The radical dawa in transition

The rise of Islamic neoradicalism in the Netherlands

Table of contents

6

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present the *The Radical Dawa in Transition*, a report by the General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, AIVD). This is the latest in a series of publications and alerts about radical Islam from the AIVD.

Based upon the AIVD's own operational investigations, as well as knowledge shared by other European security services, this report provides a detailed factual overview of the nature and extent of the problem of the propagation of an intolerant radical ideology and the actual risks that it poses to our democratic order.

The AIVD has established that the non-violent version of radical Islam is being evangelised on an ever increasing scale in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe, and that that activity is becoming more and more organised. Despite its non-violent form, this ideology is still disrupting the relationships within and between ethnic groups. This can result in radicalisation, polarisation and social isolation.

My hope is that the subtle distinctions and realistic risk assessments described by my service in *The Radical Dawa in Transition* will be reflected in the responses to this report. A one-sided evaluation of the issue can easily lead to exaggerated responses, and they may well simply reinforce the existing mistrust between certain sections of the population. Only a careful and qualified approach to the subject does justice to its complexity.

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S. J. van Hulst

8

Introduction

In recent years, and certainly since the murder of Theo van Gogh in November 2004, much of the public debate on radical Islam in the Netherlands has been dominated by the violent jihad. This current within radical Islam encourages the use of violence against what it perceives as 'the enemies of Islam' in order to instigate social and political changes in line with the religious convictions of the jihadis. That has prompted discussion about a variety of questions in Dutch politics, media and society at large. For example: to what extent can this form of terrorism undermine the democratic legal order? What legal measures can be taken to prevent it? What political or social developments might have generated this jihad? And how can young Muslims be prevented from resorting to violence out of dissatisfaction with their position in society? The debate on these issues is ongoing and, influenced by international developments as much as domestic ones, is most unlikely to lose any of its vehemence any time soon. The jihadi message of mobilisation has so far found hardly any support within the Dutch Muslim community. As a result, the real strength of those active in the Netherlands remains limited – although any actual terrorist attack would certainly prove highly disruptive. The AIVD therefore remains as attentive as ever to the violent jihad in all its forms.

Contemporary radical Islam does not express itself only through violence, however, although that is sometimes very much the impression one might gain. In the Netherlands, as in several neighbouring European countries, there currently exists a variety of movements actively seeking the imposition of strict Islamic law and tenets. And they, for all sorts of reasons, are experiencing growth. These movements have their origins in the Islamic world, operate according to a strongly religious agenda, are outspokenly hostile to the values of Western democracy in a whole range of respects and reject the idea of integration into a society built upon those values. In no way, however, do they propound the use of violence in order to achieve their objectives. Their message does very much seem to strike a chord with groups of young Muslims in the Netherlands and other parts of Western Europe, who are currently struggling with issues of identity. Consequently, a train has been set in motion which – given the growth these movements currently are enjoying – might eventually lead to a growing section of the Dutch or European Muslim communities turning away, physically as well as mentally, from their surrounding societies. There is no threat of violence here, nor of an imminent assault upon the Dutch or Western democratic order, but this is a slow process which could gradually harm social cohesion and solidarity and undermine

certain fundamental human rights. In this respect, one could refer to such phenomena as a tendency towards extreme isolationism coupled with rigid intolerance towards other beliefs and opinions, anti-democratic behaviour and in some cases even a desire to impose a separate form of justice, with ultra-orthodox Islamic laws taking precedence over Dutch or Western law.

The General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands has been investigating these developments, based upon the realisation that there are various kinds of radicalisation and that each presents its own threats and risks. Together with radicalisation with the potential to result in terrorist violence, forms of non violent radicalisation which could severely disrupt society have been studied as well. These include striving towards the creation of parallel community structures with forms of self-defined justice and the propagation of anti-democratic behaviour which could result in polarisation, inter-ethnic and inter-religious tensions and serious social unrest. This reflects the broad definition of radicalism as adopted by the AIVD: the active pursuit of and/or support for far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to the continuity of the democratic legal order (aim), possibly by using undemocratic methods (means) which may harm the functioning of that order (effect). By extension, then, radicalisation is the process of increasing readiness to pursue such changes – possibly by undemocratic means – and/or to encourage others to do so.[1]

By democratic legal order, the AIVD is referring to the specific way in which relationships within democratic societies are organised. These include both 'vertical' relationships, between citizens and government, and 'horizontal' ones between citizens themselves. Thus the democratic legal order has two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. The former is the ordered political system which regulates the relationships between citizens and government, the *democratic constitutional state* made up of all the principles, procedures and institutions which form the political system of the Western World and guarantee the basic human and social rights of those within it. The horizontal dimension is the ordered, democratic way in which citizens interact with one another: *the open society*.

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[1] This definition of radicalism and radicalisation is linked to what the AIVD describes as the 'broad approach to terrorism and radicalisation'. See the service's Annual Report 2006, p. 11, for a definition of that 'broad approach'.

This report follows on from a number of previous AIVD publications, beginning with the 2002 report *Saudi-Arabian-Arabian influences in the Netherlands – links between the Salafist mission, radicalisation processes and Islamic terrorism*. That report focused on the activities of Saudi-Arabian-Arabian missionary organisations in the Netherlands and their possible influence in radicalising Dutch Muslims. The direct predecessor to this report, however, is the publication entitled *From dawa to jihad*. Published at the end of 2004, *From dawa to jihad* describes the wide-ranging threat posed by radical Islam to the democratic legal order. Specifically, it covers two separate tendencies which together form contemporary Muslim radicalism: the violent jihad and the radical dawa, with the former ready to make its contribution to the armed struggle against the West and other supposed 'enemies of Islam'. For more information about the violent jihad in the Netherlands see the 2006 AIVD publication, *The violent jihad in the Netherlands, current trends in the Islamic terrorist threat*.

This report is about the dawa component of Muslim radicalism. The term dawa – the 'call to Islam' – primarily refers to efforts to make as many Muslims as possible active practitioners of the faith, in a peaceful manner. In the case of non-practising Muslims, that means returning them to avowal. This goal in itself is generally accepted as commendable by Muslims, and is not the theme of this report.

Rather, this report focuses upon the *radical dawa*. This term refers to the activities of Islamic missionary organisations, mosques and preachers imparting a radical, ultra-orthodox message. These movements are described as ultra-orthodox because they are highly rigid in their theological interpretations and resist all forms of religious modernity or contemporary modifications of their doctrine. Their radicalism lies in the fact that they want to fundamentally reform society, and in doing so reject the Western democratic legal order. They also have a highly activist aspect, which is one of the key points on which they differ from more traditional ultra-orthodox currents. Moreover, the radical dawa employs religious arguments to reject participation in the non-Islamic society surrounding it and encourages far-reaching intolerance of and isolation from all who do not share its views, be they other Muslims or non-Muslims. Finally, it calls for anti-democratic action. But it does all this without resorting to, appealing for, glorifying or supporting violence.

The AIVD has observed that radical dawa movements have been gaining strength in the Netherlands and several neighbouring countries in recent years. They and their preachers have enjoyed more and more success in reaching specific groups through messages tailored specifically to them. They were originally very much directed from

abroad – ideologically, financially and logistically – but now, after a brief phase of fragmentation caused in part by the domestic and international response to the violent jihad, they are undergoing a process of autonomisation and professionalisation. The AIVD calls this process the rise of Islamic neoradicalism and describes it in Chapter 1 of this report.

In the Netherlands, this is a phenomenon expressed primarily within Salafism[2]. This is arguably the most radical current in the spectrum of Sunni Islam, and the violent branch of it is a source of inspiration for jihadis around the world. The non-violent variant of Salafism is at present particularly active in the Netherlands, as it is in Belgium and France. Chapter 2 describes Salafism in its present form in the Netherlands.[3] Salafism is clearly gaining strength in the Netherlands, a fact primarily reflected in a significant increase in the number of Salafi readings being held throughout the country. In describing this process the AIVD will highlight both the message and the methods the Salafi preachers are employing while mobilising young Muslims both religiously and politically, since it is they – rather than the so-called first-generation immigrants – who seem most receptive to radicalisation as part of a complex search for identity.

In Chapter 3 the attention is turned to a number of radical dawa movements which are active in the Netherlands but have managed to secure greater influence in other parts of Europe. They include the Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb ut-Tahrir, which operate in such countries as Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. These movements share some important features with the Salafi groups in the Netherlands, but have their own histories, differ ideologically and have adopted divergent strategic paths. But the potential impact of all these movements upon the democratic legal order is very much the same in whatever country they are expanding. Chapter 4 reveals how radicalism in general can pose a threat to the democratic legal order and lists some of the security risks, both short and long-term, associated with the rise of the radical dawa in the Netherlands. Within the Islamic communities in the Netherlands, the AIVD is already observing, although still on a limited

[2] The term Salafism is derived from al-salaf al-salih, the righteous forefathers. This is a reference to the prophet Muhammad, his companions and immediate successors according to tradition, those who set the perfect example for all who followed. Contemporary Salafism builds very much upon the Hanbali school of legal thought, which is regarded as the most conservative school of legal thought within Sunni Islam.

[3] This report includes a 'Historical sketch of modern Salafism' in its appendix.

scale, the erosion of some aspects of the democratic legal order. It is quite possible that the radical dawa might eventually heighten ethnic and religious tensions in the Netherlands, with increasing polarisation as a result of its intolerant message concerning those who do not share its views. Tensions within the horizontal dimension of the democratic order (the open society) are therefore, in the future, quite foreseeable. However, the AIVD does not foresee any lasting disruption or damage to the vertical dimension of the democratic legal order (the democratic order as a political system), not even in the long term.

Chapter 5 provides suggestions for the development of strategies which might abate the current vigour of Islamic neoradicalism. In doing this, it is particularly important to remember that, however confrontational they may be, the activities and opinions of Islamic neoradicals are in line with the freedom or religion and freedom of expression as guaranteed by Dutch law, and as such cannot be countered using conventional legal means. This chapter also points out that either downsizing or enlarging (the so-called relativistic versus the absolutistic approach) the problem of Muslim radicalisation in its current manifestation can be harmful for actually finding solutions. In a sense, it can be stated that the security issues associated with that radicalisation are increasingly a product not of the phenomenon itself, but of the formation of inaccurate images of it.

The purpose of this report is to put the debate concerning radical Islam – or, more specifically, the radical dawa – in the Netherlands into the proper perspective. When addressing this subject, the impression is sometimes given that this is a powerful movement set to overturn the Dutch political system from within, and in the not-too-distant future. That is most certainly not the case. Even so, the radical dawa is not simply a marginal phenomenon involving a few people frustrated by events elsewhere. Rather, it is a movement which is generating its own dynamic, which operates from inner conviction and which has managed to achieve a reasonably wide reach by delivering a clear message. Nevertheless, the majority of Dutch Muslims feel no ideological affinity with it. In fact, many of them regard its ultra-orthodoxy as intimidating. Yet these moderate Muslims often have difficulty parrying its message. And the relativistic and/or absolutistic images which are widely held in society on the issue of radical Islam at large only serve to further hinder that response. An effective curbing of the problems associated with the radical dawa will come from calling it what it is: a small group of radical dawa activists who are undermining the multicultural solidarity which characterises Dutch society.

13

14

1 The rise of Islamic neoradicalism in the Netherlands

1.1 Three phases in the development of Dutch Islamic radicalism

As in the rest of the Western world, Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands has been changing rapidly for a number of years. That process is linked to developments within the radical movement itself, but is also a result of changes in the Dutch and other Western Muslim communities and in society as a whole.

The process first became noticeable in the Netherlands during the final years of the twentieth century, and stepped up after 11 September 2001. The change accelerated further following the murder of film-maker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004, and still seems to be gaining in intensity. A similar process has been witnessed in other Western countries, in the wake of the attacks in New York on the 11th of September 2001 and after the Madrid bombings of 2004 and the London attacks in 2005.

This report demonstrates that a new phase in the process of change is now emerging. After a first phase in which radical Islamic movements in the Netherlands expanded under foreign direction, and then a second one of autonomous radicalism focused specifically upon the Netherlands, a new third phase is already partially under way. In the Netherlands, it is currently manifesting itself primarily within the radical dawa movement. While developments during the first two phases ran roughly in parallel within both the radical dawa and the jihadi movement, the two are now growing apart. It remains unclear, therefore, whether this latest phase is also affecting jihad-oriented Islamic radicalism.

The principal changes in this third phase concern the control, organisation, ideological orientation and strategic and tactical thinking – including opinions regarding the possible use of violence – in significant sections of Dutch Islamic radicalism. And it seems as if this new form of doctrine is going to become the guiding paradigm for many radicals, although that does not necessarily mean that its two earlier versions are going to lose all support. The latest paradigm is ushering in the rise of a new type of Islamic radicalism, one which can be defined as *Islamic neoradicalism*.

15

Before describing the significance of the rise of Islamic neoradicalism in greater detail, first the two previous phases in the process will be described.

1.2 First phase: Islamic radicalism takes root in the Netherlands under foreign direction

Islamic radicalism first reached the Netherlands during the mid-1980s. It was during this period, the first phase in the development of Dutch Islamic radicalism, that jihadist networks as well as radical dawa organisations of foreign origin began to gain ground here, managing to recruit a small but highly committed group of adherents. Most of them were first-generation immigrants, mainly from Morocco. Close ties were maintained with the 'parent' networks and organisations abroad, in terms of direction, development, ideological orientation, financial support and strategic and tactical choices.

At this time, most of the jihadist networks committed to armed struggle in conflict zones in the Muslim world were either influenced or led directly by at least one veteran of the war in Afghanistan or Bosnia-Herzegovina. And in many cases they had at least an ideological link with the Al-Qaeda network.

The radical dawa in the Netherlands also developed during this period, under the direct control of and with financial and logistical support from non-governmental missionary organisations operating from certain Islamic countries which view themselves as guiding nations, on a spiritual level, for Muslims worldwide. The primary goal of those organisations was to spread their own religious ideology amongst Dutch Muslims.

The radical dawa in the Netherlands manifested itself primarily within Salafism. From 1980 onwards, Saudi-Arabian-Arabian non-governmental missionary organisations like Al-Haramain and Al-Waqf al-Islami were involved in the establishment of several Salafi mosques. Belonging to the political current within Salafism and led by a number of imams with close ideological and institutional ties to Saudi-Arabian Arabia, these mosques have dominated the ultra-orthodox debate within the Dutch Islamic community since the mid-1990s.

In the first phase, the ideological links between the radical dawa and jihadism – one can be a breeding ground for the other – were reasonably close, even though the two movements are not identical. They operated from different strategic perspectives, but

were prepared to support one another when the need arose. The same applied during the second phase, described below.

1.3   Second phase: the rise of autonomous domestic radicalism

1.3.1   Foreign control declines in favour of autonomy

The second phase in the development of Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands began after the attacks of 11 September 2001. Autonomous jihadist and radical dawa networks now came into ascendancy. They were interested primarily in the local situation in the Netherlands and, by extension, elsewhere in Europe. They were able to emerge because a number of foreign 'parent' organisations and networks were successfully dismantled, and hence lost their power and ability to organise, in the international fight against terrorism. As far as jihadism is concerned, groups like Al-Qaeda were severely dismantled; in the case of the radical dawa, internationally active radical missionary organisations like Al-Haramain were affected. Al-Haramain, for instance, featured on a UN list of groups proscribed because of links with Islamic terrorism.

The rise of autonomous Islamic radicalism with a domestic orientation was also a product of the fact that Dutch-based supporters of the armed jihad and the radical dawa were increasingly breaking away from their original sources of inspiration as they became more and more convinced that Islam was also 'oppressed and threatened' in the Netherlands.

1.3.2   Fragmentation, lack of organisation and amateurism

In the second phase of Islamic radicalism support for Islamic radicalism grew in the Netherlands because there were now autonomous networks focusing upon the domestic situation. But this also resulted in fragmentation, a lack of organisation and amateurism[4] when it came to ideological, strategic and tactical thinking, in turn giving rise to a number of new phenomena within both jihadist militancy and the radical dawa.

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[4] The use of the term 'amateurism' does not mean that these groups were never able to achieve the objectives they set themselves.

For a number of young people, jihadist radicalisation became a very individualised process. Their militancy developed very quickly, entirely independently and with absolutely no form of external control, although the process was usually influenced by the internet. This group has been referred to as the 'self-igniters'.[5]

Meanwhile, a number of small jihadist groups with highly sectarian characteristics also appeared. They formulated very extreme ideological, strategic and tactical views in complete isolation, the result of a kind of home-made, 'cut-and-paste' jihadist doctrine based upon selective quotation from Islamic sources. This is what happened with the neo-Takfiri[6], for example, amongst whom were the so-called Hofstad Group and Mohammed Bouyeri, the murderer of Theo van Gogh.

In other cases the fragmentation, lack of organisation and amateurism led to the emergence of a 'radical Islamic lifestyle'. This is typically expressed through the use of specific forms of rhetoric ('jihad talk') and the adoption of highly ritualistic patterns of behaviour – for example, wearing a 'strict' Islamic dress, using certain body language and observing the separation of the sexes. The group which has taken up this lifestyle is much larger than hard core of 'true' Islamic radicals, the reason being that they find it a 'cool' way of life without having any deep-seated convictions.

Finally, there are 'peripheral' groups which try to use their supposed Islamic radicalism to justify what simply could be characterised as escapism, nihilism, hooliganism, vandalism or criminality.

