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**Written Response to the Questions from the  
Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid of  
the German Bundestag for the Public Hearing on  
December 2, 2015 on the Topic:**

**Religious Freedom and the Development of Democracy**

**I. General Questions Regarding Religious Freedom**

**1. How do religious freedom and the development of democracy interrelate,  
and what implications does that have for politics?**

The formation of a true democracy is unthinkable without the legal anchoring and social implementation of religious freedom. The freedom to adhere to a worldview or religion, to practice it, or not to adhere to any worldview or religion, to change one's religion, or to publicly acknowledge it, or rather to publicly participate in religious activities, has already been established as a fundamental human right according to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948. This human right, in a comprehensive sense, can only become a reality in a democracy which stipulates this right by law and carries out its social implementation.

On the contrary, uprisings (such as those of the Arab Spring, which began around 2011) intended to lead to true democracy cannot succeed without the demand for, argument for, and legal anchoring of freedom of religion and worldview. If this demand for religious freedom is not a central component during the phase of political upheaval and reorganization, the end result will not be a democracy in its fullest sense. (At the end of the Egyptian Revolution, the topic of religious freedom was not on the agenda of either the military or the Muslim Brotherhood, nor was it a concern of the Salafis, who have jointly governed since 2012.)

Religious freedom can only be established in combination with other human rights, such as the freedom of opinion, freedom of press, and political liberties, which must be anchored in the rule of constitutional law; it is, in contrast, practically unthinkable that a state would grant full human rights and liberties but single out only religious freedom as forbidden. Or in other words:

In those places where religious minorities are oppressed, ethnic and social minorities also face discrimination. (Such a situation exists in Turkey, where the Christian religious minority faces discrimination and the Kurdish ethnic minority is also oppressed.)

For politics and diplomacy, the implication is that more should be done to actively promote the awareness of the immense importance the freedoms of opinion and religion have in relation to the establishment of democracies. Politics and diplomacy should not only argue on the international level more for religious freedom but also take appropriate measures to support the religious worldviews of minorities and dissidents.

## **2. Which causes have contributed to the strengthening of fundamentalist streams in religions, and what role do they play in current conflicts? To what extent is religion exploited for other purposes?**

Both external and internal factors are responsible for the strengthening of fundamentalist streams in religions. The emergence of political Islam and the first Islamist movement of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century was the religious-fundamentalist answer to Egypt's perceived stagnation throughout the entire nineteenth century, especially in the economy but also in the areas of education and the military. The second answer was the idea of Pan-Arabism and nationalism, which tried to unite progressive-thinking Muslims and Christians in the Middle East into parties and movements under the flag of secularism; but ultimately this idea was subject to the far greater attractiveness of developing Islamism.

Political nationalism can be ethnically or politically charged and can be just as militant and absolute in its ideology as religious fundamentalism. It can assume its role using secular reasoning in a similar way and thereby take on more and more of the characteristics of fundamentalism:

Examples of this from four major world religions are now increasingly absolute assertions such as those by the a) Hindu nationalists of the Hindutva movement: India is perceived as the holy land of the Hindus, such that those who are Hindu can claim India as their fatherland (such statements are repeated militantly against Muslims); b) militant Buddhists in Sri Lanka, (who advocate the notion that Buddha has chosen the Sinhalese people to turn Sri Lanka into a “pure” land of Buddhism and who therefore fight against Jews, Christians, and Muslims); c) ultra-nationalist forces in Turkey (“Grey Wolves”), who fight militantly against ethnic minorities such as the Kurds and also against religious minorities such as Christians and would like to declare the multi-ethnic country of Turkey to be a homogeneous “Land of the Turks;” and finally d) the Christian nationalists of Hungary, who vehemently oppose the influx of Muslim refugees because Hungary, in their view, is a “Christian” country.

Nationalism seems increasingly difficult to enact in modern times because cultures increasingly spread worldwide, and within today’s national borders, a variety of religions and worldviews lives side by side; monocultures no longer exist. This diversity has developed through waves of globalization and has expanded through extensive migration, leading to increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity. Along with this come countless studies and extensive findings from the cultural sciences that make this knowledge about the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and religions globally available.

