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# Liberal Values for Illiberal Ends

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The employment of women's rights in the anti-immigration discourse  
of the French and German far right

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# 1 Introduction

Writing in the French newspaper, *L'Opinion*, in January 2016, Marine Le Pen, leader of the French populist radical right and nationalist party, the *Front National* (FN, now known as the *Rassemblement National*, RN<sup>1</sup>), cited the following quote by the French feminist thinker, Simone de Beauvoir: ‘never forget that it would only take a political, economic or religious crisis for women’s rights to be called into question.’ The crisis that Le Pen was referring to was, of course, the far right’s favourite – the ‘refugee crisis’ – which Le Pen fears will ‘mark the beginning of the end of women’s rights’ (Le Pen 2016).<sup>2</sup> Whilst staunch opposition to immigration has long been central to radical right parties (RRPs), it seems unusual for an illiberal, far-right party such as the FN to speak in favour of women’s rights, a topic that is engrained in the liberal values which the far right typically rejects. RRP’s hold nativist beliefs, deeming non-native elements to be fundamentally threatening to the homogeneity of their ideal nation state (Mudde 2007). Nationalism and nativism are generally of concern for International Relations, but are particularly important issues in Europe today. European populist RRP’s are anti-establishment, positioning themselves against the European Union (EU) and its liberal democratic values of tolerance and respect for minorities. They have been gaining ground across Western Europe for the last three decades and are widely regarded as a grave threat to European democracy and stability (Mudde 2012).

Their reactionary policies on immigration are typically mirrored in their conservative attitudes towards social rights, including women’s rights, LGBTQ rights, and animal rights. Gender, in particular, is an important structural component of the far right, with RRP’s typically building on traditional gender stereotypes and employing gendered language to encourage their conservative model of society. The current European climate is increasingly progressive towards such social movements, however, and in response, RRP’s have begun to co-opt liberal values and use them for their own purposes. The western European public is now presented with a far right that not only allegedly supports women’s rights, LGBTQ

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<sup>1</sup> The *Front National* (National Front) changed its name to *Rassemblement National* (National Rally) in June 2018 following a members’ vote. In a press statement, the party cited ‘a profound cultural, strategic, political and internal change’ as the reason for the new name (quoted in Gojard 2018). For simplicity, I will continue to refer to the party as the *Front National*, given that my study primarily reflects the period before the name change.

<sup>2</sup> Translations of original quotes from French and German are my own, unless otherwise stated. Given that my thesis works with translated quotes, I have provided the original quotes alongside the translations in an appendix.

rights, and animal rights, but uses them to justify and advance their reactionary arguments against immigration. It is difficult to comprehend how these liberal values can be credibly combined with an anti-immigration discourse, yet RRPs continue to attract support across Europe. This Janus-faced employment of European liberal values represents a new and alarming danger. Liberal values have long acted as a safeguard to democracy within and without the EU. If nationalist RRPs can hijack the values of their opposition, it will become increasingly difficult for truly liberal democratic parties to resist them. In International Relations, poststructuralist theory considers discourse vital for the construction of knowledge and power relations. Populist parties are renowned for their use of powerful discourse. Given the power of discourse, and the threat associated with these parties, the employment of liberal values in anti-immigration discourses warrants attention. Examining the anti-immigration discourse of two central western European RRPs, the French *Front National* (FN) and the German *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany, AfD), my thesis aims to understand the particular use of women's rights and gender equality, and its significance for liberal values, by the European far right. Not only are France and Germany key members of the EU with strong liberal democratic identities, their political landscapes have both been marked by increased support for RRPs in recent years. In 2017, the leader of the FN, Marine Le Pen, made it through to the final round of the French presidential elections and the AfD entered the federal parliament and became Germany's largest opposition party. The FN has a long history as a populist RRP, whilst the AfD is one of Europe's newer far-right parties, founded in 2013. Despite different histories, both parties share the same central concern of immigration and are defined as nationalist, populist, far-right, and Eurosceptic (Rooduijn et al. 2019).

My thesis will examine the use of women's rights in the anti-immigration discourse of the FN and the AfD in response to the following research question: *how do radical right parties employ women's rights to advance their anti-immigration arguments?* To respond to my research question, I will conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of anti-immigration discourse in texts published by the two parties. The results of my analysis illuminate the primary narratives facilitating opposition to immigration in the name of women's rights and reveal the rhetorical strategies used in their construction. Before presenting these, I will review the relevant literature in order to situate my thesis within the field. I will first explain the position of RRPs and their discourses in International Relations, before considering the relevance of gender for International Relations and specifically the far right. I will then

explore the far right's Othering processes and typical framing of anti-immigration, before outlining the use of gender as an Othering technique. My literature review will highlight the theory through which such discourses operate which, paired with the reactionary discourse strategies outlined in my theoretical framework, will guide my analysis. The primary aim of a discourse analysis is to unpack the strategies used to communicate certain ideas. CDA has a particular focus on power relations and social inequality, however, and thus also aims to offer insight into the crucial role of discourse in the reproduction of dominance (van Dijk 1993, 253). As van Dijk (1993) explains, such an analysis of discourse therefore 'implies a political critique of those responsible for its perversion' and hopes to promote change through critical understanding (253). In explaining the gendered anti-immigration discourse of the French and German far right, my thesis will therefore also acknowledge how such narratives reinforce and extend relations of inequality.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Radical right parties in International Relations

Contemporary European RRP are both nativist and nationalist. Whilst nationalism is often regarded as a matter of domestic politics, it is of crucial importance for International Relations. Nationalism is notoriously difficult to define but is commonly understood as the identification, based on common history, culture, and language, with the nation state and support for it and its national people's interests, to the detriment of foreigners (Griffiths and Sullivan 1997, 65). Doty (1996) points out that these national identities and the distinctions between those inside and outside of national boundaries are essential for international politics (238-40). Nationalism is considered to be integral to the nation state and the world order that it is built upon, and therefore to the study of International Relations. Furthermore, the aversion to foreigners within the nation state manifests itself in opposition to immigration, a key marker of contemporary nationalist parties. In today's world, it is evident that managing migration, and therefore contending with anti-immigration forces, is a key concern for International Relations. Finally, as already mentioned, European RRP typically oppose the EU, or at least the Eurozone, which they claim threaten national sovereignty. Given the centrality of these unions, European nationalism is regarded by many as an ever-present threat to the international system.

### 2.2 Discourse

Discourse has become a key unit of political analysis in International Relations theory. Poststructuralists, postmodernists, and social constructivists have directed attention to the language of politics, focusing on the relationship between language and action (Milliken 1999, 225). These critical theorists are interested in discourse studies as a way of illustrating how 'textual and social processes are intrinsically connected and describ[ing], in specific contexts, the implications of this connection for the way we think and act in the contemporary world' (George 1994, 191). Milliken (1999) outlines the established theoretical agreements in discourse studies, which can be summarised in four parts. Discourse scholars consider discourse as 'structures of signification' which *construct* social realities. This understanding is underpinned by a constructivist conception of meaning, whereby people, rather than the material world, develop meanings and practices using linguistic and other sign systems (229).

Furthermore, in its production of these objects, discourse also constructs legitimate subject roles, defining *who* holds authority and who does not (ibid). Discourse is therefore not only connected to knowledge, but to power. Discourses depend on repetition by these powerful actors in order to strengthen the realities they have created. Milliken explains that this repetition limits the possibility of resistance, legitimises the discourse, and creates ‘reasonable and warranted relations of domination’ and the ‘common sense’ of societies (237). This idea of common sense underpins the final point on the power of dominant discourses. The common sense function that dominant discourses come to fulfil gives them great power to justify political action. By constructing knowledge and power relations, discourse therefore legitimises political practices (230).

Far-right discourse and its impact on electoral appeal have been the focus of much academic literature (see, for example, Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Wodak et al. 2013). When it comes to far-right populist parties, discourse is regarded as a particularly important feature and the recent rise of populism has prompted a re-engagement with populist discourse in academia. Notably in 2019, Team Populism, a global network of political scientists, conducted a study supported by the British newspaper The Guardian. Scholars analysed the speeches of almost 140 world leaders in 40 countries, including all major countries in Europe, the Americas, and India, and scored them according to their degree of populist discourse. The results of the research, recorded in the Global Populism Database, show that the average populism score has doubled since the early 2000s (Hawkins et al. 2019). Populist RRs communicate racist and xenophobic arguments, but they do so successfully. Given the importance of immigration and the traction of arguments against it today, it is important to understand how their discourses legitimise such arguments.

In 1999, Milliken regretted the lack of concepts for explaining processes of discourse production, which she understood as important for theory and foreign policy arguments (238). She nonetheless outlined the foundations of discourse production processes. She explains that new discourses are formed by adopting existing discursive constructions. Milliken explains this adoption process using the concept of ‘articulation’ that Jutta Weldes developed for foreign policy study. According to Weldes (1999), discursive objects are constructed from ‘cultural raw materials’ and ‘linguistic resources’ that already make sense within a particular society, a process which she refers to as ‘articulation’ (154). The combination and repetition of existing cultural materials results in ‘contingent and

contextually specific representations of the world' which 'come to seem as though they are inherently or necessarily connected and the meanings they produce come to seem natural' (ibid). Although theory on the processes of discourse production has come a long way, Milliken's concern still underpins and drives my particular research project: we know that right-wing nationalist parties are invoking liberal values, including gender equality, but scholars have not yet explained the specific processes they use to do so.

### **2.3 Gender**

Issues of gender and gender identity were long side-lined from the study of International Relations. Not only were women almost completely absent from theory and practice, the role of gender in international politics was underappreciated (Tickner 1992). Feminist scholars challenge this, highlighting the ways in which the study of International Relations is a deeply gendered activity (ibid., 6). They consider how international politics is affected by men and women and the gendered, typically masculine elements of core concepts, such as war or security. The study of gender in International Relations is part of a wider study of power relations. One activity of feminist scholars is the analysis of gendered discourses which, as Khalid (2011) explains, typically reveals underlying power relations (29). Finally, working within a strand of critical theory, these scholars understand gender as part of a socially constructed identity, which serves a particular purpose. It can therefore be instrumentalised by powerful actors in order to fulfil specific aims.

