

Presenting the first fundamental research of Islamic chaplaincy and spiritual care in the secularized West, this award-winning book describes how the increasing diversity in religions and worldviews in prison populations has led to a widening demand for spiritual caregivers. As a result, Muslim imams have moved from pastoring the Islamic community in the mosque to providing spiritual guidance in prisons with little to no formal training, education, or legal position. Their work goes largely unnoticed, and it is primarily still seen as a side duty for the mosque imam, rather than an independent function of the prison. *Imam Behind Bars* provides insight into Islamic chaplaincy in the Netherlands, as well as a conceptual framework, case studies, and models for working in Western democracies and Islamic countries.

"As long as people do not have a good idea, i.e., one based on empirical studies, of what Muslim chaplains do, they will continue to fantasize about what they do. That is, they will think they give fanatical talks, are not actually engaged in pastoral care, do not conduct themselves in a professional way, and are unwilling to work together with their colleagues, etc. This study shows what imams behind bars really do: looking for humanity and helping the detainees with advice, prayer, and encouragement." Andries Baart, Professor of Presence and Care, University of Humanistic Studies.



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"Recipient of the Best Dutch Muslim Islamic Theological Publication Book Award 2001-2011." (*Nieuwemoskee Pracht van de Theologie* 2011).