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VOLUME 19

Transnationalism

Diasporas and the advent of a new (dis)order

Edited by

Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg

With

Judit Bokser Liwerant and Yosef Gorny



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As such these diasporas constitute actors which have an influence on the wider local, even the national, scene—even if this importance is not directly linked to their practical and specific interests.

On the other hand, another aspect that comes to mind when considering the data of this investigation concerns the dissociation of the possible impacts of such actors on the establishment of a multicultural setting, on the one hand, and their role in globalization, on the other. These diasporas, indeed, implement a new multicultural reality in Brussels by the very fact that they build up communities on the ground of symbolic materials of their own. On the other hand, some of them are forces of reticence that slow down the expansion of other aspects of globalization, and especially the expansion of English in Belgian society. What explains this discrepancy between two dimensions of globalization is the mode of insertion of diasporas in the setting—whether at middle range, higher levels, or lower levels. Hence, while the ethnonational linguistic quarrel tends to strengthen cultural-linguistic globalization in the form of the expansion of English, the multiplicity of diasporas may result in some slackening of this expansion in certain layers of the social reality.

In conclusion, and this seems to merit further theoretization, it appears that in a conflictual multicultural society like Belgium, collective identity is of primary importance in LL; that power may come up as both to impose some patterns and to prevent the appearance of others, both from groups directly involved in these relations and from others which are not involved but are influenced by those who are; and finally that globalization, as conveyed by English, is a factor that plays a major role in conflictual multiculturalism, even where it is not the first language of any group in presence.

More generally, the sociological analysis of LL offers the opportunity of outlining how well-known principles of social life mold together a specific social scene of major importance. What happens here cannot be entirely foreign to what happens in other arenas, and in this respect, LL is but one more example of the making of social reality under diverse, uncoordinated and possibly incongruent principles. It is a perspective that may be helpful in seeking some “regulating mechanisms” that might exist in this set of numberless items, beyond its appearance as a jungle of jumbled items. An approach which by focusing on the potential variations of LL configurations, wishes simply to account for LL’s constituting, after all, a quite “ordered—and not so unusual—disorder.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

MUSLIM TRANSNATIONALISM AND DIASPORA IN EUROPE: MIGRANT EXPERIENCE AND THEORETICAL REFLECTION

Nina Clara Tiesler

Across academic literature, at least within the social and political sciences, Muslim populations in Europe are increasingly being described as *diasporas* and/or as communities and groupings of “transnational character.”¹ These are concepts which do not occur in traditional Islamic theological or legal debates, yet they are also becoming more common as self-perception *among* Muslims, as well as in politicized discourses *about* Muslims. Against the background of interview samples and field experience among “transnational” Muslim people, this chapter describes discursive tendencies on the topic of “Muslim transnationalism” and diaspora (nowadays used in senses detached from religious relevance)² within social science, and examines the contributions of two leading Muslim authors who position the situation of Muslim minorities by means of the language of that discourse.

The observation that this meta-language differs from the self-perception of the subjects concerned may appear trivial at first. It does not

¹ The original train of thought of this chapter had been developed as early as 2004, and thus was able to benefit from scholarly discussion in very diverse academic contexts, among them the panel on Transnational Religions (organized by Ramon Sarró) at the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Social Science Congress (Coimbra, Portugal, 2004), the conference on the Role of Social Sciences Part I at the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation (Berlin 2004), and later in a session of the postgraduate/postdoctoral colloquium on contemporary Critical Theory supervised by Detlev Claussen (University of Hanover). I want to express my deep gratitude to those participants who provided inspiring comments, as well as to the editors of this volume, Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg for their kind invitation and patience. While writing this chapter and trying to respond to the theme of their book, it helped a lot that the main arguments and parts of the text had formed a journal article which was recently published in German (Tiesler 2007a), and had received further comments.

² On the proliferation of the term “diaspora,” see Baumann (2000): “The semantic broadening of ‘diaspora,’ both in terms of relating it to any dispersed group of people and to conceptualize a certain type of consciousness, have made it one of the most fashionable terms in academic discourse of the late 20th century.” (Baumann 2000: 325).

at all point to a "Muslim particularity," but rather to the weight that educational middle-classes (here: the educated and educating) in general have in processes of the construction of collective subjectivity (Hroch 1978, Siems 2007). Instead, what makes this dynamic interesting is the fact that here representatives of a new generation of European-Muslim intellectuals³ are analyzing the new social conditions and experiences of a culturally and ethnolinguistical heterogenic religious minority not through conventional Islamic-theological and legal categories, but through a secular discourse language and its conceptual creations of transnationality and diasporicity.⁴

Such reflections spread and echo rapidly in virtual and public discourses, of course including Muslim discourses.⁵ Interestingly, an opposite tendency (from secular to religionized terms) can be observed in "non-Muslim" discourses. Public debate and some contributions in social and political sciences (which up until the early 1980s had explicitly distanced themselves from questions of religion) and which recently are more concerned with topics related to Muslims in Europe, are partly inclining towards a "culturalization," "religionization" and "Islamicization" of their categories and debates. Socio-economic and political aspects, gender, religion and culture are rarely differentiated when it comes to Islam and Muslims.

Muslims and their cultural attitudes, eventual socio-political engagement and social mobility, are hardly ever discussed in a comparative and non-normative context, i.e. compared in relation to similarities rather than contrasts with non-Muslim minority and majority groups of the same age, gender, class, migratory and/or educational backgrounds. In terms of analysis, this deficiency often leads to a disproportionate "Islamicization" of the subject (Muslims), and strengthening of the

³ Mandaville (2003: 130f) describes developments within Muslim intellectual activity in Europe, with particular regard to those thinkers and activists concerned with the politics of Islamic identity and community in Europe. Through the reconciliation of day-to-day realities of European life with religious principles, their work is appealing to the "second generation" of Muslims who were born and raised in Europe. Many of them are highly educated and seek to fashion a critical and sophisticated idiom of Islam.

⁴ As one characteristic of what he conceptualizes as "new" Muslim transnational networks in Europe, Nielsen (2003) highlights forms of interaction with realities and institutions external to the Islamic world. Academic institutions in Europe surely belong to this category.

⁵ This dynamic of academic discourse languages being transmitted more rapidly to public debates and adopted by the media, certainly increased with new communication technologies, but its roots lie in the aftermath of 1968 (Claussen 2000b), when more academics became journalists, and journalism started requiring a broader academic education.

Islamicization of public (and academic) discourses,⁶ in short, nearly everything and anything these Muslims do, think, affirm or negate appears as deriving from their Muslim-ness, i.e. as an Islamic particularity, which may in fact not be the case at all. Economic and social aspects, class, gender and educational background, the impact of particular experiences in a specific historic context (e.g. social mobility or social exclusion in a European society) as well as similarities and continuities with non-Muslims or people of similar migratory experience are therefore often overlooked. In this general discursive context a strong attachment to Islam is often wrongly presented as opposed/apart/alien to the dominant culture or to active Western citizenship.

