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Citizenship Regimes and Identity Strategies Among Young Muslims in Europe

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Identity and Participation in Culturally Diverse Societies

A Multidisciplinary Perspective

Edited by

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Bert Klandermans, and Bernd Simon

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Citizenship Regimes and Identity Strategies Among Young Muslims in Europe

Catarina Kinnvall and Paul Nesbitt-Larking

Introduction

The abandonment of pan-Arab nationalism, the Iranian Revolution, the collapse of Soviet communism, and the consequent shift in the Middle East strategy of the United States have together constituted a rebalancing of global power over the past three decades. These tectonic forces remapped the world and subsumed the old ethno-racial categorizations of the post-colonial order under new socially constructed global “civilizations.” Such forces prompted major recalibrations among both majority non-Muslim populations and Muslims themselves and salient identities shifted from ethnic to religious categorizations. Put simply, British Pakistanis and French Algerians became Muslims, while the majority British population reinvented English Christian values and the French promoted *laïcité* (secularism). These contemporary global forces and relations have conditioned new identity strategies among those for whom Islam has become salient. We sketch the characteristics of ideal-typical identity strategies that have emerged throughout Europe and specify how individual states and citizenship regimes, notably in their characteristic modes of integration and assimilation, promote certain identity strategies among Muslim youth.

The Countries and the Analysis

This chapter explores identity construction strategies across five European societies: the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden. We have selected these countries on the basis of their contrastive colonial history, patterns of immigration and citizenship regimes with respect to multiculturalism, and because of the growing relevance of Scandinavian countries to the debates on citizenship in contemporary

Table 10.1 Muslims in Europe, 2005

Country	Total population	Muslim population	Muslims as % of total
Denmark	5,400,000	270,000	5
France	62,300,000	5,000,000–6,000,000	8–9.6
Netherlands	16,300,000	945,000	5.8
Sweden	9,000,000	300,000	3
UK	58,800,000	1,600,000	2.8

Source: BBC (2005).

Europe. While dissimilar in many respects, each country can be said to have had negligible Muslim populations in the immediate postwar period and then to have experienced substantial immigration of a diversity of Muslims from the 1950s to the 1990s. Given the comparative youth of many Muslim immigrants over the past five decades, a rapidly growing proportion of European Muslims is European by birth. We refer to these generations as “post-diasporic” Muslims. A recent assessment of the number of Muslims in Europe, which makes use of a range of government data, generates the estimates shown in Table 10.1.

Investigating the linkages between colonial history, established modes of immigration, citizenship regimes, and dominant identity strategies on the part of Muslim minorities, we generate detailed and often complex illustrative material to support the typology that we discuss below. While our empirical goals are to illustrate the applicability of the theoretical model rather than to empirically test hypotheses, it is useful to identify certain methodological choices undertaken in our fieldwork. Altogether, a total of 42 in-depth interviews with young Muslims were conducted in 2006 and 2007 in the United Kingdom (14), Denmark (15), and Sweden (13). Additionally, a three-hour focus group was undertaken among members of the Muslim Students’ Association at the University of Bradford, UK, in April 2007. Participants and interviewees were recruited through personal contact and the snowball technique. Interviews and focus group proceedings were recorded, transcribed, and interpreted through discourse analysis.

Colonial History, Immigration Patterns, and Citizenship Regimes

Below we undertake a brief comparative sketch of five countries. For each country, we trace the dominant modes of immigration, the colonial history of the country, and an assessment of citizenship regimes with respect to

multiculturalism in terms of characteristic modes of integration versus assimilation. Our central finding is that citizenship regimes, rather than colonial histories and patterns of immigration, exert the greatest impact on Muslim minority identity strategies. The largely assimilationist regimes of France (a major colonial power with substantial post-colonial immigration) and Denmark (a minor colonial power with little post-colonial immigration) are associated with relatively high levels of ethno-religious tension and comparatively little sense of engagement among the Muslim minorities. Both countries have generated relatively successful far right parties. The more multicultural and integrated approaches of the United Kingdom (a major colonial power with substantial post-colonial immigration) and Sweden (a minor colonial power with little post-colonial immigration) are associated with relatively lower levels of ethno-religious tension and a comparatively high sense of engagement among Muslim minorities. Despite its citizenship regime of recognition of minority cultures, the Dutch approach has been – like the French and Danish approaches – to remove deeper questions of integration from the *agora* and in so doing to be less successful in confronting ethno-religious tensions. The absence of a politics of community engagement beyond the “elite accommodations” of pillarization has been associated with the rise of substantial parties and movements of the far right. It bears repeating that our claims regarding the broad relationships between regimes and identities across Europe are cast at a macrological level that necessarily conceals considerable variation. Our principal findings are prefigured in Table 10.2.

Identity Strategies

Throughout this chapter, “identity strategy(ies)” refers to relatively long-term plans of action concerning the formation and presentation of the self. We conceive of identity itself as an active verb, as a “doing” rather than as a noun, an achieved and static state of “being.” Identities are dynamic, complex, and always both in social context and in formation. Many Muslims in the diaspora find that their religion assumes new significance, and/or discover that its symbolic connotations have somehow shifted. In the case of the first generation, this is largely due to their transition from majority to minority status where a heightened awareness of Islam is discovered anew (Mandaville, 2001). In the case of post-diasporic generations who constitute a minority by birth, a more complex pattern emerges. Reitz’s insights resonate across the experiences of Muslim youth in Europe when he argues that young Muslims, unlike their parents, are often unable to rationalize and accept second-class status. Not only are they socialized through schooling to the entitlements of citizenship, but they experience fewer options for returning to their homelands (Reitz, 2005).

