Political Rationalities, Counter-terrorism and Policies on Islam in the United Kingdom and France

F<small>RANK</small> P<small>ETER</small>

Introduction

This article examines policies on Islam in France and the United Kingdom with a particular focus on their relation to and their embeddedness in strategies countering urban violence and terrorism. It is based on the assumption that policies concerning the incorporation, regulation and administration of Islamic institutions and Muslim practices are connected to counter-terrorism policies and a variety of policy measures directed against phenomena of urban violence and delinquency. Starting with a rethinking of our understanding of power in the context of European Islam, my principal aim is to outline an analytical framework for state policies which will replace the hitherto dominating analytical focus on national juridico-political orders with a Foucaldian perspective on the functioning of political rationalities in a governmentalized state. The application of the framework proposed here will bring into focus a type of counter-terrorism policy which is not based on mechanisms of surveillance and exclusion of suspected individuals or groups, but instead on targeting the milieu within which these individuals and groups supposedly operate through a policy which is partly conducted 'beyond the state', and notably by Muslims themselves. Fundamentally, this policy reconfigures its erstwhile object – the abstract category of Islam conceived as one 'religion' defined in law – as an Islamic milieu, an understanding of how social conditions in the long-term determine interrelated Muslim practices, beliefs and institutions. This policy is thus not based on a distorted legal framework, but on evaluations of

feasibility and costs, prognostics of future developments in the Islamic milieu, and shifting standards of acceptable religious practices and beliefs by Muslim citizens.

My attempt to broaden our understanding of policies on Islam beyond an analysis of the national jurido-political order[1] – defined through citizenship legislation, state-religion regimes, and, more generally, national political cultures and underlying political theories – is motivated by two aims. First, by considering the juridico-political order as merely one of several mechanisms of power, I seek to foreground the questions of whether those state policies which deviate from this order are commanded by a specific rationality (and are not merely deviations) and how we can study this rationality in relation to the law. Second, the line of investigation pursued here aims at contributing to our understanding of discrimination against Muslims – a crucial topic in studies on Muslims in France and the U.K. – and possible remedies against it. The discursive rendering of the concept of power used here will lead us to study discrimination as being partly constitutive of Muslim understandings and practices of Islam, and not only as the enactment of constraints. This, in turn, will entail a different appraisal of remedies against it and help to illuminate the ways in which the latter are constrained by and possibly reiterate the conditions which enable discrimination in the first place.

My approach to the study of policies on Islam in France and the U.K. is grounded in Foucault's conceptualization of mechanisms of power and his reflections on those mechanisms specific to the exercise of bio-power in a governmentalized State (Burchell et al. 1991; Foucault 1997 and 2004). My point of departure is the assumption that the functioning of politics stems from three distinct rationalities of power which coexist, namely juridical and disciplinary rationality and, finally, what Foucault calls the security apparatus (*dispositif de sécurité*), which I want to elaborate here as 'anticipatory rationality'. In this article, I will limit myself to analysing the functioning of this specific political rationality, which has come increasingly, in the last decade or so, to underlie policies on Islam in France and the U.K.

In a first step, this rationality can be characterized by its object, the Islamic milieu within which racialized Muslims live, that is the group of those whose personal or inherited roots in Islamic countries have been naturalized and biologized and who now constitute the 'Muslim community' of France and the U.K., usually equated with immigrants (and descendants) from majority Muslim countries. Following Silverstein, I define racialisation here as 'the process through which any diacritic of social personhood – including, class, ethnicity, generation, kinship/affinity, positions within fields of power –

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1   For studies who seek to transcend this orientation in ways other than mine see for example Maussen (2004 and 2006).

comes to be essentialized, naturalized and/or biologized' (Silverstein 2005: 364). Anticipatory rationality can be characterized furthermore by its usage of an anticipatory – or prospective – analysis which aims to discern future risks of social or political conflicts arising from this part of the population which it conceives as part of an Islamic milieu. Finally, it can be characterized by its attempt to incorporate Muslims into the fight against 'radicalization'. As stated above, this anticipatory rationality will be considered one instantiation of a security apparatus. While this anticipatory rationality is closely intertwined with the legal order, it puts in operation a reconfiguration of the latter by adjusting the legal system – and the subject of law – to varying and indeed often conflicting knowledge claims about the social citizen, in this case the racialized Muslim conceived as part of an Islamic milieu. Put differently, this anticipatory rationality sets in motion a specific politicisation of difference inside the population which triggers variegated effects. While this movement of politicisation aims at the normalisation of Muslims, it does so by breaking up, at least momentarily, the universalism of law and political representation based on the relative subordination of particulars to the abstract 'we' of the universal community of the liberal state (Brown 1995).

In the following analysis, I will seek to identify the divergent policy consequences of this reordering of the uneasy balance between universalism and particularism and the concomitant shift in the combination of political rationalities and explore how we can study Islam both as an effect of this double movement of politicisation and normalisation and as its vehicle. More particularly, I will argue that the increased importance of a anticipatory rationality underlies the emergence of what I will call civil Islam, Islam understood as a set of discourses and practices which aim to 'sacralize the living-together of a specific collectivity' (Willaime 1993: 571) against the threat of 'radicalisation' of 'young Muslims' and, more generally, various forms of urban violence among the racialized Muslim population. The emergence of civil Islam – as policy aim and as specific remaking of the Islamic tradition by Muslims – implies, and this is the second argument advanced here, that the application of legal norms underlying policies on Islam and enabling or disabling Muslims practices is increasingly based on a specific non-legal rationality which induces various reconfigurations of concepts such as laïcité, Establishment, Republicanism or Multiculturalism. Finally, in a comparative perspective, I will argue that the heightened role of this anticipatory rationality is a major factor in the limited realignment of policies on Islam in France and Britain which we can observe during the last decade. Put another way, the study of this rationality provides one means to grasp the commonalities of European policies on Islam beyond national boundaries and nation-specific modes of regulating religion.

Political Rationalities

In his study 'Security, Territory, Population' (2004), Foucault distinguished between three mechanisms of power – juridical system, disciplinary system, security apparatus – all of which Foucault defines indirectly by contrasting them to each other. In 'Security, Territory, Population' he begins to do so by giving a simple and illuminating example, namely that of state policies concerning theft.

