Beyond the Domestication of Islam
A Reflection on Research on Islam in European Societies

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Opgedragen aan mijn ouders, Zus (†) en Toek Sunier (†)

RECTOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Within two decades Islam in European societies has developed from an issue of minor academic interest into one of the fastest growing research fields in Europe. The main cause for this is no doubt the necessity felt on the part of national and local governments to take account of the presence of some 15 million Muslims in the European Union today.[1] As a consequence, the integration of Muslims into European societies has become a highly politicized central research focus. Research agendas on Islam in Europe increasingly follow the political priorities and goals formulated by national and local governments. One of the results of this is that research periods tend to be shorter and there is less time for long-term in-depth research. Research tends to revolve around the question of how Muslims integrate into European societies and what challenges this entails for these societies. By concentrating mainly on what policy makers and the public opinion deem important, theoretical concepts, thematic foci and methodological approaches are shaped around these policy-informed questions. Integration has developed from a political priority into a scientific paradigm with its own epistemological assumptions, problem definitions, communicative devices and citation communities, which in turn feeds into policy agendas.

Recent dramatic events such as the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on the 11th of September 2001, subsequent attacks in Madrid and London, and the murder on Theo van Gogh, have invigorated the urge to monitor everything that is done by Muslims. The combination of a deracinated migrant youth and an unpredictable 'globalized Islam', as described by Olivier Roy (2002), is said to form a dangerous and easily inflammable mix (see also Kepel 2006). Muslims are often depicted as proverbial aliens, adherents of a 'border-defying global Islam' (Silverstein, 2005; see also Samad & Sen 2007), with irreconcilable cultural differences with the West. Be it the riots in the suburbs of Paris or Amsterdam, the formation of radical political cells in many poor quarters of big cities, the existence of no-go areas in those cities, sexual harassment of girls, or the simple hanging around of youngsters on public squares, apparently they all point to the same problematic. Bernard Lewis has written that after the Crusades and the encroachment of the Ottoman Turks in the seventeenth century, we are now facing Islam's third confrontation with the West (Lewis 2002). Samuel Huntington foresees a 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington 1997), and the conservative American journalist Caldwell published a book this year with the ominous title: *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe. Can Europe be the same with different people in it?* Caldwell blames European countries for being too indecisive in the face of a growing 'Muslim problem'. Instead of taking the massive immigration seriously and forcing Muslims to assimilate, European governments look away and ignore the problem (Caldwell 2009). Many more authors express a deep worry about, in their eyes, an uncontrollable force coming from outside. Some arrive at the conclusion that there is an unbridgeable cultural gap between Muslims and the rest of the populations of Europe. Others point to the urgency of a civilizing mission in the wake of an 'unmistakable Islamization of Europe'. An increasing number of politicians consider security, containment, and control of Islam crucial tenets of political decision-making.

As a result of these worries, integration of Islam has been charged with strong normative underpinnings centering on the basic question of whether Islam fits within a

European self-understanding and self-identification that is rooted in the 'Ancient Mediterranean', and the Renaissance, culminating in the Enlightenment (Friedman 1992: 195). The 'quest for a European Islam', and whether this can exist at all, is one of the most sensitive and topical issues of the public debate in the past decades.

I call the political programs that emanate from the complex relationship between integration, and political priorities of security and national identity, the 'domestication of Islam'. Domestication is a process of governance, containment and pacification based on national identity politics. It is a process that is in the first place and self-evidently about integration of Islam into European societies. But in fact it is more explicitly about the character of nation states and the challenges they face. Domestication politics revolve around the question of how national states should deal with the presence of Islam in all its perceived facets.[2] Since domestication involves a good deal of monitoring and control of religion, it also implies an intervention in the very content of Islamic practices and convictions. Different nation-states have historically grown, nationally specific modes of dealing with religious difference, so the domestication of Islam takes on nationally specific features and outlooks.[3] Most of the semi scientific reports on policy development take the Islamic challenge as their point of departure.[4]

One of the effects of the spread of domestication policies across Europe is that research agendas tend to focus almost exclusively on the political priorities of domestication and governance. The governance of Islam is the fastest growing focus of research on Islam in Europe (see e.g. Bader 2007; Fetzer and Soper 2005). Moreover, there are serious indications that research on Islam in Europe is gradually narrowing down to issues of security, deviant behaviour and culture clash. One of the major consequences of the one-sided emphasis on governance, national identity politics, and integration and security in the study of Islam in Europe is that it conceals and ignores certain issues and trends that might be very important.[5] This has produced a paradoxical situation. Whereas Islam in particular has become the common denominator for a wide range of phenomena, attitudes and developments, as fields of research religious practices and the production of religious knowledge among Muslims have suffered from programmatic concealment and downright neglect. Despite some good studies in the field of anthropology and theology that deal with religious practices among Muslims in Europe, in most research a normative understanding of Islam seems to be taken for granted.

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF DOMESTICATION

It is tempting to attribute domestication politics, with its emphasis on governance, containment and security, predominantly to '9/11', not least because this event is often adduced as legitimization for fundamental policy changes across Europe in the past decade. The roots of domestication, however, must be sought in the immigration policies of European countries of the early 1980s. In those years a gradual shift took place from an emphasis on the economic absorbing mechanisms of host societies to the cultural characteristics of the migrant populations. Migrants became increasingly visible on the streets and in neighborhoods where they settled with their families. They represented the growing cultural diversity in the public realm in European cities. Labor migrants were now called 'ethnic minorities', or 'cultural

minorities', terms that referred to their ethnic and cultural background in their countries of origin.

A similar shift could be observed in studies on migration. Already in the late 1970s there were scholars from very different disciplinary backgrounds who criticized the one-sided emphasis on economic and social assimilation mechanisms in the host countries in many studies on immigration. Little attention was paid to the origins of migrants, out of what type of society they came, what economic, social and not least cultural backgrounds they had. Thus Shanin argued that: "[…] no simplistic 'background' which 'disintegrates' under the impact of 'capitalism' will do; there must be a more substantial analysis of actual happenings" (1978: 283). Shanin not only criticized the assumption that labor migrants would be absorbed completely by the European economic system, he also blamed the economic ignorance of 'background': "[…] labor migrants carry aspects of peasanthood not only in the traces of the past, but also in terms of actual relations and contacts, both real and imaginary *(but remember the dreams, especially in political context)"* (italics by me, T.S.) (1978: 286). Shanin nowhere used the word culture, but he was very well aware of the importance of the social and cultural backdrop of labor migration.[6]

In the course of the 1980s culture became a fundamental concept with which the background of migrants could be understood and explained at the cost of other factors such as economic structure and social context in the host countries.[7] This has been referred to as 'culturalism'.[8] Initially people from around the Mediterranean (Muslim and non-Muslim) were lumped together under the heading 'Mediterranean culture', but in the course of the 1980s 'Muslim culture' emerged as separate explanatory category. Scholars of Islam and social scientists found each other in minute descriptions of organizational patterns, habits and duties, confessional outlooks and attitudes towards their new cultural environment. Their main aim was to demonstrate the fundamental cultural differences between Muslims and the rest of society. 'Muslim culture' rendered an almost timeless character and turned from a 'category of practice' into a 'category of analysis' (cf. Brubaker & Cooper 2000).

These descriptions constituted the 'evidence' which politicians and social servants needed to develop their policies. The emergence of 'Muslim culture' as an analytical category occurred at a time when a series of international events, of which the Iranian revolution was no doubt the most important, turned Islam into an issue of prime political interest. More generally, the growth of Islamic political activism in many countries in the Middle East, the growing religious awareness among Muslims in Europe and in the Middle East, together with the increasing visibility of Muslims in the streets of European cities, coincided with the general idea that religion in Europe had successfully withdrawn from the public realm (Rath & Sunier 1994). Religious difference became a key to understanding Muslims' reluctant attitudes towards a secularizing host society (according to some), and the key to understanding their marginal position in societies that are based on Christian values (according to others).[9]

In the early 1990s most governments in Western Europe were becoming increasingly concerned about how to 'integrate' Muslims into their societies, each according to their own political frameworks. It was already clear that most migrants would stay permanently and that Islam would be a constant element in the political and social fabric of society. This was of course not something new,[10] but unmistakably new was the strong emphasis on the

juxtaposition of the perceived liberal and secular foundations of West-European nation-states and the religious traditionalism that Muslim immigrants were said to carry with them. The fact that the vast majority of Muslims in Europe have a migrant background makes them into crucial pivots in mediatised and highly sensitive debates on modernity and religion, secularism, integration, identity and belonging in all countries in Europe with sizable Muslim populations. It is a debate about the perceived incompatibility between world views, about the 'clash of civilizations', and not least about the future character of European nation-states in an age of globalization. This debate also includes state neutrality, governance and the management of difference.[11] In the mid 1990s the former secretary-general of the NATO Willy Claes declared Islamic fundamentalism the successor of communism as the prime threat to 'Western civilization and liberty'. But the most well-known and most explicit politician who expressed his concerns in those days was the leader of the Dutch liberal party Bolkestein in his address to the 'Liberal International' in Luzern in 1991. In his speech he called on European societies to be aware of the presence of Muslims and to think about how 'we' should relate to Islam and to 'our' own liberal roots (Bolkestein 1991). Bolkestein referred not so much to the assumed effects of Islam on the individual migrant's attitude, but to the place of Islam as a religious denomination in Western political communities. The presence of Muslims is not just a matter of integration of newcomers; rather it is an issue, according to Bolkestein, that touches on the very roots of European civilization. Bolkestein set the tone of a debate and a political priority that determines political processes in all of Europe today. Although these debates and political arrangements take on different forms and different courses in different countries of Europe, they all revolve around the same question: how to cope with a new Muslim presence. It should be emphasized that these concerns rest on the assumption that with modernity, religion has been effectively relegated to the private sphere. Secularism in the sense of the separation of religion and state, state neutrality, and a decrease of religiosity and religious practices, is a very strong underlying ideological element in domestication policies.