Table 10.2 Dominant identity strategies among European Muslim youth

Country	Colonial/imperial history and dominant mode of immigration	Characteristic mode of integration/assimilation	Dominant identity strategies
UNITED KINGDOM	Major colonial power. Predominantly post-colonial immigration to fill unskilled/semi-skilled manual work in the industrial centers	Immigrants integrated under and ascribed inferior status as displaced colonial subjects. Laissez-faire recognition of communities and groups and later multiculturalism	Engagement and essentialism evident among young Muslims; retreatism common among first-generation Muslims
FRANCE	Major colonial power. Predominantly post-colonial immigration to fill unskilled/semi-skilled manual work and settlement in the <i>banlieues</i>	Highly assimilationist into a secular and notional egalitarian regime. Civic republicanism and <i>laïcité</i>	Essentialism and retreatism are both evident. Relatively little evidence of engagement
THE NETHERLANDS	Minor colonial power. Some post-colonial immigration, but mostly guest workers to fill unskilled/semi-skilled manual work and refugees/asylum seekers	Pillarization and Muslims as the "fourth pillar." Unavoidable costs and the creation of "two-tier" rights. Social closure between groups	Engagement, essentialism, and retreatism all evident
DENMARK	Insignificant colonial power. No post-colonial immigration, but mostly guest workers to fill unskilled/semi-skilled manual work and refugees/asylum seekers	Highly assimilationist into a secular and notional egalitarian regime	Essentialism and retreatism are both evident. Relatively little evidence of engagement
SWEDEN	Insignificant colonial power. No post-colonial immigration, but mostly refugees and asylum seekers	Attempted integration through laissez-faire recognition of communities and groups and later multiculturalism	Engagement and essentialism evident among young Muslims; retreatism common among first-generation Muslims

In analyzing the social psychological forces encountered in the politicization of Islam, the concept of youth is particularly important. These are years of existential anxiety and ontological doubt in which competing claims for belonging and affiliation are most acutely in tension (Erikson, 1994). Focusing on the psychology of adolescence, Arnett (2002) discusses the uncertainty and confusion resulting from global change. As local cultures are challenged and changed as a result of globalization, some young people find themselves adrift: at home neither in the local context nor in the global situation. They search for alternative answers in mythologized traditions, fundamentalist religions, or far-away nationalisms. Entrepreneurs of meaning construct a range of essentialist readings of past, present, and future. Peter Mandaville (2007) expresses these social psychological dynamics well:

Impressionable young European Muslims, many of whom have little knowledge or experience of their religion beyond a recently discovered desire to find some sense of moral certainty and a place in the world, are given an identity compass whose discourse of "global Islam" allows them to understand themselves as part of a larger struggle against hegemony, imperialism and godless capital. (pp. 111–112)

The fact that Islam, in response to legacies of colonialization, modernity, globalization, and current discourses on terror, has become increasingly politicized and securitized has sharpened identity issues among many young Muslims. As a result, Islam has become an emerging identifier among many young European Muslims as they struggle against racism, alienation, and marginalization. To be a young Muslim in many European societies of today requires a constant negotiation with the rest of the society. As young Muslims they are chronically associated with a religious tradition that is under the microscope throughout the societies in which they live and in which, for the most part, they are citizens. As young Muslims in Europe, they are under strong pressures to take a stand in the perceived conflict between various notions of European secularism and Islamic religion.

Social psychological responses toward the quest for identity within the context of contemporary Europe are by no means uniform. We have developed a model of three broad identities that involve different identity strategies among both Muslims and non-Muslims, which we present as ideal types: Essentialism, Retreatism, and Engagement (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2010; Nesbitt-Larking, 2008). While our focus in this chapter is upon Muslim youth, our typology has broader applicability and is pertinent to the analysis of both other minority communities and majority communities.

Grounded in the propensity to resort to stereotypes and to erect psychic barriers of security through the invocation of familiar and trusted signifiers, an *essentialist* identity may be manifest in forms of totalistic modes of

reasoning, black and white thinking, religious or secular fundamentalism, and other manifestations of psychic rigidity. An essentialist identity strategy is an attempt to retreat from the cold hostility of normlessness and to secure coherence in a world that is otherwise fragmented and threatening. Familiar symbols and tropes, such as those of nation, gender, and religion, are used to anchor the self, often through a retreat to a mythical past (Kinnvall 2004, 2006; Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2010). To assert an essentialist identity strategy is to appropriate meaning in the establishment of a pristine and privileged interpretation of certain discourses and texts. In Bakhtin's terms, it is monological, meaning that a single authority has monopolized meaning, to the exclusion of all competing voices (Bakhtin, 1994). Essentialism can be viewed as an identity strategy that establishes clear boundaries between self and Other, truth and heresy, the sacred and the profane, and the just and the unjust. The reassertion of boundaries between us and them is a necessary if not always sufficient precursor to action. It is a discourse as well as a strategy in which those regarded as Other are cast as enemies to be denigrated, shunned, or crushed.

For many Muslims and for many members of majority populations, an essentialist identity strategy is psychically uncomfortable in that it is too rigid and absolute. There are indeed dangers in constructing and positing such all-or-nothing identities. A more attractive option is to remain undefined in often-uneasy *retreatism* from the world of tension and conflict, and to stay under the definitional radar. Retreatism keeps the options open – both subjectively and intersubjectively. To retreat and to distance oneself from the modern polity is an identity strategy that seeks to avoid any commitment at all. However, this does not mean that any future commitment is precluded. A retreatist might covertly share a belief system with the essentialist, but be hesitant to articulate it. Under such circumstances, lines of communication are kept open – at least minimally – with the Other and overt hostility is minimized. On the other hand, a retreatist may be retreating or withdrawing from a powerful essentialist membership group in which to express doubt or objection is to risk being labeled an infidel or a traitor. Retreatists are by definition neither “for us nor against us.” They may be covert essentialists, fearful of a broader political community or society in which essentialisms are rejected, or they could be those secretly favoring a politics of open engagement in a climate of mutually hostile and irreconcilable essentialisms.

