



UND IHRE HERKUNFTS-  
GESELLSCHAFTEN  
IN ASIEN UND AFRIKA



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# Muslims in Europe and Their Societies of Origin in Asia and Africa: Diversity and Consequences of Religious Faith and Practice in Different Contexts

• Centre for Modern Oriental Studies (Prof. Ulrike Freitag)

## Strategies of Adaption and Dissociation

### Islamic Missionary Groups from South Asia in the European Diaspora – the Tablighi Jama‘at and the Da‘wat-i Islāmi

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The research is conducted at the Universities of Frankfurt/Oder (Comparative Social and Cultural Anthropology, Prof. Werner Schiffauer), Hamburg (Religious Pedagogics, Prof. Wolfram Weiße) and Halle/Saale (South Asian Studies, Prof. Rahul Peter Das) in a collaborative project coordinated by senior lecturer Dr. Dietrich Reetz at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies (ZMO) in Berlin.

Six studies investigate the role of religious Muslim groups, movements, and institutions in European countries in an attempt to understand the extent to which Muslims will shape emerging European identity. The results should contribute to an understanding of whether and how Muslims in Europe can aspire to a religious lifestyle and what obstacles might arise in the process. Muslim notions of Europe, the position practising Muslims might adopt there, and the ideas and concepts they pursue will be explored. For comparative reasons links with their countries and cultures of origin will be considered. The transfer of cultural and religious knowledge and its influence on local and translocal social milieus is also to be studied. As an interdisciplinary project, "Muslims in Europe and their societies of origin in Asia and Africa" combines concepts derived from the sociology of religion with those of Islamic studies and the political sciences. The research is designed as a series of complementary case studies.

The research project will actively communicate research to the wider public, including specialists, activists and intellectuals. For this purpose it will organise public events and develop representations for the media and the Internet. Apart from academic publications on project findings, the submission of proposals to politicians and other decision-makers in society is also planned.

The case study, which focuses on the Tablighi Jama‘at (TJ) and the Da‘wat-i Islami (DI), aims to assess the repercussions of South Asian Islamic missionary group activism in the European context. The study is coupled with a dissertation project. Via field and literature studies of the subsidiaries of both movements in Germany and three other European countries (Spain, France, Great Britain), it explores how movements adapt their mission-



Deoband-Seminar in Bury, Holcombe GB

ary endeavour to the European field. At the same time, missionary groups will be accompanied to their countries of origin in South Asia, and their strategy regeneration and translocal networks observed in detail. The intention of the project is also to contribute to an understanding of whether these missionary activities will lead to a further dissociation of Muslims from societies in Europe, as some observers assume, or whether their orientation towards consolidating Islamic norms will be conducive to integration.



Europe's main headquarter for Tablighi Jamaat in Dewsbury, GB

## Islamic Training Institutes in Germany and Their Links to Training Institutes in the Middle East and Europe

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In recent years Muslim initiatives to establish Islamic training institutes and training circles in Germany have increased (see, e.g., Islamologische Institut, www.islamologie.info, founded in 2001). Firstly, the project will present an overview of these initiatives. In a second step it focuses on 2-3 training institutes and looks at how they are linked to training institutions and networks in Europe and the Middle East, such as the Egyptian al-Azhar University and madrasas in Syria and Turkey, in order to analyse the transmission of Islamic knowledge both in and to Europe.



Homepage of the Azhar-University, where many Imams in Germany were educated

## University of Hamburg, Religious Pedagogics (Prof. Wolfram Weiße) Between Participation and Disengagement: The Muslim Minority and Its Schools in South Africa and Europe

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The case study draws a comparison between Muslim minority discourses in South Africa and those in Europe (Netherlands, England), which are similar in many ways. It focuses on debates about Muslim minority rights in the context of establishing Islamic schools.

Of particular interest are the links and parallels, and the differences and divisions between Islamic schools in South Africa and those in Europe. The analysis delves into the increased networking activities of South African Muslims with schools in England and the Netherlands, which are partly organised through the networks of Islamic movements of South Asian origin, such as the Tablighi Jama‘at and the Deobandis.



Students at an Islamic school in England (from the Website of the Leicester Islamic Academy <http://home.btconnect.com>)

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