RRPs typically promote traditional gender roles and have a stereotypically masculine image (Immerzeel et al. 2013, 275). Sociologists have explored the misogynistic politics and emphasis on control over women and their rights common to nationalist parties (see, for example, Short 2017). In addition, both the members and those who vote for RRP are predominantly male. A cross-national investigation into 12 western European countries by Immerzeel et al. in 2013 found that women are on average 39 per cent less likely to vote for a RRP than men (275). For these reasons, Mudde (2007) describes European right-wing parties as 'men's parties'. Whilst scholarship on right-wing nationalism has increased in recent years, studies on the role of gender are limited (Köttig et al. 2016, 2). Research has been centred on finding possible explanations for the gender gap in far-right voting, including the analysis of potential socio-economic factors (Coffé 2018, 3), and populist characteristics that



may appeal more to men than to women (Immerzeel et al. 2013, 265). Given the traditional gender stereotypes and common anti-feminist tone of RRP, scholars note that women's rights are seemingly only instrumentalised as part of an anti-Islam rhetoric (Blee 2017, 278; Froio 2018; Farris 2017; Wodak 2015). RRP claim that Islam is oppressive towards women and use this claim to oppose Muslim immigration. Despite this observation, little attention has been given to these gendered anti-immigration discourses themselves. Indeed, highlighting future angles for gender sensitive research on the far right, Bitzan (2016) urges more attention on the intersection between gender and anti-immigration discourses and international comparisons of far-right gender discourses (74). Sara Farris (2017) explores the juncture between nationalism and feminism, noting their common framing of Islam as a 'quintessentially misogynistic religion and culture' (4). Farris coins the term 'femonationalism', short for 'feminist and femocratic nationalism', to refer to this intersection between right-wing xenophobic parties and feminists and femocrats (ibid.). Her book provides some useful insights into the key gendered stereotypes of the victimised Muslim woman and the oppressive Muslim man, which both groups invoke. She focuses, however, on the feminist logic underpinning this framing. Farris considers the reasons that nationalist, feminist, and neoliberal views may converge in their understanding of gender in Islam. She argues that this racist practice, enacted by feminists across the spectrum, is produced by a specifically economic logic that aims to reproduce the existing order (5). My thesis will build on the stereotypes that Farris mentions. Unlike Farris, however, I will not consider women's rights as a point of agreement between nationalists and feminists, but as a political tool, co-opted by RRP to legitimise and advance anti-immigration arguments. I will therefore focus on the ways that this discourse is constructed and reproduced, rather than the reasons that it may appeal to different groups.

## **2.4 Framing anti-immigration**

Anti-immigration is the central concern for RRP. They employ different arguments to oppose immigration, from economic arguments to cultural ones. Nativist arguments share the idea that non-natives are incompatible with natives and therefore present a threat to the homogeneity of the national community. They rely on Othering to construct divisions between the in-group (natives) and the out-group (non-natives). Coined within postcolonial theory, Othering refers to a 'process of differentiation and demarcation, by which the line is

drawn between “us” and “them” – before the more and the less powerful – and through which social distance is established and maintained’ (Lister 2004, 101). Othering is a discursive process whereby powerful groups define another group as different and inferior. It underscores anti-immigration policies, which construct immigrant groups as both different and inferior. Given that the in-group and the out-group (or Other) are socially constructed and imagined, the representation of the out-group can change depending on ideological preferences and national context.

Scholars have noted a shift in right-wing immigration arguments from race-based or ethnic Othering to cultural Othering (Froio 2018; Farris 2017). In her study of the anti-immigration framing choices of the French far right, Froio (2018) explains that differences between the in-group and out-group were previously typically explained using racist and neo-racist frames, which stress the primordial characteristics that allegedly make up the national identity of the in-group (Froio 2018, 698). Such race-based frames employ ‘strictly oppositional values’, informed by biological racism, to claim that certain ethnic groups are inherently inferior and incompatible with the national population (ibid., 697). These race-based frames are accompanied by cultural frames, which claim that the civic characteristics of another culture are fundamentally different. Since 9/11, however, a specific anti-Islam cultural nativism has emerged within the western far right, whereby Islam is presented as ‘backward’ and therefore incompatible with European liberal values (ibid., 699). In addition to the shift towards cultural nativism, it is important to note the new focus on anti-Islam arguments in anti-immigration discourse. The last decade has seen an increase in specifically Muslim immigration to Europe and this has become the main focus of the European far right. Anti-immigration arguments have in many cases become anti-Islam arguments, with many RRP no longer speaking broadly against immigration, but specifically against Islam (Farris 2017, 4). This shift in focus has strengthened the cultural frame. New cultural anti-immigration arguments consider Islam and Islamic culture to be irreconcilable with the ‘cultural roots and principles of western democracies’ (Froio 2018, 699). In addition to the traditional race frame, and the more recent cultural one, Froio identifies a third frame used by the far right to express anti-Islam prejudices: the religious frame. This frame feeds into the cultural frame but emphasises differences between Islam and the alleged *religious* identity of European natives, whether that is Christian or secular (702). Although anti-Islam has become the dominant anti-Other discourse, the critique of Islam and Islamic culture is often used by RRP as a critique of immigration in general, whether or not they are referring to Muslim

immigration. Froio thus explains that migrants are now no longer seen as Syrian or Algerian, for example, but as Muslim, whether or not they are (699). She notes that cultural and religious anti-Islam frames employ national values to justify opposition to Islam, citing values of tolerance, secularism, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, and animal rights to assert the incompatibility between Islam and western liberal values (ibid.). Based on this, she calls for more work on the interactions between far-right and mainstream discourses, explaining that this link may allow the far right to bridge the gap between nativism and liberal values (705).

## **2.5 Gendered Othering**

Gender emerges as part of cultural and religious Othering. Spivak (1985) explains that Othering is a multidimensional process which can work through several different layers of social differentiation. Difference can be conveyed through ethnicity or culture, but also through class or gender. Powerful actors have made use of gender in Othering processes, claiming that the out-group, for example Muslim immigrants, does not respect women's rights and, for this reason, is not compatible with the supposedly gender egalitarian in-group. As gender is already implicated in power relations in politics (Khalid 2011), it is easy to present women of different cultures as vulnerable and victimised. This representation is not new to the far right. Given that discourses are constructed upon existing ones, it is important to understand how women's vulnerability and rights have already been employed in Othering discourses. Postcolonial feminist scholars have shown how Muslim women are often stereotyped as victims in discourses on women's rights. This stereotype relies on the image of a veiled Muslim woman living in an oppressive society. The insistence on the vulnerability of the Muslim woman in turn constructs the men in her society as oppressive, uncivilised, or aggressive. Muslim men are thus characterised by their supposed disrespect for women's rights. The discourse has been employed by Western imperialist powers to justify intervention or to enact policies against minorities (Mahmood 2009, 193; Bob 2019, 129). For example, several studies have shown the use of this particular gendered discourse in the US 'war on terror' discourse, whereby the US administration justified its interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan by presenting them as attempts to save oppressed women and defend women's rights (Khalid 2011; Tickner 2002).

The same stereotype was employed in arguments for the French ban on face covering. In 2011, France became the first European country to impose a ban on full-face veils in public areas, extending their existing ban on religious symbols in public institutions. Although the ban technically applies to all forms of face covering, including masks, helmets and balaclavas, it was widely considered to target Islamic veils. The parliamentary commission recommending the ban stated that the wearing of the veil by some women threatened the founding principles of the modern French state: *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité* (Bob 2019, 130). According to the commission, the veil is coercive, infringing on women's *liberté* and, in its limited application to one gender, their *égalité*. It described the veil as the 'ambulatory expression of a denial of liberty that touches a specific category of the population: women'; a symbol of women's 'subservience' which 'constitute[s] a negation of the principle of equality'; and, finally, 'a regression of the rights and the dignity of the women in our society [...] a form of sexual apartheid' (translation in Library of Congress 2015). Despite the reasons given by Muslim women for wearing the veil, it was presented as a tool of oppression and the ban as a protection of women's rights and French national values. These gendered postcolonial stereotypes construct a narrative which postcolonial, feminist, literary theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) refers to as the 'white men [are] saving brown women from brown men' narrative (93). Here, racial Othering is aided by gendered Othering to presents the Muslim woman as the ultimate vulnerable victim in need of support. Paradoxically, given that they claim to support gender equality, such campaigns seem to focus on women's vulnerability by exposing alleged risks to their safety, rather than on empowerment. As will be shown, this emphasis on vulnerability corresponds to contemporary gendered Othering discourses and to reactionary attitudes more generally.

### **3 Theoretical Framework: Reactionary Framing**

Given the centrality of reproduction for discourse, Milliken (1999) states that to be considered well done, discourse analyses must not only explain the current state of international society, but address how this state is ‘inherently contingent’ on what has come before and what will come in the future (242). The insights from postcolonial and feminist theory highlighted in my literature review will not only be crucial in explaining how the far right’s gendered anti-immigration narratives are constructed, they will also ensure this theoretical continuity. When it comes to the particular arguments and discursive strategies that explain how the far right co-opt values of the liberal opposition, however, my analysis will be supported by existing theories on reactionary rhetoric.

It seems unusual for anti-establishment far-right parties to invoke liberal democratic values such as women’s rights. However, Hirschman (1991) shows that it is, in fact, not so uncommon for reactionary forces to employ liberal arguments. Hirschman’s examples are typically taken from reactionary arguments against proposed progressive movements, such as social and economic progress, but they elucidate rhetorical strategies that are used more generally by reactionary parties against progressive arguments. Building on the concept of discourse as a powerful legitimising force, Hirschman found that reactionary rhetoric was shaped by the ‘imperatives of argument’, rather than fundamental political beliefs, ‘almost regardless of the desires, character, or convictions of the participants’ (x). His book attests to the power of discourse, tracing different types of argument or ‘manoeuvres’ that are used by reactionary forces and creating a useful typology of narratives. Hirschman explains that when their views or policies might be considered unsavoury by the public, reactionaries can endorse the opposite opinion, ‘sincerely or otherwise, but then attempt to demonstrate that the action proposed or undertaken is ill conceived’ (11). He outlines three ways, or ‘theses’, by which they can do this. They can claim that it will not work (the ‘futility thesis’); that it will produce opposite or undesirable effects (the ‘perversity thesis’); or that it will endanger some previous societal accomplishment (the ‘jeopardy thesis’) (7).

Writing on the global right wing, Clifford Bob (2012) also shows how the contemporary right wing manipulates the arguments of its liberal opposition. Bob shows that reactionary methods and arguments are commonly shaped through interaction with those of the opposition (190).

He demonstrates how the right wing co-opts liberal images and arguments or frames its stances in a liberal way. He also outlines further rhetorical techniques, such as persuading, framing, and denouncing, which the right wing can use to turn the opposition's arguments against them (194). These techniques have been used to frame issues from possessing a gun to seeing a Muslim woman's face as a 'right' to be protected. Bob returns to analyse the power of appealing to rights specifically in a later publication (2019). In this, he describes how, in today's 'age of rights', rights have become 'weapons of politics', used not only as progressive goals, but for 'illiberal ends' and 'aggressive purposes' (2). For Bob, rights serve as rhetorical moves that are 'aimed at securing the claimant's underlying goals, most importantly by attracting adherents to the cause through moralistic rights language' (11). It is in this way that varieties of rights, such as civil rights or human rights, and group rights, such as women's rights or LGBTQ rights, have come to serve as a 'rallying cry' for all manner of political programmes (ibid.). Bob shows that rights are open to political manipulation and are extremely powerful, and urges scholars to explore their use (7). He provides a typology of ways in which a proponent can use rights, which includes for masking underlying motives, overturning particular policies, discrediting rivals, or undermining or suppressing subordinate groups or communities (14). Whilst the theory outlined in the literature review therefore explains the justifications of this project and the origins of some of the frames, the work of Bob and Hirschman on reactionary rhetoric will help to explain the rhetorical strategies at play.

