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The Role of Political Islam in the European Union: Source or Obstacle for Societal Integration?

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Abbreviation Index

Arab European League – AEL

Avrupa Milli Görüş Teskilatları / Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs – AMGT/IGMG

Bureau of European Policy Advisers – BEPA

Conseil Français du Cult Musulman – CFCM

European Coal and Steel Community – ECSC

European Council for Fatwa and Research – ECFR

European Economic Community – EEC

European Institute for Human Sciences – IESH

European Network Against Racism – ENAR

European Parliament – EP

European Union – EU

European Union Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia – EUMC

Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe – FIOE

Fédération Nationale des Musulmans de France – FNMF

Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations – FEMYSO

International Institute of Islamic Thought – HIT
Islamische Gemeinschaft Deutschland – IGD

Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland – ISLAMRAT BD / IRD

Koordinierungsrat der Muslime – KRM

l'Exécutif des Musulmans de Belgique – EMB

L’Institute Musulman de la Mosquée de Paris – IMMP

Le Comité Musulmans des Turcs Français – CMTF

Member States – MS

Muslim Association of Britain – MAB

Muslim Brotherhood – MB

Muslim Council of Britain – MCB

Muslim Parliament – MMP

Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion – DITIB

Union des Organisations Islamique de France – UOIF

Union of Muslim Organizations of UK and Eire – UMO

United Kingdom – UK

Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren – VIKZ

Zentralrat für die Muslime in Deutschland – ZENTRALRAT MD / ZMD
Abstract
Currently, the European Union is experiencing a highly contested process of Muslim immigration and integration. At the forefront of these contestations lies the concept of Political Islam, a concept which claims to accept democratic values and system of government through active participation. While examining Political Islam is of crucial importance, this concept was rarely studied in the past as terror attacks and radicalism occupied the majority of the public’s attention. Using different models of integration, this paper seeks to examine the preferred way to integrate Muslims into European society. Since the 1950’s, political Islam which supports participation in politics as a means to influence the social sphere, has been present in Europe. In the decades following the 1950’s, a federation of Islamic organizations was established and different institutions on the European level were founded. Examining political Islam, this thesis addresses the role of political Islam in the European Union and assesses its impact on Muslim integration into Europe. Using the FIOE as a case study, this thesis determines that while there is a role for political Islam in the European Union on both the national and European level as representatives for a portion of Muslim communities in Europe, it identifies diverse findings as to whether political Islam is a source or obstacle for societal integration. While connections and affiliation between the FIOE and the Muslim Brotherhood were proven they were not done in a formalistic approach. Therefore, questions about the aims of the FIOE’s workings in the European environment and its sincere aims still remain unrevealed to a certain extent.

Keywords: European Union; Integration; European Society; Muslim; Islamic Organizations; Representation; Political Islam; Muslim Brotherhood; FIOE; European level; Islamic Identity
Introduction to the thesis

1.1 Structure of the paper

The paper addresses the role of political Islam in the European Union (EU) and tries to connect it to the issue of Muslim integration in the EU member states (MS) and the EU itself. To do this, we will examine the different actors (EU and MS) approaches for integration such as multiculturalism and assimilation taking into account the large Muslim group size. We will hold a multi-perspective discourse on the integration of Muslims in Europe. During this discussion, we will examine the cases in which field integration plays a role and the extent to which it does so. We will also examine whether this integration is societal integration (in social and political terms). Specifically, we will assess whether Muslims do receive the rights they deserve, whether they are incorporated into European society as equal-rights citizens, and whether many Muslims are considered second-class citizens by other European citizens and even discriminated against as a religious minority.

Following this, we will examine a variety of Islamic organizations on the national level utilizing examples from France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK). Aside from studying the history of their development, their purported support base, and their main objectives and interests, we will attempt to see whether they hold uniform perspectives and similarities or possess divergent beliefs.

Next, we will address two basic concepts: 1) Islam as a religion and 2) political Islam as a political ideology. The foundation to understanding political Islam will be provided. The above differentiation is important since a lot of researchers mix the two concepts therefore from the beginning it already raises a lot of questions.

We will then briefly examine the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood movement. This will be done in order to determine whether the Egyptian model can affect our understanding of Islamic movements in Europe. Finally, we will discuss different concepts of political Islam in Europe in a form of a case study.

After discussing the above pillars we will have an in-depth study of the main case study on the European level, the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE). The FIOE is an extremely interesting and important case study due to its complex nature. The FIOE does not solely function on the European level but
interacts with different European and national level branches of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and is even considered by some to be connected through various links to the global MB movement. That said, the nature of its relationship with the Egyptian and global MB movement is very controversial and indefinite. Furthermore, the European environment, in which the FIOE operates, is unique since, for example Muslims in Europe are a minority in a more secular environment with a non-Muslim majority.

We will track the stages of integration of the FIOE to fully understand its background, different ties, and figures. After that, we will discuss its objectives today and examine its different European level branches. By understanding the FIOE and its aspirations to act as the representative of European Muslims, we will strive to discover how the European level organization attempts to do so by preserving and even enhancing Islamic identity by confirming democratic values and not preaching violence.

Ultimately, by examining the FIOE case study, we will not only understand the role of political Islam in Europe and the organization’s nature but also attempt to answer whether the FIOE serves as a source or obstacle for the societal integration for Muslims in Europe.

1.2 Short historical introduction

In the period following the Second World War, massive immigration to Europe commenced. The primary reason for this immigration was economic, i.e., an increased demand for labor due to the booming economy. As the immigration continued, new cultures, ethnicities, and religions migrated to Europe. Many of the immigrants came from different former European colonies of the former European empires and through different working agreements in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Nonetheless, while the immigrants were from different countries, continents, and ethnic backgrounds, many of them were Muslim (Sen, 2007, p. 223; Vidino, 2010, p. 4).

At the start, when the phenomenon was mostly economic, citizens of the European nation states perceived the new immigrants mostly as temporary workers who will contribute to the booming European economy. Even though these reasons were
similar for the immigrants; they wanted to also earn a living and return to their homelands after a while, the interactions and relations were in the same direction (Vidino, 2010, p. 4). Simultaneously, on the European level, the Future European Union (EU) was experiencing an economic integration due to treaties such as the European coal and steel community - ECSC (1952) and the European Economic Community - EEC (1957). Throughout this period, while the EU was an economic player, it was not, at least on the international level, a political player. Due to strong national authorities and weak European institutions, different leaders who placed their nation-states at the forefront of their policy decisions adopted different integration approaches to deal with the Muslim immigrants. For example the assimilation, multiculturalism and exclusionist approaches. (A peaceful Europe – the beginnings of cooperation, 2012; Sen, 2007, p. 224; Kaya, 2009, p. 33-35)

During the 1970’s and 1980’s, despite tightened immigration, many immigrants remained in Europe and also reunited with their families and raised their children in Europe where new generations were born and interactions between them to the mainstream society became a lot more visible. Subsequently, political debates arose in interlinked discourses regarding immigration and issues of integration into the host society. These debates occurred on various societal levels ranging from debates among ordinary citizens to debates between decision makers (Vidino, 2010, p. 4). As the immigration phenomenon to Western European countries continued in these decades, events such as the Arab oil boycott, the ongoing integration of the European project to become the EU, international conflicts and the collapse of the Soviet Union, took place.

Today, Islam is Europe’s second largest religion, with estimates stating that between 15 and 20 million Muslims live in Western Europe.
Since having a more visible and stable presence, the Islamic world became more vocal in their demand for accommodation vis-à-vis their faith, asking to be granted an equal treatment such as received by other religious groups (Vidino, 2010, p. 5).

Large scale terrorist events at the beginning of the 21st century, which reached their peak in the World Trade Center attack on 9/11 and continued with bombings in
Madrid 2004 and London 2005, brought about a rising politicization regarding issues of Muslims living in Europe. At the same time, from a Muslim side, events such as the publication of the *Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie in 1989 and the Mohammad cartoons case in 2006, gave members of the Islamic community in Europe the feeling that they were not welcome, and in the worst case, that they were stigmatized and generalized as terrorists by the hosting society. It is important to note that in these years second and third generations of immigrants were being born as Europeans. Adding to that, different theories that were discussed at the time by scholars such as Huntington’s ‘clash of civilization’ and the concept of the ‘west and the rest’ did not help to reduce the flames when different events such as the ones mentioned above occurred and influenced the relationship of the diverse European society (Kaya, 2009, p. 4; Sen, 2007, p. 218-219).

Today, in the 21st century the phenomenon of integration is highly relevant not only because it did not exist to the same extent in the last 60 years but also since immigrants third generation immigrants are being raised in the European Union. While this paper deals with Muslim integration in Europe, the general lack of integration deeply impacts society as a whole (Sen, 2007, p. 216-219, 223-224).

The lack of integration for the Muslim minority in different aspects of life in a majority of non-Muslim hinders possible utilization of religion as political ideology that might come in times with contrast to basic set of values of the European Union environment. Therefore, this paper deals with the role of political Islam in the European Union and tries to examine if it is a source or obstacle to societal integration.

### 1.3 The puzzle

The research subject of this thesis, as delineated in the title, is the “Role of Political Islam in the European Union: Source or Obstacle for Societal Integration?”

This thesis approaches the subject by defining and elucidating the processes of integration for Muslims in Europe, both as it concerns positive and also negative results, and the possible impacts on the Muslim minority in the European Union. The thesis considers what is political Islam and focus on a specific organization, the FIOE.
Examining this organization’s different characteristics, some of its roles in impacting the Muslim community in Europe, and whether its actions influence positively or negatively, widely or hardly at all on Muslims in Europe, this thesis attempts to shed light on whether the discussed actions are a source or obstacle to societal integration. This topic is not only contemporary and relevant but also extremely important in order not only to understand possible mistakes that might have been made in the past, but also to understand different present factors that might have a wide influence in the upcoming future in the relationship between Muslims and some of their representatives, European authorities, and rest of European society. The research goal is to approach a better understanding not only regarding Muslim’s roles and potential influence but also to better understand how policy makers on the national and European levels should engage with this rising phenomenon of confronting and co-habituating with organizations whose beliefs are often potentially ‘debatable’ in the context of the European Union. Even if the research results cannot fully encompass the spectrum of productive or right answers regarding what and how policy makers should act, possible answers in this paper should at least give us certain knowledge as to which decisions should be avoided or approached with caution in order to create better integration for Muslim communities that live in the European union.

1.4 Limitations of this research

There are some possible methodological problems that characterize this kind of unique research regarding Muslims in Europe. First, despite evidences of common features for Muslims living in the EU, it is difficult identifying one who considers him or herself a Muslim and one’s socio-economic characters.

The second problem is in regards to the differences in the national approaches for integration that have also impacted how the identity of individuals is being recorded in different statistics. A third problem is the way that nations collect data on their Muslim immigrants, with a certain exception for the UK, since the census on religious identification in 2001. Today there is no accurate number regarding Muslims in Europe. As a result, future projections on size of Muslim communities in Europe are based on indirect estimations (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 33-34; Irving Jackson, 2009, p. 235).
1.5 Research question and Methodology
The research question of this dissertation is derived from the topic itself and will answer the question, “What is the role of Political Islam in the European Union? And is it a source or an obstacle for societal integration?” The paper will also focus on certain aspects of political Islam with the case study of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe while applying the research question to the case study.

The methodology of this paper will be one of discursive analysis and will be supported with academic research from various written and multi-media sources.

1.6 Definitions
1.6.1 Definitions for Political Islam:
1. According to the change institute, which presented a study to the European Commission regarding violent radicalization, the definition for Islamism/political Islam is: “Islamism is a precise ideology that justifies the requirement to consider Islam both as a faith-based way of life and as a political theory of the state (al-din wa-l-dawla). It seeks to establish an Islamic state, however defined, in which the sovereignty of the divine is affirmed and legislation is based on the Shari’a, however defined. It entails both a process of politicisation of the faith and reification of the moral and legal norms within Islam. The process involves the establishment of political parties and movements that seek to form a government either through violent revolution or (/and) democratic elections” (Change Institute, 2008, p. 139).

2. Reza Simbar in her paper about Political Islam and International System defines Political Islam as: “Islamism and political Islam broadly refers to those who are committed to applying an ideological vision of Islam in the socio-political sphere. They do not recommend violence, and they want to use political means to reach their objectives” (Simbar, 2009, p. 111).

1.6.2 Definitions for the concepts of Role, Source and Obstacle:
According to Princeton’s University WordNet which is a lexical database for English (Princeton, 2012):

Role is: “normal or customary activity of a person in a particular social setting” (WordNet, Definitions for role, 2012).
Source is: “the place where something begins where it springs into being” (WordNet, Definitions for source, 2012).
Obstacle is: “something immaterial that stands in the way and must be circumvented or surmounted” (WordNet, Definitions for obstacle, 2012).

1.6.3 Definition for Societal Integration:
According to Irving Jackson (2009) integration is “a society’s ability to integrate all its members into new arrangements of active citizenship that ensure the long-term well-being of all in a diverse society (Irving Jackson, 2009, p. 227).

Understanding the definition of integration and its different aspects from the side of the society, trying to refer to integration of Muslims and continuing with Irving Jackson (2009) definition: “Taking account of the European Parliament’s Benchmarking Report and the related official EU and national documents that preceded it, this paper thus assumes the “integration” of “Muslims” to refer to moves towards a state in which individuals self-identifying as Muslims are not prevented from fully accessing social, economic, and even political structures due to their religious and cultural practices, even while these individuals are seen as actively adhering to the codes of behavior laid down by the state” (Irving Jackson, 2009, p. 228). We will refer to it as societal integration.

1.7 Assumptions
There is an understanding that the topic is complicated and will not necessarily bring one decisive answer. Many sub-topics are interlinked and related to the different phenomenon of political Islam with integration of Muslim communities in Europe (which are also linked through different histories of nation states that impact their societies). In addition, the intervention of global agenda and geo-politics into the European political and social spheres adds another difficulty in reaching a unified, single answer. Nevertheless, we have made some preliminary assumptions in the beginning of this paper to try to find out whether they exist and if they do, to try to explore to what extent.

1) We assume that there is a decisive role for Political Islam on the nation state level, and therefore it will be found under the umbrella organization of the FIOE. In that
In this case, there will be also a role for Political Islam at the European level, namely striving for both social and political integration through ideology and agenda.

2) While at the outset it might seem the words ‘source’ or ‘obstacle’ contradict each other, we will understand that since societal integration is comprised of social and political integration, it does not contradict necessarily that we on the one hand, will have a source, and on the other hand, an obstacle. Furthermore, it also depends on which actor we are discussing since or societal integration can be perceived as a source for Political Islamic movement, and it might serve as an obstacle for the Muslim community in terms of social integration into the mainstream society.

3) We assume that political Islamic movements are not only preserving but also enhancing the Islamic identity of Muslims in Europe by emphasizing the common denominator of Muslim immigrants –their religion— and by doing that there is a certain influence of the religion in order to use Islamic concepts and achieve unity among the diverse Muslim societies in Europe.

4) Political Islam as a political ideology, at times clashes with secular values and can be seen as contradicting some of the most fundamental sets of beliefs given by democratic values, i.e. headscarves, which has caused heavy debates in Western Europeans states, most notably of late in France with political reforms being sought against full-face covering.

