Master Thesis in European Governance

LEGITIMIZING INSTEAD OF SECURITISING ISLAM

Attempts of Preventing Radicalisation in Western Europe
through the Governance of Imam Training

MA-Thesis
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06.07.2018

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List of Abbreviation

AD	Associative Democracy
BCJI	Central Bureau of Judicial Investigations
CCME	Council of Moroccan Residing Abroad
CEFR	European Council of Fatwa and Research
CGI	Contact Group Islam
CMO	Council for Communication between Muslims and Government
CTI	Center for Islamic Theology
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CVE	Counter Violent Extremism
Dyanet	Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs
ENER	European Network for Experts on Radicalisation
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FION	Federation Islamic Organizations Netherlands
HBO	University of Applied Science
IGGÖ	Islamic Faith Community Austria
IUE	Islamic University of Europe
IUR	Islamic University of Rotterdam
MENA	Middle East and North-Africa
MENAFATF	Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force
MP	Member of the Parliament
MS	Member States
NFMIO	Dutch Federation of Maghreb Islamic organizations
NIMAR	The Netherlands Institute in Morocco
NMO	Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Corporation
NUTIO	the Dutch union of Turkish-Islamic organizations
OCW	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
PVE	Prevent Violent Extremism
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network
RMMU	Council of Moroccan Mosques Utrecht
RMMN	Council of Moroccan Mosques Netherlands
TICF	Turkish-Islamic Cultural federation
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
UMMAO	Union of Moroccan Mosques Amsterdam
WHW	Dutch Higher Education and Research Act

1 INTRODUCTION

"We must create a balance with the Islam of France under whose terms the Republic guarantees its right to worship. If Islam does not help the Republic fight those who threaten public liberty, it will be harder and harder for the Republic to guarantee freedom of worship."
(Former French Prime Minister Manuel Valls 2016)

Two months after the massacre at the editorial offices of the satiric magazine "Charlie Hebdo" and a Jewish supermarket in Paris, then French Prime Minister Manuel Valls announced to reform Islam through the training of imams and by means of increased state financing (France24 2015). This way of pro-active governmental interference on the management of religious accommodation represents peculiar developments in Europe. It is marked by a shift from traditional security policy towards compromising the relation of state and religion, the place of Islam in general and it raised new questions regarding identity, citizenship and integration. How to govern intercultural co-existence is usually based on secular considerations, but the security prerogative puts Islamic accommodation at the centre of the debate.

The terror attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) and the arrests of hundreds of European foreign fighters to join ISIS in Syria or Iraq in the following years unveil the subsisting problem of radicalisation inspired by Islam within the European Union Member States (EU MS) (Vidino 2009, 61). According to the "Terrorism Situation and Trend Report" of the European Union, in 2016 alone attacks such as in Brussels, Nice and Berlin have reportedly killed 142 Europeans and left 379 people injured (Europol 2017). Governments in Western European countries have initiated bold and controversial policies aimed at preventing (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE). Based on the prevailing narrative that terrorism is caused by the presence of extremist ideology (Kundnani 2015) several hard and soft measures have been carried out over a decade, with extensive effects on cohabitation (Neumann 2013). A review requested by the European Parliament in 2014 on counterterrorism policies across EU MS showed remarkable adverse effects, contributing to dynamics of escalation, disobeying fundamental rights and social cohesion and generating ethnic and racial discrimination (Bigo et al. 2014). The minority survey of the Fundamental Rights Agency in 2017, furthermore stresses that pertaining discrimination, harassment, and police stops towards Muslims can

over time decrease the trust in police, judiciary and the attachment to the country they are residing in (FRA 2017, 7).

The recognition to break this vicious circle of unintended consequences of security politics and discrimination found its way into public debates (Politico 2016). Only recently, scholars and policy-makers have acknowledged the role of religious attitudes and traditions in the formation of identity (Baumann 1999, Maussen & Boger 2010, Koenig 2015). Integration, assumed to contain religious fundamentalism, is increasingly a problem of governance of religious diversity. How states react to increased immigration and trends of accommodating religious needs of minorities varies across EU MS (Koenig 2015). Especially imams, the prayer leaders in mosques, are perceived to contribute to the development of Islam in a national context. The idea of imams as superimams having "pastoral power" (Foucault 2007) over Islamic communities remains a prevailing interpretation reflecting the needs of governments. Imams are compelled to mediate the relation between Muslims and the major population (Hashas et al. 2018, 19). Resulting from this common understanding of the role of Islamic clerics, the training of imams has become a crucial component within the discourse concerning Islam in Western European Member States. National imam trainings comprise a variety of dimensions exemplary for the debate about the place of Islam in European societies. In that respect, the management of the courses to train religious leaders is directly linked to the construction of faith. It involves the selection of methodologies, scientific disciplines and filters theological streams. The formation of imam trainings demands to some extent the interference into religious mechanisms that are able to redefine an "Islam of tomorrow" (El Asri 2018, 102).

However, imam trainings at national educational facilities are not prevalent across EU MS. France for example has no public imam education, although it is subject to discussions since the announcement of former Prime Minister Valls (Politico 2016). The Netherlands on the other hand have state-funded academic imam trainings due to a persistent eagerness of Dutch authorities (Boender 2013, 229). Nevertheless, the programs have recently been evaluated and thoroughly criticised, with a major concern towards a lack of in-depth theological knowledge (Regioplan 2012). The aim of this thesis is to explore opportunities to collaborate with Islamic countries for the training of imams, especially regarding the example of a Dutch-Moroccan imam education. Furthermore, this thesis is devoted to a better

understanding of the institutional preconditions for religious accommodations in the Netherlands and suggests ways for improvement in the case of imam trainings and the development of a European Islam. To disarray the different discursive trends this introduction has highlighted, the following research question will be examined:

Which possibilities and limitations does religious governance and in particular transnational religious education for imams offer to enhance a European Islam and what are the implications of the development of a European Islam to prevent radicalisation?

The particularly multicultural pillar system of the Netherlands, "*verzuiling",* accounting for a division in four smaller *zuils* or pillars of different religious denominations and philosophies of life, display an interesting example for investigating to what extent the remains of this institutionalised way of dealing with religious diversity, are adequate to cope with newer forms of religious diversity (Bader 2007, Koenig 2015). The case of the Dutch imam training debate reveals the complexity of Islamic accommodation in a secular state setting, with modes of naturalising, or "domesticating" (Laurence 2012, 249) Muslims towards a Dutch Islam (Ghaly 2008, Boender 2013).

Several theoretical considerations have been included in finding solutions for the inherent dilemma of accommodating religious needs in accordance with a secular Western European state. The connection of different approaches allows for addressing the complex dimensions that are part of the problem and paves the way for new democratic-experimental solutions towards a European Islam, building on ancient traditions but able to account for new realities that comprise religious everyday-life of Muslims in a modern European context.

Islamic institutionalisation in the Netherlands took place in the wake of a dissolving multi-pillar system. The dynamic development of Muslim minorities claiming for religious accommodation took place within changing political strategies from labour migration policies in the 1960s and 1970s, to minority politics in the 1980s and integration policies since the end of the 1990s. Amid these different modes of coordination, a variety of issues emerged that comprise today's deep reality for a growing Muslim population. Foreign states supported Islamic worship in the countries of residence, a practice which was increasingly regarded as counterproductive for the integration of minorities. A second generation of Muslim migrants

grew up with questions regarding their religious identity between traditional parents and an increasingly difficult relationship with the major society due to an ongoing denunciation of Islam. In addition to questionable security practices towards ethnic minorities, the place for Muslims and Islam in European societies is captured by a variety of dimensions. How freely next Muslim generations develop identity and a sense of citizenship should be a central element of debate. Until then, solutions should focus on distorting mechanisms in the present and look for solutions towards an Islam of tomorrow (El Asri 2018).

1.1 Research Interest

This research intends to explore the ways in which transnational imam training between the Netherlands and Morocco could enhance the development of a European Islam and furthermore, how a European Islam could prevent radicalisation. The research question underlying this thesis has a multi-dimensional interest of knowledge. To disaggregate the subject at hand, several sub-questions account for the different dimensions and will each be part of the analyses. Due to the complexity of the research field insights from different disciplines have been used. The following questions emerged during the exploratory research process and account for the conceptualization of the research question.

(1) How did the institutionalisation of Islam take place in light of the pillar system in the Netherlands and what comprises the governance of religious diversity today?

(2) How are Dutch authorities reacting to the underlying threat of "import imams", perceived as long arm of Muslim states to maintain influence over the diaspora population? How are the Netherlands promoting "home grown" or "superimams" to replace imams coming from their countries of origin and how do Muslim communities react to this offer?

(3) How can the identified shortcomings of the current Dutch imam trainings be translated into short and long-term objectives for a European Islam and what opportunities are in place, especially for a cooperation with an Islamic country?

(4) What comprises the Moroccan imam training and what particular offer does Morocco have to train foreign imams? Which opportunities could foster or counter a Dutch-Moroccan cooperation on training imams partly in Morocco?

(5) Under what considerations is legitimization of Islam fundamental to prevent radicalisation?

The sub-questions raised furthermore display the backbone of the respective sections in the analytical chapters 5 and 6 and will comprise the conclusion of chapter 7, where especially sub-question 5 will be answered in light of the overall research question. Although these questions emerged during the research process, due to reasons of clarity they are already mentioned in the introduction.

1.2 Relevance of Research

This paper is written at a time of heated political discussions about the place of Islam in Europe, fuelled by numerous terror attacks across the continent by radical Islamists and the recent arrival of millions of mainly irregular Muslim migrants since 2015, as well as economic grievances that are often blamed on immigration. The manifestation that Islamic values are incompatible with the European society is mirrored in the recent elections with an increase of Anti-Islam parties in national elections like France, the Netherlands or Austria. Although a great majority of European Muslims are positively attached to their country of residence, the experienced religious discrimination appears to be in the ascendancy. Pertaining discrimination, harassment, or police stops can over time decrease the trust in police, judiciary and the attachment to the country they are residing in (FRA 2017, 7). Recently, scholars and decision-makers acknowledge the role of religious attitudes and traditions in the formation of identity (Baumann 1999, Maussen & Boger 2010, Koenig 2015). Integration, perceived as containing the spread of religious fundamentalism, is increasingly perceived as a problem of governance of religious diversity (Koenig 2015).

The "perils of modelling governance of religious diversity" in Europe is a very complex and heterogeneous academic domain (Bader 2007a). The conditions under which Muslims aim at accommodating their religious practices are entrenched in widely diverging regimes across

Western European states. Bader (2007a, 883) stresses the urgency for more detailed studies on "what 'governments' on all levels actually, and not only legally, have done and 'do to Muslims'" and further emphasizes research on the internal governance of Islamic accommodation. Moreover, this paper focuses on ways in which societies create opportunities and limitations for the development of Islam as well as the complex interrelationship between radicalism and citizenship (Buijs & Rath 2003, 8-9). Besides these internal governance structures, the external opportunity structures emphasize the institutionalised regimes and policies that comprise for governing Islam in new possible ways, through transnational experimental designs of cooperation.

This thesis aims at contributing to the increasing literature on governance of religious diversity in Europe. Especially the current debate on imam training in the Netherlands aims at taking a variety of aspects into consideration, involving the different actors within the decision-making process. An additional perspective on the Moroccan approach to offer imam training to European believers opens possibilities for new forms of transnational collaboration, increasing the virtues of liberal-democracy regarding Moroccan diaspora communities. This paper therefore also contributes to the emerging literature of diaspora governance in light of institutional pluralism, and additionally touches upon literature on post-secularism (Baumann 1999, Laurence 2006, Maussen 2007, Vidino 2011, Rascoff 2012, Boender 2013, Sunier 2014).

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

After this introduction, the following chapter two provides for understanding the adverse effects of counter radicalisation measures into a vicious circle of security policies and discrimination. In reviewing the literature, the concepts of radicalisation and counter radicalisation are reflected regarding the practical implementation of European strategies to counter and prevent violent extremism. The significance of their implications regarding a denunciation of Islam, lies the basic understanding of why religious accommodation needs to be released from security prerogatives. Chapter three comprises several theoretical insights. First, Religious Governance (Bader 2007) has been used to reflect on the religious minorities aiming at recognition of their spiritual worship. Second, the role of imams has been analysed

in light of Foucault's concept of "pastoral power" to assess the debate about national imam trainings (Foucault 2007). Third, Political Opportunity Structures were applied to explore options for international cooperation on the training of imams. This approach allows for putting the structure of the underlying political and social systems into opportunities, hence limitations or possibilities emerging for activism. Chapter four introduces the exploratory and descriptive research design as well as the underlying methods, which consist of semi-structured and open interviews as well as primary and secondary data analysis. Chapter five, six and seven comprise the analytical parts of this thesis. Chapter five in particular examines the specific modes of religious governance in the Netherlands in a historical perspective of Islamic institutionalisation and the respective imam training debate. After an evaluation, the shortcomings of recent imam trainings and the evidence from the discussion about Islamic accommodation are translated into long-term objectives for a consensual Dutch imam training and to enhance a European Islam and respective short-term solutions to reach these objectives. Hence, political opportunity structures will depict possibilities and limitations for a transnational imam training between the Netherlands and Morocco. Chapter six accounts for the Moroccan counterpart and elaborates the political system comprising the Islamic Kingdom. Here too, political opportunities will be deployed with respective possibilities and limitations for a transnational imam training. Furthermore, chapter seven explores new ways of international religious governance in two ways. First, by confronting Morocco and Netherlands regarding the identified opportunity structures. Second, the role of the EU with regard to religious accommodation and transnational cooperation is introduced in order to explore additional options for enhancing a European Islam. Finally, chapter eight concludes by answering the overall research question, providing policy advices, and suggesting future research objectives.

2 THE PROBLEM WITH COUNTER RADICALISATION

This literature review depicts the controversies among policy makers and scholars on the understanding of radicalisation by offering a comprehensive discussion about how the security prerogative is played out with regard to counter radicalisation measures. For the research interest of this thesis it is important to understand how certain concepts of radicalisation and violent extremism, in particular cognitive and behavioural radicalisation, are translated into different policies. In three different sections, it will be shown that these instruments often have unintended consequences, where the elements intensify and aggravate each other which leads to a worsening of the situation in a vicious circle. This chapter will end with suggesting new modes of religious governance as alternative approach to counter in particular cognitive radicalisation, inspired by Islam and to end the vicious circle of security measures and discrimination. Section 2.1 gives a brief overview about the making of the common understanding of radicalisation to further examine contested terms and definitions, and to disentangle empirical and common explanations for Islamist radicalisation. Section 2.2 furthermore, examines measures on countering and preventing radicalisation and discusses how underlying assumptions affect policy strategies. The sub-sections focus on the different European models accounting for CVE and PVE measures and their often unintended consequences. Finally, Section 2.3 concludes with a discussion on the emerging counter-effects and lies the basis for alternative theoretical considerations to improve the situations for Muslims in Europe with the more inclusive approach of religious governance.

2.1 Radicalisation and Militant Islamism

Since the events of September 11 2001 the emergence of radicalisation and violent extremism using Islamic justifications accounts for a global challenge, with different means to counter such acts from being executed but also to prevent the radicalisation of vulnerable individuals in the first place. Especially strategies that aim at preventing violent extremism (PVE) need to take into account the contexts in which radicalisation takes place in order to formulate clear objectives and to reach effective outcomes. The formulation of PVE strategies and the established instruments are based on specific definitions and understandings of radicalisation.

The major task of this chapter is to unveil the controversy among policy makers and scholars from different disciplines, especially regarding its root causes as well as the contexts it is grounded in. Therefore, this section provides an overview of the academic debate on the phenomenon of radicalisation, radicalisation inspired by Islam and counter radicalisation as well as to summarize recent empirical findings in order to understand why certain measures have been initiated in this manner.

2.1.1 Contested Terms and Definitions

The general manifestations centring around radicalisation are highly disputed within the literature. In order to avoid misinterpretations, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between specific terms that are often used interchangeably among scholars and policy makers.

Until the early 21st century *radicalisation* was barely mentioned in the academic discourse on terrorism and political violence and even less was undertaken to develop a systematic concept to understand the phenomenon (Neumann 2008, 3). Even now the term lacks a common definition across existing literature. The simplistic understanding of terrorism as "evil ideology" inherent with perpetrators lacked solid analytical ground (Kundnani 2012, 4) and was replaced by a new paradigm of political terrorism introduced by Walter Laqueur, the founding father of terrorism studies. The "new terrorism" of post 9/11 is described to be rooted in increased fanaticism, inspired by ideas of nationalism, communism, fascism or fundamental Islamism (Laqueur 1998, 50). The basic idea was that terrorists and who are perceived as their allies "were unreformable and that no political or economic change could stem their hatred" (Kundnani 2012, 4).

The concept of radicalisation emerged as less value-laden and more liberal alternative to explain the root causes leading to this new form of terrorism. Radicalisation is used to explain "what goes on before the bomb goes off" (Kundnani 2012, 5). Through the term radicalisation, a discussion about the driving forces behind terrorism and political violence was possible again (ibid.).

The common sense behind *radicalism* and "being radical" describes these terms as challenging political, economic and cultural norms, practices and institutions. Radicalisation, more specifically, describes the relationship between such challenges and the potential of

individual engagement in violence within these challenges of the status quo (Githens-Mazer 2012, 556).

The term *violent extremism* is often used in the context as a very extreme pole on the scale of radicalisation, whereas extreme ideas are actually being executed in terms of violent actions. The European Commission's "Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation" describes violent radicalisation as "socialisation to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism", where extremism refers to a rejection of democratic values and the rule of law (Alonso et al. 2008, 7).

Concerning this thesis, radicalisation is understood as the process that "may lead individuals to support violent extremism" (Neumann 2008, 3) and furthermore, the changes in attitude that lead to an increased commitment and use of violence in political conflicts (Della Porta & LaFree 2012, 6). Moreover, this paper follows the reasoning of Githens-Mazer (2010) by assuming that this simple dichotomy of challenge and mitigation is problematic. He argues that the current debate is inflated by the shock of 9/11 and the subsequent securitisation of Islam leading to radicalisation used as a descriptive term to explain how and why Muslims executed violent acts against the West in the name of their religion (Githens-Mazer 2010, 557; Langohr 2004).

This predominant and simple understanding of radicalisation led to the emergence of responding political agendas often called "counter-radical", "counter-extremist" or "counter-violence". The academic discourse was constraint to the "needs of government security establishments" focusing on factors and indicators to establish concrete measures to prevent and counter radicalisation and violent extremism instead of taking the bigger picture of causality into account (Kundnani 2012, 5). Therefore, the following section attempts to provide an overview of the multiple existing concepts surrounding radicalisation.

2.1.2 Empirical Implications of Islamist Radicalisation

The attempt to disentangle the official narrative that terrorism is caused by the presence of extremist ideology is a complex endeavour. The logic between different elements of the terrorism and radicalisation discourse has been collectively insisted on by policy-makers and researchers (Kundnani 2015). Recent literature seeks to dissolve these narratives and disaggregate the plethora of factors involved, which reveals to be a highly complex and disputed undertaking. Nevertheless, this section aims at paving the way to understand the

complexity of this intent and prepares for an in-depth discussion on countering and preventing radicalisation in the wake of militant Islamism.

The wide range of disciplinary perspectives include insights from psychology, sociology, political science, security and terrorism studies, contributing to the research agenda of radicalisation. Those studies explore the complex dynamics between social, political and cultural surroundings (macro-level), the role of internal interactions within armed-groups (meso-level) but also on individual experiences in radicalisation and de-radicalisation processes (micro-level) (Della Porta & LaFree 2012, 6). It is striking that most research on this subject include mainly literature reviews and secondary analysis of data, as well as information retrieved from data which is publicly available such as media reports and transcripts of court proceedings. These forms of pre-experimental research designs are mostly not controlled for external and internal validity and are therefore at high risk for error in drawing causal inferences (Silke 2008, 101). Despite contributions to an understanding of the backgrounds of violent extremists including their profiles with regard to their education, family circumstances, childhood, profession and religiosity (ibid.), empirical studies indicate that it is impossible to use socio-economic profiling to identify radicalised individuals (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2012, 810). It has also become evident that there are no single or clear set of motivations driving individual radicalisation. However, it is possible to identify a limited number of apparent reasons why certain drivers tend to facilitate the radicalisation of individuals, such as the search for meaning and identity but also more intellectual reasons like ideology, religion, political grievances due to feeling discriminated or simply following a peer group leader (Dalgaard-Nilsen 2012, 810; Hirschfield et al. 2012, 8). Furthermore, the causal linkage between individual radicalisation and being involved in terrorism as moment, when radicalisation finally becomes visible, is highly questionable (Kundnani 2012, 17; Pisoui 2014, 788).

The indication of *radicalisation as process leading to increased commitment to use violent means in political conflicts* is used by a great majority of researchers. This definition however entails a multidimensional understanding of radicalisation: First, as a *change in perceptions* towards polarized and extreme opinions in a given situation, hence cognitive or ideological radicalisation and second, the *articulation* of increasingly radical aims and objectives, hence behavioural radicalisation (Della Porta & LaFree 2012, 6-7).

A concept of militant Islamism inspired by social movement theory in particular was summarized by Dalgaard-Nielsen (2010) in her review of empirical research on this field:

> *"Militant Islamism is centered on a narrative, which claims that Islam and Muslims are constantly attacked and humiliated by the West, Israel, and corrupt local regimes in Muslim countries. It claims that in order to return to a society of peace, harmony, and social justice, Muslims need to unite and stand up for their faith. They need to fight the West and other corrupting influences. Violence, including violence against civilians, is a necessary and legitimate means given the superior military power of the West. The fight, which militant Islamism claims is a religiously sanctioned fight, is an individual duty and an emancipatory journey, which brings the fighter closer to God"* (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010, 798).

This definition entails the two dimensions of behavioural and cognitive radicalisation, justifying extremist action, religiously legitimised. Political grievances fuelled by humiliation of Islam are instrumentalised, or to put it in other words, translated into action, either by individual endeavours or recruiter's efforts. However, making religion responsible for violent radicalisation and violent political mobilisation, it is a poor approach to explain the causes for radicalisation (Githens-Mazer 2010, 14, cited in Dzhekova et al. 2016, 42). According to Neumann (2013, 882) and the social movement approach most activists are not considered as ideologists studying their movement's texts but instead, identifying with the core ideas and principles and, which is crucial, being motivated by group dynamics in blaming the major society for their grievances. When looking at drivers and triggers for violent radicalisation, both on group and on individual level, it is important to focus on studies that base their conclusions on primary data, evaluated in accordance with academic principles such as validity and reliability thus, with a precise and transparent research methodology (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010, 798). As empirical evidence from the social movement approach suggests, the atmosphere within the Muslim population with regard to political grievances is not directly about the non-Islamic identity but roots in neglecting an official Islamic authority tied to the state. A study conducted by the Change Institute (2008) furthermore found out that the religious revival among young European Muslims is a search for guidance, a self-chosen identity in the face of perceived hostility from the major society (Change Institute 2008, 84).

Nevertheless, one argument cannot be ignored: violent extremism is still the exception across the scale of radicalisation. Only very few individuals who may share ideas with violent

extremists would translate their attitudes into action (Change Institute 2008, 97, 120). Indeed, empirical studies on socio-cognitive influences have shown that perceived self-efficacy has a great impact on increasing the capacity to act instead of feeling helpless. Showing individuals that having the ability to participate and that their actions do have an impact on one-self and the environment may translate their grievances in productive empowerment or even political activism (Bandura et al. 2001, El-Mafaalani 2017). But yet, these individual grievances and identity struggles can still be instrumentalised by militant groups, peers and other sources of recruitment. Therefore, counter violent extremism measures should also take into account the inherent discrimination, may it be societal, structural or political. An individual's state of precariousness could be exploited by such groups (Change Institute 2008, 97, 120).

However, the question that remains concerns the relationship between extremist ideas (cognitive radicalisation) and to finally conduct extremist actions (behavioural radicalisation). As described above, research shows that not all terroristic acts are motivated by extremist ideas (Neumann 2013, 876). The difference between cognitive and behavioural processes are particularly important when looking at the counter measures by policy makers and politicians. Nevertheless, such policy frameworks should take the whole picture of causation into account when formulating political agendas and communicating to the public.

2.2 Countering and Preventing Radicalisation

Measures to counter and prevent violent extremism should also take into account the inherent discrimination towards vulnerable individuals, may it be societal, structural or political. In the wake of increased radicalisation and violent extremism, the interest of policy makers, social workers and researchers increased to understand what measures are needed to prevent violent acts from being executed but also to prevent the development of radical ideas. What is important to note is that up until 2014 hardly any empirically based evidence of preventative or de-radicalisation interventions existed. The lack of theory-based approaches makes a systematic evaluation of underlying assumptions of an intervention ineffective to provide an adequate analysis of the impact of such policies (Feddes & Galucci 2015, 17, 21). Especially the EU has therefore called on the evaluation of policies and measures in place and launched different initiatives to facilitate the exchange of best practices such as the European Network

for Experts on Radicalisation (ENER) in 2006 or the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in 2011 (European Commission 2014a).

2.2.1 Counter Radicalisation

This section discusses the logic behind CVE and PVE measures within the dynamics of radicalisation. The complex and diversified radicalisation discourse is in no way inferior to the approaches of reacting to the increased threat of extremist violence. CVE comprises compound dynamics of escalation, highly under investigated – an appalling detail when considering political strategies. CVE roots on the uncontroversial idea that the manifestation of violent extremism is based on attitudes and social-behavioural processes, once we understand these attitudes and processes we can prevent future acts of extremist violence. These basic assumptions raise the theoretical questions of which measures should be conducted in which way as counter radicalisation strategy (Rascoff 2012, 137). However, the disagreement over the meaning and causes for radicalisation are reflected in different policy approaches, varying in underlying assumptions and experiences (Neumann 2013, 885). As Neumann (2008) adequately describes it, CVE is not a single policy but a policy theme carried out through multiple channels (cited in Rascoff 2012, 137).

Nevertheless, two main approaches can be identified, varying in their logic on the before mentioned process of either cognitive or behavioural radicalisation (Neumann 2013, 885).

2.2.2 The State of the Art in European CVE and PVE

After a brief introduction on the conceptualization of counter radicalisation, this section offers an overview of the two main strategies in Europe and their shortcomings.

Counter radicalisation policies still lack adequate theoretical assumptions. It is based on the broad idea that the prevention of future violence needs an official involvement in "shaping the ideational currents that are thought to underpin that violence" (Rascoff 2012, 127). Recent attacks on European soil conducted by radical individuals who were born and raised on European soil have increased the pressure on governments to invest in counterterrorism activities, including counter radicalisation (Vidino 2009 & 2010). However,

these measures may conflict with the Fundamental Rights of religious freedom, equality of citizens and non-discrimination. On the one hand these programs have a discriminatory effect by police actions especially against the Muslim population and on the other, they often aim at establishing an "official Islam"[1] (Rascoff 2012, 130), government-sponsored and -handpicked activities by "moderate Muslim clerics" (Vidino 2010, 2).

The following review of the state of the art of European CVE and PVE strategies identified two main traditions of interventions comprising assumptions on behavioural radicalisation and cognitive radicalisation. Neumann (2013) labels them the "Anglo-Saxon" and the "European" model, whereby the first deals mainly with behavioural radicalisation while the latter includes both behavioural and cognitive counter measures. It will become clear that under both assumptions, the predominant tools have unintended consequences negating the pertaining policy objectives (Neumann 2013, 885). It is important to note that both approaches cannot be understood as clearly distinct from one another. It rather serves to draw an analytical line in order to display the major differences, an attempt of modelling that varies across literature (Change Institute 2008, Briggs 2010, Rascoff 2012, Neumann 2013).

The Anglo-Saxon Model

The Anglo-Saxon model, especially the UK aims at a more proactive role than the rest of Europe, promoting government intervention where individuals intend to break the law. In this perspective, political ideas and motivations are less relevant for the benefit of freedom of speech and democratic principles (Neumann 2013, 885). Britain has historically speaking always promoted an official multiculturalism towards its Muslim population. After the London attacks in 2005, the government "revised its overall approach to domestic counterterrorism" into the "CONTEST" strategy (Rascoff 2012, 151). The comprehensive strategy included the programs "Pursue", "Protect", "Prepare" and "Prevent" (Hirschfield at el. 2014, 14), with the latter one being the most controversial as it empowered local authorities with government support (Rascoff 2012, 151). With a rise of funding from £6 Million to £140 Million, "Prevent" introduced "engagement officers in local police forces, the creation of a toolkit for school on their role in the prevention of violent extremism, and the national roll-out of Channel, a

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[1] Later also referred to as „naturalization" or „domestication" of Islam (Laurence 2012, Sunier 2014).

discrete [sic] referral process to provide support for individuals vulnerable to violent extremism" (Briggs 2010, 975). The increased inclusion of local police forces and officers showed unclear results which lead to a revision of the strategy to "CONTEST II" in 2009, shifting the focus from the prevention of violent extremism to preventing extremism hence, interfering during the process of radicalisation (Rascoff 2012, 152; see also Briggs 2010, 975).