In the context of a legal rationality, theft is to be punished simply according to the law which contains a number of prohibitions and specifies the respective punishments. The rise of disciplinary systems 'frames' the application of the law on the one hand by various practices of surveillance – which aim to detect the thief even before he passes to act – and on the other, by a complex of penitentiary practices which aim at the correction and transformation of the delinquent. Finally, inside a security apparatus, the functioning of both the legal and disciplinary systems are reordered in reference to a new series of questions concerning theft, such as statistical evidence on occurrence of theft; the impact of famine or any other social crises on the number of crimes committed; the costs incurred in the punishment of thieves; the cost and efficiency of re-educating criminals; and so forth. The rise of security mechanisms partially reconfigures the legal apparatus; while it enables a specific application of the law, no longer does this application follow directly from the binary code of prohibition vs. permission which underlies legal rationality. Instead, the security apparatus operates on the basis of a reasoning based on evaluations of what is socially and economically acceptable and feasible. In the course of the application of its policies, prior understandings of law are either suspended, even while continuing to determine the aims which these policies seek to actualize, or they are redefined – through new legislation and/or the application of laws – with reference to what is acceptable and feasible. The security apparatus is furthermore characterized by the fact that its matrix incorporates cost calculations as one of its constituent elements. Finally, specific phenomena are not considered in an isolated way, as in law or disciplinary institutions, but as part of a probable series of events; this is so since the security apparatus is fundamentally concerned with the problem of uncertainty. This problem of uncertainty is tackled to an important degree by relying on a reasoning in terms of what Foucault calls 'milieu': 'The specific space of security refers then to a series of possible events; it refers to the temporal and the uncertain which have to be inserted into a given space [which] […] one can call the milieu' (Foucault 2004: 22). Fundamentally, thinking in terms of milieus is an attempt to tackle the problem of uncertainty by understanding and calculating 'the action at a distance of one body on another' and, more generally, by grasping how, inside of a space conceived of as 'milieu',

causes and effects loop. In brief, milieu designates a new 'space of intervention' for state power 'in which instead of affecting individuals as a set of legal subjects capable of voluntary action – which would be the case of sovereignty – and instead of affecting them as a multiplicity of organisms, of bodies capable of performances, and of required performances – as in discipline – one tries to affect precisely a population' (Foucault 2004: 23).

In the following analysis, I will study how policies on Islam in France and the U.K. have been reshaped, to different degrees, by a rationality which precisely is based on considerations of feasibility and acceptability, on calculations of costs, and on the notion of milieu, here Islamic milieu. Before examining the functioning of anticipatory rationality, one remark on the role of expert knowledge in this process is necessary, since the reliance on anticipatory analysis and the reasoning in terms of an Islamic milieu attribute a significant role to what I will refer to as expert knowledge on Islam.[2] This assertion raises the question of the scientific status of this expert knowledge. Now, it is clear that a lot of what is said today by the proliferating group of experts on Islam and what is referred to in public – by politicians, journalists, intellectuals, Church leaders, […] – as expert knowledge is not considered scientific by scientists, whether they be from the social sciences or humanities. However, there is no need to enter into the debate on the question how we can classify the content of expert knowledge on Islam and, more generally, which factors – internal or external to science, scientific factors proper or social ones – make that specific artefact count as science. My point here is simply that a group of experts, a group which is larger than that of scientists, provides and/or legitimates a specific idiom for making reality amenable to deliberation and planning (as, e.g., in the case of the terms integration, radicalisation, 'young Muslims', etc.).[3] While the scientific status of this expert knowledge is often contested, this does not allow us to dismiss it as mere talk and irrelevant to a study of policies on Islam. These contestations are part of the political field which has been opened up by the increasingly prominent workings of anticipatory rationality. They co-determine the latter's functioning and thus need to be studied as such. Furthermore, expert knowledge not only serves to plan policies, but also, as I said, to make matters Islamic simply amenable to deliberation. Finally, importantly, expert knowledge on Islam – and not least the type of rationality which it enables and disseminates – is an important

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2   The specific contribution of academic research on European Islam and immigration to expert knowledge cannot be dealt with here, but see, for the case of France, Peter (forthcoming), 'French Scholarship on Islam in the Republic', paper presented at Forum for Islamforskning-Workshop 'Research on Islam Repositioned', Copenhagen, May 2007.

3   I draw here on Rose and Miller's definition of political rationalities (Rose/Miller 1992: 179).

element in policies on Islam, since it directly reshapes the ways in which Muslims think of Islam and Islamic conduct in the context of France and the U.K. Put another way, expert knowledge on Islam is the primary vector through which state policies reconfigure what they target.

The Case of the United Kingdom

In the case of the United Kingdom, anticipatory rationality becomes significant for policies on Islam after 2001. As stated above, this rationality functions next to other mechanisms of power, some of which are politically narrowly defined (electoral tactics), others not (anti-discrimination politics and legislation; communitarian policies). The following analysis will touch only briefly upon them[4] and concentrate on the emergence and functioning of anticipatory rationality in relation to a legal rationality which notably underlies anti-discrimination policies. Anti-discrimination policies were formally introduced for the first time in 1965 following the restriction on immigration instituted in 1962, and were considerably extended in 1976 with the creation of the *Commission for Racial Equality* (CRE) which was authorized to conduct race relations audits of companies, government agencies, etc. (Anwar 1986: 17-20; Lester 1987: 22; Crowley 1992: 88 f.). These policies are first of all noteworthy for our discussion, since they institutionalize, from the 1960s on, the racial prism of British perception of the post-migratory reality. Society was divided into 'black' and 'white', the term 'Asians' being little used until the 1990s (Bensons 1996; Alexandre 2002; Modood 2005: 46 f.). As concerns Muslims, the limitation to racial groups, as has often been noted, excluded them from anti-discrimination measures and thus created a situation of inequality and furthermore directly contributed to redirecting the process of incorporation of Islam from the national to the local level (Lewis 1997; Rath et al. 2001: 227-29; Ansari 2004: 340-88).

I consider these policies as an outcome of a legal rationality not only because they largely – though not exclusively – work to ensure equality by legal means, but because the recognition of racial difference and discrimination by these policies aims at reaffirming equality of all citizens beyond these differences. Fundamentally, they consider difference as normalizable and they seek to normalize and neutralize it as a mere individual attribute that is irrelevant to national identity, through legal protection and measures of positive discrimination. Importantly, these policies are founded on the assumption of a stable identity, whether it is black, Asian or Muslim, which they themselves obviously contribute to stabilize. Both the emphasis placed on the normalisa-

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4   For a more detailed study of these see Peter (2006c).

tion of difference on the one hand and the assumption of stable difference and identity on the other distinguish this rationality in contrast to anticipatory rationality, as we shall see.

Policies on Islam, before 2001, have largely functioned in this framework which was slowly but not fully extended from racial groups to Muslims over the course of the 1990s, particularly after the Labour party came to power in 1997. While these policies are clearly not uniform, but inspired by various factors, notably electoral considerations responding to the increased articulation of British Muslim identities (see Peter 2006c), they rely on notions of a stable Muslim identity and they are also deeply concerned, in reaction to Muslim demands, with issues of legal equality and the normalisation of the Muslim presence through the latter's recognition. The central role in policies on Islam in the 1990s, of the equal treatment of Muslim confessional schools, realized by Labour, of debates on legislation against religious discrimination, of Muslim demands for amendment to the exclusively Anglican law on blasphemy and, later on, of the debate around the law against incitement to religious hatred (adopted in 2006) demonstrate this.

