

Centre for the Study of Islam and

CHRISTIAN MUSLIM RELATIONS

Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham 29, U.K.

No. 4

RESEARCH PAPERS

December 1979

MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY -

THE QUR'AN SCHOOL DEBATE

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MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY -
THE QUR'AN SCHOOL DEBATE *

Muhammad S. Abdullah

When one talks of Qur'an schools or Qur'an courses one must necessarily also talk about that Qur'an which has given its name to this educational institution. The Qur'an is the fundamental document and the centre of Islam, around which the worldwide community of Muslim believers is gathered. Both for the community and for the individual Muslim it is the straight path, the path to salvation, which must be followed if one wishes to attain salvation.

Along with the Qur'an schools the Qur'an itself has now become the object of argument. Recently, a number of voices have suggested that the scripture of Islam "undoubtedly contains passages which are not compatible with the constitutional bases of the Federal Republic". It is clearly necessary that this sensitive subject be tackled without timidity. Behind the subject of Qur'an schools one begins to sense that possibly Islam and its very core are intended, when it is suggested that a spirit of intolerance against those who have a different faith is being taught in these schools.

In May 1979 a Protestant clergyman expressed the fear that those who today are demanding that Qur'an courses be prohibited, might tomorrow come up with the demand that Christian religious education in the schools be abolished. This statement needs no further comment.

* This paper is translated from the German original in CIBEDO Dokumentation, no.3 (June 1979). The author is a German Muslim working as a journalist for the radio service Deutsche Welle; he is also a representative of the World Islamic Congress which has its headquarters in Karachi, Pakistan.

Since the Qur'an has increasingly become the focal point of the debate, an account of the history of its compilation, its content and its position in the Muslim community from an Islamic point of view introduces this paper. Only with this background in mind can one understand why the Turks living amongst us are so attached to this institution of the Qur'an course, although a majority would prefer to modernise it and to adapt it to the diaspora situation.

* * * * *

The history of the compilation of the Qur'an, its content and its position in the community

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night
of Power:
And what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is?
The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.
Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by God's
permission, on every errand:
Peace! ... This until the rise of Morn!

In these words the 97th Sura of the Qur'an tells of the first revelation, which the Prophet Muhammad received at the age of forty years on the 27th day of Ramadan in the year 611AD, and by which, according to the Muslim faith, he was called to become the seal of the prophets (Sura 33.40).

The Arabic word Qur'an is a lone word from the Aramaic with the meaning: reading, recitation, from the corresponding verb qar'a, i.e. to read, to recite. By Muslims the Qur'an is often called simply the Book (al-kitab) which contains the totality of the divine messages which the Prophet received in the course of two decades, just as they are recorded in the "mother of the book" (umm al-kitab), the source which was created at the beginning of the world. In this regard the Qur'an itself says:

Nay, this is a Glorious Qur'an,
(Inscribed) in a Tablet Preserved! (Sura 85.21-22)

And verily, it is in the Mother of the Book, in our
presence, high (in dignity), full of wisdom, (Sura 43.4)

So the Qur'an is the word (kalima) of God and consequently the believer always introduces a quotation with the phrase: God has said (qaala Allah).

The Qur'an contains a structure of religious traditions, social regulations and political obligations covering and regulating man's total life. For Muslims it is the original form of the law, the primary reality of Islam. It is not only the concentration of all the teachings of the Prophet, out of which a broad stream of traditions has grown, but above all the final authority, the word of God through the mouth of the Prophet who founded Islam. In other words the Qur'an is a verbally inspired document of revelation, dictated to Muhammad word by word. However, its authority is not primarily based on the method of its revelation, but is to be found at a deeper level. For the Muslim the Qur'an is, as already mentioned, the reflection of an eternal, original scripture of revelation existing outside history, which is preserved with God. This is clear from the following passages from the Holy Book:

We have without doubt, sent down the message; and
We will assuredly guard it (from corruption). (Sura 15.9)

Do they not consider the Qur'an (with care)? Had
it been from other than God, they would surely have
found therein much discrepancy. (Sura 4.82)

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without
doubt, to those who fear God; (Sura 2.2)

Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to
gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an
they could not produce the like thereof, even if
they backed up each other with help and support.
And We have explained to man, in this Qur'an,
every kind of similitude: yet the greater part of
men refuse (to receive it) except with ingratitude! (Sura 17.88-9)

Worth noting further is that the style and nature of the Islamic scripture of revelation differs significantly from the Bible. The Qur'an conveys another understanding of time and history, which excludes a Christian interpretation of history as salvation, history in a dimension of space and time. In other words, the Qur'an offers neither an historical account of progressive revelation from creation until the last day, nor a collection of documents for theological and dogmatic formulations. Solely on these grounds there is hardly

a possibility for exegesis in a Christian sense. The Qur'an itself strongly warns against simple interpretations. For example in:

It is He Who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; (Sura 3.3)

He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book: in it are verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning); they are the foundation of the Book: others are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical, seeking discord, and searching for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord:" and none will grasp the Message except men of understanding. (Sura 3.7)

A.L.R. (This is) a Book, with verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning). Further explained in detail, - from One Who is wise and well-acquainted (with all things): (Sura 11 1)

So the Muslim seeks to understand his sacred book in another way - by reciting aloud. He seeks to make the Qur'an inwardly his own. Consequently he also uses Qur'anic formulas in his daily life and adopts a Qur'anic way of thinking which influences his total outlook. So just as a Christian can say that he lives with Christ, a Muslim can say the same regarding the Qur'an. The sacred scripture of Islam is thus not an abstract book which exists as a separate object. The Qur'an exists as a challenge which expects an answer, which draws the listener in. The word Islam, after all, means surrender and the word Muslim the one who surrenders. So it is the Qur'an which creates a group of followers for itself: the Islamic community. The Muslims live in the Qur'an and according to it and the Qur'an, vice versa, lives on in, with and under the recitation and response of faith.

The Qur'an is also, if one may put it that way, the Christ of Islam, not the Prophet through whose mouth it was revealed. In Christianity the Word became flesh, in Islam it became Qur'an.

If one understands this central significance of the Qur'an for the Islamic community it becomes easy to understand why the 'ulema' (religious scholars) guard the purity of the text so zealously.

Even today every translation of the Qur'an must go through an extremely detailed process of proof reading and checking, before permission to print is given. This rigorous process, however,

applies not only to translation into foreign languages - they are usually entitled not "The Holy Qur'an" but "The Meaning of the Qur'an" - but also to Arabic copies. The work of a Qur'an commission is, of course, made significantly simpler by the existence of the source text.

