

Representation or Participation? How German Muslims Seek to be Recognized

I. Introduction

To be formally recognized not only as individuals but also as a religious community is one of the main targets of German Muslims which has not yet been realized. All attempts to achieve a legal status equal to the Christian churches have failed so far. Though, a shift in the debates can be observed: whereas in the 1990s the issue of juridical recognition in the full sense – as a corporation of public law which comprises the right to raise taxes and to provide pastoral care in public institutions, etc.¹ – was at the centre of interest, it has now become clear that this type of recognition can only be a long-term goal and that small steps towards this goal also make sense. It is often pointed out in this context that for many rights and activities including religious education at state schools the status of a corporation of public law is not a necessity.

Unequal recognition is often quoted as a proof for discrimination and rejection.² “Refused recognition” is a widespread topic of Muslim discourse finally resulting in a kind of resignation.³ Correspondingly, the British Muslim activist and social scientist Dilwar Hussain has observed that in order to achieve recognition Muslims in Europe tend to make much more efforts for representation than for participation.⁴ The issue he has raised will serve as a kind of guideline through this essay. When studying Muslim struggles for recognition, my perspective is that of a coordinator of Christian-Muslim dialogue and social ethicist with a Roman Catholic background, who is interested in social processes and looks at Islam from a comparative perspective

of mutual learning and searching for ways of concerted commitment.

In the first chapter some philosophical aspects of recognition will be considered which are then to be applied to concrete examples. This is followed by a chapter in which the question “Representation or Participation?” will be raised in relation to various fields of Islam in Germany. The conclusion will depict several perspectives and make a comparative remark on the situation of the churches.

II. Ways of Recognition

As a “vital human need”⁵ recognition is a central concept in modern societies, in which identity is no longer automatically delineated by society and the individual’s social position, but formed through interaction with others.⁶ This makes evident that denied recognition (or mis-recognition⁷) has severe consequences. Concerning recognition several types, levels and dimensions can be distinguished:

(1) The first distinction is between *individual and collective recognition*.⁸ In the case of Islam one often finds a mixture: Individuals want to be recognized for their Muslim identity, but also wish Islam to be recognized by the state. The following reflections will be concentrated on collective struggles for recognition in the public sphere. The collective entities involved in these struggles are not fixed and homogeneous, however, as complex belongings of individuals to a variety of entities exist. Moreover, collective identities always result from quarrels among conflicting interpretations about self-definition.⁹ Therefore, understandably, it is a

¹ Cf. Gerdien Jonker, Muslim Emancipation? Germany’s Struggle over Religious Pluralism, in: Wasif A. R. Shadid/Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld (eds.), *Religious Freedom and the Neutrality of the State: The Position of Islam in the European Union*, Leuven 2002, 36-51, 39s. On the requirements cf. Christian W. Troll, *Christian-Muslim Relations in Germany. A Critical Survey*, in: *Islamochristiana* 29 (2003), 165-202, here 181s.

² Cf. Nico Landmann, Westeuropa, in: Werner Ende/Udo Steinbach (eds.), *Islam in der Gegenwart*, München 2005, 560-597, 596: “Neben diesen konkreten Vorteilen hat die öffentlich-rechtliche Anerkennung auch einen symbolischen statuserhöhenden Wert – und das Nichtvorhandensein dieser Anerkennung unterstreicht für viele Muslime, dass sie als Glaubensgemeinschaft nur einen zweitrangigen Wert haben.”

³ Cf. Hans-Joachim Roth, Religiöse Orientierung von Jugendlichen und ihre Bedeutung für den Umgang mit islamischem Religionsunterricht: Die Fragen des islamischen Religionsunterrichts – Zur Einführung in die Diskussion, Wolf-Dietrich Bukow/Erol Yildiz (eds.), *Islam und Bildung*, Opladen 2003, 135-156, 145.

⁴ Cf. Dilwar Hussain, The Holy Grail of Muslims in Western Europe: Representation and Relationship with the State, in: John Esposito/François Burgat (eds.), *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, London 2003, 215-250, here 245. I shall quote this version, but also refer to a slightly longer unpublished version of this article which the author kindly made available to me.

⁵ Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and “The Politics of Recognition”*, ed. by Amy Gutmann, Princeton 1992, 26.

⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 31 and 36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁸ Cf. Barbara Kaletta, *Anerkennung oder Abwertung. Über die Verarbeitung sozialer Desintegration*, Wiesbaden 2008, 130.

⁹ Cf. Seyla Benhabib, *Kulturelle Vielfalt und demokratische Gleichheit. Politische Partizipation im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*, Frankfurt 1999, 56.

highly disputed matter which Islam, represented by whom should be recognized.

(2) The second distinction is between *juridical and social recognition*. Likewise Axel Honneth differentiates between juridical recognition and social esteem.¹⁰ As to Islam in Germany these two dimensions cannot always be strictly separated.¹¹ Whereas juridical recognition is very concrete and defined by laws, social recognition is more flexible and difficult to measure finding its expression in respect, reputation and esteem. Concerning the recognition of religious communities, the state formulates certain terms and conditions which need to be fulfilled. Probably this concreteness is one of the reasons why juridical recognition is in the core of the Islam debate in Germany. As to the relationship of both, social recognition may be a source of conflict, which can be regulated by a juridical framework guaranteeing recognition in certain fields. Whether juridical recognition has been accorded or not, can be gauged straightforwardly. Determining whether social recognition has been granted is a more difficult case, so that it is worthwhile looking at this field in the following study.

(3) *Recognition is a relationship*: There is one who receives recognition and one who grants recognition. In the case of human rights a relationship of mutually equal recognition exists. Other issues may be more one-sided. Thus, it must be pointed out that to seek for recognition does not come with a guarantee to receive recognition. Social recognition may be the result of public debates; then a (fairly diffuse) public opinion – and not the state – is source of a kind of collective recognition.¹² There is a certain imbalance when a majority has the power to grant recognition or to refuse it. The initial position in the struggle for social recognition is marked by inequality, as for immigrants with poorer education access to the public sphere is on aver-

age more difficult. Even if complete equality concerning recognition is impossible, there should be at least equality regarding chances, and religious belief should not be hampering recognition.¹³ Yet recognition always has to do with difference. Instead of exerting a “difference-blind” politics of assimilation, Charles Taylor therefore proposes a “politics of difference” which recognizes “the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else.”¹⁴ It is difficult to decide, however, if a certain degree of recognition can be considered as adequate or not.¹⁵

(4) There are *different strategies to seek for recognition* as part of the communication process leading to recognition, which is not something existing *a priori*, but has to be won “through exchange.”¹⁶ Representation and participation may be seen as two such strategies. Both are complex terms. *Representation*, first of all, means drafting a picture of something, i.e. in this context delineating a certain role and concept of Islam. Then, representation signifies representing others, e.g. as elected bodies or speakers. Representation relies on acceptance of what is articulated in debates so that there is certain closeness to participation. In many cases there are disputes about which body may legitimately represent whom.¹⁷ *Participation* means being or becoming a part of something which, by nature, is always a broader context or issue. It also indicates a second mode of exertion of democratic governance: participation through direct plebiscites, elections or citizens’ groups.¹⁸

Dilwar Hussain defines the two concepts as slightly oppositional: Participation means contributing and collaborating for the benefit of all, which is a central element of democracies. Representation, in contrast, signifies that individuals or groups act according to their status and in favour of their own interests in a certain social role or political function.

