themselves! This measure was however quickly withdrawn. Article 39 of the *Beginselwet Gevangeniswezen* (=Bill on the Principles of the Prison-System) stipulates that it is "the task of the governing board of the prison to see to it that the prisoners can attend the religious services [...] organised on their behalf". The result of a study made in 1985, however, was that 80% of the Turkish and Moroccan prisoners thought that the existing opportunities to exercise their religion were insufficient, in view -among others- of the absence of an imam, a prayer-room and facilities to perform ritual ablutions. The said prisoners also stressed the impossibility during Ramadan to obtain a warm meal after sunset. This had been one of the factors causing the Turkish prisoners to break their fast. Recently, however, a new regulation has been introduced by the Minister of Justice, creating the possibility of calling in imams on behalf of the spiritual care of Muslims in judicial institutions, on an ad hoc-basis and against payment, for an experimental period of two years. This is to be the first step towards establishing specific services for the spiritual care of Muslims, comparable to the Christian and Jewish ones already in existence, which in the absence of a sufficient number of qualified imams and of an organized form of representation of the Dutch Muslims, has not yet been realized.

Apart from the involvement of Dutch non-Muslim personnel in the application of Islamic dietary laws within specific sectors, the Islamic way of slaughtering animals for meat consumption -usually referred to in European languages as "ritual slaughtering"- had to be given a place in the legal system. Since the sixties a discussion had been going on whether legal measures should be taken to permit this. In 1977 the *Vleeskeuringsbesluit* (=Decree on the Inspection of Butcher's Meat) was finally changed to meet this specific need. It was given its final draft in 1982, on the basis of the *European Treaty regarding the Protection of Slaughter Cattle* (arts. 11 and 12). Herewith the Islamic way of slaughtering obtained the same recognition the slaughtering according to the Jewish rites had. In 1986 the official list prescribed by law mentioned 106 abattoirs where Islamic slaughtering was permitted. At the same time Muslim butchers were granted exemption from certain business licensing requirements to help them ensure that Muslims would be able to partake of their daily food without contravening the

prescriptions of Islam, the assumption being that per 1000 single Muslims and Muslim heads of families one Muslim butchery would be needed. Nevertheless, there has been an ongoing discussion to change the situation stimulated by various pressure groups and political parties. The Dutch Association for the Protection of Animals favours the idea of convincing the Muslims that Islam in fact does not forbid the electrical stunning of animals previously to their being slaughtered. Extremist right-wing political parties, on the other hand, reuse old antisemitic stereotypes to stigmatize the Muslims as backward and cruel in order to seek support for their policy of remigrating the Muslims migrants from Holland to their countries of origin. Discussions are flaring up especially during the annual Feast of Sacrifices when large numbers of animals are being brought to the abattoirs.

Islamic holidays

The status of the Islamic holidays according to Dutch law has been set down in an important decree of the Supreme Court (d.d. 30 May 1984) formulated in the case of a Turkish charwoman lodging a complaint against her (former) Dutch employer.¹⁶ She had requested a day off (unpaid for) to be able to participate in the festivities celebrating the Breaking of the Fast, at the end of Ramadan. Her employer refused. She, however, did not appear at work and was instantly dismissed. The Court in the city of Den Bosch, which after she had appealed to it declared that she was right, decreed, among others things, that "Muslim employees are in principle entitled to days off to celebrate their religious holidays, and can only be refused on the same grounds that would entitle the employer to require an employee to work on a public Christian holiday". The Supreme Court, however, dismissed the argument and argued that with public Christian holidays we are essentially dealing with: "feast-days which have been accepted by Dutch society as days when no work has to be done regardless of the employee's religion. Although these Christian holidays find their origin in the Christian faith, they have become generally accepted days off, which holds as such for all those who participate in Dutch society, whatever their beliefs and nationalities may be. For this reason festivals of other religions [such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, Sh-vK] cannot be put on a par with the generally accepted Christian festivals so as to answer the question whether an employer may legitimately require individual employees practicing other religions to work on those other festivals".

At the same time the Supreme Court acknowledged, however, that "-apart from specific arrangements in terms of employment- normally speaking an employee cannot in fairness be required to work, provided that, having stated his reasons, he has well in advance asked for permission to have a day off to celebrate a religious festival important for him. This may be different if

it is to be expected that the smooth running of affairs in the firm concerned will be seriously hampered by the absence, on that day, of the employee concerned. Should the latter justify deviation from the rule mentioned above, [judgment] will depend on the particular circumstances of the case concerned". Consequently, the Supreme Court destroyed the verdict of the Court in Den Bosch asking them to investigate the circumstances under which the requested day off was refused and to pass judgement based on the new findings.

Thus, an official distinction has been made in jurisprudence between "generally accepted Christian feast-days" on the one hand, and the "feast-days of other religions" on the other, and the Government now acts accordingly. This was, for example, true of the Cabinet report of 22 November, 1985 on the report "Minorities - minor rights?" in which -among other items- attention was paid to the findings in it that more than 150 legal stipulations make clear that Dutch society is still largely based on Christianity.¹⁷ The Cabinet emphasized their admitting that they were aware of the discrepancies in the treatment of Christians on the one hand, and Muslims and Hindus, on the other hand: for example when the former do not and both the latter groups do, by contrast, have to take extra (unpaid for) days off to celebrate their religious feast-days and anniversaries. The Cabinet also acknowledged that the Labour Law in art. 13 offers the possibility for the weekly day of rest to take place on Saturday instead of on Sunday. At the same time it acknowledged that The Netherlands are responsible for carrying out art 6 sub h of the *Declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief*, adopted by the UN on 25 November, 1981, in which the freedom is guaranteed "to observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion and belief". In spite of this the Cabinet decided not to expand the number of generally accepted Christian feast-days to Jewish, Islamic and Hindu feast-days. It pointed out a possible arrangement of these matters as part of the negotiations between the management and trade unions regarding employment conditions. This decision of the Cabinet left the situation unchanged, even though it promised to focus the attention of the management and the trade-unions, in the Joint Industrial Labour Council, on this point by asking them "whether they thought that there was cause to stimulate, by means of recommendations or otherwise, the notion that provisions for paid holidays on feast-days should be made for the respective employees in the Collective Labour Agreements."¹⁸

This state of affairs does however insufficiently satisfy one's sense of justice, as the unequal treatment now officially approved continues. For however strong the "official character" of Christian holidays is emphasized, it remains nevertheless true that the existing legislation enables one category of employees to fulfil their religious obligations without loss of income, whereas

this is not or only exceptionally possible for the other category. So far, only in a restricted number of Collective Labour Agreements (CAO's) has paid leave on important non-Christian holidays been included. The same holds for the civil servants of the Dutch State. However, all that has been said so far is only true of feast-days. With respect to the weekly Islamic prayer-services on Fridays, in which according to Islam every male adult should take part, no special arrangements in legislature or employment conditions are known to us.

Funerary rituals and cemeteries

In Holland, the Islamic ritual purification of the deceased is usually performed by persons associated with a mosque-organization, in a hospital or, sometimes, in a special washing-place of the mosque. The latter is chosen particularly, when the funeral is going to take place in Holland itself and the deceased will lie in state, in a room of the mosque (not being the prayer-room itself), during a period of at least 36 hours, prescribed by Dutch law. Especially the Surinamese Muslims are used to burying their deceased in Holland, in contrast to almost all of the Moroccans and Turks who still prefer to bury their dead in their countries of origin. Apart from strong family ties, one can point to a religious factor determining this preference, viz. the value attached to a regular visiting of the graves of deceased family members, during which prayers are said for the salvation of the dead and food and alms are divided among the poor in their name. Members of the Turkish and Moroccan groups who are buried in Holland, almost exclusively consist of small children and some adults without strong family ties in Turkey or Morocco. One may expect the percentage of the Turkish and Moroccan dead people to be buried in Holland will increase as their stay continues and the ties with their families in the countries of origin will weaken.

Government and Parliament have been discussing a new *Wet op de Lijkbezorging* (=Bill on the Disposal of the Dead) for many years. In the course of these discussions some MP's have suggested that the specific wishes of the Muslims in Holland should be taken into account as well. Three particular points are at stake here, viz. the possibility to bury the dead without a coffin (which has remained obligatory so far), the permission to bury the deceased as soon as possible and at any rate within a period of 24 hours after the moment of death, and, finally, the possibility of founding Islamic cemeteries. In its Memorandum in Reply of July 23, 1982, the Government has stressed that it will aim at introducing into the new law as little obstacles as possible which might stand in the way of funerals according to the rites of Islam and of other religions.¹⁹ "This will be impossible only, if interests of public health, the tracing of criminal offences and public order demand [to act otherwise]". The new law which touches

upon many delicate aspects of Dutch cultural and religious life, has still not been approved yet. Occasionally Muslims have already been exempted from the prevailing legal rules concerning the exact moment of funerals and the use of a coffin. These exemptions have been provided by a local mayor who thereby is acting on the authority of the public prosecutor.

With regard to the founding of Islamic cemeteries the Dutch legal system contains detailed rules concerning the opening and maintenance of private, denominationally based cemeteries which are applicable to any religious group, including Muslims, among others on the basis of quantitative criteria. It is also possible for smaller denominational groups to have a special section of a public cemetery reserved for them, and this is what has actually happened so far in several Dutch municipalities.

Religious marriages

It has been generally known that Islamic law does not distinguish between civil and religious marriages. In many Muslim countries where marriage laws are in accordance with the sharia, as in Morocco, both types of marriage coincide. In other countries, such as in Turkey and Surinam, where marriage laws have been secularized, a custom has been developed to organize a religious marriage ceremony after the celebration of the civil one. The situation among Muslim groups in The Netherlands is in accordance with this pattern. Turkish and Moroccan nationals in Holland have their marriages performed at their respective embassies. These marriages are recognized by the Dutch authorities if both partners are Turkish or Moroccan subjects. In the case of mixed couples, however, Dutch law demands a regular civil marriage at the Dutch registrar's office, which then may be supplemented by a 'consulate-marriage'. Muslims from Surinam, being Dutch subjects, contract a Dutch civil marriage and organize, similarly to that of the Turks, a special religious ceremony in which the imam plays a central role.

Apart from the above-mentioned pattern, there exists among Muslim groups in The Netherlands an exclusive type of religious marriage that is not sanctioned by any civil authority. As this kind of marriage has no legal value, it seems to be more appropriate to consider this ceremony as a form of religious sanctioning of a life-style and not as a marriage in the proper sense of the word. The primary motive for this practice is to avoid pre-marital sexual intercourse which is strongly condemned by Islam. This type of 'marriage' creates the possibility for Muslim youngsters of opposite sexes to live together as is the case with Dutch youngsters. This life style may develop, however, into a legally sanctioned marriage in case of pregnancy or when the social circumstances of both partners have been stabilized. One may consider this exclusively religious marriage as a continuation of a similar

practice known in the countries of origin. In these countries such marriages are organized when the necessary legal conditions for a real marriage are lacking, as in the case of polygamy or when one of the partners is younger than the required minimum age for marriage.

Dressing rules and the separation of the sexes

Islamic regulations for the proper clothing of women and the separation of the sexes in general and above all during swimming and gymnastics at school in particular are well known and have been the subject of discussions in many European countries. In The Netherlands, where religious freedom is enshrined in the Constitution, some events have taken place which stress the importance of these regulations to Muslim parents. The ensuing discussions were centered around two fundamental questions. First of all, do these practices, and the wearing of head-scarfs by school girls in particular, have a religious basis, and, secondly, to what extent are school boards obliged to take them into account? These questions may be illustrated by a number of events that took place in the past five years.

In 1985 the local authorities of the town of Alphen aan de Rijn forbade Muslim girls to cover their heads at the public primary schools of the municipality, the principals of the local private-Christian primary schools having agreed to adopt the same policy. The parents concerned protested against this regulation making clear that this practice was based on genuinely Islamic prescriptions and therefore should be protected by the constitutional principle of religious freedom. Finally, the matter was discussed in the Lower House with the result that the local authorities had to revoke the prohibition.²⁰ Other incidents concerned mixed swimming and gymnastics at schools. Some local authorities exempted Muslim female pupils from mixed school-swimming. Usually the exemption did not apply to gymnastics because of the possibility of wearing training suits during these lessons.

In practice, however, Muslims girls cannot cover their heads whenever they want to do so, at any school. Neither have the problems arising from mixed lessons in swimming and gymnastics been completely solved. This may be illustrated by the conflict between a private-Christian secondary school and the parents of two Muslims girls in the city of Helmond. On grounds of hygiene, organizational complications and principles of integration and emancipation to be applied in its lessons, the school had prohibited the Muslim girls to stay away from the mixed swimming lessons and to wear special clothes (training suits) during mixed lessons in gymnastics. According to the ensuing verdict of the Court of Justice of the city of Den Bosch of September 5, 1989, the constitutional right of religious freedom allows for claims made by citizens only of the state and its public

institutions, including public schools, but not of private institutions, such as private-Christian schools. This verdict implies that the principals of private-Christian schools do continue to have every right to prohibit the wearing of head-scarves and to force Muslim girls to attend mixed lessons in swimming and gymnastics. In its verdict the court argued that "within a reasonable distance" there existed in all probability some other schools which could be acceptable to the parents of the Muslim girls concerned. It is far from clear, however, whether the principal of a private school would have to accept the application of Islamic dressing rules, in case of the absence, "within a reasonable distance", of a school which in fact did respect the convictions of Muslim parents.

Various comments on this verdict have been published by Dutch lawyers challenging the legitimacy of this verdict, among others by drawing a comparison with recent English jurisprudence regarding the refusal of a Christian school to allow a pupil from among the religious community of the Sikhs to wear a turban, this being considered to infringe upon the rules concerning the wearing of school uniforms. The English judge concluded that this prohibition was tantamount to racial discrimination in the sense of the Race Relations Act of 1976. The Dutch lawyers quoted also questioned the competence of a school to apply its own views of the integration and emancipation of minorities, especially where this would imply the suppression of religious freedom.²¹ The verdict just-quoted has therefore remained contested and one can only regret that the case has not been taken to the Dutch Supreme Court.

According to the Minister of the Interior, in her already-quoted address, "There is no reason to make a fuss if Muslim women wish to wear headscarves in public or at school". In view of the verdict just discussed it is quite clear, however, that all private-Christian institutions do have every right to do so. One cannot but agree with the words of the Minister: "I cannot help observing that public discussion of such things is extremely offensive to the people wearing them during classes". But again, this does not change the right private, religiously based institutions seem to have had so far to forbid the wearing of these scarves on their premises, and to force Muslim girls to participate in mixed swimming lessons and gymnastics without proper dressing.

As for the Government's policy towards the refusal of some Muslim parents to send their daughters to school, this also has been explained quite clearly by the Minister of the Interior: "Faith may also go hand in hand with religious precepts that do not assist integration into a new society. If a choice has to be made between such precepts and the opportunity to develop one's individual talents in our society, the latter opinion will receive the casting vote as far as the Dutch Government is concerned. This means for example that the possibility of putting a girl into a separate class for Muslim girls will

be examined if the parents are opposed to a mixed class. However, should this prove impracticable, the obligation to attend school will remain in force and the child will be expected to attend classes".

Inter-family relations

Rights and duties of parents and children are well defined both by Islamic law schools, as well as by the legislation of some of the countries of origin. These rights and duties, which also include the financial support of family members such as parents, brothers and sisters, are complex and differ from law school to law school. The Hanafites limit the financial responsibility of a person to those family members with whom marriage is excluded by blood relationship. The Hanbalites, on the other hand, limit the responsibility to the group of heirs of an individual person. In Morocco, children are also obliged by law to contribute, in proportion to their financial capacities, to the support of their parents.

In practice we notice that Dutch jurisprudence takes these Islamic regulations concerning inter-family relations into account. For instance, the Crown gave permission to a Turkish widow to join her two sons in The Netherlands, who in accordance with the just-mentioned Islamic prescriptions felt obliged to take care of her. Also, the *Raad van State* (=Council of State) gave permission to a 20 year-old boy to join his elder brother in Holland, who in accordance with Islamic regulations also had the obligation to financially support his younger brother.

Islamic regulations with regard to the relationship between parents and children do not prevent generation conflicts from occurring in Muslim countries or within Muslim communities elsewhere. However, the direct influence of Western culture on the second generation of Muslim migrants contributes to conflicts arising between parents and children, often with far-reaching consequences. The same is true of the relationship between husband and wife. Conflicts between parents and children and between husband and wife do not seldom lead to a situation in which children or wives run away from home. For this reason special Muslim shelter-homes have been founded in the four big cities of The Netherlands. The objective of these houses is to offer their clients assistance and guidance fitting in with an Islamic framework. Thus, Islamic regulations on nutrition and beverages as well as on the separation of the sexes are taken into account.

Dutch education and Islam

Mosque education and mosque-schools

Mosque education is hereby defined as a form of education organized and effectuated by the Muslim communities themselves. This education often

takes place in the mosques and is carried out by the imams. To denote this form of supplementary education we prefer to use the terms 'mosque education' and 'mosque- schools' instead of the frequently used 'Quran education' and 'Quran-schools', for the reason that this type of education has a broader aim than merely the recitation and memorization of the Quran. Naturally, the teaching of the Quran occupies a prominent place in mosque-schools but the scope of the latter is broader. At these schools attention is also paid to other issues of faith, to behavioral rules and ethics in general. For instance, in this context also the existing differences between Dutch and Islamic society norms are explained to the pupils. Thus, the primary objective of mosque-education is to enable these youngsters to function adequately in the religious community, as well as in society at large.

No exact figures can be provided about the participation in Islamic religious education at the mosques. Some authors state that 60% of the Turkish children between 7 and 14 years of age participate in this type of education.²² Others mention a significantly lower figure, namely 20%. In 1983-84 the exact number of Turkish children that attended such education amounted to approximately 7000, which comes to 33% of all the Turkish pupils enrolled in Dutch primary schools.²³ A third category of authors have restrained from providing figures. They merely stress the fact that a considerable number of children attend this type of religious education and that the participation within the Turkish community is higher than that within the Moroccan one due to a more effective organization of the former.²⁴ In 1989 the figures for the city of Rotterdam indicated, however, that 25% of the Turkish and 40% of the Moroccan children attended courses in the mosques.

From the preceding figures we may conclude that a considerable number of parents attaches value to the Islamic religious education in the mosques, in order to develop the religious identity of their children, to maintain the bonds with their countries of origin and to bring their cultural heritage within their children's reach.

This type of education has a predominantly negative image in the relevant publications of outsiders. First of all, it is purported that mosque-education constitutes a heavy burden on Muslim children as they have to attend the lessons on their days off. This is true to a certain degree: the children dedicate 6 to 10 hours a week to these lessons, leaving them little time for other activities. It should however be taken into account that the parents in many cases have no other adequate alternative in offering their children the possibility to develop their social identity on a religious basis.

Also the contents of this type of education itself are criticized by many who argue that the educational methods applied could create the basis for blind fundamentalism.²⁵ This point of view is disputable as there exists no proof that learning Quranic verses by heart in itself leads to fundamentalism.

The parents of these children, for instance, have often received a similar education without notably becoming fundamentalists or fanatics.

Finally, criticism is directed against the manner in which the children are approached by the teacher, who is sometimes accused of beating them by way of punishment.²⁶ Socially-speaking, this type of punishment is not acceptable. We recommend therefore a more and better control by the Islamic organizations themselves in order to ensure the adequate functioning of the mosque-schools, particularly in view of the value attached to this type of education by the parents.

Islamic education in public and private-Christian schools

Muslim pupils are enrolled in public as well as in private Christian schools. In 1982-83 the distribution of Moroccan and Turkish children over both types of primary schools was almost fifty-fifty. Figures for the City of the Hague, however, indicated that 71% of the Muslim children were enrolled in public primary schools. Some authors state that Muslim parents sometimes prefer private-Christian schools for a number of reasons, such as the positive attitude to religion, the stricter discipline and the lower rate of foreign children in these schools. Research has pointed out that Moroccan parents, however, only rarely choose a Christian school for their children.²⁷ Other authors mention external factors, such as the housing policy enforced by municipalities, as an explanation for the presence of Muslim children at Christian schools.²⁸ The relatively higher representation of Muslim children in Catholic schools in comparison to Protestant schools has, however, a historical reason. The up-taking of migrants in The Netherlands in the period of 1955-1965 was mainly taken care of by churches and some private foundations. The Catholic Pedagogic Centre was the first to show an interest in assisting children of a foreign background.²⁹ It should furthermore be stressed that the choice by Muslim parents, lacking knowledge of the Dutch educational system, of a Christian school was mainly determined by the distance between home and school. Last but not least, school administrators frequently sent Muslim children to those schools already attended by a high percentage of foreign children.

Islamic religious education at public schools

Islamic education at these schools is provided for indirectly, through lessons in the language and culture of origin, as well as directly, through special lessons in Islam. The former type of special education, existing in public as well as in private schools, is subsidized by the Government and is carried out by teachers recruited from the countries of origin. In these lessons Islamic religious education is also incorporated, though not formally. With regard to

Islamic education at public schools articles 29-31 of the Education Bill make it possible for parents to apply for religious education for their children. However, at present Islamic religious education at public schools is effectuated only in very few municipalities such as Rotterdam, Tiel and Ede. This type of education is subsidized by the municipality and the teaching is mostly done in Dutch by Moroccan and Turkish imams and other free-lance teachers. Even though in several municipalities many requests for this type of religious education have been filed, the realization has been restricted for a number of reasons. The most important of these is the condition stipulated by the authorities that these lessons should be taught in Dutch. However, it is far from easy to find imams who master the Dutch language well enough and who are at the same time acceptable to both the Moroccan as well as the Turkish communities. The situation in the City of Rotterdam makes it clear, however, that it is indeed possible to organize, at primary school level, Islamic religious education that can be attended by different ethnic Muslim groups.

Islamic religious education at Christian schools

Despite the high representation of Muslim pupils at private Christian schools changes in the educational programmes, especially with regard to religious education at these schools were considered undesirable and impossible. As a consequence Muslim children were obliged to attend lessons in Christianity and were also not permitted to have their own religious education. In 1987 a special committee of the Protestant Christian Pedagogic Centre discussed the question whether and, if so, to what extent the possibility should be created within these schools to allow Muslims and Hindus to pay attention to their religious identity. The committee proposed the so-called 'Christian encounter school'. This is a type of school which is fundamentally based on the Bible, but in which other religions are respected and treated on a basis of equality. This notion implies a 'contradictio in terminis' as equality of the various religions cannot be expected to be realized in an educational system which is based on a Christian framework from which these schools derive their reasons for existing. Moreover, the committee itself stresses, in this regard, the fact that the 'encounter school' should be clearly distinguished from other types of schools where all religions have equal rights. The unequal position of the non-Christian religions at this type of Christian school can also easily be deduced from its proposed structure. First of all, the plans for the 'encounter school' have been drawn up without practically any participation on the part of Muslim or Hindu parents. Secondly, parents of non-Christian children are not offered the opportunity to participate in school-boards, because of the Christian foundation of this type of school. Thirdly, although a possibility exists to provide Islamic religious education at these schools, the teacher is considered as a 'guest teacher', and not as a full member of the staff

of teachers. Furthermore, it has been proposed that he or she should be paid by the Islamic community itself and not by the school administration as is the case with other teachers.

Because of these shortcomings the 'encounter school' at the town of Ede preferred to opt for a different organizational framework in order to deal with these shortcomings. The schoolboard has proposed the so-called 'cooperation school', which has serious consequences for their identity as a private Christian school. At this school Muslim parents are allowed to participate in the school-board, and imams are offered the opportunity to give Islamic religious education, so the school's Christian foundation has been abandoned. As a result, 'The Union for Christian National School Education', one of the master organizations for Christian education, has expelled the 'cooperation school' as a member.

Private Islamic schools

As mentioned earlier on the Dutch Constitution permits religious communities to found their own private schools which are fully subsidized by the Government. The same permission is also granted to non-Christian religions as is clearly stated in the note of the Dutch Minister for Education concerning the foundation of primary schools based on Islam and Hinduism. In this context and over the past three years 13 Islamic and one Hindu schools have already been founded. Six more Islamic schools are expected to open their doors in August, 1991. Even though Islamic schools are accessible to all Muslim children regardless of their ethnic origin, the foundation of these schools has generally been initiated by specific ethnic groups. The majority has been realized owing to initiatives made by local Turkish mosque-communities. Some local Moroccan mosque-communities and the interethnic Islamic Women's Organization *Al-Nisa* have taken the initial steps towards the foundation of some schools, as well. The Islamic Foundation for Dutch Education (ISNO) which is associated to the previously mentioned Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation and promotes a "secular-liberal" type of religious education in line with the policy of the Turkish authorities, has initiated the founding of 3 out of these 13 schools. The remaining 10 schools are usually called the "autonomous" Islamic primary schools, as they are governed by an autonomous local board of governors. The colouring of their lessons is more outspokenly "orthodox". The objective of both types of these schools can be said to be twofold: first of all, to transmit and preserve Islamic religion and culture within the context of the Dutch secular state and, secondly, to improve the educational level of Muslim children by paying special attention to their specific problems.

Despite the above-mentioned constitutional guarantees, in practice the foundation of these schools has met with structural obstacles generated

mainly by Dutch local authorities. In contrast to the foundation of Christian schools discussions were held in the municipal councils about the advantages and disadvantages of Islamic schools to the communities concerned. In this context especially two advantages were stressed. First of all, the essential role which may be fulfilled by these schools in the development of a Muslim identity due to the extra attention given to Islam and the culture of origin of these children. Furthermore, it is argued that the development of a solid cultural and religious identity will lead to a positive self-conception of the children which is indispensable to their emancipation in Dutch society. Beside these advantages, a number of disadvantages have been mentioned. First of all, it was argued that these schools will stimulate the isolation of Muslims and constrain their integration in Dutch society. In the long run this could be disadvantageous to their participation in society as a whole and therefore stimulate discrimination against them. Furthermore, these schools could lead to the concentration of Muslim children in separate schools and negatively influence the attitude of other Dutch schools towards Muslim children. This argument is not of much importance as the racial separation in the sector of education observable in the so-called 'black' and 'white' schools is a reality, already. In 1985, 40 percent of the population of 107 out of 146 schools in a deprived position in Amsterdam consisted of children of ethnic minorities. 41 of these 107 schools showed even an ethnic concentration varying from 70 to 100 percent.

Apart from these barriers Islamic schools meet with other obstacles. First of all, the Dutch educational law requires that each private school should be a member of a master organization consisting of at least 50 private schools. (One of the tasks of these master organizations is the settling of labour disputes between the teachers and the boards of governors). Not being able to meet these requirements initially Islamic schools have associated themselves temporarily with the existing "public-private" and private-Christian educational master organizations. Lately, however, the Dutch Minister of Education gave permission to Islamic schools to create their own master organization with a minimal number of 10 attached schools. This has resulted in the founding of the Islamic Organization of School Boards (ISBO) to which all of the presently existing Dutch Islamic schools are associated.

Another barrier which these schools have to face in Holland is the shortage of trained Muslim teachers. In practice the majority of the engaged staff is of a non-Muslim background, a situation which could hinder, to a certain degree, the realization of the objective pursued, namely the transference of Islam and Islamic culture to the Muslim youngsters.

It will take three years before one can judge whether these schools have succeeded in realizing their objectives. Until that time they deserve the benefit of the doubt.

Notes

- ¹The present chapter is an updated extract of the authors' book *Muslims in Nederland*, 1990.
- ²Landman, N: *Adreslijst van moskeeën in Nederland*. Utrecht 1990. Computer-file.
- ³*Minderhedennota* 1983: 10,107,110.
- ⁴*Religieuze voorzieningen*. 1983,98, and Hirsch Ballin: 1988,79-80.
- ⁵Hirsch Ballin: 1988,81-85.
- ⁶Landman: 1990,8.
- ⁷Rutten: 1988, 139-144.
- ⁸Shadid and Van Koningsveld: Zwolle 1986.
- ⁹*Nederlandse Jurisprudentie*. 1986,no.702, pp.2638-43.
- ¹⁰Rutten: 1986, 60-61.
- ¹¹Wagtendonk: 1990.
- ¹²Den Exter: 1990.
- ¹³De Wit: 1988,30.
- ¹⁴*Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. Vergaderjaar 1984-1985. Aanhangsel*, No 667.
- ¹⁵Hoffer: 1990.
- ¹⁶*Nederlandse Jurisprudentie*. 1985, No 350, pp.1209-1217.
- ¹⁷Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 16102 no 128: *Algemeen erkende rust-, feest- en gedenkdagen* [=Public holidays], part.pp.22-27.
- ¹⁸See the letter of the *Landelijk Bureau Racismebestrijding* [= National Anti-Racism Bureau] No AK/ab/103/85 d.d. August 1985 to the national bodies for advice and consultation with respect to Government policy for the minorities, part.p.5; the questionnaire of the Special Committee for the Minorities with reference to the report "Minorities - Minor rights?" d.d. 4/2/1986 [*Tweede Kamer*, 1985-86, 16102, no 130], part. questions 3 and 20 up to and including 24, and their answers of 14/8/1986 doc.no 141; also: the account of the talks of the Special Committee for the Policy concerning the Minorities of 19/2/1987 with the Minister for Justice, pp. 3 and 6.
- ¹⁹Van Bakelen: 1984,20-21.
- ²⁰Shadid and Van Koningsveld: 1985.
- ²¹See A.Possel, in *Migrantenrecht*. 1989 No 5, and C.A.Groenendijk, in *Rechtsvordering*. 1988 No 96.
- ²²*Religieuze voorzieningen*. 1983,43.
- ²³Karagül: 1987, 82-83.
- ²⁴Van Esch and Roovers: 1987,35.
- ²⁵*Religieuze voorzieningen*. 1983,51.
- ²⁶*Religieuze voorzieningen*. 1983,51; Van Esch and Roovers: 1987,87.
- ²⁷Van Esch and Roovers: 1987,33-34.
- ²⁸Lkoundi- Hamakers: 1987,100.
- ²⁹Kloosterman: 1987,12-13.

Islam in France

New Perspectives

R. Leveau

A change in the nature of the general debate concerning the settlement of an immigration characterized by its Muslim culture, which has developed since the beginning of the eighties, might well be under the way. Indeed, both the French political class, as well as the center-right or center-left parties assuming governmental responsibilities insist upon the fact that the basic compromise should be founded upon the restriction of any particularism to private matters only. But if this is the position of central power, it seems that Muslims in France are starting to ask for a partial modification of the system on a community basis, at a time when it is becoming less and less appropriate to designate that cultural group as immigrants or foreigners: 60 per cent of its members are born in France and nearly 30 per cent of them have been living in that country for more than 15 years.

In the same way, the adoption of the French nationality which, at the beginning of the eighties was still a problem for many, is now quite common among young people, probably as a reaction against the extreme-right positions.

So that, today, we have to deal with a vaguely-defined group giving birth to a collective community-based identity, the religious character of which varies according to the strategies adopted to negotiate the terms of an integration process. Furthermore, Muslims are not the only ones to try and find their exact place in French society. By a screw-back effect, the very groups they are supposed to model after -in this case the Jews-, have come to likewise develop a collective community-based identity. But, in doing so, their behaviour, which would seem to question the classical French integration model for minorities based upon a centralized State, is ambiguous because it does not prevent them from looking for collective recognition on the part of that same State. They do not claim to contest either its integration role or the values of French society. But the emergence of new intermediary elites, coming particularly from associations, little by little engenders a behaviour which models itself with a varying degree of intensity according to the diversity of these crises: the Rushdie affair or the wearing of the veil, for example.

Equally, French society reacts to that presence by insisting upon its own constitutive principles, adopting the idea that a Muslim culture group might adhere to its values at the same time doubting to a large extent, and far beyond the usual extreme-right partisans, the possible convergence of republican values with Islamic culture. These data have been collected through a survey regarding associations, which has been conducted between 1988 and 1989, and through simultaneous public opinion polls based on a global sample of the French population as well as on a specific sample of Muslim culture persons.¹

Associative movements and community elites

During the eighties, an associative current flourished among the North-African population. That tendency corresponded with the need of a specific group willing to settle while breaking away from former associations dominated by their countries of origin, though without finding its place among the institutions, the parties or the French trade-unions. As for the French administration which, for some time, had noted a change in immigrants' attitudes, it did not understand its meaning and, above all, feared developments which would have provided the Iranian revolution and Middle-East terrorists with immigrants' networks. The French administration was afraid of an evolution of North-African immigration which might lead to the development of ghettos and of 'non-assimilable' populations phenomena, after the pattern of English suburbs or of the black communities in the United States. In 1981, the liberalization of the rights of foreign associations was going to facilitate that evolution and to offer an opening towards social, cultural, economic and, soon, political intermediary functions for which there were few elites available.

To fill that emptiness, one called upon the few who had succeeded in acquiring an upward social mobility, cutting them off from their former group and making them opt for individualistic solutions, as well as upon students coming from North-African countries who could find in those intermediary functions first a way of earning some money and soon after a 'raison d'être', and upon shop-keepers who until then had not looked for a social visibility outside the economic sphere, and sometimes also upon people who, at first, had been nominated by their own countries and in the end had become advisors on immigration questions to the French civil service, the local councils or the political parties. Due to the spreading of these intermediary elite groups, present in various sectors though they were often rivals there, one could witness the development of a communitarian thematic. For these elites compete to obtain from the State both a more important representation and larger resources, with all the individual and collective consequences which may characterize this type of rivalry.

In order to get more, they need to be widely supported by the group they wish to represent and therefore they must adopt a particularistic language mixing cultural themes as well as a collective memory with religion in order to reinforce the ingredients of a common consciousness. A similar evolution will be found, later on, among those elected coming from associative spheres coopted by political parties or local councils. The creation of an intermediary elite group, highly competitive because they feel they ought to get as quickly as possible into some functions which are part of a game in which they find themselves having a symbolic relationship with the top people of the State, increases both the community-based rhetoric and allegiance to central power, expressed through administrative channels, persons elected and political parties, all of them appearing, in various degrees, as being representative elements of a centralized State. Until recently, local authorities were considered, on the contrary, as being hostile and antagonistic. Undoubtedly, this comes from the fact that they were all, whatever their political colour, unwilling to grant either symbolic recognition or subsidies.