Because nationalism is less and less able to draw on a supposed unity of folk and fatherland, it is not uncommon for religion to be exploited by nationalists, drawing on a nationalistic-religious fundamentalism. At the same time, militant nationalists also help themselves to the arsenal of religious fundamentalism: Thus the nationalist forces in Turkey assert not only that “true” ethnic Turks cannot be Kurds, but also that a “true” Turk must be Muslim and that Turkish Christians endanger national security with their “disloyalty.” Thus the men behind the murders of two Turkish Christians and one German Christian in Malatya in 2007 were identified as ultra-nationalist forces that considered the small number of Christians in Turkey to be endangering the unity of the country and to be political traitors.

### **3. Through which national and multilateral measures can the right to freedom of religion and belief be implemented in accordance with international human rights conventions, the ideological neutrality of the state be strengthened, and people be encouraged to live together in a society of diverse religions and worldviews?**

The current immigration of so many people who are coming to Germany and Europe offers a good opportunity to contemplate anew the importance of freedom of religion and belief and to ensure the justification of their central role in shaping a peaceful coexistence.

The character, importance, and impact of worldview and religious freedom on a peaceful and equal coexistence should be addressed more often in German society and politics: Justifications for the importance of the freedom of religion and worldview must be newly

worked out in the context of our multi-religious and multi-cultural coexistence. At the same time, care must be taken in the legal-legislative sphere that religious freedom will be accepted by all and that no one will be threatened if he turns away from his original religion or if he doesn't practice the religion the way the other members of his religious community demand of him.

In schools and universities the peacemaking significance of religious freedom should be rediscovered and relearned. As an indispensable component of the canon of human rights, religious freedom should once again be shifted into the focus of public debates in order to promote human rights – beyond using legal enforcement – bringing them closer to immigrants and new citizens. Particularly institutions with a large reach, such as the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB), are suitable for this task.

#### **4. Will religion, or more specifically religious freedom, be exploited to suppress other human rights such as, for example, women's rights?**

Specific protagonists (such as advocates of legal-political Islam, which is not necessarily violent), who would like Islamic norms to be respected and enforced in state and society (for example, with the demand that no pork be served in preschools or school cafeterias), want to exploit religious freedom to accomplish political goals: Here some argue that withholding girls from swimming lessons and school trips in the name of religious freedom is necessary or that consideration for the feelings of Muslims demands that religious holidays such as Christmas and Easter should either no longer be celebrated in preschools and day-care centers or should be turned into nonreligious holidays.

In these cases, the notions which stem from political Islam (whose interpretations within the Muslim religious community are highly controversial) become genuine religious obligations and therefore cannot be disregarded or questioned, with the result that these demands are made in the name of religion to accomplish political goals. At the same time, these demands made in the name of religion put pressure on Muslims with other opinions to follow the norms in the same way.

Likewise, religious freedom can be exploited to suppress women's rights: As those who work at women's shelters can confirm, there are cases in which advocates of very conservative or even legalistic political Islam are tolerating domestic violence against daughters and wives when they are "disobedient" as "moderate correction" (according to Sura 4:34), instead of condemning perpetrators privately and publicly in all forms and in every single case and publicly taking a stand against every form of violence toward women, even if others derive justification for this from religious sources and the traditions of Islam. Although on one hand, the state and its representatives have very little business interfering with the religious views and teachings of religious communities, on the other hand, it is so clear that the boundary between religious freedom and women's rights has been crossed here; without a doubt, it means religious freedom has been exploited if an allegedly "moderate" correction of women is in any way accepted as being justified by religion or

tradition, is taught, or is sold or disseminated in mosques or online as the writings and books of Muslim theologians who teach such things.

## **II. Religious Freedom in Germany**

### **1. Is the separation of state and (the ruling) ideological community a prerequisite for religious freedom? If yes, is it guaranteed in Germany?**

The separation of state and religion does, as a rule, promote religious freedom. It is not, however, a requirement for religious freedom in every case, nor does it automatically guarantee religious freedom, as is easily recognized in Laicism-influenced Turkey. Whether religious freedom exists in a country is determined primarily by how the majority religion treats religious minorities. (One can recognize that there is absolutely no religious freedom in Wahhabism-influenced Saudi Arabia by observing how they treat Christians and even advocates of other forms of Islam, such as the Shiites, who are till today victims of discrimination, oppression, and even violence. This violence had also turned against religious sites and institutions).