¹⁰ Cf. Axel Honneth, *Kampf um Anerkennung. Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte*, Frankfurt 1994, 197. Cf. also Arto Laitinen, *Zum Bedeutungsspektrum des Begriffs Anerkennung: Die Rolle von adäquater Würdigung und Gegenseitigkeit*, in: Hans Christoph Schmid am Busch/Christopher F. Zurn (eds.), *Anerkennung* (Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie, Sonderband 21), Berlin 2009, 301-324; cultural recognition could be discussed as a third field.

¹¹ On legal recognition cf. Mathias Rohe, *Der Islam – Alltagskonflikte und Lösungen. Rechtliche Perspektiven*, Freiburg 2001, 199-214.

¹² Cf. Kaletta, *Anerkennung* (note 8), 79.

¹³ Cf. Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice. A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*, New York 1983, 255s.: “No simple equality of recognition is possible; the idea is a bad joke. [...] But if in the struggle for recognition there cannot be equality of outcomes, there can be [...] equality of opportunity.”

¹⁴ Taylor, *Multiculturalism* (note 5), 38; cf. also 43 and 72: “There must be something midway between the inauthentic and homogenizing demand for recognition of equal worth, on the one hand, and the self-immurement within ethnocentric standards, on the other.”

¹⁵ Cf. Laitinen, *Adäquate Würdigung* (note 10), 317.

¹⁶ Taylor, *Multiculturalism* (note 5), 24. Cf. Hans-Joachim Höhn, *Kampf um Anerkennung. Muslime, Christen und der säkulare Rechtsstaat*, in: Karl Gabriel/id. (eds.), *Religion heute öffentlich und politisch. Provokationen, Kontroversen, Perspektiven*, Paderborn 2008, 140-148, here 145: “Anerkennung aber muss erworben werden [...]”

¹⁷ Cf. Werner Schiffauer, *Muslimische Organisationen und ihr Anspruch auf Repräsentativität: Dogmatisch bedingte Konkurrenz und Streit um Institutionalisierung*, in: Alexandre Escudier (ed.), *Der Islam in Europa. Der Umgang mit dem Islam in Frankreich und Deutschland*, Göttingen 2003, 143-158, here 145s.

¹⁸ Cf. Joachim Detjen, *Politische Bildung. Geschichte und Gegenwart in Deutschland*, München 2007, 302.

Organisations which represent Muslims and their interests can be regarded as an example of representation.¹⁹ The two concepts can be illustrated by referring to the example of mosques in Germany: New, visible mosques may be a step towards participation of Muslim communities, if they regularly open their doors, cooperate with town councils, churches and other institutions. Two prominent examples are the mosques in Mannheim and Duisburg which both encompass a centre for encounter and dialogue.²⁰ On the other hand, a well-known argument against building mosques is that they are exaggerated means of representation. When no efforts are made to participate, new mosques nourished suspicion that they are primarily means of representation.

With respect to obtaining recognition, Hussain draws a comparison with the "Holy Grail." In his overview he arrives at the conclusion that the Muslims' strive for recognition has been in vain and disappointing. He proposes participation as an alternative, which means not only struggling for the own group but: "making the whole society their concern rather than just their parochial interests."²¹ He regards Muslims' efforts for representation as very critical:

"Muslims have largely attempted to work with the state, overlooking their opportunity to also work within the state."²²

An important factor for this is that in many countries, from which Muslim immigrants to Europe originate, no full-fledged civil societies exist. Considering the two most important countries of origin with respect to German Muslims it can be noticed that these two countries clearly tend toward representation and formal recognition: In Turkey official Islam is even organized by the state and only recently Muslim groups outside this monopolizing Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyaret) have gained a certain amount of freedom. Since the Austrian occupation in 1878, in Bosnia and Herzegovina a church-like institutionalized Islam exists, which now is faced with the challenge that various Muslim movements have arisen outside the official Islamic community and that the latter

has to find its place in the emerging civil society. Even though this does not mandatorily impinge on the development of Islam in Germany, it is evident that these traditions will influence it strongly. But as Hussain's essay has been published seven years ago, it must also be asked if there has been some progress with regard to recognition.

III. Looking at Various Fields of Constructing Islam

Constructing Islam in Germany is a particularly exciting issue. To build up new organisations and to find their place within society was a new issue for Muslim immigrants. Though mass immigration started in the early 1960s, until the beginning of the new millennium and until it was politically accepted on a broad scale and legally implemented by a new citizenship law, it looked as if Germany was a country of immigration and Islam would remain a permanent phenomenon in the country. Based on this insight, many milestones have been reached in the past few years in building up a contextual German Islam.

What shall be discussed here is not the individual level²³, but the collective construction of Islam. As there is no church in Islam which could speak in the name of all Muslims, the field of articulating Islam is variegated.²⁴ When introducing Islam in Germany people look primarily at Muslim associations as a registered legal form. Even in the context of this essay this can be an aspect to start with, but there are many other fields in which Islam is constructed.²⁵ All these fields result from interaction of Islam with social sub-systems such as public welfare, education, science, other religions and the media. For the present study fields have been selected in which certain achievements have been reached and independent identities of Islam can be observed.

It is not claimed that these fields are exhaustive. Muslim youth and women organisations are further fields which, however, have been omitted here due to restricted space. In each of the fields it would be necessary to intensify the analysis. The intention is to formulate first hypotheses, depict tendencies and observations which have to be confirmed by

¹⁹ Cf. in favour of this mode according to the French model Dalil Boubakeur, *Der interreligiöse Dialog als Faktor des sozialen Zusammenhalts und als Instrument des Friedens im Mittelmeerraum*, in: Peter Graf (ed.), *Der Islam im Westen, der Westen im Islam*, Göttingen 2004, 201-209, here 202.

²⁰ Cf. www.institut-mannheim.de and www.ditib-du.de.

²¹ Hussain, *Holy Grail* (note 4), 247. On participation cf. Wasif A. R. Shadid/Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld (eds.), *Political Participation and Identities of Muslims in Non-Muslim States*, Kampen 1996.

²² Hussain, *Holy Grail* (note 4), 247.

²³ Cf. e.g. Sigrid Nökel, *Die Töchter der Gastarbeiter und der Islam. Zur Soziologie alltagsweltlicher Anerkennungspolitik. Eine Fallstudie*, Bielefeld 2002; Halit Öztürk, *Wege zur Integration. Lebenswelten muslimischer Jugendlicher in Deutschland*, Bielefeld 2007.

²⁴ As an illustration of this, cf. the variety of topics discussed in: Ala Al-Hamarneh/Jörn Thielmann (eds.), *Islam and Muslims in Germany*, Leiden 2008.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. Peter L. Berger/Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, New York 1966.

further research. One side of the relation will be focused on the strategies of recognition. Responses of the majority to these strategies are adumbrated, but not explored in detail.

