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Abstract

In this article we present a cross-national comparison of the discursive framing of political claims on Muslims and Islam in four European countries. We explore these issues empirically and relate the cross-national differences found in the data to a diverging logic in the different integration debates. We argue that persistent variations in discursive framing can be understood by looking at the unique conceptualisation of group categorisation and distinction used in the national integration debates. It is,

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furthermore, argued that these discursive and symbolic trends do not relate directly to observed differences in integration policies.

Keywords

Discursive framing, integration, Islam, Muslim, media, public sphere, Western Europe

Introduction

The cultural, socio-economic and political integration of Muslims in Europe has received a lot of academic and political attention. In the Western European media, the number of stories relating to Muslims or Islam has increased dramatically in recent decades. In the Netherlands, for example, reporting on Muslims and Islam in five major national newspapers nearly doubled after the attacks of 11 September 2001 and again after the assassination of the filmmaker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam (Van Heelsum and Van Stiphout, 2010). It has also been suggested that the rise in volume is further accompanied by a general misrepresentation of Muslims or Islam in the Western media. According to Shadid (2005) this misrepresentation is characterized by (1) a simplified and detached representation of Islam; (2) the problematising of Islam and the stigmatising of Muslims; (3) the creation of distinctions between 'us' and 'them'; and (4) the underrepresentation of insider Muslims' voices and opinions. Using data of the EURISLAM¹ project, we aim to analyse the debate surrounding Muslims and Islam in the French, Dutch, British and German written media.² We are interested in making a cross-country comparison to see how negative and generalising this debate is in our four countries and how this relates to the relative openness or restrictive nature of integration policies. In addition, we wish to see if there is a significant difference in national debates that is not fully explained by other characteristics of the debate, such as the participation of Muslims actors in the debate. We will focus primarily on the first three characteristics identified by Shadid (2005) because these are related to the internal quality of the debate.

The first part of the article discusses the questions whether (1) there is a country-specific element in discursive framing of the integration debate and (2) if this element holds if we control for non-discursive factors of selection in the media. In the second part of this article we will try to explain national differences in discursive framing by looking at the national integration policies in France, the UK, the Netherlands and Germany. We will also introduce, in the final section, the logic of integration as a concept that can explain why certain discursive differences in the integration debates persist.³

National debates on Muslims

So what is, in our four countries, the overall tone of the debate on the position of Muslims in society? To answer this question we will analyse the debate using the first three problems identified by Shadid (2005): (1) a simplified and detached

representation of Islam; (2) the problematising of Islam and the stigmatising of Muslims; and (3) the distinction between ‘us and ‘them’. We choose these three potential problems since they reflect the internal qualities of the debate, whereas the fourth problem (the underrepresentation of insider Muslims’ voices and opinions) is more about access to the debate. To operationalise the first three problems, we use indicators that can include both negative and positive cases, generalising the problems into two dichotomous indicators of discursive framing:

1. The specification [*S*] of Islam/Muslim object categories in the public debate:

The negative characteristic of simplification is reframed as the degree of specification of object categories in the public debate on Islam. A decrease in the specification – or an increase in the generalisation – of objects implies an addressing towards, for example, all Muslims or Islam in general. More specification in the public debate implies the addressing of more specific objects, for example specific religious movements, groups or individuals. The specification of a claim can thus be either specific or general. Claims that have no Muslim/Islamic subject/object, or those directed towards unclassifiable subjects/objects have been excluded from the analysis.⁴

2. The position [*P*] towards the rights or position of Islam or Muslims in society:

The position of a claim can capture the problems of stigmatisation and the creation of ‘us’ and ‘them’ categories. An increasing negative position in the debate emphasises the problematisation of Islam/Muslims and contributes to the stigmatisation and solidification of Islam and Muslim as separate categories that are clearly distinct from the perceived majority. The position of a claim can be either negative (e.g. anti-Muslim/Islam, xenophobic, extreme right) or positive (e.g. pro-Muslim/Islam, antiracist, anti-extreme right). Claims holding ambivalent positions were excluded from the analysis.

Regarding the relation between these two indicators, we expect that negative positioned claims will in general more specifically formulated. This will be so because it is ‘easier’ or politically less costly to hold a negative position towards very specific subjects, e.g. individuals or small groups that, taken separately, do not *explicitly* represent a whole societal category, or, as Van Dijk has remarked:

it may be assumed that whereas people may want to avoid a negative impression in any situation, they are probably more anxious to avoid a general negative evolution about their personality, than to avoid a negative judgment about one particular action in one specific situation. To be categorized as ‘a racist’ or even as being ‘intolerant’, presupposes a more enduring characteristic of people, and is therefore a judgment that is particularly face-threatening.