After 2001, under the impact of the riots in Northern English towns implicating young British Pakistanis, and September 11, this begins to change and anticipatory rationality becomes more important. The influence of this anticipatory rationality is visible already in the influential Cantle Report which contains the results of one of the government ordered enquiries made into the disturbances and its causes. The Cantle Report is important in two respects: first, because it makes a contribution to establishing the use of an anticipatory analysis in the elaboration of policies for governing 'modern multi-racial Britain' (Home Office 2002: 9); second, because it insists strongly on the normative dimension of the disturbances and the need for more 'cohesion'. The main message of the report, i.e. that it is necessary to define and to disseminate a common set of values in order to guarantee 'community cohesion', is precisely the result of an anticipatory analysis of Britain's multicultural society. According to the report, the absence of common values has strongly contributed to the disturbances in northern England. The entire report is thus basically an attempt to discern and to relate the diverse causes – political, social, cultural – underlying this absence of shared values in order to devise a strategy for preventing similar incidents in the future. Among the report's manifold recommendations, a substantial number thus relates to the need to enhance social cohesion through increased 'cross-cultural contacts'. This is reflected for example in the demands to confessional schools to take in more pupils from other confessions and the proposition to make funding of cultural, religious or ethnic associations dependent on their contribution to social cohesion (Home Office 2002).

While the report is relatively vague about many issues and deploys anticipatory rationality only in an incipient form, the latter soon becomes used more fully and more directly in relation to British Muslims. The reasons leading some British Muslims to join the Taliban in the fight against the allied forces in Afghanistan have been debated since 2001 in British media.[5] Very soon, the disaffection of Muslims towards British politics, a phenomenon which is regularly measured in opinion polls,[6] is also being debated in anticipation of a terrorist attack in England.[7] The perpetration of the first suicide attack by a Briton in Israel, in early 2003, contributes to nourishing these reflections.[8] In the course of these public debates, a variety of positions are defended. Generally speaking, we can discern two dominant positions which are to a large degree complementary. First, there are those who reason in terms of simple defence, notably through the police and military apparatuses, against the terrorist threat and, second, there are those who demand a more comprehensive and preventive approach to this threat. This latter approach is based on an anticipatory analysis. Government policies are informed by both approaches simultaneously.

The anti-terrorist strategy put into practice in 2002, *Contest*, aims not only at hunting terrorists and preparing how to deal with the aftermaths of future terrorist attacks, but also at reducing the number of individuals supporting terrorism or eventually becoming terrorists themselves (Intelligence and Security Committee 2006). On the one hand, the government thus introduces, in late 2001, a new anti-terror legislation (Bamford 2004: 747-49) and puts into practice a new police strategy which effectively discriminates against British citizens of Asian origin.[9] On the other hand, there are attempts to develop a more preventive approach to the terrorist threat and it is in this context that policies concerning the incorporation and administration of Islam enter. This second approach is based on the anticipatory analysis of the 'milieu' which allows disaffection and terrorism among Muslims to grow. Since 2001, the discussions in the public and among policy-makers are thus concerned with the relative impact which British foreign policy in the Middle East, discrimination and segregation and the activities of extremist Islamist groups have on the radicalisation of 'young Muslims' in order to devise an efficient policy to prevent this latter development in the future.

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5   See for example 'Why Brits fight for the Taliban', The Observer, 4 November 2001.
6   See for example the opinion polls conducted for The Guardian at www: icmresearch.co.uk.
7   'Inside the Mind of a Terrorist', The Observer, 9 March 2003.
8   'Making of a Martyr: From Pacifism to Jihad', The Observer, 4 May 2003.
9   'Muslims face increased stop and search', The Guardian, 2 March 2005.

Fundamentally, this implies a shift in the configuration of political rationalities and, more precisely, the decline of the legal rationality. The latter's epistemology, presupposing the existence of relatively stable (ethnic or religious) communities, is strongly put under strain by the events of 2001 – indicating both the divergences between communities and their transformation – and the government's outlook, in the subsequent period, is certainly characterized by a stronger awareness not only of the internal plurality of religious and ethnic communities, but also of their constant evolution in relation to society. I would argue that in the post-2001 context, the government defines its task increasingly as controlling and guiding the range of processes which are continually shaping ethnic and religious identities inside the milieu circumscribed by immigration and ascribed Islamity. It is because of this new focus that expert knowledge begins to play a crucial role in policy-making and debates relating to it. Certainly, the question of equality has not simply been abandoned by British politicians. To the contrary, social, economic or legal equality is seen to varying degrees as a crucial factor – but insufficient on its own – to influence positively the development of the Muslim community. The Home Office's insistence in its 2005 programme on the need to strengthen equality and in turn community cohesion can be cited as one example here (Home Office 2005a).[10] However, today, this policy of equality and normalisation to a large degree is commanded by and embedded in an anticipatory rationality. This is no mean change to preceding times: in the context of such an anticipatory rationality, the principle of equal treatment of various religions, including Islam, can be suspended, openly or not, as a function of the results of such an analysis. The policies in favour of disseminating civil Islam are just one example of it.

What then are the effects of this development on policies on Islam and, more particularly, how does it relate to and lead to the government's support for civil Islam? In a first step, civil Islam can be defined here as a state policy aiming to refashion a certain number of institutions and practices among immigrants from Islamic background in order to reduce the risk of socio-political conflicts and terrorism in the future. In its attempt to identify the causes of the mentioned phenomena and adequate counter-policies, this state policy reasons in terms of an Islamic milieu. As introduction to the analysis of these policies, a reading of a series of leaked government documents, emanating essentially from the Home Office[11] and presenting reflections on the government's anti-terrorism strategy, provide one example of such a reasoning.[12]

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10   The results of this policy cannot be evaluated in this article.

11   The role of the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) in Islam policies in Britain is certainly of very limited importance. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the ministry is concerned with some aspects of this policy on a seemingly regular basis. For example, a FCO unit created in 2004 and in charge of

It should be noted first that the government's reasoning in matters of terrorism is in several ways incomplete. Policy-makers continue to struggle, for instance, with the question of whether there is an unambiguous correlation between terrorism and socio-economic deprivation.[13] Also, the precise trajectory of extremist Muslims[14] and terrorists is to a large degree unclear, apart from the fact that a certain number of extremist (non-violent) Islamic groups supposedly facilitate this process (Timesonline 2005). While these points are left in limbo, the Home Office report clearly identifies other causes and possible remedies to the radicalisation of young Muslims. The report relates the new British policies in the field of incorporation of Islam to three causal factors of radicalisation: the auto-segregation of Muslims; the absence of a strong rejection of extremism and terrorism by 'moderate' Muslims; weak or missing control by state authorities of Muslim activists, notably because of their transnational activities. What are the solutions proposed here? These consist in stimulating Muslim institutions and actors to interact more with majority society, notably via inter-religious dialogue; bringing 'moderate' Muslims who are to be supported by the state to reject and fight against extremism and terrorism; increasing the ratio of nationally rooted or trained activists in British Islam in order to facilitate its control and its adaptation to the British context.