Some have argued that the end of the Cold War and the deeper involvement of the West in the Middle East after the Gulf War in 1991 were the main causes for this 'domestic turn' in European politics concerning Islam, but as I already indicated, international developments only invigorated the felt necessity to formulate political agendas to contain Islam. Not even the often brought up 'Rushdie Affair' can in itself account for this shift.[12] The roots must be sought in the politics of immigration and integration in nation-states in Western Europe. The terrorist attacks during the present decade and the 'war on terror' have only strengthened anxieties about global events and have led to a further inward turn of European nation-states, a process of 'social closure'(Geschiere & Meyer 1998).

BEYOND THE DOMESTICATION OF ISLAM
I take a critical stance towards the dominant conceptual grip in which much of the present-day research on Islam in Europe finds itself. Each epoch has its own research questions (and answers) and research topics. They emerge under specific historical and political circumstances. The present-day prominence of the domestication politics has historical and political foundations. It is the product of a particular historical conjuncture. Many of the

issues that have been raised in the past two decades must be understood in that political and historical context.

Yet, I maintain that although politicians and policy makers remain obsessed with integration, civilization clashes and radicalization; researchers, instead of following suit, should critically discuss results and outcomes and set the parameters for future research. As researchers we have to realize that Islam has become a politicized topic par excellence. It follows that research on Islam is politically relevant almost by definition. Yet, political relevance does not imply that researchers should blindly follow the political priorities of domestication. If we really want to understand what is going on among Muslims in Europe and how Islam is evolving, first of all we should demonstrate that all aspects and dimensions of Islam in Europe are relevant and not just the problematic issues that reach the press. Religion continues to be an active social force also in Western societies and we should go beyond the narrow confines of the secularization thesis (see Casanova 1994; De Vries 2008).

There are particularly three fields that in my view have suffered from academic neglect. The first field concerns everyday practices of Islam as we can observe them in local settings such as neighborhoods. The strong emphasis on Islam as an issue of friction and conflict in society has reduced local neighborhoods into containers of a wide variety of problems ranging from criminality to social isolation. Practices and outlooks of ordinary Muslims do not get the academic attention they deserve. As a result there is hardly any research on the production of everyday Islam in European cities that starts from the perspective of local Muslims.

The second field concerns religiousness among young Muslims in Europe. Since Muslim youth, crime and politics are prime political topics across Europe, there is a tendency in research to focus exclusively on radicalization and deviant problematic behavior. Research grants and research commissionaires tend to favor these issues over much more widespread and non-problematic forms of religious engagement, expression and experience.

The third field concerns Islamic leadership and sources of religious authority. Leadership among Muslims in Europe is a highly politicized and highly sensitive issue. This is certainly the result of the alleged negative influence that leaders, especially those 'from abroad', would exert on Muslims. Although their role in the building of Islamic communities is overemphasized, there is hardly any thorough research carried out on the making of religious leadership among Muslims in Europe.

I consider the further exploration of these three fields, which I will elaborate below, crucial for the development of my research agenda in the years to come.

Locality and the 'practice of everyday Islam'
When it turned out that Mohammed Bouyeri, the murderer of filmmaker Theo van Gogh, had been an active member of the local community in his neighborhood in Amsterdam, many people were bewildered. How could a well integrated man who had spent almost his whole life in the Netherlands, turn into a vicious murderer inspired by radical Islamic ideologies? Or rather, how can a radical violent Muslim also be a member of the local community? One could easily explain this anomaly away by pointing at the changes Bouyeri went through when he came in contact with radical ideas and ideologies. His born-again radicalism was a second life. One can also suggest that Bouyeri wasn't really integrated in the local

community, as proven by his flirtation with radical Islamic ideologies. And there are always people who are ready to testify that Bouyeri, like many other young Moroccans in the neighborhood, had always been 'a pain in the ass' rather than a decent community member.

But there is yet another more widespread explanation. In 2005 the Dutch journalist Margalith Kleijwegt published a book titled *Onzichtbare ouders* (Invisible parents) with the subtitle *the neighborhood of Mohammed B*. It is a depressing description based on observations and interviews with inhabitants of that neighborhood. The journalist presents an image of a local residential area that consists of a majority of 'foreign' (read: Muslim) inhabitants and a minority of Dutch who live completely separated from each other. Kleijwegt's conclusion is that a neighborhood such as this one in fact produces young men like Mohammed Bouyeri. These kinds of descriptions, however, tell us more about how local neighborhoods are perceived today, than they attempt to understand 'locality' in present-day so-called multi-ethnic neighborhoods. Descriptions such as these largely contribute to the biased image we have of old urban neighborhoods with a high proportion of Muslim inhabitants. It is a view from outside and from above in which the local Muslim population is portrayed as caught in a local drama written and directed in 'the Islamic world'. Muslims do not act or think, they behave on the basis of fixed normative religious schemes. The Bouyeris, but also the troublemaking youths, are frustrated products of this dispersed community.

Older neighborhoods with a relatively high proportion of Muslim inhabitants in cities like Manchester, Amsterdam, Berlin or Paris are portrayed as arenas of contestation and struggle over scarce resources, where violent confrontations between groups of inhabitants are rule rather than exception, and where there is no social cohesion at all. It is this image that stood behind the many analyses and explanations of the riots in some suburbs of Paris in 2005. Such neighborhoods, according to this view, have turned into 'loci of mega identity politics', where excitable speech and violent confrontations inspired by extremist cultural and religious ideologies are the only effective political instruments. The local population is variously portrayed as a numb, poorly integrated and poorly educated majority that cannot integrate and that is still caught up in myriads of transnational ties and obligations. A population that lives completely isolated from the rest of society. Also as a rebellious and trouble-making second generation that refuses to integrate into society, and last but not least a minority of 'indigenous' inhabitants that are the real victims of it all.

There is a rather long tradition of neighborhood research in Western Europe. Many of these studies were inspired by the research of Americans Park and Burgess in the mid twentieth century. Park and Burgess (1925) started their research on immigration and urban development back in the 1930s and showed how successive waves of migrants were absorbed into American cities. Most of the neighborhood research that took place in the late 1970s and 1980s in Europe focused on patterns of interethnic and interreligious relationship as they developed in neighborhoods with an increasing number of immigrants.[13] The main issue in most of these projects was the question of how integration of newcomers took shape at a local level and how relations with the rest of the population developed. 'Neighborhood' was a scalar term, a geographical description of an area surrounded by administrative boundaries. The neighborhood was society in microcosm. Ethnic and racial tensions, but also practices of good neighborliness that took place were perceived as local variants of national trends and

developments, but with its own dynamics. Most of these studies at least took the local community as a point of departure and offered adequate and detailed descriptions of life in the neighborhood. There was, however, hardly any theorizing about what local community actually entailed and how locality was related to the wider society.

Towards the end of the 1990s this genre was gradually replaced by an approach that reduced the neighborhood to a magnifying glass where 'national' problems of integration and ethnic tension become manifest. The neighborhood is now predominantly conceived as an area consisting of poorly integrated elderly migrants of Islamic origin, who live completely isolated, youngsters that cause trouble, mosques that house radical cells, imams that are led by foreign powers and a variety of other problem-causing groups and phenomena. As a result a parallel society emerges, an image that fuels anxieties about society falling apart. The term 'common man' that is often applied by populist politicians, refers to the so-called indigenous population that is said to be the real victim of this (dis)integration process. The scope of most contemporary neighborhood research centers around the question how society can get a grip on these 'multicultural' problems and how 'foreign cultures' can be domesticated effectively.

Neighborhoods are thus increasingly studied top-down, from the perspective of the social engineers of integration and national security. This helicopter view with its superimposed schemes of identity and coherence has profoundly influenced our perceptions of local communities.[14] It dehumanizes inhabitants and reduces them to governmental policy categories. At the same time it is a particular manifestation of methodological nationalism, the equation of 'society' with the nation-state.[15] The nation-state is perceived as the only legitimate and 'natural' perspective from which social phenomena are analyzed. Sociological categories and concepts are structured on a national format.

The assumption that 'national models' provide a key to understanding the process of integration of Islam is partly informed by the numerous studies that have been published in the past decades that compare national contexts.[16] Although many of these studies offer valuable comparative insights in national politics on Islam, it should be emphasized that the national dimension is not the only, nor necessarily the most important dimension of analysis. This depends to a large extent on the context, the characteristics of the particular issues that are at stake, and not least on the questions raised.