Within comparative studies of religion, there is widespread consensus on the notion that the observation of religions and the formation of theories of religious history impact on cultural processes⁷ as well as a growing "awareness of discursive structures where Comparative Studies of Religion encounters its subject matter" (Seiwert 2003). The same is overwhelmingly valid for social science disciplines, and the motivation of this chapter is to demonstrate how dominant discourses can influence the development process of their research subject.

DISCOURSES ON MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

Although immigrants, postcolonial people (Sayyid 2006: 1-10), and later refugees from predominantly Islamic societies had been moving and settling in European countries since the end of World War II, prior to the mid-1980s their religious affiliation only attracted the attention of a few sociologists of religion and church representatives (Nielsen 1992: 2). To a far greater extent than the presence of people who represent other non-Christian religions (such as Hindus and Sikhs), Muslims in Europe have further featured in nearly all discourses and social-science research perspectives dealing with migration throughout the past 30 years. Most scholars who had initiated their research on Islam and Muslims before September 11, seem to be aware of the imperative of self-critical reflection *in* academia regarding the consequences of this

⁶ This is elaborated in Tiesler (2006: 124-172). See also Allievi 2006.

⁷ Nehring (2003: 46) recognizes this awareness already in Wilfred Cantwell Smith, whose significance in postcolonial cultural debate he discusses by critically confronting Smith's concept of a 'world theology' with the self-positioning as a discipline of comparative study of religions.

turning-point for academic research. Political and public discourses, as well as the situation of Muslim minorities who are the subject of our discussions have changed (most visible in urban contexts).

While the turning point(s) of 1989 (end of the Cold War, the Rushdie Affair, the first French Headscarf Affair) and global political events in the early 1990s ("Religious Revival," Bosnia, Saddam in Kuwait) caused new research interests in a previously rather marginal field, there is no doubting the fact that September 11 and the new historical context marked by the "War on Terror" brought a massive explosion of public and academic interest in phenomena seen as related to Islam. The monitoring of Muslims and their community life, especially in minority contexts, is now frequently officially announced as of "prime interest" by politicians, in the media and by intelligence services. Noticeably more research funds regarding the subject "Muslims" are channeled to academia. This does not necessarily mean that the sudden increase of research activity has led to an explosion of scientific knowledge about the subject in question, as far as it concerns the *experience of Muslims* in contemporary societies in this specific historical context, or insight into *lived Islam* and *Muslim community life*. Rather, the entanglement of political interests under the heading of "security" with the increase of research interest and possibilities, often leads to a mutual production of a hegemonic language which tends to determine the research questions in dominant discourses.⁸

The notion of "radicalization" is only one example of this dynamic, wherein academic reflection at the "meta-level" often tends to lose connection to its fundamental ground: field experience and empirical data. The distance to the subjective experience of the individuals and collectives in question becomes obvious when new tendencies towards

⁸ In his revealing essay, "With Us or Against Us: The Rhetoric of the War on Terror", Yahya Birt offers an analysis of this rhetoric to see what it seeks to persuade Muslims to do, what its unspoken premises are, and which categories it uses to mobilize Muslim sentiment: "After 9/11, there has been a shift in the cultural representations of Muslims towards more direct political themes and the use of terrorist violence. In particular, there has been the emergence of a shared political rhetoric, particularly between Washington and London that is central to the 'war on terror'". Birt distinguishes between a crude form of rhetoric in the "war on terror", which is summarized as "Islam versus the West" or "the clash of civilizations", and which, because it generally serves to antagonize Muslims, is not commonly used, on the one hand, and a sophisticated form of the "war on terror" rhetoric on the other: "The sophisticated form argues that while suffering is found everywhere and is constant, only Muslims are highly likely to be involved in terrorism. [...] This sophisticated argument [...] replaces the crude form of 'Islam versus the West' with the more sophisticated form 'Islamism versus Americanism'" (Birt, download 02/2007: <www.yahyabirt.com/?p=57>).

Islamic piety, the engagement of Islamic NGO's in developing countries, social movements of Muslims and the strengthening of public Islam in Western societies, new urban youth subcultures, the emergence of identity discourses which promote and are witness to a global "awakening of Muslim subjectivity" (Vakil and Sayyid 2006), or political responses and mobilization among Muslims against discrimination—are all easily interpreted as "evidence" for a general trend which will justify the framing of research on Muslims (and, in the worst case, the production of its results) under the hegemonic concept of "radicalization."

Within this context, the attribute "transnational" has partly changed connotations as well. While critical academic transnational approaches contributed to the insight that international migrants and their communities are no longer to be seen as "anomalies, but as representative of an increasingly globalized world" (Al-Ali and Koser 2002: 3), the rhetoric of the "War on Terror" tends to revive a negative connotation of transnationalism (now suggesting a threat) when it comes to Muslims.

However, with particular regard to the scholars who already contributed to the field before September 11, empirical social science and Islamic studies provide today a wide range of studies on the topic of Muslims in Europe.⁹

During the 1980s and 1990s, the main concern of scholarly work on Islam and Muslims in Europe was with the institutionalization of Islam. The aim was to understand the place that Muslims, and thus Islam, were obtaining, in the public space of Western societies, including the legal status of Islam (e.g. Shadid and Van Koningsveld 1991, 1996, 2002; Metcalf 1996). Apart from an ongoing interest in "religious change", Islamic education and the role of social agents (e.g. women, youth, artists), another line of inquiry has been developed quite recently: it is influenced by new topics in the study of social and cultural phenomena, namely theoretical developments in transnational and diaspora studies. In interpreting migration and globalization issues, these theories have also been applied to Muslims and Islam. Groundbreaking works are by

⁹ While Gerholm and Lithmann 1988 and Nielsen 1992 constitute the first comprehensive survey texts on Muslims in Europe which contain contributions by scholars of disciplines explicitly concerned with religion, it seems most appropriate to mention (here in chronological order) a selection of discursively influential works which deal with the situation of Muslims 'in the West' and which feature, along with Islamic Studies experts, largely scholars from the social and political sciences (sociologists, anthropologists etc.): Shadid and Van Koningsveld 1991; 1996a; 1996b; 2002, F. Dassetto 1995, Abulmaham 1995, Kepel 1996, Metcalf 1996, Nonnemann et al 1996, Vertovec and Peach 1996, Vertovec and Rogers 1998, Rath et al. 2001, Hunter 2003.

Mandaville (2001), Roy (2004), Allievi and Nielsen (2003), Grillo (2004) and Bowen (2004). Such perspectives try to map out the dimensions in contemporary Islam and Muslim people in Europe that cross the borders of the nation-states and citizenships.