The Prophet Muhammad himself learnt by heart all the revelations which came to him and regularly memorised them, so that he always had the text at hand. In addition he took a number of precautions to preserve the text. It is known that Muhammad appointed a number of persons to whom he could dictate each revelation as it was received. One source recalls 15 names of secretaries to the Prophet, among them the later Caliphs Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet.

When in the early Islamic community the demand to learn the sacred texts by heart grew, Muhammad himself trained four men as scriptural experts and delegated to them the responsibility for transmitting the Qur'an. According to the tradition their names were Abdallah b. Mas'ud, Salim Mawla Abi Hudhayfa, Mu'adh b. Jabal, and Ubayy b. Ka'b. In addition to these four, trained as Qur'an experts by the Prophet himself, the sources also record the names of thirty male and three female Qur'an reciters, among them the Prophet's secretary Zayd ibn Thabit.

In the fourth year after the Hijra, i.e. 626 AD, Muhammad sent seventy of his companions as Qur'an teachers to various Arab tribes. Each of them could recite the Qur'an by heart. Already during the lifetime of the Prophet thousands of Muslim committed the Qur'an to memory in this way. According to tradition, five hundred out of three thousand Qur'an reciters fell in the battle against Musaylima who rose against the community in the year 632, after the death of the Prophet. The British orientalist, Sir William Muir, states in this connection in his book The Caliphate: "The slaughter among the reciters was so great, that Umar decided to collect the sacred text so that nothing of it should go lost".¹

At the suggestion of Umar, later to become Caliph, the reigning Caliph Abu Bakr, asked Zayd b. Thabit to collect all surviving written fragments (slips of paper, palm leaves, stones, bones, pieces of leather and wood), to expand these with the orally preserved texts

of the Qur'an reciters and to commit this text to ordered pages.

When the text brought together in this way had been examined and approved by a commission of reciters, it was put together in a book and presented to the congregation every day during the month of Ramadan in the year 633 AD and thereby finally recognised as authentic.

Besides this first copy of the Qur'an, which later came into the possession of the daughter of 'Umar, the widow of the Prophet, Hafsa, four other rescensions existed in the provinces. The authors of these copies were, besides the already mentioned scholars Abdallah b. Mas'ud and Ubayy b. Ka'b, the long-serving lieutenant of the Prophet Abu Musa Abdallah al-Ash'ari and Miqdad b. 'Amr, one of the earliest followers of Islam. According to tradition the rescensions of these four men differed from that in the possession of Hafsa only in the arrangement of the suras and in a few insignificant textual variations. It was left to the Caliph 'Uthman to canonise the text in the year 653, in other words twenty one years after the death of the Prophet. The basis of the so-called Medinan model codex (al-Imam) was the Hafsa Qur'an, and the chairman of the editorial commission was again Zayd b. Thabit who had been responsible for the first compilation. On the basis of this model codex seven copies were sent to the great cities of the time, among others Mecca, Kufa, Basra and Damascus, together with an edict that in the future no variation from the standard text would be allowed, even when it was a matter only of the pronunciation of consonants. Consequently all variant copies were destroyed. Since then only the so-called uthmanic rescension has existed, going back to that of Zayd b. Thabit, the text of which is still valid and available today.

The already quoted British orientalist, Sir William Muir, summarises his remarks on the authenticity of the Qur'an as follows:

What we have, although probably corrected by himself is still his own we may state, with reference to the strongest proofs, that every phrase of the Qur'an is the genuine and unfalsified expression from Muhammad himself there is equally every indication, internal as well as external, that we possess the text, that Muhammad himself pronounced and used and we believe that the Qur'an is the word spoken by Muhammad as certainly as the Muslims believe that it is the word of God. 2

The German Islamicist Nöldeke says,

Small copyists' errors may exist but the Qur'an of 'Uthman contains only genuine parts, although often in a most strange order. The efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later changes in the Qur'an have failed. 3

The Qur'an School

The Qur'an school as we know it today has certainly been influenced by the madrasa - the mosque school - but it has not, as is often mistakenly assumed, developed out of it. The madrasa combines the functions of the theological seminary, a school of law and a mosque. Its purpose is to teach orthodox religious and legal doctrines according to the Sunni rites and to seek candidates for the offices of judge (qadi), jurist (mufti) and preacher (khatib) and to educate them accordingly. The curriculum is based on the interpretation of the Qur'an (tafsir) and the preserved accounts of the sayings and actions of the Prophet (hadith) and includes the whole of the legal system (fiqh) and theological speculation (kalam). The first of the madrasas were founded in the middle of the eleventh century. The traditional Qur'an school, as it is to be found in the Federal Republic today, has, on the other hand, developed out of the adult education courses which earlier were carried out in connection with mosques. Already at an early stage the custom became prevalent in Islam that respected theologians explained the text of the Qur'an and the traditions to an audience after the common prayer. During these sessions small or large parts of the Qur'an were memorised. Towards the end of the tenth century separate Qur'an schools for children developed out of these courses. They were introduced by the theologians into the basics of reading, writing and grammar, recited the Qur'an and memorised moral stories and proverbs.

The Islamic historian and philosopher of history, Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), reports that in his time children in the maktab were taught reading, writing and Arabic language before they were taught the Qur'an. He remarks that they then learnt the text of the Sacred Book "without major difficulties". At this time the teaching was undertaken by highly qualified experts. Usually study began with the

first sura of the Qur'an, al-Fatiha, (The Opening). After this sura came the last one, then the next to last one, then the third last one and so on until the second sura. Thus one went through the scripture from the end to the beginning. There were educational reasons for this method deriving from the fact that the individual suras of the book - with the exception of the Fatiha, are arranged according to length in such a manner that the shortest one is at the end. Since the Muslim usually recites a short sura during prayer, it is appropriate that the students correspondingly begin the study of the Qur'an with those suras which are immediately useful in the ritual.

Already in the classical period the Qur'an students were between six and eighteen years old. However, it is usual for children to be prepared for Qur'an study at an even earlier age of 4-5 years. In connection with the first lesson, which usually takes place at home, a family celebration is held. This first lesson traditionally consists of the five first verses of the 96th sura of the Qur'an. This is the first revelation which the Prophet Muhammad received, and it deals with readings and writings:

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of thy Lord and
Cherisher, Who created -
Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood:
Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, -
He Who taught (the use of) the pen, -
Taught man that which he knew not. (Sura 96.1-5)

As soon as sufficient understanding for the religion has been awakened in the growing child, a start is made on the learning and performance of the canonical prayers and visits to the Qur'an school. From the seventh year the parents have the duty to ensure that their children participate in the congregational prayers.