Since Laicist Turkey encourages and supports Islam as the only religion and ultimately considers all other religions to be erroneous and potentially dangerous for the maintenance of state order and stability, in practice the principle of Laicism benefits the religious minorities in Turkey very little: The Orthodox church is not allowed to run seminaries to educate priests, nor are Protestant Christians permitted to purchase buildings, nor can even properties which have been in the hands of the church for centuries (such as the Syriac Orthodox monastery Mor Gabriel from the fourth century) remain in their possession unchallenged (instead, they are threatened by expropriation).

On the other hand, the separation of church and state is not always an indispensable prerequisite for the protection of religious freedom, as is evident in Scandinavia, where Lutheran Protestantism has long been the state religion. Despite this, the Scandinavian countries are at the top of the list of those which confer the highest levels of religious freedom. In the meantime, the state church has been largely dismantled, but the amount of religious freedom in Scandinavia is still very large.

### **2. Is the special church labor law still reconcilable with the constitution, and is it socio-politically acceptable?**

The special church labor law comes from a time after the end of the Second World War, when the majority of the population was either Catholic or Protestant; some provisions regarding “religions and religious organizations,” such as their equality with ideological communities, refer all the way back to the “Constitution of the German Empire” (the so-called “Imperial Constitution”) from August 11, 1919.

In the meantime, however, the religious landscape has undergone visible changes: Roughly speaking, today one-third of the population are members of the Catholic church,

one-third are Protestant, and one-third of the German population is unaffiliated or adheres to a worldview or religion whose membership numbers are not collected by the government (such as Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism).

The “church landscape” has also dramatically changed internally: Today, alongside the established national churches, there are various Orthodox and Catholic Oriental churches from the Middle East, several churches for specific groups of immigrants (partly converts to Christianity), and large free churches that are part of nationwide organizations but that receive just as little consideration under the applicable church law as do Muslim or Buddhist groups. This religiously very diverse and statistically not clearly ascertainable landscape outside the reach of the Protestant and Catholic churches is no longer represented in an exact manner by the applicable church law in accordance with the current circumstances.

In the case of possible changes to the special church labor law, the following should certainly be considered:

The special church labor law applies not only to churches, but to all religious congregations that have public corporation (KdöR) status; therefore, it is less of a church special regulation than a regulation for all religious congregations with public corporation status. If one wants to change the special church labor law, one must change nothing less than the constitutional law, because according to the constitutional law, religious congregations regulate their internal affairs themselves. Thus far, the Federal Constitutional Court, as well as other high entities of case law, has stated that the special church labor law directly deviates from this regulation. Therefore, in order to change the special church labor law, the constitution would have to be changed first, followed by changes in national church contracts.

However, even if the constitution were changed, the exceptions in the Anti-Discrimination Act would still stand (which apply not only to churches, but to all religious congregations); a change would also involve making legislative changes on the EU level. But what would this immensely huge effort actually accomplish? What would be the advantage for employees? No real benefits for individual employees are clearly recognizable.

### **3. What are the central legal and social challenges of protecting religious freedom in Germany, and how can politics, civil society, and religious communities contribute?**

A basic principle for comprehending worldviews and religion in Germany is shaped by the requirement that religions and worldviews may be practiced not only in private (as Laicism in France assumes), but they may also be practiced in public, where people can promote their beliefs peacefully and impart to others meaning-giving, ethical principles and guidelines as important drivers of the shaping of a peaceful coexistence. Possible means of religious and worldview expression in public life also include participation in broadcasting

councils, their right to provide religious instruction, and the federal funding of theological professorships.

When this definition of publicly visible religion is put to the test in light of the altered church, or more accurately, the religious map of Germany, the question arises as to how these regulations should be reorganized and who would be in the position to devise a model that would grant all religious communities equality according to their proportions. How can a consensus be found here, especially as this subject is often discussed very emotionally in public?

The suppression of religion and all religious communities into a solely private domain is overall not accepted in Germany, particularly because this strict separation of state and church doesn't correspond with the German historic tradition. At the same time, it is true that this model of a principial yet incomplete separation of church and state, which would include a benevolent promotion of churches by the state in some spheres, is not readily transferable to other religious communities: Most of them, for example, don't fulfill all the legal requirements for the granting of corporate rights. This situation represents a central legal and social challenge for the protection of religious freedom in Germany.