However, also the revised program was scrutinized under various dimensions (Rascoff 2012, 166-168): First, it raised questions about the legitimacy and the competences of the state regarding counter radicalisation. According to Rascoff this has two main reasons. Firstly, governments are simply no experts in countering radicalisation. Especially in its religious modes and concerning the academic debates, already questioning how much theological insight is necessary in order to formulate an effective counter radicalisation strategy. Secondly, governments may fail, simply because they are the messenger, lacking credibility among Muslim communities because they are no insiders. Additionally, it has been shown that government subsidised programs also tend to undermine the credibility of the executive group, although the message itself would be favourable (Rascoff 2012, 167). "It is one thing for Muslim countries like Indonesia or Saudi Arabia to promote scholar-led, Qur'an based deradicalisation programs, but quite another for non-Muslim countries (...). It just isn't credible." (Hassan 2010). The problem is that the motivating theology of militant Islamist groups grounds in neglecting anything officially introduced, as was already pointed out in the previous section on radicalisation (Change Institute 2008, Delgaard-Nielsen 2010).

The second strain of critics against the "Prevent" program was that it distorted the relation between Muslims and the state, a phenomenon referred to as "securitization" of Islam (Rascoff 2012, 152, 171, see also House of Commons 2009, 182). The emphasis on certain Islamic notions as official ones particularly fuelled a debate about the multidimensionality of the securitization approach. "Prevent" has created an "awkward political economy in which Muslim groups have access to special counter-radicalisation funding", as Rascoff summarizes (2012, 172). He further describes the "selective quality" of the program supporting the creation of an anti-Muslim narrative (ibid.). Intissar Kherigi observes an "artificial distinction between a 'moderate' and 'extremist'" creating imbalances and actually threatening the political equality of Muslims (Kherigi 2010). Another example for how "Prevent" managed to further distort the relation between Muslims and the state, was by funding the "Project

Champion" which placed over 250 "spy cameras" in Muslim areas of Birmingham (BBC 2011). Hence, the counter-radicalisation approach challenges the Fundamental Rights of equality of citizens and non-discrimination (Rascoff 2012, 174).

Thirdly, the provision of religious accommodation directly by the government produces a "subtle coercion", pointing to liberty in general. Individuals who primary might have not been confronted with religion are "potentially exposed to religious indoctrination" of a moderate, official Islam (Rascoff 2012, 179)[2].

Overall one can say that "Prevent" missed to deliver any concrete security benefits while fuelling general suspicion and grievances. Even the recent "Prevent" strategy (2011) accompanied by the Prime Minister's "Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism" (2013) are still considered as "snooping" around, through involving teachers, professors and doctors in reporting potential "radicals" (Bigo et al. 2014, 29). The end of "Prevent" would help "to avoid nurturing a new generation of antagonised and disenfranchised citizens. Ultimately, Prevent-style policies make Britain less safe" (Kundnani 2015, 7).

The European Model

Neumann (2013) understands the differences in CVE objectives and policy instruments rooting in different assumptions, philosophical traditions and historical experiences among states (Neumann 2013, 885). Especially Europe in the wake of fascism and National Socialism experienced the fragility of modern democracy. It is this historical heritage that shapes the attitude towards today's extremism of many European policy-makers who perceive radicalisation as a primarily threat of political Islam (Neumann 2013, 887). The government's role was to establish a framework of religious identity within the merits of membership in European countries and communities (Rascoff 2012, 148). France and Germany for instance advocated for a "domestication" of Islam, a term established by Jonathan Laurence (2012) to describe the development of official Islam councils to manage the state-mosque relations, including state-led consultations, councils, conferences, and commissions to represent the Muslim faith (Laurence 2012, 133). What happened was the emergence of institutionalised

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[2] This is especially the case in prisons, where only a selection of clergymen is picked in charge of Islamic literature provided in prison libraries (see Rascoff 2012, 179)

representative Islamic bodies and appointed Muslim representatives as well as the facilitation to construct and maintain public spaces for Muslims (Haddad & Golson 2007, 487). Rascoff (2012, 149) understands this domesticated version of Islam as golden middle between two more extreme tendencies: "the pull of the transnational *Ummah*[3] on the one hand and consulate-based 'embassy Islam' on the other." The former describes the dynamics of the global Muslim community and the latter refers to the outsourced competences for Islamic accommodation to foreign Islamic countries. Embassy-Islam constitutes the practice of receiving religious practitioners from "sending countries" and further educating them within the national societal contexts (Laurence 2012, 200), hence an institutionalised but yet not uncontroversial undertaking. However, the objective of "domestication" was to reformulate Islam in a way religion is already institutionally accommodated for Christianity and Judaism. In particular the foreign influence threatens to undermine European ideas of secularism and liberal societies (Haddad & Golson 2007, 498).

Therefore, the European counter radicalisation approach doesn't focus on law enforcement alone but opts for political and civil efforts as well. The promotion of democracy and citizenship is combined with challenging ideological ideas and political grievances. Ideological and structural "breeding grounds" should be disposed for individuals who are considered vulnerable to radicalisation (Neumann 2013, 888-9). Security-matters like surveillance, investigating and arresting violent Islamists are traditionally kept separately and secretly under the functions of the national security apparatus. Nevertheless, security issues have, "of course", crossed the management of the establishment of an official Islam in EU MS (Rascoff 2012, 150).

2.3 The Problem of Counter Radicalisation

A review requested by the European Parliament in 2014 on counterterrorism policies across EU MS showed remarkable results. The evaluation of various hard and soft measures point to an adverse effect by contributing to dynamics of escalation, disobeying fundamental rights and

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[3] Traditionally, *Ummah* means the nation, people or community, however it is mainly used referring to the global religious community of Muslims (Hashas et al. 2018, 2).

social cohesion generating ethnic and racial discrimination instead (Bigo et al. 2014, 18). The main findings dismiss several hard and soft measures:

Hard measures, including the expansion of pre-emptive judicial powers and an increase of administrative investigative powers are criticized to have a considerable impact on the lives of the European Muslim population. Pre-emptive legal prosecution is a key part in the strategy to prevent radicalisation in EU MS and include various means like the expansion of pre-charged detention periods of up to 14 days under the premise of terror (the usual detention lasts less than a week). Furthermore, various terror investigations were conducted under a vague incrimination of an "act of terror", often punishable without real evidence of danger represented by an individual (Bigo et al. 2014, 20). The administrative measures that not necessarily require the consultation of a judge include stop and search powers, passport confiscation, deportation orders, fundraising offences or asset freezings. Although the state authorities have the legitimacy to punish individuals who are bridging the law, fundamental rights such as the right for data protection, freedom of expression, presumption of innocence and effective remedy should be accounted for more rigorously (Bigo et al. 2014, 21, 33).

Soft measures aiming at preventing and countering radicalisation include the work in prisons, efforts in de-radicalising individuals who have been exposed to violent extremist ideas. Other policies imply the "establishment of partnerships with community representatives, investment in social and neighbourhood projects, as well as mentoring schemes dedicated to youths considered 'at risk' of radicalisation", like "Prevent" in the UK, or similar policies from the Netherlands and Denmark (Bigo et al. 2014, 27). But yet, "CONTEST" and "Prevent" in particular are concerned with a comparably high amount of criticism (see also Briggs 2010; Rascoff 2012; Neumann 2013; Hirschfield et al. 2014; Powell 2016).

To conclude, the report points to the discriminatory effects of practices and little efficiency to actually prevent radicalisation from occurring. Public surveillance in combination with community involvement intensified the discrimination of Islamic communities as preventative strategy and increased political grievances even more. In particular a large Muslim population was affected by the new measures, contributing to a feeling of discontentment which is considered to lead to "possible violence between communities and the state" (Bigo et al. 2014, 21). Based on empirical findings, social movement theory tries to overcome this causality dispute on which basis surveillance mechanisms are often integrated

in CVE strategies (Silke 2008; Kundnani 2012; Pisoui 2014). The EU report therefore recommends a reduction of the scope of both hard and soft powers. The latter is originally regarding community cohesion work, but is neither effective in countering radicalisation, nor in fostering a sense of community. The evaluation suggests to not limit community cohesion programs to the Muslim community only, but should be tackled under the scope of youth marginality through social workers and professional instructors (Bigo et al. 2014, 31-34).

Figure 1: Most recent police stop being perceived as ethnic profiling among those who were stopped in 5 years before the survey, by EU Member State and target group (%)[abc]
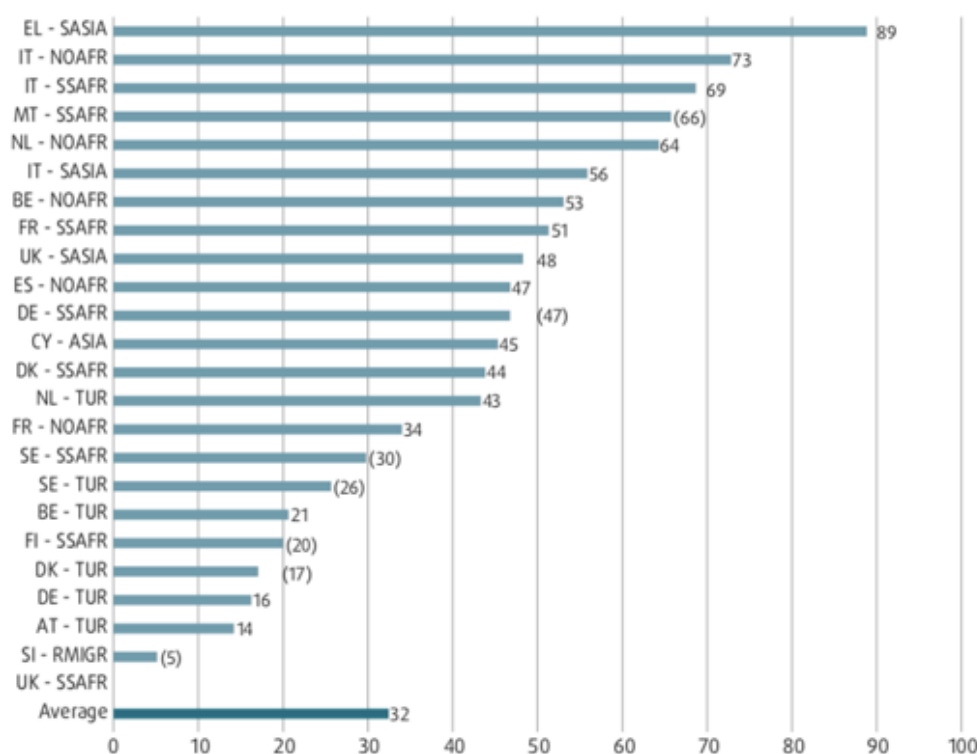
Notes: a: Out of Muslim respondents who were stopped by the police within 5 years before the survey (n=3,140); weighted results. b: TUR = Turkey, SSAFR = Sub-Saharan Africa, NOAFR = North Africa, SASIA = South Asia, ASIA = Asia, RIMGR = recent immigrants from non-EU countries.
Source: FRA 2017, 53

A survey conducted by the Fundamental Rights Agency in 2017 stresses pertaining discrimination, such as harassment or police stops, can over time decrease the trust in police, judiciary and the attachment to the country they are residing in. Especially second-generation respondents show a lower level of trust in the police and the legal system. 32% of those Muslims who have been stopped in the last five years prior to the survey believe this happened

because of their immigrant or ethnic minority background (see figure 1). Although the variation across MS is significant, the effects of discrimination that ethno-religious profiling on minorities have can be profound (FRA 2017, 7).

Another recent study by the Pew Research Center (2018) on attitudes towards religion across EU MS concerning the connection between extremism and Muslims has revealed that although 49% link only very few or no Muslims to extremism, 13% of Europeans say that at least some Muslims in their country support violent extremist groups (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Perception among Europeans linking Extremism to Muslims

Most Belgian and Dutch respondents see at least some support for extremism among Muslims within their borders

% who say _____ Muslims in their country support violent extremist groups

	All/most/many	Just some	Very few/none
Belgium	22%	39%	32%
Spain	19	30	33
Netherlands	18	45	33
Denmark	17	32	46
Finland	17	34	42
Italy	16	34	42
France	13	27	55
Norway	13	32	49
Germany	12	32	52
United Kingdom	12	28	57
Sweden	11	28	54
Austria	10	32	53
Portugal	9	27	32
Switzerland	9	31	56
Ireland	8	26	52
MEDIAN	**13**	**32**	**49**

Source: Pew Research Center (2018, 68)

Furthermore, an average of 22% of Europeans show nationalism, anti-immigration and anti-religious minority sentiments (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Scale of nationalism, anti-immigration and anti-religious minority sentiments (NIM)[4]

One-in-four Danish, German, Irish and Swiss adults score higher than 5 on a 10-point scale of nationalism, anti-immigrant and anti-minority sentiment

% who score ...

	Score between 5.01 and 10	Median score (0-10)
Austria	29%	3.3
Belgium	20	2.7
Denmark	25	2.7
Finland	23	3.1
France	19	2.5
Germany	25	2.9
Ireland	25	3.1
Italy	38	4.1
Netherlands	16	2.3
Norway	19	2.5
Portugal	18	3.5
Spain	17	2.9
Sweden	8	1.2
Switzerland	25	3.3
United Kingdom	22	3.0
MEDIAN	**22**	

Source: Pew Research Center (2018, 75)

The respondents where further asked to choose which statement they consider the bigger problem in terms of violence committed in the name of religion: "The teachings of some religions promote violence," or "Some violent people use religion to justify their actions." Although the majority says the bigger problem is that some violent people use religion to justify their actions, about one-fifth claim the bigger problem is that the teachings of some religions promote violence. One third of respondents in Italy and three-in-ten in Austria and Switzerland take this position as well (Pew Research Center 2018, 69-70). To the question of compatibility of Islam with national culture and values the survey revealed a polarised position (see figure 4).

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[4] How the scale is comprised in detail see Pew Research Center (2018, 76).

Figure 4: Consensus in Western Europe whether
Islam is compatible with national culture and values (in %)

	Islam is fundamentally incompatible with their country's culture and values	There is no fundamental contradiction between Islam and their national culture/values
France	34%	52%
Sweden	34	48
Switzerland	42	48
Belgium	40	47
Denmark	43	47
Germany	44	46
Netherlands	44	46
Portugal	31	46
UK	42	46
Ireland	41	45
Norway	40	45
Spain	37	44
Austria	48	42
Italy	53	33
Finland	62	29
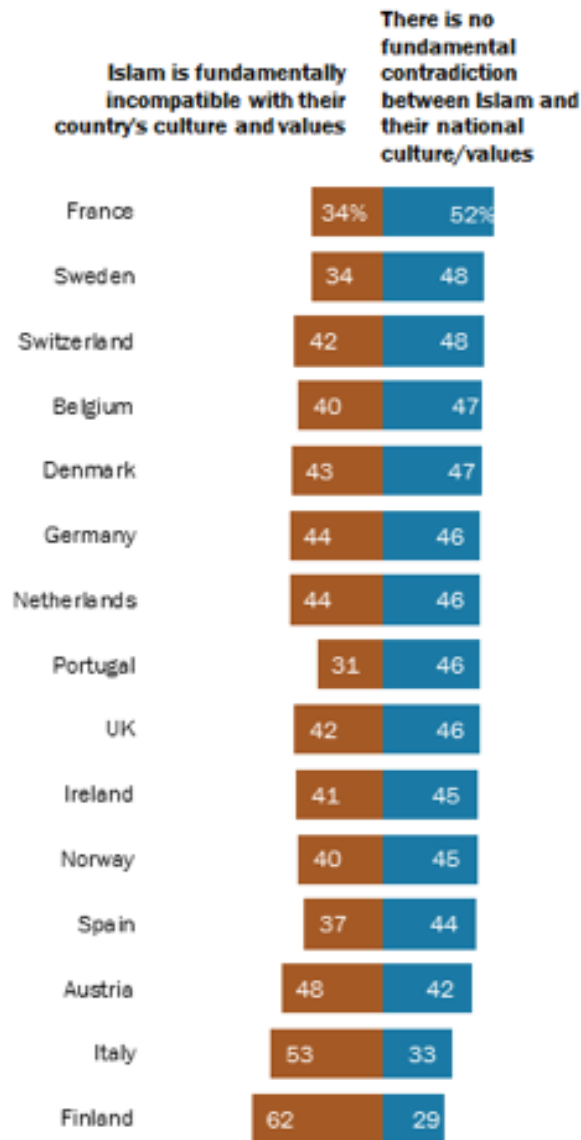
Source: Pew Research Center (2018, 66)

These observations are important to consider with regard to political grievances of minority groups and Muslims. Public policies and debates in light of security, immigration and identity are conducted on the back of minorities. That has far-reaching implications for the perception of the majority towards minority groups transmitting a feeling of neglection. Empirical evidence has shown that political grievances increase the vulnerability of individuals and

minority groups, which can lead, in very few cases, to violent extremisms (Change Institute 2008, Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010).

It is now clear that PVE and CVE measures show remarkable adverse effects of intensifying feelings of grievances. Individuals who fall under the scope of certain ethno-religious characteristics are regarded with general suspicion. This practice of religious profiling enhances a defensive attitude towards the major society and vice versa (see for instance Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010, Neumann 2013). It should not come as a surprise that these policies manifest fears among the major population and grievances within the Muslim population.

Formulating CVE measures should inevitably derive from research based on primary data, evaluated in accordance with academic principles and a transparent research methodology (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010, 798). Especially when the impact of such security policies are obviously implicating ethnic-religious discrimination.

Figure 5: The Vicious Circle of Security Politics
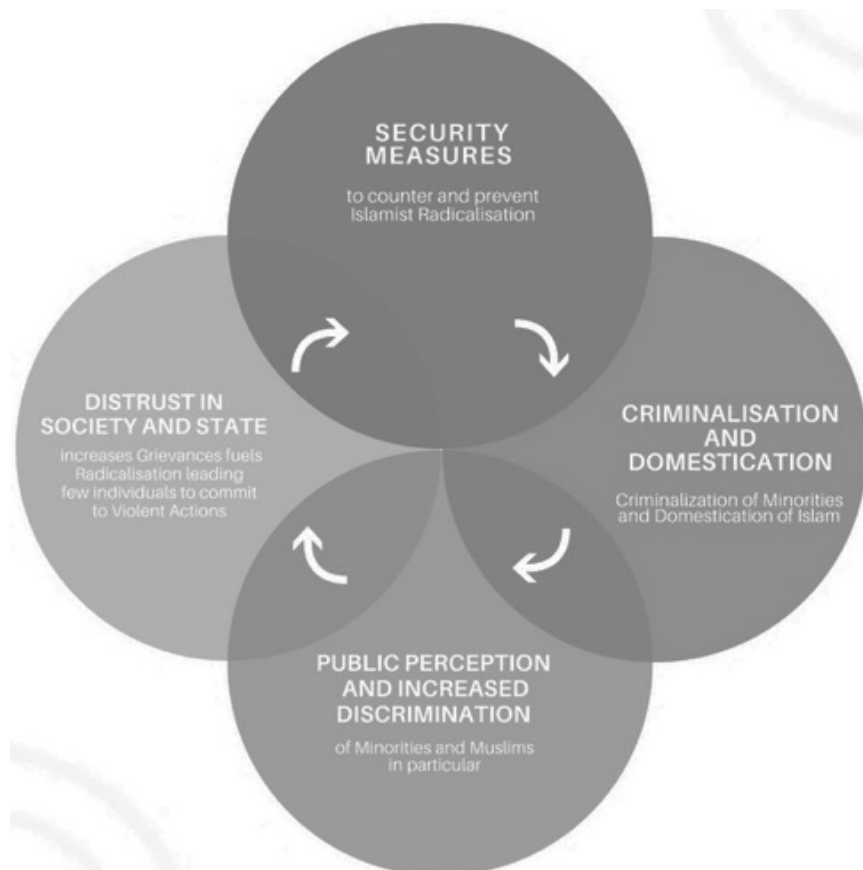
Source: Own visualization

The complex dynamic that may lead individual Muslims to turn to radical ideas and commit to extremist violence comprises several dimensions spiralling into a vicious circle of security measures and discrimination, where the elements intensify and aggravate each other. The visualization in figure 5 was set forth by the evidence of the literature, leading to the following findings: First, executive powers and security measures contributed to the criminalisation of minorities and Muslims in particular. Furthermore, the promotion of an "official Islam" was promoted through the domestication of religious practices, state-ruled and endorsed by society. The combination of these two facets provides for a third dimension, namely the making of a public image towards extremism, linked to Islam and immigration, questioning the legitimacy of the place of Muslims in Western European societies. The resentments of denouncing Islam are reflected in nationalism, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim sentiments. European Muslim populations are confronted with a variety of prejudices and assumptions, or even victim to religious profiling and increasingly in need to justify their faith. This fourth element comprises individual grievances and identity struggles of Muslims who are confronted with an often defensive attitude from the major society and controversial public policies.

How these dimensions condition one another differs across Western European MS. It is prudent to observe these dynamics of cohabitation between the state and Muslim communities and to understand the linkages between the different conditions in specific state settings. Especially the domestication of Islamic practices needs to be put into an analytical perspective. The approach of religious governance by Bader (2007) in particular allows for normative considerations with regard to the accommodation of Islamic practices. The case of the Dutch imam training in particular offers insights in the making of a deep Islamic reality for the everyday life of Muslim communities in Western European countries. How the idea of "pastoral power" is transmitted towards Dutch imams unveils under which distorting conditions an acceleration is assigned to what will be called a "Dutch Islam".

3 RELIGIOUS GOVERNANCE:
The Role of Imams and Transnational Collaboration

How to govern cohabitation of ethno-religious minorities and the major society is usually based on secular considerations. However, the literature review has shown that the security prerogative puts Islamic accommodation in the centre of debate. It is only recently that scholars and policy-makers acknowledge the role of religious attitudes and traditions in the formation of identity (Baumann 1999, Maussen & Boger 2010, Koenig 2015). Integration, assumed to contain religious fundamentalism, is increasingly perceived as a problem of governance of religious diversity. The announcement of French Prime Minister Valls on the formation of a French imam training in response to the increased threat of radicalisation displays what Laurence called "institutional activism" in Islamic affairs or "domestication of Islam" (Laurence 2012, 133). Especially the management of imam training comprises a variety of dimensions exemplary for the debate about the place of Islam in European society. Diverging interests are colliding within the process of establishing a training program involving state-led consultations with Islamic authorities and Muslim communities as well as efforts from educational facilities and scholars. The idea of a "superimams" prevails over his traditional role. A state-led education for spiritual caretakers needs to balance these claims.

This Master thesis uses insights from different theories in order to disentangle the complex puzzle of religious accommodation in the Netherlands, including questions for the society as a whole such as identity, citizenship and liberal-democratic values. The combination of three different approaches allows for addressing the complex issues that are part of the problem and paves the way for new democratic-experimental solutions towards an Islam that builds on ancient traditions but is able to account for new complex realities that comprise religious everyday-life of Muslims in a European context, hence a *European Islam*. Islamic institutionalisation took place in the wake of a dissolving multi-pillar system in the Netherlands. Amid different modes of coordination, a variety of issues emerged comprising today's reality of a growing Muslim population.

The concept of religious governance has barely been used to analyse and reflect on religious minorities. It looks at regulation, steering and different means of guidance beyond rules, thus it accounts for policy-driven coordination as well (Bader 2007). Utilizing the concept of Bader, this papers aims at providing new insights and ways out of the security dilemma accounting for discontentment across Muslim populations. It comprises normative ideas of political theory through the concept of associative democracy (Hirst 1994). A focus on religious governance of education allows for a framework to analyse the imam training in particular (3.1). An additional perspective examines the role of imams in their traditional role as prayer leader towards a Western European context with new societal duties in the theoretical context of "pastoral power" (Foucault 2007, Tezcan 2008). This is essential for analysing the Dutch imam training debate and the diverging approaches of the actors involved (3.2). The third part presents the concept of political opportunity structures (Tarrow 1996, Kousis & Tilly 2015, Laurence 2015) in order to explore limitations and possibilities for a transnational collaboration between Morocco and the Netherlands for the training of imams in particular, and the development of a European Islam in general (3.3).

3.1 Religious Governance

Literature on multiculturalism largely neglects the relationship between religion and politics by adopting the basic assumptions of the pluralisation of public cultures. However, this approach didn't hold with new religious minorities increasingly claiming for practical accommodation of their religious practices (Bader 2007, 18).

The theory of religious governance is an approach to challenge structural inequalities with new institutional mechanisms and policy models. Bader (2007) adapted the normative concept of associative democracy (AD) by Paul Hirst (1994) which falls under the scope of political theory of multilevel polities in sociology and political science, especially with regard to the study of administration (Bader & Hirst 2012, 5f). Hirst formulated AD to address the problems of overloaded governments through democratising and empowering civil society. It aims at transferring social provisions to self-governing voluntary associations while maintaining public funding and political accountability (Hirst 1994, Hirst 2002). The core claim of this normative approach for political reform is that as many social activities as possible should be

carried out by self-governing voluntary associations as it reduces the complexity of states and enables the classical mechanisms of democratic representation to work better. Such self-governing voluntary associations should replace forms of hierarchical corporate organisations in order to empower affected interests and promote a government by consent through society. Moreover, many public functions such as provision of welfare, the organisation of communities and organisational governance should be carried out by voluntary associations through public funding. It addresses the declining effectiveness of representative democracy, the decreased satisfaction of standardised and centralised state welfare as well as the issue of democratic accountability in extensive public services through the separation of funding and provision. That demands agreements about the scope and costs of services but leaves the performance to non-state actors, to eliminate the often conflicting roles of funder and provider. Within the scope of public entitlements, citizens should have the option to create as many associations as possible, based on the emerging variety of values. Associationalism recognizes the reality of an organized society by redirecting control to consumer interests by having a voice within the process and additionally, the option for exit, unlike the services mostly provided by large hierarchically directed organizations. However, only associations that act on the basis of public entitlements would receive public funds (Hirst 2002, 408-410).

AD criticises the simplistic understanding of the state, sovereignty, citizenship and culture. The normative perspective introduces a more flexible and dynamic notion in a multi-level context and on the complex practical reality of institutions (Bader & Hirst 2012, 6). It is noteworthy that this idea touches upon the fundamental principles of the liberal doctrine of secularism, the clear and strict distinction between religion and the state. Nevertheless, the connection between the political theory of AD with religious governance allows for more abstract ideas.

Bader adapts the concept of AD for an approach of religious governance on the basis of minimal moralism and experimental democracy (Bader 2001a, Bader 2007). The idea is that the increased visibility of religious diversity requests new institutional settings of religious pluralism to facilitate the formulation of policies more in line with principles of liberal democracies. A re-conceptualization of what comprises liberal democratic values and institutions in such a setting could help to more effectively contain religious fundamentalism (Bader 2007, 22). "The prospects of associative democracy depend upon our capacity to design

workable solutions for specific contexts and to engage in democratic experimentalism to develop existing institutions in the direction of such concrete or realistic utopia." (Bader 2001b, 61)

3.1.1 Criticism of Religious Governance

Institutional Pluralism and Multiculturalism is a heavily debated concept and has been studied in numerous ways by social scientists in an influential debate about the rise and fall narrative (Kymlicka 2010, see also Brubaker 2001, Jobbke 2004, Baubock 2002). Critically, however, perspectives vary regarding two major arguments. First, institutional pluralism in light of multiculturalism has been doomed to have failed its promises. Second, secularism doesn't allow for privileges of one religion over another. Establishing rights for religion in the context of cultural controversy may decrease the confidence of European citizens and provoke populist resentments. Fokas (2015) for instance, investigated the direction of Religious Pluralism in Europe based on the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights and stresses the need to consider how the messages are perceived with regard to different audiences (Fokas 2015, 67). Having this said, the aim to break the vicious circle of security politics and discrimination could turn into another misguided chain of circumstances comprising different elements.

