



Dialog for De-Radicalization in Postcolonial Europe

Toon van Meijl 

*Dept. of Anthropology and Development Studies, Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies,
Radboud University Nijmegen, Nijmegen, The Netherlands*

Dialogical Self Theory will be deployed to deconstruct the discourse of cultural integration in postcolonial European nation-states in order to contribute to the de-radicalization of inter-ethnic relations. From the perspective of Dialogical Self Theory it may be argued that ethnic others are frequently locked up in *I*-prisons by an exclusive focus on their positions as citizens with a migration background who are not yet integrated into mainstream society. This unidimensional view of the Other circumvents the multiplicity of the self and neglects other positions that they may have in common with so-called ‘autochthonous’ citizens. Dialogical Self Theory offers an alternative approach that highlights not only cultural differences, but also partial but potent human commonalities. As a consequence, the focus may be shifted from differences towards dialog, which in the end will lead to de-radicalization.

The debate about the integration of people with a migration background in European countries has changed radically since around the turn of the millennium. In the past, integration was predominantly expressed in terms of a passport and a job, but in recent years it is increasingly framed in terms of culture, values and norms. As migration is feared to threaten national unity, migrants are nowadays expected to abandon their cultural heritage in order to assimilate into the so-called ‘culture’ of their new home countries. In this paper, it will be demonstrated that this shifting focus on culture in the debate about the integration of migrants is counterproductive to the extent that it leads to a radicalization of viewpoints on either side of ethnic boundaries. In addition, it will be shown that Dialogical Self Theory may contribute to de-radicalizing the exclusive focus on cultural differences by opening up a perspective on similarities since selves are invariably characterized by multiplicity.

The discussion is situated in the context of anxious politics (De Koning & Modest, 2017). Many people are rapidly losing confidence in the future and the future of their children since the current world order seems even more unpredictable and unreliable than the relatively transparent constellation during the Cold War. In recent years, the number of violent conflicts

Received 6 July 2019; accepted 2 August 2019.

Address correspondence to Toon van Meijl, Dept. of Anthropology and Development Studies, Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies, Radboud University Nijmegen, P.O. Box 9104, 6500 HE Nijmegen, The Netherlands. E-mail: T.vanMeijl@ru.nl

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

around the world has increased, while the number of liberal democracies has decreased (Scheffer, 2018, pp. 143–158). Globalization, neoliberal politics and postcolonial processes, all exacerbated by fast-tracking climate change, offer serious challenges to the socio-political order in many states that used to seem rather stable until recently. In this paper, we zoom in on the implications of one associated issue that causes widespread anxiety: migration. After all, it is frequently argued that migration has resulted in more cultural diversity but less social cohesion, which is widely believed to cause a radicalization of sorts.

Over the past two decades, international migration has increased by 40% according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2018, pp. 15–16). In 2015, some 244 million people had migrated to another country. Most people are migrating to countries within their region, but many others move to high-income countries in the Global North. As a consequence, the share of migrants in the total population of many western countries has quadrupled or even quintupled. When compared with the size of the population in each region, for example, international migrants represent some 15% of the total population in North America and some 10% in Europe (IOM, 2018, p. 18). The impact of international migration is especially visible in western cities, with many being turned into so-called majority-minority cities: the old majority group has become a minority (Crul, 2016). In these cities there is no longer a dominant ethnic majority group. Some describe this as the ‘diversity turn’: contemporary societies are increasingly pervaded with diversity (Vertovec, 2012, p. 287).

Widespread experiences of rising diversity in western countries are reinforced by media reports of global displacement that is constantly breaking records, with the number of internally displaced at over 40 million and the number of refugees at more than 22 million in 2016 (IOM, 2018, p. 2). In Europe, the number of refugees reached an all-time high in 2015, which was directly related to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Since it coincided with the aftermath of the economic recession that began with the credit crunch in 2008, it intensified a fierce debate about the borders and the identity of nation-states. Across the political spectrum, the question was raised how countries can cope with a growing influx of refugees and an ever expanding diversity at times that require local residents to tighten the belt?

Anxiety about the impact of migration on nation-states must be understood not only against the background of increasing numbers that in some quarters of society is causing a perceived loss of control and fear of being eclipsed by foreigners, especially in cities. This fear, in turn, may be confirmed by the observation that some migrants seem to have turned themselves against liberal democracy as the foundation principle of western countries. A crucial turning point in this great debate about migration has been the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11/2001, later followed by terrorist attacks in a range of cities throughout Europe and elsewhere.

