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The new Islamic presence in Portugal¹

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Abstract

Around 15 million Muslims live in Europe today—approximately 30,000 of them in Portugal. During the last few decades, Muslims in modern Europe have demonstrated remarkable community building and institutionalization processes. That is to say, they have adopted certain European customs and standards, while at the same time retaining religious and cultural customs and standards which differ from those of the dominant culture. This is also true of the Muslims in Portugal. In elaborating on some of the factors that affect the relationship between the Muslim minority and the dominant society, this paper will draw a more detailed picture of the New Islamic Presence in Portugal.

Introduction

The first question which arises from a comparative European perspective is: what are the particulars of the small New Islamic Presence (NIP) in Portugal?²

The comparatively high number of Ismaʿīlīs (a Shīʿa branch) is one of several points which turns the rather marginal Portuguese case into a very interesting one. Another point of interest is the historical inheritance of Al-Andalus and the Reconquista. It suggests the comparison of the current situation in Portugal with that in Spain. The two countries share quite similar historical experiences of Islam—but the present-day consequences are different. In fact, each issue would require a separate paper so only their most crucial aspects will be referred to here. This paper concentrates on the





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most striking phenomenon concerning Muslims in Portugal: the role of elite and middle-class Portuguese Muslims and the extraordinary composition and structure of the Sunnī community in Lisbon. Although this attracts attention to the Portuguese NIP, it has been mostly overlooked in recent comparative studies on Muslims in Europe.

This is indeed specific to the Portuguese case: as in other European countries, Muslims in Portugal are active in social, cultural and religious matters—but in contrast to the situation in other European countries, the new socio-cultural groupings here have not manifested those aspects that research unfortunately has to deal with in this field: the ‘common’ pressure points which have emerged in the new encounter between Muslims and non-Muslims in secular, Christian-influenced, late capitalist European societies. In Portugal, this encounter seems neither to raise tensions, nor to attract special attention. One can hardly find a western European country where the NIP, no matter how large, is as consistently overlooked as in Portugal on the agenda of the media, social research, political negotiations or cross-cultural and inter-religious dialogues. In viewing the phenomenon of Islam in present-day Portugal, the interest of what we see lies in what we do not see: no demonstrations against opening mosques; no controversial issues in parliament, in local administration or in the media; no ‘headscarf affair’; no debates on official recognition or standards of secularism; and no academic discourse on ‘anti-Muslimness’, ‘Islamophobia’ or the role of Islam in processes of social marginalization of ethnic minorities. One must ask why this is so.

At first glance, the answer lies in the number of Muslim immigrants and citizens in Portugal, which is very small indeed compared with other NIPs. This explains why there is no Muslim Parliament or Council as in the United Kingdom, no Muslim student or women’s organizations and no negotiation about Islamic education in public schools as in Germany, Austria, Spain and the United Kingdom, etc. But the fact that Muslims, who represent the largest non-Christian religious minority in Portugal, are few in number is not the one and only explanation for the relatively encouraging state of socio-religious co-existence. Perhaps more significant reasons can be found in both specific Portuguese socio-historical developments—of which the NIP was both an integral part and a consequence—and the specific conditions and capacities of the Portuguese Muslim presence itself. To prevent misunderstandings, one must note that the silence surrounding the Muslim minority in Portugal means neither that they have been ignored, nor that they have been privileged. It appears rather that they have been overlooked in various contexts and for a variety of reasons. What are the circumstances that have resulted in public marginalization? What has been the role of the main parties and influential factors, namely the Muslim groups, the media, minority politics, the dynamics of the public sphere and other minority groups?



**Questions, themes and puzzles: viewing the Portuguese case
from a comparative European perspective**

Only in the mid-1980s did academics begin to see valid research possibilities in the issues arising out of the Muslim presence in Europe. At first, studies were mainly undertaken in countries with the largest immigration populations, such as France, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and sometimes Sweden.³ In 1992, when Nielsen presented the first extensive comparative study on Muslims in western Europe, he complained that very little research concerning the Muslim presence in southern Europe (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Austria and Switzerland) had been conducted.⁴ During the 1990s, this gap in basic research was surely closed as far as the NIP in all those countries is concerned,⁵ but smaller NIPs, such as those in Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal, have still not been included in comparative studies.⁶

Basic data and approach

The main reason for this substantial lack of research concerning the NIP in Portugal is undoubtedly the small number of Muslims. Between 3,000,00 and 4,000,000 Muslims live in France today, or what amounts to nearly 7% of the total population. Between 2,000,000 and 2,500,000 Muslims live in Germany (2.5–3%) and approximately 1,500,000 in the United Kingdom (2.6%). Even those countries that have a smaller Muslim population, such as Ireland, which has 20,000 (0.6%), and Luxembourg, which has 10,000 (2.6%), have a higher percentage of Muslims relative to the total population than Portugal, where Muslims are at the most 0.3% (Kettani 1996).

Another reason has to do with the academic agenda in Portugal itself. Some ten years after the revolution and the decolonization process, from the mid-1980s to the late 1980s on, social research in Portugal began increasingly to focus on the new subjects of research which resulted from the huge influx of immigrants from the PALOP.⁷ What appeared urgent were issues other than the NIP. Although the presence of non-Christian religious groups was a completely new phenomenon, it played at best a secondary role to studies on ethnically defined immigrant groups who were put on the scholarly agendas for urgent socio-economic reasons. So it was that the majority of studies focused first and foremost on Cap Verdians, the largest immigrant group, and on other Black African groups, such as the civil war refugees from Angola. The first and by far the largest group of Muslim migrants came from Mozambique and the majority of them were of Indian origin. Most of the Muslims of Indian descent had been well established as traders or in higher sectors of employment in Mozambique. They went to Portugal in response to Africanization, and later as a result of the civil war. Their circumstances and their capacity for professional integration were better

than, for instance, those of the majority of labour migrants from Cap Verde. The traders clearly coped rather well with the obstacles they had to overcome to re-establish themselves in their profession. The profile of the second group of Muslim immigrants arriving some time later from Guinea Bissau shows a remarkable percentage of students (Saint-Maurice & Pena Pires 1989), who in general have better economic and integration capacities than, for example, unskilled civil war refugees from Angola.⁸ The majority of Muslims in Portugal from India and Mozambique appear to be from a (proto-)middle-class background (on the basis of their skills/labour qualifications) and work in traditional and modern tertiary activities (mainly commerce and banking). With regard to occupation and employment, Mozambican nationals have been found exceptional among immigrants from the PALOP (Baganha 1999). Only approximately one-third of the Muslims in Portugal—mostly the Black African minority and newcomers—live in economic poverty.⁹ It is noticeable that fewer Muslims of Indian background than Hindus live in the very poor districts of Lisbon. While the living conditions of labour migrants from Muslim countries, especially in recent influxes to Spain and Italy, often appear problematic and cause tensions, the heterogeneous groups of Muslims in Portugal have not presented problems from the socio-economic point of view. Until now, the Muslim groups have attracted less attention than other minorities as subjects of social research, for understandable reasons: the current situation in Portugal draws much more attention, for instance, to Sinti and Roma (*ciganos*) and Timorenses.¹⁰

Nevertheless, if one counts all the Muslims in Portugal, including the heterogeneous Sunnī community and the Ismaʿīlīs, the highest numerical estimations give around 38,000 (in comparison, for example, with 12,000 Hindus).¹¹ Furthermore, the vast majority of them live in and around Lisbon, mainly in certain districts of the periphery and downtown. Thus it is certainly true that Muslims and their way of living are visible in Lisbon, just as they are in other European metropolises.¹² Apart from the Grande Lisboa district, one could also conduct fruitful studies of Portuguese Muslim life in Loures, Vila Franca, Coimbra, Porto, Almada, Portimão and Faro.

