CREATING A GENUINE ISLAM

Second Generation Muslims Growing Up In Canada

ABSTRACT

As immigration trends continue to make Canada an increasingly religiously diverse country, Canada's own multiculturalism policy has become questionable. In order to better understand the creation of religious identity within the Canadian context, it is necessary to examine the integration and acculturation experiences of the second generation, those who have grown up in Canada. This experience of growing up differently will hopefully begin to shed light on the policy implications of multiculturalism and whether it is effective in Canadian culture. This article examines the religious expression and involvement of second generation Muslim immigrant youth growing up in Canada in comparison to the first generation, in an attempt to fill this research gap. As part of a larger research project, this article focuses on the ways these Muslim youth are constructing their personal identities and their Islam as Canadians.

RUBINA RAMJI

Rubina Ramji, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the Cape Breton University Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. She is currently working with Peter Beyer, at the University of Ottawa, on an extensive project investigating religious identity of second generation youth in Canada.

> Give it a couple of...generations for people to get...out of the shell of their own culture, to mix with the world. Because I believe what we have in Canada is an opportunity that a lot of the world doesn't have, I mean, don't get me wrong, there's a lot of blood on the hands of everybody who lives in this country. But we have an opportunity for people to start fresh. We have people from all different backgrounds, all over the world. We are a representation to the world....There are certain points into staying and understanding your own culture and appreciating your own culture. But to be able to evolve and to move on with the times...we can show the world here how to live amongst people from all different backgrounds. (Male Muslim participant)

The issues of religious belief, practice and identity in Canada are complex. As "old-stock Canadians" are becoming less religious, immigration is strengthening cultural and religious pluralism (Lefebvre 2005). Over the past 30 years, Canadian society has become increasingly religiously diverse due to immigration patterns.[1] Also, Canada's approach to diversity is to foster a culture of inclusion through its core values of equality, accommodation and acceptance (Biles and Ibrahim 2005). Although Canada remains predominantly Christian, between 1991 and 2001 the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities in Canada have nearly, if not already, doubled in size (Bramadat 2005). Within this Canadian context, religion has remained important in relation to the creation of identities, boundaries and group solidarities. In fact, research in Canada has shown that recent immigrant children and youth are twice as likely to attend religious services in comparison to their Canadian-born couterparts (Biles and Ibrahim 2005).

Canada's official multiculturalism policy promotes the idea that Canada is not only defined by its acceptance of new immigrants, but also that these immigrants should maintain their differences so that they can contribute to and transform Canada's cultural mosaic. In effect, they become Canadian while at the same time enriching the country that has welcomed them (Beyer and Ramji 2007). This policy has come under constant inquiry as to whether it is in fact genuine, whether it has been effective and whether it is advisable to pursue, given the international realities of the impact of immigration and integration (or lack thereof). Greater examination of the second generation is essential in understanding policy implications of multiculturalism and its effectiveness in Canadian culture.[2]

Muslims in Canada

The Muslim community began to grow rapidly after the 1970s, building mosques and establishing transethnic communities across Canada (McDonough and Hoodfar 2005). Canadian immigration policies have allowed Muslims from almost every part of the Muslim world to migrate to Canada, and many tend to be from middle and upper-middle class families. In fact, the number of Muslim immigrants to Canada has doubled each decade since 1981 and Pakistan, India and Iran have been among the top 10 source countries for immigration (Statistics Canada 2003). Thus the foreign-born Muslim population in Canada is diverse, multiethnic and multilingual. Given the fact that many Muslims have lived in Canada for a few decades, the population of Canadian-born Muslim youth has substantially grown. These younger Muslims, known as the second generation, have no direct ethnic

identity to build upon, and therefore have to define Islam and its practices for themselves, in juxtaposition to the ethnic cultural values they have received from their parents.[3]

Many studies undertaken in the European context find that Muslims turn to a Muslim identity because of the contact of different cultures. Our research, however,[4] deals with a different group of immigrants than those that are most often the focus in such studies. North American research on immigrants also tends to focus on the first generation immigrant population, often with little regard to the role of religion (see, for example, Berns McGown 1999, Coward and Goa 1987, Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004, McLellan 1999, Rukmani 1999, Shakeri 1998). Academic and non-academic literature on Canada's most recent immigrants tend to focus on language acquirement, foreign credentials, understanding Canadian norms and a strong memory of a "homeland": these are non-issues for the second generation. Therefore, there is currently a lack of research helping us understand the long-term implications of migration to Canada and the effects of migration on religious identity.

