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Article

Securitization, Islamic chaplaincy, and the issue of (de)radicalization of Muslim detainees in Dutch prisons

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Abstract

What position does organized Muslim chaplaincy in Dutch prisons take with respect to the prevention of radicalization and to the de-radicalization of detainees with a Muslim background? After describing the process of securitization of Salafism in the Netherlands, discussing the use of context-related concepts as radicalization, extremism and terrorism, and sketching the context and the making of Muslim chaplaincy, the article provides a brief overview of recent research on the relation between detention and (de)radicalization. Then, the stance of Islamic prison chaplaincy towards (de)radicalization of Muslim prisoners is described and analyzed in terms of goals, policy and practice. An expansive oligopolistic system of chaplaincy, representing various organized religions, seems to facilitate a relatively a-political type of Islamic chaplaincy, which often acts as a countervailing force to the dominant trend of securitization.

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Résumé

Quelle place occupe l'aumônerie islamique institutionnalisée dans les prisons néerlandaises concernant la prévention de la radicalisation et de la déradicalisation des détenus d'origine musulmane ? Après avoir décrit comment le Salafisme est approché en tant que problème de sécurité nationale, cet article aborde l'utilisation de concepts tels que la radicalisation, l'extrémisme et le terrorisme, esquisse la genèse et la structure de l'aumônerie islamique des prisons aux Pays-Bas et fournit un bref aperçu des recherches récentes sur la relation entre détention et radicalisation. Ensuite, l'article décrit et analyse la position en termes d'objectifs, de politiques et de pratiques de l'aumônerie pénitentiaire islamique à l'égard de la (dé)radicalisation des prisonniers musulmans. Un système d'aumônerie vaste et oligopolistique, représentant diverses religions organisées, semble faciliter le développement d'un type d'aumônerie islamique relativement apolitique, qui combat parfois la tendance dominante des pratiques de la sécurité.

Mots-clés

aumônerie pénitentiaire, dé-radicalisation, Islam, radicalisation, sécurité nationale

Introduction

A dominant trend of securitization is discernible in the development of Western societies, including the Netherlands (Balzacq, 2011; De Graaf, 2011). 'Security' has been moving up on the public agenda in media, politics, and government, which has incited a strong increase in the volume of means used in the name of national security. Since the 1980s, particularly in response to '9/11' and several bloody attacks in Europe conducted in the name of Islam, the Muslim community has been transformed into an object of security (Kaya, 2009; Cesari, 2010; Croft, 2012; De Koning, 2013, 2015). In the Netherlands, Salafis in particular are increasingly framed as a potential security threat to Western democracies. They are seen as susceptible to processes of radicalization, which can lead to extremism and terrorism.

This article addresses the issue of how the Dutch Islamic prison chaplaincy approaches alleged processes of radicalization among Muslims in Dutch prisons in 'the age of securitization' (Kaya, 2009). The main question is: What position does Dutch Muslim prison chaplaincy take with regard to the radicalization of detainees with a Muslim background and efforts to prevent and counter these processes? Related to this question, we will also examine the issue of whether or not radicalization and de-radicalization frequently occur in Dutch prisons.

In order to answer the research question, we will first (1) describe the process of securitization of Salafism in the Netherlands; (2) discuss the way we use contested concepts like radicalization and extremism in this article; and (3) describe the context and establishment of Muslim prison chaplaincy in the Netherlands. Next, we will (4) give a brief overview of recent research on the relation between detention, radicalization, and de-radicalization; and then (5) analyze the position Muslim prison chaplaincy takes with regard to the (anti-)radicalization of Muslim prisoners in terms of view and practice.

We will conclude with (6) a remark on the position of Islamic prison chaplaincy in a context that is almost completely focused on security.

There is still little known about the role (Muslim) chaplaincy plays in the complex relation between detainments and (de)radicalization. With this article, we aim to contribute to a better understanding of this role. Our exploratory research is partly based on an interview with Dr. Mohamed Ajouaou, head of the Section Islamic Spiritual Care at the Custodial Institutions Agency, and a written presentation by him on the role of prison imams in preventing and countering radicalism in Dutch prisons (Ajouaou, 2008, 2015).[1] In addition, we studied primary and secondary literature, including a document of the Section Islamic Spiritual Care on its mission and the function of spiritual counselors (Spiritual Care Department, 2016).