Transnational Islamic movements, such as the Tablighi Jamaat, the networks of Muslim migrants, and the day-to-day construction of the *umma* (Global Islamic Community) are just three examples that reveal how pertinent is the metaphor of transnationalism for interpreting contemporary Islam, and how it is lived and featured by Muslims in Europe. Importantly, these works mostly suggest a distinction between *Transnational Islam* (including schools of thought, networks, and discourses that explicitly refer to global Islam and Islam as a system and religion) on one hand, and the day-to-day experience and practice of people who are Muslims and who happen to have migration experience in their family history, on the other (e.g. Al-Ali 2002, Salih 2002, Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). Naturally, and probably needless to say, the quite diverse transnational links, experiences and practices of the latter cannot necessarily be seen as a kind of "Muslim particularity" and even less as specific "Islamic practice." Proposals that contribute to the question of what transnationalism actually means for the people who live it, are mainly based on ethnographic research provided by social and cultural anthropologists.

MUSLIM TRANSNATIONALISM AND DIASPORA: BRIEF IMPRESSIONS FROM THE FIELD

Over the last 15 years, approximately, scholars of migration who endeavored to study minorities defined by religion, culture or ethnicity more often than not felt moved by the dominant discourses to frame their line of research within the respective current concepts of the day. In Europe, one of these since the 1990s was "The Self and the Other"; soon after followed by the so-called "religious revival," and, increasingly from the late 1990s on, ethnicity, diaspora, "collective identities" and transnationalism. Inspired by theory-determining discussions on the concepts of diaspora, transnationalism, and constructions of collective identities, after the first conversations¹⁰ conducted in the field I soon

¹⁰ The conversations focused primarily on the appropriateness of the diaspora concept for Islam and later on 'concepts of space and belonging' of Muslims in Europe, with particular attention to the Portuguese case. They were held as part of

began to doubt whether the daily life experience of my conversation partners really was that of a member of, say, a *diaspora* or *transnational community*. This was in addition to the fact that only very few of my original conversation partners used such concepts to refer to themselves or expressed their subjective experiences by means of the categories of an academic discourse language.

Among the determinants of their daily life and their reflections on it, there was little or nothing recognizable of the "forms of consciousness" nowadays described as diasporic¹¹ or transnational—unless one applied a particularly wide definition of those concepts, which allowed for a nearly arbitrary selection of decisive criteria. The outcome depended highly on the interviewee's level of education; less Islamic community leaders and more educated middle-classes were of course familiar with such non-Arab and non-Islamic concepts, although they—just like non-Muslim academics—often received them with varying connotations. For reasons sometimes similar, sometimes very different, most of them promptly declined to apply diaspora or transnationalism to "Islam" or their communities.

The reasons given by various Muslim conversation partners had to do for example with the universality principle of Islam, according to which, in contemporary understanding, the *umma* constitutes the transnational community *par excellence* and *avant la lettre* anyway.¹² With

two research undertakings (doctoral dissertation 1999–2003 at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Hanover University and post-doctoral research project 2004–07 at the Institute of Social Science of Lisbon University), with Muslims of both sexes, different ages, origins and (initially also) standards of education in Germany, Britain and Portugal. Following the first experiences, the group of conversation partners was limited to the educated middle-classes. This included university students, community leaders, project managers, authors and journalists. I am deeply indebted to all conversation partners for their openness, answers—and as many questions. For insights into those studies see Tiesler 2006 and 2006a.

¹¹ As for a definition of a "Diaspora consciousness" see e.g. Clifford (1994): "Diaspora consciousness is entirely a product of cultures and histories in collision and dialogue. [...] Diasporic subjects are, thus, distinct versions of modern, transnational, intercultural experience" (Clifford 1994: 319). Phil Cohen states ironically: "Diaspora is one of the buzzwords of the postmodern age; it has the virtue of sounding exotic while rolling sibilantly off the English tongue; it whispers the promise of hidden depths of meaning yet assimilates them to the shape of a wave breaking gently on native shores. [...] It offers a desirable feminine ending, and much versatility" (P. Cohen 1998: 3). For a general introduction see R. Cohen (1997).

¹² The traditional transnational character of most so-called world religions which were (and are) expanding at a global level is only one example which inspires valid questions about "what is new?" in current transnational migration, and why international migration today leads academic reflection to the invention of the term "transnational". On this issue see Al-Ali and Köser (2002: 1–8). On the relation

regard to day-to-day experiences of the people in question, the example of Portuguese Muslim families who (like many),¹³ maintain (family) ties between Mozambique, Portugal and the UK by traveling, communicating, and sometimes trading across borders in postcolonial contexts, suggests understanding transnational horizons as a type of social capital resource, and transnational links and practices (while they are markers of a family's biography)¹⁴ as a normality in daily life. In a discussion with young people of this particular group of Portuguese Muslims (who can be seen as representatives of *Public Islam* in Portugal)¹⁵ on their attitudes toward mobility and their self-understanding in comparison to other young people in Lisbon (who lack migration experience in their family histories), a female university student remarked revealingly:

Of course we happen to be somehow 'transnational', maybe a bit more than most other young Portuguese people, but not necessarily more than those (non-Muslims, NCT) whose parents also came from the colonies or went to France or elsewhere in Europe to work. We are also not the only ones who are interested in international politics or humanitarian aid and against the Iraq War. Somehow we became transnational, but it wasn't on purpose.... (Field Diary, 14 May 2007)¹⁶

The relevance of this remark lies in the interviewee's approach to her own "transnationality" which is seen as an advantage and normality, and is in no way opposed to—or contesting—her sense of national belonging, the latter being clearly Portuguese (by birth, nationality and socialization) despite differences from the "majority population" in terms of migration history (postcolonial people who came from

Religions-Nation states-contemporary civil societies, see Rudolph and Piscatori 1997. Written in the late 1990s, the authors focus on the dilution of state sovereignty by examining how the crossing of state boundaries by religious movements led back to the formation of transnational civil society.

¹³ See, for example the works in Bryceson and Vuorela 2002.

¹⁴ Above and beyond all differences in migration experience (positive/negative, adventurous/traumatic pro-active/forced, etc.), the experience and its consequences (among them: the development of transnational practices) as such are marking migrants' family histories. For those who actually migrated (the so-called first generation), emigration means a rupture (without being necessarily and/or entirely positive or negative) in their biographies, and this marker is normally transmitted through their narratives to the following generations, while transnational links and practices become a normal procedure in daily life.

¹⁵ On (the role of) this group of Portuguese Muslims of Indian origin, see Tiesler 2001.

¹⁶ Tiesler, research project *Muslim Youth in Portugal. Religion and Culture, Mobility and Citizenship*, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, funded by FCT. See <http://www.ics.ul.pt/instituto/?ln=p&mm=3&linha=5&ctmid=1&mnid=1>.