Another line of reasoning is that empowering religions both politically and socially would increase the potential to radicalise organisations and political conflicts through the provision of additional resources and opportunities. While some use it as integrative strategy others might instrumentalize the means for separatist strategies. This claim is mainly made by Republican critics (Barber 1984). However, to legitimate the needs of religious minorities is meant to decouple these attempts from ineffective socio-economic policies meant to empower minorities, and from reactive and "a badly timed selection of 'moderate' organisations/leaders from above" (Bader 2007, 259).

3.1.2 Governance of Religious Diversity – Accommodating Islam

Political and philosophical advocates of classical secularism on the one hand and orthodox fundamentalists on the other, perceive religion and democracy in general incompatible with each other. Believers are inevitably faced with two sets of obligations: the demands of faith,

an "authority outside the common wealth" and the "obligations of liberal- democratic citizenship" (Rosenblum 2000, cited in Bader 2007, 118). The promising approach of secularism assuming that traditional religious practise of new immigrants would "successively dissolve in the process of acculturation and assimilation" have been declared a failure (Koenig 2015, 4, see also Maussen 2015, 80). Instead, scholars and decision-makers acknowledge the role of religious attitudes and traditions in the formation of identity (Baumann 1999, Maussen & Boger 2010, Koenig 2015). Integration, perceived as containing the spread of religious fundamentalism, is increasingly perceived as a problem of governance of religious diversity.

How states accommodate religious needs of minorities varies across EU MS (Koenig 2015, 44). When taking on a macro-sociological perspective, different internal and external factors of the institutionalisation of Islam are observable. Internal factors regard Muslim groups them-selves, functioning within a private scope through the construction of their own institutions (Rath et al. 1999, 53). Moreover, especially among second and third generation immigrants, new forms of Islamic networks and organizations emerge (Koenig 2015, 44). On the other hand, such institutions lack in official recognition into the institutions of the major society. Rath et al. (1999, 53) argue that this is not per se due to certain objections by society, but yet, there is no concrete incentive to initiate different forms of arrangements. The idea of new arrangements is also emphasized by Bader (2007, 289) who is advocating for "democratic experimentalism". Associative democracy is opposed to top-down and elite-driven "Grand Designs", refusing the idea of a one-size-fits-all institutional solution (Bader 2007, ibid.). Nevertheless, the involvement of different stakeholders is important to provide new sorts of guidelines and rules. This idea of "experimental change" to fund, regulate and control is crucial for associative democracy (Bader 2007, ibid)[5].

Muslims can however, call for recognition of their institutions, for instance on the principle of equality with regard to other religions or for access to public funding. Official institutional recognition thus, goes in accordance with European virtues and morals of regulations and legal requirements, a structural reality that confronts new immigrants with certain difficulties. Fire safety and local development plans are important prerequisites for the

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[5] An innovative example of democratic experimentalism is the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) used within the EU social policy framework to enhance cross-national learning with a relatively high state sovereignty, while orienting national improvements towards common European objectives (Zeitlin 2005).

establishment of a mosque for instance, or visa facilitations and working permits with regard to foreign religious practitioners who plan to work in EU MS.

Nevertheless, principles, rights and procedures are considered not to be sufficient to guarantee liberal-democratic institutions and associations. Day-to-day interactions also don't bring forth automatically the aspired virtues. Bader therefore calls for minimal moralism and minimal liberal-democratic morality (Bader 2007, 54, 179).

3.1.3 Governance of Religious Education – Moral Minimalism

Religious education is not only an important goal for Islamic organizations (Schuh 2015, 213). Educational regimes have an important role to accommodate the often conflicting demands of different stakeholders from both the public and the private sector, such as students, scholars, religious and national communities, politicians and educational authorities (Bader 2007, 269). Especially in Islamic education learning and teaching are traditionally based on religious beliefs. Islamic countries provide a private and public infrastructure for their believing population, a setting which was missing in Western European countries after the arrival of Muslim migrants (Fuess 2007, 215). Since different states are struggling with the same religious needs of Muslims in state supported institutions, it is interesting to observe the different responses across EU MS how to deal with these demands (Soper & Fretzer 2007, 933). On the other hand, Muslims struggle with how their new institutions should be best accommodated into European "moral structures" (Boender 2013, 230).

The discussion about the integration of Islam into Western Europe and how to legitimise accommodating the demands of faith in line with the obligations of liberal-democratic citizenship needs to be put into an analytical perspective, here, the Netherlands. In particular the case of the imam training debate in a Dutch context, including public and governmental stakeholders as well as private, Muslim communities, associations and scholars, will unveil the specific trade-offs between the different actors. Furthermore, this thesis operates to explore the possibilities to overcome the shortcomings of Dutch imam trainings through collaborating with an Islamic country, in particular Morocco. In case of the Netherlands the pertaining core values serve as template for a Dutch moral minimalism, guaranteeing the freedom of religious education but also acknowledging minimal control of

religious education, i.e. "respecting the religious consequences of religious freedoms", however based on minimalist although liberal-democratic standards (Bader 2007, 280). In a plenary session of the second chamber of the Dutch parliament from July 2015 the following principles of freedom and democracy have been identified as core values in a contemporary Dutch context: freedom of speech, gender equality, individual freedom and responsibility, reciprocity, tolerance and respect for people with different opinions, faith-leavers and LGBT (Tweede Kamer 2015). These principles need to be kept in mind during the analysis of the Dutch case.

3.2 Imams – the Role of Islamic Religious Leaders

The empirical case study of the Dutch imam training is exemplary of the tensions and processes between state, religion and society. The idea of a "superimam" reflects a modern projection of common ideas on minority groups and the so-called "domestication of Islam" through top-down practices. In a first step it is important to understand the traditional role of imams in an Islamic context before theorizing the European trajectories and expectations. Describing the role of imams from a Muslim perspective serves as a basis to objectify the contestation of the issue of imam training in European countries, particularly in the Netherlands.

3.2.1 The Profession if Imams in Islam – Focus on the Qur'an

The Qur'an refers to the imam in several verses with the meaning of leader, example or guide and emphasizes his role in the history of Islam. The term imam has its origin in the Arabic *amāma*, "in the presence of", meaning prayer leader, leader, master, guide or point of reference (Qur'an 28:41, 46:12, 36:12, 2:124, cited in Hashas et al. 2018, preface). In Sunni Islam an imam is leader of the *khutba*, the prayer held every Friday, but also the preacher of a mosque in general or a caliph (Hallaq 2009, 173). Prophet Mohammed was the first imam in this role and was both teacher and imam. In the early days, the principal task was the knowledge transfer of the Qur'an, being the worship leader of a mosque was only secondary. Education in the early Islamic context was a free and informal activity in which the state had no direct stake, mainly traded in a *madrasah,* the educational facility attached to a mosque (Tibawi 1977, 226, 229).

Moreover, teaching was conducted as a way of life and focused on religious activities that appeal to God rather than developing specific competences (Tibawi 1976, cited in Aslan 2012, 24). Lecturing wasn't a jurisdiction but an oral transmission (Khaldun 1970, cited in Aslan 2012, 24). The imam needs to live an Islamic life form (Encyclopedia of Islam 1997[6]) and to be *hafiz*, thus able to recite the Qur'an by heart (Tezcan 2008, 241). However, nowadays reciting the Qur'an by heart as prerequisite to becoming an imam differs among traditions. While an excellent knowledge is common in Morocco it isn't required in Turkey (Boender 2013, 241). Following Yavuz (1977), classic Arabic literature suggests that no additional social or scientific skills are necessary to obtain the role of an imam (cited in Aslan 2012, 22). Furthermore, also whether he should be compensated financially for his activities is disputed among the different Islamic schools (Aslan 2012, 22).

According to Islamic sources, his professional role increased with the Ottoman Empire, before the 10th century a remuneration for working as imam was the exception rather than the rule. Under Ottoman power, the administrative role of Islamic clergymen expanded and the imam became responsible for the registration of births and deaths, school inspections, safeguarding of morals, marriages and pastoral care in the military. However, this role was reduced in the last centuries of the Empire due to a lack of education of imams in general and political contestation. Only in the early 20th century with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire the education of imams started to become reorganized, but is still a contested realm in Islamic countries (Aslan 2012, 21).

Since the term imam refers to a prayer leader, this function doesn't imply an official religious office (Aslan 2012, 21). A Muslim doesn't need any intermediation in comparison to a priest who indeed needs to be appointed to embody the "Holiness" (Tezcan 2008, 121). Moreover, the imam could become binding without any act of recognition by the Muslim community (Encyclopedia of Islam, 1986). On the other hand, ritual sermons in a community without an appointed imam can be led by each community member. As a function of responsibility, traditionally the elders who obtain a larger knowledge about the holy language and Islamic doctrines get to perform the prayer. This person should "symbolically be the person closest to God and the Prophet Muhammed (…)" (Pallavicini 2010, 470). The imam as official

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[6] Madelung, W. Art. Imāma EI[2] III/1163-1169.

religious clergyman in Islam has traditionally a relatively weak institutional position compared to the theological figure of the priest (Tezcan 2008, 121). Islamic mysticism regards divine and salvation more metaphysical (Fakhry 1971) without the necessity of pastoral direction (Foucault 2007, 280)[7].

Today, Islamic countries consider imams as civil servants who are employed by the government. His role is to oversee the mosque's activities, to function as mediator within his community, teach Qur'anic reading and most importantly, hold the Friday sermon, *khutba*. Due to its potential of inspiring political communication and opposition, Islamic regimes have increasingly expanded their impact on the Friday sermon as extended arm of the state apparatus for ideological reasons. The influence is executed either through written suggestions of the sermons or indirectly through the training of imams in governmental facilities (Wiktorowicz 2001, 55-57).

As far as this paper is concerned, imam refers to the head of a mosque in a regular function, leading the prayers by standing in front of the worshippers which accords to the etymological understanding of imam as "one who stands in front" (Iqbal 2017, 23).

The following section puts the imam in perspective of the role of the priest as "shepherd of a herd" in order to understand the European idea of the role of the imam as religious leader of the *Ummah*. The contextualization within a historical-political framework emphasizes the connection between religion and government techniques. It aims at shedding light on the challenges between European Muslims on the one hand and the major societies on the other with regard to the institutionalization of imam training (Tezcan 2008, 119). This thesis follow Tezcan (2008) who makes use of Foucault's idea of "pastoral power" as technique to arrange the relationship between religious leaders and community (Tezcan 2008, Foucault 2007). Moreover, pastoral power is used as a cultural *dispositif*, in the sense of Foucault, the apparatus consisting of "regulatory controls" (Foucault 2007, 20) thus, an arsenal of instruments, rules and ideas that is useful when analysing the institutionalisation of other or new forms of religions, such as Islam (Tezcan 2008, 120).

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[7] Mysticism is a complete different system than pastoral power. The salvation of the soul doesn't rely on confession and therefore, escapes examination (Foucault 2007, 280).

3.2.2 The Profession of Imams in Europe – Performing "pastoral power"

In Foucault's genealogical analysis of religion the priest makes use of a "pastoral technique" or "pastoral power" to arrange the relation between the shepherd and the herd, with the essential objective of salvation (Foucault 2007). The shepherd functions as an intermediary directing the flock to eternal life due to his profession of a particular truth, obeying the law to reach salvation (Foucault 2007, 173, 199, 230). This "relationship of truth" commits individuals to the priest as "instance observing the conduct of life" (Tezcan 2008, 120). The individualization implies that the shepherd takes care of each sheep and individuals are obliged to account to the priest. Thus, the shepherd is accountable to his herd (Tezcan 2008, 120, Foucault 2007, 173, 206, 227). While salvation in a clerical context is directed by a priest, Islamic mysticism offers a rather personal scope for individual salvation (Tezcan 2008, 121), where the soul "sees itself in God and it sees God in itself." (Foucault 2007, 280)

Especially the individual scope of salvation offered by Islam facilitates the varying belief and religious practice among Muslims. However, Tezcan (2008) argues that this understanding of salvation doesn't explain the existing gap between high confessional rates and low religious practices. He further stresses a decline of religiosity in modern societies, in accordance with modernisation theory (Tezcan 2008, 121) which is opposed by social movement scholars, observing a general increase in religious affiliation (Change Institute 2008, Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010). Particularly, among second and third generation Muslim, a tendency towards higher religious organisation is observable (Koenig 2015). This is also the reason to emphasize the role of imams in this regard.

Post 9/11 has attributed increased importance to the Islamic religious leader in public, political and scientific debates, who is required to guide his community. An imam is to take care of the collective order and to assure the community's transparency and accountability (Tezcan 2008, 121, The Economist 201). However, this displays a modern society's security prerogative rather than the described pastoral power aiming at salvation (Tezcan 2008, 121).

3.2.3 Towards a "home grown" Imam

What are the expected functions of the imam in a European context? According to Aslan (2012) Western societies tend to have the idea of a "superimam" who is able to manage social issues

as religious authority and to build bridges in order to integrate his community as well as to perform the role as pastoral care taker (Aslan 2012, 61). A survey from 2007 commissioned by the European Parliament emphasizes the preparation of the leaders of an official Islam as "the greatest emergency", since the programs based outside of Europe, mainly situated in Turkey, Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, do not favour the formation of home grown, hence "adequate, well-trained and self-confident" leaders (Dassetto & Ferrari 2007, 67). Furthermore, the "imported" religious leaders take the cultural models of Muslim countries to Europe, unfolding either a manner of isolation in a closed circle of immigrants or functioning as an extension of foreign agencies of their state of origin (Dassetto & Ferrari 2007, 18). Moreover, the report considers intervention activities from the side of the EU concerning the implementation of formative training institutions, although not mentioning any specific attempt (Dassetto & Ferrari 2007, 67). A closer look at the Dutch training programs in particular show that more attention should be drawn to the theological education within the programs.

3.3 Political Opportunity Structure

The third part of the theoretical chapter concerns the comprehensiveness of the research design underlying this thesis. The political opportunity structure theory serves as a conceptual basis for cooperation between Morocco and the Netherlands. Given political opportunities, it would be useful to collaborate for a transnational imam training in the Netherlands, if the possibilities outweigh the obstacles. It will be further explored, whether the emerging opportunities could enhance the development of a European Islam.

Political opportunities can be broadly defined *as "consistent but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements"* (Tarrow 1996, 54, emphasis in original). This approach emphasizes the structure of a political system, in particular the influence it has on obstacles and possibilities that emerge for each group's political activism (Giugni 2009, 361). Four main dimensions for political opportunities have been identified by McAdams (1996): (1) the relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system, i.e. the formal legal and institutional structure of the system (2) the stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity (3) the presence or absence

of elite allies, both referring to the properties of informal power relations and (4) the state's capacity and propensity for repression, as only non-consensual dimension (McAdams 1996, 27-28). In the context of this paper, the latter refers to democratic or non-democratic political intentions.

The dimensions that this approach is providing allow for an analytical response to the structural changes concerning the accommodation of Islam in Europe, i.e. how could the political opportunity structures be used to establish an imam training with an Islamic country? What kind of possibilities and limitations do they offer for a transnational education for Islamic clerics and what are the implications to enhance a European Islam? Previous contributions analysed the behaviour between national and transnational institutions, economic structures, actors and social groups who are making claims based on the process of national or transnational contention. These structural changes include governments but allow also for an extension to transnational arrangements (Kousis & Tilly 2015, 3). The approach is mainly used within the realm of social movement theory (Giugni 2009, Kousis & Tilly 2015, McAdams 1996, Tarrow 1996). Nevertheless, the key question it focuses "How do threats and opportunities faced by potential participants in joint political action affect the likelihood, character, and consequences of that action?" (Kousis & Tilly 2015, 4) can be adapted to the objectives of the underlying research question.

This thesis aims at analysing religious governance, in particular the governance of religious higher education with regard to the training of imams, and to explore the emerging political opportunity structures to enhance a transnational collaboration between the Netherlands and Morocco. The discussion of three different theoretical considerations provided insights from different angels in order to disentangle the complex puzzle of religious accommodation.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research question underlying this Master thesis, 'Which *possibilities and limitations does religious governance and in particular transnational religious education for imams offer to enhance a European Islam and what are the implications of the development of a European Islam to prevent radicalisation?',* comprises multi-dimensional aspects in a complex field of study. The legitimization of religion is assumed to decrease the breeding ground for radicalisation based on religious justifications towards violent extremism as long-term objective to a higher extent than various counter radicalisation and counter violent extremism approaches (Bader 2007, Religion Monitor 2017). It cannot be disputed that the question of how to legitimize Islam in a non-Muslim major society is a complicated, yet highly scrutinized undertaking and necessitates a variety of considerations to be of academic use and to present recommendations. On the basis of all available evidence, this thesis aims at disaggregating these conditions in order to disclose and clarify them as well as accurately undergo an analysis with the use of descriptive and exploratory research methods. The descriptive analysis of religious governance in the Netherlands will be conducted in order to unveil the setting-up of Islamic religious accommodation. The attempt is to examine how Islam in Europe and new Muslim generations in particular are captured by distorting conditions and explore new ways of coping with the demand to enhance a European Islam. This thesis accounts for a deeper knowledge about the structural genesis of Muslims in the Netherlands and reveals preferences towards a European Islam from a Muslim perspective. After a historical institutional analysis of the accommodation of Islamic practices, the empirical case study of the Dutch imam training debate aims at examining the deep reality of religious accommodation and explores new ways of educating spiritual caretakers. Since no contribution has been found exploring transnational imam training between a non-Islamic European and an Islamic country, this is a rather bold attempt and includes normative considerations to account for the utility and practicability of the identified possibilities and limitations.

Figure 6: Conceptualization of Research Design

Historical + Descriptive		Descriptive + Exploratory		Exploratory
Religious Governance and Imam Training in the NL Religious Governance and Imam Training in Morocco	→	Transnational Imam Training between the NL and Morocco	→	Implications for European Islam and Prevention of Radicalisation
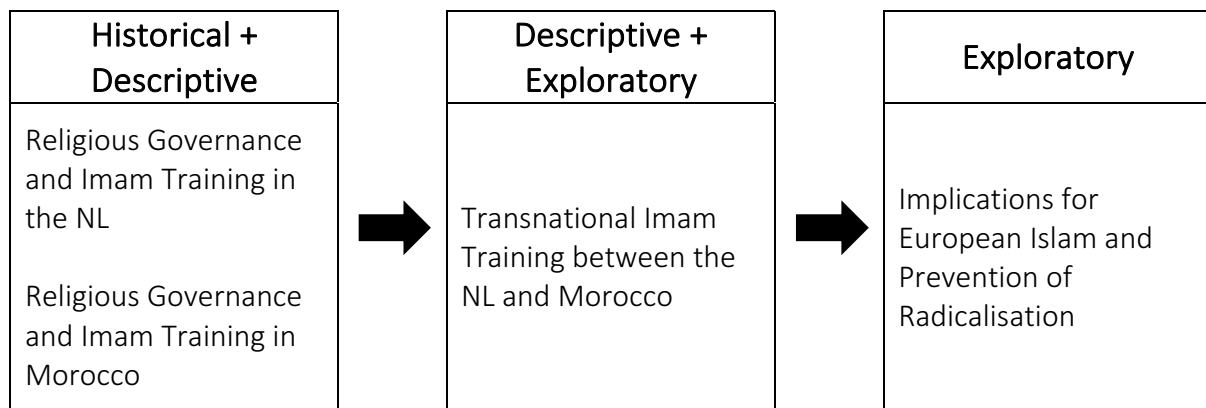
4.1 Exploratory Research Process

The majority of the research process took place in Rabat during a research internship at NIMAR, the Netherlands Institute in Morocco. The institute from Leiden University provided the researcher with the infrastructure to explore the research field in Morocco and the Netherlands. The goal was to establish a research question containing a relevant and fundamental subject of investigation with regard to modern day challenges in a European context. Parts of the research were conducted in the Netherlands through several interviews with stakeholders of the Dutch imam training.

For this study, findings from different disciplines and methods have been applied to disentangle non-linear factors and colligate others. The inductive research approach allows to comprehend dynamics and construct alternative solutions by taking empirical social phenomena as starting point. Hence, this research design does not test for underlying assumptions but employs an explorative process of research and analysis to generate a broader understanding of social life (Hodkinson 2008, 99). It rather assembles a puzzle that has been joint together through scientific discovery, a process of scientific inquiry that refers both to the outcome and the procedure (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2018). Instead of testing one specific theory, the insights from different approaches where combined in order to answer the underlying research question in a descriptive and exploratory manner, with the goal of more tentative than final inferences and recommendations. Several sub-questions accounting for the multi-dimensionality of the research question were established during the

research process. For reasons of clarity and structure they have already been mentioned in the introduction.

Comprising characteristics of positivism, corresponding to the facts, and hermeneutics, establishing meaning and interpretation, this research borrowed elements from Grounded Theory Methodology, an interpretative method to make sense of the world and translate it into reality (Age 2011, 2604). Hence, it aims at explaining, predicting and interpreting the findings. In particular two principal concepts of Grounded Theory Methodology have been used: "constant comparison" and "theoretical sampling" (Suddaby 2006, 634). The method of constant comparison allowed to refine and elaborate detected concepts and categories as well as to discover the research field in depth. Theoretical sampling as second key element implies sampling based on theoretical considerations rather than by the choice of individuals or groups. This procedure is oriented towards developing and contrasting concepts based on research interest with the goal of theoretical saturation (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr 2014, 194, 200). Furthermore, theoretical sampling was supported by theoretical memos for a constant reflection of the data but also to avoid a loss of theoretical knowledge that may lead to testable statements. The theoretical memos are held by the researcher.

4.1.1 Deviant Case Study

In addition to the before mentioned research approach this study displays a deviant case study with the Netherlands having particular preconditions to display an adequate unit of analysis. A case study tries to explain "a relatively bounded phenomenon" stipulating a series of definitions for different cases (Gerring 2007, 18). It connotes a spatially delimited unit observed and accounts for the type of phenomenon an inference attempts to explain. A deviant case method by definition implies a case with a surprising value and needs to be put into perspective of a general model (Gerring 2007). It is used to probe for new, unspecified explanations thus, it provides for ways of developing or extending theories (Small 2009). In the case of the Netherlands, three particular conditions have been identified accounting for its deviantness (Gerring & Seawright 2008). Namely, a particular multicultural system, a state-funded imam training established in 2005 as well as no major terror attacks, relatively to other countries in Western Europe. First, despite France's secular system of *laïcité*, British liberal *multiculturalism* and Germany's officially recognized and regulated *Kirchliche Körperschaften*,

the Dutch *verzuiling* displays a case where religious accommodation was able to develop under the legacy of a pillar system, characterised by tolerance of religious diversity (Boender 2013, 228-229; see also Soper & Fretzer 2007). Although each of these state-religion settings comprises a compelling example of investigation, the pillar system in the Netherlands represents a particularly interesting case to explore possibilities for new ways of religious governance. Second, the Netherlands established state-funded imam trainings in 2005 and 2006, respectively and hence have a considerable experience in training imams for over ten years (Regioplan 2012). France is currently still negotiating possibilities for public trainings, Germany has started in 2010 (CSIS 2010) and Austria in 2017 (ORF 2018). Furthermore, the Netherlands have not been target of any major terror attack such as Charlie Hebdo in Paris in 2015, the truck massacre at a Christmas market at Breitscheidplatz in Berlin, the Metro bombings in Brussels in 2016, or the suicide bombings at Manchester Arena in 2017 (Bigo et al. 2014). The following analysis will reveal the independent but publicly funded development of religious practices and philosophical ways of life, without state interferences on the level of daily religious life in the Netherlands.

With the deviant case selection this thesis culminates in a general proposition in what way religious accommodation and in particular the training of imams can be improved by transnational cooperation with an Islamic country. In order to do so, it employs insights from the religious field in the Kingdom of Morocco. This case selection accounts to probe for new explanations, hence exploring new strategies of legitimizing Islamic worship in the Netherlands and possible directions for a European Islam. (Seawright & Gerring 2008, 297).

4.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The methodology underlying this research design comprises a mixed-methods approach and includes primary data such as expert interviews, official documents and media reports as well as secondary data from previous academic contributions (Mahoney & Goertz 2006).

The first part of the analysis contemplates a historical institutional examination of religious accommodation in the Netherlands to display whether the legacy of the pillar system is a favouring precondition for coping with new religious diversity after the arrival of a Muslim labour force. The imam training debate as empirical case study in light of the previous historical

analysis is used to examine the identified dimensions in order to unveil the prevailing scrutiny under which Islam and new Muslim generations are evolving in a Western European country under distorting conditions. Namely, shifting public policies as well as strict state-church relations accounting for a particular aim at forming an Islam recognized by state authorities, several worrisome incidents of violent extremism inspired by Islam, and an increased involvement of Islamic authorities with varying recognition from both the state and Muslim communities. The historical examination is based on secondary literature, policy reports such as the minority reports of 1983, 1994 and 1997, respectively, and the integration policy of 1998 and 2007. But also research and evaluation reports such as the Landman report of 1995 on the possibilities to establish a Dutch imam training, or the evaluation report of the existing imam trainings in the Netherlands (Regioplan 2012). Moreover, the imam training debate in particular was assessed in light of plenary sessions of the Second Chamber and complemented by media coverage as well as insights from the interviews conducted with different stakeholders. The findings of this first analysis of religious governance in the Netherlands in light of the imam training debate were herein subjected to a critical theoretical interpretation and further translated into long-term objectives for a European Islam and a consensual Dutch imam training. Several short-term solutions were identified to contribute to these objectives, among other a transnational imam training. Hence, emerging political opportunities include the position of imams at the Dutch labour market and shortcomings of recent training programs, factors that would speak for a transnational imam training with an Islamic country.

The second part of the analysis examines to what extent Moroccan imam training could contribute to the education of foreign and especially, Dutch imams. Indicators of a Moroccan contribution will be examined and translated into political opportunities, namely: a range of reforms concerning religious institutionalisation and security efforts due to several severe terror attacks; the general stability of the Kingdom in a region of conflict due to its tradition of a moderate Islam of the middle way and the double role of the King as religious leader and head of state; or the particular framework of an institutionalised religious field comprising, among others, Islamic studies and the education of religious leaders. This section refers to a book published in March 2018, in which Abdellah Boussouf, Secretary General of the Council of Moroccans Residing Abroad promotes the possibilities to transpose the Moroccan religious field (*le champ religieux marocain*) to European countries. Additionally, an interview with the

director of "Mohamed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines et Morchidate", Abdesalam Lazaare and two female French students who obtain their education as religious counsellors at the institute provides further insides in the Moroccan imam training. The book and the interviews are complemented by official sources and media reports.

In the last part, this thesis explores options of transnational religious governance regarding the Netherlands and Morocco as well as the EU. First, after a descriptively examining common denominators of the bilateral relation the established political opportunity structures between the Netherlands and Morocco are confronted and explored for new modes of experimental democracy. This section accounts for a normative interpretation and comprises also practical considerations how to improve imam training in the Netherlands and to enhance a free evolvement of Islam and new Muslim generations. Second, an elaboration of the EU marks a brief prescriptive assessment of the different roles of the European Union concerning religious accommodation in the Member States to present in what ways the EU contributes to the place of Islam in a European context. Official sources of the European Commission and the European Parliament have been used. Furthermore, an additional sub-section has been included after several interviews at the CVE Unit of the EU Delegation in Rabat. The insights are valid as they account for new forms of politics and policies to counter radicalisation by ideological means of Islamic justifications.

4.3 Expert Interviews

Several open interviews and semi-structured interviews have been conducted with different experts in Morocco and the Netherlands. Two interviews were undertaken over Skype with an Austrian expert on radicalisation and a Dutch scholar in Amsterdam. One representative from a Moroccan mosque organisation in the Netherlands was interviewed over the telephone, after the establishment of the contact initially failed. The interviews were held between February and June 2018 and included experts in the field of imam training such as Islamic scholars, governmental representatives from several embassies and the EU delegation in Rabat, while in the Netherlands two experts were interviewed, one representing the established contact organ between the state and Muslim communities (CMO) as well as the spokesman of RMMN, the Council of Moroccan Mosques in the Netherlands. Some

respondents preferred anonymity, therefore table 1 lists the main institutions and representatives, but leaves out the names of some respondents. The choice of the interview partners was conducted via theoretical sampling (Suddaby 2006), thus based on theoretical considerations, and ought therefore to have a comprehensive insight in the research field from various perspectives.