Securitization of Salafism

Over the last three decades, the scope of the security domain in the Netherlands has extended considerably, and the number of institutional bodies, legislative powers, and facilities in this domain has increased enormously. A process of *securitization* has been going on, which has led to what has been called 'the emergence of a national security state' (De Graaf, 2011: 16; Balzacq, 2011).

Since the late 1980s, Islam has become a major topic of security discussions and concerns (Cesari, 2010; De Graaf, 2011; Vellenga, 2011; De Koning, 2013, 2015). The Salafi movement in particular has come to be seen as problematic in the Netherlands in terms of security and integration.[2] This movement emerged in the mid-1980s. In 1986, the Saudi charity Al Haramain established the Foundation El Tawheed, thereby providing the foundation for a Salafi infrastructure in the Netherlands. In the 1990s, the network of the movement expanded with new Salafi mosques (the Al Fourqaan-Mosque in Eindhoven, the As-Soennah Mosque in The Hague, and the As-Soennah Mosque in Tilburg North), youth organizations, and charities. Within the Salafi movement, three currents are distinguished: apolitical Salafis, political Salafis, and Jihadi Salafis (De Koning, 2009). In 1998, the Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst (BVD; Internal Security Service) published the report, *De politieke islam in Nederland* (Political Islam in the Netherlands), in which it warned about the development of a radical undercurrent within the Muslim community in the Netherlands, termed 'the political Islam'.

In response to several bloody attacks in the USA and Europe in the name of Islam, and the rise of the anti-Islam movement in the Netherlands instigated by Pim Fortuyn in 2001, the Dutch security policy substantially changed, and the government developed a new policy on counterterrorism (De Graaf, 2011). New taskforces and departments on terrorism and counterterrorism were founded. In April 2004, the Nationale Coordinator voor Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid (NCTV; National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism and Security) was established in order to coordinate all bodies involved in the new counterterrorism policy and to promote a joint strategy. On 2 November 2004, Mohammed Bouyeri, a member of the so-called 'Hofstadgroep' of mainly Moroccan-Dutch youngsters that was labeled as a terrorist network, killed filmmaker Theo van Gogh. In December 2004, the AIVD[3] published the report *Van dawa tot jihad* (From Dawa to Jihad), and in 2007 it issued the report *Radicale dawa in verandering* (Radical

Dawa in Change), focusing on the threat of so-called Islamic homegrown terrorism and on the societal conditions under which this form of terrorism can develop. This threat was conceptualized in terms of polarization, radicalization, radicalism, extremism, jihadism, and terrorism. Both on the national and on the local level, authorities set up de-radicalization policies and programs in order to monitor, control, and counter tendencies of radicalism and extremism. These policies included both preventive as well as repressive, and general as well as person-directed, interventions. In 2009, the Ministry of Internal Affairs published the booklet *Wegwijzer Façadepolitiek* (Guide Façade Politics) to assist local governments and civil organizations to recognize the façade politics of Salafist groups. With this publication, the government declared every Salafist organization suspicious by definition.

From 2010 until 2014, the anti-radicalization programs in the Netherlands were scaled down. In November 2009, the official terrorism threat level, stipulated by the NCTV, decreased from level 4 (substantial) to level 3 (limited) on a scale from 1 to 5. Many central and local anti-radicalism programs were ended. However, with the rapidly growing number of Dutch jihadist foreign fighters in Syria from December 2012 onwards, the official threat level was raised again to 'substantial' in March 2013, where it has remained since then (Weggemans et al., 2014). In response to the elevated official threat level, the national government and many local authorities restarted anti-radicalization programs (De Graaf and Weggemans, 2018).