This report also recognizes, as others have done,[15] that British foreign policy (in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, […]) is a factor of alienation of Muslims which is to be countered by a more efficient communication strategy with Muslims. This analysis has been strongly rejected by members of the British government, notably Prime Minister Blair. However, it would be wrong to take this rejection as indicating simply the limits of anticipatory rationality. Rather, it points more generally to the latter's profoundly ambivalent nature

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reinforcing contacts with the Islamic world is also assigned the task of promoting a positive image of British foreign policy among Muslims in order to reduce the risk of alienation (Home Office 2005c: 16).

12 The following remarks refer to an internal report, co-written by the FCO and HO for the Prime Minister, and leaked to the press after the bombings of 2005. In this report, written essentially in 2004, one finds an analysis of the different strategies applied or to be applied in the government's striving to keep 'young Muslims' from radicalisation and terrorism (Timesonline 2005).

13 While evidence is so far lacking to support this connection, this is, however, not seen as an argument against anti-discrimination policies. Given that the aim is to enlist support of 'moderate' Muslims in the fight against extremism (see below), the Home Office argues that Muslim leaders' perception that discrimination is a cause for the radicalisation would constitute in itself a reason to pursue such anti-discrimination policies.

14 See below on the Home Office's definition of 'extremism'.

15 See, e.g. 'Leak shows Blair told of Iraq war terror link', The Observer, 28 August 2005; 'Don't treat us like patsies, say Muslim MPs', The Guardian , 15 August 2006; Home Office 2005d.

which stems from the fact that the causal reasoning (in terms of milieu) is both a modality of power and a means for various persons and groups – including Muslims – to hold power accountable for the negative effects of policies, here those of British foreign policies on the 'radicalisation' of Muslims. Pointedly said, instead of seeing in this rejection by Blair and others the limits of anticipatory rationality, this rejection marks its presence in a specific form of opposition which it enables.[16]

Inter-religious Dialogue and the Imams

After 2001 and even more so after the bombings of July 2005, civil Islam is being institutionalized and this is done primarily via policies concerning inter-religious dialogue and imams.

First, the government decides upon giving more support to inter-religious networks (Home Office 2005a: 12; Inter Faith Network 2002, idem 2005 and cf. idem 2003 for the situation on the local level). While it is too early to evaluate the results of this attempt to insert Islam more firmly into the multi-religious landscape, it is reasonable to assume that this policy will, generally speaking, prove to be an accelerator of Islam's institutionalisation while at the same giving advantage to those Muslim actors, institutional or individual, who have the necessary profile, in terms of professional, social and cultural competencies, in order to fully participate in inter-religious activities.

The reasons for granting this support to interreligious groups are indicated without ambiguity by the Home Office whose position here illustrates well the changed political approach pointed to in the discussion of the Cantle Report. According to the ministry, 'a more cohesive society needs more than just equality of opportunities for all individuals' and also depends on 'certain social conditions' enabling citizens to get to know each other and to develop 'shared values' (Home Office 2005a: 11). Now, British policy is conceived precisely as an effort to create the conditions necessary for the dissemination of 'shared values'. Apart from measures such as funding for sport or artistic activities and the introduction of civic education in schools, inter-religious dialogue thus benefits from increased financial support. The justifications given for this support are to a certain degree distinct from the earlier objective, inspired by communitarian ideas (Bevir 2003; Smith 2004), to reinforce, on various levels, the consultation and cooperation with religious communities and to facilitate the access of these organisations to public funding (Home Office 2005b: 3-35). After 2001, the government's aim is not simply to sup-

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16 For a discussion of this point see Peter (forthcoming), 'French Scholarship on Islam in the Republic', paper presented at Forum for Islamforskning-Workshop 'Research on Islam Repositioned', Copenhagen, May 2007.

port the activities of religious communities, but to orient them in their activities in order to turn them into forces of cohesion, and not factors of divisiveness. While the Anglican establishment – its 'minimal nature […], its proven openness to other denominations and faiths seeking public space, and the fact that its very existence is an ongoing acknowledgement of the public character of religion' (Modood 1994: 73) – might have facilitated at various points in time the process of incorporation of Islam into the United Kingdom, we should be careful not to consider it as implying a specific view of religion by government or the latter's approval of the public character of religion. Rather, it opens up and legitimates a space for action between government agencies and Muslim (and other religious) groups which is commanded by varying rationalities and, after 2001, increasingly by an anticipatory one.

Second, the government starts to prepare, since 2001, a new policy aiming to reshape Islam as it is practised in Britain through a number of structural measures or measures directly focussed at specific groups or institutions. This policy, in England as elsewhere in Western Europe, is concerned primarily with mosques and imams (see Birt 2006 for a detailed study). In 2001, the Home Office announces that the conditions of immigration for religious ministers will be revised, the aim being to guarantee a sufficient knowledge of English. The rationale behind this move is illustrated by the example given in the Home Office's declaration where the importance of linguistic competencies for a 'religious leader' is highlighted for the case of interacting with other religious groups. In this respect, the Home Office also points to the events of the summer 2001 as a case where such interaction has been made impossible because of language problems. The Home Office also declares its preference as ministers for persons with residence in Britain or holders of British degrees. Apart from the fact that the professional qualifications of these persons are easier to validate, the Home Office considers that these persons are, because of their knowledge of society, 'better able to relate their particular faith to the context of the United Kingdom' (Home Office 2001: 46).

Put briefly, the function of an imam is conceived of here in the context of a policy of community cohesion. Given that the imam's mission is henceforth supplemented by the obligation to preach an Islam in conformity with 'British values', the criteria for judging his qualifications change. Since 2004, candidates for immigration into Britain as ministers of cult need to prove linguistic competencies whose standard has been raised considerably; other measures are being prepared in order to verify, after their entry into Britain, their knowledge of and engagement with British society (Home Office 2005b: 20 s.). This policy of closure towards foreign imams is continued, as shows Birt (2006), in the field of chaplaincy where new posts subsidized by the state are exclusively destined for candidates who hold a certificate from one of the two existing institutes in Britain preparing Muslim chaplains.