1.3.3 The internet: a key catalyst in the fragmented second phase

The rapid growth of the internet around the world during the first few years of this century did not pass radical Islam by. Hundreds of websites, both violent and non-violent in nature, appeared and caught the attention of young Muslims during the second phase.[7] They include several dozen Salafi-oriented sites in Dutch, propagating

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[5] Rather than 'individualised', this phenomenon is perhaps better referred to as 'solitary' radicalisation because those concerned very much went through the process alone.

[6] The term 'takfir' comes from 'kufr', the Arabic word for unbeliever. Takfiri call for the killing of those they regard as non-believing Muslims – by whom they really mean any Muslim who does not share their own radical interpretation of Islam. Neo-Takfiris have adapted this concept to a specifically Western context, extending it to include the killing of non-Muslim critics of the faith. See also the AIVD publication *The violent jihad in the Netherlands*, p. 32.

[7] At present there are around 4.500 radical websites worldwide.

more or less militant versions of the ideology. Many young Muslims conduct heated discussions on these websites and, protected by their relative anonymity, do not shy away from making very militant statements. This form of expression does not necessarily indicate a truly extremist attitude to life, but it has certainly contributed to the growth of Islamic radicalism. A lot of young people seem to find it difficult to place the radical messages in the right perspective, and so to resist them. During the second phase, the internet also began to act as a kind of ideological encyclopaedia: within a relatively short time, radically-minded Muslim youths can visit a host of Islamic websites and gather a collection of extremist quotes and citations tailored exactly to their personal point of view. Thanks to the internet, the 'cut-and-paste' ideology mentioned earlier flourished during the second phase, contributing significantly to two of its key features: fragmentation and amateurism.

1.3.4 The radical dawa decides where it stands on jihad

The public debate sparked in the Netherlands by 11 September 2001 and the murder of Theo van Gogh forced the radical dawa in the second phase to define where it stood with respect to the violent jihad. Partly under pressure from the Dutch public and politicians, its representatives openly declared their opposition to the use of violence in the West. As an extension of that, they also concluded privately and independently that support for jihad in that form could undermine their own mission. The radical dawa would benefit more from gradual but lasting progress which did not attract negative, growth-restricting attention from the authorities or society at large. Moreover, there is sometimes a genuine abhorrence of violence. The result of all this was that the jihadis and the radical dawa, which had hitherto formed the radical Islamic movement together, slowly began to grow apart and could no longer be regarded as a single force. Jihadis began to accuse the radical dawa of making too many concessions to the 'infidels', whilst the radical dawa condemned jihadism for damaging the growth and reputation of Islam through reckless acts unsanctioned by the clerics it recognised. As for support for fellow Muslims in conflict zones, a more ambivalent attitude could be observed. Taking up arms against those who attack Islam is clearly authorised under Islamic law, and sometimes even regarded as necessary, but the radical dawa in the Netherlands no longer calls openly for this form of jihad – although it certainly does not condemn it, either.

1.3.5 The autonomisation of the radical dawa in the Netherlands and the rest of Europe

As mentioned before, the radical dawa has in recent years been undergoing a process of autonomisation in the Netherlands and various other European countries. What this means in practice is that less and less control is being exercised over mosques in the Netherlands from the Islamic world, that there is greater ideological fragmentation, that the message being delivered is tailored more to the local situation and that an ever clearer divide is appearing between jihadism and the radical dawa.

Moreover, a new generation of radical dawa preachers has appeared. Whereas the first generation was heavily dependent upon the so-called Islamic 'guide nations' for support, both ideological and institutional, the new preachers seem to have wrested themselves away from it, at least in part. They may still share their doctrine with the religious establishment in the previously mentioned Islamic counties, but they are increasingly succeeding in presenting that free from direct control and in a form adapted to the local situation. The result is a more professional message and a higher standard of organisation within the radical dawa, and also an opportunity for its proponents to join forces. Consequently, the movement in the Netherlands and some neighbouring countries is now on the threshold of a third phase in its development: the rise of Islamic neoradicalism.

1.4 Third phase: the rise of Islamic neoradicalism

1.4.1 A new orientation, not yet a new movement

All the signs indicate that Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands is at the beginning of a third phase, which involves significant sections of the movement undergoing substantial changes to the way they are directed and organised, as well as to their ideological, strategic and tactical thinking. Changes so fundamental that the result of it can be described as Islamic *neo*radicalism. The use of such a term does not imply, however, that there is yet one clearly defined, homogeneous movement with adherents who have converted consciously to it. Rather, it represents a new orientation within established Islamic radicalism – one attempting to overcome the problems of fragmentation, lack of organisation and amateurism.

1.4.2　Towards more structure and more coherent strategic and tactical thinking

The rise of this Islamic neoradicalism coincides with that of a new generation of Islamic radicals. They countenance no compromises whatsoever in their ideal of a political and social order based upon ultra-orthodox interpretations of Islam, both within the Muslim world and beyond it. However, they do very much question the way in which the previous generation attempted to bring about a radical Islamic world.

The neoradicals are highly critical of the phenomena which have appeared in their circles since September 2001. They include far-reaching individualisation in the form of so-called 'self-ignition', the sectarian processes which have affected some radical groups and the selective quotation of Islamic sources. In their view, radical Islam has for too long overvalued emotions and resentment at the expense of rational and pragmatic thinking.

According to this new generation, Islamic radicals have for years lacked any clear strategic and tactical vision concerning how Islam can become a real force in the West. They believe that radicalism in the Netherlands must be transformed into a mass movement capable of becoming a powerful factor in society thanks to widespread grassroots support. And for that it is necessary to join forces and to organise the movement more professionally. They also realise that their goal requires clear strategic and tactical vision, as well as a concrete political programme which goes further than merely formulating utopian ideals. Only in that way can they continue to appeal to large sections of their potential rank and file and to gain long-term commitment from their adherents. It is also important that their message transcend ethnicity to reach all Muslims in the Netherlands.

1.4.3　A new vision of the rank and file

The Islamic neoradicals are well aware that the Muslim communities in the Netherlands do not consist solely of frustrated and disaffected individuals. They also realise that new groups are appearing within the community, such as highly-educated Muslims. Groups which they believe can play an important role in establishing a broad-based radical movement. Such a movement, after all, can never be driven by frustration and resentment alone. And reaching each of the groups needed to form a mass movement means putting across specific messages tailored to each of them.

1.4.4 Decline of the internet in the third phase?

In the third phase of its development, the radical dawa clearly wants to attract and retain widespread support. And it is questionable whether the internet, which was such a prominent factor in the second phase, is the most suitable medium for doing that. Internet users, radical or otherwise, are in a position to explore all it has to offer with an independence which makes it difficult for a movement's cadres to retain control of their rank and file's ideological education. After all, there are countless alternative views circulating online. The radical dawa wants to control how its message is received, to the exclusion of other points of view. It also relies heavily upon the charisma of its preachers, with their ability to manipulate group processes. And that requires close and, when necessary, frequent personal contact with the target audience. Although efforts to harmonise online activities within the radical dawa have been observed, there is no sign as yet of one united and co-ordinated virtual dawa message. On the internet, at least, the fragmentation which so characterised the second phase is still widespread.

1.4.5 The use of violence is inopportune

As already described, a divide has opened up between jihadism and the radical dawa, as now represented – in the third phase – by the group of Islamic neoradicals. One of the key considerations in their reticence about calling for the use of terrorist violence in the Netherlands or elsewhere in the Western world is their desire to gain broad support. The use of such extreme violence can deter potential adherents and compel the government to take repressive measures, and that could substantially damage the neoradicals' long-term mission: to slowly build wider backing for radical Islam and to start developing a mass movement. However, they do not rule out the use of certain forms of violence – for example, street protests with no loss of life – and public disturbances as long as these do not endanger the long-term strategy.

1.4.6 The rise of non-radical movements

The supporters of Islamic neoradicalism are well aware of the social dynamics within the unfrustrated and unalienated sections of the Muslim communities. And they realise that the rapid growth of non-radical movements could represent formidable competition for their ideology. Both, after all, are attempting to draw from the same well of potential support. And they are doing so at a critical time, just as that target group – second-generation Muslims in the Netherlands and Europe – is embarking

upon a complex search for its own identity. A search which by no means has to end at a radical destination.

For example, a movement which wants to combine an orthodox Islamic lifestyle with participation in Western society is currently gaining ground. Whilst not yet widespread in the Netherlands, this thinking is already well established elsewhere in Europe and in the Middle East. One of its exponents is the Egyptian 'televangelist' Amr Khaled, who combines a conservative vision of Islam with positive thinking about the personal growth of the individual as a participant in modern society. Khaled rejects the rigidity of currents like Salafism, whilst in no way calling into doubt the supremacy of Islam.[8]

The influence of developments elsewhere in Europe can also been seen within the Dutch Muslim communities. One reflection of that is a combative but non-radical social activism, campaigning for the right to fully express Muslim identity within an open and pluralistic society. Operating in parallel with that is an emancipationist civic activism which seeks to make the Islamic voice more clearly heard on the wider political stage. An expression of this trend in the Netherlands was the participation of several local Muslim parties in the 2006 general election. At the international level, the Swiss philosopher Tariq Ramadan is a prominent proponent of such non-radical, identity-based activism – and, by extension, its emancipatory political counterpart. His views have been gaining an increasingly sympathetic reception in the Netherlands.

Other potential competitors for Islamic neoradicalism are secular currents within the Muslim communities. After all, not all the political and social movements in the Islamic world are inspired by religious motives. Currents rooted at least partially in Western enlightenment thinking also have their spokespeople and supporters there. The strict separation of state and religion which characterise the modern Turkish and Tunisian constitutional systems are obvious examples of this, but there are also several theologians, philosophers and political thinkers – such as Sadik al-Azm, Nasr Abu Zeïd, Abdullahi an-Naim and Khaled Abu al-Fadl – who place human rationality before religious dogmatism.[9] These movements and individuals do not enjoy widespread support within the Islamic diaspora in the West, but they could still hinder the growth of Islamic neoradicalism by offering members of the Muslim communities alternative perspectives and opinions.

[8] See also: P. Haenni. L'islam du marché. Paris, 2005.
[9] These thinkers are of Arab descent, but are primarily living in the Western world.

The Islamic neoradicals regard the recent appearance of movements of so-called 'ex-Muslims' in several European countries, the Netherlands included, as particularly threatening. They are afraid that Muslims who turn their back on the faith for good – and in so doing challenge its supremacy and the infallibility of its divine message – can undermine the growth of radical Islam from within.

1.4.7 The rise of non-activist ultra-orthodox movements

As well as the non-radical movements just described, there is also another current discernible in Western Islam: ultra-orthodox groups which call for complete separation from society without combining that with activism. Whilst seeking to live in ultimate piety themselves, they have no mission to reform the Western society around them. Their message is thus purely religious, with no political overtones. Such groups include the so-called apolitical Salafis. Theologically, however, this movement is just as ultra-orthodox as the radical dawa and so could potentially compete with it for adherents. In this case, currents with the same religious values but a totally different attitude to political questions form a threat to the Islamic neoradicals, and it is not uncommon for these groups to come into conflict with the radical dawa over the question which of them truly represents the Muslim community in the Western world. Not least because of the conviction with which it operates, however, the radical dawa seems to have won that argument for the time being.

1.4.8 The radical dawa's claim of representation

As it has grown in strength in the Netherlands and some of our neighbouring countries, so the representatives of the radical dawa have become more insistent in their claims that they represent and speak on behalf of the Islamic communities in the West. In their contacts with the government, mainstream organisations and others, they argue that they represent pure Islam. And sometimes even that they speak for all the Muslims in the country.[10] As a result of this effective public profiling, Islamic interest groups in which proponents of the radical dawa are prominent are now regularly consulted on issues or disputes involving Islamic communities in the West.

[10] At a meeting with Tilburg City Council on 16 April 2007, local salafist imam Ahmed Salam claimed to speak for all Muslims in the Netherlands. His statement was prompted by a remark from the leader of the Labour (PvdA) group that the imam represented only a minority view.

This is the case in several European countries[11], the Netherlands included. In this way, the radical dawa has been afforded a legitimacy which far outstrips the often limited extent of its support. Due to this public profiling the wider Islamic community in the West sometimes finds itself forcibly associated with a particular religious profile. This despite the fact that the majority of Western European Muslims want to be part of a pluralistic democracy and are not seeking to build a society based on an ultra-orthodox model. Many moderate or secular Muslims, however, are unwilling to challenge these self-appointed leaders openly, for fear of being branded infidels and 'enemies of the Islamic community'. That fear could help encourage the growth of Islamic neoradicalism.

1.4.9 Answering the competition: intolerant isolationism and anti-democratic activism

As alluded to in section 1.4.6, there is competition for the support of the Dutch Muslim communities. The neoradicals' strategy in this battle is twofold, combining what the AIVD refers to as 'intolerant isolationism' and 'anti-democratic activism'. These two tactics operate in parallel, but differ in their emphasis. Both have the same goal, though: to increase the power of Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands. And both draw upon methods which run counter to the spirit of the democratic order, if not the letter of its laws.

'Intolerant isolationism' attempts to create a separate space alongside the public domain, one governed by rules different from those applicable under the democratic legal order. The aim is to establish separate, Islamised enclaves within society, places with no room for those who think differently or who practise other faiths (exclusivism) and where Islamic rules and regulations take precedence over Dutch law (parallelism). These enclaves are intended as power bases for radical Islam and to serve as bridgeheads for its further expansion. They may be physical areas, at the local or national level, but can also be virtual enclaves in the media, on the internet, in public life or in education.

Meanwhile, 'anti-democratic activism' intends to transform the public domain into a space in which the democratic legal order is replaced by other standards. Except as a

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[11] For the role played in this by radical dawa movements in for instance the United Kingdom, see Melanie Philips, Londonistan, London, 2006; Ed Husein, The Islamist, London, 2007 and *Hardline takeover of British mosques*, The Times, London, 7 september 2007.

distant ideal, the aim is not to Islamise the public domain as such, but rather to hinder and disrupt the 'obscene' democratic order as a political system and its open, multiform society as a place to live. The tactics used are provocation, deliberate polarisation and the fostering of hostility towards the supposedly anti-Islamic outside world. Because of this confrontational approach, anti-democratic activism is an attractive alternative for those radicals who feel that achieving isolationism will take too long and whose thirst for action makes them prefer 'quick wins', but for whom violence and terrorism go too far.

1.4.10 Undemocratic and anti-democratic tactics

As has already been said, the Islamic neoradicals reject terrorist violence. But they have been exploring non-violent tactics, both open and clandestine, as an alternative. Although so far used on only a limited scale in the Netherlands, these undemocratic and anti-democratic methods have for some time been part of the radical arsenal in the Islamic world. Below is a summary of what they might involve in the Dutch context, classified into those which have already been used here on a small scale and those known to be under consideration or conceivable.

a. Tactics which already have been used on a small scale in the Netherlands

- Forcing people in the immediate vicinity, neighbourhood or wider Islamic community to conform to one's own strict standards of behaviour. Women, homosexuals, the more liberally minded and suspected non-believers are most likely be confronted by this tactic.
- Forcing people in the immediate vicinity, neighbourhood or wider Islamic community to display loyalty to their own faith group alone, and sometimes to their own ethnic faith group alone.
- Attempting to convince or intimidate people in the immediate vicinity, neighbourhood or wider Islamic community not to participate in some or all of the institutions of the democratic legal order. For example, using threats or persuasion to prevent them voting.
- Attempting to convince or intimidate people in the immediate vicinity, neighbourhood or wider Islamic community not to work for or provide services to the institutions of the democratic legal order. For example, trying to prevent them taking up a government job.
- Deliberately attempting to disrupt the relationships between religious or ethnic communities, or to create other forms of social tension. For example, discouraging

contact with those who hold different views and cultivating hostile thinking. This attitude is sometimes prompted by the feeling that there exists a genuine threat to the Islamic community.

- Attempting to encourage people in the immediate vicinity, neighbourhood or wider Islamic community into certain forms of civil disobedience. For example, not paying taxes, removing children from school, providing incorrect details when applying for a student grant or loan and withholding information from the police.

b. Tactics which are being considered

- Attempting to gain influence inside political parties, the judicial system and other social organisations such as trade unions, professional associations, student bodies and consultative organs, including by means of clandestine entryism.
- Deliberately attempting to disrupt social harmony or to create tensions by, for example, spreading false rumours or conspiracy theories.
- Using persuasion or intimidation to implement a Sharia-based legal system within a particular community or neighbourhood.
- Attempting to gain influence within political parties or other social organisations with a view to taking them over in the long term.
- Attempting to influence political officeholders through intimidation, bribery or, if they are Muslim origin, branding them as traitors to the faith and their own community.

1.4.11 The powers behind Islamic neoradicalism in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe

The radical dawa in the Netherlands and several neighbouring countries like Belgium and France is shaped primarily by political Salafism, which is also the most important source of Islamic neoradicalism in these countries. Although other radical dawa movements are also active in these countries and other European countries. Their objectives are more or less the same as those of the political Salafis, but they employ different strategies and tactics. However, they too are encouraging the rise of Islamic neoradicalism. These movements include Hizb ut-Tahrir, Tablighi Jamaat and the Muslim Brotherhood (see Chapter 3).