(Van Dijk, 1992: 90)

For actors in a representative capacity, e.g. as a member of a political party, concerns about the social impact of their actions and positions will further limit their discursive possibilities in the public sphere. Whereas an individual might not enjoy being labelled a racist, it will be of greater social consequence if, for example, political parties or governments are accused of being racist.

The mean scores in Table 1 show that there is some cross-national variation in our two indicators of discursive framing. For both the position and specification of claims, the case of Germany appears to be highly contrasting. The mean score of the position of claims is lowest in Germany (-0.190 , compared with 0.340 in the Netherlands, 0.620 in the United Kingdom and 0.450 in France). As expected, the relatively negative tone in the German debate is partially reflected in a more specific object of the claim (a mean score of 0.646 in Germany compared with -0.222 in the Netherlands, 0.068 in the United Kingdom and -0.243 in France). To visualise the cross-national variation in discursive framing, we take and plot the mean scores of position vertically and specification horizontally in Figure 1. The circles surrounding the countries represent the share of claims that have a Muslim or Islamic object, with a smaller circle indicating that fewer claims had a Muslim or Islamic object. The discursive framing in the German printed media clearly stands apart in being both more negative in position and more specific in object. The share of claims with an Islamic object or Muslim subject is furthermore relatively high in Germany (91%) compared with France (64%), the United Kingdom (67%) or the Netherlands (71%). This indicates that the debate in Germany is more immediately directed towards Muslims and Islam, and to a lesser extent towards other actors, e.g. policymakers, politicians, academics or right-wing extremists.

To add more depth to our analysis it is crucial to consider other, non-discursive factors that are likely to influence the position and specification of claims. Important in this regard is the dynamic between what Koopmans (2005) identifies as *speakers* and *gatekeepers* in the public sphere. The public sphere is a polymorphic and bounded space that can expand and contract over time, but is always *limited*. Gatekeepers in the media therefore have some control over the

Table 1. Means score of position and specification per country.

	Position* (negative/positive)	Specification* (specific/general)
The Netherlands	0.340 (549)	-0.222 (614)
Germany	-0.190 (717)	0.646 (739)
The United Kingdom	0.620 (416)	0.068 (751)
France	0.450 (276)	-0.243 (333)

N in parentheses.

*One way ANOVA:

Position, $F(5, 3089) = 49.471, p = 0.000$.

Specification, $F(5, 3862) = 91.599, p = 0.000$.

Source: EURISLAM (2010).

accessibility of the public sphere in the power of selection. Journalists and other newsmakers make a selection from raw news material on the basis of existing structural and symbolic power relations. In our sample there is some evidence for cross-national selection biases. For example, the representation of Muslim actors in the debate fluctuates from 16% in Germany to 32% in the United Kingdom. Compared with other actors in the debate, it is likely that Muslim actors will express themselves relatively positively regarding their position and rights in society. Another issue that might create a bias in discursive framing is the variations in reported forms of political action. As a percentage of claims, repressive measures against Muslim groups or individuals have, for example, been reported with greater frequency in Germany (14%) than in France (6%). The form of action is again likely to influence both the position and specification of a claim. Repressive measures are both more likely to contain negative expressions and are usually directed towards smaller, more specifically defined groups or individuals. To control for these factors we include actor and form of the claim as variables in a logistic regression model for the position and specification of claims in our four countries. We use *state actors*, *repressive measures* and *Germany* as reference categories for actor, action and country.

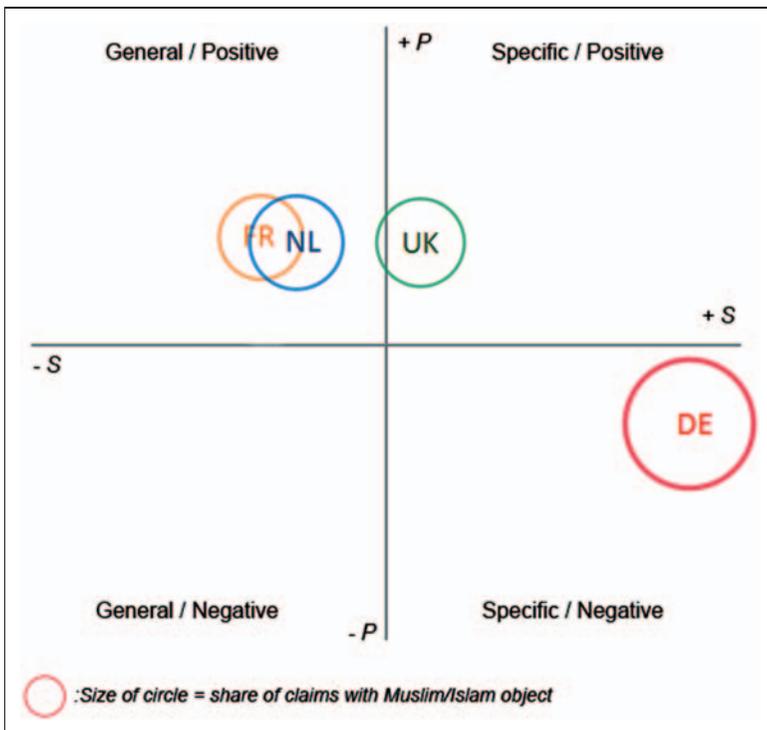


Figure 1. Mean score of position and specification per country.

