

ISLAMOPHOBIA

AND ITS ORIGINS

Henk Dekker and Jolanda van der Noll

Paper,

prepared for presentation at the fourth ECPR Conference,

Pisa, 6-8 September 2007

Leiden University,

Political Science Department

Wassenaarseweg 52, 2333 AK Leiden, the Netherlands

Email: dekkerh@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract

How can we explain Islamophobia? This is the intriguing question that is answered in this paper. We conducted a survey among 581 non-Muslim Dutch youth aged 14-16 year, including seven questions to measure the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims and a variety of questions that are operationalizations of the various independent variables. These independent variables represent the main theories in this field of study: the Direct Contact hypothesis, Political Socialization theory, Realistic Group Conflict theory (which is basically a rational choice theory), and Social Identity theory. Our analyses show that direct contact (its evaluation), the socialization by relevant others (their perceived attitude), and the perception of symbolic threat have most effect on the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. Positive beliefs about the Islam and Muslims and the national attitude also have an effect on this attitude. Direct contact and socialization not only have a direct effect on the attitude but - through positive beliefs, the perception of symbolic threat, and national attitude - also an indirect effect. Together with gender and religiosity, these variables explain 71.5 percent of the variance in the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

Introduction

How can we explain Islamophobia? That is the intriguing question that we will try to answer in this paper.

Public opinion polls gave rise to this research. Polls in various countries discovered that large proportions of the population have negative opinions of the Islam and Muslims. For example, in the Pew Research Centre 2005 poll, more than two out of ten respondents in the USA declared to have an unfavourable opinion of Muslims (22%). In France, one third had such a negative opinion (34%). In Germany almost half of the respondents (47%) and in the Netherlands even a majority of the respondents had an unfavourable opinion of Muslims.

Scientifically we were triggered to do this study since we found out that a generally accepted instrument to measure Islamophobia did not exist and we could not find a model or theory to explain Islamophobia in the existing literature.

Another reason for this research project is that many political leaders, parties, institutions and also many citizens believe that the relationships between non-Muslims and Muslims form one of the main political challenges for Western European states now and in the future. A positive or negative development of these relationships will have a great positive or negative impact on the social and political cohesion of these societies. Growing Islamophobia may result in increasing discrimination, marginalization and social isolation of Muslims. More hindrances that obstruct the social development of Muslim youth may result in stronger feelings of social exclusion and helplessness among these youth, which in turn may increase the chance of further radicalization of some of these young Muslims (EUMC 2006 and 2006a).

In this paper, we present a definition and operationalization of Islamophobia, a theoretical explanatory model, the findings from a new survey, and our conclusions about the origins of Islamophobia.

Islamophobia

In the existing literature, Islamophobia, literally a fear of the Islam, is defined in terms of behaviour and as an attitude.

Islamophobia as negative behaviour towards Muslims and the Islam includes 'hostility', 'violence', 'enmity', 'rejection', 'exclusion', and 'discrimination'. The Runnymede Trust (1997) conceptualises Islamophobia as an unfounded hostility towards the Islam. Heitmeyer and Zick (2004) conceptualise Islamophobia as a form of group-orientated enmity and a general attitude of rejection of Muslims and all religious symbols and rituals that stem from the Islam. The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia registers discrimination and violence towards Muslims and negative reports about Muslims in the mass media. The Centre observed an increase in violence against Muslims and negative mass media reports about Muslims after '9/11' (EUMC 2003). Muslims are more than other groups confronted with exclusion, discrimination, and violence (EUMC 2004). Many Muslims suffer from discrimination in education, on the labour market and at the housing market. Their educational level is below average, their unemployment rate above average, they are over-represented in labour sectors with low wages and disproportionately represented in areas with bad housing. Muslims also face verbal threats and physical aggression (EUMC 2006).

Islamophobia as an attitude is, to our knowledge, not yet extensively investigated. We have found no validated instrument to measure the attitude of Islamophobia. What we have found are public opinion polls usually asking not more than one or a few questions about the respondents' opinions. For example, the Pew Research Centre asks its respondents the following question: 'Please tell me if you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable, or very unfavourable opinion of Muslims?'. Although the answers to this question are very informative (they were in fact an eye-opener in 2005) they do not much say about what the opinions entail and what the affections towards Muslims are nor does the data set aim or offer the opportunity to study the origins of the opinions.

It is important to make a clear distinction between behaviour and an attitude. Behaviour is observable for those who are confronted with it, while an attitude cannot be directly observed. Behaviour may be the effect of an attitude. An attitude is than a predictor of behaviour.

We consider Islamophobia as an attitude. The major characteristic of an attitude is the affective nature. An attitude is 'the amount of affect for or against some object' (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975: 11) and 'is simply a person's general feeling of favourableness or unfavourableness' (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980: 54). We choose, following Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the one-dimensional interpretation of the attitude concept instead of the multidimensional interpretation, in which the concept also comprehends knowledge and behaviour (e.g. Bohner, 2001). In this one-dimensional approach, knowledge and behaviour are not dimensions of an attitude, but rather a variable that may explain variance in an attitude respectively an effect of an attitude. Specific for Islamophobia is that the individual has a negative attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

Predictors

The attitude explanatory model in this research has been based on the view that the subjective factors explaining attitudes relate to three processes (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980: 63, Hewstone 1986, and Mackie and Hamilton 1993). Basically, people directly and

indirectly develop attitudes towards the Islam and Muslims through their own affective and cognitive experiences with the Islam and Muslims (direct contact), through accepting affective and informative messages from external sources (socialization), and through their own thinking (self-generation through inference processes). All three processes assume that attitudes are not inherited but rather acquired and developed after birth in interaction with the environment.

The first process of attitude development is processing one's own experiences through direct contact with the attitude object. Direct contacts are expected to influence attitudes both directly and - through their effects on cognitions and emotions - indirectly. Personal experiences - 'I have seen it with my own eyes' - have generally a strong impact on people's orientations and are not easily forgotten. The Direct Contact hypothesis predicts that direct contact with the attitude object - here: the Islam and Muslims - results in a (more) positive attitude (Allport 1954, McLaren 2003). However, the effects of direct contact with ethnic minorities and foreign peoples as measured in various empirical studies, were not by definition positive (Hewstone & Brown 1986, Linssen 1995, Linssen et al. 1996). The complexity of the effects is assumed to result from selectivity and misunderstandings in observations, reception, and retention. What one observes and experiences is filtered by cognitions and affections acquired earlier. Selective observation will probably confirm and strengthen these earlier acquired orientations rather than weaken them. Direct contact experiences which conflict with pre-existing cognitions and affections will have less influence than experiences that match with the pre-existing orientations. Factors that influence the effects of direct contact on attitudes relate to the frequency and the character of the direct contact. The more contacts the more positive the attitude is expected to be. Important characteristics are, among others, compulsory versus voluntarily contact and contact with someone of equal status versus contact with someone with an inferior or superior status. Voluntary contact and contact with equals are supposed to have more effect on attitudes. The evaluation of the contact (positive or negative) is important as well. Having had frequent negatively evaluated direct contact with the Islam and Muslims may be an important origin of Islamophobia. If someone has had no direct contact experiences he/she will not have been challenged to reflect on the original attitude and subsequently will not have been 'forced' to change this attitude. We hypothesize that a negative attitude towards the Islam and Muslims is partly the result of frequent negatively experienced direct contact or the absence of direct contact with the Islam and Muslims. The key independent variables are the *frequency of direct contact* with the Islam and Muslims and the positive or negative *evaluation* of that contact.

The second process of attitude development is processing information from others. Socialization theory predicts that an attitude is the result of affective and informative messages from relevant others (Dekker 1996, Sears 2003, Gimpel et al. 2003, Oskamp & Schultz 2005). Various 'relevant others' are identified in the existing literature. The first socialization agent is the family, followed by the church, the school, the peer groups, the mass media, the employer and fellow-employees, and the political, economic and cultural elites. Theoretically, the most influential messengers of information and emotions are the persons who first exert influence on the subject with respect to the issue under investigation (parents), who exert influence for the longest period of time (parents, best friend, partner), whose credibility the subject believes to be the highest (parents, teachers, television news), who have the most power over the subject (parents, teachers, employers, partner), and who have the most resources and skills to influence and manipulate perceptions and emotions (elites in cooperation with public relations experts, mass media). It is important to recognize that we can only speak of 'influence' when there is a message, when this message reaches the individual being socialized via some

form of communication, and when the person being socialized is receptive to it. The effect of a given communication is related to the content of the message, the channel of communication, and the extent to which the receiver pays attention to, comprehends, yields to, retains, and processes the information. We have not found any study, which explores the Islam-Muslims socialization of non-Muslims. There are a few studies, which focus on the socialization about ethnic minorities and immigrants in general. When TV programs report about multicultural city areas most attention is directed to negative themes such as criminality and ethnic minorities are often portrayed in negative situations (Vergeer and Scheepers 1999). We *hypothesize* that Islamophobia is partly the result of frequently received negative messages about the Islam and Muslims from the grandparents, parents, favourite teacher, one's best friend, and the mass media. The key independent variables are then the *frequency* of talking about the Islam and Muslims with the grandparents, parents, favourite teacher, and one's best friend and the frequency of mass media use together with the *perceived attitudes* of these possible socializers.