Focusing exclusively on the national dimension runs the risk of ignoring the dynamics of locality. A top-down approach does no justice to all kinds of local practices, strategies, coping mechanisms, initiatives and networks that are developed in order to reach out to fellow inhabitants and build up the texture of the local community and that can only be understood in its local context. Since these practices cannot be gauged and directly evaluated in terms of national integration results, they are generally discarded. Goodwill that exists among local inhabitants and their ability to build local community across ethnic and religious dividing lines is ignored, not only by policy makers but also by researchers.

In the 1990s I conducted research in some neighborhoods in the city of Rotterdam (Sunier1996). My initial aim was to provide a picture of the activities of local Turkish Islamic associations in the city. Most of them ran a mosque and provided religious and social services to Turkish migrants. Initially I approached these associations as the local branches of Turkish Islamic movements that have their headquarters in Germany or Turkey. Although the relation between local organizations and national and transnational networks did constitute an

important aspect of the local political agenda, local neighborhood dynamics turned out to be at least as important. In fact there were contradicting forces exerting influence upon the local associations. Some members of local boards felt frustrated in their attempts to root their organization in the local community. Municipalities treated them as representatives of 'the' Turkish community and judged them on their contribution to the integration programs. The headquarters of the Islamic movement to which the local association belonged demanded internal organizational loyalty. But the daily dynamics of the local neighborhood community were often far more relevant for the decision-making process. The contradictory requirements from 'above' were re-appropriated and became an inherent aspect of the local political strategies. Put differently, national and transnational influences were an integral part of the dynamics of locality. Decisions taken by local leaders often went against the grain of municipal policies, or against the Islamic movement's agenda. Without any insight into what local dynamics imply, it is easy to accuse local community leaders of obstruction and troublemaking. Yet, the most effective local association leaders were those who were able to develop an adequate level of 'local sensitivity' and follow their intuition. There was much more local knowledge available than municipal policy makers admitted. These local insights were hardly ever recognized and understood by officials.[17] It is impossible to assess the effectiveness of local strategies with preconceived standards of judgment.

It was not only political strategy that was at stake. Many Muslims developed a sense of religion that reflected their local rootedness in diverse and fascinating ways, without cutting off links with their roots. The local neighborhood, not necessarily the administrative area with official boundaries, is a site of everyday practices that link global processes with the fabric of daily human experience. This means that we should adopt a bottom-up approach and explore how ordinary people make sense of the world around them and how everyday circumstances co-shape religious experience.[18] In my research I noticed that the rather simplistic notions of belonging that characterize the integration discourse were often refuted. Municipal officials on the other hand often discarded these local experiences. I often came across desperate social servants who complained about the fact that 'these foreigners do not follow neighborhood boundaries in their social networks'. Some even arrived at the conclusion that 'Muslims have problems with the whole idea of a neighborhood'.

I contend that a thorough analysis of the dynamics of locality provides us with crucial insights into the making of everyday Islam. These insights are extremely relevant for a better understanding of how Islam takes shape in European societies and how local 'practices of everyday Islam' emerge that do not necessarily fit into the grand narrative of integration and progress, or into the discourses of radicalization that obsess the media and politics. If we continue to confine research agendas to top-down integration policies, we will overlook important developments taking place at a local level, and above all we discard the agency among 'localized' Muslims. Locality is not about fencing off from the rest of society and from global influences. This is a misinterpretation of the complexities of local networks and their relations with the wider society. 'Local' does not imply social closure per se. The production of locality is about how to make national and global flows and pressures into meaningful local experiences and packages of knowledge.

How should we assess these issues? Here Arjun Appadurai offers a promising approach. How should we define locality, he enquires, in a world that is "dramatically delocalized" because of globalization (1995: 204). Locality is a relational and contextual rather than a spatial and scalar concept. It enables certain kinds of agency and certain kinds of networks and it produces certain kinds of subjects. Locality in its relational dimension should not be considered an opposing force vis-à-vis national politics and transnational networks and ideologies but as an integral part of it. What is the relation between locality as an aspect of social life and neighborhood as a substantive social form? In other words: "what can locality mean in a world where spatial localization, quotidian interaction and social scale are not always isomorphic?" (ibid.).

Locality is indeed a fragile social condition that must be reproduced and re-established constantly. The common vision of locality, however, is that where local communities were formerly stable social networks, now, under the cumulative effects of modernity, scale enlargement, bureaucratic centralization, and not least immigration, they have been reduced to isolated plots of population. Ethnic or religious tensions within communities, that are an undeniable aspect of daily life, must be analyzed not through an outdated image of who are the 'established' and who are the 'outsiders', but as a constant process of rooting. [19] Locality is about producing reliable locals (Appadurai 1995). This has always played a vital role in local communities and Muslims have been an integral part of that process for decades. Much of what has been written on local neighborhoods could well be reinterpreted along these lines. Once we understand this process, we are able to 'see' how locality, community and everyday culture are produced and how we should assess this in research.

The same holds true for 'Islamic culture'. In much integration literature Islam is taken as a normative system that exerts influence 'from outside' upon Muslims in whatever setting and under whatever circumstances, without taking into consideration the local 'cultural intimacy' (cf. Herzfeld 2005). Muslims are portrayed either as border-defying outsiders, or completely isolated individuals. I propose instead to introduce the concept of 'everyday Islam' to denote practices and outlooks that connect quotidian experiences, networks and interactions with Islamic reasoning. Locality in this sense refers to a particular Islamic engagement. It should not be confused with the concept of 'folk Islam' that is often applied by scholars of Islam denoting non-orthodox religious practices. 'Everyday Islam' is certainly not a theological variant of Islam. It is a concept of practice and it refers to agency and reflexivity of local subjects. 'The practice of everyday Islam' as a concept offers a way to explore Islam in European cities whilst avoiding the pitfalls of 'social engineering'.[20]

It is the bottom-up approach to the reproduction and interpretation of Islam by localized subjects. Such an approach offers an important alley for the study of local Islam in Europe, not least because it helps us to understand such apparent inconsistencies as the non-Muslim neighbor of a Muslim family voting for anti-Islam politicians, yet at the same time getting along well with the neighbors. It also helps us to understand that the Mohammed Bouyeris of this world are no anomalies, not misfits, produced by a disintegrating neighborhood. It offers the possibility of taking everyday living Islam out of the tight schemes of identity politics and integration trajectories, and at the same time frees it from the grip of normative orthodoxy, or political activism. We should investigate practices, social networks and ideas that tell us more about how Islam is reproduced, lived and experiences by ordinary

people in ordinary quotidian circumstances. It helps us to really understand how people make sense of the world around them. It provides for us insights into the origins of conflicts and also into forms of cooperation that tend to be overlooked by the present-day fast research projects.

There are a variety of ways to assess practices of everyday Islam as an integral part of local everyday life. One is of course a detailed anthropological account of daily networks, practices and local rituals in residential areas, in other words by doing decent anthropological fieldwork. The increasing pressure to carry out research in the shortest possible time has made it almost impossible to collect relevant data. But it is not just a matter of time; it is first and foremost the perspective with which we assess daily practices. It is of vital importance to include everyday resistance of local Muslims not as a sign of unwillingness to integrate into society, but as what De Certeau calls practices to confront order and discipline of powerful institutions.[21] The so-called 'Polder moskee' in Amsterdam offers a nice illustration here.[22] The initiators of this mosque, where Dutch is the lingua franca, aim at providing a genuine Dutch Islamic institution. The way the project was framed was also a clear message to those who still consider Islam to be an outside intruder that has to be domesticated. There are similar initiatives in other cities in other countries in Europe. We can also think of the many local initiatives that are called multicultural that can be found in practically all neighborhoods in European cities. In many of those initiatives Muslims play a crucial role and as such they provide a clue as to how Islam is reproduced and reinterpreted in local circumstances.

Another way to assess everyday Islam is by collecting personal accounts, life histories and 'ego-documents' that relate to everyday life experiences. There are already a considerable number of these documents, published or unpublished. These should be reinterpreted to explore everyday Islam. It is also crucial to set up systematic research that deals with life histories of Muslims in Europe and the history of Islam in Europe at the same time.

A systematic inventory of ego documents and life history accounts of Muslims in Europe would also contribute to a better insight into the multiplicity of attachments Muslims have with Europe. Islam has already been an integral part of Europe for centuries, but as we all know Islam and Europe are currently depicted as opposing worlds. Yet if we take a closer look at several parts of Europe (especially in southern and eastern Europe), we come across accounts and experiences that may well go against the dominant one-dimensional image of Islam as a foe. More in general, we cannot understand the development of Europe as a socio-cultural realm unless we take into account the very diverse encounters with Islam throughout Europe (see e.g. AlSayyad & Castells 2002; Cardini1999; Djait 1985; Goody 2004; D.L. Lewis 2008).

There is a strange, yet understandable distinction being made between so-called indigenous Muslims in the Balkans and Eastern-Europe on the one hand, and Muslim migrants in Western Europe on the other. The daily experiences of thousands of Muslims in Western Europe have nothing to do anymore with 'being new', 'not yet integrated'. The recent transformations that have taken place in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe have had a profound impact on the experiences of Muslims in the region. The epitheton 'indigenous' therefore obfuscates rather than informs. History is an arena of contestation. Personal histories, communal narratives, 'lieu de memoire' and other sources of 'small history' provide

us with the necessary insight into senses of belonging and the building of local community among Muslims. This is in my view an inherent aspect of the production of locality.