The odds ratios in Table 2 support some of our expectations regarding the control variables. In the first regression the relative odds of having a positive claim are highest for Muslim actors and lowest for repressive measures. In the second regression the odds ratio for having a general claim is lowest for repressive measures. It is striking that the relative odds for having a positive claim are relatively high for political decisions in comparison with the other forms of actions. The differences between the countries are further statistically significant within the 5% level in both regressions. Again, the case of Germany appears distinct and stands out with a lower odds ratio in the position of claims and a higher one in the specification. To control for the fact that odd ratios can easily overestimate the relative risk in cases where the incidence of the outcome of interest is quite common (>10%), the risk ratios (RR) and the corresponding confidence intervals were also calculated to better reflect the likelihood of claims being either framed more positively and/or more generally.

These results indicate that, holding actor and action constant, public expressions made in the German press on the position and rights of Muslims have higher relative odds of being both more specific and more negative. These results provide evidence that, irrespective of actor or action, there exists a country-specific element

Table 2. Logistic regression – discursive framing controlling for non-discursive factors of selection in the media.

	Position of claim (negative/positive)		Specification of claim (specific/general)	
	Exp(B)	RR	Exp(B)	RR
<i>Ref: Germany</i>				
Netherlands	2.691***	1.594 (1.442–1.735)	6.880***	3.371 (3.007–3.718)
United Kingdom	4.732***	1.879 (1.725–2.009)	4.821***	2.876 (2.512–3.238)
France	2.973***	1.649 (1.454–1.822)	6.568***	3.308 (2.875–3.719)
<i>Ref: State actors</i>				
Political parties	0.885	0.932 (0.718–1.162)	1.369	1.221 (0.946–1.000)
Civil society	1.804***	1.331 (1.184–1.471)	1.811***	1.430 (1.251–1.610)
Muslim actors	11.939***	2.046 (1.955–2.112)	1.400**	1.237 (1.051–1.432)
Unknown actors	1.533	1.241 (0.939–1.528)	1.571	1.323 (0.912–1.764)
<i>Ref: Repressive measures</i>				
Political decisions	10.197***	4.370 (3.352–5.239)	40.307***	17.251 (11.281–22.466)
Verbal statements	4.752***	3.078 (2.326–3.867)	42.835***	17.683 (12.092–22.500)
Conventional actions	8.094***	3.990 (3.037–4.865)	19.243***	11.876 (6.837–17.716)
Protest	1.419	1.338 (0.783–2.148)	23.132***	13.200 (7.428–19.481)

* $p \leq 0.10$, ** $p \leq 0.05$, *** $p \leq 0.01$, CI 95% in parentheses.

Source: EURISLAM (2010).

in discursive framing. Because our analysis is restricted to the printed media, we are not in the position to make any generalisation regarding a more broadly defined public sphere. Furthermore, it would be a mistake to generalise by stating that claims made in Germany are as a rule more negatively framed. Within the bounded space of the German debate on Muslims and Islam in the printed media, there continues to exist ample contention and differences of opinion. Related to central tendencies in France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, however, the debate on Muslims and Islam in Germany appears to be more negatively and specifically framed. The contrasting case of Germany may obfuscate the fact that there are smaller but still significant differences in the discursive framing in the debates on Muslims and Islam in France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Especially between France and the United Kingdom there appears to be a difference in both the position and the specification of claims. When we cross-reference different country variables by switching the reference category, we find a significant difference in discursive framing between all countries with the exception of France and the Netherlands: France and the Netherlands are predominantly ‘general-positive’ (with a smaller share of claims in France), the United Kingdom ‘specific-positive’ and Germany ‘specific-negative’.

Thus the next question is: how can we explain these national differences in discursive framing of the debates on the position of Muslims in society? To answer this question we will discuss national integration policies (in the next section) and what we call ‘the reproduction of integration in the public sphere’ (in the final section).