As in other western European countries, the NIP in Portugal is a recent immigration phenomenon. Relative to their size, Portuguese Islamic communities have been as successful as their counterparts in other European countries in networking and establishing themselves institutionally. What further parallels, differences and questions concerning the Portuguese NIP emerge from the comparative European perspective?

In the discourse on Muslims in Europe, we use the concept of NIP to grasp the recent historical phenomenon of a constantly growing Muslim population and its multifaceted cultural expressions in those countries which during the Cold War were called 'free Europe'. This concept points to the fact that we are not dealing with the first and only Islamic presence in Europe. Rather it helps to distinguish the *new* Muslim cultures in European



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societies from the traditional Islamic presence in south-eastern Europe (e.g. in the Balkans) on the one hand, and the historical Islamic presence on the Iberian peninsula on the other. The latter, the eight centuries of Al-Andalus, belongs to medieval history and has left a rich cultural inheritance—but no Muslim population. In the middle of the twentieth century immigration intensified for political and social reasons and educational purposes and as a result of decolonization processes and labour migration from Muslim countries. These processes initiated what has become a widespread Muslim presence throughout Europe today.

Furthermore, the term carries some revealing connotations which hint at basic characteristics of our subject. We speak about an Islamic *presence* because Muslims and their way of life have become visible and represent a dynamic socio-political and cultural factor in European societies. What are currently present in Europe are divergent forms of Muslim everyday life and the ongoing developmental processes of Islamic cultures in different new surroundings. That is why one can hardly speak of ‘*the Islam in Europe*’ because neither ‘Islam’ nor ‘Europe’ can be seen as monolithic bodies. The other new aspects of Islamic cultures in modern Europe are vividly exemplified in the Portuguese NIP. The Arab cultural inheritance of the historical Islamic presence is quite noticeable, in architecture and language for example, but the Muslim presence in present-day Portugal does not have any socio-demographic link to the former Muslim population. Finally, we call it new for the valid reason that the present Islamic organizations and Muslim groups came into being in Portugal only as a result of immigration. This is crucial for, with very few exceptions, immigration to Europe resulted from individual decisions which were not made for religious reasons, e.g. for missionary purposes. Muslim immigrants met each other for the first time in their new surroundings. In their efforts to establish at least a minimum of a cultural–religious infrastructure, they had to choose European forms of community organization (such as the ‘association’) which, because of their hierarchical structure, are very alien to traditional Islamic contexts. The Muslims in Portugal did so quite easily.

Facilitating aspects for integration

Like other NIPs (for example, in the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands) which came to the land of the colonizing power as a consequence of decolonization, most Muslim immigrants to Portugal had few language problems. And they also found at least some fellow Muslims who had settled there earlier for educational purposes or socio-political reasons. These early Muslim immigrants were normally from the (educated) middle class and thus were elites who had the economic, social and intellectual capacities to deal with bureaucratic obstacles in the beginning of the institutionalization processes.





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One of the main challenges the multifaceted NIPs in other countries encounter is to elect a person or establish an organization that represents and serves as the focal point for the Muslim communities at the national level. This is a prerequisite for negotiations by Muslim groups with governmental institutions on issues such as developing Islamic cultural-religious infrastructures and winning recognition for their community in areas such as their official and equal recognition as a religious community, official provision for funerals, Islamic holidays, dietary regulations in places of employment, schools, hospitals and prisons, and the introduction of Islamic religious education in public schools. Because groups from various countries of origin often represent divergent religious and cultural variations of Islam, the development of representative umbrella organizations is naturally a complicated and lengthy process. Countries like Portugal, where the majority of the NIP has the same country of origin (e.g. Turks in Germany, Indians and Pakistanis in the United Kingdom and Maghrebians in France), are not immune to this because the various groups, mainly organized in homogeneous local communities of common origin, often struggle with the same controversial issues as they did, or their relatives do, in the countries they have left. Because of its small numbers the Portuguese NIP does not exhibit the pattern of local communities. Apart from the majority group of Indian origin, the Islamic Community of Lisbon (Comunidade Islâmica de Lisboa) (CIL) appears today to represent a microcosm of the so-called 'Islamic world'. Smaller influxes and individual immigration movements during the later 1980s and in the 1990s, including secondary migrations from France and Spain, resulted in Muslims from various sub-Saharan, north African, Arab and some (south) Asian countries gathering in the central mosque. Although the communities outside Lisbon are organized independently and have formed their own associations, the CIL, because of its size and because the Portuguese Muslim elite takes part in it, plays the central role. Although this representative role is not formally registered, it is mainly the CIL that manages relations with non-Muslims, regardless of the issues that journalists, politicians or any religious or secular organizations bring to it. The policy of the self-defined community (represented by the Portuguese Muslims of Indian/Pakistani origin) is in no sense hostile towards its surroundings. It gives interviews patiently whenever it is asked to comment on international events and crises which are somehow linked to the Islamic world and uses these opportunities to explain its religion and highlight its negation of—and distance from—extremist political movements. Although one must assume that inside the community disagreements on various issues arise on a day-to-day basis, the elite 'integration spokesmen' generally see to it that internal struggles do not become public. An ugly fratricidal struggle about the presidential election in the mid-1980s was an exception and was the only occasion on which the Muslim community attracted negative publicity to itself.



The steadily increasing number of Muslims is seen as one of the most significant phenomena of modern Europe (Antes 1994), especially at a time when Europe is searching to define what may be called its 'cultural identity'. Unfortunately, the reasons for increased attention often derive from regrettable entanglements of politics and religion and from an undifferentiated equalization of so-called 'fundamentalist' political movements with multifaceted Islamic cultures *per se*. Local citizens are aroused by extremists to resist the increasing cultural presence of Islam in their midst. Generalized perceptions of 'the other/the alien' and tendentious historiography perpetuate these prejudices. Above all, the media plays an important role. Therefore an assessment of the Muslim presence in the Portuguese media and the function of the latter will follow below.

Muslims and Portuguese society

The very recent phenomenon of an NIP on the western coast of the Iberian peninsula arose at the historical turning point of modern Portugal, from 1974 on, when the Salazar/Caetano regime finally collapsed and the former colonies became independent. Portuguese society began to experience a fundamental change in the political, social and demographic landscape. This started with the revolution, which initiated the transition from an authoritarian system to democracy,¹³ and with the long overdue independence of the African colonies, which initiated the process of decolonization.¹⁴

The socio-historical context of the Muslims' arrival

It was not only the rigid system and atmosphere which began to change rapidly: in addition approximately 500,000 so-called *retornados* returned to their motherland.¹⁵ The consequence of the dramatic changes in both areas (the PALOP and Portugal) was that the Portuguese nation state (for a short period) was quickly transformed from a country of emigration into a country of immigration. This changed several fundamental aspects of its self-perception. After having fought a losing battle in the African colonies, the role of the colonial empire was gone for good and Salazar's programmatic slogan, 'proud and alone', became obsolete. These famous words once paid tribute to the political concepts of the *Estado Novo* ('new state'—the name the Salazar regime gave to its political system), reflecting Portugal's isolation, at least from Europe, in matters of economic and foreign affairs. Apart from domestic political developments, changes in Portugal's self-perception were initiated by the turn from the self-styled 'pan-continental' perspective to a desire for European integration and new aspirations in foreign affairs. The sense of being 'proud and alone' became obsolete for another reason. In addition to the re-emigrants, approximately 30,000–45,000

non-Portuguese individuals left the scattered former colonies during the first post-revolutionary years and settled in and around Portugal's major cities, mainly Lisbon and Porto.¹⁶ Living conditions were utterly intolerable in the PALOP—and not only for Portuguese people. Years of wars of independence and the sudden loss of Portuguese administrative structures led to further deterioration of an already barely tolerable *status quo*. Angola and Mozambique slid into civil war.