The third process of attitude formation is inference. In this process, the attitude is deduced from previously acquired or developed orientations and previously performed behaviour. Previously acquired orientations become linked to each other and an attitude derives from that unique combination. The attitude is in this process of internal inference derived from what the individual already knows (knowledge and insights), perceives (perceptions or beliefs), thinks (opinions), feels (attitudes, other than the one under study), experiences bodily (emotions) and desires (values). These orientations may concern the individual him/herself, and the object of the attitude – here the Islam and Muslims.

In the relevant literature about attitude development through inference processes different weights are attached to the various components (Stephan and Stephan 1993, Eagly et al. 1993, 1994). Three approaches can be identified: cognitive, affective and connotative. In the cognitive approach, a negative attitude is the effect of little or no knowledge and more negative than positive beliefs (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980, Hamilton et al. 1986, Grant 1990, Hagendoorn & Linssen 1994, Hagendoorn 1995, Poppe 1999, Hagendoorn 2001). Negative attitudes are explained from low levels of knowledge and negative beliefs (Jervis 1976). The affective approach argues that affections and emotions in particular are most important in explaining attitudes (Zajonc 1980, Crawford 2000). Recent discoveries by, among others, Marcus (2003), show emotions, or strong feelings accompanied by physiological reactions (Frijda 1986, Ledoux 1996), as a major variable in explaining political attitudes. Emotions form potentially an important variable in explaining attitudes because they can be acquired at an early age and because they can last a long time. Once an emotion is linked to an object, it will manifest itself in every contact with that object. This also happens when one just reads about the object and even when the object just comes to mind (Bem 1972). The emotions acquired first also hinder and filter the acquisition of new cognitions and affections. More 'negative' attitudes will be acquired about objects, which evoke negative emotions compared to emotionally neutral or 'positive' objects (Stillwell and Spencer 1973). In the conative or behavioral inference approach, behavior or the intention thereto precedes and influences the attitude. A particular attitude may be developed following a particular behavior or the intention thereto in order to justify that behavior or the intention thereto (Brehm and Cohen 1962, Bem 1972). There is no theoretical or empirical reason to exclude, a priori, one of the three approaches in explaining attitude development through inference (Eagly et al. 1994). Generally, the most promising explanation of an attitude seems to be a combination of the three approaches. This does not mean that all variables are equally important. Opinions usually relate to specific issues and not to more abstract and general

objects such as the Islam and Muslims. The conative approach may be less relevant in cases with no or a few behavior opportunities as is the case here. We *hypothesize* that Islamophobia can be partly explained by a low level of knowledge, negative beliefs, and negative emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims. The key independent variables are then: *knowledge* about the Islam and Muslims, *beliefs* about the Islam (clichés) and Muslims (stereotypes), and *emotions* with respect to the Islam and Muslims.

Specific inference theories are the Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Sherif, 1966) and the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979).

The realistic group conflict theory predicts that a negative attitude towards a group is the result of a perceived conflict of interests and a perceived threat of one's own interests (Poppe & Hagendoorn 2004a). These interests can be concrete (for example, labour opportunities and social security) or abstract or symbolic (for example, a particular way of life, values, and democracy). The growing numbers of Muslims in Western Europe may be perceived as a threat to European values if one believes that the two value systems conflict with each other (Gijssberts et al. 2004). Conflicting values are perceived with respect to, among others, sexuality, women's social positions and roles, judicial punishments, and the state-church relationship. Following the realistic group conflict theory, we *hypothesize* that Islamophobia can be partly explained by the perception that the Islam and Muslims threaten concrete and symbolic interests. The key independent variables are then *perceptions of threat*.

In the social identity theory, this perceived conflict of material and immaterial interests is not an essential condition for a negative attitude towards an out-group. The social identity theory argues that people have a fundamental need for a positive self-identity and that this self-identity is to a large extent derived from social group membership (Tajfel and Turner 1979, Turner et al. 1979). Therefore people compare their own groups with other groups and evaluate the groups they belong to positively while they evaluate other groups less positively or even negatively. The national group is one of the main groups to identify with (Bloom 1990). People who suffer from a lack or low level of positive self-identity will tend to value their own country and people as more positive and one or more out-groups as more negative. They will be inclined to strengthen their positive attitude towards their own country and people and to attribute more negative characteristics to one or more out-groups within the country or abroad and to develop a more negative attitude towards these ethnic minority or foreign national groups. Several studies have shown that attitudes towards one's own country and people can have an impact on the attitudes towards ethnic out-groups living within the country and the attitudes towards foreign countries and peoples (Schatz et al. 1999, Dekker 2001, Dekker et al 2003, Coenders et al. 2004, Coenders & Scheepers 2004, Hagendoorn & Poppe 2004, Poppe & Hagendoorn 2004b). Following the social identity theory, we *hypothesize* that Islamophobia can be partly explained by a low self-esteem and a strong positive attitude towards one's own national group. The key independent variables are then: *self-esteem* and *national attitude*.

Summarizing, we *hypothesize* that the main origins of Islamophobia are: negative experienced direct contact or absence of direct contact with Muslims; having frequently received negative information about the Islam and Muslims from parents, one's favourite teacher, one's best friend and the mass media; having a low level of knowledge about the Islam and Muslims; having developed negative clichés about the Islam and negative stereotypes of Muslims; having experienced negative emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims; perceiving the Islam and Muslims as a threat of concrete and symbolic interests; suffering from a low self-esteem; and having a very positive attitude towards one's own country and people.

Research

Design and respondents

To test the hypotheses we conducted a new survey among Dutch youth. One of the reasons to focus on youth as the research population is the growing empirical evidence that fundamental political attitudes are developed at an early age, and that these attitudes, once developed, tend to have a long life (Nie et al. 1996, Putnam 2000, Sears 2003). If desired, this group can be relatively easily approached through school to improve their knowledge and to correct one-sided perceptions. Another reason to focus on young people is the knowledge that young adolescents and young adults can become very politically active and that they have a greater-than-average preference for protest behaviour. Research of negative attitudes among youngsters can give an indication whether there is a soil for negative actions.

To prepare the questionnaire, we held open discussions with non-Islamic youth at the lowest educational track according to the focus group method (Greenbaum, 1993; 2000; Gibbs, 1997). We wanted to find out what the thoughts of the pupils are and in which way they talk when Muslims and the Islam are subject of conversation. We also wanted to know how the youth themselves explain their attitudes. From these conversations it became clear that Muslims are almost all the time connected to a nationality or ethnicity; all conversations were about Turks or Moroccans. This is not surprisingly because more than 60 % of the Muslims in the Netherlands has a Turkish or Moroccan background, while the other 40% is dispersed over many small groups (CBS, 2004) and more than 90% of the people with a Turkish or Moroccan background declares to be Muslims (SCP/WODC/CBS, 2005: 119). The attitude towards Muslims varied between neutral and very negative. Quite often the participants argue that Muslims feel easily offended and that 'they quickly say that you are a racist'. Headscarves and burquas are perceived as oppression of women and evoke very negative emotions. Muslim girls are often perceived as harmless, while some participants feel intimidated when they meet small groups of Turkish or Moroccan boys. All participants of the discussions have direct contact with Muslims in their classes, but not outside school. Their Muslim classmates are perceived as positive exceptions compared to Muslims in general. This is however not true for pupils of classes in which a majority of the pupils have a non-Dutch background. According to the participants they receive a lot of negative information: mostly, their parents have a negative opinion about Muslims and in addition, television provides mainly negative information, not only informative programs like the news, but also television shows in which is tried to find missing persons; they often report about fathers who have kidnapped their child to Morocco or Turkey. Many participants indicate that they have a more negative attitude towards Muslims and Islam since the terrorist attacks in the United States. (A more extensive report is available at the authors on request).