Getting into the politics

The attempts by North-African elites to get together were also directly going against the intra-community merging and mixing operated by local councils. Local authorities could not accept that sport clubs or theatre groups would be established on the basis of specific ethnic origins. They refused to take into account what is basically at stake in the associative movement, i.e., the emerging of new elites, a process that the present leadership wishes to slow down. On the other hand, the FAS as well as the CCFD², which, along with some foreign supporters, are going to constitute the main financial resources for associations, prove to be far more tolerant as far as particularisms are concerned. Because they give money for 'operations' rather than to organizations, these bodies will not need to enquire into the motivations of those in charge of such projects, when, on the other hand, competition is immediate at a local level. Starting in 1986, the political parties and in particular the various tendencies within the Socialist Party, have been providing them with a non-disinterested help. These are going to consider young people representing the second generation of North-African immigration as a potential electoral and militant reserve they can call upon to support national electoral campaigns or whenever rivalry between different tendencies within the Party Federations will make it necessary. In the course of the months preceding the Congress of Rennes in March 1990, these considerations played quite a big part in reinforcing community cleavages. The Socialist Party, by way of a decision taken by the National Secretariat in spite of the reservations put forth by the Federations, has mixed its local

representatives of Muslim origin with Jews and with French people born in Algeria in order to hide its primary purpose. Since then, this group has become a Muslim-culture socialist circle, which publishes a periodical publication aimed at getting recognition of 'the specific character and identity of our community'. In order to be better listened to, they are anxious to be their own spokesmen and to give their opinion as far as racist offences, or the *Conseil de Réflexion sur l'Islam* (a special study group on Islamic questions) which has been created by the Home Secretary after the veil's affair, or the way colonial history is presented in school books, or the FIS's electoral victory in Algeria, are concerned.

The presence of these new elites in the political arena gradually forces the political class to adopt a community-style discourse and strategy for it feels intuitively that such a language and such a practice lead to a dedramatization of social relationships which otherwise could pick up violent note. If they were not recognized, these elites would seek the resources and the legitimacy they could not find in France elsewhere. But to accept them is contradictory to the principles of a centralized State. Given the fact that the persons, the groups and the places used to get that new practice accepted, are at the same time the most representative symbols of that same State, one may consider the fact that this does not constitute a fundamental deviation from former practices. When addressing both the Party in power and the administration to obtain a specific place of their own, these elites demonstrate their allegiance and implicitly refuse to call upon their own national States or other partners symbolizing the mediation of the Muslim community. Even though it implies a high degree of integration, even sometimes excessively so, its practice is risky for it may lead to misunderstanding and rejection. The public-opinion poll launched in November 1989, at the same time as the veil's affair, and taking into account, on the one hand, a sample of the French population and, on the other hand, a sample of the Muslim-culture population indicates rather well the ambiguity and the risks deriving from misunderstandings as well as from conflictual perceptions. (See Appendix).

Ambiguous perceptions

When interpreting complex and contradictory data one can only use either the method of the half-full bottle or that of the half-empty bottle. When it comes to the situation of Muslims in France one can adopt an altruistic point of view and insist upon their willingness to compromise and to understand, to accept the rules characterizing the system and even to go unnoticed. In the same manner one is going to focus, in society as a whole, on a number of elements which allow one to say that the long-term presence of Muslims in France has been accepted. They are, indeed, expected to follow the general rules which

have been laid down at the beginning of the Third Republic for the integration of other minorities, such as the Protestants or the Jews, and which in particular consider any religious allegiance to be a private matter and allow religious affairs a small social visibility only.

On the other hand, one can easily say that for the most part the Muslims who have been interviewed even if they have a strong wish to be integrated into French society, are ready to do so only if they can keep their identity and a high percentage of visibility. Even if their demand is undertoned it can nevertheless hurt the perceptions of the majority of the population, especially if one takes into account the highly devaluating views concerning Islam which that survey confirms.

The effort to compromise

Several types of answers reinforce the idea that, on the whole, the two groups which have been interviewed want to preserve the French conception of secularism and wish it to be the frame of integration. For example, concerning the question of the adoption of a specific status for Muslims in order for them to solve such problems as marriage, divorce, children's care, etc..., not only 82 per cent of the global sample are opposed to such measures, but also 66 per cent of the interviewed Muslims. That percentage is higher among young Muslims who have got a secondary education and is close to the global sample. On the other hand, when it comes to those who gave a favorable answer the percentage is 10 per cent higher among practicing Muslims, most of them also being older.

Also 82 per cent of the French population and 93 per cent of the population of Muslim origins think that one can be perfectly integrated in French society and practice Islam in private -the latter opinion is supported by 71 per cent of the group that thinks one can live in France while faithfully following *all* of the Islamic prescriptions.

Other elements indicating that the general rules of the game related to society at large are accepted may be found in the answers given to the following question: "If one close member of your family were going to abandon the Islamic religion, how would you react?" 72 per cent answered that they would go on seeing that person and let him or her be free in their choice, thus reinforcing the idea that religious practice is a matter of freedom of consciousness, which one ought to consider both on an individual level and on a collective one, thus rejecting the rules of a minority Islam Imam Khomeiny tried to impose at the time of the Rushdie affair. In this respect one may also quote, even if it is a bit ambiguous, the positive answer (70 per cent) given by the Muslims interviewed to the question: "would you be against a close member of your family (a brother, a sister, a child) marrying a non-Muslim

person? Indeed, as far as the religious rules are concerned these marriages are valid for Muslim men. But one may equally notice from specific surveys that the percentage of people of a different religion who are either married or live together is as high as 50 per cent. This concurs with a higher proportion of answers favorable to mixed unions among young people.

If one leaves out the highly favourable answers for preserving the French conception of secularism, one can also find in the sample constituted by people of Muslim origins a group of up to 25, or even 30 per cent (if not more), characterized either by a wish for a very strong secular position, or by a willingness to be unnoticed, to be anonymous. One can also find, among Muslims, some negative answers related to the fact of being veiled at school (45 per cent are against it) or outside (25 per cent are against it). Young people and women are more distinctly represented in this group. The same is true when it comes to building mosque minarets as visible as church towers (18 per cent are against this proposal), or with respect to the question of the call to prayer (49 per cent are against it). Largely a third among those constituting the Muslim sample say they are opposed to private Muslim schools or even to the fact of having Muslim chaplaincies in secondary schools, 41 per cent say they are opposed to having political parties or trade-unions labelled "Muslim", and 31 per cent do not wish to have a Muslim as President of the Republic.

Integration and community visibility

But, contrary to the minority which demonstrates a strong attachment to traditional secularism, or does not wish the group to be too visible, one can notice that more and more there exists a willingness to be integrated without losing one's own cultural identity and this corresponds with the strategy adopted by Muslim elites since 1985/86 by way of the associative movement. That precise wish is particularly expressed in various answers. For example, 95 per cent claim they have a link with Islam, 75 per cent because they are believers and 20 per cent thinking more in terms of remembering; 90 per cent are in favour of giving Muslim surnames to their children. 72 per cent of the persons interviewed wish Muslims in France would have their own representatives.

This percentage is higher among young people, including those who have gone to school. It is also higher among Algerian people than among Moroccans. A huge majority (60 per cent) is in favour of choosing democratically such representatives from among the Muslims living in France -their appointment by the authorities of the different Muslim countries is favoured only by 13 per cent. Also 79 per cent are in favour of building mosques when practicing Muslims ask for it, and 71 per cent say they are in favour of having visible minarets. 73 per cent wish they could celebrate

officially the most important Muslim feasts, thus implying these days would become holidays; a similar percentage wish to be able to practice the fasting during Ramadan, some of them (60 per cent) during the entire month, others for some days only. 87 per cent would like some food-products to be prohibited in State-school dining halls in accordance with Muslim rules, although only 47 per cent ask for Muslim chaplaincies in those very same schools, and 57 per cent insist upon the founding of private Muslim schools.

If one compares these figures with the ones corresponding to the people in favour of (30 per cent) or indifferent to (22 per cent) wearing veils at school, and even more (74 per cent) outside, one may conclude from that comparison that a voluntary desire for visibility as a group does exist, which expresses itself through a whole series of signs in the public space, from food-products prohibitions to collective demonstrations, such as feasts or Ramadan, and asking for recognizable places for the celebration of religious services.

That sort of behaviour seems to characterize a community wanting to be perceived as a whole, and not on an individual basis, and which agrees to paying the entrance fee previously set by the majority group. This visibility and this marking-process of the group leave aside the possible resort to marriage interdicts which could, in the case of girls, be founded upon some religious rules as constraining as food prohibitions and a flexible way of dealing with nationality problems which now have been dissociated from identity behaviour of a religious nature.

The identity behaviour which can be modelled thanks to these answers above appears as a sort of marker in a collective process basically constituted by the acceptance of, and even more the searching for integration, which implies resorting to the State, going through the state-school system, local institutions, as well as political participation by way of the vote system, allowing resources to be mobilized at various levels. 73 per cent are in favour of letting non-European foreigners vote at a local level and 71 per cent would be pleased to have a Muslim mayor as head of their town, when, on the other hand, the idea of electing a Muslim as President of the Republic is rejected by only 31 per cent of the Muslims. These distinctions, even if they partly demonstrate a sort of dream, indicate an even greater desire to be politically integrated. Young people and non-practicing persons are the ones who are most in favour of having a Muslim President or a Muslim mayor being elected.

Linked in various ways to this majority, which seems to choose for both integration and community assertion, one can assume that there is, on the one hand, a sub-group representing 25 to 30 per cent of people ready to accept the forms of individual integration characteristic of the French model and, on the other hand, another group rather similar (20 to 30 per cent depending upon the

questions) which could be tempted to obey the rules of the majority Muslim community rather than those of French society.

All these conclusions ought to be considered with moderation and care. They indicate the existence of tendencies and certainly not of differentiated and antagonistic groups. There may be shifts depending on time or circumstances. On the other hand, one should not forget that this public-opinion poll took place at a time of crisis, when antagonistic perceptions might well have been exacerbated. This can be seen in the table in the appendix showing extremely strong contrasts reflecting each group's vision of Islam, uniformly positive among Muslims, on the whole negative as far as all the categories of French people are concerned.

Muslim presence is accepted if it keeps discreet

Starting from that vision one can try to make clearer the idea French people have about the integration of Muslims in civilian and political society. Those having a positive vision of Islamic culture represent, depending upon the circumstances, between 10 and 20 per cent of the sample. With this in mind, if one accepts the integration of Muslim people, this can be done only if the social visibility of that culture is restricted at the very most, for it is going to remain suspicious to the majority of people. The Muslim religion ought, therefore, to be kept a private matter (82 per cent) and, if such is the case, there would not be a systematic rejection of the group for 49 per cent would not be opposed to a close member of their family marrying a Muslim person. But once this principle is set, there comes the doubt, for opinions are rather equally divided between those who think that it is possible to live in France and obey all the Islamic rules (41 per cent), and those who think it impossible (42 per cent). That feeling is reinforced by the answer to the following question: "The more one is integrated in French society the less one remains a Muslim": 52 per cent agree with that idea, only 30 per cent disagree with it.

To most of the French to be a 'good Muslim' in France means to renounce being one or, at least, to be discrete enough not to show it. The idea of a specific status for Muslims is rejected by 82 per cent of the French sample and most of the questions related to their visibility in public are given largely negative answers, including those connected with social practices which have been recognized and established for other cultural and religious groups, and sometimes even for Islam also. For example, Muslim chaplaincies in secondary school are rejected by 54 per cent of the people, the prohibition of some food-products in school dining halls by 56 per cent, the possibility of setting up Islamic private schools by 63 per cent -and, indeed, wearing a veil at school by 75 per cent. Even if a vague majority (59 per cent) accepts the founding of mosques (33 per cent in favour, and 26 per cent indifferent), the

percentage of adverse answers is as much as 46 per cent as soon as one starts speaking of minarets being as visible as church towers and reaches 86 per cent when it comes to the call to prayer. 56 per cent of the French are equally opposed to the idea that the two most important Muslim feasts should become official holidays for the Muslims, and the percentage of negative answers comes to 73 per cent where the question regarding the celebration of these feasts by everyone is concerned.

There too one can thus witness the emergence of behavioral units which are marked in an almost stronger way than those in the Muslim population. Three-fourth do not refuse the integration of the Muslims provided that they adopt secularism and the values of French society. Nearly half of them believe that this development is hardly possible but still accept an opening on principle, meanwhile making sure that there would be no overflow.

At one extreme one finds close to a quarter of the people interviewed who accept a religious identity to be asserted in terms which are not far from those the majority of the Muslim population are attached to; at the other extreme an important third of the people questioned who are totally opposed to the idea of integration and even of a settlement or a presence which, in whatever way, becomes visible. 38 per cent are opposed to the building of mosques, 37 per cent are against a close member of their family marrying a Muslim, 25 per cent reject the possibility of Muslim surnames being accepted for civil registration, 31 per cent are opposed to women wearing the veil outside.

Expressing an antagonism

This rejection front represents, indeed, rather old and rightist voters, but it includes also about 37/38 per cent of the communist voters, this percentage being far higher than the average level reached either by the Left or even by traditional right-winged parties. It is clear that, concerning these rejection themes which, for a large part coincide with the rhetoric of the National Front, the percentage of people agreeing with these themes is, when there is a crisis, far higher than the results that party has obtained in recent elections, and such a support comes, to a not inconsiderable extent, from leftist voters, communist ones in particular. Is it thus possible to come to the conclusion that the immigration theme is going to drive part of the voters who are not under the influence of the National Front to join its ranks? One may undoubtedly wonder whether that is not the case, but one should also remember that this particular public opinion poll took place at a time when the crisis was at its peak, thus dramatizing reactions while hiding those stabilizing factors which, usually, weigh upon the choices voters make.

Nevertheless, one can draw from that table the image of two groups placed on a colluding trajectory, even though it also indicates that on both sides there

exists a willingness to compromise in order to have a viable political system. But, if one were to simplify the whole picture, one could assume that the search for integration, very strongly demonstrated by the Muslim group, leads to the adoption of a community type identity and that the dynamics of the Welfare State won't be capable of absorbing it entirely. On the other hand, the fact that a majority of people accepted the idea that Muslim immigrants are going to settle and found families in the country led, in the eighties, to the reassertion of the values of a centralized State and of the secular principles which to the two groups were an important element in the integration contract. The wish to compromise expressed by the majority of both groups as well as the steps ahead made by both sides in relation to the failures inherited from the colonial period must not let them forget that on each side a minority group (of 1/4 or 1/3) exists which, either through its demands or its refusal is capable of ruining any effort towards a synthesis.

The existence of a dialogue, the coaptation of elites, the fact of looking for common cultural fields and values (which are not entirely expressed in that public opinion poll) may reinforce the logic of the compromise. To allow further study of the conflictual perceptions likely to structure political behaviors in the direction of a community way of thinking, a new public opinion poll similar to that of November 1989 ought to be launched, at a time when there is no crisis. That enterprise was an original one because the same questions were put to two supposedly antagonistic groups. It would be interesting to be able to extend it to other groups, such as the Jews and the Protestants, who may also be led to redefine their identities, especially in relation to the Muslim community position challenging the conditions of their integration in the political system at the beginning of the Third Republic, or to claim their own share of the resources and oppose the emergence of a new group which is becoming too visible. It would also be necessary to wonder about the evolution of the relationship between the majority group of Catholics and the State. Was the fact that, in 1984, both of the huge demonstrations took place, the one for the defense of Catholic schools and the other for the adoption of the ten years' resident permit, indicating a tacit acceptance of the settlement of an important Muslim group on French territory, a mere coincidence?

Appendix

Question: Of the two words following, which one, according to you, corresponds best to Islam?

	Population group per cent (%)	
	FRENCH	MUSLIM
Peace	19	84
Violence	60	9
Without any opinion	21	7
	---	---
	100	100
Going backwards	66	21
Progress	12	64
Without any opinion	22	15
	---	---
	100	100
Woman's protection	12	61
Woman's submission	76	28
Without any opinion	12	11
	---	---
	100	100
Fanaticism	71	18
Tolerance	15	62
Without any opinion	14	20
	---	---
	100	100

Notes

¹A/ Survey on the forms of insertion of Muslim populations in the French political system, CERI-FNSP, 1988/89.

B/ Islam in France, public opinion poll under the direction of IFOP/Le Monde/RTL/La Vie, Nov. 20, 1989, with the collaboration of Gilles Kepel, Rémy Leveau and Jean-Luc Parodi.

²FAS (*Fonds d'action sociale pour les travailleurs immigrés et leurs familles*), Social Action Fund for immigrant workers and their families. CCFD (*Centre catholique de lutte contre la faim et pour le développement*), Catholic Center for the Fight against Malnutrition and for Development. If FAS's standards insist upon integration, cultural and religious specifics are rather widely accepted when it comes to projects focussed upon 'ethnic pride' and aimed, in particular, at fighting marginalization, failure at school and delinquency.

The Challenge of Muslim Minorityness

The American Experience¹

Y. Haddad

The enhanced consciousness of minority status in the Muslim *umma* (community) is a post-colonial phenomenon. It is the byproduct of the European carving of the three Muslim empires of the sixteenth century into 44 nation states² and installing national governments committed to perpetuating a western model in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. This division left one third of the estimated eight hundred and fifty million Muslims of the world living as minorities in non-Muslim countries. Consciousness of "minority" existence has also been increased by the awareness of the new opportunities available to Muslim communities that have been voluntarily established in the Americas, Europe, Australia and New Zealand as a result of the migration of Muslim labor to "the west". While their condition varies from one country to another, members of these communities generally have been guaranteed the freedom to practice and propagate their faith in their new environment.

Minority consciousness has also been influenced in this century by the development of a genre of literature advocating a political Islam, one that taps into powerful imagery of the struggle of the early believers under the leadership of the prophet Muhammad to establish a righteous and just state in a hostile environment. The perseverance of the community of the faithful in the formative period of Islam has provided models of *modus operandi* for ideologically committed religious and opposition groups in various Muslim countries. Since the sixties, popular authors such as Abu al-A`la al-Mawdudi³ and Sayyid Qutb⁴ have depicted their supporters as persecuted minorities who should emigrate to a more congenial place, enhance their Islamic consciousness, and organize in order to return to their homelands to replace what they consider to be un-Islamic nationalist and socialist governments.

The conditions and problems of Muslim minorities have, in the last two decades, received increased attention from the various international Islamic organizations as well as individual Muslim writers. Recently, the Muslim World League established a *Fiqh* Council with representatives from all legal schools to address the variety of issues facing the Muslim community in the modern world, including the issue of minority life in a non-Islamic environment. In its recent meeting in India, the Council advocated the development of what is being called *fiqh al-darura* (jurisprudence of necessity) or *fiqh al-aqalliyah* (jurisprudence of minority) to address issues relating to living an Islamic life in a non-Muslim environment.⁵

Both the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Muslim World League have expressed special interest in the plight of Muslim minorities since their inception. While on some level this interest reflects the continuing influence of Muslims from the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent whose experience of the dismemberment of the Moghul Empire and the creation of a large Muslim minority in India (estimated at about 80 million people) has generated public discussion on the role of minorities, it also demonstrates international concern for oppressed Muslim minorities in Palestine, Cambodia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines, among others. The two organizations have confined their activities mainly to the issue of the survival of the dispersed communities in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa, with limited activity in Europe and the Americas. Their programs include educational and political support, with special emphasis on the ability of Muslims to withstand Christian missionary crusades aimed at converting them to Christianity.

Prominent among twentieth century authors who have felt that minority status is incompatible with Islam is the above mentioned Abu al-A`la al-Mawdudi, who affirmed that minorities deserve to suffer the consequences of belonging to a minority faith and that they must expect to be mistreated and marginalized. Mawdudi's ideas were grounded in the classical Islamic division of the world into *dar al-harb*, the domain of war, *dar al-Islam*, the domain of Islam, and *dar al-sulh*, the domain of treaty. From this perspective, Muslims, in order to guarantee their safety and the freedom to practice their faith, are expected to live in areas governed by Islam. Although they may venture into other regions of the world as diplomats or traders, they are to return to countries under the control of Islamic governments if they are threatened or not allowed to practice their faith. So convinced was Mawdudi of the importance of this doctrine that, appearing before a commission concerned with the future of Muslims in India, he said:

I have no objection if the Muslims of India are treated as sudras [lowest of the four casts of Hindus who pollute others by a mere touch] and Mlechchas [lower than the untouchables] and Manu's laws are applied to them depriving them of all share in government and rights as citizens.⁶

Concern for the status and welfare of minorities has been brought to the attention of the Muslim umma through the untiring efforts of Professor Syed Zein al-Abdin of King Abd al-Aziz University, who established the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs in Jeddah and began a journal devoted exclusively to issues of minorities and 'minorityness'.⁷ In a book published by the Institute the Moroccan Islamist M. Ali Kettani discusses the realities of what it means to be a minority. While his ideas reflect the classical Islamic understanding of the issue, his work is an attempt to reflect on the reality of such status in the context of the modern world. For Kettani the size of the group is not a factor; 'minorityness' implies weakness and powerlessness, a condition that he believes is incompatible with Islam. Islam, he affirms, insists on the health and wellbeing of a community, conditions guaranteed by social and political empowerment. Muslims therefore must not accept minority status as a permanent condition in which they accommodate and acquiesce to those in power. Their 'minorityness' is to be perceived as a challenge to the community to seek to alter such a condition and transcend it.

According to Kettani, if a minority Muslim community experiences oppression and is not allowed to practice its faith, then its members have the options of either fighting back, *jihad*, or emigration, *hijra*. These options are based on the precedent of the practice of the Prophet of Islam when he was faced with persecution and tribulation.

Emigration for one's belief is an act of religious merit; in some cases it is even a religious duty. Such a man is a *muhajir*, but not a refugee. He is required to work hard to prepare for his return, and the Muslim community at large is required to help such *muhajirs* even if there might be no other way for them to return except by resorting to force.⁸

The term *muhajir* has been used by several generations of immigrants from the Arab world in its generic meaning, one who emigrates from one country to another. For a growing number of Muslims, due to the influence of Islamist literature, the term increasingly has been endowed with religious significance. It refers to one who consciously seeks to emulate the prophetic model, i.e. leaving one's home in search of a new life where one can freely practice one's religion and its dictates without being harassed for one's beliefs. It is used to raise individual consciousness and to empower the community. The reference to the immigrants as

living in a condition of *hijra* endows their existence with Islamic meaning. It signifies a mode of being that does not bow down to an oppressive power but posits a life of struggle to practice and maintain the prescriptions of Islam on an individual level while seeking to create a righteous and just society on the communal level.

The preponderance of material on the *hijra* comes in publications produced by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Jamaati Islami in the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent. Its focus of reference is the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the emigration of the Muslim community from Mecca to Medina. The Medinan model has two options. One requires a return to the place of emigration, just as the Muslims of Medina returned to Mecca, in order to cleanse it from its corruption and deviance and restore it to the dominion of the Muslim umma and the shari'a. Emigration in this case becomes a matter of refuge, of empowerment, of organization and planning focused on the domain of Islam. The other option for emigration, also based on the Medinan model, is one in which relocation and settlement is permanent. In this case unceasing effort is required to Islamize the society in which one lives. The final goal is to create an Islamic state even in the land of emigration.

While it is clear that Kettani favors the Medinan model, he is aware that normally the Muslim minorities are in no condition to take over the ruling of countries in which they live, or to utilize the power of these countries in the interest of bringing about an Islamic state. Consequently, he recommends that minority Muslim communities seek to centralize their place of residence in certain areas and establish a truly Islamic community that is based on the brotherhood of Islam, an organization that is not elitist, sectarian, partisan in politics or divided into racial or professional distinctions. They should seek to govern their own affairs through the principle of *shura*, consultation. When this occurs residential enclaves are no longer ghettos, but are communities designed to serve as a means of fostering and maintaining Islam. Their social, economic, political and cultural life is to be centered around the mosque and the Islamic school. These enclaves are necessary to protect the community from the dangers of assimilation and disintegration. By maintaining control of their children's education, the Muslims will be able to insulate them from the pressures to lose their Islamic identity and integrate into the society. Thus Kettani's plan insists on features of distinction in terms of language, dress and Islamic names. Admitting that learning the local language may be necessary for communication with the hegemonic culture, he believes that it is crucial that Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, be taught and that Islamic dress be worn by members of the community as a sign of distinction.⁹ He also emphasizes the necessity for

the community to keep Islamic names, condemning the practice adopted by some earlier generations of Muslims to the United States of anglicizing their names and calling it "the most ominous sign of social absorption."¹⁰

It is clear that because the Muslim community in North America has been recently formed and thus lacks an indigenous religious leadership, ideas advocated by visitors and scholars from overseas have a profound impact on the community. However, not all Muslim leaders are pessimistic about the future of the Muslim community in the west should it fail to isolate itself from the hegemonic culture. Muhammad Abdul-Rauf, former imam of the Islamic Center in Washington D.C., trusts the tenacity and ability of Islam to survive powerful cultural influences just as it has successfully faced them over fourteen centuries of its existence. He affirms that despite the fact that the United States is "largely dominated by the Judeo-Christian tradition...., the hospitable American melting pot,"¹¹ will make it possible for Islam "not only to survive intact in America but also to flourish in honour and dignity."¹² To demonstrate America's guarantee of freedom for Muslims to practice their religion he quotes President Eisenhower, who in a speech at the opening of the Islamic Center in Washington in June 1957 said, "We shall fight with all our might to defend your right to worship according to your conscience."¹³

A few American-born Muslims in the United States have proposed an alternative model of emigration also taken from the life of the Prophet and the first Muslim community. This is the first emigration of the Muslims from Mecca to Ethiopia in order to avoid persecution by the polytheists who ruled the city. As developed by a Muslim Sunday School teacher¹⁴ based on lessons on the life of the Prophet, this model shows that the Muslim community, in its formative period, was saved from total annihilation by the Christians of Ethiopia who refused to repatriate the Muslims to Mecca or deliver them to their enemies. Unlike the Medinan model, this Ethiopian model teaches the common brotherhood between Christianity and Islam and advocates cooperation and mutual support. It focuses on the protection that the Christian Ethiopians provided for the Muslims, on co-existence, and dialogue. As the teacher put it to her class, "But for the protection of Islam by the Christians, there might have been no Muslims or Islam today."

While there is no consensus on what is the ideal model to be followed in the North American context, variations of this "cooperative" model are attractive to many American-born Muslims. Some of the accommodationists have gone as far as to refer to their mosque as "our church," to the Qur'an as "our Bible," and to the imam as "our minister." While on some level this is an attempt to make Islam accessible

to their non-Muslim friends, it is also an effort to emphasize the similarities among the People of the Book. Those who advocate this approach emphasize the respect Islam has for Jesus and his mother Mary and quote verses from the Qur'an emphasizing the commonalities between the two faiths.

Debate over integration and participation vs. separateness and distinction are part of the public discourse of various Muslim communities as they seek to define their present identity and role as well as future prospects for the community in North America. It has raised a number of issues, especially for the American-born generations for whom America is the only country they know and identify with. Can a minority group insist on maintaining its exclusivity and distinction, for example, at the same time that it insists on being treated equally and given equal access to resources? Some fear that the affirmation of religious exclusivity sets the Muslim community on a confrontational course with the host culture which may lead to discrimination. Others argue that the welfare of the minority group, its very survival, depends on the willingness of the majority group to allow its members to practice and propagate their faith.

Both accommodation and separateness as models of minority identity are supported by the prophetic model. They are also supported by their adherents and propagators by reference to Qur'anic text. The accommodationists are fond of quoting Surah 2:256, "There is no compulsion in religion" as proof of Islamic tolerance of other religions and advocacy of co-existence and cooperation in a multireligious context. This has generally been interpreted as a foundation for a pluralistic society. The isolationists on the other hand, quote Surah 3:85, "Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him" as indicative of God's choosing Islam as the only true religion. They would argue that Muslims must refrain from providing legitimacy and sanction for religions and ways of life obviously unacceptable to God. Thus Kettani can say that seeking to belong to and affirm a pluralistic ideal "that accepts all religions as equally valid is the first sign of religious assimilation."¹⁵

The separatists have therefore developed a theology of society that sees Islam as "a total way of life," an alternative to the western system, one that possesses its own norms by which to judge all aspects of cultural, social, political, and economic life. They allow for diversity only within the parameters of these Islamic norms. Pluralism is acceptable only to the extent that it is clearly part of the teachings of the Qur'an. Advocates of this interpretation affirm that, for example, while there is no stipulation as to what kind of style Muslim women must use in covering their hair,

there is one that requires them to do so. Local or individual variations are acceptable as long as they remain faithful to the basic requirement.

The separatists, or isolationists, feel that the tribulation of living in a non-Muslim environment is a calling from God who has commissioned the Muslims of the world to call others to the straight path. "You are the best community brought forth to the world, commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil" (S. 3:110). They believe that they have been placed in the United States for a purpose, to help guide its errant community which is mired in drugs, pornography, incest and immorality to come to the truth.

You, therefore, are in America not merely as flesh and blood, nor simply as Indians, Pakistanis, Egyptians, Syrians....but as Muslims, one Community, one brotherhood. You are Ibrahimi and Muhammadi. Know yourself. You have not come here to lose your identity and get fitted into this monstrous machine or to fill your bellies like animals.¹⁶

While many of the immigrants have come to America for economic reasons, what one Muslim leader called "the allurements of the dollar," the separatists warn against being consumed by economic considerations and losing one's faith. For while it is permissible for Muslims to emigrate in the pursuit of better living conditions, it should not be at the cost of giving up the faith. The admonition is to return to poverty, if the alternative is the loss of one's soul.

Should there be the least danger to faith go back to your native land or to any other place where there is the security of faith; go, and take your family, go even if you have to go on foot.¹⁷

Another feature of the separatist literature is its advocacy of steadfastness, of staying the course and not giving up against great odds. This admonition is not a promise of "pie in the sky" but is based on historical precedent that proves that those who walk in the way of the Lord will prevail. "It was in these circumstances that the Qur'an challenged the power-drunk nations of Rome and Persia, while at the same time infusing dignity and self-confidence into the weak, helpless Arab Muslims."¹⁸ This triumphalism is based on a divine promise in the Qur'an, "So lose not heart, nor fall into despair, for ye must gain mastery if ye are true in the faith" (S.3:139).

These ideas have not necessarily won the support of the majority of American Muslims. In fact, it is clear that many are unhappy about such exclusive claims; some have denounced their advocates as "fanatics," "reactionaries," and "totally out of it". They feel that this kind of isolationism focuses unnecessary attention on the community attracting prejudicial statements from Americans who are unable to tolerate

difference who then ask: "If they don't like it here, why don't they go back to where they came from?"

Accommodationists have since the beginning of the century quoted the writings of Muhammad Abduh of Egypt as support for the struggle to feel at home in America. His *fatwa* for Muslims living in South Africa legalizing the consumption of meat butchered for People of the Book (Christians and Muslims) has been quoted as justification for not abiding by the restrictions of eating *halal* (properly butchered) meat.¹⁹ This opinion was dominant among Muslims in North America until the 60s. The accommodationists felt that "any nourishing diet, any decent dress, and any type of architecture for their houses and mosques"²⁰ was acceptable if it did not violate the tenets of the prescriptions of the faith since religion and culture were not one and the same thing. Thus Abdul Rauf counseled:

The elements of Islamic culture, therefore may not be inherent in Islam. They are patterns of culture or a mode of life developed or adopted by a Muslim community. Therefore, when a Muslim moves into an alien culture, carrying with him his cultural heritage, he is at liberty to adjust to the host culture so long as he maintains the core of his religion, including all the specific Islamic tenets in all areas.²¹

Isolationist ideas concerning minority status have also been challenged recently by some leaders from the "liberal" wing of the Islamic movement. They have raised questions about the relevance as well as the adequacy of the traditional affirmations concerning minority status and their applicability in the modern western states where new Muslim minorities are being formed. To some, the real threat to the Muslim community is from tolerance of the west, not intolerance or persecution. Rashid al-Ghannushi, leader of the Islamic movement in Tunisia is calling on the Muslims living in the United States to participate in American society and renounce isolation since the American system guarantees freedom of religion, their full rights as citizens to influence and participate in the political process, and the right to propagate their own faith.²² Others who have called for Islamic participation in the public life of the west include Egyptian Fathi Osman, former editor of *Arabia* magazine, and Hassan Turabi, leader of the Islamic movement in the Sudan.

On the practical level, issues that arise in the community requiring Islamic resolution in such areas as personal status law, inheritance, child custody and the like increasingly are referred by the Sunni community to the Fiqh Council of the Islamic Society of North America and to Muslim scholars from overseas who attend Islamic conventions and meetings and preside over sessions specifically designated for the purpose of providing

Islamic answers to everyday problems of the modern world. Sometimes decisions are made locally, such as when the elected board of the mosque/Islamic center acts as a deliberative or consultative body providing guidance on the issues. Other times international guidance is sought. The Shi'ite community, for example, has generally looked to Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran for *fatwas* or legal opinions.²³

The Muslims of America

Muslim emigration to the United States has increased during the last century to include new people from over 60 nations who represent different linguistic, national, and racial backgrounds.²⁴ They have arrived since the 1880s in several waves, due both to congressional legislation altering American immigration policies, specifically that allowing a greater number of skilled and professional people from Asia to fill the needs of the expanding American economy, and to the fact that there is a growing number of refugees who are seeking haven from socio-political and economic upheavals in their home countries. Like other immigrants before them from all over the world, these persons have come to the United States in order to take advantage of the benefits available in this country: economic and/or social enhancement, political refuge, religious freedom.

