Like will to like?

Partner choice among Muslim migrants and natives in Western Europe

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Abstract

The most influential theory on partner choice, from which I will also depart, the theory on assortative mating, starts from the premise that individuals prefer to marry someone who shares certain characteristics. The tendency that like marries like is denoted by the Greek term "homophily". Religious and ethnic homophily are very important in this context. Consequently, this paper looks at marriages between natives and migrants of different origin, which are at the same time interreligious as the focus is on Muslim migrants. Marriages between natives and migrants from countries with a large Muslim majority have been reported as exceptionally low. Further analyses try to find out what is so exceptional about intermarriage between Muslim migrants and natives and devote attention to levels of individual religiosity, conflicting ideas about family life and relationships, sexuality, attitudes about intermarriage and lastly, the role of parents in the matchmaking process. The latter have been understudied in previous research, as it was mostly not able to go beyond socio-demographic variables. My research provides evidence for all of these factors, but in contrast to earlier research, my analyses show for the first time that parental interference and possibly the importance of value transmission through marriage reduce the likelihood to intermarry.

Keywords: intermarriage, Islam, religiosity, Western Europe

1. Introduction

Investigating the social integration of minorities in Western European receiving societies involves the examination of different intergroup relationships. This paper focuses on the strongest indicator, namely whom migrants marry. The answer is not self-evident as migrants can choose between partners of different ethnic origins. The aim of this paper is to give an overview of the spousal choices of migrants and natives. The marriage market offers migrants different opportunities ranging from: 1. a member of the receiving society (intermarriage), 2. a member of the same ethnic minority living in the same country of residence (co-ethnic), 3. a member of another ethnic minority living in the same country of residence, 4. someone living in the country of origin and 5. someone who lives in a country other than the country of residence or country of origin. Type 1, intermarriage, remains rare, albeit more common in recent years as predicted in assimilationist perspectives (e.g. Qian and Lichter 2011; Lucassen and Laarman 2009), and intermarriages with members of other ethnic minorities (Type 3) or someone living in another than the country of origin or country of residence (Type 5), are even fewer. Since my research question focuses on the social distance between minority and majority group members, this paper deals with marriages between natives and Muslim migrants[1] (exogamous) versus marriages among migrants (endogamous). Demographic developments including an increase of second-generation migrants give a strong impetus to endogamous marriages. Marriage within the same group or marriage based on shared characteristics is termed homogamy and denotes "like marry like" (Burgess and Wallin 1943), also known as assortative mating.

[1] Participants belonging to the migrant populations did not have to identify themselves as believing Muslims, as the degree of religiosity is a core variable in the study. Instead, the research population was defined as people with a Muslim background. For pragmatic reasons they will be called 'Muslim migrants' in the following.

Disregarding the literature on premarital relationships, Google Scholar currently[2] counts more than 14,200 publications on interracial marriage, 59,000 on intermarriage, 10,300 on mixed marriage, 1,770 on exogamous marriage, another 1,530 on interethnic marriages, but only 1,490 on interfaith marriage and 392 records for interreligious marriage. Frequently, the latter studies reported upon are not even on migrants, but natives belonging to different denominations (e.g. Catholics and Protestants). Nonetheless, the numbers vividly demonstrate the unabated interest in this topic. The majority of these studies have been conducted in the United States (Qian and Lichter 2011; Kalmijn and van Tubergen 2006; Lieberson and Waters 1988), and might not directly be transferable to Europe, which hosts migrants of different religious and ethnic origin. Among those studies, to date no international comparative study on intermarriage has been conducted with an explicit focus on Muslim migrants although religion has been pointed out as a crucial symbolic boundary (e.g. Kalmijn and van Tubergen 2006). Lucassen and Laarman (2009) have compiled results from studies on intermarriage in Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (2009). Their attempt to compare these countries is well intentioned, but is quickly confronted with the chief problem at hand: the data are hardly comparable across countries. As already pointed out by Patrick Simon (2011) existing research that draws on official or publicly available data operationalizes migration background in remarkably different ways, which prohibits direct comparisons. Currently two datasets (TIES and SCIICS) allow us to compare intermarriages across countries. Studies based on these datasets by Huschek et al. (2012) and Lancee and Seibel (under review), however, focused on Turkish migrants only, of which the majority follow Islam. Huschek et al.'s (2012) study provides some evidence for a higher probability of marrying a

[2] Retrieved 21 January 2013.

partner from the country of origin in countries that promote multiculturalism. However, these policies do not matter for the choice of a native partner. In the second study country differences remain unexplored. As this study includes four countries, I can study contextual differences in intermarriage propensities. Among these four countries are Belgium and Switzerland, where to my best knowledge only very few to no studies on intermarriage exist. One prominent study on intermarriage in Belgium was conducted more than a decade ago (Lievens 1998). Another study also based on the TIES dataset addresses partner choice of the Turkish second generation in Belgium (Hartung et al. 2011). Intermarriages in Britain and Germany have been explored to a greater extent (e.g. Schroedter 2012; Muttarak and Heath 2010; Voas 2009; González-Ferrer 2006; Berrington 1994), but datasets still lack explanatory variables which go beyond socio-demographic variables. Consequently, large-scale representative datasets cannot clearly answer the question that has remained open since decades: are the low intermarriage rates of migrants from countries with a large Muslim majority related to religiosity or ethnicity (see Lucassen and Laarman 2009) or both? In spite of heterogeneity within migrant populations, ethnic groups are often equated with religious groups (Kalmijn and Van Tubergen 2010). By including Muslim migrants from countries with different levels of religiosity such as the former Yugoslavia, Morocco, Turkey and Pakistan, the EURISLAM survey seeks to fill this gap. By virtue of its design, this is the first study that includes members of multiple ethnic groups in different receiving societies.