The growth potential of Islamic neoradicalism

The threat ultimately posed by Islamic neoradicalism is largely dependent upon its potential for growth. Estimates by the AIVD and security services in a number of neighbouring countries appear to indicate that approximately 5 per cent of the religious Muslim population in the Western world[12] is to some extent receptive to radicalisation. Of that 5 per cent, about 10 per cent will actually radicalise in the end. In so doing, they may choose either jihadism or the radical dawa. The radical dawa mainly targets the 5 per cent of religious Muslims potentially receptive to radicalisation – a fairly large group. It must be emphasised that these figures are estimates only; no hard statistics are currently available.

The current growth of the radical dawa in the Netherlands is most apparent from the expansion now being enjoyed by Salafism. More and more preachers are being sent out from the Salafi mosques to give readings all over the country, and hence they are reaching increasing numbers of young Muslims. Since 2005, the number of readings, the number of preachers and the audience seems to have at least doubled (see further 2.5.1).

1.5   The three phases: three forms of Islamic radicalism

The beginning of a third phase of Islamic radicalism does not mean that the first two are entirely over yet. It is certainly not the case that an entirely new form of radicalism has suddenly replaced its predecessors. At the present time, all three are flourishing alongside one another.

The table on the next page compares the characteristics of those three forms:

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[12] This represents only one section of the total Muslim population (which adds up to approximately one million in the Netherlands). What proportion of Muslims count as 'religious' is difficult to estimate, but one could cautiously say that it is perhaps about half of them.

	Manifestation	Direction/ control	Ideological basis
Phase 1: 1985 - present	Individuals and small groups with strong orientation towards country of origin.	Parent organisations abroad. Ideological, logistical and financial support from abroad.	Derived from foreign scholars (ulema).
Phase 2: 2001 - present.	Various manifestations: • Individual radicalisation 'self-ignition'; • Autonomous groups and networks focusing upon the Dutch situation; • Sectarianism amongst some small groups; • Superficial 'lifestyle Islamic radicalism'; • Limited number of Salafi mosques, but with strong appeal to nascent Islamic radicals; • Salafis discover the young as a target group; • Autonomous preachers in the alternative religious circuit, not linked to institutionalised mosques; • Widespread use of the internet.	Autonomisation resulting from loss of control from abroad and increasing desire for independence. Fragmentation. Lack of organisation. Amateurism.	Autonomisation: • Local Salafi and other preachers as well as foreign scholars; • 'Cut-and-paste' ideology, with strong focus upon the internet; • Utopian or apocalyptic outlook.
Phase 3 (Islamic neoradicalism): 2005 - present	Rapid growth of the radical dawa; rise of political dawa Salafism.	Professionalisation: central leadership, regional cadre and local militants able to mobilise a large rank and file.	Attempt to be less utopian; translation to specific situation in the Netherlands. Politicisation: response to political and social developments, trying to influence them whilst at the same time rejecting the democratic legal order.

Basic strategy	Target group(s)	Approach to government and society
Retain Muslim communities in 'pure' Islam by immersing them in ultra-orthodox preaching. Western Muslim communities are regarded as potential sources of logistical and other support in conflicts in Muslim regions and abroad.	First-generation immigrants with strong orientation towards country of origin and the worldwide Muslim community (umma).	Little contact. Orientation towards country of origin and the umma.
• The radical dawa is preached alongside violent jihad, but the two gradually grow apart; • Win young Muslims over to the radical dawa message of 'pure' Islam; • Encourage intolerant isolationism; • Encourage activism designed to confront Western society; • Use of violence, including terrorism, intended to raise tensions between Muslims en non- Muslims.	Relatively deprived, particularly frustrated and alienated second-generation Muslim youth.	Resistant to integration. Avoidance behaviour. Encouragement of intolerant isolationism amongst own rank and file.
Jihadism and the radical dawa have become two very different strategic options: • Use of violence in the West is usually considered inopportune at the present time; • Focus upon gradual growth; • Encourage formation of clandestine and informal enclaves with tendency towards self-government; • Encourage open or clandestine anti-democratic activism; • Use of clandestine tactics to mobilise potential rank and file, frustrate opponents and disrupt democratic processes; • Exert clandestine influence over policy; • Entryism, initially into mainstream social organisations.	Various, from second and third-generation Muslim youth. Not only the frustrated and alienated, but also the religiously inspired, socially concerned and highly educated.	Encouragement of intolerant isolationism and anti-democratic activism in own community. Also 'front' politics, clandestine attempts to exert influence over policy and entryism, particularly into mainstream social organisations.

2   Dawa Salafism in the Netherlands: the driving force behind the rise of Islamic neoradicalism

2.1   Introduction

The Netherlands has had a steadily growing Muslim community since the late 1960s. Now comprising some 8 per cent of the population, this community originally consisted primarily of migrant workers from Turkey and Morocco. But it has become more diverse since the mid-1990s, mainly due to the arrival of asylum seekers from a variety of Islamic countries. Nevertheless, Turkish and Moroccan migrants and their descendants still make up the country's two biggest Muslim communities. Both Turkey and Morocco practise a moderate form of Islam; traditionally, ultra-orthodox versions of the faith have not been widespread there. Despite this, though, an increasing number of young Dutch Muslims – mostly of Moroccan origin, but also some of Turkish descent – have been turning to Salafism.

Their receptiveness to this strand of Islam appears to have its origins in new recruitment and persuasion strategies adopted by the radical dawa, and in this specific case by Salafi mosques and preachers. This growth is associated with the process of autonomisation and professionalisation described in the previous chapter. The three phases in the development of Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands since the 1980s are outlined below, as they apply specifically to Salafism.

2.2   First phase: creation of a Salafi faith community in the Netherlands

A Salafi faith community first appeared in the Netherlands towards the end of the 1980s. With help from the Saudi-Arabian missionary organisations mentioned in 1.2, the Al-Tawheed mosque was established in Amsterdam and the Al-Fourkaan mosque in Eindhoven. A few years later, this time with an indirect form of Saudi-Arabian-Arabian control, the As-Soennah mosque in The Hague and the Islamic Foundation for Education and Propagation of Knowledge in Tilburg were established. Since the mid-1990s, these mosques have been under the ideological direction of Arabic-speaking preachers originally from countries like Egypt, Syria and Sudan, but educated in Saudi-Arabian Arabia or at least familiar with Saudi-Arabian-Arabian religious dogmas. Their

original target for evangelisation was the first generation of Moroccan immigrants, but they were not particularly successful in that; the ultra-orthodox message did not resonate well with that group's own religious background. But the same cannot be said of Muslim migrants from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa: they were already more familiar with these dogmas, so the increase in their numbers in the Netherlands from the mid-1990s considerably strengthened the Salafi mosques.

The four mosques mentioned above all have rhetorically gifted preachers, are exceptionally well-organised and attract multi-ethnic congregations. Together, they are attended by about 3,000 people at Friday prayers.[13] There are also three or four smaller Moroccan mosques with ideological or institutional links to them.

2.3   Second phase: a second generation of Salafis and autonomisation of the dawa

It was around the turn of the century that the Salafi mosques 'discovered' a new generation of rapidly maturing Muslim youth – a discovery closely related to the recent history of immigration into the Netherlands. This was a period when a relatively large number of the children of first-generation immigrants were reaching adulthood. And as young adults, for various reasons – not least their Islamic background in a non-Islamic country – they were starting to look for their own Muslim identity within Western society. That was a quest only accelerated by the general Dutch response to the 11th of September 2001 and the murder of Theo van Gogh. At the same time, the first generation of Salafi preachers – who had arrived in the Netherlands some years before 2001 – was able to put across their message at several Salafi mosques. Having developed their own organisations, these mosques now began to pay increasing attention to the dawa. Meanwhile, a new generation of Salafi preachers was emerging; men who unlike the first geeration of Salafi preachers, although usually rather older than the young people they were targeting, like them actually came from the second generation of Muslim immigrants and so shared their social and cultural background.

[13] The Salafi mosques primarily try to attract adults, but they do also provide religious education for children. The As-Soennah mosque in The Hague, for example, sets aside significant amounts of time for that activity.

Since 2005, these preachers seem to have become increasingly good at 'connecting' with the way this second generation of Muslim youth views the world. Because of that, they have been specifically charged with spreading the word amongst the young – so much so that they can easily be classified separately as 'youth preachers'. These youth preachers claim to have definitive answers to all the many questions young Muslims have about their place in Dutch society, their religious background and recent political and social developments. And those answers, they say, are to be found only in pure Islam and not in either Dutch society or their own country of origin. These preachers mainly reach their young target audience through meetings arranged specifically for them, which are held with great regularity all over the country.

2.4   Third phase: the rise of Islamic neoradicalism within Salafism in the Netherlands

2.4.1   Increasing professionalism and focus upon the Dutch situation

A significant section of Dutch Salafism is now gradually entering a third phase in its development. This is characterised primarily by efforts on the part of the second generation of preachers to make their mission in the Netherlands more professional and to devise a strategy and tactics tailored more to the situation here.

These preachers are convinced that, before anything else, the current fragmentation of Dutch Salafism must be stopped. They are also conscious of the fact that the Salafi message is not going to hit home with their target group, young Dutch Muslims, of its own accord. Many of these young Muslims do not automatically view a return to pure Islam as the solution to the problems they are labouring under. They are also deterred by Salafism's insistence upon the observance of strict, puritanical codes of behaviour. The preachers therefore realise that they need to understand the target group better. But the growing diversity of Muslim youth means that they are no longer one group, but a whole host of different subgroups each requiring its own tactical approach if they are to be won over to Salafism. For example, those with different levels of education need to be addressed in different ways.

The preachers also understand that, to achieve their objectives, they need to understand and be able to exert influence over the wider socio-political context in the Netherlands. Whereas the first generation of preachers was far more interested in political and social developments in the Middle East and the Muslim world in general, their successors

are concentrating much more specifically upon the Dutch situation. They realise that they can attract and mobilise adherents by repeatedly insisting that Muslims in the Netherlands are being systematically prevented from practising pure Islam. In so doing, they emphasise that this 'suppression' is the work of the Dutch government, of the non-Muslim Dutch population and of certain specific people within the Muslim community who follow what the Salafis claim is an 'un-Islamic' way of life. They are also aware, however, that increasing the political and social influence of Salafism requires not only that it gain more support, but also that it adopt different tactics. More and more frequently, therefore, they are turning their attention to the – often clandestine – exertion of strategic influence over government, interest groups, consultative bodies, funding organisations, social institutions and so on (see further 4.2.1, under i).

2.4.2   Professionalisation of Salafi dawa on the lecture circuit

The new generation of Salafi evangelists is dominated by charismatic, eloquent youth preachers. For some years now they have been leaving the four main Salafi centres in the Netherlands every week to visit a number of non-Salafi mosques with predominantly Moroccan congregations, and also Islamic youth centres, where they give religious lectures. The primary target audience is an 'undercurrent' of younger members of the mosque. These meetings usually take place without the knowledge of the mosque committee, which hardly ever has Salafi sympathies, but even if it does hear of such a meeting it often lacks the executive authority needed to prevent it.

Unlike the first generation of preachers, the second consists of young men – almost all of Moroccan origin – who were born in the Netherlands, or at least grew up here. Partly because of this, they are well aware of developments in Dutch society. In their lectures, they primarily address younger members of the second-generation Moroccan community and, albeit to a lesser extent, immigrants from other backgrounds. That overwhelmingly means young people from the wider Arabic cultural community, under which Somalis are also included in this case. They are also reaching a growing number of Dutch converts to Islam. The lectures are usually given in Dutch.

Traditionally, the Turkish community in the Netherlands has felt no affinity with Salafism. Its Arab origins, its ideological links to a school of Islamic law with no

influence in Turkey[14] and its call for pan-Arab Islamic brotherhood – expressed through the glorification of the Arabic language, amongst other things – are all reasons for that. Moreover, and despite its largely rural origins, the Turkish community in the Netherlands is heavily influenced by Kemalism. Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, introduced clear distinctions between church and state and between tradition and modernity. This philosophy, known as Kemalism, remains widely respected amongst the Dutch Turkish community. Also, Turkey's official Department of Religious Affairs, Diyanet, exercises ideological control over about three-quarters of the Turkish mosques in the Netherlands, with the result that they are overwhelmingly moderate in nature. Recently, however, Salafism has been gaining in popularity amongst a still small group of younger Turks – although it also seems that their radicalisation has isolated them from the wider Turkish community and instead led them to join multi-ethnic networks. So any radicalisation of Turkish youth is for the most part occurring outside their own community, which – unlike the Moroccan – is highly resistant to this kind of movement.

Other young Muslim immigrants who are not part of the Arab cultural community, such as Afghans, also appear to be showing little or no affinity with Salafism at the present time.

It has recently been observed that the Salafi preachers appear to be seeking a new and larger target group. Since the end of 2006, they have been organising lectures in the Tamazight language of the Berbers, which is the mother tongue of most Moroccans in the Netherlands. This move has significantly increased the Salafis' potential audience. Lectures have also been given in Turkish.

If women are present, the meetings are strictly gender-segregated. There are also special lectures for women only, delivered by female speakers. They do not have the same status as the male preachers, however.

Well-educated young Muslims are another new target group for the Salafi preachers. They, after all, have the potential to enter important positions in Dutch society and to gain influence within their own communities. These educated young people, together with others deemed to show promise, are more likely to be admitted to exclusive

[14] Salafism is rooted in the Hanbali school of legal thought ('madhhab') within Sunni Islam, whereas Turkey follows the more liberal Hanafi school.

teaching groups, to be involved in strategic consultations, to be given responsibilities and, if possible, to be asked to preach the word themselves. By targeting this group, the hope is to create a Muslim intellectual class which can act as a religious liberation movement – a strategy inspired by Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.[15]

2.4.3   The politicisation of Salafi dawa

During the current third phase of Salafism's development, most of its adherents seem be choosing the non-violent, political form of Islam. That applies equally to virtually every Salafi mosque in the Netherlands and to the second generation of preachers. This variant of Salafism is characterised by the adoption of a clear position, grounded in religious motives, on relevant social and political developments and by efforts to influence them through activism.

Political Salafism first emerged in Saudi-Arabian Arabia during the early 1990s as a reaction to the supposedly limited political awareness of the official Saudi-Arabian clergy, also referred to as apolitical Salafism.

On such issues as violent jihad in the West, both political and apolitical Salafism are diametrically opposed to the variant which preaches global armed religious war: jihadist Salafism.[16]

2.5   Political dawa Salafism: an emerging radical mass movement?

2.5.1   Growing support through the Salafi lecture circuit

Political Salafism has been both growing and professionalising in recent years. The question now is whether that growth might lead to the emergence of a radical mass movement. It is still too early to provide a definitive answer, but that does not detract from the fact that the number of Salafi meetings in the Netherlands has increased substantially since 2005. Speakers from the four main mosques now lecture, with varying frequency, at thirty or more different locations. That number has at least doubled in the past two years.

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[15] See Chapter 3 for more information about the Muslim Brotherhood.
[16] See also the appendix to this report, 'Historical sketch of modern Salafism'.

The lectures are given by about fifteen experienced preachers, who are affiliated to the four main Salafi mosques in various ways. There are also approximately ten 'trainee' preachers at present, who lecture only sporadically. Supervised and guided by their more experienced colleagues, most have associations with Islamic youth centres. There appears to be an active system of recruitment: talented young people are 'spotted' and then gradually guided towards preaching work. The number of active preachers has at least doubled between 2005 and 2007. It is the expectation of the AIVD that the number of lectures given will probably continue to increase, not least because the Salafi mosques are prioritising this activity.

Most lectures are given at Moroccan mosques or Islamic youth centres. There are approximately 550 mosques in the Netherlands, of which about 40 per cent can be characterised as 'Moroccan'. The Salafis are currently reaching some thirty of these, representing just under 15 per cent of the total. It is not unusual for a hundred or so young Dutch Moroccans to attend such a lecture, but is unclear how many are actually convinced by the Salafi message; that is difficult to gauge because it is very much an 'inner' process. As already pointed out, the number of Muslims in the Netherlands who have actually radicalised towards either the jihad or intolerant isolationism and anti-democratic activism remains small in percentage terms. But it is still not clear whether a Salafi message tailored to a specific group and sometimes repeated with great frequency might win over more young Muslims. The rapid growth in the number of lectures and preachers, and the increasing interest in Salafism amongst young Moroccans, indicate that it could. Moreover, a sort of 'domino effect' now appears to be setting in: more people are giving more Salafi lectures at more venues. See 2.6.1 for a detailed analysis of their content.

This whole process is still being managed centrally at the moment, but there is expected to be some decentralisation over time as a new generation of preachers becomes so familiar with the message that it can spread it without guidance from above.

None of this necessarily means that the exponential growth will actually continue at its current rate. At present, it is difficult to ascertain whether interest in Salafism is increasing out of dissatisfaction with the established order or out of a true devotion to ultra-orthodox doctrine. Either way, though, it is very important that Dutch society remains alert to this growth. Particularly because, certainly in its social aspects, the message being propagated by these preachers makes a powerful appeal to the sense of deprivation and the need to seek an identity felt by certain groups of young Muslims.

Those listening to that message might be encouraged into a process of religious socialisation with a political dimension which eventually results in the adoption of an intolerant and isolationist attitude towards mainstream Dutch society, and a rejection of the democratic legal order.

