

# Is Cultural Integration Determined by Income and Education? Evidence from Surveys of Muslims in Britain, France and the United States<sup>1</sup>

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Word count: 11,011 (all inclusive)

## Abstract:

Muslims in the United States are often thought to be more integrated into society than Muslims in Europe. The most prominent explanation for this integration gap is *resource determinism*: the argument that immigrants' cultural integration is determined by their resources of wealth and education. We test this argument using national and Muslim-specific public opinion data from the United States, United Kingdom, and France in 2008 and 2010. We confirm the stylized fact that American Muslims are more culturally integrated and then test whether accounting for the income, education, age, and gender of respondents decreases the integration gap between the United States and Europe as resource determinism would predict. We find that the gaps persist, undermining the claim that better economic integration leads to better cultural integration. We suggest that the more likely drivers of these varied integration outcomes are the varied political environments in which immigrants are situated.

**Keywords:** Integration, Muslims, Europe, United States, Economic, Cultural, Survey

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<sup>1</sup> We greatly appreciate comments from Claire Adida, Gina Bateson, Devin Caughey, John Clifton, Sara Wallace Goodman, Jens Hainmueller, Danny Hidalgo, Tomás Jimenez, Peter Mandaville, Yotam Margalit, Gale Muller, Vipin Narang, Maggie Peters, Chris Warshaw, Matthew Wright, Teppei Yamamoto, Mohamed Younis.

Why are American Muslim communities more culturally integrated into the United States than European Muslims in their respective countries? This question has confounded European policymakers and scholars for the past two decades as communities from North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia have grown in prominence on the continent<sup>2</sup>. During this time period and across a variety of qualitative and quantitative examinations, researchers have found significant and consistent discrepancy in the values and public attitudes of European Muslims of immigrant origin and the liberalism that European governments espouse and wish to instill (see Joppke 2005). To address the gap, European governments have undertaken enormous public relations efforts and legislated often-controversial policy measures to promote and incentivize minorities’—but especially Muslim minorities’—integration into their countries.

A number of observers have suggested that discrepancies in immigrants’ cultural integration are a product of what we call *resource determinism*: the claim that individual resources like income and education largely determine subsequent cultural integration (Gordon 1964; Alba 1985; Alba and Nee 199 and 2003; See discussion in Gans 2007 and Kasinitz, Mollenkopf and Waters 2005). Applying this account, the fact that American Muslims are wealthier, more educated, and more residentially dispersed when compared to their European counterparts allows them to integrate more easily into American society.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, the relative poverty and poor human capital of many European Muslims is believed to inhibit their integration into society, affecting everything from tolerance for freedoms of speech and religion,

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<sup>2</sup> Muslims in North America and Europe represent many ethnicities and religious sects. Over time, and often for political reasons, they have self-consolidated and have been classified by others as ‘Western Muslims’. We also employ this term, acknowledging the diversity therein, to study attitudinal and behavioral trends across the various Muslim communities.

<sup>3</sup> This supposition is supported by earlier work on other groups that suggests that socioeconomic outcomes are associated with more positive political attitudinal integration while negative outcomes are associated with more negative attitudinal integration. See Dahl 1961; Gordon 1964; Moynihan and Glazer 1963; Tribalat 1995 and 1996. Evidence that American Muslims are wealthier and more educated comes from Haddad 2002; Cesari 2004; Gest 2010; as well as our own data.

to confidence in government institutions and participation in the political process. In short, the resource determinism hypothesis holds that economic integration explains cultural integration. Despite its obvious importance to both scholars and policymakers, this argument has gone largely untested.

In addition to testing whether economic integration explains cultural integration, it is first necessary to establish how the integration of Muslims understood and measured. It is then important to test whether European Muslims actually *are* less integrated than their counterparts in the United States. If so, in what ways are they less integrated? These questions tap into a broader debate among scholars of integration about its definition and its causal dynamics across disparate immigrant groups in different states.

Using nationally representative surveys administered by Gallup<sup>4</sup>, we test whether the resource determinism hypothesis accounts for differences in cultural integration between Muslims in Europe and the United States. Specifically, we combine surveys administered in the United Kingdom, France, and the United States to find Muslim respondents who have very similar income, education, age, and gender. *If differences in integration persist among this set of otherwise similar individuals, something besides these factors must be a cause of differences in integration.* We focus on questions of variance decomposition: Can differences in income, education, gender, and age account for differences in cultural integration between Muslims in Europe and America? Can they account for differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States, United Kingdom, and France? We find that the answer is “no.” Although economic and educational differences moderate the trans-Atlantic gap in certain integration outcomes, the discrepancies endure in almost every single outcome explored. In some cases, differences in levels of integration between American and European Muslims are *larger* after

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<sup>4</sup> Gallup is a consulting company that engages in global and US public opinion research.

controlling for resources. This suggests that the salience of some other explanatory factor (or factors)—likely one that has less to do with the character of the two continents’ Muslim populations and more to do with the quality of the two socio-political environments. We hypothesize that key environmental determinants include norms of identity construction and the different ethnic compositions of the countries’ Muslim communities.

We begin with a review of the relevant literature and highlight the lack of comparative trans-Atlantic survey evidence. We then outline the research design and methods of our subsequent analysis. We next present the results of examinations that compare British, French and American respondents, controlling for individuals’ income and education. We find substantial evidence in favor of rejecting the resource determinism hypothesis. In an effort to propose more plausible alternatives, we begin to develop the alternative hypothesis that differences in cultural integration are primarily the result of the societal and political environments in which Western Muslims find themselves.

## **Understanding Integration**

Social scientists struggle to define and measure integration. Complicated subjectivities make it challenging to precisely conceptualize, much less quantify. Nevertheless, there have been a number of attempts to solidify the definition and criteria for immigrant integration and assimilation—terms that are largely used interchangeably. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, Chicago School sociologists envisioned immigrants’ adaptation to a “common culture” (See Bulmer 1984). This approach envisaged a linear theory of integration into a mainstream orthodoxy of shared values, language and behavior (Gordon 1964). Scholars focused qualitative examinations on questions of attitudes, behavior, identity, citizenship and race. However, as later scholars

preferred understandings that acknowledged the co-evolution of immigrant and native cultures, this conceptualization lost favor (Alba and Nee 1997; Brubaker 2001). Rather than place purportedly established national norms on a pedestal to be emulated, scholars preferred to observe the relative strength or weakness of social boundaries that divided natives from immigrants.

In their influential considerations, Alba and Nee (1999 and 2003) argue that various forms of personal and community capital determine group rates of assimilation. These include human capital (education and language acquisition), economic capital (socio-economic status and assets), and social capital in the form of personal networks. The implication is that socioeconomic integration *leads to* the cultural integration that concerned earlier scholars. The focus of contemporary integration theory on economic resources developed as a counterweight to the previous focus on cultural integration and conveniently sidestepped many of the conceptual difficulties faced by previous work (Gans 2007).