An upshot of Islamic terrorism is that it has provoked anti-Muslim sentiments in many migration countries, which sometimes extend into campaigns against the reception of political refugees and even all migration. Thus, the emergence of Islamophobia and its projection onto all Muslims, if not all non-western migrants, has entailed a deep polarization around migration issues throughout Europe. A vicious circle is the result since branding all Muslims as terrorists is self-evidently counterproductive. After all, the exclusion of Muslims from integrating as full-fledged citizens of European nation-states triggers a further radicalization among some Muslims who stumble upon barriers in their ambition to build up a decent life for themselves and for their children in a new country (De Koning, 2008).

In this paper, radicalization will therefore be analyzed in light of the polarization of migration in postcolonial European nation-states. First, I will elaborate on the debate about the

integration of people with a migration background in European countries and the political demand to abandon their cultural heritage, sometimes even to neglect their religious identity, in order to assimilate into their new home countries. It will be demonstrated that it is principally impossible for non-western migrants to meet the criteria for civic integration that have been introduced in recent years, and which depart from a rigorous boundary between western and non-western people and values. Subsequently, Dialogical Self Theory (DST) will be deployed to deconstruct the discourse of civic integration in order to contribute to a de-radicalization of inter-ethnic relations. It will be seen to offer an alternative approach that highlights not only cultural differences, but also partial yet potent human commonalities.

FROM INTEGRATION TO ASSIMILATION

The setting of the analysis in this paper is postcolonial Europe, but I will focus especially on the case of the Netherlands since the radical transformation of migration and integration policies in that small country on the shores of the North Sea exemplify international processes of change (Scheffer, 2011). The Netherlands is especially interesting in view of its reputation as a so-called guiding country, a libertarian nation-state that has been setting trends with the legalization of prostitution, soft-drugs, euthanasia and gay marriage, while it also advocated tolerance of cultural diversity for a long time. At present, however, immigration has become just as controversial and politicized as in many other European countries. The national identity is believed to be under threat of increasing numbers of refugees and other migrants. Right-wing politicians are attracting more followers, causing some to contend that the Netherlands has also turned racist and Islamophobic (De Koning, 2016). Indeed, the country seems more polarized than ever before, with dialogicality between different sections of the population being few and far between.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on the history of migration, but the Netherlands has had a net migration balance since the mid-1960s (Entzinger, 2003, p. 59). In 2018, the population totaled 17.2 million, with 10.1% of the population having a background in some other western country, and 13.1% with a migration background in non-western countries, especially Turkey (2.4%), Morocco (2.3%), Surinam (2.0%) and the Netherlands Antilles (0.9%) (Statistics Netherlands – CBS, 2019). The steady influx of immigrants over the past 50 years has not only changed the composition of the population, but it has also induced a change in migration and integration policies. For decades, these were characterized by impromptu measures that were generally short-term oriented. In the early 1990s, however, ethnic minorities had doubled in size since the 1960s, while a second generation was emerging within established migrant communities. Thus, minorities were becoming not only more numerous, but also more heterogeneous. A second generation was growing up in the country to which their parents had moved in search of employment. They were attending local schools and speaking the Dutch language, but that did not immediately improve the social and economic situation of minorities, among which unemployment was extremely high. In this context, the leader of the liberal party, Frits Bolkestein, suggested that cultural differences were hampering the integration of people with a migration background. This comment targeted members of Muslim minorities in particular since he added that in his view Islam and liberal democracy were incompatible (Bolkestein, 1991). Thus, he echoed Samuel Huntington's (1996) so-called 'clash of civilizations'.

Although the government began emphasizing the need for integration more strongly in the course of the 1990s, a series of events around the turn of the millennium prompted a more radical revision of integration policies. This time, the debate was reinvigorated by a prominent member of the Labor party, Paul Scheffer (2000), who noted a segregation of an ethnic underclass of mainly Muslims who in his view were not only unable but also unwilling to integrate. He suggested that this would undermine social cohesion in society as well as the functioning of the liberal democratic state, especially because many Muslims were alleged to hold illiberal views. He advocated a so-called ‘civilization offensive’ in order to teach Muslim migrants Dutch culture and the principles of liberal democracy. Soon thereafter, the world was shaken up by 9/11, which in turn contributed to the rise of populist politicians with outspoken views against migration, in particular against Muslims (Bruquetas-Callejo, Garcés-Mascareñas, Penninx, & Scholten, 2007).

The rising influence of right-wing politicians with anti-immigration if not Islamophobic sentiments had an impact on political views regarding migration across the entire spectrum so that a radical shift in integration policies became inevitable. A series of proposals and measures followed to diminish immigration figures, while mandatory forms of integration for newcomers and oldcomers alike were introduced. The emphasis shifted from employment and economic integration towards the cultural adaptation of immigrants to Dutch society, their duty to learn Dutch and to embrace Dutch values, including the principles of the (neo-)liberal and democratic nation-state. Indeed, migrants are required to assimilate into Dutch ‘culture’ writ large, in spite of widespread confusion about its contents. The concept of integration was thus narrowed considerably by effectively rephrasing it in terms of complete assimilation. In relation to the goal of integration the search was no longer for compatibilities between different categories of people, but the focus shifted towards abandoning cultural differences (Entzinger, 2003). This was justified with reference to a new, allegedly more ‘realist’ vision that was based on the belief that national norms and values were under threat so policies had to be developed to secure their preservation (Prins, 2002). In the next section, I elaborate the ideological foundation of those policies, which in my view trigger radicalization rather than enhancing integration.

