Playful Religious Education (PIREd) for young people, age 13-16
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The start – prevention of radicalization
Processes of polarization are seen a serious threat for peaceful living together in the Dutch plural society, resulting in social divide between rich and poor people, employed and unemployed persons, orthodox and liberal believers, native and non-native citizens. Students, as future members of the society have the right to be stimulated in their (religious or secular) identity development – participative citizenship being an important part of their identy in the Dutch plural society; a society that favours living together in diversity with mutual respect one to the other. In this context young people with an Islamic background are seen as 'at risk' for radicalisation.

An imaginary of threats is constructed in which radicalization, society's safety and Islam are intertwined from. In this context of what is called 'securitization' identity development of muslim students – religious identity and the identity of Dutch citizenship – is seen as 'at riksk'.

Radicalization – the problem
In our view the problem at stake is the potential radicalization of muslim youngsters. Our research question is: how can the possible process of radicalization be interrupted and what is needed to broaden the horizon of muslim younsters? One reason that is mentioned as a source of radicalization is that young muslims have the feeling that they are not heard, that politicians talk *about* muslim them, and not with them. Politicians and policy makers, resulting from their discussions about muslim youngsters, conclude that muslim young people are at risk for radicalization. By consequence programs are developed for deradicalisation of radicalized young men (most of them are males). In our view, however, the focus should not be on de-radicalization, but on the prevention of radicalisation. That means that first of all we must know more about ways lead to radicalization.

Radicalization – the concept
Radicalisation originally only denotes 'something very important and of great degree', nowadays radicalisation has gained a negative connotation. In the media, 'radical' is usually understood as a negative aspect of someone's character or of an expressed opinion. Radical statements often contain – usually simplified – verbal expressions that position the persons making them on the side of one of the extreme positions concerning the issue at stake.
The concept of radicalisation refers, however, not only to mere processes of individuals' religious development, but also to "the inability to integrate non-western and non-religions expressions and actions in our political vocabulary" (Fadil …). In Fadil's view radicalisation is a performative concept introduced in governmental documents from 2001 onwards and related to Islam in particular as a result of '9/11'. The focus from then on is on timely observations of radicalisation of muslims as individuals and in organisations, interpreted as a sign of poor integration in the Dutch society.

Radicalization – the solution

In our view a solution for the problem of 'risk of radicalization' starts with a conversation with young people and taking these youngsters serious as believers in their search for meaning. Most of the parents of these young people, being 1st or 2nd generation migrants, practice their religion and their daily rituals as this was passed on to them by their parents. First and second generation parents in general are not used to talk about their religion; they are 'religiously illiterate' (see also Alma 1993, for a similar problem in passing on religious tradition among Christian younsters). Longing for inspiration the young generation muslims consults the imam, and in case the imam cannot respond to their need, they consult the internet – an often unreliable source of information.

Religious literacy

Our starting point is that radical youngsters are religious persons who strongly emphasize certain aspects of their religious tradition; aspects that are very valuable for themselves. For that, these young people deserve respect and appreciation. If we do not respect their own (conservative, literally, rigid, whatever …) way of dealing with tradition, we will not reach these young people. In our view these young people need guidance through the history of their own religion and also of other religions, so that they become aware of interactive developments in traditions over time. They then will discover that their Islamic tradition has been understood differently at different times in history.

In the developed teaching material the start is in the life world of the youngsters, their questions and their need for information. The lessons respond to this need for knowledge about the religion of their parent - Islam, that is: the focus is on religious literacy with a clear link to 'identity development' (psycho-education) and citizenship education. The aim of the PIREd module is the development of a balanced and flexible muslim identity, contributing to the Dutch democratic society.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of our project consists of the valutation theory (VT) and the dialogical self theory (DST), with its research instrument of the self confrontation method (SCM). Core concepts in VT and DST are '*I*-position', 'positioning' and 'society of mind'. In DST-terminology the question is reworded as: how are radicalization processes mirrored and organized as different *I*-positions in the self, 'society of mind', and what kind of intervention/educational material is needed to prevent/interrupt the process of radicalization.