Engagement is the third identity strategy. Rejecting both the hostility and mistrust of essentialism and the evasiveness of retreatism, engagement as an identity strategy implies a willingness to open self to Other, both psychologically and sociologically, and to move from a monological to a dialogical identity strategy (Bakhtin, 1994). A dialogical identity strategy references both the dialogical self which opens up introspective

communication (argument within the self) and dialogue in a social setting in which there is a genuine attempt to communicate, to listen, and to be heard. Engagement as an identity strategy suggests an assertive motivation toward collective problem solving in a society and the coming together of disparate voices in a genuinely political forum of conciliation and compromise. In the absence of a potential agreement, there is at least the agonistic tension of agreement to disagree without disrespect or violence. For Muslims and non-Muslims, serious engagement with others becomes a possible solution and strategy to identities in question and formation in which fears and uncertainties are overcome through forms of self-conscious dialogue and openness to others.

Below we investigate the three identity strategies of essentialism, retreatism, and engagement as we map the formation and deformation of identities among young Muslims in Europe and how their identity strategies are affected by their memories of a colonial past and immigration, as well as their experiences of integration, assimilation, and the citizenship regimes in which they live.

United Kingdom

Dominant modes of immigration and colonial history

In the wake of decolonization and the partition of India, Indians and Pakistanis, many of them Muslims, immigrated into Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. Under the 1948 British Nationality Act, citizens of former colonies had rights of settlement and citizenship in the United Kingdom, and hundreds of thousands took advantage of the need for labor to settle in London and the industrial towns of the Midlands and the North. Under more restrictive immigration legislation, East African Asians supplemented the first waves of immigration throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Since the 1970s, significant numbers of Muslims have migrated from Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Afghanistan, some as refugees and asylum seekers.

As a former colonial power, in which an elite of White settlers in collaboration with comprador elements exercised considerable power over native populations, the United Kingdom constituted a place of settlement in which, notwithstanding their legal status as citizens, new commonwealth immigrants arrived with an already ascribed inferior status as displaced colonial subjects. Full and equal national integration was, therefore, an inherent contradiction. Not only were Muslim immigrants assigned to a lower “caste,” but their occupational categories upon arrival placed them predominantly in the working class.

Characteristic modes of integration or assimilation

With respect to integration, most Muslim immigrants initially reacted with some form of retreatist identity strategy, quietly sustaining their own communities and remaining only partially assimilated. Balibar points out that British colonialization saw itself as "respectful of cultures," while French colonialization proclaimed itself "assimilatory" (Balibar, 1991). This point of distinction was to prove highly influential in the respective trajectories of these two former large-scale colonial powers. While the French project of uniform republican and secular solidarity would result in widespread and fundamental struggles over the sacred in public spaces, the more pragmatic and accommodating British approach gave rise to policies of multiculturalism. In the British case, integration has been viewed as a question of managing public order between majority and minority populations with ethnic cultures and practices mediating the process. The focus of British multicultural politics is rooted in "race and ethnic relations" (Geddes, 2003; Melotti, 1997; Modood, 2005). The result has been "multiculturalism on one island" as Adrian Favell (1998) puts it, where immigrant and ethnic minorities have been "nationalized" in relation to British social and political institutions. As in the Dutch case, described below, this has aggravated social closure among a series of distinct and enclosed minorities. Such closure, with its attendant separation and alienation, was the object of an impassioned 2006 speech by Tony Blair, in which he stressed "the duty to integrate" (Blair, 2006).

Dominant identity strategies

Given their willingness to participate, the young British Muslims we interviewed articulated a strategy of engagement for the most part, even if support was qualified and nuanced. Searching for commonalities, one of our Muslim youth interviewees in the United Kingdom, a public spokesperson for the strategy of engagement, stressed the extent to which British Muslims "are not in a sense distinct from mainstream British society ... they believe in fairness, tolerance, understanding etcetera." Reflecting on a familiar point of tension between Muslims and the authorities, he went on to explain how most Muslims enjoy a good relationship with the police and assist the police once they are aware of criminal activity in their community. Other respondents were less sanguine regarding the British police and some made reference to patterns of endemic and overt police racism. Despite this, even the more vocal critics conceded that in their daily engagements, relations with the police were quite acceptable, while they were concerned with the more global climate of Islamophobia, arbitrary interrogation, detention, arrest, and rendition. Our focus group was conducted among members of the Muslim Students Association in Bradford, who noted that while the rule

of law and justice obtain in the United Kingdom for the most part, many Muslims are beginning to doubt the extent to which the presumption of innocence applies to them.

With respect to political participation, our interviewees identified the principal challenges as the failure of Muslims themselves to exercise their rights of citizenship, to mobilize actively, and to make demands beyond block voting for members of parliament (MPs) on the basis of traditional tribal loyalties, a characteristic of their parents' generation. A female student stated that parents have a different political understanding from Muslim youth because: "they've come from a time or origin where they had their loyalty to the British, like kind of the Empire and everything, whereas we've been born and bred in a society in the West and we're rejecting those values that they call the Western values, and it's like if you talk to a majority of the youth, they don't want to be positive contributors in society ... the best thing that has happened so far for Muslims in the UK is the Islam channel."

Many of our respondents expressed satisfaction with the formal and anticipated rights of citizenship in the United Kingdom and felt that their rights were respected. However, most also believed that they had been excluded from a broader sense of inclusion in the British nation. They experienced challenges getting job interviews, were shunned in public spaces, and believed that their core values were seriously misunderstood. Perhaps in reference to Blair's speech, one frustrated female student in Bradford stated: "On the one hand we've got some people going 'oh, we've got to integrate more,' but at the same time it's double standards, they don't allow us to because of all these misconceptions that they have ... you've got to understand, people are saying 'integrate' and at the same time shutting the doors in front of your face."

