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ARTICLE



How religion came into play: ‘Muslim’ as a category of practice in immigrant integration debates

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ABSTRACT

‘Muslim’ has become a frequently applied category in immigrant integration policy. While there is extensive research on the construction of this religious category to identify the target groups of these policies, there are few empirical studies on the category use. Many scholars argue that populations of immigrants were increasingly labelled as ‘Muslim’ following the 9/11 terror attacks. Also, the increased application of ‘Muslim’ is debated as the result of the anti-Islam mobilisation by populist right-wing parties or in relation to the institutional accommodation of Islam. This article asks when, through which actors and in which contexts the category ‘Muslim’ entered and evolved in the policy field. The study focuses on parliamentary immigrant integration debates in Austria, Germany and Switzerland (1993–2013). The analysis shows that right-wing parties make use of the category ‘Muslim’ in relation to security and common values. Left-wing actors take up the category to criticise this usage, while mainstream parties do so when discussing the accommodation of Islam. Instances of religious violence were not found to generate a sustained increase in category use, while the agenda setting of populist parties on the right and the extent to which the accommodation of Islam is debated proved to be decisive.

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Introduction

A broad range of scholars have discussed the exclusionary effects of religious labelling in immigrant integration politics. Werner Schiffauer speaks of a ‘Muslimisation of the immigrant’ whereby diverse populations of immigrants are portrayed as homogenous groups and reduced to a religious identity (2007, 117). Fatima El-Tayeb discusses ‘Muslim’ as a ‘visible other’ to white Europeans in a ‘colour-blind’ Europe whereby religion functions as a ‘racialised boundary’ (2011, 16). The construction of the category ‘Muslim’ in immigrant integration via symbolic boundary drawing (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2009), through politicised knowledge production (Johansen and Spielhaus 2012) and discursive techniques of governing (Tezcan 2012) is well researched. The actual usage and development of the category ‘Muslim’ by contrast, has been subjected to much less scrutiny. On the one hand, some assumptions on the usage of this category, including the impact of the

9/11 terror attacks, are frequently reproduced, mostly without any reference to empirical research. For the particular policy field of immigrant integration, this assumption is central to the literature of the past decade (see, for example, Alba and Foner 2015; Chebel d'Appollonia and Reich 2010; Martinello 2006). On the other hand, factors that are considered to be relevant for the development of immigrant integration policy in general (party politics, institutions) are seldom taken into account.

This article discusses the development of the category use of 'Muslim' in immigrant integration policy debates, guided by the questions of when, through which actors and in which contexts 'religion comes into play'. Patterns of category use are discovered and discussed in light of different arguments from the literature on what might influence the usage of 'Muslim' as a category in immigrant integration policy debates. These include contextual events such as: jihadist terrorism (see above); populist right-wing parties (Klammer 2013; Rosenberger and Hadj-Abdou 2013); and the accommodation of Islam (Brunn 2012; Tezcan 2012).

The cases observed in this study – parliamentary debates on immigrant integration in Austria, Germany and Switzerland – are highly comparable cases that vary according to two relevant factors. The empirical study over a period of 20 years, from 1993 to 2013, demonstrates the usage of religion to address immigrant populations at the level of cross-case comparison (focusing on parties and institutions) as well as in within-case comparison of developments over time and between each country's parliamentary parties.

The article proceeds as follows: I first discuss the scholarly debate on categories in immigrant integration policies, and 'Muslim' in particular, to develop the theoretical framework for this contribution; then I present the cases. This is followed by the description of material and methodology for the empirical case study. Empirical results are presented in part five. Finally, I discuss these results with a focus on institutional workings and party politics.

Politics of categorisation: immigrant integration policies and their subjects

6Building on the work of Michel Foucault, Reece Jones argues that 'categories do not simply mimetically represent the world but instead simultaneously create it and limit it' (2009, 177). As scholars who aim to understand a category's workings are always at risk of reproducing them, Rogers Brubaker emphasises that we should carefully differentiate between categories of (scholarly) analysis and categories of (political and social) practice (2013). This article analyses the usage of a category of practice, namely 'Muslim' as a category applied in immigrant integration policy practice. Brubaker's term 'category of practice' is useful to study categorisation processes as it 'considers the other-identification of groups along categories and how they may shape self-identifications' (Rosenberger and Stöckl 2016, 3). The application of a category of practice may be congruent or overlapping with self-identification, or be a form of other-identification fully rejected by those thus labelled. This is also the case for 'Muslim', a term that first of all describes religious affiliation but has been increasingly used in other contexts.

Categories are important to any policy field but in the field of immigrant integration, the use of categories often directly relates to processes of symbolic boundary drawing and othering. The very idea of immigrant integration is characterised by the presupposition of a unity (mostly within a nation-state society) into which others need to be integrated (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2009). As a policy field, it subsumes what 'the state can 'do' (Favell 2005, 43) mostly in terms of top-down measures addressed to those 'others' in need of integration. Following the differentiation of integration regimes common in migration studies (for example, those described by Tariq Modood 2011), immigrant integration as a concept is an individualistic approach (like assimilation, but contrary to multiculturalism). It targets individuals not groups. Following the concept of immigrant integration, the private sphere is the place to cultivate cultural identities and immigrants should be discouraged from thinking of themselves as part of a minority (ibid., 6). Though, the political practice of immigrant integration policy frequently applies group categories inconsistently to identify the 'others' it seeks to integrate. Previously, the subjects of immigrant integration were mostly identified by their legal status (e.g. foreigners, asylum seekers, third-country nationals), or sometimes by ethnic and national categories. This has increasingly shifted to 'Muslim' as a religious category (Bleich 2009).

