The Framing of 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch Public Spheres (2001-2015)

A Contribution to the Sociology of Events

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Faculteit der Maatschappij- en Gedragswetenschappen

Voor mijn ouders

To my parents

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Preface

Even though I do not believe in faith, I cannot deny that the following pattern smacks of predestination: from the moment I started working on a dissertation about events, I was confronted with one personal life event after another. In the past years, I, among other things, fell deeply in love three times, lived in five different cities, in three countries (a perfect recipe for encountering all sorts of events), and had to deal with a period of long-term illness for the first time in my life.

At some point, I proclaimed jokingly that I should have shifted my research focus from the framing of 9/11 among three national public elites to an auto-ethnographic analysis of events. Not every experience that I had was pleasurable, yet all of them probably helped me to improve my understandings of eventful situations.

In the further development of these understandings and creation of this dissertation, many people have been of great help and support.

First of all, my two *promotores*, Jan Willem and Justus. Jan Willem was already my supervisor when I was a Research Master's student. During the ten years I have known him, he has been a true scientific tutor. I especially admire his enthusiasm, erudition, and sociability. I asked Justus to become my supervisor because I assumed that being advised by the writer of a wonderful dissertation could help me to write a decent one myself. He turned out to be an inspiring *promotor*, who constantly kept on pushing me to improve my work. I want to thank the two of them as a supervising team, for their enormous commitment to my research (sometimes they even appeared to be more fascinated by and into it than I was).

I took the first steps to develop this project while I was participating in the Social Studies of Institutions graduate exchange program between the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), Washington University St. Louis and EHESS, in Paris. John Bowen was the stimulating host of the American part of the program, as was Nicolas Dodier for the French part. Emma, Thomas, Clotilde, Adrienne, and Andia – my fellow exchange students – kept me company for a year. It was through our interactions that I became interested in the relationship between a country's political power position and the cultural repertoires that are dominant among its citizens (see Chapters 5 and 6).

After this exchange period, the AISSR gave me the opportunity to turn my research proposal into a PhD. I am particularly grateful to José Komen for the efforts she took to make this possible.

As a PhD Candidate, I went abroad again twice for a substantial period. The instructions and help of Ken Benoit and Paul Nulty during and after the 2014 Essex Summer School in Automated Text Analysis were essential to the production of my topic-modeling analysis. I spent the spring semester of 2016 at the Graduate Center of CUNY, where I was hosted by Phil Kasinitz. In these months, I shared a fascination with Dirk concerning two topical events (the death of Johan Cruijff and the remarkable American presidential pre-elections) and explored different parts of New York with Willemijn.

In the AISSR there have been many, many people I have met during the years who lit up my days. One of the most positive experiences of my PhD trajectory has been seeing how much friendship can exist between colleagues, who are factually (future) competitors. I want to thank mostly, but certainly not exclusively, the following people: Myra, Svetlana, Kobe, Nataliya, and Katharina for being Sociologists on Tour; Sander, as he showed me how to be a Good Citizen; Davide, who turned me into a monster; Rowan, for (nearly always) beating me at squash; Bojan, because we shared lots of canteen dinners; and Charlotte and Michiel, with whom I delved into the philosophy of science.

In the final period of completing my PhD, I started working as a Lecturer in Political Science at Leiden University. I am grateful to Maria Spirova for the freedom she has given me to keep on researching and writing, while fulfilling my teaching responsibilities. Someone who also came in towards the end of the project is Helen Faller, who has been an excellent, quick editor of my work.

I am lucky to have several good friends in my life, whom I had already met way before I started my PhD: Remmert, with whom I developed my political worldview and debating skills, and Laura and Jasper, with whom I discovered the field of sociology during our Bachelor's degree study and built quite a few *bieramides*.

I got to know Rens, paranymph and *boss*, while we were working in the same flex room (the famous B6.01). He turned out to be a great fellow observer of interaction rituals, at and beyond the office. One day, our own interactions became a little too cozy for him and he moved to a quieter room. Our friendship has, however, survived this move. I met Leonard, paranymph and housemate for the longest period

of my PhD trajectory, during a study trip to Warsaw in the spring of 2007. Since then, my life has been enriched by a stream of sociologically infused jokes and analyses.

Of the members of my family, I want to especially thank the three people with whom I was living on September 11, 2001: my mother, my father, and my brother, Simon. I cannot recall at all how we discussed 9/11 back then, which justifies my methodological decision to not rely on people's memories when researching events (see Chapter 1). But what I do know is that they have been of enormous support to me, both in the years before and during my time as a PhD Candidate.