A new religio-cultural diversity

As had emerged some years earlier in France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany, immigration—as a result of decolonization and/or labour migration—changed the religious and cultural compositions of European nation states. Initiated by the decolonization process, the religious and cultural landscape of a very Catholic Portugal changed. At the time when the foundation stones of political pluralism and the consolidation of democracy were being laid, the western European country of emigration *par excellence* lost its overwhelming religious and cultural homogeneity. This was most visible in Lisbon and its suburbs.

The religious affiliations and cultural backgrounds of the immigrants from the PALOP are diverse. They include African (local) religions and syncretistic cults, Catholicism of Roman influence and African forms, a small percentage of Protestantism, different forms of African-cultured Islam (including Šūfī groups), Sunnī Islam of former Indian origin, Ismāʿīlism and Hinduism.¹⁷

African Sunnī Muslims came from Guinea Bissau.¹⁸ A smaller number of Black African Muslims immigrated to Portugal from Mozambique.¹⁹ While there are many east African Sunnī Muslims and Ismāʿīlīs, all of Indian origin, Mozambique was the point of departure for the majority of Muslims living in Portugal today.

For several reasons it is difficult to gather reliable numerical data for the study of the NIP in Europe,²⁰ and this is true of both Muslim citizens and Muslim immigrants living in Portugal. We have to work with differing estimated numbers of immigrants and with ongoing immigration and emigration fluxes. Furthermore, most of the available statistics on immigration, as well as the results of the legalization campaigns,²¹ do not document data on religious affiliation, as the Portuguese national census normally does,²² though it seems that only an unrepresentative percentage of immigrants took part in these censuses. Apart from documented data on beneficiaries of financial support, participants in educational programmes, marriages, funerals and the numbers of voters in the general assemblies, the Muslim communities themselves can only estimate the number of their members.²³ Nevertheless, it is they who may present the most realistic overview, and this is why the vast majority of newspaper articles rely on them.

Since the communities have complete economic independence from the state and because they cannot expect any advantage from higher proportional representation in legal negotiations,²⁴ there is no real reason for them to over- or under-estimate the number of their members, but all numerical data are still based to some extent on estimates and do not contain clear information on the daily religious practice of Muslim individuals living in Portugal.

Integration through global networks and precepts: the Ismā'īlī community in Portugal

Shī'ism is almost exclusively represented by the Shia Imami Nizari Muslims, followers of the Aga Khan, who is also an authority in secular matters. The Ismā'īlī community numbers approximately 8000 members,²⁵ who are mostly of Indian origin (mainly from Gujarat). They have settled mainly in Lisbon and to a lesser extent in Porto. They are closely connected with their sister communities in Canada, the United Kingdom and Spain and seem to cope with integration very well. The majority of the members of the present-day community in Portugal had known each other in the Ismā'īlī community in Mozambique. Collective migration is an extraordinary exception for Muslim groups in Europe, but a characteristic of the Ismā'īlīs, whose global community numbers around 15,000,000 people. Apart from the fact that they do not have any homeland, their history, during which expulsion and discrimination have occurred frequently, explains why they are no strangers to migration. The Aga Khan networks function very well as organizations (including Health and Education Services in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the Aga Khan University and Faculties of Health Sciences). The Aga Khan Foundation, which has a branch in Lisbon, is also well known and respected for its accomplishments in development aid projects and its support of modern Islamic architecture.

The two fundamental precepts, introduced by their spiritual leader and Imam, the Aga Khan, that Ismā'īlīs must always observe go some way towards explaining their ability to integrate and cope with migration. The first and the most important is the religious obligation to Islam and to the Imam. The second is loyalty towards the country of residence and any government responsible for the security and well-being of the Ismā'īlī community. Ismā'īlīs have a unique relationship to the Aga Khan. They follow the direct advice of Prince Karim Aga Khan IV given in speeches and *firmons*. In their new environments and social contexts, Ismā'īlī groups have followed their leaders' concepts of 'Westernization' (for example under British rule in India and nowadays in any Western society), 'de-Indianization' (in Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique) and, in terms of spirituality, a more recent 're-Islamization'. Generally they practise a form of faith that is recognizably different from other forms of Islam. It searches for a



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balance between the spiritual and the material. For them, 'Islam', which is linguistically related to meanings of peace and wholeness, refers to peace of the spirit as well as to understanding between people and their material well-being. Education and access to good employment also play a fundamental role. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the majority of copy-shops in Lisbon belonged to Ismā'īlī families. The idea of several families I spoke with in Lisbon was to integrate their sons as soon as possible into any available form of employment (as traders or handymen) and to produce the financial resources necessary for the higher education of their daughters. Choosing a respected profession was seen as being more important for women. In the late 1990s, the imposing Lisbon Ismā'īlī Centre was built (in the Rua Abranchese Ferrão, designed by the architect Raj Rewal in co-operation with the Portuguese architect Frederico Valsassina). As an image of the Ismā'īlī concept of integration, it assimilates in itself architectural styles and influences from Lisbon's Mosteiro dos Jeronimos, India's Fatehpur Sikri and Spain's Alhambra. Whenever Prince Aga Khan visits Portugal, as he has at least twice since Ismā'īlīs have lived there, the Portuguese authorities treat the event like a kind of state visit. Like Sunnī, and at times other Shī'a, Muslims, the Portuguese press always distinguishes this extraordinary Shī'a group from other followers of the Islamic faith.

Integration through the acting of local elites: the Sunnī community in Lisbon

The first Muslims to settle in Portugal in the 1950s were Sunnīs—single students of Indian background, who came from Mozambique and met each other for the first time in Lisbon. The best known Portuguese Muslims, who dominate the leading committees of the CIL to the present day, have been these early arrivees. Suleyman Valy Mamede, who came to Lisbon in 1953, became the founder of the community and the most important promoter of integration. This erudite author of several works in Islamic subjects and respected teacher is known as 'the father of the mosque'. He was the president of the CIL for seventeen years and also directed the prominent Portuguese press agency, ANOP, which broke up at the end of his directorship. Furthermore, Mamede was an active member of the moderately conservative Social Democratic Party (PSD).²⁶ Some people said that it was as a result of his involvement that the PSD was the privileged mediator for initiating diplomatic contacts with Arab countries after 1974. In fact, in 1979, on the occasion of the laying of the central mosque's foundation stone, the *Expresso* (3 February 1979) titled its cover story 'Construction of the mosque in Lisbon could stimulate improved relations between Portugal and the Arab World' ('*Construção de mesquita em Lisboa poderá estimular aproximação entre Portugal e o mundo árabe*'). This is the very first



newspaper article on the Portuguese Islamic community after April 1974 that I could find in Lisbon's archives and it may be seen as remarkable that it describes primarily the assumed advantages the very mineral oil-dependent Portugal might derive from an Islamic presence. Valy Mamede, who was president of the CIL at this time, was a protagonist in the above-mentioned struggle in the presidential elections in 1985. The main people involved all came from this small group of early Muslim immigrants. Mussa Omar, a surgeon, was at first the main supporter of Mamede's opponent (Isaac Cassimo Semá) and finally became a candidate himself. When the need for a compromise to calm the situation became urgent, one of the other 'pioneers', Abdool Karim Vakil, the director of a bank, became the primary candidate and president.²⁷

Vakil kept some pictures from the early times of Muslim life in Portugal in the 1960s, when fifteen or twenty Muslims gathered in his house to pray together: 'On the occasion of Islamic festivities, for instance during Ramadan, we went searching for other Muslims to invite them to pray with us' (*'Quando era ocasião defestas, o Ramadão por exemplo, andávamos à procura de outros muçulmanos para fazerem connosco os orações'*) (*Expresso Revista*, 11 March 1989). In 1968, when the (Sunnī) Islamic community of Lisbon (CIL) was founded, it had only 25 or 30 members.²⁸ Apart from the lack of prayer halls, the Muslim elite faced further problems during the *Estado Novo*.²⁹ Valy Mamede was asked nineteen times to come to the PIDE (the notorious secret service of the *Estado Novo*). He was also asked approximately eighteen times by the civil government of Lisbon to hand over certain legal documents regarding the treaties concerning the founding of the CIL. Since Portugal still had a colonial empire, the establishment of an Islamic community at home was obviously judged problematic by the government, at a time when colonialism was execrated by the majority of the Muslim countries affected.