The research I propose is situated at the juncture of social science and history. At the VU University there is a long lasting and institutionalized cooperation between social scientists and historians. I look forward to further developing the research field in cooperation with my colleagues of the faculties of social sciences and arts within the context of this interdisciplinary network. Apart from that, I am preparing research on everyday Islam in collaboration with colleagues from European and American universities in a comparative project on Asia and Europe.

Youth, politics, religion and popular culture.
Consider the following two cases!

Case one. Around 5.00 p.m. one of the central halls of the town hall of Amsterdam is gradually filling with invited people. It is a very diverse audience. There are young Muslim men and women executively dressed, some wearing headscarves and dresses in fashionable colors and designs, men in up-to-date suits. We see well-known central figures of 'Islamic Netherlands', among them, representatives of organizations, 'opinion leaders' and politicians. In addition there are numerous non-Muslims invitees. There are official and non-official representatives of other religions, as well as some local and national politicians. There are people, like myself, who are in one way or another connected to the 'Dutch Islamic scene'. And there is, not least, the mayor of Amsterdam.

At the entrance we are welcomed by ladies who issue name tags. Many of the invited people look around to see who else is there, shake hands, exchange business cards, meet acquaintances, and work on their personal network. The whole scene bears a striking resemblance to the average New Year's reception. This is actually how it has been organized. This is the 'National Iftar', a novelty meeting set up as a reception at the end of the holy month of Ramadan. It is organized as part of the yearly 'Ramadan festival' and one of the final events of the four weeks of activities that revolve around the Islamic fasting period. There are cooking competitions, public lectures, music, Islamic fashion events, film, commodity fairs for halal products, all very much designed to provide this Islamic obligation with a flavour of modern spirituality fitting to the social environment in which young Muslims in Europe function.[23] It is also organized as a message to Dutch society at large that Muslims constitute an integral part of that society.

Case two. In 2006 Dutch television showed a so-called 'video-testimony'. The maker, Samir A. is one of the protagonists of the Hofstad group, a network of alleged Muslim terrorists in the Netherlands that had been arrested by the police in late 2004, following the murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in November 2004. The video message was the first one of this kind in the Netherlands. The news program NOVA dedicated a special item to the case in September 2006, in which experts on Islam were asked about the religious meaning of such practices and about the religious convictions of the suicide killer.

The video-testimony has become a well-known means by which Palestinian suicide bombers announced their intended attacks on Israeli targets publicly. In a short delivery of

usually around ten minutes, the bomber explains his/her planned attack, and motivations based on quotes from the Quran and other sources. He or she explains the political goal of the attack, and salutes his or her family, rejoicing their reunion in Heaven. The practice was soon to be taken over by al-Qaeda bombers. The perpetrators of the bombings on the London underground in July 2005 issued a similar statement. Most of the video messages of this sort have an ominous, sometimes sinister outlook. The more professionally made videos have background music, images of previous attacks, a well-thought-out camera direction and a well-prepared statement. The performer looks straight into the camera, addressing the spectator directly. We should keep in mind that these kinds of video messages have also become standard communicative devices of many radical Islamist organisations. For some years al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden has been sending out his messages through videos which are distributed and submitted to broadcasting companies. His facial expression, gestures, well-chosen words, his phrasing and timing should be considered as a particular communicative style that has been mimicked by many other radicals.

On the video we see Samir A. dressed in a white suit and a black waistcoat, a scarf around his head and an automatic gun against the wall behind him. In perfect classical Arabic he first addresses his parents warning them to obey God and to follow the Quran. He addresses his fellow members of the Hofstad group to encourage them in their struggle. He then gives a warning to the Dutch audience.

By mimicking the gestures of Bin Laden, Samir A. replicates his style and performance meticulously. According to some of the experts in the news item, this is a means of invoking respect from young fellow Muslims. My argument is that his public is principally Dutch society and his message is designed for a primarily non-Islamic audience. Samir A. knew that his performance would have an impact on the Dutch public. Certainly since al-Qaeda applied and elaborated this strategic device, the communication with the 'West' and with the 'enemy' has become much more important in determining and developing the particular format and language used. The careful composition of the video-testimony and the specific narrational build-up reveals a thorough understanding and application of particular figures of performative style and figures of speech that make sense in the 'West'.

The common sense explanation of these two contrasting cases would be that they exhibit the two sides of integration. Samir A. represents the world of a small number of young Muslims who have almost completely divorced themselves from mainstream society. The organizers and participants of the National Iftar during the Ramadan festival on the other hand, are well on the way to turning their 'problematic' religion into a cultural relic comparable to Christmas or Easter.

The argument I put forward is that the two cases have much more in common than is assumed. They are both examples of the contemporary making of religious selves among Muslim youth in Western Europe. They are both examples of new modes of Islamic visibility, style and performative acting. And they are both pursuits of truthfulness (see also Van de Port 2004). An exploration of the religious practices and convictions of young Muslims is only successful when seemingly contradictory cases such as the two just described become part of the same analytical framework.

In the majority of publications on Muslims in Europe, the mass immigration of people with an Islamic background in the second half of the twentieth century is being explained as the beginning of a series of fundamental transformations in the makeup of Islam. Not only did it cause a change in the social structure of indigenous Islamic communities, but it has also led to a fragmentation of religious normative thinking. In the past years we have witnessed a sharp increase in studies that deal with the question of how Islam is transformed in the new European context. There are a considerable number of authors on Islam who argue that with the spread of modern mass-media and the continuous process of globalization, normative religious frameworks have been critically undermined and there is a gradual retreat of religion from the public realm (see e.g. Cesari 2006). This process, it is argued, has been instrumental in the spread of individualized 'copy-paste- Islam', especially among young Muslims. By using all kinds of modern (re)sources young Muslims create their own Islamic self-understanding which has no need for religious authority. This so-called 'individualization-thesis' thus also assumes the de-legitimation of religious authority (Amir-Moazami & Salvatore 2003; Peter 2006; Volpi and Turner 2007). This often turns these young people into unpredictable and even dangerous subjects that are up to anything, it is argued. But it is also often assumed that individualization is the first phase in a secularization process and the beginning of a complete loss of religious conviction. Some have argued that the migration process itself is instrumental in this transformation because it has unsettled the social texture from which Muslims migrated. This has led to a critical attitude among second generation Muslims in Europe towards the 'Islam of the parents' and religious authority (see e.g. Mandaville 2001, 2003, 2007). They break away from the 'Islamic culture' of their parents in search of a pure Islam.[24] Others have argued that it is the engagement, or should we say confrontation, of Islam with democracy and 'Western values' that has caused these transformations (Cesari 2004). Transformations are thus understood in the context of a more general process of modernization in which religion is retreating into the private sphere (see also Jacobson 1998).

A considerable part of both qualitative as well as quantitative studies takes up the individualization thesis and assumes that young Muslims will increasingly neglect religious obligations and will eventually lose their religious convictions altogether (see Phalet et al. 2002). There are also a growing number of studies that arrive at opposite conclusions, namely that because of the unsettling of traditional Islamic authority many young people opt for radical versions of Islamic thinking (see e.g. Kepel 2006). There is enormous interest in why and under what circumstances young people radicalize. This interest has of course to do with security, a prime political goal in Europe at the moment. When it became evident that perpetrators of the bomb attacks in London were not agents from outside, but 'blokes from the next block' and that a considerable number of young Muslims are willing to use violence, the prevention of radicalism became a prime goal in integration policies.[25] In the 21st century research on radicalization has become the dominant field in the study of Islam among young people.

But is not just security that accounts for this focus on radicalization. The underlying assumption in most studies is that migration to Europe has caused a normative confrontation between traditional understandings of Islamic reasoning and traditional sources of authority on the one hand, and the modernized privatized understanding of religion in a secular public

realm in the West on the other. This confrontation has brought many Muslims into disarray. But where the first generation can rely on their traditional networks, for young people it has brought chaos, existential uncertainty and not least identity crisis. They live in a no-man's-land between two irreconcilable cultural environments. Most young Muslims are able to reconcile the opposing requirements, but some cannot. This has led to feelings of resentment and envy which make them vulnerable to the influence of radical preachers and radical Islamist ideologies that foresee a better future (see Buijs et al. 2006; Eyerman 2008; Gielen 2008; Kepel 2006; Lewis 2002; Tibi 2009).

At this point we can observe a strange contradiction. The radicalization thesis rests on the assumption of a process of individualization, yet at the same time radicalization is depicted as the result of extreme ideological pressure 'from outside'. This contradiction is founded on a particular understanding of 'identity'. In most studies dealing with radicalization, culture and identity are key analytical concepts. The crucial question that implicitly and often explicitly underscores this kind of research is whether young people are able to cope with the 'cultural schizophrenia' that is brought about by migration. If not, then they fall in-between and develop behavioral problems. The assumption that lies behind this line of reasoning is that cultures are stable, identifiable and distinguishable categories (Brubaker & Cooper 2000). 'Culture', 'religion' and 'identity' are supposed to be basic features with explanatory power. Identity denotes a stable personal core that individuals must possess in a world that is in constant flux. When identity is not as stable as it should be, it may lead to an 'identity crisis'. It has been re-introduced in the study of youth from migrant background by linking it to cultural change (see e.g. Abdel-Samad 2006).