Terminology: Radicalization and de-radicalization

Concepts such as radicalization, de-radicalization, extremism, Jihadism, and terrorism are contested and have even been characterized as 'empty signifiers' (IMMRC and GISS, 2016). We do not dismiss these concepts but note that they are always context-related. What is perceived, for instance, as 'radical' in one situation, can be considered as 'normal' in another situation (Buijs et al., 2006; De Koning, 2015). The context here, then, is the post '9/11' era in the Netherlands. In this context, we will follow mainly the definitions that are used by Dutch security and legal authorities. According to the NCTV and the AIVD, *Jihadism* can be defined as 'a form of Islamic extremism glorifying the use of violence' (AIVD, 2017). These services identify *extremism* as 'the phenomenon in which people or groups consciously cross the limits of the law and conduct illegal actions in order to achieve their objectives' (AIVD, 2017). In a similar vein, but phrased more sociologically, we understand *radicalization* as the process in which individuals and/or groups retreat from and oppose dominant values, arrangements, and institutions (De Koning, 2015). *De-radicalization* is the opposite of radicalization: it is the process of becoming less extreme or radical. The terms can be applied both to beliefs and values, and to behavior. However, a change in behavior does not necessitate a fundamental change in values or ideals, just as, conversely, a cognitive shift does not imply, by definition, a change in behavior. The term *disengagement* refers to behavioral de-radicalization (Fink and Hearne, 2008; Noricks, 2009; Silke, 2011). It is important to realize that in the Dutch judicial system radical beliefs and thoughts are not illegal and punishable in contrast to extremist violent activities. Since 2004, *terrorism* has been defined broadly by Dutch security and legal authorities as 'ideologically motivated

actual or threatened violence against persons, property or the fabric of society, with the aim of bringing about social change, creating fear amongst the population or influencing the political decision-making process' (AIVD, 2017).

The making of Islamic prison chaplaincy

According to trend reports by Penal Reform International, the International Centre for Prison Studies, and Amnesty International, the *Dutch prison regime* is relatively mild in regular prisons (Van Eijk, 2016). The Custodial Institutions Agency (DJI) in the Netherlands distinguishes five types of penitentiary institutions: (1) Remand centers for adults held in pre-trial detention or serving short-term sentences; (2) Prisons for adults convicted of an offence; (3) Correctional institutions for juvenile offenders for young people convicted of an offence, between 12 and 18 years of age, up to a maximum of 23; (4) Forensic psychiatric centers for adults who have been convicted and require psychiatric care (patients); (5) Detention centers for foreign nationals living illegally in the Netherlands or refused access at the border and for drug couriers. During the last ten years, the number of detainees in these institutions has decreased. Due to the substantial decline in the number of registered serious crimes and the reduction of the duration of imprisonment, Dutch prisons are not overcrowded, as is the case in some other European countries (Van Eijk, 2016). For the period 2015–2021, the Ministry of Justice and Security is foreseeing a scenario in which the number of registered crimes will decline by 5 percent and the capacity of the penitentiary system will decline by 21 percent (Smit et al., 2016).

In connection to this, in penitentiary institutions, prisoners can access an ample supply of professional services and facilities, varying from psychological programs to vocational training. Each prisoner has his or her own cell and enjoys privacy. During the day, detainees follow a well-structured program (getting up, eating, training, working, sports, airing, and therapy). While group activities organized by prison chaplaincy during the week have to fit in a tight schedule, Sunday services and collective prayer on Friday provide a welcome opportunity to some of the detainees to get out of their cells (van Dun, 2011).

The Dutch Law on Spiritual Care orders penitentiary institutions to ensure that suitable *spiritual care* is available during any stay longer than 24 hours.[4] This law is based on Article 6 of the Dutch Constitution, which guarantees the *freedom of religion*: the state does not interfere with religion, but it facilitates the profession of one's religion or belief when people are taken into custody. Detainees should be allowed to express and exercise their religion as they would in regular life. Grounded in the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 9), this has been, and still is, the juridical foundation of spiritual care in the army as well as in prisons (Van Eijk, 2013: 19–74).

The Dutch system of prison chaplaincy is grounded in the Dutch tradition of public policy, which accommodates the heterogeneous composition of the population in terms of religion and secular worldviews. Although originally a Protestant country with a large Catholic minority, at present, nearly 70 percent of the Dutch population considers themselves as having 'no religion' (Bernts and Berghuijs, 2016). Muslims constitute 6 percent of the population and are not secularizing (Huijnk, 2018). The Dutch system of

dealing with religious diversity favors religions that are organized. In this sense, the Dutch model may be called an oligopoly (Grim and Finke, 2006; Yang, 2010; De Groot and Vellenga, 2018), which is rather different from the monopolies of the Anglican state-church in England and Wales and the Roman Catholic Church in France with its formal tradition of *laicité* (Beckford et al., 2005). It differs as well from a religious free market model, although the detainees' individual preferences for spiritual care play a large role in the distribution of the chaplaincy staff.