In the Valuation Theory the person is seen as a 'motivated story teller', telling the story of her/his life from different perspectives, from different positions In each and every context, to each and every person the story teller has to decide what to include and what to exclude from the narrative. That's why the concept of 'multi voiced self' was introduced – many 'voices' positioned in what is called the person's Self, the 'society of mind'.
Regarding the direction of a persons thinking and acting, two basic motives are distinguished: the S-motive aiming at self-awareness and self-esteem and the O-motive referring to other persons and the need for belonging to others, to a group, to an organization, to a religious tradition. By way of connecting affects to statements about persons or situations the respective motives come to the fore. According to the VT in one and the same situation, or in the encounter with one and the same person, different affects can be experienced reflecting a positive or negative commitment, and different degrees of commitment.

In line with this framework the self can be defined as a dynamic multiplicity of *I*-positions in dialogue with each other in the society of mind. (Hermans, 2013). As students form their religious identities, they need opportunities to engage in dialogue with their own voices (for example radical or moderate) and the external voices that dominate their cultural contexts (e.g., growing populism, sense of existential insecurity, assigned religious or patriotic identities by groups). Therefore, we try to include different religious positions and their possible voices in all of our lessons. For example, while the positions such as "I as a radical" and "I as a moderate Muslim" are highlighted in the lecture on jihad, positions such as "I as responsible to environment" and "I as wasteful" and their possible voices are discussed in the environmental responsibility lesson.

The contextual and environmental conditions for an individual to choose any of these positions in our module are subject of debate. To do this we invite teachers to engage in dialogic classroom conversations It gives students/learners space to 'think together and cross the boundaries of their own understandings' (van der Veen et al., 2015) and interact with others and their voices – be it concrete others like classmates, or others in texts in the Qur'an. In this lesson on Jihad students are invited to enter into a dialogue with the respective texts in the Qur'an: is it a context of peace or a context of war? What is the meaning of such a text in the context of the Dutch plural society? Through dialogic classroom conversation, we create a space for students to understand this dynamism of *I*-positions.

Also, engaging in dialogue with multiple *I*-positions of others and within themselves (their 'society of mind') supports students' ability to make instructional choices by recognizing **moments of dissonance**, and using the tension in these moments to increase their capacity for self-reflection (Stewart, 2018, p. 38).

For muslim students the Qur'an is part and parcel of their 'society of mind' and as such is a partner in the internal dialogue. The same holds for the prophets (for example 'I as a follower of the prophet Muhammed' or 'my prophet Ibrahim'),, the powerful Qur'anic concept of 'Khalifah' ('I as Khalifa') or the position of respected religious leaders (for example 'my imam').
Some people in groups and organizations are granted the position of leader and receive respect, admiration, and more social power than others. They are perceived as 'promoters' because they add value to the community, give it a sense of direction and stimulate its further development. DST assumes that such promoters are not only functioning as figures in society but also adopted and even developed as
parts in the extended domain of the self. In my view, prophets or Imams or religious leaders can be considered as promoters in muslims 'society of mind'.
Through a continuous dialogue the ultimate aim might be reached: a flexible balance between different positioned voices/voiced positionings.

In the lesson on Identity students are invited to reflect on the different 'roles' they have in daily life and compare this with the roles mentioned by their classmates. Did the student choose a specific role her or himself, for example the role of 'naughty classmate', or 'good muslim'? Or was the role assigned to her or him – and if so: by whom and why? Comparison of roles in pairs – what roles are assigned, and what roles are self-assigned – creates self-awareness of one's positioning in different contexts.