2. Theoretical framework

In contrast to the theory which proposes that opposites feel attracted to each other - a rival theory of the homophily mechanism - existing studies point to a persistence of marriage patterns along ethnic lines (e.g. Huschek, Liefbroer, and de Valk 2012;

Schroedter 2012). How can we explain this stable ethnic homogamy in marriages? There are different explanations: Next to the homophily mechanism, research has referred to the proximity mechanisms and third-party approach. I do not expand on all of these mechanisms in detail in this paper. Several studies have underlined the importance of meeting opportunities and proximity (Blau, Blum, and Schwartz 1982). Hence, the focus of this study is on homophily mechanisms and third-party influences, which have been less often empirically tested, because public data such as the Microcensus lack appropriate operationalizations.

The homophily mechanism predicts a preference for intramarriage because couples cherish shared attitudes and values (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001; Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954). Common religious and ethnic roots are some of the most powerful determinants of partner choice. Commonalities reduce the likelihood of union dissolution. A study by Blackwell and Lichter (2004) revealed that homophily increases if relationships progress from premarital relationships such as dating and cohabitation to marriage (winnowing hypothesis). Hence, intergroup relationships are less likely to result in marriage (Joyner and Kao 2005) and have higher divorce risks (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005). This is also a reason for opposition towards intermarriage together with differing family values as migrants pointed out in semi-structured interviews (Straßburger 2003). The lowest intermarriage rates have been observed for groups who originate in societies with a large Muslim majority (e.g. Lucassen and Laarman 2009). Burgess and Wallin (1943) showed already that the degree of like mating is highest for religious affiliation next to the cultural background of the family (e.g. living arrangements, nativity and social status of parents). However, we should also see notable differences within the groups of Muslims. Muslims from different countries vary in their levels of religiosity and sexual liberalization (Norris and Inglehart 2012;

2003). This study aims to shift the focus away from the expectation that Muslims generally have lower intermarriage rates by including groups from different countries with a large Muslim majority. For Pakistani and Moroccan migrants who both stem from relatively religious societies and hold on average more religious beliefs I expect a stronger preference for homogenous relationships than for migrants from the former Yugoslavia or Turkey who originate in less religious contexts (Inglehart and Norris 2003).

Next to ethnic differences, previous research indicates gender differences. Lower intermarriage rates for women have been linked to third-party influence (e.g. González-Ferrer 2006). The intermarriage of women is discussed as a cultural loss as they occupy the role of cultural transmitters (Kalmijn and van Tubergen 2006). Hence, group members have an interest in keeping strangers out, because it ensures the continuity of their group norms (see Kalmijn 1998). I consider parents and the state as third parties, because both may interfere in marriage decisions. Burgess and Wallinn (1943) suggest that marriage between two persons of the same religious affiliation would result from internal and external pressure to marry within the same group. They conclude that a shared religious affiliation would be more important than the religious practices themselves and also more important than the same nativity. They see the higher number of marriages conducted among individuals belonging to the same religious affiliation rather than the same level of religious practice as an indication of pressure to marry within the same group. In Turkey, for example, two types of marriage regimes coexist: the first type, the descent kinship regime, is characterized by a high degree of intergenerational solidarity, where parents are included in the decision-making process. On the opposite are affinal kinship regimes where relationships are based on love and the decision to marry is taken by the couple. This type occurs more often in Western

countries, but is also present in Turkey, mostly in urban regions (Nauck and Suckow 2006). Consequentially, intramarriages of migrants should be to a greater extent associated with external pressure exerted by parents and kin. Next to the familial influences, religious attachment should go along with lower likelihoods of marrying out.

On a higher level, the state mostly intervenes on a legal basis by granting either entry to the country or following other policies that indirectly affect attitudes. For the investigation of the social distance between Muslim minorities and natives, nation states' position towards Islam is arguably relevant. Nation states included in this sample (Belgium, Britain, Germany and Switzerland) have pursued different accommodation strategies with regard to Islam. Most countries started out with a rather restrictive position in the 1980s and became more accommodating over time. During the last decades, Britain has been the most accommodating country and Switzerland together with Germany around the 1990s have been the least accommodative countries. After that Germany and Belgium occupied an intermediate position (Carol and Koopmans 2013; Koopmans, Michalowski, and Waibel 2012). As Bourhis et al. (1997) pointed out, social exclusion through state integration policies may hinder acculturation, leading to reactive ethnicity (see Portes and Rumbaut 2006, 96). Building on this theory, I expect that intermarriages are more likely in countries that take an accommodative stance towards Islam. Natives and migrants in Britain should be more likely to marry an out-group member than in other countries, as Britain is the most accommodative country in my sample. The competing hypothesis tests whether higher levels of religious accommodation are associated with increased religious boundaries, a revitalization of values and beliefs as suggested by Yancey et al. (1976), where in the words of Gordon's (1964) assimilation theory no amalgamation takes place. This suggests that Swiss

natives and migrants should have a higher propensity to marry an out-group member as it is the least accommodative country of the four.

3. Data, operationalization and method

Data

For the analysis, I rely on the international comparative EURISLAM dataset[3] with more than 5,000 respondents without migration background and respondents with ex-Yugoslav, Turkish, Moroccan and Pakistani and a Muslim background[4] living in Belgium, Britain, Germany or Switzerland. All groups were sampled from the latest electronic phonebooks. Migrants were recruited on the basis of first and family names indicating the respective ethnicity (onomastic sampling). The sample of natives was randomly drawn from the phonebook. Onomastic sampling has the advantage that it can be applied in all countries. If some countries would sample respondents from population registers and some not, for instance because they include in Germany foreigners only, this would add extraneous variance. Since the possibility of conducting interviews in the respondent's mother tongue is very important (Schaeffer 2011), interviews with migrants were carried out with bilingual interviewers who spoke the country of residence and ethnic language.

