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Editorial

The first issue of volume 10 of the *Journal of Muslims in Europe* brings together a number of individual articles dealing with a variety of subjects. As chief editor, I always look forward to reading the contributions to an upcoming issue and exploring common themes, common questions, or strands for comparison. The articles in the current issue provide ample starting points for comparison. However diverse the problematic addressed in the contributions, the common theme that emerges is the manifold and complex ways in which states intervene in the lives of Muslims in Europe. As most articles demonstrate, statecraft is more than just the implementation of legal measures or the application of formal policies. States are cultural agents and determine to a large degree the discursive parameters within which Muslim communities develop.

Luis Manuel Hernandez Aguilar analyses the discussions in Germany that followed a 2012 court decision about male circumcision. He provides a fascinating account of how the legal ramifications of this ritual commonly practised by both Jews and Muslims developed into a ‘circumcision debate’, resulting in the problematisation of the ritual in an attempt to determine who is a ‘real German’ and who is not. Habiba Chafai explores the role of parents from Muslim backgrounds in shaping the participation and socialisation of their children in Dutch society. This issue harks back to the late-nineteenth-century struggle about Christian upbringing in that country. The author shows that, in the case of Muslims, the issue is entirely connected to images of Islam and integration priorities. Dunja Larise explores how the Austrian Empire between 1880 and 1912 laid down the terms on which Muslims in the newly annexed territories in Bosnia and Herzegovina were to settle their religious and community-related affairs. The article shows that considerations that were in play over a century ago are strikingly similar to those relevant in present-day states, despite the obvious historical and contextual differences. Mino Mirshahvalad analyses why conventional Shi’a authority does not suit the living conditions of Shi’a Muslims in Italy, and why there is an implicit demand for new Shi’a leadership. Many of these new conditions can be traced back to the particular position of this Muslim community in contemporary Italy. The Current Debate essay by Martijn de Koning and Thijl Sunier deals with the so-called ‘Islam debate’ in the Netherlands. The authors explore the role of academic literature

on Islam in shaping the debate and the ways in which much of this literature is grafted onto the state's policy priorities.

From its inception in 2012, the editors of *JOME* have aimed to publish articles about Islam and Muslims in Europe in order to provide the reader with an adequate and up-to-date picture of the lives of Muslims in Europe and the current state of research. The contributions in this and in previous issues show that 'Muslims in Europe' is more than a geographical designation. *JOME* has developed into a relevant source of information about the complex relation between religious practices and convictions, and the societal environment in which Muslims live.

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