CULTURALIZATION OF CITIZENSHIP

Since contemporary discourses on immigration and integration abound with explicit references to ‘culture’ throughout Europe, it is necessary to analyze this culturalization of citizenship in more detail, also because it is certainly not unique to the Netherlands (Duyvendak, Geschiere, & Tonkens, 2016). Most European countries have become anxious about cultural diversity and religious pluralism within their boundaries since it is believed to affect the cultural integrity and the social cohesion of the nation-state. Needless to say, these views of the national identity are based on an essentialized conception of culture, which is commonly understood as static, fixed, objective, consensual, and uniformly shared by all members of society (Wikan, 2002). As a consequence, the nation-state is also conceived as founded on a bounded and distinct community, with a shared sense of belonging and loyalty predicated on a common language, cultural beliefs, norms, values, religion and traditions.

In contemporary Europe, these versions of culture increasingly dominate popular imaginaries of the nation. People tend to think they are deprived of their ‘own’ culture, and, as a result, a form of cultural conservatism has emerged that aims at protecting cultural

authenticity (Grillo, 2003, p. 160). Thus, nation, race, culture and identity are woven together in complex ways in a range of national traditions and give rise to different anxieties about so-called ‘strangers’ who in this type of thinking are categorically excluded from standard constructions of the nation-state. Indeed, these processes on which nation-states are constructed and reproduced also shape the ways that immigrants are perceived and received. Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2002) have described this type of thinking as methodological nationalism, which is based on the assumption that the nation-state is the natural social and political order of the modern world. The adjective ‘methodological’ refers to the approach of shaping the nation by representing immigrants as alien disturbers of a natural order. By definition, immigrants are regarded as adverse elements of an orderly working of the state.

Methodological nationalism has due consequences for notions of citizenship when migration causes incongruity between the state and the nation. Citizenship routinely involved inclusion in the nation-state when state and nation still coincided, but from the moment that states become ethnically and culturally more heterogeneous citizenship of immigrants is immediately problematized. The nation is no longer considered to be overlapping with the state, which causes the state to reorient itself regarding the nation and other categories of citizens, in particular so-called allochthonous citizens, those who were born elsewhere, or who descent from people born elsewhere, and who are thought not to belong naturally to the nation-state because they have crossed borders. As a corollary, citizenship becomes a political instrument to distinguish between natural members of the nation-state and unnatural members of the nation-state who have to be resocialized in order to become integrated. In culturally diverse states, citizenship is used as an instrument of exclusion because they are founded upon a methodological nationalist conception in which the nation is naturally closed in view of a differentiation between autochthonous citizens and aliens.

The Dutch sociologist Willem Schinkel (2010, pp. 268–269) explains the distinction between different categories of citizens in terms of a distinction between formal and moral citizenship. He defines formal citizenship with reference to legal rights and duties of citizens as members of states. Since a formal citizen is not necessarily a good citizen, however, moral citizenship, on the other hand, entails an extra-legal dimension of normativity. The conception of moral citizenship demands people who are considered as culturally and morally anomalous to adjust to mainstream thought and action by embracing individual rights to freedom, regardless of gender, religion and sexuality (Schinkel, 2010, pp. 269–271; see also Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010). Thus, cultural differences are to be assimilated and plural moralities are to be abandoned. As a consequence, the distinction between formal and moral citizenship is not simply a theoretical issue, but it has far-reaching implications for practices and policies. The culturalization and moralization of citizenship has in recent years been given substance in national and local policies of immigrant integration. However, it has also generated widespread polarization around the question who has the right to belong in the nation-state, which in turn has caused a radicalization of different viewpoints. Some have even analyzed this shift in policies as a culturalized form of racism (De Koning, 2016, see also Schinkel, 2010, p. 269).