2.5.2 A social appeal to resentment

Through its current social message, political Salafism's radical dawa is seeking to attract widespread support amongst young Muslims in the Netherlands, particularly those of Moroccan origin. A not insignificant proportion of this group is struggling with problems like dropping out of school, unemployment, above-average contact with the judicial system and a difficult search for an identity. The Salafi preachers are experts in playing on their sense of deprivation and marginalisation. They claim that the weak social position in which many young Moroccans – and their parents – find themselves is not of their making. Rather, it is the anti-Islamic sentiments of the Dutch which have afforded their community second-class status. They present Dutch society as the sole cause of the problems affecting young Moroccans here.

This playing on a sense of deprivation seems to be an important factor in radicalisation. Indeed, similar calls for resentment are also made to other Muslim ethnic groups. If the audience does not appear to share that feeling spontaneously, then the preachers claim systematically that Muslims in the Netherlands will always remain second-class citizens and never be given the rights they are due because of their faith. In that way they can eventually summon up the desired resentment and, over time, initiate the process of radicalisation.

2.5.3 A common new identity as the answer to the crisis of identity

It is clear that active attempts are being made to wean young Moroccans, and other Muslims where possible, away from national religious traditions which are supposedly inspired by superstition. The preachers present 'pure Islam' as a divine revelation which must be separated from that tradition, confronting their audiences with interpretations of the Koran founded in the works of Salafi religious scholars, most of them from Saudi-Arabian Arabia. These present opinions totally different from the more moderate interpretations which are common currency in countries like Morocco. Consequently, listeners to these sermons are in a sense being drawn into the Middle Eastern cultural sphere and so being given a destination in their quest to find their own identity. They are told that in the Netherlands they have neither a Dutch identity nor

a Moroccan one, but are Muslims first and foremost. They are thus offered a neutral, all-embracing Muslim persona with which, so they are told, they are guaranteed a stable life and can embrace pure Islam. In reality, however, what they are being given is a Saudi-Arabian interpretation of Islam with the accompanying Saudi-Arabian forms of expression and Saudi-Arabian outward characteristics. This is a version of Islam which sits very uneasily with Dutch society, but also with the traditional Moroccan religious identity. And, as already noted in 2.4.2, it is an interpretation which finds very little resonance at all within the Turkish community – in this respect, that group seems to possess a more deep-seated sense of its own identity.

2.5.4 The political discourse embraces a process of socialisation

Through their lecture circuit, the Salafi preachers are actively seeking to create a group identity. Now that they are ready to embrace pure Islam, the audiences are told, they are about to enter a new group which is well organised and will provide them with warm friendships: an effective means of bonding young Muslims in search of their own identity. Joining the band of true Muslims will give them not just spiritual peace but also a solid social foundation with which they can complete their quest for their own identity. Moreover, they will become part of a distinctive group which stands out clearly from the decadent society all around it. The individual is pushed into the background; they are going to be part of an Islamic collective. The young adherents – predominantly men, but also women – are specifically commanded to present themselves outwardly as Muslims to set them apart from the 'unbelieving' and 'sinful' outside world. Their dress code both confirms their Muslim identity and expresses their rejection of mainstream society. The young men must grow their beards and wear 'Islamic' dress – including trousers above the ankle and a prayer cap – whilst women should be fully covered, preferably including a face veil. All this makes it extremely difficult to leave the group later, and only contributes to the growth and power of Salafism.

Within the lecture circuit, there are also active efforts to identify particularly capable young participants at an early stage so that, once their loyalty has been established, they can receive further religious instruction in exclusive groups and then be groomed to propagate the radical dawa of their own accord. The group process is thus characterised by a high level of openness and pressure to convert on the one hand, but also by a certain amount of exclusivity on the other. The Salafi message is for everyone, but responsibility within the movement is reserved for a chosen few.

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2.6 The radical dawa: intolerant isolationism and anti-democratic activism

2.6.1 The anti-integration theology of Salafism[17]

As explained before, the current generation of Salafi preachers is spreading a polarising, anti integration message in order to recruit as many adherents as possible and so build a mass movement. However, this tenet is also firmly grounded in the religious texts at the heart of the doctrine. Out of a sincere religious conviction, Salafis are striving to make all human thoughts and actions subservient to the ultimate, compelling supremacy of God.

They therefore regard the purification of the faith and hence of the society around them as one of their most important tasks. To this end, they have established a highly organised internal system for the transfer of knowledge. This consists mainly of lectures and one-day or longer Islamic conferences ('dawrahs') at which they present an ultra-orthodox message designed to heighten social awareness, but also to deepen the inner religious being.

The lectures address abstract theological themes of an ultra-orthodox nature, like 'preparing for death', 'the soul – friend or foe?' and 'resolve in times of temptation'. Through these topics, an attempt is made to connect with the spiritual and moral quest being undertaken by young Muslims. The preachers also try to create fertile ground for a Salafi approach to Islam. For example, they bring up such issues as the struggle against idolatry and innovation.

2.6.2 The struggle against idolatry ('shirk') and innovation ('bidah')

The message being propagated by political dawa Salafism in the Netherlands is supported by an ultra-orthodox theological reasoning. In general, this is done according to the same general principles as used by other variants of Salafism. What is specific to political dawa Salafism is the way in which these principles are translated into the contemporary political and social context.

[17] The AIVD's observations on this subject correspond closely with the descriptions of Salafism's theological doctrine in Quintan Wiktorowicz, 'Anatomy of the Salafi movement', in Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, pp. 207-235, New York, 2006; and Hamid Algar, Wahhabism: a critical essay, pp. 1-70, New York, 2002.

At the heart of the underlying theology is the principle of 'tawhid', the unity of God. Muslims must acknowledge God as one unique entity, deserving of all praise as ruler of the universe. It is the duty of believers not only to accept this as a basic tenet of faith, but also to practise their acknowledgement of it. That means strict observance of the laws revealed by God in the Koran and further explained in the Hadith, or teachings of the prophet, as well as preventing and combating idolatry ('shirk') – which refers not only to the worship of other gods, but also to all human actions which do not consider and submit to the commandments of God. And in Salafism they include honouring and respecting democratic institutions, a country, a flag and so on. Music, dance, film, sport and other forms of relaxation can also count as 'shirk'. Idolatry comes from what the Salafi view as the deluded idea that people can arrange their own personal and public lives independently, without following the instructions provided by God. People who think that they can exist and act of their own free will – in other words, those who believe that man is an autonomous force in the universe – are committing 'shirk'.

According to Salafism, preventing and combating idolatry begin with the acceptance that, through the Koran, God has fully revealed how people must lead their personal and public lives. From this come the strict codes of behaviour so characteristic of the movement. Anything which deviates from a literal reading of the revelation is a 'bidah', or innovation introduced by man, and that can lead to 'shirk'. Every innovation affecting the traditional interpretation of the Islamic texts is a threat to the faith, even when inspired by the noblest of motives.

2.6.3   Intolerant isolationism

Their desire to enforce pure Islam leads the Salafis to want no part of a non-Salafi society. When pious Muslims come into contact with other cultures and people with different ideas, there is a danger of thoughts being exchanged and religious cross-pollination occurring. And that can result in 'bidah', which imperils the faith. It is partly because of this that Salafism can be characterised as an anti-integration movement on religious grounds. Integration into any other society threatens the purity of the doctrine.

Many Salafis regard the Islamic concept of a world divided into a House of Islam ('Dar al-Islam') – where peace and justice prevail – and a House of War ('Dar al-Harb') – also House of Infidels ('Dar al-Kufr') – in a perpetual state of darkness and injustice as compelling. They therefore believe that the pious must distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims, and that the two groups can never co-exist on equal terms. This

43

means that they are also averse to the concept of freedom of religion. That, after all, assumes that all religions should be treated equally and that every religious expression deserves respect and must be allowed freely and without restriction. For Salafis, there is only one true faith: Islam as they observe it. They therefore also describe themselves as the 'Saved Sect' ('al-firqa al-najiya')

It is based upon this conviction that Salafis criticise other religious currents. For example, they particularly abhor Jews and Shi'ites. The latter are regarded as apostates and enemies of Sunni Islam. The Jews, meanwhile, are the mortal foes of the prophet Muhammad and hence of Islam as a whole. Although the Koran states that Jews and Christians deserve respect, in Salafi circles that injunction is considered obsolete since the current generation of Jews and Christians no longer have anything in common with those referred to in the Koran.

Salafism also harbours a strong belief in anti-Islamic conspiracies, based in part upon several verses from the Koran which assert that Jews and Christians are ill-disposed towards Muslims.[18] This preconceived mistrust leads to hostility being perceived in every quarter, and in some cases to a self-perpetuating victim complex. The supposed hostility is totally at odds with the Dutch government's attempts to initiate a dialogue; Salafis here view such a dialogue as a textbook example of deliberate threats. Anyone entering into a dialogue with unbelievers, making concessions to Dutch society and showing willingness to assist integration is endangering his own faith. Contact with the supposed 'enemies of Islam' is permitted out of self-defence, but the true purpose of and thinking behind it must never be revealed to the infidels. This defence mechanism builds upon what was originally a Shi'ite dogma, 'takiyya', which allows believers to adopt a different religious or ideological identity to defend oneself or the faith when it is under threat. One practical repercussion of this is that Salafi mosques in the Netherlands present a façade of respectability in their contacts with the outside world: as and when necessary, they deliver a message of moderation and integration. But that is clearly very different from the word they are spreading within their own trusted circles.

[18] They include verse 3:118. See also Wiktorowicz, p. 218.

2.6.4   Rejection of democracy and a state based upon secular law

Salafis reject the idea of a constitutional state based upon secular law. This is because it involves people developing their own legislation and rules, and then putting them before the laws of God. The ultimate law has already been revealed to man in the form of the Sharia. And those who comply with that are fulfilling their duty to contribute towards perpetuating the power of God. Salafism seeks the full implementation of the Sharia, since only that will create a temporal state which complies with the will of God.

This is also why they reject the Western notion of the separation of church and state. Such a concept is an affront to God, since it implies that spirituality should be excluded from the political domain and hence from the organisation of society. And that represents a direct threat to Islam, according to the Salafis, precisely because it is the task of spirituality to guide society towards the observance of Islamic codes of behaviour.

Salafism also utterly rejects the idea of democracy as the basis of a governmental system. Democracy is one of the ultimate forms of idolatry, because it involves people deciding amongst themselves – to the exclusion of God – how they want to organise the society they live in. In a democracy, primacy lies with man and not with God. The basic principle underlying the legitimacy of contemporary democratic states, the sovereignty of the people, is totally at odds with the fundamental tenet to which the Salafis adhere, the sovereignty of God.

These considerations make any integration into or assimilation with Dutch society a threat to the faith. The fact that they view that society as adrift and corrupt goes without saying. So participation in the democratic process, or any form of co-operation or compromise with the 'infidel regime', is rejected. Salafi preachers regularly postulate their belief that Islamic laws and customs take precedence over and are superior to those of the Netherlands.

45

3 Other radical dawa movements in Europe and the rise of Islamic neoradicalism

3.1   Introduction

So far, a description has been given about the rise of Islamic neoradicalism in the Netherlands and it has been shown that this is reflected primarily in the growth of political Salafism. This is a largely autonomous radical dawa movement, which has managed to reach a specific audience with its non-violent missionary message. The AIVD has also observed similar developments globally. Throughout almost the entire Islamic world, and in particular the Arab part of it, Islamic radicalism in all its forms, including Salafism, has been enjoying a revival. More recently, the same trend has been seen in several Western European countries with Muslim communities. Various radical dawa movements are active in this region, becoming increasingly autonomous and less reliant upon direct control from the previously mentioned Islamic 'guide nations'. Here, too, Islamic neoradicalism seems to be on the rise. So its growth in the Netherlands is not an isolated phenomenon but part of a wider global tendency.

3.2   The radical dawa in Europe: three phases

Radical dawa movements have been active in Western Europe since the 1960s, primarily in Germany, France and the United Kingdom. They were originally marginal groups which found little response from first-generation immigrants, for much the same reasons as in the Netherlands: the ideology they were propagating simply did not appeal. These evangelical movements were usually headed by activists who in turn were receiving ideological guidance and logistical backing from Muslim guide nations or foreign missionary organisations. But things have changed since the turn of the century. With the rise of a new and younger cadre, the ultra-orthodox movements have become more independent. Although not broken entirely, the ties with the guide nation or parent organisation have been pushed into the background.

By adapting their religious message to the local situation and disseminating it in a more professional way, these movements have now succeeded in establishing a lasting relationship with young Muslim immigrants in Western Europe. Just as in the Netherlands, the radical dawa in a variety of manifestations – including Salafism – now

appears to have entered at least its second phase, but more often the third, in a whole number of countries in the region.

3.3 The activism of radical dawa movements in Europe

3.3.1 The growth of the radical dawa in Europe

As described in Chapter 2, political Salafism is the most important radical dawa movement in the Netherlands. In several other Western European countries, too, Salafi mosques have succeeded in mobilising increasing numbers of young Muslims. They have growing adherence in Belgium, Germany and France, for example, where that phenomenon has also been accompanied by the appearance of a new generation of Salafi preachers.

As in the Netherlands, those preachers maintain relationships with known Salafi mosques but mainly propagate their message in a highly autonomous way, tailored to the local situation. And they do so in Flemish, German or French, not Arabic. In Germany there are several active converts who, like their counterparts in the Netherlands, spread the word through a nationwide lecture circuit. And a number of Belgian youth preachers maintain close relationships with like-minded Dutch colleagues. There is certainly some cross-border co-operation, and it is becoming more and more professional. For example, Dutch youth preachers regularly address Belgian audiences.

In the countries surrounding the Netherlands, other radical dawa movements like the Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb ut-Tahrir are also active. The latter two, in particular, operate from a local perspective, making greater use of professional methods and increasingly targeting young Muslim immigrants. These groups do have some support in the Netherlands, but are noticeably less successful here than the Salafis. In their nature, overall objectives and methods, all these movements display close similarities with Salafism, but they have different histories, disagree on certain ideological and theological interpretations and have adopted generally divergent strategic paths.

There are various reasons why Salafism has taken root in the Netherlands whereas other movements have elsewhere. Here, for example, the activities of Saudi-Arabian missionary organisations together with the arrival in the Netherlands of charismatic,

rhetorically gifted Salafi preachers and the establishment of viable mosques sympathetic to their message, helped to pave the way for those preachers to find a group of (young) people receptive to their message. Social developments have also contributed. Thanks in part to its high level of organisation, Salafism is the current which has managed to propagate the radical dawa with the greatest success in the Netherlands and so has tended to overwhelm rival missionary movements. There have been similar processes in other European countries, but with different groups taking the lead. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood was already established in Germany before the Salafis came onto the scene and before international political developments added impetus to a new generation of Muslim youth's search for its own identity. The same applies to Hizb ut-Tahrir in the United Kingdom.

Below some information is provided about the muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb ut-Tahrir, because they are also active in the Netherlands, albeit on a smaller scale than the Salafi.

3.3.2 The Muslim Brotherhood: founders of modern radical Islamic activism

The Muslim Brotherhood ('Hizb al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun') was founded in Egypt in 1928, by Hassan al-Banna. Its establishment was linked to efforts to revive the Islamic identity of the Arab world, which was believed to have been undermined by colonialism. The movement's aim is to act as a bulwark against advancing Western cultural and ideological hegemony. It was originally prepared to use violence to this end, but since the late 1960s the Brotherhood has gradually evolved into a non-violent grassroots movement. It is attempting to 're-Islamise' society in accordance with an ultra-orthodox doctrine. To achieve that, it seeks to create a social vanguard which will eventually spark a mass movement for the radical transformation of society. With this in mind, the Brotherhood plays an active part in society and does not shun political participation. It is on this latter point that the movement differs most fundamentally from other ultra-orthodox tendencies.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood has taken it upon itself to provide many public services unavailable through the deficiently functioning government. It collects refuse, operates ambulances, distributes food and emergency aid, and so on. In this way it has created almost a state within a state in some poorer urban districts. These activities also generate broad public support and enable the movement to expose the supposedly inefficient nature of the current political system. The result is that people are more inclined to seek refuge in Islam and so provide the Brotherhood with a power

base. A substantial section of the Egyptian middle class is also sympathetic, out of dissatisfaction with the country's perceived political and economic stagnation. Although officially banned, in practice the Brotherhood is tolerated in Egypt and in fact forms the only serious political opposition there.

The terrorist movements al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Group) and Egyptian Islamic Jihad both have their roots in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. They were founded in the mid-1970s by elements dissatisfied with the organisation's disapproval of violence.[19]

The Muslim Brotherhood has an important offshoot in Syria. During the 1970s and early 1980s, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood was involved in numerous violent confrontations with the authorities. In 1982 this culminated in a fierce battle for the Brotherhood's stronghold, the town of Hama, in which some 20,000 people were killed.[20] Since then, the organisation has been prevented from playing any part whatsoever in public life. Most of its members are in prison or in exile, some of them in Saudi-Arabian Arabia. The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria no longer urges the violent overthrow of the Damascus regime, with its party manifesto now subscribing to democratic participation.

The Muslim Brotherhood and its splinter groups enjoy widespread support in most Arab countries. For example, both the Palestinian Hamas movement and the Islamic Action Front in Jordan have their origins in the organisation.[21] Islamic Action Front members dominate the student movement, trade unions and professional organisations in Jordan; however, the boundaries of the country's electoral districts have been drawn in such a way that they are limited in their ability to stand in local and general elections.[22] Several other Arab countries have banned the Muslim Brotherhood altogether.