#### **4. Which forms of discrimination and actual limitations are experienced most frequently when practicing religious freedom in Germany, especially for members of non-Christian religious communities, and how can politics successfully confront them?**

Academic analyses differentiate between discrimination by the government and discrimination by society: Discrimination and actual limitations related to religious freedom inflicted by the German government are virtually non-existent. In society it is otherwise; in some areas, discrimination is increasing (such as various forms of anti-Semitism against Jewish minorities, which are so far-reaching that the president of the Central Council of Jews has already advised against wearing a Kippa in public in certain neighborhoods). These social forms of discrimination are often difficult to control and to prevent (such as anonymous online discrimination against Muslims).

Generally speaking, members of religious communities (Muslims, as well as Christians) can experience discrimination on account of their religion in their day-to-day lives, especially from people who have absolute regard for an atheist or evolutionary worldview, who consider religious convictions to be "prehistoric," and/or who deem a lack of religious ties as a prerequisite for the ability to do science and unbiased research. The on-average more religiously bound Muslim minority deals with these discriminatory prejudices to an even larger extent.

#### **5. Which challenges exist in the context of the current refugee situation regarding the protection of religious freedom in Germany, and how can politics, civil society, and religious communities address these challenges**

## **early in order to make it possible for members of all religious communities to have their rights to religious freedom respected?**

In this respect, the present refugee situation offers opportunities and challenges: An opportunity exists, initially, in the possibility to again shift the focus of social debates back to the topic of religious and worldview freedom; the challenge will be to introduce the immigrants (and future new citizens) who come predominantly from countries without (real) religious freedom to the concept of accepting and respecting all worldviews and religions.

Many refugees have come to Germany because they sorely missed the freedoms of opinion and religion in their homelands; for some, the plurality of worldviews and religions will be an unfamiliar and perhaps not always easy-to-accept reality; and yet others have come with the goal of using the existing liberties – including religious freedom – for their own purposes, in order to abolish them for others. While many people will welcome the freedom to choose whether or not they will continue to follow a religion (specifically their ancestral religion), some other refugees who have migrated with them will want to contest this freedom and, as has been made clear by the assaults on minorities and converts to Christianity in the refugee centers, not tolerate that anyone would make use of it. Everything possible has to be done to reduce the tensions caused by closeness, uncertainty, and idleness in the refugee centers, while at the same time protecting minorities like e.g. forbidding those who advocate Salafist-Fundamentalist Islam entrance to the asylum accommodation.

### **III. Religious Freedom and the Development of Democracy in Islam**

**1. The euphoria after the Arab Spring has, in the meantime, given way to disillusionment. The hopes for a democratization of the countries of North Africa and the Middle East have not, with the exception of Tunisia, been fulfilled. In Syria and Libya, civil wars are raging; in Egypt the military has again installed an authoritarian regime; and in Turkey there are efforts to convert the once formally Laicist government into a religiously influenced authoritarian presidential system. On the other hand, since 1998, Indonesia – despite setbacks – still qualifies as an example of a Muslim democracy. In this context, the question arises: How capable are Muslim-majority societies of democracy, and how can Europe position itself to support them on the way to democracy and human rights?**

Muslim-majority-influenced societies are capable of democracy in principle. Whether this democratic capability can take a political form essentially depends on whether or not Islamic law is a part of the constitution and legislative process of the country in question. The deciding factor is whether or not the moral and legal norms of Sharia law influence the formulation of law, statutes, and the constitution. If they do, there will certainly be points of conflict with democracy, human rights, and liberty.



Thus the legal discrimination against women, which takes place in all Arab countries, makes it evident that although civil law indeed differs by country as far as the detail of various regulations, these civil laws are still influenced by Sharia law in all Arab countries; or, in other words, secular civil law does not exist in any Arab country. The result is that women are discriminated against in marriage, inheritance, divorce, and child-custody rights. Yet women's rights movements in various countries have been able to make it harder for men to divorce (through court-ordered reconciliation and intervention attempts, as part of the process of a legal divorce) and to engage in polygamy (which, in civil law, is tied to conditions such as the requirement for the husband to provide proof of sufficient finances to run a second household); a legal ban on polygamy, however, could not be achieved by women's movements in any Arab country. (It has only been banned in Tunisia, where it had already been abolished in 1956 by former President Bourghiba.) The actual reason for this lies in the influence of Sharia law on civil law; it is simply because Sharia law permits polygamy.