Simon is the most wonderful brother anyone could wish for, with whom I can have endless conversations about football and life, and who is always, no matter how I feel, able to make me laugh. I dedicate my PhD thesis to my loving parents. It was the upbringing they gave me – watching the 8 o'clock news while sitting in between them, visiting momentous historical locations during holidays – that stimulated me to develop a passion for history, politics, and societal issues. This dissertation has been created out of that passion.

Amsterdam, July 2019

Chapter 1
Introduction: Contributing to the Sociology of Events by Focusing on 9/11 as a Case Study

For many people across the globe, September 11, 2001 was a day of rupture. In New York, the Twin Towers were hit by two planes, which caused both buildings to collapse. A third plane struck the Pentagon. There was a fourth one, destined to fly into the White House. However, passengers overpowered the hijackers and it crashed in rural Pennsylvania.

In the days, weeks, and years since these incidents the United States, the West and the world at large changed substantially. The U.S. government introduced the Patriot Act and invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. In many Western countries, right-wing populist parties – which often promote negative discourses about Muslim immigrants as their main selling point – became increasingly successful in elections.

It is not controversial to claim that receptions of 9/11 played an important role in the occurrence of these actions and developments. This makes the attacks a case of what scholars such as Berezin (2009), Sewell (2005), and Wagner-Pacifici (2017) call "events": those happenings that people experience as so shocking, remarkable, or significant that they adjust their ways of thinking, feeling, and doing in response. Events differ from 'ordinary happenings': occurrences – in fact, the great majority of things that people encounter during their lives – which take place without any significant change as a result (see Sewell, 2005, pp. 226–228). They constitute interesting sociological objects of research because they provide insight into processes of rapid social transformation. Whereas social life usually occurs with a high degree of continuity and change often comes about in a fairly gradual way (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010), events offer an opportunity for swift, accelerated alterations.

Yet even though it is patently clear that 9/11 has been a significant event, identifying and explaining its specific transformative responses is quite a challenge. In this PhD Thesis, I use the Twin Tower attacks as a model for developing a methodological approach to investigate events and provide theoretical contributions that deepen our understandings of them.

* * * * *

Events often play a paradoxical role in sociology, and generally in writing on history, society, or politics. On the one hand, they are ubiquitously present in analyses of social change. Scholars use them in their abstracts, introductions and conclusions, or to build upon a central argument. However, on the other, events are scarcely seriously theorized and investigated.

This scarcity mainly manifests itself in a notion of events which depicts them as *self-evident turning points*. This notion accords an important role to events in social life. It considers them watershed moments. After their occurrence, the world is supposed to be different from how it was previously. For instance, in sociological texts frequently arguments can be found that 'since 9/11' or 'in reaction to 9/11,' public discourses or policies have changed. Articles that advance this reasoning, which is explained in greater detail in Chapter 2, often have titles such as "The roots of public attitudes … before and after September 11" (Fetzer and Soper, 2003) or "The post-9/11 split" (Sander and Putnam, 2010).

There is good reason to regard this as a plausible vision of social life. As I outlined above, many people experience shock or excitement in response to events like 9/11 and politicians and policy makers claim that political action should result from them. Yet, scholars who consider events to be turning points often assume this transformative working to be self-evident. Consequently, they do not fully unpack the phenomenon theoretically and empirically, leaving unanswered various intriguing questions. Where do event effects come from? In what ways are they related to the situation prior to an event's occurrence? How long do they last?

There exists a second dominant sociological event notion, which holds a diametrically opposed perspective. This notion considers events to be the *corollaries of structures*. Scholars who employ this view regard them either as remarkable expressions of a society's state of being or the conduits for transformations which would have occurred anyway. They claim that it is first and foremost large, structural factors, such as economic, cultural, or technological developments which determine the course of history. Events are only small, rather unimportant elements within this bigger picture. This notion, which is also further explored in Chapter 2, is present in the works of several prominent sociologists, such as Bauman (1989), Beck (2002), Bourdieu (1988), and Elias (2000 [1939]).

The most important argument that can be made against this notion is that it leaves the power of shock and surprise unexplored; the fact that people can enter a state of rupture in response to an event, which makes them wish for things or undertake actions that were difficult to foresee before its occurrence.