The focus on economic integration was reinforced by a prominent review published by Waters and Jimenez in 2005. Primarily based on the work of Alba and Nee (2003) and Bean and Stevens (2003), the authors distill four “standard” measures of immigrant integration: (a) socioeconomic status, defined as educational attainment, occupational specialization and parity in earnings; (b) spatial concentration, defined in terms of dissimilarity in spatial distribution and suburbanization; (c) language assimilation, defined in terms of English language ability and loss of mother tongue; and (d) intermarriage, defined by race or origin.

Accordingly, American Muslims are commonly thought to be more culturally integrated into the United States than their European counterparts because of their above average resources, residential dispersion and linguistic proficiency (Cesari 2004). However, few other American

immigrant groups today receive more attention for their purportedly inassimilable attributes and reluctance to adapt to their destination societies than Muslims (e.g. Skerry 2010; pace Huntington 2004). Gest (2010) actually postulates that Western Muslims' resource-based integration may be a precursor to political frustration and alienation, rather than cultural integration—an integration paradox that suggests greater economic integration raises immigrants' expectations of the destination society and generates critical disappointment. Further research follows the work of 'contact' theorists who contend that integrated immigrants' exposure to ethno-cultural difference fosters social conflict (e.g. Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Hewstone and Swart 2011). This also reveals the subjectivity of what constitutes integration: immigrants viewed as an economic threat (like Latinos or Eastern Europeans among working class natives) are evaluated according to economic integration criteria, while those viewed as a cultural threat are evaluated according to cultural integration criteria. For these reasons, Western Muslims represent an intriguing test of the purported relationship between economic and cultural assimilation. Does it hold?

The controversy surrounding Muslim immigrants also reveals a further tension in contemporary integration theory. Integration can be conceptualized either as *achievement* (meeting a benchmark level of income, education, language ability, or appropriate attitudes), or as *agreement* (matching the behaviors and attitudes of others in society). Although it has been largely ignored, this distinction is crucial to a clear conceptualization of integration (See Gans 2007). For example, in a country such as the United States where relatively few people trust the media, does integration mean developing greater trust in the media (to meet some benchmark of trust) or losing trust in the media (to match the attitudes of others).

Scholars have used both achievement-based understandings of integration and agreement-based understandings that compare Muslims with non-Muslims in the same society (e.g. Norris and Inglehart 2012) or other immigrant groups (e.g. Bisin 2008). Research suggests that migrants often attempt to match the attitudes and practices of neighbors (Crul and Vermeulen 2003; Crul and Thomson 2007), perhaps adopting local lifestyles of underachievement that would look like a lack of integration when viewed through the lens of achievement rather than agreement. The tension between achievement and agreement is most thoroughly explored in the work of Zhou and Portes (1993) and their followers. They argue that American immigrants assimilate according to different trajectories depending on the structure of their ethnic community and the destination context that surrounds it. Subsequent studies have demonstrated the propensity of migrants to change their attitudes to match those of the native community in the destination state (Inglehart and Wetzel 2001; Díez Nicolás 2003; Moreno 2005; Maxwell 2013). Notably, Portes and Zhou (1993) also show that some ethnic enclaves of immigrants try to uphold homeland practices in order to make economic gains, rather than matching local practices of economic underachievement. For immigrants, assimilating to local attitudes and practices is not always economically optimal (Rumbaut 2003; Zhou 2005).

The tension between integration as agreement and integration as achievement is especially prominent in discussions about the integration of European Muslims. On the one hand, European Muslims—who often come from humble origins in developing countries—are evaluated as to how closely they *achieve* absolute levels of economic status. On the other hand, they are also evaluated as to how closely they *agree* with the cultural attitudes of others in the countries where they live. Many observers find that European Muslims generally fall short by one or both of these criteria (Fekete 2004; 2009; Statham et al. 2005; Abbas 2005; Laurence and

Vaisse 2006, Pew Global Attitudes Project 2006; Kibria 2008; Bisin et al. 2008; Gest 2010; Laurence 2011; notwithstanding Norris and Inglehart 2012).

We suggest that scholars have evaluated Muslim integration according to arbitrary standards that are not met by many other members of society. Non-Muslim natives experiencing poverty, unemployment, educational underachievement, residential segregation and low rates of intermarriage are not generally characterized as less integrated, but these are the very standards by which scholars measure whether Western Muslims are integrated into society. In this study, we address this directly by considering indicators of both integration-as-agreement and integration-as-achievement.

### **Communities Understood in Isolation**

Despite wide interest in comparative integration, no prior research has attempted to systematically compare the economic and cultural integration of Muslims in the United States and Europe with survey data. Many current understandings of the socio-political attitudes and habits of Western Muslims have come from qualitative fieldwork that focuses on specific countries, cities, neighborhoods, and Muslims of specific ethnicities—of which there are many. Key works considered the expression of Islamic faith in political spheres (Nielsen 1999), forms of advocacy and organizational life in Muslim communities (Eikelman and Piscatori 1996), the extent and nature of Islamophobia and religious discrimination (Runnymede Trust 1997), and Western Muslims' out-group social status and the effect of stigmatization on socio-political integration (Munoz 1999). Early work also reported Muslim responses to the Salman Rushdie affair in 1989 (Kepel 1997), the first French headscarf controversy in 1989 (Bouregba-Dichy 1990) and the 1991 Gulf War (Schnapper 1993). In the absence of reliable public opinion data,

scholars have relied on intensive ethnographic methods, elite and non-elite interviews, focus groups and observation.

Existing studies of Western Muslims' political attitudes have often focused on specific groups, issues, or organizations. Some scholars followed Muslim reactions to the 11 September 2001, 11 March 2004, 7 July 2005 terrorist attacks, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that followed (Pleyers 2003; Birt 2005; Modood 2005; Geisser and Zemouri 2007; Weller 2009). Tim Peace (2010) has assembled a particularly comprehensive history of British and French Muslim political activism since 1989. Qualitative work has also approached specific challenges in Muslim political activism such as political identity (Samad 1996; Kastoryano 2002), diaspora politics (Eade and Garbin 2002), secularism (Asad 2003; Mahmood 2006), adaptation to democratic politics (Cesari 2004; Nielsen 2004), anti-democratic political parties (Hamid 2007), globalized Islam (Roy 2004), government bureaucracies' religious illiteracy (Baker 2009), news media coverage (Poole, 2002; Moore et al. 2008), political representation (Purdam 1996; Sinno and Tatari 2008) municipal level activism (Purdam 2000; 2001), political organization (Warner and Wenner 2005; Pfaff, S & Gill 2005), and political mobilization (Hopkins et al. 2003). Others have employed Muslim communities as an evocative case study in wider studies of minority political participation (Garbaye 2005; Odmalm 2005; de Wit and Koopmans 2005; Saggat 2008; Crowley 2001). Still others have examined Muslims' specific participation in wider campaigns (Peace 2010), the reasons behind radicalization (Slootman and Tillie 2006), the legal integration of Islam into democratic states (Joppke and Torpey 2013) and the reasons behind political disengagement or anti-system behavior (Gest 2010; Laurence 2011).