To obtain a sample which is stratified along divisions of educational level and gender, secondary schools were used to gain access to the respondents. In the survey, all three types of secondary education are included: pre-vocational education (in Dutch: 'vmbo'), higher general education ('havo'), and pre-university education ('vwo'). With respect to the stratification along the likelihood of having direct contact experiences with Muslims, the selection of the schools was based on the map 'Muslims and Mosques 2003/2004', which shows a regional division of the Netherlands, based on 'Muslim densities' in municipalities. The map differentiates between five areas; all these areas are represented in the sample. In total, 734 respondents from 33 third year classes of 11 secondary schools in the Netherlands filled out the questionnaire. The questionnaires of those respondents who indicated to be Muslim (72) were not included in the analysis. The same

holds for the questionnaires of those respondents who did not have the Dutch nationality (12) were younger than 14 or older than 16 (24), who did not fill out the questionnaire seriously (39), and who did not answer one or more of the sub-questions of the dependent variable (6). As a result, the analyses that follow regard a sample of 581 non-Islamic Dutch youngsters. Girls and students from one of the three types of secondary education schools (for 'higher general education') are slightly over represented in the sample.

The questionnaire, containing 104 mainly closed-ended single- and multi-item questions, was completed during regular school hours. The fieldwork has been conducted in the period between March 14 and April 26, 2006. In this period there have been no major national or internal events, which could have influenced the answers of a part of the sample.¹

The study was presented to the respondents as a study of 'how youth think about particular groups in the Dutch society'. We have chosen this general wording of the aim and contents of the study because we wanted to avoid any priming to Islam and Muslims. For the same reason, the group questions in the survey do not name Muslims only but also Jews and the Dutch, while the religion questions regard not only the Islam but also Judaism and Christianity. Questions about Turks and Moroccans were asked instead of questions about 'Muslims' since we discovered in the preparatory focus group discussions that the research population 'Muslims' almost always associates with Turks and Moroccans. We also asked questions about other religions than the Islam and about other groups than Turks and Moroccans in order to avoid a too strong focus on the Islam and Muslims and to prevent particular answer mechanisms. We included Christianity because this is the religion that the focus groups mentioned when asked for the religion of the Dutch. The main reason to include questions about Jews – and not about, for example, Surinamese - is that for this group there is an obvious link with another religion, which could be included in the religion question.

Measurements

The *Attitude towards the Islam and Muslims* was measured using seven questions. There are several reasons why it is generally desirable to use more than one question for the measurement of an attitude. This is the more desirable if the object of the attitude consists of more than one element (here two elements: the Islam and Muslims). Furthermore, an attitude can be either general or specific, for example the specific attitude of trust. Finally, the object of the attitude can remain abstract or become very concrete when it concerns the person's direct environment.

The seven questions were introduced as follows: 'There are many different groups in the Netherlands, which differ on for example country of origin and religion. Two large recognizable groups of foreigners in the Netherlands are Turks and Moroccans. Most of them are Muslim. There is also a large group of Jews in the Netherlands, but they are not obviously connected to one country. When the questions are about Dutch people we mean people who have the Netherlands as originating country (as well as for the parents, grandparents and great-grandparents). Many of the questions in this survey are about the ethnic groups Turks, Moroccans, Dutch and Jews. Other questions are about the religions Christianity, Islam and Judaism'.

¹ We have deposited the data set with DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services). DANS is the Dutch organisation responsible for storing and providing permanent access to research data from the humanities and social sciences and is an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). At the end of 2007, the data set will be available at <http://easy.dans.knaw.nl/dms>.

The seven questions asked for the general attitude towards the Islam, the general attitude towards Turks and Moroccans, the amount of trust in Turks and Moroccans, and the feeling of (un)favorableness of getting new neighbors with a Turkish or Moroccan background. The question asking for the general attitude towards the Islam was worded as follows: 'Below you can indicate what you think of certain religions in the Netherlands. Give each religion a grade between 0 (very negative) and 10 (very positive). If you are not positive neither negative with respect to a religion you grade it a 5'. The question about the general attitude towards the different groups was worded as follows: 'How do you feel in general about the following groups? Give each group one grade ranging from 0 (very negative) to 10 (very positive). If you are neither positive nor negative with respect to a group you can grade them a 5'. The question asking for trust in the different groups was worded as follows: 'How much trust do you generally have in these groups? Give a grade between 1 and 5; 1 = no trust; 2 = little trust; 3 = some trust; 4 = much trust; 5 = very much trust'. To measure the feeling of (un)favorableness of getting neighbors with an Islamic background, we asked: 'Imagine, your neighbors are moving and you will get new neighbors. How positive or negative would you be with respect to neighbors from the following groups? Give a grade between 1 and 5; 1 = very negative; 2 = negative; 3 = negative nor positive; 4 = positive; 5 = very positive'. The groups mentioned in all questions were Turks, Moroccans, Jews, and Dutch.

The answers to these questions formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). To obtain a five-point answer scale for all sub-questions, the answers to the general attitude towards Turks, Moroccans and Islam, were recoded. To achieve a balance in the scale between the single question on Islam and the six questions towards Muslims – Turks and Moroccans –, the answer on the general attitude towards Islam has been counted three times. The score on the attitude scale is the sum of the scores on the seven sub-questions divided by nine. The scale values vary from 0 to 4. The higher the scale score, the more positive the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims is.

We measured two aspects of direct contact: the frequency and the evaluation. The *Direct Contact Frequency* was measured using a question asking for the frequency of contact in class, at school, in the neighbourhood, and 'somewhere else'. The question was worded as follows: 'Indicate for each group whether you have contact with members of these groups (in class, at school, in the neighbourhood, somewhere else)'. The listed groups were Turks, Moroccans, Jews, and Dutch. The answer categories were: 'Never', 'Seldom', 'Sometimes', and 'Often'. The answers formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). The value of the direct contact frequency variable is the average score of the answers on these eight sub questions and varies from no contact (0) to much contact (4). The scale has been divided in the categories 'seldom', 'occasionally', 'sometimes', and 'often'.

The *Direct Contact Evaluation* was measured using one question asking for an evaluation of the contact with each of the four groups. The question was worded as follows: 'How do you in general evaluate the contact with the people of these groups?' The five-point scale ranges from very negative (-2) to very positive (+2).

In additional, we asked the respondents whether they had Turkish or Moroccan friends. The question was worded as follows: 'Does one of your friends belong to the following groups?' The answer possibilities were yes or no. The listed groups were again Turks, Moroccans, Jews, and Dutch. Having such friends would imply positive direct contact (McLaren 2003: 193).

There are two socialization variables: socialization by persons and socialization through mass media.

The *Socialization by Persons* was measured using two sets of questions: one about the frequency of communication with the socializers and one about the perceived attitude of these socializers. The socializers were the respondent's grandfather, grandmother, (foster) father, (foster) mother, favourite teacher and one's best friend.

The frequency questions asked for the *Frequency* of talking - often, sometimes, occasionally or never - with the socializers about the three religions – Islam, Judaism and Christianity - and about the four groups – Turks, Moroccans, Jews, and Dutch. The questions were worded as follows: 'With some people you might talk about the different religions [groups], with others maybe never. Please indicate with whom you talk often, sometimes, occasionally or never about the different religions [groups]'. The answers to these questions formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .89). The scale ranges from rare conversations (0) to many conversations (4).

The perception questions asked for the respondent's perceptions of the socializers' attitudes towards the four religions and their attitudes towards the four groups. The questions were worded as follows: 'What do these people generally think of these different religions [groups]'. The *Perceived Attitudes* towards the Islam, Turks and Moroccans were rated on a five-point scale from very negative (-2) to very positive (+2). The answers to these perception questions formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .92).

The *Socialization by Media* was measured also using two sets of questions: one about the frequency of mass media use and one about the perceived information the media provide. The media, named in the questions, were: the newspaper, the television news, informative programs on TV, and the Internet.

The frequency questions asked for *Frequency* of reading a newspaper, watching the TV news, watching other informative television programmes, and searching for information about the different religions and groups on the Internet. The questions were worded as follows: 'How often have you read the newspaper last week?' 'How often have you watched the television news last week?' 'How often have you watched other informative television programs last week?' 'How often did you search for information about the different groups and religions on the Internet last week?' For all questions, the answer categories were 'Every day', '5-6 days', '3-4 days', '1-2 days', 'Not at all', 'Don't know', and 'Don't (read newspapers/ watch television news/ other informative television programs/ search the Internet)'. The answers to the three questions about reading a newspaper and watching TV news and other TV informative programmes formed almost a reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .58). The use of the Internet has not been included in the scale because there was hardly variation in the answers to this question. The score on the frequency variable is the sum of the scores on the questions about the use of the three media and varies from 1 to 5.