National integration policies

Figure 2 represents the general evolution of integration policies in our four countries. Individual rights include non-cultural measurements on the provision of legal

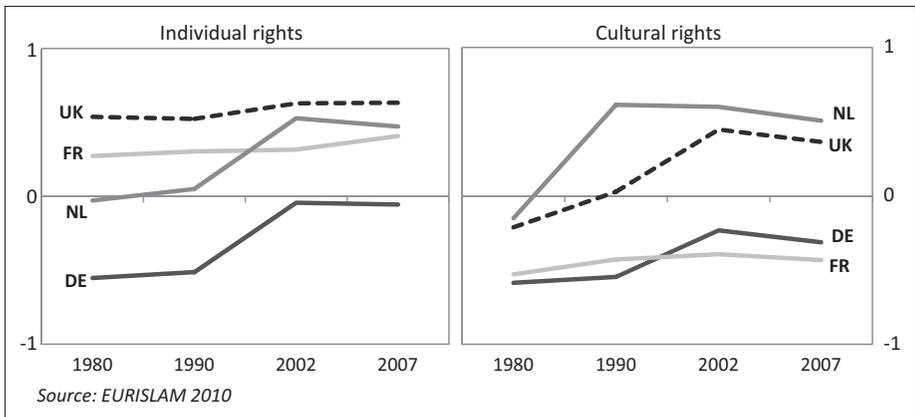


Figure 2. Evolution of integration policies.

residency, work permits, naturalisation and family reunion. Cultural rights include measurements on the provision of cultural group rights and conditions for naturalisation, religious practices and foreign language provision, especially those related to the integration of Islam and Muslims. Policies were quantified on a scale running from restrictive or unaccommodating (-1) to unrestrictive or accommodating (+1). They were measured at four different points of time (see Carol et al., 2009, for details on the measurements).

For the policies related to the individual rights of immigrants we see that there is some convergence. Policies in both the Netherlands and Germany became less restrictive after 1990. In 2007, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands have comparable policies while Germany falls somewhat behind, having slightly more restrictive integration policies concerning individual rights. However, for our discussion on the integration debates on Islam and Muslims, policies related to the cultural rights and requirements of immigrants are of more importance since they deal directly with the accommodation of Islamic religious practices. In contrast to individual rights, there seems to be no convergence in cultural rights between our four countries. Between 1980 and 2007, policies even seem to have grown further apart, resulting in two distinct groups of countries. Germany and France are relatively unaccommodating compared with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, which have more accommodating policies, granting special cultural and religious rights to Muslims.

Therefore, taking into account national differences in cultural and religious accommodation of Muslims as a group, it can be expected that the overall tone of the debate on the position of Muslims would be relatively positive in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, compared with the debates in Germany and France. However, in the previous section we concluded that the tone of the debate in France was 'general-positive'. This mean positive position of the integration debate in France seems to be in contrast with the overall restrictive and unaccommodating cultural and religious policies regarding special rights for Muslims in France. In this sense it is surprising that the French public debate does not lie closer to the German one. Although national integration policies do account for 'predicting' the discursive framing in three countries (Netherlands, UK and Germany) they do not match with the position of France in particular. In the following section we will argue that this should be understood mainly by taking into account the different systems of logic relationships that persists in each integration debate. In particular, we argue that persistent variations in discursive framing should be understood by taking into account a system of logical relations in the categorisation and distinction of different societal groups. This logic system is created and perpetuated by political and academic elites and finds its ultimate public expressions through media disseminations. We understand the cross-national variation in discursive framing in relation to differences observed in categorical and distinctive conceptions in the logic of integration. These conceptions shape a rather idiosyncratic and singular logic that overarches the integration debates. Within this debate there is a strategic ambiguity that permits the polysemic

attribution of meaning. The logic of integration therefore provides a more or less singular discursive 'arena' in which social actors publicly contest for symbolic power.

The reproduction of integration in the public sphere

Introduction

Commenting on research carried out for the EU Targeted Social and Economic Research programme (see Heckmann and Schnapper, 2003), Favell argues that the researchers did indeed find that immigrant as well as majority groups

talk about the issues in each country in ways that follow the distinct national ideologies. But little or no *self-reflexive* effort was made to ask how these nation-sustaining ideas about distinct national 'models' have themselves been created and sustained by politicians, the media and the policy academics themselves in each country.

(Favell, 2003: 22, emphasis in original).

In this last section of our article we wish to make such a reflexive effort and look a bit closer at the reproduction of integration in the European printed news media, focusing specifically on the representation of Muslims and Islam. We argue that cross-national differences in a systematic logic of relations in the integration debate will translate into different discursive reproductions of integration in the public sphere. This will help us to understand why, at a certain time and place, some claims find resonance and legitimacy in the integration debate while others do not. In the first part of the article we found a significant gap in the discursive framing of claims between Germany and the other three countries. Below we will argue that these discursive differences are less related to actual integration policy, but more to a logic system of distinctions and categorisations used in the integration debate that can be either inclusive or exclusive in governing diverse societies.