In recent years, greater interest in and concern about Western Muslim populations has led scholars to supplement the insights of the qualitative literature with evidence from public opinion

polling. Prior to 2001, generalizable trends in Muslim political attitudes and behavior were only available from select surveys that were typically limited to specific countries [Hutnik 1985: 89; Peach 1996; O’Beirne 2004 (which relied on 2001 data)]. Since then, a number of studies have used survey data to compare the cultural values of Western Muslims and non-Muslims (e.g. Inglehart and Norris 2009; Gallup 2009, 2011; Pew 2007, 2011b; Esposito and Mogahed 2007; Open Society Foundation 2009; McFall 2012). Questions have centered on themes such as the palatability of political violence, the interpretation of religious scripture, and the suggested irreconcilability of Islam and democracy or ‘Western’ culture.

Unfortunately for scholars interested in Muslim integration in the United States and Europe, there is no single public opinion survey that covers the relevant populations. Surveys of Western Muslims exist, but they have been conducted according to different standards, for different goals, across different time periods, and at mismatched levels of sampling. Official statistics from governments are often unhelpful because privacy policies in states like Germany and France limit government collection of citizen religious affiliation. Only two organizations currently administer cross-national instruments to Muslim communities in North America and Europe: Gallup (2009, 2011; and Esposito and Mogahed 2007) and the Pew Research Center (2007, 2011b). Gallup’s reports on Europe and the United States have each been written and published separately and have not generally been acknowledged by academic scholarship on Western Muslims. One of our major contributions is to assemble existing Gallup survey data into a comparable, representative sample of Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States, Britain, and France for the first time.

## Research Design

In order to answer the question of whether resource differences account for differences in Muslim societal integration in the US and Europe, we identify nationally representative, face-to-face surveys administered to Muslims and non-Muslims in the US, UK, and France during 2008 (Europe) and 2010 (the US) that have a sufficient number of identical questions that we can merge the surveys. We use data from Gallup, because although Gallup's European and American surveys are not formally linked, the phrasing and selection of questions are consistent enough (thanks to organizational norms) to examine jointly.<sup>5</sup>

To our knowledge, this data has not been previously examined by academic researchers because Gallup keeps most of its data proprietary. We were able to access these otherwise private data sets (and secure a promise of access for researchers seeking to replicate our findings), giving us nationally representative surveys of Muslim respondents in the United States, the United Kingdom and France to test whether resource differences can explain the cross-national variation in Muslim integration outcomes. There are other surveys of Muslims in the United States and Europe, notably the Pew Global Attitudes Survey in 2006 and the Pew Survey of Muslim Americans in 2007 (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2006, Pew Research Center 2007), but these did not include equivalent questions to some items in the Gallup surveys that are crucial for our analysis below.

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<sup>5</sup> The combined surveys result in the following sample sizes: 475 Muslims and 2,683 non-Muslims from the United States, 529 Muslims and 976 non-Muslims from the United Kingdom, and 541 Muslims and 978 non-Muslims from France. Gallup reported to us that the methods for oversampling Muslims were as follows. UK: "Face-to-face interviews were conducted with British Muslims aged 18 and older during July 2008 in England, Wales and Scotland in areas where the Muslim population was greater than 5% or more based on the 2001 British Census." France: "Face-to-face interviews were conducted with French Muslims aged 15 and older in June 2008. The French Muslim interviews were conducted in locations where the percentages of the population of immigrant background (first and second generation) were 10% or higher. Data on immigrant populations was provided by the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE)." Gallup was not able to provide response rates.

The data have some limitations which are inconvenient but surmountable. First, some survey questions relevant to integration were not asked on all five surveys. In many cases, questions were asked only in Europe, or only to European Muslims (but not European non-Muslims). Gallup also does not systematically collect data on respondents' ethnicities, so we are unable to account for the effects of our subjects' different ethnic backgrounds. This limits some of the inferences we can make; while we may be able to match respondents exactly on the variables we have in common, there is no way to know for sure how respondents would answer questions they were not asked. Nevertheless, the combined surveys are complete enough to provide compelling evidence that the resource determinism hypothesis is inadequate. We believe this demonstrates the value in Gallup's cross-national survey work, and would strongly suggest follow-up studies that ask comparable questions across continents with a much larger battery of questions. There is also missing data within each survey, due to respondent non-response. We multiply impute the missing data using the algorithms for categorical variables developed by Kropko, Goodrich, Gelman, and Hill (2014).

Our general approach is one of variance decomposition. We identify a number of outcomes (generally denoted  $y$  in equation 1 below) that are *attitudinal* indicators for aspects of economic and cultural integration into society and look for differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States, United Kingdom, and France. Specifically, we pool data for Muslims and non-Muslims from the United States, United Kingdom, and France and estimate a regression predicting each outcome while including an indicator for whether the respondent is Muslim, indicators for the UK and France, and interactions between the country indicators and the Muslim indicator:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{muslim} + \beta_2 \text{uk} + \beta_3 \text{fr} + \beta_4 \text{muslim} \times \text{uk} + \beta_5 \text{muslim} \times \text{fr} + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

This series of interactions allows us to calculate the average attitudinal response for each of the six sub-groups of interest, as well as the average difference in the responses of Muslims and non-Muslims in each country. Where aggregate attitudinal differences exist, we document them and then test whether controlling for resources and basic demographic differences between US and European Muslims erases these aggregate attitude gaps. This style of test relies on the basic fact that although correlation may not imply causation, causation *does* imply correlation. If the gaps go away, this will demonstrate that accounting for variation in respondent resources accounts for variation in respondent attitudes, consistent with resource determinism. If attitudinal gaps persist, then resource levels cannot account for variation in attitudes, meaning that the cause-and-effect links hypothesized by resource determinism should be strongly questioned.

We control for resource and demographic variables in two ways. First, we use conditioning strategy in which we reweight the surveys of Muslims in France and the United Kingdom to match the joint distribution of the demographic variables in the American Muslim sample. Each survey comes from Gallup with sampling weights; our procedure adjusts the sampling weights so that the European Muslim populations resemble the American Muslim population as closely as possible. Analysis with these adjusted weights answers the question of whether Muslims in the UK and France would be better integrated if they were demographically similar to American Muslims. If the resource determinism hypothesis is correct, then we expect any differences between Muslims and non-Muslims to disappear.

In non-technical terms, our reweighting approach tests the following observable implication of the resource determinism argument: that the attitudes of Muslims with identical resource endowments will be the same, and that the differences in aggregate attitudes of Muslims on opposite sides of the Atlantic are due to different distributions of resource endowments. The

claim is that American Muslims are more integrated because they are wealthier and more educated; if European Muslims were similarly wealthy and educated, they would express similar attitudes. By reweighting, we can directly test (and ultimately disprove) this hypothesis. Reweighting effectively searches through the British and French samples and retains only the Muslims who have resource endowments similar to some segment of the American Muslim population. *If attitudes in this reweighted sample of European Muslims still differ from the attitudes of American Muslims, than something other than demographics must account for the difference.*

For some parts of the analysis, we are able to use a more conventional regression strategy by adding a vector controls to the regression model above: income, education, age, gender, and whether each respondent was born in the country where they now live. However, this conditioning strategy faces practical limitations—many questions relating to integration were only asked in Europe, meaning that we cannot pool American and European data with responses to those questions as the outcome variable. Our reweighting procedure remains feasible for parts of the analysis where entering a control vector in the regression is not. Regression and reweighting should be roughly equivalent because regression with controls is simply a reweighting scheme (Aronow and Samii, in press). *For parts of our analysis where both regression and reweighting are possible, we recover the same results with both methods.*

Our specific resource controls are limited to questions that Gallup asked in each of the five surveys we combine:

1. Education completed in three categories [less than high school diploma; a high school diploma; a university diploma]<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The responses about educational attainment collected by Gallup were more fine-grained in each of the surveys, but the categories were not directly comparable. We could accurately determine these three categories despite the discrepancies.