5) FIOE is linked to a certain political ideology, linked to the global agenda of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has certain goals in indoctrinating Muslims and giving them the platform of a certain separation from the mainstream society. This can create separation of identities between Muslims and the rest of European society. The actors connected to the organization are doing so in order to use religion as a political vehicle to reach representativeness in Europe in a direct or an indirect way and to achieve their goals by saying they are taking care for social integration and defending the rights of Muslims in Europe in front of European authorities.

6) There are many stakeholders in this situation not only from within the European Union and European society but also from different Muslim countries and
organizations that want to influence Muslim societies in Europe for their own national, religious, or representational interests.

1.8 Hypothesis
We will strive to show that a decisive role of a political Islam entity in the European level such as the FIOE might bring a source for political integration in the European level. However there will be an obstacle for social integration of Muslims in the European society while it can serve as a source of social integration for different Muslim communities to merge into a bigger and more unified Islamic European society with a stronger Islamic identity.

1.9 Operationalization and explaining the process of the paper
The research paper will be divided into four main parts. After this introduction and setting up of definitions, the next section will deal with matters of integration for the Muslim communities in the European Union from different perspectives. The next section will discuss different Muslim (or Islamic) organizations in Europe at the nation state level and their characteristics. Through a connecting chapter about the roots and concepts of political Islam, we will move forward to the European level and apply the main research question to the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE), trying to understand its nature, role, and whether it serves as source or obstacle in matters of societal integration. The last part of the paper will conclude by checking whether the first assumptions were true or false, elaborating on the findings that were found, possible predictions, and final conclusions.
2 Discourse on integration of Muslims in the EU:

In this chapter, we will analyze the integration of Muslims in Europe. We will identify and reveal issues that are developing well and others that are barriers that obstruct the possible integration of first generation immigrants and the second or third generations. This will be done to understand whether integration of Muslim society in the EU functions or on the contrary lacks positive functioning that might lead to negative results of integration within the host society. Also, although most articles discuss Muslim communities in specific countries, we might be able to draw parallel similarities at the nation state level to the Muslim community at the European level.

2.1 EU Integration Policy: Does it exist?

As per the EU website with regard to the topic of integration, the EU’s mandate to promote integration is derived from treaties, the European council programs, and the Europe 2020 strategy. While the founding treaties rarely referred to the integration of immigrants, the treaty of Lisbon, which was implemented in 2009, was the first to provide a legal basis in matters for promotion of integration at the EU level by saying that European institutions may provide incentives to support and promote integration of legal third country nationals, excluding any harmonization of the laws and regulations of member states (The mandate to promote integration at EU level, 2012).

The charter of fundamental rights, which was legally binding since 2009 within the treaty of Lisbon, is another segment in promoting integration of minorities in more of a protective way regarding fundamental rights. The charter applies to all institutions of the European Union and to all member states in the EU who are implementing EU law in matters of regulations or directives, which will be manifested in national law. In other cases according to the EU, fundamental rights should be guaranteed under the laws and constitutions of the member states when the charter applies itself in some provisions to all people and in other provisions to EU citizens only (The mandate to promote integration at EU level, 2012; EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, 2012).

It is also mentioned that since 1999 the European council, through different meetings, has called for a common immigration policy which will include and enhance better integration of third-country nationals through better coordination of national integration policies and EU level initiatives which will be framed and based upon
common basic principles and will become the cornerstones for future initiatives of the EU in this specific field which so far is under the competence of the member states. In 2009, the European council even expanded its last statements by stating “Member States integration policies should be supported through the further development of structures and tools for knowledge exchange and coordination with other relevant policy areas, such as employment, education and social inclusion” (The mandate to promote integration at EU level, 2012). Doing so will enlarge the competences of the commission as the entity which will coordinate a common framework that member states will utilize and from which results will also be able to be monitored to see if they have been successful or unsuccessful (The mandate to promote integration at EU level, 2012).

The Europe 2020 Plan, which is a growth strategy, was adopted in 2010 by the European council. It expresses strategic targets of the EU and shares common objectives for member states and the EU. Some of the provisions, which relate to immigrants’ integration, aim for higher employment rates and better integration of legal immigrants, improving education level and promoting social inclusion through the idea that reducing poverty will lead to less exclusion. The second part of the strategy relates to the member state level and the employment policies of member states in terms of integration of immigrants, while discussing increasing labor force participation through values of equality in integration in the labor market and also removing barriers for new immigrants. This includes other issues such as education, non-discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities, and affordable access in matters of different public services (The mandate to promote integration at EU level, 2012).

The European Union’s website further elaborates regarding different actions that were and are being taken by the EU in order to make integration function better. Some basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU were adopted in 2004 by Justice and Home affairs council which are considered to be the foundations in the field of integration from the EU perspective, and talks about the process of different accommodations for immigrants and residents of the EU in matters of basic values, employment, awareness of the host society and its different characteristics like education and access to institutions. The common agenda for integration, which was presented in 2005, was a follow up to the latter and provided a framework for the
implementation of the common basic principles developing more tools and instruments for better integration. The last development in this matter was presented in 2011 by the commission as the European agenda for the integration of non-EU migrants in matters of actions to be taken in order to increase societal integration in many fields such as economy, society, culture, and politics. There is an understanding, that although there is a lot of potential for benefiting from migration and diversity, there is also a challenge: Though authorities can take the measures which in their opinion will best help them achieve integration process due to different national approaches of integration. One can see that there is also a gradual rising intervention from the side of European institutions such as the commission in matters that until not long ago were considered to be mostly national. In this matter, the EU also identified modules and common indicators in order to monitor the results of the different nation integration policies. Nevertheless it seems that issues of integration remain under the competences of the nation states while the EU is trying to bring a certain framework of possible operation (EU actions to make integration work, 2012).

In addition, despite all of the actions and the EU mandate for integration, it’s crucial to note that regarding minorities, the commission has no general power. This means that in the course of minorities besides binding treaties of the EU, the MS are the central actors holding the competences. This is particularly relevant in matters that relate to issues such as recognition of minority status, self-determination and autonomy. Nevertheless, MS are obliged to guarantee minorities the fundamental rights that are protected in different EU treaties and international law (Minorities, 2012).

Different approaches are being taken to promote integration on different levels starting from ministerial conferences through network of national contact points that have an exchange between MS and the EU, establishing a European Fund for helping member states with better integration of newcomers and creating a European integration forum. It seems that many of the actions are being taken as an initiative of the commission, which includes different levels of organizations in its plans. There are also European integration modules that are planned to be adjusted to the different MS approaches and which will focus on dimensions of integration process. These modules are being prepared through a continuous dialogue between the commission
to representatives from the MS governments and different organizations. Another development was the setting up of core indicators that are aiming to reinforce the learning process of the European Union, though its results will be presented in 2013. Taking the policy areas into account—namely employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship—we will try to include them and explore to what extent societal integration functions within the Muslim community in the EU. As a result we will also try to determine whether integration for this community exists in large or low scale (EU actions to make integration work, 2012).

**2.2 EU’s Member State approaches for integration – France, UK & Germany**

Since European integration policy is primarily a frame and built on a common principle, in matters of the de-facto process of integration, the nation states are the main actors. According to Alam (2007), two broad models of integration exist: The assimilation model and the multicultural model. According to the assimilation model, also known as the national-majoritarian model, the integration of the minority means its assimilation into the dominant majority culture. In other words, there is non-recognition of the minority culture in the public sphere. Integration distinguishes between modes of action in the public and private spheres. In the public sphere, integrated minorities must embrace the nation’s ideals and values and identify with the common culture of citizenship, which is dictated by the majority’s definitions. In the private sphere however, minorities can continue to adhere to their different ethnocultural background. In contrast, the multicultural model states that integration occurs through equal recognition of minorities’ cultures and religions in the public sphere and minorities have the right to negotiate their personal identities within the context of the state it lives in, while supporting and authorizing the issue of the territory it lives in and it is loyal to. While defining these models, Alam (2007) states that absolute adherence to either of these paradigms can stall and prevent a true process of integration and true and honest interactions between the segments of society (Alam, 2007, p. 241; Kostakopoulou, 2010, p. 831).

European MS, which are under the EU, are diverse and different in their attitudes towards integration of minorities in general and Muslims in particular. Fuess (2007) argues that the countries try to fit the Muslim communities into their frameworks of rules, which evolved as a result of each state’s distinct history and particular dynamic
between the state and the church in matters of religion. According to Fuess (2007), there are four main approaches of integration of Muslims in Western Europe today. While we will now present the approaches, we will emphasis the situations in the main three countries of this paper- France, Germany and UK (Fuess, 2007, p. 216).

The first model is the Laïcité model, which exists in modern-day France. This model calls for strict separation between church and state and dictates that the state is religiously neutral. This model was also designed as the assimilationist model to achieve and maximize national cohesion to also enhance French national identity as a ‘French First’ model (Fuess, 2007, p. 216; Kostakopoulou, 2010, p. 831). The model recognizes the legitimacy of collective identities, however it does so only outside of the public sphere. In turn, diverse ethnic and religious groups do not possess special privileges in public policy or special protection due to their existence as minority groups in any way (Schain, 2010, p. 207). Schain (2010) argues that this model of integration is the best-defined model, due to the fact that it evolved in response to waves of immigration from North Africa (Schain, 2010, p. 207).

The second model, according to Fuess (2007), is the Religion For All model, which can be seen as multiculturalism. This model is practiced in modern-day UK. According to Schain (2010), the British multiculturalism approach evolved out of a political compromise regarding immigration policy and active anti-discrimination policy. Roy Jenkins, former Home Secretary said in 1966: "I do not think that we need in this country a melting pot…. I define integration therefore, not as a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance" (Schain, 2010, p. 211).This model is described by the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, which in 1997 described the status of the UK as a "community of communities" (Schain, 2010, p. 212). In this model, the state provides religion for all in schools and assists in enabling the establishments of private religious schools while not officially recognizing them through the constitution’s official recognition of religious communities (Fuess, 2007, p. 216; Schain, 2010, p. 211-212).

The third model is known as the Official Recognition model. This model enables countries to constitutionally allow the official recognition of new religious
communities. While Germany is under this category unlike other countries it does not apply the recognition for Islam (Fuess, 2007, p. 216-217; Vidino, 2010, p. 160).

2.3 Discourse about Muslim’s Integration

In this chapter, we will start with a small introduction regarding the Muslim communities in Europe and follow up with a scholarly discourse about integration of Muslims in Europe. We will try to identify and reveal what are the issues that function well in this matter and what are the different barriers that characterize first generations of immigrants or second and third generations of Muslims born in Europe. This will be done in order to try and understand whether integration of Muslim society in the European Union functions in a proper way or on the contrary, lacks positive functions that might even bring negative results of integration with the host society. Since a large part of the literature review mostly discusses communities of Muslim immigrants in France, Germany and the UK, there will be an induction of Muslim communities in the specific countries to an understanding of reality on the European level, i.e. meaning in the rest of the respective countries. This will be possible due to the fact that common features and similar lines were found in characteristics between Muslim communities in the respective countries.

Before entering into the field of integration, it is important to mention that there are no actual and precise numbers regarding the exact number of Muslims living in MS or in the EU due to prohibitions in national laws of collection on data of religious, racial, and ethnic identity of its citizens. This creates challenges in demographic research all around the EU. Furthermore, there are only different estimations since most countries do not require religious identification. These estimations conjecture between 13-25 million Muslims out of a population of 450 million inhabitants in the EU, constituting one of the largest and religiously most active minorities on the European continent with significant numbers in France, Germany, and UK. It can be remarked there are different unofficial estimations that talk also about higher numbers. As a result of this inaccuracy, many disagreements arise which influence a way of thinking regarding not only the size but also the potential influence of the Muslim society in the European union (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22385; Change institute, 2008, p. 18; Fuess, 2007, p. 215-216; Khan, 2000, p. 29, 38).
Another aspect, which is important before we try to understand and discuss integration, is that in many aspects the Muslim community in the EU is not one but actually set up out of diverse communities. Thus when on the one hand Islam is held as a religion, this must also be considered with the diverse national, ethical, socio-economic backgrounds of citizens and the different currents of belief within the immense and diverse religion of Islam. Therefore, one should also be cautious before stigmatizing and generalizing or claiming that in all matters there is a one united Muslim community and Muslims are all the same (Khan, 2000, p. 38).

In looking at Muslim immigration and integration in Europe there is also a fundamental need to understand the historical context in which Muslims migrated to each country in Europe. Also of importance, is a parallel understanding of the host societies which can show different reactions on the integration of the Muslim community as a minority which was also shown briefly above in this paper. According to Khan (2000), the different past interactions and relations in the time of imperialism and colonialism still influence some attitudes of the European mainstream towards non-European people. Some figures like Edward Said, who supported the concept of orientalism, might even claim that there are contrasting opinions about Islam concerning its civilization, values, and perception, which continue to exist in the relationship within the European Union among European people and Muslims (Khan, 2000, p. 32-33). Whether we agree or not with Said’s argument or other theories similar to his, this is a important for understanding terms like conscious and subconscious affect that should not be underestimated by different researches who are trying to frame issues of societal integration since this can also be another important factor regarding perception (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445; Khan, 2000, p. 33-34).

When talking about integration, we should ask ourselves if tolerance towards minorities means real acceptance as equal or as merely being tolerated and even inferior. It is most likely that different actors will think and estimate this matter differently, but what will also be noticed is that the difference between theory and practice in matters of tolerance and even acceptance has a wider gap than may seem (Khan, 2000, p. 31, 33).
Events such as the terrorists attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) and the Mohammed cartoons (2006), have raised to the surface some doubts in the public eye, especially in hosting societies regarding the willingness and honesty of Muslim immigrants to assimilate into society or live in sustainable peace and co-existence within the western societies culture and values of the European Union. In addition, these events were politicized by political figures, which for their own interests have often heated the debate and brought forth severe generalizing of a whole community, even if they did not support the attacks (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445).

As noted, Muslim communities in Europe are diverse in their social, economic, and cultural backgrounds even within themselves (Khan, 2000, p. 37); however, different events challenged according to some the willingness of Muslims to accommodate and supply real integration to their respective European societies. As a consequence, this has become more challenging to the mainstream society and also to the various European authorities in the different levels in finding the right formula. The complicated relationship of that consists of inequality in majority-minority relations. Another problem from the side of the host society is that it can lead to an extensive lack of integration when people consider Muslims an alienated minority with an opposed set of values and beliefs to the majority of society. Even when the state will not support this, matters of everyday life can be made by the attitude of the citizens themselves while Muslims in the diaspora are experiencing relations with a non-Muslim majority (Khan, 2000, p. 30). Additional factors such as social exclusion and unemployment can lead to fear from policy makers regarding the failure of integration and a rise of radicalization. This might bring consequences that when political claims of Muslims arise, they might be perceived as potential threats to issues of European identity. Therefore, it seems that different factors are triggering each other and causing reactions from multiple groups which are not perceived in a good way and can bring different chain reactions from the different actors (Boubekeur, 2008, p. 85-86). Here within, and given the above information, this paper divides the different results into two main fields of integration, social and political, while the social field also contains subfields of economic integration to labor market and cultural integration.
In matters of Social integration it was found by Khan (2000) that interactions of Muslims with the majority society had led the first group to feel alienated (Khan, 2010, p. 38). Different terrorist events in Europe as well as the 9/11 attacks on US soil have mobilized social and political relations toward the Muslim community within the European Union, while by some the existence of a Muslim threat was perceived to have reached a new peak (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384). While it is being claimed by Adida et al. (2010) that different studies find no special problems in matters of integration or behavior for Muslim communities in Europe, other authors have managed to find differences in patterns of integration between Muslims and non-Muslims. For example, it was discovered that Muslims integrate in a slower way than non-Muslims (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445). In addition, it was found in matters of religious identity, that a Muslim born in the UK and even having lived there for a period of more than 30 years is comparable to a non-Muslim immigrant who had just arrived (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445). Contrastingly, vis-à-vis religious identity, it was found that higher levels of income and higher job qualifications seem to be interlinked with higher levels of religious identity for Muslim immigrants (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445). Another fact about social integration and living in segregated neighborhoods is that it was found that this kind of neighborhood did not deliver any evidence to breed intense religious identity for Muslims and that intense identities occur more in mixed neighborhoods. This might relate to the fact that in a mixed neighborhood a person might feel more different and show consciously or unconsciously that he is different; unlike in a more homogenous environment where the person knows his levels of identity within his own group. Continuing this issue, it was also found that Muslims who live in more ethnic segregated areas have higher unemployment rates (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384; Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445-447, 450).