From April 1974 on, the number of Sunnī Muslims residing in Portugal was estimated at 4000–6000.³⁰ The ambassador of Egypt invited fellow-Muslims to use the basement of his residence as a prayer hall. In 1979 the government of Mota Pinto offered a part of the Principe Real palace to the community to use as a temporary mosque. Muslims who did not live near these places continued to gather in boarding houses and private homes. Although the first petition for land (near the Praça de Espanha in the district of Bairro Azul) to build the central mosque was submitted in 1966, plans for construction could not be set in motion until 1978, when permission to build was finally granted. Portuguese builders and constructors and the architect Ilídio Monteiro (also Portuguese) received the orders for the ambitious undertaking, which could only be realized with the financial support of Islamic countries. The Islamic Centre of Portugal (Centro Islâmico de Portugal), plans for which were initiated by the ambassador of Morocco, was a co-operative venture by all the diplomatic

representatives of Islamic countries in Portugal. It was founded in 1976 to support the official establishment of the CIL. As in other European countries in which mosques have been built, Saudi Arabia, with its \$1,000,000 contribution (all prices in US dollars), was the main investor. According to a list based on a statement by Mamede published in the daily newspaper *A Capital* (28 March 1985), Kuwait made the second largest donation of \$550,000, followed by Libya (\$200,000), the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman (\$100,000 each), Iran (\$50,000) and Iraq (\$40,000). Several other countries, such as Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, donated smaller amounts. A practical consequence of the publicly fratricidal struggle over the community's presidency was that the main investors stopped their payments and some parts of the central mosque are still not finished as planned. The economic situation of the CIL has deteriorated, but it is now independent.

During the 1980s the number of Muslims in Portugal increased to 15,000,³¹ and in the 1990s it rose to 20,000–30,000.³² The first mosque was built in 1982 in Laranjeiro (Comunidade Islâmica do Sul de Tejo), followed one year later by the small but impressive Mesquita Aicha Siddika in Odivelas. Generally, the reactions of the occasionally curious non-Muslim people who lived near Islamic centres have been rather relaxed. An exception to this occurred during the inauguration in Odivelas. Some young demonstrators violently expressed their intolerance, whereupon the Muslims immediately invited them to come into the mosque for an educational discussion. This solved the problem. Today Muslims say that they are respected by the surrounding communities and sometimes even receive support from their neighbours.

In 1985 the great central mosque in Lisbon (Mesquita Central de Lisboa) finally opened its doors and in 1991 a mosque was opened in Coimbra, in the Santa Apolonia district, where approximately fifteen families and 100 Muslim students gather for worship. Representatives of the Portuguese governmental institutions have always accepted invitations to attend the ceremonies. More than ten temporary mosques³³ and prayer halls³⁴ (*lugares do culto*) are scattered throughout Lisbon and the rest of the country. Three centres for Islamic culture and education are well used by Muslim adults and even more by children.³⁵ The rather conservative newspaper *Al-Furqán*, 'the Islamic voice in Portugal' (*a voz islâmica em Portugal*), which has been published since 1981, also edits monographs and leaflets on Islamic subjects and, more recently, has organized book fairs. In 1989 Valy Mamede founded the independent Portuguese Centre for Islamic Studies (Centro Portuguesa de Estudos Islâmicos) in Lisbon and there is also an Association for Islamic Education.

One can find the Qur'ān in a Portuguese translation,³⁶ as well as video cassettes about Islamic history, culture and worship. Lively discussions on topics such as Christian–Muslim relations past and present, children's

education in the new millennium and women in Islam take place between Muslims (and non-Muslims) in the Portuguese Islamic Internet Forum (Fórum Islâmico).³⁷ A female Portuguese convert to Islam has designed a home page for her sisters in faith. It is called “Ā’isha’s Garden” and is intended to be a place to discuss Islamic and gender issues. In the Forum, questions on conversion to Islam, individuals’ personal stories and the experiences of mostly young Portuguese converts are always part of the open discussions. Conversion is also a topic in the section ‘Questions to the Imām’, where Sheikh Munir, the Imām of Lisbon’s central mosque and the CIL’s foremost theological spokesman, responds to mainly Portuguese-speaking Muslims who send their questions from Portugal, Brazil and sometimes even from the United Kingdom, and who enjoy making contacts through this site with their co-religionists.

The new technologies and their common language have led to increasing communication between Portuguese and Brazilian Muslims during the last few years. This is interesting because they neither have the same descent nor share similar historical experiences, or the same traditional regionally specific customs. In contrast with the Portuguese NIP, the majority of Brazilian Muslims today are from the Middle East (al-Ahari 1999).³⁸ The internet chat sites, as well as the visit to Lisbon in 1995 of a Brazilian Imām, who took part in a Portuguese television chat show (*Público*, 9 February 1995), provide evidence of this new interaction.

Muslim children attend Islamic classes after school. Muslim traders gather during the day in the backrooms of their shops to perform their prayers. The dream and pride of Muslim families and communities is to send at least one of their children abroad for a good education in Islamic studies. When their financial circumstances permit and Muslim parents have the chance to send their children abroad to study, the United Kingdom seems to be the preferred place (see also *Expresso Revista*, 11 March 1989).³⁹ Apart from the fact that in Europe the United Kingdom offers the widest spectrum of Islamic studies, an explanation for this phenomenon could be that the NIP in Britain, as in Portugal, is mainly represented by Muslims of Indian/Pakistani origin. It is nevertheless interesting to see that a Muslim minority living in a European country prefers another European country to the Arab world for higher education in Islamic studies—a fact which raises other questions concerning the self-perception of European minority Muslims and their establishment in a new environment. And although links with the United Kingdom are strong in the case of the Portuguese Sunnīs of Indian origin, they are even stronger between the Portuguese Ismā’īlīs and their British sister communities. Ismā’īlī studies are well established in the United Kingdom but here the link is not only a bridge to higher Islamic education but also a direct connection between the communities. Marriages between the Portuguese Ismā’īlī middle class and British Ismā’īlīs are not uncommon.⁴⁰

The Portuguese Islamic community and the media

The Islamic communities seem to function as an anchor for immigrants with a Muslim background. As a consequence of the intense activities and constant striving of Sheikh Munir, who is of Indian origin and erudite Hanafī background, being a graduate of the University of Karachi, this development has already affected the actions of Portuguese governmental institutions concerned with immigrants.⁴¹ As he knows, newly arriving Muslims are normally sent to the mosque. Economic and social conditions for many Muslim immigrants, especially for the Black African minority and newcomers, are often alarming. For these people, belonging to their Islamic communities has become a basic necessity for social reasons, even at the level of the meagre financial support provided through the Islamic *zakāt* alms system, which is given to families in critical situations.