There are no accurate figures on the number of the Muslims in the United States. Estimates range from one to eleven million, although some scholars are persuaded that the best guess is somewhere between three and four million. They have established over a thousand mosques/Islamic centers in the United States and organized several umbrella organizations including the Islamic Society of North America, the Islamic Circle of North America, the Federation of Islamic Associations, and the Council of Masjid. The majority are Sunni although there are substantial Shi'a groups including Ithna Asharis, Isma'ilis, and Druze as well as a flourishing Ahmadiyya²⁵ community that was established in the 1920s.

The convert community is estimated at about one third of the total, about one million adherents, mostly from the African American population. Initially organized under indigenous leadership into sectarian forms of Islam such as the Moorish Science Temple²⁶ (formed by Noble Drew Ali in 1913) and the Nation of Islam,²⁷ the majority of African-American converts have since 1975 joined the ranks of Sunni Islam under the leadership of Warith Deen Muhammad. Black Muslim sects continue to flourish among the underclass of the ghettos of urban America, attracting members to such groups as the Nation of Islam,²⁸ Ansaaru Allah²⁹ and the Five Percenters.³⁰

Estimates of white converts range from 40,000 to 80,000. They include some who are considered by the Muslim community to be opportunists, seeking employment or privileges from Muslims and Muslim countries, or those who have converted for reasons of expediency such as Christian or Jewish men marrying a Muslim woman. The majority, on the other hand, are sincere seekers deemed to be genuine converts to Islam by those who associate with them. They come from a variety of religious traditions, and include even some ex-seminarians (both Catholic and Protestant). A significant number, estimated as perhaps up to thirty percent, are of Jewish background.

There is a substantial number of temporary Muslim residents in the United States who have a varying influence on questions of identity and marginality for Muslims as they participate in the life of the community and its institutions. These include migrant laborers, emigres who are awaiting return to their homecountries (such as Iranians and Afghans), a large number of students studying at American universities, businessmen, itinerant missionaries, and sizeable contingents of diplomats from 44 Muslim nations to the United States and the United Nations. The last group includes representatives of governments that have sought influence in the immigrant community by financing mosque construction, publication of periodicals, and the formation of various organizations. This has led in some instances to divisions in the community as conflicts overseas are replicated on the American scene.

Minority Identity in North America

Being Muslim in the United States means different things to different believers. It is conditioned by a variety of factors, including the definition of Islam itself as determined by those who identify themselves as Muslim in the United States. It includes the world view they advocate as Islamic, the heritage they choose to preserve as the minimum essential for the survival of the faith and the acculturation that takes place as a consequence of residence in the country, the adjustment they have to make to life in the United States, and the extent to which they have attempted, or been able to form, a coherent Muslim community.

It is also shaped by the evolving nature of American society itself, including its attitude toward religious minorities in general and Muslims and Islam in particular. The form this attitude takes is strongly influenced by the kind of integration given to what is understood as "the American way." This may be an insistence on "anglo" conformity which seeks to mold all people into a predetermined cast, or may be the vision of a "melting pot" that allows for changes in all those undergoing the

process of adjustment. It may focus on a Judeo-Christian culture based on biblical values, or a joint religious heritage, or may stress the importance of a pluralistic system that tries to accommodate a variety of customs, values and ideals in a whole that is distinctly American.

Muslim identity is also influenced by the discrepancy immigrants see between the proclaimed values of their new country and their experiences in their local environment, including schools,³¹ courts,³² places of residence and employment,³³ as well as the general ethos of the United States. Depictions of Muslims by the image makers and opinion shapers in the popular culture, including literature,³⁴ the movies³⁵ and the media,³⁶ are often painful.

Also important in the shaping of Muslim self-consciousness has been the fluctuation of American foreign policy during the last forty years, which appears to have deeply troubled or even alienated the majority of Muslim citizens. As America's position of leadership in the world has increased during the last four decades, interaction between Muslims throughout the world and American society has accelerated dramatically. Yet the American establishment appears to continue to ignore Muslim sensibilities. American support for the State of Israel over the last twenty years, despite the latter's apparent violation of professed American values and standards, is increasingly viewed by Muslims as hypocritical. With the coming of the Ayatollah Khomeini to power in Iran, American foreign policy has been perceived as increasingly hostile to Islam and Muslims.³⁷ This has been exacerbated by events such as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, American bombing of Libya, the Salman Rushdie affair and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Arab immigrants in the 1940s first began to feel the pressures of Zionism building in American society. They were frustrated by their inability to counter this because their communities were small and dispersed throughout the United States and because they lacked the organizational structures and leadership that can impact public policy. Their feelings of marginality were intensified by their lack of input into the shaping of American priorities, opinion, and foreign policy, and their inability to influence the press to help correct the slanderous reports that were being published. Realizing that the often false information that was appearing in the press maligned them as a people as well as the heritage in which they took great pride, a handful of American-born Muslim veterans of the second world war, led by Abdullah Igram, established the first Muslim umbrella organization in the United States. Called the Federation of Islamic Associations, it was later to represent 27 mosques and Islamic centers in the United States and Canada. These individuals

became involved in gathering information, debating and lecturing on issues of justice for the Palestinians to whoever would listen.

The tension in the Muslim community between alienation and integration has a long history. It became particularly focused during the Nasser confrontation with the West in the early 60s. As a larger number of new immigrants began to arrive from the Arab world, they brought with them the paramount identity of the time, Nasserism and a commitment to Arab socialist ideology. Nasser became a hero for many Arab immigrants in the United States, who proudly began to identify as being of Arab heritage over against the regional or national identities they had associated themselves with until then.³⁸ The support of Arab nationalist causes and the appropriation of an Arab identity was specially strong after the withdrawal of the British-French-Israeli military expedition from Egypt. Elkholy quotes a woman telling a Jordanian official visiting the United States in 1959 that "Whenever a party is opened in the name of the prophet, no one is particularly moved. But the name of Gamal Abdul-Nasser electrifies the hall."³⁹

It was during this same period that Muslim foreign students attending various American universities formed the organization of the Muslim Student Association in 1962. Its goals were opposed to Nasserism and nationalism, which was seen as a vestige of colonial policy designed to divide the Muslims into nation states in order to facilitate their domination. The members of this organization were committed to the teachings of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq and the Jamaati Islami of India and Pakistan. Dominated by students who planned to return to their homelands upon completing their education, the organization set out as its arena of activity the whole Muslim world. The American "*hijra*" became a temporary theatre of operation for consciousness raising and empowerment, in order to prepare for the restoration of Muslim nations to proper Islam. The expressed purpose was to blunt the growing influence of Nasserism and Arab nationalism and socialism. They imported speakers such as Muhammad al-Ghazzali of Egypt and Abu al-A`la al-Mawdudi and Syed Abu al-Hassan Ali Nadvi of the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent. Both Mawdudi and Nadvi travelled extensively throughout the United States and Canada preaching that it is important to have a separate Islamic community and not mix with the host culture. They admonished the Muslims to restrict their social contacts to fellow Muslims and eschew friendships with people of other faiths. Maintaining a separate and visibly distinctive culture was advocated as the best protection against assimilation and annihilation.

For us Muslims it is permitted to live only in a country where we can live with our distinctive qualities and observe our duties. If it is not possible in this environment or you feel you cannot carry out your religious obligations, it is not permissible for you to stay. It is your duty to see that you live here distinctly as Muslims.⁴⁰

While this distinction was to provide a shield against disintegration, the same time it was projected as the justification for an Islamic witness to the host culture. Muslims were to be an instrument of blessing and light to America.

Of foremost importance, however, is the stipulation that you make your stay here as practicing Muslims and not break up or lose your identity. Would you melt like wax before the heat of this civilization? If so, better go back to your native lands, no matter that you earned only a fourth or a fiftieth part of what you do here. And if you are safe against it and there is no such danger then your stay in America is blessed: a new light may come to it through you, and the path may be opened for Islam.⁴¹

The Arab-Israeli war of 1967 had a profound impact on the Arabs and Muslims living in the United States. American partisan depiction of the war and one-sided support for Israel was overwhelming. Taking Jewish organizations as a model, several Arab-American organizations interested in setting the record straight came into existence at this time. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) was formed by James Aburezk, then senator from South Dakota, to combat prejudice against Arabs and Arab-Americans. Its goal was to disseminate accurate information about the Arab American community and struggle to hold American society accountable to its ideals, to combat stereotypes, and to sensitize American society to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Other organizations that were formed at this time include the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc. (AAUG), the American Arab Association (AMARA, successor to the defunct Eastern State Federation), and the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA), which aims "to engage in political, social, cultural, and educational activities for the purpose of maintaining political action involvement in the United States." While the majority of the members of these organizations were Arab Christians, there was substantial Muslim participation. Their appropriation of the "Arab" designation was seen by some in the Islamic movement as divisive since it emphasized nationalist or ethnic rather than religious identity and left little room for identification by Muslims from Albania, Russia, Pakistan and other non-Arab Muslim countries.

Members of the Muslim community felt themselves increasingly alienated and separated from the political process. Several candidates for political office, including Mayor Goode of Philadelphia, Congressman Joseph Kennedy of Massachusetts, and presidential candidate Walter Mondale, apparently afraid of being "polluted" by "Arab" money, refused and/or returned contributions from Arab-Americans to their campaign. (In two cases the donors were of Lebanese Christian background.) This has been widely interpreted by the Arab-American community not only as a racist and prejudicial act, but also, more importantly, as a means of disenfranchising them as an ethnic minority. It was not until the election of 1988 that several Islamic political action committees were formed. In some cases, they cooperated with the Arab-American organizations in support of Jesse Jackson's candidacy for President.

The growth of the power of the Israeli lobby in the United States has had a profound impact in recent years. A visitor to the mosque in Houston, Texas, for example, will find that it has hundreds of copies of two books that they distribute free to guests of the mosque: the *Qur'an* and *They Dare To Speak Out*,⁴² the latter of which highlights some of the victories the Israeli lobby has won against anyone seeking an independent policy for the United States. This concern about being disenfranchised in the face of the power of the lobby has resulted in a variety of options for Muslim life in the United States. Some have responded by increasing their efforts to be effective in the political process. Others have abandoned any hope of setting the American government on an even handed course and opted for marginalization.

Of great concern to members of the Muslim community during the last decade has been the prejudice against Islam that seems to permeate American society at all levels from the presidency to the editorial commentary in various newspapers to the concerns of ordinary citizens. In an interview with *Time* Magazine, November 17, 1980, then President elect Ronald Reagan said, "Lately we have seen the possibilities of, literally, a religious war - The Muslims returning to the idea that the way to heaven is to lose your life fighting the Christians and the Jews." Eager to correct this apparent bias, the Muslim World League Office and the Council of Masajid held an emergency meeting which was attended by the leadership of the Muslim communities throughout the country including Warith Deen Muhammad of the American Muslim Mission. There was unanimous agreement that the words of the President-elect were not only prejudicial but may have provided an opportunity for an open season on Islam in America. The group condemned his statement not only as erroneous but as inflammatory. They unsuccessfully attempted to extract

a retraction from him. Responses from both organizations rejecting Reagan's allegations as untrue of Islam and citing Muslim tolerance of Christian and Jewish minorities, appear to have fallen on deaf ears. *Time* did not publish their letters of protest, and the President-elect's response failed to acknowledge any recognition of their affirmation of the real nature of Islam or any sensitivity to the discriminatory nature of his statement. He wrote:

During my administration, we shall work hard to promote a free exchange of ideas that we can truly represent the best interests of our country and its people. If we work together with creativity, understanding, and patience, we should be able to develop the solutions necessary to advance our nation's prosperity and strength.⁴³

A request to receive a delegation of five Muslim religious leaders including the Director of the Muslim World League and the Imam of the mosque in Washington went unheeded.

Evidence of hostility toward Islam in the United States continues to this date. Some columnists and media commentators have continued to malign its teachings. There have also been reports of increased incidents of harassment and attacks against individuals and mosques and Islamic centers often directly related to a public attack made by an American official against Muslim leaders overseas. The candidate for mayor in the city of Dearborn, Michigan (the city with the largest immigrant Arab community in America) ran in the last election on a platform promising to get the Muslims out. His hostility inspired graffiti in the city urging readers to "Be an American, kill an Arab."

The often negative media portrayal of things Arab and Islamic has taken its toll on the Muslim community in the United States. The publication and dissemination of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*,⁴⁴ and the accompanying commentary about Muslim intolerance has raised new questions about survival, persistence and identity for the Muslim community in the United States. Will the Muslims of North America survive as a vibrant religious community in the United States able to fully and freely participate in its religious mosaic and help in defining its future as a pluralistic society? Or will the children of the immigrants opt for an easy way out, identifying completely with the new country and abandoning the faith? And, like Rushdie, will they mock their own heritage and sacred values using the idiom and precepts of the host culture? At present, the incident appears to be one of the important factors galvanizing the community. Attendance at mosques/Islamic centers and Sunday Schools has tripled. Increasing numbers of Muslims seem to be heeding those who warn that America hates Islam and that the

only option for Muslim survival is to consciously choose to be marginal and to reaffirm the Islamic identity of the community. And Muslims continue to wonder what the next chapter will be in what clearly seems to them to be a tradition of hostility towards Islam as part of the effort to buttress American public support for Israel.

Concluding Remarks

Viewed from the perspective of size, history, and power, the Muslim community in the United States must be considered as marginal; nonetheless, its potential for action and influence exceeds what its size might indicate. In the first place, its immigrant constituent members are the best educated per capita in the world. Second, it is strategically located in the center of a world power, with potential access to the American media and the growing sense of the need to learn to understand as well as utilize the American political process in the interest of their ideals. Third, its recent growth and development provides it with worldwide connections through kinship and associational networks. Fourth, it is of sufficient influence and sophistication to have significantly impacted Muslims from all over the world, especially students seeking higher education. Fifth, it is ethnically and linguistically diverse, reflecting a microcosm of the world of Islam. Finally, its members live in a free society where they are able to experiment with new models of organizational life and of theological and ideological interpretation away from the watchful eyes of fearful governments.

The identity of the community and its consciousness of "minorityness" is enhanced in the American milieu. Muslims experience American society as very religious. They believe that the professed separation of religion and state is violated every time a leader affirms that America is a Judeo-Christian country. They ask why it is acceptable for an American president to call for the implementation of Christian values while denouncing all efforts to build a moral and just Islamic society. And they wonder why America seems to support the concept of a "Jewish State" in Israel while Muslims are urged to be civilized and renounce the hope for an "Islamic state."

Furthermore, Muslims are keenly aware that American social life is organized to a great degree around church and other religious organizations. They watch the parade of religious programs on television and wonder why Americans affirm the necessity of pluralism, of secularism and national identity only when they address Muslims. Many think that this proceeds from the deep prejudice Americans harbour toward Islam and Muslims.

In order to combat the feeling of defeatism and weakness that may overwhelm the Muslim student and/or immigrant, Ismail al-Faruqi recommended the appropriation of an Islamic ideology as an anti-dote. This seems to emphasize the Islamist perception of minority life. Muslims are in the United States not as beggars, but as contributors towards the building of a just society.

Faruqi stressed that an Islamic ideology or vision is one in which there is no guilt at having left one's homeland and achieved some measure of success in a new place, and there is no need to be exceedingly grateful to the adoptive country because success belongs to God. This vision also gives the immigrant a challenge to propagate the faith, with the understanding that Islam will provide the perspective by which to evaluate and assess the means of transformation of North America. Faruqi was specific about those ills of American culture that should be addressed by the challenge of Islam. "The Islamic vision," he said, "provides the immigrant with the deepest love, attachment and aspiration for a North America reformed and returned to God." When this transformation has taken place, immigrants and converts alike will find their lives taking a new meaning and significance "whose dimensions are cosmic..."⁴⁵

The Islamic identity has been appropriated by a growing number of Muslims during the last decade. Islam is seen as a unique order of life established by God for humanity, where religion and politics must be intertwined to assure justice and freedom. It provides special cohesiveness and communal support to a community going through a troubled time in which it sees itself rejected, the object of hate and fear. For many Muslims, America, seems to have been "highjacked" by special interest groups, as a result of which it has departed from values and vision that previously had merited God's blessing. Thus it is in need not only of salvation but of radical transformation that can restore it to its mission, as a country living in obedience to God. The answer is the kind of Islamic vision articulated by Faruqi. The Muslim who opts for this vision identifies with a universal ideology of brotherhood that does not discriminate between human beings according to race, colour, language or national origin; its goal is the conversion of the world. In this way separateness is experienced not as the result of rejection by the host culture, but as a divine commission made necessary because America has deviated from a moral life devoted to God.

The majority of Muslims in America today, however do not subscribe to this kind of thinking. They continue to operate outside organized religion; a substantial number are college graduates who are integrated into the American professional class. Yet they too remain uncomfortable

with American foreign policy as well as with the tendency of political leaders to describe America as a "Judeo-Christian" country. They hope for a better America, a place where the principle of separation of religion and state can really apply, and where people of all faiths can flourish and maintain their traditions without being subject to harassment and prejudice. Their goal is to work for the realization of America's potential within the framework of American ideals and values. At present this goal seems difficult to attain, as they experience hurt and disillusionment over the disparity between principled declarations and compromising actions by the American administration.⁴⁶ Their hope is that somehow America can both realize and admit its nature as a multi-cultural and multi-religious society, and that finally it can be proud of its identity as Christian, Jewish and Muslim.

Notes

¹This study is extracted from the author's forthcoming book *The Muslim Experience in the United States* to be published by Oxford University Press.

²There are forty four member states in the Organization of the Islamic Conference which was formed on a governmental level to cope with the dangers affecting Muslims in the world. It came into being in 1969 after the burning of the Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem.

³Mawdudi: 1977.

⁴Qutb (n.d.).

⁵This new development was brought to my attention by the Mufti of Oman in an interview in June 1990. He represents the Ibadi school of jurisprudence on the Council.

The justification for such an endeavour is the precedent set by the founder of the Shafi'i school of Islamic law who referred to the work he initiated in Egypt after leaving Baghdad as "*al-fiqh al-jadid*," the new jurisprudence. (I am indebted for this information to Dr. Syed Saeed of the Institute of Islamic Thought in Herndon, Virginia.)

⁶Munir: 1980, p.65.

⁷The term has been coined by Syed Z. Abedin in his foreword to Kettani: 1986, p.XIII.

⁸Kettani: 1986, p.3.

⁹*Ibidem*, pp 9-13.

¹⁰*Ibidem*, p.11.

¹¹Abdul-Rauf: 1983, p.271.

¹²*Ibidem*, p.272.

¹³*Ibidem*, p.277. A slightly different version quotes President Eisenhower saying, "Americans would fight with all their strength for your right to have your own church and worship according to your own conscience. Without this, we would be something else than what we are." Abdul-Rauf: 1973, p.75.

¹⁴The teacher was opposed by some of the parents who found her ideas subversive and was relieved of her duties.

¹⁵Kettani: 1986, p.10.

¹⁶Nadvi: 1983, p.111.

¹⁷Nadvi: 1983, p.158.

¹⁸*Ibidem*, pp.118-199.

¹⁹Abduh also issued a *fatwa* for Indian Muslims sanctioning cooperation with the British colonial forces despite the fact that they were not Muslim. In justification for his opinion, he cited the precedent of the Prophet and the early caliphs having cooperated with non-Muslims because of the benefit that would accrue to the Muslim community. "Isti'anat al-Muslimin bi'l-Kuffar wa-Ahl al-Bida' wa-al-Ahwa'," in Muhammad 'Amara, *al-A'mal al-Kamila li'l-Imam Muhammad 'Abdu: al-Kitabat al-Siyasiyya*, Cairo: al-Mu'assasa al-Arabiya lil-Dirasat wa'l-Nashr, 1972, pp. 708-15.

²⁰Abdul-Rauf: 1983, p.274.

²¹*Ibidem*.

²²Rashid al-Ghannushi in an interview with the author in the Spring of 1990.

²³Professor Abdul Aziz Sachedina of the University of Virginia who is Ayatollah Khome's representative in the United States has shared with me two of these fatwas. One that was issued to the Shi'ite mosque in Toronto sought an opinion on whether the community should insist that non-Muslim women should be asked to conform to Islamic practice by covering their hair when they attend lectures and public events at the mosque. Khome wrote that they do not need to, but the community chose to ignore his opinion.

²⁴Yvonne Haddad, *A Century*: 1986.

²⁵For information on the Ahmadiyya movement see Ahmad, M.B.M. (n.d.); Zafarulla Khan: 1978.

²⁶For information on the Moorish Science Temple see Calverly: 1965; Fauset: 1944; A Moorish Temple Catechism: 1942; Simpson: 1947.

²⁷The Nation of Islam was formed by Elijah Muhammad after the disappearance of Fard Muhammad, a mysterious figure believed to be of Middle Eastern background who worked as a peddler in the Detroit Ghetto. See Lincoln: 1961; Eissien-Udom: 1962.

²⁸This is a splinter group from the Nation of Islam that did not recognize the leadership of Warith Deen Muhammad and continues to follow Louis Farrakhan.

²⁹For the teachings of this sect, which is an early splinter group of the Nation of Islam, see the writings of the founder, Muhammad: 1979, 1982^a and 1982^b.

³⁰An early splinter group from the Nation of Islam who believe that only five percent of humanity will be saved on the Day of Judgment. These will be exclusively from the members of their group.

³¹Qazzaz, al-: 1975; McIrvin Abu-Laban: 1975; Jarrar: 1976; Griswold: 1975; Perry: 1975; NAAA: 1980; Aswad: 1981.

³²Hitti: 1924, p.88.

³³S. Khan: 1981.

³⁴Said: 1978; Terry 1982^a, 1982^b and 1983.

³⁵"From 1984 to the present, a period of nearly two and one half years, this writer has documented nineteen films that focus on Arab portrayals. The image of the Arab in most films parallels the image of the Jew in pre-Nazi Germany. The cinema of Nazi Germany offered viewers the Jews as scapegoat." Shaheen, *The Hollywood Arab: 1984-86*, cf. Michalak: 1989.

³⁶McDavid: 1983; Lendenmann: 1983; Karl: 1983; Shaheen: 1983.

³⁷Haddad: 1991.

³⁸Haddad: 1986.

³⁹Elkholy: 1966, p.48; cf. Massoud: 1976.

⁴⁰Nadvi: 1983, p.114.

⁴¹*Ibidem*, pp.114-115.

⁴²Findley: 1985.

⁴³*Muslim News*, vol. 1, no. 1, January 1981, p. 14.

⁴⁴Rushdie: 1988.

⁴⁵Faruqi, al-: 1983.

⁴⁶Hussein, N. al-: 1984.

PART III

Islamic Education

Islamic Schools and Islamic Religious Education

A Comparison between Holland and other West European countries

K. Wagtendonk

Introduction

In 1990 there were at least 50.000 Muslim children of primary school age in Holland. For a few years now they have the opportunity to attend Islamic¹ schools in some places. In September 1990 there were actually some 1500 of them doing so. It has taken a remarkably long time for Islamic schools to be established, considering that, in Holland, the creation of private confessional schools is the order of the day as far as Christians are concerned. Already in 1977 J.M.M. van Amersfoort foresaw the arrival in Holland of what he called 'the school with the Koran' parallel to the traditional 'school with the Bible'.²

There are at this moment 13 Islamic schools in Holland. The first two were created in 1988, four others in 1989, and seven new ones started in September 1990.³ At least three others are planned. It is not my intention in this article to describe what is going on in these schools - all of them follow the Dutch curriculum; rather, I want to describe the background, investigating the possible relation between the recent creation of these schools and earlier developments. I do this by way of comparison, going into the question of why these schools came only in Holland and not in the surrounding countries. The astonishing fact presents itself that, in countries with Muslim minorities much larger than in Holland and with a much longer history, Islamic schools are less numerous than in Holland. I want to explain this phenomenon here. The explanation can also provide some perspectives for future developments.

In a broad sense, the previous history of Islamic schools began with the creation by Muslims of the first generation of mosques and prayer rooms as well as the organization of mosque schools. Many children come to the

mosques after school time and in weekends to learn Islam for a longer or shorter period. Their number is an indication of the importance attached by Muslim parents, faced with a different culture to which their children are constantly exposed in Dutch schools, to Religious Education (RE) as a means of strengthening their identity.⁴ During the past two decades especially, RE in Christian schools, attended by increasing numbers of Muslim pupils, began to be seen as a problem. Muslim parents, who, in most cases, had not sent their children to a Christian school on the basis of a deliberate choice, felt annoyed and even shocked when their children came home with Christian ideas.⁵ They began to ask for Islamic RE to replace it.⁶ Sending their children to state schools was not a real alternative as it practically meant the absence of RE. At the same time some teachers in Christian schools felt that they should pay more attention to Islam, but the character of the school actually excluded this.

The Islamic school is a possible answer to the problem. Van Amersfoort's 'school with the Koran' meant something typically Dutch. The 13 now existing Islamic schools are typically Dutch, at least insofar as these schools are fully state funded and are run on the same conditions as Christian confessional schools. This is unusual in the West European situation. Only in Belgium do we find one Islamic school publicly funded as in Holland. Although in England there are some 15 Islamic schools, these are all independent schools.⁷ In Germany there are two independent Islamic schools.⁸ In France there is one.⁹ The situation in Denmark stands alone. Here we find seven schools for Muslim pupils, founded during the last decade. These schools are 85 percent state funded. Though they teach the national Danish curriculum combined with Islamic Religious Education¹⁰ - in this respect they resemble the Islamic schools in Holland - yet they cannot be considered regular Islamic schools as they are only open to Arab or Pakistani children, not to Turkish, Danish and other Muslim pupils because the language of tuition is Arabic or Urdu. In my opinion it is the organization of education in Holland that causes the different situation with regard to Islamic schools.

Muslim Pupils and RE in Christian Schools

In Holland, the recent phenomenon of these schools is largely the result of the failure of earlier endeavors of Muslims to obtain subsidized Islamic Religious Education in state schools, though the law makes it possible. By Islamic Religious Education (IRE) I mean education in Islam of a confessional character and taught by a Muslim. This is what Muslims want.¹¹ From 1975 the then Federation of Muslim Organizations in The Netherlands, FOMON,

endeavoured to get, from local councils, facilities such as classrooms where imams would teach IRE following on the school program.¹²

At that time the facilities of the Muslims were still very much inadequate. The free use of classrooms in state schools for IRE would have been welcome. The law made it possible. Also IRE itself can be subsidized in state schools on certain conditions. These are locally determined, such as the rule that parents of 12 pupils at least demand it, that it be taught in Dutch and that the teacher be qualified. FOMON's request did not yield results worth speaking of. This was not only due to some of the requirements, which could not be fulfilled, but also to the fact that the FOMON by that time was dominated by the Süleymancis, a conservative current in Turkish Islam. This question of IRE played at the same time in West Germany. There, the Süleymancis, in order to get their Koran courses into the schools, were considering applying for the status of a church in order to become a legal person in public law terms and thus to be able to bear responsibility for IRE. This would enable them to get a quasi monopoly position for IRE in German schools, quite differently from Turkey where their Koran courses were forbidden even outside schools. A lot of protests arose from left-wing as well as from 'Kemalist' Turks, especially from the mother-tongue teachers, some of whom were also teaching Islam. The 'Koranschule Debat' began.¹³ German educationists also got involved in it.¹⁴ The discussion moved to Holland. Mosque school education was given a bad press as socially conservative and pedagogically wrong because, it was said, it is aimed at drilling obedience into the child. By learning the Koran by heart, it was held, creative and rational development of personal abilities were blocked.¹⁵

So it was mainly the bad reputation of the mosque school that led to the reluctance of the local authorities to grant what was asked. If the authorities had so willed, they could have adapted the rules. Their reluctance, which was also partly influenced by political positions, to which we return later, lies at the root of the Islamic schools phenomenon in Holland.

In other countries where the same thing might have been expected, this failed to occur. For a clear understanding of why, in Holland, Islamic schools emerge quite easily, whereas in neighbouring countries a similar development is almost absent, it is necessary to compare the education systems and the place of RE therein in Holland with those of these countries.

Education Systems in Western Europe

State schools appeared in Western Europe in the 18th century when the educational task of the church was taken over by the state. Confessional schools developed alongside the state schools, however. Supporting the state school were liberal politicians with enlightened secular ideas, and the greater

their influence on the school system, the smaller the place of Christian faith in education. This caused orthodox Christians to found confessional private schools in competition with the state schools, and this led everywhere to school funding struggles.

The developments in various countries were diverse. It is important to note that the state school does not automatically mean a neutral school. In Western Europe there are several types of state schools. The two extremes are the confessional state school as in Scandinavia and the completely neutral *école publique* in France. The state schools in Scandinavia always teach RE. In Denmark, for example, Lutheran RE is taught automatically in state schools. Alongside these schools, private confessional schools can be founded. The running costs of these schools are 85 percent subsidized by the state. Only five percent of the schools are private confessional schools. In France the state school regards itself as neutral (*laïque*). By the end of 1989 the affair of the headscarfs seriously challenged the *laïcité* of this school. Some changes are likely to be expected in the near future. Alongside the state schools (*écoles publiques*) the churches created private schools (*écoles libres*). About 15 percent of the primary schools are private schools. They are partly funded by the state.¹⁶

Between the two extremes we find at least three other types. In Germany we find mainly two types of state schools: community schools (*Gemeinschaftsschulen*) and confessionally split denominational schools (*Bekenntnisschulen, Katholisch, Evangelisch*, etc.). In both types of schools the pupils receive RE, separately according to their religion, generally under the responsibility of the state. Only in Bremen and Berlin are the churches directly responsible.¹⁷ The content is determined by the churches. The state tests the content to see that it is broadly in agreement with the values that underlie the Constitution. As far as primary schools are concerned, the various state schools constitute the big majority, some 98 percent. Private primary schools on a religious basis do not get much chance if they are not specialized.¹⁸

A fourth type of state school is found in England. It cannot be described as a confessional school but rather as 'generally Christian'. It has RE according to a so-called 'agreed syllabus' under supervision of the Local Educational Authority (LEA) but for some parents this is too vague and therefore, confessional schools have arisen also in England: the so-called voluntary-aided schools in which RE is taught under the responsibility of a church. The running costs of these schools are 95 percent state funded, as is 85 percent of the capital invested. About 25 percent of the schools in Britain are voluntary-aided. Some 4,500 Church of England and Roman Catholic schools, and some 20 Jewish schools exist.¹⁹

All the mentioned types have in common that the state is the principal provider of education, whether or not this education is accompanied by RE. Private (confessional) schools form a relatively small minority. They never receive 100 percent state subsidies.

The fifth system can be found in Holland and Belgium. Here the state school and the private school have equal rights,²⁰ though the character of the state school with respect to RE and -connected with this - the social success of the state school are different in the two countries. In the state schools in Belgium there is always RE - split up in denominations - or, for those who do not want it, ethics.²¹ In Belgium, 44 percent of all pupils as against 35 percent in Holland attend state schools.²² The state school in Holland is neutral but less neutral than in France: when parents of 12 pupils ask RE for their children, it must be taught them.

The German Solution

The frustration of demands for IRE in state schools, led in Holland to the emergence of Islamic schools, as we stated above. The application for IRE in Dutch schools was turned down partly because of the influence of the negative public discussion in the West German press. In West Germany a similar application had been made earlier by the Süleymancis, but the reaction of the authorities in Germany to this demand differed from that in Holland. This reaction can be explained by the difference in the education system of the two countries. At the same time it makes clear why Islamic schools in Germany did not develop as far.