Regarding education, data revealed that Muslims are on average less educated than other groups living in host countries (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 447). Further it was evidenced by the European Union monitoring centre for racism and xenophobia (EUMC) and the European network against racism (ENAR) that people with Muslim backgrounds are less likely to succeed academically (Change institute, 2008, p. 18).

While cultural integration lies under the broad definition of social integration, it is being noted that despite the secularization process that Europe and European people
undergo, it seems that the myth of Christian Europe still exists to a certain extent or notably rises mostly when there are clashes with Islam. As a result, it automatically also relates to the past relationship between Christian Europe and Islam which was not always peaceful. This recognition of past can motivate and inflame reactions or have a spillover effect beyond the borders of the European Union to other districts around the globe mainly with Muslim societies (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384). Considering that and relating to past events in the 21st century, a study from 2009 which was conducted by the open society institute found that a racial and religious prejudice exists today toward Muslims in a higher level than 5 years ago. Also in the last study, a very high percent of questioners claimed this is also to be considered as another obstacle for social integration (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384). According to Khan (2000) on the other hand, Muslims suffer from religious discrimination on the basis of their religion and not necessarily upon racial basis. Therefore when Muslims are being perceived in broad and generalizing definitions, such as an enemy from within, this does not contribute in creating and maintaining an environment that might serve as a platform for sincere integration and warm relations between the different segments of the society. This might also create an extreme in attitudes on both sides and set up greater barriers for the relations in different matters and also lead to a dangerous way in perceiving the other (Khan, 2000, p. 36).

While once discussions in Europe were more debated in economic terms due to the ageing European population and the fact that Europe needs labor force, it seems that the debate shifted mostly to matters of benefits and cost from the Muslim society in terms of cultural diversity and its different impacts on the European society for good and bad (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445). By the findings of the UK national survey of ethnic minorities among different cultural-ethnic groups, it seems that the percentage of Muslims having an intense religious identity is roughly twice as large of that of non-Muslims. According to the study, the fact that Muslims have almost twice the probability of having marriage arranged by their parents than non-Muslims shows also that high religious identity might come as an obstacle for social integration from within the Muslim community (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 445-447). Searching for a more positive aspect of Muslim integration in Europe, according to Waardenburg (2003), there is an increase in the number of women that have been more integrated to the labor market in Britain. This can show the evolvement in the role of Muslim women
to be more independent than before in the Muslim family. There is also an increase in Muslim women’s organizations, which operate parallel to the men’s organizations, while women allow themselves to play a greater role in the public sphere as representatives. This might indicate a changing and better social integration for Muslim women within the overall society which also brings women a different position and way of thinking in their private lives (Waardenburg, 2003, p. 315-318).

Continuing with economic integration in the labor market, it is noted by the data of Adida et al. (2010) and Bisin et al. (2008) that there are more social barriers to Muslims than others in integrating to this crucial market since labor supplies money which supplies different ways to purchase and answer the needs of Muslims in the day to day living. According to Adida et al. (2010) regarding second-generation immigrants, there were no decisive conclusions to the question if there is a Muslim disadvantage in economic integration. This was also due to the problem that too many factors in the equation of diverse Islamic society do not allow researchers to isolate the religious factor (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384). Nevertheless, the results of their paper confirmed that anti-Muslim discrimination does exist with regard to the French labor market since it was found that a Muslim candidate for a job is 2.5 less likely to receive a job interview call back in comparison to his Christian competitor. As a result, one can say that based on religious affiliation, discrimination does exist and most likely will be also related to different racial, cultural and ethnicity issues (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22384-22385). Furthermore, in other articles it was found that Muslims on average have lower household incomes, and have more than double the probability to be unemployed, and that they are significantly poorer than Christian immigrants (Adida et al., 2010, p. 22386; Bisin et al., 2008, p. 447).

Although Muslims are poorer and less likely to become managers than non-Muslim candidates, those who do succeed and also live in areas with a lower unemployment rate show a stronger religious faith and higher sense of identity (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 450). It is also noted that a rise of specific anti-Muslim or anti-immigrants sentiment which becomes more and more noticed from the side of different segments of the mainstream society also does not help to nurture better social integration for Muslims but brings about opposite results between the groups and more complicated relationship (Change institute, 2008, p. 19).
In order to complete the discourse on societal integration, after dealing with social integration on its wide spectrum, we will refer now to the matter of Political integration. According to Waardenburg (2003), Muslims in Europe have managed to develop along the years a political consciousness and therefore participate in political life with representatives in different levels acting from political parties or different Muslim organizations (Waardenburg, 2003, p. 315-318). These Muslim organizations had also managed to integrate politically in tactical way with other organizations from different religions when for example issues such as presenting the theme of homosexuality in schools were in debate. In this matter at least, Muslim organizations could have more claim to represent Muslim parents and their agenda (Khan, 2000, p. 32). Even if there is to some extent a political integration of Muslims, it is noted by Khan (2000) that actually there is only a limited influence of Muslims on state policy. This is via issues such as education and the recognition of Islamic laws within the national and European legal framework and environment. This is also a major reason why Islamic organizations know that by claiming to represent the Muslim communities in Europe, they can achieve more political influence from decision makers since there is a lot of potential in representing or at least claiming to represent such an important community (Khan, 2000, p. 37).

There is another argument regarding the nation states, which claims that decision makers of nation states preferred to regard the Muslim communities as a collective Muslim existence, which contributed to the concept of homogenous religious identity. This might bring about an ongoing social barrier of integration since it can lead to mutual mistrust and dilemmas about Muslim values with regard to religious and cultural beliefs faced by both Muslims and non-Muslim segments of European society, since it was proven that the Muslim community in Europe is anything but a homogenous community (Khan, 2000, p. 30).

2.4 Conclusions of the chapter

While it was noted that the EU has its approach for integration and actions are being taken towards the integration of minorities and among them also Muslims, it seems that there is a wide gap between the idealistic theory of the institutions and the realistic reality regarding Muslims who are living in Europe in terms of social and
political integration. Furthermore, it seems that the integration pattern is more unique for Muslims than other migrant communities. The rise of religious identity within different concepts such as diaspora and majority/minority relation, adding to that the wide social context and the framework it is being taken in, shows that integration for many Muslims who live in Europe does not happen according to European and national expectations, standards, or wishful thinking (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 453; Khan, 2000, p. 42).

The different facts that were shown above contribute to the understanding that the Muslim minority in Europe is more unique in terms of integration whether because of actions being taken from the host society or cultural and ethnical differences from within the Muslim community, which widen the gap between the segments individually, or simultaneously and bring the results that Muslims integrate less and slower than non-Muslims (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 453-454).

Even when second generation Muslim immigrants have a lower probability of showing a high attachment to the culture of origin over time, this reduction is more emphasized to non-Muslims than for the Muslims. Furthermore, years spent in a host society (as in the case of the UK) were negatively associated with the level of religious identity for non-Muslims while in the case of Muslim identity it had no relationship, which indicates different attachments in integration to the majority of society (Bisin et al., 2008, p. 453-455).

As a result of the different and diverse data that was found and described in this discourse, we must further research ideology and different activities of political Islamic movements in Europe that claim to represent Muslims in Europe. We shall examine whether these understandings can help us find similar or other reasons for the decisive findings in terms of lack of integration for Muslim communities in Europe. We will discuss in the next chapter about Islamic organizations in France, Germany and UK and try to examine how these organizations were established, whom they represent and what their goals and interests are.
3 Portrait of Islamic organizations in the EU: 3 case studies on the national level

3.1 Introduction

According to Cesari (2007), more than 12 million Muslims live in main Western European countries. The phenomenon of immigration and permanent settlement of Muslims in Europe is relatively new and started mainly in the post-World War Two period at the beginning of the 1950’s. At this time there was heavy immigration from different Muslim countries. While the motives of immigrants were also largely economic, as time passed and some returned to their origin countries, another significant number of migrants decided to stay and live in Europe for diverse reasons. As a consequence, migrants and among them Muslim communities to a larger extent considered ways to live in Europe while at the same time preserving some of their norms and values. Simultaneously, the host societies did not necessarily prepare a functioning integration process for understanding those migrants who might stay in the respective countries. First generation Muslim migrants did not come with any kind of plan for organized religious activities neither did they call for full social and political integration. When family reunifications started to increase in larger scales from the 1970’s with arrival of women and children, the role of Islam in social and political relations with the country started to increase rapidly in European countries. This has led to founding more modern roots not only as a religion but also as having interaction with the host society. In that time from a European perspective, the EU was still mostly in its ongoing process of economic integration. In addition to that the lack of social engagement and absence of welfare facilities given by the states in this stage meant that not integrated Muslim migrants could use their faith as a place of comfort and belief in the new and less familiar homeland. Since the rural people are less educated and considered to be more conservative, the lack of integration and social-welfare by state institutions gave platform for religious organizations and enough space to enter to this vacuum. Thus, the understanding and reaction for the need of integration by authorities arrived late, following the realization of immigrant permanent stays and the reunification of families in the host countries. Not only that, but the European Union was only in the stages of its economic integration and was not yet referring to minorities, not to mention with legally binding abilities to this matter, and did not help to create a better and cohesive reality of integration for Muslims in Europe (Boubekeur, 2008, p. 86; Cesari, 2007, p. 110; Change institute,
As a part of relocating to another place, communities also detached from their cultural origins and created new diaspora identities in order to achieve social and political recognition. Though, at the same time, they also had to try to preserve their backgrounds. As a result, Muslims got involved in different levels of interaction towards their communities. These factors helped to give a fertile ground to establish new forms of identities and different movements that would rise and claim to represent Muslims in Europe (Khan, 2000, p. 37; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 31-32).

The progress with time and with access by Muslims to more social services has led to more engagement in the social arena. Also, Muslims as believers of this faith became more visible in the eyes of others than before. Islamic and Islamist movements started to rise more in an organized way in an attempt to represent different communities of Muslim minorities in Europe. They accomplished this also by establishing institutions and buildings in larger scale than before, such as mosques, schools and different structures that might serve the respective communities. Even representation through political parties came where successful lobbying helped to bring some changes in states’ policies on issues regarding Muslim communities (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 32).

As mentioned before, approaches for integration are different, and Muslim communities are diverse. Thus we will elaborate in this chapter various kinds of Islamic organizations that represent Muslim communities. Islamic activism started to take pragmatic forms at the local and national level in order to gain public support in favor of recognition to sensitive issues important to Muslims in the European continent (Khan, 2000, p. 38; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 32).

From the side of the people, Muslim citizens or residents had also begun to realize that as diaspora minorities they must engage in constructive dialogue with state and society organizations in order to achieve their goals. One of the possible vehicles for this was to use their place and status for their specific interests and establish different institutions and organizations (Khan, 2000, p. 37; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 31-32).
Talking about different Islamic organizations, we will explore now different Islamic organizations that arose in Western European countries such as the aforementioned colossuses France, Germany, and the UK. Understanding that Muslims in Europe originate from diverse multi-level backgrounds, we will see the variety of organizations that materialized to represent Muslim communities and why according to different method, agenda and backgrounds, at the national level it is almost impossible to find one single representative voice. We will examine their background and describe their main aims and whom they claim to represent. This while from the states’ sides, the organizations mostly experience barriers in their different attempts to reach social and political recognition (Irving Jackson, 2009, p. 226-227; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 25, 55-56).

3.2 France
The case of France is special due to laïcité, which means that Public life is secular, and under strict separation of church and state. Religion is a private affair and kept outside of public life. As a result, public life naturally is against any influence of religious institutions. In matters of Muslim representatives, initiatives were developed quite late compared to other European countries in terms of building prayer halls and mosques, for example. Estimations about the Muslim population in France range from around 4 to 5 million to 7-8 percent of the total population. This means France has the largest percent of Muslims in Europe. Most of them are of Maghreb origin. However, there is no reliable data on the number of Muslims in the country. Nevertheless, Muslims in the country and especially the youth among the community are more represented among the unemployed population of French society (Fuess, 2007, p. 217; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 35-36; Waardenburg, 2003, p. 318-322).

Islamic associations have formed several federations to identify and represent common interests vis-à-vis the state and French authority since the late 1970’s. During the 1990’s when the French government could no longer offer sufficient social and educational support, younger Islamists started to play a pivotal role and an important social and educational role in the poor suburbs of French cities. The organizations had to create space for Muslims living in a state and society that was proud to be secular. As a result, there is quite a wide spectrum of Islamic associations.
in France. Some of them still seek recognition as official representatives of the Muslim community

1. Union des Organisations Islamique de France (UOIF) - it was established in the year 1983 and is considered to be the strongest Muslim federation in the country. In matters of representation, it is formed out of mixed groups of figures from the Maghreb area in North Africa and has around 200 affiliated organizations. Considering interests, in terms of ideology, the organization is close to the Muslim brotherhood movement and the Tunisian spiritual leader, Rachid Ghannouchi (who is also the Tunisian president today) which can imply close ties with the Ennahda party in Tunisia. The interests of the organization aim for space for Islam in the public domain and it refuses to limit the role of religion to the private sphere. It is also claimed that one of the organization core ideas is to re-islamize young Muslims. In 2003, it became a pivotal actor in the CFCM, a representative body charged with the management of the Muslim religion in France winning 14 out of 41 council seats. The UOIF also manages the European institute of social sciences for training imams and religious educators from different European countries. The organization is the French branch of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE). It is also known that financial support is being provided to the organization by the Arab Gulf States, which can also imply from where some concepts of ideology are being imported (Amghar, 2008, p. 67-68; Cesari, 2007, p. 116; Maréchal, 2008, p. 62-63, 66; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 37).

2. Conseil Français du Cult Musulman (CFCM) – is an organization that is a representative board for Muslim worship. It was established in 2003 after a decade of negotiations between various organizations and political representation from French authorities. It is comprised of an elected national body, which is in charge of issuing principal statements, and is a partner with local and national public authorities. Its main interests are; defending the dignity and interest of Muslim worship in France, organizing exchange of services and information between the places of Muslim worship, encouraging a dialogue between religions, and ensuring a space for worship within the public space (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 37).
3. L’Institute Musulman de la Mosquée de Paris (IMNP) – includes more than 500 associations among its members. It was financed until 1993 by Saudi Arabia, however, today it is funded by its own members who are mostly of Moroccan origin. The organization was also always closely associated with many government initiatives and its leader played an important role in the establishment of the CFCM (Pèdziwiatr, 2007, p. 38).