When the child reaches the age of puberty it acquires a further duty, namely participation in the community of those who fast during the month of Ramadan. For every child this is a joyful and festive occasion. The preparations for this moment have usually begun in the twelfth year. First the child fasts only for one day, then for several, until finally at the attainment of puberty the full month is achieved.

The role expected of Qur'an students in traditional Muslim Turkish society at the performance of religious usages is based on their youth and their knowledge of the word of God. It is to a certain extent of a mystical character. For example, one of their tasks is to recite the Qur'an in chorus under the leadership of their teacher on Thursdays at the graves of those who have recently died. Likewise, when an expectant mother experiences complications at delivery the children of the nearest school go in procession through the streets reciting the Qur'an. They carry an outstretched sheet, in the middle of which is an egg. People passing by throw small cash contributions onto the sheet and call blessings onto the mother-to-be. In the cities Qur'an teaching is usually supervised by the qadi while among the tribes the qa'id exercises this function.

The spiritual decline of the Islamic world also affected the institution of the Qur'an school. While the original intention was to get to know and understand the Qur'an - to seek for knowledge as the tradition demands - the situation now was that the text was learnt by heart solely to assure reward in the afterlife and to derive personal advantage in this life out of the power of the Word of God. The same was the case with the spiritual qualifications of the Qur'an school teacher. The original highly intelligent mosque preachers and interpreters gave way to men, who were certainly able to recite the Qur'an text completely by heart, but who increasingly became incapable of understanding or explaining its content. In most cases expertise in grammar and theology neither existed or was expected.

It is in this connection interesting that the criticisms which have been expressed against the Qur'an schools in the Federal Republic since 1977 are in no way new. Their equivalent is to be found in, for example, the Handwörterbuch des Islam from the year 1941. It is stated there:

Discipline in the Qur'an school is practised through corporal punishment. The teacher carries a long stick with which he strikes the head of the unattentive student with more or less brutality. To punish more serious sins he condemns the sinner to a certain number of strokes many parents even ask the teacher to punish the children for misdeeds which have taken place outside the school. 4

The methods of punishment and teaching are here recounted in exactly the same kind of detail as one finds in current newspaper reports.

With the exception of Turkey, it is clear that with the introduction of modern educational systems the influence of the Qur'an schools has steadily decreased, despite revived piety in all classes of population. The children of enlightened parents are only brought to the Qur'an school so that they may learn a few suras of the scripture for the purposes of the ritual duties. Then they are again withdrawn.

In some countries religious education has recently been introduced into the public schools as a regular teaching subject. It is thus quite possible that in a few years there will be no more Qur'an schools in the traditional sense, and that in their place teaching of the faith will take place in the schools as an accompaniment to religious education, as the same way as confirmation classes take place today in Germany under the auspices of the church.

The religious situation in Turkey; the home country of most of the Muslim guest workers in the Federal Republic, has for a long time been dominated by the reaction, started at the end of the second world war, against positivist laicism. The official cultural policy of Turkey, modelled on the West, has collapsed, at least in Anatolia. There are unbridgeable contradictions between the cultural ideal of the city populations and that of the peasant masses. The consequences of the mistaken cultural planning, started by Atatürk, are becoming increasingly clear and have led the country into the abyss.

The current chaotic internal developments started becoming critical already in 1960. The Islamcılar (Islamists) and the Atatürkçüler (Kemalists) faced each other as two irreconcilable blocs. On the religious wing it was in particular the Naqshabandi groups, seeking their understanding of an Islamic revival, which exhausted themselves in exclusive and extreme anti-Kemalism (here lie the sources for the later MSP, National Salvation Party, and MHP, National Action Party). The most radical formulation of this movement is to be found in the Halidiye which sometimes mistakenly is connected to the Nurculuk movement. The chronology of the renewed recognition

of Islam in Turkey is, very briefly, as follows:

- 1949 - The theological faculties at the universities of Ankara (İlahiyat Fakültesi) and Erzurum (İslami İlimler Fakültesi) were reopened.
- 1950 - The call to prayer in Arabic is again permitted. The Sufi orders, prohibited since 1925, are again permitted.
- 1952 - Religious officials (mufti, vaiz, imam-hatip, muezzin, kayyim) are again appointed by the state. The religious administration establishes a hierarchy: provincial mufti, district mufti, vaiz. Reintroduction of religious education in the primary schools.
- 1956 - Reintroduction of religious education in the middle school.
- 1959 - Resurrection of the advanced Islam institutes (Yüksek İslam Enstitüleri) in Istanbul and later in Konya, Izmir, Kayseri and Erzurum.
- 1967 - Reintroduction of religious education in the secondary schools. Since then the schools for preachers (imam-hatip schools), closed since 1933, have been revived.

The Qur'an courses, to which Islam in Turkey owes its survival, are supervised jointly by the office for spiritual matters (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) and the ministry of education. However, a large number of unrecognised Qur'an courses are also held. The real Qur'an course movement in Turkey grew out of the Süleymanlı group, founded by the religious scholar Sheikh Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888-1959). The Süleymanlı founded the Federation of Qur'an Courses (Kurankursu Federasyonu) based in Sirkeci - Istanbul. These courses are recognised by the state.

It is prescribed by law that the children may only take part in the Qur'an teaching from the fifth year of primary school, and that they must be able to read and write the Latin script.

The law further demands that the leader of a Qur'an course must have completed at least theological seminary (the second year of the imam and hatip school).⁵

The situation in the Federal Republic of Germany

At the end of 1978 more than 400,000 Muslim children and young people under 16 years of age lived in the Federal Republic of Germany. Of these some 390 000 were of Turkish nationality, in other words 41% of all foreign children living here. In May 1979 the Federal Minister for education and science, Dr Jürgen Schmude, stated in a conversation with the Turkish Minister of Education, Necdet Ugur, "Turkish children must be fully integrated in the German educational system. At the same time they must preserve their connections to their culture and the religion of their home country by means of the Turkish language".⁶ Of the 390,000 Turkish children about 160,000 attend ordinary schools and about 50,000 are involved in career training.⁷

In the field of school and education there is a particular crisis in the teaching of their own religion. It is true that the law makes it possible to give Muslim children an Islamic religious education in the state schools. For example, it is usual that two hours are set aside within the Turkish national education for religious education. But there are no teachers specifically trained in religion. The consequence is that in the state schools hardly any teaching exists, which can be considered theologically and educationally sound religious education. This situation is highly unsatisfactory. It has also been recognised too late by the relevant German authorities, that for the Muslim minorities which must live here in a context which not only follows another faith but also is secular, religious education is synonymous with education and identity. Additionally, however, Islam as a community must resort to such education, if it wishes to survive in the diaspora.