III.1. Muslim Associations, Building up Umbrella Organisations and the “Deutsche Islam Konferenz”

The formation of Muslim associations in Germany has been primarily a bottom-up process, which has resulted in the formation of umbrella organisations on the national level embracing local associations with a certain profile all over the country.²⁶ The first attempt of creating a preferably single top organisation comprising several of these organisations was the “Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland” (IR) in 1987, founded as a “coordinating institution and common decision-making body of Islamic religious communities.”²⁷ Its largest member organisation is the “Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş” (IGMG) which was inspired by Necmettin Erbakan in the beginning and currently comprises both an Islamist and a reformist-oriented wing. To obtain the status of a corporation of public law is mentioned as a main goal in the self-portrayal of the IR:

“The Islamrat seeks for the recognition of Islam in Germany as a Corporation of Public Law and for its equal treatment with the two large Christian churches and the Greek-Orthodox church.”²⁸

Thus, representation stands at the centre.

The second top organisation is the “Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland” (ZMD), founded in 1991. Until 2000, when it left the ZMD, its largest member organisation was the “Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren” (VIKZ), which is part of the Turkish Süleymanci movement. Its representative name – analogous to the “Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland” (Central Council of Jews in Germany) – helped the ZMD to be heard in public as one of the most important Muslim voices. Like the IR, the ZMD claims to be a contact organisation and central representative body of German Muslims:

“Our most important task is to promote Muslim life and spirituality in Germany and to enable the Muslims to practice their religion without difficulties.”²⁹

Thus, in contrast to the IR, the self-portrayal of the ZMD which explicitly wants to support smaller associations is focused on issues regarding prayer, slaughter, religious education and pastoral care. A central document in German Islam is the “Islamic Charta,” published in February 2002 by the ZMD.³⁰ Starting by explaining Muslim belief and practice, it continues with various issues of Muslims living in Germany. It is interesting that formal recognition is not mentioned in the document. The text is more about recognizing the religious practice of Muslims (§ 20). This indicates that formal representation corresponds to the institutionalized churches, whereas recognition for the orthopractical religion Islam might well look different.

There is one section in the Charta outlining participation without using the word itself:

“The Central Council (ZMD) feels responsible for society in its entirety. Together with other social groups it therefore endeavours to make a significant contribution towards more tolerance, better ethical behaviour, as well as an effective protection of the environment and of animals. The Central Council (ZMD) deplores the violation of human rights wherever and whenever this occurs. Thus it is a partner in the fight against religious discrimination, xenophobia, racism, sexism, and violence.” (§ 18)

Though this paragraph mentions obligations for the whole of society, the last article in the Charta indirectly recommends to vote according to the commitment of the candidates to Islam, not to the general welfare:

“The Central Council (ZMD) is politically neutral. Muslims entitled to vote will give their ballot to those candidates who support their rights and aims most strongly and show the greatest comprehension of Islam.” (§ 20)

²⁶ As exhaustive introductions to this topic, cf. Thomas Lemmen, *Muslime in Deutschland. Eine Herausforderung für Kirche und Gesellschaft*, Baden-Baden 2001; Ina Wunn et. al., *Muslimische Gruppierungen in Deutschland. Ein Handbuch*, Stuttgart 2007. The issue of Muslim associations on the level of the federal states cannot be addressed here. Cf. e.g. Hansjörg Schmid/Ayşe Almıla Akca/Klaus Barwig, *Gesellschaft gemeinsam gestalten. Islamische Vereinigungen als Partner in Baden-Württemberg*, Baden-Baden 2008.

²⁷ “[B]undesweite Koordinierungsinstanz und gemeinsames Beschlüßorgan islamischer Religionsgemeinschaften.”

²⁸ “Der Islamrat strebt Anerkennung als Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts für den Islam in Deutschland und seine Gleichstellung mit den beiden christlichen Großkirchen und der griechisch-orthodoxen Kirche an.” www.islamrat.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=45&Itemid=54.

²⁹ “Unsere wichtigste Aufgabe ist es, das muslimische Leben und die islamische Spiritualität in Deutschland zu fördern und den Muslimen die Ausübung ihrer Religion zu ermöglichen und zu erleichtern.” www.zentralrat.de/2594.php.

³⁰ Cf. www.zentralrat.de/3037.php.

This may be seen slightly contradictory to § 18 and its focus on participation, and also as evidence for an intended dominance of Islam. Therefore, the overall picture remains inconsistent; it is a mixture of pro-active participation and representation linked with Islamic interests.

A further step toward organizing Islam in Germany was the creation of the “Koordinationsrat der Muslime” (KRM) in 2006 as a coordinating roof that was founded by the four umbrella organisations ZMD, IR, DITIB (“Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion” which is a branch of the Turkish Diyanet and constitutes the largest Muslim consortium in Germany) and VIKZ. According to its internal rules of procedure, its objectives are treaties with the state:

“Together with existing structures on the level of the federal states and on the local level, it works to create the legal and organisational requirements for the recognition of Islam in Germany by state treaties.”³¹

The KRM may be seen as a tool for representation, whereas participation happens primarily on the level of its member associations. Polemical demarcations between mosque associations which belong to different umbrella organisations can hardly be found any longer. Nonetheless, the KRM remains weak as it has not been able to develop beyond an organ of informal consultation.

It becomes evident that Muslim associations on a national and federal level are mainly oriented towards the state. As the prerequisites for formal juridical recognition are very high in Germany (individual membership, organisational structure, stability and permanency, theological authority, loyalty to the constitution) – also for a religious community, a status which is beneath that of a corporation of public law – this might either lead to resignation or the Muslims will come to terms with a very tedious process. Concerning the organisations’ claim on representation, statistical figures demonstrate how limited this representation is in reality: According to the latest and most exhaustive empirical research, only 20% of the German

Muslims are members of Muslim associations.³² Muslim associations often claim that a membership covers the entire family and that thus there are far more adherents than formal members. But recent empirical results are disillusioning: Only 15.8% of the German Muslims feel represented by DITIB, 7.2% by the VIKZ. The figures for the umbrella organisations are even lower: ZMD 2.7%; IR 2.2%; KRM 1.9%.³³

When the “Deutsche Islam Konferenz” (DIK), organized by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, was initiated in 2006, both sides hoped that it would lead to a kind of normalisation and would solve many of the issues in debate. The DIK comprises 15 state representatives and 15 Muslim representatives. The composition of the Muslim members brings about a particular challenge, as these members are representatives of associations, well-known Muslim individuals and critics of Islam. All members were chosen by the state, not elected. The following topics have been treated in the DIK in four plenary sessions and in working groups: values as a basis for society, building of mosques, introduction of Islamic religious education, responsible coverage of Islam in the media and the cooperation between the Muslim population and security agencies. The DIK is intended to be a platform for the dialogue between state representatives and Muslim representatives on a national level.³⁴ Although not many concrete measures have been implemented as a result of the DIK, it marks a paradigm shift for German Muslims: Concerning representation they have now acquired direct access to state representatives on a high level, and regarding participation they are considered as necessary dialogue partners by the state. This is highly appreciated by many observers from outside:

“The German Islam Conference can be understood as a contribution to recognize the Muslims as political players. [...] However, it tends to support the recognition of legitimate political interests on a national level.”³⁵

In spite of this, the DIK has not yet delivered a permanent solution to the issue of representation.