4. Fédération Nationale des Musulmans de France (FNMF) – was established in 1985. In terms of representation and within the Maghreb community, it was based upon Moroccan networks as a counterbalance to the growing Algerian influences over the religion in the country. According to Pèdziwiatr (2007), it has about 70 affiliated organizations, some of which are also significant mosques on the outskirts. However, the number still does not get close to the amount of affiliated organizations of the UOIF. In matters of interests, some of the organization’s main aims are to meet the religious, cultural, educational, and social and humanitarian needs of Muslims (Pèdziwiatr, 2007, p. 38).

3.3 Germany

In Germany, estimations about the number of Muslims range between 2.8 to 3.2 million and 3.8 – 4.3 (Number of Muslims in Germany, 2012; Pèdziwiatr, 2007, p. 39).

Various groups of Muslim populations exist in Germany, though the majority constitutes Turkish people. Unemployment was noted as a big feature conditioning the lives of Muslims in the country (Pèdziwiatr, 2007, p. 39). Due to the German approach of integration, which was mentioned earlier in this paper, neither the state nor Muslims groups managed to appoint officials that would act as representative links between the two main segments, though there is an attempt to do so with the Islam Konferenz acting as a forum for dialogue since 2006. According to Pèdziwiatr (2007), “The traditional relationship between state agencies and the German churches has been used erroneously as the basis for interpreting the needs of Muslim migrant communities that remain diverse in origin and practice, unlike their German counterparts. The opportunities for contact between Muslims and states institutions are thus diminished, and there is, as a result, a serious under-representation of Muslims in national and local level decision-making processes…” (Pèdziwiatr, 2007,
Nevertheless, Germany remains a fertile ground for a wide range of representative Muslims organizations, which operate at social and political levels in different ways (Background - From an initiative to a common goal, 2010; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 39-41). The following organizations show the wide spectrum available in Germany:

1. Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ISLAMRAT BD / IRD) – The German Islamic Council - was formed in 1986 with the cooperation of the World Muslim Congress and other movements including the Islamische Gemeinschaft Deutschland (IGD). The organization is primarily comprised of members mixed ethnic backgrounds although members of Milli Görüs, an organization related to the FIOE, play key roles. According to its website, The Islamic Council sees itself as an Islamic community in a secular and pluralistic political system structure and it seeks recognition as a public body for Islam in Germany. In addition it seeks equality with the two major Christian churches and the Greek Orthodox Church, and seeks to be based on teachings of the Koran and the Sunnah including teachings of Islam to youth through a plethora of activities. The German Islamic Council claims to be committed to the unity of Islam in Germany by promoting cooperation and solidarity among Muslims and representing their interests in Germany (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 41; Selbstdarstellung, 2012; Über uns, 2010).

2. Zentralrat für die Muslime in Deutschland (ZENTRALRAT MD / ZMD) – The Central Council for Muslims in Germany. The Central Council for Muslims in Germany was formed in 1994 and currently has approximately 20 organizations and networks affiliated to it, representing around 700 mosques and communities in the country. This organization is composed of a broad ethnic base and, in turn, the organization represents Muslims with diverse ethnic backgrounds. Some of the the organization’s main interests are; improvement of the legal and material situation of Muslims in Germany and stimulating debate among the representatives of the member organizations. The Islamische Gemeinschaft Deutschland (IGD), one of the founding group-members of the council, is related to the Muslim Brotherhood. Furthermore, the IGD was involved in the establishment of the Coordination Council of Muslims (Koordinierungsrat der Muslime - KRM) which is a German level umbrella organization founded in 2007. This Coordination Council of Muslims comprised of
the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), the Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany (IRD), the Central Council of Muslims (ZMD), and the Association of Islamic Cultural Centres (VIKZ). On the European level IGD was also one of the founding members of the FIOE (Maréchal, 2008, p. 62-63; Mitglieder, 2012; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 42; Startseite, 2012; Über uns, 2010; Vidino, 2010, p. 165).

3. Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion (DITIB) – Created in 1982 by DIYANET (the Turkish directorate of religious affairs of the prime minister’s office). It claims to represent the Turkish version of controlled Islam. Despite its official connections with Turkey, the organization is one of few in Germany which receives positive public opinion and is perceived to be a legitimate partner for the German authorities. The organization also brings to Germany religious teachers from Turkey to keep the religious connection with the Turkish state. It’s important to note that the form of controlled Islam in Germany was not a part of the Turkish controlled Islam inside Turkey itself due to its secular policy and characteristics at least till the rise of Ragip Tayip Erdogan, which came to power in 2003. However, in Germany these Turkish organizations could operate freely among Turkish immigrants and have a boomerang effect of support for Islamist movements back in Turkey (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 42; Vidino, 2010, p. 165; Waardenburg, 2003, p. 322-325).

4. Avrupa Milli Görüş Teskilatları / Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs (AMGT/IGMG) – even when it was forbidden as an Islamist movement in Turkey, it was allowed to act in Germany. This organization is one of the most influential Turkish-Muslim federations in Germany and was established in 1972. It has a wide spectrum of activities starting from religious (qur’anic) classes to social and cultural activities and political/educational conferences while also is rich with institutions and claim to have 514 mosques communities. It has close links with the Refah party, the first Islamist party in Turkey, which was led by Necmettin Erbakan when different family ties between are also characterizing the leadership of the organization with the IGD. One of its core ideas is advancing and supporting a political vision of Islam. However, it is important to note that the organization remains ideologically diverse with the younger generation of the German Muslims whom are trying to utilize this entity to stake a claim in German society. Although so far the organization never attempted to establish a political party, it is under the close scrutiny of German
intelligence service which suspects this organization in being or at least having the potential of being hostile to the constitutional order of Germany. It is a pan-European organization with 87,000 members while 27,500 members are assessed to be in Germany. The organization is also one of the strong national branches under the European network umbrella federation in the European level of the FIOE (Change institute, 2008, p. 74; Merley, 2011, p. 32-33; Pędziwiatr, 2007, p. 42; Vidino, 2010, p. 153-154; Waardenburg, 2003, p. 322-325).

3.4 United Kingdom

Britain is home to a large community of Muslims, like the two other countries mentioned above. In fact, Islam with almost 3 percent of the population describing themselves as Muslims what makes it to the most common faith in Britain after Christianity. This came out as a result of the last census in 2001, which posed a question about religious identity. This was unlike other European countries in the EU which did not do this. Within the Muslim community of the UK, the largest part of Muslims is from Pakistan and from South East Asia who make up three quarters of the Muslim society in the UK. In terms of residence, they are not evenly distributed throughout the country and are concentrated mainly in particular regions and cities. Other characteristics about the Muslim population in Britain are that it is very young, and that Pakistani and Bangladeshi households tend to be larger, relatively double the size of the rest of Muslim populations. Other studies have also shown that once economic situations deteriorate, the unemployment rate of minorities will rise faster than that of the rest of society. Furthermore, it is noted the Bangladeshis and Pakistanis have two-and-a-half times more chances of being unemployed than the British population (a phenomenon which can also be traced in the French labor market) and nearly 3 times more chances of working in low-paid jobs. While Muslims are over represented in prison populations with almost 10% incidence, they are at the same time underrepresented in in social and political agencies (Pędziwiatr, 2007, p. 43-45). There are in the UK diverse Islamic organizations that exist even if operating mostly in indirect ways:

1. Union of Muslim Organization of UK and Eire (UMO) –This was the first national organization to be established, in 1970, by different representatives from different organizations. Though the number of affiliates grew along the years, the organization
was not influential enough to attract some other large organizations that were already also established in the country. In terms of representation, it also attempted to lobby in national government mostly via issues regarding Muslims at the local level. In terms of interests, its first objective was to bring Muslim unity in the country for realization and understanding of Muslim unity. Other aims and interests of the organization are in matters of coordination activities and in acting as a representative body regardless of the other Islamic competitor organizations (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 45).

2. Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) – this organization is an umbrella organization which is also considered to be a western brotherhood offshoot which gained status of prominence and influence within the Muslim community. It was officially established in 1997 following negotiations by representatives of more than 250 Islamic organizations from all different parts of Britain. Lately, it has been strengthened and is also considered to be one of the most representative organizations of Muslims in the UK. Currently, there are about 350 institutions affiliated with a wide range of agencies from the social sphere of Muslims both at the local and the national levels, which also testifies to high links of networking on all levels. It represents different Muslim groups who are ethnically mixed. The organization opposes the idea of being labeled as ethnic minority ideas and clearly and publicly presents and supports for its religious identification. The approach of the organization in dealing with civic affairs is one of constructive engagement using active and effective participation to deal with problems and to influence policies and outcomes in the political process (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 46; Maréchal, 2008, p. 66; Vidino, 2009, p. 173).

3. Muslim Parliament (MMP)- The organization was established in 1992 by Kalim Siddiqui who was also a vocal supporter for the Iranian fatwa to kill Salman Rushdie for his book *The Satanic Verses* in 1989. Contradictory to that, the organization published its Muslim agenda in which it called for the establishment of peace and harmony within British society, which was under social barriers in their opinion. The death of Siddiqui in 1996 shuffled the cards for the organization’s future and it has seemed to lose most of its active role due to ongoing rivalries for new leadership position in accordance to the deteriorating situation of the organization. In addition to
that and possibly as another outcome, the relationship with the Iranian state broke down out of this process (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 46-47).

4. Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) - The association was set up in the year 1997 by a group of Arabs Muslims who felt like a minority in a Muslim majority of South East Asians, which dominated the Muslim scene in the UK. The association claims to be an institution that was established in an attempt to fill in the gap in terms of Islamic preaching work (da’wa) and where there is a need for a representative Islam that encompasses all aspects of life. Having few members compared to other organizations, the association proved its ability to co-organize massive demonstrations in the past. Therefore, this association has most likely a larger influence than the number of its actual members. Some of its main aims and interests are to spread the teachings and culture of Islam, to drop gradually Islamic principles and values to the hearts of the Muslim community, to assist the Muslim community in maintaining its integrity and to foster within the ideals of Islamic conduct in different social spheres. Furthermore, it aims to promote an active role for the Muslim community in helping to solve the problems of British society. The web site of the Muslim brotherhood in English gives some further details and adds that the Muslim Association of Britain is: "An Islamic gathering in the United Kingdom that seeks to spread and preach Islam and care for and defend the interests of the Muslim minority" (Al Shikhi, 2008). It is also noted that the organization is a member in the FIOE when different connections connect it also to the Muslim Brotherhood movement (Al Shikhi, 2008; Leiken & Brooke, 2007, 107-121; Maréchal, 2008, p. 62-63; Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 47; Vidino, 2006, p. 6).

Since the scope of this paper does not allow us to go into details about other national examples regarding other countries in the EU, it is still important to acknowledge that they exist. For example, like organizations which claim to represent Muslim societies in Netherlands and Belgium, take care of their interest and protect their rights. It is also important to note that many of the characteristics regarding social integration that were mentioned before exist in other countries, such as lower-paid jobs and higher rates of unemployed. In the Netherlands as with the UK, Muslim organizations are not officially recognized by the state and represent Muslim communities as one voice. There are some organizations like Milli Görüs that operate as well in Germany and
therefore there are high possibilities they are linked between themselves and to the European umbrella organization of the FIOE. In Belgium, it is possible to notice different levels of integration between different ethnic Islamic groups. Even though Islam was recognized as legally-administered faith since 1974, there was always a problem at least until recently to establish one representative organization. Today, it is worth noticing that the EMB (l’Executif des Musulmans de Belgique - Muslim Executive Council) that was established in 1999 plays the role of a mediator between the state and Muslim communities in the country and also receives state subsidies since 2001. Another organization is the Arab European League (AEL) which is quite a new organization and was established in the 2000’s. Its main goal is to defend the civic rights of Arabs in Europe. Led by Abou Jahjah, the organization with some left parties set up a “resist” and ran in the elections in 2003, which showed an attempt at political integration at the national level in Belgium. Furthermore, Jahjah already announced the creation of a new political party named the Muslim Democratic Party. Understanding the significance of a European context and European Parliament elections, the organization started expanding its branches to other European countries as a part of its strategy and in order to become a pan-European representative force. The poor results of the movement at national level might suggest that the European level arena might be a more successful environment for this type of organizations who try to be a representative political actor (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 47-53)

3.5 Conclusions of the chapter

The processes of rising immigration and integration have led to the rise of Islamic organizations and associations that claimed to represent the diverse Muslim communities in Europe. After developing with minimalistic initiatives in the beginning, a second generation of Muslims being born in Europe was another factor that helped different movements to utilize their agendas in order to gain influence and enter the social and political arenas by representing those minorities and their needs in front of the authorities. Different attitudes from European society in terms of social exclusion also helped some Islamic movements to utilize the environment in order to form new and stronger identities and fuelled the desire of Muslims to be represented by their own representatives who would argue to maintain the interests of the Muslim minority in a non-Muslim environment. As political pressure on Muslim communities increases, Muslims are also pushed back into faith-led activities as one of the only
forms of civil rights they can defend in order to achieve better social integration. As seen in the chapter, with the diverse amounts of Muslim organizations at the national level, the interests and aims of these organizations have led to different initiatives that have grown with its scale through the years. Subjects such as prayer halls and mosques have been built to unite the local communities and preserve the Muslim values in life. Those have been imported by different Islamic and Islamists organizations. Religious education and fund raising for the local community has also been of main characteristics as we saw in some of the objectives of some Islamic organizations. As the scale of religious initiatives has grown and developed over time, other ideas have become of more value, such as creating Islamic institutions to educate and instruct future imams and religious teachers. However as we noted above, there are various Islamic organizations and therefore even though they are more or less influencing other agencies, it is not true to say that there is only one organization that is legitimate to represent the whole Muslim community on a national level (Pêdziwiatr, 2007, p. 56; Waardenburg, 2003, p. 313-314).

The establishments of various organizations can be more religiously identified to support different cultural social and religious activities for the immigrants and their born generations. We could notice that agenda can be diverse where some of them have a strong preaching character, calling Muslims to practice their religion better or be better Muslims, and other organizations have a religious/cultural activity orientation. Some are acting to represent relatively small communities and some as noted before are more influential and can be connected to European and even international networks, which probably will give them better platforms in trying to reach their goals in matters of social integration and reaching the politicians and authorities faster in matters of political integration (Waardenburg, 2003, p. 313).