The State's Quest for 'Moderate' Muslims

The government's attempts to reshape British Islam are not limited to policies aiming at imams and chaplains, but also rely on a policy of support for specific Muslim groups. From the government's point of view, one of the principal aims of its policy is to reinforce 'moderate' Islam and to support it – and be supported itself – in the fight against extremism (see for example Home Office 2005c; for a survey of related government activities see Timesonline 2005 and Prime Minister 2006: 7). This raises of course the question of how the government goes about determining those Muslim groups which are 'extremist' and those which are suitable carriers of civil Islam?

In this respect, the government's reasoning is complex and does not simply reflect a division, which is supposedly that of the government, between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims (Bonnefoy 2003). The complexity of the decision by government agencies follows not only from difficulties in identifying correctly their Muslim interlocutors. In fact, the term 'moderate', as used by government agencies, comprises a broad range of groups with very divergent profiles in terms of resources and political outlook. Other criteria enter thus necessarily into the government's choice of its Muslim partners. In absence of other sources, the report by the Home Office, cited previously, provides us with some evidence for discerning these criteria. Following this report, extremism is defined as

'advocating or supporting views such as support for terrorist attacks against British or Western targets, including the 9/11 attacks, or for British Muslims fighting against British or allied forces abroad, arguing that it is not possible to be Muslim and British, calling on Muslims to reject engagement with British society and politics, and advocating the creation of an Islamic state in Britain' (Timesonline 2005).[17]

A reading of this report indicates that among those Muslim groups which are not 'extremist' government agencies make supplementary distinctions. The essential criterion in this respect is the influence which a specific group or actor wields inside the Muslim community and the simple acceptance to enter into contact with authorities. Put differently, the government does not limit relations with Muslims to those who are aligned on its policies. In fact, even the MCB, the main defender of an Islamic commitment for the 'common good' and for this reason and others regularly denigrated as 'a government creature' by other Muslims (Glynn 2002: 972 and, more recently, BBC News 2005), does not have, according to this report, satisfying relations with the govern-

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17 See also Home Office (2005c: 1) for a similar definition.

ment. The government's aim, in fact, is rather to make and intensify contacts with a more important number of Muslim actors whose openness towards the government might vary, but who need to be influential. In a second step, the task is to convince them, 'in private', as the report underlines, to adopt a more intransigent position towards 'extremism' while at the same time developing their human and material capacities (Timesonline 2005). Put another way, the government recognizes differences with respect to how the various so-called moderate Muslim groups relate to its policies. However, these differences do not determine the decision of whether to cooperate with them or not, but re-flect the government's ultimate policy aims regarding the transformation of Muslim groups. On the one hand, British policy towards Muslims is thus ex-clusionist, as for example in the case of the Muhajiroun (and successor or-ganisations) or Hizb ut-Tahrir (Taji-Farouki 1996; Wiktorowicz 2005), and, more generally, legally discriminating against Muslims and/or British Asians; on the other hand, this policy is based on a more prospective approach which aims to prevent the radicalisation of British Muslims by transforming, in a mid-range perspective, the field's internal structure and relations between Muslims and the state. This latter policy has been challenged more recently following the reshuffle of the cabinet and the appointment of Ruth Kelly to the newly created Department for Communities and Local Government. While Kelly's counter-terrorism strategy does not depart from that of the pre-ceding period (Department for Communities and Local Government 2007), she has questioned the MCB's commitment to Britain's 'shared values' and seems disinclined to continue cooperating with it. How this will affect the MCB's position in the long run and, more importantly, if this change signals the abandonment of a prospective approach in policies on Islam remains to be seen.

How then is the state support for civil Islam perceived by Muslim organi-sations? Civil Islam emerges from the partial convergence of government ob-jectives and aims pursued by various Muslim organisations concerning the in-tegration of immigrants of Islamic background and the strengthening of reli-gious institutions. From the point of view of Muslim groups, the new gov-ernment approach can be beneficial, since it directly leads to an acceleration of the incorporation of Islam. A comparison of propositions and demands in this field made by diverse Muslim personalities after the bombings of 2005 and government projects (concerning institutes for Islamic studies, the promo-tion of 'moderate' Islam or the role of imams) suggests that there is a partial convergence of aims between the two groups (Home Office 2005d). However, in the course of consultations about specific measures to be taken, diver-gences can emerge, as shown in the recent case of policies regarding mosques and places of worship in Britain. The government's projects were strongly criticized by the MCB as a simple attempt to control Muslims, whereas the

Muslim Council was asking for government support for its work. For Muslim organisations, the cooperation with the government in fact regularly raises important problems of legitimacy (Home Office 2005c; Muslim Council of Britain 2006). Another major divergence should be mentioned in this respect. While state policies clearly aim at ensuring the population's 'devotion to the unity of the social body' (Willaime 1993: 572), civil Islam, for many Muslim organisations, is part of a much broader (and older) tradition of understanding Islam as a public religion whose teachings certainly cannot be limited to the striving for social cohesion.[18] From the point of view of government, civil Islam can be considered a specific variation of the civil religion in Britain, a variation which is build upon combining the integrative function of religion with the idea of necessary reform of Islam.

As for Muslim associations, their commitment to civil Islam partly results from political and public pressure which has increased formidably since 2001 and which has contributed to reorienting the older civic engagement rooted, as for example in the case of the MCB and its constitutive members, in the tradition of Islamic movements (Birt 2005; McLoughlin 2005). In fact, the MCB has long since fought for facilitating social and political participation of British Muslims. After 2001, the Muslim Council reoriented its work to focus more on maintaining social peace. In statements made after that year, it thus recalls believers, notably the 'youth', their obligations as Muslim citizens and, addressing politicians and the broader public; it places increased emphasis on the role of mosques as social and educative centres and as means to prevent delinquency. More generally, the MCB is arguing in the interest of encouraging public authorities to cooperate with Muslim associations.[19] In 2004, after the bombings of Madrid, the MCB is taking a further step on this path and is explicitly asking Muslim leaders and activists to cooperate with security forces to prevent a terrorist attack (Muslim Council of Britain 2004).

The Case of France

The incorporation of Islam in metropolitan France is, for the first time, just as in the United Kingdom, taking place on the local level and it proceeds, broadly speaking, in the absence of any political strategy. Contrary to the U.K., this process started relatively late. The Muslim presence in France has for a long time been seen as temporary both by many immigrants – with the important exception of Franco-Algerians who left Algeria after independence

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18 For this reason, I do not speak here of 'civic religion' (see Willaime 1993).
19 See for example 'Our Social Contract', The Common Good – The Newsletter of the Muslim Council of Britain, vol. 1, n°4: 4 and the press releases of the MCB from 15 July 2001 and 6 August 2001.

– and by the state. In fact, as is well known, the adoption of restrictive policies of immigration in Britain, in 1962, precedes by more than a decade similar measures taken in other European countries. This has led to a process of settlement which started much earlier in the United Kingdom than elsewhere and it also contributed to accelerating the creation of Muslim institutions (Nielsen 1992: 44).