2. Respondent income percentile, calculated from categorical income data in each survey (fifteen categories in Europe, eight categories in the US).
3. Gender [female; male]
4. Age in five categories [15-30 years old; 30-45 years old; 45-60 years old; 60-75 years old; 75-90 years old]
5. Whether the respondent was born in Europe or the United States, respectively.<sup>7</sup>
6. Whether or not the respondent is African American.<sup>8</sup>

In alternative specifications, we also control for religious salience using a positive or negative answer to ‘Is religion an important part of your life?’ The results are largely unchanged. We omit this from the main analysis because decreasing religiosity is viewed by many as a necessary component of religious minority integration. We find that Muslims in the UK and France are systematically less educated and have lower incomes than Muslims in the United States.

In addition to income and education, the aforementioned ‘contact’ and ‘exposure’-based theories suggest that integration discrepancies could be attributable to the heterogeneous ethno-religious composition of most American Muslims’ neighborhoods. To test this, we do additional analysis controlling for responses to the following question: “How would you describe the make-up of the neighborhood you currently live in? (1) Mostly made up of people who share your ethnic and religious background, (2) Made up of a mix of people, those who share your ethnic and religious background and others who do not, (3) Mostly made up of people who do not share your ethnic and religious background.” Unfortunately, Gallup only asked this question to European respondents, so we cannot directly compare the neighborhoods of European Muslims

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<sup>7</sup> The measure of whether respondents were born in Europe is missing for European non-Muslims. We impute that all non-Muslim Europeans were born in Europe.

<sup>8</sup> A significant fraction of the American Muslim population is composed of native-born African Americans—20% of all American Muslims according to the Pew Research Center (2007). To account for the possibility that American Muslims’ relative integration may be driven by the nativity of African Americans, we include an indicator variable for them.

to their American counterparts in our main results below. However, in an additional set of tests, we make the admittedly strong assumption that no American Muslims live in neighborhoods with people that mostly share their ethnic and religious background (consistent with the common wisdom that European Muslims are more ghetto-ized than American Muslims). The results we present below do not change when we include this partially imputed measure of neighborhood type.

We measure a total of 22 outcome variables related to normative attitudes and cultural practices of integration into society. Nine of these variables are available for all respondents in our pooled surveys, so we can evaluate baseline differences between Muslims in the United States and Europe, and make comparisons between Muslims and Non-Muslims. These nine survey questions are in three categories:

*Religious Tolerance:* (a) “I would not object to a person of a different religious faith moving next door,” (b) “I always treat people of other religious faiths with respect,” (c) “In the past year, I have learned something from someone of another religious faith.”

*Identity:* “How strongly do you identify with each of the following groups? (a) [this country], (b) your ethnic background, (c) your religion.”

*Trust in Societal and Government Institutions:* “In [your country], do you have confidence in each of the following or not? (a) Quality and integrity of the media, (b) Judicial system and courts, (c) honesty of elections.

Broadly speaking, we might expect that less integrated individuals would be less critical (and therefore more trusting) of public institutions,<sup>9</sup> would identify less with their country of

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<sup>9</sup> This expectation is based on an extensive literature arguing that newly arriving immigrants are more likely to look favorably on the relative stability and wealth in the destination country than those residents who boast longer residencies and greater awareness about the deficiencies of their societies. See de la Garza, Falcon, and Garcia 1996;

residence and more with their ethnicity and religion, and be less religiously tolerant. We compare the responses Muslims in the US, UK, and France to these nine questions. Where there are differences, we then test whether those differences go away when we reweight European Muslims to have the same income and education as American Muslims. We also are able to test whether Muslims and non-Muslims within the same country have similar responses to these questions, with and without controls for demographic similarity.

The rest of our 22 measures of integration are only available for some subsets of respondents, depending on which surveys included them. Many European respondents indicated that they viewed participating in politics and volunteering in community organizations as essential parts of societal integration. Gallup asked all Europeans (but not Americans) in our study four questions about political activity and volunteer service: “Have you done any of the following in the past month? (a) Donated money to a charity, (b) Volunteered your time to an organization, (c) Helped a stranger or someone you didn’t know who needed help, (d) Voiced your opinion to a public official.” Although we cannot compare the responses of Europeans to Americans, we test for differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in Europe and then see whether reweighting the European Muslim sample to demographically match the American sample erases these differences.

Similarly, Gallup asked a number of questions only to European Muslims, including whether the respondent voted in the last national and local elections, whether newspapers printing picture of prophet Muhammad should be allowed under protection of free speech, support for 9/11 and violence against civilians, whether religious minorities should be flexible to blend in, and data on the language of the survey. Without comparison data – either from US

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Dinesen forthcoming; Kao and Tienda 1995; Maxwell 2013, 2010a, 2010b, 2008; Michelson 2003; Röder and Mühlau 2011; Röder and Mühlau 2012.

Muslims or European non-Muslims – our approach with these questions is to assume that higher levels of voting, less support for violence, more support for free speech, and greater rates of language acquisition indicate better integration (we feel that for these particular items, using an achievement-focused understanding of integration is justified). We test whether European Muslim responses to these questions move in the direction of increased integration when we reweight the sample to match the demographics of American Muslims.