Administering the open and semi-structured interviews, in correspondence with the experts, ten face-to-face interviews, two skype interviews and one telephone interview have been conducted. The benefit of this was the receipt of rich data and an adequate provision of the principles of conduct. The author attempted to follow a communicative attitude and open interest towards the knowledge of the expert. The general principles of contextuality and relevance ought to make the respondents feel more comfortable thorough the interview (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr 2014, 67-72, 133-172). The semi-structured interviews have been minimally adjusted depending on the knowledge and subject of the expert, an example is provided in the Appendix. Open interviews were held mainly in the beginning of the research process and served to explore the field of research and to establish a relevant research question. After the interviews have been transcribed, the "on the record" information was further coded and processed in the context of the expert, i.e. his background, for instance if he or she represented an official public or private, Muslim or non-Muslim institution or if he or she was a scholar. Insights that could be used but without disclosing names and organisation, hence classified as "not for attribution" were used in the same manner, while information "on the background" could only be used to inform the research and to seek for corroborating sources (Goldstein 2002, 671). This was necessary where some representatives wanted to stay anonymous or provided sensitive information to the researcher. The data collected through the interviews was arranged in a systematic order coding and categorization applied to the transcribed information (Saldaña 2013, 3, 13). Transcripts and coding of the interviews are held by the researcher.

Table 1: Conducted Interviews between February and July 2018

NAME	BACKGROUND AND POSITION	SITE
ABDELSALAM LAZAARE	Director of Mohamed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates	Rabat

EBUBEKIR OZTURE	Director of CMO (Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid)	Rotterdam
FARID EL ASRI	Islamic Scholar for UIR and Leuven University, director of a research network on Islam in Europe (EMRID) & Political Advisor	Rabat
LÉON BUSKENS	Director of NIMAR & cultural representative for the Dutch embassy in Morocco	Rabat
NICO LANDMAN	Dutch Scholar (Utrecht University), responsible for the 1995 Report for establishing a Dutch imam training	Utrecht
RAMI ALI	Political Scientist, Lecturer and De-radicalisation Expert	Vienna (Skype)
DIPLOMAT	EU Delegation, Political Unit	Rabat
DIPLOMAT	EU Delegation, CVE Unit	Rabat
DIPLOMAT	Embassy, Political Unit	Rabat
DIPLOMAT	Embassy, Political Unit	Rabat
DIPLOMAT	Embassy, Security-Attaché	Rabat
SAID BOUHARROU	Spokesman of RMMN (Raad van Marokkaanse Moskeeën Nederland)	Amsterdam (Telephone)
STUDENT 1	French "Morchidate" Student at Mohamed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates	Rabat
STUDENT 2	French "Morchidate" Student at Mohamed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates	Rabat
THIJL SUNIER	Dutch Scholar (VU Amsterdam), focus on Studies on Islam	Amsterdam (Skype)

4.4 Trustworthiness of the Research

The greatest challenge of qualitative research is a contemporary shared understanding of common values. The explicit quality criteria include the reliability of data collection, generalizability and validity of the results (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr 2014, 35). The main problem for generalizing the research outcomes in qualitative research is due to the building of hypotheses based on empirical material. It is therefore important to explain the process and line of reasoning underlying the scope of the empirical outcomes (Flick 2011, 108).

Several methods have been employed to improve validity, reliability and generalizability of the study, such as theory and data triangulation. The method of triangulation

is used to constitute the field of interest from different starting points. These additional perspectives should allow for gaining new and varying knowledge about the field of interest and increase the validity and reliability of the research outcomes (Flick 2011). It allows to triangulate the data to perform reliability tests such as expert checking. This paper used expert interviews as well as secondary and content analysis, thus methodological triangulation, to identify the main actors within the field of imam training who were then highlighted as potential experts for interviews. Theoretical triangulation, the inclusion of several theoretical concepts, intends to emphasize the research interest inherent in the research question. The viewpoints stressed by the theoretical considerations are related to each other, which has been visualised in figure 6. The goal of triangulation is to "decrease, negate, or counterbalance the deficiency of a single strategy" and moreover, to increase the ability to interpret the findings (Thurmond 2001, 253). Methods such as constant comparison and theoretical sampling account for a comprehensive and coherent research process where meaning is constructed out of intersubjective experiences (Suddaby 2006, 634). To increase validity, theoretical memos have been drafted and the research process was made explicit. The theoretical memos are held by the researcher.

4.5 Limitations of the Research Design

First, theoretical saturation, as suggested by Grounded Theory Methodology, "The criteria for determining saturation …[,] a combination of the empirical limits of the data, the integration and density of the theory and the analyst's theoretical sensitivity", cannot be met with regard to the underlying study (Glaser & Strauss 1967, 62, cited in Suddaby 2006, 639). Although the most important actors within the discourse of imam training in the Netherlands and Morocco have been identified, the amount of interviews would simply go beyond this research framework. Furthermore, as suggested by Grounded Theory literature, in particular Suddaby (2006) and Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr (2014) the boundary between researcher and empirical site was blurred during writing this paper. Although a variety of analytical reflections have been carried out, a partly subconscious interpretation of results is almost inevitable (Strauss & Corbin 1998, cited in Suddaby 2006, 639). However, the author made the attempt

to combine a creative research component with a practical approach such as data and theory triangulation and to make the research process as explicit as possible to the reader.

Second, since the majority of the time writing this thesis was spent in Rabat, the difficulties of the research setting within the institutional context of Morocco are particularly accountable for some of the shortcomings. While the EU officials and MS representations showed a relatively high resonance with the author's requests, Moroccan institutes used the occasion as diplomatic gesture towards the requesting embassy. Furthermore, the research permit necessary to interview Moroccan officials was authorized only three months after the arrival of the researcher. However, the author was able to meet with Islamic and academic experts and was able to gain valid insights on both the Moroccan and the Dutch imam training.

Third, the deviant case selection is model-dependent and shows its concerning the general model or set of background factors. By definition, a deviant case in no longer deviant if a factor to explain that case have been identified, hence, deviant cases are most likely transformed into another variant of case study design to resolve the problem of representativeness. But only if a new hypothesis has been established that can be translated to other cases in the population (Gerring 2007, 105-108).

Fourth, the translation of Dutch and French literature was very time consuming. The lack of language knowledge in Dutch and French prevented a comprehensive literature analysis. One interview which was held in French was accompanied by a translator which didn't allow for a smooth conversation and solid application of the principles of conduct. Nevertheless, the language proficiency was sufficient to identify the relevant issues within the literature and carry out a detailed translation where necessary.

Fifth and noteworthy, the biggest limitation to this thesis is the danger of assumed causality that new forms of religious governance of Islam have direct effects on diminishing radicalisation. The complexity and multidimensionality of the issue at hand do not allow for causal inferences. It is important to make it explicit that the exploratory and descriptive approach to answer the research question allow for focusing on certain aspects. Therefore, the attempt to establish a fairly disaggregated model as suggested by Bader (2007a) was made to allow for the exploration of linkages between the accommodation of Islam and the decrease in violent fundamentalism based on religious justifications. Nevertheless, one cannot expect to find the one true answer to the multifaceted question underlying this study but, "better an

approximate answer to an important question than an exact answer to a trivial question" (Putnam 2003, 252).

5 RELIGIOUS GOVERNANCE AND IMAM TRAINING IN THE NETHERLANDS

How did the institutionalisation of Islam take place in light of the pillar system in the Netherlands and what comprises the governance of religious diversity today? How are Dutch authorities reacting to the underlying threat of "import imams", perceived as long arm of Muslim states to maintain influence over the diaspora population? How are the Netherlands promoting "home grown" imams to replace the imams coming from their countries of origin and how do Muslim communities react to this offer? How can the identified shortcomings of the current Dutch imam trainings be translated into short and long-term objectives and what political opportunities are in place, especially for a cooperation with an Islamic country? These sub-questions aim at displaying the historical process in the Dutch state-church relationship of institutionalising Islamic spiritual worship. How religious accommodation developed has been legally regulated within a state-church-society complex known as *'verzuiling'*. Within the 20th century, the Netherlands had a pillarised system of religious diversity in a unitary nation state within a liberal democracy. In order to understand the contentious current debate about the role of Islam in the Netherlands it is important to resolve the process of pillarisation between 1920 and 1960 and the following erosion of the pillar system in the late 1960s. The legal remnants of the pillars laid the basis for the establishment of Islamic spiritual places of worship after the arrival of the so-called "guest workers" (Sunier 2010, 123). However, what followed a modest facilitation of Islamic practices for the Muslim labour force was a contradictory integration policy. These preconditions are indicators for what will be called herein the "Dutch imam training debate" (Bowlby & Van Impelen 2013). This chapter proceeds as follows:

Sections 5.1. describes the structural developments in a historical multi-dimensional framework. Initially, the process from pillarisation to de-pillarisation is outlined to provide for the first analytical dimension: how the new migrants used the pillars to account for their religious needs (5.1.1.). The second dimension deals with the political reactions to the increased number of Muslim migrants characterized by constitutional revisions and a comprehensive minority policy (5.1.2). The third dimension marks a further shift towards an integration policy to account for the shortcomings of the previous multicultural approach (5.1.3). The fourth dimension is dedicated to the legal developments of confessional

accommodation and religious education and aims at explicitly highlighting the shift from a pluralistic to a secular approach (5.1.4). This framework provides a deeper understanding for a heated debate about the training of Muslim religious clergymen. Section 5.2 disaggregates the Dutch imam training debate into several previously identified dimensions in a historical pattern. It surveys the shift from minority policy (5.2.1) to integration policy (5.2.2) marked by intensive discussions surrounding the state-church relationship in a secular system with a particular emphasis on funding religious activities (5.2.3). Another dimension reflects on Islamist acts of violence putting Muslims increasingly under public scrutiny (5.2.4) and the emergence of a Muslim authority (5.2.5). This momentum marks a major development for the establishment of a Dutch imam training program. In a next step the initial difficulties of Islamic representation are discussed in light of its great diversity jeopardizing the establishment of an imam training (5.2.6). Section 5.2.7 examines how, despite several obstacles, governmental efforts finally led to the establishment of several Dutch imam trainings but also their resolution. This section ends with an overview of the major findings of their evaluation. Section 5.3 furthermore, interprets the Dutch model of religious governance and the imam training debate in theoretical reflection of associative democracy (5.3.1) and pastoral power (5.3.2). Finally, section 5.4 discusses the results from a Muslim perspective and includes insights from interviews with stakeholder of the Dutch imam training (5.4.1) and from the position of the Dutch government (5.4.2) to further present the emerging political opportunities for a transnational imam training with an Islamic country as well as for establishing a European Islam (5.4.3).

5.1 Emancipation of Religion – The Legacy of Pillarisation and Depillarisation

Between the 1920s and 1960s the Dutch society was divided in four smaller segments, so-called *zuils* or pillars, according to two religious and two *levensbeschowelijke*, philosophies of life, denominations[8] (Ghaly 2008, Boender 2013, Sunier 2010). The different religious and

[8] However, it is noteworthy that there is no consensus among scholar whether there were three or four religious or philosophical denomination and if the erosion already started in the late 1960s. For a discussion see, for instance, Wintle (2000), Vink (2007) or Van Rooden (2010).

ideological philosophies operated individually but its elite leaders cooperated on the top level. Each of the pillars had its own social institutions, newspapers, public broadcasting, political parties and educational facilities (Ghaly 2008, 372). Besides the ideological "liberal" sphere and the "Social Movement", the religious pillars of Protestants and Catholics comprised more than 50% of the Dutch population and accounted for all social classes. The most important feature of this system was the requested non-inference from the state on the daily lives of the communities, thus emphasizing their own sovereignty (Sunier 2010, 117-118). This factor created a very stable political climate, contributing to a feeling of belonging to the same nation state (Sunier 2010, 117-118). "The blocks were principally considered equal and balanced to one another" (Sunier 2010, 118). Boender (2013) describes two important processes developing through pillarisation: Religious and ideological identities with distinctive but well-maintained social, cultural, economic and moral boundaries on the one hand and an identification with the Dutch nationality on the other (Boender 2013, 238-239). The principle of equal treatment of all religious and lebensbeschowelijke bodies was constituted by Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution, granting equal rights for public subsidies (Kennedy & Valenta 2006, 338), "the proportional distribution of financial, political and social costs and benefits through secret and top management meetings" among the leaders of the pillars (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1009-1014). The political establishment agreed on the importance of a religious public life despite inevitable disagreement among churches. The government recognized its responsibility to provide each denomination with the same prerequisites especially in education, allowing for the establishment of confessional schools and universities (Boender 2013).

Despite intensive cooperation between the ruling elites of the four pillars the system was rigid and slowly (Sunier 2010, 118). Additionally, the young generation didn't go to church anymore. "The experienced separation of society among denominational lines was no longer convincing and relevant for their life" (Interview Nico Landman 2018). Technological development, prosperity, the development of communication, increased mobility, improved education and the emergence of interest groups established a more critical and informed society that wanted to engage in a democratic and political system (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2016, 1009-1014, translated by the author). *Verzuiling* lost its functioning in the late 1960s and 1970s, respectively and within the society a process of de-pillarisation

emerged with the goal of "re-uniting the Dutch people" and to introduce new principles through the "centralizing mechanisms of the modern welfare state" (Sunier 2010, 118).

5.1.1 Making Use of the Legacy

Migrants arriving mainly from Turkey and Morocco in the 1960s used the remaining judicial basis for the mobilisation of a new Muslim population to provide for their public religious life. Although the system eroded socially, its legal remnants supported the institutionalisation of Islamic educational and cultural facilities (Ghaly 2008, Sunier 2010, Boender 2013). Since the principle of religious equality is substantial for "equal treatment in similar situations" public subsidies offered the possibility for Islamic organizations to catch up (Sunier 2010, 117). In the late 1970s Turkish mosque associations emerged within a large, centralized structure of national umbrella organizations associated with the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs (Dyanet) (Peters & Vellenga 2006). Dyanet controls roughly 170 mosques in the Netherlands with a central organisation in Ankara appointing the imams who are sent abroad. The rest of in total approximately 220 Turkish mosques are organized through the Islamic foundation Netherlands and the foundation Turkish-Islamic cultural federation (ISN, TICF), the foundation Islamic Center of the Netherlands (ICN), the Dutch Islamic Federation (NIF), the Dutch union of Turkish-Islamic organizations (NUTIO) and a few other organizations (Minderhedenbeleid 1997, nr.2). Moroccan mosques mainly preserved their independence and collaborate directly with each other, hence umbrella organizations play a less important role. The 1978 established Union of Moroccan Muslim Organizations in the Netherlands (Unie van de Marokkaanse Moskeeorganisaties in Nederland, UMMON) has a comparatively weak position with no official membership and therefore, little influence on the local level (Interview Nico Landman 2018). However, despite its restrained operational activity the organization claims to represent about 90 Moroccan mosques (Peters & Vellenga 2006). Some other mosques with Moroccan background have grouped themselves in the Dutch Federation of Maghreb Islamic organizations (NFMIO) (Integratiebeleid 1998., 6).

Based on the principle of equality, different government-sponsored accommodation activities were carried out, such as the Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Corporation (Nederlandse Moslim Omroep, NMO). "Catholics and (…) Protestants had their four hours [of] television a week and the Muslims got one hour (…)" (Interview Nico Landman 2018). But with the Islamic

communities claiming their rights for equality the discussion about the legal remnants of the verzuiling system sped up: "[S]hould we continue with this broadcasting separately or should we pull it all together for a more general [program] about culture and religion?" (Interview Nico Landman 2018). Although some temporal subsidy laws lost its validity around the arrival of the majority of Muslims, a few organized individuals were still able to make use of the regulatory arrangements. A law for the construction of places of worship was valid from 1963 to 1973 accounting for the establishment of new churches with the erection of new villages and cities after the reclamation of land from the inland sea was encountered by the new mosque associations. Only the Yunus Emre Mosque of Almelo managed to apply at the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer) in time before the regulation expired in 1973 (Roose 2009, 134, Van Bijsterveld 2010, 533, Interview Nico Landman 2018). However, other enacted subsidies such as for the construction of the first 100 mosques to support the arriving Muslims have not been re-established (Van Bijsterveld 2010, 533, Interview Nico Landman 2018) although the government continued their support for prayer rooms as advised by the "Hirsch Ballin Commission" (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2016, 1009-1014). The first Moroccan mosque was opened in 1974 in the cellar of a Church in Amsterdam (Sunier 2016, 411). By the end of the 1990s more than thirty Islamic schools fully financed by the government were founded, as well as an Islamic School board organization and an Islamic pedagogic centre (Rath et al. 1999, 58).

5.1.2 From the Equality Principle to Minority Privileges

At the end of the 1970s the assumption of immigrants being temporary residents faded towards their permanent stay. The political reaction aimed at a pluralistic society, emancipating minority groups to become citizens on an equal footing. The minority report of 1983 reflected this goal by stipulating measures of adjustment and to eliminate inequality (Minderhedenbeleid 1983). The revision of the constitution in 1983 abolished certain privileges for the church while creating new opportunities for Muslims (Ghaly 2008, 373). Thereby political communication between the government and Muslims improved through the formal inclusion of Islamic representatives as official interlocutors in advisory bodies to implement and monitor the policy. Individual Muslims started to participate politically and

Islamic associations and foundations were established to represent their constituents on policy matters (Rath et al. 1999, 58). It was also in 1983 when European governments, among them, the Netherlands signed an agreement with the directorate of Religious Affairs (Dyanet) welcoming the foreign management of Turkish imams preaching a "modest Islam" in a cross-border manner (Sunier 2016, 402). Moroccan immigrants were supported by the so-called *Amicales*, different governmental organizations funded by Morocco[9]. Nowadays, Moroccan imams are invited to the Netherlands through rather informal networks (Schuh 2015, 211) but the official practice of sending Moroccan imams to Dutch-Moroccan mosques during the holy month of Ramadan remained (De Volkskrant 2015).

The constitutional reform generally strengthened the role of Islam in the Netherlands but in the same time impeded public funding for religious practices. The shift from the previous pillar system towards a stricter separation of state-church relations limited the state's possibility to give assistance where required (Ghaly 2008, 373). However, the new constitutional factors contributing to a recognition of an Islamic infrastructure didn't come along without pivotal demands.

5.1.3 From Pluralism to Integration – The Domestication of 'Migratory Conditions'

The 1990s are marked by a shift from minority to integration policy. The emphasis on preserving own cultural identities dismantled towards the promotion of citizenship, employment and equal educational opportunity as primary objectives of the new policy[10]. Two significant reasons account for the policy transformation – societal dynamics and political agendas: Firstly, immigration continued. The Dutch minority policy covered 60% more recipients over 10 years with an increase from 473,000 to 756,000. The second development is marked by an unemployment rate of 40% among the minority's working population, preventing, among others, inter-ethnic contacts leading to a process of marginalization. An increased number of minorities are directly or indirectly dependent on the social security benefits, welfare provisions, facilities and housing which is reinforced by a comparative lack of

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[9] Amicales were known as Moroccan control agencies to inform the Kingdom about political affiliations of Moroccans in NL. The political struggle between left activists and royalists was extended to the Netherlands but dissolved in the 1990s through a democratisation process (Bouras 2012, in Sunier 2016, 411-412).

[10] A practice Bader (2007) called "ineffective policies of socio-economic empowerment".

access. The aggravated difficulty of entrance mirrors direct or indirect discrimination but may also be the result of cultural differences. The "Scientific Council for Government Policy" therefore suggested to strengthen the position of immigrants in the Netherlands to use the full potential of human resources for the benefit of the overall society (WRR 1989, 9-14). The new strategy displays a shift from collective integration of minority communities towards individual participation in education and the labour market (Sunier 2010, 120).

The immigration policy defined migrants until their third generational descendants (WRR 1989, 9-14). This led to a narrative of classifying Muslims mainly as migrants, confronting them with requirements and aims of the Dutch integration policy (Sunier 2010, 120) and to comply with the dominant national culture (Sunier 2014, 1140). These policies show a certain degree of domesticating Islam trying to make people "from outside the Dutch nation state" members of Dutch society (Sunier 2010, 120, see also Sunier 2014).

5.1.4 Legal Principles of Secular Religious Accommodation

After the pillar system, the Law on Religious Denominations, *Wet op de kerkgenootschappen*, accounting for non-interference in internal matters of the associations, including the appointment of clerical officials, was replaced by the Law of Public Manifestations in 1988, *Wet openbare manifestaties*, providing in particular the freedom to manifest any religious or moral conviction. The negligence of the pillars was legally finalised in the revised constitution of 1983 through the separation of church and state, neutrality of the state towards religion and belief, and freedom of religion and belief, in particular under Article 1 and 6[11]. (Ghaly 2008, 373, Van Bijsterveld 2010, 524). The most relevant constitutional change was the abolishment of the former chapter "On Religion" and the further complete omission of the term "churches". Instead, the formulation of religious freedom aimed at increasing individual liberties (Van Bijsterveld 2010, 525).

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[11] Art. 1 Constitution: "All persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted."
Art. 6 Constitution: "1. Everyone shall have the right to profess freely his religion or belief, either individually or in community with others, without prejudice to his responsibility under the law. 2. Rules concerning the exercise of this right other than in buildings and enclosed places may be laid down by Act of Parliament for the protection of health, in the interest of traffic and to combat or prevent disorders."

Article 23 of the Dutch constitution gives primary and secondary schools under private authority the same right for funding as state schools. It was not altered with the constitutional revision but was established through the pacification in 1917, resolving the tensions of secular state-religion relations (Onderwijs Raad 2012). "This was mainly visible in education where all school, religious or public, were state sponsored on an equal basis" (Interview Nico Landman 2018). The dual system of public and private education allowed for the establishment of confessional, *bijzondere*, schools disposing of the same state funding as public*, openbare,* schools. This shows that today's Dutch educational system is still pillarised. While public education is administered by the state, confessional schools have their own self-organizational administrative boards. However, the basic curriculum is under the responsibility of the state and equal for all confessions. The only difference are the forms of education, extra-curricular activities and additional religious education (Sunier 2010, 119, Van Bijsterveld 2010, 525).

The academic question for the training of Muslim clergymen in the Dutch context besides Article 23 is based on the Law of Higher Education of 1876 where theological faculties of the Reformed Church were transformed into public theology. After the division of state and religion the outsourcing of confessional trainings from public universities to religious facilities took place, a system called *duplex-ordo* (Bremmer 2003, 78). This was initiated to free universities from confessional ties as well as to keep confessional training from state interventions (Vroom 2003, 88, cited in Johanssen 2006, 17). However, under the notion that confessional studies claiming the word of God could be neutral, universities under the so-called *simplex-ordo* opted for an integral study of theology, such as the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam (VU) which was founded in 1880 as a response to the new legislation (Bremmer 2003, 78, Ghaly 2008, 372). Due to this secular structure, the government is not capable of initiating any religious education itself. Nevertheless, the arrangement of simplex-ordo covers state subsidies for faculties such as at the VU or other private institutions such as Islamic Universities. Although the Dutch constitution doesn't provide for the official recognition of any religion under the principle of equality, organizations can expect some sort of state recognition and therefore, available subsidies for the accommodation of higher religious education (Statham & Koopmans 2004, 88). Under the "Dutch Higher Education and Research Act" (WHW) private higher education institutions may seek for their recognition by the Minister of

Education, Culture and Science as a "recognized private higher education institution", which allows them to apply for and provide accredited programs (NVAO 2018).

Evidence of the historical institutional analysis shows that public policies such as the minority and integration policy as well as secularism affect the position of Islam in the Netherlands. It is therefore not surprising that the role of Islamic leaders and clergymen became a crucial dimension for the development of this position. The self-organized Islamic organisations and mosque associations hire imams who were unknown to Dutch authorities. That was increasingly perceived as a threat for a full integration of migrants (Schuh 2015, 211). What Boender (2013, 231) called the "institutional reflex", the constitutional principle for equal treatment, laid the basis for the government to establish a program for the training of imams as instrument to organize the emancipation of religious minorities to include them as Dutch citizens (Boender 2013, 239). The legacy of the pillar system allowed imams to be perceived, along with Protestant ministers, Catholic priests and humanist advisors, as spiritual caretakers, *geestelijke verzorgers* in prisons, hospitals, the army and other public institutions (Boender & Kanmaz 2002, 171). The central factor for the Dutch government to engage in the imam training was suddenly not according to the original idea of *verzuiling* to assist religious plurality in a multicultural society within a secular state but to foster integration of imams and Muslims in the general Dutch society (Ghaly 2008, 372).

How particular religious accommodation is set up depends on the constitutional principles of freedom of religion and the separation of church-state relations. However, religious integration is not a linear process. The variables of the process result from a "*complex of factors and outcomes*" and are mostly unpredictable, depending not only on the before mentioned historical long-term factors but also societal and political short-term factors (Sunier 2010, 116, emphasis added). Religious education has a strong tradition in the Netherlands and especially in the Dutch society (Van Bijsterveld 2010, 525). The constitutional separation of church and state and the exceptional funding of certain religious programs display a huge contradiction and fuels an ongoing debate. The training of imams is exemplary for a deeper division of positions for the future of Islam in Europe, as well as the dilemma of accommodating practices within a secular state structure. The following section therefore outlines which

arguments account for additional factors, despite the legal regulation, to this particular pluralistic framework of the imam training in the Netherlands.

5.2 The Dutch Imam Training Debate

The main argument in the literature and among policy makers to engage in the training of imams today is the potential threat of foreign influence or the 'long arm' of Islamic states over 'their' Muslim population. How are the Netherlands reacting to the underlying threat of 'import imams'? How is the Muslim population reacting to this assumption and what comprises the current policy of promoting a 'home grown' imam? The answers to these questions ground in contentious public discussions and negotiations between the different stakeholders involved. The debate of the training of Islamic clergy dates back almost 35 years, so far without a satisfying outcome. That is the result of different historical phases of tension and compromise regarding the place of Islam in the Dutch society (Ghaly 2008, 387). The involved dimensions in light of the previous discussion on a shift towards integration policy in a secular state include political debates about the role of foreign imams, the new paradigm of integration policy, discussions about secularism, the formation of Muslim authorities claiming a seat at the table when establishing an imam training as well as several worrisome incidents surrounding the presence of Muslims in Europe. The following sub-sections outline these dimensions to further put them into perspective of the imam trainings resulting from these discussions.

5.2.1 Attempts to Facilitate a home-grown Imam Training

The first initiatives to establish a Dutch imam training started in 1982 when the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture (Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur) commissioned the "Waardenburg Committee" to establish religious facilities for foreign workers. The primary question at this state of the debate was how imams coming from abroad on a temporary basis could adequately council young Muslims with regard to their questions in a non-Islamic society. The working committee concluded that an imam training was favourable to educate foreign imams in Dutch and on the position of Muslims in a modern context (Regioplan 2012, 13). Until then, established programs mainly served as preparatory

courses and were organized voluntarily by the government and Turkish organizations (Ghaly 2008, 370).

More serious inquiries started in 1993 with a motion by Member of Parliament (MP) Mulder-van Dam and colleagues emphasizing the need to investigate on training opportunities for Muslim clergy in the Netherlands and how the government could create the conditions to establish such a facility, if needed by the Islamic community (Minderhedenbeleid 1994, nr. 8). A following round table was held in 1994 organized by the Ministry of Education with representatives of Islamic communities and educational facilities. The discussion showed interest from the side of the Islamic community for an imam training on secondary education and additional follow up programs at higher professional educational and academic level (Minderhedenbeleid 1994, nr.14).

5.2.2 Attempts to Dictate a home-grown Imam Training

In 1995 Nico Landman, a scholar from Utrecht University who conducted research on mosque recruitment was commissioned with a comprehensive investigation of obstacles and chances for a local training program (Ghaly 2008, 370). He concluded that Muslim communities and mosque organizations are rather sceptical about Dutch authorities and trainings should only be developed with the cooperation of mosque organisations. The main obstacle was the fear of introducing a dictated Islam, acceptable in Dutch society and ignoring the actual task of an imam to explain the true meaning of Islam and the Qur'an (Interview Nico Landman 2018). The cabinet established a new integration policy in 1998 containing considerations on training spiritual caretakers. Five central elements of strategic importance of the "Landman report" where presented: (1) the need to collaborate internationally, especially with Turkey and Morocco; (2) regulating the integration of foreign imams until a local imam training program starts; (3) studying the development of first generational ethnic minorities; (4) start a scientific dialogue about and with Islam; (5) taking the recommendations of the report in mind while focusing on the broader implementation of the integration policy with a preliminary focus on education (Integratiebeleid 1998, nrs.2). Interior Minister Dijkstal thereupon offered the "ethnic minority integration policy" on behalf of the objectives for a local training program to "support a positive role of spiritual ministers (…), in particular of imams". Under these aspects the integration policy outlined legal possibilities at the level of academic education, respecting

the constitutional freedom of religion and belief and the principle of separation of church and state (Integratiebeleid 1998).