Even though these two notions imply opposing views on the significance of events to social life, they share one thing in common: the phenomenon itself remains a black box. In the turning points-notion, it is unclear what the origins of event effects are and how they relate to existing structures. The corollaries-notion does not include a theorization of the processes by which events are mediated to transform structures. What I therefore suggest is needed is a sociological perspective of events which focuses on the interplay between events and structures.

Apart from these two dominant event notions, various scholars indeed reflect on this interplay theoretically and examine it empirically. In the first section of this chapter, I already referred to the work of Berezin (2009), Sewell (2005), and Wagner-Pacifici (2017). Additionally, Collins (2004a), Swidler (1986, pp. 278–280), and Zolberg (1972) do not specifically write about events, but analyze disruptive processes that result from remarkable occurrences. In this dissertation, I mainly relate to these scholars: I strongly build on their work and try to improve or add to it at several points.

* * * * *

The event 9/11 provides the central case for my contributions. It presents a highly interesting case because it has turned into a significant occurrence in a wide variety of locations around the globe. In an interview given a few weeks after the attacks, Jürgen Habermas even went as far to characterize it as the "first historic world event":

> Perhaps September 11 could be called the first historic world event in the strictest sense: the impact, the explosion, the slow collapse – everything that was not Hollywood anymore but, rather, a gruesome reality, literally took place in front of the "universal eyewitness" of a global public (Borradori, 2003, p. 28).

Following this reasoning, 9/11 is a perfect example of a most likely case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Gerring, 2007, pp. 237–238). If we were to expect the occurrence of huge ruptures and major processes of change as reactions to an event in many social contexts around the world, then it would be in response to this one.

In this dissertation, these social contexts comprise the public spheres of the United States, France, and the Netherlands. As I use the term here, public spheres are those places where a country's political and cultural elites come together – physically or virtually – to debate topical issues (*Cf.* Bail, 2014a; Jacobs and Townsey, 2011; Uitermark, 2012). In the following chapters, I examine various types of public sphere data sources. My main materials are newspaper articles, but I also analyze legislative speeches, election programs of political parties, and policy documents. Online sources such as blogs, Twitter, and Facebook are not included. This is not because I do not consider them part of the public sphere, but rather since they hardly existed around 2001. Television and radio programs also provide important public sphere data. Yet they are left out as well because it is quite difficult to investigate them on direct references to 9/11 (which is my central technique for researching events): newspaper articles and policy documents can be easily examined by using a search term such as 'September 11,' while this is an extremely time-consuming thing to do for television or radio programming.

The method that I employ to study these textual materials is – obviously – text analysis. I apply large-scale, quantitative counting of words and word combinations – topic modeling – along with qualitative content analysis of quotes (the specifics of my methods are outlined in the chapters in which they are utilized). This mixed methods approach provides the opportunity to acquire both an overview of the great trends in the framing of 9/11 as well as an in-depth view of how these frames were developed and used in various social contexts (*Cf.* Bergman, 2010; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Public spheres are suitable social settings for studying events because of two reasons. A theoretical reason is that events acquire a great deal of their dominant societal meanings in public spheres, which are the core arenas where political and cultural elites debate their significance and implications (Bail, 2014a; Koopmans et al., 2005; Uitermark, 2012). At the same time, they serve as a primary source of information for ordinary citizens to make up their mind about events' significance and implications (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003). From a methodological point of view, it can be argued that public sphere data are usually accessible for long periods

of time. This offers the opportunity to go back in time, for example, to the weeks just after September 11, 2001, without having to refer to people's memories (see also Collins, 2004b, pp. 188–189). 9/11 happened 18 years ago, so questioning interviewees today about the opinions they held in the first days following the event could result in unreliable data. Particularly with events, which are full of shock and rupture, it is often difficult for people to reconstruct a somewhat accurate picture of their acts and thoughts during the time period directly after their occurrence.

The United States, France, and the Netherlands provide interesting contexts for comparing framings of 9/11. On the one hand, these three countries are politically and culturally similar enough so that we do not necessarily expect large differences in event responses as a research outcome. For example, they are all liberal democracies, with more or less comparable dominant, Western value systems. On the other hand, they vary according to a number of factors that, at first sight, may have caused differing framings of the event. The United States is the country where 9/11 took place. From event research (Berezin, 2009, p. 93) we know that the relationship to the place of the occurrence matters. France and the Netherlands, for their part, have quite distinctive dominant national attitudes towards the United States. The French are generally somewhat anti-American and aim not to depend too much on the U.S. (Bowen, 2006; Meunier, 2006), while the Dutch have a rather positive view of the country, see it often as a patron or 'bigger brother' (Kennedy, 2009; Kooijman and Kuipers, 2008).