As a result, the issue of political integration has put a high priority on most Muslim organizations. From a European point of view, it would be to some extent a good thing that European leaders could feasibly relate to one Muslim voice and not dozens in order to be able to deal with the needs and demands of Muslim communities. However, they were aware this was not the situation from the beginning since the Muslims communities in Europe are diverse and complex also with their inter
relations aiming for power and influence by representing others with diverse agendas on different scales (Pêdziwitrat, 2007, p. 32)

Understanding this perception of representations of Islamic organizations at the national level, their interests and aims, we will now try to understand the case study of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE), going back to the European level. We will analyze if there is integration at the national level and the European level. Furthermore, we will explore and try to understand the nature of this organization. Before elaborating on our case study and to be more knowledgeable about the concept of political Islam, we will first have a small connecting chapter. This will be an attempt to understand concepts and definitions of political Islam. After these necessary foundations, we will explore the story of the integration of the FIOE organization, how it was formed, who its representatives are, and what its aims towards Europe are. This will be undertaken while trying to find answers about its nature and if it acts as a source or an obstacle for societal integration.
4 Introduction to Islam, Political Islam and relevant concepts

4.1 Introduction

Religions in general are powerful and significant forces in society. Islam as a religion plays a central role for Muslims all over the world. This is first and foremost at the level of connection, which relates to Islamic definitions and pillars (even if politically diverse to some extent). Since it is so influential globally, it is likely that everything Islamic can be even more relevant for Muslim communities in the diaspora such as in Europe. As one of the largest religions, its message is a universal one, containing concepts such as the ummah for Muslims (the global Muslim community) which teaches the ability to spill over national borders, connect between different ethnic ties, socio-economic statuses, blood ties etc. Some other Islamic obligations and practices such as prayers (salat), charity (zakat) and the Islamic concept of godhood (tauhid), are in embodied in the practice and reinforce the unity of faith and fellow feelings for the universal community of the ummah among Muslims themselves. In spite of their internal diversity, Muslim communities in many respects can and do respond to broad Islamic issues by showing their belonging to this global community. In the case of Muslims in Europe, however, their social, religious, and political mobilization can also be regarded in day-to-day issues they face as ordinary citizens and not just regarding Islamic issues that occupy the Muslim community around the world. Therefore we can observe in different cases also different reactions (Abou El Fadl, 2005, p.113-121, 274; Khan, 2000, p. 37-38).

In Islam one can find many different examples regarding living in peace and co-existence with others, discussions about liberties, and different liberal principles. One of many examples is the sayings of Bakquir Muhammad al-Hakim who was the fifth shi’i imam. He said, “the well-being of people can only be achieved through coexistence” (Abou El Fadl, 2005, p. 208). Another example, taken from Omar, the second caliph, states, “who has the right to oppress people when god has created them free?” (Abou El Fadl, 2005, p. 184). According to Abou El Fadl (2005), religion can play a legitimate role in public sphere as long as it doesn’t show lack of respect or act oppressively towards other parts of society. When one claims Islam as their religion, it is also important to examine the true writings and not just interpret the Quran verses and discourse regarding non-Muslims according to one’s own ends and interests. This
is especially true with the case of Europe where a minority of Muslims lives with a non-Muslim majority (Abou El Fadl, 2005, p. 202).

There are prominent people who also take the purity of religion and interpret it for their political needs in different ways, or place those ideas above the working of the host society. It is no secret that this exists also in other religions and other countries as subjectivity is by nature variant. Therefore we will enter into the Political Islam arena in Europe and try to understand if the two sets of beliefs contradict or complete each other while we will also connect the European case study to one of the examples of this phenomenon which is called Political Islam.

4.2 What is political Islam & The beginning of Muslim brotherhood
In Islam, more than with other monotheistic religions, the divine and religious law is conceptualized as the will of God. This is why the religion became a very effective agent in organizing public life with the ability to define guiding principles for the behavior of the individual and the collective. The main role of the shari’a laws was and still is to promise a society, which will obey morality to every law, and this is in order to preserve the faith from corruption. When the joint life of Muslim communities in the world were exposed to different values and costumes during the 10th century, the religious wise known also as the Olama, were battling with reality in order to preserve the shari’a vision. The value-cultural struggle reached its peak in the 19th century during the modernization period which was exported by the Ottoman Empire through its immense territories while it attempted to create a new order which would more resemble the one of the west. The collapse of the empire after the First World War and the rise in the creation of modern nation states did not deliver answers to the Muslim masses and their needs (Hatina, 2007, p. 71-72). The parallel Islamic dimension since the second half of the 19th centuries brought intellectuals to support the efforts of reviving Islam through combining and merging foundations of neo-hanbalism (a current in the Sunni Islam) with emphasis on moral and religious issues through opportunist pragmatism. This shift, which is also known as modern salafia, tried to revive the Islamic belief while confronting challenges from the West to Muslim societies (Amghar, 2008, p. 68; Maréchal, 2008, p.21; Simbar, 2009, p. 109-110).
In the early parts of the 20th century, Hassan al-Banna who established the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt in 1928, understood the importance and the connection between patriotism and nationality in building an independent state. His addition to the concept of European independent states was in his mind another phase beyond the nation state which meant that nationality became a means and a vehicle for achieving the real goal, which was an Islamic state that would be based on the shari’a laws and restoring the Islamic caliphate. From a practical-theological aspect, the aim spoke about exchanging the infidel régime (Dar el Harb) in an Islamic religious state (Dar el Islam) as a base for Islamic-wide theocracy, which would spread beyond the modern nation state borders. The Islamic rule would reach to all aspects of society in the individual and collective sphere. Also, national feelings were aimed at achieving the superior goal served by Islam. From the perspective of the Muslim Brotherhood organization, there was and there is no conflict between these two aspects of nationality and Islamic law. The meaning in this phrase is that Islam can cure the sickness within which Muslims were living only by the divine law, shari’a law (Lia, 1998, pp. 21-22; Tal, 2005, p. 2-5, 16-17).

Therefore though political Islam can be defined in various ways, we will define it according to Reza Simbar who says: “Islamism and political Islam broadly refers to those who are committed to applying an ideological vision of Islam in the socio-political sphere. They do not recommend violence, and they want to use political means to reach their objectives” (Simbar, 2009, p. 111).

When one talks about fundamental Islam the direct meaning is the passion to go back to the sources of the antique religion in order to cure the modern sickness in which the Islamic society is under. Therefore, while trying to understand the core of The Muslim Brotherhood agenda and school of thought, we must understand the concepts of the movement from their world perspective. Through the years, the movement became the first political-modern fundamentalist movement in Islam. The movement also worked on the basis of winning the hearts of Muslims and as a social justice movement which supported the welfare of the Egyptian people and for political awakening (Kramer, 1996, p. 144; Maréchal, 2008, p.20-21; Tal, 2005, p. 2-4).

From the global perspective of the movement, goals would be achieved by a vibrant struggle against the Western influences which had influenced Muslim states, and therefore the battle in the West would destroy concepts of imperialism, political
parties, foreign companies, and the anarchy in the education system. The hope for result would be that the process would bring to an end the stagnation and depression that existed in the West. The Muslim brotherhood would strive to free the great Islamic state from the sovereignty of non-Muslim governments and Islamic minorities throughout the world. The directives of the Muslim brotherhood to help achieve the movement goals and fulfill the global vision are:

1. Preaching (da’wa) – given through various media options and by orders to the activists and representatives of the movement in Egypt or abroad.

2. Education (al-tarbiyya) – placing emphasis on Islamic education to the young generations which in the long run will stop western education. Al-Banna understood the critical importance of this field since education that can change society will be a pre-condition in order to take the regime and control Egypt.

3. Rigidness on practicing (al-toujiyya) – Islamic ways of life which will be acknowledged and implied in all social frames including areas of economy, education, health, law, and military.

4. Implementation (al-‘amal) – by establishing and founding educational economic and social institutions such as mosques, schools, and, charity organizations.

5. Prepare for jihad – the state will prepare a united front against intruders and enemies of Allah as a part of materialization of the future Islamic state (Tal, 2005, p. 20-22).

Furthermore, in the Al-Banna period there was an understanding that the final goal will be achieved gradually by winning and gaining the hearts of people of the masses and in preparing them to establish an Islamic theocracy. The movement rests in a large scale as a pan Islamist Sunni fraternity. There is no doubt that the corner stones and the pillars of the ideology of the movement are the basis of Islam on which everything else exists (Tal, 2005, p. 22-23).

4.3 Different concepts of the phenomenon of political Islam

There are different concepts for the phenomenon of Political Islam when one tries to explore the world of Islamist movements in the diverse Islamic context. Different scholars might refer to it by different names or look on it from another angle. What is also important is how one side perceives the results since there is a use of religion as a
political ideology in order to obtain certain results that will differ between groups (Change institute, 2008, p.5; Simbar, 2009, p.111)

Going back to our definition of Political Islam by Simbar: “Islamism and Political Islam broadly refer to those who are committed to applying an ideological vision of Islam in the socio-political sphere. They do not recommend violence, and they want to use political means to reach their objectives” (Simbar, 2009, p. 111). However, we must remember that the term Islamism contains a wide range of groups and opinions under its umbrella and therefore we must also be cautious in order to try and prevent any misunderstandings or irresponsible generalizing (Simbar, 2009, p. 112). Simbar (2009) adds that Islamism can also refer to the people who dedicate themselves to the mission of applying the vision of Islam in the socio-political sphere and also use the reference to define their political identities (Simbar, 2009, p. 112). Adding to that and referring also to Lorenzo Vidino’s division of 3 main groups of Political Islam or Islamism, violence is not necessarily the major concept in Political Islam and mostly will not relate to it or at least be a marginal part of this phenomenon.

It is important to emphasize that by using Vidino’s pyramid concept, there is no intention in the case study itself to claim that all Islamic organizations are radical. In the European sphere, it is important to understand this approach in order to try and determine later if our case study is within this scope.

According to Vidino’s article about Islamism and the west: Europe as a battlefield, (2009), using a pyramid metaphor, there is a larger circle to the concept of Radical Islam than what most people refer to it as, since radical is mostly connected with violence. He explains this concept by supplying us the pyramid of Radical Islam and tries to explain the differences between the segments of Radical Islam. By taking the metaphorical structure of the pyramid, he claims that at the top is the smallest part, the violent jihadists who are ready to fight and even die in order to achieve their goal. Simbar (2009) agrees with Vidino on the content by also saying this will only serve a marginal part of the whole. However, when violent actions are more marginal, the concept of Islamism is wider.

These groups, using a universalistic approach believe Islam should apply as the system that will bring the world order back to balance that was lost with the falling of
the caliphate. The second part of the pyramid according to Vidino (2009) is wider than the top but narrower than the base and being populated by Islamist organizations such as Hizbut-Tahrir that verbally express its opposition to systems of governments which do not apply and conform to the shari’a. On the other hand, those groups at least do not publicly express or support the usage of violent means. The last part of the pyramid which is the base of the structure according to Vidino is occupied by groups and movements that publicly declare they support democracy and integration of Muslim communities within the European mainstream of society, however some at least, working simultaneously in hidden ways in indoctrinating and sometimes also radicalizing European Muslims who do not integrate for different reasons. This can also give a platform for further radicalization. (Change institute, 2008, p. 4-5, 81-82; Simbar, 2009, p. 111-112; Vidino, 2009, p. 165, 167-168).

Since structure and course of actions regarding these different types of groups will be different, it will therefore set diverse questions about the true nature of organization before regarding how one should approach and engage with Political Islam (Vidino, 2009, p. 168.).

Combining the knowledge from the previous research about lack of integration, the different national level Islamic and Islamist organizations and the core of political Islam understanding, we will now try to search for answers for the nature of FIOE as an European level Islamist organization.

It seems that The FIOE is a significant component for this kind of Political Islam in Europe: combined from Muslim Brotherhood branches and other partners such as the Islamist movements of the Pakistani Jama’at-e Islami in the UK, UOIF in France, Turkish Milli Görüs in Germany and other organizations that were mentioned before in the national level and further more Islamic organizations and associations over Europe. The FIOE organization, making responsible decisions to avoid unnecessary confrontations that other parts of the Islamist pyramid would, instead opt for, choose a flexible and pragmatic policy of social and political engagement with the different authorities at the European level. Projecting and discussing moderation and acceptance of democracy, these brotherhood linked organizations in the national and European level operate indirectly or even with the active support of Western
governments. Even though, they use different tactics than the other two parts of the Islamist pyramid, Vidino (2009) claims that a large part of their worldview and aims are shared with the two other two groups which comprise the pyramid of Islamism. Therefore, many debates and questions arise regarding the nature of this political Islamist (according to our understanding of political Islam) or Islamic federation (according to its people) which constitutes many national operating Islamist organizations and whether or not they are the right representatives for the Muslim community in Europe (Amghar, 2008, p. 68-69; Change institute, 2008, p. 4-5; Merley, 2011, p. 29; Vidino, 2009, p. 168-171, 173; Vidino, 2010, p. 34).

Considered as the spiritual leader of the global and world-wide Brotherhood movement Yusuf al-Qaradawi once said: “Islam will return to Europe as a conqueror and victor, after being expelled from it twice – once from the south, from Andalusia, and a second time from the east, when it knocked several times on the door of Athens. I maintain that the conquest this time will not be by sword but by preaching and ideology” (Vidino, 2009, p. 165). We must always research and see if reconciling attitudes that many Europeans consider as moderate figure into the diverse world of the Muslim brotherhood stand in accordance to some of the core values of the European union (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 70; Merley, 2011, p. 29-30; Vidino, 2010, p. 92-93).

Although the exact numbers are unknown, the organization is recognized by many as the most influential Islamist movement. The movement slogan is that Islam is the solution while its core belief is that the social and political ideals are divine and were given by Allah. Therefore, it seeks to actualize this manifest destiny by reclaiming the Islamic caliphate (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 71; Leiken & Brooke, 2007, p.107-121). The movement spans across the globe in more than 70 countries with different branches and affiliates. Members and supporters of the movement founded and funded Al Qaeda, Hamas, and other radical Islamists groups. Ehrenfeld argues that already after the Iranian revolution in 1979 the Global Muslim Brotherhood arranged a campaign to spread Political Islam to the West by wrapping itself with a look of modernism (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 76).
Cesari (2007) argues that “in response to globalization, religions do not merely strengthen pre-existing identities (based on gender, family, or geography), but also offer resources for constructing new forms of individualization and globalization” (Cesari, 2007, p. 109). From this and the different contexts of integration, European Muslims are having in life according to Cesari (2007) a big challenge in need to integrate their Islamic tradition in a secular democracy which is also with a non Muslim majority (Cesari, 2007, 109-110).

Understanding the MB agenda, this concept of political Islam can give a better-globalized platform for the success or influence of this kind of Islamist agenda in the European sphere. While concepts of religion are also being introduced, this help also to attract Muslims in the diaspora to feel more connected for such movements to achieve more global influence (Cesari, 2007, 109-111).
5 Focus on the FIOE organization

At this point we will apply our main research question to the organization itself and answer “what is the nature of the FIOE?” Also, we will approach the question regarding whether or not it is a source or obstacle for societal integration?

Using the deep background that was noted before, and being supported with our introduction to the understanding of Political Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood movement, we will now explore the stages of integration for this European level federation of Islamic organizations. We will later on try to have a better approach in understanding the aims and goals and will elaborate on the organization’s different institutions operating at the European level.

5.1 Stages of Integration: From a mosque in Munich to headquarters in Brussels.

The Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE) is not an overnight development in Europe. There are deep wells that run through it, and in order to understand who the people that started this organization are, we must first try to understand the stages of integration for this organization. Just as the European Union started to integrate gradually between member states in the 1950’s to what it is today, so did the FIOE with its national organizations and branches.

Already in 1954 following the militaristic officers’ revolution in Egypt, Gamal Abdel Al-Nasser’s decision to ban the movement of Muslim brotherhood from activity while persecuting its members, forced some to flee and find asylum abroad. The movement members who managed to relocate fled mostly to Saudi Arabia and Western Europe. Unlike some of the movement’s members that were being put in prison or were executed, one of the movements top figures, named Said Ramadan did not have to flee since he was already living in Geneva, Switzerland after finishing his law studies from the Cologne University in Germany (Johnson, 2011, p. 40; Marèchal, 2008, p. 56-57, 59; Vidino, 2010, 27-29).