Acts of political violence are perceived to be the result of 'cultural pathology', and 'hybrid misfit'. Despite their thorough socialization in Western Europe with its long-term democratic traditions, radical Muslims totally reject modern society and are ready to fight that society with violent means out of sheer frustration. This psychological distress is brought about as the result of cultural clashes. Also young people who do not resort to radical, violent or criminal behavior are said to live 'between two cultures', which can easily lead to 'identity problems' and thus constitute a potential category of 'cultural drop outs'. The sensationalists gaze at radical practices and styles in television programs and in popular academic writings, which portray radicalization as a giant step into another universe, incomprehensible to ordinary people, is widespread.

The 'between two cultures' image not only assumes inbuilt cultural tensions in the trajectory towards modernity framed in an evolutionist discourse, but also shapes perceptions on processes of cultural change. A girl of Muslim background donning the veil and observing religious duties, and at the same time wearing jeans, attending university, and shaking hands with male co-eds is perceived as a "transitionary hybrid" (Ferguson 1999), combining 'traditional' and 'modern' cultural elements as two clearly separable fields. One of the consequences of this simplified view of religious engagement is that there is hardly any interest among researchers in agency, let alone in new forms of religious appropriation, signification and performative practice that are to be found among young Muslims in Europe.

A way to overcome the omissions and fallacies in much of the present-day research on young Muslims is to elaborate on insights in the study of youth cultures and bringing back the

agency of young Muslims into the analysis. By approaching young Muslims as active agents of their own cultural environment and not as victims of a cultural clash and/or trapped in an identity crisis, we get a much brighter picture. Instead of treating Muslims' cultural practices as transitory and dependent phenomena, they should be assessed as (youth) cultural traits in their own right (see Amit-Talai & Wulff 1995). Islamic fashion shows and *salafi* practices are not opposite tendencies, but should instead be treated as practices of self-making and quests for authenticity and truth.[26]

When exploring religious practices and engagements among young people, one is struck by their endless creativity. Since there is no single field that qualifies as purely religious, there is no practice that must a priori be singled out. In my view the production of religiousness and the making of religious 'selves' among young people reside on the nexus between performance and aesthetics, politics, and popular culture. Meaningful and productive research on Islam among young people should go beyond discursive dimensions alone and include the following four conceptual clusters: (1) performance and self-styling, commoditization and popular culture, (2) discipline, embodiment and techniques of the self, (3) authenticity, truth and authority, (4) identity politics and the public sphere. I intend to set up research that brings together these clusters. Let me further elaborate them.

Performance and self styling, commoditization of religion, and popular culture refer to the obvious fact that religious engagement and religious expression are by definition public acts. Even if we subscribe to the privatization thesis of religion, and assume that religiosity resides only in the mind, it would be senseless to depict religious engagement as an invisible act. Religion exists by virtue of its practicing, its acting-out, and its performance. Only then does it render social meaning. If we take Birgit Meyer's definition of religion as a 'practice of mediation' (2006), it follows that style, performance and aesthetics are central concepts in the understanding of the reproduction of Islam among young people in Europe. Popular culture and the commoditization of religious products are essential contemporary practices of religious mediation and we are only beginning to understand how they work. There are numerous practices and activities, performative and aesthetic articulations that fall outside established definitions of 'mainstream' and thus 'regular' religion. The interplay between Islam, mass media, popular culture and the commoditization of religious experience is instrumental in producing new forms of community (Eickelman & Anderson 2003; Schulz 2006). A quick glance at the numerous websites set up by young people of Muslim background – and not just those of radical Muslims – reveals an ever increasing diversity of forms in which Islam is imagined, mediated and performed. Simple dichotomies like radical/non-radical, democratic/non-democratic, but also religious/non-religious fail to capture the wide range of expressive, performative and sensational forms that we witness today.

An Islamic fashion show, a religious entertainment evening, a 'halal reception', a public speech, a religious hip hop concert, an Islamic stand-up comedian, media training sessions for Muslims, a training session for Muslim women to learn how to act publicly, an Islamic healing session aimed at strengthening self confidence, the public appearance of women in *niqaab* or *chadori*, the production of video-testimonies, all pertain to the religious realm. For the people involved in these kinds of activities they are utterly relevant in the

making of the religious self and the constitution of a religious community. In spite of this, these forms are still largely neglected in mainstream studies on Islam in Europe.

The concept of style denotes the specific forms in which religious belonging and religious practices among young Muslims take shape. The spread of new media in the past decades has had a tremendous effect on religious articulation.[27] Not only does style fit better with the public and sensational forms of religion we encounter today, it covers more adequately the wide range of practices that I wish to include. Style, loosely defined as a 'signifying practice', has been coined as a central analytical tool by the CCCS of the University of Birmingham in the 1970s in their studies on youth culture. The 'Birmingham School' shifted the attention from culture and cultural change as a source of coercion, stress and conflict to the active role youths play in the creation of youth cultures, and to the visible and performative aspects of culture (Hall and Jefferson 1976). Style is continually reproduced. It is not the expressive outcome of a preconceived identity, but rather a practice that generates identity. Styling is an essential prerequisite of modern religious subjectivation, the making of the religious self.

Religious styling, denoting an integrated set of signifying practices, has several advantages over the much more widespread term religious identity. It shifts the emphasis to what is practiced, performed, acted out and, not least, the economy of discipline, whilst also embracing a somewhat wider variety of forms, acts and attributes. Styling brings in agency, without ignoring the relations of power. As Ferguson (1999) has reminded us, style is not simply 'having ideas' and expressing them. It is an embodied practice that is durable and assumes cultivation and discipline. It assumes an achieved competence in performing a certain style. Styles, including religious styles, develop in a situation of duress and this resonates well with embodiment and discipline, the second conceptual cluster.

Saba Mahmood, in her study of a pious group of female Muslims in Cairo, elaborates on the aspect of training and argues that through the disciplinary training of the *salat* (ritual prayer) these women articulate conventional formal acts of the ritual with intentions and spontaneous emotions. In other words they identify the act of prayer as a key practice for purposely molding their intentions emotions and desires (Mahmood 2001: 828, 2005). As such far from being a formal and externalized act of religious duty, the *salat* through techniques of training and disciplining becomes an embodied practice that shapes the self. Mahmood understands the body not just as a signifying medium but as a tool for arriving at a certain kind of moral disposition. The body is thus trained to acquire moral capacities and sensitivities one does not have beforehand, even if one is convinced believer. Mahmood rightly emphasizes that an analysis of embodiment of ritual should pay ample attention to the pedagogical process by which the embodiment is achieved.[28] This is a conscious training that social actors may or may not embark upon and it should always be looked at within a particular power laden context. The great advantage of this approach is that we are able to overcome the paralyzing contradiction between a kind of free floating individuality on the one hand ('the ideal individual religious subject') and a suppressive and normative understanding of religious doctrines that leave no room for reflection, interpretation and self-making.

Donning the headscarf, for example, is a stylistic and aesthetic device. In that respect it is appropriate to classify the headscarf as a form of headgear as is often done in public spaces such as schools.[29] But we cannot fully understand its religious implications when we

ignore the symbolic significance of the veil, its normative underpinnings and not least the embodied moral disposition that comes with it. Style, it should again be emphasized, is not a kind of free of choice self-making activity. Particular styles are conventionally connected to particular communities (Maffesoli 1996: 16). Donning the veil is as much a 'body technique' invested with passion and emotion, as a religious symbolic act that enacts a certain relation towards a discursive tradition. Many young Muslims I spoke with emphasized that bodily discipline, be it veiling in public or any other act that arouses public reactions, is an important means to distinguish oneself from mainstream 'fast' styling. It is a way to deepen one's convictions (see also Moors 2005, 2008).

The same can be said about religious music. If we depict the wide variety of religious musical styles as simply another musical genre, we overlook the religious impact of particular musical genres. During an interview I had with a couple of young Muslims, they explained to me how the music of Native *Deen,* an Islamic hip hop group from the United States, brought about a certain religious experience that is reminiscent of the effect of a *zikr.*[30]

Authenticity, truth and authority, the third conceptual cluster, are crucial to understand religious engagement among young Muslims in Europe. One of the fallacies of the privatization and individualization thesis is that it assumes that religious authority becomes obsolete. Young Muslims do, however, not just construct their own Islam out of nothing, they relate to Islam as a discursive tradition and they relate to other Muslims in a variety of ways. Religious engagement is a process of community building and of subjectivation in that the religious self develops in a context of regimes of truth (see e.g. Foucault 1983; Roeland 2009). The sources of authority and the process of authorization of religious knowledge among young Muslims is however still a rather underdeveloped field of research.[31]

If we take performance, style and public appearance as inherent elements of modern religiosity and religious practice, it follows that religious engagement with the public sphere is almost by definition identity politics, the fourth conceptual cluster. When Muslims act publicly they comment on the characteristics of the public sphere and contribute to its transformation. The question of how, under what conditions and with what intentions Muslims engage with the public sphere is part of a much more general scholarly debate on the accessibility of that public sphere with its conceived secular and neutral character (see Asad 2003; Calhoun 1992; Meyer & Moors 2006). The numerous so-called headscarf affairs that regularly occur throughout Europe, and also the public reactions that both public and political activities of Muslims arouse, are indications of the profoundly contentious character of the presence of Muslims in Europe. Young people who were born and raised in Europe argue that they do not want to be treated as guests who have to earn their place in society. They are already a part of that society whether some people like that or not.