The perception questions asked for the respondent's perceptions of the positive or negative information the media provide about the three religions and the four groups. The questions asking for the *Perceived Content* were: 'Is the newspaper you read mainly positive or negative about the different religions?' 'Is the television news you watch mainly positive or negative about the different religions?' 'Are the other informative television programs you watch mainly positive or negative about the different religions?' 'Is the information you found at the Internet mainly positive or negative about the different religions?'. The answer categories were 'Very negative', 'Negative', 'Neutral', 'Positive', and 'Very positive' (and 'Don't know'). The same questions were asked for the media information about the four groups. The answers to the Internet question were not included in the scale because of hardly any variation. The answers to the questions about the newspaper, TV news and other TV informative programmes formed a reliable

scale (Cronbach's alpha = .82). The score on the perception variable is the sum of the scores on the perceived content of the three media and varies from -2 to +2.

Subjective knowledge was measured using two sets of questions: one asked for the self-assessed knowledge of the various religions and the other for the self-assessed knowledge about the various groups. The questions were worded as follows: 'Please indicate for each religion how much you know about them' and 'Please indicate for each group how much you know about it'. The answer categories were: 'Nothing', 'Little', 'Something', 'A lot', and 'Very much'. The answers to the questions about the Islam, Turks, and Moroccans formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .79). The scale values vary between 0 (no knowledge) to 4 (much knowledge). A high score indicates a high level of subjective knowledge of the Islam and Muslims.

Beliefs - clichés of the Islam and stereotypes of Turks and Moroccans - were measured using two questions asking whether or not certain characteristics are applicable to the three religions and the four groups. The question about religions was worded as follows: '... which characteristics are according to you applicable to the different religions? Please indicate for each characteristic whether you perceive this as applicable to the religions at this moment. If you think that a characteristic is applicable to one religion, you mark that one religion. If you think a characteristic is applicable to two religions, then you mark those two religions. If you think a characteristic is applicable to all three religions, you mark all three religions. Do you think a characteristic is not applicable to any of the religions, you mark none of them'. An equal number of positive and negative characteristics were presented to the respondents: old-fashioned, peaceful, violent, social, dominant, tolerant, unfriendly towards women, and just.

The question about groups was worded as follows: 'Below are some characteristics of people listed. Please indicate for each characteristic whether or not you think this characteristic is applicable to most people of the listed groups, for instance to most Turks. If you think that the characteristic is applicable to one group, you mark that one group. If you think the characteristic is applicable to two groups, then you mark those two groups. You have to mark all groups to which you find a characteristic is applicable. If you think a characteristic is not applicable to any of the groups, you mark none of them'. An equal number of positive and negative characteristics were presented to the respondents: rude, tolerant, selfish, pleasant, aggressive, friendly, arrogant, intelligent, clumsy, hard working, slowly, confident, dominant, and efficient. Respondents received one positive point for every assigned positive cliché or stereotype and a negative point for every not-assigned positive cliché and stereotype. The negative clichés and stereotypes were scored the other way around. The answers to the cliché and stereotype questions about the Islam, Turks, and Moroccans were reduced to two reliable scales: one *Positive Beliefs* scale including all positive clichés and stereotypes, and one *Negative Beliefs* scale including all negative clichés and stereotypes (Cronbach's alphas are .85 and .88 respectively). The values on the scales vary from -18 to +18. A high score on the two scales means more positive beliefs respectively more negative beliefs about the Islam and Muslims.

The perception of threat was measured using one question asking for a reaction to more than 20 statements with respect to labour, safety and symbolic values, including democracy. One of these statements refers to the Islam; two refer to 'Muslims', and four to Turks and Moroccans. The other statements refer to foreigners in general, Jews, and the respondents' fellow-nationals, the Dutch. The statements concerning the Islam, Muslims, Turks, and Moroccans were: 'Islam and democracy are hard to combine', 'The opinions of Muslims and the Dutch are in general the same', 'Muslims who maintain their own culture threaten the Dutch culture', 'Turks take the jobs of the Dutch', 'Moroccans take the jobs of the Dutch', 'I feel unsafe when I meet a group of Turks on

the street', 'I feel unsafe when I meet a group of Moroccans on the street'. Factor analysis revealed that the reactions to these statements could be grouped at two factors: one is *Perceived labour threat* and the other is *Perceived Safety and Democracy Threat* (Cronbach's alphas are respectively .98 and .77). The scale values vary from 1 to 5.

Emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims were measured using two questions asking whether or not the respondents have experienced particular emotions with respect to the three religions and the four groups. The question about the religions was worded as follows: 'Below is a list of emotions. Please indicate for each emotion with respect to which religion you have experienced this emotion. Have you experienced an emotion for one religion, you mark that one religion. Have you experienced an emotion for two religions, then you mark those two religions. You have to mark all religions by which you experienced that emotion. Have you never experienced a certain emotion for one of the religions, you mark none of them'. The same question was asked for the different groups. An equal number of positive and negative emotions were presented to the respondents: fear, admiration, anger, enthusiasm, uneasiness, happiness, disdain, and appreciation. Respondents received one positive point for every assigned positive emotion and a negative point for every not-assigned positive emotion. The negative emotions were scored the other way around. The answers to all emotion questions can be reduced to two reliable scales: one scale with twelve *Positive Emotions* with respect to the Islam and Muslims and one with twelve *Negative Emotions* with respect to the Islam and Muslims (Cronbach's alphas are respectively .87 and .86). The values of both scales vary from -12 to + 12. A high score on the positive emotions scale means that the respondent has experienced many positive emotions. A high score on the negative emotions scale indicates that the respondent has experienced many negative emotions.

Self-esteem was measured using 10 statements, which are translations and adaptations of the Rosenberg's (1965) 'self-esteem scale' items. The question was worded as follows: 'Please read the list of statements below. How much do you agree or disagree with these statements? Circle the number corresponding to your opinion'. The statements are: 'On the whole, I am satisfied with myself', 'At times I think I am no good at all', 'I feel that I have a number of good qualities', 'I am able to do things as well as most other people', 'I feel I do not have much to be proud of', 'I certainly feel useless at times', 'I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others', 'I wish I could have more respect for myself', 'All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure', and 'I take a positive attitude toward myself'. Possible answers were: Fully agree, Agree, Do not agree, but also do not disagree, Disagree, and Fully disagree. The reactions to the statements form one reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .91). The scale values vary from 0 (very low self-esteem) to 4 (very high self-esteem).

The *National Attitude* was measured using a question asking for a reaction to 15 statements. These statements represent five different national attitudes: national liking, pride, preference, superiority and nationalism. The statements are: 'I am happy to be Dutch', 'I love the Netherlands', 'I am proud to be Dutch', 'I am proud about what the Netherlands has achieved', 'I prefer to hang around with Dutch people', 'I prefer to live in the Netherlands', 'I prefer to have the Dutch nationality', 'I like Dutch people better than inhabitants of other countries', 'the Dutch are better', 'I like it most to hang around with Dutch people', 'the Dutch nationality is the best nationality', 'the Netherlands is the best country to live in', 'I feel member of one Dutch family', 'I have Dutch blood', and 'I have the same descent as other Dutch people'. Together these statements construct one reliable national attitude scale (Cronbach's alpha = .93). The scale values vary from 1 to 5. The higher the scale value the more positive one's attitude towards his/her own country and people is.

We also asked questions about several background variables: *gender, age, education level, social class, and religiosity.*

Description

Table 1 shows the descriptive information for the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims and for the various independent variables.

The table reveals that more than half of the respondents have a negative to very negative *attitude towards the Islam and Muslims* (54%), while four out of ten respondents have a positive to very positive attitude towards the Islam and Muslims (40%).

More than half of the respondents reports having only seldom or occasionally *direct contact* with Muslims (56%). One third has sometimes contact (33%), while a small minority has often direct contact with Muslims (11%). More respondents report positive than negative contact experiences (respectively 37% and 30%). From the respondents with only seldom contact more report negative than positive experiences (respectively 39% and 29%). The opposite can be observed among the respondents with sometimes contact (45% report positive while only 16% report negative experiences). A large majority of the respondents with often contact evaluates their contact positively while only a few evaluates their contact negatively (respectively 75% and 5%). A little more than half of the respondents indicate to have Turkish and/or Moroccan friends (53 percent).

Generally, the respondents do not *talk* much about the Islam and Muslims. Almost eight out of ten report that they seldom or occasionally talk about the Islam and Muslims. (77%). Most conversations about the Islam are held with the mother, father and a best friend (respectively 29, 28 and 28 percent). The favourite teacher is the person with whom the respondents talk least often (12%). Most conversations about Turks and Moroccans are held with a best friend; six out of ten respondents report to talk sometimes or often about Turks and Moroccans with their best friend (62%). Less frequently is talked with the father (49%) and the mother (48%), and much less frequently with the grandfather and -mother (both 23%). The least is talked with a favourite teacher (21%).