## **4 Research Design and Methodology**

### **4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis**

Acknowledging the relationship between discourse and power, CDA aims to uncover the ways in which discourse produces and reproduces dominance and inequality. Van Dijk (1993) describes CDA as a form of ‘sociopolitical discourse analysis’ because of its focus on social inequality (249). For van Dijk, CDA is a mode for understanding the power relations involved in constructing or maintaining forms of social, political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial or gender inequality (ibid.). Given that my project focuses on radical right political discourse and both its use and reproduction of different forms of social inequality, this form of discourse analysis is best suited to my research. Critical discourse analysts examine the linguistic properties of texts within a specific discourse to uncover the use, construction, and reconstruction of power relations. They attempt to understand the discursive strategies that legitimise control, ‘naturalize’ the social order, and reinforce relations of inequality (ibid., 254). The anti-immigration discourse of the radical right constructs relations of inequality between different ethnic groups. When it uses women’s rights to do this, it introduces a further element of inequality, that of gender. This form of analysis will therefore help me to uncover the discursive strategies behind this multi-layered use and construction of inequality.

### **4.2 Text selection**

The AfD began as part of the German political group *Wahlalternative 2013* (Electoral Alternative 2013), which was formed to oppose German Eurozone policies that it claimed had been proven unsuitable. In 2013, the group founded a new party, the AfD, in order to compete in the 2013 federal elections. The Eurozone remained the AfD’s central concern until 2015 when, following months of party tension, founder and principal speaker Bernd Lucke was forced to quit the party and Frauke Petry was elected as the new principal speaker. This new leadership marked a change: the party agenda shifted to the right and its focus was redirected from the Euro to immigration issues. The transition prompted several MPs to resign, citing the rise of xenophobic sentiments in the party (Reuters 2015). It also coincided with the peak of the European ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015, which marked an upturn in anti-immigration and anti-Islam sentiment and bolstered support for far-right parties across Europe. Whilst anti-immigration has long been the central issue for more established far-right

parties such as the FN, it was not until 2015 that the AfD could be classed as a RRP, rather than a right-wing single-issue party. My project therefore considers texts published between 2015 and the beginning of 2019, when I completed my data collection. This time period allows for a fairer comparison between the established FN and the newer AfD. Furthermore, both France and Germany held major elections in 2017: the French presidential election and the election for the German parliament. Analysing the parties across their election campaigns also allows me to study a greater variety of materials. Finally, both parties had considerable success during this period: the French presidential elections of 2017 marked the first time since 2002 that a FN candidate had made it into the second round; the AfD made significant gains in the 2016 state elections in Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt and, as already mentioned, won its first seats in the federal parliament in 2017, with 12.6 per cent of the vote.

In order to gain as comprehensive results as possible, my data collection comprised any written or spoken texts published by the party as official discourse between 2015 and 2019. This included articles written by party members, website content, party programmes, election manifestos, interviews, and speeches by party leaders and MPs. I chose to limit my research to what was published on official party channels, rather than considering what individual members may have published on personal channels, to reflect the discourse of the party. Skinner (2002) points out that any statement reflects deliberate linguistic choices by the speaker (105). He urges readers to engage with and interpret these choices on a linguistic level to understand their meanings (113). I will, therefore, demonstrate the broader narratives by unpacking the language in individual quotes by members and leaders of the parties.

### **4.3 Method**

In order to respond to my research question, I had to first ascertain that the RRP did in fact employ women's rights to advance their anti-immigration arguments. After scanning the party programmes for the typical arguments used in their anti-immigration discourse, I performed key word searches to find occasions where women's rights or gender equality were invoked. If this occurred in an argument on immigration, I recorded it. After finding evidence of explicit links between women's rights and anti-immigration, I began to organise my data thematically, analysing the particular arguments that were being used, until I could



identify distinct narratives, which will be discussed in my analysis below. Given that it is impossible to analyse everything that has been published between these years, I encountered the inevitable problem in conducting discourse analyses of when to stop collecting data. Milliken (1999) advises that an analysis can be said to be 'complete', or rather 'validated', when new texts consistently fit within the theoretical categories that the researcher has generated (234). After identifying three categories from my initial research, I found that they accounted for any new discourse that I collected. Milliken also responds to the issue of reliability of discourse analyses. She explains that when performed as such, the interpretation offered will have been 'checked and reworked until it fits with and explains consistently texts that were not originally part of its empirical base' (235).

## 5 Analysis: Anti-immigration for Women's Rights

### 5.1 A feminist far right?

As will be shown, both parties articulate a commitment to women's rights in anti-immigration arguments. In order to ascertain whether the shift in discourse represents a real shift in attitudes towards gender equality, or simply an opportunistic employment of it as a legitimising discourse, it is necessary to briefly examine their actual commitment to women's rights. The FN was renowned for being particularly retrograde in its attitudes towards gender equality under founder and former president Jean-Marie Le Pen. When his daughter, Marine Le Pen, took over the presidency of the party in 2011, she began a campaign of *dédiabolisation* (literally, de-demonisation), which aimed to refashion the party's image, overhauling the racist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic one of her father's party. Unsurprisingly, this involved a softening of the language used to refer to gender roles. Despite this, Rojtman (2018) shows that the new FN under Marine Le Pen does little more to support women's rights than it did under her father's leadership. Indeed, of the 144 proposals in Marine Le Pen's 2017 presidential election manifesto, only one specifically concerns women's rights: 'defend women's rights: fight against the Islamism which reverses their fundamental freedoms; implement a national plan for equal pay and fight against job insecurity and social precarity' (Le Pen 2017b). In the European Parliament too, FN MEPs consistently vote against laws designed to advance women's rights: for example, the Estrela report on sexual and reproductive health by the Commission for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in 2013; the Zuber report on equality between women and men in the EU in 2014; and the Tarabella report on progress on gender equality in 2015 (Rojtman 2018). In 2017, journalists working for the French television documentary *L'Œil* found that since Marine Le Pen had become an MEP, the European Parliament had reviewed 59 texts on women's rights. Le Pen voted against 17 of these, abstained seven times and was absent 32 times. When questioned by the journalists about her disinterest in these texts, she explained that the European Parliament texts on women 'never speak of what is reversing women's rights: the advancement of Islamism' (quoted in Bodoc 2017). The FN's new commitment to women's rights in their discourse is largely absent from their policy. In addition, it is worth noting that its support for women's rights is often channelled through its female leadership. Stockemer and Barisione (2017) note that the party's new identity revolves more around the figure of Marine Le Pen as a strong, personable leader, than it did around that of her father (104). She

often refers to her own identity as a woman to evidence her support for women's rights. This can be seen in her campaign video for the 2017 presidential elections. The campaign is structured around the refrain 'I am a', following which Le Pen gives reasons that her identity places her as the best candidate. The video begins with 'I am a woman', followed by 'I am a mother' (Le Pen 2017a, 00:24–00:36). These elements of her identity are invoked as evidence of her commitment to women's rights. Other members of the party also highlight her supposedly innate support for women's rights. For example, FN member of the National Assembly and secretary-general of the *Rassemblement bleu Marine* (RBM)<sup>3</sup>, Gilbert Collard, states that 'for all those who no longer recognise themselves in institutionalised feminism, yet for whom the struggle must continue, the *Rassemblement bleu Marine*, chaired by a woman, Marine Le Pen, can today serve as a rallying point' (Collard 2016). Here, the fact that Marine Le Pen is a woman is given as a reason that the RBM will offer more support for women's rights than other groups without female chairs. The FN is opportunistic in their employment of women's rights, using it to legitimise their opposition to immigration, and channelling it through their female leader.

The AfD is equally conservative in its attitudes towards gender equality. The party relies on traditional gender stereotypes and rejects feminism. Its 2016 manifesto commends the traditional family and highlights the danger of gender mainstreaming and the current 'emphasis on individuality' which, it claims, 'undermines the family as a worthy, fundamental unit' (AfD 2016, 27). The AfD also calls for a strengthening of traditional gender roles, stating that it wishes to 'initiate a discussion on social values to strengthen parental roles and [fight] against the stigmatisation of traditional gender roles promoted by gender mainstreaming' (ibid.). In their study on gender equality in nativist discourses, Siim et al. (2016) find that the AfD argues for the elimination of 'all laws and regulations decreed in the spirit of gender ideology' and for the withdrawal of subsidies for any measures that promote gender ideology, including positions for equal opportunities officers and funding for gender studies (quoted and translated in Siim et al. 2016, 49). In addition to abortion, the AfD opposes a gender quota, claiming that this would lead to discrimination against men (ibid.). At times, strands of the AfD have even spoken out explicitly against feminism. In 2014, the youth wing of the party, *Junge Alternative* (Young Alternative), launched a social media campaign targeting feminism as a left-wing ideology and encouraging its members to post

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<sup>3</sup> The *Rassemblement bleu Marine* (Marine Blue Gathering) is a political coalition of right-wing and far-right parties, created by Marine Le Pen in 2012 before the legislative elections.

online the reasons that they reject it (White 2014). The programme of the AfD, like that of the FN, shows little support for gender equality, suggesting that such arguments are used opportunistically rather than because of an actual support for women's rights. In comparison to the FN, the AfD relies less on its female members when it comes to promoting this discourse. Female members of the party, in particular the well-known parliamentary leader Alice Weidel, commonly oppose immigration in the name of women's rights. However, they do not explicitly refer to their identities as women to imply an emotional connection or innate commitment to women's rights like Le Pen. Women's rights are clearly not a priority for the AfD or the FN but are, as scholars have noted, instrumentalised by the parties as part of their anti-immigration discourses.

## **5.2 Non-native women's rights**

The first of the far right's anti-immigration narratives employing women's rights concerns the rights of non-native, immigrant, predominantly Muslim women. Rearticulating existing ethnic and gendered Othering discourses, this narrative presents immigrant women as victims of patriarchal, oppressive cultures. The narrative has two effects: first, it reinforces cultural and religious Othering frames which, as Froio (2018) has shown, operate as anti-immigration discourses in themselves and, second, it establishes certain assumptions which form the foundations of subsequent anti-immigration narratives. The RRP's claim that immigrant, particularly Muslim, women are deprived of their rights. In a FN press release, for example, Collard (2016), commented on 'the alarming decline of women's rights in our country.' He added that 'the self-proclaimed feminists of today are fighting the wrong battle; the fight for gender equality does not take place in the aisles of toy shops, but in the French Colognes and Molenbeeks.' The German city of Cologne and the Brussels suburb of Molenbeek are given as examples of areas with large immigrant communities. Collard suggests that women's rights are seriously endangered in these communities, framing the struggle in grave terms as a 'battle' and a 'fight'. The statement mocks modern feminists by dubbing them 'self-proclaimed' and ridiculing their preoccupation with supposedly small issues, implying that the FN appreciates the struggle for women's rights more than others. FN spokesperson, Jordan Bardella (2016a), also situates the struggle for women's rights within these communities. In a FN press release, he refers to the 'suburban neighbourhoods where women's rights crumble under the weight of retrograde foreign cultures. Adapting their

clothing or their make-up, verbal abuse, subservience and social control; to the general indifference, first and foremost of public authorities, women suffer from a decline of fundamental freedoms.’ Using emotive language, he again emphasises the decline in women’s rights, conjuring up an image of destruction with the verb ‘crumbling’. Bardella also suggests that the FN is the only party to care about the rights of these women, commenting on the ‘indifference’ of the authorities. The list of evidence given, beginning with the clothing restrictions, frames the decline as continuous and suggests that the fight against it is urgent. It is clear that the clothing of Muslim women is integral to the claim that they do not have fundamental rights. The FN vehemently supported both the 2004 ban on conspicuous religious symbols in French public schools and the 2011 ban on face covering in public areas, and Marine Le Pen has even spoken in favour of a complete headscarf ban in public places (Bronner et al. 2012). For the FN, these items of clothing contradict the French principle of secularism and are a sign of the oppression of women. Indeed, in the televised debate between the presidential candidates in 2017, Le Pen (2017c) stated that for her, ‘the veil is an act of the subjugation of women’ (1:01:38). Notably, this narrative almost exclusively refers to Muslim women, rather than immigrant women more generally, referencing their clothing and areas with large Muslim populations. This corresponds to the observation made by Farris (2017) that anti-Muslim rhetoric has become the dominant anti-Other rhetoric (4). As Froio (2018) states, however, this anti-Muslim discourse dovetails with and strengthens the broader anti-immigration discourse.