ISLAMOPHOBIA, RACIALIZATION AND RADICALIZATION

Although the label ‘racism’ is heavily loaded in European history because of the holocaust, the concept has recently re-appeared in the debate about migration and integration (Lentin,

2012). This ensues from the inherent link between the culturalization of citizenship in Europe and an intense critique of Islam, resulting in widespread Islamophobia and, as some people have cogently argued, the ‘racialization’ of Muslims (De Koning, 2016; Schinkel, 2010, p. 269). The campaigns to enhance social cohesion in European nation-states through the reconstruction of a shared national culture that is defined in terms of key liberal values, such as individual liberty, gender equality and sexual freedom, are directly related to a discourse of defense against an alien, Islamic culture. Especially since 9/11, the claim goes that the permissiveness of so-called backward cultural practices of Muslims during the decades when multiculturalism was still the goal, promoted an environment in which Islamic extremism could develop. As a consequence, social unrest and violence in quarters with a high density of Muslims are situated in a culturalist perspective that does not take into account the relevance of power inequality, which is manifested in low levels of education, high levels of unemployment, discrimination on the labor market and poverty among Muslim minorities in Europe. The terrorist attacks in London, for example, were widely interpreted as the result of ‘cultural confusion’ among young British Muslims, while the rioters in the French banlieu were believed to suffer from a ‘cultural handicap’ (Jouili, 2019, p. 210). Very few commentators explained the discontent among Muslims in relation to deep disappointment with the reluctance of western countries to share prosperity with people of a migration background, Muslims in particular.

Branding Muslims as ‘barbarians’ who do not belong in ‘civilized’ Europe with its liberal democracies may be analyzed as a survival of the colonial era (Hage, 2016). In this hegemonic narrative of a cultural threat from Muslims in Europe there is consequently no space for distinctions between people who articulate the relation between culture and religion in different ways. Nevertheless, western influences have radically changed the experience of Islam in different countries, where advocates and opponents of western values are engaged in a deep debate. Many Muslims attempt to reconcile Islam with western values, among other things, by arguing that Islam has always had a strong democratic character. Others, however, have been critical of the colonial domination of some Islamic countries by western powers. Irrespective of these differences among Muslims, however, Islamophobia is projected onto all Muslims in European discourses about migration and integration. This caused Martijn de Koning (2016) to argue that Muslims are racialized as unacceptable Other (see also Schinkel, 2010, p. 269).

The concept of racialization is controversial, but in this context it must be understood as the categorical exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society on grounds of their religion and associated culture (Ghorashi, 2006). As pointed out above, the marginalization of Muslims in postcolonial Europe is justified with reference to their allegedly backward culture, especially because it is supposed to justify violence towards non-Muslims. The question is, however, whether violence that is committed in the name of Islam and which targets non-believers is cause or consequence of Islamic beliefs. This issue is not necessarily a philosophical dilemma about the question which came first, the chicken or the egg, but opinions about it depend on someone’s worldview.

There is no need to reiterate the polarization of perspectives on cultural diversity in contemporary European societies, and the implications this has for dealing with differences between peoples within the boundaries of nation-states. Fear for Islamic terrorism and an associated bias against all Muslims have shifted the discourse of integration across the entire spectrum. As a consequence, current integration policies no longer depart from respect for cultural differences, but instead they aim at abandoning differences. We all have to be the

same. Triggered by terrorist attacks, all migrants from non-western countries are forced to neglect their cultural background and assimilate completely into western societies. Needless to say, however, that it is essentially impossible to dispose of culture, so in practice migrants are expected to meet criteria that can never be attained. The exclusive focus on discarding differences might therefore be counterproductive to the extent that it may trigger frustrations, if not a radical rejection of western societies by those who feel excluded.

To prevent the radicalization of people who are racialized because of their cultural and religious background, a new type of thinking is required. A new approach that also contributes to repairing the paradox of assimilation, which expects people to abandon part of their self and to become someone they will never be. To release the tension between migrants and their host countries, it seems inevitable to shift the focus from differences to similarities. Nowadays, migrants are first and foremost addressed as Others, whereas the similarities with Self are sidelined, if not downright denied. In everyday life in multicultural societies, however, people generally build all sorts of social relations that are based on shared interests, emotions, and aspirations within a range of networks and settings. Everyday sociabilities are generally not based on tolerance of ethnic or cultural differences, but instead on recognition of partial but potent human commonalities, on common domains of affect, mutual respect and shared aspirations, also for the next generation.

MULTIPLICITY AND DIALOG

Studies of conviviality in multicultural circumstances are not abundant, but the number of reports about people living positively with cultural differences is growing (e.g. Chimienti & Van Liempt, 2015; Peterson, 2017; Vollebergh, 2016; Wessendorf, 2010; Wise & Belayutham, 2009). These are important because they offer insight into the question how cultural differences are negotiated at the grassroots. Greg Noble (2009), for example, has argued that youngsters with a migration background who are growing up in and between different cultures prefer to neglect their ethnicity, even though they acknowledge that it is a very significant aspect of their identity. A focus on their ethnicity, however, fails to capture the complex nature of the self for second generation migrants. Highlighting ethnicity is experienced as a kind of 'boxing in', excluding other identifications that they value just as much, including age, gender, and subcultural features such as food, clothing, music *et cetera*. Noble (Noble, 2009) therefore argues that everyday recognition involves recognizing others in their full humanity, rather than as representatives of a particular category or group. In such an approach the situated sociability of young people's identities is foregrounded: multiple and fluid attachments, the temporality of being, and the situated and provisional nature of subjectivity (see also Wise & Velayutham, 2009).