As a concept that inspires the formation of policy, integration is intertwined with conceptions of the nation. Actors in the field of integration, such as politicians and academics, are often informed and influenced by these conceptions. Debates on integration therefore have a tendency to take place within and across national contexts, as is the case in Brubaker's (1992) seminal work on the different citizenship regimes in France and Germany. Critics of Brubaker's work have characterised his analysis as being too deterministic and static, leaving little room for internal contention or transnational convergence (Bertossi, 2011). It remains to be seen, however, if convergence of integration policies will find a public expression in the national integration debates. The case of Germany is interesting in this regard because it underwent a significant structural change in its citizenship regime in 2000. Regarding the impact in the contention over migration and ethnic relations in the public sphere, Koopmans et al. predicted that these changes will bring

Germany discursively closer to countries such as Britain and France (Koopmans et al., 2005: 23). From the result of our analysis we can clearly see that this has yet to happen and we argue that, besides institutional changes in policy, it is likely that differences in the logic of integration continue to play a role in setting these debates discursively apart. Favell (2003), for example, argues that integration is about 'imagining the national institutional forms and structures that can unify a diverse population; hence imagining what the state can actively do to "nationalize" newcomers and re-constitute the nation-state under conditions of growing cultural diversity' (Favell, 2003: 18). As an imagined national and unifying activity, integration possesses a symbolic value that places it beyond the field of policy. A primary concern in the integration debate is therefore the symbolic governance of diversity within a bounded territorial space. Two opposite and archetypical 'solutions' to the governance of diversity seem possible. First, a solution can be sought in explicitly differentiating and distinguish groups on the basis of some perceived characteristics. Here diversity is 'solved' by the systematic maintenance of differences in society. On the opposite side we find a solution in the form of pure assimilation that defines the polity as an indivisible mass. In any integration debate these archetypical solutions form logical opposites that influence the way integration is perceived. Two central operators in this logic are the categorisation and distinction of societal groups. Together, these operators inform actors in the integration debate on who integrates into what. Categorisation in this regard determines who can be addressed in the integration debate, while the perceived distinction between groups tells us something about the normative acceptance of diversity in society. Taken together, this system of logic relations helps to shape the discursive repertoire of actors involved in the field of integration, e.g. politicians, academics and migrant groups.

Koopmans et al. (2005) postulate a similar theoretical model in which the making of political claims in the public sphere stands in a dialectic relationship with institutional and discursive opportunity structures. The institutional opportunity structures constitute structural issues such as the formal access to citizenship, while the discursive opportunity structures are formed by symbolic interpretations of citizenship and national identity. Cross-national differences in the institutional and discursive opportunity structures find expression in national variations in the political claim-making in the public sphere. In their model, Koopmans et al. (2005) draw a direct relationship between the institutional and discursive opportunities, arguing that there is a dialectic relationship between symbolic and structural dimensions of integration. We propose, however, that the institutional side of integration policy is not directly linked to the discursive framing in the integration debate. In between, we argue, stands an overarching repertoire of logic relations that are used to discuss, understand and govern diversity in society. We understand the direct relationship between the policy side and the discursive framing of claims to be severed because any logic of integration can be used with strategic ambiguity with a polysemic attribution of meaning to outwardly similar expressions. Contention, disputes and movements within the integration debate therefore

operate quite well within the bounded discursive space of a singular logic system of relationships. In the following sub-sections we will proceed to illustrate this point by briefly introducing some dynamics found in the French, British, Dutch, and German integration debates. After that we will argue that it is these 'logics of integration' which explain national differences in discursive framing of the public debates on Muslims in France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany.

Republicanism in France

In relation to the debate on migration and integration, France's republican tradition and history is often mentioned as an important factor. Bertossi (2011) points to the fact that there exists internal contention on the meaning of republicanism among scholars and politicians in the French integration debate. On one side there are propagators of a pure colour-blind republicanism in which the unity and equality of the polity is deemed absolute and unquestionable. The opposition argues that this specific colour-blind approach obfuscates some of the structural obstacles faced by ethnic minorities in France. Discrimination, both institutional and unofficial, hinders the integration of these groups regardless of the republican ideal of equality. The categorisation and distinction of societal groups play an important role in this regard. In modern societies, most forms of discrimination are both morally and legally prohibited. Blatant forms of xenophobic expressions based on race, ethnicity, culture or religion are not part of the norm, because, according to Van Dijk:

discrimination and racism are legally and morally prohibited, most Western countries share the official belief that *therefore* discrimination and racism no longer exist as a structural characteristic of society or the state. If discrimination or prejudice still exists, it is treated as an incident, as a deviation, as something that should be attributed to, and punished at the individual level. In other words, institutional or systemic racism is denied.

