

AFPC's World Almanac of Islamism

The American Foreign Policy Council (AFPC) in Washington D. C. is publishing the first

World Almanac of Islamism

All entries will be published in a book later this year, and most of the entries are also [available online](#) right now.



I am honored to be among the contributors. I've written the entry about Islamism in Germany. Here a few paragraphs, see the original [here](#):

Germany

"Islamism in Germany has deep roots, stretching back to a symbiosis between the German state and radical religious elements during the First World War. These ties endured during the Second World War, fueled by the Third Reich's close ties to the Grand-Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Hussaini, and throughout the decades of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, before emerging to challenge the stability of the Federal Republic in the post-Cold War era."

(...)

"There exists considerable ideological and operational difference between lawful Islamism, which seeks the gradual imposition of *sharia* (Islamic law), and violent *jihad*, which is aimed at the overthrow of the established state. In Germany, Islamism of the lawful variant predominates, although

instances of *jihadi* activity have been documented as well. As of 2009, Germany's internal security service, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Verfassungsschutzbericht*), estimated that some 29 Islamist organizations with a total of 36,270 members were active within the country.²

(...)

“Since 9/11, and particularly over the past several years, political Islam has become a major topic of public debate in Germany. The wearing of the headscarf, honor killings, forced marriages, and support for terrorism and anti-Zionist activity are among the main topics of discussion surrounding both Islam and Islamism. Yet many newspapers, researchers, and politicians, as well as the general public at large, remain reluctant to deal with these issues. Those political groups or parties which express their opposition to political Islam do so out of ideological and/or racist grounds, rather than as a result of careful analysis of specific elements of political Islam. Likewise, many groups opposed to Islam are also against other foreigners (as well as those considered to be not “German” enough).

Nevertheless, a tiny but growing number of public intellectuals, scholars, activists, authors, and journalists have emerged publicly as critics of Islamism in recent years. These individuals have faced resistance on the public policy front. Some institutions, like the Berlin Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA),⁴¹ have equated any meaningful criticism of Islam with anti-Semitism, often framed as “Islamophobia.”⁴² Many journalists and mainstream scholars even compare or equate Islamist preachers of hate with pro-Western scholars, writers or activists,⁴³ and reject any military response to Islamism or Islamic *jihad*.⁴⁴ Most instead portray Islam as harmless or interesting, and look uncritically upon figures

like leading Sunni Islamist Yusuf al-Qaradawi.⁴⁵ ”

(...)

“The grand *mufti* of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Hussaini, was welcomed by Adolf Hitler, financially supported by the Nazi regime, and used Germany as a base from which to communicate anti-Jewish propaganda into the Middle East.⁴⁷ After 1945, Islam was used both by the Federal Republic of Germany and the U.S. (via the CIA) as a tool against the Soviet Union and its allies during the Cold War.⁴⁸ As part of this effort, Gerhard von Mende, a former Nazi in the “Ostministerium” (department of Eastern affairs), engaged the services of Muslims like Nurreddin Nakibhodscha Namangani, a former *imam* for the Nazi Schutzstaffel (SS). In 1958, Namangani began a “Mosque Construction Commission” in Munich, which became the starting point for political Islam in post-war Germany (if not the whole of Europe). From the start, however, it was clear—given the ideologies and past histories of those Islamists and their German allies—that anti-Semitism and anti-Western thought would become staples of the ideology thereby promoted. ”

(...)

“Still, there are signs of a growing awareness of Islamic radicalism among government officials. On November 17, 2010, for example, former German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziére warned publicly that Islamic *jihadists* were on their way to the country with the intent of committing a terrorist attack.⁶¹ His successor, Hans-Peter Friedrich, has gone further, announcing in March 2011 that he intends to hold a “prevention conference” dealing with Islamism and Islamic Jihad in Berlin in 2011.⁶² This marks the first time that the German government has engaged the country’s Muslim community in a joint effort to combat Islamism. The prospects for such a union, however, are far from certain, as most of the Muslim

organizations participating in the state's official "Islam conference" have rejected the outreach."

Read the entire entry on the page of the American Foreign Policy Council's [World Almanac of Islamism](#).