The AfD is not as preoccupied with the rights of immigrant women as the FN, yet they too make reference to their oppression. Like the FN, the AfD presents Muslim women as oppressed by their religion and its supposedly archaic worldview. In an article published in the AfD members’ magazine on International Women’s Day, AfD representative and spokesperson for women’s affairs, Birgit Bessin (2018), refers, for example, to ‘the profoundly misogynistic Sharia culture [that] is spreading through mass migration to Germany.’ Bessin emphasises the perceived danger to Muslim women’s rights by describing the culture as ‘*profoundly* misogynistic’ and by labelling it as a form of ‘Sharia’. Both the FN and the AfD frequently describe *Islamic* practices as elements of Islamist fundamentalism or Sharia law. Referring to these practices as components of fundamentalism or political Islam, rather than simply Islam, exaggerates their severity. The AfD also regularly cites the headscarf as evidence of the lack of Muslim women’s rights. Germany does not have laws in place against either the headscarf or face covering for reasons of secularism like France, but

the AfD has made both part of its programme, repeatedly linking the bans to gender equality. The AfD programme for the 2017 parliamentary elections, for example, claims that the headscarf is a 'religious and political sign of the subordination of Muslim women' (AfD 2017, 35). In February 2018, the AfD also proposed a burqa ban to the German parliament, stating that the burqa 'contradicts the equality of men and women' (Deutscher Bundestag 2018, 2). Like Le Pen, Weidel went one step further, suggesting a ban on headscarves in German public spaces. She called the headscarf sexist, stating that it was an 'absolutely sexist symbol' which 'stands for the submission of women' and that it 'flaunts the apartheid between men and women' (quoted in Fiedler and Müller-Neuhof 2017). Her statements convey certainty through the combination of the adverb 'absolutely' and the description of the headscarf as a symbol which directly 'stands for' submission, suggesting that this is its only purpose. Weidel's reference to the headscarf as a form of apartheid also casts it as a deeply segregating and discriminatory act.

This narrative of vulnerable Muslim immigrant women clearly fits into the existing gendered Othering discourse examined in postcolonial literature. Modern Muslim women living in France and Germany are presented, as Wodak (2015) states, as the 'ultimate "Other"', in need of help (152). It is evident that this narrative is constructed by a process of articulation, built upon the existing stereotypes of vulnerable women from different cultures. The FN has used this motif of the oppression of immigrant women for a long time. This means that the FN can build not only on the far right (and previous) gendered Othering narratives, but on their own, and may explain why the AfD, with a shorter history and fewer existing narratives of its own, refers to it less frequently.

Moreover, both the FN and the AfD express sympathy and an alleged desire to help immigrant women and rectify their inequality. In her 2017 presidential campaign video, Le Pen (2017a) describes her empathy with these women, claiming that she 'experience[s] these restrictions on freedoms [...] like a form of extreme violence.' She implies that, as a woman, she has a deep connection to these women and a violent, emotional response to their restricted freedoms. The same approach is taken by Bardella (2016b) who, in support of Le Pen's campaign, claims that as the 'only woman and mother to lead a political party, Marine Le Pen will always be at the sides of women who aspire to regain their freedom by breaking out of the chains of these cultural ghettos.' Bardella's statement again conveys the alleged violence of these restrictions with the image of chains and Le Pen's solidarity with these

oppressed women. Likewise, the AfD expresses the need to fight for the gender equality of oppressed women in Germany, stating that their ‘equality must be fought for’ (Pazderski 2016). This rhetoric of fighting makes the rights of these women seem like a priority for the parties and suggests that there is an urgent need to protect them. Again, this discourse clearly refers back to Spivak’s (1988) ‘saving brown women’ narrative, however, given how these discourses are channelled through female members of the party in the FN’s case, here it can be rephrased as white *women and men* saving brown women (93). In the context of an anti-immigration discourse this seems illogical. It is already unusual for the far right to invoke women’s rights, but invoking the rights of immigrant women is even more unusual. RRP are typically unsympathetic towards foreigners and keen to present them as an Other and a threat, rather than expressing an affinity and sympathy for them. This discrepancy indicates that the sympathy cultivated for Muslim *women* is an instrument within a broader anti-immigration discourse which helps RRP to stigmatise other foreigners.

Unsurprisingly, the emphasis on the vulnerability of Muslim women is used by the parties to portray immigrant, Muslim men as their natural oppressors. Both the AfD and the FN use the supposed victimhood of Muslim women as evidence of the misogyny of their male counterparts. This is exemplified by an article that the AfD published on their website referring to the results of a 2013 study by the United Nations which found that over 99 per cent of Egyptian women had been victims of sexual harassment. In the article, AfD board member Georg Pazderski (2017) states that the results of the study are not only ‘evidence of the oppression of women in Muslim countries’ but that they ‘expose above all the stone-age mentality of Muslim men towards Muslim women.’ Pazderski explicitly links the alleged oppression to the attitudes of Muslim men, which he exaggerates as ‘stone-age’, and presents it as proven by referring to it as ‘evidence’. This reasoning adds arguments on gender equality to the typical stereotype of the Muslim Other. The vulnerability and victimhood of Muslim women is explained through the misogyny and oppression enacted by Muslim men. This completes the other half of Spivak’s (1988) racial and gendered Othering narrative: that the female victim needs saving ‘from brown men’ (93).

### 5.3 Native women's rights

The representation of Muslim men as misogynistic and oppressive forms the basis of the second women's rights narrative. It also allows RRP's to transition from an anti-Muslim Othering narrative to an anti-immigration one. Firstly, by focusing on these allegedly engrained and abhorrent cultural attitudes, the far right reinforce the perceived difference between Muslim men and the native community. Referring to their attitudes towards women, however, Le Pen (2016) states: 'the particular kind of sexual frustration that these men are subject to, whether because of their situation as migrants, their living conditions in their countries of origin, or their religious dogmas, does not interest me in the slightest; I have better things to do than find some kind of excuse for these rampant males.' Using violent, and at times explicitly racist, language, Le Pen's statement portrays Muslim men not only as different, but as animalistic and inferior. The phrase 'rampant males' has particularly animalistic connotations, typically used to highlight wild, aggressive characteristics. As already mentioned, such Othering discourses are not new. However, here the normal Othering discourse takes on a new dimension based on attitudes towards gender equality. Rather than operating as an extra layer to the Othering discourse as in the previous vulnerability narrative, in this case gender and gender attitudes are used as evidence of Otherness. Through this Othering discourse, RRP's present their first argument against immigration: Muslim men are fundamentally different and incapable of integrating and it is therefore pointless to allow them to immigrate. This argument functions through the rhetorical technique that Hirschman (1991) refers to as the 'futility thesis', whereby 'attempts at social transformation will be unavailing' (7). Hirschman (1991) explains that futility arguments commonly evoke belief in a 'natural law', with their proponents claiming that certain things are 'invariant by nature' (58). The attitudes towards women are presented as proof of difference and fixed: 'clear *evidence* that Muslim migrants are *incapable* of integrating' (Pazderski 2017, emphasis added). Here, this is stated with certainty and any chance of them changing their attitudes is dismissed. According to this discourse, whilst the attitudes towards gender equality are deplorable and clearly need addressing, they are engrained in the Other's culture and it would therefore be futile to try to overcome them. Like the vulnerability discourse, this argument does not therefore espouse true support for women's rights or a real desire to fight for them.



The above quote from Marine Le Pen also introduces the second anti-immigration argument based on the alleged attitudes of immigrant men towards women. The far right translates this misogyny into a direct threat, this time not for immigrant women, but for native women. Some degree of threat or risk is implicit in the presentation of Muslim men as oppressive, animalistic and sexually frustrated. However, the RRP's take this one step further, implying that European women are at risk of objectification, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. This claim became explicit during the period in question, aided by a series of very unfortunate national events, primarily the incidents that took place on New Year's Eve 2015 in Germany. On this night, there were incidents of mass sexual assaults at public celebrations across the country. The assaults in Cologne were the most widespread and the most reported but similar incidents occurred in other cities, notably in Hamburg, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, and Bielefeld. A document leaked by the German federal police and published by the German newspaper, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, in July 2016 estimated that more than 1,200 women had been sexually assaulted during that night across Germany, including around 650 in Cologne, over 400 in Hamburg, and many more in Stuttgart, Düsseldorf and other cities (Mascolo and von der Heide 2016). It estimated that more than 2,000 men had been involved and stated that 120 suspects had been identified (ibid.). Statistics published by the federal police in July 2016 showed that 881 offences were reported that night across Germany, of which 642 were sexual offences and 239 'combination offences' (Statista 2016). Initial reports stated that the majority of perpetrators were of Arab or North African appearance, leading many to assume that migrants were responsible for the assaults. The document published by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* partially confirmed this claim, stating that approximately half of the suspects had been in Germany for less than one year (Mascolo and von der Heide 2016). Taking place during the height of the 'migrant crisis', the attacks were immediately linked to the increase in refugee arrivals in Germany in 2015 and sparked an international outcry and widespread debate on Germany's (and Europe's) handling of the 'migrant crisis'. The assaults had a catastrophic effect on the perception of refugees and immigrants, and of Germany's asylum policy. As would be expected, the AfD capitalised on these events, condemning Germany's liberal asylum policy. The implicit threat from the perception of migrant men as aggressive and sexually frustrated became an explicit threat narrative based on the assaults.

The AfD's threat narrative claims that because of their misogynistic attitudes, immigrant men physically endanger native women and should not be allowed into the country, using the

Cologne assaults as evidence. From the beginning of 2016, the AfD began to refer to immigrant and refugee men as sex offenders, repeatedly invoking the risk to German women. Whilst this threat narrative was particularly prevalent immediately after the New Year's Eve incidents, it has been employed ever since. For example, Weidel (2017a), referred to the 'mass of criminal migrants who seem to regard women and girls as fair game.' The term 'fair game' conveys a sense of complete disrespect, heightened by the reference not only to women, but to girls. Migrants arriving in Europe are commonly referred to as a 'mass'; referring to them as a 'mass of *criminal* migrants' therefore suggests that all of them are criminals. This narrative casts women as potential victims, reversing the common portrayal of migrants as victims in a technique that Bob (2012) refers to as 'framejacking'. According to this technique, the frame of the opposition, in this case the vulnerability of the migrants, is co-opted and re-applied to a different object, here German women (ibid., 85). This technique is evident in another statement by Weidel (2017b), in which she claims that 'mass immigration represents a huge security problem particularly for the most vulnerable members of our society, notably young girls and women.' Weidel again presents women as potential victims by highlighting their vulnerability. She amplifies the threat and evokes the shock and sympathy of her audience by referring again to 'young girls'. By framejacking and presenting German women as the true victims of immigration, the AfD transforms any sympathy for migrants into fear, and suggests the urgency of acting. Notably, Weidel's claims were made over 18 months after the New Year's Eve assaults, showing that these ideas became established in the party's anti-immigration discourse.