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[19] See also: Gilles Kepel, Jihad, the trial of political Islam, pp. 276-299, Harvard, 2002, and International Crisis Group, Islamism in North Africa II – Egypt's opportunity, Brussels, 20 April 2004.

[20] Raymond Hinnebusch. Syria: Revolution from above, pp. 92-103, London, 2001.

[21] See also: Mohammed Abu-Rumman, 'Political liberalization in Jordan' and 'The role of Europe with regard to Islamic movements', in Islamic Activism and Democratization in the Middle East and North Africa, pp. 25-29 and 55-59, a publication of Forum and the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), The Hague, 2007.

[22] See also: International Crisis Group, The challenge of political reform. Jordanian democratisation and regional instability, pp. 16-24, Brussels, 8 October 2003.

The movement began to make inroads into Europe in the early 1960s.[23] Its bridgehead was established in Germany, where Saïd Ramadan – former personal secretary to Hassan al-Banna and father of the Swiss academic and theologian Tariq Ramadan – had settled. From there, he and others built up a network which now has branches in virtually every European country with a Muslim community.

Not all Muslim Brothers or their sympathisers are recognisable as such. They do not always reveal their religious loyalties and ultra-orthodox agenda to outsiders. Apparently co-operative and moderate in their attitude to Western society, they certainly have no violent intent. But they are trying to pave the way for ultra-orthodox Islam to play a greater role in the Western world by exercising religious influence over Muslim immigrant communities and by forging good relations with relevant opinion leaders: politicians, civil servants, mainstream social organisations, non-Islamic clerics, academics, journalists and so on. This policy of engagement has been more noticeable in recent years, and might possibly herald a certain liberalisation of the movement's ideas. It presents itself as a widely supported advocate and legitimate representative of the Islamic community. But the ultimate aim – although never stated openly – is to create, then implant and expand, an ultra-orthodox Muslim bloc inside Western Europe.

The Muslim Brotherhood is actually still in the first phase of Islamic radicalism's development. The movement may be active in various European countries, and enjoy considerable influence in some of them – Germany included[24] – but its cadre still consists mainly of first-generation immigrants who are usually well-schooled in ultra-orthodox doctrine and methods. The Brotherhood has failed to bring down the age of that core group, however. Nor has it really succeeded in reaching a younger generation of Muslims who often come from totally different cultural backgrounds. In this effort, it is encountering strong competition from the Salafis. Whilst the Brotherhood made some progress in attracting youngsters to their politico-religious message during the 1990s, it is now political Salafism which is making the running with that audience. As a result, the Muslim Brotherhood is less prominent in Europe now than it was a few years ago. And its willingness to engage in the political process has probably been its undoing. Young Muslim radicals are not prepared to make such concessions, so they

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[23] Lorenzo Vidino, 'The Muslim Brotherhood's Conquest of Europe', in Middle East Quarterly, winter 2005.
[24] See, for example: Uta Rasche, 'Spinne im Netz der Muslime in Deutschland' ('Spiders in the web of Germany's Muslims'), Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 11 May 2007.

feel more attracted to the Salafis and other ultra-orthodox movements. Nevertheless, the European Muslim Brothers still have considerable influence. For instance, they played an important role in the recent controversy surrounding the Danish cartoons of the prophet Muhammad. And they did not shy away from the use of provocative tactics during that.

Operating from Doha in Qatar, the Egyptian Muslimbrother Yusuf al-Qaradawi – who preaches on al-Jazeera television and chairs the Dublin-based European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR) – plays a part in that strategy. He regularly presents himself as the religious leader of Europe's Muslims and issues religious edicts ('fatwas') providing practical interpretations of orthodox Islamic law for use in the diaspora. For example, the ECFR – which has no formal ties with the Muslim Brotherhood – has ruled that European Muslims may use interest-paying Western banking services where no Islamic alternative is available. This 'fatwa' typifies the blend of ideology and pragmatism now displayed by the Muslim Brotherhood. In the European context, it is prepared to make concessions and to be less dogmatic than other radical dawa movements, but at the same time it still holds firm to the supremacy of Islam and the compelling need for observance.

Political Salafism in Western Europe has very much borrowed the Brotherhood's methodology: achieving the Islamisation of a society through strong organisation and the gradual, clandestine establishment of a strictly religious Muslim social system. In this respect, Salafi radicals and other ultra-orthodox movements view the Brotherhood as their example. But they utterly reject its willingness to participate politically and to accept compromises.

Some Salafi imams now active in Europe, the Netherlands included, are former members of the Egyptian or Syrian Muslim Brotherhood. After being forced out of their home countries, they usually received further schooling in Salafi doctrine in Saudi-Arabian Arabia before later making their way to Europe from there.

The Muslim Brotherhood certainly has some support in the Netherlands. For example, the management committee of the es-Salaam mosque currently under construction in Rotterdam – and set to be the largest in the country once it is finished – includes several members with known links to the organisation.

52

3.3.3   Tablighi Jamaat: Islamic religious activism in the first phase

Tablighi Jamaat – literally 'movement of the message' – was founded in the 1920s by an Indian cleric affiliated to the Deobandi movement, which has its roots in the Hanafi school of religious law. A classic missionary movement, Tablighi Jamaat seeks to reintroduce Muslims to the message of Islam. Its members devote several hours a day to religious studies and missionary work, and try to educate as many fellow Muslims as possible about their faith.[25]

The movement's approach is one of active evangelism. For example, by approaching Muslims on the street – an activity the Salafis consider improperly innovative. Nevertheless, Tablighi Jamaat interprets the Islamic texts in an ultra-orthodox way. Theologically, its views are virtually identical to those of the apolitical Salafis: Muslims should live, and even sleep, exactly as the prophet did. However, the movement shuns both politics and violence.

For this reason, Tablighi Jamaat is not regarded as a direct threat to the constitutional order of Western democracies. Nevertheless, the ideology it propagates is totally at odds with certain fundamental Western values. At the very least, for example, it can be characterised as strongly opposed to integration. It also adheres to the traditional doctrine of 'purdah', which requires that women be totally excluded from public life and preferably not even leave the home.

Tablighi Jamaat also rejects Western concepts like democracy, secular legislation and individual self-determination. And some young Muslims have radicalised under the movement's influence: because of its strong emphasis upon an ultra-orthodox version of Islam, it lays fertile ground for more extreme interpretations.

For example, British terrorist Richard Reid – the so-called 'shoe bomber' who attempted to blow up an intercontinental flight from Europe to the United States – was first introduced to the radical dawa by Tablighi Jamaat before further radicalising outside the movement. Other young Westerners who have followed a similar path include John Walker Lindh and José Padilla. Lindh, 'the American Taliban', fought against US forces in Afghanistan in 2001 and Padilla planned to explode a so-called

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[25] 'Da'awat il-God': the invitation to return to God through charity, prayer and the Word.

'dirty bomb' aboard an aircraft. All three are now serving long prison sentences in the United States.

In 2006 a young Belgian convert called Micha Bellen disappeared, leaving behind jihadist literature in his room. He eventually reappeared in Pakistan, where he had established contact with the Tablighi Jamaat headquarters in the province of Punjab.[26]

Tablighi Jamaat has been reasonably successful in several European countries. Unlike the political Salafis, its adherents shy away from confrontation and prefer to operate in anonymity. In the Netherlands, the movement mainly targets Moroccan Muslims and is active in numerous mosques – although hardly ever at the institutional level. It also has a following within the Dutch Pakistani community.

Because of the controlling role still played by its headquarters in Pakistan and the courses European followers are offered there, Tablighi Jamaat is still in the first phase of development in Western Europe. But there are already signs that it is becoming increasingly professional, focusing more and more upon young people and expanding its cadre. All things considered, the indications now are that the movement is slowly moving into the third phase. The links with Pakistan are not going to be broken, however. And Tablighi Jamaat's high level of organisation means that it is going to skip the second phase, fragmentation, altogether.

3.3.4 Hizb ut-Tahrir: polarising Islamic radicalism

Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Party of Liberation, was founded in Jerusalem in 1952, by Taqiuddin al-Nabhani (1909-1979). Ideologically, this movement is strongly influenced by Saudi-Arabian Wahhabism (Salafism). Organisationally, it originally seems to have been modelled on both the Muslim Brotherhood and Marxist movements; in the early days it attracted many members who had left the Brotherhood because they found it too moderate and objected to its contact with secular authorities.[27]

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[26] De Morgen, 'De onzichtbare dreiging van de islamitische Jehova's' ('The invisible menace of the Islamic Jehovah's Witnesses'), Brussels, 2 September 2006.

[27] See also: Zeyno Baran et al, The Challenge of Hizb ut-Tahrir: Deciphering and Combating Radical Islamist Ideology – Conference Report, 2004, and Hizb ut-Tahrir – Islam's Political Insurgency, Nixon Institute, Washington, 2004.

Hizb ut-Tahrir can be characterised as a political party, but not one in the conventional sense of the term. It operates in great secrecy and is organised into cells with an almost military hierarchy. Doctrinally, the movement is dominated by virulent anti-Zionism, an intense hatred of secular governments and ideologies, the complete avoidance of those holding different opinions and the advocacy of a confrontational and polarising message.

The ultimate aim of Hizb ut-Tahrir is to establish the Islamic Caliphate within a reasonably short term. It is prepared to use violence to achieve that when really necessary, but considers that inopportune at the present time. Before it can do so, the movement must first build up its own strength. One of its active strategies to that end is clandestine entryism: Hizb ut-Tahrir is endeavouring to secretly place as many members as possible in strategic positions in society. When the time comes for Islam to seize power, these activists will reveal themselves and help the movement to achieve its objectives from within. It is partly for this reason that the movement's main target is the well-educated. In the United Kingdom[28] it is active in universities and similar institutions; students whose level of education has somewhat alienated them from their own communities, and so feel culturally uprooted, can be easily susceptible to its approaches.

Hizb ut-Tahrir also attracts a relatively large number of converts to Islam. In European countries like Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, but also in Australia, it has been relatively successful and is managing to reach ever larger groups of young Muslims by appealing to their feelings of inferiority, deprivation and alienation from their host society, providing an ultra-orthodox religious context for their frustration, apparently bleak future prospects, search for identity and feeling of cultural void.

Several terrorist organisations with their origins in Hizb ut-Tahrir are active in the United Kingdom. They include The Saved Sect and Al-Muhajiroun. It also operates in the former Soviet republics of central Asia; for example, it has been linked directly to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a terrorist group affiliated to Al-Qaeda.

Hizb ut-Tahrir in Europe is highly autonomous and professionally organised, with a young and well-educated cadre. It has clearly identified its target groups for recruitment

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[28] The United Kingdom considered banning Hizb ut-Tahrir in 2006, but eventually decided not to. The organisation is proscribed in Germany, on grounds of anti-Semitism.

and offers them messages tailored to the local situation and usually delivered in the local language. Whilst based upon the ideological and methodological doctrines of the central leadership, the fact that these messages can be adapted as necessary by activists indicate that Hizb ut-Tahrir is in third a phase of development in Europe. Its national organisations apparently operate entirely independently of the centre, can function without its leadership and so have become autonomous.

Wherever it is active in Europe, Hizb ut-Tahrir tends to target the largest Muslim ethnic group. In the Netherlands, that is the Turkish community. But whilst it does have some support there, which is even growing, membership remains small in numerical terms. The movement does take to the public stage here on occasions, as it did during the Danish cartoon crisis at the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006. It also organises conferences in the Netherlands.

3.4   The growth of Islamic neoradicalism in Europe

All the movements described above are active in Western Europe. In the Netherlands, it is the political Salafists who are in ascendancy; that also applies in Belgium, Germany and France. In countries like Denmark and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, Hizb ut-Tahrir is gaining more and more influence. And that movement is also active in Germany. Behind the scenes, meanwhile, Tablighi Jamaat and – to a lesser extent – the Muslim Brotherhood are gradually establishing a solid base inside Muslim immigrant communities in all these countries.

In some cases, mostly at the individual level or on a small scale, these movements are working together and so may be influencing one another ideologically. Institutionally, however, there is serious rivalry between them. That has its primary origin in ideological differences of opinion arising out of theological issues or disagreements about doctrinal strategy. The Salafis, for example, utterly disapprove of the personal evangelisation tactics used by Tablighi Jamaat because they regard them as a dangerous form of innovation. And Hizb ut-Tahrir despises other radical dawa movements because it does not consider them confrontational enough. There is also personal rivalry at the highest level between spiritual leaders, sometimes rooted in competing desires to be considered the undisputed leader of the Muslim community, which in some cases spills over into open hostility. All of which certainly taps the strength of ultra-orthodoxy.

These groups are increasingly seeking to recruit better-educated young people, through whom they hope to gain strategic influence in Europe in the long term. Hizb ut-Tahrir is particularly fond of this tactic, as are several influential members of the Muslim Brotherhood. They are not confining their efforts to disaffected ethnic-minority youth, then, but it is certainly not a group they have forgotten. They, after all, are the potential foot soldiers of the future. The people who can transform the radical dawa into a mass movement for fundamental change in European society. Moreover, these ultra-orthodox movements also seem to appeal to certain European converts to Islam.

Given the size of the Muslim community in Western Europe, the radical dawa's target group in the region is huge. It is not impossible, then, that these movements will manage to gain greater influence within both that community and European society as a whole. Especially if they enter the third phase of development and so begin operating entirely under their power, free of foreign control. Once that happens, they effectively become part of the region's own religious tapestry. And that could eventually create tensions within the European democratic order. After all, the basic ideology of all these ultra-orthodox movement is fundamentally at odds with the values of Western democracy.

In every European country, there seems to be one specific group of Muslim immigrants which is most susceptible to increasingly ultra-orthodox views. In the Netherlands this is the young second generation of Moroccan migrants, whereas in the United Kingdom and Denmark it is the second generation with roots in the Indian subcontinent. And elsewhere it attracts other groups, such as Bosnian Muslims. Which it is depends partly upon the particular nature of a country's intake of Muslim immigrants. Whilst the Netherlands has a relatively large Moroccan immigrant population, most British Muslims hail originally from Pakistan or Bangladesh and in Germany they are predominantly Turkish. A substantial proportion of the new adherents of the radical dawa are well-educated, too, which implies that – however important they may be – local and national factors are not the only ones contributing to Islamic radicalism. Others are also at play. It would appear, for instance, that Muslim immigrants have a strong latent religious identity which can potentially make them receptive to ultra-orthodox ideas. Moreover, Islam is seen to be spreading internationally, there is a widely held sense of victimhood and a strengthening of pan-Islamic solidarity. In that light, local situations and national borders are not a barrier.

In combating radicalisation at the policy level, then, it is important not to regard local factors alone as its driving force. Radicalisation must be seen in a wider context, and

57

the radical dawa should be acknowledged as a self-sustaining force with international appeal. A force which has its origins not only in the factors mentioned above, but also in the uncompromising and intimidating way in which its message is presented. And that message seems to be sounding more compelling than ever now that just about all of the prominent radical dawa movements have reached their third phase of development and Islamic neoradicalism has established a firm foothold in Europe.

4   Security risks from Islamic neoradicalism

4.1   When does radicalism endanger the democratic legal order?

4.1.1   The definition of radicalism with security consequences

In earlier reports, the AIVD has already defined when radicalism in general can pose a security threat to the democratic legal order.[29] Such a threat exists when there is:
the active pursuit of and/or support for far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to the continuity of the democratic legal order (aim). Possibly by using undemocratic or methods (means) which may harm the functioning of that order (effect).[30]

A more precise definition of radicalism with security consequences is:
the readiness, based upon ideals inspired by politics, ethnicity or religion, to develop activities which, by virtue of the ends being pursued and/or the means used, does (or may) pose a threat to national security, and in particular to the continuity of the domestic democratic legal order or the international rule of law, or could seriously hinder the functioning of either.

4.1.2   The democratic legal order: a political system and a way of living

This definition of radicalism with security consequences is founded upon a broad conception of what the government and society understand by the democratic legal order.[31] This centres on the notion that that order is a specific way of regulating the

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[29] In particular, see From dawa to jihad, 2004.

[30] As an extension of this, radicalisation can be defined as the process of becoming radical and the internalisation of that process. To dispel any possible misunderstanding, it should be stressed here that this description refers only to radicalisation which poses a threat to the security of the democratic legal order. Clearly, radicalism in itself does not represent such a threat. Indeed, history teaches us that radicalism in general, in the sense of striving for the fundamental reform and accepting the far-reaching personal and public consequences of those efforts, can be beneficial – and even essential – to the dynamism of a society.

[31] See From dawa to jihad, pp. 13-17. See also the Dutch government paper Grondrechten in een pluriforme samenleving ('Basic rights in a plural society'), Kamerstukken (Proceedings of the Second Chamber of the States-General) II 2003/04, 29 624.

relationships within society: both vertically between citizens and their government and horizontally between individuals.[32]

The democratic legal *order* thus has two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. The former is the ordered political system which regulates the relationships between citizens and government, the *democratic constitutional state*. The latter is the ordered, democratic way in which citizens interact with one another: *the open society*.

The democratic constitutional state is based primarily – although not entirely – upon principles, procedures and institutions founded in law. They include the separation of powers, basic rights such as equality, freedom of expression and freedom of religion, government caution in encroaching into people's private lives, universal suffrage, the freedom to pursue political power, the democratic control and review of decision-making, open government, the principle that decisions are taken by the majority but with respect for the minority, and so on.