(Van Dijk, 1992: 95, emphasis in original)

In the French logic of integration, an intersection between categorisation and distinction occurs that creates a particular position in the integration debate, and, subsequently, the debate on discrimination. In comparison with other European countries, France has had a much more violent history regarding its immigrant population. This is especially true of French Algerians, who were the target of many violent attacks in the 1960s, and who continue to have a bad image in the eyes of the French majority today. France's colonial history fuelled the fierce discrimination against Algerians and other Maghrebians even after the Second World War (Lucassen, 2005). Especially the cultural distance between Maghrebians and the French majority was deemed a problem. Islam played an important role in this perceived distance, but Maghrebians were more commonly ethnically categorised

as Arabs (*Arabe*) rather than religiously or culturally as Muslims. What is particularly striking about this is that, irrespective of the harsh and violent clashes with 'Arabs', the idea of a universal equality under republicanism remains particularly strong among academic and political elites. Regarding the categorisation of minorities, Lucassen argues that the French have a 'schizophrenic' attitude, stating that:

everyone is aware of the fact that the integration of North Africans is moving very slowly, and in everyday life the 'Arabs' constitute a very real social category, but it is nevertheless deemed wrong to make them visible statistically or as a policy category. The dominant French Republican tradition of integration through national institutions like schools, the army, churches, unions, and political parties has created an ideological revulsion toward ethnic categorizations – even towards groups that are considered to be unfit for assimilation.

(Lucassen, 2005: 186)

The power and importance of republicanism in the French logic of integration influences many different actors in the integration debate and is, furthermore, defined in relation to its superiority to other solutions in the governance of diversity. Bertossi states that:

regardless of the way in which French scholars approach the question of ethnic categories, they do share a similar conception of the value of republicanism; that is, republicanism is the model France has inherited from her political tradition, and it stands, compared to other models, as the best ideological and policy framework to incorporate migrant and minority groups into French society.

(Bertossi, 2011: 1566)

These shared conceptions do leave room for internal contention, but, as an overarching structure, it does set the French integration debates discursively apart because expressions that relate to the ideal of republicanism are likely to be favoured over expressions that follow a completely different logic. It can be imagined that other forms of expressions, for example one similar to those found in the British integration debate, would be ineffective in France because they correspond to a different logic and therefore lack a certain legitimacy within the French debate. Brubaker (2007), for example, shows how some political parties developed a universally and positively formulated differentialist rhetoric of the 'right to be different' (*le droit à la différence*) to push for more exclusionary citizenship law in the 1980s. Brubaker blames the failure of this differential turn on the presence of the Front National and the influence of Le Pen. His support for *le droit à la différence* connected this differentialist turn with a form of culturalism that was too far removed from the ideal of equality under the French republic. This move therefore

lost some of its legitimacy and the public debate was again dominated by the more inclusive rhetoric of *le droit à la ressemblance* or *le droit à l'indifférence*.

Multiculturalism in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands

In relation to France and Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are typically seen as multicultural societies in their approach to integration. Diversity is governed through relatively inclusive policies that recognise the diversity in society. As in France, the symbolic strength of the multicultural model has in no small part been dependent on the involvement of political and academic elites in the integration debate. In the United Kingdom, before the 1960s, policies of assimilation rather than multiculturalism were the norm. Outbursts of violence against migrants were not uncommon and ethnic unrest and rioting remained an important social problem even after the Second World War. With the arrival of new migrants from the Commonwealth countries in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the British integration debate moved gradually towards the inclusive form of multiculturalism for which it is known today. Upon arrival, the migrants from the Commonwealth already possessed British citizenship. With respect to their integration, this sharpened the focus on colour and race in the categorisation and distinction of migrant groups (Lucassen, 2005). In the beginning the British approach to integration was primarily pragmatic:

British policy makers and collective minority actors have mostly opted for a pragmatic approach to integration rather than for a sophisticated normative model as in France. In this context, the work done today by the most influential British scholars on this issue may in fact be seen as an attempt to move away from this traditional pragmatic approach and to promote a public normative conception of multiculturalism.

(Bertossi, 2011: 1569)

Favell argues that the increased involvement of British scholars in the integration debate has played 'a major role in legitimizing in the mainstream a national sense of ease with difference and diversity' (2003: 20).