It must be reaffirmed that the overwhelming majority of Turkish parents wish that their children be brought up in the religion and that consequently they must have an Islamic religious education. So far this desire has not been satisfied in the German schools, since no qualified teachers of religion have been available and, additionally, no corresponding curricula have been developed. Furthermore, many parents have had to experience that some teachers tried to win their children to Christianity. In his work Moslemkinder in Kindergärten

und Schulen, Father Werner Wanzura (White Fathers), leader of the ecumenical contact work for non-Christians in the Archdiocese of Cologne, writes:

There are Protestant and Catholic teachers of religion who see in the presence of Muslim children an opportunity for "conversion". Not only do these teachers awake the mistrust and the hate of Muslim parents by acting thus, they also do not act in the spirit of Christ who demands the individual's voluntary decision for conversion. But they also offend against the rights of parents, since the parents must decide on the religious upbringing of their children. Even if the permission of the Muslim parents is available, this does not necessarily mean that they are aware of what they have agreed to. Nearly all of them have a certain fear of government officials and therefore sign everything which comes from a government office, so as not to commit anything which could lead to deportation.

A few years ago, to fill this vacuum, simple workers who had once attended Qur'an courses in their Turkish homeland declared themselves ready to set up Qur'an schools for Muslim children on their own initiative. So what we are dealing with is in the first instance an action by Muslim parents of self-help, of a duty which Islam imposes on them.

The subsequent problems were inevitable, both with the regard to the educational and to the political fields. Apart from their good intentions the honorary Hodjas lacked everything. In Islam also, there have always been attempts from political circles to gain influence over religious organizations and individual religious officials, and it was only natural that the weak points should be attacked first. These simple servants of religion stood with their backs to the wall. They were faced not only with political pressures, they also found themselves in an acutely defensive situation in the face of sometimes massive proselytizing. They can hardly be blamed for their inability to resist.

In the Federal Republic, Qur'an education takes place both in Qur'an courses and in Qur'an schools, the Qur'an courses being characterised by the fact that also adults may attend them. Organisers of these courses are:

- The Suleymanlei movement (Islamic Cultural Centre, Beulsweg 15, 5000 Cologne 60)

- The Islamic Federation (Islamic Centre München, Wallner-Strasse 1-3, 8000 München 45, and the Islamic Association, Motorstrasse 61),

with a number of attached autonomous congregations and organisations with various spiritual and political aims.

Besides these there is a grey area where those institutions are found which have been set up by the National Salvation Party and the Federation of Turkish Cultural Associations (National Action Party) with its head office in 6000 Frankfurt am Main, Reuterweg 65 (Greywolves). There are also more than 200 local groups of which 110 approximately belong to the Cultural Federation (e.g. Turkish-German Cultural Association, Christophstrasse 14, 5000 Cologne 1, the Greater Association of Idealists, Schanzenstrasse 5, 5000 Cologne 80, etc.). On the other hand, no Qur'an schools are run by the Nurculuk movement (Jama'at un-Nur, Rolandstrasse 88, 5000 Cologne 1), which for a long time was considered to be one of the main movers of the so-called ad hoc Qur'an courses, a misunderstanding which probably derives from the fact that they call their members "students". Of these only the Süleymanli movement have allowed public scrutiny of the organization of their Qur'an courses. The result is that since then they have become the main target of the opponents of these institutions.

In the Federal Republic and West Berlin the Süleymanlis run 133 congregations at whose centres Qur'an courses take place. At any one time these courses are attended by 8,300 children and about 1,000 adults. At the main centres there are trained teachers employed on a full-time basis. They are fully educated and also inspect those courses which are run by honorary hodjas. The curriculum follows that which governs Qur'an courses in Turkey.

A press statement issued on 15 April 1979 by the Islamic Cultural Centre, Cologne, says:

Incorporating 133 congregations the Islamic Cultural Centre of Cologne is by far the largest Islamic umbrella organisation in the Federal Republic and West Berlin. More than 60% of all Muslim religious congregations are attached to the Cultural Centre. The attendance figures of our centres, according to information from spring 1978, amount to an annual 935,000 persons.

Islam is a message of peace which includes all people without distinction of faith. In view of this the Islamic Cultural Centre is prepared to cooperate as partners with all authorities and considers itself bound by the free and democratic constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Although this opinion, which we have regularly made public, is the inspiration for all our activities, from time to time the mass media spread reports which have as their aim to detract from and injure the reputation of the Cultural Centres. The false and mistaken impression of our activities is based partly on ignorance but to a significant degree also on the prejudices of a group which is agitating to reinforce prejudices against Islam, and which rejects any connection with any faith, and which for these particular reasons attacks especially our Qur'an courses. Unfortunately the reports produced by this group are often accepted by the editors of the mass media without criticism, while impartial and objective information is hardly taken into consideration.

Today we seek your help to change this situation, because not only those in positions of responsibility but also our countrymen in general, who are the supporters of the centres, feel themselves very badly affected by such negative press.

The Muslim parents are concerned about the religious upbringing of their children. They fear that their children may be alienated from themselves and from the faith. They are concerned that their children thereby also may lose their cultural and national identity. For the religion is without a doubt a means for preserving the identity of the Muslim children. As is well known, Muslim children in German schools are offered either an unsatisfactory religious education or none at all. While Christian children have the opportunity to take part in two or three weekly hours of religious education from the first class of primary school, our children are either sent home or occupied in other fashion. For these children the danger of losing their ties to the faith because of influences of their environment is so much greater. And what do those few Turkish teachers who are attacking the Qur'an courses do, without at least informing themselves concerning these courses? They reject even the offering of religious education in the primary schools.

According to our faith the parents are obliged to prepare their children to perform the prayers. When the school does not fulfil this obligation the parents are left with no alternative but to take the initiative themselves. That is the reason why the parents send their children to Qur'an courses for their religious education. In these courses it is particularly stressed that excessive demands in no way be placed on the children. Our concern is the educational success of our children. The religious teaching of the children corresponds to their age and capacity of understanding. When many children spend their afternoons in our cultural centres this is also for another reason. Since usually both parents are out at work, they entrust their children to the care of voluntary supervisors in our mosques. Children study and do their homework under supervision. Who, otherwise, would take these children off the streets?