In the Dutch prison system, chaplains from eight denominations are appointed as civil servants. The state facilitates these denominations to provide chaplaincy using delegating authorities (*zendende instanties)*, which enable the Ministries of Defense and Justice to communicate with 'a religion'. Since 2006, these authorities cooperate in a Bureau for Spiritual Care, which started with a Protestant and a Catholic section, followed by a Jewish and a Humanist section, and representatives from the Islamic community in 2007 (Ajouaou and Bernts, 2015). Since then, the Hindu community and representatives of Buddhism have entered this system; the head of Protestant chaplaincy manages the Greek and Russian Orthodox chaplains. The proportion of each denomination in the total chaplaincy staff is guided by the preferences of the prisoners as expressed in a survey that is organized about every five years. The official system is therefore a mixture between state-regulated supply and market-guided demand.

Spiritual counselors are representatives of a religious community, which is supposed to discipline these counselors enough to be acceptable for a position in the military or judiciary system. In this way, the government can indirectly exclude independent, 'radical', or 'sectarian' spiritual counselors. At the operational level, spiritual counselors in prisons tend to rely on a ministry of presence (Klaver and Baart, 2011; Sullivan 2014). Less frequently, they report that they try to widen the prisoners' worldview (the dialogical model) or that they share their own religious motivations (the kerygmatic model) (Flierman, 2012).

Increasingly, the key word in the legitimization of spiritual care services in the state-regulated context is *security* (in addition to freedom of religion and belief) (Todd, 2013). The link with organized religions and the complex incorporation of their representatives into the governmental bureaucracy serve to warrant the legitimacy of these services. Moreover, since 9/11, the focus on the perspective of security has also penetrated the Ministry of Justice and Security, including its Spiritual Care Service, requiring that chaplains serve peace and order in prison (Van Eijk, 2013: 275–278). According to the perspective of religions, however, this is not the goal of spiritual care. Chaplains, as advocates of human dignity, may indeed consider it their duty to protest against prison authorities.

The first Muslim chaplains in custodial institutions were appointed in the 1990s (DJI, 2017a). These chaplains were salaried by the government on a freelance basis, since Islamic chaplaincy did not yet meet formal requirements, such as mastering the Dutch language, having a delegating authority, a head of chaplaincy, and academic training. In 2005, representatives from various Islamic backgrounds succeeded in forming one organization that could serve as a delegating authority and filed a request to the Minister of Justice. After negotiations, the Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid (CMO; the Muslims and the Government Liaison) was recognized by the Dutch government as the

Islamic delegating authority in 2007. This has favored the relative proportion of Muslim chaplaincy. Subsequent surveys among inmates still indicated a larger demand for Islamic chaplaincy than offered (Henneken-Hordijk and Mol, 2010). While the capacity for spiritual care has been reduced since 2008 to almost 50 percent, 18 percent is reserved for prison imams. The recent survey on religious preferences of detainees indicated that 27 percent of the prisoners with a preference for a chaplain of a specific denomination prefer an Islamic spiritual counselor (Inview Veldwerk, 2017). Following this result, the benchmark for prison imams will be increased to 27 percent, thus becoming the largest section, followed by the Roman Catholic chaplaincy (26 percent), and Protestant chaplaincy (15 percent).

In 2015, 150 spiritual counsellors for eight religions and spiritual movements were active, including 40 (full time equivalent) prison imams (DJI, 2017b). Among the 40 imams are six female employees. Most of the prison imams work in regular prisons and detention centers; a few are active in the two special Terrorist Departments that are part of the prisons in Vught and Rotterdam. Approximately 33 prisoners are incarcerated in these departments: likely 28 Jihadists and 5 extreme right radicals.