Mozambique), religious affiliation (Islam) and ethnicity (Indian origin). Her remark translates a kind of common sense of this group of young Portuguese Muslims, whose parents had already been Portuguese nationals under colonial rule in Mozambique, and perceived themselves not as immigrants but, along with other Portuguese people (non-Muslims and not ethnically marked), as "retornados" (returnees).¹⁷ In a quantitative survey in 2006, 89% of these young Muslims strongly agreed with the notion of feeling at home in Portugal (in comparison to 88% of non-Muslim young Portuguese people).¹⁸ It makes once again clear that people of transnational horizons, practice and experience are unlikely to be "disembodied subjects orchestrating their lives in an unbounded and ungrounded 'space of flows,'" but rather are social actors who "set boundaries and ground identities" (Smith 2002: xiv).

Here, the remark of the university student introduces and supports the main argument of this chapter, namely that an academic discourse language (here: the term "transnationalism") provides and/or suggests tools and labels for self-reflection and identity constructions to middle-class people. Such terms are partially adopted and become self-descriptions, while in this type of pendulum of swing dynamic between social research and the *field*, the *academia* (in my humble impression) in its production of discursive trends runs the risk of overestimating the relevance of—and consciousness about—such elements in the constant formation process of hybrid collective subjectivity.

Somehow set apart from daily life experiences, regarding the notion of *diaspora*, most of the religiously educated interviewees of the "first

¹⁷ On shifting constructions of the category Muslim and Muslim identities in Portuguese contexts see Vakil 2003 and 2003a.

¹⁸ Participating in this survey were 245 young (transition to adulthood) Lisbon people (Muslims and non-Muslims) of middle class background. It was undertaken between November 2005 and March 2006 in the context of a joint project conducted by David Cairns (Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon) and the author of *Attitudes Toward Mobility Among Young Lisbon People* (Cairns and Tiesler 2006, "Little Difference? Young Muslims in the Context of Portuguese Youth", *ICS-UL*, Working Paper No. 8 (WP 8-2006), @: <http://www.ics.ul.pt/publicacoes/workingpapers/index.htm>). The quantitative data material contributed to the broader project of the author on Young Muslims in Portugal (see footnote 16) which is mainly based on qualitative data material. One of its results elicits that these young Muslims have broader international horizons and a higher geographical mobility with regard to short stays abroad (in terms of language skills, contacts, travel and temporary stays abroad for educational purposes) than young people without migration experience in their family biographies, while neither the Muslim, nor the non-Muslim sample showed future plans or a readiness to leave Portugal for longer periods for professional purposes, despite the rather unfortunate situation at the Portuguese labor market.

generation” appeared hesitant to draw parallels between the history of Judaism and that of globally dispersed Muslims, when debating it from a theological and/or legal point of view. Mostly, the *diaspora* topic led the conversation to Islamic legal history, to the issue of the minority situation for which there exists no authoritative concept in Islamic theory or law, but has examples in history and respective diverse Islamic legal opinions (well documented is the early example of Al-Andalus after the *reconquista*).¹⁹

THE ABSENCE OF A DIASPORIC SITUATION IN THEORY

Seemingly untouched by social reality, in which nearly one-third of all Muslims nowadays live in such a situation, outside the “House of Islam” in a strict sense, the minority situation far away from the Muslim core countries (i.e. the permanent residence of Muslims under non-Islamic legislation) is still being stigmatized from some normative-Sunni viewpoints in conservative circles. A *diasporic* situation is seen as problematic and accepted only as temporary, with arguments that result in part from problematic entanglements of theology and historical experience (Duran 1990).

It is not as though this stigmatization, this gap in legislation or orientation would have convinced anyone who had immigrated to Europe in search of better living conditions to “return” to their country of origin (or that of their parents). The absence of a model within Islamic law for a “good Muslim life” in the midst of late-capitalist and (post-?) secularized dominant societies seems to play no essential role for the majority of the Muslims concerned. The issue that lies at the root of the problem complex, the so-called “bipartition of the world” into the antagonistic zones of a “House of Islam” and a “House of War/of Unbelief” (which is generally meant to include Europe) is being dismissed as mediævally outdated—or else new parameters of allocation are being determined, whereby Europe (or parts thereof) may be considered part of the “House of Islam”, for instance on the grounds of the quality of constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion (Shadid and van Koningsveld 1996).

The quality of freedom of religion—i.e. the prerequisite for a “good Muslim life” in the minority situation—is being assessed differently

¹⁹ On the issue of the minority situation under non-Islamic law, on historical examples as well as new perspectives see Duran 1984 and 1990; Fierro 2000, Lewis 1993, Shadid and Van Koningsveld 1996, Tiesler 1999, Miller 2000.

by different Muslims in different countries: one only has to consider the French verdict on the veil, which in 2003 led to its ban in public schools. Conflicts like this, which in ignorance of the highly specific, current socio-historical context of their development are being shifted into simple explanation patterns of a renewed “Islam—vs.—the West” dichotomy, then lead partly to emancipative solidarity and identity politics, at times also to isolationist policies. The isolationist positions are then in turn ideologically supported by the old bipartition of the world, and the entanglements of Islamic-legal desiderata and historical experience (from the Crusades to more recent colonial history) extend into present times. Such positions are marginal, yet capable of huge media impact.

The fact that Europe as a location of permanent residence so far could not be framed affirmatively in Islamic categories, that established Islamic concepts were unable to grasp the reality of twenty million immigrants, postcolonial people, refugees and citizens who position themselves as Muslims or are being classified as such by others due to their ethnic origins, both opens up and demands room for new concepts. New conditions and experiences of living require new answers to new questions. The respective discussions do not focus only on the situation of international relations and migration, but in our case are based on experiences within the European context. Mandaville describes Europe as a “unique context for the reassessment of theories, beliefs and tradition, while increased transnationalism enables these new reformulations to travel the world” (Mandaville 2003: 140–141). Such discussions do not mark the beginning of the young history of the New Islamic Presence²⁰ in Europe, but have grown along with second

²⁰ In order to create a conceptual framework for the effects of a multi-faceted migration phenomenon, i.e. the increasing visibility of Islam in contemporary Europe, Tomas Gerholm and Yngve Georg Lithman in 1988 introduced the concept of a *New Islamic Presence* (NIP). Astonishingly, this concept—unlike the contributions in the book by the same name, which meanwhile is being considered a classic in the field—has rarely been taken up. I use the term in order to summarize the historically young and extremely heterogenic phenomenon of a constantly growing number of Muslim citizens, refugees and immigrants and their manifold cultural, social and political forms of expression in those countries which in the days of the East-West conflict of systems were perceived on the Western side as *free Europe*. The composition of the term already indicates that this phenomenon, which only became numerically relevant in the 1950s, gained visibility as a result of the oil crisis from the mid 1970s onwards and has been perceived as socially relevant since the 1980s, does not constitute the first and only Islamic presence in Europe. The NIP is distinguished on the one hand from *Traditional Islamic Presence* (IIP) in Southern Europe (of which, outside of Turkey, the average citizen had been aware prior to the war in Bosnia only in association with holiday trips, e.g. to Cyprus), and on the other hand from *Historic Islamic Presence* (HIP) on the Iberian

generations born and raised here and which did not regard their stay on this continent as temporary.