In West Germany the demand for IRE in state schools could not be ignored as it was in Holland, because RE on a denominational base is taught in these schools²³ and at least 90 percent of the Muslim children attend them.²⁴ But because Islam, unlike the established churches in Germany, does not have a representatively organized structure, there is as yet no legal body²⁵ that can take responsibility for IRE in the schools as interlocutor of the state.²⁶ In all German *Länder* the possibility exists to include Islam as part of (Turkish) mother-tongue teaching.²⁷ In Bavaria, Hessen, Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia mother-tongue teaching is given under state (i.e. the *Kultusminister's*) responsibility, in Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Saarland and Schleswig-Holstein under Turkish diplomatic and consular responsibility. In Bavaria and Hessen attendance is obligatory.²⁸ What has come out of it is not necessarily IRE. In North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), where many Muslims live, a curriculum for RE was developed by a mixed committee of Muslim teachers and Christian experts. Because it was meant to be used on a large scale, it would have been necessary to have it authorized by the Islamic 'church'. Such a representative body, however,

does not yet exist. Therefore it was called *religiöse Unterweisung für Schüler islamischen Glaubens* (religious tuition for pupils of Islamic faith) instead of *islamisches Religionsunterricht* (IRE). The curriculum was to be used by the mother-tongue teachers. It appeared in 1986.²⁹ At present some 800 mother-tongue teachers are working with it, receiving additional training simultaneously. The Süleymancis have already criticized this curriculum as not God-directed.³⁰ Their criticism did not come as a surprise. Though they had taken the initiative, they had not been asked to join the curriculum committee. Instead of that, the Cult Minister had thrown in his lot with the 'Kemalists', i.e. with official Turkish Islam. But it is not expected that they will create their own schools now. The cost factor remains an obstacle - only 85 percent of the costs are state funded if the school is recognized. Moreover, public opinion as well as the government are not keen on schools that can easily be called 'fundamentalist'.³¹

Belgium: IRE in State Schools

In Belgium, where RE also belongs to the curriculum of the state schools, a similar step as in West Germany was taken. From 1975 Belgium introduced RE for Muslim pupils in the state schools. The Law on the School Pact of 1959 was changed to include Islam in the list of religions that are taught in schools. The Saudi Arabian sponsored Islamic Cultural Center (ICC) was appointed as the sole caretaker for the Muslims in Belgium. Qualified teachers, having a secondary school diploma, including imams, were to be recruited by the ICC. They receive a salary on the same basis as other religious teachers, at least in principle. In fact it is much lower as long as the statute of the teachers of Islam has not been approved.³² Because the ICC was co-responsible for it, RE could have a confessional character. The number of pupils and teachers has increased steadily since 1975. In 1981/2, 15,565 Muslim primary school pupils were receiving IRE³³ (43.1 percent). This figure increased to 23,917 (14,660 in the French³⁴ and 9,257 in the Dutch speaking part of Belgium)³⁵ in 1987/8, which amounts to 63 percent.³⁶ The developments did not occur without conflicts within the ICC and between the ICC and the Muslim communities in Belgium concerning the representativity of the ICC.³⁷ In 1985/6 a begin was made to formulate a statute for the teachers. The government wanted to stop the continual import of teachers from abroad and required either the Belgian nationality or a five-year residence in Belgium.³⁸ The situation will improve when a representative High Islamic Council will be elected in democratic elections and will be recognized by the Belgian Government instead of the self-appointed ICC. The ICC was only de facto recognized as sole caretaker for the Muslims in Belgium. By June 1990 a provisional Council of Wise Men

replaced it in lieu of the High Islamic Council to be elected yet.³⁹ As long as this High Council does not exist, the state cannot 'recognize' it, which means that the statute concerning teachers cannot definitively be completed nor can the right to create Islamic schools be effectuated.⁴⁰ As far as Islamic schools are concerned, the only existing Islamic school was founded in 1989 by the ICC when it was still the authorized agent of the Muslims. For the year 1990/91 240 pupils enrolled.⁴¹ It is accommodated in the building of the ICC in Brussels. The fact that there are not yet more of these schools, although the financial conditions are the same as in Holland, is not so much due to the lack of a representative Islamic administration, as to the fact that IRE is provided on a large scale in Belgium. Only those who insist on segregation, headscarfs and an all-round Islamic education in the future might take the trouble to create Islamic schools. Others think of other possibilities that might be preferred. Aïssa Najjari, chairman of the Federation of Mosques in Belgium, in 1986 mentioned mixed schools as something that is forbidden for Muslims, but 'not a real problem', and, to solve it, he only suggested single-sex schools, not Islamic schools.⁴² In a concentration school in which 380 pupils (95 percent of the total school population) attend IRE only four pupils (two girls and two boys) do not take part in PE, fewer than ten girls wear a headscarf, and of the 45 pupils (ten boys and 35 girls) who do not participate in school swimming only three girls advanced religious reasons.⁴³ This gives some idea of potential Muslim interest in creating Islamic schools, though non-religious reasons for creating Islamic schools are not to be excluded. Making a concentration school into an Islamic one can raise its status and strengthen the feelings of identity of the pupils.⁴⁴ The remarkable fact, even if we allow for the absence of state schools in certain areas,⁴⁵ that relatively many Muslim children in Belgium (50 percent as against 56 percent of the total primary school population) attend Catholic private schools, of which only some provide IRE may just as well point to the same phenomenon: fewer foreign pupils means better quality of education and, consequently, more status.

Holland: Christian 'Encounter' Schools no Solution

In Holland, differently from the Belgian situation, state schools have no RE. We have seen that the Muslims did not succeed in bringing the imams into the schools. Before we come to speak now specifically about the situation in Rotterdam and Amsterdam we will have a look at the Christian schools and their Muslim pupils. Some 44 percent of the Muslim children are attending Christian schools. The reasons for this are probably non-religious. One obvious reason is the absence of state schools in certain places.⁴⁶ Only 35 percent of the Dutch school population, after all, attends state schools.

Another reason is that Catholic schools in the early sixties were ahead of other schools in dealing with language problems of pupils of migrant workers and as a consequence of their greater experience, other schools sometimes sent their Muslim pupils to them. When, however, Muslim parents have the choice, they generally do not choose a Christian confessional school - in contradiction to the idea that they are attracted by its moral and religious standards as the story goes.⁴⁷

From the beginning of Muslim pupils being admitted in Christian schools, RE with its confessional character has been an issue for some Muslim parents. And school teams which wish to take account of the faith of their Muslim pupils, meet opposition from governors of the school who do not want to lose sight of the Christian identity of the school.

Fundamental discussions and exchange of experiences, in the past decade, led to various answers in Protestant and Catholic educational circles. The main dilemma became: RE as 'witness' or 'dialogue'. Some wanted total openness based on equality of faiths. Following the dialogue concept, the model of the 'encounter school' (*ontmoetingschool*) was developed as a middle position between a purely self-directed and a completely open confessional school.

Now a number of Christian schools want to be 'encounter schools', i.e. schools where pupils of various religious backgrounds 'meet' each other, and these schools therefore pay some attention to Islam in their RE. But they remain Christian schools all the same, because they cannot allow the meeting with others on really equal footing, as that would mean the abandonment of the unique Christian character of the school. And Muslim parents cannot become school governors. This school, therefore, cannot be an alternative for Muslims who want IRE for their children.

J. Kraan, in a recent article, tries again to square the circle. He argues in favour of introducing imams in the Christian 'encounter schools' to teach Muslim pupils IRE during one hour per week out of three. He has two arguments: 1) the comparison with Christian schools in Pakistan that accept IRE for their Muslim pupils and still remain Christian schools, and 2) the fact that there are two other hours for RE and that the rest of the lessons breathe a Christian spirit. The latter quantitative argument is not very strong; the former does not apply because the situation of the Christian school in Pakistan as a Muslim country is totally different.⁴⁸

England: Reluctance to Fund Islamic Schools

In a way, Dutch Christian 'encounter schools' that give some information on Islam in consideration for their Muslim pupils, resemble English state schools. RE, in English state schools, is taught to all pupils. In addition there is

a weekly act of worship ('assembly'). During the past decades some of these schools also introduced information on Islam in their RE to reflect the multi-cultural situation. After the example of the 1975 Birmingham syllabus a number of new syllabuses for RE were developed.⁴⁹ But Muslims object that this is not IRE: it does not have a confessional character, nor is it, generally, taught by Muslims.⁵⁰ Since 1988 the situation has become even worse as the Education Reform Act determines that the Agreed Syllabus, when revised, should be 'mainly Christian'. On the other hand, where the school population is mainly Muslim, these Muslim children are in a better situation than in the Dutch encounter school: when the governors feel that the mainly Christian character of RE is inappropriate, the school can apply for an exception to be made. The Muslim parents can have some influence here because the governing body includes a number of parents. Where it is felt that the LEA is not taking enough notice of the fact that a particular school population is overwhelmingly Muslim, the school may apply to become 'grant maintained', i.e. independent from the LEA, funded directly by the central government and self-governing. For this reason one school in Birmingham became a so-called 'opted out' school.⁵¹

But the problem cannot be solved in this way structurally. Muslim parents or, more prominently, Muslim community leaders wish to have RE in which Islam is not just one religion next to others. The competition that is then implied, they feel, cannot but weaken the cultural identity of their children, instead of strengthening it.⁵² In 1976 they proposed their own IRE syllabus and in 1983 they issued a statement suggesting voluntary IRE in state schools in addition to general RE.⁵³ This suggestion cannot easily be complied with. It would implicitly remove the last remnants of the confessional character of general RE and it misses a legal basis. Others therefore call for separate, publicly funded schools in which they are completely free to determine the contents of RE. Christian and Jewish voluntary-aided schools exist, and they see no reason why there should not also be Islamic voluntary-aided schools. At this moment, they have no other choice than to create independent schools, hoping to get voluntary-aided status for them. There are 15 independent schools now. Most of these schools are exclusively either girls' or boys' schools. Apart from the King Fahd school in London, an elite school, the only school for boys and girls is the Islamia Primary School in Brent. All these schools, that are recognized by the Education Department and regularly inspected, are striving to become voluntary-aided. But just like in Holland where the authorities until now are not keen on allowing state funded IRE, the British government is unwilling to grant the voluntary status to Islamic schools. A recent example was the rejection, in July 1990, of the application of the Islamia school of Brent for voluntary-aided status. The argument of the Minister was that there were too many vacant places in

Brent schools because of falling school rolls,⁵⁴ so that there would be no need for an Islamic school in that place. There is no appreciation whatsoever of the special religious basis of the school. Saving the jobs of teachers of existing schools is apparently the only argument. This comes near to unwillingness, not to say discrimination. The underlying ideology is unity of RE/culture and conformation. But why then are more than 4,500 Church of England, Roman Catholic and Jewish schools recognized as voluntary-aided?

Dutch State Schools and RE

The ideal of the unity of education is also present in Holland in one way or another; witness the subject 'Spiritual Currents' (*Geestelijke Stromingen*) that since 1985 has to be taught in all schools. Apart from the world religions, it includes various ideologies. But this ideal is not dominant, at least not in the political reality of coalition governments in which Christian Democrats are always participating.

The once fierce school funding controversy created a clear-cut demarcation and this is still maintained. Structurally, RE does not belong in state schools because of the constitutional separation of State and Church. The only argument for having RE in state schools would be a pragmatic one: it strengthens the position of these schools in their competition with the confessional schools. But the frequent liberal-socialist majorities in borough councils are in any case reluctant to subsidize IRE in state schools and all the more when not all the qualifications can be met. In their opinion IRE is a private affair that belongs in the family. They are as much against confessional schools, but they cannot prevent these because the criteria for founding them are not locally determined. Muslims who want IRE in school are compelled at present to comply with the local regulations or to create their own confessional schools.

In this connection I refer to the situation in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. In the first half of the last decade the Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation (TICF) applied for publicly funded IRE in state schools to be taught by imams. The local authorities had no objection as long as it would fit in with Protestant RE and Humanist Socio-cultural Training in a framework that was called 'Spiritual Orientation', and it should be taught in Dutch. After long discussions the first condition was dropped⁵⁵ but not the second. As Turkish imams generally do not speak Dutch, this meant that they were not eligible for teaching IRE. The Turkish proposal to accept teaching in Turkish for a transitional phase during which the teacher was to learn Dutch was rejected. This not particularly flexible attitude caused a unique action by most of the Rotterdam mosques and other Islamic organizations, who then created SPIOR, a common platform of Islamic organizations.⁵⁶ That helped to allow

them to organize IRE in 28 schools to be taught by Dutch speaking teachers who were qualified in one way or another. It was probably also furthered by the application for the creation of two Islamic schools. The lack of enthusiasm of the education alderman for this type of school was openly expressed. He regretted not being able to prevent them.⁵⁷

Amsterdam provided funds for IRE on similar conditions as Rotterdam did, but only as an experiment for a limited period.⁵⁸ And when, finally, a teacher was available, the period had already expired. Like the Rotterdam council, the council of Amsterdam did agree to two Islamic schools. But Islamic schools are only approved because they cannot be refused. The Constitution of 1917, after half a century of school-funding struggles, brought equal treatment of private and state schools. If a minimum number of pupils and continuity are guaranteed, the school cannot be refused. Of course, the teachers should be qualified and the Dutch syllabus followed. The Education Department pays all the costs. For RE, on the other hand, the funds are limited because the municipality itself has to supply them. When it does not have the money, it is free to say 'Sorry, we cannot afford it'. And that is what is threatening in Rotterdam at this moment, so that it is possible that IRE will disappear again from the Rotterdam schools. For the local authorities RE in state schools is not a must. It does not belong to the structure. They argue: the one who wants RE can, after all, choose the confessional school. But most of the Muslims do not yet have this choice. The arrears they have, compared with other religious groups in Dutch society, justify that the facilities for IRE should be enlarged instead of economized upon - apart from the fact that it is simply their right.

France after the Affair of the Foulards

The French position is the extreme opposite of the Scandinavian one, as we have indicated earlier. So far no RE, let alone IRE, in public schools in France is possible. This is the case since 1882 when Church and State were involved in a fierce school struggle, with which the name of the then education minister, Jules Ferry, is connected. State education was to be secular. Jesuits were no longer allowed to teach in state schools. In 1905 13,000 Catholic schools were closed on the abrogation of a Concordat,⁵⁹ though reopened later privately. Only in 1959 was aid to private schools regulated in a similar way as in Britain and Germany. The only concession to the Church as far as state schools are concerned is that the Law of 1886 leaves room in the weekly school program for RE, be it a RE that is unfunded and has to take place outside the school premises. The subject that has come in the place of RE since the law of 1906 is civics. Only in the framework of this subject is the teaching of religion, as a historical phenomenon and part of the general

culture, not totally excluded.⁶⁰ In the last decades some civics teachers have also been giving attention to Islam as a culture that has contributed to Western civilization. The leading principle has always been the strict neutrality (*laïcité*) of the school.

Until now we have heard little about Muslim efforts to create Islamic schools. This can be explained by the fact that more than 98 percent of the approximately 600,000 Muslim children of the primary school age attend state schools.⁶¹ Private schools in France, making up only 15 percent of the total, are not popular with them. Moreover, the few Muslim pupils in Catholic schools often do not have RE because many of these schools have dropped this subject altogether.⁶² They function in fact as schools for the better-off classes. Their sample function is therefore also restricted. And the Protestants are staunch defenders of public education. They do not have separate schools. The number of Jewish schools (42)⁶³ is relatively small. The ample availability of public education and the fact that, consequently, the Muslim pupils are not faced with compulsory Christian RE, probably lessens the need for IRE in school. Otherwise, some Muslim pupils do receive IRE because here and there IRE is given as part of mother-tongue teaching that is taught in about 10 percent of the state schools.⁶⁴ Seen from this angle the need for Islamic schools might also be small. Moreover, private schools involve extra costs which the Muslims might not be able to afford. This, however, is not to say that changes in the near future could not occur. The *foulards* affair of the autumn of 1989 has caused the existing system to come into discussion. The National Education League wants a revision of the *laïcité* concept that forms the basis of public education. It pleads for an 'open' *laïcité* that is not afraid of entering into a dialogue with other cultures.⁶⁵ The 'Holy Alliance' of the Catholic Church with other religions during the *foulards* affair was mainly aimed at its own benefit.⁶⁶ At the moment the Church is in discussion with the state about the weekly school program.⁶⁷ Though the Church appreciates its freedom and does not wish a return of the Concordat, yet it strives to gain more than only a change of position of RE in the weekly roster. It will of course try to get RE itself back into the state school, as a voluntary subject, to be sure, and to get control over its content. Otherwise it does not want to abolish the strict neutrality of the state schools in order to prevent others from dealing with religion, since it considers this subject to belong to her special terrain. It is clear that if RE as a voluntary subject would ever be introduced in state schools then the Muslims cannot be denied to organize IRE in the same way.

The *foulard* affair is not really over. The question whether wearing outward religious signs - i.e. the headscarf - is irreconcilable with the neutrality of the state school has yet to be answered. Answering in the affirmative necessitates the creation of Islamic schools if one wants to leave

the right to education intact⁶⁸ - unless it is a matter of public order, *quod non*. As appears from a national survey at the end of 1989,⁶⁹ however, 75 percent of the French population opposed the wearing of headscarfs in state schools and an almost equally high percentage was against allowing Islamic schools (63 percent), as 71 percent identified Islam with fanaticism. This is, of course, a random indication. The growing intolerance of recent years might stimulate the wish to create separate schools. Also the situation in Algeria, where the FIS is taking over and the islamization of the schools is gaining ground, might be of some influence.⁷⁰ As appears from the mentioned survey, 45 percent of the Muslims declared themselves against the headscarf in the school and 30 percent in favour, whereas 57 percent of them declared themselves in favour of Islamic schools and 36 percent against. Islamic education in all its forms is typically a subject for the High Islamic Council to think about. In Strasbourg a state funded Islamic Academic Institute may be created shortly, parallel to similar existing Catholic and Protestant institutes. Alsace-Lorraine where a Concordat applies⁷¹ may also become an experimental garden where things can be tried out before they are introduced elsewhere in France.

Obstacles and Alternatives

After this short tour d'horizon we return to the situation in Holland. The rise of Islamic schools so far has been spectacular.⁷² In the next two years there may be 20 schools. The history of the schools is very young so that I must confine myself to a few remarks.⁷³

Of the six schools that were in existence in 1989, four were founded by Turks, one by Moroccans and one by the mixed Muslim women group *al-Nisā*. Three of the Turkish founded schools are run by the Islamic Educational Foundation (ISNO) that is associated with Diyanet. Of the remaining three schools, one was founded by the AMGT (*Milli Görüş*). Of the seven new schools, three were founded by Turks, also belonging to the AMGT, the remaining four by Moroccans. Apart from the three ISNO schools, which are centrally governed, all schools are autonomous. The pupils of the above mentioned four Turkish founded schools are mainly Turkish except for the ISNO school in the Hague, which has mainly Moroccan pupils. Also mainly Moroccan is the Moroccan founded Tariq Ibn Ziyad school in Eindhoven (1988) and the new schools in Roosendaal, Den Bosch and Helmond. The ISNO schools consider themselves as liberal. Compared with the others they are indeed liberal. In the classroom boys and girls sit freely mixed though, in two of the ISNO schools, they do PE and swimming apart. In these schools IRE of one to two hours a week is taught in Turkish and by an imam. No prayers take place in the school, nor are there

strict rules for dressing. The autonomous schools can be considered conservative though IRE in two of them is in Dutch, taught by an imam or by volunteers, the teacher or the mother-tongue teacher. Islamic dress, including headscarfs, is for women teachers obligated and for girls from age 9 strongly advised. Boys and girls are segregated and teachers may not touch elder pupils of the other sex. The pupils pray in school.

Though the schools are running properly and the inspection in 1989/90 was positive about the then existing schools it is not all roses here. There are several obstacles. The most important is the lack of qualified Muslim staff. For the time being the need is filled by appointing non-Muslim teachers. On the average two out of three are non-Muslims, in one case eight out of nine. As RE in private schools is supposed to be taught by the teachers themselves, IRE in these cases has to be given by others who cannot be remunerated. This is, of course, an unsatisfactory solution. Moreover, since non-Muslims cannot be offered a career perspective in an Islamic school, it is not surprising that it is not the most capable candidates that make themselves available and that the Islamic schools have a large turnover of non-Muslim staff. A third problem in this respect is the appeal of the schools to Muslim parents. The participation of parents is still below what was expected. This is probably due to the non-Muslim Dutch speaking staff that cannot communicate directly with the parents. The first thing needed now is an Islamic Teacher Training College with educational and didactical training for IRE. Another bottleneck is the legal condition that an Islamic school, in order to be considered a subsidiable private school, should really be an Islamic school, and not an ethnic one in disguise. As integration also means the integration of the various ethnic groups of Muslims among themselves as Muslims, the importance of this condition is obvious. One application for an Islamic school (in Utrecht) was not approved for this reason.

Although the Islamic schools were generally admitted by the local councils concerned, this is only thanks to the constitutional freedom of education and the tenacious support of individual non-Muslims, mostly Christian-Democrats. In several cases the approval was refused because of technicalities (1x), because it was said that there is no need for more than one Islamic school in a place within 5 km (3x) or because it was considered a foreign school in disguise (1x). In most cases the applicants went to court and sometimes had to appeal to higher courts. The judicial decisions will soon be known.

The Islamic school is never without controversy. It has supporters and opponents, both Muslims and non-Muslims. The former stress its emancipatory effect. The opponents consider the Islamic school an obstacle to integration. They see it as a form of self-chosen isolation just at the moment when the pillarization of Dutch society is coming to an end. A real

impediment is that for Muslim children, as compared with Catholic, Protestant or Jewish children in their schools, the situation is more unfavourable with respect to their knowledge of the Dutch language. They do not have Dutch speaking parents and therefore do not have a good knowledge of the language. Neither can they learn from their fellow pupils in the Islamic school because these are in the same situation. On the other hand, the number of Muslim/foreign pupils in black schools may be almost as great, so that it makes little difference. Turning such schools into Islamic schools would at least have the advantage of fitting in with the family background of the pupils, one of the strong points of Islamic schools.

What looks to be an alternative is the 'cooperative school' (*samenwerkingsschool*) of Christians and Muslims. This is a recent development. So far only one exists. It evolved out of a former Christian 'black' school, the Juliana van Stolberg School in Ede. In 1982 it introduced 'encounter education', paying attention to Islam in RE. But when Muslim parents asked for IRE, the school governors and the board of the Association of Christian National Schools, to which the school belonged, refused.⁷⁴ Some Muslim parents then started to take their children from the school and they even applied for the creation of an Islamic school in Ede. In 1990 the school team decided to withdraw the school from the Association and to continue as a 'cooperative school'. This implied that Christian RE and IRE are taught separately. IRE is given by two Turkish imams (a Diyanet and a Süleymanci imam) and a Moroccan imam, in Turkish and Arabic respectively. Apart from their own RE, the pupils have one (evaluation) hour together each week, during which common and separate religious notions are discussed. This is in fact a remnant of the former 'encounter' set-up but now on a more egalitarian basis. The test, of course, is whether in the future equality in the number of Muslim and Christian teachers will be reached. For the time being the school has only Christian teachers. It is quite thinkable that, in future, under pressure of Muslim parents, more Christian schools turn into cooperative schools. There are dozens of Christian schools with more than 50 percent of Muslim pupils eligible for becoming such schools. It is the only guarantee for full equality and democracy. Taking refuge in measures such as limiting the number of Muslim pupils to 33 percent, as the Foundation for Protestant Christian Education in Utrecht wants,⁷⁵ can only mean that inequality continues. The cooperative or interdenominational school, based on cooperation where it is possible, is in this case an interreligious school. It remains to be seen whether this school will have success. It has scarcely outgrown the experimental stage. But as this type of school combines the advantages of both the state school and the private school, viz. has a more public character as well as freedom for RE, it might become attractive to those Muslims who want their own RE and at the same time keep the

language contacts with the Dutch school population and the advantages of a common organizational structure.

A second alternative could be IRE as part of mother-tongue teaching following the German example. Although mother-tongue teaching is defined as 'teaching of language and culture of origin', the latter not being identical with IRE, it is officially mainly meant as language teaching but, in actual practice, using it partly for IRE is not excluded.⁷⁶ At the moment the Foundation for Curriculum Development (SLO) is working on an adaption of the German NRW curriculum in cooperation with a group of Muslims. It is doubtful, however, whether this RE, which cannot have a confessional character, will meet the needs of Muslim parents.

Conclusion

Our conclusion is that in a country where a large majority of the schools consists of state schools in which, moreover, RE is not taught automatically, as is the case in France, the Muslims have less need for separate schools than elsewhere. But that does not mean that in a country where RE is automatically taught in state schools and where these schools form the big majority Islamic schools are an absolute must. Belgium is an example of a country where IRE in state schools fills the need. In Holland, where state schools are not in the majority, nor supply IRE, and where therefore many Muslim pupils receive Christian RE in Christian private schools, the need for Islamic schools arises. In Britain, where RE - generally Christian or the multifaith variant - in state schools, which are the large majority, is taught, the need for Islamic schools is also likely to be relatively strong - relatively, because I imagine that only a minority of the Muslims really want Islamic schools, at least as long as public funding does not cover 100 percent of the costs. This should be further investigated, of course. What is striking, however, is that, in Britain, not IRE, but rather the single-sex school seems to have first priority. In one case an Islamic girls' school even had to be closed because the Muslim Headmistress, establishing a Muslim direction on the school, was opposed by the parents who, although Muslims in name, had a secular outlook.⁷⁷ Maintaining or reopening single-sex schools might be attractive in this situation, though it is no real alternative for those who want Islamic schools. Granting the voluntary aided status to the independent Islamic schools would help to boost the status of Islam and the Muslims in Britain. The British government's refusal so far to subsidize Islamic schools is comparable to the Dutch reluctance to subsidize IRE. But Britain, unlike Holland, has no way out. It is not certain that IRE in the framework of mother-tongue teaching would be an alternative. In Germany (NRW) a RE-curriculum is enforced on Muslims in the if-you-don't-like-it-lump-it-style,

a surrogate for IRE, from which many Muslim organizations have dissociated themselves. Belgium and Holland have different solutions. Both are better than the British and the German ones. This, of course, is certainly not a permanent situation. In both countries the creation of state funded Islamic schools is possible in principle and it is not to be expected that in the long run the authorities can maintain their opposition. Where others have their own schools, Muslims cannot be denied the same right. This holds true also for France.

For Muslim parents in Holland who want IRE for their children, apart from the state school, where IRE so far is mainly a theoretical option as long as the rigid local conditions are not relaxed, there are only two alternatives: the Christian-Muslim 'cooperative' school or the Islamic school. This is the choice they have. And where these options do not yet exist they may try to realize them. The choice they make, theoretically depends on whether they prefer an immediate integration, contenting themselves with IRE only, or rather stress their identity, isolating themselves for the time being, and accept a slower integration but win in emancipation. In actual practice personal and local circumstances may be the decisive factor.

Notes

¹I prefer 'Islamic' to 'Muslim' not because of the Dutch habit to speak of 'islamitische scholen', but rather because Islam is meant as the base of these schools.

²J.M.M. van Amersfoort: Het beleid afgestemd op blijven. Interview in *Trouw* d.d. 30/12/1987.

³One school "al-Bouschrâ" in Amsterdam is not included. It was founded by Dutch Protestants as an independent private primary school in 1970 for Moroccan pupils. In 1981 it began to be subsidized by the state. Though it provides IRE in the frame work of mother-tongue teaching and even a Friday prayer service, it can not be called an Islamic school because the underlying ideology is Christian. It has no Muslim school governors.

⁴Exact figures are not available. Some 30 - 50% of the Muslim children may for a longer or shorter period attend the mosque school. Cf. for example "Ouderparticipatie, de mening van ouders", report of the Regionaal Centrum Buitenlanders, Den Haag, 1990.

⁵Cf. Lkoundi-Hamaekers: 1987, 101: e.g. dying is 'going to Jesus'.

⁶Lkoundi-Hamaekers: 1987, 102f. and Kraan: 1990, 11.

⁷Bradney: 1987, 412-42; Parker-Jenkins: 1990, 15; Cumper: 1990, 60. I have come across the following schools: Islamia Primary School, Brent (1983), 90 pupils, waiting list of 650; Islamia Girls' School, Sheffield (1983), for pupils of 11-16, 28 pupils (1986); Zakaria Muslim Girls' School, Batley, 127 pupils, waiting list 300; Islamia Girls' School, London (1989); Muslim Girls' Schools, Glasgow and Leicester; Muslim Girls' High School, Bradford (1984), 65 pupils of 10-18 (1986) and Dewsbury (1982), 171 pupils of 12-16, and 58 of 16+ (1985) boarding; Institute of Islamic Education, Dewsbury; Islamia Girls' Secondary School, Huddersfield (1984), 42 pupils of 12-16+ (1986); Secondary Muslim Boys' School, Birmingham; Dâr al-'Ulûm, Coventry; King Fahd School, London; Victoria College Muslim Girls' School, Long Ditton, (closed down). According to Claire Jenkins: 'Forced to take part' (*The Times Educational Supplement*

d.d. 9/11/1990, pp. 22f.), there are now 17 Muslim private schools in Britain and 1,200 of 250,000 Muslim pupils attend such schools.

⁸A girls' boarding school in Bergkamen, NRW (1987, recogn. 1989) housing 16 girls age 18-20. Two years Islamic instruction enabling to teach at mosque schools. The school is run by the Federation Islamischer Gemeinden im Ruhrgebiet, which has its base in Köln and is affiliated with the AMGT. The primary boys' school in Berlin (1987), AMGT. The Deutsch-Islamische Schule in München mentioned in Roovers & Van Esch: 1987, 84 is unknown. It is probably a mosque school.

⁹Apart from international schools such as a Syrian Arab school and an Iraqi one in Paris, there is one independent Islamic school, in Paris, founded in 1981 by the Libyan Embassy. A publicly funded Islamic school exists only in the French island la Réunion: the "Medersa", mixed in the first level and a boys' school in the second level. Source: Ministère de l'Education Nationale, Letter to the author dd. 27/11/1990.

¹⁰I owe this information to Dr. Jorgen Nielsen (Birmingham) and to Johan Bang (Ministry of Education, Copenhagen).

¹¹Lkoundi-Hamaekers: 1987, 101. Van de Wetering: 1990, 66, 80. Cf. also Olesen (ed.): 1987.

¹²Lkoundi-Hamaekers: 1987, 102f.

¹³Abdullah: 1979.

¹⁴Thomä-Venske: 1981, 6-9.

¹⁵Triessscheijn: 1980, 18-20, 32; Kriens: 1981, 160ff.; Ergün: 1982, 252ff.; Rijsewijk: 1984, 183-187.

¹⁶The amount of funding depends on the means of the school.

¹⁷Van Esch & Roovers: 1987, 82f. To the state schools belong also the *Weltanschauungsschulen* of which a secular philosophy of life is the base.

¹⁸They are only allowed where other schools do not occur or in case they are special schools (*Sonderschulen*) with different teaching methods or supplementary schools. Constitution FGR 1949, art. 7, paragraph 5. They are funded maximally for 85 percent.

¹⁹Cumper: 1990, 60.

²⁰In Holland the private schools can be confessional or general (*algemeen bijzonder*). Both are 100 percent state funded.

²¹In the school year 1987-88, 9,257 Muslim pupils attended IRE in 216 elementary schools (180 state schools and 36 Catholic schools) in the Flemish part of Belgium. Information: J. Leman - Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid, 29/8/90.

²²Cf. *Statistisch Jaarboek van België*, 1989.

²³Apart from Bremen, where undenominational general Christian RE is taught, as a result of which no special RE for Muslim pupils is deemed necessary. Cf. *Religiöse Erziehung*: 1987, 3f.

²⁴Only two percent of all primary schools in West Germany are private schools and the same percentage of pupils is attending these schools. No figures about attendance of Muslim pupils are available. As 30 percent of the private schools are non-denominational (*Waldorfschulen*) the percentage of Muslim pupils may be higher than the average. Cf. *Statistisches Bundesamt, Bildung und Kultur*, Fachserie 11, Reihe 1, *Allgemeinbildende Schulen*, 1988.

²⁵In German *Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts*.

²⁶In Hessen for the year 1987/88, Islamic public bodies responsible for IRE were planned in two places: a *Verein zur Förderung eines objektiven Verständnisses der islamischen Religion* (Giessen) and a *Verein der guten Sitten* (Wetzlar). Cf. *Religiöse Erziehung*: 1987, 5; Giani: 1987, 83-89.

²⁷Cf. *Religiöse Erziehung*: 1987, 1.

²⁸*Religiöse Erziehung*: 1987, 3f.

²⁹Cf. *Religiöse Unterweisung*: 1986.

³⁰Their protest and their critique were voiced in a written statement and a letter from the *Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren* in Köln to the minister undersigned by 10 organizations (among others AMGT, and Pakistani and Moroccan associations), dd. 9/6/1988.

³¹A 'Kaplan' boarding school in Köln was closed down in 1987 by the authorities as fundamentalist and a threat to public order. The two existing AMGT schools may have another lot, though, initially, the girls' boarding school in Bergkamen was closed down in 1987 because of technicalities, while in the local press it was held to belong to a right wing extremist organization related to Kaplan and the Grey Wolves. The AMGT in Köln expressly gave out a declaration of non-violence in a letter to Islam-Archiv Deutschland, dated 26/4/1990. The school in Berlin is still in an experimental stage.

³²Cf. *Integratie(beleid)*: 1989, 400.

³³Dassetto & Bastenier: 1984, 176; Bastenier & Dassetto: 1987.

³⁴Information: inspector M. Leurin via Mrs. M. Renaerts, *Ministère de l'Education, de la Recherche et de la Formation*.

³⁵In 180 state schools and 36 private schools, cf. Verlot: 1989, 42. Available figures about the Dutch speaking part of Belgium show that in 1984/5, 10,159 Muslim primary school pupils in state schools and 970 in private schools received IRE. This amounts to 84 percent.

³⁶Verlot: 1989, 108 + *Statistisch Jaarboek van België* 1989.

³⁷Tamarant & Van den Broeck: 1990, 6ff.; Van Loock: 1989, 14.

³⁸Van Loock: 1989, 15. The Minister of Justice declared that he would deal flexibly with the new requirements concerning Islam teachers, cf. *De Morgen*, 20/9/1986.

³⁹Source: *Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid*, letter to the author d.d. 29/8/1990.

⁴⁰*Integratie(beleid)*: 1989, 393.

⁴¹It is a French-language school, following the Belgian curriculum. Source: *Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid*, letter to the author d.d. 29/8/1990.

⁴²*Leven als moslim*: 1988, 42f.

⁴³Mazairac: 1988, 50ff.

⁴⁴J. Leman, *Kabinetschef Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid*, in a letter to the author, dd. 29/8/1990.

⁴⁵Verlot: 1989, 100.

⁴⁶Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990, 109.

⁴⁷Lkoundi-Hamaekers: 1987, 100; Kloosterman: 1987, 112; Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990, 109; differently, for Britain, Nielsen: 1989, 24

⁴⁸Kraan: 1990.

⁴⁹Nielsen: 1989, 229.

⁵⁰Zaki: 1982, 33-38.

⁵¹Information received from Dr. J.S. Nielsen.

⁵²Zaki: 1982, 35.

⁵³Nielsen: 1989, 235.

⁵⁴'Caused by a natural decline in the number of school age children and the fact that Brent schools are so bad that many parents prefer to educate their children outside the borough', *Newsletter of Islamia School*, July 1990, 12, p.2.

⁵⁵Conditions as regard content may not be stipulated, because that would be contrary to constitutional freedom of religion. Cf. Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990, 112.

⁵⁶*Stichting Platform Islamitische Organisaties Rotterdam*.

⁵⁷Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990, 126.

⁵⁸Amsterdam's condition that its contents should be in agreement with Dutch values is held by Shadid and Van Koningsveld (1990^a, p. 112) to be in contradiction with the constitutional freedom of religion.

⁵⁹Holmes (ed.): 1983, 334.

⁶⁰Cardoso: 1990, 11.