Democracy can be established in societies shaped by Islam if the influence of Sharia law is avoided, because Sharia law states that divine law takes precedence over all human law. Sharia law as divine law – and there is a consensus in established Islamic theology that this is the case – stands above manmade law and is in principle only open to interpretation, not open to dismissal. Wherever this claim is reflected in federal law (whether it be in civil law, as in all Arabic countries, or in criminal law, as in only a few countries in the Middle East), it is impossible to have diversity of opinion, open unhindered exchanges of diverse legal perceptions, multiple parties, and freedom of choice for citizens from various religions and worldviews.

The opportunities for Europe to support democracy and human rights in this region through direct intervention are definitely few; more promising is engagement in education and training, in exchange and encounter programs such as the support of projects which thematically deal with the establishment of democracy and civil liberties.

## **2. Which points of conflict exist between an Islamic legal system based on Sharia law on one hand, and, on the other hand, the human rights and liberties essential for a functional democracy (especially the freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, women's rights, and minority rights)?**

Points of conflict exist between an Islamic legal system based on Sharia law and the human rights and liberties essential for a functional democracy in all the areas mentioned, thus in the areas of freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, and women's and minority rights:

**Freedoms of Opinion and Religion:** Sharia-influenced law definitely limits religious freedom, since according to Sharia law, all followers of other religions are invited to convert to Islam (partly through active "da'wah" [= "invitation"] and partly through the Islamic theological concept which defines Islam as the only unsurpassable, perfect religion out of all religions), and those who stray from Islam are threatened by Sharia law with the

penalty of death. This Sharia law death sentence for all self-confessed apostates, which had become part of Sharia law until the tenth century AD, has never in theological history been repealed or revised.

Of course, historically other views have existed among Muslims, rulers, and theologians; a few theologians have even spoken out very emphatically for the freedom of choice in religion (such as the Maldivian theologian and professor Abdullah Saeed, who currently resides in Australia). They have, however, overall found few followers and, up to this time, have had very little influence, because Sharia law unambiguously demands the death penalty for such activities, and deviations from established theology are still considered to be heresy.

Even though the legal conviction and federal enforcement of the death penalty for apostates on the grounds of valid laws are only possible in a few countries (for example, in North Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Mauritania), this doesn't change the fact that in other countries where no such legislation exists (such as in Egypt), leaving Islam and/or converting to another religion is legally impossible for a Muslim-born person. Also, those who may even possibly change their religion do not receive any legal protection there. They are repeatedly publicly sentenced to death through fatwas (legal opinions) or statements from those in power and, to some extent, are executed on the open street by zealous members of society. In 2007 the Egyptian Minister of Religious Endowments, Mahmoud Hamdi Zakzouk, defended the death penalty for converts because the rejection of Islam is high treason, even though there was no such legal definition in Egypt.

In other countries, where there are no laws against converting to a religion other than Islam, converts are often charged with other crimes, such as espionage or drug trafficking (as in Iran). Some converts to Baha'i or Christianity and also self-confessed atheists or secularists – partly with the approval of, or even under incitement of, religious scholars – are attacked and murdered on the open street (such as the self-confessed secularist Farag Fouda in Egypt, 1992). Ostracism, discrimination, and social persecution are encountered almost everywhere.

**Minority Rights:** The actual composition of the religious minorities varies from country to country and from group to group. But everywhere where Sharia law is a part of the federal law, minorities are entitled only to reduced rights, which are defined by the religious legislation. The previous governments of the Arab countries, a large part of which were “remnants” from the time of the Cold War, were, until the Arab Spring – although the countries of this region, except Lebanon, named Islam as the “national religion” in their constitutions – largely influenced by secularist-to-nationalist ideas. The governments themselves rarely had a hand in the active persecution of religious minorities and factions, although they occasionally failed to effectively oppose assaults on minorities, failed to consistently pursue offenders, legally discriminated against minorities, and failed to eradicate their social discrimination (the most notable exceptions are Iran and Saudi Arabia, two countries in which the government directly conducts the persecution and ostracism of minorities).