Next, varying national experiences with (Islamic) terrorism in the period prior to 2001 might also have given rise to differing understandings of 9/11. France has had "a long history of struggle with various forms of terrorism" during the second half of the 20th century (Gregory, 2003, p. 124). Islamic fundamentalists played an important role in this: Algerian Muslim terrorists committed various attacks in the Paris subway during the 1990s and almost crashed into the Eiffel Tower with an airplane in 1995. The United States had one similar experience, with the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, which was also committed by Al Qaeda. The Netherlands endured acts of terrorism in the decades before 2001 as well, for instance, the Moluccan train hijackings in the 1970s (De Graaf, 2011). Yet, none of these acts was performed by Muslim fundamentalists.

Nevertheless, anti-Islamic sentiments – which make blaming Muslims for 9/11 easier – were evident among Dutch citizens and in public debates during the 1990s. This is similar to the situation in France. However, this contrasts with the

U.S., where it was, at that time, less acceptable to talk negatively about Muslim citizens (Alba and Foner, 2015).

* * * *

The most important contribution this dissertation makes lies in advancing the sociology of events, and in this way also the greater research field of the sociology of social change. Its second main aim is to deepen our understandings of contemporary American, French, and Dutch political cultures, in particular of how responses to 9/11 have shaped them.

To do so, I develop an *inductive approach to studying events*. After reviewing existing sociological event notions and analyses, I argue that it is best to investigate as openly as possible the direct associations that people – in this dissertation, public sphere actors – make to events in differing social contexts, over long periods of time (Chapter 2). This research approach is designed to investigate the specific case of the Twin Tower attacks, but could be used to study other events within a diversity of social contexts, using a wide variety of data.

The approach is applied by examining references to 9/11 in national newspapers, election manifestos, and policy documents from the United States, France and the Netherlands during the period of 2001 – 2015 (Chapter 3). It turns out that the event has received uniform, stable framings in the realm of foreign affairs. In all three countries, the event has been dominantly linked to the issues of terrorism and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars during the entire period of research. When it comes to domestic affairs, the story is however different. Connections between the Twin Tower attacks and these affairs have also remained stable over time in the three cases, yet the specific issues of association have differed significantly.

In the United States, 9/11 has been prominently linked to issues of safety (safety in enclosed buildings, at sports events, or during music festivals). A connection to debates about the status of American Muslims is almost absent for each of the 14 years included in the study. In the Netherlands, by contrast, the Twin Tower attacks have hardly been related to national safety issues, and has been framed very much as a 'domestic Islam event.' They have turned into an occurrence, which for many Dutch public actors proves that (critical) reflection on the integration process of Dutch Muslim immigrants is needed. In France there has been

almost no translation of the event into domestic affairs (at least until 2015, the year of the Charlie Hebdo attack). French newspapers have paid comparable amounts of attention to 9/11 as Dutch ones have; yet this has most often happened in the context of foreign affairs. Thus, in France the Twin Tower attacks have become a *non-domestic event*.

These results speak to our understandings of contemporary Western history in various ways. They imply a corroboration of the widely shared scholarly view that 9/11 has been an important event for debate and the development of policies around the issues of terrorism and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars in the entire Western world (Entman, 2003; Gershkoff and Kushner, 2005; Hoffman, 2002; Jackson, 2005). However, my findings nuance the writings of scholars who present 9/11 as a catalyst for the public stigmatization of American Muslims (for instance: Garg et al., 2018; Woods and Arthur, 2014). Indeed, during its aftermath this group has experienced an increase of stigmatization in everyday life (Bakalian and Bezorgmehr, 2009; Cainkar, 2009; Ewing, 2008; Peek, 2011) and many anti-terrorism policies, which are supposed to be 'neutral,' target them (implicitly) to a greater extent than members of other groups (Byng, 2008). Explicit reflections on the domestic position of Islam are, though, more or less absent from framings of the event in the American public sphere. The prominent links to the status of Muslims in the Netherlands, in contrast, confirm the idea that 9/11 has turned into a Dutch 'domestic Islam event' (Entzinger, 2006; Van der Veer 2006). In the case of France, I find partial corroboration. Various academics claim that the Twin Tower attacks have been a relatively unimportant event in this country (Berezin, 2009: 442–444; Bowen, 2007: 92–97; De Wenden, 2011: 90). My results suggest that this is indeed so, when it comes to domestic affairs. Yet, at the same time, they show that 9/11 has been relevant to French foreign affairs.

