

Muslims in Europe and Their Societies of Origin in Asia and Africa:

Diversity and Consequences of Religious Faith and Practice in Different Contexts

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.

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Centre for Modern Oriental Studies (ZMO) in Berlin

Strategies of Adaption and Dissociation

Islamic Missionary Groups from South Asia in the European Diaspora – the Tablighi Jamā'at and the Da'wat-i Islāmī

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The case study, which focuses on the Tablighi Jama'at (TJ) and the Da'wat-e 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 missionary 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's main headquarter for Tablighi Jamaat in Dewsbury, GB



Deoband-Seminar in Bury, Holcombe GB

Europe, as some observers assume, or whether their orientation towards consolidating Islamic norms will be conducive to integration.

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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 Eu-

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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.



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

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 Jamaat and the Deobandis.

University of Frankfurt/Oder, Comparative Social and Cultural Anthropology (Prof. Werner Schiffauer)

Islamism, the Reform of Islam, and Civil Religion in France

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The research project is concerned with discourses and organisational structures in the predominantly Franco-Maghrebi federation "Union des organisations islamiques de France" (UOIF, founded in 1983). Today, groups and institutions federated in the UOIF are important sites for debates and practices through which a variety of actors embedded in transnational networks engage with the laicist context of France. Taking inspiration from Bourdieu's field concept, this project aims to situate and analyse the UOIF in relation to the emerging Muslim field in France. Particular attention will be paid to relating the reform projects circulating within the UOIF to understandings of correct Islamic belief and practice in other Muslim groups. The study will question common assumptions on the impact of the French "secular context" on Islam and seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the spatial configuration of Islam in France.



Minister of the interior Sarkozy with the president of the UOIF, Lhaj Thami Bréze

Pioneers of "Euro-Islam"?

Muslim Women in the Milli Görüş

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The project analyses religiously authorised gender discourses in the Islamic milieu in Germany, concentrating on female and male actors in the Turkish-Islamic organisation Milli Görüş. By combining data gathered in Germany with gender discourses and practices in the Islamic context, the project attempts to provide a transnational research



Islamic Community Milli Görüş (IGMG), Meeting of Women

perspective. It thus analyses the dynamics of Islam in Europe under the aspect of continuities and discontinuities Islamic traditions might experience as a result of lasting Muslim presence in the European context.

University of Halle/Saale, South Asian Studies (Prof. Rahul Peter Das)

The Ahmadiya in Germany

Areas of Conflict between Islamic Identity and Secular Embed-

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The core of this project is the Islamic reformist movement of the Ahmadiya in Germany. It originated in South Asia, where it was founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad at the end of the 19th century. Based on the analysis of material published by and about the Ahmadiya, the first research phase deals with its image in German society in general and the German media in particular. Its perception of Germany's attitude to the movement will be discussed in retrospect, as will its relationship to pluralism and the secular environment. Finally, a comparison with the movement in Great Britain, India and Pakistan will be undertaken in the context of the above-mentioned issues, which will include legal and interreligious aspects, as well as the approach of the countries concerned to Islamic minorities.



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, founder of the Ahmadiya



Baitul Futuh Mosque of the Ahmadiya in London, the biggest mosque in western Europe



Ahmadiya performing their purification act at a meeting in Germany