THE THESIS OF A PENDULUM OF SWING DYNAMIC BETWEEN ACADEMIES AND COMMUNITIES

As mentioned above, several new research contributions by academics interpret certain actions of globally dispersed Muslims as well as diverse Islamic groups, schools of thought and international networks through the concepts of transnationality or transnational communities (e.g. Mandaville 2001 and 2003, Werbner 2002, Allievi and Nielsen 2003, Vertovec 2003, Roy 2004, Grillo 2004 and Bowen 2004). The quality and the radius of relations between globally dispersed Muslims, their links to (previous) countries of origin and further countries, their travels (with commodities), occasionally trade and the flow of currencies, the participation in international discourses and communication via the virtual sphere certainly suggest their transnational character. Others have discussed the definition of a "Muslim Diaspora" (Saint-Blancat 1995, Samers 2003) among other things as an "anti-nation" (Sayyid 2002). However, as soon as the external labels "diaspora" and "transnationality" are being discussed in regard to their possible quality as self-label, the following question arises:

This chapter suggests that we are dealing here with a discourse which distances itself from its material context (i.e. the experience of the interviewees) and is subsequently carried by scholars to the "concerned" subjects—out of the academies into the communities. Hence the thesis it poses for discussion is the following. The key part in the promotion of "transnational" or "diasporic" forms of consciousness lies with the (mainly non-Muslim) scholars and the educated Muslim middle-classes. Where "diaspora" and "transnationality" are employed as self-description, it is through the proclamation and spreading of such a self-definition by Muslim protagonists who themselves are members of European academia.²¹

peninsula. The latter, the 800 years of *Al-Andalus*, belongs to the history of the Middle Ages. It is considered historically closed, as it did not leave any Muslim population behind after the Christian reconquest. On the updated reading of the concept against the background of current research, see Tiesler 2000 and 2001.

²¹ Martin Baumann, whose theoretically well-informed works on the proliferation of the Diaspora-term are based on field experience among Hindu minorities in Europe and the Caribbean, called attention to this dynamic as early as 2000. In his words: "Referring in parallel to the growing usage and esteem of 'diaspora' in the academia, intellectuals, representatives, spokesmen and spokeswomen of the thus renamed

The simple "Yes" in reply to the question above acquires significance when we examine what is historically specific about this process, i.e. its social conditions. While the influence of international relations and events should not be underestimated, these conditions are found in Europe. This is often overlooked in public discourse on Muslims, when "Islam" is viewed as something remote and exotically foreign and its protagonists in Europe are mistakenly perceived as reproducers of some obscure tradition that has been imported and continued here intact and unaffected (Salih 2001). Further, it is essential to readjust the focus from systems (here: Islam, Islamic legal history)—which featured neither fresh ideas on transnationality nor the notion of diaspora or its semantically reinvented conceptualizations—to the agents who are changing historical traditions and systems (Krämer 2000). As is usually the case in processes of social change and/or the analysis thereof, these agents are the *educational* middle classes,²² in this case: the academy and those European Muslims who are active within it and within their communities. Thus it becomes possible to trace behind the simple "Yes," by means of this example, the consequences which the supply of a secular discourse language may have on community politics.

NEW ISLAMIC PRESENCE, NEW DISCOURSES

The historically specific situation, i.e. the history of the development of New Islamic Presence in Europe, can only be outlined briefly here by means of a few key dates. Since the end of World War II, de-colonialization, labor migration, educational purposes, forced migration and flight from regions of poverty and crisis have brought about an increasing number of immigrants from predominantly Islamic

diaspora people and communities started to adopt the notion as a self-description. The term gained currency among the urban, well-educated elite, which itself often formed an aspiring part of university life. The diaspora term earned acceptance and circulation, be it to construct a unity of an actually heterogeneous group of people; be it to emphasize one's claim for representation; be it to call for a retightening of bonds with one's former home culture or country; or be it to serve as an indictment of power relations, past and present being the cause for a group's precarious, socially marginalized situation." (Baumann 2000: 323).

²² The term "educational middle classes" ("edukatorische Mittelschichten") was coined by Detlev Claussen (2000a), and refers to those educated middle classes that are involved in teaching and training, i.e. teachers in all school types and lecturers in higher education. On the key role of middle classes in processes of social change and the formation of large-scale collective forms of consciousness, see among others Hroch (1978).

societies into European nation states. Within the current borders of the European Union live approximately twenty million people who are being counted as Muslims on the grounds of their religious beliefs, their social-political statements or often simply their geographic or family origins. The numbers of German, French, British etc. citizens of Muslim faith as well as the share of the *second* and *third generations* are constantly increasing.

In the early days, the initially mostly male immigrants—whose stay was wrongly estimated as temporary by themselves and from outside—were not perceived as Muslims—but in their economic function (e.g. “guest workers”), legal status (e.g. refugees) and, above all, in national categories (Turks, Pakistanis, etc.). For one, they did not display any publicly visible signs of religiousness (Kettani 1996: 14f). And second, public and academic interest in post-war and post-colonial Europe did not exactly throw itself at religion. Questions addressing religion were unfashionable, though this would not be permanent (Nielsen 1992, Pollack 1997). Only when looking back at the 1980s, when the religiosity of the new members of society and their affiliation to Islam became more visible and, in response to the dominant European pattern for religious minorities, were organized as hierarchically structured associations, we can speak of a New Islamic Presence in Europe. At the same time, within European social sciences—and there we have the agents—a corresponding discourse evolved, a loose discourse group which then began, in dialogue with American colleagues, to concentrate on “Muslims in Europe” and “Islam in the West.”

Since the 1979 revolution in Iran, Islam had returned to the political agenda, and at the very latest with the end of the *short century* (1914–1991, Hobsbawm) and the Cold War, religiously defined, modern political movements started appearing in the most diverse regions of the world—from the awakening of the American “Bible Belt” under Reagan, i.e. the Protestant religious right in the USA, through the FIS in Algeria to the extremist “*Communione e Liberazione*” movement from Catholic quarters in Italy (Kepel 1991). The first French veil controversy (which attracted huge media interest) in 1989 and the Rushdie affair which got transported far beyond British borders (when Islamic congregation leaders in Bradford staged their public protest against the *Satanic Verses* with a burning of books, and Khomeini pronounced his momentous “death fatwa” against the novelist Salman Rushdie) in the same year marked the turning point in the young history of the New Islamic Presence in Europe (Tiesler 2006: 93f). Along with this

general trend, from that moment on there was also a growing tendency to interpret the problems of migrants who had arrived from traditional, predominantly Islamic societies determined by agriculture in religious terms, although these problems—which had become apparent in modern European cities in the days of economic stagnation—actually had little to do with Islam (Antes 1997: 9–15).