Radicalization and de-radicalization in prisons

Does detention promote the recruitment of 'ordinary' Muslim prisoners for jihadist networks? Do jihadists leave their networks under influence of detention? Which factors are significant? First, we will examine the factors that are highlighted in the literature, and then the factors that are significant according to the Section Islamic Spiritual Care.

Since the beginning of this century, the literature on radicalization and de-radicalization has exploded (Neumann, 2010; Silke, 2011; Weggemans and de Graaf, 2015). Three types of factors are often mentioned in both bodies of literature: *ideological* factors, *social* factors, and *practical* factors. Several researchers on radicalization point out that radicalization is rooted in a strong feeling of social injustice. They emphasize that extremism should be viewed as an expression of resistance to perceived forms of injustice (Silke, 2011). However, Madeline Morris et al. (2010: 4) conclude in a review of the literature that ideology 'is not *the* primary – or perhaps *a* primary – motivating factor for participation in terrorist organizations'; instead, social factors seem often to be more significant. Some authors found that the individual's adoption of a radical group's ideology occurs largely after the individual has joined the group (Bjørgo, 2009; Striegher, 2013). The importance of social factors, such as personal relationships, social networks, and a sense of community, in decisions to join extremist groups is widely shared (Sageman, 2004, 2008; Norricks, 2009; Neumann, 2010). Max Abrahms (2008: 96) summarizes: 'Empirical evidence is accumulating in terrorism studies and political psychology that individuals participate in terrorist organizations not to achieve their political platforms, but to develop strong affective ties with fellow terrorists'. In prison, 'ordinary' prisoners often come into contact with radical ideas due to contacts with radicalized fellow prisoners. Practical factors that can stimulate processes of radicalization are the longing for adventure or the desire to be important and carry responsibilities. The literature is equivocal on the role of financial incentives in motivations for joining radical groups.

Research on de-radicalization suggests that so-called *push* factors, which represent dissatisfaction with radical ideologies and networks, have a more direct effect on decisions to disengage than *pull* factors, or alternative attractions (Bjørgo, 2009; Mullins, 2010; Striegher, 2013). This implies that effective interventions should focus more on the negative aspects of participation than on presenting attractive alternatives. Disengagement, in the sense of renouncing violent behavior, seems to be a more realistic target of imprisonment than changing the prisoner's mindset and ideological beliefs (Silke, 2011). Moreover, *social* factors appear decisive in the process of de-radicalization. Sam Mullins (2010: 167) concludes: 'unsatisfactory group relations can sow seeds of discontent which ultimately lead to decreased commitment and de-radicalization'. Alongside social factors, *practical* issues can be important, including the simple fact that people become tired of demanding and risky activities, and desire to live a 'normal' life. Factors such as stigmatization of and negative media attention to jihadists can be a high barrier to re-socialization (Fletcher and Stover, 2009).

Islamic chaplaincy, radicalization, and de-radicalization

As mentioned above, Dr. Mohamed Ajouaou is head of the Section Islamic Spiritual Care of the Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen (DJI, Custodial Institutions Agency), which is part of the Ministry of Justice and Security. In his work, he makes a fundamental distinction between *religion/religiosity* and *ideology*. Important aspects of religiosity include beliefs, knowledge, meaning, and praxis. The concept of ideology refers to the view on the *ummah*, the relation between Muslims and non-Muslims, the application of the *sharia*, the relation between religion and politics, the legitimacy to use violence to achieve religious-political goals, homosexuality, etc. According to Ajouaou, radicalization refers to the category of ideology and not to the category of religiosity: 'Radicalization and jihadism do not have any link with religiosity as such'. Radicalization is not connected with religiosity but only with (political) ideology.

Obviously, Ajouaou's distinction between religion and ideology serves a clear *interest*. It justifies the claim that Islam as a religion is always respectable and should always be treated accordingly by the state and state institutions, although it is sometimes intertwined with reprehensible ideologies. Ajouaou does not make a distinction between 'good religion' and 'bad religion', but between 'religion' and 'good or bad ideology'. By doing this, he is taking the position that every detainee deserves support in his or her way of believing and he gives a clear *justification* of the work of this department, namely, offering Islamic spiritual care to all Muslim prisoners in Dutch detention facilities, independent of their ideological positions.