This dissertation offers three main event lessons. To some extent, these lessons are already included in the analyses of Chapter 3. Yet the other empirical chapters explore them in more detail (Chapter 4, 5, and 6). First, I conclude that *the framing of the same event can differ considerably depending upon national context*. American and Dutch framings of 9/11 as a safety and a Muslim event, respectively, may not be remarkable, given that other cross-national comparisons of events show similar patterns in terms of issue attachment (Hoffman and Durlak, 2018; Koopmans and Vliegenthart, 2010; Legewie, 2013; Semetko et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2007; De Vreese, 2001). Though, the finding that the event has received a low degree

of domestication (the extent to which a foreign event is linked to affairs that take place within a nation-state's borders) in France is surprising. We know from other literatures that the diffusion of cultural products such as books, languages, and art forms occurs with differing degrees of domestication across countries (Heilbron, 1999; Janssen et al., 2008; De Swaan, 2001). But this is – to the best of my knowledge – a new insight with regards to events.

My second main event lesson is that *events can have long, structured lives*. Various important event scholars position and analyze events as occurrences that are only considered causes for social change within short time periods (for instance Sewell, 2005; Swidler, 1986; Zolberg, 1972). There is an event, followed by some weeks or months of rupture and transformation, and then things return to normal. My analysis of the framing of 9/11 (Chapter 3) indicates that this perspective on events is too static. Researching them over long periods of time is worthwhile because even several years after the Twin Tower attacks – for instance in the aftermath of new events such as the Madrid train attacks in 2004 and the Charlie Hebdo assault in 2015 or around various national elections – all sorts of implications for social or political alteration were still inferred from them. These results partly corroborate the view of Wagner-Pacifici (2010, 2017), who analyzes events over long time periods, characterizing them as "restless." My study shows that 9/11 indeed has had long lives of significance in each of my countries of research, yet it also indicates that these lives have not been as fluid as the notion of 'restless' suggests. For instance, in all three national contexts, the event has received rather structured, stable meanings: it has been consistently linked to the same prominent issues for the whole period of research.

To then understand why 9/11 has received such differing domestic framings in the U.S. and the Netherlands, I relate three influential sociological and political scientific concepts developed to explain cross-national variations in attitudes and behavior – "cultural repertoires" (e.g., Lamont 1992; Lamont, 2000; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000, Lamont et al., 2016), "cleavage structures" (e.g., Kriesi et al., 1995; Kriesi et al., 2008; Kriesi and Pappas, 2015), and "discursive opportunities" (e.g., Koopmans and Olzak, 2004; Koopmans et al., 2005; Bröer and Duyvendak, 2009) – to event literature (Chapter 4). This results in a typology, that helps to comprehend why some occurrences remain 'ordinary happenings,' while others become events. Analyzing American and Dutch national newspapers and legislative speeches which link 9/11 to the issues of safety and Islam as domestic affairs yields my third main

addition to event literature: *changes in response to an event can happen via two processes*, *either through shock or focus*. In the United States, 9/11 has become a domestic 'shock event'– the starting point of a radical break (Sahlins, 1985; Sewell, 2005) – regarding issues of safety because the attacks were seen as a confutation of the dominant perception of the American nation-state as an impregnable haven. The occurrence has not become a domestic Islam event, as around 2001, it was generally considered morally unacceptable in the United States to publicly problematize the societal status of American Muslim citizens (*Cf.* Bail, 2014a, p. 135; Ibrahim, 2014, pp. 117–119; Nacos and Torres-Reyna, 2004). In the Netherlands, 9/11 has turned into a domestic 'focusing event' – a significant indication that existing trends should be continued (*Cf.* Kingdon, 2011 [1984]) – concerning the issue of Islam since it confirmed the negative image of Muslim immigrants that had already been developed in its public debates during the 1980s and 1990s (*Cf.* Van Reekum, 2016; Uitermark, 2012). Dutch public actors considered their country too small to deal on its own with a problem as big as terrorism. Therefore, 9/11 has not become a Dutch domestic safety event.