Operationalization

The dependent variable *intermarriage* was measured by combining three questions: first, respondents were asked whether they are married, cohabiting, divorced, widowed or single. The latter three groups were additionally asked whether they currently have a partner. The analyses include married respondents and divorced and widowed

[3] For further information see www.eurislam.eu
[4] meaning either the respondents themselves or their parents were Muslims.

respondents without a new partner. Those with a new partner were excluded if they are not married as the inclusion of unmarried couples would add extraneous variance. In the third step, respondents had to indicate whether their partner is of the same descent.[5] Thus, in case of natives we deal with interethnic, but not necessarily interreligious marriages. Marriages of natives with members of other religious group are too rare to analyse with the EURISLAM dataset.

The main explanatory variables are national accommodation policies, ethnic origin, religious identification, frequency of praying, family and gender values. Country dummies are used as proxies for the *accommodation of Islam* and receptiveness to migrants and ethnic group dummies for *countries of origin*.

The measure of *religiosity* covers practices and beliefs. Religious identification is measured by means of two variables "To what extent do you see yourself as Muslim/Christian?" and "To what extent are you proud of being a Muslim/Christian", which were measured on a scale varying from one (not at all) to five (very strongly). To avoid multi-collinearity, the average of the two items was used since both items correlate 0.6 within the native population and 0.7 among migrants.

In addition to religious identification, religious practice was measured in a twofold way to also assess differences between religious practices that vary by groups. First, by the frequency of prayer - a gender- and group-neutral measure compared to the attendance of religious services, which is less frequent among Muslim women (Wunn 2008) and does not depend on the availability of a place of worship. Respondents could indicate the frequency on a scale from one (never), to five (several times a day). The second variable for religious practice is measured by the questions if respondents wear

[5] About 3% of the marriages in the reference group (marriages among migrants) contain marriages with a migrant of different ethnic and religious background. However, excluding these cases from the analysis does not change the results noticeably.

religious symbols, follow certain dietary rules or refrain from certain activities on religious holidays. All questions have binary responses (1-0); therefore, the row mean was used.

For *family values* the factor scores for a latent variable, which consisted of five items measuring the parent-child relationships were saved e.g. "One of the most important things to teach children is obedience and respect for authority". Higher values indicate tighter and more hierarchical parent-child relationships. Respondents rated their agreement on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from one (totally disagree) to four (totally agree). The attitude towards *premarital sex* was measured on a ten-point scale ranging from one (always justifiable) to ten (never justifiable). The family values and attitude towards premarital sex do not result in a single factor solution. For this reason these variables are treated as separate measures in the model.

Perceived cultural distance is measured by items that measure how different the respondents perceive themselves compared to Muslims living in the receiving society (question for natives)/ compared to natives (question for Muslims) in regard to a) the values they teach their children, b) how they think about the role of religion in society, and c) the way they think about sexual abstinence before marriage. The scale ranges from one (very similar) to four (very different). Factor analyses showed that the items load on a single factor. Again, the factor scores for the latent variable were saved and used in further analyses.

In the next step, I investigate whether intermarriage behaviour is a result of *preferences*. The variable is based on the question "If a Muslim (question for natives) / non-Muslim (question for Muslims) married a close relative of yours, would you find that pleasant, would it not make a difference or would you find that unpleasant?". The

variable was recoded to a binary variable with the categories one (acceptance: pleasant and would not make a difference) and zero (rejection: unpleasant).

Lastly, *parental interference* is included in the analysis. Respondents were asked whether they chose their marriage partner himself, his or her parents decided (arranged) or respondent and parents made the decision together (semi-arranged).

Control variables include gender (male dummy), age (for natives), generation (in-between[6] and second generation dummies for migrants), marital status (married, divorced and widowed dummy), education in years and perceived proportion of out-group members in the neighbourhood. The latter variable was assessed by asking respondents "How many people in your neighbourhood are of <ethnicity of country of residence> origin (for migrants)/ Muslims (for natives). The scale ranges from one (almost none) to five (nearly all). Moreover, I include self-reported problems with the language of the receiving society (ranging from one: never to five: always) in order to control for possible linguistic advantages, e.g. of colonial migrants.

Method

The analysis of intermarriage behaviour pays attention to the mediating effects of the independent variables religiosity, family values and perceived differences. The explanatory variables are entered in a stepwise fashion. The first model includes only socio-demographic variables whereas the second model controls for the perceived proportion of out-group members in the neighbourhood to test the extent to which the composition of neighbourhoods can be a confounding other factor. The third model contains the familial in-group solidarity measure and attitudes towards premarital sex to grasp their influence, while the fourth model encloses the religiosity measures

[6] If children migrated before age 16 they were defined as in-between generation while the second generation includes only children that were born in the countries of residence.

(identity and practices) to assess to what extent the effects of the ethnic origin, contexts of receptivity and familial solidarity are mediated by the attachment to the religious in-group. The fifth model sheds lights on the perceived cultural distance to explore if not only the actual distance between groups matters, but also the perceived distance. The intermarriage preferences are entered in the sixth step. These preferences, however, may be modified by parental endogamy preferences and their influence on spousal choice. For this reason, parents' influence is assessed in the last step. Linear probability models (LPM) with robust standard errors using the Full Information Maximum likelihood estimator are calculated. The Full-Maximum Likelihood Estimator (FIML) includes incomplete data records in the estimation procedure (Enders 2010). It increases the number of cases included in the model.

4. Results

Descriptive Analyses

In the first step, I report descriptive results on intermarriage rates. Figure 1 displays the percentage of intermarriage rates by group and country.