Research objectives

This research project examined the involvement of 92 second generation immigrant[5] Muslim youth, aged 18 to 27, that had at least one immigrant parent and were either born in Canada or had arrived in Canada before the age of ten. These participants came from Muslim backgrounds, and were currently living or studying in the urban areas of Toronto, Ottawa and Montréal. The interviews were conducted over a two-year period beginning in September 2004 and concluding in April 2006.

The purpose of the research was to investigate the participants' involvement in religion and their attitudes towards religion. The question of religious identity or lack thereof was central to the investigation. Interviewees were asked about their upbringing within their inherited religious identity, about their own involvement in that religion, if any, and about any religious practices or unconventional practices they may have adopted. They discussed how their own views and practices differed from their parents' generation (the first generation of immigrants), and how they situated themselves within Canada and the wider world.

The focal point of this research was to find out how this generation was or was not reconstructing its overall and specifically religious worldviews, practices and identities. Our organizing assumption was that these youth are "caught between two worlds," in between the religious and cultural identities and experiences of their parents, on the one hand, and those of the mainstream Canadian culture, on the other.

The second generation Muslims focused upon in this study are not being confronted by a new culture, but have been raised within Canadian culture, in which they feel completely at ease. They have been raised to contend with a variety of identity dimensions in their lives, those of their Islamic faith, those of their parents' ethnic cultural heritage and those of Canadian culture, the values and practices of which they have been exposed to through school, politics and the media. The approach taken in the study was to take into account the culture of both the participants and their parents, in order to better understand the diverse conflicts and tensions faced by the second generation Muslims as they develop their religious identities in a Canadian society.

In terms of identity, definitions of what makes someone Muslim vary from discipline to discipline. Åke Sander (1997), at the Institute of Ethnic Religions in Gothenburg, Sweden, has suggested a four-category classification system, defining what makes someone a Muslim. A Muslim can either be an "ethnic," "cultural," "religious" or "political" Muslim. A person belonging to an ethnic group in which the widely held belief of the population is Muslim can be considered an ethnic Muslim. A cultural Muslim is someone who is socialized in a Muslim culture. A religious Muslim would be considered a person who performs the Islamic commands and a political Muslim is a person who claims that "Islam in its essence primarily is (or ought to be) a political and social phenomenon" (Sander 1997: 184-185).

The second generation Muslims…have been raised to contend with a variety of identity dimensions in their lives, those of their Islamic faith, their parents' ethnic cultural heritage and their exposure to the values and practices of Canadian culture through school, politics and the media.

Although these categories might be useful at the level of quantifying population information, for this particular study it is imperative that the interviewee's own self-definition be utilized in the classification (Ramji 2008). This study looks at orthopraxis (actions of obligation), intentions, familial and institutional influences, as well as levels of belief.[6] Therefore, given the information that was provided by the participants during the interviews, the Muslim participants of this study can be separated into four categories using the basis of self-definition and identification.[7]

Participant categorization

The four-fold categories fashioned from the 92 participants' own perceptions are: the *Salafists* (6), the *highly involved* (36), the *moderately involved* (33) and the *non-believers* (17). *Salafists*[8] are those who espouse forms of Islamic Sunni ideology and practice what they consider "pure" or "original" forms of Islam. *Salafists* believe that the only reliable guides for living and practicing Islam are the *Qur'an* and *ahadith*. These, they insist, should not be viewed in innovative ways, and therefore they often hold highly conservative or restrictive views about Islam. *Salafists* put Islam at the centre of their lives – a highly demanding and conservative form of Islam. For *highly involved* Muslims, Islam is a central aspect of their lives and great importance is given to the five pillars as the core of Islamic practices.

In contrast to the *Salafists*, however, members of this group are less insistent on the unique validity of their own understanding, are significantly more irenic in their attitudes towards other people, other lifestyles and other worldviews, and are internally more varied in the specific ways that they construct their Islam. The *moderately involved* are those who are generally knowledgeable about Islam, engage in some practices, such as high feast days like the *Eids*, identify clearly as Muslims, but for whom Islam does not form a central practical part of their identities and lives. Many of the *moderately involved* are like a large portion of the Christian North American and Western European population, whose members adhere or identify to their religion, believe in it, but only practice occasionally. *Non-believers*, representing the other extreme from the *Salafists*, define themselves essentially as atheists or people without a religion, although they admit to being Muslim through their family and cultural background.