5.2.3 State-Church Dilemma: The Secular Obstacle to Impose Imam Training

The first discussions were characterized by confusion about the role of the government with regard to imam training possibilities. Furthermore, the differences and structures necessary to establish a training for imams were simply not clear to the non-Islamic constituents comprising of Dutch officials and scholars. The preceding confusion and the forthcoming governmental debates finally didn't lead to the establishment of an imam training: "Precisely because of the separation of church and state, it is not up to the Dutch government to adopt or enforce the establishment of imam training in the Netherlands itself." (Miljoenennota 2001). However, the minister president further outlined that it can indeed facilitate and stipulate such an establishment by finding means of recognition and state funding (ibid.). The Minister of Education, Culture and Science together with the Minister for Major Cities and Integration Policy commissioned a committee with advising a Dutch imam training.

In 2003, the "De Ruiter Committee" came to the conclusion that a full Dutch imam training at university or higher education level was not feasible. Five major obstacles were mentioned: (1) the autonomy of many local mosques, (2) the unclear role of the imam and projected demands, (3) the diversity within Islamic branches, (4) the lack of structure for a program regarding potential students and (5) the lack of resources for the profession of an imam within a mosque (Regioplan 2012, 16-17). Although an obligatory *inbergeringscursus,* a course of the Dutch institutional and cultural context, was introduced to foreign imams in 2002 in order to foster the social and linguistic integration (Ghaly 2008, 371), preparations for an imam training program introduced by the Dutch government were abolished. Based on the principle of separation of church and state, the government restraints from the internal affairs of religious and philosophical communities. At the same time the cabinet emphasizes the successful integration and calls on the denominations themselves to actively contribute to realising the objectives of the integration policy of ethnic minorities.

> *"Respect for the principle of the separation of church and state demands restraint from the authorities, especially when it concerns the internal affairs of such a community. This*

does not detract from the fact that the Cabinet has the task of taking care of the best possible conditions and circumstances for the integration process, to also pay attention to the social aspects of religion and belief, insofar as it is important for the integration process." (Integratiebeleid 1998, nrs.2).

To stimulate a training program, the government offered a "specific contribution" over a period of ten years under certain conditions (Integratiebeleid 1998, nrs.2).

5.2.4 The Discovery of Political Islam

The new mandatory training courses for imams with non-EU background coming from overseas on a temporary basis gained large media attention. The debate started to be drawn to the foreign influence on domestic Islamic experiences (NRC 2002). An open discussion and increased academic publications about migrants from Turkey and Morocco led to their discovery as Muslims. While the institutionalisation of Islam in the structural system of the de-pillarised Dutch society proceeded outside public notice, a subtle negative connotation started to unveil. Communities of various cultural backgrounds were subsumed under one "Muslim culture", biased by rural and anti-modern images of first generational Muslims (Sunier 2010, 123). The Dutch society feared to incorporate those "rural habits" to the next generation through the established facilities (Sunier 2010, 124).

What started with the emerging violence and Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East and the Gulf War 1991 and the Rushdie Affair 1989 intensified after the events of 9/11. At his moment the frames that connected security threats to Islam and the demographic presence of Muslims in Europe were set in stone (Boender & Kanmaz 2002, 175, Peters & Vellenga 2006, Fadil, El Asri & Bracke 2015, 223). Additionally, the employment of clerics from overseas was proscribed not solely to import foreign imams but to import a threat for national security. The "transnational nature of faith communities" (Maussen 2007, 25) was considered incompatible with European liberal civilisation (Sunier 2014, 126). Several incidents around 'the three h's' put imams and Muslims further into spotlight: homosexuality, headscarf, and handshake. In 2001, Khalil El-Moumni, a Moroccan imam from Rotterdam called homosexuality a contagious "disease" that is harmful to society (De Volkskrant 2001). In 2004 the handshake debate reached the Netherlands when a Syrian imam from Tilburg refused to shake hands with Integration Minister Rita Verdonk (De Volkskrant 2004a, Cato 2015, 274).

Others were accused of youth radicalisation and expelled from the Netherlands (De Volkskrant 2005e). Foreign imams were increasingly perceived incapable of fulfilling the governments expectations to integrate young Muslims into Dutch society (Boender 2008). Critics such as Geert Wilders from the Party of Freedom (PVV) became louder, polarizing between Dutch immigrants and Dutch natives. The plead for a ban on Muslim immigration became daily media tenor. The fear of political Islam and the radicalisation of young Dutch Muslims occupied an increasingly important place in the debate (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2016, 1009-1014). Propositions were made to ban foreign imams from practicing which would automatically lead to the dependence of Muslim communities on domestic trainings for their imams (Schuh 2015, 21).

5.2.5 The Emergence of a Muslim Authority

At this point, there has not been a representative Muslim institution or operational body to authorise skilled staff and scholars (Johansen 2006, 16). The call from the committee in 2003 on minority groups to organize became urgent. It aimed at the formation of a cooperation partner to take responsibility over a training program. This missing variable was crucial in light of the government's incapability for further action through the separation of church and state. Despite assistance in terms of information and advice it should wait for proposals submitted by Muslim organizations and educational facilities. However, different parties questioned this restrained official position. The Muslim side perceived the governmental approach as hindering the emancipation of European Islam (Trouw 1997, see also El Asri 2018) while the opposition, in particular the VVD, opted for further restrictions on the working permits of the imported imams in light of the undergoing international developments (Ghaly 2008, 374). Although the "De Ruiter Committee" concluded in 2003 that the time has not yet come for the creation of a national imam education, the government chose to speed up the process in 2004. This decision was largely caused by the murder of Theo van Gogh in November 2004 (De Volkskrant 2004b). The killing of the Dutch Islam-critic writer and filmmaker was committed by a Dutch-Moroccan citizen who referred to the Qur'an after his act of violence (New York Times 2004). Shortly after the killing of van Gogh, two motions by MP Mirjam Sterk[12] (May 2004 from

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[12] Tweede Kamer 2004-2005, 29 200-VI nr. 155.

Christian Democratic Alliance) and Wouter Bos[13] (November 2004 from Labour Party) on the requirements for foreign imams concerning their previous training and their residence permits were taken into account in a review by the "Advisory Committee for Immigration" (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken, ACVZ). The report advised the government to establish an imam training without banning the admission of foreign imams or the imposition of requirements such as a course on Dutch culture as these general prohibitions impede freedom of religion and are in conflict with the equality principle (ACVZ 2005, 99).

5.2.6 Islamic Representation but still no Settlement

Finally, in 2004 the Council for Communication between Muslims and Government (Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid, CMO) was recognized by the Minister Verdonk as major representative organisation for Muslims in the Netherlands. The body unites all large mosque federations of different origins and represents approximately 500,000 Dutch Muslims (Peters & Vellenga 2006). Despite the high hopes of having a well-integrated Islamic interlocutor broadly supported by the communities, CMO has been criticised for being mainly Sunni dominated and therefore too narrow to account for the high diversified Muslim population. An additional body was established consisting mainly of Shi'is, Alevis and Ahmadiyya Muslims. Contact Group Islam (Contacgroep Islam, CGI) was recognized by the ministry only a few weeks later (Johansen 2006, 13). In November 2006, also the formal establishment of the Council of Moroccan Mosques (Raad van Marokkaanse Moskeeën Nederland, RMMN) was announced in a national conference – a joint venture between regional Moroccan-Islamic umbrella organizations such as the Union of Moroccan Mosques Amsterdam (UMMAO), the Council of Moroccan Mosques Utrecht (RMMU) and the Federation Islamic Organizations Netherlands (FION) to strengthen the position of mosques in the Netherlands (RMMN 2018).

The ambitious attempt to find consensus for the establishment of an imam training that would be recognized by the majority of Muslim communities was unexpectedly complicated with regard to the Islamic bodies. Some major obstacles were disagreements about feasibility, effectiveness, organization and management of the program (Boender 2014, 42). Not least because of the great heterogeneity among Muslims. Sectarian, denominational,

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[13] Tweede Kamer 2004-2005, 29 854 nr. 10.

ethnic, and cultural diversification hindered a common viewpoint about the functions of an imam. That was a challenge for structuring and designing a program (Ghaly 2008, 374). As already mentioned in the theoretical chapter, a Moroccan imam is only credible when he is hafiz thus, knows the Qur'an by heart while this is not usual for Turkish Muslims. Another major concern for Muslim communities was the duration of the program. While it is usual in Islamic countries to obtain training in Islamic theology from primary school it was implausible to train an imam in-depth in a four-year study program (Interview CMO 2018). A satisfactory arrangement for a state-funded imam training was far from reality, at least for the Islamic actors.

5.2.7 Imam Training in the Netherlands

The establishment of a Dutch imam training moved forward through several proposals by Dutch educational facilities.

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

In November 2004 VU representatives met with Minster of Education Jet Bussemaker (Labour Party) to establish a program of Islamic theology at VU in Amsterdam, in which the ministry suggested an additional vocational imam training course. In December 2004 consultations where held with private Islamic universities such as Islamic University of Rotterdam (IUR) and Islamic University of Europe (IUE) as well as from publicly recognized universities such as Leiden University and University of Groningen. However, State Secretary of Education Mark Rutte only provided the start-up subsidy to VU Amsterdam, despite proposals of both Universities Leiden and Groningen. The cabinet justified its decision in order to realize a training of imams and Islamic spiritual carers on the short term (Rechtenmedia 2005).

In September 2005 a three-year Bachelor in Islamic theology was launched as well as a one-year Master course for Islamic chaplaincy at the newly established Centre for Islamic Theology (Centrum voor Islamitische Theologie, CTI) at VU University Amsterdam of Applied Sciences (Johansen 2006, 13). VU received a development subsidy from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science from € 1.5 million for the period 2005-2011.

Table 2: Program Master of Islamic Spiritual Care 2005 at VU

	ECTS
Islam/Islamic Theology	
Contemporary Islamic Theology	**6**
Islamic Theology regarding Spiritual Care	6
Muslim Youth between two Cultures	6
Islamic Ethics and Fiqh I	3
Islamic Preaching	6
	21
General / Spiritual Care	
Psychology	6
General Research Skills	3
Mental Care in Organizations II	6
	15
Thesis/Internship	
Internship	6
Thesis	18
	24
Total	**60**

Source: Regioplan (2012, 33-34)

The Master program of 2005 consisted of compulsory courses: Islamic theology regarding spiritual care, Islamic ethics and fiqh, psychology I and Thesis; as well as electives: contemporary Islamic theology, mental care in organizations II, Islamic pre-university studies and Muslim youths between two cultures. The majority of the study design comprised Islamic subjects (35%) and 25% general subjects in the field of spiritual care while it ended with an internship and a thesis (40%) (see table 2). This program was strongly oriented towards the profession of Islamic spiritual caretakers with the objectives to develop sufficient knowledge, insight, skills and attitude for independent practice (Regioplan 2012, 33-34).

Additional programs emerged, modified and vanished

The direct response from CMO and the CGI was sober. Becoming a credible imam with sufficient skills in Islamic theology and Arabic takes rather six to ten years. A degree in Islamic

theology doesn't raise the necessary authority to preach in a mosque (Johansen 2006, 13, Interview CMO 2018). The mood was tense among scholars, Islamic organisations and the government, with accusations ranging from scarcity of the design of the program towards naivety of the experts involved (De Volkskrant 2005a & 2005b, Interview Thijl Sunier 2018). As a result, Muslim organisations announced an imam training program themselves, supported by Islamic communities (BN DeStern 2014, De Volkskrant 2005c). Three Muslim organisations (UMMON, ISC, Surinamese mosque dome World Islamic Mission WIM) together with InHolland University of Applied Sciences started a four-year vocational (HBO) study program imam-Islamic spiritual carer (De Volkskrant 2005d), by means of €400.000 state-subsidy each year (Regioplan 2012). Also the University of Leiden started a Bachelor's and Master's program in Islamic theology that received €2.35 Million state funding in total. They additionally announced a follow up imam training program (Integratienota 2007-2011, 122).

Table 3: Overview Islam and Imam Education in the Netherlands

Institution	Recognition	Programs	Duration
		Launched 2005	
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU)	Simplex-ordo Protestant, recognized	BA Islamic Theology (HBO)*	3-years
		MA Islamic Spiritual Advisor (HBO)*	1-year
		Launched 2006	
Universiteit Leiden	Duplex ordo, recognized	BA Islamic Theology*	3-years
		MA Islamic Theology*	1-year
		Planned imam training**	1-year
Hogeschool InHolland	HBO, recognized	HBO training Imam/Islamic Spiritual Care Counsellor	4-years
Islamische Universiteit Rotterdam (IUR)	Private, not recognized	BA Islamic Studies (HBO)*	3-years
		MA Islamic Spiritual Care (HBO)	2-years
Islamitische Universiteit van Europa (IUE)[14]	Private, not recognized	BA Islamic Theology	4-years
		MA Islamic Spiritual Care (HBO)*	1-year

*accredited, **never launched

Sources: NVAO, VU, IUR, IUE Ghaly 2008, Regioplan 2012

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[14] IUE changed its name to Europe Islamic University of Applied Sciences Europe (EIUAS) in 2017.

However, InHolland University announced the termination of the HBO imam training in 2013 with its last students graduating in 2018 due to its limited effectiveness. "[I]t costs too much money for too few students." (NOS 2013) Only one year later, Leiden University decided as well to discontinue the Bachelor Program in Islam studies. Although it was planned as preparatory course for an imam education on a Master level, such a training never came to existence. It aimed at a two to three-year education with a vocational aspect to gain first-hand experiences with imams in religious institutions by the participating Islamic organizations. The same reasons account for its failure: too costly, too little interest from students and Islamic organizations (NOS 2014, Universiteit Leiden 2005). The VU reacted to the expressed criticism and announced the renewal of its training program in 2016 accounting for some of the criticised shortcomings (NOS 2016a). A new curriculum has been launched for 2017-2018 (Vrije Universiteit 2018).

VU together with IUR are the only parties left providing an imam training that is recognized as such, although the imam program of IUR is not officially accredited. Moreover, after IUR Rector Akgündüz made a hateful statement in 2015 about homosexuals, women and non-believers and a few months later on Kurds, the self-governed university came under public scrutiny and lost some of its support. In the following, the Dutch Parliament discussed about possibilities to withdraw the accreditation of the Bachelor in Islamic studies (Tweede Kamer 2015). In the same year the cabinet introduced a bill that also non-government-funded institutions with approved courses can lose their status in case of discriminatory statements (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2015). Another option would have been the IUE with its accredited HBO Master in Islamic Spiritual Care (NVAO 2015). However, owing to recent scandals concerning tax evasion, lack of management and nepotism, the future of the institution and its students is rather uncertain, according to the inspectorate (NOS 2017, Inspectierapport 2017, 6). With the termination at InHolland the only official HBO imam training for students with a higher professional education level, the Dutch Parliament raised its concern in 2015 to further work on the development of such a program (Tweede Kamer 2015)

An Evaluation

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science commissioned Regioplan to carry out an evaluation of the existing Islam and imam training courses in 2012. The assessment found some major limitations. Important to note is that this survey was conducted across three higher education facilities that received government funding: VU Amsterdam, University Leiden, and InHolland University of Applied Science. However, only VU and InHolland actually introduced specific imam trainings[15], this survey includes Islam and imam trainings[16] but leaves out the non-recognized institutions IUE and IUR (Regioplan 2012):

Table 4: Inflow and results of Imam trainings in the Netherlands

Reference date	VU	Leiden	InHolland[17]
	July 2012	October 2011	October 2011
% of immigrant students[18]	Unknown	84% (BA) 94% (MA)	96%
Ethnic origin of students	Unknown[19]	40% Moroccans 17% Turkish	52% Turkish 28% Moroccans
Bachelor			
Total intake BA since start of training	118	90	191
% female BA students	55%	62&	43%
% of BA failure since start of training	55%	57%	38%
% graduated BA since start of training	25%	10%	3%
Master			
Total intake MA since start of training	46	16	na
% female MA students	485	19%	na
% of MA failure since start of training	12%	25%	na
% graduated MA since start of training	59%	38%	na

Source: InHolland, VU, Leiden, in Regioplan 2012, 125

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[15] As mentioned earlier, Leiden worked on a specific imam training beyond Islamic theology but the Administration Board decided against such program after an in-house survey. There was too little support from students, Muslim bodies and scholars (Interview Dutch Expert 2018).

[16] Since Islamic theology accounts for educating a "new Islamic intelligentsia" the survey accounts for Islamic confessional education including Bachelor, Master, and explicit imam training (Regioplan 2012).

[17] VU is simplex-ordo, Leiden University is duplex-ordo, InHolland is vocational.

[18] For VU University Amsterdam only information is available about the nationality of the students and not about the ethnic origin. The students predominantly have the Dutch nationality.

[19] No exact figures are known of the ethnic origin of students at VU Amsterdam, interviews conducted by Regioplan found many students to have a Moroccan background.

- *Fewer students than initially anticipated and a limited number of graduates*

Between 2005 and 2012 approximately 400 Bachelor students and 60 Master students participated in the program with a graduation rate between 3 and 25%. There is a large drop out phase within the Bachelor while between 38 and 59% of Master students graduated. There are many students with a study delay.

- *Discrepancy between need for polder imams and actual employment opportunities in mosques*

The survey emphasizes the need for 'polder imams' in the future with regard to the increased religiosity among descendants of Muslim immigrants. However, there is no general acceptance for polder imams. The lack of knowledge for Islamic sources of the graduates is an obstacle for Islamic communities and the working conditions at mosques with regard to their salary are not favourable for young professionals. The survey concludes that Dutch graduates cannot compete with graduates from Islamic training programmes at renowned institutes from Islamic countries.

- *Only very few students trained in the Dutch training programmes are now employed as imams by a mosque*

Only a very limited number of Dutch graduates are employed as imams at a mosque due to the above mentioned obstacles. Especially students and graduates are not very eager to work for a minimum wage and a weak legal security system.

However, the established training programs showed some remarkable positive developments as well:

- *Training programmes have led to recognition and professionalization of Islamic spiritual care* work and emerging Islamic professionals are deeply rooted in Dutch society

Especially the imam training at VU Amsterdam led to a formal recognition of Islamic spiritual care takers as professionals working in hospitals, at the Ministry of Justice, i.e. in prisons or the Ministry of Defence, i.e. in the army). However, the number of vacancies is limited, though growing. The education is nevertheless, important to create professionals for various branches who function as interlocutors between the Muslim communities and the Dutch society.

The study also provides an outlook for the future of government sponsored imam trainings:

- *Further development training programs necessary to better fit in with needs*

The establishment of the courses contributed to the set-up of an infrastructure for highly educated Islamic professionals who are able to build bridges across society, within the government and in academia. An emphasis is drawn to the need for Islamic theological literature in Dutch and the deepening of theological knowledge of students, since the current level doesn't allow for recognized religious authority within the community. Table 4 provides an overview of the most important quantitative findings of the survey.

5.3 Normative Interpretation of the Religious Governance and Imams in the Netherlands

Religious accommodation and imam training as empirical phenomenon are captured by a variety of distorting factors particularly from the side of the state, through minority and integration policies as well as perception of what an imam should be able to account for; second, from the Muslim communities i.e. their heterogeneous composition and therefore, distinct interests, as well as public debates comprising trajectories and transmitting resentments towards the major society. The following section therefore reflects the Dutch model of religious governance and the imam training debate in theoretical considerations of associative democracy and pastoral power in order to emphasize normative future directions for a European Islam.

5.3.1 Historical Patterns of Associative Democracy Dissolving

How states react to increased immigration and trends of accommodating the needs of minorities varies across EU MS (Koenig 2015). The institutional pluralistic approach of Associative Democracy (AD) described by Hirst (1994) and Bader (2007) discusses the transfer of social provision to self-governing voluntary associations to improve the mechanisms of democratic representation (Hirst 2002). This concept addresses the simplistic, homogenous and static understanding of state, sovereignty, and citizenship and suggests a more flexible and dynamic multi-level governance. This normative perspective on the rigid practical reality of

institutions challenges the fundamental principle of the separation of religion and state (Bader & Hirst 2012). The in-depth analysis of the Dutch case has unveiled historical patterns of religious governance through characteristics of AD as described by Bader (2007). But these patterns have dispersed in the wake of secularism, granting accommodation through applying a *rule of thumb.* In the secular Dutch state, integration or security are the frames that govern public funding.

The Pillar system as a whole allowed for the accommodation of religious minorities on equal footing, providing public subsidies and non-interference by the state in daily religious life. Although the arrival of Muslims at a very late stage of this system didn't allow for a fully established pillar in comparison to the other denominations that even had their own hospitals and public institutions, but the Islamic population was still able to exercise their right for public broadcasting, the accommodation of religious worshipping and the establishment of religious organizations, schools and universities. With the constitutional change in 1983 towards the explicit separation of church and state, the public funding of religious accommodation stopped to the biggest extent. The Dutch institutional pluralism with associational democratic characteristics was transformed to a secular system with rather limited opportunities to provide for faith-based demands. Weak structural preconditions didn't give much leeway for the Muslim population to establish their own self-funded private institutions. The modern reality of the "leaderless Islamic *umma*" was different from the internationally organized Church (Bader 2007, 225). Institutional regulations of the implicitness of the state-church were different for Muslims in Europe who, after their arrival, had to start organizing themselves from the very scratch.[20] (Ghaly 2008, 374, Liedhegener 2014, 126). A report in the 1980s by one of the first experts on Islam in the Netherlands on financing religious activities called on the government: "Subsidise religious activities, otherwise people will look abroad for foreign money!" (Interview Thijl Sunier 2018). This is exactly what happened. The influence of the 'long arm' of foreign governments has a constitutive impact on the development of Islam in Europe according to politicians, scholars and Muslim organisations as shown in the previous discussion.

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[20] Bader on the contrary argues that no religious minority starts from the scratch as their strategies are "influenced by their respective doctrinal and organisational traditions" (Bader 2007, 224).

Besides start-up subsidies in the 1980s for Muslims to catch up, the new imperatives of integration and secularism didn't allow for the funding of religious organizations. In the previous system of verzuiling public subsidies were distributed mainly on the basis of the equality principle. Today, state funds are distributed under different prerogatives. "In general, a rule of thumb for Muslims in European countries is easier to get structures and facilities and subsidies and recognition (…). Rather than demanding separate institutions for themselves." (Interview Nico Landman 2018) State subsidies for mosques for example are very restricted: "You have to frame it in such a way that it isn't religious anymore. So for example, to get activities of mosques sponsored, don't call it Qur'an lessons but integration lessons. Then you might have success." (Interview Nico Landman 2018). Another example of this shift towards case-by-case decisions for state funding of religious activities was outlined by Thijl Sunier:

> "[W]e don't finance religious organizations, we only finance activities. We don't finance mosque building, but other aims. For instance, the municipality of The Hague subsidised a Salafi mosque for helping the municipality during New Year's Eve. The mosque went out in the neighbourhood and helped the police to control the youth. What wasn't a religious activity but security. So financing continues." (Interview Thijl Sunier 2018)

According to scholars and observers of the debate in the Netherlands there is no unanimity among Dutch officials about this issue. While some aim at a strict separation of church and state hence, "no Euro should go to a religious topic", others argue "separation is more a separation of power rather than money" (Interview Nico Landman 2018).

When it comes to education for example the mechanisms of the pillar system were maintained. The Dutch constitution, namely Article 23 still gives confessional schools under private authority the same right for funding as state schools. Associative democratic practice is thus still enacted through the means of Islamic (and other denominational) educational facilities, based on the minimum morals of religious and educational freedom. Self-governed administrative boards provide the service of Islamic education.

Associationalists focus on the role of organisations by reducing the burden on public institutions to make the representative government work more efficient, hence there is no need for high political activism (Hirst 2002, 413). In reality, this concept is confronted with obstacles concerning the institutionalisation of Muslim minorities, the organisation and

mobilisation dilemma (Bader 2007, 227). First of all, they have to organise, for instance in mosque associations, and appoint representatives who are able to raise their claims and negotiate on behalf of their community. Second, the management of these organisations is increasingly under pressure with regard to their leadership and member mobilisation, especially when failing to claim for certain accommodations[21].

The imam training debate has sped up the establishment of representative Muslims bodies such as the CMO or RMMN, to negotiate the set-up of a program for educating Islamic clergy on behalf of the Muslim communities. Additional self-governed actors, such as private Islamic universities like IUR or IUE could be important stakeholders as well. However, in light of liberal-democratic Dutch values like gender equality, tolerance and respect for LGBT and faith-leavers for instance, these institutions are still lacking a considerable consensus towards these issues (see section 5.2.7).

5.3.2 The 'pastoral power' of Polderimams[22]

The argument for the training of imams in the Netherlands goes back to the 19th century and the nation building process by King William I (1815-1849). In 1816 the General Regulations for the Administration of the Reformed Church introduced a new organizational structure on the Reformed Church, providing the legal basis to be state governed (Bos 2010, 101). After years of revolution, the members of the Kingdom were perceived to be subject to a moral community with a need to be educated and morally informed. The production of a moral community had to be nationally organized, with Protestant churches performing as key function to produce citizens (Van Rooden 2010, 68). The Protestant state used explicit policy instruments such as state stipends, their administrative structure, and theological training to involve ministers and school teachers in the nation building process and the construction of citizenship (Boender 2013, 236). Like the Protestant ministers who functioned as "moral entrepreneurs", the imam is debated to be a possible "bridge builder" between the Muslim community and society (Boender 2013, 237). "[The imam] also has an important exemplary

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[21] Some claims may include rule exemptions or specific regulations (zoning, building, parking), or federal law including general admissions, tax or labour exemptions or changes in anti-discrimination law (Bader 2007, 224).

[22] The term "polderimam" comprises the synonymous for „superimam" in the Dutch case (Boender 2014).

function for the followers and he can bring up social questions in his sermons." (Integratienota 2007-2011, 122). This implies that imams could be trained to teach civic virtues, similar to the 19th century Ministers educating their audience.

The new attributes attached to the idea of the modern or 'good' imam are described and largely quoted by Birt (2006) in "Good imam, bad imam" in a post-9/11 British context:

> *"The good imam is now to embody civic virtues, interfaith tolerance, professional managerial and pastoral skills, possibly become involved in inner city regeneration, work as an agent of national integration (most importantly on behalf of his young unruly flock), and wage a jihad against extremism. By contrast, the bad imam has become an agent of divisive cultural and religious alterity to be deterred by multiplying bureaucratic hurdles, defamed, deported or imprisoned"* (Birt 2006, 687).

In a Dutch context the specific role of the imam is made explicit with the integration policy of 1998:

> *"The organizational religious and philosophical connections can make an important contribution to the orientation of their members to Dutch society and strengthen their sense of responsibility for that society. They can, together with other social forces, prevent their members from falling into marginalities and worse and contribute to their members making the right choices for their economic, social and cultural functioning with respect for Dutch laws and rules of association. Imams can make an important contribution to this*." (Integratiebeleid 1998, 8)

Under the integration policy 2007-2011 this was further emphasized: "[The imam] can serve as a bridge builder between his own religious community and Dutch society (…,) he is an important role model for his supporters and he can raise social issues in his sermons." (Integratienota 2007-2011, 122) Thus, a "polderimam" councils between the dominating Dutch major society and Muslim communities, facilitating civil participation and citizenship while at the same time decreasing the influence of Turkey or Morocco from import imams (Boender 2014, 26). The official Dutch position was clear. In 2005, the government was advised by the "Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs" (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken) to create an imam training program that has the full support of all the different practising Muslim groups, only then it has practical value. "It would be extremely complicated to create government-approved individual training courses for each of the branches, or to lump them all in one training course" (ACVZ 2005, 99). Since religion is often

experienced through a religious-ethnical identity transnational faith communities will not easily relinquish the ties with their country of origin, especially with regard to their clerics.

The legacy of the pillar system allowed imams to be perceived, along with Protestant ministers, Catholic priests and humanist advisors, as spiritual caretakers in prisons, hospitals, the army and other public institutions (Boender & Kanmaz 2002). The central factor for the Dutch government to engage in the imam training was suddenly not according to the original idea of verzuiling to assist religious plurality in a multicultural society within a secular state but to foster integration of imams and Muslims in the general Dutch society (Ghaly 2008). That raises questions about the place of Islam in the Netherlands, and especially what comprises Islam in a Western European context?