Research on the production of religiosity among young Muslims in Europe is only in its initial phase. One of the biggest challenges for research on Islam in Europe in the coming years is how to explore the unmistakable process of fragmentation without slipping into voluntarism and individualism and neglecting disciplining practices and the discursive tradition within which young Muslims make religious selves. Religious subjectivation among Muslims is a process that requires thorough investigation. I have argued that we need to focus on the complex interplay between four conceptual clusters: (1) performance and self styling, commoditization and popular culture, (2) discipline, embodiment and techniques of the self,

(3) authenticity, truth and authority, (4) identity politics and the public sphere. Together with my colleague Martijn de Koning of the University of Nijmegen we are preparing an international conference and a research program that takes these interlocking conceptual clusters as a starting point. One of the crucial aspects of this program will be the interreligious comparison. Particularly in the field of religion among youth a thorough and systematic comparison between different religious traditions and practices is crucial.[32]

Religious authority and fragmentation: styles of Islamic leadership
The general observer of the organizational landscape among Muslims in Europe of about two decades ago would probably conclude that the picture was clear and simple. There were Muslims with strong familial ties back home, their religious practices were rooted firmly in the countries of origin, and mosques were run by Muslim organizations that had their origins also in the home countries, often controlled by headquarters there. Political and doctrinal dividing lines followed a similar pattern and religious authority was firmly in the hands of traditional *ulama*, often sent from home countries. Islamic observance and religious life revolved around the mosque and was practiced in familial and communal networks based on common origin. Leadership and sources of religious authority were considered to self-evidently emanate from religious doctrine.

As I already indicated in the previous section, developments in the last two decades have distorted this well-ordered picture and have unsettled normative and functionalist assumptions about religious life among Muslims in Europe. When we look at the present-day Islamic landscape in Europe, the picture is blurred. Organizations have changed their policies and their activities. The number of mosques and religious associations that are not organized along ethnic lines has increased sharply. A considerable number of young people no longer go to ordinary ethnicity based mosques, or have abandoned Islam altogether, while others opt for more radical variants of Islam, or explore new modes and expressions of religiousness. This has had a tremendous impact on the established ways of conveying religious knowledge. Traditional sources of religious authority have come under pressure and there is an enormous increase in semi-religious activities and practices that do not fit the picture of 'mainstream' religion.

Islamic religious authority is a fast growing research field in the study of Islam in Europe. There are a considerable number of studies that deal with the position of imams in different countries in Europe (for an overview see e.g. Peter 2006; Volpi & Turner 2007). Most studies, however, deal with the discursive dimensions of Islamic authority. They generally lack a thorough assessment of why certain preachers are more popular than others and how the relation between leader and constituency develops. The dynamics of Islamic leadership in Europe and the ways in which religious knowledge is produced and conveyed, is hardly explored, because leadership and authority are conceptually conflated.

Although leadership and authority are interlocking and closely related concepts, they have their own dynamics and should be theorized more thoroughly than hitherto has been the case. It is my aim to explore the development and workings of Islamic leadership in Europe based on the proposition that a shift has taken place from representative religious leadership (based on formal criteria of representation) to a performative style of leadership (based on certain leadership qualities).

This shift is closely connected to the fragmentation and pluralisation of religious authority that can be observed throughout the Muslim world, but probably most explicitly in Europe (Mandaville 2007). Modern mass media has caused a serious challenge to traditional forms of Islamic authority mainly because it has allowed for a tremendous increase in the number of voices in the public sphere. Spokespersons legitimatized by conventional means of religious conveyance are complemented and challenged by "rival and alternative articulations of belief and practice" (Eickelman & Anderson 2003: x). New technologies of communication circumvent traditional centres of learning and, not least, Muslims in the western world, where they constitute minorities, engage with parts of the public sphere that are considered secularized (ibid: x-xi).[33] Contemporary notions of religiosity and religious belonging are rooted in current experiences of believers rather than in conventional exegesis of religious texts. Traditional forms of religious knowledge and conveyance do not match with life-worlds in Europe anymore, particularly among young people. Today young Muslims in Europe, more than ever, feel the need to reflect on the origins of their religion and reconcile them with their experiences. The complexities of modern urban life in which the majority of young Muslims live, requires specific competences. Modern media have not only caused a 'globalization of Muslim affairs', but have also created *new* publics that could not be reached by traditional leaders and traditional means. These new publics ask new questions and challenge traditional production of knowledge by *ulama*.

Spokespersons among Muslims must develop sensitivity about what goes on in the minds of believers, and about what takes place on a local, national and transnational level. At the same time there is an increasing pressure from the side of governments and authorities on religious leaders to meet the requirements of the integration programs and anti-radicalization measures. Imams are under considerable pressure to improve their knowledge of the country of residence and alleged continuing influence from the 'Islamic world' on Muslims in Europe is seen as very undesirable. It thus requires knowledge about what goes on in the world and at home and the intellectual ability to 'translate' that into a religious discourse that makes sense and appeals to multiple publics. This has resulted in a fragmentation and multiplication of publics that often have to be addressed at once. It has also resulted in an unsettling of religious authority altogether (see Schulz 2006). Next to the imams and the spokespersons of Muslims organizations, there are new types and new forms and styles of religious leadership that do not fit into the traditional picture of an Islamic leader. An increasing number of leaders operate on the intersection of media-stardom, public-opinion (political) leadership and religious innovator. They address a public. Rather than representing constituencies, these new Islamic religious leaders create consensus through *particular* situated modes of addressing *particular* publics in *particular* situations, or through *particular* modes of performance and style. This renders present-day leadership a historically situational specific character. I further argue that new media technologies and mass-mediated consumerism are not only instrumental in the emergence of these new religious expressions, but also that these new leaders are themselves part of a process of religious renewal.

They become important players in the Islamic field, yet they cannot be fixed anymore to particular organizations or movements. They are preachers and at the same time they are opinion leaders, public figures that act upon certain situations and events. Sometimes they emerge from within the ranks of organizations and, while becoming publicly known, they

tend to detach from their original organizational bedrock and become free floating public figures. Some are only known in a relatively limited public realm, or they emerge and disappear after a short while. They deliver speeches, appear in the media to comment on events and in some cases they have become the centre of new devotional practices and beliefs. Sometimes they act from a great distance and count more as a source of inspiration than as a tangible figure in situ. Sometimes these figures are genuine celebrities who owe their public role and popularity to modern mass media. They have supporters, fans who attend their lectures and public performances and they dispose of persuasive qualities. The most well known and controversial celebrity at this moment is undoubtedly the Swiss Muslim philosopher Tariq Ramadan who worked for the Rotterdam municipality and the Rotterdam University, but Ramadan was sacked lately because of his alleged links with the Iranian government. Ramadan is at once immensely popular among well-educated young Muslims in Europe, and highly suspected by European governments.

Religious leadership is probably the most sensitive issue in the contemporary debate on Islam in Europe. The styles of leadership just sketched are elusive and therefore perceived as a threat to the public order. Tariq Ramadan, but also Tariq Ali, Fethullah Gülen, Amina Wadud, Khalid Yasin, Mohammed Hassan, Yusuf al-Qaradawi are but a few names among the many Muslim intellectuals that are extremely popular among young Muslims today. But there are many more, less well known figures that play an important role in the lives of young people. A considerable number of these leaders are female.

One obvious but important aspect of the changes in styles of leadership concerns the modes of information management. At the time when most Muslims in Europe were strangers in their host countries, community leaders had a very powerful position because of their strategic position as intermediaries between Muslims and the host society. They were able to maintain their indispensable position as information manager. Today this intermediary role is scarcely relevant. New leaders do not speak on behalf of preconceived communities anymore. They address a public and must convince rather than represent. Warner (2002: 50) reminds us of the crucial difference between *the* public, an audience, and *a* public. The public is a totality; it is all of us together. An audience is a concrete crowd in a visible space bounded by a certain event. A public, according to Warner, exists only by virtue of being addressed. These insights apply to the new types of religious leadership discussed here. Muslims publics are overlapping relatively unstable constituencies that generally have no institutional ties to leaders. Sometimes they are a public when they watch or listen to speeches and lectures, or surf the Internet, and on other occasions they are an audience in a public meeting. In that respect there is no sharp distinction between opinion leaders, entrepreneurs and brokers, priests, stakeholders, celebrities and politicians. Where these roles were formerly separated, increasingly they now merge. The implication is, therefore, that there is also no sharp distinction between Muslim/non-Muslim, religious/non-religious, political/non-political spheres. We can of course distinguish between a formally appointed imam and a political representative, but when it comes to the production of religious discourse in a highly media-sensitive environment, these distinctions become irrelevant. An example may elucidate this. A couple of years ago there was an incident in the Netherlands about an imam who refused to shake hands with a female minister. The incident reached the press and a debate ensued about the interplay of religious obligations, theological doctrines and notions of Dutch civility. The

debate was enhanced by the images of the incident that were shown on television over and over again. To fully understand the case in all its dimensions, it is not very productive to formally separate between statements by official imams and other sources of information, or between Muslims and non-Muslims, because it is the multiplicity of voices and images and the way in which these direct the course of the event that is relevant here.