Certain scholars have emphasized notable generational differences among British Muslims where the post-diasporic generation often shows dissatisfaction with the cultural and linguistic preoccupations of older community members (Gilliat-Ray, 1998; Modood & Werbner, 1997; Modood, 2005; Robinson, 2005). What they are objecting to are strategies of retreatist ethnic traditionalism that too readily coexist with the passive acceptance of low status and discrimination. Many young British Muslims have been attracted to a reimagined global *ummah* in which a reawakened religiosity serves to anchor pride and an authentic sense of rootedness (Modood, 2005; Robinson, 2003, 2005). A study by Saeed, Blain, and Forbes (1999) of Pakistani Muslim teenagers found that young Muslims' identification with Islam constituted a core religious identity in 97 percent of the sample group. Hence, while some Muslims thought of themselves as culturally and socially substantially British, the evidence suggested that there was still some reluctance to assert Britishness as anything beyond legal entitlement.

Recent surveys of Muslim opinions in Britain show that up to one third of the respondents claimed to have more in common with Muslims in other countries than with non-Muslims in England (Mizra, Senthilkumaran, & Zein, 2007). Western foreign policy plays a large part in this process and may induce some young Muslims to enter the radicalization phase. The United States-led "war on terror" in Iraq and Afghanistan, the situation in Kashmir and Chechnya, Western support for Israel, and the painful pictures of suffering Muslims emerging from the occupied areas in Gaza and the West Bank are often perceived as Western foreign policy.

Hence we see two dominant identity strategies among young British Muslims where engagement appears to coexist with essentialism. Most of our interviewees and those participating in our focus groups were reacting against their broader sense of exclusion from the British community. However, most of them expressed a serious willingness to engage and to involve themselves in dialogue rather than resorting to more essentialist strategies of violent practice. At the same time, it is important to note that we may be witnessing a more general discontent with democratic politics among post-diasporic Muslim youth in Britain. And even if only a very limited amount of people are likely to act violently in order to challenge the British state and the international community, an identity strategy of essentialism may result in violent encounters unless attempts to counter such identity strategies are taken seriously.

France

Dominant modes of immigration and colonial history

Proportionately, the Muslim population of France is the largest in Western Europe. On the basis of a civic egalitarianism, the former French colonies enjoyed French citizenship rights and the right of immigration to France. The majority of Muslim immigrants to France are from the former French colonies of North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, and more recently from Turkey. The specific pattern of French colonialism was strongly assimilationist, furnishing certain legal rights, but nonetheless superimposed upon a racist and francocentric political culture.

Throughout its history as a global republic, the emphasis on a universalist idea of integration has implied the transformation of immigrants into full French *citoyens* (Favell, 2001). With its established public mythology of founding a great homogeneous nation with a strong centralized state, France has tried to integrate migrants without any official recognition of national minorities or local ethnic groups. Integration has meant assimilation to the French culture and nation, and the demand that migrants drop particular

forms of cultural identity in order to become "good Frenchmen" (El Hamel, 2002; Kivisto 2002; Melotti, 1997).¹ From the Constitution through the centralized educational system, the political culture of *laïcité*, and specific regulations on public space, particularisms are discouraged.

Characteristic modes of integration or assimilation

Despite the formal equality of all citizens, the political culture has sustained practices of social differentiation and exclusionism. Large proportions of the mostly poor Muslim immigrants live in the *banlieues*, the impoverished suburban belts surrounding French cities. Many of the *banlieues* constitute zones of exclusion, heavily policed and often characterized by violence as a way of ruling through confrontation. This obviously creates a space for a range of marginalized and minority groups to emerge and make their voices heard among disillusioned youth. As most majority French never visit these areas, the *banlieues* are regarded as alien communities. The absence of interaction and communication has been evidenced in a series of challenges, such as the long-standing *hijab* controversy. With only minimal consultation with established and moderate Muslim communities, the post-colonial French state adopted a series of absolutist regulations that served to exacerbate tensions and to alienate Muslim youth. The French state's unwillingness to legitimize religion in public life, together with a generalized cultural suspicion of Islam, is thus likely to continue an ongoing problematic relationship with Muslim diasporic and post-diasporic groups.

Dominant identity strategies

The riots that spread across France after the death of two teenagers in October and November 2005 must be viewed in the light of such structural inequalities. However, the riots should also be understood from a generational perspective as a form of relative deprivation. Young French Muslims searching for a meaningful identity have been able to bind local experiences and life in the *banlieues* to imagined homelands and have at times resulted in Islam becoming a source of global identification, related to global wars, insurgencies, and perceptions of post-colonial discrimination (Moussaoui, 2003). Kastoryano (2006) argues: "Islam thus gives a 'romantic' sense to the conception of the community. It serves as a justification for internal cohesion and ethnic pride, providing a means of recovering 'lost' youth and reaching out to the 'victims of immigration'" (p. 66). By casting Muslims in the role of victims, Islamist organizations have also been able to appeal to

¹ This position is slowly changing, however, with the establishment of a Muslim council by the authorities (Samad & Sen, 2007).

many young Muslims. The Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF), an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood, became increasingly visible in the mid-1980s as it expanded its social, political, and media visibility. To capture a young social base, its emphasis has often been on the necessity to rebuild one's identity on a political religious basis that will work as a remedy for the loss of cultural and social markers. As emphasized by one UOIF member, Abdelkarim,

Whether you are White, tanned or Black, you have to reject slurs and pet names that put you in the category of "we don't know who you are." You are not a North African or an Arab.... You are neither an Islamist nor a fundamentalist.... Yes, in France you are at home. And whether you apply the precepts of Islam or you are non-practicing, you are Muslim. Therefore, you are: a young Muslim. Respect starts here! Then you will be able to demand respect from others. (Quoted in Kepel, 2004, pp. 268–269)