5.4 Exploring Opportunities for a National Islam

The development of new policies in the Netherlands, took place within the institutional frame work of *verzuiling*. But with the emergence of new questions and issues the institutional framework hardly was suited, also from within the Dutch Muslim communities, partly related to the cross-border characteristics of this new religious diversity. The previous analysis reflects on two major perspectives with several sub-dimensions in order to explore how the emerging opportunity structures could be used to develop an imam training with broader consensus among the stakeholders and in accordance with the development of an Islam in a European, or Dutch context respectively. First, this section explores issues emphasized by Muslim representatives while in the latter the major concerns by Dutch representatives are outlined. Second, implications for a European Islam will be highlighted in light of long-term objectives and short-term solutions. The third section depicts political opportunities for a transnational imam training.

5.4.1 Muslim Related Opportunities

Clash of generations

The most crucial finding was the obvious tension between the first generation of Muslims and the second and third generations. The previous labour migrants where the ones to engage in

Islamic accommodation in the Netherlands, often attached to traditional ideas imported from their regions of origin, mostly rural areas. This Muslim authority consisting of elderly Muslims who are deeply integrated within the Muslim communities represent the mosque boards and are responsible for the recruitment of imams. Cemal Aydemirli, an Islamic scholar from IUE argued that recent graduates are simply not what mosques are looking for:

> *"In the beginning of the imam opleiding there was a huge interest. A lot of students wanted to study to become an imam. But after graduation none of the mosques wanted the students as an imam. (…) They didn't want to change the way of their doing because of a youngster who just graduated from an imam education which was not really their education."* (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018)

While the Muslim authority comprising first generation immigrants maintains its deep traditional positions within the management boards of mosques, their second and third generational descendants are in a deep identity crisis. They are confronted with a normative religious experience surrounding a 'binary Islam': "How do I know that I'm a Muslim? I eat halal so I am halal? This is very new in the history of Islam. (…) [It's a] representation of Islam with restrictions. That kills spirituality." (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). Migrant communities are confronted with confusion as they are often experiencing not being full participants of the Dutch culture, or perceived as such, and at the same time lose their traditional religious orientation (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). El Asri further stresses the need for a reconciliation between Islamic references and the reality of new paradigms for European Muslims (Interview Farid El Asri 2018).

The Theological Question

Amid a generational gap lies a far deeper crisis of Muslims and the Islamic civilisation as a whole (Baig 2014). What El Asri called "a problem of update" demands a progressive transformation of cultural heritages, definitions and values in a changed reality of Islamic everyday life (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). Also Rasit Bal, director of CMO emphasized the need to innovate Islam: "Islam didn't evaluate and go beyond its borders or has been criticized from within. (…) You have to make [an] innovation and go forward with the timeline. When you go out of your boundaries Islam could get a better place in society." (Interview CMO Rotterdam

2018). Defenders of a progressive Islamic dialogue call on Muslims to critically interrogate the ways Muslims perceive and receive the Qur'an in response to challenging issues of modernity like equality of men and women, homosexuality or increased Islamism and Islamic radicalisation (see for instance Fadil & Fernando 2015, Zeb 2015, Eickelman 2017, Fadil 2017).

The question of how Muslims and in particular imams should deal with the issues of hypermodernity lie within a theological-normative scope according to El Asri, who illustrated this issue with a theological response to radicalisation. Six young Muslims who decided to fight for ISIS in Syria where approached by an imam before involving police forces: "the imam didn't use a moral approach (…) but talked about theological issues. 'What is your religious argument to go to Syria?' 'What is your definition of the *khalif*[23]?' 'How can you theologically justify to go without the agreement of your parents[24]?'" (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). By theological means of deconstructing the individuals references, the alleged perpetrators were convinced to stay. Especially the discourse on radicalisation inspired by Islam shows, despite a variety of academic contributions an astonishing shortcoming of Islamic theologian to participate in the debate.

The legitimization of theology to issues of contemporary European Islam and Muslim realities seems like an unconventional solution, kept to Islamic communities and mosques, insofar as they choose to deal with these issues or until exposed by media coverage (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). New interpretations of Islamic sources need to find their way into a modern European Islam. "Our approach is new, also from the perspective of the average Muslim here in this country (…) but it's about the process." (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). European scholars and Muslim representatives like Farid El Asri, Islamic anthropologist and director of EMRID, a research network on Islam in Europe, are looking for new theological and academic approaches in a modern secular culture without producing "normative instructive knowledge" (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). A process that takes time, according to CMO director Rasit Bal. Also the European Council of Fatwa and Research (CEFR) which was founded in 1997 in Dublin contributes to an interpretative reform of Islam from within.

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[23] According to interpretations in the Islamic Encyclopaedia, the caliph's institutional authority and delegation is limited by political obligations and the fulfilment of the *shari'a* (Islamic law). However, there are numerous interpretations. (see Encyclopaedia of Islam 1997, De Jong, F. Art. Khalifa El⁴III/949).

[24] According to the Qur'an the parents are hierarchically directly under god, only then comes a khalif (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018).

Particularly in light of Dutch values – freedom of speech, gender equality, individual freedom and responsibility, tolerance and respect for people with different opinions, non-believers and LGBT – imams are anticipated to council between the dominating Dutch major society and Muslim communities. This could display a major challenge for HBO graduates professionalised as spiritual caretakers but without a deep theological background.

Position of imam

The previous dimensions are essential to understand the deep reality of European Muslims today. In order to respond to the confusions of "hypermodernity" (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018) the task of imams is to respond carefully and most importantly, theologically to the questions of his community members.

With regard to his traditionally unpolitical role as Islamic everyday life counsellor, it is arguable whether this has ever been reality in a European context where, as a matter of fact, foreign trained imams leading the prayers have been the rule rather than the exception, and that since the 70s. This practice is however not surprising, since the European Muslim population inherits a great variety of traditions. Imams need to be moderators for different points of views but in Europe the reality is more complex than in Islamic countries. While Moroccan mosques follow a Maliki tradition Turkish mosques chose Hanafi for their reference (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018).

There seems to be a basic compliance among Muslim representatives to decrease foreign influence and focus instead on locally trained imams, embedded in Dutch (and Western European) language, culture, and society (Interview CMO & IUR Rotterdam 2018, Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). However, as outlined previously, the trainings are barely recognized by Muslim authorities. Additionally, the wage of imams stayed at a minimum level as well as his legal status. If their position doesn't improve, young Muslims won't become the long-awaited polderimams (NOS 2016b).

Legitimacy – Top-down versus bottom-up

Especially since 9/11 the Dutch government tried to detach Turkish and Moroccan communities from their countries of origin through increasing entrance barriers for foreign imams. On the other side, the consulate-based embassy Islam from foreign Islamic countries

maintained their support in European states. The political climate resulted in polarised tensions not only between European and Islamic countries but furthermore, between European governments and their Muslim communities (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). The imam training debate is exemplary for the domestication of Islam.

The neutralisation of the position of imams towards professional spiritual caretakers is simply not credible for Muslim communities and in particular mosque associations who are hesitant to employ the graduates (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). Both El Asri and Bal suggest an Islam "from Muslims for Muslims" and a more inclusive bottom-up approach towards the education of imams. This is necessary in order to increase credibility with regard to the mosque association and legitimacy from the Muslim communities (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018, Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018).

Objectifying religious authority

Despite consensus among Muslim communities and government officials that imams should be embedded in the Dutch culture, a major concern is the legitimacy and credibility of his authority. But who legitimises his position is a far more complicated undertaking. While the public approves of imams who raise their concerns publicly in a liberal and tolerant manner, the Muslim population seems to mistrust religious representatives who call for integration in support of the government[25]. Governments and media dictating who is a good and who is a bad imam contradicts with the Islamic practice of authority:

> *"There are imams with a deep experience of 40 years following a community. And the majority of the community says after such media coverage [of an Islamist terror attack] 'the majority of us is ok but there are some others.' (…) Because there are imams who do their job but you don't see them in the media. It's fake in the civilisation of show and the imam is an actor of others[26]."* (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018)

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[25] see for instance the case of French imam Hassen Chalghoumi who received death threats after supporting France's burqa ban (New York Times 2010).
[26] He further stated „For me it's not a problem of visibility in the media, for me it's a problem of the contents and how the imam can deal with the hypermodernity (…) theologically."

The practice of legitimizing and delegitimizing[27] imams publicly seems to be a major obstacle for the establishment of a free and stable Islamic authority, supported by the communities.

Despite great obstacles confronting Muslim organisations, the interviews showed a great will and high enthusiasm of the involved parties to design the future of Islam. Different Muslim organisations and Islamic scholars joined forces and established interdisciplinary research institutes and networks[28]. The question of authority and with it leadership, communication and definition remains to be developed by new emerging Islamic scholars, theologian and representatives (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018).

5.4.2 State Related Obstacles

The Secularism Argument

While the major concern of European-Muslim representatives is the development and reinvention of Islamic theological understandings in a new societal context, the government is highly reluctant to get involved with religious matters. "It is not the task of the government to engage in theological questions." (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018). However, Muslim organizations are free to exchange practices with other countries without governmental support.

However, reality proofs differently. According to the equality principle the Dutch government should not grant privileges to any religious denomination. The selective funding under framings of integration and security reflects activities of moderation, pressure to adapt and to become predictable as well as disciplining of members (Bader 2007, 228). As the previous analysis shows increased cooperation alters the demanding criteria of recognition from the government to legitimately interfere with religious practices[29].

The Netherlands Institute in Morocco (NIMAR), a research centre for Islamic studies from Leiden University funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as well as the

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[27] An example of delegitimizing an imam happened in 2015 when the Saudi cleric Aidh al-Quarni has been falsely accused being a "hate imam" and was denied access to the Netherlands. CMO spokesman Yassin Elforkani defended Al-Quarni and called on the government for clear rules. (NLTimes 2015)
[28] see for instance EMRID (http://www.emridnetwork.org), ENSIE (http://www.ensie.site), LUCIS (https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/humanities/centre-for-the-study-of-islam-and-society)
[29] Examples were the funding of mosque activities and Qur'an lessons (see section 5.3.1)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs situated in Rabat could not get involved in the set-up of a program unless a Muslim organization together with an HBO or university approaches the institute. Léon Buskens, director of NIMAR and work attaché for educational affairs in Rabat stated that no appeals have been made so far, but that they are willing to consider an involvement when a higher Dutch educational institute requests NIMAR to to the set-up and facilitate the exchange between Dutch and Moroccan institutes, depending on the request (Interview Léon Buskens Rabat 2018).

Political obstacles

The major concern with regard to foreign imam training is the political involvement of Islamic governments. "Politicians want imams who are rooted in Dutch society and understand what Muslims in the Netherlands need" (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018). The initial goal of decreasing foreign influence on the Dutch Muslim population is perceived to be hijacked through involving them in the education of *their* Islamic clerics.

Additionally, there is no common sense whether religion can solve the problem of radicalisation, an approach fiercely promoted by the Moroccan King (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018).

5.4.3 Implications for a European Islam

If the goal is to develop an Islam in a contemporary Dutch, and respectively European context, the major question is, what is it that comprises a European Islam? Islamic representatives and scholars emphasize that a European Islam needs to evolve from within and provide answers to the questions of hypermodernity, in a systematic, reflective and theological manner (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018, Interview El Asri Rabat 2018). The major concern scrutinizing this objective is the making of an Islamic authority, confident Islamic leaders and intellectuals. A clash of generations where first generational Muslims comprising authority over mosque boards are hesitant to involve progressive "newbies", recent graduates from national imam trainings that are Dutch native who could provide for new generations of Muslims and their spiritual seeking. Second, emerging theological questions of Muslim everyday life to (re)act in today's hypermodernity beyond an Islam of restrictions of 'halal' and 'haram' are not met. The implications that the previous chapters have emphasized comprising a European Islam direct

towards a great need of Islamic leadership. New interpretations of Islamic sources need to find their way into a modern European Islam. A European Islam needs a confident and recognized Muslims authority, socialized in Europe but able to reflect on Islamic traditions in light of challenges for European Muslims (El Asri 2018, Sunier 2018). Therefore, being aware of the national trainings comprising the religious field in the Netherlands, table 5 summarizes the main findings of the discussion and proposes transnational imam training as short term solution to reach the goals of a consensual imam training, recognized by today's Muslim authority, in order to inform a European Islam through European Islamic leaders of tomorrow.

Table 5: Long-term goal and short-term solutions for developing a European Islam

LONG-TERM GOAL FOR EUROPEAN ISLAM AND DUTCH IMAM TRAINING	
Recognized Muslim Authority	Integration of a Muslim authority highly attached to liberal-democratic values, fully embedded in the Dutch culture and recognized by Muslim constituents; Part of an "Islamic intelligentsia"
Consensual Imam Training	Implement a consensual imam training for all stakeholders (Islamic authority, Islamic communities, Islamic scholars, and the Dutch government)
SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS TO EASE TRANSITION	
Islamic institutionalisation	Increased collaboration between Muslim organisations and further Islamic institutionalisation
Clear criteria of religious funding	Disaggregate polarised political tensions through establishing clear criteria for religious funding and the relationship between Dutch organisations and foreign countries
Processual education	Follow a hermeneutic educational approach in Islamic studies and imam training to define a Dutch Islam from within (bottom-up)
Cooperation with foreign country	Learn from Islamic countries with long tradition in imam education by introducing imam training in collaboration with countries of origin in order to increase credibility of new emerging Islamic authority (a minor abroad?)

5.4.4 Political Opportunities for Transnational Imam Training

The following political opportunities refer to the possibilities and limitations, encouraging or discouraging a transnational imam training between the Netherlands and an Islamic country,

in this case Morocco. The possibilities emerge from major shortcomings of Dutch imam training programs and claims of Muslim believers in the Netherlands. Although one respective point drops out of this scope, the NIMAR institute has been included as possibility since it displays a major opportunity for establishing a transnational imam training with Morocco.

Table 6: Opportunities in the NL through Cooperation with Islamic country

POSSIBILITIES	
Position of recent graduates	Recent graduates of Dutch imam trainings lack in theological training and Arabic skills, which is necessary to be employed in a mosque
Questions of Identity & Citizenship	Questions of identity and citizenship for new-generations of migrants emerged regarding their origin, or the origin of their parents and traditional Islamic rituals.
Islam from Muslims for Muslims (Bottom-up)	Demand of free European Islamic evolution "from Muslims for Muslims" who have in-depth theological knowledge and are able to theologically reflect on traditional understandings in modern context
Demand for Credible Islamic leaders	Need for confident Islamic intellectuals and well-trained Islamic teachers who are aware of culture and traditions of Islamic communities in Europe
NIMAR	The Netherlands Institute in Morocco represents a Dutch educational facility which could help with the establishment of a transnational imam training
LIMITATIONS	
Foreign Influence	Fear of foreign influence and political Islam
Secularism	Political deadlock to finance imams and legitimize religious questions in the formation of identity and citizenship
Illegitimate state intervention	Privileges for imam training might lead to conditional arrangements and state interferences
Equality Principle	Privileges for Islamic accommodation might increase demand from other religious denominations

The urgency of a national imam training in the Netherlands is growing. "In the Netherlands a third and a fourth generation of Muslims is now growing up, while we are dealing with new phenomena, such as radicalisation inspired by Islam. To counteract this, we need imams who understand the young people well, but can also speak Dutch", CMO spokesman and imam Yassin Elforkani states (BN DeStem 2014). The high expectations expressed towards polderimams – counselling, being hafiz, having theological answers to the hypermodernity,

decreasing grievances and solving the problem of radicalisation – might be too much of a burden. His task is to "guide people by explaining the words of the Qur'an, the rest is out of his scope." (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018). Higher education for Islamic spiritual leaders regulated by Western European states aims at producing adequate, well-trained, and self-confident Islamic leaders and imams, embedded in the cultural national environment in order to fulfil their role as mediator between generations, cultures and religion. It is now clear that most graduates become spiritual caretakers rather than imams.

With regard to the training of imams in the Netherlands, this paper ventures a normative but pragmatic, yet hypothetical proposition: a cooperation with foreign countries on religious training as short-term solution to enhance a free development of a European Islam. European countries, not having a profound Islamic tradition may not provide solid ground for the development of new Islamic ideas, a mandatory prerequisite for the development of a European Islam. The study of Islamic ritual traditions provides students with theological assumptions on how to deal with Islamic experiences in the everyday-life of Muslims (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). HBO trainings such as provided at the VU might equip professional spiritual caretakers with the technical skills of pursuing a career as polderimams. However, it is questionable whether the Islamic knowledge is sufficient to critically reflect on theological literature. Therefore, the Netherlands could learn from Islamic countries such as Morocco which has a long Islamic tradition in training imams.

The previous multi-dimensional analyses of religious governance and the imam training debate in the Netherlands have revealed the complexity of issues and actors involved and examined a vision for a European Islam from a Muslim perspective. Emerging opportunities for transnational imam training in an Islamic country could contribute to the development in this direction. The policies and the development of new policies took place within the institutional framework of verzuiling. But new questions and issues came up for which this framework was hardly suited, also from within the Dutch Moroccan community and partly related to the cross border characteristics of this new religious diversity. With an analytical perspective on Morocco, the next chapters aim at exploring the possibilities for cooperation in Islamic education for Muslim clerics, by displaying what an Islamic country such as Morocco has to offer.

6 RELIGIOUS GOVERNANCE AND IMAM TRAINING IN MOROCCO

What could Morocco contribute to religious educational accommodation in the Netherlands with regard to the training of Dutch imams? The foundation of the Mohamed VI Institute for the training of imams in 2015 marks a crucial moment for transnational religious training. Morocco produces and exports Islamic education beyond its borders, promoting religious moderation and tolerance in order to combat radical Islamic ideas (AOAV 2017).

Religious reforms in Islamic countries have been underway since the emerging War on Terror discourse in 2001. However, the Maghreb country has undergone some major religious reforms in the last two decades actively promoting a 'moderate Islam'. Morocco focused on containing religious fundamentalism in response to the Casablanca bombings in 2003, not only by means of a comprehensive CVE strategy including intelligence and police force but also through a profound theological education of society and imams. Morocco is among the most stable Islamic countries (CNN 2018). Its particular position resulted from a Maliki Sunni tradition embedded in an institutionalised religious field with the King as Head of Religion.

In his most recent book *Une Monarchie Citoyenne en Terre d'Islam* published in March 2018, Abdellah Boussouf, Secretary General of the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME), examines possibilities of a transnational transposition of *le champ religieux marocain* by discussing six major elements of the Moroccan model that may be of utility for European, and respectively African, Islamic educational issues (Boussouf 2018). Although international collaboration in the religious field has a very ancient history, in contemporary terms active state cooperation mainly centres around security, economy and partly cultural aspects (Mayer 2005). The contemporary Moroccan religious approach will be discussed as presented by Boussouf, accompanied by additional academic contributions, government and media sources. Section 5.5.1 examines the political background and how a range of events accelerated political and institutional reforms. Section 5.5.2 describes the Moroccan Islamic tradition based on the three pillars: Malikite school of law, Ash'arite tradition of theology and Moroccan Sufism. Moreover, this section examines what a "moderate Islam", promoted by the Kingdom, is about. Section 5.5.3 analyses the Moroccan model, its religio-institutional properties comprising of six major elements as described by Boussouf (2018), complemented

with additional considerations. Section 5.5.4 elaborates the imam training in Morocco, in particular the Mohamed VI institute for the training of imams, morchidines and morchidates. Section 5.5.5 depicts political opportunity structures emerging from the analysis.

6.1 Political Background

Between 2003 and 2011 Morocco was hit by a range of terror attacks killing 74 individuals and leaving hundreds injured (GTD 2018). In 2003 14 coordinated suicide bombers killed 45 people and left almost a hundred injured on five different spots around the city of Casablanca. The attacks, perpetrated by the Al-Qaida affiliated Moroccan Combatant Group (Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain, GICM) stroke international targets such as the Jewish community, a Spanish restaurant and the Belgian consulate resulting in six Europeans found dead (BBC 2003). Although the bombings occurred during a worldwide terror alert due to a terrorist attack in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi-Arabia five days earlier killing 34 people, there has been no specific warnings issued to Morocco (New York Times 2003).

After a series of bomb attempts in 2007 in the city of Casablanca killing one individual despite the bombers themselves, the 2011 terror attack in Marrakech was the second largest one after the 2003 bombings that killed 17 people and injured 23 others, including Dutch, French, British and Canadian citizens. The attack of which al-Qaida of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) claimed responsibility took place in Morocco's strongest tourist city, at the popular Jemaa el-Fnaa square next to the city's historic market area that attracts a plethora of tourists. Tourism is Morocco's second biggest employer after agriculture and draws most foreign currency to the country. Additionally, King Mohamed VI struggled to prevent the Arab Uprisings to slop over and destabilising the firmly established Kingdom (The Guardian 2011). Another important aspect indicating Morocco's vulnerability to terrorism is the increased number of Moroccan foreign IS fighters. Although Morocco has not been victim of attacks through ISIS, government's security sources believe 2,000 Moroccans have left the country as of March 2017, fighting with the militant group in Syria and Iraq. Around 200 have returned home and have been arrested directly after their arrival. It is known that Moroccans do not only collaborate with the ISIS abroad but operate in militant networks maintaining close ties

with ISIS across the country, being active among others in Casablanca, Marrakech, Tangiers and Agadir (Reuters 2017).

These events demanded political responses by the Kingdom of Morocco leading to a series of reforms to tackle capacity shortcomings, root causes for radicalisation and the inclusion of religious beliefs. The Moroccan approach of a moderate Islam is promoted as the one of the key elements to counter violent extremism (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2013). However, it is argued that these reorganisations don't function as theological breakthrough to questions of modernity but rather a restructuring to increase the King's position (Maghraoui 2009, 197).

Reforms and Politics

Since the new millennial, the Moroccan government embarked reforms in the religious field where an official Moroccan Islam was characterized and reconstructed (Kalpakian 2011, 1). The major objective of the transformation was to limit the influence of other Islamic doctrines and to strengthen the role of the King as supreme religious leader, with negative consequences for religious dissidents such as Wahhabism and Shiism. Religious hardliners were targeted and accused to promote radical ideas leading of militant Islamism resulting in numerous imprisonments (Maghraoui 2009, 200). The gradual institutionalisation of religious affairs is argued to be the most comprehensive reform within a Muslim country, legitimized by official bodies and the rule of law (El-Katiri 2013, 53-54). The Moroccan government overhauled the family law to foster a more inclusive society. The so-called *Moudawana* achieved a progressive enhancement of the status of women including a formal equal legal standing in the household and on divorce matters but furthermore, an inclusion in religious matters. Women are trained as female preachers and religious instructors in response to increased demands of diversified interpretations of Islamic sources. Known as *Morchidates*, however women are not allowed to work as imams or lead the khutba (Berman 2016).

Despite efforts of democratisation and strengthening the Parliament, the Prime Minister and his government, the central authority (*makzhan*) maintains to exercise effective control. The *makzhan*, the legitimized administration during French protectorate comprising the King and his advisors, dictate the dominant political culture, limiting freedom of press and managing the public debate on human rights and civil society in support of ancient traditions

of rather authoritarian nature (Buskens 2010, 110, Wainscott 2016, 639). Protests surrounding economic grievances are forcibly dispersed and protesters disproportionally imprisoned (Human Rights Watch 2018), journalists accused of insulting public figures are prosecuted, detainees fear of suffering torture and ill-treatment and same-sex relations remain a crime (Amnesty International 2016). The makzhan, also called "the deep state", the "informal hand" or "system behind the system" displays the centralised role of the monarchy and is responsible for distrust among Moroccans (Zerhouni 2018[30]).

However, the new family law is an expression of the political will to enforce social change by giving women and children more rights, and of a moderate progressive vision of Islam (Buskens 2010, 132).

6.2 Islam in Morocco

The religious field in Morocco is the result of a historical accumulation, deeply marked by the reigning dynasties from the Idrissids to the Alawits[31]. The ancient Moroccan Islamic tradition comprises three pillars: Malikite school of law, Ash'arite tradition of theology and a demarcated style of Moroccan Sufism. The Malikite rite, founded by Imam Malik, refers to Sunni Islam with a traditional orthodoxy of Sufism and has undergone a dynamic and responsive development throughout the country (Maghraoui 2009, 198, Buskens 2010, 94). The doctrinal school and legal Maliki tradition devotes rational *fiqhs* (Islamic jurisprudence) enhancing social relations (*mouamalats*) to establish equality in importance between the here and the hereafter (Boussouf 2018, 362).

Moroccan Sunni tradition doesn't refer to any ideological affiliation but applies a methodology of "transmitting the norm which takes into account the opinion of a 'clerical' body whose mission is to secure the right that has been produced by the state in religious matters" (Boussouf 2018, 299, see also Muedini 2015).[32]

In Moroccan history, Sufism had a considerable impact on politics and religion through Sufi saints and brotherhoods, although it has remained a rather informal religious expression

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[30] Dr. Saloua Zerhouni is professor at Mohamed VI University and founding member of *Rabat Social Studies Institute*, a think tank in Rabat. She gave a lecture at NIMAR institute about political participation in Morocco.
[31] For a comprehensive analysis see for instance Geertz (1971) or Buskens (2010).
[32] On a general introduction on Islam, Sunni Islam and Islamic law see the EPRS (European Parliamentary Research Service) publications „Understanding the branches of Islam" (2015), „Understanding the branches of Islam: Sunnism" (2016) or „Understanding Sharia" (2015).

(Cornell 2010). Ash'arite ideology functions as a dogmatic approach comprising socio-religious identity and accounts for social order and an oral culture integrating both concepts of tolerance from the ruled and obedience to the rulers. This tradition resulted in a comparatively stable political reality in Morocco since the 16th century, in particular the Royal Alawite Moroccan family. The integration of Ash'arism, Malikism and Sunni Sufism consolidated ideological harmony, relatively resistant to theological and intellectual conflicts that are usual among different affiliations (Ladjal 2015, 297-298, Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). Today, it furthermore displays a religio-political means to enhance regional security in the Maghreb region (Mohamed VI 2016).

What is a "moderate" Islam?

Moroccan moderate Islam comprises a model trying to find "the middle way" (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018). Balancing the three pillars of Moroccan Islam displays a religio-political means to enhance regional security in the Maghreb region. In a speech by King Mohamed VI delivered on August 20th in 2016 on the 63rd anniversary of the Revolution, he defends a "moderate" understanding of Islam and condemns the instrumentalization of illegitimate interpretations used by violent extremists.

> *"(…) Islam is a religion of peace. (…) Terrorists take advantage of some young Muslims – particularly in Europe – and of their ignorance of the Arabic language and of true Islam, to spread their distorted messages and misleading promises. (…) How could one possibly accept that anyone who listens to music will be swallowed by the depths of the earth, and other such lies? Terrorists and extremists use all means to convince young people to join them in order to attack societies profoundly committed to the ideals of freedom, openness and tolerance. (…) As ignorance spreads in the name of religion, Muslims, Christians and Jews have to close ranks in order to tackle all forms of extremism, hatred and reclusiveness.(…)"* (Mohamed VI 2016).

Like other countries in the MENA region use the term "moderate" as a strategic mean, also Morocco promotes a moderate Islam. An Islamic country was designated moderate when it engaged in democratic processes but since the rise of the Islamic State it more specifically coincides with the rejection of violence. Morocco in particular advocates an Islam of *the middle way*. In January 2016 the Kingdom hosted Islamic clerics from around the world to draft the Marrakech declaration on religious tolerance. The document reacts to the increased violence

of militant Islamism and refers to Charter of Medina in 622 AD, a constitutional contract which guaranteed the religious liberty also to non-Muslims between the Prophet Muhammad and the people of Medina (Marrakech Declaration 2016). Despite the objective of the declaration to promote a moderate Islam to counter violent extremism there are additional strategic considerations why countries advocate a "moderate" Islam (Washington Post 2017).

The creation of the Council for Oulémans for instance seeks to capitalise on common fundamentals of Morocco's updated interpretation of its religious and cultural tradition and coordinates and unifies the efforts to promote a moderate Islam to counter religious extremism on the continent and in Europe (Jeune Afrique 2017). In particular, the imam training institute carries out this task by educating Islamic preachers. As a result, the Moroccan approach is reproduced and disseminated across several sub-Saharan African countries. EU MS have already started to approach Morocco (see section 7.3).

How Moroccan "moderate" Islam is being accommodated and promoted will be examined in the following sections. The objective underlying this analysis aims at displaying, despite several controversies, which opportunity structures might favour and counter a collaboration with the Netherlands.