The open society, meanwhile, is the whole body of conditions for a democratic legal order which are *not enshrined in written legislation*. Such an order requires more than simply that citizens formally acknowledge and comply with the principles and procedures of the democratic constitutional state; it ceases to function properly when particular conditions (which are difficult or impossible to formulate as specific rules) are not met. In other words, a democratic legal order requires a certain degree of confidence, social cohesion, solidarity, active citizenship and loyalty. At the heart of this are a number of standards and values: respect for the open nature of society, respect for its pluriformity and diversity, mutual respect amongst its citizens, respect for divergent interests and a genuine willingness to reconcile them as much as possible, respect for the private lives of others, respect for other moral and religious views, and so on. First and foremost, the citizens themselves are responsible for achieving and maintaining these values; the government can only impose them from above to a limited extent, and it is questionable how desirable that is.

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[32] Every society has its own way of regulating the horizontal and vertical relationships within it. This is described as its 'legal order'. This therefore embraces more then the system of justice ('the law'). This is only part of the legal order. A legal order can be described as democratic if the citizens making up the society concerned are involved in shaping and evaluating it, in an organised way and with equal political rights. This means that democratic legal order can never be static; by definition, it will be dynamic as it is constantly re-evaluated and reshaped by its people within it.

4.1.3	**A broad view of security**

A broad conception of the democratic legal order goes together with a broad view of security. The security of a society is about much more than the ensuring the physical safety of all those within it, protecting private property and safeguarding basic public services. The Dutch government believes in a far wider definition, which also includes a prominent role for security in the sense of social and political stability.[33] This is the kind of security made possible by the democratic legal order; citizens must feel secure in their dealings with government and amongst themselves. They also need a sense of long-term security. To put it another way, there has to be 'social trust': a prevailing climate in which people are able to assume that they can live together peacefully, now and in the future, regardless of their religious, ethnic or political differences. This confidence is based upon the realisation by the majority of the population that the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution, as well as democratic processes and institutions derived from it, apply to all. Moreover, it is also firmly grounded in the standards and values automatically associated with an open society, such as respect for pluriformity and for the private lives of individual citizens.[34]

4.1.4	**Assessing risks to the democratic legal order**

With this in mind, when assessing risks to the democratic legal order the nature and extent of the risk they pose to the both its horizontal dimension and its vertical needs to be examined.

In establishing the *nature* of risks to that order, there are two questions emerge:
- What are the risks to the *proper functioning* of the democratic legal order? The question here is not whether the continuing existence of that order is actually threatened, but whether there is any danger that it will no longer be able to offer *all citizens* what it was established to provide them with: the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution, equal treatment by the processes and institutions of the democratic society, freedom of religion, the right to a private life and so on. In other words, this question addresses the risk of *damage* to democratic legal order which might cause it to *dysfunction to a greater or lesser extent.* Not so fundamentally

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[33] Strategie Nationale Veiligheid ('National Security Strategy'). Kamerstukken II, 2006-2007, 30821, no. 3.

[34] Since it is largely uninstitutionalised, the horizontal dimension of the democratic legal order is obviously far more vulnerable to risks than the vertical dimension.

that the entire order is in danger of failing, but enough to stop it working for some people. Or, to be less absolute, for a significant section of the population such as a particular religious or ethnic community.

- What are the risks to *continuity* of the democratic legal order in the short or long term? We are concerned here with a *potentially permanent disruption or undermining* of that order as a system, in either its vertical or horizontal dimension, or both, to such an extent that its very existence is likely to be threatened sooner or later. Answering this question requires an assessment of the likelihood that one or more serious blows will be struck to the democratic order, with the possible result that it will be irreparably damaged or collapse altogether.

Likewise, there are two questions to be asked when assessing the *extent* of risks to the democratic legal order.

- What is the true 'strength' of the radical movement which has prompted the risk analysis? Specifically, we need to ask ourselves whether that movement possesses the resources – human, financial or other – needed to actually achieve those of its objectives which are counter to the democratic legal order and whether it is able to deploy them to that end.
- What opposition does that movement face in achieving its objectives? In other words, how much resistance is being or will be offered by specific sections of the population – for example by the community of which the movement itself is a part – society as whole or the government.

Answering all these four questions allows us to understand the true nature of the real risks we face now and in the near future and in the longer term. In the latter case, of course, forecasts need to be made concerning the possible future development of the radical movement in question, in respect of its own strength and the opposition it is likely to face.

4.2 The radical dawa: the risks now and in the longer term

4.2.1 The current risks: partial dysfunction of the democratic legal order

It would be going much too far to suggest that the radical dawa is capable of permanently disrupting our entire democratic order. But it is true to say that the movement does pose a threat now in terms of causing the partial dysfunction of that order for a section of the population. In certain cases, it is already capable of rendering

parts of the democratic legal order inoperative for some people, particularly those within its own sphere of influence. For example, Muslims who are not Salafis, do not practise their religion, hold secular views or otherwise fail to conform to Salafism's strict code of behaviour. This to some extent endangers both the horizontal dimension of the democratic legal order, as it applies within the Dutch Muslim communities, and also the vertical dimension in terms of the relationship between sections of those communities and the government. The risks involved are summarised below:

a. *The radical dawa undermines support for the democratic legal order*
   To a limited extent, the propagation of an anti-democratic message by the radical dawa is already contributing to a reduction in general support for the democratic legal order amongst certain sections of the Muslim population. Under its influence, the number of – mainly young – Muslims who are rejecting all aspects of democracy is increasing. At the very least, this threatens the horizontal dimension of the democratic legal order, although those imbued with anti-democratic sentiments have yet to actively resist its vertical dimension by openly challenging democratic institutions and processes.

b. *The radical dawa contributes to the polarisation of society*
   The message of intolerant isolationism delivered by the radical dawa is contributing to the polarisation of society. The movement is uncompromising in the hatred its expresses towards homosexuals, Jews, Shi'ites, non-practising Muslims and all the other supposed 'enemies of Islam' – a group which, in the Dutch context, means a huge swathe of its host society. This message serves to reinforce the mutual hostility felt in some sections of that society, by both Muslims and non-Muslims. Again, this represents a threat to the horizontal dimension of the democratic legal order.

c. *The radical dawa prevents 'non-conforming' Muslims from exercising their basic rights*
   Although not explicitly threatening violence, the radical dawa is exerting heavy pressure upon Muslims – both within its immediate sphere of influence and beyond it – to conform to its own extreme interpretation of Islam. This effectively means that it is preventing Muslims who do think and believe in the way it does from exercising their basic rights. Whilst the radical dawa is opposed to personal 'takfir' – independently characterising other Muslims as apostates and then 'excommunicating' them and perhaps even advocating their death – virulent abuse of supposed non-believers and enemies of Islam are not uncommon. This is couched in terms like 'arch-enemy of God', 'dog' and 'tumour'. Although those who fail to conform to the movement's rules and thinking are not literally described

as 'unbelievers' and 'apostates', that is the accusation implicit in the other forms of abuse employed.[35] Other Muslims can experience that as highly threatening, since traditional doctrine regards apostasy as a sin punishable by death. Consequently, individual Muslims really are being prevented from exercising their basic rights.

d. *The radical dawa prevents non-Muslims from exercising their basic rights*
Non-Muslims who want to criticise certain aspects of the faith in the media, academic discourse, art or satire may also feel restricted by the intimidating, even threatening tone sometimes adopted by the radical dawa towards such supposed 'hostility' to Islam. This undermines free debate and public confidence in the democratic legal order.

e. *The radical dawa prevents women from exercising their basic rights*
Another way in which the radical dawa prevents the exercise of basic rights is through the restrictions it seeks to impose upon (Muslim) women in the Netherlands. This, it claims, is to curb their exposure to what it sees as the sexual excesses so typical of the West and thus to protect, even save, women's honour. Adherents of the radical dawa preach, and in their own circles practice, the doctrine that women should at most be highly restricted in their studies, must not work, must not play sports, must not join clubs, must not associate freely with men, must not shake men's hands, must not be treated by male doctors or other health professionals and may only leave the house with the express permission or in the company of a male relative. It is also apparent that girls are being required to comply with strict codes of dress and behaviour from a very early age – much earlier than is customary in the Islamic world.

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[35] A number of public statements by Imam Fawaz Jneid of the As-Soennah mosque in The Hague perfectly typify this approach. At Friday prayers he has said, amongst other things, that then MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali is the arch-enemy of God, that Ahmed Aboutaleb – at the time Deputy Mayor of Amsterdam – should change his name to Sharon, that local Amsterdam Labour (PvdA) politician Fatima Elatik is a 'dog', that the Liberal Party (VVD) and television news programme Nova have declared war on Islam and that the Socialist Party (SP) is conducting a witch hunt against Muslims. All attacks prompted by supposed criticism of Islam or refusal to condemn the Danish cartoons. Jneid also fiercely cursed Theo van Gogh in a lengthy prayer of supplication only a few weeks before the film maker's violent death. Over the weekend of 23 June 2007, an article appeared on the As-Soennah website in which Ehsan Jami, founder of a group for ex-Muslims, was accused of being an 'incestuous weasel' who is angry with Islam because it does not allow him to perform sexual acts with his mother and sisters. The newspaper columnist Afshin Ellian was also described in similar terms.

f. *The radical dawa prevents homosexuals from exercising their basic rights*
The radical dawa also condemns homosexuality to an extent which infringes upon basic rights. Homosexuality is regarded as a sinful deviance, public or semi-public displays of which can result in social repudiation and even charges of heresy. As a result, many gay and lesbian Muslims are afraid to reveal their sexuality and so are prevented from exercising their basic rights.

g. *The radical dawa imposes its own religious legal system in an informal and clandestine way*
Inherent in the intolerant isolationism propagated by the radical dawa is strong resistance to integration into Dutch society. But internally – although only very rarely in public – the movement goes much further. What it actually preaches is that Muslims should retreat into their own closed communities where, as much as possible, Islamic religious law prevails over that of the Dutch state. In several cases on a limited scale and at the local level, informal and clandestine moves in this direction have already been observed.

One direction this approach might take, for example, is efforts to apply the Sharia to Muslims in the Netherlands in the domain of personal and family law. Some Salafi mosques already conduct Islamic marriages which, for ideological reasons, are not registered with the civic authorities. They are therefore invalid under Dutch law, but legitimate as far as the mosque is concerned. In the event of subsequent divorce and child custody issues, the Islamic rules are followed. And under them, women do not have the same rights as men. This is a situation irreconcilable with the principle of equality applicable in the democratic legal order. There are also Salafi mosques which are prepared to 'marry' men who are already have wives, and so are legitimising bigamy and polygamy.

h. *The radical dawa is exploring ways of clandestinely opposing and disrupting the democratic legal order*
Clandestine tactics designed to actively oppose and disrupt the processes of the democratic legal order – such as championing polarisation and fomenting unrest – have already been tried out on a limited scale at the local level. This is not one of the radical dawa's primary approaches in the Netherlands at present, but a 'reconnaissance' of the possibilities such tactics might offer is under way. For example, several of the movement's representatives stated that – by way of a highly irregular 'exception to the rules' – Muslims would be allowed to vote in the 2006 general election in order to thwart the omnipresent 'enemies of Islam'. This declaration was accompanied by a voting recommendation which was essentially

negative and defensive in nature: Muslims were 'permitted' to vote for the leader of centre party D66 because he – rather than his party as a whole – was the politician least hostile to Islam. A vote for anyone else was deemed 'indecent', and parties like the Christian Democrats (CDA), Liberals (VVD), Labour (PvdA) and Socialists (SP) were all condemned as anti-Islamic.

i. *The radical dawa is clandestinely seeking to influence government policy and, through entryism, mainstream social organisations*

The radical dawa has begun active clandestine efforts to gain strategic influence[36] over national and local government policy-making and to secretly enter mainstream social organisations. The clandestine aspect of this derives from the fact that the people concerned refrain from mentioning their religious opinions and loyalties. For example, the radical dawa has become actively involved in advising local authorities on crime fighting, premature school-leaving by ethnic-minority youth and services for immigrant women. Organisations secretly affiliated to Salafi mosques have obtained government grants for projects to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents and school drop-outs from the ethnic minorities. Away from the purview of the funding body, these young people are then presented with the message of the radical dawa. This particularly seems to hit home with young habitual criminals from Muslim backgrounds, since it loads their latent sense of guilt with religious baggage. Radical dawa activists are also involved in homework clubs for ethnic-minority schoolchildren. Rarely, however, can they or their activities be associated directly with a mosque. The funding bodies usually achieve their aim – a reduction in crime, a return to study, better school results or whatever it may be – but in the process a number of the young beneficiaries make the anti-democratic Salafi ideology their own.

In their contacts with the government, radical dawa activists often represent themselves as spokespersons for the Muslim community. And, thanks to their high level of

[36] One action of this kind was orchestrated by the Salafi mosque in Tilburg, mentioned in 2.1. Leading figures there were the driving force behind the radicalisation and public 'coming out' of a female Utrecht schoolteacher, who was then dismissed in the autumn of 2006 after informing the school's management that she would no longer shake hands with men. The case generated considerable media coverage, a complaint to the Equal Treatment Commission (Commissie Gelijke Behandeling, CGB) – which ruled in favour of the teacher – and a court case won by the school. The Tilburg mosque provided the teacher with material assistance throughout the affair, regarding it as an important step towards the introduction of ultra-orthodox behavioural codes in the Netherlands.

organisation and outwardly honourable motives, they are regularly accepted as such. In reality, though, they certainly do not speak for the community as a whole. This is a role they take upon themselves with a hidden agenda: to gain as much control as they can over contacts between the authorities and Muslim communities in the Netherlands.

j. *The radical dawa is a breeding ground for violent activism*
The radical dawa rejects the use of violence in the West partly on ideological grounds and partly for pragmatic reasons. However, this movement can never totally be separated from the violent jihad and certainly not at the level of the individual recipients of its message. The possible relationship between the two has a number of manifestations:

- The intolerant isolationism, anti-democratic activism and anti-Western message of the radical dawa can for some individuals act as a stepping stone towards further radicalisation along the road to violence. Young Muslims who advocate a more confrontational approach are certainly receptive to this path. A number of the convicted terrorists of the Hofstad Group, amongst them the murderer of Theo van Gogh, regularly attended either the Salafi Al-Tawheed mosque in Amsterdam or the As-Soennah mosque in The Hague – or both – before continuing their process of radicalisation outside those institutions. Two convicted Hofstad members also claim to have been married according to Islamic rites at the As-Soennah mosque. At the very least, this implies that these terrorists came into contact with and possibly were influenced by those mosques' doctrines at some stage in their lives.
- The radical dawa repeatedly insists that Islam and Muslims are being deliberately attacked by the Western world. By this it is referring primarily to the supposedly critical, even hostile, manner in which Islam is portrayed in the West and to the way in which Muslims are treated here. From time to time, and especially by the first generation of preachers, this alleged assault is painted in broader terms to include the 'unjustified' Western military operations in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. A twofold message which could easily create an atmosphere in which calls for violent jihad at least find a hearing. The message of the radical dawa can thus insidiously – and perhaps even unconsciously – create a platform for violence.
- The radical dawa unequivocally rejects violent jihad in the West at the present time, but there remains a question mark over the stance it might adopt when unforeseen circumstances lead to seriously raised attacks by the indigenous population tensions in the Western world. What would happen, for example, if there were attacks by the indigenous population against Muslims or a jihadist terrorist attack in the

Netherlands? Because the radical dawa accepts the use of violence in self-defence, no definitive answer to that question can currently be offered.

- In the case of a number of radical dawa movements, it is unclear to what extent their current disavowal of violence is more than simply pragmatic. It is not entirely inconceivable that offshoots of, say, the Muslim Brotherhood or Hizb ut-Tahrir might consider taking up arms if they felt they were strong enough. Experience from a variety of Islamic countries shows that splinter groups from these organisations have been prepared to use violence in pursuit of their objectives. The question, then, is under what physical and operational conditions they might consider it opportune to resort to force. For the moment, in the current European context, there is no clear answer.