We should bear in mind the processes that lead to the application of categories and the consequences of their usage. Policy problems and the categories within them are the result of problem-identification and problem-formulation by political actors. They are therefore socially constructed rather than given (Bacchi 2009; Yanow 2002). Along with the broader process of problem-identification, the use of categories also determines the ensuing steps in the policy process including proposed policy measures and their implication. The application of 'Muslim' as a category detaches the targets of immigrant integration policies from specific regional/national ties and eventually from the process of migration itself. This means that second-generation immigrants 'rebecome "other"' (Allievi 2005, 8). Problems in immigrant integration then become problems of Islam/Muslims, a development parallel to the phenomenon of 'ethnicisation' (Lutz and Heckmann 2010). Thijs Sunier speaks of a development in the 'post-9/11 political climate' whereby 'everything that is done by Muslims' is turned 'into a crucial element of the integration agenda' (2012a, 1139). While I further discuss the attribution of a change in political climate to the events of 9/11 in the empirical part of this article, these observations about the conflation of categories in the field of immigrant integration is crucial to my argument.

Researching 'Muslim' integration

As older literature shows, processes of 'othering Islam' and referring to 'Muslim' as a category of immigrant integration are by no means new (e.g. Zolberg and Woon 1999) and many authors assume that it became a topic of immigrant integration debates in the late 1990s (Spielhaus 2011, 170). Especially the construction of the category 'Muslim', often phrased as the construction of 'Muslim subjects' (see Tezcan 2012), has recently been intensively researched. In this vein, Riem Spielhaus describes how populations of immigrants who were previously addressed as 'guest workers' in Germany are now subsumed under the category 'Muslim', not

least as the German naturalisation reform allowed many immigrants and their descendants to become citizens. But rather than viewing them as Germans, 'Muslim' has become the category to name and problematise these populations in public, political and academic debates (2013, 174ff.). In an article on 'Muslim' as a category in surveys, Johansen and Spielhaus further conclude that 'the connection of categories 'Muslim' and 'immigrant' functions as an imaginary that contributes to the invisibility of non-immigrant Muslims as well as non-Muslim immigrants' (2012, 109) and thereby to the production of populations of 'others'.

Informed by this literature on the construction of the category 'Muslim', this article is interested in how the category is used in immigrant integration debates and thereby focused on its political application. I am convinced that it is important to provide empirically based knowledge on how religion came into play in this field, and to support and refine arguments on subject construction and its marginalising and exclusionary effects. Therefore, this article investigates three cases of immigrant integration policy to learn about influential factors from their comparison. Among the wealth of research on religion and immigrant integration politics we find at least three important arguments that help us understand the development of 'Muslim' as a category of practice in this policy field. 'Muslim' integration is discussed in relation to security issues, institutional state-religion relations, and party politics.

Securitisation of religion and migration

Security issues are a central aspect in the application of 'Muslim' as a category of immigrant integration policy. Following Thijl Sunier, securitisation is (next to an emphasis on national identity and the problematisation of Islam) one of the three basic features of the 'stronger focus on Muslims as the principal targets of integration policies'. Sunier portrays this as a 'crucial change' that the terror attacks of 9/11 'marked' (2012a, 1138). Sometimes security issues in immigrant integration are debated as the direct consequence of violence in the name of religion (Joppke 2009). Sunier follows this argument when he portrays certain immigrant integration policy measures as a result of jihadist violence:

When it became evident that perpetrators of the bomb attacks in London were not agents from outside, but 'blokes from the next block' and that a considerable number of young Muslims are willing to use violence, the prevention of radicalism became a prime goal of integration policies. (2012b, 197).

Other authors see the security focus on Islam in immigrant integration policy as the result of longer processes and identify two concurring developments. One is a securitisation of European migration policies in general that goes back to the 1990s. Jef Huynmans describes how the securitisation of migration politics 'results from a powerful political and societal dynamic reifying migration as a force which endangers the good life in west European societies' (2000, 752). This migration-security nexus intensified from 2001 onwards (Faist 2006). The other, as Erik Bleich argues, is the change in dealing with religious diversity after the terror attacks of 9/11 from value debates and cultural issues towards a securitisation of religion (2009). According to this literature, immigrant integration politics after 9/11 witness

both a 'migration-security nexus' and a 'religion-security-nexus'. This contributes to the prominence of the perceived security threat from 'Muslim immigrants' in immigrant integration politics.

However, the securitisation of immigrant religion is not isolated. Christian Joppke argues that in Britain the government applied a twofold strategy in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, namely new anti-terror laws on the one hand, and 'going the extra mile in accommodating Muslim claims', on the other (2009, 463). Here lies a second argument helpful in understanding the development of 'Muslim' as a category in immigrant integration.

Accommodating and governing religion

Following the incomplete church-state separation of most European countries, growing minority religions have to be embedded in existing religion-state configurations. Independently of their position towards religious groups, state actors have to deal with religious communities in administrative and jurisprudential practice (Bader 2007, 226). Such issues of accommodation and institutional establishment are increasingly connected to and debated in the policy field of immigrant integration (see Brunn 2012; Mattes 2017).

In the past decade, we observe structural links of religion-state relations and immigrant integration, such as the German Islam Conference and similar fora, which are often explicitly framed as integration tools (see below). Levent Tezcan, who analysed the German Islam Conference in detail, did so from the perspective of *governmentality*, thereby demonstrating the 'conduct of conduct' in a Foucauldian sense. He argues that the intertwining of integration and religion-state relations serves the aims of governing through community and aids the preservation of a group, which is in need of integration. (2012, 53ff). The amalgamation of religion-related politics and immigrant integration politics can be found in many areas, for example, when religious education in public schools is treated as an integration tool (Uslucan 2011). Here, multiple dynamics are at play: state actors have an interest in involving religious organisations in immigrant integration policy since they then can serve as a single point of contact for officials. Also, religious communities have organisational structures that policy makers use to implement immigrant integration policy measures. Religious actors, on their part, depend on state actors' collaboration to achieve institutional establishment and the accommodation of their religious needs. Their involvement in immigrant integration politics also widens their scope of action, to some extent also mutually reinforcing the interests of religious communities and immigrant integration policy makers.