The multiplicity of identities in culturally complex circumstances requires an analytically refined approach which may be found in Dialogical Self Theory. The dialogical self is a useful construct for relating plural, competing conceptions of identity to the psychological notion of the person as a composite of multiple, often contradictory self-understandings. Dialogical Self Theory starts from the assumption that the internal domain of the individual and the external domain of society are intimately connected. As a consequence, the dialogical self has been defined as a dynamic multiplicity of *I*-positions in the landscape of the mind, intertwined as it is with the minds of other people, such as, e.g., my partner, my children, my

colleagues, and my adversaries (Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Dialogical Self Theory is inspired, on the one hand, by Bakhtin's (1984/1929) metaphor of the polyphonic novel, which allows for a multiplicity of positions among which dialogical relationships may be established, and, on the other hand, by William James' (1950/1890) classic distinction between *I* and *me*. The latter has been elaborated into a notion of an extended self, in which the other is not simply positioned outside the self, but is considered as part of the self. On the interface between these traditions, Hermans and Kempen (1993) have argued that the self has the capacity to endow each position with a voice so that dialogical relationships between different and even opposed positions may be developed.

The conception of the self as multivoiced and dialogical has proved a valuable device for the analysis of the dynamic connections between the global and the local at the level of personal identifications in multicultural societies (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Hermans & Kempen, 1998). In a globalizing world, societies must no longer be considered as bounded and relatively isolated from other societies, which also has an impact on cultural differences between societies. As pointed out above, an increasing number of people is living on the interfaces between societies, implying intimate contact with different cultural customs, which also makes an approach based on methodological nationalism outdated. The increasing interconnectness of societies and peoples, however, does not only lead to an increasing contact between different cultural groups, but also to an increasing contact between different cultural conceptions within individual persons. This compounds the socio-cultural development of migrants, especially children and adolescents (Van Meijl, 2012, 2013). Intercultural contact leads to the emergence of a multiplicity of cultural positions or voices coming together in the self of individual people. And such positions may become engaged in mutual negotiations, agreements, disagreements, tensions, and conflicts between cultural values, views and practices (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). The global-local nexus is, in other words, not just a reality outside the individual, but it has penetrated the self of people living in multicultural societies who have no option but to engage into a dialog between various cultural positions.

A dialogical conception of the multicultural self is not only required to orchestrate the dynamic relationship between local and global institutions and between pre- and post-migration values and views, but it is also intertwined with the necessity for migrants to interact with people from a different cultural background by recognizing and accepting their alterity. This is unavoidable in a world in which divisions between different cultures can only be bridged by means of dialogical exchange. After all, only dialog may contribute to making cultural differences meaningful and comprehensible (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Since other persons and groups with different cultural customs are increasingly part of an extended self in terms of a multiplicity of contradictory voices or positions, a dialogical conception of the self seems therefore also indispensable.

A review of the debate about citizenship in the Netherlands, however, has demonstrated that dialogical relationships between different cultural positions in the self are usually riddled with hierarchy. Different cultural positions may not be valued equally, neither in society, nor in the self: *I* as migrant is to be denied, whereas *I* as Dutch citizen is to be championed. Hermans and Kempen (1993, p. 73) have highlighted the hierarchical ranking of cultural positions by introducing the concept of dominance as an important characteristic of dialogical relationships between self and other, or, between self and society (see also Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010, pp. 38–40). If the self is defined as a multiplicity of different *I* positions, it may be argued that societies are not only able to address the self in a variety of

identifications, but also to let the self know how these identifications, and the way the self functions in them, are approved. Accordingly, in contemporary European societies, since citizenship is primarily understood in cultural and moral terms, migrants are expected to adjust to the cultural values of their new country and to neglect the cultural aspects of their identity derived from their country of origin. Thus, the self of migrants is monitored by the society approving or disapproving their behavior and concomitant construction of a cultural identity. Thus, societies also have the capacity to make some identifications more dominant than others. And the dominance of societies in the identification process not only organizes but also restricts the multiplicity of possible identifications in multicultural arenas.

DIALOG AND DE-RADICALIZATION

The dialogical conception of individuals as plural and composite persons is not only significant for understanding how migrants deal with cultural diversity in their daily lives in multicultural societies, but it also opens up the possibility for a dialogical perspective on multicultural relations in contemporary European nation-states. Considering the self as a mini-society in which different *I*-positions are intimately intertwined with others, the dialog among internal positions may be considered to reflect the dialogical interaction among external positions. As such, a dialogical perspective on diversity may relieve the tension proceeding from the polarization of relations between so-called autochthonous versus allochthonous citizens in European nation-states. A dialogical perspective on cultural diversity may benefit in particular members of the second and third generation of people with a migration background, who are frequently disenchanting to be constantly addressed in terms of their ethnicity or their associated religion, as ethnic Others. Instead they prefer to be identified as cosmopolitan citizens with multiple identifications. Accordingly, the metaphor of dialogical relationships among different cultural positions may be extended from the self of individuals to the analysis of dialogical relationships among cosmopolitan sociabilities of multicultural citizens. It will shift the focus from an essentialization of differences to an exploration of commonalities.