³¹ “[Er] wirkt gemeinsam mit den bereits bestehenden muslimischen Länderstrukturen sowie den vorhandenen Lokalstrukturen an der Schaffung rechtlicher und organisatorischer Voraussetzungen für die Anerkennung des Islams in Deutschland im Rahmen von Staatsverträgen” (www.islam.de/files/misc/krm_go.pdf, § 2). It is remarkable that the KRM does not yet have its own website.

³² Sonja Haug/Stephanie Müssig/Anja Stichs (eds.), *Muslimisches Leben in Deutschland*. Im Auftrag der Deutschen Islam Konferenz, Nürnberg 2009, 167.

³³ *Ibid.*, 179.

³⁴ Cf. the documentation: Leila Donner-Üretmek (red.), *Drei Jahre Deutsche Islam Konferenz [DIK] 2006-2009*, Berlin 2009; and www.deutsche-islam-konferenz.de/cln_117/nn_1318820/SubSites/DIK/DE/DieDIK/Ausblick/ausblick-node.html?__nnn=true.

³⁵ “Die Deutsche Islamkonferenz kann als ein Beitrag zur Anerkennung der Muslime als politische Akteure verstanden werden. [...] Tendenziell unterstützt sie aber die Anerkennung legitimer politischer Interessen auf Bundesebene.” Dirk Halm, *Der Islam als Diskursfeld. Bilder des Islams in Deutschland*, Wiesbaden 2008, 73.

The links between representation and participation on the agenda of the DIK seem promising, but many of the issues discussed remain vague, the scope of action and implementation being limited.

It must be admitted that Muslim associations are central figures in the struggle for recognition. Due to their limited scope and their failure (to a large extent) to obtain recognition, other fields of constructing Islam need to be considered in the following. The story of the Muslim umbrella associations may be seen as a proof that mainly focusing on representation does not suffice to gain recognition in German society.

III.2. Social Commitment of Muslims

Due to the often underprivileged situation of Muslim immigrants, social work and commitment constitutes a central field of Muslim activities. In an overview of social activities of Muslim roof organisations, Thomas Lemmen observes that they mainly or even exclusively address Muslims, and that they often care for their members in all areas of life.³⁶ This observation requires an adequate interpretation. As a starting point it has to be mentioned that it is very difficult to grasp this field, since little research has been done here so far.³⁷

A stress of activities lies in the field of education: The VIKZ runs about 20 hostels for either male or female pupils. Although some of them take this as the basis for being trained as an Imam, what is actually done in these hostels is social work, not education of elites. In addition to an Imam, a state accredited social worker directs each hostel. As there are usually no all-day schools in Germany, the hostels prevent young people from spending their spare time on the street or in front of the computer or television.³⁸ Nevertheless, these hostels are controversially discussed. Whereas in the beginning they were mainly regarded as segregative (as all leisure activities take place "inside" and not in mixed sports or music clubs), in some towns the VIKZ has in the meantime succeeded in dissipating mistrust by opening the doors, cooperating with state schools and demonstrating the integrative function of its institutions. The Fethullah Gülen

Movement also runs schools or institutions for private lessons. Until now, their institutional affiliations and religious motivation have not been very transparent.³⁹ With decreasing mistrust from outside, the religious motivation has been made more transparent during the last years. The activities of the Gülen Movement primarily addressed youths with a migration background and are very ambitious and professional.⁴⁰ In both cases the activities of Muslims have started to be respected, but the public and dialogue partners remain suspicious about a possible hidden agenda.

One of the most remarkable institutions in this field is the "Begegnungs- und Fortbildungszentrum muslimischer Frauen" (Muslim Women's Centre for Encounter and Further Education, BFmF) in Cologne focusing on women and families. It is an initiative of self-help for encounter, education and consulting. In their mission statement they mention equal recognition concerning religion, gender and race as a goal of Muslims. The situation of the Muslims is not only considered in terms of religious recognition but in the wider context of inequality and discrimination. Recognition is reached by participation ("Teilhabe"):

"Our manifold activities are intended to enable women to participate in society on an equal level while preserving their own identities."⁴¹

The manifold courses, projects and activities give proof that this is more than lip service. The high reputation of the centre and the awards it has received indicate that it might be easier to attain recognition by means of a broad social approach instead of with a narrow religious approach.

Muslim associations do not yet perform social tasks coordinated with the state like the churches which run kindergartens, hospitals and old people's homes, etc. Muslim social commitment is still rising, but the activities of many mosques resemble that of welfare centres. This can be seen as a very pragmatic way towards recognition. Instead of waiting for full juridical recognition it is a way to act.⁴² As many projects address the own community and

³⁶ Cf. Thomas Lemmen, Die Sozialarbeit muslimischer Organisationen in Deutschland, in: Klaus D. Hildemann (ed.), Religion – Kirche – Islam. Eine soziale und diakonische Herausforderung, 191-206, 198f.

³⁷ Cf. Peter Heine/Aslam Syed (eds.), Muslimische Philanthropie und bürgerschaftliches Engagement/Muslim Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, Berlin 2005.

³⁸ Cf. also the case studies in Schmid/Akca/Barwig, Gesellschaft (note 26), 86-90, 166-169.

³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 29s., 129-133; Bekim Agai, Zwischen Netzwerk und Diskurs. Das Bildungsnetzwerk um Fethullah Gülen (geb. 1938): Die flexible Umsetzung modernen islamischen Gedankengutes, Schenefeld 2004.

⁴⁰ Cf. as an example www.bil-privatschule.de.

⁴¹ "Mit unseren breit gefächerten Angeboten möchten wir Frauen und Familien unter Beibehaltung ihrer eigenen Identität zur gleichberechtigten Teilhabe in der Gesellschaft befähigen."
www.bfmf-koeln.de/German/index.php?page=articles&op=readArticle&title=Leitbild.

⁴² This corresponds to the recommendations of Thomas Lemmen/Melanie Miehle, Islamisches Alltagsleben in Deutschland, Berlin 2001, 62.

little publicity is gained, they are not particularly visible. There is a broad spectrum of activities so that it is hardly impossible to detect a common tendency. The internal orientation of many of these projects has many reasons: These associations have difficulties communicating with actors of the majority society, making the initiation of cooperation a tough task.⁴³ Moreover, these are the activities of an underprivileged minority,⁴⁴ which – unlike the powerful and well established churches – is not capable of becoming active for the society as a whole.

To sum up, an impressive scope of activities can be witnessed. Still, there is the danger of pursuing a parallel commitment which could not be described as real participation. What can be found in this field is often neither representation nor participation, but a kind of self-help. This paints a critical picture of society as a whole, as the task to build up partnership in this field seems to be often neglected.

III.3. Islamic Religious Education in State Schools

Islamic religious education (IRE) is generally considered as a central focus of recognition of Islam.⁴⁵ In Germany, religious education in state schools is guaranteed by the constitution. Article 7, paragraph 3 accords to religious communities the right to provide the contents of this subject organized and run by the state (Berlin and Bremen constitute formal exceptions). Thus, religious education is a field par excellence of cooperation between the state and religious communities. There has been a lengthy discussion about the introduction of IRE leading to a relatively broad consensus that IRE should be introduced. The lack of a definite Muslim organisation being a partner and contact for the state constitutes the main obstacle. Nevertheless with more pragmatic arrangements IRE has started in seven federal states as a model project in selected schools in 2003. IRE creates its own organisations, provisionally replacing a broad Muslim representation: a round table with representatives of several Muslim associations such as in Lower Saxony, or local parent associations like in Bavaria.