Party-political utilisation

A third argument also follows the logic of actors and discusses the development of religion in immigrant integration as the result of party-political interests. 'Muslim' as a category in immigrant integration enhances the spectrum of cultural aspects debated in the policy field. Bringing 'Muslim integration' to the agenda is thus of

interest for parties that rely on the cultural conceptualisation of 'us' (in contrast to civic or economic notions) for voter mobilisation (Rydgren 2005, 5).

Many authors have described how nationalist and populist and radical right-wing parties use 'Muslim' as a racialised category in the politicisation of immigration in exclusionary terms (Klammer 2013; Rosenberger and Hadj-Abdou 2013). Christian-democratic parties may also use the category 'Muslim' to facilitate a 'new emphasis on Christianity', as Tariq Modood calls the juxtaposition of a 'Muslim' other with a 'Christian' us (2012). Both party families refer to the idea of common values that those addressed as 'Muslims' do not, or do not yet, share. More recently 'Muslim' has been applied as a category by left-wing parties to condemn anti-Muslim/anti-Islamic mobilisation by right-wing actors. While these political actors have different motives for applying religion as a category in immigrant integration, they all benefit from its usage. This follows the logic of 'niche parties' benefiting most from the politicisation of migration as described by Oliver Gruber (2014).

To sum up, I aim to assess the application of the category 'Muslim' following different arguments from the scholarly literature on religious violence and securitisation, religion-state relations and party politics.

Introducing three cases of immigrant integration debates

The cases observed in this empirical study are parliamentary immigrant integration debates in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Parliamentary debates are a useful arena to observe category use as it provides a stable setting in which representatives offer arguments for their positions and frame policy issues (Bara, Weale, and Biquelet 2007, 578). The three cases are highly comparable as they share a broad set of similarities but also significant variations on factors presented above.

Immigrant integration and religion in Austria, Germany and Switzerland

Austrian, German and Swiss immigrant integration politics resemble each other in a number of ways: they share similar post-war migration histories with guest worker regimes during the 1960s and 1970s. The three societies are classified as restrictive migration regimes and 'ethno-cultural' models of immigrant integration (Bertossi and Duyvendak 2012) and the policy field developed relatively late. Up until the 1990s none of the countries had developed immigrant integration policies on the national level. Governmental institutions and national policy programmes were not created until the 2000s (for detailed country reports, see Bommers and Kolb 2012; Mourão Permoser and Rosenberger 2012; Ruedin, Alberti, and D'Amato 2015).

Political debates on religion in relation to migration and immigrant integration are similar in many ways (see Dolezal, Helbling, and Hutter 2010). All three countries established fora for the exchange with Islamic communities, which were, at least partly, treated as integration measures or initiated by the governmental offices in charge of immigrant integration. The German Islam Conference was established in 2006 to both address issues of accommodating Islam and questions of immigrant integration (Deutsche Bundesregierung 2007, 207ff.). Although the conference's mandate has been renewed multiple times by now, some authors

suggest that legal accommodation has become an even more distant goal (Spielhaus 2009, 15). In Austria, the State Secretariat for Integration established a dialogue forum with Muslim representatives, which only lasted for a year and ended in 2013. Similarly, the Swiss *Muslim-Dialog* of 2010 ended quickly due to subsidiarity complaints from the cantons (EJPD 2011).

Influential factors for category development: security issues, religion-state relations and party politics

During the study period (1993–2013), none of the countries was directly affected by jihadist terrorist attacks with large numbers of casualties. Germany was affected to a degree as some of the perpetrators of the 9/11 terror attacks had lived and operated in the country. In 2006, attempted bomb attacks on two regional trains failed because of faulty construction of the explosives so no one was injured (Der Spiegel, August 21 2006). Apart from threats by terrorist networks, Switzerland and Austria were not affected. As in most European countries, however, politicians debated terrorist threats and saw their territory as a potential target.

Despite similar religion-state relations, the actual recognition of religious groups varies across the three countries. While ‘systems of cooperation’ (Minkenberg 2003) allow for special treatment of selected, officially recognised religious communities, the ways of and instances for awarding this status differ, especially with regards to Islam, whose followers make up between 5 per cent (Switzerland) and 6.8 per cent (Austria) of the total population in the countries observed (Scharbrodt et al. 2015). While German *Länder* and Swiss *Kantone* (with the exception of Geneva and Neuchâtel¹) grant official recognition to religious communities according to their respective constitutional arrangements, in Austria this is regulated by federal law. Austria also has a tradition of inclusive treatment of religious pluralism. Official recognition of Islam dates back to a law from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy from 1912 (Mattes and Rosenberger 2015). Germany has a distinct history with (inner-Christian) religious pluralism (Kastoryano 2004) and the German *Länder* also granted official recognition to Jewish communities. Until 2013, no Islamic community was granted an official status. In Switzerland, official recognition of minority religions is very limited. While some cantons do not grant recognition to any non-Christian community, others have more inclusive settings, but no canton grants full official recognition to an Islamic community (see religion.ch).