--Figure 1 about here—

It appears that intermarriage rates strongly differ across countries and groups. The results are not solely a product of the size of the migrant population in the four countries – at least on the national level. Groups that are represented in higher numbers, such as Pakistani migrants in Britain or Turkish migrants in Germany do not differ strongly in their intermarriage rates from their co-ethnics in countries where they form a numerically weaker community. Apparently, the rates also seem unaffected by the

policies towards accommodation of Islam. Switzerland has together with Germany one of the highest intermarriage rates of Moroccan migrants. These surpass the rates of all other ethnic groups. However, overall, intermarriage in the comparatively restrictive country Switzerland is neither more nor less frequent than in a more accommodative country such as Britain. Colonial ties also do not serve as an explanation: Pakistani migrants in Britain have lower intermarriage rates than the more recently arrived migrants from the former Yugoslavia. As institutional and proximity based approaches cannot fully explain intermarriage behaviour, we need to search for other explanations, which will be put forward in the multivariate analyses and control for cross-national differences in the composition of these ethnic groups.

Multivariate Analyses

Coming to the results of the multivariate analyses, I start out with the socio-demographic factors.

--Table 1-3 about here--

Consistent with previous research, we see that intermarriage significantly differs for men and women with men being more often intermarried than women. Interestingly, this effect is only marginally significant among natives (Table 3), whereas it is highly significant in the sample of migrants (Table 2) and in the combined model for migrants and natives (Table 1). This suggests a stronger gendered effect in the migrant population. Earlier research by Lucassen and Laarman (2009) has pointed to these gendered differences in intermarriage and related them to different meanings of intermarriage for men and women. Intermarried women are seen as a loss in patriarchal

systems where religion is transmitted from the father to the children, which is reflected in a lower likelihood of women to intermarry.

Remarkably, the relationship between education and intermarriage also works differently for migrants and natives. While natives' education is of little relevance for intermarriage, we see again a highly significant link in the migrant population where a one-unit increase in education is associated with an increased likelihood to intermarry.

While there is a clear generational trend and a higher likelihood to intermarry for younger natives (Table 3), such a clear trend is not observed in the migrant sample where the in-between generation is actually less likely to intermarry and the second generation does not differ significantly from the first generation (Table 2). In opposite to assimilation theory, the analyses rather indicate a stability of family formation strategies in subsequent generations.

A finding that is outside of this study's' scope but nonetheless worth mentioning is that intermarriages are more likely to be dissolved compared to endogamous marriages (Table 1 – 3). Existing research on this topic points to religious differences (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005). In addition, intermarriage constitutes a coordination problem: the more language problems migrants have, the less likely they are to intermarry (Table 2).

For the central explanatory variables, I find significant differences across countries and groups. After controlling for socio-demographic variables, migrants living in Belgium, which is on average as accommodative of Islam as Germany, are significantly less likely to intermarry than those living in other countries. Again contrary to my expectation, migrants in the relatively accommodative Britain do not differ significantly from migrants in Germany (Table 2); but are more likely to intermarry than Belgian or Swiss migrants.

Among natives, differences arise between those living in Germany and those in Britain and Switzerland (Table 3). In line with the expectation that natives in more welcoming contexts are more likely to intermarry, British natives are indeed more likely to intermarry. Yet, natives in the restrictive Switzerland are also more likely to intermarry than German and Belgian natives. The exceptional high rates of intermarriage of Swiss natives may in part be attributable to a long history of intermarriage indicated by one of the highest intermarriage rates in the OECD countries (see Lanzieri 2012) and a different composition of the immigrant group. For the outlier Belgium, one could argue that migrants live in highly segregated areas; the majority of them live in Brussels region (Teney 2009). To conclude, the pattern is not straightforward. Since the patterns for migrants in the relatively accommodative Britain resemble the intermarriage behaviour of German migrants, greater religious accommodation is also not systematically associated with lower intermarriage rates. My research suggests that Islamic accommodation neither supports social integration by providing a welcoming context as Connor (2010) proposed nor do restrictive policies lead to reactive ethnicity and lower likelihoods of social integration or at least do not affect all groups in the same way.

According to the theory of opportunity structures (Blau, Blum, and Schwartz 1982), group size might thus be a confounding factor. The perceived proportion of out-group members in the neighbourhood is indeed positively related to the likelihood to intermarry. Moreover, the opportunity structures partly explain group variation: the significance level and coefficient of Moroccan migrants in comparison to natives decreases after the control of opportunity structures (Table 1), whereas Pakistani migrants became marginally more likely to intermarry in comparison to migrants from the former Yugoslavia after the control of opportunity structures. These findings suggest

that Moroccan migrants tend to live in less segregated areas, while Pakistani migrants are to a greater extent surrounded by other Muslims and less likely to intermarry as long as the opportunities to intermingle with non-Muslim natives are lacking. However, country differences remain stable (Table 2-3).

Shifting the focus from the country of residence to the country of origin confirms the impression given by the descriptive statistics: Moroccans are more likely to intermarry than migrants from the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Pakistan (Figure 1 and Table 2). Why is that? It is not only a matter of opportunities. When we look at the fourth model in Table 2 the answer becomes apparent: Particularly for Turkish and Pakistani migrants, lower intermarriage rates are also related to their religiosity. Once religiosity is included in the model, their coefficients reach significance and turn into positive coefficients, and their likelihoods to intermarry increase. Thus, religious attachment can indeed support group closure. For Moroccan migrants it has been noted that networks are weaker than those of Turkish migrants and therefore less likely to be segregated (Crul and Doomernik 2003).

However, we need to be more specific about the subtle differences between religious practice and identity. Though the significant coefficients always indicate a negative relationship between migrants' religious attachment and intermarriage, not all indicators are equally important. Instead, as found in previous studies, the relationship between religion and intermarriage is more complex than thought (e.g. Perry 2013). For migrants, religious identification and religious practices, such as following dietary rules or abstaining from certain activities on religious holidays matter most. For natives, praying frequency reduces the likelihood of intermarrying. Thus, intermarriage presents the challenge of combining different ways of life. And these do not suddenly change across generations along with time spent with other groups in the same country.