In France, Islam is perceived, until the 1980s, as an essentially foreign phenomenon which is not, with two exceptions, a concern of French policy-makers. First, there are, as pointed out, the 'French Muslims' (*Français Musulmans*) from Algeria whose needs, including religious needs, are taken into consideration by the state who creates a number of administrative organs whose task is to facilitate the insertion of these groups into French society, since 1977 (v. Krosigk 2000: 169-71). Second, the French state puts in motion, during the 1970s, a policy aiming to help bring about the 'return' of immigrants. From this policy follows a stronger awareness of 'cultural' needs, including religious needs, of immigrant groups in France which need to be taken care of in order to facilitate their reinsertion in the countries of origin (Kepel 1991: 139-45; v. Krosigk 2000: 186-89).

Apart from these points, however, Islam in France is administered basically according to three conditions: Muslims are seen as non-French; policy and/or administrative measures regarding Islam and Muslims are realized in cooperation with or simply by delegation to foreign friendly states in the Maghreb; 'French interests' are prioritized in decision-making in this policy field. The 'Mosquée de Paris', which is controlled by Algeria and which is the main interlocutor of the government in matters Islamic, is the symbolic expression of this approach (Kepel 1991; Boyer 1992). It is only during the 1980s that France wakes up to the reality of its ethnic and religious pluralism. The important national debates about the reform of citizenship legislation bear witness to the turmoil this recognition creates in politics and the broader public (Feldblum 1999; Weil 2004). As to Islam more precisely, its recognition as being somehow part of France is closely linked to the 'affaire du voile' of 1989 (and subsequent affairs) whose chronology does not need to be laid out here (Baubérot 1996). It is from this moment onwards, in a demographic context marked by the coming-of-age of new French-born generations of Muslims that the incorporation of Islam becomes politically important and Muslim identities politicized to a degree hitherto unknown.

Beyond Laïcité

As is well known, policies on Islam have been conflicted almost from their outset, i.e. since the late 1980s. A large number of studies have examined these conflicts and while these studies often do diverge considerably, it is cer-

tainly true to say that great emphasis has been placed by many of them on how different understandings of the appropriate policy relate to specific understandings of laïcité. More specifically, many studies have pointed to a fundamental opposition structuring these debates. Essentially, two different camps which seem to confront each other in the course of these debates are distinguished. On the one hand, there are the defenders of a 'new' or 'open' laïcité who demand that laïcité be adapted to a changed religious landscape and the sometimes new needs, in terms of religious practice and organisation, articulated by French Muslims. Furthermore, this process of adaptation, it is often argued, should be conducted in a way which reflects the peaceful relations between the state and religions today. On the other hand, there are those who defend an understanding of laïcité as being 'not negotiable' and who consider that its adaptation equals its dilution into supposedly Anglo-Saxon models of politics. As many studies have pointed out, these positions relate to often diametrically opposed policy proposals concerning Islam, as has been demonstrated notably with regard to the headscarf case.[20] While the approach just outlined has proven its utility in the analysis of French Islam policies, I will suggest here a different approach to their study. Basically, I will consider the elaboration of policies on Islam and conflicts around it as the outcome of two distinct rationalities which do not simply oppose each other, although they sometimes do, but in many respects also necessarily function in combination. Conflicts about the course of policies on Islam, to a large degree, concern the definition of the ways in which they should combine and the relative weight of each of them.

In terms of rationality, we can say that those who defend laïcité as non-negotiable give priority to an instance of a legal rationality which I will designate here as Republican. The Republican rationality can be characterized by an atomistic conception of its policy object, the citizen, and by its refusal to recognize particular identities (other than that particular identity configuration it proclaims in a given moment as universal). This rationality is justified by a discourse which makes social cohesion incumbent upon a type of normalisation subsumed in the principle of transcendance by citizenship (*la transcendance par la citoyenneté*) (Schnapper 2003). The principle of separation of state and religion is a central mechanism for enabling this practice of citizenship. Fundamentally, Republican rationality is based on the (obviously relatively contingent) application of law as mechanism for identifying difference and making it indifferent. Now, this rationality often combines with an instance of anticipatory rationality. This is so, since the outright refusal to recognize particular identities regularly conflicts with the state's fundamental

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20 On this question see notably Amir-Moazami (2001); Rochefort (2002); Bouamama (2004); Tévanian (2005); Asad (2006).

aim of normalizing these identities, an objective which, furthermore, cannot be realized solely by enacting prohibitions. Anticipatory rationality, in the case of Islam and French Muslims, is based on an assessment of presently existing types of religious practice and religiosity. Furthermore, it inquires into their past evolution and future development as part of an Islamic milieu which is characterized notably by social and spatial exclusion, discrimination and the breakdown of social and religious authority. Whereas in the context of Republican rationality, the reference to legal norms is prioritized, anticipatory rationality takes as its starting point for determining its policy of normalisation an assessment of the relative distribution in the Islamic milieu of normal and deviant types of Muslim religiosity and an evaluation of the state's possibilities to change this state of affairs. To varying degrees, the application of law, broadly defined, and the (re)definition of normalcy are made dependent upon this process of evaluation. Also, law is applied by taking into account its effects on the milieu and, more generally, it is but one means within a broader policy which pursues normalisation with means other than that of prohibition.[21]

As I said, these two rationalities function in varying combinations. By combining, I mean that anticipatory rationality is either employed to realize in a mid-term perspective the ideals of Republicanism or it is employed on the assumption that the scope of application of Republican rationality is necessarily limited. In the first case, normalisation aims ultimately at the dissolution of particulars through policies restructuring their specific milieu, in the second the impossibility of realizing this aim fully is acknowledged and some particulars are thus declared as normal and normalizable while at the same time the Islamic milieu as a whole is targeted by various measures aiming at normalisation.

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21 I cannot deal here with the headscarf law of 2004. While the proponents of the law (see for example the report of the Commission Stasi) study the practice of wearing headscarfs in the context of a specific milieu and regularly make use of prospective analysis, I consider the law by virtue of its enacting a prohibition an instance of Republican rationality whose primary justification for its proponents lies precisely in that it is 'an exercise in sovereign power' which confirms Republican sovereignty (Asad 2006). A comparison of the debates concerning this law in 2003/04 with previous discussions (in 1989 and 1994) demonstrates the degree to which anticipatory reasoning has become indispensable to French political debates on Islam including those participants wishing to reaffirm Republican sovereignty.