By viewing religion as a minor feature of mainstream French society, thus ignoring how Christian religion has been institutionalized through customs and habits, Muslims cannot but be aware of the secondary status of their religion. Muslims are not perceived as fully responsible autonomous beings as declared by the French universalist state. Identity politics in France thus exists within a state of tension between a post-colonial narrative of monocultural national unity and the reality of globalization and multicultural diversity. By virtue of being institutionally excluded and made into the "deviant" Other, many young Muslims are redefining their sense of self and others to reflect the post-colonial insecurities they are experiencing. While some French Muslim youth have adopted retreatist strategies and a few manifest strategies of engagement, a significant and alienated minority has turned to variants of essentialist identity strategies in order to achieve integrity, pride, and a sense of belonging. The relative lack of engagement among French Muslims is reflected in a recent Gallup Poll (BBC, 2009) that reports 77 percent of British Muslims identifying with the United Kingdom, while only 52 percent of French Muslims identify with France.

The Netherlands

Dominant modes of immigration and colonial history

In the Netherlands, a small number of post-colonial Muslim migrants arrived in the 1950s from Indonesia, the Moluccan Islands, and Surinam. However, the post-colonial experience of Muslim immigration into the Netherlands has never been as prominent as that of the United Kingdom and France. The Netherlands has thereby avoided the patriation of social

relations and conflicts directly from the former colonies. In the Dutch case, further waves of Muslims migrated from Turkey and Morocco in the 1960s and 1970s as guest workers on special permits. Refugees and asylum seekers arrived from Bosnia, Somalia, Iran, and Pakistan in the 1990s and beyond. Many of those originally admitted on work permits have been able to gain permanent residency and their numbers have been enhanced under family reunification policies and marriages in the homeland. Recent changes to Dutch immigration legislation have introduced strict economic, cultural, and social criteria as citizenship tests and this has reduced the number of Muslim immigrants dramatically. Net migration from Morocco, for instance, decreased from 4,132 in 2001 to –525 in 2007, while net migration from Turkey during the same years decreased from 4,707 to –24.² During 2008 and 2009, net migration has increased from both countries, however. From Turkey the net increase was 4,114 in 2008 and 5,686 in 2009, while from Morocco it was 5,634 and 6,515, respectively.³

Characteristic modes of integration or assimilation

In a manner similar to the French, the Dutch approach to the integration of Muslim minorities is an extension of the dominant civic culture. In the French case, it is civic republicanism, and in the Dutch instance, it is the principle of pillarization. Originally established over a century ago as a state form to achieve consensus among the leaders of the Catholic, Protestant, and Socialist communities, the metaphor regarded each community as a pillar at the apex of which the elites of each pillar negotiated among themselves. Pillarization has more recently been extended to include a fourth Muslim pillar (however, for a contrary view, see Vink, 2007). The pillarization system is a form of consociationalism that has given religious groups the right to establish their own infrastructures (e.g., schools, religious buildings, interest groups) and has enabled them to be subsidized by the government. According to Shadid, pillarization has created a pervasive "unavoidable costs" approach toward political integration (Shadid, 1991). The unavoidable costs are those associated with the potential for individuals to be denied certain rights by those who claim to speak on their behalf, and for the entire society to be burdened with the costs associated with creating and perpetuating a "two-tier" system of parallel communities characterized by significant social closure. Partly in response to the perceived failures of pillarization and unavoidable costs, the new right in the Netherlands, exemplified by

² Statistics Netherlands 2009, retrieved September 21, 2009 from <http://statline.cbs.nl>.

³ See Statistics Netherlands (CBS), May 13, 2009. In *Annual Policy Report 2008: Developments in Dutch Migration and Asylum Policies*, August 2009. Retrieved November 23, 2009 from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI-BBCreport-Sept09.pdf>.

Geert Wilders' Party For Freedom (PVV), has recently been aggressively promoting an assimilationist citizenship regime.

Dominant identity strategies

As in France, many Dutch Muslim youth have become increasingly dissatisfied with low status, social exclusion, and discrimination. As in other European countries, residential segregation has inhibited many Moroccan and Turkish youth from developing a Dutch identity and a belief that they have little say in Dutch society. The relatively low economic status of many Moroccan and Turkish youth has further contributed to their search for religious identities that can provide a sense of security and affirmation. A pervasive lack of trust in the legitimacy of the government has also become increasingly visible (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). This can partly be traced to the reactions of the majority community to the murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh and the response among Dutch politicians who competed in anti-Islamic statements and measures. Kelley, Morgenstern, and Naji (2006) argue that the hostility of prominent Dutch leaders toward Muslims, exemplified in the speeches of Wilders, has reinforced a feeling of exclusion and humiliation among many Moroccan and Turkish youth, playing an important role in the radicalization of certain Muslim youth.

The application of pillarization principles toward Muslims emerged from a broadly egalitarian and pluralistic public policy and few thought through the consequences of simply applying it to those who had not already been integrated. Neither the majority nor minority communities were helped by applying principles that had been developed for a native population with largely similar socio-economic status, history, and culture to the integration of migrants of diverse cultural background (Cuperus, Duffek, & Kandel, 2003). Pillarization offered a symbolic form of equality, while in practice it reinforced and reproduced ethnic cleavages and segregation on a distinctly unequal basis. Pillarization might have worked in the context of the largely retreatist strategies of generations of new migrants for whom deference to majoritarian Dutch values and their own community leaders was widespread. In his study of Muslims in the Netherlands, Buijs (2007; see also Buijs & Rath, 2006) points out that the development of young Muslims as radicals in many cases starts with a generational conflict. Parents come to be regarded as assuming a submissive position in society, whose retreatism is decoded by Muslim youth as a "routine-Muslim" status among those who are not fully devoted to their faith.