Sexuality is another crucial issue among individuals living in Asian countries. But it also turns out to be an issue among migrants of Muslim descent living in Western Europe. It is closely tied to intermarriage and partly mediated by religiosity as the decline in significance level (Table 2, Model 3 and 4) suggests. Individuals who think that premarital sex is not justifiable display less social integration in terms of intermarriage. It is, together with cohabitation, a common practice among natives, but this is true to a lesser extent among migrants (Hartung et al. 2011). The loss of chastity before marriage is tied to family honour (Bradby 2006). However, it may also prevent teenage pregnancies. Table 2 reveals once more the family to be the focal point of migrants' integration. The endorsement of family values, which stress the importance of family reputation, close parent-child relationships and obedience, seem to affect social integration adversely - though a causal conclusion should not be drawn based on this cross-sectional dataset. This finding is limited to the migrant group.

In addition to value differences and differences in religiosity, the perceived cultural distance alters individuals' likelihoods to intermarry, which underlines the importance of perceptions for individuals' behaviour (see Thomas and Thomas 1928, 572). Although the coefficient of perceived cultural distance only becomes significant in the combined model for migrants and natives (Table 1) and in the separate model for natives (Table 3), it also matters for migrants. However, the effect is insignificant if religiosity is included in the model.

Pertinent to the study of intermarriage, the role of preferences has often been stressed by scholars (e.g. Kalmijn 1998). Is intermarriage now a result of opportunities, third parties or preferences? I have discussed the role of values, which are also related to individual preferences for homogamy, but how about preferences for a partner of a certain origin? The second last model includes an item that measures the attitude

towards intermarriage between Muslim migrants and non-Muslim natives. The interesting finding is not the existence of the link per se, but group differences in the strength of this relationship. Strikingly, intermarriage is not a matter of preferences in all groups. While it is highly important for migrants (Table 2, Model 6), it is not decisive for natives' marriage decision (Table 3, Model 6). This finding may be an indication of a culture-specific partner choice. These preferences are to some extent weakened by parental preferences, as the decline of significance level shows. If parents arrange their child's marriage or at least decide together with their child whom he/she should marry, the likelihood to intermarry decreases significantly (Table 1-3, Model 7). These findings give support to the persistence of the descent kinship regime, in opposite to the affinal kinship regime prevalent in Western Europe (Nauck and Suckow 2006).

5. Conclusion

As we have seen, the picture is dominated by intraethnic partner choice across all groups and countries. Marriage is related to values and customs individuals maintain and hold. Formative influences range from religiosity to family values. Although migrants live in Western European countries where affinal kinship is the dominant kinship regime, the prevalence of intergenerational solidarity and parental interference in marriage decisions indicate the existence of a descent kinship regime outside of the country of origin (Nauck and Suckow 2006).

In conjunction with these kinship regimes, migrants' and natives' notions of family and religion widely diverge, the relationship between family values and religiosity on the one hand and spousal choice on the other strongly differs for both groups. For natives, only praying frequency reduces their likelihoods to intermarry. Migrants, by contrast, who are strongly attached to their family in terms of values and

their parents' opinion on who is a suitable partner, show a tendency greater than chance for intramarriage. Corresponding to Inglehart and Norris' analyses (2003), cultural differences in dealing with sexuality are also important in the study of migrants' social integration. Conflicting views about premarital sexuality divide migrants from natives, who tend to be more liberal in this regard. Based on this analysis, there is no clear linear trend towards amalgamation as predicted by Gordon (1964), as the second generation does not significantly differ from the first and the in-between generation being actually less likely to intermarry.

Moreover, intermarriage behaviour is in part, too, explained by preferences for a spouse belonging to the same ethnic and religious origin. These preferences, however, seem to be inherited: intermarriages become less likely if parents are involved in marriage decisions. Hence, intramarriage partly results from the influence of third parties, such as parents. It is through intermarriage that parents can preserve their values in spite of the geographical distance to their countries of origin. It is important to note that comparably lower intermarriage rates for some groups do not reflect a general resistance to integration and are just one piece of the puzzle (Heath and Demireva 2013), but an important one as intermarriage can be beneficial to structural integration (Meng and Gregory 2009) and provides individuals with contacts outside of their community.

This study has some limitations with regard to the operationalization and availability of data. First, the analyses are based on a cross-sectional dataset, which do not allow me to trace causal effects, in particular whether the values studied affected the marriage decision or whether they result from this relationship and reflect a homogenization of spouses. Thus, relationships might be spurious due to influences after marriage. Moreover, the operationalization of homogamy poses a problem: Due to the one-sided perspective of the data, which does not include data of the partner, we can

only approximate the role of value homophily. Future studies should therefore encompass network data, which include spouses, parents and siblings. This would allow one to study the subject of intermarriage more holistically.

Group size effects cannot be completely ruled out as cross-national comparable data on the percentage of co-ethnics do not exist. While some countries only include foreigners in their official statistics, others also contain naturalized migrants in their statistics. Moreover, the size of the units (place of residence) for which the number of foreigners has been collected, largely differ across countries. Instead of drawing on these hardly comparable measures of group size, I include the perceived proportion of out-group members in the neighbourhood. Schaeffer (2014) has shown that the average perceived diversity of neighbourhoods approximates the objective measures relatively well. Nevertheless, the measure in the present dataset does not contain the year prior to marriage. However, there is reason to believe that residential characteristics remain relatively stable over life-course (Lancee and Schaeffer 2013). To sum up, including a better measure of opportunity structures for the year prior to marriage might help to fully explain country and group differences as well as the high importance of education for migrants; schools offer children with a migration background the opportunity to meet natives.

Another limitation concerns the operationalization of policies. The dataset analysed contains no information on the year of marriage, which makes it difficult to match policy scores as provided by Koopmans et al. (2012) with intermarriage rates. Thus, part of the cross-national variation that I cannot fully explain might be due to the countries' variation in their accommodation strategy across time, which is not captured in the analyses presented here.