The Ethnicisation of the Republic[22]

As I said, it would be wrong to consider the Republican rationality in isolation. In fact, since the 1980s, the wilful denial of ethnicity and religion becomes increasingly difficult to maintain in France. The direct reason for this is the perceived failure of what is often called the Republican model of integration, i.e. a process of integration through state institutions which dissolves ethnic and other communities into the French nation. After the settlement of immigrants and as new generations of French-born Muslims come of age, France witnesses the 'birth of a religion' (Kepel 1991), namely Islam. The partly simultaneous emergence of Islamic institutions, notably since 1981,[23] and the coming of age of French-born Muslims, increasingly practicing their religion, was mostly seen as the opposite of a desirable course of integration. In this context, the question of how to regulate the practice of Islam arose with a new urgency and Muslim identity became politicized to a degree hitherto unknown.

This is in many respects a new and contested development as is illustrated in the introduction to the foundational study of French Islam, '*Les banlieues de l'Islam*', published in 1987. The author, Gilles Kepel, a fervent defender of French laïcité, writes: 'According to some, it is illegitimate or inappropriate to study Islam in France. Such a project is in fact suspicious. It would only end up displacing the *tête de turc* from fairs of earlier times to the intellectual field, it would offer a specious description of immigrant populations and the cultural pretext for discriminating against them.' But, as Kepel points out with reference to the rise of the extreme right movement in France, 'the circumspection of some becomes aphasia and opens up the space for the noisy phantasms of the others'. And then 'only a thorough analysis of social phenomena without any concessions can break this vicious circle' (Kepel 1991: 10).

Beyond the specificity of this case, the argument made here is interesting, since it illustrates the general predicament of adherents to the Republican rationality and outlines the configurations of forces which make it necessary and profitable, from their point of view, to espouse a more ethnicized perspective on French society. By doing this, their aim remains, of course, to work for a society where ethnic and other particular identities can be abstracted. Nevertheless, the effects of their discourse are ambivalent: it contributes indirectly to legitimate a new conception of the French population, namely in terms of ethnic or religious groups, and thus also legitimates specific policies

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22 See Geisser (1997).

23 After the victory of the socialists in the 1981 election, the law of associations is modified to allow foreigners to create associations. This strongly contributes to the rise in the number of Muslim associations during the 1980s. See Kepel (1991).

which, openly or not, are based on such a conception of France even when, which is the case, the policy-makers ultimately aim to create the conditions for successfully dissolving these communities.

A variety of measures taken during the 1980s attest to this development. It is at that time that a wide-ranging system of 'positive discrimination' is created (Calvès 2004). This policy is directly related to and part of what will soon be designated as '*politique de la ville*', a policy field which slowly emerges in reaction to the so-called crisis of the *banlieues*, prefigured in the disturbances of 1981 in Lyon's suburbs (Jobert/Damamme 1995). At the same time, the ministry of national education engages in similar measures and creates a complex system of priority education zones. In these zones, specific conditions regulate the functioning of schools in order to reduce the educational gap between the suburbs and other parts of France (van Zanten 2001). Finally, French policies, since the late 1990s, have made of the fight against discrimination, including discrimination based on ethnicity, an important objective (Fassin 2002).[24]

Without a doubt, these policies are discriminating, i.e. they recognize differences and apply differential treatments to citizens in function of them. While they are not doing so openly all the time, there is a recognizable trend towards doing this since the late 1980s. From the late 1980s until today, the perceived crisis of the Republican model of integration and the fear of Islam are being debated in a variety of subfields while scientific expertise on these topics continues to increase. The religiosity of immigrants from Islamic background and their relation to the French political and legal system, problems of security and delinquency in the suburbs, the rise of anti-semitism among Franco-Maghrebis in particular, gender-relations among immigrants from Islamic countries and, from a reversed perspective, the discrimination against them are the principal topics being debated, next to that of terrorism.

Independent of the aims of individual contributors to these debates, they have together collaborated in the production of a (problematic) social identity of 'Muslims' in France which is distinct of a juridical one based on abstract rights of citizenship. In fact, the government itself has been directly engaged, since 1989, in this process through the creation of institutions, such as the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* (HCI) in 1989 and the legal consecration of the *Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme* (CNCDH) in 1990, and through assigning various public bodies the task of analysing the socio-economic profile of the immigrated population and monitoring discrimination against them. In recent years, this development has clearly intensified (see Centre d'Analyse Stratégique 2006). While the standardized col-

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24 See Fassin (2006) for a critical assessment of the policy turn in the question of ethnic discrimination.

lection of ethnic data for policy-making is still strongly criticized, the refusal of such policies is increasingly linked to the endorsement of more indirect ways of collecting ethnic data (for one example see Haut Conseil à l'Intégration 2007).

'Young Muslims' and Islam in France

The point I want to make here is not that a specific type of expert knowledge provides the blueprint for policies on Islam, but that various types of expert knowledge on Islam in France have reconfigured Islam as an object of policies (and, to a significant degree, as a discursive object for Muslims themselves). Today, Islam is not just one religion among several nor is it simply 'the Other', but Islam – as it manifests itself in modes of religiosity and practice – is *also* conceived as the outcome of an ensemble of interacting social factors which the state can and should to a certain degree influence in order to avert various threats ensuing from it. Put differently, the legal principles of equality of religions and separation of state and religion are partly suspended and policies are made dependent upon knowledge on Islam and Muslims. The effects of this development are, as in the case of the United Kingdom, ambivalent.

This reconfiguration of Islam as religion takes place by considering it as part of an Islamic milieu which is characterized notably by discrimination, i.e. the state's failure to realize the Republican promise of equality, and the breakdown of authority, both being supposedly crucial factors in processes of 'radicalisation'. Today, a surprisingly varied and large group of Muslim activists, experts on Islam and politicians insists on the effects of the breakdown of parental, religious and state authority when explaining the rise of 'radical' Islam: whether it is the alleged absence of religious authorities, the intergenerational breakdown or the weak authority of parents and the failure of socialisation in schools – all these elements have supposedly contributed to the radicalisation of 'young Muslims'. Underlying this view is the supposition that 'young Muslims' are essentially immature and in need of guidance (Peter 2006b). The effects of exclusion and discrimination which French Muslims suffer are also recognized by some as a factor alienating them from the Republic and possibly heightening the appeal of 'radical' trends in Islam. However, the importance of this factor is clearly valued differently. A significant number of actors agree upon the fact that exclusion and discrimination can be one cause for adopting 'fundamentalist' Islam and this has certainly added to the salience of anti-discrimination policies. However, the important role of Muslim actors – imams, preachers, associations, … – in this process of 'radicalisation' is also widely agreed upon. In the context of such a reading of 'radical Islam', it is Muslim leaders who, to a large degree, decide if the ex-

periences of discrimination by a believer lead to 'radical Islam' or not. In fact, given the limited possibilities for the state to put an end to discrimination, it is argued by some that Muslim associations fulfil a fundamentally important stabilizing role in society. One should add that the function of Muslim 'leaders' becomes even more important due to the fact that a large number of Muslims – together with the majority society – today hold that an effort to develop a specifically French reading of Islam is indispensable (Peter 2006a). In brief, in the context of the increasing importance of anticipatory rationality, policies concerning specific Muslim institutions and practices are debated by taking into account their role in processes of 'radicalisation' and their effects, direct or indirect, on the evolution of the Islamic milieu as a whole.