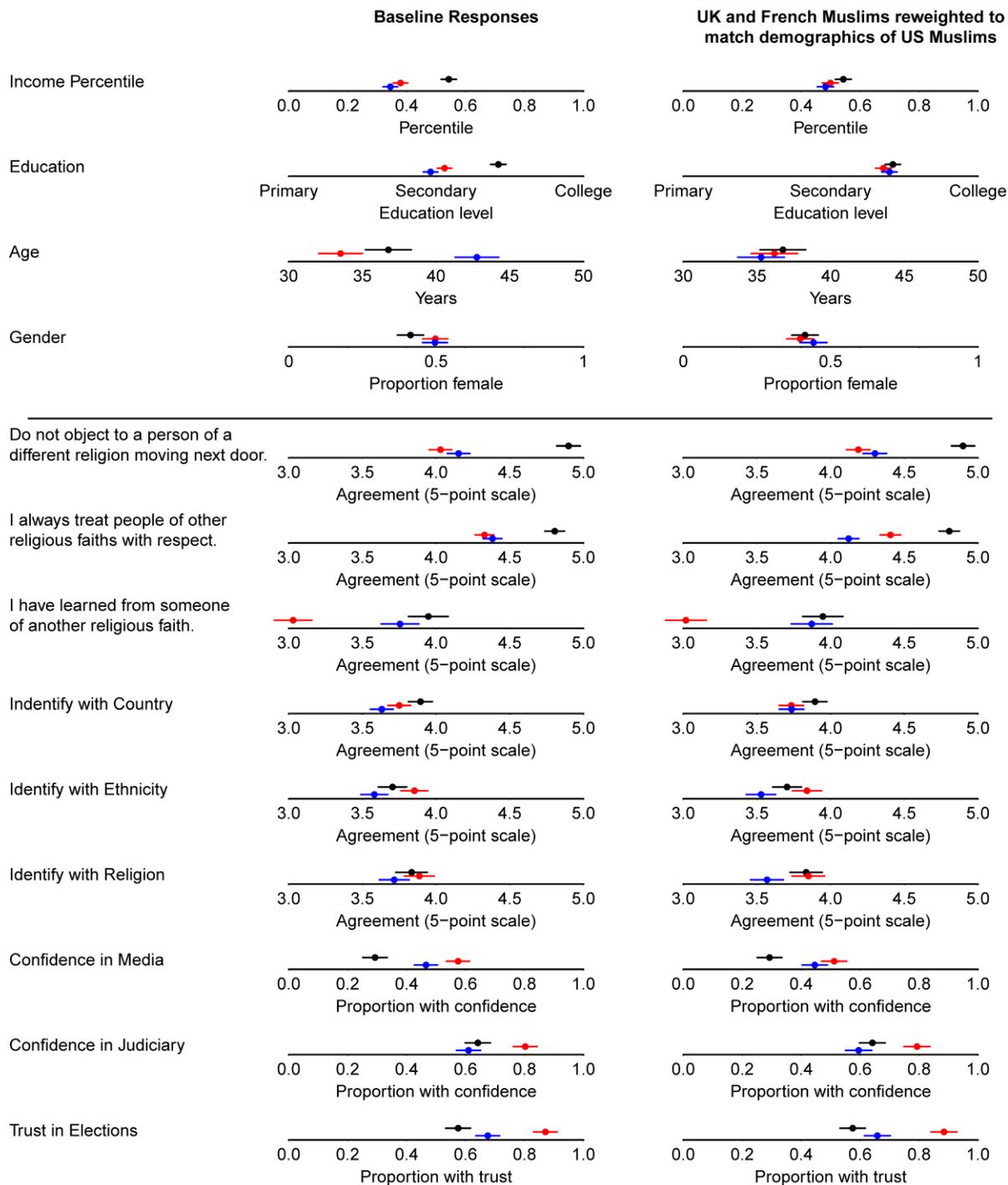
## Results

We begin by testing whether Muslims from the United States, United Kingdom, and France are different, and whether existing differences go away when we control for resource variables. The left side of Figure 1 compares the average responses of Muslims in each country, with resource and demographic variables in the top part of the figure and societal integration variables below. The top half of this figure is descriptive: it shows the demographic differences between European and American Muslims on the left and the success of our reweighting procedure at eliminating (or “balancing”) these demographic differences on the right.

We find that the demographics of European Muslims are strikingly different from their American counterparts. Muslims in France and the UK have average incomes that are at the 34<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> percentiles respectively, while the average income of US Muslims is in the 54<sup>th</sup> percentile. This reproduces findings from other studies that European Muslims are significantly less well-off than American Muslims. We also find that European Muslims have lower levels of education. American Muslims tend to either have completed high school or college, while Muslims in France and the UK are more likely to have only primary or secondary education. We also find differences across countries in the age and gender of Muslims, but these

## Comparison of Muslims in the US, UK, and France

Legend: UK Muslims (red), French Muslims (blue), US Muslims (black)



**Figure 1: A Comparison Muslims in the US, UK, and France, with and without controls for resource differences.**

This figure shows the average responses of Muslims in each country. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals around each estimate. The top portion of the figure shows resource and demographic control variables.

differences are less interesting because they are not generally viewed as direct drivers of integration outcomes.

The right side of Figure 1 shows the means of the demographic variables after reweighting the demographics of French and UK Muslims to match the multivariate distribution of these demographics in the American Muslim sample. The resulting plots show that most, but not all of the differences are erased by this reweighting procedure. Some differences remain because there are some types of American Muslims that have no identical demographic matches in Europe (there is a lack of common support), so no amount of reweighting can make the distributions identical. However, the samples appear much more similar after reweighting than before.

Turning to the lower half of Figure 1, we begin to answer the question of whether demographic differences can account for the differing attitudes of Muslims in the United States, United Kingdom, and France. On the left, we show the average responses of Muslims in all three countries to nine attitudinal questions relating to various aspects of the concept of integration. The right side shows the same responses with the European respondents weighted such that the demographics of the sample match the demographics of Muslims in the United States. *If demographic differences account for attitudinal differences among Muslims in different countries, then removing the demographic differences via reweighting should eliminate most differences in attitudes.*

We find that European Muslims and American Muslims have different responses to questions measuring aspects of integration, but these differences are not always what the received wisdom would predict. Additionally, we find that reweighing the samples of European Muslims to match US Muslim demographics does not eliminate the substantial differences in

attitudes we observe between these populations. This is our first finding suggesting that income, education, and other basic demographics may not be important determinants of cultural integration.

Looking first at questions of religious tolerance, we find that American Muslims are more tolerant than European Muslims by wide margins. When reporting their agreement with statements about neighbors of a different faith, treating people of other faiths with respect, and learning from people of other faiths, Muslims in the US generally score a full point higher on a five-point scale of agreement (the only exception is that French Muslims report learning from someone of another faith almost as much as US Muslims). These differences in reported religious tolerance do not go away when we reweight the European sample to match US demographics. This means that Muslims in the UK and France who have the *same* income and education levels as American Muslims are remarkably more religiously intolerant.

Turning next to questions of identity, we find that American Muslims are more likely to identify strongly with their country than Muslims in the UK and France. The differences are substantively smaller than the gaps in religious tolerance, but they are still substantively and statistically significant (approximately 0.25 on a five-point scale). When we use weights to control for demographics, the average identification of French Muslims with France increases, but still remains significantly lower than Muslim-American respondents. The identification of UK Muslims with the UK does not change. This suggests that demographically similar Muslims are more likely to identify with their country if they live in the United States than in Europe.