The countries of the MENA<sup>1</sup> region are committed in their constitutions to Sharia law, but also to religious freedom, which, from place to place, takes on various forms. The spectrum spans from official state-guaranteed religious freedom, as in Turkey (although in practice it is much different), to a complete lack of religious freedom in both theory and practice, as in Saudi Arabia. With regard to the status of individual groups, the rights (as defined by Sharia law) of recognized minorities such as Jews and Christians (so far, Christians have enjoyed a certain autonomy in civil law as well as in religious life; Judaism is virtually extinct in several Arab countries) differ from those of unrecognized minorities such as the Baha'i, who, for example, in Egypt cannot have their religion recorded in their personal documents since they have no legal status. Also, interreligious tensions often exist between various Muslim "denominations," such as the Sunnis and Shiites (as in Saudi Arabia). Equality between adherents of the majority religion (of Islam) and of the minorities (e.g., Jews, Christians, Baha'i) is, according to Sharia law, not permissible.

**Women's Rights** see above (question 1).

**3. In Germany there have been efforts, through the creation of appropriate professorships at universities and the state education of Islamic religious teachers, to promote a liberal and secular understanding of Islam. In this context, Bassam Tibi introduced the concept of "Euro-Islam" in academic debates in the beginning of the 1990s. Can a historically critical approach in connection with this help to alleviate the points of conflict between Islamic legal systems based on Sharia law and liberal democratic constitutions?**

To strengthen those in Germany who advocate an interpretation of Islam compatible with democracy, in my opinion, has significant meaning and can be groundbreaking for the many Muslims who want to live in Germany not only physically, but who also actively agree with liberties and democracy and, at the same time, want to stay connected to their beliefs. This "groundbreaking" affirmation of both components is a model for those who are frequently pressured by advocates of extreme Islam to choose between being a proponent of democracy or a believing Muslim. Alternatives like those offered by Professor Mouhanad Khorchide from the Center for Religious Studies in Münster are even more valuable; the attempts of advocates from established umbrella organizations to limit freedom in science and research, or to condemn findings of local research in order to claim a monopoly on the definition of "permissible" Islam, must be counteracted with determination.

In order to alleviate the conflicts between Islamic legal systems based on Sharia law and liberal democratic constitutions, first of all the stage must be set for a pluralist religious discourse in line with Muslim theology, where Muslims themselves can openly discuss with each other their differing convictions and views without having to fear for their jobs, social positions, or even their lives. The facts that the Quran gives an account of the military expeditions of Mohammed and that also wars of expansion were waged after Mohammed's death do not form conflicts between democracy and Islamic theology. These points of

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<sup>1</sup>MENA: Middle East and North Africa

conflict are, however, caused by the fact that the principles for the interpretation of the Quran were established in the first centuries and since then stand as indisputable. That means that verses in the Quran on the legal discrimination against women, on the lesser legal status of Jews and Christians, and on jihad, according to the views of established theologians, should be interpreted within the traditional framework if one wants to avoid the accusation of heresy. And not only that: The legal regulations from the time of Mohammed, which weren't very extensive, were interpreted by the early lawyers in the tenth century, after Mohammed's death, and were recorded in legal compendia that are still regarded today as binding interpretation.

A first step in the right direction would be to allow an academic-critical examination of the history of the origins of Islam and the person of Mohammed. This is because the person of Mohammed stands even today, in all of his actions, as an unattainable moral example, and in legal questions, his ideas are absolutely binding. The consensus of scholars is that Mohammed's views originating from the Arabic culture of the seventh century AD, his preferences and judgments, and even his principles for war are undisputable norms for all cultures and times – here it is urgently necessary to critically examine his legacy and question how his instruction regarding attacks, retaliation, and conversion can or must be transformed into a theocracy today. The political impact of this imitation of Mohammed's example is also evident in the fact that the integration of Alevis, who postulate neither Sharia law nor Mohammed's example as legally binding in all matters, is much easier.

In places, however, where it is taught in mosques that a Muslim can only be a believer if he pulls away from the Western world, makes contact with no one, and doesn't take a non-Muslim wife, because the Western world will contaminate him and he is called to bring Islam to the entire west, including its political and social requirements, this behavior prevents integration and builds up walls between people.

Sharia law in its traditional interpretation is not compatible with Western liberty, equality, human rights, or women's rights. With such teachings of Islam, which should also apply to society and politics and which cause young people in Germany to say they cannot be both Muslim and German at the same time, Imams throw young people into a large dilemma. Some young people shut themselves away; others fall into the clutches of radical groups. To prevent this from happening, Imams and organizations must lead a critical discourse on the validity of Sharia law regarding women's rights and religious freedom, and young Muslims must be shown a viable way to live in a pluralist society.