4.2.2 Factors contributing to the further growth of the radical dawa

As this report has already noted, the radical dawa movement in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe is currently undergoing a growth coupled to the professionalisation of its organisation and strategic and tactical thinking. And this growth is already causing at least partial dysfunction of the democratic legal order. Any assessment of the longer-term risks in that respect must therefore seriously consider the extent to which the movement's growth is likely to be sustained. Continuing growth requires that a number of criteria be met, which in turn are dependent upon the following factors:

a. *Whether or not the radical dawa continues to professionalise*
   As just reiterated, the radical dawa is currently professionalising. The question is whether that process will continue and whether it will lead to lasting results. Although highly dynamic and ambitious now, and drawing upon a strong ideology, it is quite conceivable that the movement could fall prey to internal conflicts resulting from, say, ideological, ethnic or personal differences of opinion. There sometimes seems to be rather less unity within the ranks of the radical dawa than the movement would like to present to the outside world. What is most important in this respect is who emerge as its future leaders, what status they enjoy amongst the Muslim communities and how much charisma and power to unite they possess.

b. *The level of resilience to the radical dawa within the Muslim communities*
   There is clear resilience within the Muslim communities to the rigid and intolerant nature of currents like Salafism, but many moderate Muslims have difficulty expressing it. Indeed, sometimes they are downright scared to. Yet it is not

conceivable that the resilience will grow. From young people, for example, who are deterred by the emphasis upon a puritanical way of life which they feel requires too many sacrifices on their part and is more likely to worsen than improve their position in society. The personal lifestyles of some radical dawa preachers, which are not entirely consistent with the message they are delivering, could also fuel opposition. Precisely because they are supposed to set an example, these preachers could just as easily fall from their pedestals. Moreover, a critical public debate grounded in facts, rather than either overstating or understating the problem of the radical dawa, might encourage more moderate Muslims to express their own criticisms freely and without fear. That would also heighten resilience.

c. *The extent to which radical dawa doctrine is internalised and 'lived' by adherents*
Within many religious movements, there is often a discrepancy between doctrinal theory and 'real-life' practice: between the message actually being preached by the clerical elite and the way the mass of their followers interpret it. It is therefore conceivable that, over the years, the dawa movement will develop in such a way that the doctrinal internalisation by a large group of its adherents proves less than totally faithful to the core message. This could result in a gap emerging between the 'pure' radical doctrine and a far less extreme practical observance. That gap does not seem to be very wide at the moment, but that is probably because the radical dawa is currently in a phase of clear growth and it is in the first stages of their new-found devotion that converts tend to be most strict in their adherence.

d. *The availability of non-radical alternatives within the Muslim communities*
Chapter 1 described the development of several non-radical movements within the Muslim communities. Whilst these still only enjoy relatively modest support, they could in time come to represent serious competition for the radical dawa. The fact that the Netherlands is an open and plural society also means that they have all the freedom they need to present themselves and to recruit adherents.

e. *The extent to which Muslim and non-Muslim communities polarise*
The extent to which Muslim communities have access to non-radical alternatives to the radical dawa is in inverse proportion to the degree of polarisation between Muslims and non-Muslims in society. In a polarised society, each section of the population tends to close ranks against the others. The emphasis is placed upon internal solidarity and the conflict with the other groups. Too much internal diversity is regarded as counterproductive to the collective interest of the group one belongs to.

69

To prevent this, the right tone must be chosen in the debate about radical Islam and the approach adopted to it must be proportional to the risk it poses.

f. *The development of the radical dawa community*
The extent of the radical dawa's future growth is closely linked to the issue of how the currently expanding group of young ultra-orthodox Muslims approaches adulthood. Does their embrace of radical ideas represent a passing phase, or have they truly adopted the doctrine for life to pass down to the next generation. Will a fully-fledged radical dawa community start to appear? If it does, then the comparatively near future will see a growing generation of children being introduced to the doctrine by their parents from an early age. And with that comes the risk that those youngsters will be ill-prepared for participation in Dutch society, and perhaps even withheld from it. This could enhance the permanency of the radical dawa movement, since religious messages can have a particularly lasting and powerful impact when imparted at an early age.

4.2.3 Possible long-term risks

The radical dawa is already damaging the democratic legal order, but only to a limited extent. It is primarily those within the Muslim communities who do not share the movement's ideas and beliefs who are having to face its implacable message and activist attitude. And because of the intimidating effect that has, these people are not always able to fully exercise their basic rights. In the short term, then, the impact of the radical dawa will be felt most clearly within the Muslim communities. Whilst that disturbs the democratic order, it in no way entails any full-scale disruption. The question here, though, is whether and to what extent this still limited risk might grow in the long term and come to affect non-Muslims as well.

In determining the long-term risks to the democratic legal order, it is important to differentiate between the risks to that order as a political system – its vertical dimension – and to the horizontal dimension, the open society and the relationships between people within it:

a. *Possible long-term risks to the vertical dimension*
If the radical dawa continues to grow at a rapid rate, it is quite conceivable that its anti-democratic message will lead to the formation of an expanding community of Muslims who no longer accept the authority of the Dutch state. And that will inevitably lead to tensions when it comes to maintaining public order, enforcing

legislation, interaction with the government, the imposition of taxes and administration of the democratic process. This in turn poses a risk to the vertical dimension of the democratic legal order, in particular when it comes to relations between the government and a growing section of the Muslim population. If these processes cannot be held in check, it is also possible that sections of the non-Muslim population will begin to harbour an increasing mistrust of the authorities – an additional risk to the vertical dimension. Were both the radical dawa and this 'indigenous reaction' to assume substantial proportions, that dimension would come under considerable pressure.

It is inconceivable, however, that the radical dawa could under current circumstances evolve into a movement so powerful and widespread that it truly would endanger the vertical dimension of the democratic legal order. The institutions making up that order are widely supported in the Netherlands and display sufficient resilience and elasticity to successfully resist any attempt by the radical dawa to undermine them.

b. *Possible long-term risks to the horizontal dimension*

Continuing growth of the radical dawa without sufficient resilience from society at large could conceivably result in the movement's message eventually creating serious social tensions and polarisation. In particular, its tone and activities – and potential reaction to them from other sections of society – could lead to lasting ethnic and religious problems. And this will certainly happen if groups within either the radical dawa or the non-Muslim community try to stir up emotions in a deliberate attempt to sour relations. Both Muslims and non-Muslims would then be hindered in how they think, act and relate to each other. Crumbling social cohesion, declining collective solidarity, increasing resistance to integration and intensified group thinking on all sides could enhance the mutual mistrust between different sections of the population. In that kind of climate, discrimination, racism, Islamophobia and the formation of enclaves can flourish. They could even result in violent clashes between Muslims and non-Muslims. Quite possibly, then, there is a genuine threat to the horizontal dimension of the democratic legal order, in the sense that the open society closes up due to serious polarisation of groups within it.[37]

[37] When such polarisation exists, so-called 'trigger events' like international conflicts or terrorist attacks at home or abroad could easily spark off outbursts of ethnic or religious violence in society.

5   Strategies to counter Islamic neoradicalism

5.1   Government countermeasures and the democratic paradox

The radical dawa is not at present calling for the use of violence or advocating support for violent groups or individuals. As long as this line continues and the movement also refrains from explicit sedition, incitement to hatred or discrimination, its utterances will be protected by freedom of religion and expression. The question, then, is whether the government can act against it.

But in the light of the democratic paradox – whether it is permissible to use democratic institutions to destroy or undermine democracy – the answer must be affirmative. That paradox is insoluble if one adopts a minimalistic attitude to the democratic legal order by reducing it merely to the principle of majority governance. In fact, though, the democratic legal order is much more than that. It also embraces inalienable rights,[38] for example, as well as the rights of political minorities and the duty of government to exercise caution in interfering with people's personal lives. From this broader point of view, there is very clearly a threat if democratic means are used in attempts to destroy or undermine democracy. And it is certainly permissible to act against that threat, or at least to develop official policy to counter it. When certain anti-democratic goals are actively pursued, then, even if only democratic means are used in that quest, the government is entitled to intervene.

In this respect, a 2003 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights is relevant.[39] That established definitively that a government may take action against groups seeking to employ democratic means to subvert or undermine a democratic state. The Court stressed, however, that the threat must be acute in the sense that the organisation or group concerned possesses the means to effectuate it in the short term and that there exists insufficient public resistance to counter it effectively. The government's

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[38] Freedom of expression, freedom of association, and so on.

[39] A judgement made on 13 February 2003 by the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, confirming an earlier judgement of 13 July 2001 by the Third Section of Court. By a majority of just four to three, the judges ruled that the dissolution of the Refah (Welfare) Party by Turkey's Constitutional Court was not in breach of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In the Court's opinion, leading Refah members had publicly adopted positions which might represent a threat to the fundamental guarantees of democracy, of rights and of freedoms protected by the ECHR.

intervention must also remain within the bounds acceptable for a democratically constituted state. This judgement must therefore be placed within the context of the specific political and social situation of the country concerned; that determines when exactly the authorities are justified in banning a political group seeking to establish a regime based upon principles other than those of the democratic legal order.

In the Netherlands, traditional political and administrative considerations mean that judicial action against members of intolerantly isolationist and anti-democratic but non-violent movements remains a measure of last resort. That also applies to total bans on such organisations. Non-judicial countermeasures are often regarded as more effective as well as more democratic.

Government and – above all – judicial intervention are of course necessary if and as soon as radicals use undemocratic means such as terrorist violence. To a certain extent, however, some forms of radicalism are permissible within the boundaries of the democratic legal order. Isolationalism, for example, poses no threat to that order as such. In a democratic society, citizens retain the freedom – albeit within certain limits – to pursue their own lifestyle and to decide for themselves how they conduct their relationships with each other and with the government. But if their withdrawal from society starts to endanger basic rights and freedoms of others, then they have overstepped the mark and are damaging the democratic legal order.

In this light, certain forms of *intolerant* isolationism do represent a particular threat: *exclusivism* in respect of one's own group and *parallelism*. Exclusivism is expressed through discrimination, incitement and sowing hatred. Parallelism does not recognise the authority of government, seeks to impose religious laws before secular ones and tries to create enclaves in which that system rather than government authority prevails.

Under certain conditions, judicial intervention against these forms of isolationism is possible and the government can impose proscriptions. When, for instance, exclusivist isolationism leads to actual discrimination, incitement and expressions of hatred. Or when parallelism actually results in the imposition of an alternative system of justice. The problem, though, is that the exclusivism and parallelism of the radical dawa are being spread stealthily and secretly. The movement's preachers take care not to be associated openly with such tendencies. Instead, they disseminate an implicit message of exclusivism and parallelism couched in their preaching with regard to the undesirability and impossibility of integration, Western democracy's irreconcilability with Islam, God's wrath with unbelievers and so on. And preaching along those lines is

still permissible in accordance with constitutional rights. Other ways of countering the spread of this message must therefore be found.

5.2   Between prevention and repression: strategies to counter radicalisation

In recent years, both national government and local authorities have tried to develop effective non-judicial policy against those forms of Islamic radicalism which are not illegal because they are non-violent but certainly pose security risks – both short and long-term – due to their intolerant isolationism and anti-democratic orientation. In the near future, there is a danger that the basic rights of those close to the movement and of other Muslims who hold different views will be compromised, that differences between sections of the population will be emphasised and that the groundwork will be laid for some individuals to further radicalise in a violent direction. The long-term risk is that an intolerantly isolationist and anti-democratic mass movement will emerge, which could cause serious ethnic and religious tensions within Dutch society.

Since 2004, a two-pronged approach has been adopted in both national and local policy: prevention on the one hand and non-judicial repression on the other. The purpose of the preventive policy is to enhance the ability to resist radicalisation. These efforts are aimed at particular Muslim communities, at society as a whole and at various branches of national and local government. Non-judicial repression, meanwhile, uses administrative means to actively hinder the further growth of radical dawa organisations in the Netherlands. These include fiscal, immigration and funding-related measures.

There is broad agreement at all levels that such administrative repression will only be effective if it used sparingly and targeted precisely. Not only does it often prove unworkable in practice or come up against constitutional objections related to the misappropriation of powers, but its overly generalised use – targeting a mosque's entire congregation, for example, rather than just the management board – can easily provoke feelings of injustice and so actually encourage radicalisation. It is becoming increasingly clear that there is a lot to be gained from honing the preventive aspects of policy as well as further developing focused administrative repression.

75

5.3 Countering both Islamic radicalism itself and inaccurate perceptions of it

5.3.1 Relativist and absolutist perceptions

To a certain extent, the current security problem posed by Islamic radicalism is as much a product of inaccurate perceptions of the phenomenon as it is of the radicalism itself. Both overoptimistic and overpessimistic assessments of the threat it poses often stand in the way of Muslim communities, society as a whole and the government developing an effective ability to resist it. Until recently optimistic, relativist perceptions prevailed, doing much to ensure that radicalisation was just a brief passing phase in the process of Dutch Muslim emancipation which would never give rise to any serious threat to our democratic legal order. That tendency made it difficult to specifically describe the potential threat entailed by radicalisation.

Things have now moved a long way towards the other extreme, with pessimistic, absolutist views coming to the fore. These have tended to overestimate the true threat from Islamic radicalism in recent years. Such perceptions are not only a product of the propaganda strategies and psychological warfare tactics adopted by some radical Muslim organisations, but are also shaped by certain political and social forces within the ' 'indigenous' populations of the Western world. They paint a situation so clear-cut that it brings with it a real risk of deepening the divisions between different sections of the population, particularly between Muslims and non-Muslims. And they engender mistrust of the authorities in both camps: in the eyes of the 'indigenous' populations, the government is not doing enough to suppress Islamic radicals; from the perspective of ethnic-minority Muslims, it is not doing enough to counter anti-Islamic 'white' voices.

Both Islamic radicals and their 'indigenous' opposite numbers are spreading absolute hostility and doom scenarios amongst their respective communities. This despite the fact that genuine radicalisation, whilst certainly serious and a cause for concern, has affected only a small proportion of the Muslim population. It is therefore essential that Islamic radicalism be put into its proper perspective. In order to develop effective policy against polarisation and radicalisation, it seems that both the doom scenarios and excessive relativism must be dispelled and countered.

5.3.2   Preconditions for the development of effective strategies

Outlined below are a number of perspectives which could help guide action to counter Islamic neoradicalism. These are not specific measures, but rather preconditions for the development of effective strategies. They take into account both the nature of the phenomenon itself and the incorrect or incomplete perceptions about it.[40]

a. *Consider proportionality and subsidiarity when developing strategies*
   Islamic radicalism is attracting a lot of attention at the moment. But it remains important always to consider the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity when addressing the issue. The fundamental values of the democratic system must never take second place to the effectiveness of action.

b. *Remember that the Muslim community is very diverse*
   The Muslim community in the Netherlands is far from homogeneous, either ethnically, linguistically, religiously or ideologically. Policy should therefore take into account the following factors, amongst others:
- View Muslims first and foremost as individuals and as full members in society in their own right, not necessarily just as members of a religious community.
- Show that there are other active movements within the Muslim communities, not only the ultra-orthodox ones. Be aware of the wealth of diversity within Islam. There is no one single Muslim view, and the radical ultra-orthodox position is very much a minority one. Moreover, it is one which has no ideological affinity with the backgrounds from which most of the Muslims in the Netherlands come.
- Be aware that it is estimated that between a third and a half of the Muslims in the Netherlands do not base their conduct on a religious agenda; they are either moderate in their religious observance or non-practising.

c. *Avoid polarisation when developing government policy*
   Certain forces in society, including Islamic radicals and their 'indigenous' opposite numbers, are only too happy to exploit statements which portray a sharper view of reality than the true situation. When developing policy, then, the following should be borne in mind:

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[40] This approach is in line with national government policy on radicalisation. In particular, see Actieplan polarisatie en radicalisering 2007-2011 ('Polarisation and radicalisation: plan of action, 2007-2011'), Netherlands Ministry of the Interior, 2007. See also From dawa to jihad, pp. 48 et seq.

- Do not tar all radicals with the same brush. When devising strategies, draw a distinction between the 'hard core' and the 'fellow travellers'.
- Avoid the use of doom scenarios in policy communications related to the growth and capabilities of Islamic radicalism. Both the radicals themselves and other political and social forces systematically overstate radicalism's abilities and growth in order to attract support.
- Do not confirm the movement's own claims that it is under attack, which is one of its driving forces and is used to mobilise adherents. Employ directly repressive administrative measures only very sparingly, and only specifically against the 'hard core' of the group in question. Remember that radicals could cite such opposition as an argument to become even more extreme and to motivate existing or potential supporters.
- Forces which want to widen the divisions between different sections of the population and increase mistrust of the government put pressure on society. Do not give into that pressure by taking excessive action. Rather, try to employ a pragmatic policy which does not always attract attention.
- As far as possible, try to puncture polarising sloganeering and single-issue approaches. (Inflammatory statements like: 'All our problems are down to the suppression of Islam' or 'If the Muslim tidal wave is not stemmed now, in twenty years time Europe will governed by Sharia law.')

d. *Try to avoid accommodating radical dawa groups*
   In their contacts with local and national governments, radical dawa movements often present themselves as speaking for the Muslim community as a whole. And, for fear of alienating that community, the government bodies concerned are therefore sometimes quite accommodating towards them. Instead, however, they should consider adopting the following approach:
- As a government, remember that the vast majority of Muslims – far from being radicals – are moderate Muslims. And that those people are effectively being hindered in their own personal freedom if radical dawa clerics are accepted as legitimate representatives or leaders of the entire Muslim community.
- As a government, be extremely reticent in consulting radical dawa clerics on social or religious matters.
- Try to prevent any one individual or group claiming the sole right to interact with government on behalf of a community – through consultative bodies, for example. Instead, seek as much diversity of representation as possible. Never accept that any group can exercise a veto over representatives from other currents, be they more

liberal or more orthodox, in contacts with the government. And remember that some religious representatives may have a hidden agenda.

- As a government, be extremely reticent in providing financial or other support for projects which are based upon, or might even encourage, gender segregation and other discriminatory principles.
- As a government, do not support initiatives or projects likely to encourage the propagation of a particular ideological line amongst a wider group. Likewise, withhold support when it is clear that a project's organisers intend to exclude other groups.

e. *Enter into dialogue with as many Muslim groups as possible*
A dialogue with the hard core of Islamic radicals is unlikely to produce constructive or lasting results. But it is important to interact with other players in the Muslim community. When doing so, bear in mind the following:

- Do not involve only one Islamic tendency, either liberal or orthodox, in the public debate about activities related to standards and values in society. For example, do include orthodox Muslims in initiatives to counter crime and public nuisance by problem youngsters with Muslim backgrounds.
- Involve orthodox as well as liberal Muslims in the public debate about democracy in an open and plural society.
- Be aware of the front politics regularly used by radical dawa movements. Do not support projects which can be traced back to radical dawa mosques and community centres.

f. *Try to reinforce trust in the democratic legal order*
The rise of Islamic neoradicalism has so sharpened the public debate on a number of issues that a section of the Dutch population seems to believe that the democratic legal order itself will be unable to stand up to the phenomenon. To counter this thinking, consider the following.