Last but not least, this study flags up research gaps to which future research should dedicate more attention. The more frequent occurrence of divorce among mixed couples strengthens the theory of homogamy. The analyses reveal that intermarriages are more likely to be dissolved than ethnically homogamous relationships. Qualitative research by Gaby Straßburger (2003) points out that migrants reason their opposition to intermarriage by raising the issue of cultural distance in family values and a divorce-related fear of intermarriage. In fact, the higher divorce rates among intermarried couples support this argument. Future research should therefore encompass a deeper exploration of the link between divorce and intermarriage, whether opposition to intermarriage is related to attitudes about divorce and why intermarriages are more likely to fail.

To conclude, drawing on the novel EURISLAM dataset, this is to my best knowledge one of the first studies on intermarriage behaviour, which includes multiple groups and countries and sheds light on the role of country of residence versus country of origin factors. Compared to public data I am able to address the role of cultural distance for the social integration of minorities living in Western Europe.

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Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Percentage of interethnic marriages by ethnic groups and countries

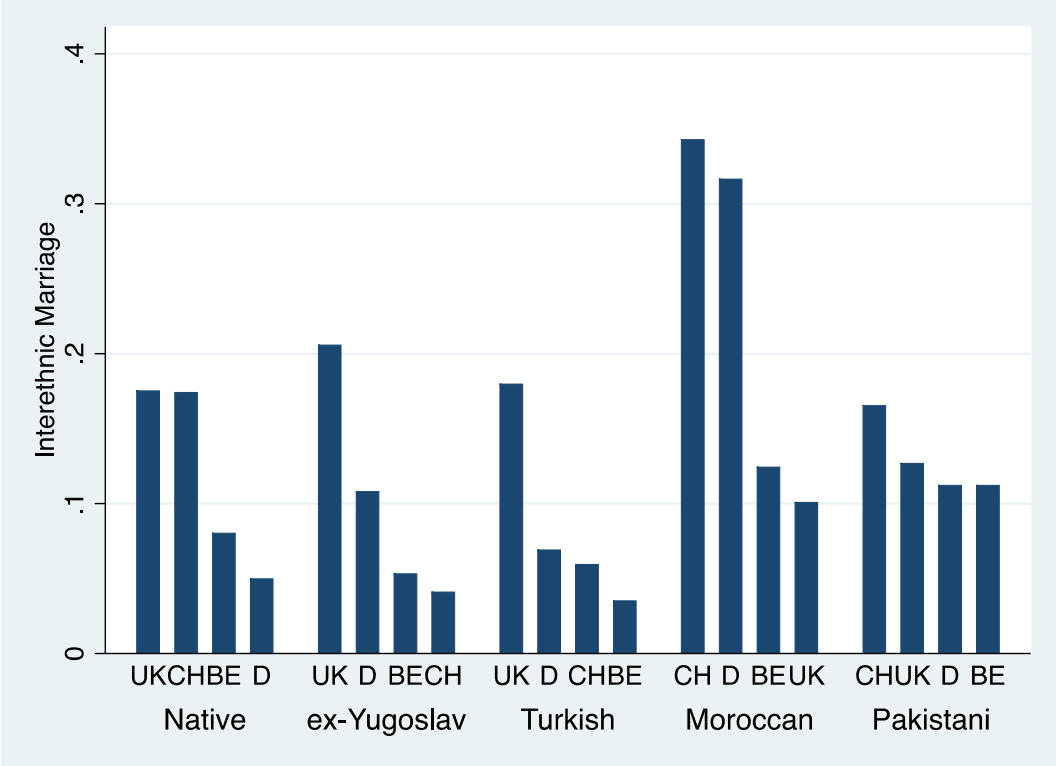

Table 1: Linear probability model of intermarriage (Migrants and Natives)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Interethnic marriage							
Male (ref. female)	0.0979***	0.0958***	0.0911***	0.0854***	0.0842***	0.0842***	0.0778***
	(0.0103)	(0.0102)	(0.0102)	(0.0103)	(0.0103)	(0.0103)	(0.0103)
Education in years	0.00498***	0.00422**	0.00267+	0.00213	0.00197	0.00181	0.000908
	(0.00147)	(0.00146)	(0.00147)	(0.00147)	(0.00147)	(0.00147)	(0.00147)
Age centred	-0.00170***	-0.00170***	-0.00151***	-0.00156***	-0.00157***	-0.00151***	-0.00123**
	(0.000448)	(0.000446)	(0.000447)	(0.000447)	(0.000446)	(0.000446)	(0.000452)
Married (ref.)							
Divorced	0.336***	0.334***	0.328***	0.323***	0.323***	0.323***	0.320***
	(0.0303)	(0.0302)	(0.0303)	(0.0302)	(0.0303)	(0.0302)	(0.0299)
Widowed	0.173***	0.178***	0.185***	0.185***	0.183***	0.182***	0.179***
	(0.0345)	(0.0346)	(0.0342)	(0.0345)	(0.0346)	(0.0345)	(0.0347)
Germany (ref.)							
Belgium	-0.0418**	-0.0415**	-0.0344*	-0.0363**	-0.0361**	-0.0367**	-0.0354**
	(0.0136)	(0.0136)	(0.0134)	(0.0134)	(0.0133)	(0.0133)	(0.0133)
Britain	0.0378*	0.0360*	0.0360*	0.0255+	0.0269+	0.0258+	0.0421**
	(0.0149)	(0.0150)	(0.0148)	(0.0153)	(0.0153)	(0.0152)	(0.0155)
Switzerland	0.0198	0.0263+	0.0205	0.0181	0.0156	0.0137	0.0101
	(0.0148)	(0.0147)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0148)
Native (ref.)							
Ex-Yugoslav	-0.00180	-0.0755***	-0.0349	-0.0276	-0.0424+	-0.0450+	-0.0313
	(0.0182)	(0.0220)	(0.0235)	(0.0239)	(0.0254)	(0.0255)	(0.0255)
Turkish	-0.00400	-0.0646***	-0.0123	0.00962	0.00408	-0.00128	0.0215
	(0.0160)	(0.0193)	(0.0221)	(0.0230)	(0.0233)	(0.0234)	(0.0240)
Moroccan	0.114***	0.0474*	0.103***	0.129***	0.115***	0.113***	0.130***
	(0.0201)	(0.0225)	(0.0252)	(0.0263)	(0.0272)	(0.0272)	(0.0275)
Pakistani	0.0263	-0.0363	0.0272	0.0576*	0.0469	0.0429	0.0923**
	(0.0205)	(0.0238)	(0.0268)	(0.0282)	(0.0286)	(0.0287)	(0.0311)
Proportion of out-group members in neighbourhood		0.0290***	0.0270***	0.0257***	0.0252***	0.0243***	0.0228***
		(0.00527)	(0.00521)	(0.00521)	(0.00521)	(0.00519)	(0.00517)
Premarital sex			-0.00828***	-0.00527*	-0.00467*	-0.00407+	-0.00329
			(0.00205)	(0.00209)	(0.00209)	(0.00210)	(0.00209)
Family values			-0.0366**	-0.0266*	-0.0241+	-0.0209+	-0.0185
			(0.0126)	(0.0125)	(0.0125)	(0.0126)	(0.0126)
Religious identity				-0.0175*	-0.0166*	-0.0161*	-0.0156*
				(0.00755)	(0.00755)	(0.00753)	(0.00748)
Praying frequency				-0.00166	-0.00102	-0.000114	0.0000470
				(0.00438)	(0.00437)	(0.00437)	(0.00437)
Religious practice				-0.0558*	-0.0518*	-0.0471*	-0.0447*
				(0.0228)	(0.0229)	(0.0228)	(0.0227)
Perceived cultural distance					-0.0335*	-0.0280+	-0.0260+
					(0.0147)	(0.0148)	(0.0148)
Interethnic marriage attitudes						0.0366***	0.0304**
						(0.0107)	(0.0108)
No arranged marriage (ref.)							
Arranged Marriage							-0.0846***
							(0.0148)
Semi-Arranged Marriage							-0.0682***
							(0.0150)
Constant	-0.0293	-0.0644*	-0.0259	0.0478	0.0500	0.0214	0.0339
	(0.0257)	(0.0265)	(0.0281)	(0.0365)	(0.0366)	(0.0375)	(0.0374)
Observations	3601	3601	3601	3601	3601	3601	3601
AIC	73593.8	83486.5	104560.7	124436.6	127456.5	131230.8	134010.9