Despite the pressures, most Dutch Muslim youth retain the quiescent retreatist strategies of their parents and others consciously organize for a

strategy of engagement. While many of those born in the Netherlands have been particularly vocal in demanding broader public support for their new-found Muslim demands, a small hard-core element, about 5 percent of all Muslim youth, has been found to be susceptible to fundamentalist political ideas (there are no comparable data available to us for the other countries). However, it is important to stress that Moroccan youth has also played an important role in countering the current polarization in societal climate by engaging in activities that promote dialogue. As a result of the need for young Muslims to respond to hostility or prejudice at school or at work, Islamic youth organizations have initiated public discussion meetings (e.g., the foundation "Ben je bang voor mij?" [Are You Afraid of Me?]) in order to raise awareness of Islam and the positions of Muslim youth (ter Val, 2005). Thus, while strategies of essentialism exist among Muslim youth in the Netherlands, these are counterbalanced by the existence of substantial numbers of youth whose strategic identities have emerged as both retreatist and engaged.

Denmark

Dominant modes of immigration and colonial history

As in the Netherlands and Germany, Turkish Muslims initially migrated to Denmark in the 1970s in order to take up temporary jobs. Other early Muslim immigrants to Denmark included some from Pakistan, Morocco, and the former Yugoslavia. A second wave of Muslims came in the 1980s and 1990s: in the 1980s as refugees from Iran, Iraq, and Palestine among others, and in the 1990s mostly from Somalia and Bosnia. Currently, Muslims with a refugee background comprise about 40 percent of the Muslim population in Denmark, and this is a characteristic shared with Sweden (Hussain, 2007; Lassen & Østergaard, 2006; OECD figures for 2006). While Denmark and Sweden both had overseas possessions, neither country was in the class of the British or the French.

Characteristic modes of integration or assimilation

The dominant approach to political integration in Denmark approximates the French model of reuniversalized citizenship in which group and community characteristics are removed from the public domain. In the political culture and public policy, the Danish nation is often defined as an ethnic community whose cultural survival is guaranteed by the state. This is believed to be best achieved through the assimilation of immigrants into Danish cultural values (Holm, 2006; Mouritsen, 2005). This development

has intensified since the November elections of 2001, which brought a right-wing minority party, the Danish People's Party (DPP), into the coalition government. In addition, the Danish Aliens Act, passed in 2002, has enhanced the security state and promoted an anti-terrorist discourse often directly targeting Muslims. Muslim youth have experienced themselves in Danish society as stigmatized and targeted. Structural exclusion and psychological vulnerability have thus affected many young Danish Muslims in their search for an embracing identity.

Dominant identity strategies

The young Danish Muslims we interviewed in the Copenhagen area were all associated with South Asian organizations and they were clearly aware of the changed atmosphere in Denmark after 9/11.⁴ After 9/11, one young man argued, Islam was often the topic of conversations during lunches at work. Since very few people knew he was Muslim, people felt they could say exactly what they felt. Almost everything they said was negative and he became convinced that he would not tell his co-workers that he was Muslim. Hence "the 9/11 situation," as one young Muslim woman framed it, "has developed many stereotypes about Muslims." This, she argued, is "mostly because of the way [the] media is presenting these issues."

The Danish media have been instrumental in exploiting racism through framing the discourse and priming the audience. This is not only the result of 9/11, but started already in the 1990s when the newspaper tabloid *Ekstra Bladet* ran a campaign focusing on the desirability of a multicultural society in Denmark (Rydgren, 2005). This was followed by an increasing number of hostile media reports focused on Muslims (Hervik, 2002, 2006). The culmination of this process was reflected in *Jyllands-Posten's* publication of the Muhammad caricatures in September 2005, a decision that resulted in increased insecurity for many Muslims in Denmark. In addition to media discourse, the Danish People's Party has also been heavily involved in the stigmatization of Muslims. In such discourses, the question of Muslim women, honor killings, and the *hijab* are some of the most contentious.

A number of young Muslims we interviewed emphasized the fear many Muslims experienced during the Muhammad debate and how misconceptions about Muslims affected the entire community negatively. One young Muslim woman talked about how she had started to wear the *hijab* after 9/11 as it provided her "mental peace," but, she argued, "I have noted that a lot of people don't like it." Another young Muslim woman argued that she was not comfortable with non-Muslims. When asked why, she responded

⁴ The interviews in Denmark and Sweden were conducted with help from three graduate students, Anna Traustadottir, Matilda Padoan, and Zayeda Sharmin.

that so many subjects that were important to her were not relevant for non-Muslims. Issues like homosexuality, pre-marital sex, and promiscuity were, she felt, part of Danish everyday life, but were in her view *haram* (forbidden). Therefore she kept her children in Islamic schools, ensuring they had only Muslim friends. Despite such retreatist strategies and the heated debates in the press, it should be noted that unlike in France, the wearing of the *hijab* has been widely accepted in schools and any problems involving Muslim pupils are usually resolved in dialogue with the Muslim parents at the local level (Hussain, 2007).

The fact that many of these young Muslims live in a non-Muslim society that sees Islam as the antithesis of democracy, human rights, and gender equality has resulted in an attempt to prove to the majority that Islam does indeed value these elements (Cesari, 2007; Schmidt, 2004). This search has often involved a return to some essence of Islam. In the process, parents are often viewed as biased in their Islamic practices by their culture and language, making parents a defining Other within a context where Islam and Muslims are under constant attack (Schmidt, 2004). One young Muslim student emphasized how difficult he found the pressure from his parents who wanted him to speak Malay at home, despite the fact that he had only been to Malaysia a few times and that it made him feel different from his friends. "I'm not sure what it means to be Muslim, but my friends keep asking me. I guess I'm a Danish Muslim. I was really angry when I saw the cartoons. I felt I had to defend who I am."