While we must be careful in our interpretations across categories, one conclusion seems clearly justified: a significant number, perhaps even a majority, of second generation Muslims in Canada are at least highly involved in their religion and sometimes more. The second generation is not being lost in significant numbers to the majority secularism of the Canadian population.

Also of interest was that the men are on average more likely to be highly involved than women, and the younger youth are more likely to be highly involved than their slightly older siblings. It is possible, therefore, that strong Islam in the second generation is more appealing to Muslim men than women; but especially that the high level of involvement that seems typical of the late-teen and immediate post-teen years will taper off or perhaps become moderate as these people get older.

The possibility of strong Islam as a form of youthful rebellion, at least for some Muslim youth, appears to be a definite possibility. Internal evidence indicates that a sizeable number of the younger *highly involved* or *Salafist* Muslims came to this high involvement relatively recently; and that only some of them had been this way since childhood. One male participant, in explaining why some of his fellow Muslims were reconstructing their understanding of Islam in a more severe way, said:

> I think I may be echoing other people when I say that every generation has its rebellion, and the rebellion in my generation has been something called the Islamic Revival Movement – so the movement that says that our parents' way of following religion was not strict enough, things like that...I see it as just adolescent rebellion, you know, and I think it's if anything, necessary. It's a trend towards going back to the sources, things like that. Uh, specifically things like the *hijab* and the beard, those are more prevalent in the new generation than in the older one.

Within the four subgroups, the *Salafists* and the *highly involved* groups shared many characteristics, but the *Salafists* separated themselves in terms of a strict adherence to practice. The central features of the *Salafists* involve a strict observance of what they consider religiously obligatory acts such as following *halal* dietary and sexual regulations, fasting during Ramadan and the five daily prayers (if not more). They do not mix with the opposite sex outside their immediate family, and at least three of them said that it was difficult to live in a society that is not segregated by sex. In keeping with these injunctions, all four of the women wear *hijab*. None of the six is presently married. The majority (up to 90%), if not all, of their friends are Muslim and share their beliefs, their behaviours and decisions. The *Salafists* tend to separate the notion of ethnicity from the practice of Islam. These participants often criticize what they consider to be their parents' cultural practices, such as extravagant weddings, listening to music and encouraging career over marriage. The culture/religion distinction is critical for those who consider themselves to practice Islam better than their parents. They have undertaken their own personal searches for the understanding of Islam. Their sources are often the Internet and electronic chat rooms, and personal reading. Many of their parents encouraged this kind of personal search for knowledge. Correspondingly, they do not consider the mosque an important source of counsel. They acknowledge that they attend Friday *jum'ah* services, but beyond that the mosque itself does not play a role in their lives. Five of the six were involved in the local Muslim Student Association. They deny the validity of intra-Islamic distinctions like Sunni vs. Shi'a, or consider the non-Sunnis as not authentically Muslim. In either case, their Islam is a Sunni Islam. *Salafists* conscientiously make all aspects of their lives as Islamic as possible. They do not feel alienated from Canadian society in the sense of considering that they belong somewhere else. This is part of the culture/religion distinction. They are highly critical of various aspects of the dominant culture in Canada (for example, if the topic came up, they were all vigorously opposed to the recent federal legislation that puts gay and lesbian marriages on an equal footing with traditional marriages).

Although several of the *highly involved* were critical of various aspects of Canadian society, they also showed a greater tendency to mesh their Islam with dominant Canadian values and orientations.

The *highly involved* tend to share some, but not all, of the characteristics of the *Salafists*. In fact, some of them date, drink or smoke. All of them practice regularly, especially when in comes to daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan and Friday services at a mosque, but many do so less often than they would like to or feel that other things like school, music and friends prevent such regularity. They are, as a group, more likely to make accommodations to the surrounding society and correspondingly are far more likely

to have a greater number of non-Muslim and non-practising Muslim friends. Many also have more liberal attitudes towards moral issues such as homosexuality, dress codes, and relations among the sexes. Just like the *Salafists*, the majority place a strong emphasis on the central role Islam plays in all aspects of their lives, on the importance of regular ritual practice and on the importance of learning more about Islam, mostly through personal exploration.