The suggestion to apply Dialogical Self Theory to redesign multicultural policies in order to enhance dialogical interaction that departs from similarities between positions, e.g. *I* as parent, *I* as neighbor, *I* as colleague, *I* as soccer fan, rather than from differences, e.g. *you* as Muslim, has far-reaching implications for rethinking the future of the nation-state in light of ongoing migration, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Van Meijl, 2019). Here, I will elaborate on the contribution that Dialogical Self Theory might make to the de-radicalization of those who feel locked up in *I*-prisons because of the unidimensional stigmatization of their ethnic or religious otherness (cf. Hermans, 2018, p. 91). In order to ease anxieties about so-called incompatibilities between ethnic groups, especially between enlightened and secular westerners on the one hand, and so-called autocratic Muslims on the other hand, it is necessary to bring about a dialog that is founded upon cosmopolitan sociabilities.

As mentioned before, radicalization is widely considered a problem. Even though only a limited number of young people turn their back to liberal democracy and seek refuge in jihadism, the impact of terrorist attacks outweighs their small numbers (Scheffer, 2018, p. 182). For that reason, too, an impressive number of de-radicalization policies have been devised, all aimed at local Muslim communities, but for those policies to be successful it is essential

to have insight in motives of young people to join violent movements. A recent book by Van den Bos (2018) has analyzed numerous cases of young Muslim men who have joined the jihad and summarizes the antecedents of a radicalization process in terms of feelings of uncertainty and unfairness. Muslims become uncertain in the country to which they have migrated because they feel unaccepted as Muslim. In view of their Islamic background, they are required to neglect their religious and cultural identifications, which are widely considered to be incompatible with western values and norms. This exclusive focus on their Muslim identity imprisons them into a religious position, which, in turn, makes it difficult to establish connections with mainstream society, at school and on the labor market. This treatment is considered unfair and leads to frustration that paradoxically causes some young people to seek refuge in their religious identity. As a corollary, their rejection as Islamic Other does not lead to the desired rejection of their religious beliefs and consequent assimilation into western society, but instead it reinforces their religious identity and triggers them to resist against democratic principles (see also Hermans, 2018).

Applying Dialogical Self Theory to this process does not only contribute to the deconstruction of the adverse effects of integration policies that cause Muslims to seek refuge in their religious identity rather than to abandon or neglect it. Dialogical Self Theory also helps to understand the internal orchestration of cultural diversity when migrants have to cope with uncertainty resulting from their move to a new country. Migrants who are living in-between different cultural environments, especially when forced to choose between one out of two, with the host society making demands that are in principle impossible to meet, some prioritize a position that is considered problematic by the surrounding society, but which is the only position that offers them hope and solace. Religion then becomes a coping strategy that inspires some migrants to rise their religious position to dominance and to allow it to govern their position repertoire as a whole. They transfer responsibility to the external authority of religion in order to reduce the burden of uncertainty and to deal with the dilemmas they are forced to face (Hermans, 2018, pp. 110–112).

Since Dialogical Self Theory offers insight into the internal dynamics of the cultural position repertoire of religious radicals, it also provides the guidelines for recalibrating a position repertoire that is organized in an extremely hierarchical fashion, with one position dominating all others. Obviously, a solution is to be found in bringing about a dialog between someone's religious position and other positions, which may be achieved above all by accepting migrants as cultural other with whom self, in spite of cultural differences, also shares similarities. As a consequence, migrants should be addressed not only as Others who have not yet assimilated in mainstream society, but instead social commonalities could be made more manifest, e.g. *I as parent, I as neighbor, I as colleague, I as friend et cetera*. By recognizing and respecting multiple aspects of the self of religious radicals, not only a dialog between different cultural positions may be generated, but at the same time it may result in a more democratic organization of someone's self. There is no need to emphasize that this is a precondition for bringing about a more dialogical and democratic organization of a multicultural society.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, Dialogical Self Theory has been deployed to critically analyze the discourse of cultural integration in postcolonial European nation-states in order to contribute to a de-

radicalization of inter-ethnic relations. From the perspective of Dialogical Self Theory it may be argued that ethnic others are locked up in *I*-prisons by focusing exclusively on their positions as citizens with a migration background who are not yet integrated or assimilated into mainstream society. This unidimensional view of the Other circumvents the multiplicity of the self and neglects other positions that they may have in common with autochthonous citizens. Dialogical Self Theory offers an alternative approach that highlights not only cultural differences, but also partial but potent human commonalities. As a consequence, the focus may be shifted from differences towards dialog, which in the end might lead to de-radicalization.