6.3 Le Champ Religieux Marocain – The Moroccan Model

The constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco prescribes a separation of powers in a constitutional monarchy, with a democratically elected multi-party system. Due to the continuing involvement of *makhzan* Morocco is considered an autocratic system. (Buskens 2010, 132). Religion in Morocco, is governed by means of a dynastic legitimacy, combining a "millennial tradition with new [worship] management of the state and its related structures" (Boussouf 2018, 282). Boussouf thereby refers to the constitutional mysteries comprising the religious field in an Islamic country. The Moroccan system is somewhat exemplary, since the King is not only considered head of state but also the legitimate supreme religious leader. Additionally, Morocco's affiliated stability aroused the interest of different political, academic and Islamic stakeholders in Europe (Morocco World News 2015a, Interview CMO Rabat 2018, Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018).

Boussouf depicts six components constituting the framework of Moroccan religious management that are elementary for its "utility" for international cooperation (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Utility components of the religious field in Morocco for foreign cooperation
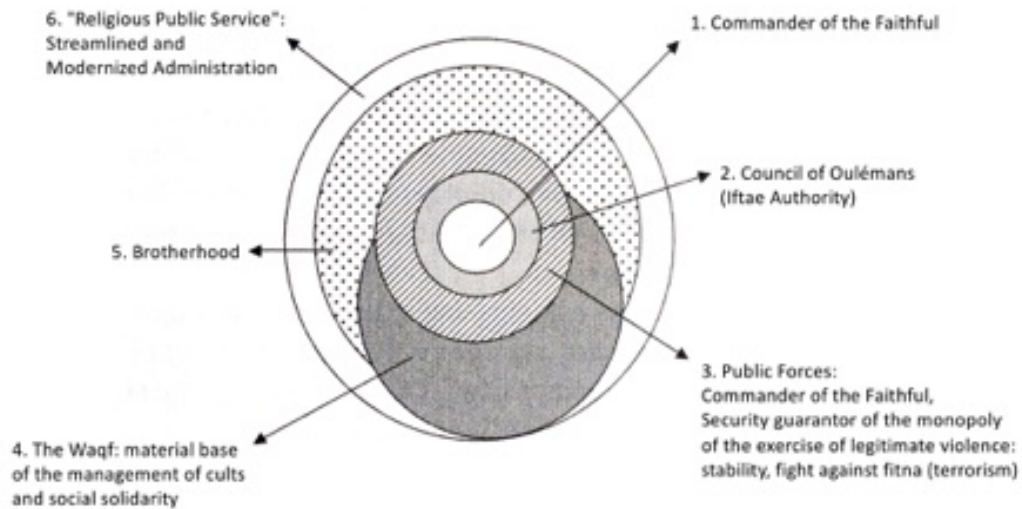
Source: Boussouf (2018, 293)

Commander of Believers

The monarchy is the most powerful institution in Moroccan society especially since the King Mohamed VI, 23rd ruler of the Alawite dynasty, is considered the legitimate supreme religious leader. He claims descent from prophet Mohammed and therefore the right to interpret Islam as *amir al-mouminin*, Commander of the Faithful (Buskens 2010, 91). His religious leadership, determined by Article 41 of the Constitution[33], is intimately linked to his political role as head of state. His position is further strengthened by Articles 42 to 48 of the constitution as well as Articles 50 to 59, stating the King's holiness, inviolability and authority. He appoints the minister of Islamic affairs, pronounces decrees known as *dahirs* and sets motions for new laws to be enacted (Maghraoui 2009, 197-199). King Mohamed VI promotes this double-role as head of state and Commander of the Faithful to take an active part in combatting radicalisation and violent extremism through "a participatory approach, based on the promotion of the

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[33] Extract from Article 41: The King, Commander of the Faithful [*Amir Al Mouminine*], sees to the respect for Islam. He is the Guarantor of the free exercise of beliefs [*cultes*]. He presides over the Superior Council of the Ulemas [*Conseil supérieur des Oulémas*], charged with the study of questions that He submits to it.

values of openness and tolerance embraced by Moroccans, and [through] the combination of social, development, religious and educational dimensions, as well as security aspects." (Mohamed VI 2015)

Council of Oulémans (Iftae Authority)

Besides the King as supreme religious leader, the supreme imams (Oulémans) of the Councils of Oulémans are the guardians of religious knowledge. Legitimized by Article 41 of the Moroccan constitution[34] and governing through the Higher Council of Oulémans, the religious authorities translate and accompany the attributions and prerogatives of the King in religious matters. They are the sole instance to issue *fatwas*, opinions, before official drafting and handle the religious every-day life of the believers (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2015). The Council, established in 1981 and revised in 2004, accounts for the religious institutional authority of Moroccan Sunnism, drafting the *khutba* that are read in mosques around the Kingdom. Additionally, under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Council reformed the imam training and established more diversified curricula that are taught at the Mohamed VI Institute for the training of imams (Alaoui 2017, 109). Secretary-General Boussouf stresses the role of the council as reference to the "moderate and tolerant Islam" defining international cooperation in religious matters (Boussouf 2018, 299).

Religious Function of the Police

The innate role of the King as both Commander of the Faithful and Head of Armed-Forces is wielded by the function of defending religion, associated with the internal order and the defence of the integrity of territory. Especially after the bombings in 2003, security and religion were closely linked and religious fundamentalism condemned as subversive enemy of the state (Boussouf 2018, 300).

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[34] Extract from Article 41: The Council is the sole instance enabled [*habilitée*] to comment [*prononcer*] on the religious consultations (Fatwas) before being officially agreed to, on the questions to which it has been referred [*saisi*] and this, on the basis of the tolerant principles, precepts and designs of Islam. The attributions, the composition and the modalities of functioning of the Council are established by *Dahir* [Royal Decree]. The King exercises by *Dahirs* the religious prerogatives inherent in the institution of the Emirate of the Faithful [*Imarat Al Mouminine*] which are conferred on Him in exclusive manner by this Article.

Morocco is reportedly the least affected country by terrorism in the region for over fifteen years (Business Wire 2017) with no major attacks in the last three years compared to countries such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi-Arabia or Syria (CNN 2017). The reason why the Kingdom remained relatively resilient to terrorist activity is its comprehensive approach to tackle violent extremism. Next to a more-fold strategy targeting different policy goals Morocco is member of different cooperative networks such as the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Counter IS, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism and holds conferences led by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (CEP 2018). Besides global partnerships Morocco furthermore, enhances its regional capacities through the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) to strengthen border cooperation as well as the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) to combat terrorist financing (AOAV 2018).

Between 2002 and 2015 Morocco's security services comprising the Central Bureau of Judicial Investigations (BCJI) and operation "Hadar" dismantled over 130 terrorist cells[35], leading to the arrest of 3,000 individuals (Morocco World News 2015a & 2015b). The comprehensive Moroccan strategy to fight violent extremism was the construction of a well-functioning security apparatus on the one hand, and the promotion of a moderate Islam on the other hand (Boussouf 2018, 300).

The Waqf

Administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Religious Foundations *waqfs* are religious endowments for the management of religious worship and social solidarity. Under institutional patronage contributions account for solidarity funding, perpetuating places of worship on a voluntary basis (Boussouf 2018, 301). They are furthermore an important source of income in Islamic countries (Buskens 2010, 124).

Brotherhood

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[35] Noteworthy, what Moroccan authorities consider a „terror cell" generally differs from international standards (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018).

Brotherhood or *confrérisme* constitutes the historical base of belonging to Islam accounting for the system of religious dominance oriented towards eschatology, the search for spirituality with God on the one hand and reinforcing ethics and morality within society on the other hand. The brotherhoods constitute the third component of Sunnism as lived in Morocco, besides Malikism and Ach'arism, having the same sources, namely the Qur'an (Boussouf 2018, 301).

Religious Public Service

Morocco has in the last decade increased its accountability and improved efficacy of public administration and the rule of law. Not least the reforms of the family law Mudawana to improve the principles of accessibility, continuity, equality and adaptability in order to meet universal standards in respect of fundamental rights.

In addition to the Council of Oulémans, Morocco founded several institutions to enhance its stance on Islamic theology and religious matters. The Council of Oulémans for Europe ensures a fulfilment of religious duties and Islamic worship for Moroccans residing in Europe in collaboration with European associations and governments. The aim is to pursue joint goals such as the vision of an Islam of "tolerance and virtue (…) based on the Qur'an" (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2014). Rabita al Mohamadia, established in 2006, comprises a council of religious scholars appointed by the King to animate scientific and cultural life in the field of Islamic studies by consolidating the links of cooperation and partnership with academic institutions and other scientific institutions pursuing the same objectives (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2015).

Furthermore, the establishment of the Ministry of Moroccans Residing Abroad, founded in 2007 marks the institutionalisation of a Moroccan Diaspora engagement strategy to strengthen the coordination between the key stakeholders such as the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME), Hassan II Foundation and several Ministries and Councils (Bilgili & Weyel 2012). Boussouf emphasizes the recognition of these six elements for international cooperation (Boussouf 2018, 302).

6.4 Imam Training in Morocco

Morocco builds on a moderate school of Islam through the Mohamed VI training Institute for Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates which opened its doors in 2014 in Rabat. Located in the heart of Rabat, the new building with traditional North-African architecture and modern classrooms is attached to the Al-Quaraouiyine University in Fez and under the authority of the Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs. The institute aims at imparting methods and knowledge to enable apprentices to fulfil der mission as imams and religious instructors. Its major task is to train and upgrade aspirants: It organizes seminars, conducts research to improve the performance of practicing Islamic clerics and establishes partnerships and cooperation with national and foreign institutions pursuing the same objectives (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2017).

Several sub-Saharan African countries such as Mali, Senegal, Chad, Nigeria or Côte d'Ivoir who follow the Maliki Sunni Islam have sent their imams to be trained in Rabat. In many African countries Muslims comprise a minority hence, there is a shortage in Islamic education and accommodation in general. Additionally, a lack of Islamic tradition often leads to misunderstandings. "In our discussions we question certain interpretation and correct them. After his graduation the imam should do the same in his country to believers", says Abdesalam Lazaar, director of the institute (Interview Rabat 2018).

The global appearance of the "Imam Academy" is remarkable: prised as leading institution to "export a moderate Islam" as success story in countering radical Islamic worldviews. However, that was not the initial idea, Lazaar states: "[I]n the beginning there were 150 spots for men and 50 spots for women, that's how it started. And we didn't make any publicity or move to bring other countries to this institution. That was not the goal at all. Then we had a successful experience." In the meantime, several European countries showed interest and approached the institute discuss a shared imam training. Associations and government officials from Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Italy for instance had meetings with Moroccan officials in Rabat over the last few years. However, so far only French imams and believers came to be trained at the institute. (Interview Abdesalam Lazaar Rabat 2018).

The Institute's curricula comprise religious topics such as Koranic interpretation, in addition to Islamic law, humanities and computing skills, whereby special programs are designed for foreign candidates. The 15th class of imams, morchidines and morchidates was

announced for the year 2019 with another 150 imams and 100 morchidates who will be trained over the duration of one year (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2018).

African nationalities obtain a two-year education while European aspirants have to spend three years at the institute as they need extended Arabic courses in order to be granted a degree (Chtatou 2016). However, some agreements provide for a three or six-month program, an option that is usually picked by French candidates. The selection criteria differ between Moroccans and foreign students. While Moroccan imams-to-be require a Baccalaureate diploma[36] and can directly apply to the institute, European Muslims don't require a university degree but need to make a request through an officially recognized Islamic organisation who carries out a pre-selection[37] (Interview Abdesalaam Lazaar Rabat 2018). Nevertheless, chosen candidates of all origins receive a scholarship of 2,000 dirham[38] from the Kingdom during the duration of their studies. Moroccan graduates will automatically be hired by the Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs obtaining the rank of a third grade administrator (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2017). In 2017 the total number of foreign students at the institute comprised almost 800 (Chtatou 2016) of whom each will obtain diplomas in a basic and in-service training as well as the development cycle and special qualification trainings (Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs 2017). However, the education is no equivalent to European higher education standards and would therefore not be recognized as such (Interview Abdesalam Lazaar Rabat 2018).

6.5 Exploring Opportunities for Morocco Training Foreign Imams

Which political opportunity structures could foster or counter a Dutch-Moroccan cooperation on training imams partly in Morocco? The previous descriptive analysis of religious accommodation in the Kingdom of Morocco displayed several promising factors that could be of use for a collaboration with the Netherlands on the training of imams. Namely, the political reforms of the religious field establishing several advanced institutions such as Rabita al

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[36] Baccalaureate is the equivalent of a European Bachelor. However, most Moroccan students at the institute are in possession of a Master's degree.
[37] In the case of France through the organisation *Union de Mosquées de France*.
[38] 2,000 dirham account for about € 200.

Mohamadia, the Council of Islamic scholars or the Mohamed VI institute for the training of imams. Additionally, the Moroccan Islamic tradition represents an Islam of the middle way, embedded in a comprehensive religious-institutional field providing for the needs of Muslim believers. In the following, the evidence of the previous sections will be examined to particularly depict the opportunities of Moroccan training for foreign imams.

6.5.1 Morocco's stability through long Islamic tradition

The tradition of Moroccan Islamic studies dates back 1,200 years. Both dynasties of the Idrisids and Alewites are recognized as descendants of the prophet Mohamed giving the rulers the unique two-folded position of heads of state and religious leaders, a privilege for the stability of any Islamic country (Interview Abdesalam Lazaar Rabat 2016). The tension of the state-religion complex account for a great majority of religious hostility in the Middle East and North-Africa (MENA) (Pew Research Center 2016). The general approval of the sultan and later the King as legitimate Commander of the Faithful led to a substantial development of a Moroccan Islam[39]. With the emerging religious fundamentalism in the MENA region Mali was the first country approaching the King directly to train their religious clerics. The successful cooperation consolidated Morocco's diplomatic position as religious instructor, drawing global attention to the institute and its moderate school of Islam as counter-radicalisation policy in the region and abroad (North African Post 2017).

Moreover, the integration of Ash'arism, Malikism and Sunni Sufism consolidated ideological harmony, a middle way anchored in an old heritage that is being promoted by Morocco through diplomatic means. According to Farid El Asri who is advocating between several European countries and the Kingdom, curiosity towards a "Moroccan model" stems from the political stability in the country, especially in comparison to the effects of the Arab uprisings (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018).

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[39] For a cross-country comparison of religious development see for instance Geertz (1971) or Eickelman (1982).

6.5.2 Advanced Course Content with a Modern Infrastructure

The Mohamed VI imam training institute is designed to transmit methods and knowledge to enable apprentices to fulfil der roles as imams and religious instructors. That includes theological aspirations as well as ritual processes. The expertise concerns basic knowledge and derived knowledge from fiqh to modern management of the cult (Boussouf 2018, 304). Religious topics regard Koranic interpretation, exegesis, *Hadith* and *Sunnah* (Prophet Mohammed's sayings and doings), in addition to Islamic law. Courses in humanities comprise history, geography, philosophy, psychology and sociology (North African Post 2017, APA 2017). With regard to modern management of ritual processes, technical competences are transmitted through standard courses in accounting, finance or logistics. Specific computer programming is necessary for a modern religious public service[40] provided in classrooms with modern computer equipment. (Boussouf 2918, 305). Practical skills beyond theology and humanity sciences serve to meet the demand of local labour markets since not all graduates have the possibility to work as an imam. Not only are there IT classes to maintain a mosque logistically but future imams need to know how to confront today's extremist online recruitment tactics. Students from sub-Saharan countries are given the possibility to learn practical skills in electrics, agriculture or tailoring to help them earn a living other than as religious instructor (APA 2017).

6.5.3 Adaptable Curriculum

The imam training institute offers curricula with a flexible composition of courses for foreign partners. The subjects are reformulated according to the needs and reality of the country of origin of the students through diverse agreements with each country approaching the institute. "An imam in Morocco is not the same thing as an imam in another country like Guinea, France or Nigeria", says Lazaar. The differences lie in politics, sociology, history and world issues that are being chosen on a case-by-case basis (Interview Abdesalam Lazaar Rabat 2018).

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[40] For more information about the modern administration of mosques see for instance El Asri (2018).

The agreement with the Union of French Mosques appeals to individual Muslims or already established imams to upgrade their knowledge or for a full training in a duration of three years, or respectively three to six months. French students are trained, depending upon the choice of the apprentice, partly in both countries. Whereas France takes care of political and social structures in a French context, Morocco provides the Islamic part and human sciences. Another composition has been agreed upon with an Italian University. In Rabat, these students are trained on Islamic matters only, while the Italian University takes part of sociological and general courses. African aspirants on the contrary bring their local teachers to Rabat for courses on geography, history and national law (Bouaziz 2017, Boussouf 2018, Interview Abdesalam Lazaar Rabat 2018).

6.5.4 High quality education

According to currently enrolled students, the main motivation for starting at the Mohamed VI imam training institute is the offered quality. "In France you find certain trainings but overall there is no complete program that is also a quality training like you find it here. Here you get education on global religious issues with very good scholars", states a French student conducting her education at the imam training institute as morchidate (Interview 1 French student Imam institute Rabat 2018). Additionally, the in-depth Arabic training within an Arabic environment helps to improve the language skills enormously. "I didn't feel a proper training was possible in France. But I felt the need for a proper training", states another French morchidate in training (Interview 2 French student at Imam institute Rabat 2018).

In addition to the Director of the Institute, the Deputy Director of Pedagogical Affairs and the Secretary General, the Institute's pedagogical body include permanent teachers, researchers within the institute, associate teachers recruited by contract and individual teachers. The Scientific Commission, proposed by the director of the institute and appointed by the Ministry of Habous and Islamic affairs, is responsible for the recruitment of teachers.

6.5.5 Political Opportunities

The emerging political opportunities display a profound and comprehensive religious model providing the adequate infrastructure to train imams according to an ancient Islamic tradition. Furthermore, the public services and the newly established institutions, the adaptable curriculum and the quality of the education depict promising preconditions for foreign

believers. Especially the promotion of a "moderate Islam" of the middle way and the official promotion in offering trainings to foreign countries give reason to look more closely towards Morocco as partner country to train imams. However, several limitations have been identified in the previous sections that policy-makers need to consider as well. The Ministry of Moroccans Residing Abroad (CCME) for instance, represents the strong institutional ties with the Moroccan diaspora, displaying a considerable influence over Muslims residing in Europe. The Kingdom is autocratic and non-secular, thus it was accused of disregarding several human rights and furthermore, following political strategic objectives with religious means in order to strengthen its own positions. Another obstacle that is worth mentioning is that an imam training in Morocco leaves out other Islamic traditions by focusing on the ancient tradition that persist in Moroccan communities in particular.

Table 7: Opportunities for cooperating with Morocco on the training of Imams

Possibilities	
A moderate Islam in a stable Islamic country	Based on a historically consolidated ideological harmony the official religious paradigm in Morocco rejects violence and promotes a peaceful Islam, guaranteeing religious freedom and an imperative of "the middle way".
Religious Public Services	The Institutions[41] established through recent reforms account for operational opportunities of transnational religious cooperation.
Advanced modern course offer	The courses of the Mohamed VI Institute for the training of imams include next to theological aspirations knowledge and methods of ritual process, e.i. technical competences of mosque management.
Adaptability of the courses (case-by-case approach)	Depending on the student's origin the institute offers a flexible combination of courses including the countries preferences and own structural context. The courses can be taught partly in Rabat and partly in the country of origin.
Quality education in Islamic theology	In-depth Arabic language courses and the study of theological Islamic sources are instructed by Islamic scholars of Rabita al Mohamadia

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[41] In particular The Higher Council of Oulémans, The Council of Oulémans for Europe, Rabita Al Mohamadia, Mohamed VI Institute for Training of imams, Morchidines and Morchidates and the Ministry of Moroccans Residing Abroad.

Official policy	The government of Morocco explicitly invites foreign states to train their imams and religious instructors at the Mohamed VI institute for the training of imams.

Limitations	
Institutionalised relation with diaspora communities	The Ministry of Moroccans Residing Abroad marks the institutionalised relationship of Moroccan Diaspora engagement to maintain their influence.
Autocratic Political System	The autocratic system of Morocco has been criticised to disregard several human rights such as freedom of speech and ill-treatment of detainees.
Non-secular State	Through the double-role of King Mohamed VI being head of state and commander of the faithful as well as the makhzan there might be a conflict of political influence on religious matters.
Special focus Moroccan Islamic doctrines	The focus on inherited Moroccan Islamic tradition only might display a to narrow view for foreign countries to train their imams and religious leaders.

How the discussed factors could play out to encourage or discourage a transnational imam training will be discussed in the next chapter, by looking at both Moroccan and the case of the Netherlands. Furthermore, transnational cooperation demands the inclusion of another actor. The European Union will be integrated briefly in the following chapter due to its increasing role in providing for governance of religious diversity.

7 BI- AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION: The Netherlands & Morocco and the EU

How Islam and imam training in particular is accommodated within EU MS and what comprises its deviant management raises a variety of multi-dimensional questions regarding identity and citizenship in light of integration and secularism, as the previous discussion have shown. This chapter aims at exploring new ways of religious governance by confronting Morocco and the Netherlands in order to explore whether the identified possibilities and limitations for a transnational imam training could indeed lead to a European Islam. Furthermore, how Islam could develop through new modes of religious accommodation requires the inclusion of an adjacent area, in particular the EU. Since it has been shown that the place of Islam emerges within a distorting environment of contentious debates, it is mandatory to reflect on EU initiatives and policies and their impact on national levels as well as their function as supranational actor in the governance of religious diversity. Hence, section 7.1 elaborates on the previously established political opportunity structures by examining common denominators of the Netherlands and Morocco, including a Moroccan diaspora community residing in the Netherlands as well as several institutional connections. The bold endeavour of transposing specific aspects of the Moroccan approach to Dutch imam trainings provides for new modes of democratic experimentalism to deal with religious claims. Section 7.2 depicts the EU regarding Islam and exchange with Islamic countries, such as in this case Morocco. Several roles have been identified: the EU as political actor, as facilitator of academic exchange, as well as guardian of liberal democratic virtues such as human rights and religious freedom. However, the EU's position as security actor concerning the multilateral relationship with Morocco is attributed specific attention. This perspective accounts for the underlying research problem of a denunciation of Islam within EU MS in light of security politics, a particular problem that the EU is increasingly coping with.

7.1 A Dutch-Moroccan Imam Training?

The transposition of a model from one sphere of knowledge to another is generally a complex undertaking. It depends on the practical aspects in correspondence with the more abstract ones. Four main dimensions to identify political opportunities have been introduced earlier and will be utilized in the following: First, the relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political environment, i.e. the formal legal and institutional structure of the system. Second, the stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity. Third, the presence or absence of elite allies, both referring to the properties of informal power relations and fourth, the state's capacity and propensity for repression, as only non-consensual dimension (McAdams 1996). In the context of this paper, the latter refers to democratic or non-democratic political intentions. Morocco however, advocates a position of mutual enrichment based on dialogue and feedback (Boussouf 2018, 303).

As the case of the Netherlands has shown, European states are struggling to accommodate adequate Islamic education and the formation of religious leaders and clerics that are recognised upon Muslim communities, an obligatory precondition for the development of a European Islam. In order to facilitate the transition to a confident European Islamic intelligentsia, this thesis proposes transnational imam trainings to account for the shortcomings of European trainings. The following overview of common denominators highlights Moroccan Dutch relations in general, before the opportunities for a transnational imam training between the two countries are discussed.

7.1.1 Common Denominators

Europe and Morocco share memories of religious contestation throughout the past on the one hand and deal with migration and security on the other. This section aims at displaying the demographic and additional institutional premises that are in place between Morocco and the Netherlands.

Moroccan Diaspora Community

While 7,1% of the overall Dutch population are Muslim (Pew Research Center 2017), an estimated number of 391,000 citizens with Moroccan origin comprise 37% of the overall Muslim population in the Netherlands (see figure 8). Persons are defined as Moroccan if they

themselves or at least one of their parents have been born in Morocco hence, the first and second generation of migrants.

Figure 8: Country of origin of Muslims in the Netherlands
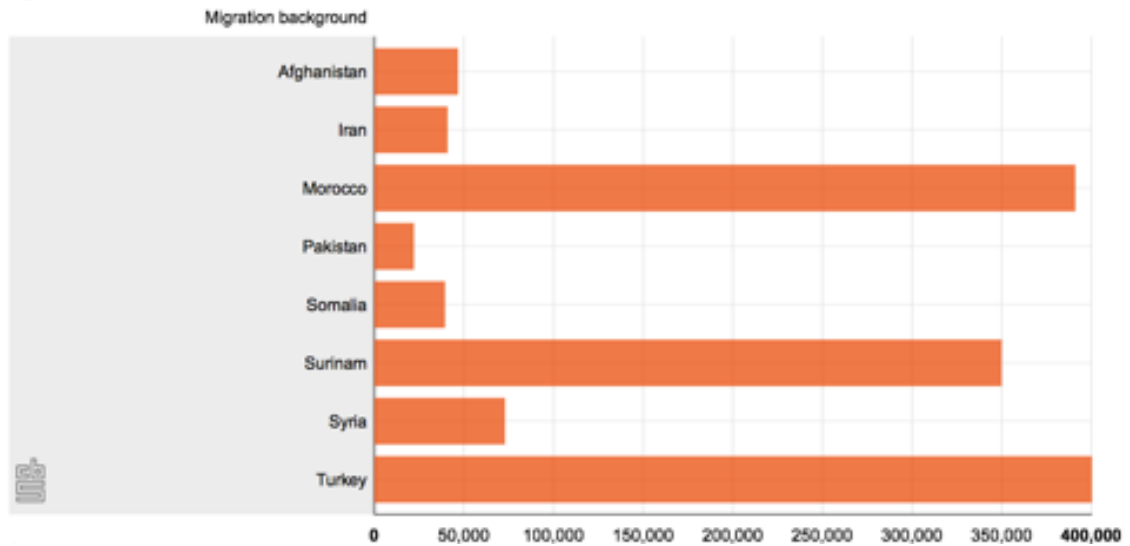
Source: CBS (2017)

Survey research found that especially Moroccan Muslims are conservative in matters of religion and more active in their faith in comparison to Turkish communities. The study showed that almost half of the Moroccan respondents visit a mosque at least once a week, 76% claimed to pray five times a day and 93% are fasting the full duration of Ramadan (Maliepaard & Gijsberts 2012). Moreover, there are around 180 Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands (De Hart 2014).

Table 8: Religious activities of Moroccan in comparison to Turkish communities (2011)

Percentage of respondents answering "Yes"	Moroccan respondents	Turkish respondents
Viewing themselves as Muslim	97%	94%
Visiting a mosque at least once a week	44%	42%
Praying five times every day	76%	27%
Fasting for all days of the Ramadan	93%	66%
Eating halal every day	94%	80%
Wearing a headscarf (women)	64%	48%

However, Moroccan mosque organisations are mainly based on autonomous mosques and depict a less hierarchical organisation in comparison to Turkish communities (see section 5.1.2). Although the Kingdom maintained its connections to Moroccan's residing abroad through the Amicales (see section 5.1.2), today the government plays only a modest role. Moroccans living abroad constitute more than 10% of Morocco's population hence, the diaspora communities comprise an important share of Moroccan society. At least two million European-based Moroccans visit Morocco during holiday season, transmitting a great amount economic weight to the Kingdom (El-Katari 2013, 62).

Institutional and Legal Ties

The Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME) and the Higher Council of Oulémans coordinate to harmonise the integration of Moroccan diaspora communities in their host countries. Morocco perceives religion as the main bond between Dutch Moroccans and Morocco, however it doesn't transmit a specific religious policy through the CCME (El-Katari 2013, Sunier 2016). During the month of Ramadan for instance, Moroccan imams are officially visiting the Netherlands to support believers in the mosques. Under supervision of the Dutch embassy, the institutions draft a list each year, accounting for approximately 30 to 50 Moroccan imams in 2018 who were granted permission to preach in the Netherlands during the four weeks between May and June (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018). Despite the institutionalisation of Morocco's relation to its diaspora communities, the efforts on recent developments in Europe are somewhat restrained. A few activities such as lectures and conferences on religious topics have been organized, but the interest is rather limited (Sunier 2016, 416).

Additionally, the revision of *"Mudawana"*, the Moroccan family law, prescribed an automatic Moroccan nationality to every child born to Moroccan parents (Buskens 2010, 119). In this way, Morocco tries to create an affiliation to religion, politics and nationalism. However,

the imposed direct effect on Moroccans residing abroad is restrained by global developments of the Islamic landscape[42] (Sunier 2016, 415).