Concerning financial and social support, the biggest challenge for the Islamic communities in Portugal has surely been the impressive effort they made to help the Bosnian Muslim refugees who arrived in Portugal in September 1992. Supported at first by the Islamic World League, the CIL took complete responsibility (including the renting of houses) for approximately 30 families. Against the background of minimal media attention received by the Portuguese NIP until then, the case of the Bosnian Muslims represented something new and exceptional. This was made clear by an article published by *Público* (10 December 1992) with the title 'The hour of the Islamic community' (*A hora da Comunidade Islâmica*). The refugees were brought to Portugal as part of a relief operation by a non-governmental student organization, which had to rely on private funding from the start. When problems appeared after some months of private care for the Bosnian families, the students' relief action was criticized for its lack of long-term planning. Nobody knew for how long the families would have to stay or would need comprehensive support. It seems that the government did not give them permission to work. In October 1993, the CIL had to concede that its resources had been exhausted. In the middle of November of the same year, it had to cancel financial support for 47 of the 107 Bosnian refugees. They were still in the media spotlight because of the refugees, but the friendly reports on the CIL's action now changed their tone: 'Lisbon's Muslims withdraw support of the Bosnians' (*Muçulmanos de Lisboa retiram apoio aos bósnios*) *Público* (16 October 1993). The extraordinary attention given to the NIP during this period, as well as the rather unfair conclusion of the case, can both be seen as exceptional.

Between February 1991 and August 1996,⁴² *Público*, for instance, published 26 articles which mentioned the local Islamic communities, eleven of them reporting exclusively on matters relating to the Portuguese Islamic communities. As a general rule over the last ten years, at least two Portuguese newspapers have published articles on the NIP on the occasion of the

beginning (or end) of Ramaḍān. Normally they have presented a brief overview of the Muslim presence (referring to the number and origin of Muslims and their institutions, etc.) and an explanation of this Islamic festival, based on the statement by a Portuguese Imām, usually Sheikh Munir.⁴³

When political events which were perceived as Islamic matters put 'Islam' at the top of international public agendas, elite representatives of the Portuguese Muslim community were often asked by the Portuguese media to comment on and provide insights into the complex relationship between political and religious matters and to explain the various viewpoints of Portuguese Muslims.⁴⁴

As in other European countries, the actively religious Muslims in Portugal do not abandon or make any attempt to conceal the cultural customs which set them apart from the dominant society. Nonetheless, the most remarkable characteristic of the NIP in Portugal is its silence and the silence about it. But this does not mean that the Muslim presence has been ignored by the media, that Muslims have been consciously excluded from social activities and public debates, or that Portuguese Islamic authorities have not been respected by the representatives of the Portuguese state.

The Muslim presence and the Portuguese public arena

For years, teachers have regularly asked the Imāms in local mosques to give lessons about Islam. The pupils have always been welcome. And on several occasions, such as opening ceremonies or anniversaries of Islamic institutions, distinguished state representatives (including Mario Soares during his presidency) have taken part in the festivities.⁴⁵

Along with other religious minorities, albeit second in line, Portuguese Muslims have taken part in discussions about religious freedom and related topics, but in all legal negotiations or discussions of the rights of religious minorities in Portugal, it is Protestant groups and umbrella organizations who have played the main role. From the early 1990s on, the debates on amending the law of religious freedom, which in crucial respects stems from the era of the *Estado Novo*, became an issue in the media. In 1996, the government's Committee for Reform of the Law of Religious Freedom (Comissão de Reforma da Lei de Liberdade Religiosa) invited all religious confessions and associations registered with the Ministry of Justice to submit proposals and statements for the reform of the law (*Público*, 21 July 1996).⁴⁶ Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, which did not show much interest, the respondents may be divided into three major groups: Protestants and Pentecostal churches (such as the Assembleia de Deus of Brazilian origin); traditional non-Christian religions (Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism); and New Religious Movements (NRMs). The majority of the last are, from the Portuguese perspective, classified as Protestant denominations and/or claim Christian roots, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses (Testemunhas

de Jeová), the Igreja Maná or the Igreja Universal de Reino de Deus (IURD). Together with the Jewish community,⁴⁷ the Portuguese Muslims organized the alliance of the non-Christian religions.⁴⁸ Because of the general concurrence of their requests,⁴⁹ Portuguese Jews and Muslims had occasion once again to demonstrate their willingness to work together. Although the Protestant minorities were seemingly the reason for the renewal of this discussion in Portugal, the issue became more complex with the appearance of the NRMs.⁵⁰

As a result of their enormous growth after 1974, evangelical churches, denominations of Protestantism and NRMs in Portugal attracted much more attention than non-Christian minority groups, such as the Hindus, Ismā'īlīs and Sunnī Muslims. The fact that these Christian (but non-Catholic) religious minorities have attracted significant numbers of Portuguese converts has made them prominent in the Portuguese public arena. They have also been the subject of studies conducted by scholars and research institutes that are somehow linked with the dominant Roman Catholic Church,⁵¹ or with Protestant institutions themselves. An examination of Portuguese newspaper articles published during the last twenty years shows that the non-Christian religious minorities (especially Muslims and Hindus) have generally not been the subject of controversial discussion in the media. Furthermore, it may be safe to assume that they have not made a significant impact on Portuguese society, apart from the fact that they are represented in the 'immigrant population'. In fact, among the religious minorities, only the IURD has provoked what one could call a real public scandal, in the early 1990s.⁵²

Conclusion: the unconscious public marginalization of the Portuguese Muslim presence

When I point to the silence surrounding the NIP in Portugal as its defining characteristic, the observation is made from a comparative European perspective. In those European countries where more Muslims have become citizens, the political parties have begun to take an interest in the Muslim vote.⁵³ During election campaigns in Portugal it is not uncommon for candidates and the media to focus on a certain 'group' of voters. Prior to the federal elections of 1995, a discussion on 'Christians in the current Portuguese socio-political situation' (*Os cristãos na actual situação sócio-política portuguesa*) took place in the Belém Cultural Centre. *Público* (20 September 1995) published an article on 'The Catholic vote' (*O voto esbatido dos católicos*) and another on 'The "gypsy" party' (*O "partido do cigano"*) (*Público*, 22 September 1995). Although approximately 70% of the Muslims in Portugal are Portuguese citizens,⁵⁴ and could potentially influence the communal elections in the Grande Lisboa district, I have not found a single article addressing the Portuguese Muslim constituency.

As mentioned above, the NIP in several other European countries has recently initiated debates on Islamic religious education in public schools. Between October and December 1999, a controversial debate in *Público* on the topic of religious instruction in Portuguese primary and secondary schools elicited a surprising number of letters to the editor. The question was whether the traditional monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church on the instruction on religion and moral topics was still an appropriate and agreeable solution in secular times, when the percentage of Catholic pupils is decreasing constantly. The opponents proposed 'secular' lessons on ethics and history of religion. These reformers maintained that the current solution was creating various forms of discrimination against children and youngsters without religious convictions (*Público*, 6 December 1999). The fact that this discrimination also affected pupils with non-Christian religious convictions, such as the second generations of Muslims and Hindus, was not mentioned at all.

During the last 25 years, the successful, visible and generally respected Portuguese NIP has been overlooked for the most part in Portuguese socio-political matters. Although the historical Islamic presence in medieval times has occasionally been mentioned by both Muslims and Portuguese governmental representatives, the current invention of a Portuguese Islamic tradition has not gone as far as it has in Spain in the last decade. In 1992 an agreement between Muslims and the Spanish Ministry of Justice did describe Islam and Muslims as having a crucial part in the historical development of the Spanish 'national identity',⁵⁵ but nevertheless the Imām of the CIL has constantly had to calm down confused Muslim pupils (who were born in Portugal and are Portuguese), when they were taught in school that Muslims were the enemies of the Portuguese people.

In 1996, when official ceremonies to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews took place in various Portuguese governmental institutions, the expulsion of the Muslims, which happened at about the same time, was not mentioned and Muslims were not invited. Significantly, those who accused the Portuguese state of 'discrimination against the Muslims' were not the Muslims themselves but the Academy for Higher Iberian–Arabic Studies (*Academia de Altos Estudos Ibero–Árabes*) (*Público*, 10 December 1996). While Spanish tourist agencies nowadays increasingly promote tours in 'Al-Andalus', and invite the tourists to 'Discover Islamic Spain', the (southern) Portuguese postcards which show 'typical Portuguese chimneys' overlook the fact that these minaret-like chimneys are typical features of Islamic architecture.