Linking the stereotype of oppressive men to actual cases of sexual assault gives the AfD an opportunity to back its argument up with statistics. A concept paper by the Working Group for Immigration and Asylum for an AfD press conference in August 2017, for example, used the assaults to support their claims that asylum seekers are responsible for the increase in crime and, in particular, sex offences in Germany. The paper suggests that women are increasingly at risk because of migration, stating that the assaults in Cologne were only 'the tip of the iceberg' as the most recent federal police crime statistics show a 53 per cent increase in crimes committed by asylum seekers in 2016. It also claims that a particularly high number of suspects in sex offence cases are asylum seekers (Bachmann 2017). The statistics this paper refers to come from a federal police report published in *Die Welt* newspaper. Whilst it is true that asylum seekers are overrepresented among the suspects of sex offences (14.9 per cent of all suspects in 2016), the report from *Die Welt* includes two

caveats that the AfD paper fails to mention. It points out that the asylum seekers arriving in Germany during this period were overwhelmingly young and male and that both of these categories are considerably overrepresented among the suspects of sex offences, and crime more generally (Lutz and Leubecher 2017). Moreover, according to statistics from the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, there was a 56.4 per cent increase in the number of asylum seekers in Germany from 2015 to 2016 (Grote 2018). The 53 per cent increase in crimes committed by asylum seekers is therefore proportional to the increase in asylum seekers. The AfD used shocking statistics to argue that what occurred in Cologne was becoming increasingly common. In doing so, they suggest that migration to Germany must be stemmed as quickly as possible to protect German women.

Bob (2012) explains how far-right parties have operated as a transnational network in the past, adopting discourses from similar parties or profiting from events abroad. This can be seen in the FN discourse after the New Year's Eve assaults in Germany. The FN used the attacks in Germany to strengthen their anti-immigration argument, quickly integrating the assaults into their discourse. From the beginning of 2016, the FN also began to employ a threat narrative. Like that of the AfD, this was built on the existing rhetoric of oppressive and violent immigrant men, who were then presented as a direct threat not only to immigrant women, but to French women. Given that the assaults did not actually occur in France, the threat narrative employed by the FN was more subtle, relating to the threat of sexual harassment and the warning of sexual violence that the assaults in Germany represented. The party weighed in on the attacks immediately and, two weeks later, Le Pen published an extended opinion piece, responding to the New Year's Eve incidents and arguing for a way out of the 'migrant crisis'. In it, she emphasises this now common threat narrative, stating that the 'second serious consequence (for security, after terrorism) relates to women' and that she is greatly troubled that migrant men 'act like criminals (let us not forget that rape and attempted rape are crimes), that they break the essential rules of our western societies, and that they openly disregard women's rights' (Le Pen 2016). Like Weidel, Le Pen exaggerates the threat, implying that all migrant men act like criminals, and casts women as the victims. Explicitly mentioning rape and attempted rape evokes fear and the reminder that these are crimes elevates the threat further. Furthermore, the FN provides a form of 'proof' of the alleged decline in French women's rights. The presence of immigrant men is said to limit women's ability to move around freely or to dress as they want. According to the FN, French women are already 'forced on a daily basis to adapt their clothing, their make up or their

lifestyle in order to avoid “trouble” given that ‘the simple act of going out alone or wearing a skirt is seen as provocation’ (Bardella 2016b; FN 2017). Compared to the more distant threat of sexual assault, objectification and harassment are presented by Bardella as daily occurrences for French women. The FN implies that harassment by Muslim men is invasive, affecting small, everyday actions, such as leaving the house.

However, the FN also intensified the threat narrative when they could. This was most evident following a national incident later in 2016. A Pashtun interpreter filming a news report in the Calais ‘Jungle’, the unofficial refugee camp in northern France, was raped and subjected to death threats. Housing 10,000 people at its largest, the ‘Jungle’ had come to be seen as a symbol of the refugee crisis in France (Agier et al. 2019, 10). Although vastly different, this event was immediately picked up by the FN and framed in a similar way to the New Year’s Eve assaults in Germany. FN vice-president, Steeve Briois (2016), referred to the event as the ‘ghost of Cologne’ and used the comparison to suggest an urgency of acting before similar mass assaults happened in France: ‘yesterday Cologne, today Calais, tomorrow, our towns and villages? How can one not think that a similar drama could occur in French towns and villages which welcome groups of migrants from the Calais “Jungle”?’ This tricolon of time expressions conveys a progression, suggesting that the attack in Calais was part of a process and that further attacks are inevitable and acting is urgent. Referring to it as the ‘ghost of Cologne’ furthermore suggests that the same events could resurface in France. The same statement exaggerated the scale of the problem, stating that the attack demonstrated a ‘situation which has become uncontrollable and which seriously threatens the dignity and safety of women’ (ibid.). The event was clearly exaggerated, allowing the FN to elevate fear and suggest that all women in France are in danger because of immigrant men. Whilst the New Year’s Eve assaults informed one variation of the FN’s threat narrative, a specific national event allowed them to construct a more extreme version, like that of the AfD. Bob’s (2019) typology of the uses of rights arguments is useful in understanding how this narrative employs women’s rights. Women’s rights are used as a ‘rallying cry’ against immigration, a contemporary rights issue around which RRP’s can garner support. In combination with the first narrative, however, they are also used to paint Islam and immigrant communities as backward, oppressive and, ultimately, inferior, deepening the existing Othering discourse. Bob (2019) names this particular strategy ‘dynamite’, explaining that rights are used to ‘undermine or destroy a foe’s culture or community’ (14). The far-right narratives outlined so

far have established women's rights as a rallying cry against immigration and, in doing so, tarnished entire communities.

In addition, Bob (2019) explains that rights can be used as a 'wedge' to discredit rivals (14). Here, the second narrative again advances claims set out under the first narrative. The first narrative displayed the beginnings of a 'wedge' employment, with both parties claiming to be the only ones to care about the decline in women's rights within immigrant communities, implying the negligence of other parties and actors. When the threat to non-native women becomes a threat to native women under the second narrative, however, the RRP's begin to truly denounce their opposition for failing to secure the rights of women. The AfD frames the German government as directly responsible for the threat to women's safety, referring to the supposed security problem as 'the threat to internal security *imposed on us* by the federal government' and claiming that the mass of criminal migrants is 'indirectly supported by officials' (Weidel 2017b, emphasis added; Weidel 2017a). Here, in true populist style, the AfD positions itself alongside the German population as 'us', against the political elite. In France too, the FN suggested that its liberal opposition was endangering the safety of French women and putting the valuable status of women's rights in danger. They claim that the French government is responsible for the situation, referring, for example, to its 'insane immigration policy' (Leonardelli 2017). On occasion, they even blame specific politicians, as in the case of Briois (2016), who asked how the Minister of the Interior, Bernard Cazeneuve, could 'run the risk of exposing women to a real threat of sexual assaults.' The French government is again cast as directly responsible for the risk to French women. The threat narrative therefore serves three purposes, helping RRP's to oppose immigration based on the risk to women's safety and rights, to tarnish the Other's culture, and to denounce their opposition.

At the beginning of his book on rights, Bob (2019) notes that when rights are used in politics, certain rights are always considered to be more important than others (4). It is clear that whilst the far right claims to support the rights of immigrant women under the first narrative, this support does not compare to their support for the native population. Bessin (2018) makes this very clear, stating that politicians concerned about women's rights in Germany should focus on 'ensur[ing] that women can go jogging safely wherever and whenever.' When safe jogging is prioritised over the safety of migrants, the difference in support for European women over foreign women is clear. Both parties' support for women's rights is clearly

limited by their nativism. The FN made this explicit in their response to the approval of a series of funding proposals designed to benefit Muslim women or women from ethnic minorities by the European Parliament. The proposals, which include initiatives to promote the inclusion of women of colour in European politics or the access to jobs for ‘visibly’ Muslim women, are denounced by the FN. In a FN press release entitled ‘the others before our own’ MEP Mylène Troszczynski (2018) urges the French public to ‘put an end to these foolish immigration policies in order to really defend European women.’ The title of the press release is evocative of the perceived divide between native and non-native women and, using the conjunction ‘in order to’, Troszczynski suggests that defending non-native women will automatically compromise the rights of European women. This makes it even clearer that the first narrative on protecting the rights of immigrant women was simply a legitimising anti-immigration discourse, used in order to stigmatise male migrants.

#### **5.4 Women’s rights and liberal values**

Under the first two narratives, the rights of both native and non-native women are employed by RRP to oppose Muslim immigration to Europe. In both cases, RRP present women as being at risk, whether because of a decline in freedoms or the risk of physical assault. In the context of women’s rights, immigration is presented, therefore, as a threat to particular groups of the population. The final narrative universalises this threat as part of a wider discourse on the rights and values of society. This narrative presents women’s rights as a fundamental right and a value of western society. The treatment of women is furthermore linked to violations of other rights, principles and values. Using these claims, the RRP present the attack against women’s rights as an attack against the values underpinning western society and immigration therefore as a threat not just to women and their rights but to the fundamental tenets of the national, European, or western society. This narrative universalises and elevates the perceived threat of immigration to something of concern for the whole society. Like the previous narratives, this one is also based on the idea of fundamental difference through cultural Othering, a process which is reinforced with regards to the whole culture through a rights rhetoric. The RRP also use this narrative to further denounce their opposition, this time for failing to stand up for the values that their programmes are built upon. The sudden support for women’s rights, a typical liberal value, in the previous two narratives is surprising in itself given the typical far-right attitudes towards gender equality.

Yet with this final narrative, the far right acknowledges women's rights as a western value and links it to other values to buttress its anti-immigration claims. Given that both the FN and the AfD are built on platforms that oppose the EU and its liberal democratic values, this is even more surprising. This narrative builds on the previous two, extending some of their claims into the realm of societal rights and values, and embellishing them with new ones.