In many respects, IRE approximates the logic of participation to a larger degree: Islam becomes part of school education; Islam has to correspond to the framework of curricula and school authorities; teachers of IRE participate in many discussions with their colleagues. Although these teachers are regarded as representatives of Islam by their colleagues, students or parents, their affiliation is usually looser than that of representatives of associations. Moreover, teacher training takes place at state universities where IRE becomes a subject like others. Hence, IRE illustrates that Islam forms an integral part of society.

It would be possible to discuss IRE on the basis of curriculum or a monitoring of lessons.⁴⁶ In this case, the exemplary look at the first school book is taken as an access. This book has the title “Saphir” (meaning “jewel” or “sapphire”). The first volume is intended for the fifth and sixth grades. Already in the third chapter with the title “To Be God’s Creation” there is a double page on responsibility as a marker of identity for human beings (“Mensch sein heißt, Verantwortung zu übernehmen”). The constitution and Islam are compatible:

“All human beings have rights and duties and bear responsibility together – independent of their religion.”⁴⁷

Human dignity and life are also considered values in Islam. Later in the book there is another comparison of the Treaty of Medina and the implementation of the German constitution.⁴⁸ Justice and pluralism are a recurrent theme throughout the whole book. Interestingly, the glossary at the end of the book contains, besides many religious terms, the entry “Grundgesetz,” meaning the German constitution, which is mentioned in several chapters of the book.⁴⁹ Thus loyalty to the state and its constitution can be seen as an implicit goal of “Saphir.”

The IGMG published an anonymous and very critical “review” of “Saphir” on its website.⁵⁰ It accused the authors of mixing a theological and religious study approach and thereby presenting a watered down Islam. In his response in the

⁴³ Cf. Schmid/Akca/Barwig, Gesellschaft (note 26), 258s.

⁴⁴ Cf. Tarek Badawia, “Ana laha.” “Ich nehme es selbst in die Hand” – Muslimische Jugendliche und ein islamischer Bildungsauftrag, für den sich sonst keiner zuständig fühlt, in: Bukow/Yildiz, Islam und Bildung (note 3), 115-134.

⁴⁵ Cf. Mouhanad Khorchide, Der islamische Religionsunterricht zwischen Integration und Parallelgesellschaft: Einstellungen der islamischen ReligionslehrerInnen an öffentlichen Schulen, Wiesbaden 2009, 57s. Cf. as introductions to the topic: Hansjörg Schmid, Wie der islamische Religionsunterricht die Gesellschaft verändert, in: *Katechetische Blätter* 135 (2010), 136-141.

⁴⁶ Cf. Irka-Christin Mohr/Michael Kiefer (eds.), Islamunterricht – Islamischer Religionsunterricht – Islamkunde. Viele Titel – ein Fach?, Bielefeld 2009.

⁴⁷ “Alle Menschen haben Rechte und Pflichten, sie tragen gemeinsam Verantwortung – unabhängig von ihrer Religion.” Lamya Kaddor et. al. [eds.], Saphir 5/6. Religionsbuch für junge Musliminnen und Muslime, München 2008, 37.

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 85.

⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 185s.

⁵⁰ Cf. “Stellungnahme der IGMG zum Religionsbuch Saphir 5/6,” in: www.igmg.de/verband/presseerklarungen/artikel/2009/05/20/9824.html?L=.html.

“Zeitschrift für Religionslehre des Islam” (ZRLI), which is the first journal in German for teaching Islam, Harry Harun Behr, professor for Islamic religious pedagogy in Erlangen-Nuremberg and one of the editors of “Saphir,” stresses the Muslims’ solidarity with all human beings:

“According to my view, Islam is more about issues concerning all of us than about issues concerning us exclusively as Muslims.”⁵¹

Humanism as a target of Islam stands in the core of Behr’s Islamic religious pedagogy. According to needs of schools and young people, IRE stresses the plurality of identities which are like permanent construction sites,⁵² and an individualized understanding of Islam. Thus, it is not very surprising that conflicts with Islamic associations that are the agents of collective Muslim identities arise. The situation of the individual, instead of common interests of Muslims, stands in the foreground.

To sum up, IRE with regards to contents and structures clearly follows the logic of participation. It will be interesting to observe further which results this teaching will achieve on other fields of Islam in the future.

III.4. Islamic Theology at Universities

Islamic theology at German universities is a relatively young phenomenon and started six years ago. Until now the majority of the imams are trained at foreign schools or universities. At the moment there are two chairs at Münster, two at Osnabrück, two at Frankfurt (soon there will be a third one) and one at Erlangen-Nuremberg.⁵³ Their task is to train teachers for IRE, Muslim theologians, in the future also imams.⁵⁴ They have no ordinary legitimization from a Muslim community, but somehow Muslim associations have been

consulted in all cases. The holders of the seven chairs have been invited for many lectures and have become quite famous faces of German Islam. Besides their research they all reflect on how Islamic theology can be build up in Germany and which steps would be necessary in order to gain recognition as Muslims. Harry Harun Behr describes Islamic theology in the German context as “discourse- and process-related by providing help in situations of social and political change.”⁵⁵ This theology is, according to Behr, highly situational, as it arises from and aims at the concrete situation, what leads to an inner-Muslim plurality.⁵⁶

Muhammad Kalisch who has held the first chair at the University of Münster since 2004 published a widely received statement about the Danish Muhammad caricatures. He stipulates self-criticism and a process of learning on both sides. Absolute freedom is paramount, even when religious sentiment is violated:

“In the conflict between freedom of expression and freedom of science on the one hand and religion on the other hand there must be an absolute freedom of opinion and science, even if this might violate religious sentiment.”⁵⁷

This means participation of Muslims in debates without any restrictions because of religion. Meanwhile, a conflict between Kalisch and Muslim associations arouse as Kalisch himself called upon this freedom postulating that Muhammad might not have existed.⁵⁸ With this statement, according to many Muslims, he exceeded the framework of Islam so that he was no longer accepted as someone legitimated to train future teachers of Islam. Bülent Ucar from Osnabrück University stated that Muslims have been rejected or regarded as aliens in society. According to Ucar, the formation of elites

⁵¹ “Der Islam teilt uns nach meinem Dafürhalten mehr über Dinge mit, die uns alle gemeinsam betreffen, und weniger über Dinge, die uns exklusiv als Muslime betreffen.” Harry Harun Behr, Ein Saphir mit Schliff. Zur Stellungnahme der islamischen Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş e.V. [IGMG] gegen das Schulbuch Saphir, in: ZRLI 3 [2009] nr. 5, 2–25, here 7.

⁵² Cf. Harry Harun Behr et al. (eds.), Was soll ich hier? Lebensweltorientierung muslimischer Schülerinnen und Schüler als Herausforderung für den Islamischen Religionsunterricht, Berlin 2010.

⁵³ Cf. the introductions to some of these courses of study in: Wolfram Weiße (ed.), Theologie im Plural. Eine akademische Herausforderung, Münster 2009.