A final example of what one could call the public marginalization of the NIP in Portugal shows that this phenomenon stems from a selective socio-historical consciousness rather than from conscious discrimination. It relates to a documentary series, which was broadcast on the public television channel RTP1. To mark the end of the twentieth century, several authors

co-produced the Portuguese 'Chronicle of the century' (*'Crónica do Século'*). It comes as no surprise that no remarks were made about the recent historical presence of new non-Catholic minorities and new Muslim groups.

Following these arguments to show that the Muslim minority in Portugal has simply been overlooked, some observations may be made in conclusion about the various reasons for this and the context in which it has occurred. We shall focus first on socio-historical developments specific to Portugal and, second, on the specific conditions and capabilities of the Portuguese Muslim community itself.

The lack of attention paid to Muslims arriving in Portugal is due in part to the general turbulence of the (post-)revolutionary years. As part of the huge influx of immigrants from the PALOP, the Muslims (and Hindus), who mainly had an Indian background and came from Mozambique, took second place behind the much higher numbers of African immigrants. In the multifaceted group of Black African immigrants, the percentage of Muslims was very low. As a minority within the larger minority community, the multi-ethnic NIP was overlooked when the focus of minority politics and social research was directed primarily towards Cap Verdian immigrants, or, as is the case now, concentrates on the rather traditional presence of *ciganos*.

With the new diversity of religions and religious minorities, which increased enormously and suddenly after April 1974, there has been much more attention given to (and conversion to) Protestant denominations (such as Brazilian Pentecostal churches), NRMs (e.g. Scientology), esoteric cults and Asian schools of thought. In contrast to the situation in other European countries, the main protagonists of emancipation of religious minorities in the Portuguese context are not the Muslims, but the Protestants.

Academic research in other European countries now often over-emphasizes the so-called 'religious factor', particularly when dealing with immigrant groups with a Muslim background. But in the majority of Portuguese studies on immigrant groups the perspective of 'ethnicity' is preferred. With few exceptions, the way the Portuguese media has treated the 'Muslim issue' during the last twenty years has been nuanced and fair.

Furthermore, the NIP itself has demonstrated remarkable potential and abilities which, from a comparative European perspective on Muslim minorities, play an important role in the integration processes.

Because the major cause of migration was the decolonization process, the overwhelming majority of Muslim immigrants were already familiar with the Portuguese language when they arrived. Since this is a crucial factor in integration, the fundamental problem of obtaining citizenship or a temporary and renewable legal status was less critical. The fact that they migrated from a former colony also meant that those Muslims who arrived in Portugal as part of the huge post-revolutionary influx of immigrants have had

the advantage of meeting Muslim who had already settled in Portugal for educational purposes and had the intellectual and social capabilities, as well as the useful social relations, needed to build a religious and cultural infrastructure. From the beginning, the early arrivees took part in the leading committees of the Islamic communities, while at the same time successfully integrating into high-level professions and becoming close friends with the Portuguese political elite.

The majority of the Muslims in Portugal, namely those of Indian origin, had been established in tertiary sectors of employment in Mozambique. They coped quite well with re-establishing themselves in their occupations (mainly as traders) in Portugal.

When one considers the situation of various new Muslim groups in other European countries, it is immediately apparent that many of the problems which Muslims had to face in their new surroundings derived from the fact that they lacked any experience of living as a minority in a culturally different dominant society. Since they had been minorities in both Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, the vast majority of the NIP in Portugal did not lack this minority experience when they arrived. And because Muslims arrived in Portugal more than ten years later than in other European countries, they had some opportunity to learn from the experience other Muslims had acquired since their earlier arrival in Europe.

To the present day, the policy of the Islamic community in Portugal has been rather non-political and, in any case, positively oriented towards their surroundings. Although they have had (and will have) to cope with internal struggles, those members of the communities working for integration could well ensure that their image in the Portuguese public sphere remains positive. Some insiders speculate that this might change if politically active Arabs were to join the small Arab minority in the CIL, and this must remain an open question.

Notes

- 1 A short version of this paper ('The New Islamic Presence in Portugal') was presented at the IVth Portuguese Congress of Sociology in Coimbra (17–19 April 2000). I wish to express my thanks to those who have helped in its preparation: Margarida Silva Dias, Cláudio Brito, Sara David Lopez, Luis Rosa, Peter Antes, Franz-Wilhelm Heimer, John Abromeit and the Heinrich-Boell Foundation. Another version of this paper, in Portuguese, is forthcoming: 'Muçulmanos na Margem: a Nova resença Islâmica em Portugal', *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, 34 (Dec. 2000).
- 2 Since Gerholm & Lithman (1988) published their volume *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe*, this notion of NIP has frequently been used in the discourses of Muslims in Europe.
- 3 See, for example, Gerholm & Lithman (1988), Shadid & van Koningsveld (1991).
- 4 'It has been necessary to omit Spain and Portugal altogether for the same reason' (Nielsen 1992, 87).



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- 5 For different approaches, see: on Sunnī Muslims and the *Comunidade Islâmica*, Francisco (1991), Pedroso (1991), Pimentel (1993), Frias (1995) and Gadit (1996); and on the Ismā'īlī community, Lopes (1988) and Coxilha (1995).
- 6 See, for example, Abulmaham (1995), Nonnemann *et al.* (1996), Shadid & van Koningsveld (1996a, b), Vertovec & Peach (1997).
- 7 *Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa* (Portuguese-speaking African countries), namely Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Cap Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe.
- 8 For more detailed information about immigrants from Guinea Bissau, see Machado (1998).
- 9 Observers of the (informal) labour market have recently noticed more male Pakistanis, regardless of their educational background, working in construction and building. For more detailed information on profiles of PALOP immigrants, see Malheiro (1996).
- 10 It may also be significant that the Portuguese academic landscape hardly included disciplines that concentrated intensively or exclusively on non-Christian religions (Anthropology of Religion is an exception). Academic chairs in subjects such as Islamic Studies, with a natural special interest in Muslim subjects, did not exist.
- 11 In 1991, the leader of the Hindu community (*Comunidade Hindu*), Kantilal Jamnadas Saujani, estimated the number of community members as 8000 (*Diário de Notícias*, 24 August 1991). Eight years later this had increased to 12,000 (Bastos & Bastos 1999a). The vast majority of Hindus living in Portugal came from Mozambique during decolonization and under pressure from the civil war. They mainly held Mozambican citizenship and had lived there for three or four generations. The main points of departure of the former generations had been Gujarat (Porbander, Rajkot and Surat) and Diu. For detailed information about Hindus in Portugal, see the bibliography in Bastos & Bastos (1999b).
- 12 Of course, the Muslim presence in Berlin, Paris and Marseilles, London and Bradford, for example, far exceeds that in Lisbon.
- 13 To the present day, the transition from an authoritarian regime to democracy is a controversial subject. Rahden (1997) indicates that Portuguese history books only began to deal with it a few years ago, thereby supplementing the wide scope of revolution literature (which mainly follows political rather than academic approaches) and subjective memoirs with fact-oriented surveys (see Medina 1990; Reis 1992; Ferreira 1994). While German historiography does not deal with this subject, a whole string of investigations of contemporary Portuguese history exists in English. The 'Bibliographical essay' by Maxwell (1995, 201–17) presents an extensive survey.
- 14 This process was later seriously described as the 'decolonization disaster' (Bornhorst 1997, 261) and the first phases of political transition, the revolutionary years 1974–6, as political chaos.
- 15 In current Portuguese academic studies, the term *retornado* is generally no longer used. It did not have the quality of a category and thus appeared problematic. Nevertheless it is still widely used on a popular level. The notion appeared for the first time in April 1974 with the huge influx of immigrants from the PALOP to Portugal. *Retornado* referred to Portuguese re-emigrants from the PALOP, and was not applied to Portuguese re-emigrants returning from other places. The literal meaning is 'homecomer', so the notion inevitably carries the connotation of 'return', thereby excluding a crucial experience of its subject: only 60% of the 'returning' people were born in Portugal (Pena Pires *et al.* 1984). The term also carries an ideological connotation: because of their loss of privileges the *retornados*