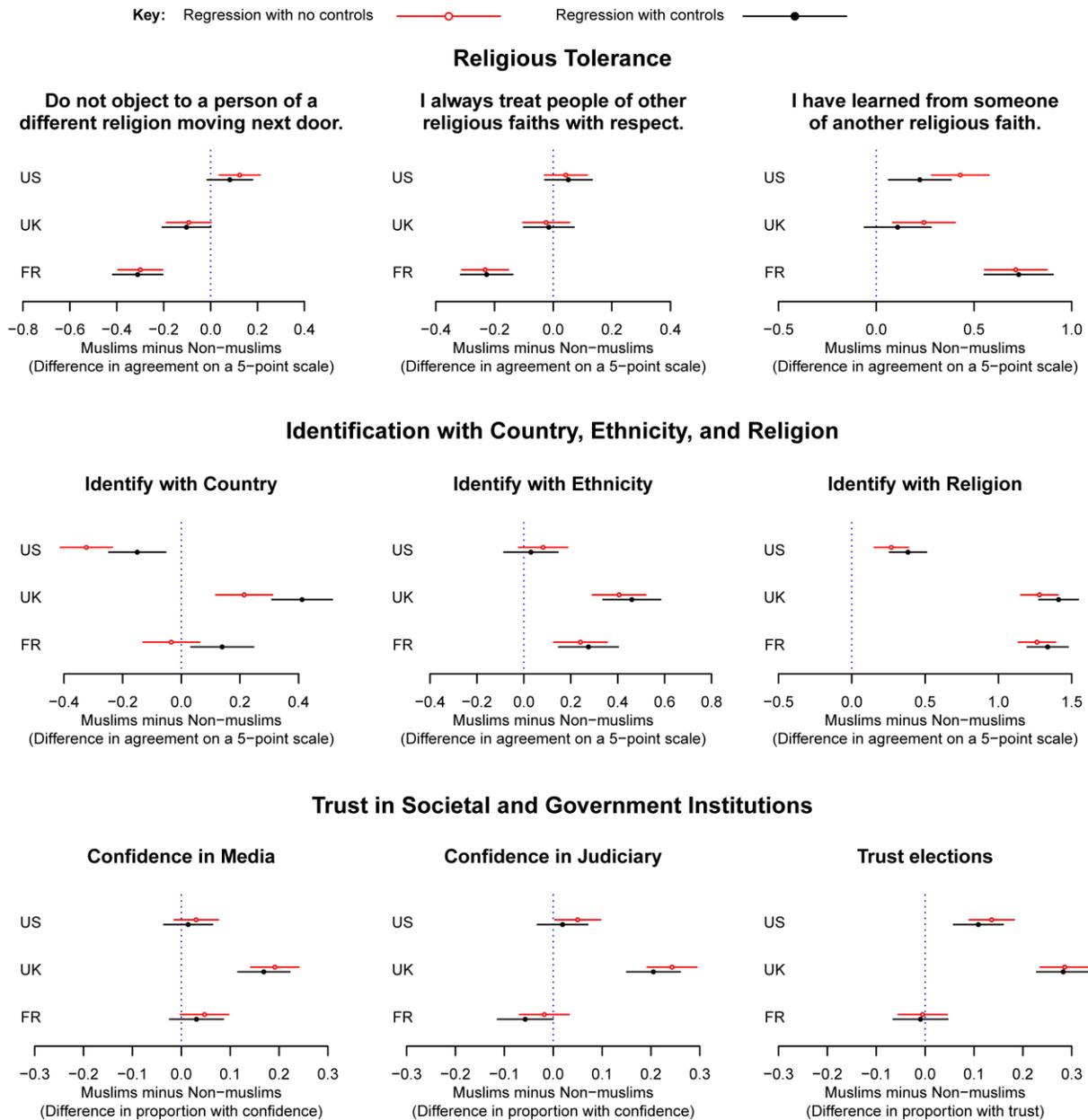
On questions of ethnic and religious identity, American Muslims are not distinctive from European Muslims (French Muslims identify with these groups less, UK Muslims identify

more). Patterns in these average responses do not change when we reweight the European sample.

Finally, we find that American Muslims tend to have less trust in societal and government institutions than European Muslims. Only 33 percent of American Muslims report trust in the media, compared to 50 and 61 percent of French and British Muslims respectively. Similarly, American Muslim trust in the judiciary is far lower than trust among British Muslims (but not among French Muslims). And American Muslims are significantly less likely to trust elections than Europeans. As we mention above, this lack of trust by American Muslims may be theorized to be a sign of greater integration; poorly integrated individuals are less likely to express awareness of or opinions about deficiencies in their societies. As with every other indicator of cultural integration that we have examined thus far, these patterns do not change when we control for income and education.

The results we have just shown compare Muslims in different countries to each other, but we suspect that Muslims may have different attitudes on opposite sides of the Atlantic simply because British and French attitudes differ from those of Americans more generally. For example, if the French are less likely to identify with their country than Americans in general, then perhaps we should assess the integration of French Muslims based on whether they match the attitudes of others in their society. To test this, we include all of the respondents, Muslim and non-Muslim, and estimate the regression model in Equation 1 for each outcome, first omitting resource and demographic controls and then including them. The results are shown in Figure 2, where we plot the *difference* in average responses to each question between Muslims and non-Muslims in each country. Estimates to the right of zero indicate that Muslims answer more positively than non-Muslims, while estimates to the left indicate the opposite. We show the

## Muslims and Non-Muslims in the US, UK, and France



**Figure 2: Differences between Muslims and Non-Muslims in each country, with and without resource controls.**

This figure shows the differences between the responses of Muslims and Non-Muslims in each country, without resource controls (gray, open disk), and with them (black, closed disk). Estimates to the right of zero indicate that Muslims answer more positively than non-Muslims, while estimates to the left indicate the opposite. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals around each estimate.

results of regressions with and without control variables. If differences in income and education are the primary drivers of Muslim integration, then we expect that any differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in the regression without controls will become statistically indistinguishable from zero once we include controls.

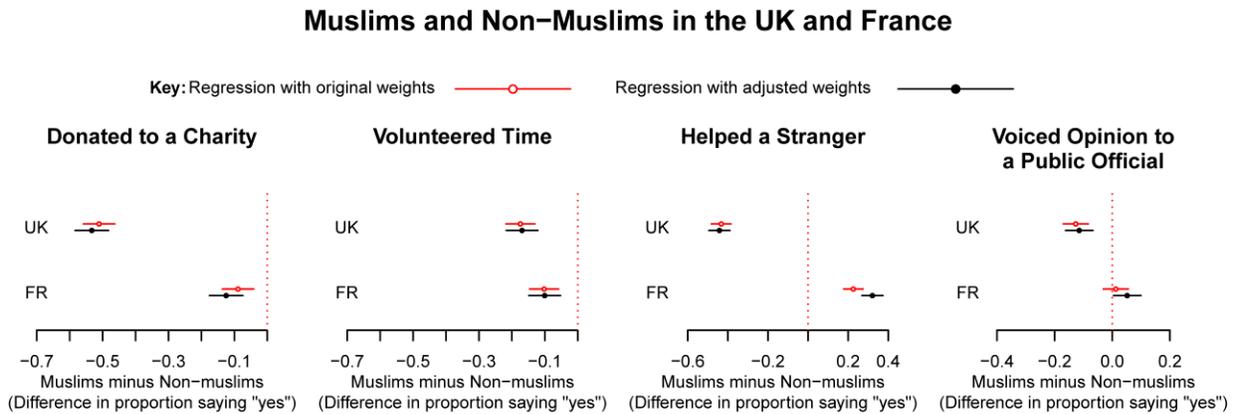
In fact, we find that differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in each country persist when we control for demographic variables. In answers to questions about religious tolerance, we see relatively few changes when we alternately omit or include demographic controls. In general, Muslims are more likely to have learned from someone of another faith, but the demographic controls erase this gap for British Muslims and decrease it for American Muslims. This is the only substantial change we see from including demographic controls and is in the opposite direction of what resource determinism predicts.