Next, by analyzing the framing of 9/11 in legislative speeches about the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, I illustrate two of these main event lessons in more detail (Chapter 5). Dominant links between the event and the two wars were drawn in all three countries. Yet, the specific role accorded to the occurrence differed, especially in the case of the Iraq War. In debates over the Afghanistan War, during the fall of 2001, one central implication was uniformly attributed to 9/11: the Bush Administration was allowed to strike back by invading the country where Bin Laden was hiding. However, when the Iraq War was debated, less than two years later, only in the U.S. was the event still considered a legitimate justification for invasion. In France and the Netherlands, it had lost too much significance. This indicates that even when an event is linked to the same issue in distinctive country contexts, the specific meanings and long-term importance of those links can differ greatly.

Finally, to better understand processes of event domestication, I contrast the framing of 9/11 and three other recent international events – the 2004 Tsunami in Southeast Asia, the Arab Spring, and the Trump Election – in French newspapers to those in Dutch ones (Chapter 6). This analysis indicates a consistent pattern: in the Netherlands, each of these events has been related to domestic issues to greater degrees than in France. These varying event responses turn out to be the result of two different national cultural repertoires (Lamont, 1992; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000):

a French repertoire that sees foreign events as opportunities to manifest the Grandeur of the Republic on the political world stage versus a Dutch repertoire that considers them a reason to reflect on the state of affairs in the own societal or individual lifeworld. Thus, even though 9/11 might have been the "first historic world event" (to cite Habermas again (Borradori, 2003, p. 28)), it is not an outlier in terms of the political levels – foreign or domestic – at which French and Dutch public elites have generally responded to it.

Chapter 2
Events in Sociology: A Theoretical Exploration

2.1 Introduction

How do sociologists conceptualize events? What kinds of theories have they developed to study them? In which ways can those be supplemented and improved? This chapter starts with a discussion of the various ways in which events are usually presented and analyzed in sociology. It then problematizes and builds upon them to introduce an *inductive approach to studying events*.

I begin with a review of two event notions that are dominant in the field of sociology: *events as self-evident turning points* and *events as corollaries of structures*. Here I use with emphasis the term 'notions,' and not 'theories.' The literature in which these two notions are employed does not contain a complete theoretical disquisition of events, in the sense of an explicit outline of what they are and how they work, from which a clear methodology or hypotheses can be derived.

Nevertheless, it is important to consider this literature before focusing on more elaborate theorizations of events. By starting out with these dominant notions and explaining what is problematic about them, I aim to show that events deserve more serious theoretical reflection and empirical investigation than they usually receive.

Most of the work I discuss in this chapter was written by sociologists. Scholars from other social scientific disciplines, such as anthropology, communication science, history, and political science have – of course – also focused on events. For instance, the first chapter of Meinert and Kapferer's edited volume *In the Event: Towards an Anthropology of Generic Moments* (2015, p.1) urges anthropologists to go beyond their tendency to analyze events "as exemplifications or illustrations, usually in the form of case studies, of more general ethnographic descriptive or theoretical assertions." This is rather similar to how I review the events as corollaries-notion (section 2.2.2). Thus, the contents of this chapter speak to wider social scientific debates about events.

2.2 Two dominant event notions

2.2.1 Events as self-evident turning points

The first dominant notion depicts events as self-evident turning points. The central assumption behind this notion is: there is a world before and a world after an event occurs and the two are fundamentally different. Events are considered watershed moments in social life.

In sociological literature, 9/11 is often regarded as such a moment. The following three quotations are illustrative of this pattern. Fetzer and Soper (2005) state at the back of their widely cited book on national policies concerning Muslim immigrants in Great Britain, France, and Germany:

> Over ten million Muslims live in Western Europe. Since the early 1990s, and especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, vexing policy questions have emerged about the religious rights of native-born and immigrant Muslims.

Klandermans et al. (2008) begin their article about political activism among Muslim immigrants in the United States and the Netherlands as follows:

> Over the past several years the Western world has become a less hospitable place for immigrants of Islamic descent. Dramatic events such as 9/11, attacks on Spanish and British railways, and the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh have generated unprecedented levels of Islamophobia in Western countries (Klandermans et al., 2008, p. 992).

Lastly, Sander and Putnam (2010) wonder whether the trend of declining civic engagement among Americans, which Putnam observed in his famous study *Bowling Alone* (2001), has altered as a result of 9/11. They conclude:

> Whether they were in college, high school, or even grade school when the twin towers and the Pentagon were hit, the members of the 9/11 generation were in their most impressionable years and as a result seem to grasp their civic and mutual responsibilities far more firmly than do their parents (Sander and Putnam, 2010, p. 11).