The information that is received by these conversations is mainly negative. Almost six out of ten respondents perceive the attitude about the Islam and Muslims of these persons as negative to very negative (57%). Only two out of ten have positive to very positive *perceptions* of these attitudes (21 percent). The mother, father and best friend are perceived as being most negative about the Islam (respectively 33%, 28% and 30%). The favourite teacher is again perceived as being the least negative about the Islam (11%). The best friend is not only most often the conversation partner, but is also perceived as the one with the most negative attitude towards Turks and Moroccans. The favourite teacher is perceived as being the least negative in the eyes of the respondents.

Almost half of the respondents indicate to *use* the *media* (i.e., newspaper, TV news, and other informative TV programmes) more than three days a week (47%). Television news bulletins are mostly watched; more than half of the respondents watch the news three or more days per week (57%). Almost half of the respondents read a newspaper three or more days a week (47%). Almost three out of ten respondents watches three or more days per week other informative television programmes (29%). Very few respondents use the Internet for information about the various groups and religions (6%).

The *perception* of the information provided by the media is mainly negative. More than half of the respondents perceives that the media are negative to very negative about the

Islam and Muslims (55%), while one third thinks the media are neutral in their reports (37%), and less than one out of ten thinks the media report positively (8%).

Half of the respondents assess their *knowledge* about the Islam and Muslims as a little to nothing (51%), while three out of ten respondents say to know something (30%) and only two out of ten respondents think they know much to very much about the Islam and Muslims (20%).

Almost half of the respondents have (very) negative *beliefs* about the Islam and Muslims (47 percent). Only two out of ten respondents have (very) positive beliefs about the Islam and Muslims (20%). The negative clichés of the Islam, which received high scores, are: ‘violent’, ‘dominant’, and ‘unfriendly towards women’. The negative stereotypes, which were declared applicable most to Moroccans, are ‘aggressive’, ‘rude’, ‘arrogant’, and ‘dominant’. The positive clichés are most often assigned to the dominant religion in the respondents’ country, Christianity, and the positive stereotypes are mostly assigned to the respondents’ own group, the Dutch.

More than four out of ten have experienced mainly negative to very negative emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims (44%). Approximately one out of ten respondents has experienced mainly (very) positive emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims (11%). The negative emotions were mostly experienced with respect to the Islam and Moroccans. In particular, the emotions of ‘uneasiness’, ‘anger’ and ‘fear’ obtained high scores. The positive emotions were mostly experienced with respect to the respondents’ own national group, the Dutch, and the dominant religion in the respondents’ country, Christianity.

Less than two out of ten respondents perceive Turks and Moroccans as threatening the labour opportunities of the respondents’ own national group (17%). A majority of the respondents do not perceive such a threat (62%). The *perception of symbolic threat* is more widespread: almost half of the respondents perceives the Islam and Muslims as a threat for their safety and the Dutch culture (45%), while less than two out of ten do not have this perception (16%) and four out of ten have a neutral position (39%).

There are not many respondents who suffer from a very low or low self-esteem (5%), while more than two-thirds has a high or very high self-esteem (67%). Almost four out of ten respondents have a very positive national attitude (39%, scoring 4 or higher on the national attitude scale, which ranges from 1 to 5).

Table 1: Descriptive information about the attitudes towards the Islam and Muslims and the various independent variables.									
	N	No of items	Mean	SD	Percentages				
					1	2	3	4	5
Attitude towards the Islam and Muslims ¹	581	7	1.83	.86	16.7	37.0	6.2	33.9	6.2
Direct contact with Muslims: frequency ²	580	8	1.97	.90	19.1	36.7	32.8	11.4	
Direct contact with Muslims: evaluation ¹	505	1	.05	.99	10.1	20.2	32.3	30.1	7.3
Having or not having Muslim Friends ³	578	2	.53	.50	46.7	53.3			
Socialization: frequency of talking about the Islam and Muslims with personal socializers ²	581	12	1.62	.60	16.5	60.8	20.7	2.1	
Socialization: perceived attitudes of personal socializers ¹	581	12	-.23	.50	7.1	50.1	22.2	20.1	.5
Socialization: frequency of mass media use ⁴	564	3	2.17	1.11	20.9	32.4	25.2	16.7	4.8
Socialization: perceived attitudes of mass media ¹	564	6	-.31	.46	6.6	48.2	36.9	8.2	.2
Beliefs about the Islam and Muslims: positive beliefs ⁷	581	18	-6.29	8.77	46.5	28.0	5.3	15.3	4.8
Beliefs about the Islam and Muslims: negative beliefs ⁷	581	18	-.06	9.89	21.2	25.4	7.6	31.9	13.9
Knowledge of the Islam and Muslims: subjective ⁶	576	2	2.71	.69	8.2	42.5	29.7	18.6	1.0
Emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims: positive emotions ⁷	581	12	-7.29	6.11	63.5	20.5	5.0	6.8	4.2
Emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims: negative emotions ⁷	581	12	-.51	7.29	24.1	20.3	11.9	27.2	16.5
Perceived threat of labour opportunities ⁵	514	2	2.33	1.21	30.7	31.2	21.4	9.7	7.0
Perceived threat of street safety and Dutch culture ⁵	336	5	3.37	.88	2.1	14.0	39.0	34.2	10.7
Self-esteem ¹	503	10	3.84	.75	.8	4.2	28.0	46.3	20.7
Attitude towards one's own country and people ⁵	581	15	3.22	.91	4.0	18.6	38.4	29.8	9.3

¹ 1 = very negative; 2 = negative 3 = neutral; 4 = positive; 5 = very positive.
² 1 = seldom; 2 = occasionally; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often.
³ 1 = no; 2 = yes
⁴ 1 = < 1 a week; 2 = 1-2 days a week; 3 = 3-4 days a week; 4 = 5-6 days a week; 5 = every day.
⁵ 1 = completely disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = completely agree.
⁶ 1 = nothing; 2 = little; 3 = something; 4 = much; 5 = very much.
⁷ 1 = strongly absent; 2 = absent; 3 = neutral; 4 = present; 5 = strongly present.

Explanation

Firstly, we calculated the correlations between the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims and the independent variables. Next, multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of the different independent variables on the attitude. As a third step we conducted path analyses using structural equation modelling to examine indirect effects of the main predictors on the attitude. In the multivariate analyses, all independent variables were included even if they appeared to be weakly or unrelated to the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. The missing values of the continuous variables were imputed by mean estimation, under the assumption of multivariate normality, in order to prevent the exclusion of too many respondents. To check this assumption, we compared the standard errors under normality with the standard errors obtained by bootstrapping in AMOS. Respondents who had missing values on any of the categorical variables were omitted, in this way 528 respondents remained in the analyses. To be sure that there was no multicollinearity between the independent variables, we inspected the variance inflation factors (VIF). A VIF-value larger than 10 indicates serious problems (Field, 2005). However, the VIF-values of all variables are smaller than 3, indicating that multicollinearity was not a problem.

Table 2 presents the correlations between the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims and the various independent variables. Almost all theoretically chosen variables correlate with the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. In line with our expectations, we see that direct contact, socialisation content, knowledge, positive beliefs, and positive emotions are positively related to the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims, whereas negative beliefs, the perception of threat, negative emotions, and national attitude negatively correlate with the attitude. Contrary to the expectations, there is no significant relationship with socialization frequency - the frequency of talking about the Islam and Muslims and the frequency of media use – nor with self-esteem.

Significant differences in attitude exist across gender, age, social class, and being religious. Girls tend to be more positive about the Islam and Muslims than boys. At the scale from zero (negative) to four (positive) girls obtain a 0.5 higher score than boys (the scores are 2.1 and 2.6 respectively). This difference in means is significant [F-test (1) = 60.543; $p < .01$]. Older respondents are more negative towards the Islam and Muslims than younger pupils. However, the relation is very weak and the age difference in the group of respondents is only small (14 to 16 years). The relation with the socio-economical class, measured with the estimated relative income of the parents, is also very weak. There is also a significant, but weak difference in attitude between religious and non-religious respondents [F-test (1) = 6.505; $p < .05$]. Religious respondents are somewhat more positive than non-religious youth; the mean scores are respectively 2.0 and 1.8. Differences in educational level do not relate to differences in the attitude.

The highest correlations are found between the attitude and the direct contact evaluation ($r = .714$), the perception of symbolic threat ($r = -.682$), the perceived attitude of the personal socializers ($r = .637$) and the national attitude ($r = -.478$).