The party landscape in Germany differs significantly from Austria and Switzerland, as no right-wing party was in parliament during the study period (for an overview of the respective party systems, see Krumm 2013; Pelinka 2009; Rudzio 2014). The Austrian Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ) and the Swiss People’s Party (*Schweizerische Volkspartei*, SVP) by contrast, are well-established strong right-wing parties that participated in governments and focus on anti-Islamic voter mobilisation (McGann and Kitschelt 2005). German Christian Democrats historically emphasise that there is no room for a parliamentary party to the right of the CDU/CSU (*Christlich Demokratische Union/Christlich-Soziale Union*). Germany also has more strong left-wing parties in parliament, ranging from the socialist party The Left (DIE LINKE successor of the PDS) to the Greens (*Die Grünen – Bündnis 90, GRÜNE/B 90*) and the more mainstream

Social Democrats (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD). In Austria, a long-standing two-and-a-half party-system changed into a multi-party system. During the study period, the Green Party (*Die Grünen – Die Grüne Alternative*, GRÜNE), the Social-Democrats (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*, SPÖ), the Christian-Democrats (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, ÖVP) and the Freedom Party were in parliament. From 2006 to 2013 there was also an equally right-wing FPÖ spin-off party present (*Bündnis Zukunft Österreichs*, BZÖ). The Swiss party system is more fluid. During the study period, the Swiss parliament included a couple of short-lived and/or very small parties. Two parliamentary parties relate to the Green movement (Green Party of Switzerland, *Grüne Partei der Schweiz*; GPS, since 1983 and Green Liberal Party of Switzerland, *Grünliberale Partei der Schweiz*, GLP, since 2007). The Social Democratic Party of Switzerland (*Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz*, SP) and two larger confessional parties (Christian Democratic people's party in Switzerland, *Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz*, CVP and the Evangelical People's Party of Switzerland, *Evangelische Volkspartei der Schweiz*, EVP) are well established in Swiss parliament. Like the conservative CVP and EVP, the SVP spin-off Conservative Democratic Party of Switzerland (*Bürgerlich-Demokratische Partei*, BDP) is more oriented towards the centre than the nationalist People's Party.²

Methods and data

The following analysis is guided by the question of how and why 'Muslim' evolved as a category in immigrant integration debates. I also asked when, by which actors and through which contextual issues religion came into play. The cross-case comparison investigates the effects of three influential factors identified from the literature: security issues such as jihadist terrorist attacks; the presence and strength of right-wing parties; the accommodation of Islam in prevailing religion-state settings.

The empirical part of this article builds on the manual computer-assisted content analysis of parliamentary debates on immigrant integration in Austria, Germany and Switzerland between 1993 and 2013 (see [Table 1](#)). Parliamentary protocols are a suitable data source as they cover a broad spectrum of political debates and full coverage is available throughout the whole study period. Unlike media reports, parliamentary protocols are primary sources and have not been subject to any external editing. The selected 20-year time frame starts when immigrant integration began to evolve as an independent policy field in all three countries and ends in 2013, by which time the policy field had become well established.

Table 1. Data corpus: number of documents and quotations analysed.

	Austria	Germany	Switzerland
No. of documents	340	371	100 ³
No. of quotations	530	1620	447

Methodologically, a quantitative computer-assisted content analysis was combined with a conventional qualitative content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005), with inductive category development to identify clusters of meaning (see also Mayring 2008). In the first step, I collected parliamentary protocols which included debates on immigrant integration. To identify these debates, a search string⁴ was used to download relevant parliamentary protocols from the parliamentary databases. In the second step, the relevant sections of the selected protocols were manually coded with a date, country and a descriptive context variable (see below). Computer-assisted coding was then used to first identify (explicit) references to Islam/Muslims and then to code the party affiliation of the speaker. The issue of each statement was coded manually in a third step using descriptive codes (Saldaña 2016). Thereby I only coded debates about integration and the explicit use of the category 'Muslim' within it. Inductive category development was then applied to condense information, resulting in six issue clusters in which the category use occurred:

- *dialogue*: references to Islam/Muslims related to interreligious dialogue, religious diversity and the coexistence of religions.
- *differentiation*: references to 'Muslims' that condemn generalisations of Muslims, discrimination against Muslims or the anti-Islam mobilisation by political parties.
- *establishment*: issues relating to the accommodation of religion, state-religion relations and legal regulation of religious practices.
- *integration*: while all category-use discussed in this article occurs in the context of immigrant integration debates, this issue cluster refers to the discussion of principal matters of integration whereby the category 'Muslim' is applied. Here, references to Islam/Muslims are related to general notions of immigrant integration, for example issues of residence status and political participation are summarised.
- *security*: all instances of addressing Islam/Muslims as a security threat or in relation to terrorist organisations.
- *values*: this cluster gathers references to Islam/Muslims in the context of debates about collective identity and common values.

These inductively developed issue clusters provide the structure for the demonstration of contextual issues in the following presentation of empirical results.

Debating 'Muslim' integration: an empirical analysis

Results from the empirical study are presented as follows: first I discuss the development of category usage over time. Then follows the presentation of actors who address 'Muslims' in immigrant integration policy. A third aspect of the analysis looks at issues to which this category is applied. The observed patterns are analysed against the backdrop of the theoretical framework, using both comparison between countries and over time.

When religion came into play

The lack of empirical studies on the emergence and development of 'Muslim' as a category of immigrant integration stands in harsh contrast to the repeatedly reproduced claims made in the literature that refers to 9/11 as a turning point, as discussed above. In fact, the empirical analysis shows a very different picture.

In Figure 1, there are great differences between the studied countries, a fact which undermines generalisations about the influence of terrorist attacks related to religion in western countries. Secondly, while there is a significant peak in German debates in 2001 following the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington DC, Austrian and Swiss immigrant integration debates do not apply the category 'Muslim' much more than in previous years. In the German Bundestag by contrast, the so called 'Hamburger Zelle', the German-based network of some of the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, was extensively debated in relation to immigrant integration. Large jihadist terror attacks in Europe, such as in Madrid 2004 and in London 2005, did not provoke an immediate intensification in the application of the category in any of the observed countries.