In 1959, during the cold war, there was the theory that “the enemies of your enemies are your friends” and Western German intelligence operation found out that USA cooperated in some ways with the Muslim brotherhood movement. According to Johnson (2011), Washington supported the brotherhood top figure Said Ramadan who was also the son in law of movement’s founder, Hasan al-Banna back at that time in
Europe. West Germany was also asked by its American ally to cooperate with Ramadan but refused to do so by underestimating his potential influence and at the same time concerned from negative impacts of having this kind of relation (Johnson, 2011, p. 39).

While at the same time Europe started receiving influx of Muslim immigrants from its former colonies for cheap labor, other members of the global brotherhood, mainly from North Africa and the Middle East started to flee from their new nationalistic leaders because of political reasons. The fact that their new governments cooperated with the soviets made their life easier in being able to find refuge in Western Europe. These figures, like Ramadan, started to establish the first small Islamic organizations which were small and had few hundred members at most of different local communities. From the ideological perspective, the ambitions of these figures were not at that time containing a European wide perspective agenda but were characterized practically in spreading the Muslim brotherhood agenda to the communities where they were living in Western Europe. As immigration was increasing and Muslim communities got larger, so did the role and influence of the different local Islamic centers. Understanding on one hand the potential of influence as representatives and on the other hand having the perception this immigration is temporary, the main aim was therefore to try and utilize the political and social influence over the diaspora Muslim communities to mobilize it against the oppressing regimes in their origin countries that made them to leave their homes (Amghar, 2008, p. 64-65; Marêchal, 2008, p. 56-58; Vidino, 2009, p. 171; Vidino, 2010, 27-29)

Focusing on Germany in the same period of time, few hundreds of Muslims who fought for Nazi Germany and decided to stay after the war, gathered mostly in the city of Munich. They established a co-operation with western Germany head of secret intelligence, Von Mende, who back then assured them a mosque for their religious practices while some of them will require and help him with operational purposes. The mosque was promised to be built in the city of Munich (Johnson, 2011, p. 40; Vidino, 2010, p. 29-30).

The mosque was built and had established a legitimate status as a place of worship for the Muslims freedom of religion and also served as meeting up point for young Arab
students. Ramadan who was still a member of the Muslim brotherhood movement entered this picture in 1958 by managing to kick out those who were leading this mosque and were connected to Von Mende. Using the European platform, the reality of massive immigration and lack of integration back in those days, hard work and organizational skills that he learned back in the Egyptian movement of the brotherhood, Ramadan started to use the Munich mosque as a platform to overstretch his concept of political Islam in the national level and European nations wide. After taking over the leadership of the mosque in Munich, he founded the Islamische Gemeinschaft Deutschland (IGD), the Islamic society of Germany. He led it from 1958-1968. The IGD was also helped to be established by the Muslim world league, a rich organization that Saudi’s actors use in order to spread their interpretation of Islam all over the world. This fact teaches on the cooperation that was achieved between these actors in order to establish the organization while the latter was also accused lately in terror financing (Johnson, 2011, p. 41; Vidino, 2005, p. 26-27; Vidino, 2010, p. 29-30).

A major first attempt for European Expansion happened in London 1973. Islamic cultural centers and different organizations met in order to try and establish a network of these organizations which will be led by representatives from the Munich mosque and other Saudi’s figures which will reflect their own interests to dominate the scene of Islam in Europe (Johnson, 2011, p. 41).

A meeting was held in Switzerland in 1977 by prominent figures from the Muslim brotherhood such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi. The meeting which discussed how to revive the Egyptian movement who suffered for years from the oppressive regime in Egypt, saw Europe as a place they could work where it can be protected by the European nations from different kind of oppression in Egypt. It also discussed about establishing different institutions in Europe such as the international institute of Islamic thought (HIT). This institution main aim was to provide theoretical foundations for the spread of Islamism in the west including the European continent when the west was less familiar with this phenomenon but Islam became more and more visible in Europe when immigrants started to decide and stay permanently in Europe while they had to interact more often with the native society (Johnson, 2011, p. 41).
The decision made by the institute leaders in Saudi Arabia to relocate it to the United States reveals again the deep links between these actors (Johnson, 2011, p. 41).

The Islamic center in Munich continued to develop and evolve from the small mosque it was into a headquarters for a Germany-wide chain of mosques and cultural centers. It also showed the wide aspirations which its leaders already had by then. Being supported and inspired from the continuation of influx of immigrants and family reunification in Europe and their lack of integration to the European society, the main first stage of integration was successful. Considering different expansions, figures from different organizations with similar lines of agenda started to get membership to this growing Islamic community in Europe. This joint up forces even if were different and so does the international alignments showed the ability to overcome diverse ethnic divisions and the ability to unite in diaspora under Islamic concepts, even if in another environment of their origin countries probably it would have split them due to differences (Johnson, 2011, p. 42)

By the end of the 1980’s when it was already obvious that large part of immigration is going to stay in Europe and not return back, figures in the European brotherhood began to view the Muslims presence in Europe from a different point of view. Top brotherhood movement scholars such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi started to redefine some basic religious qualifications and definitions. For example, it was noted that the traditional stating of distinction between Dar el Islam (house of Islam) and the Dar al-Harb (house of war) does not reflect the reality in Europe anymore. To their idea and way of the Islam interpretation, Europe could not be considered as Dar al-Islam because shari’a laws were not enforced but it could also not be considered as Dar al-Harb because Muslims were allowed to practice their religion in a free way. As a result, a decision came up to place Europe under new category which it will be regarded as Dar al-Da’wa (land of preaching). This meant that the European territory is where Muslims live as a minority group and being respected by others but on the other hand have also the important duty to spread their religion in peaceful and diverse ways to other Muslims and also the rest of society (Vidino, 2009, p. 172).

The Muslim brotherhood in Europe had bigger ambition than this theological aspect of the concept. As a result of redefining the presence in Europe, figures from the
brotherhood also changed the nature of their role in it, hoping to lead and represent the Muslim communities. The characteristics of this new presuming leading role were outlined in a book named *priorities of the Islamic movement in the coming phase*, which was published back in 1990 by Yusuf al-Qaradawi who gained more influence in the movement as one of the top theological scholars. In his book, he devoted a large section to the presence of Muslim minorities living in western countries and to the unprecedented opportunity for representation by the Islamist movement. In his opinion, it could play the leading role of the Muslim nation (the ummah) and this will be done by guiding and shaping the minds and hearts of Muslims immigrants living in the west in general and Europe in particular. (Vidino, 2009, p. 172; Vidino, 2010, p. 69-70).

Ideas of segregated neighborhoods and creation of a wide web of networks of Islamic centers and other means of preaching to Muslims to make the Islamic movement more popular in Europe were also supported, implying the politically Islamic concept of Dar al-Da’wa. Unlike other actors that supported violence in the matter of dealing with non-Muslims, his stands were being perceived by European figures as moderate, for sure relatively to other violent jihadists or other actors that publicly spoke against democracy and western system of government. Al-Qaradawi and other figures in the European brotherhood understood critical factors such as balance of power and minority-majority relationship. Therefore it was understood that confrontation can only damage the movement activity, acting as moderate and also comparing to others will help them to be kept as a legitimate Islamic actor according to different definitions of European authorities (Leiken & Brooke, 2007, p. 107-121; Vidino, 2009, p. 172).

In matters of operation, from the beginning of the 1990’s, the western brothers (affiliated or linked brotherhood figures which work in the west but do not necessarily admit to represent the global movement or its agenda) began to implement this strategy that was smartly designed to be marketable to western eyes in order to be kept legitimate. At first figures started to disconnect and cut all formal ties to the Middle East in order not to have counterproductive opinion. Nevertheless, it seemed that change was more superficial since the ideological affinity and connections to the brotherhood movement remained without a change. To operate more efficiently and without too much wrong attraction, they started to function not as structured and
centralized organization but as a more ideological affiliation organization (Vidino, 2009, p. 172).

In this context, Mohammed Akef, the former head of the Muslim Brotherhood once expressed himself regarding matters of affiliation by saying, “We do not have an international organiza-tion; we have an organization through our perception of things” (Vidino, 2010, p. 42). In 2005, Akef referring to Muslim Brotherhood organizations in Europe claimed that they do not possess direct connections to the Egyptian movement; however, there is coordination between them. This creates another stronger understanding of affiliation and ties that might be problematic in assessment since it is not always a sufficient or clear representation of the Brotherhood in Europe (Vidino, 2010, p. 42-43).

With continuation, a two-sided strategic plan went under way. This was internally in Europe, both to radicalize potential local Muslim communities through propaganda and for the establishment of a wide network of mosques. Externally, when dealing and negotiating with European politicians and elites, Islamist movements would show a moderate approach and acceptance by advocating for integration and democracy. According to Vidino (2009), the Western Brothers had the understanding that penetrating the system in Europe is a lot better than clashing with it, learning from past events with violent jihadists. Therefore, it was primarily in the Western Brothers’ agenda to first gain European trust. This also indicates the pragmatic tactics in a changing environment like Europe (Vidino, 2009, p. 173). Adding to that Ehrenfeld claims that “the Muslim brotherhood invested a lot of effort in creating an identity that was marketable to the west and the strategy seems to have succeeded gratefully” (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 76)

Merley (2008) notes that while FIOE figures showed that the organization was an independent one formed in 1989 to take care and supply the religious, social and cultural needs and interests of Muslims in Europe, some FIOE officials had also mentioned that the core idea for integrating to the European level entity (which is the FIOE) was already originated in 1984 by a group of Islamic organizations. The nineteen European Islamic organizations which were the founding members in 1989
are almost all known by their different ties to the global Muslim Brotherhood (Merley, 2008, p. 2).

Returning to stages of integration at the same time, by the 1990’s the number of organizations affiliated to the Muslim brotherhood in different ways had also integrated and stretched over Europe. The IGD was a founding member of the Brussels-based Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE), linking the different Brotherhood affiliated groups in more than 20 countries (Johnson, 2011, p. 42; Maréchal, 2008, p. 62-64; Merley, 2008, p. 2).

According to Ehrenfeld (2011), the FIOE is a brotherhood umbrella group in the European level, tasked with integration of brotherhood organizations that are scattered throughout the continent. Based in Brussels like the forums of European Muslim Youth and other student organizations like also the EU institutions, the FIOE and its different connected institutions also include different Brotherhood groups in major European countries at the national level. Germany for example has become one of the most substantial European or Western Brotherhood bases, including the organizations of the IGD, Milli Görüş and the ZMD while other movements in other European countries also benefit from Saudi funds. (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 76).

Contributing to that, global events such as the end of the Cold War also impacted the global level and scene of actors by creating a new world order, putting Europe in a more central place. This all while the Western Brotherhood developed further and networked in Europe both at the national and European level, funded by rich gulf Arab states. All of that also has helped to pave the way for the brotherhood to claim for the leadership role of the European Muslim communities in order to try and implement their guidelines (Johnson, 2011, p. 43). Looking to Europe, the Muslim Brotherhood and FIOE today, Ehrenfeld (2011) argues that “Europe is one of the MB’s most lucrative bases of operation today, housing established umbrella charitable groups and coordinating councils with international reach” (Ehrenfeld, 2011, p. 74).

5.2 The FIOE, its Institutions and Relations with the EU

5.2.1 FIOE Today

Understanding the story of integration with the FIOE, the different figures, and the processes involved gives us a challenge as to how we approach this European level
federation. According to Vidino (2011), when we approach from a more formalistic angle based on dependency in relationship, it can be harder to relate the FIOE as a part of the main Muslim Brotherhood movement due to different strategies of members that were taken since the 1990’s. Using a more non-formal approach as was shown earlier while describing historical events, figures, ideological, organizations, we can assume that this organization relates to the Muslim brotherhood movement. We must be aware that members from different Islamic organizations in Europe would not admit directly to being a part of the Muslim Brotherhood movement since this can be counterproductive especially due to the controversies about the movement these days (Vidino, 2010, p. 50-51; Vidino, 2011, p. 4).

Merley (2008) & Johnson (2011) argue that many of the main Egypt Brotherhood’s organizational structure and functions respectively were basically duplicated to the European structure discourse. This was of course excluding the secretive military wing that not a lot is known about (Johnson, 2011, p. 43; Merley, 2008, p. 3). In terms of working environment, one of the biggest differences is the working as a minority religious sector. Therefore, ideas of the main movement in Islamizing the mainstream society as attempted in Muslim countries are not applicable in Europe. Nevertheless, due to severe problems in integration in the European sphere and adding to different factors of identity and socio-economic status, this organization or its members can convince that it should represent Muslim communities in Europe. This is all while the organization’s goal in representing is also to influence ideology. Therefore, trying to dominate in the sphere of representing the majority of Muslim communities in Europe is a more realistic goal (Johnson, 2011, p. 43).

In attempting to examine and understand an organization or even an entity which operates at the European level, it can be efficient to examine it through its own website. However, in the case of the FIOE, trying to get as much information as possible from its website did not bring too many results. The information that was found included mainly some facts about the organization, its objectives and charter, all of which will be laid out in this chapter. Furthermore, it must be noted that the connection to its institutions or potential information about its branches and affiliated national level organizations were not found on the FIOE’s current website but through different links to other sources that guided mostly to the organization’s old website. It
is important to mention that given the strength and size of this kind of entity there is a paucity of information for completing the puzzle and reaching decisive conclusions.

According to its own web site, the FIOE mentions that the organization is a cultural one, comprising hundreds of organizations which are spread across 28 European countries and all of which subscribe to a common belief, with a methodology based on moderation and balance and aiming to represent the tolerance of Islam (About Us, 2012). Merley (2008) adds that guidance is also provided to member organizations by the general assembly (which meets annually by executive committee and member organization representatives) and a shura (religious) council while the different member organizations are being issued with similar guidelines, which they may disagree with it or follow the content (Merley, 2008, p.3)

This is interesting when looking at Vidino’s (2011) argument that organizations of the European Brotherhood operate with a large extent of independence (Vidino, 2010, p. 53; Vidino, 2011, p. 1-2). In the words of the former top leader of the movement in Egypt, Mohammed Akef, the movement is “a global movement whose members cooperate with each other throughout the world, based on the same religious worldview – the spread of Islam, until it rules the world” (Vidino, 2011, p.2). According to Merley (2008), while the organization expresses itself as an independent organization, it is not a completely an independent one but an umbrella group network at the European level that comprises the global Muslim Brotherhood in the European sphere. Johnson (2011) adds that the great ability of the Brotherhood movement to establish new forms while being consistent on final goals has been shown also in achieving influence that is shown to be the most influential Islamist force (Johnson, 2011, p. 39; Merley, 2008, p.1, 3-4).

As shown before, there is the existence of strong links which connect the organization’s leadership or institutions in different ways whether ideologically or materialistically to actors such as the Global Brotherhood and Saudi Arabia and other Arab gulf countries while it is also claimed that different ties to the movement of Hamas exist. Institutions which are also linked to Yusuf al-Qaradawi can be directed from the brotherhood organizations in different countries and this is another indicator for affiliation of the global movement with the European brotherhood. Nevertheless,
the FIOE managed to position itself in the European level as a dialog partner to EU and other institutions (Johnson, 2011, p. 39; Merley, 2008, p.1, 3-4; Vidino, 2010, p. 52).