In an interview shown in the documentary *Mit Danmark*, Janusz Bakrawi articulates a similar post-diasporic narrative of the awakening of difference and distinction:

I was born in Denmark, here in Virum ... My mother is Polish and my father Palestinian. As a child and a teenager I never saw myself as being different. I was Danish and my friends were called Mikael and Jakob. Slowly I discovered, however, that people saw something different. A stranger, an immigrant – somebody allowed visiting. The only immigrants I had known were my mother and father. I didn't even know that they were immigrants. It is strange to discover that you are suddenly a guest. ("My Denmark," Final Cut Film Production, DR 1, February 4, 2007)

During a walk through the city, Bakrawi makes reference to the anger and frustration of not belonging. He talks about how he has tried to fit in, tried to be a "real" Arab, tried to laugh with the Danes when they made jokes about immigrants, but all this just made him angrier. In response he finds himself asking questions about his identity. While speaking the language and being acculturated to Danish customs and traditions, Bakrawi remains an outsider. While Bakrawi's experience may result in a strategic choice to retreat into a parallel existence to the majority society, it could also be the

beginning of an essentialist strategy. In this Bakrawi's expression of religious confusion and anger is probably similar to many non-aligned Islamists across Europe, who appear to have a rather superficial knowledge about Islam and lack rigor in their religious studies. Instead they exhibit a ritualistic adherence to prayers and dress code and often attract attention because of their outspoken religiosity. Retreatist and essentialist identity strategies are thus likely to coexist in the Danish case.

In 2002, the Danish government passed a package of laws, called L35, to combat the growing threat of international terrorism. These laws give the police greater powers of covert surveillance that can be used against Muslim groups or individuals (Hussain, 2007). As expressed by a young Muslim from Tåstrupgård, an area on the outskirts of Copenhagen: "I feel the police are constantly on my case. Last week we were stopped twice and they always have that funny look on their faces, as if we can't speak or something, I don't know – we're just hanging out."

This does not necessarily mean that these young people become radical Islamists. According to a report (Taarnby Jensen, 2006), only a small number of dedicated Islamists subscribe to violent Islam, so called Jihadists who are not in any way representative of the majority of Muslims in Denmark. On the contrary, they appear to be rather isolated groups whose views on *jihad* have marginalized them from their original immigrant communities. Hence it could be concluded that the particular Danish context of outspoken and institutionalized Islamophobia has, at times, resulted in a search for essentialist identity strategies, but that these are by no means the only response to the current political climate.

Sweden

Dominant modes of immigration and colonial history

Sweden, along with other European countries, has experienced a dramatic change from economic migration to the migration of refugees. Through the 1980s and 1990s, Sweden kept a very open migration policy, which resulted in a remarkably high level of immigrants in relation to the total population. The Muslim population in Sweden is highly diverse, with Muslim migration from Turkey, Iran, Iraq, South Asia, Africa, and the Balkans (Sander, 2004).

Characteristic modes of integration or assimilation

As with the United Kingdom, Sweden has adopted a policy of group-based pluralism in which a multicultural recognition and fostering of minorities have been encouraged. Sweden's multicultural policies date from the mid-1970s.

They have often worked to reinforce cultural boundaries around the migrant groups by providing cultural rights without always providing access to political, social, and economic institutions. While enjoying formal citizenship rights and protected cultural rights, Muslims in Sweden have experienced economic exclusion and social closure. This has led to increased segregation in terms of housing, economic marginalization, illegal economic activities, the formation of gangs, and a culture of violence (Larsson, 2006).

Dominant identity strategies

As in Denmark, it is clear from a report from the Swedish Department of Integration (SDI, autumn 2005) that anti-Muslim sentiments in Sweden increased following 9/11. Sixty percent of respondents in the SDI survey agreed with the statement that Islam cannot coexist with basic "Swedish values," and only four out of ten believed that "Swedish Muslims are like Swedes in general." The effects of such Islamophobia and racism are most visible on the Swedish job market. One young woman we interviewed described how her father had been a university teacher in Afghanistan, but could find nothing more than routine manual work in Sweden, despite his efforts to upgrade.

Despite the undoubted challenges of integration and the continued isolation, the politics of engagement seems to remain a viable and constructive strategy for a majority of Muslim youth in Sweden. The fact that no right-wing party has been allowed to seriously affect mainstream politics constitutes a significant difference between the Danish and the Swedish case. This is not to say that Sweden has been immune from essentialist strategies among Muslim youth – which have, at times, resulted in violent activities. Hence, as in Denmark (as well as in other European societies), a small number of extremists have come to achieve prominence out of all proportion to their numbers. In 2005, Swedish police arrested three young men who had planned to blow up a Swedish church. Characteristic of other young Muslim extremists across Europe, they were psychologically troubled young men, inspired toward acts of violence to fulfill grandiose needs for recognition and belonging (*Sydsvenskan*, May 3, 2006). Their knowledge of Islam was so weak that their actual levels of religiosity seemed irrelevant to their actions (*Dagens Nyheter*, June 14, 2006).

Among the more than 300,000 Muslims in Sweden, there is, as in Denmark, an increasing minority who are affected by global narratives of Islamic resurrection and who would like to institutionalize religion in a more essentialist sense (Carlbom, 2003). The Swedish Muslim Council (SMC) is often set in this category. The main tasks for this organization are to institute parallel Muslim organizations and institutions, particularly in

law and education (Carlbom, 2003, pp. 89, 91; Otterbäck, 2004). Some of the SMC's concerns are carried into the basement mosques of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. Friday prayer in many of these mosques is often about more than religious ritual. It is a combination of strong political attacks and moral directives concerning how a Muslim should live – what is *haram* (forbidden) and what is *halal* (allowed) (*Sydsvenskan*, February 8, 2006). Often these basement mosques are used to create male bonding and for recruiting young Muslims. According to Carlbon (2003, p. 92; see also *Sydsvenskan*, February 10, 2006), these groups are not interested in integration, but rather see isolation and separation (a parallel society as manifest in identity strategies of essentialism and retreatism) as an advantage for protecting and strengthening their version of Islam.