It is important to notice that Dutch prison imams do *not* use the concept of 'radicalization' in their approach to detainees, although they acknowledge that prisoners can go through this process and are aware that there are serious concerns about this in Dutch politics and society (Meer and Ledegang, 2017). Starting from a more person-oriented perspective, they try to approach prisoners primarily as persons, and not as (potential) radicals, in contrast to other professionals in the prison system who operate from a security perspective. Mohamed Ajouaou states:

The term 'radicalization' is quite dominant in the current world of politics, justice and policy which forces us to use this term too, sometimes. However, we do not approach prisoners primarily from this perspective and we leave it to others to report on it. We do not consider that as our main business. Looking at prisoners through the glasses of security can easily result in a narrow view. We are aware of that and approach each prisoner as a person. (Interview M. Ajouaou, Amsterdam, 29 October 2016; translation by the authors)

The specific position of prison imams as both civil servants and representatives of the recognized Islamic Delegating Authority creates the space for having their own approach towards processes of radicalization and de-radicalization in prison. Prison imams use this space by approaching all prisoners, radicalized or not, primarily as persons 'from a social and human point of view.' (Ajouaou, 2015: 3). It is remarkable that radicalization does not seem to occur very often in Dutch detention facilities. According to Ajouaou, radicalization is not a real problem at the moment: 'Radicalization is not a big issue in Dutch prisons. Radicalization seems to be almost non-existent in our facilities. However, it always remains a concern' (Interview M. Ajouaou, 29 October 2016: translation by the authors).

It is estimated that between 2006 and 2014, 80 persons have been detained in the two Terrorist Departments (Weggemans and De Graaf, 2015: 11). With regard to the de-radicalization of prisoners in these departments, disengagement seems to be the trend, although there are indications that some prisoners go through a process a de-radicalization of beliefs. An example is Jason Walters, another member of the 'Hofstadgroup'. He was sentenced to 15 years' incarceration in March 2006 and was released in May 2013. He wrote an open letter, stating:

The ideals I once fostered are gone and I'm aware now that they are morally bankrupt. With horror I view that the high-sounding 'fight for freedom,' which promised to be the beginning of a new, just world turned into a bloody escalation of violence, sectarianism and religious madness, in particular in Iraq. Unprecedented cruelties and crimes have been committed [. . .] This forced me to review my point of view critically, which led to the awareness that it is no longer tenable. (Walters, 2010; translation by the authors)

The intriguing follow-up question is why radicalization seems to be almost absent in Dutch prisons and why disengagement seems to be the trend in Dutch Terrorist departments, and consequentially, which role prison imams play with respect to these trends.

The answer to these questions is rather complex, since many factors are involved, and the available data are limited. However, we highlight three factors, all mentioned by Ajouaou in the interview and in harmony with the aforementioned literature on radicalization and de-radicalization in prisons. Firstly, related to the fact that the Dutch prison system is not overcrowded with detainees, there are *ample provisions* of psychological, social, and practical services. Consequently, in Dutch prisons, detainees are busy and follow well-organized programs during the day. In fact, Ajouaou commented in a tongue-in-cheek remark: 'Prisoners hardly have time to radicalize'.

Secondly, there is a *separation* between radical or extremist and non-radical/ extremist prisoners (Neumann, 2010). Prisoners who have been convicted for being involved in terrorist activities are incarcerated in specific Terrorist Departments; all other prisoners are detained in 'ordinary' prison facilities. This arrangement minimizes

the risk of recruitment by other detainees in ordinary prisons or, in other words, the risk of 'contamination'.