⁵⁴ Cf. Rauf Ceylan, Die Prediger des Islam. Imame – wer sie sind und was sie wirklich wollen, Freiburg 2010. Ceylan has been professor at the University of Osnabrück since summer 2009.

⁵⁵ “(D)iskursiv und prozessual, indem sie Hilfestellung in gesellschaftlichen, sozialen und politischen Umbruchsituationen leistet.” Harry Harun Behr, Ein ordentliches Fach? Neue Wegmarken für den Islamischen Religionsunterricht, in: Herder Korrespondenz 61 [2007], 298–303, here 303.

⁵⁶ Harry Harun Behr, Grundriss islamisch-theologischen Denkens im Kontext der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, in: ZRLI 1 (2007), H. 1, 2–9, here 4.

⁵⁷ “Im Spannungsfeld von Meinungsfreiheit und Wissenschaftsfreiheit einerseits und Religion andererseits muss es eine absolute Freiheit der Meinung und der Wissenschaft geben, auch wenn dies religiöse Gefühle verletzen mag.” Muhammad Kalisch, Stellungnahme zum gegenwärtigen Konflikt um Karikaturen, die den Propheten Muhammad abbilden, in: www.compass-infodienst.de/Muhammad_Kalisch__Stellungnahme_zum_Konflikt_um_die_Mohammed-Karikaturen.5852.0.html.

⁵⁸ Cf. on the case Peter Philipp, Doubt about Muhammad’s Existence Poses Threat to Islamic Religious Education (18.9.2008), in: www.en.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-478/_nr-812/i.html.

is therefore necessary for Muslims, which is one of the tasks of the chairs.⁵⁹ In a recent article Ucar claims that Islamic theology can be critical and dialogue-oriented, but needs to be authentic in order to be accepted by Muslims:

"In the long run, this recognition and legal equal treatment serves as a basis for participation and integration."⁶⁰

According to Ucar, this means that recognition and equal ranking of Islam will be necessary. Before this has been achieved, participation and integration may take place in more informal ways.

Ömer Özsoy, whose chair at Frankfurt University has been donated by the Turkish Diyanet, states that acceptance and internalization of democratic and pluralistic values are necessary for Muslims. He sees it as a task for Islamic theology to contribute to this process.⁶¹ His colleague Abdullah Takim stresses the need of a scientific articulation and public comments on important topics by German Muslims:

"In my view, the Muslims in Germany have to articulate on a scientific level and to work out positions on important topics (both social and theological) in order to make themselves be understood and to contribute to the community, for Islam has meanwhile become an integral part of Germany."⁶²

Both in Osnabrück and in Frankfurt the chairs have organized interdisciplinary congresses.⁶³ Representatives of different scientific disciplines contributed to these congresses and also had a

look on Islam from outside. Thus Islamic theology is on the point of becoming a discipline in the concert of sciences at German universities.⁶⁴ The professors for Islamic theology in Germany are highly independent and not in the service of any associations (also in Frankfurt). They critically reconstruct Islam stressing historical change and the ability to adapt. Thus they have acquired a high degree of respect. In the 1990s the representatives of the associations functioned as main public spokespersons of Islam in the media and conferences, while nowadays these professors as learned experts are often preferred. They are participating in the scientific discourses and are arguing for participative forms of Islam. Although their juridical legitimization within the Muslim communities is not always clear, they are affecting recognition. Their chance will be to form Islam on a broad scale in the future by training imams, theologians and teachers.

III.5. Inter-Religious Dialogue between Muslims and Christians

In this field some empirical research has started which can serve as a basis for analysis.⁶⁵ Christian-Muslim dialogue takes place on many levels and in numerous projects. Concerning recognition this field breaks ranks, for at least in ideal cases Muslims and Christians act together and produce common identities. If this is not yet the case, at any rate equal social recognition may be acquired within the course or context of dialogue. Dialogue also has strong consequences on the participants and their communities of origin. It is one field which has helped Muslims to be present in the public sphere and to articulate their concerns. As Muslims

⁵⁹ Cf. Bülent Ucar, Wie bringen die Religionen ihre ethische Botschaft in die gesellschaftliche Diskussion ein? Ein Beitrag aus muslimischer Sicht, in: Hansjörg Schmid et al. (eds.), Verantwortung für das Leben. Ethik in Christentum und Islam, Regensburg 2008, 229-248, 244.

⁶⁰ "Diese Anerkennung und rechtliche Gleichstellung bietet langfristig die Basis für Partizipation und Integration." Bülent Ucar, Islamische Theologie in Deutschland? Die Ausbildung von Religionslehrern und Theologen an staatlichen Hochschulen, in: Die Unbekannte Religion. Muslims in Deutschland (*Herder Korrespondenz Spezial* 2/2009), 31-35, here 32.

⁶¹ Donner-Üretmek (red.), Drei Jahre (note 34), 277ss.

⁶² "Meines Erachtens müssen sich die Muslime in Deutschland [...] wissenschaftlich artikulieren und zu wichtigen gesellschaftlich-theologischen Themen eine Position erarbeiten, um sich verständlich zu machen und zum Zusammenleben beizutragen, denn der Islam ist mittlerweile Teil Deutschlands geworden." www.akademie-rs.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf_archive/schmid/2008_03_03_Takim_Antwort_Bischof.pdf, here 2.

⁶³ www.uni-frankfurt.de/fb/fb09/islam/forschung/symposien/index.html, respectively www.islamische-religionspaedagogik.uni-osnabrueck.de/973.htm.

⁶⁴ Cf. Ertugrul Sahin, Der schwierige Weg zur Einbürgerung des Islam. Plädoyer für eine islamische Theologie an deutschen Universitäten, in: *Forschung Frankfurt* 2008/1, 81-85 (also in: www.forschung-frankfurt.uni-frankfurt.de/dok/2008/2008-01/Der_schwierige_Weg.pdf). Sahin describes Islamic theology at state universities as a necessary milestone in order to naturalize Islam in Germany (85).

⁶⁵ Cf. Eva Maria Hinterhuber, Abrahamischer Dialog und Zivilgesellschaft. Eine Untersuchung zum sozialintegrativen Potenzial des Dialogs zwischen Juden, Christen und Muslimen, Stuttgart 2009; Gritt Klinkhammer/Ayla Satilmis, Kriterien und Standards der interreligiösen und interkulturellen Kommunikation – Eine Evaluation des Dialogs mit dem Islam. Projektabschlussbericht, Bremen 2007; Hansjörg Schmid, Zwischen Asymmetrie und Augenhöhe. Zum Stand des christlich-islamischen Dialogs in Deutschland, in: Peter Hünzeler/Salvatore Di Noia (eds.), Kirche und Islam im Dialog. Eine europäische Perspektive, Regensburg 2010, 49-89. Cf. also Friedmann Eißler, Christian-Muslim Encounter – Recent Issues and Perspectives, in: Al-Hamaneh/Thielmann, Islam (note 24), 161-182.

and Christians are not yet in an equal position, Christians often act as advocates supporting Muslim needs and interests.⁶⁶

A continuing difference of interests can be witnessed in several dialogues and over the course of many years. Church interlocutors predominantly want a dialogue on theological issues, whereas Muslims usually prefer a “concrete dialogue” that is orientated towards action and criticize a merely verbal exchange without any measurable results.⁶⁷ Muslims want to be recognized and get access to social resources by means of the dialogue, whereas Christians want to acquaint themselves with the religion perceived as foreign, so that they often take up the role of the inquirer and the Muslims, consequently, are pressed into the role of the respondents. Some Christian participants of dialogue observe that Muslims have started to retire from dialogue as they now have a direct access to the government (via the “Deutsche Islam Konferenz,” for example). But this only applies to representatives of associations, not to those who work with one of the numerous grass-roots organisations.