Turning to questions about identity, we find that Muslims in Europe identify more with their ethnicity and religion than non-Muslims. American Muslims are relatively similar to American non-Muslims, although they are somewhat more likely to identify with their religion and less likely to identify with their country. Interestingly, Muslims in France and Britain are also more likely to identify with their country of residence—complicating a determination about their integration and revealing that identity attributes are not zero-sum, but rather quite pluralistic. Including resource controls erases none of the gaps between Muslims and non-Muslims, and some gaps increase slightly.

Our analysis of trust in institutions shows that Muslims and non-Muslims are generally comparable in the US and France, while Muslims in the UK have higher levels of trust in these institutions than non-Muslims. This result contradicts the received wisdom that Muslims in Europe are less integrated, at least to the extent that trust in government is a feature of

integration. We also find no appreciable difference in the estimates whether controlling for resource variables or not. We interpret this as evidence against the resource determinism hypothesis.

We obtain very similar results if we condition on the control variables by using the adjusted survey weights, rather than including the controls in each regression. This confirms our finding from the analysis in Figures 1 and 2 that resource variables do not explain much variance in integration attitudes and practices, whether we compare Muslims across countries, or to non-Muslims in their own countries. It also lends confidence to our analysis below where conditioning on control variables is only possible via weighting because outcome variables are not available for the US sample. In this setting where both weighting and regression can be checked against each other, they recover the same result.



**Figure 3: Differences between Muslims and Non-Muslims in the UK and France.**

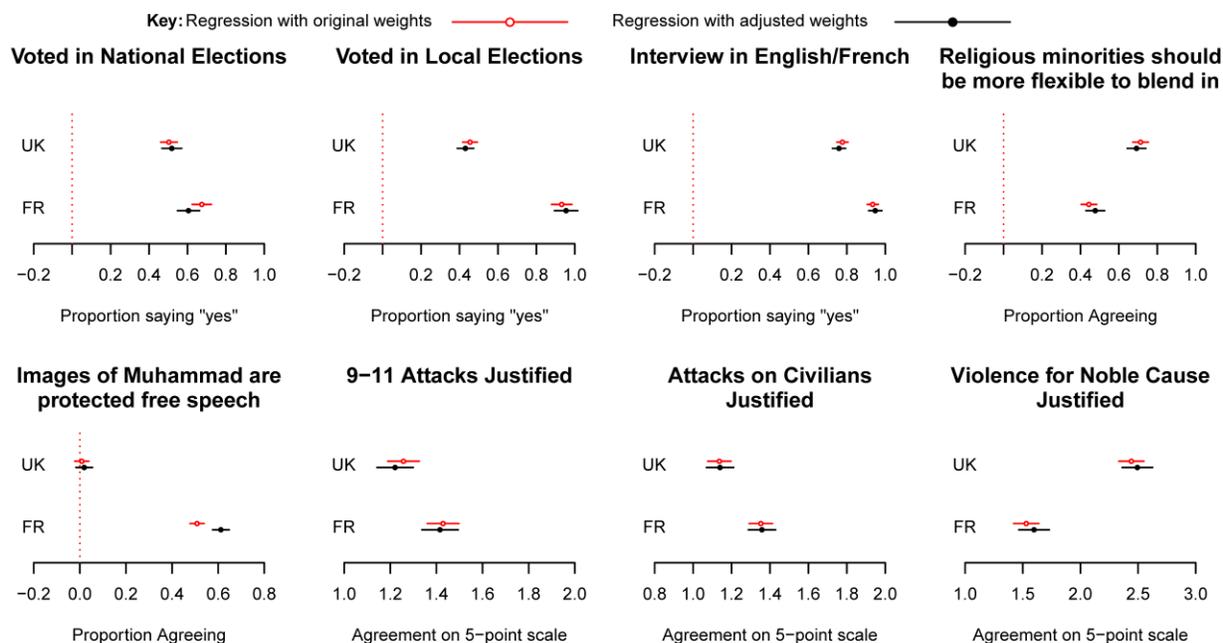
This figure shows the differences between the responses of Muslims and Non-Muslims in the UK and France, without adjusting the survey weights for resource controls (gray, open disk), and with the adjusted weights (black, closed disk). Estimates to the right of zero indicate that Muslims answer more positively than non-Muslims, while estimates to the left indicate the opposite. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals around each estimate.

We now turn to a series of analyses using data from the United Kingdom and France because the equivalent outcome questions were not asked in the American survey. Political participation and civic engagement is an important part of integration theoretically. The European survey data offer us the chance to measure respondent's self-reports of donating to charity, volunteering time, helping strangers, and voicing their opinion to an elected official: results are shown in Figure 3. Muslims generally report fewer of these actions relative to their non-Muslims peers, with the exception of French Muslims who help strangers substantially more.

Notably, none of these estimates changes dramatically when we reweight the sample of Muslims from the two European countries to match the demographics of American Muslims. We should be clear about what this reweighting is accomplishing -- it allows us to test the proposition that if Muslims in these countries had demographic characteristics matching those of Muslims in the United States, they would more civically engaged. Note that we cannot compare the civic engagement of European Muslims to American Muslims because these questions were not asked in the US, *but this analysis is still comparative because we can observe whether the aggregate reported civic engagement of Muslims in France and the UK changes substantially when we reweight the sample to match the demographics of US Muslims.* We find that this is clearly not the case; accounting for demographic differences does not change aggregate reported civic engagement, providing another piece of evidence against the resource determinism hypothesis.

The next set of eight outcome variables covers a range of attitudes and actions that are necessary for integration according to public opinion: voting behavior, language assimilation, religious flexibility, and the adoption of radical attitudes about violence. For these outcomes,

## Muslims in the UK and France



**Figure 4: Differences between Muslims and Non-Muslims in the UK and France.**

This figure shows the responses of Muslims in the UK and France, without adjusting the survey weights for resource controls (gray, open disk), and with the adjusted weights (black, closed disk). Estimates to the right of zero indicate that Muslims answer more positively than non-Muslims, while estimates to the left indicate the opposite. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals around each estimate.

data are only available for Muslim respondents living in the UK and France. As before, we first plot these responses with the original survey weights and then test whether reweighting the respondents to match the demographics of the US Muslim sample qualitatively changes the results. We no longer have a baseline of non-Muslim attitudes for comparison, but for all of these questions, some responses clearly indicate more integration into society than others. The results, shown in Figure 4, can be summarized quickly: *we find no evidence that Muslims from the UK or France would endorse religious flexibility for minorities, agree with the protection of religiously*

*offensive free speech, or be less inclined to think that the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks were justified if they had the demographic characteristics of Muslims from the United States.*