Robust standard errors in parentheses
+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 2: Linear probability model of intermarriage (Migrants)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Gender	0.110***	0.109***	0.0996***	0.0943***	0.0939***	0.0938***	0.0863***
	(0.0115)	(0.0114)	(0.0115)	(0.0115)	(0.0114)	(0.0114)	(0.0114)
Education in years	0.00574***	0.00516***	0.00361*	0.00276+	0.00273+	0.00265+	0.00175
	(0.00156)	(0.00156)	(0.00157)	(0.00157)	(0.00157)	(0.00157)	(0.00157)
First generation (ref.)							
In-between generation	-0.0332*	-0.0295*	-0.0344*	-0.0329*	-0.0332*	-0.0340*	-0.0370*
	(0.0151)	(0.0150)	(0.0150)	(0.0148)	(0.0148)	(0.0148)	(0.0149)
2nd generation	0.00171	0.00794	-0.00198	0.00402	0.00394	0.00210	-0.00512
	(0.0223)	(0.0222)	(0.0219)	(0.0218)	(0.0218)	(0.0218)	(0.0219)
Married (ref.)							
Divorced	0.358***	0.358***	0.352***	0.344***	0.345***	0.343***	0.340***
	(0.0402)	(0.0401)	(0.0402)	(0.0400)	(0.0400)	(0.0400)	(0.0393)
Widowed	0.296***	0.299***	0.306***	0.305***	0.304***	0.304***	0.318***
	(0.0685)	(0.0695)	(0.0682)	(0.0696)	(0.0697)	(0.0694)	(0.0695)
Germany (ref.)							
Belgium	-0.0736***	-0.0709***	-0.0638***	-0.0608***	-0.0606***	-0.0607***	-0.0588***
	(0.0162)	(0.0161)	(0.0157)	(0.0156)	(0.0156)	(0.0156)	(0.0155)
Britain	0.0105	0.0144	0.0134	0.00402	0.00443	0.00338	0.0254
	(0.0176)	(0.0175)	(0.0173)	(0.0177)	(0.0177)	(0.0176)	(0.0182)
Switzerland	-0.0278	-0.0168	-0.0237	-0.0235	-0.0243	-0.0264	-0.0303+
	(0.0177)	(0.0176)	(0.0178)	(0.0177)	(0.0178)	(0.0178)	(0.0177)
Ex-Yugoslav (ref.)							
Turkish	-0.00124	0.00951	0.0206	0.0362*	0.0398*	0.0371*	0.0475**
	(0.0143)	(0.0143)	(0.0157)	(0.0165)	(0.0175)	(0.0175)	(0.0179)
Moroccan	0.105***	0.113***	0.129***	0.149***	0.149***	0.150***	0.155***
	(0.0200)	(0.0199)	(0.0201)	(0.0216)	(0.0217)	(0.0216)	(0.0217)
Pakistani	0.0269	0.0365+	0.0599**	0.0847***	0.0860***	0.0841***	0.122***
	(0.0196)	(0.0195)	(0.0204)	(0.0220)	(0.0222)	(0.0222)	(0.0243)
Language problems	-0.0193***	-0.0160**	-0.0136**	-0.0131**	-0.0129**	-0.0123*	-0.00872+
	(0.00493)	(0.00497)	(0.00495)	(0.00496)	(0.00497)	(0.00494)	(0.00496)
Proportion of out-group members in neighbourhood		0.0260***	0.0234***	0.0223***	0.0222***	0.0213***	0.0201***
		(0.00564)	(0.00559)	(0.00559)	(0.00559)	(0.00558)	(0.00553)
Premarital sex			-0.00855***	-0.00482*	-0.00448+	-0.00400+	-0.00311
			(0.00235)	(0.00240)	(0.00241)	(0.00241)	(0.00241)
Family values			-0.0508***	-0.0370*	-0.0357*	-0.0326*	-0.0294+
			(0.0151)	(0.0151)	(0.0151)	(0.0152)	(0.0152)
Religious identity				-0.0215*	-0.0209*	-0.0202*	-0.0193*
				(0.00840)	(0.00843)	(0.00840)	(0.00833)
Praying frequency				-0.00111	-0.000842	0.0000867	0.000617
				(0.00491)	(0.00491)	(0.00491)	(0.00491)
Religious practice				-0.0600*	-0.0582*	-0.0526*	-0.0528*
				(0.0253)	(0.0254)	(0.0254)	(0.0253)
Perceived cultural distance					-0.0141	-0.00827	-0.00756
					(0.0171)	(0.0172)	(0.0171)
Interethnic marriage attitudes						0.0378**	0.0286*
No arranged marriage (ref.)							