Table 2: Correlations between the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims and the independent variables		Pearson's R	Somer's d
Direct Contact Theory:	Direct contact: frequency	.306 *	
	Direct contact: evaluation	.714 *	
	Having Muslim friends	.310 *	
Socialization Theory:	Frequency of talking with personal socializers	n.s.	
	Perceived attitudes of personal socializers	.637 *	
	Frequency of mass media use	n.s.	
	Perceived attitudes of mass media	.273 *	
Inference:	Beliefs: positive beliefs	.444 *	
	Beliefs: negative beliefs	-.443 *	
	Knowledge: subjective knowledge	.130 *	
	Emotions: positive emotions	.383 *	
	Emotions: negative emotions	-.460 *	
Realistic Group Conflict theory:	Perceived threat of labour opportunities	-.397 *	
	Perceived threat of safety and culture	-.682 *	
Social Identity Theory	Self-esteem	n.s.	
	National attitude	-.478 *	
Background	Gender	-.308 *	
	Age	-.136 *	
	Educational level		n.s.
	Social-economic class: estimated income		.127 *
	Being religious	.106 *	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). n.s. = not significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis to obtain more insight in how the independent variables are together related to the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. The results show that the main explanations for the attitude are the evaluation of direct contact, the perception of symbolic threat and the perceived attitudes of others ($\beta = .343$, $-.266$ and $.217$ respectively). Having positive beliefs about the Islam and Muslims, and a more positive national attitude also have significant effects ($\beta = .102$ and $-.076$ respectively). These variables, together with gender and religiosity ($\beta = -.118$ and $.051$ respectively) account for 71.5 percent of the variance in the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

Table 3: Predictors of the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims (standardised regression coefficients).		Beta	t	Sig.
Direct Contact Theory:	Direct contact: frequency	-.039	-1.134	.257
	Direct contact: evaluation	.343	9.293	.000
	Having Muslim friends	.015	.475	.635
Socialization Theory:	Frequency of talking with personal socializers	.037	1.406	.160
	Perceived attitudes of personal socializers	.217	6.735	.000
	Frequency of mass media use	.035	1.355	.176
	Perceived attitudes of mass media	.034	1.231	.219
Inference:	Beliefs: positive beliefs	.102	3.108	.002
	Beliefs: negative beliefs	.011	.308	.758
	Knowledge: subjective knowledge	.013	.466	.641
	Emotions: positive emotions	-.040	-1.270	.205
	Emotions: negative emotions	-.056	-1.619	.106
Realistic Group Conflict theory:	Perceived threat of labour opportunities	.001	.041	.968
	Perceived threat of safety and culture	-.266	-6.297	.000
Social Identity theory:	Self-esteem	.049	1.805	.072
	National attitude	-.076	-2.562	.011
Background variables:	Gender	-.118	-4.403	.000
	Age	-.046	-1.870	.062
	Educational level	.012	.458	.647
	Social-economic class: estimated income of parents	.031	1.251	.211
	Religiosity	.051	2.102	.036

N = 528. Significant predictors (p < .05) are in bold.

The next step in the analyses was to examine the indirect effects of the main predictors of the attitude. We analyzed the indirect effects of the direct contact evaluation and of the perceived attitudes of socializers.

We relied on two publications in the selection of indirect paths of the direct contact evaluation to the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. Pettigrew (1998) suggests four processes through which direct contact has an influence on attitudes: learning more about the out-group, including correcting negative stereotypes, changing behaviour, generating emotional ties, and a weakening of the in-group evaluation. Our data set allows an analysis of two of these paths: through positive beliefs and national attitude (behaviour was beyond the scope of our study, and knowledge and emotions appeared to be insignificant predictors of the attitude). In addition, Ward and Masgoret (2006) have found that inter-group contact reduces perceptions of threat. Our analysis thus includes the indirect effect of direct contact evaluation through the variables of positive beliefs, national attitude, and the perception of symbolic threat. We expected that respondents with more positively evaluated direct contact will have more positive beliefs about the Islam and Muslims, will have a less very positive national attitude, and will perceive less symbolic threat posed by the Islam and Muslims, ultimately resulting in a more positive attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

The same line of reasoning was applied to the selection of possible indirect effects of the perceived attitudes of 'relevant others' in the socialization process. We expected that respondents who report perceptions of positive attitudes of their socializers and thus have received more positive information from these socializers will have more positive beliefs, will perceive less symbolic threat and will have a less very positive national attitude. Figure 1 shows the explanatory model including both the direct and indirect effects.

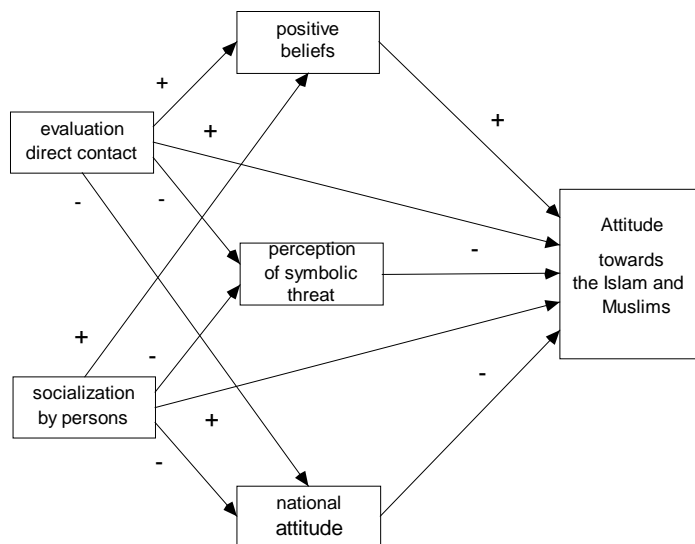


Figure 1: Predicting attitudes towards Muslims and Islam

Table 4 shows the results of the path analysis. Both the direct contact evaluation and the socialization by persons have significant effects on having positive beliefs, the perception of symbolic threat, and the national attitude. The indirect effects through these mediating variables on the attitude are all significant as well. The total effect of direct contact on the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims ($\beta = .511$) is however to a large extent (67%) due to the direct effect ($\beta = .343$). The total indirect effect is for two-thirds caused by the indirect effect through the perception of symbolic threat ($\beta = .112$). The same pattern applies to the socialization variable. The direct effect of the socialization by persons accounts for a large extent (62%) of the total effects ($\beta = .217$ and $.345$ respectively). Again, most of the indirect effects are caused by the perceived symbolic threat ($\beta = .095$). Only a quarter of the indirect effects of socialization by persons on the attitude are due to the effects through positive beliefs and national attitude ($\beta = .015$ and $.017$ respectively).

	Direct contact evaluation	Socialization by persons and their perceived attitudes towards the Islam and Muslims
Attitude towards the Islam and Muslims		
<i>Total effect</i>	.511 *	.345 *
<i>Direct effect</i>	.343 *	.217 *
<i>Indirect effect</i>	.167 *	.128 *
- through positive beliefs	.036 *	.015 *
- through perception of symbolic threat	.112 *	.095 *
- through national attitude	.019 *	.017 *
Positive beliefs	.350 *	.149 *
Perception of symbolic threat	-.423 *	-.359 *
National attitude	-.255 *	-.227 *

N = 528. * relation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion, reflection and discussion

Multiple regression analysis showed that the evaluation of direct contact, the perception of threat on symbolic issues and the information received from other persons are the most important predictors of the attitude. Beliefs about Muslims and Islam and national attitude appeared to have a significant influence as well. Together with gender and religiosity, these variables explain 71.5 percent of the variance in the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims. Path analysis revealed that the effects of direct contact and socialization by persons are even stronger when indirect effects (through positive beliefs, perceived symbolic threat and national attitude) are taken into account as well.

The results also show that all three processes of attitude formation from which the independent variables were derived, contribute to the explanation. Especially direct contact and socialisation appear to be important processes. The process of inference contributes by means of the beliefs variable (clichés of the Islam and stereotypes of Muslims). The realistic group conflict theory is most important of the two specific inference theories, particularly due to the effect of the perceived symbolic threat (regarding safety and culture). The perceived threat by Muslims of labour opportunities for the Dutch appeared to be insignificant. This may be partly explained by the age of the respondents; labour opportunities might be something they are not yet thinking about. In addition, in recent years the public discussion about a possible threat by immigrants on the labour market focused more on immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe rather than on Turks and Moroccans. The prediction from the social identity theory that the attitude towards the in-group has an effect on out-group attitudes found support in the study, although the influence of the national attitude is rather small.

We hypothesized that the main origins of Islamophobia are: negative experienced direct contact or absence of direct contact with Muslims; having frequently received negative information about the Islam and Muslims from parents, one's favorite teacher, one's best friend and the mass media; having a low level of knowledge about the Islam and Muslims; having developed negative clichés about the Islam and negative stereotypes of Muslims; having experienced negative emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims; perceiving the Islam and Muslims as a threat of concrete and symbolic interests; suffering from a low self-esteem; and having a very positive attitude towards one's own country and people. Most of the hypotheses cannot be rejected. The ones that we have to reject are the hypotheses that mass media messages about the Islam and Muslims, having experienced negative emotions with respect to the Islam and Muslims, a low level of knowledge about the Islam and Muslims, and a low self-esteem contribute to the explanation of Islamophobia.