A final outcome we consider is whether Muslim women report wearing a *hijab*, or headscarf. This question was only asked to Muslim women, so we test whether reweighting the European Muslim women respondents to match the demographics of their American counterparts would change the rate at which they report wearing the hijab. The results, shown in Figure 5, indicate that this is one outcome where demographics do appear to matter. First, rates and France would vote more in elections, speak English or French with survey interviewers, of hijab wearing are much higher in the US than in Europe; approximately 45 percent of American Muslim women report wearing the hijab, compared to 22 percent and 28 percent in the UK and France respectively. However, the reweighted estimates predict that if Muslim women in Europe had the same levels of income, education, and age as US Muslim women, only 17 percent in the UK and 11 percent in France would wear a hijab. While this would certainly fit with non-Muslim conceptions of integration in these countries – 65 percent of French non-Muslims agree that removing the hijab is “necessary” for integration – it is striking that American Muslims who are better integrated on almost every other measure we consider in this paper are far more likely to wear a hijab. It suggests that equating integration with headscarf removal in France and the UK may in fact be detrimental to other more meaningful (and arguably more legitimate) aspects of integration. In the US, rejection of the hijab has not been as firmly linked to Muslim integration, and American Muslims are simultaneously more likely to wear the hijab *and* to be more religiously tolerant and identify more with the United States. Our data cannot provide traction to directly test whether focusing on eliminating “Islamic” dress is detrimental to

development of religious tolerance and national identity among Muslims in the UK and France; this important question is worthy of future study.



**Figure 5: Hijab-wearing by Muslim Women in the US, UK, and France.**

This figure shows the proportion of Muslim women in the US, UK, and France who report wearing a hijab (headscarf), without adjusting the survey weights for resource controls (gray, open disk), and with the adjusted weights (black, closed disk). Estimates to the right of zero indicate that Muslims answer more positively than non-Muslims, while estimates to the left indicate the opposite. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals around each estimate.

Taken together, this collection of results refutes the strongest form of the resource determinism hypothesis that individual income and education determine cultural integration. It may still be possible to claim that some characteristic we have not been able to measure here would explain the variation that income, education, gender, age, and place of birth have not. Ideally we would have controlled for the country of origin for Muslim immigrants, but Gallup did not record this information. As such, while we can rule out that the trans-Atlantic gap in Muslim integration is not due to income or education, it could still be due to differences in the national origins of Muslims in America and Europe.

Another alternative explanation is that American Muslims are better integrated because they tend to live in neighborhoods with neighbors from various ethnicities and religions, while European Muslims tend to live in neighborhoods with others from their same ethnicity and religion. As we describe above, we cannot directly test this because Gallup did not ask American Muslims about their neighborhood composition. However, if we assume that all American Muslims live in mixed neighborhoods, then we can redo the weighting analysis above controlling for neighborhood as well (in practice, this is equivalent to omitting all European Muslims who report living in neighborhoods where most others share their religion or ethnicity from the analysis). When we do this, we recover results that are virtually identical to those presented above.

## **Discussion**

Our findings undermine the most prominent explanations for discrepancies in Muslim integration in the United States and Europe, and challenge the general notion that resource determinism is a sufficient explanation for variation in cultural integration by migrant communities. Almost none of the trans-Atlantic gap in cultural integration outcomes can be explained by accounting for income, education, gender, age, or neighborhood type. This suggests that the salience of another explanatory factor—likely one that has less to do with the character of the two continents’ Muslim populations and more to do with the nature of the two socio-political environments.

Though a full consideration of these national environments and their institutional differences is beyond the scope of this study, we suggest that several explanatory factors may be at work. First, the American propensity to evangelize its generations of immigrants to particular ways of life has been well documented (Schildkraut 2011: 94). In acknowledging their country

as one historically and forever composed of immigrants, Americans may adopt a relatively flexible national identity that finds adaptations and bastardizations of American traditions and habits unproblematic, if not excitingly innovative (See Hirschman 2013; Stephan and Levin 2003). This ethic of Americanization is expressed in the form of a laissez-faire approach to dual nationality, a strict separation between church and state (See Joppke and Torpey 2013), the absence of an official national language, and immigrants' immediate qualification for hyphenated identities (e.g. Pakistani-American, Cuban-American, etc.) upon arrival. European states feature a relative reluctance to acknowledge their present and future heterogeneity, and a general ignorance about the fluidity of the continent's ethnicities and nationalities. Even the most liberal accommodations of immigrant diversity like Dutch or Swedish multiculturalism in the 1990s and early 2000s recognized the equality of foreign-born communities in a manner that preserved their right to exist separately from supposed national entities.

Second, the American Muslim population is ethnically diverse.<sup>10</sup> By contrast, individuals from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia comprise over 76% of the French Muslim population (OECD 2013, Pew 2011a), and individuals from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh comprise more than 38% of Britain's Muslim population (Office for National Statistics 2013, Office of National Statistics 2012). Furthermore, 63% of American Muslims were born in another country, and 70% of these first generation Americans hold U.S. citizenship. We do not have the data to evaluate whether country-of-origin or citizenship effects account for integration disparities, but we think that specific national origins are less important than the homogeneity or diversity of national origins in the Muslim population. When the Muslim population is diverse, Muslim immigrants

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<sup>10</sup> Pakistan is the most common country of origin for foreign-born US Muslims, accounting for 14 percent. The percentages from other countries are even smaller (Pew 2011b).

are more likely to have social relationships outside of their specific ethno-cultural community, perhaps leading them toward greater cultural integration.

Differing national models for religious life and interfaith relations in the US and Europe may also account for some differences in integration. Kymlicka argues that ‘American denominationalism... has been successful precisely in relation to...religious groups composed primarily of recent immigrants, and Muslims in particular’, who are more likely than European Muslims ‘to express the feeling that their religion and religious freedoms are fully respected, and that they are accepted as citizens’ (2009: 548). Similarly, Foner and Alba contend that without the separation of church and state, ‘the religions imported by past immigration streams [to the United States] could not have achieved parity with Protestant versions of Christianity’ (2008: 379). This is a view shared by Bhargava (2011) who believes that the ‘weak establishment’ or ‘moderate secularism’ of Britain alienates the majority of Muslims (See Meer and Modood 2011: 15).

Our finding that economic integration does not account for cultural integration has important implications for the study of integration politics. Although it is beyond the scope of our study to explore integration of other minority populations, we suspect that resource determinism will fail in other cases as well. After all, the case of Western Muslims seems like it should be easy to explain in solely economic terms: American Muslims are rich and well integrated, while European Muslims are poor and poorly integrated. In fact, we find that even among the European Muslims who match the wealth and education of American Muslims, cultural integration lags substantially. If resource determinism fails to explain such an easy case, then it should be questioned more generally.

This finding will give pause to governments currently revising their policies for immigrant admission to select according to education, language acquisition and skill. While such resources will likely hold some economic benefits, integration in the manners discussed here will not necessarily follow unless such selection policies are complemented by receptive societies. This article also suggests that states and scholars should complicate their understandings of precisely what form of integration they seek. Accordingly, states may reconsider their strategies to regulate and incentivize immigrants' integration. In the case of Muslims, measures such as minaret prohibitions, *burqa* bans, and other forms of social control may be unnecessary and perhaps counterproductive.

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