Although the SMC claims to represent all Swedish Muslims, this is clearly not the case (Carlbom, 2003). There are also a number of organizations who actively work to improve relations between young Muslims and the Swedish society. Swedish Young Muslims (Svenska Unga Muslimer, SUM) is one such organization with around 5,000 members and 30 local branches. Omar Mustafa, one of its leaders, describes how SUM encourages interfaith conferences, workshops, and camps and how the organization makes active involvement in the public sphere a top priority. He also maintains that Islamophobia has not been as visible in Sweden as in the rest of Europe, especially pointing to the difference with Denmark, where xenophobic attitudes have been much more prevalent.⁵ This style of calm and integrated Muslim assertiveness eschews the extremes of isolated retreatism and angry essentialism. Far from being compliant, it is agonistic and assertive, making claims in the *agora* of pluralistic struggle, seeking compromises and bargains and advocating a strategy of engagement.

In our interviews with young Muslims in Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, many of our interviewees also expressed little or no reluctance to be part of Swedish society. Many emphasized a sense of engagement and argued that they felt generally welcome in Sweden and that most Swedish people treated them with respect. One young (male) leader of the Muslim Scouts told us how he and some friends were involved in training "peace agents" in response to misconceptions about Muslims in the wake of 9/11. "There will always be extremists and fundamentalists all over the world. One can't just point to all Muslims as terrorists. So we are trying to change that view ... well, especially the young people, they feel that they don't know how to respond, which is why we intend to educate peace agents. They will provide a different picture, respond to all the questions, reduce some stereotypes."

⁵ Interview with Omar Mustafa on the Young Left's web page (<http://www.ungvanster.se/template/arkiv/?pressID=1147>).

Interviews with two imams reinforced the notion of Muslim identity as a tool for integration. They argued that Islam can work as a tool for integration rather than separation for different Muslim groups. According to their views, Islam – devoid of any cultural or ethnic elements – can easily be combined with a Swedish identity as "the message of Islam is eternal and inclusive and can thus contain all cultures." Jocelyn Cesari (2004) agrees: "As was the case several times before in Islamic history, Muslims in the West are revising and recreating Islamic culture by hybridizing their own heritage with the dominant norms and values of their host societies" (p. 83).

So far it appears that Swedish policies toward integration have been more successful than their Danish counterparts and that the lack of explicitly xenophobic and Islamophobic parties has managed to create a less hostile atmosphere. This may explain some of the tendencies toward strategies of engagement rather than essentialist confrontation. At the same time, it is difficult to dispute the fact that, among minority groups, it is Islamic identity constructions that have grown most strongly in Sweden. According to Friedman and Ekholm Friedman (2006), Muslim groups are among the largest migrant groups and are the most internally integrated and externally separated. This creates a strong foundation for continued mobilization. Hence, we can see that although the extremes of essentialism may have been avoided by young Muslims in Sweden in favor of engagement, the situation is unstable and it is unclear what kind of balance will eventuate.

Conclusion

Despite their very different experiences with colonialization, Denmark, France, and the Netherlands have developed a conceptualization of immigrants as separate entities rather than relational beings. These societies have been largely unsuccessful in nurturing a politics of engagement. In so doing, they reflect the incapacity to transcend in-group/out-group binaries made familiar through the minimal group experiments of social identity theory (Kinnvall & Lindén, 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Such are the consequences of insisting on a regime of assimilation on the level of citizenship that papers over the schisms of national and religious identities that are (de)formed in the mutual hostilities of social closure and the systemic hatreds of racism. While the complex histories of colonial conquest continue to pervade ethno-racial and religious relations throughout contemporary Europe, it has become apparent to us that public policy on the cultural entitlements and arrangements of citizenship regimes exerts an independent impact.

The return to Islam opens up a radical questioning of the Enlightenment assumptions of liberalism, republicanism, and pillarization. Statham, Koopmans, Giugni, and Passy (2005) argue: "it is the public nature of the

Islamic religion, and the demands that it makes on the way that followers conduct their public lives, which makes Islam an especially resilient type of identity, and which results in claims-making for group demands" (p. 441). On the basis of the daily hard work of navigating agonistic political relations, Muslims and non-Muslims alike have exhibited the trust and good will to sustain a pervasive politics of engagement in Europe, notably in Sweden and the United Kingdom, where there has been less emphasis on the conformity of newcomers to the existing political culture and institutional arrangements. In such contexts, robust and self-confident claims made in the public sphere have been both acceptable in the national conversation and likely to exert a positive impact. For a minority of others, most significantly in assimilationist settings, the *ummah* – a global Muslim community – has come to substitute for the good-enough national political community and has thereby enhanced an anti-Western global identity, often referred to as "Western-phobia" (see Larsson, 2006). Rejecting the West, young Muslims have converted themselves into accidental orientalist adhering to whatever essentialized versions of Islam have the greatest currency on the active web sites. Like their Western equivalents, these cyber-fundamentalists have constructed protective walls of essentialism and retreatism behind which they can build community. While small in numbers, their impact is huge and consequently much of the energy in shaping public policy around religious being and expressivity in Europe must attend to their identity strategies. In the end, if the essentialists are too hard to reach, the world of the retreatists can be engaged through a respectful and genuinely mutual dialogical politics of recognition.

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