COMMENT

The contribution by Rens van Loon (this issue) on radicalization in leadership complements the analysis in this paper to the extent that it offers the tools developed by Dialogical Self Theory to initiate processes of de-radicalization at the level of individuals. As such, it offers a bridge between the self and society, on which the analysis in my paper was primarily focused. I demonstrated the widespread tendency in many western societies to view Muslims as Other, with an exclusive emphasis on their religious identity, which is not infrequently conceptualized as radical and violent following the attacks on the Twin Towers and other terrorist incidents. However, by focusing on Muslims and other types of migrants with a non-western background as Other, the violence of some is, in terms of Van Loon, trans-positioned to many, if not all. By the same token, Islam is frequently transposed to other identity features, such as the other as parent, as friendly, generous or hospitable. Indeed, views of Muslims and other migrants tend to be increasingly one-dimensional, which involves an exclusion of other identity features. As a consequence, the over-determination of people's religious identity may entail a radical aversion of mainstream society by Muslims, thus achieving the opposite effect of what is intended.

Van Loon not only endorses the need for a different approach, but also offers the building blocks for achieving different, more reconciliatory relations between peoples of a different background in multicultural societies. These are derived from Dialogical Self Theory and suggest, first, the need to create conditions for dialog, and, second, to develop a meta-position in which a wider range of positions is considered than only someone's religious identity as Muslim or their cultural identity as Other. Indeed, a shift in focus from differences to similarities is required, so that the Other is also addressed in other positions, e.g. as parent, neighbor, friendly or kind. The recognition of these other positions of the Other is a first step towards a more balanced perspective on people with a migration background, in which positions that they have in common with the Self, e.g. parent or neighbor, are transpositioned to the one-dimensional perspective on them as Muslim or as migrant Other. The upshot of this approach is a termination of over-positioning someone's religious or migration background by engaging into dialogical relations with positions of others that may be shared with self. The implied transference from exclusion to inclusion through dialog is likely to lead to a process of de-radicalization.

ORCID

Toon van Meijl  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0547-2627>

REFERENCES

- Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. Edited and translated by C. Emerson. Introduced by W. C. Booth. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. (Originally published in 1929).
- Bhatia, S., & Ram, A. (2001). Locating the dialogical self in the age of transnational migrations, border crossings and diasporas. *Culture & Psychology*, 7(3), 297–309. doi:10.1177/1354067X0173003
- Bolkestein, F. (1991, September 12). The integration of minorities. *De Volkskrant*, op-ed page. (Address to the Liberal International Conference, Luzern, September 8, 1991).
- Bruquetas-Callejo, M., Garcés-Mascareñas, B., Penninx, R., & Scholten, P. (2007). *Policymaking related to immigration and integration: The Dutch case* (Working Paper No. 15). Amsterdam: Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) and International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion Research Network (IMISCOE).
- Chimienti, M., & Van Liempt, I. (2015). Super-diversity and the art of living in ethnically concentrated urban areas. *Identities*, 22(1), 19–35. doi:10.1080/1070289X.2014.924414
- Crul, M. (2016). Super-diversity vs. assimilation: How complex diversity in majority-minority cities challenges the assumptions of assimilation. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(1), 54–68. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2015.1061425
- De Koning, M. (2008). *Zoeken naar een 'zuivere' islam: Geloofsbeleving en identiteitsvorming van jonge Marokkaans-Nederlandse moslims*. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.
- De Koning, M. (2016). You need to present a counter-message": The racialisation of Dutch muslims and anti-islamophobia initiatives. *Journal of Muslims in Europe*, 5(2), 170–189. doi:10.1163/22117954-12341325
- De Koning, A., & Modest, W. (2017). Anxious politics in postcolonial Europe. *American Anthropologist*, 119(3), 524–526. doi:10.1111/aman.12916
- Duyvendak, J. W., Geschiere, P., & Tonkens, E. (Eds.). (2016). *The culturalization of citizenship: Belonging and polarization in a globalizing world*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Entzinger, H. (2003). The rise and fall of multiculturalism: The case of the Netherlands. In C. Joppke & E. Morawska (Eds.), *Toward assimilation and citizenship: Immigrants in liberal nation-states* (pp. 59–86). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ghorashi, H. (2006). *Paradoxen van culturele erkenning: Management van diversiteit in nieuw Nederland*. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit. (Inaugural lecture).
- Grillo, R. (2003). Cultural Essentialism and Cultural Anxiety *Anthropological Theory*, 3(2), 157–173.
- Hage, G. (2016). État de siège: A dying domesticating colonialism? *American Ethnologist*, 43(1), 38–12. doi:10.1111/amet.12261
- Hermans, H. J. M. (2018). *Society in the self: A theory of identity in democracy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hermans, H. J. M., & Dimaggio, G. (2007). Self, identity, and globalization in times of uncertainty: A dialogical analysis. *Review of General Psychology*, 11(1), 31–61. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.11.1.31
- Hermans, H. J. M., & Hermans-Konopka, A. (2010). *Dialogical self theory: Positioning and counter-positioning in a globalizing society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hermans, H. J. M., & Kempen, H. J. G. (1993). *The dialogical self: Meaning as movement*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Hermans, H. J. M., & Kempen, H. J. G. (1998). Moving cultures: The perilous problems of cultural dichotomies in a globalizing society. *American Psychologist*, 53(10), 1111–1120. doi:10.1037//0003-066X.53.10.1111
- Hermans, H. J. M., Kempen, H. J. G., & Van Loon, R. J. P. (1992). The dialogical self: Beyond individualism and rationalism. *American Psychologist*, 47(1), 23–33. doi:10.1037//0003-066X.47.1.23
- Huntington, S. P. (1996). *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the world order*. London: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone.
- International Organization for Migration. (2018). *World migration report 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018>
- James, W. (1950). *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Dover. (Originally published in 1890).
- Jouili, J. S. (2019). Islam and culture: Dis/junctures in a modern conceptual terrain. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 61(1), 207–237. doi:10.1017/S0010417518000543
- Lentin, A. (2012). Post-race, post politics: The paradoxical rise of culture after multiculturalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(8), 1268–1285. doi:10.1080/01419870.2012.664278