At roughly the same time, the children of the first immigrants from predominantly Muslim societies reached university age. Here they grew up with Postcolonial and Cultural Studies and—crucially—in the midst of identity discourses that had been imported with some delay from the USA (Siems 2007, Tiesler 2006a). With the formation of European-Muslim middle classes that had passed through local education systems, the amount of contributions by academics and intellectuals of Muslim background on the topic of “Muslims in Europe” increased, as did debates within Islam which—partly in dialogue with, partly in definition against and opposition to, the academic and religious authorities in the (parents’) countries of origin—reflected on the experiences of emigration and minority.

PROTAGONISTS OF ISLAMIC MODERNITIES

In view of the current situation of Muslim minorities on the one hand and outdated, no longer adequate, Islamic teaching perspectives on the other, the following has been established: new social conditions open up both the opportunity and the necessity of new concepts. In the context of the development of such new Muslim-European concepts, it is impossible to ignore secular discourse language, seeing as their authors have been educated in the institutions that impart such intellectual tools. Most of them, however, have also been educated religiously and are active within their communities. Thus the objective of the study²³ on which this chapter is based was to position identity-political, Islam-theological and legal concepts, which have been developed in Europe and refer to the European area, at paying particular attention to academics, authors, and intellectuals who shape current Muslim discourses in Europe.

²³ The title of the doctoral thesis project already mentioned above is: *Heimat und Fremdheit seit 1989. Zur Neuen Islamischen Präsenz und der Entwicklungsgeschichte islamischer Konzepte im europäischen Kontext* (accepted as PhD thesis by the Faculty for Arts and Social Sciences of Hanover University on 17 February 2004). Meanwhile published as Tiesler 2006.

Central to the analysis are works by two Muslim intellectuals who were raised in Europe and who teach and research at arts and social science faculties: Tariq Ramadan (Switzerland, UK) and Salman Bobby Sayyid (UK). While Ramadan's "concepts of space and belonging" have meanwhile become influential in the communities and their politics beyond the francophone context, indeed beyond Europe, especially among active young Muslims, Sayyid is an essential contributor to the formulation of a British-Muslim discourse in which postcolonial studies and left-wing critique interweave with Islamic concepts.

Tariq Ramadan is probably the best-known European-Muslim author today. The grandson of Hasan al-Banna²⁴ and son of the Egyptian exile Said Ramadan (both considered "giants of the re-Islamization movements," *Q-News*, 312, 1999) committed himself initially as a teacher in Switzerland and later as an activist for development aid in the *Third World*. Approximately 15 years ago, the Swiss national began appearing on the stages of Muslim activities in Europe and the USA, and he acts as a consultant in EU commissions concerned with the New Islamic Presence. For Ramadan, the key to the successful integration of Muslims in Europe lies in the acquisition of both secular *and* Islamic education and primarily in their faith, Islam, the source texts of which ought to be interpreted within the current socio-historical context. Certainly Ramadan, who gained his PhD on Nietzsche in Fribourg, co-supervised by Reinhard Schulze (Berne), and has also studied Islamic law at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, is qualified for such an undertaking and, indeed, given his family history, practically pre-selected—some would say predestined—for it. Ramadan has accomplished this interpretation, and successfully at that, as the wide dissemination of *To be a European Muslim* in both Muslim and non-Muslim circles confirms. One might consider him as a pioneering thinker and activist of a contemporary, "Europe-compatible" *Islamization of Muslims in Europe*—thus positioning

²⁴ Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) was an Egyptian politician and founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. This movement was referred to by Muslims as *reform Islamic* in the sense that it provides a Muslim retort to Western modernity. It was formed between 1928 and 1932 under the British colonial rule in Egypt and succeeded in gaining a foothold in all Arab countries, in various, partly radical forms and rather liberal interpretation of al-Banna's texts. The Muslim Brothers are considered as the basic unit of political Islam (Kepel 2002), and al-Banna as the pioneering thinker of Islamic revival movements (re-Islamization movements). Later Islamic thinkers such as Khomeini (Iran), A.A. Maudoodi (Pakistan; also transcribed 'Mawdoodi' and 'Maududi' in some sources) and especially Sayyid Qutb (Egypt) referred to his writings. Al-Banna was assassinated in 1949 for conspiracy in the context of the assassination of the Egyptian Prime Minister Nuqrashi Pasha.

him well in the family tradition of the protagonists of re-Islamization movements.

Tariq Ramadan is the most important go-between of a *new international movement* of Muslim activists who refer to democracy and human rights and strive towards an understanding with the secular middle-classes (Kepel 2002: 429). He is a charismatic speaker and preacher, whose lectures and speeches are currently in high demand not only at academic conferences, in expert forums of European politics and at inter-religious dialogue talks but also, continuously since the early/mid 1990s, in combination with spiritual tasks, at the French "New Young Muslims" movements (such as the *Union des Jeunes Musulmans, UJM*). At the core these movements call for the formulation of an "*Islamic identity*" in reliance on the community, (Kepel 1996: 325) a notion that goes back to the Muslim Brothers and whose principal initiators and advocates among French Muslim youth—by now beyond the Rhône-Alpes region—have been Tariq Ramadan and, initially, his brother Hani (Imam of the Islamic congregation of Geneva).²⁵

Unlike Ramadan, Salman Bobby Sayyid is not a preacher and does not argue theologically in any context known to me.²⁶ He is not only a brilliant academic, but also a Muslim networker—as evident, among others, from his engagement in the discussion forum of London's Muslim Institute. Yet his works never stray from the terrain of a pointed, critical language versed in political and social science which bears testimony to a philosophical education and level of thought normally exceeding that of dominant Western discourses. He does not leave this terrain even when his texts are published e.g. in the virtual "reading room" of *Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh*.²⁷

Tariq Ramadan departs from the customary language of Islamic clerics and intellectuals. Still, he adapts to the respective target groups,

²⁵ At present Tariq Ramadan is *Senior Research Fellow* at the European Studies Centre of St Anthony's College at Oxford University as well as at Doshida University (Kyoto, Japan) and at the Lokahi Foundation, London. He is a visiting professor at Erasmus University, having previously taught Islamic Studies at Fribourg University. Further, he is president of the European *think tank* "European Muslim Network" (EMN). Ramadan has authored several books, including *To be a European Muslim. A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context*, Leicester 1999; *Globalisation. Muslim Resistances*, Lyon 2003; *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Oxford 2004; *In the Footsteps of the Prophet, Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*, Oxford 2007.

²⁶ Since 2003, Sayyid has been researching 'race', ethnicity and postcolonialism as a Research Fellow at the University of Leeds, where he is now director of the Centre of Ethnicity and Racism Studies.