Thirdly, there is the factor of the character and work of *Islamic prison chaplaincy*. Four aspects can be mentioned. In the first place, prison imams have been appointed as public servants to offer religious counseling and spiritual care to detainees. The application procedure is strict. Job requirements and selections minimize the appointment of imams with a radical background, and supervision and professionalization minimize the chance that they will radicalize on the job (Section Islamic Spiritual Care, 2016). Next, prison imams try to facilitate the religious needs of the prisoners as adequately as possible. This not only includes spiritual counseling, but also advice on religious practicalities such as halal food, prayer times, religious feasts, wearing head scarves, and wearing a beard (Post, 2005). The generous facilitation of the religious preferences of detainees by prison imams is partly inspired by the assumption that by doing this, religiosity will not become a point of contention for prisoners, which in turn reduces the risk of radicalization. At the same time, prison imams try to convey to Muslim detainees Islamic views that exclude radicalization or offer a counterbalance to it. Based on the aforementioned distinction between religiosity and ideology, they try to facilitate the confession of religion as much as possible and, at the same time, offer a moderate Islamic ideological view, which undermines radical ideologies. Ajouaou says: 'Radicalism is not an issue of orthodoxy, but of ideology'. Furthermore, the social dimension is significant. Speaking about Muslim extremists, Ajouaou points out that experience has shown that there is little point in having theological discussions with them as they are often firmly convinced that they are right. Sometimes, however, they appear to be sensitive to the consequences of their behavior for their parents, partners, and children, even in cases where they have depreciated them ideologically. Prison imams try to make them more aware of these consequences and to influence their emotional loyalties. Moreover, prisons imams work selectively with volunteers who wish and are able to contribute to re-socialization during detention and aftercare after detention. Radical volunteers are refused. Dutch Islamic prison chaplaincy does not honor requests from foreign powers or networks that wish to get in touch with Muslim detainees (Ajouaou, 2015). Finally, next to these ideological and social elements, practical activities are relevant. Prison imams see it as their responsibility to contribute to the humane treatment of detainees. According to their job description, they have to contribute to the denominational policy 'in promoting a humane detention climate and care tailored to the detainees within the facility' (Spiritual Care Department, 2016: 1). If they notice things occurring that do not adhere to this policy, they contact other prison staff members or prison directors.

Conclusion

During the last decades, Salafism has come to be seen by Dutch politicians, members of the government, and security authorities as *a threat*, and thus subject to the perceptions and actions that align with the concern for national security. Deep concerns are regularly expressed about processes of radicalization, especially in Muslim circles. It is true that according to the Dutch judicial system, radical religious beliefs and thoughts are not illegal; this is in contrast to radical or extremist violent behavior in the name of religion.

Nevertheless, the state attempts to combat radical beliefs as much as possible by, for instance, disseminating counter narratives in media, information programs, and education. However, the state is limited in its ability to influence civilians. Due to the fundamental right of freedom of religion and belief, and the principle of separation between church and state, people, either individually or in community with others, enjoy, to a high extent, the freedom to develop and hold their own beliefs and worldviews.

In prisons, the state has more opportunities to combat radicalism. In the Dutch prison system, many professionals monitor and coach detainees from a security perspective. Recently, specific prison civil servants have been trained in countering radicalization in penitentiary institutions (Meer and Ledegang, 2017). Focusing on the service of spiritual care, the state has the possibility to appoint, for example, only non-radical prison imams. This service has been organized according to oligopoly dynamics, namely: an expansive system of delegating authorities representing a broad variety of religious and secular sections of the Dutch population, but excluding more radical religious groups.

However, even in the setting of a prison, the process of securitization is not absolute. The legal basis of prison chaplaincy provides the state not only with the opportunity to exclude representatives of radical religious communities from becoming part of the Islamic chaplaincy, but it also gives chaplains the freedom to adopt their own approach towards prisoners. It allows chaplains to approach detainees as persons from their own perspectives, which relativizes the security perspective. Because of this, spiritual caregivers have the opportunity to counterbalance the sometimes understandable but one-sided approach of the state in a period of securitization, and to play a critical role.

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Notes

1. The interview took place at 28 October 2016. We are very grateful to Dr Mohamed Ajouaou for giving us the opportunity to interview him.
2. In comparison to, for example, the United Kingdom, in the Netherlands the Salafi movement is much more popular than other radical groups, such Hizb ut-Tahrir or Tablighi Jamaat, which attract mainly Muslims with an Indian or Pakistani background. The Indian and Pakistani communities in the Netherlands are very small.
3. In 2002, the BVD was renamed in Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst (General Intelligence and Security Service).
4. 'Spiritual care' (*geestelijke verzorging)* is the official term for (prison) chaplaincy, including Islamic prison chaplaincy.

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