The religious education of the children takes place in the framework of our thoroughly developed concepts. We emphasise especially that the children should realise, that their faith tells them to live together peacefully with all people without dist. . . of creed.

Tolerance is a particular characteristic of Islam. Islam signifies peace and fraternity. Islam bears no aggressive intentions against other religious communities. In our Qur'an courses both children and adults are encouraged to participate in the formation of this society and to live peacefully together. They should not forget that their parents have come here to earn a living, and that friendship between our peoples rests on a long tradition.

Those who are opposed to any kind of religious education can be expected to continue to attack our Qur'an courses, because their concern is that a generation should grow up without any ties to faith so that they can manipulate them in the service of their ideology. We ask that you oppose these fabricated accusations. Our Qur'an courses are open to any German and any Turk. You may come to us at any time unannounced and convince yourself.....

In recent months it has become clear that the atmosphere between those Turks who do not care about or even reject their religion, and those who practise their faith, has got much worse. Instead of looking for the causes of this development and entering into a debate with the arguments of those who doubt or are indifferent, the "pious" uncritically consider them near Communism or label them as "atheists", who must be fought "for the sake of the faith". The indifferent, on the other hand, have gone to the other extreme, they are inclined to equate Islamic piety with fascism and are, in steadily more articulate terms, demanding from the German authorities a general prohibition of all Islamic associations, which would amount to a prohibition against Islam in the Federal Republic.

To achieve this end every means seems justified. They range from falsified Qur'an quotes to the transformation and revival of historical facts which have long since been transcended. The focal point of this debate has become the Qur'an schools and Qur'an courses.

The Qur'an school debate documented

A. Land Parliament North-Rhein Westphalia, 8th Parliament.

Document no 8/4229 dated 2 February 1979, Question 1649 by members Bussow, Hein and Reymann, SPD, Qur'an schools. 8.

The Association of Turkish Teachers has expressed its opposition to Qur'an schools and the teaching practice of the teachers active in them and in favour of the closure of these schools. The reason given for the demand is that the Qur'an courses are in breach of current Turkish law. It is further claimed that the additional attendance at Qur'an schools puts too great a demand on Turkish pupils, exercises a negative influence on them, and consequently leads to a lack of interest in the regular teaching.

In particular the Qur'an schools are said to be used for the propaganda of radical right wing parties and to deride all other German and Turkish parties. In the Qur'an schools, the children are thus said to be encouraged towards intolerance against those who think differently, towards a nationalism which contradicts international understanding and the peaceful cooperation of peoples, and towards enmity towards German children and thereby an attitude leading them to isolation.

We ask the Land Government:

1. On which legal basis are the so-called Qur'an schools in the Federal Republic and in North-Rhein Westphalia active ?
2. Until the present, how have the Qur'an schools been supervised on the basis of the provisions of the Federal and Land constitutions ?
3. Are information and experience concerning the content and methods as well as the physical and sanitary conditions of the Qur'an schools available, what is the assessment of them, and are they in accordance with German legislation ?
4. Is the claim justified, and does the Land government have any information to the effect that the Qur'an schools have been established and are being run by radical right wing and fascistic parties and which conclusions are being drawn ?
5. Assuming that the criticism against the Qur'an schools expressed by the Association of Turkish teachers is generally correct, does the Land government then agree with our opinion that the continued existence of the schools and the continuing education of the children is neither in their interest or in that of our Land, and which measures do the Land government envisage to counteract attacks on the Federal and Land constitutions ?

B. Press Reactions

Since the press campaign which accompanied this question in the Land parliament was unusually emotional (Rheinischer Merkur: "Allah's German underground"; Stuttgarter Zeitung: "Opponents of the Qur'an schools may be killed"; WAZ: "Hodjas incite Turkish children"; Stern: "Stress in the name of Allah", it will suffice to include here a report of the Evangelischer Pressedienst. It reports under the title, "Turkish teachers demand the closure of the Qur'an schools":⁹

Three SPD members of the Land parliament are seeking information from the North-Rhein Westphalia land government concerning the Qur'an schools, which are being attended by Turkish pupils. In a question, Hans Jürgen Büssow, Hans Reymann (both from Düsseldorf) and Horst Hein Hörter take up a demand of the Association of Turkish Teachers. In the opinion of the Association the Qur'an courses are in breach of current Turkish legislation and overload the children because their attendance is in addition to normal school hours. Above all, according to the Association, the Qur'an schools are channels for propaganda of radical right wing parties and spread calumnies against all other Turkish and German parties. The Association of Turkish Teachers even states that the children in these schools are encouraged to intolerance against those who believe different, to a nationalism which is opposed to international understanding, and hatred towards German children. It therefore wishes that the Qur'an schools be closed.

The Islamic Cultural Centre of Cologne once again moves into the lime-light. On 25 April 1979 the Frankfurter Rundschau reported on a hearing of the Federal Parliament's Committee for Youth, Family and Health on the subject "Future opportunities for children of foreign workers":

Indignation over Cultural Centre
dc Bonn, 24 April. Foreigners' associations on Tuesday in Bonn disapproved of the invitation to representatives of the Islamic Cultural Centre to a hearing at the Federal Parliament's Committee for Youth, Family and Health on the subject "Future opportunities for the children of foreign workers". In the "Qur'an schools" for Turkish children the Cultural Centres practise propaganda for the neo-fascist Turkish National Action Party (MHP), stated the associations among them the Foreign Workers Group of the SPD Bonn and the Association of Turkish Teachers in North-Rhein Westphalia. Also the spokesmen of the Federation of German Trades Unions, of the Arbeiterwohlfahrt of the Association Education and Science, and the Verband Bildung und Erziehung expressed their disapproval of the Qur'an schools run by the Islamic Cultural Centre.

On the same day it was reported in a detailed account by Dirk Cornelissen:

It is not only the ten foreigners' associations, among them the Initiative Group Foreign Citizens in Hessen, who do not value the Islamic Cultural Centre. The representatives of the Arbeiterwohlfahrt, the Federation of German Trades Unions, the Association Education and Science and the Christian Verband Bildung und Erziehung also make no secret of their dislike of the Qur'an schools run by these Cultural Centres.

The Federation of German Trades Unions, as its representative informed the members, has nothing against Islamic education, but opposed the fact that a call to holy war is being made in the Federal Republic. Egbert Jancke from the Verband Bildung und Erziehung cast doubts on the tolerance of the Qur'an schools. They are guilty of incitement when they accuse Christianity, Zionism and Communism of being universal evils.