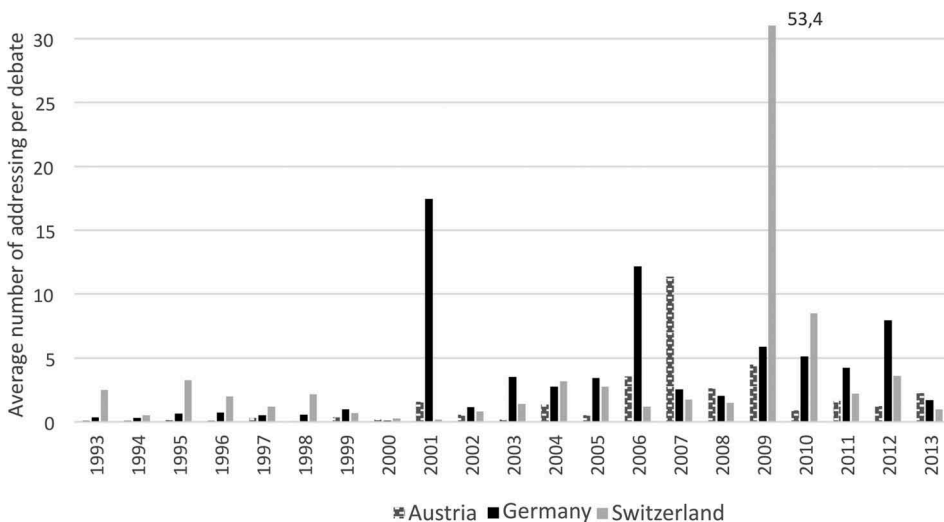


Figure 1. Average addressing of 'Muslim' per parliamentary immigrant integration debate in Austria, Germany and Switzerland over time (1993–2013).

Other peaks in 2006 in Germany, 2007 for Austria and 2009 for Switzerland are not directly related to a terrorist incident but to party-political agenda-setting. The peak in German debates in 2006 is the result of the new government led by Christian Democrats who established Islam as a topic of immigrant integration in institutional terms by introducing the German Islam Conference. The Austrian Freedom Party started to focus on anti-Islamic rhetoric in their xenophobic positions for voter mobilisation in 2006. In 2007, several parliamentary speeches by FPÖ MPs used 'Muslim' as a category to address failed immigrant integration and the problematisation of diversity (Rosenberger and Hadj-Abdou 2013).

In Switzerland, the category 'Muslim' was already quite intensively applied during the 1990s. The most intense application of the category, however, is related to the people's initiative for a ban on minarets in the Swiss constitution, initiated by the Swiss People's Party and the smaller Federal Democratic Union (*Eidgenössisch-Demokratische Union*) (see Mayer 2011). This referendum was debated throughout the year 2009 and strongly opposed by all other political parties. Arguments against the referendum called upon religious freedom, the principle of equality, and the discriminatory character of a ban of minarets. They condemned the referendum as a populist initiative that does not tackle potential problems related to Islam in Switzerland. The initiators of the referendum, on the other hand, 'painted a picture of oppressive, aggressive and intolerant Islam in Switzerland, embarking on a sinister infiltration of homogeneous and harmonious Swiss society' (Baumann 2009, 2). The SVP managed to discursively connect the situation in Switzerland to grievances elsewhere, such as the persecution of Christians and the patriarchal structures in some predominantly Islamic countries, as well as to fundamentalism and terrorism.

Regarding the question 'how religion came into play', overall there is no direct connection between the timing of applying 'Muslim' as a category of immigrant integration and terrorist attacks. Rather, we can identify peaks in addressing Islam as the result of party-political agenda setting.

Via whom religion came into play

As expected from the literature and indicated by the peaks in the timeline, it is mostly right-wing and conservative parties that make use of the category 'Muslim' in the context of immigrant integration (see Figure 2(a,b,c)).

In Austria, over 66 per cent of the overall application of the category 'Muslim' comes from right-wing FPÖ and its temporary spin-off party BZÖ. The Green party clocks up a significant share of 17 per cent, about as much as the mainstream parties ÖVP and SPÖ put together. In German debates, the category is most often applied by CDU/CSU (42 per cent), followed by almost equal shares by the SPD and the Green party (21 and 20 per cent). The left-wing DIE LINKE and the liberal FDP also have similar shares (around 9 and 8 per cent). In Switzerland, the SVP share of applying the category 'Muslim' in immigrant integration debates is 34 per cent. The Christian People's Party, combined with the Protestant EVP and the conservative BDP, makes up 25 per cent. These are followed by the Social-Democratic Party with 15 per cent, the Green parties (GLP and GPS combined 11 per cent) and the liberal FDP (7 per cent). With a stronger party fluctuation in the Swiss parliament, some smaller parties and those that dropped out of parliament are subsumed as 'others' and make up the relatively large share of 7 per cent.

While the tendency for the party furthest to the right is to make the most use of the category 'Muslim', it cannot be said that a party applies the category more often the further right it is in the political spectrum. We can shed some light on this more complex situation when we look at the context in which parties refer to the integration of Islam/Muslims.