²⁷ See: www.jamaat-e-islami.org.

and this has earned him nicknames such as “Janus face” and “Trojan horse of Islam” in press articles and features, but also comparisons with Martin Luther and the Latin American liberation theologians of the 1980s. These labels have by now become self-propelling and are rarely absent from any of the numerous articles on and by him that can be found in the internet.

PRIME TIME FOR CONCEPTS OF SPACE AND BELONGING

The core of their works can only be introduced very briefly here.²⁸ Particularly interesting in regard to the above thesis are the starting points of their considerations and the types of concepts they have developed. Tariq Ramadan has been concentrating since the early 1990s on the gap in the Islamic law system described earlier. According to him, it is about time Europe was defined as a location of Muslim life (Ramadan 1999: 145). Conditions of living are good in Europe, he claims, and this standard has nothing to do with the minority status. Rather, he argues, his own safety cannot be guaranteed in a so-called Muslim country, at least not on the grounds of Muslims being in the majority there. Ramadan closes the gap by drafting a new space, a new “house/territory” on the basis of the old bipartition of the world: the “space of testimony,” of which Europe is clearly an integral part.

Essentially, Tariq Ramadan’s work *To be a European Muslim* constitutes the more and more widely accepted attempt at an Islamic-legal regimentation and Islamic-theological conceptualization of the minority situation, thus putting an end to the stigmatization of Muslims in that situation. Ramadan rejects a transfer of *diaspora* terminology that draws on the Jewish example, arguing among other things that the concept of *Umma* knows no exclusion.²⁹ The basis of the argument he uses, however, is not the classic model of Hellenic Judaism, whereby all Jews live in diaspora, but rather that of a modern Zionist ideology

²⁸ In November 2004, Ramadan published his book *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford), where he does not only consider the experience of Muslims in Europe but also the situation of Muslim women in the USA. It appears that this book is going to achieve a similar success as its predecessor *To be a European Muslim*. While *To be a European Muslim* could so far be seen as Tariq Ramadan’s major work, the work by Sayyid selected for comparison here is the article mentioned above, due to its *diaspora* topic. The text considered as Sayyid’s major work is the volume *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and The Emergence of Islamism*, London 1997, which was republished in 2004.

²⁹ The conversation on the applicability of the *diaspora* term to Muslim minorities took place in Lisbon on 23 October 2000.

which sought to promote immigration into the newly founded state of Israel by means of the concept of the “New Jew,” but in consequence stigmatized the diaspora Jews (Zuckermann 1997).

When there is talk of *Muslim diaspora* on the Muslim side, it is usually associated with social-demographic, ethnic or political references. At any rate it does not refer to Islamic Studies or conceptual debate.³⁰ Thus Sayyid’s concept of a Muslim diaspora is not a theological one. He bases his considerations on contemporary interpretations of the *Umma* on the one hand and on the peak of the theoretical debates concerning the seemingly endless semantic extensions of the “diaspora” term on the other. Reviewing the literature on the promotion of the *Umma as place of belonging* we can state summarily: the *Umma* is being styled as the “imagined community” (Anderson) *par excellence*, as the *very nation*. Sayyid recognizes the contrary and describes the *Umma* as a non-national phenomenon, which simultaneously undermines and transcends the logic of the nation:

The assertion of Muslim subjectivity presents a serious challenge to the idea of the nation. [...] Islam interrupts the logic of the nation by highlighting the problem of integration—i.e. how to include various populations within the boundaries of a nation, and at the same time it focuses on the problem of their loyalties to an edifice larger than the nation. (Sayyid 2002: 2)

Using the intellectual tools of modern theory of the nation, Salman Bobby Sayyid argues against prevailing approaches. On his way to grasping Muslim subjectivity conceptually as *anti-nation* by means of the *Muslim diaspora* category, he declares unmistakably: the *Umma* is not a nation. He sets out with the claim that “nation” defines “home,” whereas diaspora describes the state of homelessness. It follows that in the nation the national subjects and territory overlap, while in diaspora they do not. According to Sayyid a diaspora is not the opposite, the “Other,” within a nation; rather, the existence of a diaspora prevents its unanimity, the unity of a nation. This constitutes the anti-national character of diaspora.

Neither, says Sayyid, is the *Umma* an economic or trade association, nor is it a civilization or linguistic community, and it certainly does not make up a shared way of life. In his endeavor to conceptualize a

³⁰ The fate of the Palestinians is only rarely discussed by means of the diaspora category—and where this is done at all, it is from a political perspective, not one of religious history.

Muslim diaspora, he proceeds from two ascertainments: First, from the assumption that a form of Muslim subjectivity or respective debates are currently found in all Muslim communities worldwide. And second, the following question poses itself:

There are still some practices which are uniform among Muslims (e.g. all Muslims pray in the direction of Mecca), however, it is difficult to conclude [...] that which constitutes the unity of the Umma is its uniform way of life. If the Umma is not a nation, a common market or a civilization—is it anything at all? Does not the difficulty of identifying the Umma suggest that the idea of a Muslim subjectivity is nothing more than a chimera? If Muslim identity is so fragmentary, how can we conceptualize it? One way might be to think in terms of a Muslim diaspora (Sayyid 2002: 6).

As different (or even opposed)³¹ as the works of Ramadan and Sayyid may be from each other, at the core they are committed to very similar questions, which the identity politician Ramadan once put into words as follows: “Where are we? Who are we? Which identity? Which belonging?” (Ramadan 1999: viii). These questions and reflections to that effect do not mark the beginning of the history of the New Islamic Presence in Europe; rather, they have received increased attention only since the late 1980s/early 1990s: thus it is a second generation of Muslim intellectuals that is confronted with them. While Ramadan is seeking solutions that would allow young Europeans of Muslim background to become more Islamic without having to be less European, Sayyid understands especially the last question (how to conceptualize a Muslim subjectivity) more as a challenge to academic instances.³²

Ramadan’s and Sayyid’s concepts can be formulated summarily by the term *Concepts of Space and Belonging*. The new relevance of such *Questions of Space and Belonging* became particularly evident with the formation of educated middle-classes. It has also become tangible since the 1980s within the European majority societies—as we can observe

³¹ Sayyid explicitly rejects the idea of a specified European Islam and doubts that Europe forms a particular place/reference of belonging among Muslims, by favoring a universal perspective and highlighting the importance of local and national contexts. See his keynote address “Answering the Muslim Question: Euro-Islam and European Dreams” at the MEL-conference on “Muslims in Portugal. Societal and transnational experiences”, held in Lisbon at ICS-UL, 29th of November 2007: www.mel-net.ics.ul.pt. At this occasion, Tariq Ramadan, who was chairman of the panel discussion, remarked that his concepts refer to European Muslims and do not define a “European Islam” (a vague notion originally coined by Bassam Tibi).