Mr Tüylöglu (Chief Imam of the Islamic Cultural Centre) rejected all these accusations. The Islamic Cultural Centre has no relation to the neo-fascist National Action Party or the National Salvation Party and professes its allegiance to the free and democratic constitution of the Federal Republic. There is no religious education in German schools for Muslim children. But Turkish parents have a duty "to prepare children to perform the prayers".

One of the members of Parliament on the committee was embarrassed at the invitation to these Turkish gentlemen. The SPD member Klaus Thüsing made it clear that the representatives of the Islamic Cultural Centre had been invited correctly. However, had the background been known they would not have been invited. The SPD man made it clear that also foreign fascist organizations would be resisted energetically in the Federal Republic.

Two further voices on this point:

The Federation of Turkish Workers' Associations in the Federal Republic (FIDEF) have called it scandalous that the Islamic Cultural Centre has been invited to the hearing of the Federal Parliament's Committee for Youth, Family and Health set for next Monday. The Chairman of the Association of Turkish Teachers in North-Rhein Westphalia, Ali Dagdeviren drew the attention of journalists to the fascistic character of this Cultural Centre. The Centre, which is under the influence of the Turkish Fascist Party (MHP) wants to run so-called Qur'an courses in the Federal Republic in which Turkish children would be subjected to a merciless indoctrination in reactionary ideologies. As an example, Dagdeviren quoted from the catechism of this course:

"What punishment is deserved by someone who does not pray according to the founder of our confession, the Imam Abu Hanifa ?

Answer: He should be flogged, until blood flows on his body.
If he still does not pray he should be imprisoned until he prays".

Dagdeviren emphasized that these courses are prohibited in Turkey, and that in the Federal Republic approximately 80% of Turkish children of school age take part in them. He blamed the ignorance of the Federal Government in question for the fact that the Islamic Cultural Centre was invited as the only representative of Turkey to a hearing on the situation of foreign children in the Federal Republic of Germany. 10

Finally, a Trades Union view:

IG Metall has learnt with astonishment that representatives of the Islamic Cultural Centre, Cologne, have received an invitation to the public hearing of the Federal Parliament concerning future opportunities for foreign children in the Federal Republic. This was stated by the spokesmen of the executive of IG Metall, Ferdinand Koob.... in Braunlage. The Islamic Cultural Centre, in which representatives of the Turkish right wing extremist parties MHP and the Salvation Party compete for domination, is with its establishment of Qur'an schools in the Federal Republic not primarily concerned with the religious education of the children of Turkish workers, but in the first instance with preaching reactionary fanaticism and enmity against all strangers by unauthorized persons. IG Metall has in the past repeatedly drawn attention to the dangers threatening Turkish workers by the unrestricted activity of religious fanatical and fascistic circles. After repeated representations by the trades unions the Federal Ministry of the Interior has recently promised to keep close watch on the activities of the MHP, its youth organization the Grey Wolves, the Idealist Association and the Islamic Cultural Centres. The more surprising it is that such groups have been invited to a Federal Parliament hearing and that parliamentarians claim that they were ignorant of the character of these organizations. Ferdinand Koob: "These parliamentarians are advised to put aside their expert blinkers in the future and keep a closer eye on the activities of foreign fascists in the Federal Republic." 11

C. The Minister's reponse

The answer to the question put by the SPD members Büssow, Hein and Reymann was finally published by the responsible minister on 27 April 1979. Under the heading "Qur'an Schools" it is stated,

The Land Government has, until the present, received no evidence of breaches against German law by Qur'an teaching for Turkish guest workers' children. This was stated by Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Professor Dr Friedhelm Farthmann (SPD) in his answer to the question(doc. 8/4229) put by the SPD members Hans Jürgen Büssow, Horst Hein and Hans Reymann. The Minister emphasised that the guarantee of unhindered religious expression also covers the followers of the Islamic faith. Within the framework of its policy towards foreigners the Land Government holds to the principle that the foreign workers and their families living in North-Rhein Westphalia must themselves decide the length of their stay, the degree of their integration and of their preservation of national and religious identity. 12

4. The role of the Association of Turkish Teachers in North-Rhein Westphalia
(NRW Türkiye Öğretmenler Birliği)

The parliamentary questions and the opinions and reports of the press on the theme of Qur'an schools and courses all originated in a letter which the Association of Turkish Teachers in North-Rhein Westphalia (4600 Dortmund-Dorstfeld, Orensteinerstr. 2) sent to the authorities on 20 March 1978. In that letter the chairman of this organization, Ali Dagdeviren (4600 Dortmund 1, Karl-Funkestr. 69), alleges, among other things:

- that the Qur'an schools are private training camps of the Turkish reactionary parties;
- that the establishment of these schools has been organised by the MHP and the Grey Wolves, and that in these courses party propaganda on behalf of the MHP and of the National Salvation Party is being conducted;
- that in these courses children are being taught that teachers who are against Qur'an schools must be killed;
- that between 70% and 80% of Turkish pupils attend the Qur'an courses;
- that the hodjas beat the children with long sticks;
- that the hodjas accept money from the children's parents without issuing receipts.

In a further eighteen points the Teachers' Association outlines what it believes the Qur'an courses to be teaching:

- women and girls must wear headscarves;
- Women and girls must wear long trousers in addition to a dress;
- girls and boys may not sit next to each other on one bench;
- school attendance and learning Turkish and German writing is not suitable for girls;
- swimming, sports and ballgames as well as dancing are absolutely prohibited for girls;
- Turkish children may not form friendships with Germans since these are Christian, eat pork, go dancing and do not wear headscarves;
- no meat may be bought from German butchers since they cut beef and mutton with the same knife as is used for the prohibited pork;
- Islam is the most beautiful, most honest and the best of all religions. What the other religions say is not correct, as for example when the Christian religion allows the eating of pork;

- the Turkish people is a heroic people and is superior to all others;
- women must walk behind the man in the streets since they are inferior to him;
- women may not stay in the same place as men;
- a woman may not contradict her husband;
- what is taught in the schools, whether by German or Turkish teachers, is wrong; for example, human beings, according to the teaching, cannot travel in space to the moon since it is the light of God;
- it is not permitted to reveal outside the Qur'an courses what is being taught there, where it takes place and the name of the teacher; punishment for doing so is flogging;
- teachers who are against Qur'an courses may be killed;
- Social Democrats are labelled Communists;
- the Islamic faith will conquer the whole world;
- listening to the radio and watching television are prohibited because these instruments have been invented by Christians and not by Muslims.