2

Even though these citations come from texts that concern different topics, they have one thing in common: they all position 9/11 as an occurrence after which social life was different from how it was previously. Because this is a dissertation about the Twin Tower attacks, I use citations related to that case. Yet this is a common perspective to look at events in general. Occurrences as diverse as the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the Tsunami in Southeast Asia, and the Arab Spring are often seen as watershed moments of social life, both in and outside sociology.

There appears to be good reason to embrace such a perspective. We know that citizens have been shocked and/or excited about these occurrences. And we also know that politicians and policy makers have responded to them by claiming that they should have political or social consequences. This makes it rather intuitive to consider them turning points.

It is probably because of these reasons that this turning point-notion of events seems to be considered self-evident; something that does not have to be unpacked theoretically or empirically. When scholars state that a specific occurrence is a turning point, they frequently do so without providing empirical evidence. This is mainly the case in texts that do not specifically concern events, but which use them to explain the social origins of their topic of interest. For instance, Klandermans et al. (2008) employ 9/11 and other recent terrorist attacks to depict the emergence of a political climate, and then investigate one of its aspects (i.e., political activism among Muslim immigrants).

Texts that center on the turning point-function of events most often do actually provide substantial empirical evidence. This is the case for the analyses of Fetzer and Soper (2005) and Sander and Putnam (2010), who study if opinions of immigrant rights in Western Europe and civic engagement in the United States, respectively, were different after the event as compared to beforehand (see also Fetzer and Soper, 2003). Both indeed find a difference.

This latter way of depicting events as turning points is obviously more advanced than the former. However, in both cases, significant questions are not unpacked. How does a turning point actually come about? To what extent are the transformations which have occurred the result of 9/11 itself or instead of structural developments that were already taking placing before September 11, 2001? The importance of events can never be separated from the structures in which they are interpreted; structures that have offered people schemes of interpretation via which they become shocked or excited about them and that make certain transformative

responses more acceptable than others (*Cf*. Koopmans and Duyvendak, 1995; Snow, 2008). When scholars present events as turning points, they often do not take this into account.

2.2.2 Events as Corollaries of Structures

There exists yet a second dominant sociological notion of events, which reveals a diametrically opposite perspective of them from the first notion. Whereas the first one considers events highly powerful entities, this second one – which could also be termed the 'structuralist position' – assumes they have little significance. Scholars who employ this notion see events as the corollaries of structural societal developments. They posit that primarily great, relatively stable social phenomena such as economic systems, technological levels of development, or dominant political discourses determine the course of history, and not events.

This event notion is present in the work of several prominent sociologists. For example, Ulrich Beck (2002) uses it in an essay about 9/11. He claims that the fact that this event took place expresses the world's social state of being in the year 2001:

> This is my thesis: the collapse of language that occurred on September 11th expresses our fundamental situation in the 21st century, of living in what I call 'world risk society' (Beck, 2002, p. 39).

Beck explains how 9/11 and other events such as the Chernobyl disaster and the mad cow disease confirm his thesis that people across the globe are living in "world risk society." He does not hint at the possibility that this state of being could change as a result of feelings of surprise or shock about these events. Thus, according to Beck, events should be considered *remarkable expressions of structural societal conditions*.

Writings by other modernization theorists reveal a similar event notion. For instance, in his *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) Zygmunt Bauman depicts the extermination of the Jews as an event that expresses the dark side of modernization:

> As its full picture emerges from historical research, so does an alternative, and possible more credible, interpretation of the Holocaust as an event which disclosed the weakness and fragility of

human nature (of the abhorrence of murder, disinclination to violence, fear of guilty conscience and of responsibility for immoral behaviour) when confronted with the matter-of-fact efficiency of the most cherished among the products of civilization; its technology, its rational criteria of choice, its tendency to subordinate thought and action to the pragmatics of economy and effectiveness (Bauman, 1989, p. 13).

The Holocaust revealed weak spots in modernity. These spots were part of it before the event and they remain part of it afterwards. Therefore, Bauman frames his book as a warning sign of what the structures of modernity can bring about.