- Noble, G. (2009). Countless acts of recognition”: Young men, ethnicity and the messiness of identities in everyday life. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 10(8), 875–891. doi:10.1080/14649360903305767
- Peterson, M. (2017). Living with difference in hyper-diverse areas: How important are encounters in semi-public spaces? *Social & Cultural Geography*, 18(8), 1067–1085. doi:10.1080/14649365.2016.1210667
- Prins, B. (2002). The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism. *Journal of International Migration and Integration / Revue de L'integration et de la Migration Internationale*, 3(3–4), 363–379. doi:10.1007/s12134-002-1020-9
- Scheffer, P. (2011). *Immigrant nations*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Scheffer, P. (2018). *De vorm van vrijheid*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij.
- Scheffer, P. (2000, January 29). Het multiculturele drama. *NRC Handelsblad*. Retrieved from <http://retro.nrc.nl/W2/Lab/Multicultureel/scheffer.html>
- Schinkel, W. (2010). The virtualization of citizenship. *Critical Sociology*, 36(2), 265–283. doi:10.1177/0896920509357506
- Schinkel, W., & Van Houdt, F. (2010). The double helix of cultural assimilationism and neo-liberalism: Citizenship in contemporary governmentality. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 61(4), 696–715. doi:10.1111/j.1468-4446.2010.01337.x
- Statistics Netherlands – CBS. (2019). Retrieved from www.cbs.nl/en-gb
- Van den Bos, K. (2018). *Why people radicalize: How unfairness judgments are used to fuel radical beliefs, extremist behaviors, and terrorism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Van Meijl, T. (2012). Multicultural adolescents between tradition and postmodernity: Dialogical self theory and the paradox of localization and globalization. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2012(137), 39–52. doi:10.1002/cad.20016
- Van Meijl, T. (2013). Multiple identifications of multicultural adolescents: Dialogues between tradition and postmodernity in a global context. In B. L. Hewlett (Ed.), *Adolescent identity: Evolutionary, cultural and developmental perspectives* (pp. 203–221). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Van Meijl, T. (2019). The culturalization of citizenship in the Netherlands: Towards cosmopolitan sociabilities in a neoliberal epoch. In H. Alma & I. ter Avest (Eds.), *Moral and spiritual leadership in an age of plural moralities* (pp. 221–243). London: Routledge.
- Vertovec, S. (2012). Diversity’ and the social imaginary. *European Journal of Sociology*, 53(3), 287–312. doi:10.1017/S000397561200015X
- Vollebergh, A. (2016). The Other Neighbour Paradox: Fantasies and Frustrations of ‘Living Together’ in Antwerp. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 50(2), 129–149. doi:10.1017/S000397561200015X
- Wessendorf, S. (2010). *Commonplace diversity: Social interactions in a super-diverse context* (MMG Working Paper No. 10/11). Göttingen: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religion and Ethnic Diversity.
- Wimmer, A. & Schiller, N. G. (2002). Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences. *Global Networks*, 2(4), 301–334.
- Wikan, U. (2002). *Generous betrayal: Politics of culture in the new Europe*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Wise, A., & Velayutham, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Everyday multiculturalism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.