Since the 1980s, Muslims have founded special associations for dialogue often named “Christlich-Islamische Gesellschaft” (CIG) in several cities and regions. In analogy to the formation of Muslim umbrella organisations, in 2003 an umbrella organisation of now 17 local dialogue organisations was founded, the “Koordinierungsrat des christlich-islamischen Dialogs” (KCID). The organisation has intended to create structures for acquiring financial support and to build up a lobby for inter-religious dialogue. Further aims are networking, common activities, commitment for peaceful coexistence and comments, when issues of a fair media coverage and religious freedom are touched.⁶⁸ The KCID is a sort of agency of representation, but as it is based on organisations with local activities, it can be considered as a balanced mutual complement to representation and participation.

If it is more for the sake of representation or participation, it depends on who is active in dialogue and in which context. Spokespersons of Muslim associations usually follow their strategy of representation in dialogues like in any other context. But generally inter-religious dialogue can be seen as a means of participation. Participation

can be both a topic and a target of dialogue. Like typically in the religious field, dialogue initiatives often comprise all social classes so that dialogue has a particular relevance for participation.⁶⁹ Dialogue creates networks and new institutions in which people with different religious affiliations act together in civil society. This breaks open limits of the religious communities and identities. This does not only have a symbolical meaning, but these entities may act as a mediator in the case of crises. Dialogue shows both communalities and differences and is also a procedure to deal with these differences by integrating them into a broader picture. Furthermore, dialogue eliminates prejudices and contributes to get to know the other. Images of the self and the other are brought into a dialogue. In dialogue, one experiences the inner plurality of the religions. Finally, experiences of discrimination and victimization can be broken up in dialogue.

To sum up, the relevance of inter-religious dialogue for recognition is high. Dialogue anticipates social recognition in a microcosm which ideally will emanate on the society as a whole.

III.6. Muslim Articulation in the Media

In addition to the fields treated so far, the field of media cannot be neglected. What is considered as essential here are articulations in German language addressed not only to Muslims but also to the whole society. The field can be divided into three categories:

First, journalists with a Muslim background writing for mainstream media: The most prominent figure in this category is Navid Kermani.⁷⁰ As this area is very varied and difficult to grasp, it will not be discussed here in more detail.

Second, “Muslim media”: This is a field marked by less participation, but it can be seen in analogy with newspapers like the weekly “Jüdische Allgemeine,” edited by the “Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland,” or the weekly “Rheinischer Merkur” held by the German Bishops’ Conference and several dioceses. In this context the monthly “Islamische Zeitung” has to be mentioned:⁷¹ It contains articles by a variety of authors on diverse topics – all in German language. The circulation figure is not known, it is not yet very professional and not

⁶⁶ Cf. Hansjörg Schmid, *Anwälte, Vermittler oder Partner? Zur sozialen Rolle kirchlicher Akteure im christlich-islamischen Dialog*, in: Peter Hünseler (ed.), *Im Dienst der Versöhnung. Für einen authentischen Dialog zwischen Christen und Muslimen* (Festschrift für Christian W. Troll), Regensburg 2008, 115-145.

⁶⁷ Hansjörg Schmid, *Concrete Dialogue. About What Muslims Talk with Christians in Germany*, www.con-spiration.de/texte/english/2008/schmid2-e.html, 472.

⁶⁸ Cf. www.kcid.de/kcid/satzung.php.

⁶⁹ Cf. Hinterhuber, *Dialog* (note 65), 187.

⁷⁰ Cf. www.navidkermani.de/view.php?nid=0&switch_lid=2 and his most recent monography: *Wer sind wir?* München 2009. Cf. Sabine Schiffer, *Islam in German Media*, in: Al-Hamaneh/Thielmann, *Islam* (note 24), 423-440.

⁷¹ Cf. www.islamische-zeitung.de.

quoted in press reviews. Despite its partly missionary intention⁷² and some critical points concerning the ideological background,⁷³ it contributes many current political and economic debates. There is a column, “Muslime & Globalisierung,” with pro and con articles on issues of economy and sustainable development. Besides general issues, the concerns of Muslims are at the centre of the newspaper. It features regular reports on activities of Muslims and Muslim associations in various parts of Germany and abroad. Reports on new mosques are quite frequent in the column “Muslime & Lebensart,” German for Muslims and way of life. However, in the regular interviews roughly half of the interviewees are non-Muslims. An example for Muslim concerns is a recent leading article on the new German Minister of the Interior, Thomas de Maizière.⁷⁴ Although half of the article is about how he might continue the “Deutsche Islam Konferenz,” it is well-balanced. Another issue regularly picked up is how the German majority perceives Muslims. While one article paints a dark picture, calls the term Islamism “a merciless measure of sanction and exclusion”⁷⁵, but claims at the same time that approaching the majority is essential,⁷⁶ another article after the murder of Marwa El-Sherbini in a Dresden court in July 2009 is cautious and states that despite a growing anti-Muslim sentiment, Germans are not hostile to Islam in general.⁷⁷ Thus, the “Islamische Zeitung” can be described as a mixture of lobby institution and an attempt to participate in public debate. Articles on political issues, elections, etc. make evident that as far as the “Islamische Zeitung” is concerned, participation does not render the Muslim motivation invisible. On the contrary, it is a way to be publicly present as Muslims. However, to broaden these observations a more lengthy analysis of the journal would be necessary. Third, special projects comparable to proclamation broadcasting in public media, for which Muslims do not yet have a right due to the lack of formal

recognition: There is one project run by the Südwestrundfunk (SWR) called “Das Islamische Wort – Muslimische Glaubensbeiträge” (The Muslim Word – Contributions of Muslim Faith), which can be heard and read on the internet and which will be presented here as an example.⁷⁸ It addresses both Muslims and non-Muslims. Although the broadcasting contains witness of faith, it is under the main responsibility of the editorial staff. Whereas the project was disputed in the beginning, meanwhile it has found a broad acceptance and is considered an important contribution to integration. Two authors are important figures in Muslim associations, whereas the other two are Muslim intellectuals. Among the themes broadcasted so far are theological, spiritual and ethical issues.⁷⁹ One of the contributions stresses that Muslims should struggle for the whole of humanity before speaking of Muslim solidarity.

Furthermore, the author observes that it is still difficult to imagine Muslims criticize the federal government in general political issues like the churches do.⁸⁰ In line with this, another text states that education and learning should not aim at increasing wealth, power and respect, but contribute to the “peaceful progress of all people.”⁸¹ Similarly, other contributions look at economic issues namely protection of the environment from a perspective which is partly general and partly shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.⁸² Concerning racism, a topic which was treated in the face of the murder of the Muslim Marwa El-Sherbini in Dresden, the perspective may be described as that of universal fraternity so that Muslims should not only show pity when Muslims are attacked but also resist all kinds of Anti-Semitism and racism.⁸³ Finally it is stated that the Qur’an contains “fundamental and universal values” and that Muslims and non-Muslims should participate in the “collective struggle for a prosperous and peaceful living together.”⁸⁴

⁷² In many editions there is an advertisement “Wie kann man deutsche Muslime kennenlernen?” (How to get to know German Muslims [which means here converts to Islam, H.S]), e.g., nr. 167, 4; nr. 171, 4, etc.