Civil Islam à la Française

The anticipatory analysis of Islam in France starts from the thesis that the breakdown of authority has strongly contributed to the rise of an '*Islam intégriste*' and it concludes from it the necessity to build solid structures of authority in French Islam. Hence the interest for Muslim federations and various individual actors to cooperate with the state, in spite of all difficulties – the construction of authority structures is central to French policies on Islam and this implies significant opportunities or threats to many Muslim activists (Peter 2006a). This analysis is intrinsically related to the identification of those Muslims whose message is adequate to the French context. While such an identification can be realized simply by evaluating the conformity of Muslim positions with so-called Republican values, my point here is that it has become increasingly common in French politics to abandon this type of reasoning in favour of a more complex thinking which is precisely anticipatory. The latter reasoning is based on the recognition that the state cannot regulate and/or directly refashion Islam in any desirable way without the cooperation of Muslim actors, including some of those often considered problematic. The inclusion of the *Union des Organisations Islamiques de France* (UOIF) – usually considered part of the Muslim Brotherhood – into the state-created representative body of French Muslims, the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*, illustrates this perfectly (Caeiro 2005). Such an approach is fundamentally argued in a mid-range perspective and it insists on the importance of realizing structural interventions in the Islamic milieu in order to initiate a progressive normalisation. Secondly, this approach is based, to varying degrees, on the idea that support to Islam, that is specific understandings of Islam, can be a useful tool in the management of immigrant populations, both in the fight against urban violence and delinquency on the one hand and against terrorism on the other. It is in this latter respect, that 'moderately Islamist'

groups, such as the UOIF, are considered by some politicians particularly interesting partners to the state (Peter 2006a).

A variety of policies can derive from this approach and no exhaustive picture can be drawn here. Some examples of primary fields of application, concerning the funding of mosques, Muslim associations and imams, will illustrate its relevance here. French policies concerning the construction of mosques have for a long time been a major obstacle in the establishment of community structures. Numerous mayors have been openly hostile to the construction of mosques. In 2004, while many problems persist (FASILD 2006), it is clear that the basic outlook of many mayors has changed: it is estimated that the majority of mayors grants subsidies to the construction of mosques.[25] Without doubt, these measures can partly be explained by electoral tactics. But this is clearly not the whole story. These measures also refer to the idea that the construction of 'decent' mosques (*mosquées dignes*) and/or the symbolic recognition of Islam reduces the appeal of radical tendencies in Islam (see e.g. Haut Conseil à l'Intégration 1995: 33; Debré 2003, vol. 1: 131). It should be emphasized that this idea is underlying the ongoing national debate about the public funding of mosques initiated by former minister of the interior Sarkozy.[26] In the course of these debates, Sarkozy's propositions have been and are certainly very much criticized to the point that Sarkozy has backed away from his proposal to modify the law of 1905 while maintaining his basic aim to put 'appropriate' places of worship at the disposal of Muslims.[27] While this clearly indicates the limited capacity of anticipatory rationality to effect legal change declared as such, it is important to note that many of his contradictors did not put into question the necessity to develop new readings of the law of 1905. These readings do not only displace the emphasis from the principle of separation of state and religion towards the legitimate means of intervention by the state in the religious domain, but they also understand these interventions as targeting a set of interrelated phenomena inside a variously conceived Islamic milieu.

The granting of direct or indirect subsidies to mosques and Muslim associations cannot be explained solely by a policy aiming to get rid of 'radical' Muslims. In fact, such an approach can also be based on a new conception of the educational role of associations, particularly religious associations, and its legitimate place in processes of socialisation and citizenship education in

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25 Libération, 8 December 2004. Concerning the various possibilities to finance mosques see Al Istichara. Le Journal de la consultation des Musulmans de France (2 May 2000: 7f.). Since 2000, the ministry of the interior has called upon mayors to support the funding of mosques.

26 See e.g. L'Express, 18 September 2003. See also Kaltenbach/Tribalat (2002) and Machelon/Ministère de l'Intérieur (2006).

27 Libération, 5 April 2007.

France. Put differently, such an approach is grounded in an implied or explicit new understanding of what counts as acceptable belief and religious practice of French Muslims. Whether on the local or national level, there are a significant number of politicians who approve of the idea to involve Muslim associations, not only 'moderate' Muslims, in their policies of 'social appeasement' and inter-community harmony. Likewise, there is an abundant number of Muslim groups who are willing to support such a policy (Peter 2006a), a policy which the state today feels unable to realize itself (Khosrokhavar 1997: 295). The support granted to interreligious activities can be explained to a large degree by the same motivations (Lamine 2004). Finally, the political interest in matters related to imams and their training (Frégosi 1998) clearly reflects the perception by politicians that these persons are no simple '*ministres du culte*', but also educators of 'young Muslims'. Benefiting from a legitimacy which perhaps state agencies are lacking, they are sometimes considered better placed, by politicians, to make the youth adhere to certain values considered essential for the living-together in France.

Conclusion

Drawing on Foucault's reflections on political rationalities, I have attempted to outline a new framework for understanding policies on Islam in the United Kingdom and France. By distinguishing legal rationality from that of a security apparatus, my aim was to bring into focus and analyse a different type of counter-terrorism policy which is played out in the incorporation, administration and regulation of Islamic institutions and practices. This perspective, I have argued, allows us to grasp not only the functioning of an important dimension of policies concerning Islam and Muslims. It also provides a way for understanding ongoing transformations in national juridico-political orders and, ultimately, a new starting point for an analysis of secularity in relation to European Islam.

The approach outlined here also leads us to a different understanding of the power configuration within which Muslims practice Islam. While this configuration needs in part to be examined as one subordinating Muslims, this study has shown how the state also exercises power through the reconfiguration of the category Islam as an Islamic milieu. Civil Islam as a specific understanding by Muslims of the Islamic tradition is largely enabled by this notion of Islam as part of an Islamic milieu. In a certain sense, civil Islam thus defined is a factor of empowerment, since it allows Muslims to hold the state and society accountable for various problems in the racialized Muslim community and to demand policy changes. At the same time, however, by institutionalizing Islam as a means for ensuring social peace and preventing radi-

calisation, and by adopting anticipatory rationality, civil Islam risks entrenching the perception of Islam as a potential threat. Finally, it certainly reinscribes the determination of 'acceptable' Islamic practices and beliefs through expert assessment of the milieu in which they are embedded as well as prognostics of its future development.

Acknowledgements

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