The study suffers from various limitations: it is a study in just one country (the Netherlands) among a small part of the population (youngsters) and the data were collected at a single juncture.

Future comparative research involving various countries should study possible influences on the attitudes towards the Islam and Muslims of, among others, differences in the proportion of Muslims in the country's population, differences in social-economic positions of Muslims and non-Muslims, the various governmental segregation or integration policies, the segregation or integration aims of Muslim elites, differences in citizenship education, the presence or absence of anti-Muslim politicians and political parties, and the differences in political participation by and representations of Muslims in the political system. Future research should also involve various age groups in order to study whether the attitudes of younger cohorts differ from the adults' attitudes. Another suggestion for future research has to do with the important limitation in our study, that

the data about the dependent and independent variables have been simultaneously collected so that it is not possible to establish a time order to the variables in question. The likely causal order of the variables has been reconstructed within a correlational design. Although this reconstruction seems fairly plausible (including, for example, the following order: parental Islam-Muslims socialization -> clichés of the Islam and stereotypes of Muslims -> attitude towards the Islam and Muslims), we cannot exclude any other causal order. This also applies to the other variables in the study. We have not the certainty that the proposed relations are right in terms of causality. In a future study with a panel design, the hypothesized causal relationships should be checked, for example, whether the impact of clichés and stereotypes on the subsequent attitude is greater than the impact of the attitude on subsequent clichés and stereotypes. A longitudinal study is also necessary to discover whether or not there is an increase in Islamophobia among both young and older citizens and whether this increase is greater among youth.

To improve the explanatory power of the follow-up study some variables should be measured in a more valid and reliable way and a few new variables should be included in the analysis. The measurements of emotions and beliefs with respect to the Islam and Muslims can be improved. Our study lacked a way to measure the strength of the emotions. The respondents could only indicate whether or not they have experienced a certain emotion. They could not specify whether this emotion was very strongly or only weakly experienced. The same is true for the measurement of the positive and negative beliefs.

When we developed the questionnaire we decided not to include questions to measure objective knowledge because of their possible negative effects on the respondents' motivation to continue their willingness to answer the subsequent questions. Instead of objective knowledge we measured subjective knowledge, that is self-assessed knowledge. This subjective knowledge showed no relation with the attitude under study. The question thus remains whether knowledge of the Islam and Muslims has a positive effect on the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

The socializers included in the study were the grandparents, parents, favorite teacher, best friend, and mass media. Questions were asked about only one of the many possible school socializers. Future research may also ask for, for example, the students' perceptions of the attitude towards the Islam and Muslims of their citizenship, social studies and/or history teachers and the contents of the textbooks, which are used in these classes. Future research may also include experiments to test the intended and unintended effects of separate educational projects that aim to improve the knowledge and understanding of the Islam and Muslims among non-Muslims students.

We also asked no question to study the possible socializing effect of politicians. They may serve as important Islam-Muslims socializers when they express (using mass media) positive or negative images of and views on the Islam and Muslims. Some politicians in the Netherlands and in other countries voice a very negative attitude towards the Islam and Muslims.

Our main interest in the research is a scientific interest. We wanted to understand more of the origins of the negative attitude towards the Islam and Muslims that so many people have developed witness various public opinion polls. Another reason for this study is the expectation that the relationships between non-Muslims and Muslims in Western European states forms one of the main political challenges now and in the future. We hope that insights from our study may be informative for policy makers and political leaders and may help them to design policies, which will not only prevent further social

isolation and radicalization of certain groups but also will strengthen the social and political cohesion of their countries.

References

- Abrams, D. & M. A. Hogg (eds.) (1990). *Social Identity Theory. Constructive and Critical Advances*. New York: Springer.
- Ajzen, I. & M. Fishbein (1980). *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Allport, G. W. (1954, 1958). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Barber, B. (1995). *Jihad vs. McWorld*. New York: Ballantine.
- Bem, D. J. (1972). Self-perception theory. In: Berkowitz, L. (ed.). *Advances in experimental social psychology*, Vol. 6. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. 1-62.
- Bloom, W. (1990). *Personal identity, national identity and international relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bohner, G. (2001), Attitudes, in: Hewstone, M. & W. Stroebe, *Social Psychology; A European Perspective*, Oxford: Blackwell, 239-282.
- Brown, M.D. (2000). Conceptualising Racism and Islamophobia. In: Wal, J. ter & M. Verkuyten (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Racism*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 73-90.
- Carens, J. H., M. S. Williams (1996). 'Muslims Minorities in Democracies: The Politics of Misrecognition' In: R. Bauböck, A. Heller and A. R. Zolberg (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity. Integration and Pluralism in Societies of Immigration*. Aldershot: Avebury 157-186
- Coenders, M. (2001). *Nationalistic attitudes and ethnic exclusionism in a comparative perspective : an empirical study of attitudes toward the country and ethnic immigrants in 22 countries*. Nijmegen: ICS.
- Coenders, M. & M. Gijsberts, P. Scheepers 2004, Chauvinism and patriotism in 22 countries, in: Gijsberts, M. & L. Hagendoorn, P. Scheepers (eds.), *Nationalism and exclusion of migrants: Cross-national comparisons*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 29-69.
- Coenders, M. & P. Scheepers 2004, Associations between nationalist attitudes and exclusionist reactions in 22 countries, in: Gijsberts, M. & L. Hagendoorn, P. Scheepers (eds.), *Nationalism and exclusion of migrants: Cross-national comparisons*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 187-207.
- Crawford, N. C. 2000. The passion of world politics. *International Security* 24 (4), 116-156.
- Dekker, H. 2001, Nationalism, its conceptualisations and operationalisations, in: Phalet, K. & A. Örkény (eds.), *Ethnic minorities and inter-ethnic relations in context: A Dutch-Hungarian comparison*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 113-137.
- Dekker, H. 2003. Nationaler Favoritismus und gemischte Gefühle: Zur Politischen Psychologie von Inferenz, Kontakt und Sozialisation in den niederländisch-deutschen Beziehungen. *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie* 3/4 (2), 283-301.
- Dekker, H. & D. Malova, S. Hoogendoorn (2003), Nationalism and Its Explanations, *Political Psychology* 24 (2), 345-376.
- Dekker, H. 2004, National and ethnic prejudices and their origins. In: Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz, B. & A. Ross (eds.), *Social learning, inclusiveness and exclusiveness in Europe*, Stoke on Trent, UK and Sterling, VA, USA: Trentham, 123-140.
- Eagly, A. H. & S. Chaiken 1993. *The psychology of attitudes*, Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich.
- EUMC (2002). *Anti-Islamic reactions within the European Union after the acts of terror against the USA Country Report of the Netherlands. Covering the period 12th September - 31st December 2001* Vienna: EUMC.
- EUMC (2003). *The fight against Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Bringing communities together*. Brussels/Vienna: EUMC
- EUMC (2006a), *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia*, Vienna: EUMC.
- EUMC (2006b), *Perceptions of Discrimination and Islamophobia*, Vienna: EUMC.
- Fishbein, M. & I. Ajzen 1975, *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Fortuyn, W.S.P. (1997), *Tegen de Islamisering van onze cultuur*, Utrecht: Bruna.
- Gibbs, A. (1997). 'Focus Groups'. *Social Research Update* Issue 19.
- Goldgeier J.M. & P.E. Tetlock 2001, Psychology and international relations theory, *Annual Review of Political Science* 4, 67-92..