- Support for initiatives within Muslim communities which are designed to offer a moderate counterpoint to radicalism. For example, developing the community's own ability to purge itself of radical influence, supporting deradicalisation projects or the aiding the advance of a moderate counterideology.
- Attempt to renew public confidence in the resilience of the democratic system and the open society by encouraging positive visions of the future.

79

Summary

This report describes a movement in transition: Dutch and European Islamic radicalism. This movement first reached the Netherlands in the mid-1980s, originally established by missionary groups seeking to spread an ultra-orthodox religious ideology. From the outset, Salafism – one of the most radical of all currents within Islam – played a prominent role within the Dutch Islamic radical movement. Elsewhere in Europe, however, other organisations took the lead. They included the Muslim Brotherhood, Tablighi Jamaat and Hizb ut-Tahrir. All are described as ultra-orthodox because they are very rigid in their theological interpretations, are absolutely convinced of their own righteousness and abhor all forms of religious modernity. They also are considered radical, because they actively want to force society to reform along strict Islamic lines and they reject the Western democratic legal order.

The AIVD has identified a number of phases in the development of Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands and Europe. During each of these, the movement has manifested itself differently, with a new form of radicalism emerging. The third of these phases has recently begun, although this does not mean that the latest type of radicalism has supplanted the other two types from earlier phases; in fact, all three continue to exist in parallel.

In the first phase, which began in the mid-1980s and persists to this day, a small number of ultra-orthodox mosques and preachers with their origins in the Middle East receive direct ideological, logistical and financial support from certain Islamic countries which view themselves as guiding nations, on a spiritual level, for Muslims, the so-called Islamic 'guide nations'. Their message is that of the 'radical dawa'. 'Dawa' literally means 'call to Islam'; the 'radical' designation refers to evangelical activities by missionary groups with an extreme and ultra-orthodox message. For the most part, their targets for conversion are fellow Muslims. As well as preachers of radical dawa, this phase also saw a number of jihadi veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina basing themselves in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Western-Europe. Their activities in here served violent ends and they displayed, at the very least, strong ideological associations with the Al-Qaeda network. During this phase, the radical dawa and jihadism maintained close relationships and sometimes even institutional links. Together, these two currents make up Islamic radicalism. For a number of reasons, their growth has been limited during this phase.

The second phase began after the attacks of 11 September 2001 and was accelerated by a number of other relevant events: the 2003 Madrid bombings, the 2004 murder of film maker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam and the 2005 London attacks. Due in part to the dismantling of international terrorist networks after 2001, the guiding role played by certain Islamic states gradually declined during this phase. Instead, there was a process of autonomisation, with the focus increasingly shifting to Western 'host nations'. Islamic radicals now sought to defend their faith in the West against those perceived as its 'enemies' here. Feelings of resentment became a strong motivating factor. This phase is also characterised by fragmentation, amateurism and the rapid growth of so-called 'cut-and-paste' ideology, involving selective citation from Islamic sources. In the Netherlands, it was in this period that the so-called Hofstad Group of terrorists was active.

The third phase, which began in about mid-2005, is a direct reaction to the second phase and is closely associated with the activities of a new generation of radical dawa preachers. Drawn from the second generation of Muslims in the West, they came to realise that Islam's expansion and reputation were being damaged by the poor organisation of its radical current in Europe, by its unclear ideological message and by its flirtations with violence. These new preachers emphatically oppose the use of violent means in the West, as a result of which they have broken with the jihadists. Tactically, they go in search of well-defined target audiences to reach with specific, tailor-made messages.

With the onset of a third phase, the radical dawa in the Netherlands and several other countries in our region has become an integral part of Western society. Its preachers, who grew up in Europe, represent the vanguard of a new movement. Precisely because of their background, they know exactly what issues concern the second generation of Muslims in the West and understand the region's wider social and political processes.

The AIVD defines this process of autonomisation, professionalisation and politicisation as the rise of Islamic neoradicalism. The new radicals behave differently from their predecessors, and they also employ different tactics in pursuit of their objectives. Rather that operating in social isolation and seeking confrontation, for example, they are more focused upon achieving steady but permanent growth for radical Islam in Europe.

Although the activists involved in this process are limited in number, their movement is currently expanding in the Netherlands and in several other countries in our region.

Since 2005, charismatic Salafi youth preachers have been travelling up and down the country to deliver their message. They do this mainly at mosques catering to the Dutch Moroccan community and at Islamic youth centres. In the past two years, the numbers of such centres and of youth preachers, as well of lectures given and locations visited, have at least doubled. Attendances at the meetings are rising, too. It is expected that this trend will continue.

Muslim radicalism in the Netherlands is most successful in reaching young Dutch citizens of Moroccan origin and young members of other immigrant communities with their origins in the Middle East and Somalia, as well as white converts. And not only are those who feel marginalised being reached, but also the well-educated. For the time being, however, it is not clear whether this group of new believers has truly and irrevocably chosen the path of radicalisation or whether interest in the movement is more of a 'fad'. But what is certain is that the instigators of the process are going about their work deliberately, have built up a professional cadre and can be very persuasive. All of which seems to imply that the movement has a certain lasting power.

Viewed from the perspective of its potential threat to the democratic legal order, Islamic neoradicalism employs two general tactics. The first involves efforts to create 'Islamised' enclaves within society; physical areas in which Sharia law prevails over Dutch and European legislation. The purpose of these enclaves is to become bastions serving as bridgeheads for the expansion of power and social influence. The AIVD defines this tactic as 'intolerant isolationism': intolerant because it provides those who do not conform to the prevailing ideology with no opportunity to participate in the life of the enclave. The activities of Islamic neoradicals can put the wider Muslim 'collective' under increasing duress, with the result that individuals within that community may no longer be able to exercise their basic rights. Such a process is already under way in the Netherlands. And it can have serious repercussions for those Muslims whose identity, opinions or activities deviate from the ultra-orthodox ideal: women, homosexuals, so-called apostates, liberals and so on.

Islamic neoradicalism's second tactic is the disruption and obstruction of the democratic legal order as a political system and a form of social organisation. The Islamic neoradicals call democracy an unjust system because it places the authority of man above that of God. Their chosen system is one in which all political activities are subordinated to the supremacy of God and, by extension, of Islamic law. They thus reject the openness and pluriformity which characterise democracies. And they sometimes call for anti-democratic behaviour. In so doing, they do not shy away from

83

adopting provocative tactics, deliberately attempting to polarise or fostering hostility towards the supposedly anti-Islamic outside world. In the long term, this approach could undermine our society's cohesion and mutual solidarity.

Whereas the other, earlier forms of Islamic radicalism enjoyed only limited success – in part because of their tendency to sympathise openly with the violent jihad – Islamic neoradicalism is different. Precisely because it rejects violence and presents a message of a specific nature, it is reaching a much bigger audience and could even evolve into a mass movement. Whether that actually happens will depend very much upon how resilient the democratic legal order proves to be in facing up to this challenge. And that ability to resist is enhanced once one realises that – despite their convincing modus operandi and their claim to speak for the entire Muslim community – the current generation of radicals in fact represents a minority current within European Islam. The vast majority of Muslims in the Netherlands and the rest of Western Europe want to participate unconditionally in an open, plural society and are actually harmed and intimidated by the activities of the Islamic neoradical fringe. In particular, that intimidation deters many moderate Muslims from daring to oppose radical opinions and conduct. And this in turn prevents them from defusing its appeal to their younger generation. In response to this threat, only an approach which both confronts and engages has any chance of success. But that is still not being done effectively, largely because the debate in the Netherlands about how to tackle Islamic radicalism is still characterised by high levels of both relativism and absolutism.

The relativistic view is that the problem of radicalisation represents merely a passing phase in the process of emancipation through which Dutch Muslims are passing. From an absolutist perspective, on the other hand, that process is a sure sign that the total Islamisation of the Netherlands will be completed within a few decades. But neither vision reflects the true picture. It would be far more preferable if a more realistic approach would be adopted and so tackle the real problem in a focused way. And that entails both direct confrontation with the small yet influential group of instigators behind Islamic neoradicalism and the unconditional social inclusion of the majority of moderate Muslims.

Appendix

Historical sketch of modern Salafism

Modern Salafism[41] has its origins in central Saudi-Arabian Arabia[42] and can be regarded as the international expression of Wahhabism, a religious movement with its roots in Hanbali.[43] Wahhabism – at present highly similar to apolitical Salafism – is named after the 18th-century cleric Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab (1703-1792), better known simply as Ibn Wahhab.[44] He was a travelling preacher who objected to what he regarded as the lax observance of Islam in his home region, the present day An-Najd. In response, he decided to return to the original text of the Koran. This resulted in the establishment of a missionary movement calling for literal interpretation of the scripture and unconditional compliance with very conservative moral values under which individual conduct is strictly described and regulated. In 1745 Ibn Wahhab entered into an alliance with Muhammad Ibn Saud, ruler of the Diriyah region, whose subsequent campaign of conquest he declared to be a 'holy war'.[45] Together, Ibn Saud's horsemen and Ibn Wahhab's 'brothers' ('ikhwan') fought their way across the Arabian peninsula. Eventually, in 1925, their descendants would conquer the entire Hejaz: the region containing Mecca, Medina and Jeddah, and therewith today's Saudi-Arabian Arabia.

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[41] Modern Salafism should not be confused with the reformist movement which originated in 19th-century Egypt as a reaction to colonialism. This school of thought, the founders of which also called themselves Salafis, ascribed great importance to human reasoning, so any comparison with modern Salafism is utterly misplaced.

[42] For the early history of Wahhabism and Salafism, and their political and institutional links with Saudi-Arabian Arabia, see, for example: Hamid Algar, Wahhabism: A critical essay, pp. 1-70, New York, 2002; Dore Gold. Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi-Arabian Arabia supports the New Global Terrorism, pp. 17-89, Washington, 2002; Falah A. Jabar, Tribes and Power: Nationalism and ethnicity in the Middle East, pp. 219-227, London 2003; As'ad Abukhalil, The Battle for Saudi-Arabian Arabia: Royalty, fundamentalism and global terror, pp. 50-76, New York, 2004; Gilles Kepel, Fitna: Oorlog in het hart van de islam ('Fitna: war in the heart of Islam'), pp. 212-262, Harvard, 2005; and Madawi Al-Rasheed, Contesting the Saudi-Arabian State: Islamic voices from a new generation,, pp. 22-58, Cambridge, 2007.

[43] One of the four schools of legal thought in Sunni Islam.

[44] Al-Rasheed, p. 22.

[45] Algar, p. 20.

The Kingdom of Saudi-Arabian Arabia itself was proclaimed in 1932, with Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud – under whose leadership the final conquest of the peninsula had been completed – ascending the throne. Wahhabism became the official state doctrine. Muhammad Ibn Saud's descendants, the House of Saud, remain the nation's sole political force to this day, whilst it is the kinsmen of Ibn Wahhab – the al-Sheikhs – who continue to dominate the religious establishment.[46] In other words, the alliance forged in 1745 still forms the backbone of modern Saudi-Arabian Arabia.

Since the House of Saud took power, it has derived much of its legitimacy as political master of the country from the support it receives from the Wahhabi establishment. In return, Wahhabism is given virtually unlimited power in religious matters. Almost all political decisions of any importance are co-ordinated with the clergy. But, however politically useful it may be, this alliance can also lead to tensions: the House of Saud certainly includes figures who do not necessarily share the same religious views as the official clergy. Direct confrontation is avoided, though, because each side needs the other to justify and maintain its existence. Saudi-Arabian Arabia is effectively governed by a complex form of politico-religious consensus.

Ever since the mid-1950s, when Arab nationalism and socialism inspired by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser began to take hold and the region seemed to be secularising, the Saudi-Arabian religious establishment has feared what it sees as an erosion of Islamic values. To counter this process, it and the country's political authorities have together sought to encourage the global propagation of Wahhabi doctrine[47] – often under the ideological direction of exiled Egyptian members of the Muslim Brotherhood[48] – in the form of a radical international dawa. In pursuit of this quest, they have set up a range of non-governmental organisations: the Muslim World League (MWL), the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), the Islamic International Relief Organisation (IIRO) and so on.

[46] Al-Rasheed, p. 27.

[47] See also the 2002 AIVD report, Saudi-Arabian influences in the Netherlands – links between the Salafist mission, radicalisation processes and Islamic terrorism, for a description of this dawa in practice.

[48] Under Nasser, Egypt clamped down hard on the Muslim Brotherhood and many of its members decamped to Saudi-Arabian Arabia (see also Kepel, p. 230). One prominent figure amongst these exiles was Mohammed Qutb, brother of the founder of the Takfiri doctrine, Sayyid Qutb.

As 'guardian' of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, a rich oil-producing nation, the generally accepted home base of 'pure' Islam and out of fear of supposed Western decadence, the Saudi-Arabian government has since tried to play a leading role in the Islamic world. At first, these efforts met with little success. Since the defeats in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, however, and with the subsequent ideological decline of Arab secularism, the Saudi-Arabian doctrine has gradually been gaining in influence – at first within the Arab world, but later beyond it as well. And this has led to an upsurge in Muslim fundamentalism.[49] The substantial rise in the price of oil from 1973 onwards enabled Saudi-Arabian Arabia to gain influence by building mosques and religious education centres, paying imams, publishing Islamic literature, providing free places at its religious universities and bankrolling missionary activities.[50]

1979: the radical dawah intensifies

This process received a major boost in 1979, when the Shah of Iran was overthrown and Ayatollah Khomeini seized power. The fact that Iran was now presenting itself as the new model Islamic state, with Khomeini using fiercely anti-monarchist rhetoric, caused great concern in Saudi-Arabian Arabia. Nine months later, several hundred Saudi-Arabian extremists seized the Grand Mosque in Mecca to protest against what they alleged was the decadence of the kingdom's rulers and the consequent erosion of the faith. Of particular concern was the fact that these extremists were actually part of the religious establishment and were, in effect, attempting to breathe new life into the reforms and the struggle against idolatry begun two centuries earlier by Ibn Wahhab. The 'idolatry' in this case being the House of Saud's supposed decadence, lust for consumption and flirtation with the West. It was only with some difficulty that the authorities were able to put down the protest. But the warning it sent from the religious section of the population did not go unnoticed by the country's rulers. Internally, religious rules and regulations were tightened up considerably; externally, the radical dawa was intensified and extended beyond the Islamic world. As such, it was essentially being used as a domestic defence mechanism. By spreading the Wahhabi message in the West, its secular and materialistic values might possibly be undermined from within and so lose their impetus within the Islamic world. Then came the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from late 1979. This also encouraged Saudi-Arabian Arabia to intensify its radical dawa, out of fear of Communism's atheistic ideology.

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[49] Michel Field. In de Arabische wereld ('In the Arab world') pp. 87-89, Utrecht, 1997.
[50] For the global dimension of the Saudi-Arabian dawa, see Abukhalil, pp. 138-146, and Dore, pp. 125-157.

The convergence on Afghanistan of 'mujahideen' ('holy warriors') from throughout the Islamic world heralded the rise of jihadist Salafism. This current urges a highly offensive, rather than merely defensive, form of jihad with a view to converting the whole world to Islam through violence.[51] Virtually all of today's international Islamic terrorist organisations, including Al-Qaeda, are part of this movement.

1991: the rise of political Salafism

Saudi-Arabian Arabia played an important role in driving the invading Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in 1991, with the bulk of coalition forces stationed there. When, at the end of 1990, the Saudi-Arabian-Arabian Grand Mufti Abd Al-Aziz Ibn Baz declared on behalf of the pro-government Council of Senior Scholars ('ulama') that the deployment of US forces on Saudi-Arabian territory was legal under Islamic law, the statement divided the country's clergy. One faction, led by Salman Al-Awda and Safar Al-Hawali,[52] resisted Ibn Baz' ruling. Under no circumstances whatsoever, they asserted, must coalition – that is, infidel – troops be stationed in Saudi-Arabian Arabia. That would be a frontal assault on the virtue of Islam. It was this opposition to the religious establishment which marked the beginning of political Salafism: a doctrine inspired by Wahhabism but with a political position on current events. A clampdown by the Saudi-Arabian authorities on Al-Awda, Al-Hawali and their supporters stifled the conflict, but could not extinguish it. In response to the clear anti-government message coming from one section of the clergy, the authorities subsequently invested the sympathetic religious establishment with even greater power and influence.

This process is still under way. To consolidate its domestic power base and to eliminate any feelings of dissatisfaction amongst the strongly religious section of the population, the political authorities ensure that the clergy possesses power,[53] influence, money and other resources. However, Saudi-Arabian Arabia tolerates neither the preaching of violence nor active support for terrorist groups in the name of the radical dawa. In the battle against jihadist terrorism, the nation is a full and valued partner of the international community.

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[51] Jihadist Salafism also opposes the House of Saud.
[52] For more information about Salman Al-Awda, Safar Al-Hawali and their clash with the Saudi-Arabian religious system, see, for example, Mamoun Fandy, Saudi-Arabian Arabia and the politics of dissent, pp. 61-115, New York, 1999.
[53] Field, pp. 373-384.