⁶¹Ministère de l'Education Nationale, *Note d'information*, 89-55, 4 and my estimation.

⁶²Le prix de la "paix", *Le Monde de l'Education*, avril 1984.

⁶³*Le Monde* 23/2/1990.

⁶⁴*Le Monde*, 23/11/1989. S. Boulot and D. Boyzon criticize ELCO as contrary to the equality and the neutrality of the state school, Boulot & Boyzon: 1990, 34.

⁶⁵Camilleri: 1990, 39; *Le Monde*, 4/12/90.

⁶⁶Boulot & Boyzon: 1990, 34. Naïr: 1990, 64.

⁶⁷Tincq: 1990.

⁶⁸Cordeiro: 1990, 57.

⁶⁹*Le Monde*, 30/11/1990.

⁷⁰In Algeria this led to segregation. Some intellectuals in Algiers even created a private school in reaction against it: 'l'école privée laïque contre l'école publique quasi confessionnelle' so ironically, Georges Marion, 'Les islamistes poussent leurs pions', *LM*, 3/11/90.

⁷¹Tincq: 1990.

⁷²The following primary schools exist: in Amsterdam: al-Siddiq school (1989), 400 pupils; Mimar Sinan school (1989), 100; SIBS (1990) >50; The Hague: Yunus Emre school (1989); Rotterdam: al-Ghazali school (1988), 243; Inn Sina school (1989), 87; Eindhoven: Tariq Ibn Ziyad school (1988) 165; Amersfoort (1990); Alphen (1990); Schiedam: al-Furqan school (1990); Den Bosch: Imam al-Bukhari school (1990); Roosendaal (1990); Helmond: Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi school (1990). Total number of pupils appr. 1500.

⁷³For the following paragraph I have mainly used Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990^a.

⁷⁴Ten Broek: 1987, 121ff.

⁷⁵Everaers: 1990, 3; Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990^b, 88f.

⁷⁶Van de Wetering: 1990. Shadid & Van Koningsveld: 1990^c, 108.

⁷⁷Newsletter of Islamia School, July 1990, p. 3.

Turkish Islamic Ideals of Education: Their Possible Function for Islamic Identity and Integration in Europe

Chr. Elsas

Is not Islam the main obstacle to integration in the societies of Western and Middle Europe and to the process of European integration?¹ The central thesis of this contribution is that the forms of Islam developed in the secular societies of Eastern Europe could be a bridge for integration in the Western European societies, as well as in a democratically founded greater Europe, with its Christian, atheistic and Muslim traditions. One condition is that a capability to compromise takes the place of the pressure on the Islamic communities, a pressure nourished by the fear of "fundamentalism". Forming a pair with it, the other condition is a clear disapproval of cultural relativism discrediting the combination of a cultural pluralism with universalism: for example, we cannot tolerate or even respect the violation of human rights, as in the case of the Islamic persecution of apostates. From the point of view of cultural relativism values, such as persecution, would be only the opinion of another culture. But so that living together in cultural pluralism in Europe may be possible, certain universal principles of democratic life are necessary - including an acceptance of public secular tolerance.²

In a European context the Turks have played a central role as to the presence and kind of Islam: There is Turkey itself with its European part, and the ambitions of the state with its European and Asian parts to become a member of the European Community with ca. 50 million Muslims. Besides that, nearly all of the Muslims in the European parts of the Soviet Union, estimated at more than 12 million, speak Turkish languages, such as the Azeris, Tatars, Bashkirs and Chuvash. And nearly all the Muslims in the rest of Eastern Europe are of Tatar and Turkish origin, or are Muslims from the time of the Ottoman-Turkish empire.³ With the end of the Cold War the demarcations between these Eastern European countries and Western Europe are losing their strictness. It is very well possible that rather soon there could

be religious freedom for Muslims in Eastern Europe similar to that in Western Europe. In the Southwest of Europe the Arab-Berber influence from the time of Muslim Spain and Sicily during the 8th and 9th centuries and in modern times from the Spanish, Italian and French (former) colonies is of more importance⁴, while in Portugal, with 30.000 Muslims from its former colonies in India, as well as in the Northwest of Europe, the Muslim immigration from the former British colonies on the Indian subcontinent predominates.⁵ But in all other European countries the Turkish Muslims are again in the majority, as migrants for work.⁶

Even if we use only roughly estimated numbers⁷, the main point for our consideration is clear: Besides in Turkey itself, there are in the European House another 15 million Muslims speaking Turkish languages and 6.5 million more with some hundred years of Ottoman-Turkish cultural background. On the other hand, there are only some 2.5 millions Muslims from Arab, perhaps 3/4 million from Indian and 1/4 million from Black African countries in Europe. That means: presumably more than 70 million Muslims in the European House have more or less Turkish traditions of Muslim life in secular states dating at least from the First World War - and only 3.5 million have other traditions of Islam. Therefore, this contribution will discuss the Turkish-Islamic ideals of education as the most relevant for Europe - though Arab and Pakistani immigrants usually have a higher standard of education, especially in the field of Islamic sciences.

And if we discuss the subject in the context of a greater Europe, it will be clear that integration cannot mean a total assimilation with one of those traditions in society, but has to be a combination of partial assimilations - for living together with people of other traditions - with integral units in other areas of life, which for people of a common tradition ensures a continuity of identity.⁸ That implies an integration both into society at large and into the structures of the particular religious and national community. And from a democratic standpoint such an integration must be combined with the intention of legal and social equality, at least after a transitional period.

Religion may contribute to the segregation of a particular community from the encompassing larger society. Or it may contribute to a dynamical identity which mediates between cultures. In both cases religion will have to make a special contribution in the midst of the process of change promoted by the conflict between cultures. Religion maintains the ability to function in a social context by preserving the cultural identity and integrating energies which would otherwise differentiate in such a situation.⁹ This is important especially in the case of the Muslim immigrants to Western Europe, because to a worker of Muslim origin the only support in this society is his religion; it is the only thing that belongs to him and that he can master. Therefore, there are high expectations and hopes that religion can be an integrating force also between

the first generation of immigrants and the second and third generations growing up in both cultures or nearly completely in the new one.

Here their religion is regarded as a rather strange, foreign one - though Europe has a long Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition. But in its appearance the Islamic "religion" (Arabic "*din*") means a whole "world of life" (J.Habermas: "*Lebenswelt*") and is usually combined with many elements from the culture of the immigrants' native countries. That constitutes their Muslim identity, which is derived from their encompassing wider culture back home where most people are Muslims. As far as possible, I will try to pay attention to this very important innate Muslim identity, but will nevertheless distinguish it from a new Islamic identity founded in Europe - "Islamic" denoting what belongs to Islam in a strict sense, to the Islamic religion in distinction from Muslim culture.¹⁰ Of course this religion will not be purely without local traditions and connections with the Muslim countries and their culture and politics. And we should also consider the fact that Islam is a religion highly dependent on public and communal celebrations and expressed in such daily practices as dietary and dress regulations and that few of the migrants are able to explain these celebrations and practices.

In this situation Islamic education could fulfill an important function, if it enabled the ethnic-religious community gradually to change the Muslim norms of behaviour within the group into new Islamic norms of behaviour. On the one hand, there are the obvious influences of the linguistic, national and social background and the individual relationship to the countries of origin - nearly all mosques are based on such a background. On the other hand, time will be an important factor, because knowledge of the language and rules of the encompassing larger society are increasing, even today making the younger generation competent actors on the new scene. As we all know, integration is often misunderstood to be assimilation. Instead, it should be defined as the participation of groups or individuals in society while retaining and developing their own identity with its essential parts remaining intact - that is the meaning of the Latin word "integer" in "integration".¹¹

So the mosques and their Qur'an courses, on the one hand, may serve as ghettos in the positive sense of being a realm for securing traditional beliefs and values in the face of the risks of naturalization, modernization, delinquency. The mosque may be a meeting place allowing the reconstitution of social networks and fulfilling very helpful psycho-social functions, as a pure enclave and a place of certainty, of truth in midst of the many uncertainties.¹² On the other hand, it is important that such a mosque-ghetto should be open to developing a dynamical identity in interaction with society. Here the imam can play an important part by interpreting what the Qur'an contains of relevance to current problems and teaching authoritatively from the sources about normative Islam. This is not so easy a task because he will have to find a

balance between the expectations of the older people and newer immigrants, on the one hand, and of those having the centre of their lives more here in the new country, on the other.¹³

I think it is very important to see the individual together with his family group and the authoritative teaching in this light. The experiences with a multi-faith-syllabus, as the one used in Birmingham since 1975, show that the desired emphasis is on instruction in the child's own religious tradition by someone from within that tradition.¹⁴ There are distinctive Pakistani expectations, especially in Britain, and distinctive Arab ones, especially in France, and in a similar way of smaller groups with various background. But the dominating Turkish background expects good, traditional Islamic instruction, which strengthens the identity of young Muslims, and has an affinity with the Turkish ideals of education. After such a reinforcement it could become possible for children to partake in multi-faith education in the upper grades without fear.

A second reason to look in this direction - in spite of all the tension between the Turks and other Muslims, especially those from Arab countries - is Atatürk's very serious intention 70 years ago to understand Islam in a way allowing for contacts with the European countries to be strengthened. The Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara has the task to watch over Atatürk's legacy regarding Islam, as it is mainly taught in the secular atmosphere of the Theological Faculty founded 1949 at the University of Ankara. The criticism of the followers of Said Nursi Bediüzzaman and of those of Süleyman Tunahan led to the foundation of Higher Islam Institutes in Istanbul in 1952 with lectures also by the representatives of the traditional Islamic values. Since the 70's the influence on the students of the Muslim Brothers of Egypt, especially of Sayyid Outb's writings and of Khomeiny's revolution, is remarkable.¹⁵ And there were also the conflicts between the right wing national Turkish Sunnites and the so-called communist Alevis.¹⁶ But since 1980 the Turkish state has tried to find a balance between these interests and a concept harmonising the legacy of Atatürk with an emphasis on the traditional Islamic values and on the connection with the *umma*, the community of the Muslims.¹⁷

This does not mean that the problems with Islamic education in Western Europe can be solved by taking over the school books of the Turkish State and organizing religious lessons in schools by its representatives. The connection with national feelings is too strong for the context in our countries, and the experiences in Belgium have shown the difficulties with a direct dependence on foreign states and their politics in religious affairs.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Turkey's immediate support of the sanctions against Iraq in the Gulf crisis of 1990 has changed the relations Europe/Turkey for the better. And the fact remains that Turkey is a full member of the KSZE. It signed the latter's statement on the

human dimension regarding the rights of "national minorities" (or of "regional culture" as stated in the Statement of Vienna), and of the freedom to practice one's religion in public and to convert to another religion, in Copenhagen, in 1990.¹⁹ However, to us this Turkish Muslim identity is an important factor in our search for a new Islamic identity for Muslims in Western Europe only and, in face of the fact that to find such an identity will be the task especially of the generations to come, a possible bridge to the first generation of immigrants. Or will that road be rejected completely in looking for better results from the work of scholars without a Turkish laicistic background?

A difficulty for non-Turkish Muslims is that the special trait of the Turkish Islamic character of Muslims from Turkey - we know there are Kurdish and other minorities, too - has its roots in national pride and esteem: the Turks as a nation crave for knowledge having a strong, diligent character and educating both sexes, girls and boys, to be strong and eager persons. Turkish books emphasize the fact that the Turkish tribes coming from central Asia to the West took over Islam because they found there, in a worldwide religion, the same ideals they had in their tribes. This way Atatürk was able to integrate into the state not only most of the Sunni Muslims, the majority group, but also the Alevi Muslims, a large cultural minority in Turkey, consisting of nearly a quarter of its population, which had maintained in a special way the old Turkish traditions from the time of the natural cults, shamanism and the old ideals of tribal community. Bringing together the Sunnites and the Alevites into one ethnic or national identity as Turkish Muslims, Atatürk introduced the idea of an Islam combining both groups, thereby at the same time allowing for an opening to modern Europe when Turkish Islam would be purified of various kinds of superstitions. The prolongation of the old Turkish identity is an Islam in harmony with rationality and progress, a rational belief and morality showing the way to modern times. Kemal Aytac from the Faculty of Education at the University of Ankara showed, in his book on Atatürk's speeches on politics in religion²⁰, how Atatürk stressed the self-responsible character of Islam which from the first word revealed in the Qur'an onwards - "Read!" (Sura 96,1) - recommends progress and diligence: Only due to the influence from traditional customs of the neighbouring nations had Turkish Islam lost its primal purity.

At the national celebration of the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Atatürk said: "The Turkish people must become much more religious; with this I mean religious in all purity. In Islam there is nothing against reason and against progress!" Another new book, that by Yahya Akyüz on the history of Turkish education²¹, shows that Atatürk's principle of laicism, which means that the secular state watches over religion, is not against Islam but is justified by its contributions to the pursuit of the goal to have set by a system of

education claimed to be identical with the national character and to have its foundation in science.

In accordance with the preceding book scholars of Turkish Islamic education in publications of the last past years pursue the goal of becoming self-conscious, self-responsible men and women. As Ibrahim Canan explains in his voluminous book on Islamic education from the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad²², they use their religion as a guide: to get on well with their encompassing society and to meet as a community, strengthening each other; or if that is not possible, to move to another place with better conditions of life. Such an interpretation of Islam is not common practice and by no means known and taught by all Turkish imams and teachers. But these and other publications with an established reputation in present-day Turkey show at least possibilities of compatibility with Christian and secular thoughts while maintaining an Islamic identity.

Religious views in support of a laicist Islamic education

Four main points are forwarded in support of such an interpretation of Islamic education. The first is that the conception of Allah is founded primarily on love, not on fear. A typical view among the Alevites in Turkey is that the Sunnites worship from fear but the Alevites from love and that to go to the mosques as the Sunnites do is an outward gesture, not necessarily signifying a pious disposition and proper behaviour.²³ In rural Sunni Islam, indeed, it is usually central to think of how one can accumulate the most religious merits (*sevap*) by regarding the classification of acts as necessary (*farz*) or merely recommended (*eftal*) or frowned upon (*makruh*) or forbidden (*haram*). There, easily, a spirit of fear may grow in availing oneself of the possibility in Islam of "kaza" - for example, not to fast or to pray now, with the intention of making up later on what one has neglected and sinned- religious obligations thus becoming a mountain of debts which are to be paid off.²⁴ But there is also the great Islamic tradition of the Sufi mystic and his love for Allah, connected with the names of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya and al-Gazzali and in Anatolia especially with Celaleddin Rumi and Yunus Emre.

Therefore, the book of Halis Ayhan on religious education and teaching²⁵, published by the Directorate of Religious Affairs of Turkey, could argue against stressing fear above all else in many Qur'an courses: "That is a wrong interpretation of the Qur'an." The theological argumentation then puts the emphasis, as in the book of Haurani Altintas, on religious life from knowing.²⁶ A human being is not tainted with an hereditary inclination to sin by nature, but has an innate capacity (*fitrat*) to do what is right. So it is man's task, pure and without burden, as it is his nature, to get knowledge of God (*marifetullah*) and to answer with love for God (*muhabetullah*). There is the pedagogical

argument, too²⁷: to produce a strong fear of Allah during the sensitive years of growing up will disturb the development of the person meant to become harmonious and really capable of being happy and of loving. Instead of that boys and girls are to be guided by having the innate faith nurtured by giving thanks to the creator. The influential book of Bayraktar Bayrakli comparing Islamic education with Western education²⁸ stresses the view that the creator knows what is best for mankind best, better than humans who refer only to human ideas. And God is teaching both by nature and by prophets - especially those of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Therefore Bayrakli argues that we should see and educate mankind taking into consideration the qualities God created and gave to humankind.²⁹

In reference to the second main point: people are seen as created by the creator individually different yet of the same kind, while at the same time also belonging to the animal kingdom. To support this view, Canan mentions many traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, such as: "Show love and warmth and mercy to people, so that God may show the same to you." Or: "Every being having lungs and being hungry has a right over you - you are responsible to God for this animal."³⁰ Islam then means peace, patience, forgiveness and love - though one must strive to do what is good and avert what is bad, if necessary, using punishment in education. Before punishing, Islamic education sees the close connection between conveying knowledge and instilling responsibility, and then proceeds, if necessary, to admonish - as Bayrakli³¹ remarks with the words of the Qur'an concerning the conflict of Moses with Pharaoh: "He is adverse. Therefore speak mildly to him, so that perhaps he will accept admonition or be afraid of God" (Sura 20,43).

The third main point is the process of "making known", the conveying of knowledge as a major means to develop innate capacities. The primary driving force, whose gradual direction Bayrakli³² calls the heavy task of education, is love, including sexual attraction. According to Canan, both sexes shall pursue a development in conformity with their specific innate characteristics³³ and found a family. But the word of the Qur'an, that the husband earns the livelihood for the family and is therefore the administrator for the wife (Sura 4,34), is a description and not a normative instruction for every man and every woman.³⁴ Another innate driving force in Bayrakli's concept of education³⁵ is anxiety, joined with learning to regulate it by means of trust, as of a child in its mother and of men in the forgiveness of God, "Who shows you in fear and trust the flashes of lightning and impregnates the clouds with rain" (Sura 13,12). Another innate driving force is the impulse to rule and fight, whereby the inclination to massacre (Sura 2,29f.) is to be driven out by means of knowledge³⁶, and so on.

The fourth main point is the effect on attitudes. As Canan³⁷ remarks, the Prophet Muhammad placed education on a level equal to that of praying, if

people care for their families. And the family has to provide a good education for all its members, as Akyüz³⁸ points out referring to a *Hadith* sentence of the Prophet Muhammad: "Knowledge is a commandment for women and men." Altintas in his book, and Akyüz as well,³⁹ at the same time adopt the really popular traditional rules for respectful attitudes in the family and neighbourhood, from Ibrahim Hakki Erzurum'lu, who with his book on a knowledge of God is a great authority from the great "time of the tulips" (18th century) of the Ottoman empire. So does Faruk Bayraktar, in his book on the relations between teachers and pupils in Islamic education⁴⁰ based on the principle of love and respect.

The new Turkish books are not in an isolated position in the Muslim world, but can be seen to be touch in with modern Yugoslavian and Arab Muslim thinking and in dialogue with Christian-secular Europe. For example, the Bosnian-Austrian Muslim representative, Smail Balic, argues that most conflicts of Muslims with their European surroundings have their starting point in popular religiosity, popular customs and a low level of education. With the heightening of the social and cultural level the conflicts will also disappear, while it is important that Islam should remain in its religious-ethical substance in the hearts of these people. And in the case of verses of the Qur'an, such as Sura 4,34, he sees the task for good theological hermeneutics in classifying such a verse in the category of abrogated verses (*ayat mansukha*). Only in a society with a specific social consciousness could this verse have the value of a recommendation, and there is not one case of corporeal punishment of a wife registered during the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad.⁴¹ As for the Arabs there was a rather official meeting of Muslim and Christian theologians on "Education and Systems of Values", in Morocco in 1985, with a wide consensus on a preference of positive sanctions, - such as encouragement, praise, reward, to negative sanctions, such as intimidation, criticism, punishment.⁴² And in France itself Mohammed Arkoun, for example, an Arab scholar of the generation raised in colonial times and living in Europe at the time as a professor at the Sorbonne, is proud of the Arabic culture and of Islam, and is moreover a full and loyal member of the European community, versed in their ways of religious studies and education.⁴³

Another point to look for with respect to the success of the line of thought in these more or less official Turkish books is the development in the Islamic organizations, for example in Germany. In the past few years a considerable number of mosques and associations has severed its connections with the -formerly predominant- Ottoman-conservative Turkish *Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren Köln* (=IKZ, otherwise known as the Islamic Centre Foundation, of the Süleymanli movement for courses in the Qur'an), with the fundamentalistic Turkish *Organisation der Nationalen Sicht in Europa* (Avrupa'da Milli Görüş Teskilati = AMGT) and with the Iran-oriented

fundamentalistic *Verband der Islamischen Vereinigungen und Gemeinden* (Islam Cemiyetleri ve Cemaatleri Birliği = ICCB) to join up with the *Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion* (Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği = DİTİB, otherwise known as the "Federation of Turkish Islamic Cultural Associations"), which represents official Islam in Turkey. Most Turkish Muslims in their daily practice are guided by traditionally Turkish popular Islam, which is not that much interested in theological, political and organizational issues. Therefore, there is a tendency for them to go to the mosque in the neighbourhood independent of its ideological-organizational trend. What it looks like is that a lot of them - who are not involved in any special movement - have asked for such an organization only because one was there and the other was not.⁴⁴

I therefore think these Turkish scholars may show a way towards preserving an Islamic identity, along with a certain degree of ethnic identity in combining it at the same time with such values which are highly held respectable in Europe. For many Muslims to become Dutch, English, French, or German entailed, up till now, a feeling of betraying their religion and culture and of becoming Christians, since it meant adapting to a society that was deeply permeated by a secularity inspired by Christianity⁴⁵ - that is a very high threshold. But if the Turkish Islamic scholars and authorities show a way of how to stay a good Turk and a good Muslim without any basic conflict, but rather with a certain convergence in relation to European society and ways of thinking, that is quite another thing.

I think it could work, because after immigration no one automatically belongs to any given community, but a community may now be chosen according to how convincingly it represents Islam.⁴⁶ And the younger generation increasingly has the qualifications to read what is written in the Qur'an and to discuss the value of traditions. It is my thesis that for this choice of an Islamic community not only a good organization, financial power and political influence will be decisive, but to a large extent also the most extensive integration of women, both in the encompassing society as well as in the religious community of the minority group - which is the main source of tension. For in the preservation of Muslim identity women play a primary part by socializing their children.⁴⁷ Radio and television should bring the new Turkish Islamic ideals of education to them.⁴⁸

For the books quoted are rather new and so far not well known. And there are major obstacles facing the Muslim population in Germany, for example, who want to get to know the ideas expressed in the books. The books are in Turkish and will have to be translated to reach non-Turkish readers. Who would read them in Turkish? Most Turks here are labourers who do not read much, and some of them cannot read at all, especially women over 40. Imams and teachers should read - but they have a lot of difficult work to do every day

and need a special reason to read. That could be a program of study in Turkey and of further education in Germany. But that would occur only if the Turkish state and/or the German state declared that in order to work in the field of subsidized religious education such further education was obligatory, for example in North Rhine Westphalia. In this part of Germany, where most of the Muslims live, the Minister of Culture installed, in 1979, a mixed committee to develop a programme of I.R. ed., including a list of recommended books, to be used by teachers of the mother tongue, after they had received additional training.⁴⁹ However, if the mass media were to give basic information to everyone regarding the Turkish-Islamic ideals of education to be found in these recommended books, it would be most efficient. In this way the interest would not merely be imposed, but come from those at the grass roots.

If, from their experiences with society, foreigners come to the conclusion that the main reason for their marginal position is related to their being Muslim, joining a Muslim organization can be considered to be a consequence of the changing meaning of Islam and to be a kind of ethnic or religious collective action. Islamic organizations must then be regarded as some kind of emancipatory organizations.⁵⁰ It is important that also in Turkey there no longer is a domination of ideological secularism, which was basic for the foundation of the Republic, but a pragmatic secularism, which allows non-religious and religious forces to compete with each other in order to solve the concrete problems of society.⁵¹ DITIB is an especially important organization in a European context. But also the more traditional and fundamentalistic organizations⁵², in asking for their own Islamic schools, for Islamic education in schools led by their own fundamentalistic teachers, or (e.g.: IKZ) for Christian-Muslim cooperation-schools - are becoming stabilised in the long run, in the sense of a gradual integration eliminating political and social discrimination in a climate of compromise involving as many sections of society as possible.

Because of the very strong family ties we should plan integration only in a context of the family, not of the children only, without seeking the confidence of the parents. Empirical research on the situation in Western European society shows that the majority of Muslim youths choose a bicultural option with regard to integration: to become full members of the encompassing society without complete identification with its norms and values.⁵³ A European policy of integration will be acceptable to Muslim parents, if it does not aim at alienating the children and youths from their traditional culture, and if the other sections of society accept their cultural autonomy and at the same time contribute to their integration into society at large, which represents more or less the interests and universal values of all of them. For all processes of social integration model themselves after the integration process of the individual

person - both of them aimed at coping with tensions. And only if we have the confidence that the others do not plan to destroy us or what is important in our lives, but that we all pursue the common goal of constructing our society in a European House, then we will be able to accept other opinions, too.

With the growing integration of a greater Europe the structural obstacles to Muslims in Western societies will largely diminish.

Notes

¹A major official of the European Community denied that the Soviet Union was mature enough to be included into Europe because a quarter of its population are Muslims, not for reasons of atheism or a faulty understanding of democracy; cp. Balic, B 22/90, 30.

²Cp. Tibi, 45sq.

³With the Khanat of the Golden Horde in the 13th century the Tatars also came into what is now Poland and, in the 19th century more of them came as migrant traders (now ca. 15,000) to the Eastern parts, when they were part of Russia. The ca. 1.500 Muslims in Finland, having come as traders when Finland in 19th century was an autonomous part of the Russian empire are also of Turkish Tartar descent. With the spreading of the Ottoman-Turkish empire through the Balkans and into Central Europe during the 14th through the 17th century, Turkish Muslims came to these countries, whose original inhabitants in part also became Muslims: in Bulgaria out of ca. 750,000 Muslims over half a million are ethnic Turks, and they constitute the greater part of the Muslim population of Greece (ca. 90,000 from 140,000) and Rumania (nearly all 35.000). Yugoslavia has nearly 4 million Muslims from that time, Albania 1.75 millions and Hungary some thousands, almost all of them ethnic Turks. And there is Cyprus with its 152,000 Turkish Muslims.

⁴Among the estimated 200,000 Muslims in Italy there are hardly any Turks and only 30,000 Yugoslavs, in Spain the tens of thousands of Muslims are nearly all Arab. Only ca. 100,000 of the nearly two million Muslims in France are Turkish - to be distinguished by their staying only for some time to work in rotation - and ca. 15,000 are Yugoslavian while, except for 70,000 Black Africans, nearly all of the others are Arab. In Belgium the Arabs with perhaps 160,000 constitute the majority of the Muslims, but ca. 90,000 Turks and 2,000 Yugoslavs are there, too.

⁵In Great Britain of the estimated 900,000 or more Muslims only 40,000 are Turkish Cypriots, the others are nearly all "Coloured", from India (550,000), Black African (150,000) and Arab (150,000) regions, the majority of the Muslim population being Pakistani. Also in Norway there are only 2,500 Turkish among the 12,000 Muslims, with a Pakistani majority.

⁶In Germany of the 1.8 million Muslims 1.5 million are migrant labourers from Turkey and 100,000 from Yugoslavia, and only 130,000 from Arab and 40,000 from Indian countries. In The Netherlands, out of the 310,000 Muslims ca. 160,000 are from Turkey and 2,000 from Yugoslavia, the others are mostly labourers from Morocco (110,000) and from other Arab countries (10,000), and Pakistani (5,000) or descendants of the Hindustani from the former colonies in Surinam (20,000) and Indonesia (1,000). In Austria of the 70,000 Muslims nearly all are workers from Turkey or to a smaller extent from Yugoslavia, or Bosnian descendants from the time of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. In Switzerland there are now perhaps 70,000 Muslims - ten years ago, out of the ca. 52,000 there were 38,000 from Turkey and 9,000 from Yugoslavia, and only 5,000 from Arab countries. In Sweden, out of the 25,000 Muslims there are ca. 16,000

from Turkey, perhaps 6,000 from Yugoslavia and only 3,000 from Arab countries. And in Denmark there are now an estimated 76,000 Muslims - ten years ago out of the 30,000 ca. 16,000 were from Turkey and 2,000 from Yugoslavia, the others mostly from Pakistan.

⁷Statistics from Balic, B 22/90, 31; differentiation mostly from Nielsen: 1981, 11 sqq and for The Netherlands from Custers: 1987, 13 sqq.

⁸Colpe: 1983, 2 sq.

⁹Basic statement by Mol, exemplified by Abali: 1983.

¹⁰With Waardenburg I think this distinction is helpful and that for any future integration much will depend on the way in which Islam will be accepted by the non-Muslim European culture as a religion and identity without it being denigrated.

¹¹Waardenburg in Gerholm and Lithman (eds.): 1988, 24; cp. Colpe: 1983 and for the discussion on integration Elsas: 1982, 48-122.

¹²Bastenier in Gerholm and Lithman (eds.): 1988, 137.

¹³Whether Islam or Muslims will be capable or incapable of being integrated into Western European society will depend on interaction within the community, with society as a whole and also with Muslim countries, and on how the particular groups will interpret and apply Islam and why (Waardenburg *op cit.* 26 and 30; cp. my own publications).

¹⁴Here other religions were intended to be studied for their own sake and on their own terms. But to many Muslims, the original state of affairs was in some ways preferable, because the system was Christian and they had the right to withdraw their children, while the new concepts seem to imply that all religions are equally open to questioning - though in theory it is accepted that children should know about the religions of others, for the sake of better community relations (Nielsen in Gerholm and Lithman (eds.): 1988, 69).

¹⁵Cp. Ayas: 1990.

¹⁶Birge: 1937; Haas: 1988, Kehl-Bodrogi: 1988, Bozkurt: 1988.

¹⁷Cp. Blaschke/Bruinessen: 1985; Spuler-Stegemann: 1985; Kreiser: 1986; Werle/Kreile: 1987; for the situation of education: Jacob: 1982; Scheinhardt: 1986; Erichsen: 1988; Bilgin: 1989; and Bilgin/Erichsen: 1989.

¹⁸Bastenier in Gerholm and Lithman (eds.): 1988, 139-141; and there are unforeseen developments in the Muslim countries, as Talat Halman, Ankara's diplomatic representative in the UNO, remarked for Turkey, too, in an interview in "Milliyet" of 23.7.1987, where he thought of the possibility of a Turkish Islamic Republic by infiltrating the leading positions of the state and its bureaucracy, or by a "referendum".

¹⁹Das KSZE-Treffen in Kopenhagen im Juni 1990. Das Dokument des Kopenhagener Treffens über die menschliche Dimension vom 29. Juni 1990, in: *Europa-Archiv, Zeitschrift für internationale Politik* 15, d.d. 10.8.1990, D 380-394.

²⁰Aytac: 1986, esp. 12-14.

²¹Akyüz: 1985, esp. 306.

²²Canan: 1980, 377.

²³Naess: 1988, 179.

²⁴Schiffauer: 1988, 149 sq.

²⁵Ayhan: 1985, 117.

²⁶Altintas: 1981, 55.

²⁷Wieland: 1986, 298 mentions this as a widespread opinion among present scholars in Turkish Islamic Education.

²⁸Bayrakli: 1980, 103.

²⁹And it is also an argument in view of the necessity of religious education in the midst of the general education at school, as Beyza Bilgin, professor of Islamic education at the

Theological Faculty of the University of Ankara, remarks in her book on religious lessons in grammar school (Bilgin:1980, 53 sq.).

³⁰Canan:1980, 151 and 197.

³¹Bayrakli:1980, 169.

³²*Ibidem*, 121.

³³Canan:1980, 300.

³⁴*Ibidem*, 337.

³⁵Bayrakli:1980, 122.

³⁶*Ibidem*, 110.

³⁷Canan:1980, 45.

³⁸Akyüz:1985, 51.

³⁹*Ibidem*, 121-123.

⁴⁰Bayraktar:1987, 223.

⁴¹Balic:1990, 101 sq.; cp. also Balic:1984.

⁴²Cp. Balic: 1990, 100.

⁴³Cp. Balic, B 22/1990, 33 sq. and Amsterdams Centrum Buitenlanders, *Verslag Symposium Islam en Emancipatie*. Zaterdag 9 december 1989.

⁴⁴Özcan, esp. 192-221; Elsas, 1980, 28-65; 1983, 57-117; 1986.

⁴⁵Leveau in Gerholm and Lithman: 1988, 110.

⁴⁶Schiffauer:1988, 154 sq.

⁴⁷Joly:1988, 46; Andezian:1988, 197.

⁴⁸Of course Imams and teachers should become acquainted with these books, but all of the Muslim organisations together have influence only on a relatively small part of the Muslims in Western Europe through mosques and lessons. Yet, the existing programs of the mass media could give basic information for all and further information for Imams and teachers with a much wider and quicker dispersion.

⁴⁹Cp. Wagtendonk's article in the present volume

⁵⁰Th. Sunier's paper "Islam and Ethnicity among Turks in The Netherlands" forthcoming in the volume "Islam in Dutch society. Current developments and future prospects".

⁵¹Steinbach:1990, 16.

⁵²Cp. Breiner's differentiation of five trends of understanding Islam: 1. "secularism" and besides that 2. "fundamentalism" as reform Islam, which stresses a new beginning with the study of the Qur'an and the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad and tries to dismiss all other influences for understanding and using Islamic law (*shari'a*) - therefore seeing no validity in the non-Islamic structure of state or even of society -, and 3. "modernism" as reform Islam too, but from a conviction that these original sources through their universal principles may throw light on the modern condition without destroying it; 4. "traditionalism", in the sense of propagating to enforce the traditional shari'a and 5. "traditionalism", in the sense of traditional agreement with the government in power, and accepting to that effect a limited application of the *shari'a*, in accordance with the age-old teaching of Islamic scholars (*ulama*) that obedience is better than civil war.

⁵³M. Rooijackers' paper "Young Turkish Muslims in The Netherlands; Religious Commitment, Integration and Subjective Well-being" forthcoming in the volume quoted in note 50.

PART IV

Hindus in Western Europe

Migration, Change and Indian Religions in Britain

R. Barot

Introduction

The main theme of this volume is concerned with religion and emancipation on the one hand and construction of minorities and their cultural rights in Western Europe on the other. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, to emancipate means to "free from legal, social, political, intellectual or moral restraint". Thus the word emancipate implies a relationship from which it is desirable to set one's self free. Associated with the notion of emancipation is the conception of the individual as an autonomous being who should be, at least ideally, free to determine his or her own destiny. In the history of Black people in the United States, the word emancipation refers to freedom from slavery. The notion of freedom from constraints to which an individual is subjected to seems to be central to an understanding of emancipation.