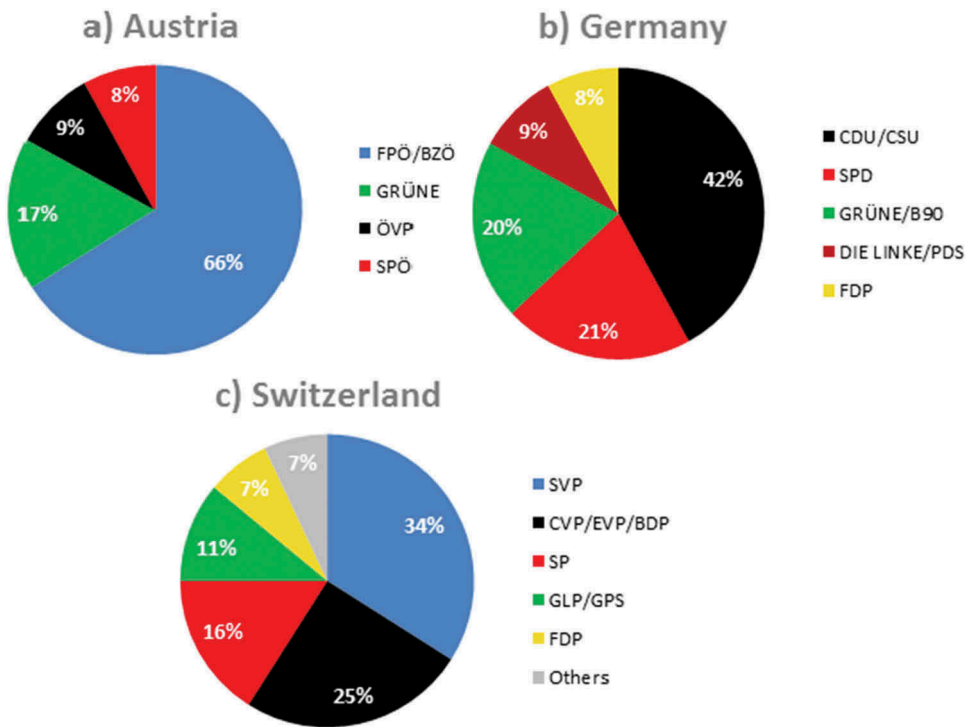


Figure 2. (a,b,c). Share of addressing 'Muslims' in immigrant integration by political parties in per cent between 1993 and 2013.

How religion came into play

When looking at the issues of addressing 'Muslims' in immigrant integration, four of the six clusters are overrepresented. Issues of *establishment* (in total 921) rank first, *security* second (454), followed by *differentiation* (427) and *values* (391). 'Muslims' are least often addressed in *integration* (265) and *dialogue* (142).

Very distinct patterns emerge in a comparison (see Figure 3). Although all countries were little affected by jihadist terrorism, there is a great variation in the overall emphasis on *security*, which is much stronger in the countries with right-wing parties that frequently bring up security issues in immigrant integration policy debates and relate them to the category 'Muslim'. In fact, in Germany, which was – as one could argue – due to the 'Hamburger Zelle' most affected by terrorist activities during the study period, 'Muslims' are addressed much less in a *security* context. Also, addressing 'Muslims' in the context of *values* is much more pronounced in Austria and Switzerland than in Germany, where despite the CDU's focus on values (as for example expressed in the 'Leitkultur debate', see Manz 2004), more space is given to other issues. This is especially true for issues of *establishment* which are mostly debated in Switzerland and Germany where Islamic communities were not (yet) granted official recognition. While *dialogue* and *integration* are less emphasised overall, *differentiation* is addressed in all three countries, most strongly in Austria and Germany.

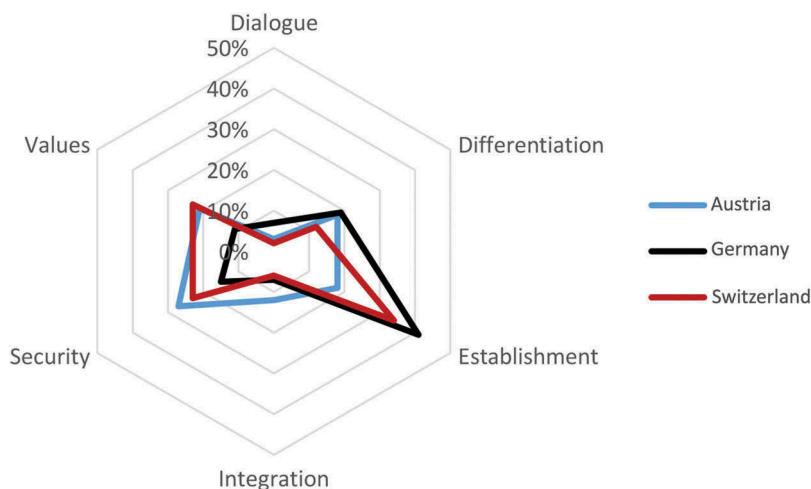


Figure 3. Overall addressing of 'Muslims' by contextual issue and country in per cent (1993–2013).

Looking into party-specific details for each country (see Figure 4(a,b,c)), we observe very different patterns between the countries. Both countries with parties on the far right see a strong polarisation between left and right. Right-wing parties in Austria and Switzerland put the strongest emphasis in addressing 'Muslims' in terms of *security*, followed by *values*. These issues are hardly (less than 10 per cent) addressed by the respective Green and Social Democratic parties, which focus on *differentiation* (and *establishment* in the case of the SP). This is an expression of stronger polarisation, as right-wing parties in Swiss and Austrian debates use the category 'Muslim' to represent those addressed by it as a threat, while left-wing parties condemn right-wing parties for doing so. German parties, by contrast, have a relatively homogenous pattern in addressing 'Muslims' in immigrant integration, all focusing on *establishment*. Although we also find examples of the same interplay of left and right in Germany, it simply takes up less space in the debate. In Switzerland, *establishment* is emphasised by all parties except the nationalist SVP and in Austria only the right-wing FPÖ addresses the issue. However, while Germany and Switzerland debate the *establishment* of Islam, legal recognition is already granted in Austria. In Germany and Switzerland, all parties use the category 'Muslim' in issues of establishment, ranging from institutional establishment to restrictive regulations. The Austrian FPÖ addresses *establishment* aiming at the withdrawal of rights, while all other parties hardly discuss religious regulations in the context of immigrant integration debates.