Although several of the *highly involved* were critical of various aspects of Canadian society, they also showed a greater tendency to mesh their Islam with dominant Canadian values and orientations. Thus, for instance, one male interpreted the necessity of personal *jihad* as meaning that one had to work hard and make a success of oneself. To be Muslim was to always be modern and make the world a better place. Another stressed environmental consciousness and connectedness to the Earth as an important aspect of Islam for her. Two of the *highly involved* did feel that one day they would like to return to the land of their parents, but in these cases the reasons were more cultural than religious; neither felt that it was more difficult to be a Muslim in Canada. The vast majority are very comfortable as Muslims and as Canadians. While they are engaging in unique and sometimes unanticipated reconstructions, they are not drawing sharp distinctions between Islam and Canada, between Islam and the West, between homeland and diaspora. Like the *Salafists*, the *highly involved* almost always feel at home and, isolated experiences of prejudice aside, largely accepted. Only one of them expressed the idea that they were living between two worlds.

If the *highly involved* are more like the *Salafists*, but more varied and less extreme, the *moderately involved* also show significant variation except that they are more like the *non-believers* than the *highly involved*. The most significant element separating the *moderately involved* from the *highly involved* was the fact that they did not place religion at the centre of their lives but regarded it as a focus for balance in life.

As a result, the *moderately involved* only occasionally go to mosque or *khana*, usually on special occasions like the *Eids*. They pray, but not regularly and not in any orthodox manner. Some read the *Qur'an* and some search for answers on the Internet but they stay away from organized associations because of their perceived differences. Most of them date, drink or smoke, but all who do hide it from their parents.

For the *non-believers*, religion of any kind is simply not very important. Few of them are alienated from their Muslim heritage entirely. Interestingly, although several participants in the other categories declared that the events and aftermath of 9/11 brought them closer to Islam, it is among the *non-believers* that we find the opposite reaction: one declared that, in her opinion, 9/11 only shows that "religion causes nothing but trouble." For the rest, they either grew up in families without stress on religion or they drifted away from their childhood practice without rancour.

It should be noted that the role of the media has played a significant role in shaping the lives of many of the Muslims interviewed, from the *Salafists* to the *non-believers*. For the *Salafist* and *highly involved* groups, media representations of Muslims after 9/11 had a correlating affect on identity. Many of these youth stated that the media made all Muslims seem like terrorists after September 11, and in reaction, many began "wearing" their Islamic identity with pride and more openly. One woman stated that 9/11 played a large role in her deciding to wear the *hijab* and being more attentive to her religion. Another woman acknowledged that 9/11 made her want to learn more about her religion in order to be able to answer constant questions and had recently begun wearing the *hijab*. *Moderately identified* Muslims also felt that the image of Islam had been tarnished after 9/11 and some actually began studying Islam to better understand it and to explain it to others.

> Canada's second generation Muslim youth are constructing their identities in general, and their religious identities in particular, in diverse and highly original ways, without regard for what the majority might think and without apparent fear of marginalization.

Some broad patterns can be discerned within the Muslim sample in our project. The majority are clearly highly involved, and very few are drifting away from their faith, especially if their involvement began during their childhood. Their Islam is for the most part individualistic rather than community oriented, although many feel that they are part of a non-descript global community of Muslims, specifically through Internet access. Only a small minority rely on a particular authority, and never the same one. The role of the media impacts their sense of self-identity as Muslims. Their Islam is also highly varied in its details: with the exception of the *Salafists*, the rest could not really be classified neatly along "liberal/conservative" lines, although on personal moral issues, the general trend was definitely in a conservative direction.

The vast majority, including the *Salafists*, feel comfortable in Canada. Their attitude to the country is generally positive even if they disapprove of various aspects of its dominant culture. Almost without exception they approve of Canada's multiculturalism policy and think that the country is by and large doing a good job in putting it into practice. There is also a strong emphasis on humility, kindness, compassion and peace as central concepts to their Islam – a unique understanding of their faith, which in many instances was far more important than the five pillars of Islam; in this way, their faith is quite distinctive to these Canadian Muslims, and for them, truly genuine.