The final narrative begins by presenting women's rights as a fundamental national or European value. Le Pen (2016), for example, refers to women's rights and *laïcité* as 'the most central values of our republic', which she claims are 'flouted' by refugees and migrants in Europe and the governments allowing them to do so. This is clearly a hyperbolic statement and one which again capitalises on her identity as a woman: however important women's rights may be in France today, they are not typically cited as a central value for the French republic. Pairing women's rights with *laïcité*, which by contrast has become a defining French value, and using the superlative 'the *most* central' presents it, however, as a fundamental and integral value. Furthermore, the collective possessive pronoun in '*our* republic' appeals to a group identity, suggesting that this value is characteristic of French society, and not the Other society and emphasising the essential difference between them. Finally, the verb 'flouted' implies that these rights are violated in a deliberate, even insolent, and insulting way. By presenting women's rights as central to the French republic, Le Pen suggests that immigration threatens the foundations of society. This claim is strengthened with a jeopardy argument, whereby Le Pen emphasises the history of the struggle for women's rights, suggesting that this could now all be sacrificed. She adds that 'it is as a free French woman, who was always able to enjoy the freedoms that we hold so dear, won with great difficulty by our mothers and grandmothers, that I want to warn of a new form of social, human and moral decline' (ibid.). Hirschman (1991) explains that framing past achievements as endangered by new societal change is common among reactionary forces. These 'jeopardy' arguments assert that new change will endanger old progress, raising the stakes and emphasising the risk in accepting the new change (84). With this suggestion, Le Pen implies that immigration is not just capable of disrupting society now, but of reversing decades-worth of change. Le Pen presents an extreme version of this narrative's first argument, using her own identity to emphasise the importance of women's rights for French society. However, other members also present subtler versions. Bardella (2016a) frames the alleged decline in women's freedoms in suburban areas of Paris as a challenge to the national values, calling for France to 'reaffirm our values.' Naming Le Pen as the best candidate to

win back the rights of these women, Bardella concludes that ‘the 2017 presidential election represents not just a political choice, but a question of civilisation’ (ibid.). Likewise, in an article opposing the visit of two Muslim speakers who have in the past made sexist comments about women, FN MP Gonzague Malherbe (2018) states that ‘this meeting is a true insult to our values’ and urges readers to be ‘uncompromising in their defence of our principles, our values, and our identity.’ These statements may lack the personal emotional appeal of those of Le Pen but nonetheless refer to the challenge to women’s rights as a challenge to French values and principles, urging the public to oppose immigration for the sake of ‘civilisation’.

The AfD also draws attention to women’s rights as a central value, not just of Germany but, even more unexpectedly, of Europe. Pazderski (2018) states, for example: ‘Islam conveys a medieval image of the family and of women. In addition, Sharia promotes the unconstitutional amalgamation of state and religion. For all these reasons, Islam is not compatible with the European enlightenment and western values.’ This statement highlights the alleged difference between the apparent values of immigrants and those of European societies, and suggests that women’s rights are a central element in this. The AfD exaggerates the difference by describing the Islamic perception of women and family as ‘medieval’ and appealing to the European enlightenment. The contrast between ‘medieval’ Islam and the post-enlightenment age again emphasises a divide between two cultures and conveys a fundamental difference between the values of Islam and those of Europe. The reference to the history of European values also suggests that not just the current status of women, but the foundation of modern society is at stake, again using a jeopardy argument to imply that Islam endangers previously achieved, this time centuries-old rights and values. Pazderski’s jeopardy argument is more general than that made by Le Pen, referring to the entire set of values, rather than women’s rights specifically. Pazderski also once more exaggerates the significance of the Islamic practices or beliefs by referring to them as Sharia. He claims that the combination of state and religion by ‘Sharia’ is unconstitutional. Here, Pazderski seems to borrow an idea from the FN given that, as mentioned, Germany’s position on secularism is more ambiguous than France’s. The German Basic Law establishes a general separation between church and state, stipulating state neutrality without preference or discrimination towards certain confessions. However, it does not establish strict separation, but rather cooperation between the state and religious societies, allowing, for example, religious classes in public schools, private religious schools and registration of religious societies as public law corporations which can levy taxes (Weiß and Adogame 2000, 47). Pazderski’s claim is



therefore not entirely accurate but, by claiming that this combination is unconstitutional, he can emphasise the idea of a legal violation. Both parties present women's rights and gender equality as defining and integral values of society, whether the national or the wider European or western society, which they claim are dramatically different from those of Islam. In doing so, they present immigration as a threat not just to the immediate freedom of women but to the values which hold society together. This elevates the threat level, implying that the foundation of society is at risk. Froio (2018) suggests that the current centrality of Islam to public debates in Europe presents the far right with a choice between maintaining an anti-Islam discourse based on race-arguments and running the risk of being marginalised, or conforming to the political mainstream and its values to gain legitimacy and become socially acceptable in the political system (697). However, it seems that when it comes to women's rights, RRP's can co-opt these mainstream rights and values and use them *in order to* reinforce racist stereotypes, whilst gaining legitimacy. As Bob (2019) explained, the contemporary 'master frame' of rights is very powerful (16-17). Groups are able to dress arguments in a moralistic rights frame to attract support for any political cause, even those that involve the domination of one group by another (Perugini and Gordon 2015, 10-12). This can be seen in this narrative; using women's rights to highlight a fundamental difference between the values of Islam and those of western society further tarnishes the whole culture or community.

In addition to presenting women's rights themselves as a value to be defended, the parties link the treatment of women to a whole host of other rights, values, and laws, which they therefore claim are endangered because of Muslim immigration, expanding the values narrative further. The link between women's rights and secularism has already been mentioned. The FN regularly refers to the wearing of the veil or headscarf in public as a violation of the 1905 law on the Separation of the Churches and the State and the principle of *laïcité*. When asked about *laïcité* during the televised debate between the presidential candidates in 2017, Le Pen (2017c) stated that '*laïcité* ha[s] not been challenged for approximately a century, and now for a number of years there has been a rise in Islamist fundamentalism in our country [...] the pressure of these incessant demands [of Islamist fundamentalism], which are clothing demands, diet demands, demands that have concerned and concern today the public space' (57:47–58:35). With another jeopardy argument, Le Pen alludes to the lasting consensus on a principle that is now supposedly endangered by Muslim immigration and emphasises that Islamic 'demands' affect all of society. She gives the

impression that Islamic practices are intrusive and widespread by repeating the word ‘demands’ and describing them as ‘incessant’. Finally, by attributing these practices to ‘Islamist fundamentalism’, Le Pen further exaggerates the perceived threat and implies that national laws are not just violated by individual practices but threatened by an alternative set of laws. As mentioned, the headscarf has also previously been linked to a violation of the French principles of *liberté* and *égalité*. The FN re-articulates this claim; in the debate, Le Pen (2017c) states: ‘I am hearing a lot about *liberté*. I would like us to think of these young women who today cannot dress as they wish, on whom the veil is imposed precisely because we have let Islamist fundamentalists take charge. Refusing to see that is hiding behind *liberté*. Refusing to resolve this problem is, in my opinion, failing the French people as well as the Muslim women who are victims of this’ (1:00:00-1:01:00). This statement clearly operates by articulating the established narrative of oppression linked to the headscarf. The lack of freedom is emphasised through the active verbs ‘imposed’ and ‘take charge’, and Le Pen once more alludes to Islamist fundamentalism as the cause of this oppression. Here, however, it is also clear how this values narrative transforms women’s rights, in this case specifically the rights of Muslim women, into a problem for the whole society by suggesting that the lack of women’s rights is also linked to violations of other national laws and values. Le Pen invokes a national value, through women’s rights, and explicitly states that its violation fails French people as well as Muslim women.

Moving beyond the headscarf, other members make the same link between women’s rights and republican values, however, noticeably again, in a more general and less emotive way. Dussausaye (2016) links women’s rights to the value of *égalité*, claiming that the ‘founding values of our social covenant, such as the *égalité* between men and women’ are being called into question. The FN (2016) also links the Cologne assaults to these values, stating in an official press release that the reality of the assaults should be taken seriously in order to maintain ‘our way of life, which guarantees, a fact we are proud of, *liberté* and *égalité* between the sexes.’ In this statement, the FN proclaims an attachment to the republican values with regards to gender. These statements again link the violations of women’s rights to *liberté* and *égalité*, claiming that by threatening women’s rights, immigration threatens the fundamental principles of society. Le Pen (2016) also offers a more dramatic and emotional rights claim based on the Cologne assaults, this time moving beyond the core values of the republic. Referencing Article 16 of the French Civil Code, she states that ‘the right to bodily integrity [...] is one of the most essential rights. This right is today under attack for a number

of women. It fills me with horror that women can once again be subjected to barbarism as a result of a senseless migration policy.’ This statement exemplifies the rights discourse; Le Pen repeats the word ‘right’ three times, reinforcing the idea that this issue does not solely concern the safety of women, but the violation of a national law. She uses violent, emotional language, speaking of an ‘attack’, ‘barbarism’, and her own ‘horror’ to reinforce the violence of the men and the severity of the attack on these rights. Finally, she once again refers to this right as one of the ‘most essential’ and explicitly links the attack against it to the ‘senseless’ migration policy.

The values of *laïcité*, *liberté*, and *égalité* have great traction in France. Froio (2018) explains that the French cultural climate is conventionally considered as advantageous towards the far right because of the strict separation between the state and religion and the French ‘universalist conception of citizenship’, which demands cultural assimilation and adaptation to these republican values (700). Germany does not have the same attachment to secularism nor to a fixed set of national values as France. As noted, this does not stop the AfD from borrowing the secularism claim in arguments against the headscarf. The AfD also finds its own ways of extending the rights and values narrative by linking women’s rights to additional values, rights, or laws. In its manifesto for the 2017 parliamentary elections, the party argues that ‘as a religious and political symbol for the subordination of Muslim women to men, the headscarf contradicts the equality between women and men and the free development of one’s personality, as guaranteed by the Basic Law’ (AfD 2017, 35). Like those of the FN, this statement adopts a lexicon of rights to amplify the gravity of the alleged violation of women’s rights by referring to other rights guaranteed by the German Basic Law, and builds on the assumption that the headscarf is imposed on Muslim women. Furthermore, the causal clause, introduced by the subordinate conjunction ‘as’, explicitly attributes these other violations to women’s rights. Speaking of the burqa specifically, Weidel (2019) extends this claim further, stating that ‘the complete refusal of social communication through the full-face veil is a challenge to the minimum standards of our civilisation.’ Referring to it as a challenge to western ‘civilisation,’ Weidel also implies that Muslim immigration endangers centuries of accomplishments. This jeopardy argument has the same effect as before, increasing the risk beyond the immediate safety and rights of women to the foundations of civilisation. This statement again makes it clear how linking women’s rights to other principles and rights transforms the violations into a problem for the whole of society. Finally, describing this as a ‘complete refusal’ and a ‘challenge’, Weidel also implies that

wearing the burqa is a deliberate and insulting choice to undermine social communication. In addition to the veil and headscarf arguments, the AfD also repeatedly claims that the Islamic practices of child marriage and polygamy go against Germany's social rules (Pazderski 2016; Bessin 2018). Pazderski (2016), for example, claims that 'the fact that their women still cover themselves in a number of ways and that child marriage is considered normal by many migrants proves whether they actually have the ability to integrate and what the values of refugees are.' Pazderski emphasises the alleged 'normality' of such practices, referring to the two, drastically different practices together to inaccurately suggest that child marriage is as common as the headscarf or veil. These practices are presented as evidence that Muslim immigration goes against the values of German society. A lexicon of truthfulness reinforces this claim with Pazderski referring to it as a 'fact' that 'proves' something. Both parties link the alleged violations of women's rights to other core values and rights. It is clear that the headscarf and veil once more play a central role in this argument. However, as Bob (2019) warned, the parties also manage to apply the rights 'master frame' to other events and practices.