For the purpose of a satisfactory sociological analysis, it is useful to examine emancipation from both structural and religious points of view. The structural perspective relates to the nature of socio-economic and political conditions. The meaning of emancipation in this context would imply improvement in social, cultural, material and political conditions which enable each individual person to achieve his or her fullest creative potential. This meaning, which is not free from values of welfare and well-being, is either explicitly or implicitly accepted in social sciences as well as in the liberal democratic social policy. Contemporary analysis of inequalities in modern societies is often concerned with this theme of emancipation and reduction of material and non-material inequalities between different classes, 'racial' and ethnic groups and between men and women. This egalitarian ethic of freedom and full development of individuals is a firmly embedded ideology of modern European societies. The influence of this ethic on theories of inequality in sociology is undeniable. There is no necessary discontinuity between structural and religious views of emancipation in so far as one is concerned with the goals of better life for everyone. However,

for believers, religious traditions offer them a whole way of living with specific rules and spiritual goals which the believers regard as emancipatory. Although structural and religious modes of emancipation are not mutually exclusive in all respects, in specific contexts some degree of inconsistency or even conflict is likely to occur between the two.

As for the position of minorities of non-European background in Western Europe, the structural perspective points to historical connection between Europe and the non-European world and to economic and political domination of the latter by the former. The substance of this relationship explains both the facts of conquest and colonization as well as the subsequent movement of the ex-colonials to metropolitan societies in Europe. This movement is readily explained in terms of the demand and supply of the labour power.

As for the social construction of non-European populations as minorities, it is argued that belief in racial and cultural differences and the creation of both scientific and folk images of racial and cultural inferiority have tended to confine physically distinct minorities to different degrees of marginality. The importance of this dimension is outlined at the outset. In order to examine the dynamic interrelation between structural and religious modes of emancipation, this chapter will first of all outline the pattern of non-European migration to Britain with a particular reference to the presence of Indians in Britain. In examining the pattern of Indian migration and settlement in Britain, the author will argue that religion has played an important part in the formation of Indian communities and that the Indians like other minority groups in modern European societies have been concerned with both adaptation and preservation. On the one hand, like all migrants and settlers who choose to live abroad, they have been concerned with adopting those British norms which would enable them to find work, housing and services essential for themselves and their families. At the same time, from the earliest phase of their settlement in Britain, they have been equally concerned with their own social and cultural heritage; namely their religion, language and a whole way of life which defines their individual identity as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists or Zoroastrians.

Racism and minorities

An ideology which is racist is usually concerned with defining racial and cultural inferiority of particular groups and populations. In recent decades, the relationship between whites and blacks has been a central focus of what we have come to identify as race relations. However, the relationship between whites and blacks is *one* particular instance of the effects of racism on a given population. The readers of this volume who are familiar with the recent history of European societies will instantly quote the Nazi theory of

the Aryan superiority and its expression in anti-semitism as an example of a racist ideology which was used to define the European Jewry as being different and both biologically and culturally inferior. In his lucid account 'Changing conceptions of race' Michael Banton explains the way in which the meaning of the word race has changed in the past two hundred years.¹ Initially meaning descent or lineage, the word race acquired a distinctive meaning as a fixed and permanent type in scientific studies of race throughout the course of the 19th century. Physical anthropologists studied variety of racial types, organised them in hierarchies and attributed degrees of civilization and savagery to different human populations according to what was to prove their biased and unscientific conceptions. Although disproved by science, the legacy of their typological studies continues to influence ideas about superiority and inferiority of 'races' and cultures associated with them. As Michael Banton points out, the folk concept of race "draws heavily upon the Typological Theory which has been superseded in science but is not easily expelled from the popular mind because of its appealing simplicity and the ease with which it can be twisted to deal with conflicting evidence".² In the popular and folk consciousness, negative stereotypes such as nigger, wog, coons and Pakis convey stigmatised images of inferiority of Black people in Britain. Individuals who are prejudiced against Blacks, Jews or the Irish may self-consciously deny them their normal civil rights and exclude them from access to services and resources. There is a large body of British evidence to suggest that the patterns of racial discrimination are widespread and that in more recent years, hostility against non-European minorities has been expressed through violent attacks on various groups, especially on people of Indian subcontinental origin.³

In some British folk thinking, the close connection between race and culture also implies connection between race and religion. As a consequence, expression of hostility against particular racial groups can sometimes entail hostility against their religion. In certain circumstances, it is perfectly possible to show that racial and religious discrimination can occur simultaneously. Expression of hostility can adversely affect the right of a minority population to observe its religious practice. Reports of vandalism on ethnic minority places of worship in Britain is a constant reminder of the feeling of fear experienced by the worshippers as they go about observing their religious practices. It is also important to note that expression of racial prejudice against a particular group and their religion can take both explicit and implicit forms. The implicit and covert form of racial prejudice is less easy to identify, especially when it is shrouded in a maze of administrative and bureaucratic practices. Imposition of strong and unreasonable immigration controls on members of minority communities provides many examples of unreasonableness and injustice in this connection. This form of covert and institutional prejudice can prevent members of a minority

population from free and fair exercise of their civil rights. The history of conquests and colonization has tended to give European powers a sense of economic, political and technological superiority which was often expressed in racial terms. The memory of British, French or Dutch imperial regimes can still continue to sustain a feeling of superiority. Consequences of racism for European Jews were disastrous. More recently, minorities of non-European origins have suffered from expression of hostility and discrimination against their colour and culture. However, they have not been merely passive recipients of this hostility. Minorities in many European societies have mobilized and organized themselves to challenge the evil of racism.

Migration and minorities in Britain

Just as the British went abroad to settle almost all over the world, they have equally attracted migrants and settlers throughout the course of the 20th century. In the later part of the 19th and the earlier part of the 20th century, Jews came to Britain fleeing from pogroms and persecution in Russia and Eastern Europe. There were a large number of impoverished Irish workers who came and settled in various British towns and cities. The two World Wars devastated Europe and displaced vast numbers of Poles and Italians. Many of them came to Britain to escape from hardship and suffering. It is often popularly assumed that migrants from the Third World to Britain and European countries came after the 2nd World War. Although labour migration to Europe developed on a large scale after the War had ended, people of African and Indian origin had lived in Britain for several centuries. It is well-known that historical, socio-economic and political factors of a global nature account for the Indian presence in Britain. Soon after the formation of the East India Company, as Rozina Visram informs us⁴, almost from the beginning of 18th century, Indians were brought to England as domestic servants and soldiers. However, they did not form communities in any permanent sense as many, if not most, of them were repatriated or returned voluntarily to India. Throughout the course of the 19th century, Indians came to England as visitors and students and lived in the country for extended periods of time. The famous Bengali reformer Raja Rammohan Roy, who nearly spent three years in England, visited Bristol in 1833 and died in the city, leaving a memory of lasting association between Bristol and Bengal.⁵ Many were to follow him. One of them was Sukhsagar Datta who settled in Bristol before the First World War and lived in the city till his death in 1967.⁶ There was a large batch of Indian students who lived in Highgate in London and actively campaigned for Indian independence. There were successful middle class Indians like Dadabhai Naoroji, Shapurji Saklatvala and Mancherjee M. Bhowmagaaree who took active part in British politics

and were elected to the British Parliament.⁷ Besides them, many professional Indians lived in Britain for long periods before the days of labour migration. Some of them, like Sukhsagar Datta, were married to English women and had become permanent settlers.

Throughout the course of British imperial history Indians were recruited to work all over the empire.⁸ Their settlement abroad created the permanent presence of Indian minorities in various colonial societies. Further, this colonial connection was to prove vital in their migration to Britain in 1950's and 1960's.

The Second World War highlighted tragic consequences of anti-Semitic racism for the European Jewry and brought about massive destruction of human life and property both inside and outside Europe. After the War had ended, through the United States' Marshall Plan, the European economies went through a major transformation and reconstruction. This change created a massive demand for labour power. As a consequence, prospects of employment attracted a wide variety of both European and non-European workers to Western European countries. Besides a large number of workers from the Caribbean and African societies, many Indian, Pakistani, and from 1971, Bangladeshi men came to Britain to work. As citizens of a British Commonwealth country, they had a right of free entry to the United Kingdom. At the time, they had short-term goals. They wanted to make money, save enough to buy land in their villages and return home. With the passage of time, their wives and children came to join them and their stay in Britain began to acquire a more permanent character. When social and economic conditions began to change in the late 1950's and the early 60's, the British Government introduced the First Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962 to control the pattern of immigration from the New Commonwealth countries in particular. 'Open door' migration from the Indian subcontinent came to the end. However, the process of decolonization and Africanization in East and Central Africa undermined the economic dominance of the Indian minorities. Indians who had remained British subjects decided to settle in Britain.

Unlike the people from the Indian subcontinent who nourished the myth of returning to India after they were successful, the Indians from East Africa were making a self-conscious and deliberate choice of making Britain their permanent home. Although their entry to Britain was restricted by what many saw as a racist Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1968, they were allowed to come to Britain provided that they obtained a voucher allocated to them. The purpose of the voucher system was to control their entry to Britain over a period of many years. As a consequence of this measure, many Indians from East Africa suffered much hardship and distress. Now Indian immigration to Britain from the Indian subcontinent and parts of East and Central Africa spans a period of about 50 years. Families have lived in Britain

long enough to have their second and third generation descendants growing up in contemporary British society.

It has already been noted that most British people regard non-European ethnic minority groups as being different and inferior in terms of ideas about their 'race' and colour. However, the relationship between the majority ascription and minority self-ascription is much more complex when class position of the minority population is taken into account. For class can cut across boundaries of ethnicity and colour. The British class system has a most decisive influence on all Indian groups as it determines the kind of work Indians can choose to support themselves and their families. In the initial phase of their migration, most Indians tended to join the labour market at the proletarian end of the spectrum. A large number of them worked in factories and many still continue to do so. However, many groups of Indian origins have been traditionally socialised into mercantile ideologies of dominant groups of the areas of India they come from. Some of them, like the Gujaratis and Punjabis have had a strong flair for trade and commerce. Over the years, many of them have moved from manual jobs to self-employment and have become successful in business. Experience of racial discrimination in the labour market and looming prospects of unemployment have played no small part in stimulating Indians to undertake a business enterprise. In his recent account of middle class Indians, Vaughan Robinson has noted that "many Indians are enjoying considerable success in their chosen fields and are likely to enjoy a future characterised by upward economic and social mobility".⁹ Besides their entry into trade and commerce and professions, Indians have also moved into a variety of fields like education, politics and mass media. There is a sense in which the Indians are often regarded as an example of a minority which has advanced educationally and economically in Britain. However, this is not necessarily true of all Indians and to characterise *all* Indians as being wealthy is clearly misleading. No doubt there are many stories of Indians who have established multimillion pound businesses and created for themselves wealth and opulence. It should not be forgotten that there are many Indians who fail in their businesses and end up working for a wage. In concluding his discussion of successful middle class Indians, Vaughan Robinson's note about limited prospects for young Indians in the inner city and 28% unemployment among all Indian men between the ages of 16 and 24 emphasises that we should carefully balance the success of some with limited opportunities for others.¹⁰ The question of the complex relationship between class and racism falls outside the scope of this paper. It is, nevertheless, worth noting that racism is not a mirror reflection of realities of class relations and that racism or anti-semitism for that matter can adversely affect both middle class Indians or middle class Jews.

According to the 1981 Census, the total population of the United Kingdom was 52,760,331. New Commonwealth and Pakistan population

was 2,207,245 which is 4.2 per cent of the total population. Population of Asian origin numbered 1.2 million (55%) and about 0.55 million were of Afro-Caribbean origin, the remaining 20% originating in South-East Asia, the Mediterranean and other parts of the Commonwealth.¹¹ A more recent Labour Force Survey provides the following distribution of minority population in the United Kingdom. The total White population of the United Kingdom is 51,333,000. The ethnic population consists of 2,473,000. Within this ethnic category, there are 745,000 Indians, 404,000 Pakistanis and 111,000 Bangladeshis. The Indians constitute the largest single minority of common national origin.¹² As the Labour Force Survey may contain sampling errors, these figures are best treated as reasonable approximations rather than absolute numbers. It is worth noting that the population of Indian origin is far from being homogeneous. Religious, linguistic, socio-cultural and class differences provide a wide range of diversity among Indians.

Migration, religion and social change

Indian religions have probably existed in Britain from the middle of the 18th century with Gujarati Parsis coming to England in 1742. By 1850's their presence in England was sufficiently significant for them to establish the Religious Society of Zoroastrians in 1861 and a burial ground at Woking.¹³ Revival of Hinduism throughout the course of the 19th century and the earlier part of the 20th century continually attracted small numbers of Europeans to organizations like the Ramakrishna Mission. The main religions of the Indian Subcontinent were not unfamiliar to a small section of the British middle classes. There were always some instances of a number of Europeans who embraced Hinduism. However, this particular form of philosophical Hinduism did not have much to do with what was going to emerge as a religion of Hindu minorities after the War. As soon as the Indians began to settle in any significant numbers, a much more complex fabric of Indian religions was going to develop. Religious affiliation has played an important part in both the migration and the settlement of Indian communities in Britain. Although a Sikh gurudwara had existed in London from 1930's, in the initial phase of mass migration to Britain, Indians were largely concerned with finding employment and housing. As soon as they brought their wives and children to live with them and as soon as communities began to develop, the need for religious worship was more acutely felt. Once migrants were secure in jobs and housing and as soon as they had established a basic infrastructure for their particular religious community, a desire for their own place of worship grew rapidly in all religious groups and various sectarian movements. The formation and construction of temples, mosques and gurudwaras proceeded rapidly. This

desire was an expression of the fact that members of various communities were well-settled in Britain to recreate their religious organizations and institutionalise them for the purpose of worship and a feeling of solidarity. Before the Second World War, the desire for independence from British rules was expressed in terms of common nationality. After the independence Indians were much more concerned with self-conceptions in which being a Hindu or a Sikh or a Muslim was of primary significance to the individuals and their particular communities.

Among Indians, religion emerged as an important dimension of group formation. The importance of religious belief and practice in migration and settlement varies for different individuals, families and groups. Professional middle class Indians may explicitly or implicitly subscribe to a secular world view and at the same time relate to their own religion with some unease and ambiguity. However, for a large number of Indians who came to Britain after the War, their religion was crucial in their self-definition. Those who came from the same geographical area, spoke a common language and often belonged to the same or similar caste or sectarian communities, met to pray and support each other. The informal gatherings of men, women and children developed into more formal places of worship. A distinct pattern of change is visible in the construction of places of worship. A small terrace house used as a place of worship symbolises the earliest phase of concern with religion. As soon as the community could mobilise more resources, leaders bought a hall to establish their temple on a larger scale. The final stage in this development was the construction of a temple, or a mosque or a gurdwara in the traditional Indian style. It marked an important stage in permanent settlement and the consolidation of the religious community. The nature of settlement and the formation of groups varies from one British city to another. When the number is smaller, as for instance in Bristol, there is a stronger tendency for people from different social groups in the same religious community to get together and to form a common community of worshippers. When groups increase in size, leaders shy away from wider groupings and choose to establish specific communities of their own. Fission rather than fusion marks the process of group formation. H.S. Morris described this trend as a process of "communal crystallization" among the East African Indians in the 1950's.¹⁴ It is fascinating that the same process of fusion and fission is at work amongst Indians in Britain. This process of differentiation is an important aspect of evolution of religious groups and the kind of social and organizational complexity they develop. An excellent example of this trend is provided in the Hindu Swaminarayan movement.¹⁵ In the first instance, it may seem as if one is concerned with a singular sectarian organization. A closer examination of the movement reveals that the movement is segmented into a number of different sects which are institutionalised and autonomous. Further, these sects come into existence in

caste communities. As the connection between sects and caste groups becomes an important principle of social organization, this brings into play a dynamic relationship between caste and sect within a religious movement. Complexity of organizational forms is common to all ethnic minority religions in Britain.

Minority religions in the wider Anglo-European context

For members of minority communities, some accommodation and adaptation to the European way of life is a necessary condition for living in a Western European society. It is a matter of common knowledge that in societies like Britain, France and The Netherlands, there is a widely held belief that the settlers from the Third World should conform to the norms of societies in which they have decided to settle. This belief is an ideology according to which it is assumed that it is in the best interest of the ethnic minority population to be like the French in France or like the Dutch and British in The Netherlands or Britain. State policies which have tended to emphasise integration and assimilation of minorities represent this perspective. From the point of view of a minority population, some degree of conformity is necessary for finding work, housing and relevant social services. However it is perfectly possible that the minorities may accept the dominant view and consciously or semi-consciously choose the option of integration and assimilation. Acculturation and even assimilation of minority populations is a well-known historical experience both in Europe as well as in the United States. As the history of the Black population in the United States shows, integration and assimilation, however, is not a unilinear process. For example, from the 1950's and especially from the 1960's onwards, social and political self-consciousness among the Blacks in the United States changed to challenge the ideology of integration and assimilation. In their search for a self-conception which was not imposed through models of integration and assimilation, the Blacks were able to reinterpret and revitalise their historical past and trace their roots to African societies. Then they developed new forms of identification which were not in keeping with the norms and values of the dominant white society. In Britain, as soon as non-European migrants and settlers began to appear in large numbers, although the state pursued a *laissez-faire* policy of settlement, the notions of integration and assimilation were to play a prominent part in the construction of social policy. In other words, the main concern was how best should the migrants adopt to the British social system without any consideration of whether the migrants could preserve their culture, language and religion and at the same time achieve full citizenship in the British society. Although the British liberal democracy allows all non-Christian groups to pursue their religion, the tacit assumption has been that observance of religious belief and practice is a matter which concerns the individual in his personal life and in his own

community. The public domain should be free from the effect of personal and community religious influences. As far as the public domain is concerned, the state and the society would treat all groups equally and expect members of religious communities to conform to a code of public behaviour. From the point of view of religious groups like the Sikhs or Muslims religious identity and its symbolic expression are vital aspects for each believer. For example, for religious male Sikhs, keeping long hair and wearing a turban as well as growing a beard are expressions of their religious identity. It is well known in Britain that when the Sikhs began working for bus services in places like Wolverhampton and Manchester, their employers insisted that they had to cut their hair and shave their beards if they were to qualify for jobs. The Sikhs were, however, not prepared to comply with this demand for long. They argued and campaigned for their right to keep their long hair, turbans and beards. Finally, the employers accepted their demand and the Sikhs were successful in maintaining the symbols of their religious identity in the public sphere.¹⁶ In the early 1970's, when motor cyclists were required to wear crash helmets for safety, some Sikh motor cyclists refused to wear them. They feared that the use of the crash helmet would entail the removal of their turban. Once again, the Sikhs had to mount another campaign of protest before they were exempted from having to wear crash helmets.

However, the balance of opinion began to change in the late sixties. The Home Secretary Roy Jenkins had defined integration "not as a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance".¹⁷ The expression of this sentiment coincided with a growing feeling that the minorities should not necessarily give up their own cultures. This view was gaining slow acceptance at the time when many Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were becoming more and more aware of the effect of their permanent settlement in Britain on their children. There was a gradual but steady erosion of children's ability to use their language and to grasp the basic principles of their religious faith. Some Muslim parents were worried about the influence of coeducational schools on moral standards of their daughters. From the early seventies they expressed this concern in demand for single sex schools. The drive to preserve language, religion and traditional gender relations gave rise to the demand for a kind of educational facility which was unlikely to be provided by the State. In Britain, it is well-known that traditional sections of Muslim communities have mobilised and campaigned for separate schools for Muslims and separate educational facilities for Muslim girls. Throughout the course of the 1970's and 1980's, the development of multicultural education has been an important expression of the view that the children from ethnic minority backgrounds should have an opportunity to learn something about their own historical past, their culture,

religion and language. Those who support multicultural education also believe that white boys and girls can also learn about the cultures of the minorities now permanently living in their own societies. Debates and discussions about multicultural education have been fraught with many difficulties as views about the goals of multicultural education vary from one set of teachers to the other. In most liberal democracies of Europe, educational policy is concerned with the provision of secular education as in Britain, France and The Netherlands. In so far as the secular ideology of emancipation is concerned, the majority view is that a child should develop his potential as fully as possible and that he should acquire those qualifications which would help him or her in finding employment so that he or she could live as a useful and active member of his or her society. The secular view of emancipation argues for freedom of choice and individualism. Those who argue about emancipation from a religious point of view do not reject the secular framework of the society which allows freedom of religious belief and practice. While they accept the need to improve their social and material conditions, in recent years they have tended to define their emancipation much more from a religious point of view. Members of different minority groups emphasise the importance of their religious practices with different degrees of concern in the public domain. Most minority religious groups accept the importance of secular education for the advancement of their young. Institutions of secular education have not been altogether unsympathetic to the importance of religious differences in those constituencies where many children come from Hindu, Muslim or Sikh families. Commitment to norms of equality may imply an equal and same treatment of all individuals. However, this may not be necessarily the best approach where cultural differences call for the kind of equal treatment which would recognise the significance of difference. There is much strength in sensitivity to differences to evolve the practices which show respect for traditions and customs of the minorities. Provision of appropriate vegetarian diet or halal meat or rules which allow Muslim girls to wear a proper garment to cover their legs during a physical education lesson are some examples of such good practices. In Bristol, at an inner city swimming pool, a special session is held for those Asian women who would never consider going to a mixed swimming pool. Under normal circumstances about equal treatment for all, they would have no opportunity to swim. In the special arrangements made for them, they can learn to swim and have a pleasurable exercise in the company of other women they know. It is doubtless that detailed research can show many more examples of practices such as this. Recognition of difference and appropriate and relevant provision for religious and cultural needs of the minorities does not always work out in practice even after the authorities adopt policies of equal opportunity for all and some form of multiculturalism. In the past few years

and especially after strong Muslim objections to the publication of Salman Rushdie's book *The Satanic Verses*, stereotyped and distorted views about Islam have been expressed by the politicians and the media. Many ordinary people and liberal minded individuals regard Islam as a harsh and backward religion to be associated with terrorists from the Middle East. As a consequence, Muslims may often fail to obtain a sympathetic hearing on specific religious issues. The wearing of turbans or veils in Britain and France has been a topic of much controversy. In Britain, a complex legal dispute occurred when a 13 year old boy, Gurinder Singh, was refused admission in a private school in Birmingham because he wore a turban. His father reported this case to the Commission for Racial Equality which instituted legal proceedings against the school.¹⁸ The details of this interesting case are less relevant here and what is most significant to note is the way in which schools can refuse to accept a symbolism of one's religion in a secular society. In France, the controversy began in the late 1989 when three Muslim girls were excluded from school for wearing the veil in a small industrial town in Creil on the Oise about 30 miles from Paris. The protest and controversy which followed showed tension between the goals of secularism and the ideology of integration and assimilation on the one hand, and the desire on the part of some Muslims in France to retain their Islamic tradition and identity on the other.¹⁹ A similar incident was reported in Britain when two Muslim girls were sent home for wearing headscarves at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls in Cheshire.²⁰ The case received some publicity and the school finally allowed the girls to wear their scarves above their heads.

Secular democracies of Western European nations have large non-European populations from traditional societies of the Third World where religion and custom continue to influence the pattern of everyday life of the people. It is obvious that models of integration, acculturation and assimilation have had limited effectiveness in Britain, France, The Netherlands and the United States. Political changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union increasingly point to growing political significance of the cultures of various nationalist minorities. People of Islamic and other non-Christian religions living in European societies will continue to demand their civil right to observe their religious belief and practice privately within their own communities as well as in the public domain. In the last two decades, minority communities have adapted to living in Britain with different degrees of success. It is doubtless that difference of opinion is bound to arise between those who support secular models of emancipation and those for whom true emancipation can come about only through their religion. As the minority population lives longer in European societies, the question of who defines the cultural rights of the minorities and their emancipation for full citizenship becomes critical. There is no doubt that

Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who live in Western European countries will continue to absorb various aspects of European culture to which they are exposed on an every day basis. However it is doubtful that this will lead to any unilinear process of assimilation. Concerned with their cultural and religious identities, minorities will continue to influence the debates on their emancipation and cultural rights. The drive for the preservation of religion, culture and language will continue along with opposition to racial prejudice and intolerance. Besides providing their labour power for the European economies, minorities bring the rich vitalities of their society and culture as their heritage to Western Europe. In the long run, it should make the European societies richer and not poorer.

Notes

¹Banton: 1987, pp.32-59.

²*Ibid.*, p. 53.

³See Daniel: 19681; Smith: 1977; Brown: 1984. Also see Home Affairs Committee: 1986.

⁴Visram: 1986.

⁵Carpenter (ed.): 1866, is an important source of information on Rammohan Roy's time in England.

⁶For an account of Bengali visitors to Bristol and the settlement of Dr. Sukhsagar Datta in the city before the First World War, see Barot: 1988.

⁷For details of their short biographies, see Visram: 1986, ch. 5 and 7.

⁸For a historical account of overseas Indian communities, see Tinker: 1974, 1976 and 1977.

⁹Robinson: 1988.

¹⁰*Ibidem*, p.472.

¹¹Quoted in Muhammad Anwar: 1986. Especially see Chapter 1: Immigration and Settlement Pattern of Ethnic Minorities, pp. 5-25.

¹²*Labour Force Survey 1987*. London: 1989, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Office of Population Censuses and Surveys Series LFS No. 7. Especially Table 5.30 pp.30-31 for a detailed break down of ethnic population in Britain.

¹³Visram: 1986, op.cit., p.61.

¹⁴Morris: 1968. Especially see Chapter 3: The Indian community, pp.25-54.

¹⁵For an account of the Swaminarayan movement in Britain, see Barot: 1980; Williams: 1984 and 1986. For an account of caste and sect in the Swaminarayan movement, see Barot: 1987.

¹⁶For an excellent account of this campaign, see Beetham: 1970.

¹⁷Rose and Associates: 1969, p.25.

¹⁸For details on the case of Mandla vs Dowell Lee, see *All England Law Reports of 1982 (3) and 1983 (1)*.

¹⁹For a short but good discussion of the issues in this controversy, see *The Times*, Monday November 27 1989, p.17.

²⁰See *The Independent*, 17 January 1990.

The Role of Religion and the Emancipation of an Ethnic Minority

The Case of the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils in Britain

D. Taylor

Introduction¹

Sri Lanka is the name of the island off the southern peninsula of India that used to be called Ceylon by the British. Some years after Independence in 1948 the name reverted to its original form of Sri Lanka. The tradition is that the island was colonized by peoples from north India, who later were converted to Buddhism.² Their descendants are the present day Singhalese. As well as Singhalese, Tamils from south India came and established themselves on the northern and eastern coasts. During the period of European colonial expansion the islands came under the influence of the Portuguese and later in the seventeenth century of the Dutch. The British came along at the end of the eighteenth century and annexed the island, finally taking over the whole island in 1815.

The population consisted of Singhalese, Tamils (known as Ceylon Tamils), Burghers (the descendants of the Dutch), and the Moors (those Tamils converted to Islam living mainly on the eastern coast). During the nineteenth century the British introduced Tamil labourers mainly from Tamilnadu in order to work in the plantations, and they have been known as Indian Tamils ever since in order to distinguish them from the Ceylon Tamils.

The Island remained a British Crown Colony until 1948 when it became an independent state within the British Commonwealth. Although the Singhalese and Tamils lived harmoniously alongside each other for the first few years of independence, gradually political manoeuvring has brought about a confrontation between the two communities which has broken out into the most dreadful forms of violence to which even today there seems to be no solution in sight.

The Tamils themselves have wandered far and wide since the nineteenth century. Not only are there fifty million Tamils in Tamilnadu south India, but there are several millions in Sri Lanka, and many more thousands in Malaya, Fiji, Mauritius and South Africa. Today there are at least fifty thousand Tamils from all these places in Britain, as well as a few thousand in Europe and the USA.

Not all Tamils in Sri Lanka are Hindus. Some are Muslims, others are Christians, both Catholic and Protestant.

The form of Hinduism which is practiced in Sri Lanka is distinctive. It is a form of devotional Hinduism (*bhakti*) in the Saivite tradition. The principal deity is Siva, whose worship goes back a few thousand years and probably can be traced back to the Indus Valley civilization. Into this Saivite tradition has been successfully incorporated the worship of the ancient Tamil deity, Murukan, the ever youthful god of the hills and forests of south India.³ Whereas Saivism is one of a number of *bhakti* or devotional religions in south India, Saivism is the only form of Hinduism to be found in Sri Lanka. And because of this Sri Lanka Tamils claim that their religion of Saivism is purer than any form of Saivism to be found in India.

Conditions under which emigration from Sri Lanka took place

The Sri Lankan Hindu Tamil community began to establish itself in Britain after political events in Sri Lanka began to erode the economic environment that Tamils had forged for themselves both before and after Independence in 1948.⁴ This began with the Sinhala Only Act of 1956 when it was decided by the Sri Lankan government that Sinhalese should be the official language of the country. This produced cries of outrage from the Tamils who refused to learn Sinhalese in order to hold a post in the civil service or the judiciary. A series of other measures were taken by the Government further restricting the economic advantages (especially in education and employment) which the Tamils were thought to enjoy. Both this erosion of the economic environment and the level of violence used to suppress legitimate protest persuaded a number of professional and non-professional Tamils to sell their assets and come to Britain. For most of them language was no problem since they had received their education in English, and they felt that they would find no difficulty in obtaining employment.

The conditions under which immigration and settlement in Britain has taken place

Immigration Laws

When Sri Lankan Tamils began to arrive in Britain from about 1956 onwards, Britain was experiencing an influx of immigrants from various parts of the world. Labour was short after the Second World War and various employers, such as London Transport and British Hotels and Restaurants Association, were encouraged to recruit from the West Indies and other parts of the British Commonwealth. But the recruitment of cheap labour had a social price to pay in the form of resistance from the indigenous population. The arrival of coloured workers was resented and Trades Unions were generally hostile. Racial prejudice was rife not only in the workplace, but in housing, local government, education, the police. Tension mounted to the point that serious riots broke out in London (Notting Hill) in 1958.

The riots prompted the governments of the day to act. They did so in two ways: first they introduced immigration laws to limit the number of New Commonwealth⁵ immigrants entering Britain; second, they introduced Race Relations Acts to regulate relations between members of the host society and ethnic minorities.

The immigration laws were introduced in a series of Acts of Parliament over a number of years, beginning in 1962 and continuing through 1965, 1967, 1968, 1971, 1981 to 1989. All these Acts made entry of New Commonwealth citizens for settlement in Britain increasingly difficult. Indeed settlement for these citizens is now almost impossible without some prior connection with someone in Britain.

Tamils from Sri Lanka experienced the restrictive effects of these laws in the same way as other immigrants from the New Commonwealth during these years. However the first Tamil immigrants were mostly professionals such as doctors, dentists, engineers and differed from the majority of immigrants from New Commonwealth countries who suffered the effects of a double migration from village to city, and from a Third World country to a modern industrialized Western European country. Thus the Sri Lankan Tamils who came to Britain from 1956 to the 1980's found a niche for themselves within the host society, maintaining their identity while at the same time resisting most forms of assimilation.

Refugee Status

During the 1980's the political situation in Sri Lanka deteriorated to such an extent that the country was almost in a state of civil war. The level of violence increased; thousands of Tamils (and Singhalese) lost their lives and many thousands more were made homeless. From 1983 onwards a steady stream of Sri Lankan Tamils came to Britain seeking asylum as refugees. These Tamils were not from the richer and well educated stratum of Tamil society. Many of

them could hardly speak English, unlike the earlier wave of Tamils who both spoke English and were educated to professional standards.

The British Government, through the Home Office, has adopted restrictive strategies in order to delay awarding refugee status to this latter group. From 1983 about 9,300 applications have been received. Only 51 persons have been granted refugee status under the 1951 Convention, and 5,150 have been granted the status of Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR which is not refugee status).⁶

Of these applicants many were forced to return to Sri Lanka. In February 1987 one group of Tamils who were forced to return to Sri Lanka received considerable media attention by actually stripping off their clothes while being forced to board the plane at Heathrow. They successfully averted being flown back to Sri Lanka but were put on a detention ship, the "Earl William" off the Essex Coast and remained there for several months. Several were allowed to remain, but five were forced to return to Sri Lanka in February 1989. From Sri Lanka they appealed against the Home Office ruling in April 1989 and the Home Office decision to refuse entry was reversed and they were flown back to Britain at the Government's expense. To date however, they have not been granted refugees status and are designated ELR (Exceptional leave to Remain). One of them is appealing against this latest decision of the Home Office.⁷

Racial Prejudice and Race Relations Acts

Apart from the restrictive practices of the Government towards all immigrants and refugees, Tamils, like members of other ethnic minorities, have experienced racial prejudice and discrimination in various areas of life. Race Relations Acts were passed by successive governments in 1965, 1968 and 1978 which legislate against all forms of prejudice and discrimination in public places. The Commission for Racial Equality (formerly Race Relations Board) was set up and has been given powers of formal investigation and conciliation. It has so far brought (and continues to bring) a number of test cases to court in order to eradicate racial prejudice and discrimination. Such cases have brought to light discrimination among estate agents, the criminal justice system, rented housing, in the army, in the police force, in the London Underground.⁸

Very few cases have been brought by Tamils, but they are indicative of the invidious nature of prejudice and discrimination which pervades much of British society: and Tamils have undoubtedly suffered from it.

The role of religion in unifying the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamil Community in Britain

The Building of Temples

During the early years of the Tamil immigration to Britain religious ritual played an important part in unifying the community. Men would meet in each other's rooms in order to sing devotional hymns accompanied by musical instruments. But these meetings alone were not sufficient to unify the whole community.