Multiculturalism in the Netherlands has been based on a distinct ethno-cultural categorisation. The Dutch model of multiculturalism evolved in a less pragmatic fashion than in the United Kingdom and is based on a more normative categorisation and distinction between societal groups. In both the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the integration debate has in recent years come under a multicultural crisis or backlash which has questioned the overall 'success' of the multicultural model (Bertossi, 2011; Grillo, 2010; Prins and Saharso, 2010). Bertossi argues that this backlash is mainly a 'discursive strategy that has served until now as a proxy for a new wave of changes in the frameworks defining public debates and public interventions on integration' (Bertossi, 2011: 1569). This 'discursive strategy' builds largely on the existing logic of multiculturalism and does not deny the

existence of the multicultural society. The multicultural backlash opposes multiculturalism only in the sense that it is said to have failed as the primary system in the governance of diversity. This failure leaves room for new political solutions and thus new political leadership. The multicultural backlash, however, explicitly underlines the existence of multiculturalism and affirms its traditional significance as a model. It is therefore not uncommon that the backlash against multiculturalism builds and frames 'new' solutions within the same logic. In multiculturalism, the categorisation and distinction of groups centres on the official recognition of difference and the support of diversity. In the multicultural backlash initiated by the anti-Islamic Freedom party (PVV), this logic remains largely unaltered. In the rhetoric of the PVV, Dutch society is still inherently multicultural. The PVV supports and explicitly underlines the importance of Christian, Protestant and Jewish religious identities. However, the PVV aims to exclude Islam and Muslims from this multicultural order by arguing Islam is an anti-democratic *political* ideology. In the 2010 party programme on *islambestrijding* (combating Islam), under the heading 'solutions', the first point reads: 'Islam is primarily a political ideology and can therefore in no way claim rights ordinarily reserved for religious movements' (PVV, 2010: 15, our translation). This particular discursive framing is a crucial part of the PVV's strategy in denying accusations of cultural, ethnical or religious discrimination. By discursively framing their programme as a struggle for democracy and freedom, the PVV performs a balancing act to legitimise its anti-Islamic rhetoric within the inclusive Dutch logic of ethno-cultural multiculturalism.

Differentialism in Germany

Although the logic of integration in France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands evolved differently, they are all more or less inclusive in orientation (Banton, 2001; Bertossi, 2011; Favell, 2003). Germany, on the other hand, is often typified as being rather exclusive in the area of integration. The de-ethnicising of German citizenship has perhaps shown that such a legacy does not rule out change, but, regarding the extension of citizenship law, Brubaker argues that it

was distinctive [...] and indicative of deep-rooted German differentialism, [that] the solution was long seen on the left not in terms of incorporating immigrants and their descendants as full citizens, but rather in terms of extending even political rights – along with social, civil, and economic rights – to resident foreigners.

(Brubaker, 2007: 538)

In this sense, deep-rooted differentialism could continue to be an important element in the German logic of integration and could continue to influence the discursive framing of political claims in the integration debate.

In the German *Ausländerpolitik*, categorisations and distinctions are most commonly based on ethnicity. The very clear distinction between Germans and

minorities can sometimes lead to somewhat oxymoronic expressions such as *unsere ausländische Mitbürger* (our foreign fellow citizens). The prevalence of strict categorisation and distinction in the German integration debate should be seen in relation to its history. The legacy of the Second World War has left many members of the German academic and political elite in the field of integration rather uneasy with strong normative conceptions of assimilation. This unease is felt both by the political left and the conservative right. While some actors in the integration debate simply felt that immigrants posed a threat to German society, others held a more benign position, believing it unethical to take away the identity of immigrants by forcing them to become German (Lucassen, 2005). Aside from a general unease with the idea of normative assimilation, the legacy of war created some integration policies that actively sought to rebuild and strengthen the shattered Jewish community in Germany. The instalment of the *Wiedergutmachungspolitik*, for example, discriminates on the basis of Jewish decent and grants Jewish migrants citizenship rights and financial support (Berger, 2010). Such measures harden the categorisation and distinction of different groups by coupling group identity with political and economic privileges. After the beginning of the 1980s, the German *Ausländerpolitik* became almost exclusively associated with the integration of Turks. Because of their large numbers and adherence to the Islamic faith, Turks were identified as being a troublesome foreign element (*Fremdkörper*) within German society. Turks were mainly categorised along national or ethno-cultural lines because racial classifications had become heavily discredited after the Second World War. Many observers believed that the Islamic background of Turkish immigrants would impose an insurmountable cultural barrier to their assimilation. The fear of a growing over-foreignisation (*Überfremdung*) became gradually more exclusively associated with a ‘Turkish problem’ (*Türkenproblem*). The belief in a fundamental ethno-cultural distance that precluded the assimilation of Turks into German society was especially strong among the Christian democratic parties, but also found some resonance among the social democrats. The SPD, for example, argued that Turks were a minority unable to assimilate. Besides politicians, some scholarly observers equally held the position that the integration of migrants would be problematic. In 1982 a group of scholars published the *Heidelberg Manifesto* in which they stated that the presence of migrants, and especially of Turks, constituted a biological and cultural threat to German society (Lucassen, 2005).