- Grant, P. R. (1990). Cognitive theories applied to intergroup conflict. In: Fisher, R. J. (ed.). *The social psychology of intergroup and international conflict resolution*. New York: Springer. 39-57.
- Greenbaum, T. L. (1993). *The handbook of focus group research*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Greenbaum, T. L. (2000). *Moderating focus groups. A practical guide for group facilitation*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Gijsberts, M., L. Hagendoorn and P. Scheepers (eds.) (2004). *Nationalism and Exclusion of Migrants. Cross-national comparisons*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Hagendoorn, L. & H. Linssen (1994). National characteristics and national stereotypes: a seven-nation comparative study. In: Farnen, R. F. (ed.). *Nationalism, ethnicity, and identity. Cross national and comparative perspectives*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction. 103-126.
- Hagendoorn, L. (1995). Intergroup biases in multiple group systems: the perception of ethnic hierarchies. In: Stroebe, W. & M. Hewstone. *European Review of Social Psychology*. Volume 6. London: Wiley. 199-228.
- Hagendoorn, L. (2001) 'Stereotypes of Ethnic Minorities in the Netherlands' In: K. Phalet and A. Örkény (eds.) *Ethnic Minorities in Inter-Ethnic Relations in Context* Aldershot: Ashgate. 43-58
- Hagendoorn, L. & H. Linssen, S. Tumanov (2001). *Intergroup Relations in States of the Former Soviet Union: The perception of Russians*. European Monographs in Social Psychology. London: Psychology Press.
- Hagendoorn, L. 2001, Stereotypes of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, in: Phalet, K. & A. Örkény (eds.), *Ethnic minorities and inter-ethnic relations in context: A Dutch-Hungarian comparison*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 43-58.
- Hagendoorn L. & E. Poppe 2004, Nationalist attitudes and exclusionist reactions in former Soviet republics, in: Gijsberts, M. & L. Hagendoorn, P. Scheepers (eds.), *Nationalism and exclusion of migrants: Cross-national comparisons*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 209-224.
- Hagendoorn, L. and P. Sniderman (2004). 'Het conformisme-effect: sociale beïnvloeding van de houding ten opzichte van etnische minderheden.' In: *Mens & Maatschappij* 79(2): 101-123.
- Hamilton, D. & T. Trolie (1986). Stereotypes and stereotyping: an overview of the cognitive approach. In: Dovidio, J. & S. Gaertner (eds.). *Prejudice, discrimination and racism*. Orlando: Academic press. 127-164.
- Heitmeyer, W. & A. Zick (2004), Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Group-Focused Enmity in Germany. University of Bielefeld. <http://www.efc.be/ftp/public/Minorities/HeitmeyerReport.pdf>
- Hewstone, M. & R. Brown (1986). Contact is not enough: an intergroup perspective on the 'contact hypothesis'. In: Hewstone, M. & R. Brown (eds.). *Contact and conflict in intergroup encounters*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1-44.
- Huddy, L. & S. Feldman, Th. Capelos, C. Provost (2002), The Consequences of Terrorism: Disentangling the Effects of Personal and National Threat, *Political Psychology* 23 (3), 485-509.
- Huddy, L. (2003), Group identity and political cohesion, in: Sears, D. O., et al. (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 511-546.
- Inglehart, R. (1991). Trust between nations: primordial ties, societal learning and economic development. In: Reif, K. & R. Inglehart (eds.). *Eurobarometer. The dynamics of European public opinion. Essays in honour of Jacques-René Rabier*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan. 145-185.
- Iyengar, S. and W.J. McGuire (1993). *Explorations in political psychology*. Durham, NC [etc.]: Duke University Press.
- Jervis, R. (1976), *Perception and misperception in international politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Larsson, G. (2005). 'The Impact of Global Conflicts on Local Contexts: Muslims in Sweden after 9/11 - the Rise of Islamophobia, or New Possibilities?' In: *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16(1): 29-42.
- Linssen, H. (1995). *Nationality stereotypes in Europe: content and change*. Utrecht: Utrecht University, ISOR.
- Linssen, H. & L. Hagendoorn, L. Matheusen 1996, Changing nationality stereotypes through contact: An experimental test of the contact hypothesis among European youngsters, in: Farnen, R. F. & H. Dekker, R. Meyenberg, D. B. German (eds.), *Democracy, socialization and conflicting loyalties in East and West, Cross-national and comparative perspectives*, New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. London: Macmillan, 265-291.
- Mackie, D. M. & D. L. Hamilton (eds.) (1993). *Affect, cognition, and stereotyping: interactive processes in group perception*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- McDermott R. 2004, *Political psychology in international relations*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- McLaren, L. M. (2003). 'Anti-Immigrant Prejudice in Europe: Contact, Threat Perception, and Preferences for the Exclusion of Migrants' In: *Social Forces* 81 (3): 909-936.

- Nie, N.H., J. Junn en K. Stehlik-Barry (1996). *Education and Democratic Citizenship in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Oskamp, S. & P.W. Schultz (2005), *Attitudes and Opinions*, Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Perugini, M. & M. Conner 2000, Predicting and understanding behavioral volitions: the interplay between goals and behaviors, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30 (5), 705-731.
- Pettigrew, T.F. (1998), 'Intergroup contact theory'. In: *Annual Review Psychology* 49: 65-85.
- Pew Research Centre (2005), *Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics*, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248> .
- Pew Research Centre (2006). *The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Eachother*. <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=253> .
- Poppe, E. (1998), *National and Ethnic Stereotypes in Central and Eastern Europe, A study among Adolescents in Six Countries*, Amsterdam: Thela Thesis.
- Poppe E. 1999, *National and ethnic stereotypes in Central and Eastern Europe: A study among adolescents in six countries*, Utrecht: Utrecht University, Netherlands School for Social and Economic Policy Research.
- Poppe, E. & L. Hagendoorn 2004a, Social distance of Russian minorities from titular population in former Soviet republics, in: Gijsberts, M. & L. Hagendoorn, P. Scheepers (eds.), *Nationalism and exclusion of migrants: Cross-national comparisons*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 143-156.
- Poppe E. & L. Hagendoorn 2004b, National identification of Russians in five former Soviet republics, in: Gijsberts, M. & L. Hagendoorn, P. Scheepers (eds.), *Nationalism and exclusion of migrants: Cross-national comparisons*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 71-93.
- Putnam, R.D. (1995). Tuning in, tuning out; the strange disappearance of social capital in America. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28 (4): 664-683.
- Putnam, R.D. (2000). *Bowling Alone; The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Rosenberg, M. (1989). *Society and the adolescent self-image, revised edition*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Runnymede Trust (1997), *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*, London: Runnymede Trust.
- Said, E.W. (1985), *Orientalism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Schatz, R. T. & E. Staub, H.Lavine (1999). On the varieties of national attachment: blind versus constructive patriotism. *Political Psychology*, 20, 1, 151-174.
- SCP (2003). *Rapportage Minderheden 2003. Onderwijs, arbeid en sociaal-culturele integratie*. Den Haag: SCP.
- SCP(2005). *Uit elkaars buurt. De invloed van etnische concentratie op integratie en beeldvorming*. Den Haag: SCP.
- SCP/WODC/CBS (2005). *Jaarrapport Integratie 2005*. Den Haag: SCP
- Sears, D.O. (2003). Childhood and adult political development. In: D.O. Sears, L. Huddy en R. Jervis (red.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (60-109).
- Shadid, W.A.R. and P.S. Van Koningsveld (1997). *Moslims in Nederland: Minderheden en religie in een multiculturele samenleving*. Houten: Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum.
- Sherif, M. (1967). *Group conflict and co-operation : their social psychology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul
- Smith, J.R. & D.J. Terry, M.A. Hogg (2007), Social identity and the attitude-behaviour relationship: Effects of anonymity and accountability, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 37, 239-257.
- Sniderman, P., L. Hagendoorn and M. Prior (2003). 'De moeizame acceptatie van moslims in Nederland' In: *Mens en Maatschappij* 78 (3): 199-217.
- Stephan, W.G., O. Ybarra and G. Bachman (1999). 'Prejudice towards Immigrants' In: *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 29(11): 2221-2237.
- Sumner, W.G. (1906). *Folkways : a study of the sociological importance of usages, manners, customs, mores and morals*. Boston : Ginn and Company
- Tajfel, H. (ed.) (1982). *Social identity and intergroup relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tajfel, H., M.G. Billig, R.P. Bundy and C. Flament (1971). 'Social categorization and intergroup behaviour' In: *European Journal of Social Psychology* 1(2): 149-178.
- Taylor, M. and M. Moghaddam (1987). *Theories of intergroup relations. International social psychological perspectives*. New York: Praeger.
- Terry D.J. & M.A. Hogg 1996, Group norms and the attitude-behaviour relationship: A role for group identification, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 22, 776-793.
- TNS-NIPO (2005a). *Gevoelens van autochtone Nederlanders ten opzichte van moslims*. Onderzoek in opdracht van de Groep Lazrak.
- TNS-NIPO (2005b). *Rapportage RTL Trend 5. Vijfde meting trendonderzoek*. Onderzoek in opdracht van RTL nieuws.

- Turner, J.C., R.J. Brown, H. Tajfel (1979). 'Social comparison and group interest in in-group favouritism'. In: *European Journal of Social Psychology* 9 (2): 187-204.
- Verberk, G.(1999). *Attitudes towards ethnic minorities: conceptualizations, measurements and models*. Nijmegen: ITS
- Ward, C. and A. Masgoret (2006), 'An integrative model of attitudes towards immigrants'. In: *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 30 (6): 671-682.
- Zajonc, R. B. 1980, Feeling and thinking: preferences need no inferences, *American Psychologist* 35, 151-175.