One of our lessons is devoted to the game we call 'MirrorMind'. 'MirrorMind', invites students/learners to a playful space, and challenges them to collectively see the different and dynamic *I*-positions discussed in the lessons. This game also offers the opportunity to apply many of the concepts introduced in the lessons in a playful context. (from here on, information about the implementation of the game can be included, which is already mentioned enough in the text)

Theoretical framework at work
In our view school is the context where students in a more or less controlled way get to know different ideas, different life orientations. As a society this is a beautiful opportunity to explore consisting ideas and open students' minds. A heavy load on teachers' shoulders!
To take the weight of teachers' shoulders we developed the PIREd module, focussing on Islamic students in formal education (secondary education, vocational training and in informal education (in / around the mosque) (students aged 13 to16). This module of seven lessons pays attention to knowledge of texts and narratives from Qur'an and Hadith, and their contextual understanding, and the interaction with 'good behaviour' as a muslim citizen in a plural society. Two lessons consist of psycho-education regarding identity development. The concept of 'hybrid identity' is clarified and related to youngsters' own identity being Dutch-Turkish, Dutch-muslim, Moroccan-Dutch etc.
One of the lessons is dedicated to a game *'MirrorMind'*. Games are seen as a powerful tool to get students involved in classroom conversations. Therefore, the heart of this project (the fifth lesson) is dedicated to the re-invented age-old Islamic game: *shatranj al-arifin*. *'MirrorMind'* is the adapted version of this game.

Examples of PIREd
In the lesson on Jihad students are invited to consider the context of the respective texts in the Qur'an: is it a context of peace or a context of war? What is the meaning of such a text in the context of the Dutch plural society?

In the lesson on Identity students are invited to reflect on the different 'roles' they have in daily life and compare this with the roles mentioned by their classmates. Did the student choose a specific role her or himself, for example the role of 'naughty classmate', or 'good muslim'? Or was the role assigned to her or him – and if so: by whom and why? Comparison of roles in pairs – what roles are assigned, and what roles are self-assigned – creates self-awareness of one's positioning in different contexts.

PIREd – formative and summative assessment
In education, teaching and learning is about disruption of 'easy going' lines of thought and simplified images, to create space for reflection, to introduce other/new and unfamiliar views, and to invite pupils to postpone their judgment.

Based on the analysis of 7 semi-structured interviews (in two rounds) with young muslims and muslima's, we developed a list of 20 statements for a kind of 'questionnaire', stating for example 'I as a Muslim in the Dutch society', 'A conversation with my non faithful/secular friends', 'freedom of religion in the Netherlands' and 'the duty of prayer five times a day'. At the end of the 20-statements-'questionnaire', named as *'&I/&you'*, the last two items refer to the general experience of living in the Netherlands and the wished for situation of living in the Netherlands respectively.
The youngsters are asked to relate their affect (of a list of 16 validated affects, like for

example anger, joy or commitment), to each of these statements. The score is between 0 (I do not experience that affect at all) and 5 (I experience that affect very much).

The research instrument *'&I/&you'* is developed to learn about the possible changes in students' attitudes regarding the Islamic tradition and the Dutch plural society. In the title *'&I/&you'* the context in which religious identity development takes place is represented by '&', the context and I, the context I live in; the other as mirror is representaed by '&you', an authentic religious identity cannot but be constructed in relation to/together with the other: &you.

The aim of *'&I/&you'* is to facilitate students to explore their own thoughts, feelings and experiences regarding the plurality of religion(s) in their classroom and in society. With this instrument students clarify and nuance their own religious positionality amidst cultural and worldview diversity. This self-analysis instrument/self-evaluation contributes to the religious and moral identity development of students, it stimulates the mutual exchange of religious positions and widens their horizon, at the same time it informs us as researchers avbout changes in students' positioning.

To research the effect of the complete PIREd module (lessons and game) all students fill in the longer version of the 20-statements-'questionnaire' before the module starts and at the end of the seven lessons. Comparison of the two filled in 'questionnaires' (at the start and at the end of the module) informs the student as well as the teacher about changes in the affective positioning regarding Islam and citizenship in the Dutch society.