There was one person who was instrumental in promoting the Sri Lankan form of Saivism in Britain at this stage. We must remember that there was neither temple, nor Brahman priest, nor proper place to perform the rituals, except in the homes of individuals and in particular in the home of this particular person. He had received lay ordination (open to certain devotees of Saivism) while he was still in Sri Lanka, so he was regarded as the appropriate officiant for most of the rituals including weddings and house blessings.

It would not be true to say that without him Sri Lankan Saivism would not have been planted in Britain at all. For there already existed the desire of the many Sri Lankan Hindus to seek comfort in the religious practices of their homeland, and without this desire no amount of urging from this person would have brought about the successful transposition of Saivism to Britain. The immigrants themselves were the bearers of their own religious traditions and it was they who wanted to bring these traditions to formal expression in Britain. But without this person, the form which this expression took might have been different.

He began by forming a Trust to collect money in order to build a temple in London. The forming of the Trust and the fund-raising activities that followed were themselves events that did much to unify the emerging community.

Once the idea of temple building took root, other groups began to build temples - all of them in London. One group consisted of a number of South African Tamils; another temple was started by the leader of a rival faction. But in all this, temple building concentrated the minds of the Tamils and made them much more conscious of their identity not only in relation to the host community, but also to other ethnic minority groups as well as to other communities of non Tamil Hindus. They knew as never before that they wanted their temple to look like a Sri Lankan temple and to be run like one.

They bought properties that had already been used for religious worship. One property had been a church, another had been a Salvation Army Hall, a third had been a synagogue abandoned after a fire. Planning permission to erect a Sri Lankan designed temple was more difficult to obtain, and in all cases the temple itself had to be housed inside the existing building so as not to clash with the general architecture of the neighborhood. In one instance special temple masons from India were employed to carry out the intricate sculpting of the many elaborate figures that surrounded the main shrine.

Brahman priests have been brought over from Sri Lanka, one of whom is the resident priest at the largest temple in London. Other temples have priests who reside on a temporary basis or who attend on a daily basis in order to perform the rituals. At the largest temple all the major festivals are celebrated according to the religious almanac sent over from Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Saivism in Britain

In the thirty years or so since the Sri Lankan Tamil Hindus have come to Britain they have managed to establish a form of Saivism in the country which is similar to the Saivism practiced in Sri Lanka, but which is not the same in every respect. For instance the temples are more congregational in Britain than they are in Sri Lanka. Another feature is the omission of all forms of village Saivism, so that we find no rituals of mortification such as *Kavati*.⁹ There is, too, very little possession of devotees in Britain, though it is widespread in villages in Sri Lanka. But by and large, Sri Lankan Saivism has been successfully established in Britain.

The Unifying Role of Religion

It could be argued that the whole process of establishing their religion in Britain has unified the Sri Lankan Tamil community in a way that no other process could have done. For if we look around to see what else could have done this, we find no other suitable candidate. The community certainly could not have been unified economically. Many Tamils are professionals and the very nature of professionalism is to divide the professional from the non-professional. And the non-professionals had to seek their livelihood individually in the employment market. Nor do the Tamils have traditions of shopkeeping which among other Hindus for instance would mobilize family and kinship networks in order to operate effectively.

Nor could the community have been unified politically. The political divisions of Sri Lanka were and are reflected among the Tamils in Britain. There are the moderates and the hardliners; those who favour a political settlement between the Singhalese and the Tamils there, and those that favour the use of force, those that favour a federation with the Singhalese and those that favour the formation of a separate state of Tamil Eelam.

Nor could the community have been unified by means of kinship. The first immigrants came to Britain as individuals; there was no mass migration of whole populations, as had happened with the Ugandan Asians. Immigrants often left their wives and families in Sri Lanka until they had established themselves. This meant that very few kinship groups existed in Britain.

For almost all of them their kin members were still in Sri Lanka. However surrogate kinship networks soon developed through friendships. Friends who might have known each other, or who had been to school together in Sri Lanka, contacted each other, often shared rooms together and helped each other out. Very often friends stood in as surrogate kin in religious ceremonies, such as the ceremony of first menstruation, or the marriage ceremony. But no matter how important friendship is, and how binding it may be, friendships alone could not have unified the community as a whole in the way that religion did and has done.

However religion can be divisive as well as unitive. First of all, not all Tamils attend the temple or even go on pilgrimage. Most perform domestic rituals in the home, but only a small proportion attend the temple. Secular Tamils are more numerous than temple-going Tamils. Second, the caste system does not exist in Britain as such.¹⁰ There are castes, but no caste system. Thus there is no cooperation between castes for the major festivals as would happen in Sri Lanka. People contribute only as individuals and not as caste members. Third, though the temple must be open to all in order to enjoy Charitable status, the presence of outcast members is not looked upon with favour. Indeed there are some members of the Parayah caste in Britain, but they would never go to the temple. They would perform their own rituals through their caste association. Similarly patrons of the temple have a higher status than the ordinary devotee, yet the patron's status is below that of the Brahman temple priest.

But one must not overemphasize the divisive nature of religion, for its unifying function has been much greater. This applies particularly to explicit religion in the form of temple building. The fund-raising activities, the appeals to the whole community to contribute, the involvement of hundreds of people in preparing items for the temple, and the consecration ceremonies - all these have been experienced and known about by almost every Sri Lankan Tamil Hindu in Britain whether he or she lived in London, or the Midlands or even Scotland. Everyone seemed to know about these activities. And the whole process gave Tamils a goal to aim for during which time they became aware of themselves as a significant group who could work together. They came to know themselves as Sri Lankan Tamil Hindus, different from other Hindus, and distinct from the wealth of other ethnic minorities in Britain. Thus as far as one can see religion has played a significant part in establishing the distinctiveness of the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils in Britain. But to what extent religion has emancipated them with reference to their cultural rights, is not so certain.

Emancipation

The Meaning of Emancipation

Emancipation means freeing someone from certain disabilities and in the past has referred to freeing someone from the bonds of slavery, as well as from political and social disabilities imposed by society, such as preventing him or her from voting or from holding public office. Emancipation here is taken to mean the process of freeing an ethnic minority from both formal and informal obstructions and disabilities which prevent it from achieving its self-determination (i.e., practicing its own traditions and customs).

However even these definitions are too negative. There are at least two further dimensions which have to be highlighted. First, emancipation must be regarded as a dynamic process which resists attempts that might absorb and integrate a minority completely with the host society. Anyone who has been involved with ethnic minorities either in Britain or in Western Europe will confirm the amazing amount of energy that their members will spend in keeping their traditions and customs alive in often very difficult circumstances. Reference has already been made to this dynamic process in discussing the unifying role of religion among the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils in the pages above. Second, emancipation also involves the setting up of boundaries that mark off the limits between the ethnic minority and the host society itself. These boundaries however have to be sufficiently porous to allow interaction with the host society on the one hand, and sufficiently resistant to prevent the erosion of the minority's traditions and customs by the host society's structures on the other. Such boundaries are almost always symbolic.

Emancipation from formal obstructions

Examples of formal obstructions are those which are built in to the legal, political, social and economic structures of British society. It is difficult to see what explicit role religion has played in emancipating the Sri Lankan Tamils from these. Legal obstructions would include the Immigration Laws, the question of refugee status, the Trust laws, the laws of the Charity Commissioners. It is said that even the judiciary is a disability which ethnic minorities have to overcome. But religion has played no explicit role in emancipating from these.

Political disabilities are of a general nature due to the British political scene and its system of voting. Agitation for Proportional Representation is muted, which means that ethnic minorities have very little political clout. But here again religion has had hardly any explicit role to play in the case of the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamil.

Economic disabilities and social disabilities are supposedly dealt with by laws governing racial equality and equal opportunities, but problems still occur

in areas of housing, employment, trade unions, the police. Here again religion has had no explicit role to play.

Emancipation from informal obstructions

When emancipation is taken to mean setting free from informal disabilities and obstructions, then it is found that Tamil Saivism has had an implicit role to play. This implicit role has been generally to reinforce social and cultural identity, to raise individual consciousness, and to raise the consciousness of the community with regard to its own traditions and customs.

Implicit role of religion to reinforce cultural identity

A good example of the implicit role of religion is found in the Tamil myth of origin. It is in fact a Charter of Identity¹¹ to which all Tamils can subscribe - Tamils from Tamilnadu, and from Sri Lanka, and all Tamils in the Diaspora throughout the world, in Britain and elsewhere, whether they be Hindus or Christians or even Muslims. The myth is that they are descendants of the Indus Valley Civilization, whose origins go back before the Aryan invasions of India, who built a civilization in south India that equals any other civilization in the world in culture, learning and splendour. Kings had palaces; there were poets and academics and universities; and traces of their literature can be found even today in ancient manuscripts. This is primarily a cultural myth, secular rather than religious, though religious overtones cannot be excluded from it. But it is an overarching symbol that is being mobilized by most Tamils. For it underscores the belief that the Tamils are a cultured people whose history goes back into the mists of time and who therefore have the right to live according to their traditions and customs with dignity and honour without jeopardizing their claim to be loyal citizens of whatever country in which they now live.

The implicit role of religion in education

The myth is often mobilized to spur Tamils to achieve educationally. Tamils, like most minorities, realize the importance of education with regard to security in the present and social mobility in the future. Thus spurred by this myth most Tamils aim to achieve high educational results and look to the State education system as a means towards this end. Hardly any Tamil would press for special aided schools for Tamils. But every Tamil parent would want the State to provide the best education for his or her children where they can compete with others and thus confirm the tradition that they are an educated and cultured people.

Thus religion plays an implicit role in the Tamil's experience of education. But education is also a two-edged sword. On the one hand it provides opportunities for advancement in the sphere of economics (i.e., getting a job); on the other hand it erodes the use of the Tamil language and Tamil self awareness. To counter the effects of the latter Tamils have started Supplementary Schools which receive State aid through grants from Local Government agencies.¹² These Supplementary schools implicitly mobilize their myth of origin by teaching a range of subjects which develop the understanding of young Tamils of their cultural heritage. These subjects include the Tamil language, Tamil Saivism, and traditional religious dancing (Bharati Nitayam). And most Supplementary schools are open to all Tamils irrespective of their religion, whether they be Hindu or Christian (it is very rare for Muslim Tamils to attend such schools).

The implicit role of religion in moral standards

Furthermore education in State schools takes place during a dangerous period of transition for most young Tamils. For it is at school where standards of moral behaviour begin to be instilled into the young, and most Tamil parents fear what they consider to be the unwarranted sexual freedom allowed to young adolescents and adults and the havoc this plays with the selection of suitable marriage partners. It is here where religion has as role to play, both in its own right and as a variable in support of kinship traditions and customs.

Among Tamils tight control over sexual behaviour is usually limited to Tamil women and not to Tamil men. Sexual intercourse it is believed pollutes the woman and not the man. This is part of their religious view of the sacred which is regarded as being both dangerous and benevolent.¹³ The sacred manifests itself in nature, and particularly in women, so both have to be controlled. Nature cannot be allowed to become a jungle, but has to be cultivated into fields. Women cannot be allowed to do as they please, but have to be surrounded by males - father, brother, husband and son. Once so controlled she becomes the source of blessings and good fortune. If she breaks out of this enclosure and becomes sexually immoral, then she becomes the channel for all the dangerous elements of the sacred, the source of shame, dishonour and misfortune. Hence the tight control over the moral behaviour of women, and this includes the control over the proper observance of marriage preferences and rules.¹⁴ From this it can be seen that religion plays an important role in controlling women and by extension in controlling the choice of marriage partners.¹⁵

The role of religion and secularization

Although religion has not played a significant role in emancipating Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils from the formal obstructions that the host society has imposed upon it, religion has played and will continue to play an important role in emancipating this minority from a range of informal obstructions. One such obstruction is secularization and its effect upon temple attendance. The unifying stage of temple building amongst the Tamils is now largely over, and what is needed is better temple attendance, but numbers are declining in proportion to the total numbers of Tamils in Britain. Some secular Tamils feel that temples will be of minor importance in thirty years from now, and that Tamil Saivism will retreat into the home. Less and less money will become available for temple maintenance and temples will generally fall into disrepair. But this is a pessimistic view which cannot be accepted. Temples play such a significant part in Tamil Saivism that it seems unlikely that once they have been built they will go into serious decline. But even if temples should go into decline, and such visible symbols of Saivism should go into disrepair, this does not mean that Saivism itself will disappear. For, as it has done in the past and like other forms of Hinduism and indeed other religions (e.g., Judaism) it will retreat into the home where it will continue to flourish. And it is from the domestic sphere that it will continue to play an informal role in the emancipatory process.

Conclusion

Conclusions about Tamil Saivism and its role in emancipating the Sri Lankan Hindu Tamil minority do not all point in the same direction. On the one hand Tamil Saivism has done much to unify the community thus assisting it on its way to self determination. On the other hand it can be divisive, in that it enhances the status of some and not of others. It has hardly played any role in the emancipation of the minority from formal obstructions, while it has played a significant but implicit role in emancipating the minority from informal obstructions from the host society in order to achieve its self determination.

Notes

¹This paper is based upon fieldwork conducted among Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils in Britain over a number of years. The major part of the funding for this fieldwork came from the Emslie Horniman Trust, whose Trustees I wish to thank. I also wish to thank the Trustees of the All Saints Educational Trust for their support.

²For a history of Sri Lanka see de Silva: 1977.

³For further details about the deity Murukan, see Clothey: 1978.

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- ⁴For further details of the establishment of Sri Lankan Saivism in Britain on this and subsequent pages, see my forthcoming unpublished thesis at The School of Oriental and African studies, London.
- ⁵The New Commonwealth refers to those territories of the British Commonwealth excluding the former Dominions, such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand.
- ⁶These statistics are provided by the Tamil department of the British Refugee Council, 3 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ.
- ⁷Details of this case can be obtained from the British Refugee Council (address above). Legal details are to be found in Blake: 1988, pp. 12-16.
- ⁸Details of these cases can be obtained from the Commission for Racial Equality, Elliot House, 10-12 Allington Street, London, SW1E 5EH, in their Press Releases dated 29/6/90, 12/7/90, 22/7/90, 13/9/90, 4/10/90, 24/10/90, 8/11/90, 28/11/90. See also their *Race Discrimination Law Report*, published October 1990.
- ⁹For details of village Saivism in Sri Lanka, see Pfaffenberger: 1982 and Ryan: 1980. *Kavati* is practiced by Mauritian Tamils who make use of the major temple in London for this purpose.
- ¹⁰See Burghart: 1987.
- ¹¹For the expression Charter of Identity, see Nagata: 1981.
- ¹²Supplementary schools usually meet once a week on Saturdays. They are not an alternative to education by the State or other full-time attendance schools.
- ¹³For a detailed discussion of the relationship between the sacred, nature and female sexuality in Sri Lankan Saivism, see Pfaffenberger: 1982.
- ¹⁴Many of these views are not held so starkly by Tamil males in Britain, but they represent the traditional thinking of Sri Lankan Saivism. The Tamil Women's League is very active in Britain and champions the emancipation of women from such views and from the control of women through the observance of marriage preferences and the giving of dowries.
- ¹⁵This whole paragraph raises the problem of two meanings of emancipation in this paper. In one sense religion does help the Tamils to achieve self determination and so be emancipated from the host society. In another sense religion is imposing a disability upon Tamil women and not emancipating them at all. This raises an important philosophical question. To what extent should self determination of a community be permitted if such self determination involves the imposition of disabilities on certain members of that community? Should the control of women by men be permitted even in the domestic sphere in a society that claims to uphold the equality of sexes? This question is not limited to one minority but to many minorities where inequality between men and women is accepted. One might argue that the question is not so acute in the case of control of marriage preferences for instance. But it does become acute when the question is posed in the context of female circumcision. The State has usually evaded the question by refusing to step in matters that they say concern the private domestic domain. However, this may be changing. For cases that traditionally remained in the private domain are now appearing in the public domain. I refer to the recent cases of women bringing the charge of rape against their husbands, who have been prosecuted for the offence.

The Structural Conditioning of Identity Formation

Surinamese Hindus and Religious Policy in The Netherlands

C.J.G. van der Burg

Introduction

During his election campaign of Spring 1986 the Welfare Minister of The Netherlands paid a visit to Bijlmermeer, a residential suburb of Amsterdam, where many immigrants live. There he was received by the Surinamese Hindus in their ramshackle temple, and by the Surinamese Muslims in their splendid, newly-built mosque. He did not come empty-handed. On the contrary, he had just come from a Cabinet meeting where the Government had decided to reintroduce subsidies for immigrant religio-cultural facilities. This would mean a sudden change in the religious policy that the Government had been pursuing for the previous few years. The Hindus and Muslims in their turn did what was expected of them on such occasions. They promised to vote for the minister's party, the Christian Democrats. 'After all we prefer a religious person to look after our religious interests', one Muslim said plainly. It is a well-known fact, though, that the majority of the Surinamese immigrants traditionally favour the Socialist Party.

The minister's flying visit did not fail to raise hopes that now the subsidy dispute within the Cabinet had been settled once and for all. In 1984 the Government was forced to abandon this unique subsidy arrangement, which it had started in 1976, on the grounds that the constitutional principle of separation of Church and State allowed no room for religious provisions of this kind. The interpretation of the relation between the State and Religion caused a profound difference of opinion in Parliament. Eventually the Christian Democrats had to yield to the pressure of the Liberals, supported by the oppositional Socialists: 'No more Government aid for religion'. On all sides protests rose against this decision, in particular from the direction of the Mediterranean immigrants, because they had benefited from this special aid

only for a very short time, contrary to the established Christian denominations. The Surinamese immigrants, however, who had come to The Netherlands as legal Dutch citizens, received no subsidy whatsoever for their religions. Therefore, these groups of Hindus and Muslims felt doubly neglected.

This is why this visit meant for the Surinamese people much more than a simple election stunt. Rather, it was in their eyes in effect a token of the official recognition of the particular social and cultural status that the Surinamese Hindus and Muslims had pleaded for since their massive influx in the nineteen-seventies. The religious claims which the official spokesmen from their welfare agencies' circles have made for so many years amount to the following: "Religion forms the essence of Hindustani¹ identity. If it is not kept up, the religious communities will in the not-too-distant future vanish into the drab anonymity of the Dutch society. The State has the moral duty to help to prevent this happening by means of a well-planned policy as well as financial and material aid." According to this line of argument the apparent lack of Hindu religious facilities has been directly connected with the absence of government aid.

Apart from the question whether it is indeed a matter of structural administrative neglect, or even persistent reluctance, and whether the irritation of the Hindustani is justified, we would rather ask ourselves whether or not this conspicuous absence of religious facilities, compared to other immigrant communities, could also be related to the nature of the Hindustani community itself and of its religion, and to the way it has developed its identity in Surinam and The Netherlands. This discussion limits itself to the Hindu community among the Hindustani.

Identity and Ethnicity

By referring to their identity, the Hindustani touched on a delicate point. In the sixties the then Director General of Minority Affairs had given the ruling that all immigrants should integrate into Dutch society 'with the retention of their (cultural) identity'. Due to its inherent conceptual vagueness and impracticability, this statement has from the outset fostered innumerable interpretations, as well as legitimations of intentions and lines of action on the part of both the Government and the immigrants.

Up to now the ongoing theoretical discussion on identity, ethnicity and related concepts hardly justifies these terms' popularity in the political debate. Our first concern will therefore be to refer to a minimal set of basic assumptions which we see as relevant to our descriptive analysis.

In the past two decades a number of views have been put forward which appeal to us in this connection. For example, there is the notion that an individual or a group can hold a number of identities simultaneously, out of

which the most appropriate is chosen in a given situation. It will be clear that in such an analytical perspective identity is seen not as something static but as a dynamic process. Besides, it is fairly obvious that a group derives its identity not from isolation, but as a result of contact with others.² In the case of the minorities the most crucial contacts are minority/majority relationships, which are almost by nature based upon an inequality of power. Generally, minorities will strive to maintain or improve their position in relation to the majority.

Seen from the perspective of ethnicization we see ethnic groups, then, as social entities which stand out from others by common cultural traits such as origin, history, language or religion, that function as symbols and definitions of the specific nature of this entity.³ Ethnicization can therefore be defined as 'group formation on the basis of ethnic identity'. Thus, the identity of an individual within such a group is based upon cultural data: one knows oneself to be a member of a group which is different from other groups, in the cultural sense. This identity may constitute the substance of one's self-perception: the actor belongs to an ethnic group and an attack on it is felt as an attack on himself. In this sense the right to retain one's own culture and the right to conserve one's ethnic identity is seen as an inalienable right belonging to the domain of human rights.⁴ Such a collective self-image can easily become the crystallization point of an ideology which directs the endeavour towards maintaining or improving the group's identity and its position within the encompassing society. Generally, we find that in such an endeavour an ethnic group never uses the totality of its observable culture, but only those elements the actors see as relevant to themselves⁵ as well as appropriate to the circumstances.

The culture of an ethnic group is seen as equally processual and dynamic because it depends to a large extent on conflicts of interests and of varying balances of power between and within groups. It can equally stress the group's identity. It is here that Banton's rational choice theory fits, which says that culture comes to embody strategies which help groups maximise their own advantages versus other groups.⁶

We share the opinion of Glazer and Moynihan, that for a variety of reasons 'ethnicity' supersedes more and more the 'class' one belongs to, as a criterion of contemporary societal arrangement. According to them, the term refers to a new development in social reality: the enormous growth of ethnic conflicts, which are increasing in intensity. They see ethnic conflicts as conflicts in which groups appeal to their unique and inalienable cultural values in order to claim certain rights. Ethnicity appears to be more successful than class, and it is a powerful means to be exploited in cases of discrimination and racism.⁷ It offers strategic advantages because it is more dignified and rewarding to present oneself as a member of an ethnic group than as someone belonging to a lower social category.⁸

As to the question of which factors can trigger off the ethnicization process, Vermeulen distinguishes between a) cultural and b) contextual or situational factors. The latter ones he subdivides into social-economic factors, stigmatization and discrimination, and factors connected with the migration process.⁹ Since, in our view, cultural factors do not start off an ethnicization process (because they are only used in the process as markers of group boundaries) we opt for an analysis of the contextual and situational factors.

Religion can play a central part in the ethnicization strategy of minority groups, because it is one of the most important cultural data that an ethnic group can be based upon, and as such it can easily function as a point of reference in the ethnicity process. Also in the case of religion such a process effects changes in emphasis, laid generally on those elements which are seen as sufficiently distinctive to support an effective ethnic ideology and an appropriate organizational form. Therefore, we believe there is a connection between the varying ways in which ethnic groups come to the fore and the varying ways in which the welfare state is promoting the interests of its citizens. Seen from this point of view, it is clear that we are particularly interested in finding out how religious ideologies and forms of organization are being developed into usable instruments in the hands of people striving to improve their position in an alien cultural setting.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the factors behind the construction and maintenance of the diverse identities, their related ideologies -and in particular the organizational framework supporting them- of a community of East Indians which, after a stay of more than a century in Surinam, is now trying to keep afloat in The Netherlands. This study focuses more specifically on the difficulties connected with the group's religious claims, mentioned earlier. Although these claims have been laid since the seventies, the political response was inadequate in the beginning. Therefore, our description starts when these requests began to create increasing political interest, that is in the mid-nineteen-eighties.

The situation in the Amsterdam suburb we sketched is in our opinion illustrative of a problem which other minority groups have to deal with, nowadays. In our view, the problem has everything to do with the notions we mentioned earlier: identity, ethnicity, majority-minority relations and a concept of culture as a dynamic process. Therefore, our analysis not only will to a large extent focus on the external factors, such as structural impediments within the encompassing society, but also internal factors, such as the role of the Hindu priesthood. In order to explain under what conditions certain identities and ideologies arose in Surinam and The Netherlands we have to review the recent history of the Hindu community. The issue of the role of religion and of religion-based power in the identity formation of this community will serve as

a guideline for our exploration, while we have the aforementioned notions close at hand as analytical instruments.

Surinam

Distinguishing several phases in the process of identity formation and organizational structuring, each of which is characterised by a set of specific external and internal factors, we may say that the very *first phase* is characterised by a religious identity formation. Although Surinamese Hinduism stems from the Hinduism of North India, which is the area from which the 35,000 British Indian indentured labourers¹⁰ came to Surinam between 1873 and 1916, it differs significantly from it. North Indian Hinduism has a dual structure of meaning and organization, i.e. Brahmanism and sectarianism, each with its own relationship to the caste system. Surinamese Hinduism, on the other hand, lost this duality as well as its close relationship to the caste system, which could not be maintained after the migration to Surinam.

In Surinam a kind of Hinduism developed which contained elements derived from both forms of the religion. In fact, a process of Brahmanization took place. After the plantation period the Brahmans not only resumed their position as religious specialists (so-called *pandits*) but they were even able to extend their authority to areas hitherto closed to them, such as healing practices and magic - areas which were the prerogative of non-Brahmanic Hinduism.¹¹ Within a few decades the Brahmans managed to gain a monopoly position as ritual officiants in an informally structured network of patron-client relationships, a Surinamese variety of the well-known *jajmani*-system. Up to now this informal network has been practically the only accepted form of organization among all Hindus, in Surinam as well as later on in The Netherlands.

This rise of a Brahmanic priestly hegemony is closely connected with the absence of the aforementioned sectarianism in Surinamese Hinduism, which basically involved ascetic monastic orders. These ascetic sectarian communities, as exponents of a philosophical attitude of world renunciation, form a counterbalance to the wordly attachment of social Hinduism, which is based on the caste system. For in Hinduism these ascetics are the ones who watch over the purity of the doctrine and who provide it with a theological basis. The fact that such ascetic authorities were absent in Surinamese Hinduism (unlike for example some major Indian communities in the U.K., such as the Gujaratis¹² deprived it of its most important religious spokesmen. As a consequence, not only has Surinamese Hinduism enjoyed great doctrinal liberty for more than a century, hardly limited by the rather arbitrary doctrinal standards stressed by the Brahman priests, (the only extant religious

authorities), but also it suffered right from the beginning from the absence of a central religious institution, which could be responsible for the perpetuation of the religion.

Religion thus played an important part in the first phase of the process of Hindu identity formation in Surinam. Therefore, it is not surprising that, in addition to their holding a central position in the community's religious life, Brahmans were also found within the ranks of the first political leaders. In the political sphere, however, they were gradually overtaken by better qualified, even non-Brahmans. This was even more the case in the *second phase*, when ethnic antagonism grew, as a result of a successful social and economic emancipation of the Hindustani community in Surinam. Still, a religious identity remained relevant, since the ideology of a missionary reform movement, the Arya Samaj, came to be increasingly important as an attractive alternative to the mainstream Hindu ideology of the orthodox Sanatan Dharm. But this religious differentiation played a part only inside the Hindu community, and not outside; that is, not in the relations of the Hindustani community with the other ethnic groups.

The Netherlands

In the seventies a third of the Surinamese population emigrated to The Netherlands. The influx reached its maximum in the years preceding Surinam's independence, in 1975. Although this massive emigration cannot be interpreted in terms of labour migration comparable to West Indian migration to Britain¹³ or to the migration of Mediterranean workers to North Western Europe, there is no doubt that it was the economic security and political stability of Dutch society at that time which motivated both Hindustani and Creoles to migrate. For the Hindustani an added consideration was the threat of Creole oppression after independence, as in British Guyana. To them this migration undoubtedly had ethnic aspects, in spite of the fact that the Creole immigrants actually outnumbered the Hindustani.

Hindustani from all economic and social sectors of society, Brahman pandits included, migrated to The Netherlands. To prevent the new immigrants from all settling in the big cities -which is what generally happened with the Mediterranean workers- the Government pursued a policy of deconcentration. The Hindustani had to undertake the arduous task of rebuilding their community, socially as well as religiously. In this respect their position was not unlike the state of affairs in colonial Surinam in the last decades of the previous century.

Since, amongst other considerations, the survival of their own community had been the rationale for the Hindustani' migration, ethnicity seemed to be the most obvious principle for the construction of organizational instruments

aimed at their integration into pluralistic Dutch society. However, the Government appeared to have a different opinion on ethnic identity. It sought to implement its policy by addressing the only existing Surinamese welfare organization. This agency, although it was officially based on an all-ethnic principle, was in fact controlled by the Creoles. Initially, the Government clearly neglected the ethnic differences among the Surinamese immigrants, showing its almost total ignorance of ethnic sensibilities. Therefore, the Hindustani decided to found their own welfare organization on a pure ethnic basis and named it Lalla Rookh, after the first ship which brought them to Surinam. The organization was born from sheer necessity, as the outcome of a particular political development, which, as we saw, was characterised in its Surinamese beginnings by enduring ethnic antagonism and rivalry and now, in its Dutch continuation, by a too pragmatic policy on the part of the authorities. So, the *third phase* which can be distinguished in the process of identity formation -this time on Dutch soil- is marked by an ethnic identification along with its appropriate ethnic organizational set-up.

Initially, this ethnic stand of the Hindustani proved to be successful, for a variety of external and internal reasons, some of which we will now mention.

Firstly, the Government of the time had an interest in maintaining calm on the minority front and avoided -practically at any cost- unrest amongst the Surinamese immigrants after a period of difficulties around Surinam's independence.

Secondly, since a purely secular ethnic identity was a popular theme in the Socialist-controlled Government's policy of the period, the prevailing political climate was favourable to the Hindustani' ethnic stand. This would not have been the case had the Hindustani stressed more strongly the religious aspect of their identity. For, when they came to The Netherlands in the seventies they entered a 'pillarised' society in which religious identity had been for a number of decades a dominant principle of articulation in the formation of interest groups. Thus, both major Christian denominations -Protestant and Roman Catholic- not only fostered their own political parties but also developed a comprehensive system of denominational organizations covering almost the entire field of social and occupational activities including state aided welfare organizations which were supported by their political representatives in Parliament. However, in the sixties, the determinant role of religious affiliation was declining and in the welfare associations a secular professional attitude was far more prevalent than a religious view. In spite of the ongoing 'de-pillarization' and professionalization of the Dutch welfare sector, the Hindustani as well as other minority groups were able to claim their own welfare organizations on a purely ethnic basis, so far without the obligation of keeping up a professional appearance. As a social determinant, religion had indeed become suspect; this was not the case with the new phenomenon of

ethnicity. Dutch society in the seventies had grown accustomed to the idea that foreigners should organise themselves to make a better stand for themselves, as foreign communities, against social and economic exploitation and discrimination.

Thirdly, since the Government was only too anxious to mobilise a kind of leadership in the migrant communities in order to implement its policies, it could not neglect Lalla Rookh, as an ethnic organization. As an agency which represented all Hindustani, Lalla Rookh united Hindus as well as Muslims. The parallel with the '*Verenigde Hindostaanse Partij*' (United Hindustani Party) in Surinam is obvious. By now it was able to play the same role, that is, as an intermediary between the Government and the Hindustani community. Thus we see an interesting transformation in that a political party in the Surinamese context came to function as a welfare agency in The Netherlands.

Within the community the religious organizational structure had for the greater part collapsed. Although the doctrinal distinction between the Sanatan Dharm and the Arya Samaj continued in the Dutch situation, the formal organizational set-up of religion largely dissolved, due to the Government's policy of deconcentration. The only kind of religious organization which more or less continued to exist was the pandit-centred informal network of personal jajmani relationships. But, compared to the Surinamese situation, the laity had little involvement with the priests, much less a certain degree of social control over them. This process of virtual deformatization of the religious organization gave the priests a free hand in their entrepreneurial activities on a religious market of supply and demand. The gradual loss of control by the laity over the priests (and vice versa) proved to be detrimental to the religious life of the Hindustani community. Attempts to improve this undesirable situation ended in failure for a variety of reasons. Initiatives to organise the priests deteriorated into talking shops lacking the authority to control their members. It was these very members in fact who refused to give up their unchallenged position as free entrepreneurs in religious services. This also applied to the formal religious organizations Sanatan Dharm and Arya Samaj. They lacked strong leadership and realistic goals, although in general the Arya Samajis were better able to organise themselves.

Institutionalization: the Foundations

The Dutch Government too had a hand in this general organizational disorder. The lack of co-operation and reluctance to organise can also be seen as the side-effect of the Government's welfare policy, which gave rise to a new phenomenon: the religio-cultural foundations. Since Lalla Rookh and other foundations came to be more firmly established as ethnic welfare agencies, the Government had begun to involve them in its policies, in particular as

distributors of funds for cultural purposes. The end of the nineteen-seventies saw a wild growth of cultural foundations, which could profit by this funding policy. This phenomenon is to be partly accounted for by the fact that through the intermediary of the ethnic welfare agencies and their local counterparts the authorities granted funds to any foundation which produced a plan to spend money for cultural purposes in a very general sense. A relationship resembling patronage between the granter, the intermediary and the spenders seemed unavoidable. This entrepreneurial flowering, even in the field of culture and religion, can be explained by the same commercial spirit in the Hindustani which also led to remarkable successes in ethnic enterprise.¹⁴ It cannot be denied that the opportunity to acquire money so easily and with little control over its spending, combined with a spirit of enterprise and independence -most of the foundations are family-based businesses- created an atmosphere of competition and mutual distrust in circles of the cultural and religious foundations. The almost uncontrollable mechanism of distributing these funds led in the long run to such obscure situations¹⁵ that cultural activities came generally to be looked upon with increasing skepticism by the Dutch welfare authorities.

The general discomfort with the way in which the funds were shared out asked for more unity and joint action on the side of the Hindustani. It was obvious that the urge for unity could no longer be based only upon the usual 'ethnic identity' employed so far, that means, in the form it had taken in Surinam. Such an ethnic stand, inspired by Hindustani-Creole antagonism in Surinam, made less sense in The Netherlands since the two communities became part of contemporary pluralistic Dutch society. It had become ineffective in the new situation because it was no longer a clear and noble enough principle of distinction, to be exploited for the promotion of Hindustani ethnic interests.