> We have a fairly good multicultural model here in Canada, whereas in Pakistan I think there's more racial polarization, you know, no acceptance of people who are even slightly different from you, much less people who are fundamentally different....I think I have an advantage over people who lived in Pakistan all their lives because I can see from the dominant culture, which I consider to be the Christian Canada, I can see from their vantage point as well as what happens at home and what my parents believe. So there's much more of a basis for comparison, and I think that makes my choice more genuine. (Male Muslim participant)

Conclusion

What we are finding is that Canada's second generation Muslim youth are constructing their identities in general, and their religious identities in particular, in diverse and highly original ways, without regard for what the majority might think and without apparent fear of marginalization, as would be expected in a context that claims to permit and even encourage this. Yet these same people, with few exceptions, also claim to feel entirely comfortable in Canada, to consider it a fine place to live, that welcomes immigrants and accepts difference. In short, they are different, but they usually also feel completely, and in an unproblematic way, Canadian.

The second generation in our preliminary sample did not, on the whole, feel disempowered or disadvantaged; nor did they seem fearful of their futures. Their attitude to discrimination, which a great many had experienced in their lives, was to ignore it as the manifestation of others' ignorance, and certainly not to accept it as a feature of the society in which they lived. Canada's multiculturalism policy, ideology and orientation definitely structures the limits of how one can be different; it is a very integrationist and, perhaps in its own way, even an assimilative multiculturalism. Yet it is also one that the second generation youth in our research seem to accept as genuine, as permitting them to live their lives as their religious convictions see fit. None wanted to live in a society where Islam was the sole religion. They all valued living in a society that is religiously and culturally diverse. One female participant, when asked how she felt about Canada's diversity, summed it up succinctly for the others:

> I think it's a good thing for Canada. I mean it's always more exposure, more ideas, more….Even within religion itself, if you don't necessarily believe in another religion, you can always take certain aspects of what they practice or what they do if it's a really good thing. I mean I see it as a good thing, it's just more diversity and more exposure to ideas you never would have considered before had you been living in a small tiny bubble.

This conclusion applies especially to the highly diverse, but also highly involved, ways in which the majority of these Muslims construct their personal identities and their Islam. Confirming conclusions reached from research among second generation Muslim youth in Europe (Khosrokhavar 1997, Vertovec and Rogers 1998), Canada's counterparts seem to be exhibiting a similar combination of greatly varied, highly individualistic and, for the most, very serious attitudes towards their religion. They are not dependent on their elders, they do not rely on traditional sources of Islamic authority, and they are not in the least hesitant about creating their own *bricolages*.[9] These are not people who are just carrying on the traditions of their immigrant parents in a kind of exercise in religiocultural preservation. Nor are they people who are simply "assimilating" to the dominant culture. Like most youth in Canada, they seem to feel it incumbent upon themselves to reconstruct their world on a primarily individual basis. Their Islam is innovative rather than imitative, individual rather than communitarian, covering somewhat evenly a vast spectrum from what some observers might be tempted to label as "extremists" but which I will avoid for the same reason the majority of the participants scorned such terms – for being limiting and one-dimensional.

References

Berns McGown, R. 1999. *Muslims in the Diaspora: The Somali Communities of London and Toronto*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Beyer, P. (forthcoming). "From Far and Wide: Canadian Religious and Cultural Diversity in Global/Local Context." In *Religious Diversity in Canada*. Edited by L. Beaman and P. Beyer. Leiden: Brill.

———. 2007. "Can the Tail Wag the Dog? Diaspora Reconstructions of Religion in a Globalized Society." *Norwegian Journal of Religion and Society* 1, p. 39-61.

Beyer, P., and R. Ramji. 2007. "Brought up in Canada but Different in Religion: Classifying Styles of Religious Involvement among Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim Youth." Presented at the annual meeting of the *Canadian Society for Studies in Religion* (Saskatoon, May 2007).

Biles, J., and H. Ibrahim. 2005. "Religion and Public Policy: Immigration, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism – Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" In *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*. Edited by P. Bramadat and D. Seljak. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada Inc.

Bramadat, P. 2005. "Beyond the Trojan Horse: Religion, Immigration, and the Canadian Public Discourse." *Canadian Issues / Thèmes Canadiens* (Spring/printemps), p. 78-81.