						(0.0125)	(0.0126)
Arranged marriage							-0.0929***
							(0.0149)
Semi-arranged marriage							-0.0699***
							(0.0156)
Constant	0.0229	-0.0876*	-0.00175	0.0871+	0.0790	0.0448	0.0632
	(0.0272)	(0.0352)	(0.0402)	(0.0475)	(0.0484)	(0.0491)	(0.0484)
Observations	2659	2659	2659	2659	2659	2659	2659
AIC	42646.2	50314.5	65759.5	81256.7	83372.8	86075.3	89558.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses, + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3: Linear probability model of intermarriage (Natives)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Male (ref. female)	0.0373+	0.0369+	0.0379+	0.0356+	0.0320	0.0322	0.0331
	(0.0201)	(0.0201)	(0.0204)	(0.0210)	(0.0211)	(0.0211)	(0.0212)
Education in years	0.000658	0.000412	0.000439	-0.000128	0.0000845	-0.000185	-0.0000498
	(0.00392)	(0.00390)	(0.00405)	(0.00407)	(0.00409)	(0.00411)	(0.00411)
Age centred	-0.00294***	-0.00287***	-0.00279***	-0.00282***	-0.00275***	-0.00265***	-0.00260***
	(0.000737)	(0.000733)	(0.000757)	(0.000771)	(0.000767)	(0.000773)	(0.000778)
Married (ref.)							
Divorced	0.289***	0.286***	0.285***	0.288***	0.286***	0.287***	0.287***
	(0.0455)	(0.0456)	(0.0458)	(0.0458)	(0.0461)	(0.0461)	(0.0461)
Widowed	0.111**	0.111**	0.113**	0.114**	0.113**	0.110**	0.111**
	(0.0350)	(0.0350)	(0.0350)	(0.0350)	(0.0350)	(0.0350)	(0.0350)
Germany (ref.)							
Belgium	0.0170	0.0142	0.0147	0.0110	0.0108	0.00920	0.0119
	(0.0264)	(0.0263)	(0.0273)	(0.0292)	(0.0290)	(0.0291)	(0.0295)
Britain	0.0764**	0.0648*	0.0665*	0.0677*	0.0743*	0.0735*	0.0735*
	(0.0277)	(0.0287)	(0.0290)	(0.0304)	(0.0303)	(0.0304)	(0.0304)
Switzerland	0.106***	0.105***	0.104***	0.107***	0.103***	0.101***	0.102***
	(0.0299)	(0.0298)	(0.0299)	(0.0301)	(0.0297)	(0.0297)	(0.0297)
Proportion of out-group members in neighbourhood		0.0192	0.0195	0.0203	0.0181	0.0179	0.0187
		(0.0140)	(0.0140)	(0.0142)	(0.0141)	(0.0141)	(0.0142)
Premarital sex			-0.00269	-0.00237	-0.00272	-0.00223	-0.00225
			(0.00400)	(0.00403)	(0.00404)	(0.00410)	(0.00411)
Family values			0.000369	-0.00130	0.000421	0.00246	0.00286
			(0.0236)	(0.0237)	(0.0237)	(0.0236)	(0.0236)
Religious identity				0.0236	0.0240	0.0238	0.0239
				(0.0165)	(0.0164)	(0.0164)	(0.0165)
Praying frequency				-0.0174+	-0.0180+	-0.0174+	-0.0179+
				(0.00998)	(0.00999)	(0.0100)	(0.0100)
Religious practice				0.00245	0.000769	0.00157	0.00136
				(0.0502)	(0.0497)	(0.0497)	(0.0497)
Perceived cultural distance					-0.0620*	-0.0591*	-0.0598*
					(0.0289)	(0.0289)	(0.0289)
Interethnic marriage attitudes						0.0244	0.0245
						(0.0206)	(0.0207)
No arranged marriage (ref.)							
Arranged marriage							0.0471
							(0.0375)
Semi-Arranged marriage							-0.114+
							(0.0637)
Constant	0.0129	0.0360	0.0194	-0.00675	0.00432	-0.0120	-0.0151
	(0.0628)	(0.0612)	(0.0648)	(0.0772)	(0.0772)	(0.0793)	(0.0795)
Observations	942	942	942	942	942	942	942
AIC	19119.0	17203.0	24586.5	28718.3	29525.7	30600.4	24696.3

Robust standard errors in parentheses
+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$