Approaching the topic of social and political integration, on the FIOE website it is stated that the federation was a natural result out of a development of Islamic work in Europe to organize efforts and prevent fragmentation, to unify the political discourse and embrace the idea of establishing Islam as a substantial and positive element in European life. It continues by saying that Muslims were finally transformed from powerless to positively-contributing citizens in European life, and that now they hold the same rights and responsibilities as the native population (About Us, 2012).

Today, the FIOE claims to be a representative force in the European arena, embodying the human dimension of Islam, and bringing added value to European life. It formulated a constitution in 2008, which establishes cooperation with other social agencies in order to consolidate principles of social justice and protect citizens from different kinds of discrimination. Emphasizing again that FIOE is the largest Islamic organization in the European level, they attempt to remove the barrier that was built against Islamic presence in the West, which has also been contributed to by the media, and different political forces that are against Muslim minorities (About Us, 2012).

The FIOE hold already relations with EU institutions. Considering the charter that was made by FIOE and that was signed by its member organizations in 2008, the former EU parliament vice-president Mario Mauro, who was responsible for relations between the EU parliament and religious groups was reported to have been excited and legitimized the document by saying that “the charter amounts to a code of good conduct for Muslims in Europe which commits them to taking part in building a united society… it pledges Muslims to helping create harmony and well-being in our societies and to fully playing the role of citizens in upholding justice, equal rights and respect for difference” (Merley, 2008, p. 36; Muslims of Europe Charter - Section 1 - On the understanding of Islam, 2012; Muslims of Europe Charter - Section 2 - The Muslim Presence in Society, 2012).
The FIOE and Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations (FEMYSO) serve also as representatives to the dialogue with religions, churches and humanism. It is a part of bureau of the European policy advisors (Bepa) which is a division of the European commission. There are different documentations for different figures from the FIOE that have participated in meetings with EU officials from the various institutions and their committees or advisory bodies from the European parliament, European commission and even holding different symposiums where EU officials were present (Merley, 2008, p. 34-35).

According to the FIOE website, these are its objectives (Objectives, 2012):

1. “Introducing Islam and its values and shaping Islamic culture in accordance with the requirements of the age and the unique features of the current status of Europe” (Objectives, 2012).
2. "Helping Muslims in Europe to perform their religious duties, preserve their cultural identity and taking care of their social and religious affairs” (Objectives, 2012).
3. “Encouraging and establishing various institutions such as mosques, schools and educational, cultural, social, leisure and vocational institutes and clubs, etc” (Objectives, 2012).
4. “Promoting member organizations, enhancing their expertise and developing methods of coordination and cooperation therewith” (Objectives, 2012).
5. “Caring for Muslim youth, providing opportunities for learning Islam and Arabic and helping them excel in their respective vocations” (Objectives, 2012).
6. “Encouraging active participation of Muslims within the framework of the European Union in a manner that serves the overall general interest” (Objectives, 2012).
7. “Working towards achieving representation of Muslims within European institutions and authorities” (Objectives, 2012).
8. “Striving towards achieving recognition for Islam as an official religion throughout Europe, which would be instrumental in enhancing the European identity of Muslims” (Objectives, 2012).
9. “Expanding the cultural and civilizational dialogue between Muslims and people who follow other religions or ideologies, in an attempt to interact positively and
establish social peace and harmony” (Objectives, 2012).

10. “Maintaining relationships with Muslims throughout the world, and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation and interaction between Europe and the Islamic world” (Objectives, 2012).

11. “Building bridges with Islamic official and public authorities and institutions, in both European and International arenas, within the framework of mutual interests” (Objectives, 2012).

12. “Contributing towards all efforts, which aim to preserve and protect freedoms, defend human rights and dignity, and refute all forms of racial discrimination and violence” (Objectives, 2012).

After reading the organization objectives and understanding its goals, we will now elaborate on some of the institutions that relate to the organization at the European level and try to see if there is a connection between the relations to societal integration and political Islam and if there is an impact regarding Muslim societies in Europe.

5.2.2 European Council for Fatwa and Research – ECFR

Some Muslims find themselves in different debates on ways of living in Europe. A secularizing and mostly non-Muslim environment is interested in guidance and might ask for advice in matters that regard or have to do with Islamic law (shari’a) and different ethics. These Muslims, who find themselves not knowing how to act, can pose a question in order to receive fatwa on practical issue recognized in Muslim countries (Waardenburg, 2003, p. 314). “A fatwa is a legal opinion or ruling issued by an Islamic scholar on an issue where Islamic jurisprudence is unclear” (Kern, 2011). According to Kern (2011), some of the fatwas that are being issued to Muslim immigrants in Europe state that shari’a law is superior to civil law and democracy. This comes with great contradiction to European and Western values (Kern, 2011; Maréchal, 2008, p. 64; Vidino, 2010, p. 63-64, 72; Waardenburg, 2003, p. 314; Official Journal of the European Union, 2010).

The ECFR is one of the most known and relevant institutions and one of the most known central institutions of the FIOE. It relates to the different branches of the organization and was established as part of an FIOE initiative in 1997. It grew out as a consequence of the attempts of the Muslim community to deal with the presence of
large numbers of Muslims that settled permanently in Europe. Yusuf al-Qaradawi is the chairman of the institution, though never lived in Europe and being banned entry to the UK. Another prominent representative is known Rachid Ghannoushi, today’s Tunisia president who resided until recently in Europe. The institution meets up once a year and is located in Ireland. From the institution meetings, different fatwas are issued and they are aimed for imams and officials from mosques and religious organizations in order to spread the different religious messages. These messages can also be published on the Internet. There is a debate about the general typology of the fatwas among researchers and scholars; whether they are moderate or conservative. Sources such as the Wall Street Journal newspaper have claimed that a radical approach characterizes the meetings and the language discussed, even though the language used to discuss fatwa’s with external groups is presumed to be moderate. Some sources are even regarding the fact that issues that are being accepted often contradict Western laws, especially regarding matters of women and marriage. For example, edicts amongst members of the institution that a woman should only cut her hair if her husband permits it, or that marriage is not valid without a male guardian’s consent. Furthermore, regarding child rights, if a child is being adopted—which is already a forbidden action according to the group—he should not be given the equal rights of a biological child. With these matters we can clearly see contradictions to treaties such as the European charter of fundamental rights in matters of rights for women and children, and in matters of equality (Kern, 2011; Merley, 2008, p. 6-8; Official Journal of the European Union, 2010).

Kern (2011) continues to argue that fatwas that were issued often show a visible opposition against European values. This includes the separation of church and state. Kern cites how Islam views address secularism where for example al-Qaradawi said that acceptance of secularism means abandonment of shari’a which will be denial to the divine guidance and law and will be considered as apostasy. Another example that was mentioned was that of the nature of women, and that this nature is to be maintained and cared for by man. In continuance, a fatwa that was dealing with apostasy agreed that each apostate should be punished. Some supported killing, however, there has been disagreement about the punishment itself. In other matters regarding women, support was found for female circumcision, acceptance of wife
beating, and punishment of females who had been raped if they were found to dress in ‘non modest way’. (Kern, 2011; Vidino, 2010, p. 64).

A debatable question that rises as a consequence is whether an Islamist worldview can or cannot cooperate with the EU secular worldview which is based on principles of rights given by man and not by god. Different European Islamic leaders pressure through lobbying to European governments the possibility of synchronizing these secular laws with Muslim religious belief. Continuing with the article from Gatestone institute written by Kern (2011) regarding Europe’s fatwas factory, it notes that different attempts are being expressed in peaceful ways emphasized on protecting minority rights. An end result is that European society as a majority has to adapt to Islam in the public sphere rather than Muslim people to Europe’s worldview. As a consequence, this can lead to more cleaving between the two segments (Kern, 2011; Official Journal of the European Union, 2010).

Therefore, it also seems that the ECFR which is a direct major institution for the FIOE at the European level is a main runner in the effort to establish a weight parallel system for Europe’s Muslims which can be a source of integration for the Muslim community from religious points of view by referring to sharia. But this would be a serious obstacle for social integration with the European mainstream society.

According to the old FIOE website, the ECFR is an Islamic, specialized and independent entity. Though claiming to be independent, on the same page it is written that the inaugural meeting, which brought with it the drafting of a constitution for the ECFR, was made by scholars who responded positively to an invitation from the FIOE. Its Objectives are established as: Bringing together and uniting scholars who live in Europe and an attempt to unify the jurisprudence views between them; Issue collective fatwas which will meet the needs of Europe’s Muslims, within the regulations and objectives of the sharia law; Deal with problems and regulate their interaction with the European communities, all within the regulations and objectives of Sharia. Furthermore, it aims at guiding Muslims in Europe through spreading Islamic concepts and decisive legal fatwas (EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR FATWA & RESEARCH, 2012)
When discussing the means and methods, it is noted that special committees will be formed from the council members, which will also be able to execute specific tasks. This for example includes a continuous discussion with official authorities in European countries that on their side will officially recognize the council as an important institution regarding matters of Islamic judgments. Other means and methods mention holding shari’a courses that will qualify figures to perform Islamic da’wa and publish different information made by the council through various ways. They continue and describe on which pillars the ECFR will base its fatwas and the ways in which fatwas will be issue by the council (EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR FATWA & RESEARCH, 2012).

5.2.3 The Europe Trust
Established in 1996 by the European Brothers, the organization of the Europe Trust was listed on the website of the FIOE as of 2004. It was noted that the FIOE aimed at establishing a trust, which could help fund its work throughout Europe. Funding Islamic work and promoting Islamic organizations in Europe are two of its main goals. While Johnson (2011) claimed also that the Europe trust funds from the Dublin-based European council for fatwa and research was already proven to be a major institution for the FIOE objectives, to issue religious opinions to Europe’s Muslims at the European level. A personal research regarding meetings of this ECFR reveals that some of the meetings were hosted by the al-Maktoum foundation which is refereed to financially as support for the Europe trust which can also give a clue that the connection between the institutions is being supported from the same foundation and the FIOE (EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR FATWA & RESEARCH, 2012; Johnson, 2011, p. 42).

Having an institution which supplies funds to the FIOE organization, gives us an understanding to a main financial institution of the organization. This helps with a continuous flow to the organization to strive towards implementing its agenda. Furthermore, according to Merley (2008) that different stakeholders from Arab gulf countries and MB movement are also involved, this implies on possible approach of the stakeholders which invest in this fund towards Europe for their own interests,
goals or attempts to achieve influence not only on the organization itself but also on the Muslim people which the FIOE organization and its national level members represent (Merley, 2008, p. 9-10).

5.2.4 European Institute for Human Sciences - IESH

Another main institution of the FIOE is the European institute for human sciences, which was established in 1990 together with the UOIF. According to the organization’s old web site, it was established as other institutions as the result of the continuous evolvement of the Muslim presence in Europe when the idea of establishing an educational institution for Islamic law during the 1980’s. As a result, there was a need to build this Islamic institution that would contribute in its own way to the field and help the needs of Muslims in the European environment. With a large amount of funds, Chateau Chinon, was purchased to give a place of permanent residence to the institution. When it was inaugurated, figures such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi were present there too. Regarding achievements, the website of the IESH notes that by the year of 2000, 120 students were studying there and another 200 students by correspondence. Another branch of this institution was established in Wales in 1997, based on the same principles of the original institution, while in 1999 another branch was opened also in Paris (INSTITUTE EUROPEAN DES SCIENCES HUMAINES (I. E. S. H.), 2012; Merley, 2008, p. 11; Vidino, 2010, p. 51),

Merley (2008) adds that while the different leaders and figures were expressing external support for democracy and tolerance, there were suspicions about connections to Islamic extremism. The French secretary for integration claimed that there are doubts about the ability of the institution to spread the values of the French society regarding separation of church and state or secularism and doubted if this institution really aims for integration or whether the aim is for inner isolation and lack of social integration of Muslims in the French society. (Merley, 2008, p. 12, 14).

Like on the former web sites of related institutions there was a paucity of clear information. The opening page in English talks about the Islamic University of Europe that teaches Arabic and Islam, and all other links that are supposed to describe further about the institute did not show any content. However, it is important to
mention that under “useful links” according to the website, there were mentioned the ECFR website which appeared only in Arabic and the FIOE website. From researching as much as possible and referring to other sources, we might again draw strong lines that there is another visible link between the institutions and (Welcome to the European Institute of Human Sciences, 2012).

All of that might implicate that though it is considered to be educational institution, even not being able to discover information or that links adressed to web-sites in arabic there is no a real intention that this will be a source for integration among other non-arabic potential studens. Furthermore, it might raise some questions what is the need in educating European Muslim students Islamic law since it is not valid in the EU.

5.2.5 Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations - FEMYSO
The FEMYSO was in 2004 included in the FIOE website as another central organization which was established by the joint initiative of different Muslim organizations and the FIOE. In its description it is noted that it works towards increasing the awareness of Muslim youth and preserving their Islamic identity through different seminars and events (Merley, 2008, p. 14). The institution has developed extensive networks throughout various European countries but also non-EU ones, and the institution headquarters operates in Brussels. Ibrahim El-Zayat who is a prominent figure of the FIOE and also a FEMYSO representative, stated once that the organization does lobby work with relation to the EU. Nevertheless, it was not mentioned in the source what kind of lobby work and with which institution of the EU institutions. Merley (2008) mentions that according to the FEMYSO website, it has developed important links in relations to the European parliament and the council of Europe while it also hosts relevant organizations at the European level. The organization was also chosen by the council of Europe as one of thirty members of its advisory council regarding youth in the period of 2006-2008. Therefore, It seems that the institution has an extensive approach for engaging with the different European institutions in its own field while the youth can claim to represent Europe’s youth Muslim voice to some of the EU institutions (History, 2012; Merley, 2008, p. 16; Representation, 2012).
Merley (2008), also considers the youth institution, different family ties seem to characterize the unofficial links between FEMYSO, FIOE and the global Muslim Brotherhood (Members, 2012; Merley, 2008, p. 15).

The institution claims to be the de facto voice of Muslim youth by representing effectively its member organizations in all spheres and levels of societal European life. (Representation, 2012; Vision & Mission, 2012).

By having this leverages to the European Union different institutions and being supported by the FIOE agenda, it might create a biased picture of reality regarding the demands of the real majority of muslims youth in Europe. However, this serves as another dimension for political integration of youth to EU institutions while most likely being guided by the FIOE general office.

5.2.6 Other networks or institutions

Since the scope of the paper is not wide enough, there will be less of a deepening in other institutions and branches, which are connected to the FIOE and can show its interlinked networks at the European level. However, it is still important to note that other networks or institutions exist such as the European forum for Muslim women, the European assembly of Muslim imam, and the federation of European Arab-Islamic schools (Merley, 2008, p. 17-19).

Regarding future institutions, Merley claims (2008) that the evolving of this European Islamic network is not over and is expected to be developed. Though, it was not found in personal research, the FIOE website said that other institutions are seeking to be established. Nevertheless, examples are given such as; the European human rights institution, a center for studies and research, a media institution, and an expert house for training and human development. It seems that the FIOE seeks to expand its influence in establishing itself over extended networks of institutions that will relate to any aspect of Muslims living in Europe with connection to every topic regardless of gender, age or profession but as long as you are Muslim who lives in the European environment in order to act as representative for Muslim community in every possible aspect of life and enhance or at least preserve the Islamic identity also in order to
control the Muslims Islamic discourse in Europe (Merley, 2008, p. 20).