In the opinion of the Teachers' Association such teaching content has a number of consequences:

- enmity between Turkish and German children is strengthened;
- girls come to school wearing headscarves and do not sit next to boys;
- likewise girls do not take part in sport or swimming;
- the children reject what the German or Turkish teacher tells them;
- they do not play with the German children and cannot complete their homework since they go direct from school to the Qur'an course where they stay between three and six hours, leaving no spare time;
- 80% of children of school age visit Qur'an courses (The Turkish daily Milliyet, dated 21 April 1977);
- since the Turkish children avoid the German children, subjects like music, art and sport can often not be taught together, despite the fact that the order of the German Ministry of Culture dated 24 May 1976 states that these subjects must be taught jointly for Turkish and German children;

- among the Turkish children, national pride is so strong that conflict often breaks out;
- because of the threats of the hodjas the children are afraid of the Turkish and German school teachers;
- The children believe that apart from the radical right wing Turkish parties the National Action Party and the National Salvation Party, all Turkish and German parties are Communist;
- German festivities, in which alcohol is drunk and joviality dominates, are regarded as comical by Turkish children. ¹³

The conclusion of the letter signed by Ali Dagdeviren is:

All such and similar teaching of religion makes it difficult for the Turkish children to make themselves understood by German children and consequently by the German people. German teachers who teach Turkish children are able to confirm these statements. The Qur'an courses create terror and give the children wrong information, by which means they acquire mistaken opinions and attitudes. This is a danger not only for Turkey but for the whole world.

For this reason we hope for the support of the Germans, so that it may be possible to do something against associations of the nature described.

D. Some necessary remarks

The SPD member of the Federal Parliament, Klaus Thüsing (member of the Federal Parliamentary Committee for Education and Science) wrote on the subject Grey Wolves in the Social Democratic Press Service of 30 March 1979:

The National Action Party (MHP) has been strengthening its infrastructure in recent years through the foundation of so-called cultural and idealist associations, a process which is observable everywhere. Supported by the Islamic Cultural Centre, Cologne, which spreads its fascistic opinions through the newspaper Anadolu and is open to Turks, ¹⁴ these associations seek to win religious Turks for their fascistic propaganda and also train unemployed young Turks who form a particular potential for the Turkish fascists, in for example karate. There is evidence of connections to German extreme rightist and neo-Nazi groups.

In fact, the report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution of 1977 states that "members and followers of the Turkish National Action Party have since the summer of 1977 been politically active in Turkish idealist association and Islamic Cultural Centres." ¹⁵

On the other hand the Islamic Cultural Centre is violently attacked by those whom it is supposed to be supporting, by the National Action Party and the National Salvation Party, because of the openness of its leadership towards state, society and church. The Centre is openly accused of "shady

manoeuvring", of plotting against Islam (together with the Catholic Church) and "Zionist activity." 16

What is the explanation of this contradiction ? A closer look at the names of the organizations indicates that the religious nationalists are grouped in Islamic Centres in Turkish Islamic Centres, in Cultural Associations etc. The term union also often appears. One may conclude that also on the Islamic scene in the Federal Republic there are great differences over the term culture.

In addition, the Qur'an courses are linked to the Islamic Cultural Centres and open to everybody. Even the names of the hodjas are no secret. They can be questioned at any time. In other words, the organisers of Qur'an courses which are being attacked by the Association of Turkish Teachers must be other organizations, which are possibly not registered in detail anywhere.

A remark is also necessary concerning the statement that between 70% and 80% of all Turkish children of school age attend the Qur'an courses of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Cologne. If that were true, the resulting figure would be between 126,000 and 144,000 Qur'an school pupils. This would mean that every Qur'an course is attended daily for up to six hours by 950 to 1,100 children.. If one then considers that the teaching, according to the statement of the Teachers' Association, takes place mostly in basement rooms, this information becomes quite unrealistic.

It is true that, according to the statements of the Land Government of North Rhein Westphalia, there is not evidence of demonstrable breaches against German law in the Qur'an education for the children of Turkish guest workers. It must, however, be assumed from the latest indication that the political climate inside Turkey to an increasing extent is having its influence on the Muslim diaspora. It is therefore quite possible that Turkish right wing extremists in Germany are offering Qur'an courses, to which the allegations of the Teachers' Association apply, at least to a certain extent. On the other hand, one should not overlook the fact that the Turkish Left in the Federal Republic is much more hostile to religion than the European Left. The Turkish Left is militantly atheistic. It is clear from their criticism of the Qur'an courses that religion and popular usage to a certain extent are

lumped together, that in the eyes of some writers religion has basically fascistio characteristics. It should therefore come as no surprise when a published reader's letter demands a constitutional judgement of the sacred scripture of Islam, the Qur'an, at least as it is being used in Qur'an education.¹⁷ A further note: In 1978, parents in the area of Velbert reported that their children had told them that the religious education teacher continuously insulted them, put them at a disadvantage and held them up to ridicule in front of other children because of their faith in Allah. It was reported that Islam was being discriminated against in religious teaching in the mother tongue, and that pressure was being exercised on the children. A typical account tells that the teacher demanded of the children that they ask God for a sweet. After a moment he said, "There you see, there is no God. But I can give you sweets". And then those who had said that there is no God were given sweets. There is a wide area here for the German school inspectorate.

Islamic models for religious education

Within the Muslim communities and organisations in the Federal Republic - apart from the governmental and the informal Qur'an courses - a number of models have been developed for religious education. The three most important of these will be briefly outlined in the following:

- the model of the Islamic Cultural Centre;
- the model of the German Working Party on Islamic Education;
- the religious education being offered in the public schools by Turkish Consular teachers.

A. The Model of the Islamic Cultural Centre.

The Islamic Cultural Centre of Cologne desires a transfer of the religious education from the Qur'an courses at mosques to the public schools. In connection with the application for recognition of Islam,¹⁸ the leadership of the Centre on 23 February 1979 declared to the Ministry of Culture of the Land North-Rhein Westphalia: "Furthermore, the Centre favours the introduction of an Islamic religious education for Muslim children as a regular subject in the public schools under

public control". This teaching should be oriented towards inter-faith relations. The press release of the Islamic Cultural Centre issued in connection with the National Conference, Easter 1979, in Frankfurt am Main states the same.

The idea of the Centre is that the teaching should enable Muslim children to formulate their beliefs and to engage in genuine conversation with the Christians and non-Christians together with whom they are living.

The religious education, attendance at which must remain voluntary, should be accompanied by teaching in the faith given by catechists (hodjas) suitably trained and authorised. This teaching should take place at the mosque once or twice a week. This teaching, possibly corresponding to the Christian Sunday school teaching, would be placed under the supervision of the relevant mufti and carried out under the responsibility of the Cultural Centres.