Mainstream parties in Switzerland and Germany present similar patterns. Conservative parties focus mostly on *establishment*. Social Democrats emphasise *establishment*, followed by *differentiation*. In Austria, the ÖVP addresses Islam/Muslims mainly in the context of *dialogue* thereby often emphasising the importance of religion for society in general, while the SPÖ focuses on *differentiation*. Discussions on *differentiation* in Austria and Switzerland are mostly directed against right-wing claims. They have more of a preventive character in Germany, where *differentiation* is often referred to in a general manner without a specific addressee. The Swiss and German liberal parties both focus on *establishment*, with the Swiss FDP also emphasising *values*, while liberals in Germany tending towards *differentiation*.

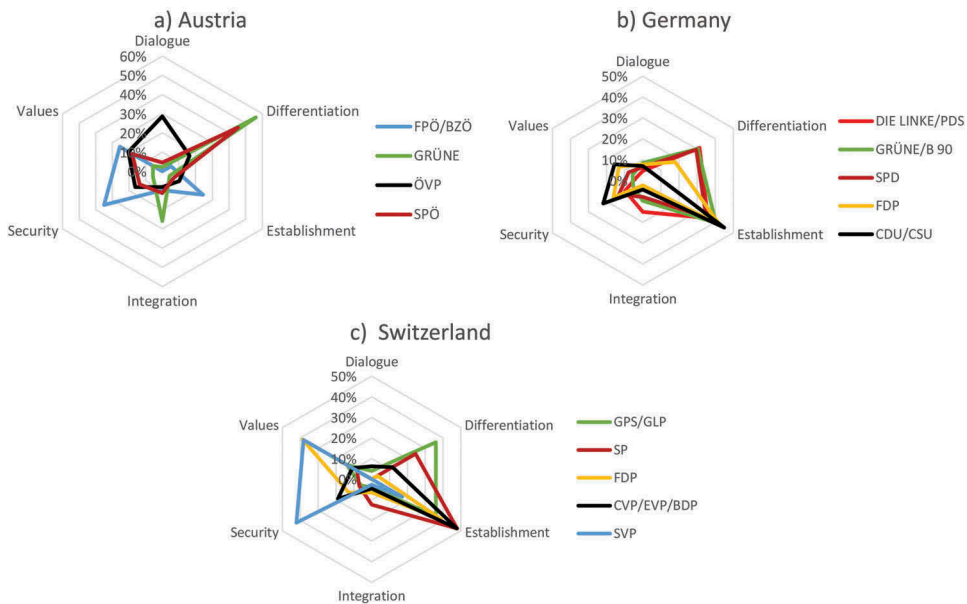


Figure 4. (a,b,c). Overall addressing of 'Muslims' by contextual issue and political party in per cent between 1993 and 2013.

When merging the issue clusters in which the category 'Muslim' is applied, there is an interesting development over time (see Figure 5). *Differentiation* declines: it was the number one context in 2001, mostly due to German debates in which all parties warned against generalisations. It came second in 2006, 2007 and third in 2009. The peaks in 2006, 2009 and 2012 all relate to *establishment* which was increasingly debated in Germany and Switzerland. Only the 2007 peak, mainly caused by the then- new anti-Islam mobilisation of the Austrian FPÖ, relates to *security* and *values*. Nor do peaks in *security* correspond with terrorist attacks in relation to religion. Both *dialogue* and *integration* are somewhat more emphasised in 2001 and 2006 but always remain of minor importance. General issues of *integration* also peak in 2009, when the context of the Swiss ban on minarets puts this cluster almost on a par with *establishment* and *values*.

Discussion: why religion came into play

We can see that 'Muslim' was applied as a category before and after 9/11 and while there is a peak in usage of the category in 2001, it could not be identified as the starting point of a continuous increase, as the literature might suggest. Clearly terror does not put 'Muslim' integration on the political agenda. Rather, 9/11 is one 'highly symbolic turning point' (Bleich 2009, 354) of many in this broader trajectory. For scholars it is important to be precise on this issue as reproducing the myth of 9/11 as the moment when Islam became 'a problem' supports the agenda of right-wing parties that push towards a securitisation of 'Muslim' integration.

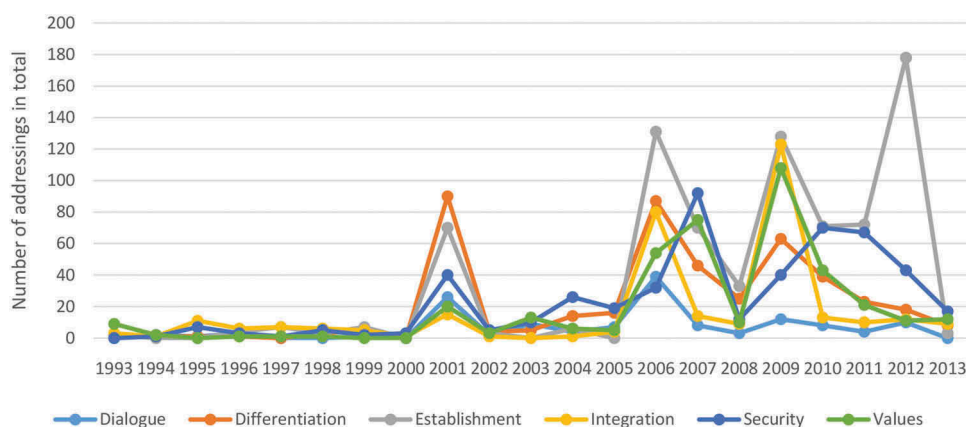


Figure 5. Combined addressing of ‘Muslims’ in Austria, Germany and Switzerland by contextual issue over time (1993–2013).