⁷³ Cf. Hansjörg Schmid, Ein schwieriges Verhältnis. Muslime und Öffentlichkeit in Deutschland, in: *Herder Korrespondenz* (2006), 75-79, here 78.

⁷⁴ Cf. Khalil Breuer, Der leise Schäuble. Der neue Innenminister wirkt sachlich und kompetent – aber wie geht die Islamkonferenz weiter?, in: *Islamische Zeitung* nr. 176, February 2010, 1.

⁷⁵ “gnadenlos wirksame Sanktions- und Ausgrenzungsmaßnahme”

⁷⁶ Cf. Malik Özkan, Geht es um den Islam? Islamgegner organisieren Mehrheiten gegen Muslime, in: *Islamische Zeitung* nr. 175, January 2010, 1 and 10.

⁷⁷ Cf. Sulaiman Wilms, “Deutschland ist nicht islamfeindlich.” Auch die deutschen Muslime sollten nicht von einem Einzelfall auf das Ganze schließen, in: *Islamische Zeitung* nr. 170, August 2009, 1.

⁷⁸ There is also the “Forum am Freitag” by the ZDF which is less focused on religion: www.forumamfreitag.zdf.de.

⁷⁹ Cf. www.swr.de/islamisches-wort, and the overview with links to all texts www.islam.de/9442.php; cf. also Reinhard Baumgarten (red.), *Das Islamische Wort – Muslimische Glaubensbeiträge im SWR*, Stuttgart 2009.

⁸⁰ Hilal Sezgin, Der „selbstverständliche“ Islam, in: *ibid.*, 77-79, here 79.

⁸¹ Emina Corbo-Mesic, Islam und Bildung, in: *ibid.*, 28-30, here 30.

⁸² Aiman Mazyek, Schattenreiche Zinswirtschaft, in: *ibid.*, 86-89, here 88; Emina Corbo-Mesic, Des Schöpfers Geschöpfe und seine Schöpfung (October 2009), www.islam.de/9442.php.

⁸³ Aiman Mazyek, Rassismus tötet (August 2009), www.islam.de/9442.php.

⁸⁴ Bekir Alboga, Islamische Werte und das Grundgesetz, in: Baumgarten, *Das Islamische Wort* (note 79), 94-96, here 95 respectively 96.

The Islam of the “Islamische Wort” is not an Islam struggling for representation, but an Islam which considers itself being an ethical resource for the whole society. Even when broaching the issue of islamophobia, this is not done primarily from the perspective of victims, but from a pro-active one.⁸⁵ Only one out of 34 texts published so far is about the claim for equal treatment and recognition – but this text, in the end, pleads not to limit the political perspective on religion:

„Many other things, however, Muslims do not need as Muslims but merely as humans.”⁸⁶

The examples of the “Islamische Zeitung” and the “Islamische Wort” illustrate that the framework strongly affects the picture of Islam: on the one hand a journal built up and run by Muslims, on the other hand a programme of a public broadcasting company. Thus non-Muslim institutions can also contribute to a participative Islam.

IV. Conclusion: A Direct Road to the Arena of Civil Society?

It is not the aim of this essay to judge which of the six presented fields is the most important – they are all relevant. Sometimes they stand side by side, indifferent and complementary, sometimes they reinforce one another, at other times they are in tension or even in conflict. E.g. the Islam of IRE is quite different from the one of the Islamic associations. Thus the fields imposingly illustrate that in Germany a rich plurality of Islam has grown in the last decade. One can speak of a contextual German Islam, for which the articulation in the German language has become self-evident. Due to the organisational grade and structure it is difficult to decide who represents the German Muslims. This strongly limits the scope of representation. Nevertheless recognition takes place through both strategies. In many cases representation and participation are overlapping and inseparable from each other. Representation needs participation and *vice versa*. Like a political scientist stated:

“Without representation there is no participation [...]”⁸⁷

The examples show that a certain degree of representation is necessary. But also a growing tendency towards participation can be observed. Recognition is in any case a result of communication and interaction. As there is certain mistrust towards the Islamic associations and their ambition for representation, the path of participation – such as proposed by Dilwar Hussain – may be more promising. The political and social role of religious communities in Germany not only results from their legal status. Moreover, recognition is not primarily accorded on the top level, but in many places grows from the bottom up.

The imitation of the established Christian churches may be misleading for German Muslims. As José Casanova demonstrated, there is a shift for religious activists from the arenas of the state and of political society to that of civil society.⁸⁸ Among Christian theologians it has been disputed, if the churches with their divine origin and long tradition should be seen as agents of civil society.⁸⁹ For the churches looking back on a long history of a close relation with the state it is not always easy to render power and to share former privileges. They still have to complete the step from “state-oriented” to “society-oriented” institutions.⁹⁰ For Muslims with their loose structure of associations and their internal pluralism this step might be easier than for the churches:

“Conceptually however Muslim political discourse has lost this emphasis, simply referring to the ‘individual’ and the ‘state’, largely neglecting notions of civil society. The emphasis in Muslim political thought now should be on reviving and maintaining the independence of civil society [...]”⁹¹

To be part of civil society means sharing and convincing with arguments instead of relying on monopolies and privileges. Therefore alliances with other social entities may occur. Contributing to the civil society also strengthens social cohesion and democracy. The doors of civil society are open for German Muslims and there is no need to wait for decades to achieve a certain legal status.⁹²

⁸⁵ Aiman Mazyek, *Morgenland im Abendland* (December 2009), www.islam.de/9442.php, which was written due to the Swiss referendum banning the construction of minarets.

⁸⁶ “Vieles weitere allerdings brauchen Muslime gar nicht als Muslime, sondern schlicht als Menschen.” (Hilal Sezgin, *Muslime und Macht*, September 2009), www.islam.de/9442.php.

⁸⁷ “Ohne Repräsentation gibt es keine Partizipation [...]” Volker Gerhardt, *Partizipation. Das Prinzip der Politik*, München 2007, 25.

⁸⁸ José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago 1994, 61-63, 218s.

⁸⁹ Cf. Frank Adloff, *Zivilgesellschaft. Theorie und politische Praxis*, Frankfurt/New York 2005, 119. Cf. also Dilwar Hussain, *Islam and Civil Society in the UK*, in: www.euro-muslims.eu/en/menu-vertical/emn-members-articles/detail/news/islam-and-civil-society-in-the-uk/.

⁹⁰ Cf. Casanova, *Public Religions* (note 88), 220.

⁹¹ Yasir Suleiman et al., *Contextualizing Islam in Britain: Exploratory Perspectives*, Cambridge 2009, 38 (available on www.cis.cam.ac.uk/CIBPReportWeb.pdf).

⁹² A lack of financial and organisational resources can limit the activities in the civil society. This might be another argument to go further.