³² B.S. Sayyid, “European Silences—Muslim Voices”, in: <http://egem.unn.ac.uk/eumuslim/volume1/bobby.htm>, downloaded 2 August 2003.

in the debates concerning national and cultural “identities” (Claussen 2000b: 19f). One might summarize laconically: Muslim intellectuals are asking these questions not because an Imam imported from Turkey or their grandmother from Afghanistan confronts them with them, but because these questions are continuously voiced in academic, public and political discourses in Europe.

As mentioned, the discursive context in which the works by the European academics Ramadan and Sayyid were written appears decisive in supporting the thesis of a pendulum of swing dynamic between social science research and community politics. Since the end of the *short century*, the dominant discourses mentioned above, from identity constructions, via diaspora to transnationality, by means of which, among other things, power relations between majorities and minorities are negotiated and also approaches for the examination of Muslims were identified, have been pointing at three trends.

The first may be found in the harmoniously wrapped yet aggressive continuation of the “cultural turn,” which increasingly extends even beyond the realms of cultural studies, political and social sciences. To be exact, we are dealing here with a culturalization of social issues. The politics of majorities and minorities indicate a boom of religious-cultural definitions from both inside and outside, which are often reduced to mere categories of descent.³³ Traditions are turned into argument and explanation pattern, a “return to tradition” is being promoted, whereby it is overlooked that this usually means returning to something that had not existed in that form before.

As a second trend we can consider the conceptual renewals of “spatialization,” which arise in the wake of the rediscovery of (national) spaces, as well as the “collective memories” which are designated as its counterpart on the individual-psychological level (Werz 2004). This increased focus on the relevance of space, which Michel Foucault, among others, anticipated at the end of the *short century* (“The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space”) is often dealt with in vague terms as a “phenomenon of globalization,” but it only makes sense when considered together with the religious revival. The third trend is probably the most decisive one among the interwoven trends: the search for—and attributions of—“collective identities.” Since the end

³³ A valid example for this may be the attempts of the Economic Community EU, in part assisted by expert commissions, to define a ‘European cultural identity’. Such attempts evidently aimed at a constitutional determination of Europe as ‘Christian’. Cf. Siems 2007.

of the Cold War, the familiar categories of collective identity—such as people, nation, group, class—have rapidly gained mobility. They pose a universe of open questions for those social scientists who study the phenomena of social agents and movements in which the search for a historical purpose in post-material conditions appears to gravitate to the center of attention, especially for the middle classes.

I take the liberty of borrowing Detlev Claussen's concept, which explains the verbal container that is "identity" (when applied to collectives) as a religion of daily life (Claussen 2000a, 2000b). This is a religion of daily life which provides uncomplicated and unifying answers to current social questions of purpose and sense, such as "*Who are we? Where do we come from? Who is to blame?*" in accordance with the requirements of an everyday mentality which is unwilling to dwell at length on problems difficult to solve. Academic discourse languages are influential because nowadays they are rapidly conveyed to the public. Yet they are of course inevitably of short duration—as is illustrated in the case of "collective identities," where already new perspectives that deal with, for example, social movements in the "post-identity" era are arriving from the USA (Laraña et al. 1994). Nonetheless, it is apparently very difficult for the Western and non-Western middle classes to give up the search for and proclamation of cultural, national and religious "collective identities."

A shared core we can recognize in all those trends, those central questions regarding ethnicity, diaspora, transnationality, the discussion of and search for "collective identity," the "Self" and the "Other" may be summarized as follows: in every case, social constructions of *space* and *belonging* are being negotiated. That is the background against which both the works by Ramadan and Sayyid and the politics of recognition within the communities may be understood.

CONCLUSION

With the coming of age of the second generation—mostly European citizens who have gone through European education systems—the share of educated (proto-) middle classes increased. The children of the first labor migrants and ex-colonial settlers (Sayyid 2006: 1–10) reached university age shortly before or after 1989, i.e. in a period when the topic of "Islam" experienced an upswing in public and academic discourses. There they grew up with identity discourses which gained

increasing popularity in European social science after 1989 and have appeared central ever since. Heterogeneity had been the fundamental characteristic of the NIP—until the identity discourses fell on fertile ground in European discourses on migration and British postcolonial studies.

New social conditions open up both the possibility and the necessity of new concepts. One of the most fiercely debated questions in the context of (European) Muslim discussions at least since the early 1990s is the quest for the definition of Muslim subjectivity, i.e. a collective understanding of "Muslimness" (Sayyid 2002). The corresponding discussions do not only focus on the situation of international relations and migration, but are based in our case on the experience within the European context. They do not mark the beginning of the young history of the New Islamic Presence in Europe, but have grown along with a second generation which did not regard its stay as temporary but rather was born and raised here. In the context of the development of such new European-Muslim concepts, it is impossible to ignore the secular discourse that was learned by authors who had been educated in these very institutions that impart such intellectual tools. Most of them, however, have also been educated religiously and are active within their communities.

Since talk of a "European identity" has become hugely popular, the representatives of Muslim interests have also become identity politicians. Muslim-European concepts can be read as responses to both dominant discourses and new experiences. In the integration of current discourse languages into such concepts and community politics, the transformation of traditional religion into modern religion becomes apparent. As "traditional" we can define here ritualistic religious practice as well as religious knowledge that are passed down orally, without a reflective examination of the text which had been accessible only to the elites. The key to this transformation lies in secular education. A generation which has passed through the European education systems is developing its own perspective on its religion. Equipped with different tools and access to scripture, this generation also enters into a different, namely often challenging, relation to traditional religious authorities. The religious personnel, initially imported from the countries of origin, have been unable to answer the questions of young Muslims which arose in a new context. The places of the old community leaders are soon to be taken (and in some places already have been) by a young generation—a generation that was raised in Europe and feel at home here.

Younger generations, in so far as they are actively committed to being Muslims, often promote a "return to the true essence" of Islam. The definition of what constitutes that true essence is subject to the plurality principle—and it generally takes a different shape in Europe than for instance in Algeria, Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan. Even if talk of a "return to true Islam" is particularly widespread precisely among young European Muslims, in practice this means a "return" to something that had not existed in that form before—if nothing else, because those social conditions within which this religiousness evolves and is formulated had not been there before. As diverse as the new Muslim perspectives and everyday practices may be, they are different from those of the grandparents' generation. Transnational conditions, secular education, new communication technologies and organization forms, the socialization into as well as experiences of exclusion from European societies and the integration of new discourse languages in Muslim debate all point to two broad tendencies: to the *Europeanization of Muslim cultures* on the one hand and the *Islamization of Europeans of Muslim background* on the other. They can only be understood in the light of the European context, which since the end of the Cold War has seen a fixation in public and social-science debates on traditions and religious attributions, including the promotion of "transnationalism" and "diasporas" and their respective forms of consciousness and identity politics.