A new substance for 'ethnic identity' was sought for and found: religion. A religious stand appeared to be preferable for a variety of reasons. As a social determinant religion had recently begun to enjoy a new popularity in The Netherlands. Although the Christian religious institutions had, for the most part, lost their social relevance, religion remained an important source of power in national politics. Moreover, due to the immigration of large numbers of Mediterranean Muslims, Islam had become the widest spread non-Christian religion in The Netherlands. This enhanced the general interest in their religion and equally in the religions of other minorities.

In spite of its formal secular stand of 'no preference and no interference' the Government, controlled by the Christian Democrats, continued to maintain a certain relationship with the established religious institutions, and with religion in general. In an attempt to reconsider its position towards the minorities' religions, the Government published in 1983 and in 1988 two reports

concerning the continuation of subsidizing the 'Religious Provisions for Ethnic Minorities in The Netherlands'¹⁶ and about the relation between Government and religious denominations.¹⁷ This shows that religion was still regarded by the Government as a matter of concern in minority politics.

It is therefore not surprising that, by then, it was religion which was starting to provide a focal point for a common Hindustani ethnic ideology. This is one of the reasons why we can distinguish a *fourth phase* in the ongoing process, in which the secular, welfare-inspired ethnic ideology has been replaced by a Hindu, that is, a religious ethnic ideology. What was new about this was that the religious aspect of this ideology was no longer stressed in the antagonism between the distinctive religious denominations within the Hindustani community. Rather, religion played by this time a part in the confrontation of the entire community with the surrounding society.

The recent founding of Hindu primary schools -the first in August 1988 in The Hague- fits very well with this new religious ethnic policy. The Hindus could make use of the constitutionally established provisions for denominational education. As a testimony of Hindu vitality and enterprise, the future will tell whether Hindu education is more than a symbolic contribution to the identity formation.

Institutionalization: Lalla Rookh

Lalla Rookh responded well to this new political interest in minority religions. The agency started to present itself as 'the' advocate of religion. The fact that up to then there were no religious provisions whatsoever for Surinamese Hindus and Muslims (whereas Mediterranean Muslims could indeed benefit from these opportunities,) increased the motivation of the agency in pursuing its religious claims. The recent building of a mosque in Amsterdam by Mediterranean and Surinamese Muslims, which had been made possible through municipal aid and that of other organizations, gave the agency all the more reason to teach the authorities their duty in religious affairs. The municipal Spring elections of 1986 were an additional opportunity to make a political issue of religion. Some members of the agency's board offered themselves as candidates for the Christian Democratic Party. To answer the question as to whether Lalla Rookh had a strong case in its religious claims we have to take a number of different factors into consideration.

Before considering these factors, we have to be aware of the inner discrepancy in Lalla Rookh's position in these matters. Although one of the agency's tasks is the promotion of the socio-religious interests of the Surinamese Hindustani minority, it always took a formal secular and neutral position, above the religious parties. Only on these conditions was it allowed to pursue its Government-aided activities as an ethnic identity agency. How

could it, then, advocate the divergent religious rights of the entire community it served? As was noted earlier, religion had always been a cause of discord within the Hindustani ranks, within the religious communities proper as well as between them.

Yet, we would say that the agency had special reasons to come to the fore itself as the advocate of religion, and that it was the only institution within the Hindustani community which was more or less qualified to do so.

The official religious organizations could have been the first to undertake this task. However, as we have already seen, in The Netherlands they were not yet sufficiently developed to represent the Hindus in this matter. (The same holds -though to a lesser degree- for both Muslim denominations, the Orthodox and the Ahmadiya). Mutual rivalry obstructed joint action. In this sense the Hindus are more badly organised in The Netherlands than in Surinam. Earlier we noted that in fact a process of religious deformatization had started with the massive influx of Hindustani into The Netherlands.

As a second alternative the traditional religious leaders, the pandits, could have been qualified representatives. We have established, however, that they do not constitute a firm enough group. They act too much as independent entrepreneurs. Even their councils are not 'weighty' enough to hold a firm grip on them. Besides, the pandits would not benefit from a religion gradually developing a church-like structure, which they fear to be the case with a Government-aided Hinduism. For them this would be fundamentally alien to Hinduism.¹⁸ An even more important reason is the fact that, generally speaking, the person of the priest and his role in religious matters are increasingly being criticised by the believers. In this respect priests are no longer acceptable to the more progressive and educated members of the community, in particular to the younger generations. Their uncontrollable religious entrepreneurship and increasing commercialization of the priestly service as a result of the unsafe jajmani relationships¹⁹ in the Dutch context are particularly open to serious objections. Moreover, the priests' lack of religious training and their unfamiliarity with what is going on in the lives of their following often result in communication breakdown.²⁰ Moreover, the pandits use a religious language which does not appeal to the younger generations. Their religious parlance makes it difficult for the latter to familiarise themselves with the traditional religious culture of their community.²¹ Since the younger generations have to keep their foothold in Western society, also in respect of their religion, the pandits should be sufficiently skilled to keep them interested in matters religion.

In short, we cannot avoid the conclusion that those institutions in Surinamese Hinduism which accompanied the immigrants, and which should have been the first to stand up for the religious rights of the Hindus in The Netherlands, appear to be unfit to do so for a variety of reasons.

So, it had to be Lalla Rookh which undertook this task. Having started as a categorical welfare agency in 1975 it gradually developed into an 'identity organization'. As a public relations agency, pleading the Hindustanis' cause with government and municipal authorities, it came to be an influential party in minority affairs. At the end of 1984 it arranged a meeting with all (i.e. 100) representatives of the cultural and social organizations with which it is associated. The most important outcome of this meeting was that Lalla Rookh's proposal to form a 'Committee of Hindu and Muslim Congregations' was given unanimous approval. This committee should act on behalf of both Hindus and Muslims as an adviser to the Government in religious matters. By this initiative the agency trod once again in the footsteps of Lachmon's *Verenigde Hindostaanse Partij* (United Hindustani Party) which took the initiative for a committee of the same name in Surinam in the nineteen-sixties. This parallelism is significant for the status and the role Lalla Rookh intends for itself. Like its namesake in Surinam the committee aims at political influence, and wants to have a say in the Government's religious policy concerning Hindustani. The Government too is interested in such a consultative body, because it is not willing to meet all the foundations the Hindustani community generates. Once again, we should realise that Lalla Rookh, being an ethnic institution, puts itself in charge of a matter which in the past gave cause for repeated controversy within the Hindustani community. From then on the point at issue was to stand up together for the cause of religion. For Lalla Rookh that meant uniting the divided parties under a common religious ideology.

A good case to test the strength of the Hindustani religious unity under the leadership of Lalla Rookh presented itself in the form of the issue on Government-aided religious provisions. Lalla Rookh made this political question into a religious one with ideological overtones. The major argument for subsidising temples and mosques was that Islam and Hinduism, unlike Christianity, were 'ways of life', in which no clear distinction could be made between the religious and the secular. In their view, these religions did not have an organizational structure which enabled them to possess funds for the maintenance of temples or the appointment of priests. Following this line of argument, ethnic religions should get government aid. With good reason, Van der Veer has expressed his doubts on the supposed unity of culture and religion among the Hindustani.²² Surinam did, contrary perhaps to India, show the beginnings of a split into a religious and a profane culture within the Hindustani community. This is also the case in The Netherlands, as we noted earlier.

The second argument was that temples were a great necessity for Surinamese Hinduism in The Netherlands, because they belonged to its tradition. Apart from the fact that we would welcome the building of temples

as indispensable points of convergence of Hindu identity in the Dutch context, we view this argument as striking in its negation of the historical reality as we observe it. In fact, this Surinamese/Dutch form of Hinduism is a house-and-family religion. Therefore, it needs sacred provisions for religious occasions in the first place. So far, this is what this kind of Hinduism seems to afford itself because of its informal organizational structure. In Surinam temples were built only as soon as Hinduism started to organise itself formally, that is to say after World War II. Since the latter appears to be happening in The Netherlands now, we may expect the number of temples to increase in the near future. If this is the case, the Hindustani should be greatly indebted to the aforementioned two reports produced by Government Commissions, who appeared not insensitive to the religious claims of the Hindustani. The Hirsch Ballin report in particular received an elaborate and positive response on the part of the Hindustani.²³

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Now, Surinamese Hinduism appears to have re-entered the phase of formal organization. The temple issue has been raised to the level of ideology, along with inaccuracies and stereotypes. Here indeed 'culture is used as an instrument in order to make a stand as an interest group because the political circumstances are favourable'.²⁴ The pandits appeared to be unwilling and unable to make religion the centre of identity formation. They themselves have lost their authority to a great extent and they have isolated themselves. The formal religious organizations have been thus far marginalised. Both parties have been overruled by another power group which tries to use religion ideologically as a means of power in order to serve its own attempts to safeguard the survival of the Hindustani community in The Netherlands.

When we review these developments and compare the present state of affairs with that of the immigrant Hindus of the late nineteen-seventies, we must conclude that, in spite of the changes in ideology, the formal organizational set-up appears to be almost the same, although in a rather weakened condition.

In conclusion we may say that, although the repeated changes in terms of identity and ideology of the Hindu community can be explained to a great extent by the change of external circumstances, there appears to be also a significant relation between the varying options of a particular kind of identity and the varying power relations within the community itself. In this respect the political use of religion as a symbol of ethnicity can be seen as the outcome of an internal struggle for power, favoured by external factors.

So far, the Hindu community has been unable to provide its own religious facilities. We hope that we have shown that this is for the most part due to a

lack of homogeneity. This shortcoming is not only promoted by the Government's welfare policy but also by conflicting interests within the community itself.

Notes

¹All Surinamese citizens of East Indian origin, irrespective of their religion, are collectively called Hindustani, which simply means natives of Hindustan, i.e. Upper India. So, there are Hindustani Hindus, Hindustani Muslims, etc.

²Cf. Peterson Royce: 1982,40.

³Cf. Vermeulen: 1984,15.

⁴Roosens: 1982,110.

⁵*Ibidem*, 103.

⁶Banton: 1985; Bullivant: 1985.

⁷Glazer & Moynihan: 1975.

⁸Roosens: 1982,105.

⁹Vermeulen: 1984,19-27.

¹⁰De Klerk: 1953; Dew: 1978.

¹¹Van der Veer: 1987.

¹²Cf. Pocock: 1976; Burghart: 1987.

¹³Cf. Peach: 1968; Bovenkerk: 1983.

¹⁴Boissevain and Grotenbreg: 1986.

¹⁵Cf. Latham: 1982; 1983; Boedhoe: 1980,3-6.

¹⁶*Religieuze voorzieningen*: 1983.

¹⁷Hirsch Ballin: 1988.

¹⁸Girjasing: 1984,12-15; Lalla Rookh: 1985.

¹⁹Cf. Van der Veer: 1985,319.

²⁰Ramsoekh and Baldewsingh: 1985.

²¹Cf. Pocock: 1976,347ff.

²²Van der Veer: 1984,10.

²³Lalla Rookh: 1988.

²⁴Roosens: 1982,116.

Epilogue

Some Future Prospects

Integration and Change

Some future prospects

W.A. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld

Introduction

In discussing the position of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries reference is often made to the well-known concepts of *Dâr al-Islâm* (the "Territory of Islam") and *Dâr al-Harb* (the "Territory of War"). Nowadays, however, Muslim scholars, do not generally use this dichotomy but apply a more nuanced terminology which deserves to be discussed. As an example we will take a book published recently by Shaykh Faysal Mawlawî, a religious scholar from Lebanon, in which the applicability of these terms to the modern world, especially in view of the position of Muslim minorities in Europe, is seriously questioned.¹ Here follows a short summary of his views.

The classical division of the world into *Dâr al-Islâm* and *Dâr al-Harb* was neither based on the Qur'ân, nor on a prophetic tradition but resulted from the independent judgement of religious scholars who developed these terms in order to denote the reality in which Muslims came to live after the wars resulting in foundation of an extensive Islamic empire. *Dâr al-Islâm* were countries ruled by Islam, applying the laws of Islam and maintaining its ceremonies. *Dâr al-Harb*, on the other hand, were the remaining countries, where the laws of Islam were not applied and which did not fall under Islamic rule. The great scholar *Al-Shâfi'î* distinguished a third category, viz. that of *Dâr al-'Ahd* (the "Territory of Treaty"), indicating those non-Islamic countries which had concluded a peace-treaty with the Islamic state, without having been obliged to pay the poll-tax of the Christians and Jews of *Dâr al-Islâm*.

The application of this classical division of the world in these times provokes a number of questions. First of all: to what extent should Islamic laws and ceremonies to be maintained in order to consider a country as belonging to *Dâr al-Islâm*? If complete observance were required, then most countries of the Muslims, nowadays no longer can be considered as such. If the application of Islamic family law were sufficient, then countries with a deeply rooted Islamic tradition, such as Turkey, would have to be excluded as well. If the mere possibility for Muslims to perform their religious ceremonies

were to fulfil the requirements, then most countries of the world would belong to *Dâr al-Islâm*!

On the other hand, the mere fact that the majority of a country's inhabitants consists of non-Muslims, does not imply automatically that it belongs to *Dâr al-Harb*. In fact, these countries do not belong to *Dâr al-Harb*, for a number of reasons. First of all, because no Muslim ruler has declared war on them. Secondly, because there exist bilateral and international treaties between these countries and the countries of the Muslims, which have to be respected as long they do not oblige the Muslims to commit a sin. Thirdly, because Muslims have in fact entered these countries by virtue of these very treaties. Therefore, in accordance with the previously quoted view of Al-Shâfi'î, these countries may as well be considered as belonging to *Dâr al-[°]Ahd*.

Can these treaties, however, from a Muslim point of view, be considered binding, as they were not concluded by rulers who actually apply the Islamic law? The author refers to the classical rule of Islamic state law stipulating that Muslims are obliged to obey the ruler even when redeviates from the principles of Islam, unless they are forced to commit a sin. Furthermore, Muslims staying in the West for work or study, have entered these countries by virtue of visas resulting from these treaties. Partial acceptance of these treaties is contradictory to the Law and ethics of Islam. Finally, those Muslims who question the legitimacy of these treaties because they have been concluded by regimes which they do not acknowledge are facing the question: is there then a state of war between themselves and those non-Muslim countries? According to Islamic law, the declaration of war is the exclusive right of the ruler. Therefore, if there is no legitimate ruler to conclude treaties, there is neither one to declare war.

Mawlawi's conclusion is that Muslims living in Europe or elsewhere in the Western world in fact are not living in *Dâr al-harb*, but either in *Dâr al-[°]Ahd* or in *Dâr al-Da[°]wa* (the "Territory of Preaching"), a new concept coined by him to denote the position of Muslim minorities in Western countries, and especially for those who are reluctant to accept the applicability of the concept of *Dâr al-[°]Ahd* to the Western, non-Muslim world. In developing the concept of *Dâr al-Da[°]wa* the author refers to what he believes to be the original principle regulating the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims which, rather than combat was a peaceful form of religious preaching (*da[°]wa*). *Dâr al-da[°]wa* denotes the situation in which the Prophet and his small group of followers found themselves as a minority in Mecca, before the Hijra, when they were preaching the basic principles of Islam while being obliged to respect the legislature in power.

The relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Western Europe seen from the perspective of *Dâr al-Da[°]wa* or *Dâr al-[°]Ahd* fall under these principles. The first principle, based on the Qur'ân,² is reverence, and justice.

Secondly, the existence of a treaty also implies peaceful coexistence, the avoidance of treason and friendly relations. Thirdly, the obeying of the existing rules of law, as long as one is not forced to trespass religious commandments.

Evidently, Shaykh Faysal Mawlawî has added a new dimension to the age-old concepts of *Dâr al-Islâm*, *Dâr al-Harb* and *Dâr al-^cAhd*. His views may lead to a discussion among Muslim scholars about the position of Muslim minorities in the West from a perspective of Islamic law. It seems to us that several aspects of the book, and especially the concept of *Dâr al Da^cwa* are in need of further development. At any rate, so far he remains one of the few religious scholars who has paid attention to this important subject, while underlining the need for a harmonious coexistence of people of different religious persuasions.

Factors of importance for future developments

In order to understand the future prospects of both Muslims and Hindus in Western Europe it is necessary to analyze the main factors which seem to forge their present situation. First of all, attention is to be paid to the changes which may be observed in their cultural-religious traditions emerging from their migration and their having become, consequently, members of a minority-group.

The *first point* to be made in this respect concerns the *partial transplantation of their cultural-religious heritage*. Some aspects of this heritage can hardly be taken along. This holds especially for religious practices and rituals connected with a local or regional religious infrastructure in their country of origin, as e.g. many aspects connected with the veneration of saints, the celebration of seasonal festivals and many other sides of popular religion. This is one of the causes of the bonds remaining between the migrants and their regions of origin. The section of the heritage which can be taken along concerns the individually performed classical religious practices, such as the acts of worship, and other elements which are shared on a national and even international level by the adherents to the same religious traditions. This process of separation leads to a certain degree of cultural impoverishment but may be seen, at the same time, as a kind of "purification" because the religious practices are disconnected from age-old forms of fusion of local pre-Islamic and Islamic customs.³

The *second point* to be observed is the *partial blending of religious variants caused by inter-group contacts*. The individual migrant will be confronted with forms of religious behaviour deviating from the type he is accustomed to, and resulting from different law schools, theologies and streams brought together in his country of settlement by migrants coming from different parts

of the world. In the religion of origin, especially in rural areas, there often exists a rather homogeneous tradition, whereas in the new country of settlement a rich variety of thoughts and behaviour may coexist. This causes a certain relativation of the previously confessed unique value of one's own tradition and may lead to a blending of various forms of religious behaviour. This is true especially of various forms of religious ceremonies, such as ritual ablutions, prayers, mourning-practices etcetera. A mutual inter-group influence in these matters may be observed.

The influences and changes dealt with here may be caused by various kinds of inter-group relations which may be illustrated by two examples. First of all, a Muslim community may appointed an *imam* originating from a different country with a different law school and theological tradition, as e.g. an Egyptian, Shaff'ite imam appointed by a Moroccan, Malikite community. Secondly, Islamic primary schools or other forms of religious education often combine teachers and pupils with similar differences as the ones mentioned before. This may lead to a conscious quest for an interpretation of a religious tradition which is acceptable to all participants notwithstanding the differences existing between their individual traditions. These intergroup-contacts, however, may also cause schismatic developments, as e.g. in the case of the Javanese Muslims in Surinam. Some members of this group, under the influence of Muslims from other communities, decided to change their originally eastward-bound direction of prayer towards the west. Others, however, preferred to continue praying towards the east, just as their forefathers had done in Java.

The *third factor* influencing the future scope of the religious-cultural heritage of Muslims and Hindus in Western Europe is *the culture of the society of settlement*. The legal Islamic tradition that may or may not, in various degrees, have influenced the law of their state of origin. Generally speaking, Turkish citizens are facing less legal conflicts between their tradition of family law and the European ones than are most other Muslim migrants, since Turkey has adopted the Swiss civil code of law, be it in a somewhat modified form. Conflicts between European and Islamic family law are frequently related to the institution of polygamy, mixed marriages, rules concerning divorce and the custody of children. An extensive jurisprudence is being developed in application of the principles of International Private Law governing these conflicts between different national legal systems. This is not to say, however, that the legal traditions of all non-Turkish Muslim migrants in Western Europe are identical as far as Islamic family law is concerned. Various forms of modernization have been introduced in different countries, such as the prohibition of polygamy in Tunisia and the permission of the first wife in case of a second marriage stipulated in Indonesian law.

In the end Muslims are bound, of course, to loose this part of their heritage upon naturalization. This does not mean, however, that the impact of the norms and values underlying Islamic family law do not continue to play an important role for these naturalized Muslims. But they have lost their legal nature and have now been changed into elements of religiously sanctioned social ethics (which implies that courts should continue to take them into account).

Another result of the influence of the new host-society is the loosening, to a certain degree, of social control, resulting in a greater variety of religious commitments.

A third result is the need of a continuous defence of a religious tradition which all of a sudden has lost its self-evidence and is forced by the majority to prove its right to exist. This may result, on the one hand, into more outspoken forms of orthodox religious commitment, and, on the other, rapidly into forms of secularization and religious liberalism.

New religious institutions and changes in the functions of existing ones

As has been clearly shown in the previous chapters, several factors caused Muslims and Hindus in Western Europe to take initiatives founding mosques and temples and by doing so to organize themselves into more or less loose communities. First of all, as a result of the family reunions, the urgent need was felt to create something more than places of worship in private houses which could hardly be used for any other purpose besides prayers. A second factor was the absence of a central body to take the initiative in founding and maintaining mosques and temples. Finally, the prevailing religious freedom opened up the possibility for the foundation of mosques by many groups with convictions deviating from those of the majority who could not easily have reached their goal in their countries of origin.

A religious community usually has a number of members, a board and an imam or priest, who in some cases may and in others may not be a member of the board. Members may be divided into two broad categories, viz. active members who pay contribution regularly, and passive members who incidentally may donate some money to the mosque. In addition to these members there exist a number of persons within the community who have a certain affiliation with the mosque or temple but cannot be considered as members. They may use the mosque or temple, as well as the services of the religious leader, whenever they need them, but they are not registered anywhere in the community's administration. In principle this form of organization is more or less the same as that of the community of a church. Apart from the legal aspects, the differences are mainly concerned with the

number of members registered, which appears to be much higher in the case of churches as they have a longer tradition and better equipped boards.

For Muslims the mosque-communities with boards and paying members are a completely new phenomenon in comparison with their countries of origin, by which they in fact are making a first step in a process of fitting themselves into the existing social and juridical structures of society. A further step in the same process caused by the new circumstances of life are the changed functions of the mosque-building and of the imam, of which we only mention the most important ones and which can be observed in all of Western European countries, as well as in the United States. First of all, the traditional function of the mosques in the field of religious education has been revived or strengthened, in view of the lack of facilities for Islamic education within the school-systems in many countries. Completely new, however, are the socio-cultural functions the mosques of Western Europe have acquired, which include the festivities and ceremonies connected with circumcision, marriage and mourning-rituals.

In line with these new developments the traditional tasks of the imam have been widened in scope. The teaching of religion to the children of his community in the mosques forms an essential part of his task. Completely new, however, are specific forms of "pastoral care", including visits to mosque-members in hospitals, prisons and the army. The existing practice in this respect among Christian and Jewish communities, as well as the absence of the social infrastructure of the country of origin (including the family) made this new development necessary.

Local religious communities, both of Muslims and Hindus, are also taking the initial steps towards the creation of other provisions, such as the introduction of Islamic education within public schools and the foundation of separate Islamic and Hindu schools. In view of the present developments in all of the Western-European countries concerned, it may be safely assumed that the number of these educational provisions will increase considerably in the near future. Local initiatives are also being taken by religious communities to create facilities for burials and cremations in accordance with Islam and Hinduism respectively. At the moment one may still observe a clear difference in burial practice between the two main groups of Muslims in Western Europe, those who have come as migrant-workers, on the one hand, and the immigrants, on the other. As for the labour migrants, they still prefer to be buried in their countries of origin. The immigrants, however, are mainly buried in their host-countries. One may assume that in loosening the bonds with the countries of origin, which seems to be only a matter of time, the need for Islamic provisions in this domain will increase considerably.

A process of ethnical and denominational group differentiation can be observed both among Muslims and Hindus in Western Europe. This process

emerges mainly depending on the number of Muslims or Hindus living in a certain place. When the number is smaller, there appears to be a stronger tendency for people from different ethnical and denominational groups within the same religious community to get together and form a community of worshippers. However, when groups increase in size, there exists a clear tendency among both religious groups to establish communities based on specific ethnical and denominational characteristics.⁴

In accordance with ethnic and denominational patterns, the local mosque-communities in all West European countries have organized themselves in master-organizations on a national level. (Some of the denominations have organized themselves on an international level, even creating headquarters in a West-European country.) These umbrella-organizations serve two purposes, viz. (a) promoting the activities of the local communities attached to them and (b) building up contacts with the national governments of the host-societies and providing the public at large with information about their activities. Wherever this is demanded by national law, these master organizations try to obtain the required legal recognition in order to be able to profit the facilities which exist for officially recognized religious communities. Many attempts at creating national Islamic councils representing the various umbrella-organizations have failed in all the West-European countries, so far. The most important factor in this respect seems to be the influence of the governments of the countries of origin interfering in different ways with the activities of many of these umbrella-organizations.

In comparison with their countries of origin, the Muslims in Europe especially have created a rich variety of religious organizations. This striking difference can be explained by three main factors. First of all, there is the primarily secular character of West-European governments. Religious communities are obliged to organize themselves in order to create the necessary provisions. The same tendency can be observed in many countries of origin where (varying) processes of secularization of the state systems are developing. The more the state system is deconfessionalized, the higher the number of religious organizations created on private initiative. In other words: secularization and deconfessionalization of state bodies evoke processes of "privatization" of religion. The second factor is that of freedom of religion. In the Islamic world the state monopolizes the religious infrastructure to a large extent, especially in as far as the creation of mosques and the appointment of imams is concerned. Opponents of the existing state systems have no alternative but to organize themselves into oppositional movements -insofar as this is permitted- or create clandestine forms of religious organizations. The only other alternative is to leave the country and start organizing themselves elsewhere. This applies e.g. to the Ahmadiyyah, Suleymanci's and Milli Görüs. Finally, there is the ethnic and religious heterogeneity of Muslims and Hindus

living in each of the countries of Western Europe. Differences in language, local customs and religious traditions also necessitate the organizational variety to be observed in Western Europe.

Secularization versus religious resurgence movements

Under the influence of modernization and westernization all world religions are undergoing a process of secularization. One of the main results is that the value of Islam and Hinduism as the main symbols of state or collective identity is decreasing. In the constitutions of some states, such as India, Turkey and Indonesia, neither Hinduism nor Islam is mentioned as the official religion of the state. In others, such as Syria, debates have taken place to deprive Islam of its position as the state religion. For many groups and individuals Islam and Hinduism, moreover, have been replaced as identity symbols by other ideologies, such as nationalism, socialism and communism. This new development is counteracted by several resurgence movements.

Notwithstanding these processes of secularization, it should be stressed that the basic pattern of society of the countries with a Muslim or Hindu majority has remained outspokenly characterized by their respective religious traditions. The same phenomenon can be observed in Western societies which, even though influenced to a large extent by the Enlightenment, have maintained some basic patterns of their Christian heritage. This Christian fundament of Western public life can be illustrated, first of all, by the officially institutionalized position of the Sunday and other Christian holidays in all sectors of society, including schools (both public and private) and, secondly, by the various financial privileges enjoyed by churches in all of the West-European countries.⁵

Notwithstanding the many pleas for multicultural societies in Western Europe, it cannot be expected that important changes of the Christian fundaments of these societies will take place in the foreseeable future. As an example one may refer to the verdict of the Dutch Supreme Court of May 30, 1984, in which the equality of Islamic and Hindu holidays with those of a Christian origin was rejected, arguing that the latter, even though Christian in origin, had now acquired a "general" nature. This implies that the minority religions are still not considered to form a structural part of the "general" pattern of these societies. In other words, the process of integration of Islam and Hinduism, demanded by most groups of the dominant society, is in fact blocked by that society itself. One of the most striking consequences of this process of rejection is the re-emergence of religion as a symbol of identity, a phenomenon often labeled by specialists as the "ethnization" of minority religions, which implies that nearly all members of an ethnical group including those with outspokenly secular convictions, are more or less forced to

solidarize with their group members under a religious label. Many Indians, Turks and North-Africans have become aware of their Hindu and Muslim identities in Western Europe for the first time. Public opinion and some scholars are inclined to interpret this phenomenon as an offshoot of religious resurgence movements in the countries of origin. In our opinion we are dealing with two completely different processes. The resurge-movements have, moreover, hardly any future in Western Europe as can be illustrated by discussing the so-called *Islamic fundamentalism*.

All over the Muslim world a revival of an Islamic conscience is observable over the past years. The term fundamentalism, though of Christian origin and not used by Muslims at all, is widely applied to denote the Islamic revival movements. Usually the term, especially as used by the media, has an outspokenly negative connotation of fanaticism and violence. In publications of Islamicists a number of aspects is usually emphasized in relation to the concept of fundamentalism, such as the struggle against secularization, legitimate self-defence (*jihâd*) and the attempt to islamize Muslim and non-Muslim groups, as well as the moral quest for and defence of a proper Islamic world-view.⁶ Even though many objections against the term fundamentalism, as well as against "intégrisme" as used in France, have been raised, these terms have in fact acquired citizenship in Western languages and will hardly be ever replaced by more adequate terms. Some authors have preferred to use the terms "islamism", "re-islamization" and "revitalization".⁷ These terms have the advantage of being closer to the meaning of the ideas as expressed by the members of the groups and movements concerned. These adherents simply tend to underline that it is their aim to promote the actual application of the laws, rules and norms, and values of Islam.

It is of great importance to stress the point that Islamic "fundamentalism" is a complex phenomenon, which can only be studied adequately if the socio-economic and political circumstances within which it manifests itself are taken into account. At present the term is used as a label to denote almost any movement with an Islamic signature, thereby perforce loosing much of its meaning. Together with its negative connotations, it tends to prevent rather than to stimulate a proper understanding of the nature and aims of the many kinds of movements involved. When studying the modern Islamic movements the following possible aims they may pursue should be taken into account.

1. The *religious aim*, common to all these movements, implying the application of Islam as an alternative for the current secularizing tendencies. This aim is expressed in the intensification of the spiritual and devotional dimensions at the individual and collective level of local communities. This kind of revival of Islam does not necessarily imply a political aim, which therefore should be distinguished sharply from the purely religious motive.

2. The *psychological aim*, viz, to stress the value of the Islamic identity of individuals and groups, and of the adequacy of the Islamic system to meet all kinds of problems of modern life. In connection with this aim references are often found to the past glory of Islamic civilization and its great contributions to contemporary science and culture.
3. The *social aim*, implying the elimination of poverty and social inequality the causes of which are looked for in the heritage of colonialism and the in harmful influence of all kinds of corruption existing in the Muslim world.
4. The *political aim*, to change the social and political institutions in such a manner that the previously mentioned aims can be realized. The use of violence to reach these aims is not an intrinsic and self-evident part of these movements, though some of them may consider themselves to be obliged to resort to it. In the absence of democratic political institutions they may be forced to develop into resistance movements, whereas, within a democratic framework they might have become ordinary confessional political parties.

The afore-mentioned distinction is of great importance in avoiding the impression that every tendency towards re-islamization automatically is accompanied by political activism or even by the use of violence. This is true especially of the study of the phenomenon of religious revival among Muslim minorities in Western Europe. The question whether it is possible for violent religious fanaticism to develop among Muslims in the West has often been answered in the affirmative by the media and by extremist politicians. Catalyzing factors in this process of stigmatization were, among others, the Iranian revolution, the Rushdie-affair and the Gulf War. Islam has been depicted demagogically as a great danger to Western democracies. This argument is even used to advocate the forced removal of Muslims from West-European society, especially by ultra right-wing political parties in most European countries.

However, the most important prerequisites for the emergence of religiously motivated violence are completely lacking in Western Europe. The democratic structure of society vouchsafes the possibility for Muslim groups of various tendencies to express their views and aims openly.

As we have mentioned earlier, religious movements which are suppressed in the countries of origin in fact are succeeding in organizing themselves, in building their religious institutions and, in doing so, in integrating in Western Europe. In fact, during the past four decades no incidents of violence based on religious fanaticism of Muslims have occurred in Western Europe. The same, however, cannot be said vice-versa. Especially during the eighties an

increasing number of violent incidents have taken place involving, among others, the damaging of mosques and Islamic cultural centres. It should be kept in mind that these incidents perforce are perceived as acts of provocation, which in the end might result in counter-incidents, of a violent nature as well. Should that happen then we are, of course, no longer dealing with the phenomenon of fundamentalism but with acts of self-defence by a minority discriminated against.

Prejudice and discrimination might be the most important constraints in the emancipation of Muslim and Hindu minorities in Western Europe. The existing prejudices against Islam are very old and are mainly transferred to the next generation through education and the media. However, a new development is the use of prejudice willfully made by racist movements, directing their efforts both against Muslims and Hindus. Unfortunately, one can hardly expect these prejudices and forms of racial discrimination to change drastically in the near future, despite all the efforts made by governments, churches, organizations of the groups themselves, etcetera. In this context reference can be made to the experience of typical migration-countries, such as the U.S.A. and Australia.⁸

Several factors of this ongoing process of discrimination can be discerned. First of all, one has to expect the socio-economic position of Muslim and Hindu minorities to remain largely unchanged, mainly as the result of a vicious circle. The low socio-economic position resulting from discrimination is, at the same time, in itself the cause of new forms of discrimination. Secondly, Muslims and Hindus will continue to emphasize their religiously based identity, thus causing an ongoing process of rejection and segregation by the dominant majority. There seems to be no way out. Finally, the growing international antagonism between the U.S.A. and Western Europe, on the one hand, and the Third World, on the other, will continue to have negative repercussions on the position of the Muslim and Hindu minorities in the West. Politicians and governments have to become aware of the fact that discrimination is the main obstacle to the emancipation of these minorities and, consequently, take effective measures, especially in the sphere of legislation, to reduce its influence.

Notes

¹*The principles of the religious Law regulating the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims*. Bayrouth 1987 (in Arabic). The author is advisor to the Sunnite Supreme Religious Court in Bayrouth.

²Sûra 60:8.

³See for instance Werbner: 1988.

⁴For this process among Hindus see the contributions of Barot, Taylor and Van der Burg in this volume.

⁵S. Nair, *Islam et laïcité*. "Al-Muntada", Printemps 1990, 19-33, esp. 30-32.

⁶Vermaat and De Wit: 1987,66; Waardenburg: 1987,10).

⁷Khalid: 1982,24.

⁸See, for instance, the contribution of Haddad to this volume.

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