The increasing number of lecturers with an Islamic message, new religious experts, and cultural brokers that deliver speeches, appear on television, take part in debates and operate websites should be taken seriously as new forms of religious mediation that constitute new audiences.[34] Cultural brokerage is an essential source of power typical for an urban environment with a multiplicity of cultural production and change. To understand the production of cultural and religious authority, we should analyze carefully how brokers utilize and instrumentalize cultural change and how cultural competence is produced precisely in situations of rapid social transformation. It is not only the exotic self-made radicals that attract the attention of the media and intelligence services that are relevant here. They are only a marginal part of a much larger process of transformation.

It is not just the content of the messages that are relevant. It is crucial to take into consideration how messages are put across, how speakers relate to audiences and to circumstances in which they operate. Modern Islamic leadership correlates much with present-day urban conditions, in which the majority of Muslims in Europe live. Urban inhabitants must have mental maps at their disposal in order to find their way in the multiplicity of voices and forms that characterize modern cities.[35] Islamic leaders must have 'urban charisma' (Hansen & Verkaaik 2009). The authority of urban leaders which this form of charisma entails is based not on an official position within a bureaucracy, either of the state or of some centre of religious knowledge, but rather on the ways they convince others of their connectedness to various alternative networks and centres of power in the city. They must also be able to 'translate' global affairs into meaningful and contextualized information, and they must be able to understand the specific sensory regimes that characterize modern urban conditions. They must have the ability to connect to people's life-worlds in the turbulence of cityscapes. And they must possess the necessary communicative skills to be able to accomplish this. There is thus no single style of urban religious leadership, but a multiplicity of styles.[36]

Leaders, instead of being tied to official readings of religious reasoning and interpretation, must develop a certain autonomy vis-à-vis discursive traditions as well as towards the publics they intend to address. Their styles of arguing, their rhetoric strategy, and the specific settings in which they operate, as well as their media-image are as important, probably even more important, than sheer content. The dissemination and the impact of a specific text may be influenced more by the popularity of the person who articulates the text than by the content of the message. This autonomy, in my view, is what makes modern religious leadership effective. If we treat an Islamic leader simply as a messenger of a normative religious message according to formal rules of conveyance, we miss a crucial aspect of the dynamics between religious knowledge, leadership and public. Ankersmit (1996) rightly argues that legitimate political power is based on the autonomy of the representative amidst the brokenness of the political domain.[37] For the issue at hand this has two important implications. First, religious knowledge comes into being as the result of

representation and mediation of normative sources. Second, Islamic leadership can only be properly understood when we take its aesthetic dimensions as our point of departure.

This understanding of leadership takes on board autonomy, aesthetics, performativity and the complex relation between message and messenger. This brings me to the role of modern mass media. The interplay between religion and media is a field that has been rather well documented in the past years.[38] Modern media have fundamentally changed the modes by which religious messages are put across and disseminated. The role of modern media such as Internet have been addressed in studies on radicalization but mainly as a rival practice to the 'normal' traditional means of religious conveyance. Modern mass media are also crucial for explaining the prominence and popularity of all types of contemporary Islamic leadership. The extent to which religious knowledge is appreciated and the ways in which it is received and interpreted by Muslim publics is based less on the content of the message as such, than on the appeal of the messenger.[39] The messenger is constitutive in the economy of meaning. What makes an Islamic leader convincing is precisely his or her ability to sense the "semantic basin" (Maffesoli 1996) in which they operate and at the same time 'grab the opportunity', so to speak, and to make use of the autonomy at their disposal to explore the limits of that 'basin'. In other words the appropriate message for the particular situation is a matter of competence of the religious leader. As such modern religious leadership itself transforms religion. Leadership shifts from mere representation to a status where religious message and the representative's presence merge in a particular and interdependent way. The Islamic leader becomes part of the religious experience (see also De Witte 2008).[40] The speaker at a meeting not only addresses his or her audience, but the meeting and the speaker become a reproductive event in an ongoing religious reproduction. His or her persuasive qualities emanate from a particular style of address and presentation. The event is then a particular sensational form (cf. Meyer 2009).[41]

There is yet another related aspect of new styles of Islamic leadership that has to be taken into consideration. It is also connected to the profound transformations that modern mass media have caused. Traditional representative leadership was to a certain extent independent from events. Leaders, either political or theological, were supposed to represent or to convey religious knowledge. This was what their formal position required from them. Today we see a different pattern of interaction. As a consequence of the floating, shifting and ephemeral character of modern constituencies, leadership and publics are much more connected to specific events, often with a ritualized character. Modern performative leaders are not parachuted into communities; they emerge in specific situations and events. They are an inherent aspect of that event. "Public events are locations of dense presence and the high production of symbols" (Handelman 1998: 12). Events can be controversial and highly political. They can be hypes, or ritualized moments in a protracted case or a vexed issue with a multiplicity of voices.[42] But we should also think of gatherings and meetings with a much more ritualized character. A *hutbe*, the Islamic Friday sermon, can turn into a political event. The sermons of Imam Khomeiny, the religious leader of Iran in the 1980s, for example were real political rallies. 'Ordinary' speeches, on the other hand, often render a religious meaning by the very performative qualities of the speaker.[43] Events turn into dense moments of religious experience. Event, ritual and politics are thus inextricably linked to one another (Salemink 2006).

I consider research on new styles of Islamic leadership as they emerge throughout Europe indispensable for the understanding of how Islam is taking shape in European societies today. Future research on this issue should take leadership as part of a new religious experience much more seriously, not least because this is the only effective way to understand how Islamic constituencies are produced. It is my intention to elaborate my preliminary findings on Islamic leadership into a research program based on the theoretical reflections I have mapped out. In my view Islamic leadership and Islamic authority, particularly the complex relation between the two, is a field par excellence where theologians and social scientists should work closely together. I look forward to developing research programs in this field, therefore, as genuine interdisciplinary projects.

CONCLUSION

Islam in European societies is a subject of great academic relevance. This is not because of the problematic nature of some events and actions of Muslims, but simply because Muslims are here to stay. At the moment Muslims and Islam in Europe are in a transitionary stage. Muslims arrived in Western Europe through migration. Within less than a decade from now the vast majority will have been born and raised here. For a number of them the significance of Islam will wane, but for others it constitutes an integral element of their life-worlds. As a consequence Muslims will leave their mark on European societies. The ways in which this will occur will display an increasingly diversified picture. Globalization and other political and social forces in all their specificities and ramifications will exert their influence upon the making of local Muslim communities. The rooting of Muslims in Europe starts from the actual fact that Muslims constitute an integral part of European societies, but at the same time modern mass media and modern means of communication enable Muslims to build networks and communities across borders. This is very much in evidence. Instead of evaluating these practices as integration issues, as researchers we must develop new ways and new approaches that do justice to new realities. I have argued that there are three fields that particularly suffer from too strong an emphasis on integration and domestication: the production of local everyday Islam by ordinary Muslims, the enormous rich and varied ways in which young Muslims create their religious environment, and the making of modern Islamic leadership and authority.

The interdisciplinary VU Institute for the Study of Religion, Culture and Society (VISOR) under which my chair is subsumed, offers a perfect academic environment in which to develop a genuine future research agenda on Islam in European societies. With VISOR as my institutional basis I intend to further explore the aforementioned fields of inquiry and develop research programs and research plans in national and international cooperation with colleagues across Europe.

Ik heb gezegd.

NOTES

[1] The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia counted over a 13 million Muslims in Europe. This number is based on official and unofficial demographic data from the member states (EUMC 2006: 29). Numbers are of course much higher when Russia, the Balkans, western-Turkey and other non-EU countries in Europe are included.

[2] The proposal in Belgium in 2009 to ban Islamic headscarves on public schools is a appropriate example of the domestication of Islam. It is an attempt to deal with the fact that an increasing number of Muslim women enter the higher ranks of society.

[3] Bowen, in discussing the domestication of Islam in French society, argues that the "dilemma of domestication" revolves around three basic issues: behaviour of Muslims, control of the republic and adaptation of Islamic norms to France (2004: 43). Bowen demonstrates how domestication has also significantly dictated research agendas in France.

[4] A good example is report of the so-called Stasi Commission that advised the government on the headscarf in public places (2003). As a result, the French government issued a law on 'conspicuous religious signs' in schools passed by the National Assembly in February 2004.

[5] As Bowen rightly argues the application of 'governance' as the key concept in the study of Islam in Europe, runs the risk of discarding all kinds of developments that do not fit in the governance analytical format (Bowen 2007).

[6] In this respect we should also not forget the work of Eric Wolf. His *Peasants* (1966), although not dealing directly with labor migration, gave a crucial impetus to the study of peasant societies. His work did circulate well among social scientists dealing with migration in those days. And another work that should be mentioned here is the seminal study titled *Beyond the Melting Pot* by Glazer and Moynihan. The authors refuted the idea of an American society in which all cultural and ethnic differences would melt together into a new way of life. Ethnic groups would retain their ethnic and cultural peculiarities according to the authors (1970 [1963]). The book had a tremendous impact on migration studies in Europe, because it foreshadowed possible developments in Europe.