- did not seem to have any interest in the decolonization process and so were regarded as 'conservatives'.
- 16 According to the *Recenseamento Geral da População* (General Census) of 1981, 45,222 nationals from the PALOP were then resident in Portugal. Of these, 19,567 were nationals of Angola, 18,557 of Cap Verde, 1126 of Guinea Bissau, 4425 of Mozambique and 1547 of São Tomé. In the same year, only 27,287 of the immigrants with these nationalities had legal status (according to the statistics of the Serviço de Estrangeiros do Ministério da Administração Interna (Foreigner's Service of the Ministry of Domestic Administration) (do Céu Esteves 1991). After the decolonization period a new pattern of international migration between the PALOP and Portugal emerged. For detailed information, see Saint-Maurice & Pena Pires (1989), who explain the following: with regard to labour migration, the existing waves from Cap Verde had intensified and migration from other countries, especially Guinea Bissau and São Tomé, became significant. Smaller waves of political refugees arrived as a result of the civil wars in Angola and Mozambique. And finally immigration for educational purposes intensified, particularly from Guinea Bissau.
 - 17 National censuses in the PALOP conducted in 1980 and 1981 provide insight into the religious composition of the countries of departure after the huge waves of emigration to Portugal. Since the vast majority of emigrants from 1974 on had been Portuguese re-emigrants (including the second generation), one can assume that the proportions of religious affiliations of the African population did not change significantly between 1974 and 1981. Various local African religious cults account for the below-100% totals in the censuses. The total population figure and the year of the census follow the countries' names: Guinea Bissau (793,000; 1980): 35% Muslims (13% of them Mandingo), 5% Catholics; Cap Verde (296,000; 1980): 98% Catholics, 2% Protestants; São Tomé and Príncipe (95,000; 1981): 55% Catholics, 3% Protestants; Angola (7,078,000; 1980): 35% Catholics, 12% Protestants; Mozambique (12,130,000; 1980): 12–15% Muslims, 12–15% Christians, Catholics predominating (Hofmeister & Schönborn 1985).
 - 18 More than one-third of the total population in Guinea Bissau today are Sunnī Muslims linked with the Islamic Mālikī school, the majority of them of Fulani and Mandingo origin (Heine 1996).
 - 19 In Mozambique 14% of the present-day population are Sunnīs of the Islamic Shāfi'ī school, mainly belonging to the central Bantu group, Yao (Heine 1996).
 - 20 Nielsen (1992) adds a 'Note on statistics' of nearly two pages in his study, discussing the reasons for—and obstacles resulting from—this problem. He emphasizes that it is obvious to observers in any way acquainted with the subject, that one of the most uncertain aspects of this study of Muslims in Europe is the nature of statistical data.
 - 21 In response to the Schengen Treaty, in the 1990s the Portuguese government carried out the so-called 'legalization campaigns' (in 1992 and 1996) to deal with the fact that 25–30% of the immigrant population was present illegally (Baganha 1999). Although a prerequisite for gaining a residence permit was that the applicant should already have had an income and a place of residence in the country for a specified length of time, the result of the first special regularization in 1992 was an increase in the number of immigrants from France, Spain and Germany, where they could not obtain comparable status. The presence of Pakistanis and Senegalese was particularly noticeable. Most of the latter arrived in Portugal only in 1993, however, and took part in the campaign of 1996. For various reasons—bureaucratic obstacles, lack of confidence in the campaign, which could also monitor the immigrant population, and the fact that it was relatively easy to



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stay illegally in Portugal and become integrated into the informal labour market (Baganha 1999)—the 1992 campaign did not produce very satisfying numbers and the 1996 campaign was generally judged more successful.

- 22 The 1981 census contained a question on religion. Specified categories were: Catholics; Orthodox; Protestants; Other Christians; Jews; Muslims; Other non-Christians; No religion. Of other European countries, only Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Northern Ireland include a question on religion in government censuses. Moreover, since the minimum period between censuses tends to be ten years, their usefulness is minimal (Nielsen 1992). In 1998, British associations of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus were negotiating for the documentation of religious affiliation in the upcoming national census (*Muslim News*, October 1998).
- 23 Although the organizational form of the Islamic communities follows the patterns of associations in their democratically elected hierarchy, nobody has to register her/his membership. From the (not only Portuguese) Muslim point of view, everybody from a Muslim background and/or who declares her/himself a Muslim is seen as a member of the Islamic community. In Portugal today, the proportion of practising Muslims, estimated on the basis of participation in Friday prayers, is approximately 10%, which corresponds to the European average. Ramadan (1999) gives a higher figure, especially during the month of Ramaḍān: 'At least 80% of Muslims (in Europe) do not practise their religion regularly and do not, for example, perform their daily Prayers. Less than 40% attend the Friday gathering at the mosque. About 70%, however, do fast during the sacred month of Ramadan.'
- 24 The opposite is the case to a limited extent in Norway and even more in Sweden, where the Protestant Church is an established part of the state. However, Sander (1997) points out that state funds can be allocated to recognized non-state religions, in rough proportion to the numbers of their members. The amount of money to be distributed is fixed so that an increase in the allocation to one religion is at the expense of other participants. In these circumstances, the size of the Muslim population is a matter that is contested.
- 25 *Expresso Revista*, 5 March 1983.
- 26 During the period of Sá Carneiro, Mamede was vice-president of the Gabinete de Relações Internacionais (Cabinet for International Relations) of the PSD.
- 27 One point was that the opposition accused Mamede of claiming to be 'president for life' of the CIL, and called him a 'dictator'. In addition, there were suggestions that the current president was linked with corruption related to the construction of the Lisbon mosque. To Mamede himself, however, his opponents were 'nothing else than a group of yobbos who decided, after having watched some news magazines on television, to imitate some gentlemen and play games with politicians'. Mamede considered his slanderers as 'far off the active community life' (*O Jornal*, 28 April 1984). This was the first and only time that Valy Mamede's actions for the CIL had been contested in public in this way. It was also the first time during his presidency that an opposition list had been put forward. For twenty years he had dreamed of the establishment of a representative mosque in central Lisbon and, in January 1985, he promised to resign his post immediately after its opening, 29 March (*Expresso*, 26 January 1985).
- 28 *Expresso Revista*, 11 March 1989.
- 29 Members of the leading committees of the CIL are nearly all very well established in Portuguese professional life and many are involved in international relations. Mussa Omar, for example, is well known for his advisory co-operation with the embassies of several Islamic countries. The president of the community's