B. The Model of the German Working Party for Islamic Education.

Particularly interesting are the efforts of the German Working Party for Islamic Education, because it makes use of modern teaching methods. In the field of organised German Islam - unfortunately only a small minority - involved parents have joined together in a working group, in which experience is exchanged and models developed which should encourage especially those parents living in the diaspora to take initiative. In the short and intermediate term the work of this group can clearly be a support for the educational model of the Islamic Cultural Centre. Whether in the long term it aims at arranging an Islamic religious education for the public schools is at present not possible to say, although it would be desirable and certainly in the interest of the future Muslim generation in Germany. In the working paper of the group it is stated:

Islamic education for children can only be genuinely successful if the children experience the example of Islam at home. In the present day it is not possible to indoctrinate children in their religion in forms handed down from the past so that they can recite their declaration of faith and prayers without mistakes but without genuine inner participation. From the beginning a living relationship to God, the Prophets and the Islamic way of life must be built up. For this it is necessary that everything which the growing child experiences and

the questions which arise always quite consciously are related to God, the Creator and Sustainer. In this we are directly following the model of the Qur'an, which continually brings the signs of God to our attention with examples such as the alternation of day and night, life and death and with references to the small miracles of every day.

With this foundation in mind we have collected material and developed the following points:

I. Iman: Nurture of the faith related to the child's basic experience which is continually related to God:

- 1) Creator and creation - the origin of all existence on the basis of the unity of God;
- 2) Relations between parents and child from an Islamic point of view;
- 3) Experience with others;
- 4) The experience of being different in a non-Islamic environment;
- 5) Experience of the group (nursery/school);
- 6) Relations to the other sex;
- 7) Life and death - life after death;
- 8) Love and fear;
- 9) Attitude to property - giving and receiving;
- 10) Permitted and prohibited;
- 11) Reason and justice;

With the basic Islamic attitude of the child to life assured in these fundamental matters, character building is followed by practical application, the formation of life on the basis of:

II. Qur'an and Sunnah: with study of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) and his way of life and the Islamic duties, for example: cleanliness, food, sleep, relations with others, etc.

The strength for this arises out of:

III. The five pillars of Islam:

- 1) The confession of the absolute unity of God which liberates man from any inhuman slavery, as he serves nothing or none other than God;
- 2) The prayer five times a day which gives to the day its rhythm and incorporates all doing into the service of God;
- 3) The payment of zakaat, which encourages a sense of community and

a sense of responsibility of men towards each other;

- 4) The fast of Ramadan which teaches us genuinely to value daily giving and food and drink;
- 5) The pilgrimage which creates a bond among Muslims who were, are and will be;

as well as the sixth important duty of jihad, the personal and active engagement in the cause of Islam.

IV. Arabic language, or rather the language of the Qur'an:

- 1) Reading and writing;
- 2) Attitude to the Arabic language in which the learning of the Arabic text and the German text of, for example, prayer, confession of faith, etc., is of the greatest importance, since every Muslim must say a fully valid prayer and the prayer must not become a mere "prayer wheel";
- 3) Reading and recitation from the Qur'an - here again with the assistance of German interpretation in a simple language;
- 4) Spoken usage and concepts which are closely connected with the Islamic culture, such concepts being taught equally in German and Arabic.

V. Reading material:

- 1) On the life and work of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him);
- 2) On earlier Prophets;
- 3) On the Companions of the Prophet and leading personalities in Islamic history;
- 4) Stories encouraging Islamic feelings;
- 5) Islamic history;
- 6) Sunnis and Shi'is; the schools of law;
- 7) Books on basic Islamic knowledge;
- 8) Books on Islamic culture and civilisation;
- 9) Books on the contribution of Islam to scientific achievement (without apologetics);
- 10) Books on the character of the Islamic state and how it could be put into practice (economic system without interest, etc.);
- 11) Books on other religions, especially Christianity, from an Islamic point of view;
- 12) Islam and its attitude to science - it must, for example, be quite

clear here that in the Islamic point of view every branch of science must inevitably start from the point that God alone is the creator and the source of all existence. This is in direct contrast to so-called modern science, which goes so far in its objectivity that it considers faith in God to be unscientific. Thence the unease over the much praised technical advances which ultimately lead to ecological destruction because of their purely materialistic basis.

Munich, October 1976.

C. Religious education in the public schools given by Turkish Consular teachers:

Very little can be said regarding this model, in that in this area there is no reliable control over the role or status of religious education in the framework of the national education given by Consular teachers. This teaching is given in the Turkish language and therefore falls outside the supervision of the German educational authorities.

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NOTES

1. W.Muir, Annals of the Early Caliphate (London 1883), p.45.
2. W.Muir, Das Leben Mohammad, p.28.
3. Th. Nöldeke, art. "Qur'an", Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th ed.
4. A.J.Wensinck and J.H.Kramers (eds.) Handwörterbuch des Islam, (Leiden 1941), p.404.
5. Diyanet Gazetesi, no.153, (15 November 1976), pp.1,16.
6. Pressemitteilung des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Wissenschaft, 21 May 1979.
7. Ibid. 14 March 1979.
8. Further information in Plenarprotokoll 8/49, Landtag North-Rhein Westphalia, dated 15 June 1977, on the subject "Turkish Qur'an schools in the Federal Republic", pp.2740ff., and "Qur'an schools for Turkish children of the Muslim faith"; Landtag North-Rhein Westphalia, 8th Parliament, doc. 8/2235 dated 11 July 1977, answer of the Land Government to question no.851, doc. 8/2112 dated 3 June 1977.
9. Evangelischer Pressedienst (edition East Westphalia-Lippe), no.32, 9 March 1979.
10. Frankfurter Rundschau, 20 April 1979, p.2, in section Politik aktuell.
11. Metall Pressedienst, XXVII/67, 25 April 1979.
12. Landtag intern Nordrhein-Westfalen, 27 April 1979, p.18.
13. This listing is reproduced verbatim from circulars of the Association of Turkish Teachers in North-Rhein Westphalia.
14. Leader of the Turkish National Action Party.
15. Verfassungsschutz 1977, chapter VII,2, "Other extremists and nationalists", p.161.
16. Vesikalarla Süleymançiligin İcyüzü ("The true face of the Süleymanlis") pp. 141f.,208.
17. Frankfurter Rundschau, 20 June 1979.
18. Cf. J.S.Nielsen, "Forms and problems of legal recognition for Muslims in Europe", Research Papers, no.2, June 1979.