We have to understand the usage of the category ‘Muslim’ in immigrant integration policy in light of party politics: the politicisation of ‘Muslim’ integration is pushed by populist right-wing actors in their interests of differentiating ‘us and them’ by cultural markers and exclusive identity concepts. Category use is amplified by left-wing actors who aim to oppose such concepts. Such a pattern of politicisation is familiar from other aspects in the policy fields of migration and integration (Gruber 2014). Where populist right-wing parties were present, mainstream-parties were much less involved in the usage of ‘Muslim’ as a category than actors from right and left.

Another explanation can be found in the institutional settings of religion-state relations. In Germany and Switzerland, negotiations on the establishment of Islamic communities become a central element of immigrant integration policy. Much more than in the areas of *values* and *security*, mainstream parties engage in the area of *establishment* when they refer to ‘Muslims’. This is linked to the politicisation of Islam in relation to migration and the perceived need to integrate ‘Muslims’. Also, the analysis of issues over time suggests that the usage of the category ‘Muslim’ in immigrant integration increasingly focuses on *establishment*.

As the countries have significant Muslim minorities and engage in state-religion relations that require close collaborations, accommodating Islam is a necessary step on the way towards equality. Still, as long as accommodation is negotiated in the field of immigrant integration, it is a form of ‘othering’ Islam and a barrier to the normalisation of relations with Muslim minorities. This argument can also be reversed by looking at the consequences of narrowing immigrant integration down to Muslim integration. When immigrants are primarily understood as Muslims, accommodating religious claims and practices becomes the instrument of choice, ignoring and possibly avoiding much more pressing needs of immigrants in fields like education, labour market and health. Both aspects support the argument of Levent Tezcan and others who emphasise that the mingling of religion-related politics and immigrant integration is a strategy that policy-makers use to implement policy measures and to govern through communities (Mattes 2017; Tezcan 2012).

Conclusion

This study has shown in which contexts and through which actors 'Muslim' became a category of practice in Austrian, Swiss and German parliamentary immigrant integration policy debates. The populist right – as a central actor in the application of 'Muslim' as a category of immigrant integration – emphasises security and common values, while left-wing actors focus on differentiation. As the German case shows, the absence of right-wing populist parties does not result in reduced category use but in different patterns: mainstream parties focus on establishment, when this is still under negotiation. While right-wing populism and (a lack of) accommodation of Islam proved to be relevant, terrorism did not result in the expected intensified application. Rather, party-political agenda-setting determines the usage of the category 'Muslim' in immigrant integration.

A broader discursive approach would allow the assessment of processes of agenda-setting beyond the parliamentary arena and party-political actors. An empirical study that analyses the application of the category 'Muslim' beyond systems of cooperation would moreover allow a better understanding of developments from a more comprehensive perspective. Within its limitations, however, the study demonstrates the necessity of critical reassessment of category use when it comes to religion in immigrant integration. This is a challenge for political actors and scholars alike.

Too many studies in migration research refer to perceived developments based on general notions, such as the impact of the 9/11 terror attacks on immigrant integration. The empirical data show that the widespread assumption that jihadist terrorism provoked the addressing of religion in immigrant integration is definitely foreshortened. Thereby, this study contributes to a reflection of this frequently reproduced idea and encourages researchers to address this question on a larger scale.

Regarding the context of category use, we can identify political strategies that undermine the declared goals of immigrant integration. Especially right-wing populists make use of religion to marginalise populations of immigrants by labelling them as illiberal and a security threat, which does not deserve the equal treatment liberal democracies promise to their citizens. To a varying degree, other parties engage in this strategy as well. Over time, we observe the hardening of attitudes towards the actual situation of Muslim minorities, when political actors make less and less effort to call for *differentiation*. This undermines liberal democratic principles, provokes hatred and results in discrimination. Also, governing through community might be more of a practical strategy than an ideological agenda but equally results in the unhealthy conflation of religion and migration instead of contributing positively to integration processes in diverse societies. By showing 'how religion came into play', this article deconstructs the political category use of 'Muslim' and thereby demonstrates the necessity for a different handling of categories of practice in immigrant integration policies.

Notes

1. Unlike other cantons, Geneva and Neuchâtel have a long tradition of confessional neutrality (see Pahud de Mortanges 2015, 696). They followed the French example of *laïcité* which refers to stricter state secularism.

2. In Austria, less than 0.5 per cent of the overall applications of 'Muslim' as a category is made by not explicitly listed parties. In Germany, all parties are listed by name in the analysis. For Switzerland, smaller/short-lived parties are referred to as 'others'.
3. Swiss parliamentary debates are structured somewhat differently to Austrian and German ones, as plenaries are concentrated in four to six parliamentary sessions per year.
4. AUFENTHALT'o'AUSLAENDER'o'GASTARBEITER'o'INTEGRATION'o'FREMDER'o'FREMDRENTENRECHT'o'MIGRATION'o'AUSLAENDERINTEGRATION'o'ZUWANDERER'o'AUSLAENDERPOLITIK'o'ASSIMILIERUNG'n'EUROPAEISCHE INTEGRATION [RESIDENCE'o'FOREIGNER'o'GUESTWORKER'o'INTEGRATION'o'ALIEN'o'ALIEN'S LAW'o'INTEGRATION OF FOREIGNERS'o'IMMIGRANTS'o'IMMIGRANT POLITICS'o'ASSIMILATION'n'EUROPEAN INTEGRATION].

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