Conclusion: Logics of integration and discursive framing

Using recently collected empirical data, we have shown that there is some variation in the discursive framing of political claims in the debate on Muslims and Islam across our four countries. After the introduction of some simple distributions, we considered two non-discursive factors that are likely to influence the discursive framing in the media. These factors of selection could explain a large portion of the observed cross-national variation in discursive framing. However, after introducing these two factors as control variables in two logistic regression models,

we found that the cross-national differences in discursive framing remain significant between all countries, with the exception of France and the Netherlands. Especially the case of Germany stands out. The discursive framing in the German debate is significantly more negative and specific. The persistent isolated position of the German debate on Muslims and Islam is particularly interesting in relation to the convergence of individual rights policies and the similarity between France and Germany regarding the cultural and religious requirements and accommodations for Muslims.

We argue that a cross-national variation in discursive framing in the integration debate that is not fully explained by non-discursive factors of selection should be understood as the reproduction of a different logic of integration in the public sphere. The variations in discursive framing therefore do not have to reflect any structural differences in integration policy. Constructed and perpetuated by academics and politicians, the logic of integration shapes public expression by providing a certain way of categorical and distinctive thinking that will legitimise certain forms of expressions over others. This can explain the differences in discursive framing in the integration debates on Muslims and Islam found in France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany. Very specific and negative political claims appear to find less resonance in the first three countries. This does not mean that these countries have somehow performed 'better' in structurally integrating their Muslims populations. It means rather that specific and negative claims are to a greater degree found to be legitimate expressions in the public debate. That a continuation of such negative expression in the public sphere can coexist with unrestrictive changes in integration policies is also stressed by Lucassen, who argues that in Germany the 'focus on the public debates, xenophobia, and racism severely clouds the on-going integration process' (Lucassen, 2005: 155). From the 1970s onwards, a particular discursive strategy was pursued in the German integration debate that reproduced the political 'mantra' that Germany was not an immigration country. Even with an increasingly structurally inclusive integration policy and a growing political acceptance of Germany as an immigration country, a popular unease with diversity appears to remain. Schönwälder argues that:

while the factors of post immigration and the resultant plurality of backgrounds and experiences in the German population are now accepted this is not accompanied by a generally positive approach to cultural diversity and public representation of minorities as groups. Germany's life as a self-conscious country of immigration begins in a climate unfavourable to an active promotion of minority rights and identities.

(Schönwälder, 2010: 153)

Thus, for the moment, these conditions appear to set the German integration debate discursively apart from those found in France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The debates in these countries appear generally less negative

and less specific. Furthermore, a smaller proportion of claims are directed towards Muslim or Islamic objects, indicating that in these countries the debate on Muslims and Islam is relatively disconnected from direct discussions of Muslim or Islamic objects. These variations correspond with differences in the categorisation and distinctions of groups that are crystallised in separate national logics of integration. The legacies of the Second World War and specific colonial histories have played a major role in this process and have therefore influenced the evolution of public integration debates. In France, the universal logic of republicanism narrows the discursive opportunity to separate Muslim or Islam entities in the integration debate (remember that in France the percentage of 'Muslim-claims' was lowest). This is true to a lesser extent for a multicultural logic found in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, since the discursive opportunities to address groups separately are much wider because such categorisations and distinctions are central concepts within the logic of multiculturalism. This is even more pronounced in the German debate, where claims are to a larger extent made towards groups and individuals singled out on the basis of their Islamic background. The relative negative discursive framing in the German debate is probably influenced by the popular belief that Germany is not an immigration country and that Muslims – or Turks in this case – either cannot, or should not, be assimilated. The fact that the integration of Turkish immigrants has in some ways been more inclusive in Germany than in the multicultural UK or Netherlands (Lucassen, 2005) shows that the symbolic reproduction of integration in the public sphere can be disconnected from integration as a structural reality. The relatively positive discursive framing in the French debate seems to point in the same direction. The general and positive discursive framing in the French debate on Muslims and Islam is much more a reflection of the normative strength of French republicanism than of the non-existence of discrimination or of the generous cultural and religious accommodation of Muslim minorities.

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Notes

1. The EURISLAM sample contains a total of 5000 instances of political claim-making for six countries between 1999 and 2008. See the introduction to this special issue for further information on sampling and coding of claims.
2. Data on Belgium and Switzerland are available, but the linguistic and administrative divisions in Belgium and Switzerland deserve special attention. These cases will be handled separately in a forthcoming publication.
3. It should be noted that our analysis is limited in a number of important ways. First, the debate on integration in West European countries is obviously not restricted to discussions on Muslims and Islam. In the current climate, however, these issues seem rather indicative of the broader discussion on integration. Second, sources outside the printed

media are becoming more relevant and should therefore be included in future studies on the discursive framing of public opinion.

4. Such claims are directed towards other objects (political parties, government actors and right-wing extremists).

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