- general assembly, Karim Bouabdellah, is also president of the general assembly of the Arab-Portuguese Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Câmara de Comércio e Indústria Árabe Portuguesa) (*Expresso*, 27 April 1985).
- 30 *Expresso*, 3 February 1979: 6000. Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Recensamento Geral da População*, Census 1981: 4335, Census 1991: 9134.
- 31 *A Capital*, 28 March 1985: 15,000. *Expresso Revista*, 11 March 1989: 15,000.
- 32 Kettani (1996, table 1.1): Muslims in the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1991 (Portugal: 20,000). *Público*, 8 December 1999: 25,000–30,000.
- 33 Using data from 1991, Kettani (1996) compared the numbers of mosques in EEC countries. Nine years ago, the total number of mosques (representative buildings, temporary mosques and prayer halls) in these fifteen European countries was 4845. For instance: France 1500, Germany 1000, the United Kingdom 600, Ireland 5, Luxembourg 10, Portugal 20.
- 34 The prayer halls (*lugares de culto*) are located in Portela, Póvoa de St Adrião, Forte da Casa, Colina do Sol, St António dos Cavaleiros, Vialonga, Carnaxide, Sacavém, Évora, Porto and Palmela. The addresses and contacts are listed at: <http://www.alfurqan.pt/mesq.htm>.
- 35 These places are the Darul ‘Ulum Al Islamiyat de Pamela, the Madressa Ahle Sunny Jamat in Laranjeiro and the Darul ‘Ulum Kadria-Ashrafia de Odivelas.
- 36 ‘Alcorão, tradução directa do árabe e anotações de’ (translation and comments by) José Pedro Machado (Lisbon, Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar, 1980).
- 37 <http://www.aliasoft.com/forumislam>.
- 38 Most of the early Muslims in Brazil were of African origin, most numerous in the area of the state of Bahia. With the Yoruba and Hausa, Muslims formed the majority of literate slaves in Brazil.
- 39 Many British Muslims (like many of the Sunnī minority communities who live outside the Arab world) choose the prominent Al-Azhar University in Cairo, which is seen as a very Islamic university and is indeed a religious authority for Sunnīs. Even so, the clear trend for European Muslim groups with regard to Islamic education is to establish and upgrade institutions in Europe for at least two reasons. First, the emigration experience has shown that the theologians responsible need to have experience of life in emigration in order to be able to answer the specific questions that arise. Second, the professional education of Muslim schoolteachers has become crucial in view of the establishment of Islamic education in European public primary and secondary schools. Curiously enough, and for different socio-historical reasons, the Portuguese–British Muslim linkage for educational purposes runs parallel to its more traditional secular equivalent. It seems that the United Kingdom is a popular choice for higher education for non-Muslim Portuguese.
- 40 The same is clearly true of Portuguese Hindus (see recent publications of Susana Bastos).
- 41 For example, the administrative body of the Alto Comissário para as Migrações e Minorias Étnicas (Permanent Secretary for Migration and Ethnic Minorities) provides addresses for immigrants to turn to.
- 42 Shortly before, during the second Gulf War, the frequency had been slightly higher. Between 1979 and 1991 the weekly *Expresso* and its *Revista* directed their attention to the NIP at least 10 times, devoting several extensive reports to it. Other daily newspapers, such as the *Diário de Notícias* and *A Capital*, show a slightly lower frequency of articles about Muslims in Portugal than *Público*. (I take this opportunity to thank the editorial and archive staff of the *Diário de*

Notícias and *Público* for access and help. Special thanks to António Marujo and João Tã.)

- 43 See, for instance, *A Capital*, 20 March 1991 and *Público*, 8 December 1999.
- 44 Portuguese print media which target an (educated) middle-class clientele occasionally invited the elite 'integration figures' of the Portuguese Islamic communities to write on Islam-related subjects. See, for example, *Expresso Revista*, 5 January 1980, 'O Islão de Khomeini não é o da maioria. Suleiman Vally Mamede, presidente da Comunidade Islâmica de Lisboa, traça a génese do Islão e sua influência futura' ('The Islam of Khomeini is not that of the majority: Suleiman Vale Mamede, the president of the CIL, traces the genesis of Islam and its future influence') or *Diário de Notícias*, 22 June 1990, 'O Islão e a Europa' ('Islam and Europe'), written by Suleiman Vally Mamede. Other newspapers which target more working-class readers also quote the Muslim representatives and on occasion invite them for interviews. This was especially the case during the second Gulf War. As an example, see the interview in *Correio de Manhã*, 9 February 1991, 'Suleiman Vally Mamede (islâmico): "Guerras santas" estão ultrapassadas' ('"Holy Wars" are obsolete'). In 1995, when Mamede died at the age of 59, several newspapers dedicated an obituary to him. See, for example, *O Independente*, 31 March 1995 and *A Capital*, 29 March 1995.
- 45 On 11 November 1995, the mosque of Lisbon celebrated its tenth anniversary. Representatives of the Islamic, Jewish, Catholic, Hindu and Ismā'īlī communities met at the festival. The president of the republic, political parties, ambassadors and local councillors (*câmaras municipais*) were all present (*Público*, 12 November 1995).
- 46 Out of 399 organizations, 210 have answered and submitted their proposals to the commission.
- 47 The Jewish community in Portugal is small (one of the smallest Jewish communities in Europe) but influential (Briesemeister 1997). It numbers approximately 400 members today and is organized in four communities: Lisbon (the synagogue was inaugurated in 1902), Porto, Belmonte and Portimão (Studemund-Halévy 1997). Academic literature on Jews in Portugal is widely available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, so no further comment is necessary here.
- 48 Apart from the personal friendship between the presidents of the Jewish and Islamic communities, Joshua Rua and Abdool Karim Vakil, these Portuguese communities had already shown their solidarity in other matters. For instance, at a time when the Muslims still lacked facilities for ritual slaughtering, the Jewish community offered theirs (*O Semenário*, 28 October 1989) and, until 1982, it was the Jewish Rabbi Abraão Assor who performed the ritual slaughter for the Islamic communities (*A Capital*, 11 March 1992a). In 1992, three Islamic butcher's shops in the Grande Lisboa district started to sell *halal* meat in Alvalade, Odivelas and Laranjeiro (*A Capital*, 11 March 1992b).
- 49 Topics included, for example, religious holidays (Friday for the Muslims, Saturday for the Jews), the formal acceptance of ritual slaughter (which already exists in practice) and provision of religiously acceptable food in hospitals, schools, etc.
- 50 Concerning the NRMs, in the 1980s and 1990s this was also the case in some other European countries.
- 51 The Centro de Estudos Socio-Pastorais (Lisbon, Universidade Católica), for example, was founded in the late 1980s to establish research in the field of Sociology of Religion, mainly concentrating on Christian minorities and the phenomenon of conversion.
- 52 In 1991, when I attended some Friday sessions of the IURD in the old cinema in Alvalade (Lisbon), the prayers and speeches focused mainly on the curing of

illnesses which were seen as being caused by the devil—so songs and prayers for ‘exorcism’ took place first. The vast majority of those present seemed to be (lower) working-class people of various origins. At the end of the session the participants lined up to make payments. At a time when the Church was already regarded as a criminal sect, the news of the arrest of the IURD leader in Brazil so affected the Portuguese public that riots took place in front of IURD buildings in several cities.

- 53 This is especially the case in those European countries where the NIP came into being largely through the decolonization processes, such as the United Kingdom (66.7%) and France (62.5%). In contrast, in other countries, where the NIP was mainly the result of labour migration, the percentage of Muslims who have acquired citizenship is usually much lower: Austria (25%), Spain (22.9%), Sweden (20%), Denmark (20%), Ireland (20%), the Netherlands (13.3%), Italy (12.5%), Norway (10%), Luxembourg (10%), Belgium (6.7%) and Germany (4%) (Kettani 1996).
- 54 While Kettani (1996) estimated the percentage of Muslims in Portugal who had citizenship in 1991 at 50%, a *Público* article in 1992 put it at 70% (*Público*, 29 February 1992).
- 55 It is a fact that the historical Islamic presence crucially influenced Spanish culture, and, as Garaudy (1981) points out, Islam should be regarded as one of the three pillars of European culture. Nevertheless, this proclamation in the Spanish Muslim agreement could be interpreted as an invention of tradition, because it only appeared as the new socio-demographic groupings were coming into being, during the establishment of the Spanish NIP. During the modern Spanish nation-building process, the perception of historical experiences with Islam had been rather negative.

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