7.1.2 Opportunities for Transnational Imam Training and European Islam

The urgency of a national imam training in the Netherlands is increasing. New generations of European Muslims are now growing up, while new phenomena are rising regarding identity and citizenship in a disputed debate about integration and security. The development of new policies within the contested institutional frame work of the Netherlands displays a major challenge for policy-makers who are confronted with a polarised public opinion and claims from Muslim communities. The previous discussion has revealed that the place of Islam in Western European societies is the "crucial subject of debate" (Fadil, El Asri & Bracke 2015, 223). New forms of democratic experimentalism could facilitate the development of a European Islam, freed from contentious political debate and case-by-case solutions (Bader 2007). This thesis ventures a normative but pragmatic, yet hypothetical proposition: a cooperation with foreign countries on religious training as short-term solution to enhance the free development of a European Islam. Transnational imam training between a European and an Islamic country is assumed to enhance a deeper theological reflection on ancient traditions of Islam in light of the deep-reality of Muslims in Europe. European countries, not having a profound Islamic tradition may not provide solid ground for the development of new Islamic ideas. The study of Islamic ritual traditions provides students with theological assumptions on how to deal with Islamic experiences in the everyday-life of Muslims (Interview Farid El Asri Rbat 2018). HBO trainings such as provided at the VU might equip professional spiritual caretakers with the technical skills of pursuing a career as "polderimams". However, it is questionable whether the Islamic knowledge is sufficient to critically reflect on theological literature. Therefore, the Netherlands could learn from Islamic countries such as Morocco which has a long Islamic tradition in training imams.

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[42] Yassine Elforkani for instance, a Dutch-Moroccan imam didn't turn to his country of origin but accepted financial support from the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in Kuwait in 2013 (Soetenhorst 2013).

Table 9: Overview Opportunities for a Transnational Imam Training between The Netherlands and Morocco

THE NETHERLANDS	MOROCCO
Possibilities	
Position of graduates of Dutch imam trainings	A moderate Islam in a stable Islamic country
Questions of Identity & Citizenship for second and third Muslim generations	Religious Public Services
Demand of an Islam From Muslims for Muslims (Bottom-Up)	Advanced and adaptable modern course offer (case-by-case approach)
Demand for Credible Islamic leaders	Quality education in Islamic theology
NIMAR institute	Official policy
Limitations	
Foreign Influence	Institutionalised relation with diaspora communities
Secularism	Autocratic Political System
Illegitimate state intervention	Non-secular State
Equality Principle	Special focus Moroccan Islamic doctrines

Religious education in an Islamic country has potential in several ways. First, it lifts the credibility of Dutch graduates towards Muslim communities and mosque boards, at least until a new generation of Muslims claim authority in the mosques. Not least because current imams in Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands obtained their education in Morocco themselves. Second, the demand for Islamic intellectuals is increasing, as mentioned by Islamic representatives and scholars in the Netherlands, Islam needs a revision from within: "until Islam undergoes its own rebirth, in which its divine commands are generally allowed to give way to secular, enlightenment practices, the majority of Muslim moderates will be held hostage by the minority of Muslim extremists." (Lloyd 2015). Third, the crisis of new generations of Muslims with foreign origin contains ethno-religious identity struggles. The

proposed "superimams" educated in the Netherlands may be theologically not well enough equipped to account for this task. Understanding the religious traditions of the country of origin could help to reconcile with own spiritual affiliations beyond the doctrines of restriction such as 'halal' and 'haram'. And finally, the greatest potential is the symbolic concession to European Muslims, recognizing spiritual questions for the formation of identity and facilitating the evolvement of a Dutch Islam.

Notwithstanding, there are remarkable obstacles. The analysis of both the Dutch and Moroccan imam trainings have revealed two highly deviating regulatory systems, a democratic Western European country and an Islamic Monarchy. The major concern of the Netherlands is to establish an imam training based on liberal-democratic policy-making with no interference of the state based on secularism, hence no involvement in theological questions. Moreover, the Netherlands aims at reducing influence of "the long arm" of the country of origin. Morocco on the other hand displays an autocratic Islamic regime with a rather intransparent involvement of the "informal hand" of the *makhzan*, a practice that is highly suspicious according to international diplomats (Interview Diplomat Rabat 2018). The full discretion lies with the King as commander of the faithful, giving him authority to guide the direction of Islam in Morocco. However, the revised institutional system and the official promotion directs at an Islam of the middle way, reflective and compromising. Strategic considerations surrounding a "moderate Islam" need to be taken into account.

A concrete proposition: VU and Morocco

Despite the increasing interest from Dutch officials towards the Moroccan imam training, so far no Dutch Muslim organisation, institution or educational facility approach the country to discuss a concrete cooperation. However, according to Said Bouharraou, spokesman of the Council of Moroccan Mosques in the Netherlands, RMMN is currently looking overseas to establish a joint imam training program with a special emphasis on theological expertise. Together with VU Amsterdam and other mosque associations, the attention is drawn to the new territory of transnational collaboration. The curriculum intends an HBO education in the Netherlands and an internship in an Islamic country. After consulting with 15 local imams, the level of Qur'anic knowledge was addressed once more. An internship in Morocco should give insights on both theological and vocational level. Negotiations with Morocco haven't started

yet, but an approach has been made. Bouharrou further emphasizes that the Dutch government has no influence in the curriculum but they could facilitate the contact with Morocco. On the question whether the government does have indeed political leeway according to the secular paradigm he referred to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR): "Strasbourg said that the government has the obligation to help religious communities to practice their religion. That gives some space".

The Influence of Islamic countries over believers in Europe is rather sceptical as the Dutch imam training debate has shown. However, the offer from Morocco of a very specific Islamic traditions displays more promising than discouraging opportunities for establishing an imam training with the Netherlands. Several rules or guarantees could be negotiated with Moroccan institutions in order to ensure that the cooperation is limited to educating imams for one semester or year abroad, but no further influence should be provided after the student's return to Europe.

A short-term solution for a long-term objective: A European Islam

A transposition of the Moroccan model as a whole is obviously not an attempt of this thesis. Nevertheless, the sphere of religious knowledge thus, theological aspects and ritual processes for European states are indeed worth to be taken into consideration to improve national imam trainings as short-term strategy to reach the overall objective of developing an Islam of Europe. The practice of embassy Islam and the long arm of Islamic countries is a condition that will not change overnight. Especially in the case of Moroccan diaspora, where the recruitment of imams proceeds through informal networks to import Moroccan clerics to the Netherlands. Imams-to-be, growing up in the Netherlands thus, being native Dutch speakers and were socialised in Dutch cultural and institutional context and obtaining their theological and ritual education in Morocco offer the chance of easing the transition from one generation of Muslim authority to another. Also the Dutch report from the "Advisory Committee for Immigration" emphasizes that "[the government cannot] prevent imams being trained in the Netherlands from being subjected to influences in the country where their communities originate, through study trips or internships, or through modern means of communication such as the Internet." (ACVZ 2005, 100). Morocco represents a stable Islamic country due to the King's role as head of the faithful, it promotes an Islam of the middle way

which is reflected in the courses. Furthermore, an advanced institutional framework offers diversified curricula to foreign organisations on case-by-case agreements.

Secularism as major obstacle is a valid argument. However, it doesn't solve the issue at hand. Namely how to best accommodate the claims of Islamic faith in modern European societies. Amid polarised societies, institutional legacies and new policies, the struggle to balance the claims increasingly ends up at the ECtHR, a conspicuous "force in the multilevel battles over the place of religion in the European public sphere." (Fokas 2015) What role the EU plays with regard to religious accommodation and how it could facilitate cross-border religious education between Islamic and EU countries will be part of the next section, a rather brief description rather than a comprehensive exploration.

7.2 The EU and Islamic Accommodation

The previous discussions have examined to what extent the existing institutionalised ways of religious diversity are adequate to deal with new forms of religious claims. European countries are struggling with ways to accommodate Muslim minorities while maintaining liberal-democratic values, especially the strict division of state and religion. This balancing act is not always in the interest of all stakeholders. Some policies have drawn public support in some areas but have been criticized elsewhere as an attack on Islam, such as bans in France on the burqa or face-covering headwear in Austria. Other policies have sought to smooth tensions between native-born and Muslim communities, such as the introduction of Muslim councils to help resolve conflicts over cultural practices (Benton & Nielsen 2013). What particular role does the EU play with regard to the place of Islam in Europe? By including this additional dimension, this study aims at displaying that Islam and Muslims in Europe are not only exposed to national policies and debates of their countries of origin and their countries of residence but comprise also actors on supranational level such as, in this case, the European Union.

7.2.1 The Roles of the EU

EU as Political Actor

The European Union increases its efforts for a productive debate about Muslim and Islam related controversies. It is host to conferences on inter- and multiculturalism and provides

funding for more inclusive projects, such as training for local Belgian police forces on Islam as part of broader community approach. Efforts also include the coordination and monitoring on combating anti-Muslim hatred through the Fundamental Rights Agency or the Eurobarometer surveys (European Commission 2017, European Commission 2015, FRA 2017). Table 10 offers a variety of projects encouraged through EU efforts.

Table 10: Selected Initiatives of the EU as Political Actor

Initiative	Description	Reference
Combating Anti-Muslim Hatred	Carrying out Key Events on anti-Muslim hatred, e.g. country missions, joint roundtables or hosting the Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium	http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=50085
Action Plan	European Commission Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals	https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/integration_en
Europe for Citizens Programme	Support for projects on the reflection on European cultural diversity	https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens/strands/european-remembrance_en
Eurobarometer on Discrimination	Survey on Discrimination in the EU in 2015	http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2077
Fundamental Rights Agency	EU MIDIS II Survey on Minorities and Discrimination in 2017	http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/eumidis-ii-muslims-selected-findings

Additionally, the EU has recently strengthened its position as international diplomatic actor to improve relations to Islamic countries and exchange practices. Joint strategies, thematic summits and dialogues substitute the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) to increase the channels of dialogue abroad, giving the EU a political role in strengthening the place of Islam in European societies..

EU to facilitate Research and Intercultural Exchange

A major goal of the EU is to facilitate research and intercultural exchange among member states and abroad, contributing to a reflection about citizenship and European identity. In addition to support for academic production and exchange between various Muslim and non-Muslim stakeholders across the EU and its Islamic partner countries, the EU delivers several

transnational symposiums and conferences as well as supports research endeavours by European Universities (European Commission 2018).

Table 11: Selected EU Projects for Intercultural Exchange

Project	Description	Reference
European Youth Portal	"CrossCulture Internships" between Germany and the Islamic world	http://europa.eu/youth/node/19044_en
Erasmus+	Worldwirde academic exchange and scholarships	http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/rasmus-plus/about/who-can-take-part_en
ACCEPT PLURALISM	A project at the European University Institute to explore contemporary diversity challenges	https://www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/RobertSchumanCentre/Research/ArchivesMigration/AcceptPluralism

However, several experts who have been interviewed for this study emphasized the need for increased European based research on Islamic theology. Especially the vision for a European Islam necessitates means that are decoupled from national prerogatives. Farid El Asri, director of the European research network EMRID stressed the opportunities of interdisciplinary research for the development of new forms of religious accommodation. The reflection on different Islamic realities within the EU could contribute to a bottom-up development of an Islam characterised by new Islamic intellectuals (Interview Farid El Asri Rabat 2018, see also his discussion about a European Islam in El Asri 2018).

By and large the EU commits to increased academic exchange within and beyond its borders. Although, limited evidence shows that more efforts could be made to facilitate research on Islamic Studies in order to enhance the development of a European Islam.

EU as Guardian of Fundamental Rights

However, also judiciary has important implications for the place of Islam in the European public sphere. Under the principle of subsidiarity, the responsibility to secure universal human rights lies within the discretion of EU MS. Hence, governing powers should belong to higher administrative units only when lower units are incapable of fulfilling them. How treaty provisions of religious freedom are executed and what direct effects occur on the

organisational and symbolic incorporation of Muslims have gained momentum in political debates (Koenig 2007).

In Europe, freedom of religion or belief is protected by Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights and Article 10 of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights. As a universal human right, freedom of religion or belief safeguards the respect for diversity (Council of the European Union 2013). Secondary legislation such as directives, regulations and decisions account for the proper implementation of the policies set out in the treaties, for example provisions for non-discrimination, equal treatment or against racism and xenophobia[43]. However, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has recently evolved as a major force in the "multilevel battles" over the place of religion in Europe (Fokas 2015, 54). European jurisdiction influences religious pluralism and the position of Islam and Muslims through national case law on religion state relations[44] or local case law on issues like the headscarf[45].

The human rights discourse provides religious minorities with new normative repertoires to legitimize their claims (see Soysal 1997 and Fokas 2015). This accounts for another means to challenge the historically institutionalised arrangements of religious accommodation across EU MS.

7.2.2 The EU's increasing Position as Security Actor in light of a 'radical Islam'

A previous literature review has shown how increased religious fundamentalism referring to Islamic sources, challenge both politics and society. Although only very few radicalised individuals commit violent acts, these outliers comprise fear and threat, putting the free evolvement of Islam in Europe at risk.

Especially the terror attacks in Paris in 2015 mark the critical juncture for EU CVE measures (Interview EU Delegation Rabat 2018). In addition to competences and matters of

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[43] Directive 2000/43/EC, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, Directive 2006/54/EC, implementing the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (Revision), or Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.
[44] For instance, Case 14307/88 Kokkinakis v Greece (ECtHR, 25 May 1993): Conviction of Article 9, freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
[45] For instance, Case C- 157/15 Achbita (ECJ, 14 March 2017) and Case C 188/15 Bougnaoui and ADHH (14 March 2017): wearing the Islamic headscarf.

internal security, the endeavour comprises coordinating, organizing and regulating its key security functions with neighbour countries. The gradual consolidation with the Middle East and North Africa took place within the policy framework of the ENP and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), through instruments such as Action Plans, Mobility Partnerships or technical assistance programs (European Commission 2018). In September 2017, Vice President and High Representative Federica Mogherini announced a program under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) worth €17,5 million to address the terrorist threat in the MENA region:

> "*We are increasing as a priority our work and cooperation on counterterrorism with partner countries. We have developed a network of counterterrorism experts that are deployed in key countries and a series of counterterrorism dialogues with our partners to exchange best practices and to learn from each other. The best way to address radicalisation and violent extremism effectively is by working together, in a comprehensive and concerted way.*" (VP/HR Federica Mogherini, in EEAS 2017)

EU in Morocco – A new Partnership on CVE

Morocco is such a "key partner country" (EEAS 2017). In December 2017 the EU Delegation in Rabat established a unit focusing on countering and preventing cognitive radicalism and violent extremism, a moment of revival for common security efforts. The CVE Unit comprises three major tasks: First and most importantly, to build a horizontal security partnership based on mutual recognition. This serves to exchange best practices and means that are necessary for a comprehensive CVE and PVE strategy. EU diplomats appose Moroccan stakeholders and delegates from EU MS to discuss Moroccan approaches to counter cognitive radicalisation inspired by Islam. A second focus for preventing radicalisation is put on education interventions. This attempt is increasingly emphasized to address environments beneficial for extremist ideologies and supporter recruitment (De Silva 2017). Third, and presumably the most challenging and bold endeavour is the establishment of a glossary: The Delegation works together with Rabita al Mohamadia, the council for Islamic scholars, on a handbook comprising the most promising "universal interpretations" of Arabic terms such as *shar'ia* or *jihad*. According to the EU delegate on CVE in Rabat, it is important to understand the terms before working on concrete measures (Interview EU Delegation Rabat 2018, see also section 2.2.2 of

this study). This is not an uncontroversial undertaking in a domain where opinions tend to differ sharply. However, the EU CVE expert is optimistic, after consulting several Islamic scholars, researchers and experts, that this endeavour is a step in the right direction. Especially the academics of Rabita al Mohamedia who are researching subjects such as education and de-radicalisation in prisons in an Islamic context, represent an auspicious partner to develop such a project. The EU delegation works on facilitating relationships between Morocco and EU MS by offering new ways of cooperation. The long-term goal is to establish a strategic dialogue with Morocco (Interview EU Delegation Rabat 2018).

7.2.3 A Balancing Act

The different roles of the EU demand a constant balancing between challenging constraints. Additional to coherence policies and new forms of participatory governance, auditing authorities and public consultations are attempts of increasing legitimacy of the established policies. Civil participation is necessary in order to overcome the polarised relationship within society with regard to Islam (Interview CMO Rotterdam 2018). At this year's European Youth Event (EYE2018) of the European Parliament for instance, 8.000 participants discussed future issues for the EU who called on EU decision-makers for a more coherent security policy with regard to criminalization and marginalization of Muslims (European Parliament 2018).

The controversial debate about the place of Islam in European societies is not limited to national borders. National discretion ends where EU legislation infers. The pro-active initiatives by the European Union display and increasing involvement in the transformation of citizenship and identity with considerable implications for an emerging European Muslim generation.

8 Discussion

In the quest of revealing answers to the research question it has been explored whether religious governance could lead to an Islam in a contemporary European context and furthermore, how the development of a European Islam is able to prevent radicalisation inspired by Islam. The thesis thereby focused on Dutch imam training and on possibilities and limitations of cooperating with an Islamic country in order to reach this objective. Several sub-questions comprise the multidimensional and complex nature of religious governance of Islamic higher education and its implications on a European Islam. The research interest was examined in a descriptive and exploratory manner to discover the subject of governance of religious diversity in depth. In a first step, this study reviewed the existing literature on radicalisation and counter radicalisation. It has been found that certain concepts of radicalisation and violent extremism, in particular cognitive and behavioural radicalisation, are translated into different policies with unintended consequences, playing out in a vicious circle of security measures and discrimination, contributing to a denunciation of Islam. The concept of religious governance by Bader (2007) offered an analytical framework for the institutionalisation of Islam and in particular, the formation of an educational regime in which future spiritual leaders are educated. By employing ideas of associative democracy (Hirst 1994) normative considerations allowed to identify some major distortions for the free evolvement of an "Islam of tomorrow", by conquering the bigot concept of "superimams". The following presentation of the main results provides for answering the established sub-questions, comprising the overall research question.

Institutionalising Islam in a secular state and the failed formation of "superimams"

Merging the findings of the historical institutional analysis together with the outcomes of exploring the practical activities regarding the training of imams, the idea of a "superimam" reflects a modern projection of common ideas on the growing Muslim population and the so-called "domestication of Islam" through top-down practices. The empirical case study of the Dutch imam training is exemplary for the tensions and processes between state, religion and society. The debate in the Netherlands has illustrated the intensive pressure that Muslims are facing with regard to the contentious discourse surrounding the education of Islamic clerics.

However, suggesting a more inclusive approach of religious governance touches upon the principles of the strict separation of religion and state. Analysing the imam training debate has unveiled ambiguous practices of interfering in religious matters by the state under integration and security policies, with a continued adherence of an attributed role and place for Islam. It will not come as surprise to policy makers that the endeavours to direct Islamic practice in a certain direction has unintended consequences. Despite the strict commitment to secularism and the prevention to involve in theological questions, the policies employed are not left unattended by Muslims. It is one thing to impede foreign money flows into the national Islamic sphere but yet another to ban the practices of "embassy Islam" from one moment to another, long established and initially welcomed in order to help the settling and religious accommodation of Muslim labour workers. However, new Islamic authorities and religious leaders, the prerequisite for a European Islam, will not "grow" on one day, either.

Transnational Imam Training – a future objective to enhance a European Islam

The possibility of transnational imam training has several chances to overcome the shortcomings of national imam trainings. In light of religious governance and transnational imam training in particular as chance for the evolvement of a European Islam, some major results need to be emphasised. (1) First, an imam who obtained parts of his practical and theological education in Morocco increases his chance to be employed in a mosque in the Netherlands. Deeper theological knowledge of students, based on a long Islamic tradition in an advanced religious institutional field of an Islamic country enhances the credibility of graduates. A deep theological knowledge and Arabic skills are important prerequisites for Islamic authorities of first-generation Muslims comprising the majority of mosque administrative boards. (2) Second, an imam who was socialised in the Netherlands and actually works in a Dutch mosque has better chances to accommodate the needs of a Muslim generation with emerging theological questions in a modern European context. (3) Third, a deeper study of traditional Islamic rituals is the foundation for Islamic intellectuals, leaders and scholars with the ability to reflect on the past and to critically discuss new and traditional prerogatives. Understanding the Islamic traditions of the country of origin could help to reconcile with own spiritual affiliations beyond the prevailing doctrines of binary restrictions between 'halal' and 'haram'. (4) And finally, the greatest potential is the symbolic concession

to European Muslims, recognizing spiritual questions for the formation of identity and facilitating the evolvement of an Islam in a European context. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize once more the multidimensionality comprising the development of Islam in a European context, including broader conceptual questions about integration, citizenship, identity and secularism.

Policy recommendations

Since this thesis includes normative considerations to enhance Islam in a European context and imam training in particular, two particular suggestions would be of particular use. The first recommendation concerns transnational imam training between Morocco and the Netherlands and the second addresses Islamic accommodation in the Netherlands on a broader spectrum.

- *Establishment of a minor or internship at the Mohamed VI Imam Training Institute*

First, in order to establish a transnational imam training with Morocco, a Dutch-Muslim organisation together with a higher educational facility should negotiate with Dutch and Moroccan officials. The evidence retrieved from this research suggests that NIMAR, the Netherlands institute in Morocco, comprising an academic institution with ties to the Dutch Ministry of Education and well established contacts with Moroccan officials in Rabat should be approached. Depending on the specific request, NIMAR could facilitate setting up such a training by providing infrastructure, contacts and academic experiences in Morocco.

- *Reconsidering the "secularism argument" by establishing clear criteria for religious funding*

Secularism is a valid argument to avoid involvement in theological questions. However, it doesn't solve the issue at hand namely, how to best accommodate the claims of Islamic faith in Dutch society. Instead, the application of a "rule of thumb" regarding religious funding should be abolished. This practice gives leeway to opportunistic political behaviour interpreting the distinction of state and religion according to personal requirements. Polarised political tensions should be disaggregated through establishing clear criteria for religious funding. Additionally, rules governing the relationship between Dutch organisations and foreign countries could enhance depoliticisation of the debate about "the long arm" of foreign Islamic countries.

Implications for the Prevention of Radicalisation inspired by Islam

In order to decrease the breeding ground for radicalisation based on religious justifications, literature suggests to legitimate the needs of religious minorities in general (Bader 2007, Koenig 2015). While EU MS are accountable for the claims of religious accommodation, the European Court of Human Rights constitutes an increasingly important actor in the multilevel battles over the place of religion in the European public sphere. Furthermore, with regard to policy formulations the EU is enhancing its position as role model and guardian of policy coherence. The attempt to decouple security efforts and integration policies has been emphasized but not strongly enough anticipated in the past. However, the link between imam training and legitimizing Islam in order to decrease breeding ground for radicalisation can only be approximated through tentative implications. This thesis has shown that increased religious fundamentalism referring to Islamic sources challenge both politics and society. Although just very few radicalised individuals commit violent acts, these outliers comprise fear and threat, putting the free evolvement of Islam in Europe at risk. New forms of governance of religious diversity are a promising endeavour to break the vicious circle of security measures and discrimination, with the aspiration of providing a secure space for Islam in European public, without hostile attempts of denunciation. However, in what way these considerations are indeed fundamental to prevent radicalisation should be subject to further empirical studies.

8.1 Future Research

This thesis concludes with the assumption that transnational training for European imams between a Western European and an Islamic country enables to overcome the shortcomings of local imam trainings in Europe, by improving theological knowledge and Arabic skills of future-imams. Furthermore, the additional skills and experiences in a country of origin contribute to the employment of imams in the respective countries and hence, the development of a European Islam, enabled with a deeper reflection of theological questions in a modern European context. These new variables may be corroborated in future studies. A great number of Dutch Muslims have Moroccan origin. Therefore, future studies could look at

other respective examples for instance on transnational imam education with Turkey, in societies that comprises a high number of Muslims of Turkish origin.

Another approach could explore the chances on the local European labour markets of graduates who return to Europe after their graduation from Morocco's imam training institute. However, the institute opened its programs to foreign students in 2015, hence only a limited number of imams obtained their education in Rabat and already returned to Europe so far. The impacts of these trainings on the actual employment of imams and how local Muslim communities react to the transnationally educated clerics still need a considerable amount of time before an evaluation would be appropriate.

An additional finding with considerable implications for further research regards the "secularism argument". The Dutch case has revealed a practice of rather vague interpretations of the strict separation of religion and state. While secularism is a welcome argument of policy makers to avoid commitment to religious accommodation or provide state funding, a selective and non-transparent funding practice applies. However, the question at hand, what comprises secularism in particular national settings and what are the legal and policy implications could be subject for investigation in a cross-case scenario, to unveil patterns of opportunistic political behaviour or otherwise, depict that this exact pattern of rule of thumb is what actually comprises the secular paradigm in order to avoid theological considerations.

A particular focus of future research should be put on emerging European imam trainings in general. In Austria for instance, the Islamic Theological Institute of the University of Vienna initiated an education for Austrian imams in September 2017. But also the Austrian Islamic community (IGGÖ) regards the education of "Austro-imams" with scepticism and questions their future position in Austrian mosques (ORF 2018). It will require future research to examine how the first graduates of this training will enter and develop on the labour market.

Perspectives for further research should consider previous contributions and employ new models of analysis. Studies on currently established imam trainings within Western Europe should be conducted in order to further reflect on governance of religious diversity in a manner of displaying "what 'governments' on all levels actually, and not only legally, have done and 'do to Muslims'" (Bader 2007).

8.2 Concluding Remark

The presence of Islam in Europe acted as a catalyst for questions surrounding religious accommodation. But these questions have grown towards much broader assumptions concerning the nature of religious communities, the relationship with the state and the place in society. Factors like identity and citizenship in light of diverging practices of integration and secularism affect the position of Islam and Muslims in Europe. It is therefore not surprising that the role of Islamic leaders and clergymen became a crucial dimension for the development of this position, as the case of the Netherlands has depicted.

The intrinsic generational identity struggle of young European Muslims is exposed to public scrutiny backed by Islamophobic rhetoric of right-wing populists, alleged claims for integration and assimilation backed by migration and security policies. When integration and security frames are used to justify public funding for religious accommodation, are we talking about illegitimate state intervention with regard to secularism? And how can the Netherlands account for the unpredictable impact of this rule of thumb? Clear criteria need to be put in place, otherwise the system risks political hijacking from all extreme camps. However, what needs to be at the heart of this debate is whether the potential benefits of policies explicitly or implicitly directed towards religious groups outweigh the risks of stigmatizing Muslims. The major question that remains is, having all these factors in mind, how free can a European Islam emerge across EU member states?

This thesis examined ways in which societies create opportunities for the development of a European Islam in light of scrutinized governance of religious diversity, and touched upon the complex interrelationship between radicalism and citizenship (Buijs & Rath 2003). Besides internal governance structures, external opportunity structures emphasize the institutionalised regimes and policies that comprise for governing Islam in new possible ways. Transnational imam training as experimental design of cooperation has the potential to create new experiences and thus, a new profile for the future leading figures of a European Islam – an Islam building on ancient traditions, enabled for deeper theological reflections on questions of hypermodernity that comprise religious everyday-life of a growing European Muslim generation, beyond 'halal' and 'haram'.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Example of semi-structured Interview

QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW MA-THESIS

Interviewer: Alina Vetter
Expert: Abdesalam Lazaar
Site: Mohamed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates
Date: May 17th 2018

1	Could you briefly introduce yourself and tell me about your background in the field of imam training?
2	The training of imams is part of Moroccan CVE strategy. Does that also account for training of European imams?
3	What are the objectives of the imam training program the M6 institute offers to foreign countries?
4	How are the objectives reflected in the curriculum?
5	Which European countries is the institute currently collaborating with? Is any specific country approaching you at the moment?
6	Which European actors do you collaborate with? (public, private, Moroccan representations in Member States, Embassies)
7	Do you also speak with representatives from the EU?
8	How do you consider the role of the EU in the collaboration of imam trainings between Morocco and European Countries?
9	How is the feedback from European imams who obtained training at your institute?
10	What advice would you give European countries with regard to the training of imams?
11	Where do you see the future of Islam in Europe?
12	So to put it all together, what do you think Morocco has to offer to EU MS, and to the EU in general with regard to the training of imams?