As Froio (2018) stated, referring to mainstream (liberal) values allows RRP to legitimise their arguments. However, it also gives them further opportunity to delegitimise other parties. The 'wedge' function of rights discourses has been discussed under the previous two narratives, whereby RRP frame their liberal opposition as negligent of non-native women's rights and responsible for the decline in native women's rights. The rights and values narrative allows for an even more pernicious attack against the opposition. Adopting this discourse, RRP position themselves as the defenders of western rights and values, typically protected by their liberal opposition. They then accuse their opposition of hypocrisy for not acting in the interests of the values that their parties are built around. Florian Philippot (2016), then vice-president of the FN, defined the party in an interview as a 'feminist movement [that] defends women's rights.' Likewise, Bessin (2018) refers to the AfD as 'the only political protective shield for women's rights in Germany', adding that 'when the AfD is the only one warning at the top of its voice that the deprivation of women's rights and Islamic polygamy must not become socially accepted as a normality, then we are not extremists, like the state media always like to claim, but we, as the AfD, are the only defenders of women's rights.' Bessin again adopts this language of attack, referring to a 'protective shield', and suggests that the AfD are working hard to fight for these rights with the image of them shouting at the tops of their voices. Bessin's statement also shows how RRP employ these

values to simultaneously legitimise themselves and denounce the opposition. Indeed, Pazderski (2017) implies the hypocrisy of the Greens and the Social Democrats ‘who campaign so strongly for women’s rights, [yet] want to limit this ideology by taking in millions of Muslim men to our society. That is absurd and dangerous.’ Setting the two actions up as contradictory, and deeming them absurd, Pazderski implies that liberal parties are being both cowardly and hypocritical, by proclaiming support for women’s rights but failing to act on it. This claim cleverly accuses the opposition of precisely what the AfD is doing, deflecting the same criticism away from them. The FN makes the same argument, contrasting the loud cries of the far right to the ‘inadmissible silence’ of the left (Le Pen 2016). Le Pen states that she is ‘revolted by the inadmissible silence, if not implicit consent, of the French left in the face of these infringements [...] the eternal lesson-givers fall silent at the very moment when the most central values of our Republic are being flouted’ (ibid.). These references to silence in the face of violation again suggest cowardliness and hypocrisy on the part of the French left, which fails to speak out about the values that they supposedly support. This is reinforced by the snide description of them as ‘eternal lesson givers’, which suggests that the left enjoys telling others what to do but does not act on its own advice. Bob (2012) defines such framejacking as a form of offensive attack, whereby reactionary forces ‘hijack their foe’s cherished frames, maneuvering them in contradictory ways’ (29). By adopting a discourse on rights and values to advance their anti-immigration arguments, RRP’s not only hijack the liberal opposition’s frames, but use the occasion to denounce them. This final narrative defines women’s rights as a central value and situates it among other rights, principles and values. This allows RRP’s to amplify and universalise the threat, and to elevate their criticism of the opposition parties. This narrative in particular demonstrates the power and the danger of the far-right’s employment of women’s rights and its connection to liberal values more generally.

## 6 Conclusion

Women's rights have become an unexpected rallying cry for RRP in France and Germany. Leaders and members of the FN and the AfD employ women's rights and gender equality to justify and advance their reactionary arguments against Muslim immigration. Analytically, my thesis identified three interlocking women's rights narratives which claim that immigrant, particularly Muslim, communities deprive non-native women of their rights, that immigration therefore endangers native women's safety and freedoms, and, finally, that the challenge to women's rights constitutes a challenge to the fundamental rights and values of society. These narratives are constructed around existing power relations, which are reproduced and strengthened through repetition. Building on established ethnic Othering discourses, the narratives reinforce the supposed difference between the in-group and the out-group and further undermine the Other's culture. The use of gender in the women's rights narratives adds a further layer of inequality to the anti-immigration discourse. Despite operating in the name of gender equality, the narratives employ gendered stereotypes, both of the out-group of vulnerable women and oppressive men, and of women more generally as vulnerable and in need of protection. Finally, the RRPs use the women's rights narratives to frame, blame, and denounce their liberal opposition, for neglecting the rights of non-native women, endangering native women, and failing to stand up for the liberal values their parties are built around. Women's rights therefore serve not just as a rallying cry against immigration, but also to further tarnish immigrant communities by reinforcing Othering discourses, and to denounce the liberal opposition.

The FN typically presents more extreme versions of these narratives than the AfD, with the exception of the second narrative on the threat to native women. This narrative was bolstered by the series of sexual assaults in Germany and was, therefore, more explicit in Germany than in France. Within the parties, the FN's women's rights narratives are often made by Marine Le Pen who, as a woman, is presented both by herself and by others as a natural protector of women's rights. Whilst female members of the AfD were in some cases more outspoken in their claims, the statements came from a more diverse group of members and leaders. My analysis did not attempt to explain these differences; however some aspects were raised which could provide insights for further research. It was noted, for example, that the French cultural climate is particularly well-suited to rights discourses, that the FN has a

significantly longer history with many more existing claims to draw on, and, finally, that the FN is chaired by a woman, whose identity is central not just for women's rights claims but for the identity of the party. Empirically, my analysis highlighted a variety of rhetorical techniques used to articulate these narratives. In their rights claims, RRPs exaggerate the sense of threat, adopting and repeating powerful, emotive, and personal language, referring to individual cases as the norm, and embellishing their claims with inaccurate evidence and statistics. They capitalise on the identity of particular party members and take advantage of national and international events. Finally, they borrow ideas from each other, flip the opposition's arguments and hijack their frames, and use jeopardy and futility theses to present immigration as inevitably unsuccessful and a threat to past achievements.

The adoption of women's rights and its connection to other liberal values is alarming, but not just because it perpetuates relations of inequality. When it comes to the rise of these parties across Europe, liberal values are extremely powerful. Employing mainstream values allows RRPs to gain legitimacy for themselves and to normalise their extreme, racist positions, but it also harms the parties who protect these values. By hijacking liberal rights language and frames, RRPs weaken the opposition's arguments and detract from their causes. Women's rights are one among many of the tools that far-right parties can use to do so. Froio (2018) noted that RRPs, beyond those in France and Germany, are also adopting LGBTQ rights, animal rights, and other liberal values. Given the power of these values, the conclusions of my thesis call, above all, for further studies into the employment of other liberal values by these and other RRPs.

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## 8 Appendix I: Translations of original quotes

The following table contains the original versions of all referenced translated quotes:

Original	Translation	Reference
Betonung der Individualität [...] untergr[äbt] die Familie als wertgebende gesellschaftliche Grundeinheit	Emphasis on individuality [...] undermines the family as a worthy, fundamental unit	AfD 2016, 27
Eine gesellschaftliche Wertediskussion zur Stärkung der Elternrolle und gegen die vom Gender Mainstreaming propagierte Stigmatisierung traditioneller Geschlechterrollen anstoßen	Initiate a discussion on social values to strengthen parental roles and [fight] against the stigmatisation of traditional gender roles promoted by gender mainstreaming	AfD 2016, 27
Religiös-politisches Zeichen der Unterordnung von Muslimas	Religious and political sign of the subordination of Muslim women	AfD 2017, 35
Der im Grundgesetz garantierten Gleichberechtigung von Frauen und Männern sowie der freien Entfaltung der Persönlichkeit widerspricht das Kopftuch als religiös-politisches Zeichen der Unterordnung von Muslimas unter den Mann	As a religious and political symbol for the subordination of Muslim women to men, the headscarf contradicts the equality between women and men and the free development of one's personality, as guaranteed by the Basic Law	AfD 2017, 35
Absolut sexistisches Symbol [...] steht für die Unterwerfung der Frau [...] wird die Apartheid von Männern und Frauen zur Schau gestellt	Absolutely sexist symbol [...] stands for the submission of women [...] flaunts the apartheid between men and women	Alice Weidel, quoted in Fiedler and Müller-Neuhof 2017
Quartiers de banlieues où les droites des femmes s'effondrent sous le poids de cultures étrangères rétrogrades. Adaptation de leur tenue ou de leur maquillage, violence verbale, asservissement et contrôle social ; dans l'indifférence générale et, en premier lieu, de celui des pouvoirs publics, les femmes subissent un recul des libertés fondamentales	Suburban neighbourhoods where women's rights crumble under the weight of retrograde foreign cultures. Adapting their clothing or their make-up, verbal abuse, subservience and social control; to the general indifference, first and foremost of public authorities, women suffer from a decline of fundamental freedoms	Bardella 2016a



Réaffirmons nos valeurs [...] l'élection présidentielle de 2017 constitue, au-delà d'un choix politique, un enjeu de civilisation	Reaffirm our values [...] the 2017 presidential election represents not just a political choice, but a question of civilisation	Bardella 2016a
Seule femme et mère de famille à diriger un parti politique, Marine Le Pen sera toujours aux côtés des femmes qui aspirent à reconquérir leur liberté en brisant les chaînes de ces ghettos culturels	Only woman and mother to lead a political party, Marine Le Pen will always be at the sides of women who aspire to regain their freedom by breaking out of the chains of these cultural ghettos	Bardella 2016b
Au quotidien, contraintes d'adapter leur tenue, leur maquillage ou leur mode de vie pour ne pas avoir « d'ennuis »	Forced on a daily basis to adapt their clothing, their make up or their lifestyle in order to avoid "trouble"	Bardella 2016b
Die zutiefst frauenverachtende Scharia-Kultur breitet sich im Zuge der Masseneinwanderung in Deutschland aus	The profoundly misogynistic Sharia culture [that] is spreading through mass migration to Germany	Bessin 2018
Sorgen, dass Frauen gefahrlos überall und jederzeit joggen können	Ensuring that women can go jogging safely wherever and whenever	Bessin 2018
Das einzige politische Schutzschild für die Rechte der Frauen in Deutschland [...] und wenn die AfD als einzige Stimme lauthals warnt, dass die Unterdrückung und Entrechtung von Frauen und islamische Vielehen nicht der gesellschaftlich akzeptierte Normalzustand sein darf, dann sind wir keine Extremisten, wie die öffentlich-rechtlichen Staatsmedien immer gerne mal behaupten, sondern wir als AfD sind die einzigen Verteidiger von Frauenrechten	The only political protective shield for women's rights in Germany [...] and when the AfD is the only one warning at the top of its voice that the deprivation of women's rights and Islamic polygamy must not become socially accepted as a normality, then we are not extremists, like the state media always like to claim, but we, as the AfD, are the only defenders of women's rights	Bessin 2018
Le spectre de Cologne [...] Hier Cologne, aujourd'hui Calais, demain, nos villes et villages ? En effet, comment ne pas penser qu'un tel drame puisse se répéter dans les villes et villages de France qui accueilleront des groupes de migrants issus de la jungle de	Ghost of Cologne [...] yesterday Cologne, today Calais, tomorrow, our towns and villages? How can one not think that a similar drama could occur in French towns and villages which welcome groups of migrants from the Calais "Jungle"?	Briois 2016