5.3 FIOE as a societal Islamic/Islamist actor

Johnson (2011) relates to the FIOE and its institutions building and argues that the understanding of the fact that this brotherhood in Europe is mainly not a religious society with theological goals (beside figures like al-Qaradawi) shows us that this is an attempt to shape the aspects of the temporal Muslim society by being supported through religious figures. Since there is an understanding they cannot re-islamize the majority of European society, By Using the language of aiming to protect Muslims from the West’s secular and multicultural societies, it can help in leveraging this European organization to be an influential representative social and political player and establish more dominance in the Muslim scene in the European level while we saw in previous chapter that national Islamic organizations which are linked to the FIOE and the brotherhood that are considered to have influence. (Johnson, 2011, p. 42-43).

Vidino (2010, 2011) claims that though the European Brothers could not create the mass movements that they wanted, they tried to negotiate with authorities. Since there is a diversity of the European Muslim community, the brotherhood in Europe reached an understanding that positive relations with western political elites might benefit a top-down pressure to the European Muslim street which will see that there are political Islamic organizations (in European and national levels) that might actually have a dialogue that will help to represent them as Muslims in Europe in both spheres. This shows on one hand how through preaching there is an attempt for a bottom-up process towards influencing on European decision makers and on the other hand top-bottom process towards the Muslim people. As a result of that, it seems that the European brothers understood the potential of this game, the different actors, and the complex European environment and thus managed to monopolize to themselves the Islamic discourse with the European union in matters of social and political Islam which also relate to issues also in matters of integration (Vidino, 2010, p. 54, 85-86; Vidino, 2011, p. 3).

In terms of representation within the Muslim community, Vidino (2011)
acknowledges that in the competition for representation, the European Brotherhood reached a relative higher position as a well-organized minority over other less organized minorities for the voice of the silent majority of European Muslims (Vidino, 2011, p. 4). Even though the organization’s conservative and politicized agenda of Islam is not always shared by the majority of Muslims living in Europe or regarding the west, this brotherhood linked and offshoot organizations have often managed to seem like that through their activism and rich funding (Vidino, 2009, p. 173). The European Brotherhood and their related organizations (such as FIOE in the European sphere) goals in the West have evolved while flexibility, pragmatism and continuous evolution are some of their core characteristics, understanding they cannot blindly follow in Europe the founding movement strategy (Amghar, 2008, p. 67-68; Vidino, 2011, p. 4). Some critics might argue that the main goal of the Brotherhood representatives is to establish shari’a law in the West. There is no doubt this prospect exists according to different statements by Yusuf al Qaradawi. Furthermore, there were also attempts by the Western Brotherhood to introduce limited aspects of shari’a law in Western societies, by establishing shari’a advisory bodies and by lobbying with Western governments to accept some shari’a principles in Western legal systems (Vidino, 2011, p. 5).

However, according to Vidino (2011), the introduction of shari’a in the West is hardly the Western Brothers (or the FIOE’s to our case) goal at this stage, at least out of pragmatism. At the moment it seems they have different priorities, while two main goals should be mentioned: The first, preserving an Islamic identity among Western Muslims, and maintaining and reinforcing the morality and practices of their communities (Vidino, 2011, p. 5).

Unlike salafists and other Islamic trends, which seek to strengthen the Islamic identity, the Brothers or part of them do not advocate isolation from mainstream society. On the contrary they urge Muslims to actively participate in it as we could also clearly see in the FIOE objectives. According to Al-Qaradawi, Muslims in the West should adopt “a conservatism without isolation, and an openness without melting” (Vidino, 2011, p. 5).

Nevertheless, creating a strong Islamic identity helps on the one hand that Muslims
will not assimilate completely into the hosting European society with secular values but on the other hand it does not necessarily contradict active participation in the civic life as FIOE claims. There is a large debate on the aims and goals of the European Brotherhood at the nation level, so looking to the European level, which is more abstract, might have an even bigger influence. The assessment of the Brotherhood linked organizations which end up in the European level with the FIOE is contested and problematic also from the Western side. Thus before a discussion on which way one should address, there is a need first to understand and achieve a similar assessment of the agenda and aims of the Brotherhood in Europe. In our case, the FIOE comprises those national Islamic movements (Objectives, 2012; Vidino, 2010, p. 76-77, 96-133).

Therefore Political Islam also seems now as a political instrument which aims for social reforms for European Muslims. It can indicate on different related issues of social and political integration as different governments mostly set conditions for Islamists to say they accept the democratic values in order to participate in this social-political game. However, one must ask if this is modification and adaptation for a European democratic environment or whether this is only a tactic for the short term while there is a long-term strategy behind (Amghar, 2008, p. 66-67).

Therefore, based on researching the organization and its institutions, it is clearly shown that the FIOE is being integrated politically with European authorities in the European level and being perceived as a legitimate actor in this sphere. This can indicate that even if on a low level, political integration for the FIOE already exists at the European level and there is recognition from EU institutions or members with granting legitimacy to this Islamic/Islamist agenda and organization, while people might argue in defining the organization, there is no debate on the fact that the FIOE is a European level entity. The implications are that an organization which is comprised of members who hold ideology of political Islam and connected to Muslim brotherhood have reached to be legitimate actor with European authorities and recognition. Considering the definition of political Islam, this means that they might strive now from the EU-sphere and not only the national one to have the ability of attempting for applying ideological vision of Islam in the socio political sphere of
Muslims in Europe once they will have enough influence or will be recognized as the voice of Muslims in Europe. Since this group is holding agenda of political Islam and not a complete naïve Islamic agenda, the EU must see with which entity it engages and what are its ambitions or values of linked institutions and figures, while examining all of its activities and not only those who seem compatible to European way of thinking.
6 Findings

As this thesis has shown and based on the different sources, the combination of the notions of Integration and Political Islam leads to a complex and relatively incoherent reality. Basic principles and guidelines are interpreted differently by nations states, which themselves are characterized by diverse historical-social-political contexts. In turn, nation states adopt different policies towards their Muslim societies that immigrated to Europe and towards the subsequent second and third European Muslims generations. As such, it does not seem to bring full societal integration of Muslims and similar social inclusion by the nation states and the mainstream society in each country. However, it must also be remarked that the evolvement of the EU and the binding nature of different treaties such as the European Charter of Fundamental Rights constitute a start in the right direction from the institutional side that must be implemented by the nation states. Nevertheless, examining social integration as integration into society and less into institutions, one can see that fundamental values are not always being practiced by all segments of the mainstream society in the different countries that comprise the EU. It was found that societal integration is not always positive for Muslims. Moreover, different cultural matters and aspects of Muslim integration seem to inhibit them from integrating into the local society and at the same time they are not being welcomed by the host society in certain realms even if they are already European born second and third generations. Despite these facts, integration is happening and many Muslims do manage to integrate however the overall situation does not seem to be the EU’s goal.

The first assumption in this study dealt with the role of political Islam in the nation states. On the one hand, seeing the diversity of Muslim and Islamic organizations illustrates that Muslim diversity does in fact exist in the EU. On the other hand, learning about the different umbrella groups, including those on the national level, teaches us that there is a unity between political Islamic movements, which aim to impose their similar ideological vision of Islam in the socio-political sphere and therefore cooperate together in many cases. Examining their claimed agenda, and the way they operate vis-à-vis respective governments teaches that they are acquiring an increasingly influential role for political Islam on this level. Moreover, it indicates that these movements are working with the respective governments through more
indirect political integration to achieve social integration for Muslims in Europe and
simultaneously are seen by the Muslim communities as their representatives in
preserving Muslim interests on the national level. Therefore the role of these
organizations on the national political level cannot be underestimated. With this
understanding we can draw straight lines to the FIOE and see that this is an entity that
operates in the same way with similar figures and characteristics while simply
operating on a different and higher level – the European level – and aims to influence
from top down to the national level. Rethinking the notion of role, it seems that this
term applies in the following fashion to the FIOE: The FIOE is attempting to serve as
a Muslim interlocker with the government to try and operate as the sole
representatives of the Muslim voice in Europe even if it does not hold a majority that
supports its Islamic agenda. By building umbrella organizations, which are
sophisticated enough institutionally and which resembles the mode of operation of the
Muslim Brotherhood, the FIOE is attempting to control the Islamic discourse while
aiming to bring matters of religion to the social sphere under the auspices of the
different values of democracy. Moreover, through negotiation with governments, the
FIOE influences Muslim society in Europe, in hope that that will support their goals.
Being the most organized, networked and, financially able, Islamic organizations and
institutions on the national and European levels allow the FIOE to be de-facto sole
Islamic entity containing almost every European country in the European level.

Moving on to the second assumption, which pertained to whether this is a source or
obstacle for societal integration, there is no doubt that the existence of the FIOE on
the European level serves political Islamic movements as a source of political
integration on the European level by having a big umbrella organization that operates
vis-à-vis the EU institutions. Further research is needed to understand if this source of
political integration on the European level might serve also as a source for Islamic
movements on the national level. It seems that considering social integration, this
kind of agenda of political Islam, though preaching for social integration in many
ways, is actually doing the contrary by preserving, if not enhancing, the Muslims’
Islamic religious identity. In this way, it is not only creating an obstacle for aspects of
social integration for Muslims in Europe but a double edged sword by reforming their
Islamic identity which differentiates them from the rest of the mainstream society and
spurs suspicion from the mainstream society. This in turn leads to further complex and ongoing obstacles for a true and honest social inclusion of Muslims in Europe. Nonetheless, a growing influence of those movements in which FIOE is involved on the European level can foster added closeness and unity within the diverse Muslim communities. This has the potential to lead to increased operations towards the same principles and aims which will feel more integrated with their own diaspora community as Muslims but not necessarily as a part of the whole European community.

In respect to the third assumption regarding identity, similar to other scholars who mainly discuss the preservation of Islamic identity, we see this as a linear process. While preserving an identity one must always also reinforce and strengthen it with different activities, such as those being taken by the FIOE on the European level and the different Islamic movements on the national level. Therefore we see that the Islamic organizations are constantly attempting to strengthen and reinforce through preserving an Islamic identity of Europe’s Muslims.

The case study illustrated that political Islam has different concepts and interpretations. While the case study does not preach for violence it calls for active citizenship, participation, and cooperation that can be seen through the different affiliations to the core ideas and figures of the Muslim Brotherhood. In most cases these values are compatible with western values, as was seen through the interpretations and different fatwas that conform to western values. Moreover, the acceptance of democracy hinders the contradiction and clash with some fundamental rights and beliefs of democratic and secular western values and systems. The FIOE was proven to be an interlinked organization through its different institutions and members on the various levels of the European Union. Meanwhile the FIOE was also shown to be connected to the global Muslim Brotherhood even if it possesses independence on the European level and gives freedom to its national-level members. This freedom is granted due to tactical reasons, and linked to the fact that the European Union is not a coherent policy federation but a decentralized one with different policies in regards to immigration and integration and other issues such as education. Learning from the FIOE institutions and its roots, it is clear that it has an
agenda of indoctrinating Muslims in Europe by creating an alternative identity to Muslims in Europe that do not manage to integrate or want to preserve their Islamic values and integrate but not assimilate to the mainstream society. There is no doubt that the FIOE is using religion as a political vehicle to achieve maximum representation and power of influence on the European level and issuing similar guidelines and operating to impact representatives on the national level by supporting groups with funds, fatwas, and other issues. That said, more research is necessary regarding the FIOE’s ability to function as a platform for process of radicalization. The major hindrance to this research, however, is possibly the fact that these efforts are done in secret. Still, as also argued by others, it seems that the FIOE exhibits two different natures: One while interacting with authorities and the other while dealing with Muslims that are members in the national level organizations. Even if the FIOE itself does not radicalize, it is enough if it will be found that its national level members do it, therefore the European level umbrella organization, FIOE, must be held accountable.

Furthermore, There is no doubt that many stakeholders, whether individuals, movements, or states, are involved in this complex political game trying to win the voice of Muslims in Europe, influence it and partake in negotiations with the authorities.
7 Conclusions

The nature of the FIOE is one of political Islam which aims to combine religion with politics, integrate into the political level, and influence the social level by trying to be the sole Islamist representative of the Muslim voice and vote. Decades of non-existent actual integration based on core ideas from the 20th century have led the FIOE to become a well-oiled institution on the European level overseeing everything that is being done on the national level including; funds, religious fatwas, and creating European umbrella institutions for the different national level Islamic organization members. As decentralized and flexible institution which grants independence to its members on the national level, the FIOE resembles the EU and its relationship with member states in some aspects. Adapting to the European environment and presenting its ideas with European essence have helped the FIOE lobby European decision makers who are faced with a complicated dilemma between values of democracy, representation, and freedom of religion and speech and between engaging with an entity whose history, figures, financial funds and ideology are clearly based in its core on an unofficial affiliation with the global Muslim Brotherhood. There is no doubt that evolutions are occurring in minds and heads of people but not always necessarily in their hearts. Since it was established, political Islam has had certain goals all over the world and primarily combining religion with the socio-political sphere. The FIOE and other members are attempting to achieve this goal in different ways. While the organizations do not speak in politicized language out loud nor use terms such as the conquest of Europe and the imminent threat, it is imperative to not think that these organizations are merely cultural ones that represent the interests of the average Muslim in Europe. While not completely successful, these organizations attempt to utilize the lack of Muslims’ social integration in Europe to foster an alternative Islamic identity in Europe. If successful, these efforts are potentially problematic since Muslims will not share the same common beliefs and values as European secular society and can potentially lead to further radicalization among segments of society.

As such, we must create an understanding so that authorities know how to address this phenomenon. To do this, one must first understand the movement’s roots, ideology and aims at past and in present. It is clear that Political Islam is a strong political ideology as seen in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in North Africa. Therefore, even
though Europe is not an Islamic society, the power and influence of Political Islam and the Muslim brotherhood as its main representatives is clearly strong. This understanding can assist in achieving better results while engaging with Political Islamic movements on the national and European levels. An honest social inclusion of Muslims that will be followed a real integration process might lead to a reduced need for Muslims to participate in these Islamic movements, which try to be the de facto voice of Muslims in Europe by manipulating religion to gain political power and influence. Therefore it seems while political Islamic movements will serve in some ways as a source for social integration and in others as an obstacle, they will nonetheless be a barrier for the Muslim communities in Europe to socially integrate into the mainstream society and its everyday values. That said, there is a possibility that Muslim communities could integrate into an Islamic identity community leaving ethnic-cultural and even national background as marginal or secondary. In terms of politics to complete the societal integration, the role of political Islam in the European Union signals to my opinion further political integration. Understanding the FIOE’s full potential in the European sphere and the growing position of the EU level and institutions, we argue that when timing and the working environment are right for the FIOE and its leading figures from the different European level institutions will decide so, they can take into account the fact that European parliament elections are considered to be second order elections and utilize it to their own political needs. Though this might take some time and conditioned by other various factors, this could be the democratic source for political integration of the FIOE to run its own pan-European Islamic party that will run to serve a Muslim minority as their representatives in the European level. In that case, the FIOE will fulfill the idea of political Islam in this matter, including full political integration and wielding influence on the social sphere of Muslims living in Europe. If this occurs, the FIOE will enter the European Union political spectrum. While holding an ideological vision of Islam, the organization and its members may attempt to shape the social sphere for Muslims in the name of democracy while not necessarily really adhering to the governing system’s values.
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