Adapted short versions of a 20-statements-'questionaire' *'&I/&you'* are included in the lessons; a kind of self-evaluation. These shortened versions function as formative assignment, aiming at the same time at broadening students' horizons, or, in DST-terminology at increasing their number and quality as well as the flexibility of the positioning of students' inner voices. To achieve these educational objectives, PIREd creates such disruptive moments by assignments, self-evaluations of the students, based on the 20-statements-'questionnaire' *'&I/&you'*. Below we give an example of an adapted version:

	It's Ramadan. During lunch break a Dutch classmate says: "You there, go and sit somewhere else, since you are not allowed to eat"	You find yourself in a dialogue-meeeting of strict and moderate Muslims.
happy		
afraid		
angry		
inspired		
disappointed		
confident		
pleased		
worried		
powerless		
stron		

Fill in how you feel when you imagine you are in the respective situation. Score between 0 – 5; 0 denoting: you don't experience that feeling at all; 5 denoting that you have that feeling very strong.

Compare your scores with the ones of your neighbouring classmate. What strikes you? Tell each other how you arrived at that specific score.
What scores differ considerably, and how come?

'MirrorMind'
Disruptive moments can occur comparing scores, but can also occur, or be stimulated by the teacher, during the dialogical encounters when playing the game *'MirrorMind'* The title of the game *'MirrorMind'* informs about the core of the game: students being each other's mirror to open their mind about their own and the other's positionings.
'MirrorMind' consists of a board, dialogue cards and chance cards. On the board vices and virtues are written, in Dutch as well as in Arabic. The virtue or vice written on the square marks the beginning of the dialogue. To facilitate the dialogue the person can make use of a 'dialogue card' with a stimulating question to facilitate the conversation.
The player whose turn comes starts the conversation by telling about her/his understanding of the virtue or vice, by informing the other participants about her/his knowledge of the Qur'anic interpretation thereof, and—what is most important—by telling them about personal experiences with this virtue or vice in daily life. Questions for clarification are allowed (no judgments!), upon which the other participants tell each other about their own experiences with the virtue or vice in question. The leader of the game (who must be an expert in Islam and trained in DST) clarifies – if necessary – Islamic concepts and guidelines for a dialogical conversation. In this dialogical encounter, the confrontation with each of the participants' understandings and interpretations, as well as the additional information about Qur'an and Haddith is a stimulus for (further) development. In the exchange the articulation of religious *I*-positions is stimulated, *I*-positions which in turn constitute the participants' religious narrative identity.

In pilot studies this game was played with various groups of Muslim youth: boys and girls and mixed groups. All players, who participated on a voluntary basis, were eager to learn more about Islam. People enjoyed playing the game — the fun of playing a board game and throwing the dice, the laughter when someone could not wait for her/his turn, and the obvious excuses used by players not to tell about their vices. The game is experienced as a safe space where justice is done to diverse narratives about virtues, and where vices could be recognised as a disliked 'voice' in the self.

In conclusion
The lessons, the game and the 'questionnaire'' *&I/&you'* respond to students' need for recognition of their actual identity as believer, their need for (more) knowledge about Islam and reflection on their position as muslims in the Dutch society. That means that in Islamic RE teachers (at schools and in mosques) should start with 'translating' 'old set rules' into a language that is understood and grasped by the students. The RE teacher must recognize the value orientation(s) that are (re)presented in students' actual narratives, favorite movies, theatre plays and songs and confront these with what is transmitted in the Islamic tradition – high appreciated values as well as the ways these culturally 'set rules' signal ways to cope with contingency in life and develop an authentic Islamic life orientation.

Each new generation grows into an old world, Hannah Arendt states in her essay 'The crisis in education'; and Arendt continues: "so that to prepare a new generation for a new world can only mean that one wishes to strike from the newcomers' hands their own chance at the new". Educators must introduce newcomers into the world, transmit existing knowledge about culture(s) and religion(s), as a stepping stone for young people's creation of a new society, a brave new world.

Ina ter Avest, March 28, 2021.