Calais		
Situation devenue incontrôlable et menaçant gravement la dignité et la sécurité des femmes	Situation which has become uncontrollable and which seriously threatens the dignity and safety of women	Briois 2016
Laisser courir le risque d'exposer des femmes à une menace réelle d'agressions sexuelles ?	Run the risk of exposing women to a real threat of sexual assaults	Briois 2016
Pour toutes celle, et ceux, qui ne se reconnaissent plus dans le féminisme institutionnalisé et pour qui ce combat doit pourtant continuer, le Rassemblement Bleu Marine, présidé par une femme, Marine Le Pen, peut aujourd'hui servir de point de ralliement	For all those who no longer recognise themselves in institutionalised feminism yet for whom the struggle must continue, the Marine Blue Gathering, chaired by a woman, Marine Le Pen, can today serve as a rallying point	Collard 2016
Le recul alarmant du droit des femmes dans notre pays [...] Les féministes autoproclamées contemporaines se trompent de combat, la lutte pour l'égalité femme-homme ne se mène pas dans les rayons des magasins de jouets mais dans les Cologne et dans les Molenbeek français	The alarming decline of women's rights in our country [...] the self-proclaimed feminists of today are fighting the wrong battle, the fight for gender equality does not take place in the aisles of toy shops, but in the French Colognes and Molenbeeks	Collard 2016
Widerspricht der Gleichberechtigung von Mann und Frau	Contradicts the equality of men and women	Deutscher Bundestag 2018, 2
Valeurs fondatrices de notre pacte social, telle que l'égalité homme-femme	Founding values of our social covenant, such as the equality between men and women	Dussausaye 2016
Notre mode de vie, lequel assure, et nous en sommes fiers, la liberté et l'égalité entre les sexes	Our way of life, which guarantees, a fact we are proud of, <i>liberté</i> and <i>égalité</i> between the sexes	FN 2016
Le simple fait de sortir seule ou de porter une jupe est ainsi perçu comme une provocation.	The simple act of going out alone or wearing a skirt is perceived as a provocation	FN 2017
Une profonde mutation culturelle, stratégique, politique et interne	A profound cultural, strategic, political and internal change	Gojard 2018
révoltée aujourd'hui par le silence inadmissible voire l'assentiment	Revolted by the inadmissible silence, if not implicit consent, of	Le Pen 2016

tacite de la gauche française devant ces atteintes [...] les éternels donneurs de leçons se taisent quand, pour le coup, les valeurs les plus centrales de notre République sont bafouées	the French left in the face of these infringements [...] the eternal lesson-givers fall silent at the very moment when the most central values of our Republic are being flouted	
Signe le début de la fin des droits des femmes	Mark the beginning of the end of women's rights	Le Pen 2016
La deuxième conséquence (pour la sécurité, après le terrorisme) dramatique de la crise migratoire tient à la situation de la Femme [...] agissent comme des criminels (viol et tentative de viol sont des crimes, ne l'oublions pas), qu'ils s'affranchissent des règles essentielles de nos sociétés occidentales, et qu'ils méprisent ouvertement les droits des femmes	Second serious consequence (for security, after terrorism) concerns women [...] act like criminals (let us not forget that rape and attempted rape are crimes), that they break the essential rules of our western societies, and that they openly disregard women's rights	Le Pen 2016
C'est comme femme française libre, qui a pu jouir toute sa vie durant des libertés très chères, acquises de haute lutte par nos mères et nos grands-mères, que je tiens à alerter sur une nouvelle forme de la régression sociale, humaine et morale	It is as a free French woman, who was always able to enjoy the freedoms that we hold so dear, won with great difficulty by our mothers and grandmothers, that I want to warn of a new form of social, human and moral decline	Le Pen 2016
Les valeurs les plus centrales de notre République [...] bafouées	The most central values of our republic [...] flouted	Le Pen 2016
Le droit à l'intégrité corporelle [...] est un droit parmi les plus essentiels. Ce droit est aujourd'hui attaqué pour nombre de femmes. Que la barbarie puisse s'exercer de nouveau à l'encontre des femmes, du fait d'une politique migratoire insensée, me remplit d'effroi	The right to bodily integrity [...] is one of the most essential rights. This right is today under attack for a number of women. It fills me with horror that women can once again be subjected to barbarism as a result of a senseless migration policy	Le Pen 2016
Que ces hommes soient, de par leur situation de migrants, leurs conditions de vie dans leurs pays d'origine, ou encore leurs dogmes religieux, soumis à une frustration sexuelle particulière ne m'intéresse aucunement ; j'ai bien d'autres choses à faire que de trouver une	The particular kind of sexual frustration that these men are subject to, whether because of their situation as migrants, their living conditions in their countries of origin, or their religious dogmas, does not interest me in the slightest; I have better things to do than find	Le Pen 2016

quelconque excuse à ces mâles déchaînés	some kind of excuse for these rampant males	
Ressens comme une violence extrême les restrictions des libertés [...]	Experience[s] these restrictions on freedoms [...] like a form of extreme violence	Le Pen 2017a
Je suis une femme [...] Je suis une mère	I am a woman [...] I am a mother	Le Pen 2017a, 00:24–00:36
Défendre les droits des femmes : lutter contre l’islamisme qui fait reculer leurs libertés fondamentales ; mettre en place un plan national pour l’égalité salariale femme/homme et lutter contre la précarité professionnelle et sociale	Defend women’s rights: fight against the Islamism which reverses their fundamental freedoms; implement a national plan for equal pay and fight against job insecurity and social precarity	Le Pen 2017b
Le voile est un acte de soumission de la femme	The veil is an act of the subjugation of women	Le Pen 2017c
J’entends beaucoup parler de la liberté. Moi j’aimerais bien qu’on pense à ces jeunes femmes qu’aujourd’hui ne peuvent pas se vêtir comme elles le souhaitent, qu’ils on impose le voile précisément parce qu’on a laissé la main au fondamentalisme islamiste. Refuser de voir cela, c’est de cacher derrière la liberté. Refuser de régler ce problème c’est à mon avis manquer aux français et manquer aussi aux femmes musulmanes qui sont victimes de cela	I am hearing a lot about <i>liberté</i> . I would like us to think of these young women who today cannot dress as they wish, on whom the veil is imposed precisely because we have let Islamist fundamentalists take charge. Refusing to see that is hiding behind <i>liberté</i> . Refusing to resolve this problem is, in my opinion, failing the French people as well as the Muslim women who are victims of this	Le Pen 2017c, 1:00:00 - 1:01:00
La laïcité n’a été contestée par personne pendant à peu près un siècle et puis, depuis un certain nombre d’années, il y a une montée de fondamentalisme islamiste dans notre pays [...] la pression de ces revendications incessantes (du fondamentalisme islamiste), qui sont des revendications vestimentaires, des revendications alimentaires, des revendications qui ont touché et qui touchent	<i>Laïcité</i> ha[s] not been challenged for approximately a century, and now for a number of years there has been a rise in Islamist fundamentalism in our country [...] the pressure of these incessant demands [of Islamist fundamentalism], which are clothing demands, diet demands, demands that have concerned and concern today the public space	Le Pen 2017c, 57:47 – 58:35

aujourd'hui l'espace public		
Folle politique d'immigration	Insane immigration policy	Leonardelli 2017
Cette réunion est une véritable insulte aux valeurs [...] intransigeants pour défendre nos Principes, nos Valeurs et notre Identité	This meeting is a true insult to our values [...] uncompromising in their defence of our principles, our values, and our identity	Malherbe 2018
Ne parlent jamais de ce qui fait reculer le droit des femmes: l'avancée de l'islamisme	Never speak of what is reversing women's rights: the advancement of Islamism	Marine Le Pen, quoted in Bodoc 2017
Gleichberechtigung [...] muss bekämpft werden	Equality must be fought for	Pazderski 2016
Die Tatsache, dass ihre Frauen hier in Deutschland sich immer noch auf verschiedenste Arten verschleiern und Kinderehen als Normalität bei vielen Migranten gelten, beweist, wie es um die tatsächliche Anpassungsfähigkeit und die Werte der Flüchtlinge steht	The fact that their women still cover themselves in a number of ways and that child marriage is considered normal by many migrants proves whether they actually have the ability to integrate and what the values of refugees are	Pazderski 2016
Beleg für die Unterdrückung der Frau in muslimischen Ländern. [Sie] Offenbart vor allen Dingen die Steinzeit-Mentalität muslimischer Männer gegenüber Frauen	Evidence of the oppression of women in Muslim countries [...] expose above all the stone-age mentality of Muslim men towards Muslim women	Pazderski 2017
Eindeutiger Hinweis auf die mangelnde Integrationsfähigkeit von muslimischen Migranten	Clear evidence that Muslim migrants are incapable of integrating	Pazderski 2017
Die sich so stark für die Frauenrechte einsetzen, wollen dieses Gedankengut in Form von Millionen muslimischer Männer in unsere Gesellschaft eindringen lassen. Das ist absurd und gefährlich	Who campaign so strongly for women's rights, want to limit this ideology by taking in millions of Muslim men to our society. That is absurd and dangerous	Pazderski 2017
Der Islam vermittelt zudem ein mittelalterliches Familien- und Frauenbild. Hinzu kommt die verfassungswidrige Verquickung von Staat und Religion durch die Scharia. Aus all diesen Gründen ist	Islam conveys a medieval image of the family and of women. In addition, Sharia promotes the unconstitutional amalgamation of state and religion. For all these reasons, Islam is not compatible	Pazderski 2018

der Islam nicht vereinbar mit der europäischen Aufklärung und den westlichen Werten	with the European enlightenment and western values	
Mouvement féministe [qu'il] défend les droits des femmes	Feminist movement [that] defends women's rights	Philippot 2016
N'oubliez jamais qu'il suffira d'une crise politique, économique ou religieuse pour que les droits des femmes soient remis en question	Never forget that it would only take a political, economic or religious crisis for women's rights to be called into question	Simone de Beauvoir, quoted in Le Pen 2016
Les autres avant les nôtres	The others before our own	Troszczynski 2018
Mettons un coup d'arrêt à ces folies immigrationnistes pour défendre réellement les femmes européennes	Put an end to these foolish immigration policies in order to really defend European women	Troszczynski 2018
die Masse der straffälligen Migranten, die Frauen und Mädchen als Freiwild zu betrachten scheinen	Mass of criminal migrants who seem to regard women and girls as fair game	Weidel 2017a
Indirekt unterstützt von Amtsträgern	Indirectly supported by officials	Weidel 2017a
Massive Einwanderung besonders für die wehrlosesten Mitglieder unserer Gesellschaft, nämlich junge Mädchen und Frauen, ein riesiges Sicherheitsproblem darstellt	Mass immigration represents a huge security problem particularly for the most vulnerable members of our society, notably young girls and women	Weidel 2017b
Die uns von der Bundesregierung aufgebürdete Gefährdung der inneren Sicherheit	The threat to internal security imposed on us by the federal government	Weidel 2017b
Die Totalverweigerung sozialer Kommunikation durch Vollverschleierung ist eine Provokation gegen Mindeststandards unserer Zivilisation	The complete refusal of social communication through the full-face veil is a challenge to the minimum standards of our civilisation	Weidel 2019