[7] See for example Kleff 1984; Van den Berg-Eldering 1979; Watson 1977.

[8] For a discussion on culturalism see: Dirlik 1990; Elsadda 2004; Freeman 2000; Vermeulen 1992.

[9] The journal *Muslim minority Affairs, founded in 1979* is entirely dedicated to Muslims in non-Islamic societies. In the Netherlands Shadid and Van Koningsveld published numerous volumes in which they pointed at the precarious position in which Muslims find themselves in Europe. See also Van Ooijen, Rath,Penninx & Sunier 1991.

[10] There is a vast body of literature that deals with the politics of nation-states towards religious diversity in all parts of the world (see e.g. Hoeber Rudolph & Piscatori 1997; Piscatori 1986; Van der Veer & Lehmann 1999). There are, however, few studies on Islam in Europe that explicitly analyze the process of domestication.

[11] In that respect Caldwell (2009) is completely wrong when he argues that European governments were lenient towards religious diversity. Quite the contrary, from the early 1990s onwards European politicians expressed their sometimes deep worries about the future of 'our liberal and secular accomplishments'.

[12] The affair, that took place in the beginning of 1989 after a public *fatwa* issued by the Iranian religious leader Imam Khomeiny in which he condemned the British-Indian author Salman Rushdie to death, brought Muslims all over the world on the street. In many places, including in European cities, copies of the challenged book *The Satanic Verses* were burnt. The protest resulted in a public outcry among the European public about the apparent lack of democratic competence among Muslims.

[13] Bovenkerk, Bruin, Brunt & Wouters 1985; De Jong 1986; Van Niekerk, Sunier & Vermeulen 1989; Peach, Robinson & Smith 1981; Phizacklea, & Miles 1979; Wallman 1982.

[14] James Scott has referred to this perspective in his seminal study *Seeing like a State* (1998). In the book he discusses the helicopter view of states in trying to impose large scale restructuration programs of all sorts onto society: 'order to improve living conditions'. One of the reasons why such mega-projects fail, according to Scott, is that they ignore the knowledge and competences of the local population.

[15] Methodological nationalism "[...] is the all-pervasive assumption that the nation-state is the natural and necessary form of society in modernity; the nation-state is taken as the organizing principle of modernity" (Chernillo 2006: 6; see also Beck 2000, 2002).

[16] See e.g. Ferrari & Bradney 2000; Haddad 2002; Hunter 2002; Klausen 2005; Lewis & Schnapper 1994; Marechal et al. 2003; Nielsen 2004; Nonneman & Niblock 1996; Rath et al 1996; Seufert & Waardenburg 1999; Vertovec & Peach 1997.

[17] Several authors have emphasized the importance of practices, bit and pieces of practical knowledge, reference points that resort and operate in people's life-worlds. There are various concepts applicable here. With the concept of 'local knowledge' Clifford Geertz (1983) refers to notions of immediacy and interpretative activity that escape knowledge producing grand dichotomizing schemes of reference. Mary Douglas used 'thought styles' (1996) to denote certain communicative genres that only make sense in contextualized and localized situations. James Scott (1998) introduced the concept of *metis* denoting local knowledge that is grounded in everyday practices and that only apply to that particular situation.

[18] Gerd Baumann's *Contesting Culture. Discourses of Identity in multi-ethnic London,* (1996) is one of the few studies that criticizes the top down approach. Baumann conducted long-term research in the borough of Southall in London. He analyzes discourses of identity by taking the local context as point of departure. His concept of 'demotic discourse' starts from local experiences without ignoring 'outside' influences. He shows how despite the ever-changing demographic, economic, social and cultural picture of the neighborhood, there is always community building taking place.

[19] In 1984 Hartwig Berger and Viktor Augustin published a beautiful historical account of the Forster Street in Berlin, Kreuzberg where immigration has been part of everyday life since the early twentieth century, long before the arrival of Turks in the 1960s. They show how successive inhabitants always 'reinvented' local community under changing circumstances (Berger & Augustin 1984).

[20] Marsden (2005) did research in Chitral in Northern Pakistan and introduces the term 'living Islam' which is rather close to my understanding of 'everyday Islam'. According to Marsden, it refers to practices, outlooks, moods, notions of personhood, networks of daily encounter and individual creativity that are overruled by 'Islamization' by islamists and governments, and overlooked by scholars of Islam who tend to apply normative understandings of Islam. Marsden provides an intriguing account of the reflexivity of ordinary people. He shows how religion and sociality in Chitral interconnect in daily situations.

[21] De Certeau's 'theory of practice' aims "[…] to bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of 'discipline'" (1984: xv). Space, according to De Certeau, is "practiced place" (117) with which he refers to the continuous human activity that transforms geographical locality into places of living.

[22] The term refers to the Dutch practices of endless consulting and negotiating.

[23] See http://www.ramadanfestival.nl/index.php?s=&kdatum=01-2009.

[24] Thus Nederveen Pieterse (1997) has argued that it is not the manifold religious practices that travel, only the Quran is portable.

[25] In many countries of Western Europe so-called 'deradicalization' programs are set up to meet that goal.

[26] One of the few recent thorough studies on Muslim youth that does not consider the attractiveness of *salafist* ideologies the result of cultural pathology is Martijn de Koning's *Zoeken naar een zuivere Islam* (*The quest for a pure Islam)*(2008).

[27] As Meyer puts it: "[…] Not only do modern media such as print, photography, TV, film, or Internet shape sensational forms, the latter themselves are media that mediate, and thus produce the transcendental and make it sens-able" (2006: 13).

[28] "[…] the point is not simply that one acts virtuously but also *how* one enacts a virtue" (Mahmood 2001: 838).

[29] In a secondary school where I conducted research the wearing of headscarves was allowed explicitly *not* as a religious symbol, but as one of the many headgears of pupils. This policy turned out to be beneficiary for Muslims in a number of situations, but it may also lead more easily to a total ban of any headgear should this be deemed important by the staff (for an elaborate discussion of the case see Schiffauer et al. 2004).

[30] The *zikr* is one of the central meditative rituals in Islam. It can consist of repetitive exclamations of the name of Allah, but there is a wide variety of other practices aiming at bringing practitioners in a mental state that enhances the religious experience.

[31] There are, however, some promising projects presently carried out in this field. Anthropologist Annelies Moors of the University of Amsterdam is conducting research on Islam and fashion among Muslims in Europe. Anthropologist Loubna el-Morabet of the University of Leiden is presently working on a research project that deals with these processes in several countries in Europe. These projects go beyond the sole emphasis on textual sources and takes on board the multiplicity of settings, formats and circumstances in which religious knowledge is produced and conveyed.

[32] At the anthropological department of the VU University anthropologist Daan Beekers recently started research in which he compares religious engagement of Christian and Muslim youth.

[33] "Messages are the complex products of many actors and factors, and when some actors and their messages are deflected from the major media into smaller ones, the intermediaries between producers and audiences diminish,

along with the ability of state and religious gatekeepers to influence what is said; and the sense of community correspondingly grows with the sense of threat or insecurity" (Eickelman & Anderson 1999: 14).

[34] See also Hirschkind 2006.

[35] See e.g Orsi (1999) on religion in New York.

[36] As Orsi argues: "Urban religion is the site of converging and conflicting visions and voices, practices and orientations, which arise out of the complex desires, needs, and fears of many different people who have come to cities by choice or compulsion (or both), and who find themselves intersecting with unexpected others (and with unexpected experiences of their own subjectivities) on a complex field and in a protean physical landscape that insists on itself with particular intensity"(1999: 45).

[37] Ankersmit compares the effectiveness of political leadership with the autonomy of artists. In both cases we are convinced, attracted and enchanted not by the minute replication of realities but precisely by the way in which both the politician and the artist 'fill in' the gap between the representation and the represented.

[38] See e.g. Ginsburg et al. 2002; Larkin 2008; Meyer 2009; Stolow 2005.

[39] Based on her research in Mali, Schulz arrives at a similar conclusion. The new mass media are instrumental in the rise of prominence of new types of religious leaders and to new understandings of religious normativity (2006: 212).

[40] As Meyer and Moors argue: "[new forms of mediation not only create] new styles of self-representation, but also pinpoints new forms of religious experience that cast believers as spectators, spectacles as miracles, and God's blessing as prosperity" (2006:9).

[41] A sensational form, Meyer argues, "can best be understood as a condensation of practices, attitudes, and ideas that structure religious experiences and hence 'ask' to be approached in a particular manner" (2009: 13).

[42] J.L. Lewis (2008) argues that (ritualized) events can create transparent reflections on particular situations, but they can also create obfuscation, mystification or confusion.

[43] The most well-known example in my view is the famous 'I-have-a-dream' speech of Martin Luther King in 1963. It started as a regular political speech against racism, but through the qualities of the performance, the use of Biblical phrases and the way in which the public was drawn into the event, King created a moral imperative with a highly religious character. A similar effect was produced by some of the election speeches of Barack Obama in 2008.

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