Canada. Statistics Canada. 2003. "Religions in Canada." *2001 Census: Analysis Series*. Retrieved on December 1, 2006 at www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/Index.cfm.

Coward, H., and D. Goa. 1987. "Religious Experience of the South Asian Diaspora in Canada." In *The South Asian Diaspora in Canada: Six Essays*. Edited by M. Israel. Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario & Centre for South Asian Studies.

Janhevich, D., and H. Ibrahim. 2005. "Muslims in Canada: An Illustrative and Demographic Profile." Our *Diverse Cities / Nos diverses cités* 1, p. 49-57.

Khosrokhavar, F. 1997. *L'islam des jeunes*. Paris: Flammarion.

Lefebvre, S. 2005. "Religion in the Public Sphere." *Canadian Issues / Thèmes Canadiens* (Spring/printemps), p. 87-90.

McDonough, S., and H. Hoodfar. 2005. "Muslim Groups in Canada: From Ethnic Groups to Religious Community." In *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*. Edited by P. Bramadat and D. Seljak. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada Inc.

McLellan, J. 1999. *Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ramji, R. 2008. "Being Muslim and Being Canadian: How Second Generation Muslim Women Create Religious Identities in Two Worlds." In *Women and Religion in the West: Challenging Secularization*. Edited by K. Aune, S. Sharma and G. Vincett. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Rukmani, T. S. (Ed.). 1999. *Hindu Diaspora: Global Perspectives*. Montréal: Chair in Hindu Studies, Concordia University.

Sander, Åke. "To What Extent is the Swedish Muslim Religious?" In *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community*. Edited by S. Vertovec and C. Peach. Warwick: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick.

Shakeri, E. 1998. "Muslim Women in Canada: Their Role and Status as Revealed in the Hijab Controversy." In *Muslims on the Americanization Path*. Edited by Y. Yazbeck Haddad and J. L. Esposito. New York: Oxford University Press.

Vertovec, S., and A. Rogers (Eds). 1998. *Muslim European Youth: Reproducing Ethnicity*, Religion, Cutlure. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Notes

[1] Multiculturalism is a key element to Canada's immigration and citizenship policies. The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988) places great emphasis on the freedoms of citizens to practice their religion without prejudice or interference. The Act states: "the Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism."

[2] Portions of this article have been drawn from a co-authored paper with Peter Beyer titled "Brought up in Canada but Different in Religion: Classifying Styles of Religious Involvement among Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim Youth" presented at the annual meetings of the Canadian Society for Studies in Religion (Saskatoon, May 2007).

[3] This article is a discussion piece of a much more in-depth examination about second generation Muslim women within this project and its methodology. Please see Ramji (2008). Information on all three immigrant groups can be found in Beyer 2007 and forthcoming).

[4] "Religion among Immigrant Youth in Canada" is a research project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The author collaborated with Peter Beyer, principal investigator, Shandip Saha and Leslie Laczko (University of Ottawa), Nancy Nason-Clark (University of New Brunswick), Lori Beaman and Marie-Paule Martel Reny (Concordia University) and John H. Simpson, Arlene Macdonald and Carolyn Reimer (University of Toronto). This research study on Muslims is part of a larger study that focuses on second generation immigrants from Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim backgrounds and who currently reside or study in the urban regions of Toronto, Montréal and Ottawa-Gatineau.

[5] As a second generation Canadian myself, I am not fond of using the phrase "second generation immigrant" as it somehow implies that I am an immigrant and not a Canadian. Even though I am a Canadian citizen, the term makes me think that I am either a second class citizen or not "truly" Canadian as it is still linked with the idea of belonging somewhere else. The phrase was used within the research project, so I will use it here (sparingly).

[6] Islamists, particularly the Salafists, tend to look at the level of one's Muslimness (see Roald 2001).

[7] 92 people were interviewed who considered themselves to have Muslim backgrounds. Of the 92 participants, 58 were female and 34 were male.

[8] *Salaf* generally refers to the Companions of the Prophet and the first generations of Muslim followers. *Salafis* are thus people who seek to go back to this original Islam, generally rejecting the normative character of intervening developments.

[9] Thanks to Peter Beyer for the use of this term to best describe the "do-it-yourself" assembly or creation of religion.