In Norbert Elias' civilization theory (2000 [1939]), events have a slightly different position. Instead of expressions of societal conditions, Elias sees them as what we could call *conduits for structural transformations*; moments when changes that have already been long underway erupt. He states, while reflecting on the courtization of warriors in Western Europe:

> All the changes take place quite slowly over a considerable period, in small steps and to a large extent noiselessly for ears capable of perceiving only the great events heard far and wide. The explosions in which the existence and attitudes of individual people are changed abruptly and therefore especially perceptibly, are nothing but particular events within these slow and often almost imperceptible social shifts, whose effects are grasped only by comparing different generations, by placing side by side the social destinies of fathers, sons, and grandsons (Elias, 2000 [1939], p. 394).

In other words, it may seem as if the changes occurred abruptly. But these moments of rupture are "*nothing* but events." They are not that important because the transformations would have happened anyway. If not at that specific moment, then surely at some later point in time.

In Pierre Bourdieu's work, we find a notion of events that is very close to that of Elias. Even though Bourdieu is famous as a social reproduction scholar, he also pays attention to processes of change (*Cf.* Gorski, 2013). For example, in *Homo Academicus* (1988) he deals extensively with May 1968 in Paris – the rupture that

started as a university crisis but ultimately developed into a national political crisis. One of the book's five chapters is dedicated to the "critical moment" (Bourdieu, 1988, pp. 159–193). It describes how during several revolutionary weeks, students, professors, and workers discovered each other in a shared resentment against Gaullist social structures. Yet, according to Bourdieu, the critical moment was rather unimportant in the creation of this resentment. He deems the protests first and foremost the outcome of long-lasting crises within various French fields (mainly Academia and the economy). Reflecting on the case of May 1968, Bourdieu formulates an axiom, which he supposes to be true for revolutionary situations in general:

> The probability that the structural factors which underlie critical tension in a particular field will come to engender a situation of crisis, fostering the emergence of extraordinary events (which a normal state of affairs would render unthinkable or, at the very least 'exceptional' and 'accidental,' therefore bereft of social significance and impact), reaches a maximum when a coincidence is achieved between the effects of several latent crises of maximum intensity (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 161).

What is particularly relevant here is the way in which causality is conceptualized. Beginning with structural factors, a situation of crisis emerges, followed by critical tension, which finally results in the emergence of events. When analyzing Bourdieu's work on change, Gorski (2013) points out that he is an adherent of conjunctural analysis. In Bourdieu's view, change comes about when structural, field-related factors create a conjuncture of transformation. During such a process, 'critical moments' might arise. Yet they mostly come, as in the citation above, at the end of the causal chain – as the outbursts of something deeper and more structural.

Thus, in the works of several prominent sociologists, we find a notion of events which depicts them as corollaries of structures: either as expressions of structural conditions (Beck and Bauman) or conduits for structural transformations (Elias and Bourdieu). These are rather one-sided perspectives. In many cases, separate moments may indeed (only) be expressions of a societal state of being or the endpoint of long-term processes of change. However, it is sociologically important and interesting to leave open the possibility that things happen differently. Beneath

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the corollaries-notion lies a continuous perspective on social reality. In this perspective, the world is full of reproduction or gradual change. When moments of rapid change occur, those are considered the result of long-term processes or crises.

I want to suggest that a moment or situation may be interpreted as so remarkable or huge that people see it as a reason to turn social structures upside down, in a way that was difficult to foresee before its occurrence. Such a view of social life allows events to become extremely important, and form the beginning of a sudden, relatively unexpected process of transformation, instead of merely its endpoint. Or, to say it in the words of Della Porta (2008, p. 29): events can also be independent variables. Indeed, events such as the Holocaust or the protests in May 1968 had all sorts of structural causes; yet, at the same time, we know that many people have been so shocked or excited by them that they have reconsidered their worldview as a result. A structuralist notion of events offers little room for the power of surprise, of being carried away by a specific moment or situation.[1] These are exactly the phenomena to which the event scholars whom I discuss further in this chapter pay attention.

2.2.3 The Basic Relationship Between Events and Structures: An Interplay

Even though the two notions outlined above present opposing views of events, they have one important thing in common. In each of them the event remains a black box: a social entity to which characteristics are attributed without being fully theorized or investigated. The first notion (events as self-evident turning points) lacks a theorization of the role of structures in the creation of events. For scholars who use this notion it seems to be self-evident to think, for example, that there is a world before and after 9/11 and so they do not develop a disquisition of the social origins of such a radical transformation. Scholars who follow the corollaries of structures-event notion, then, possess a view of social reality which makes it difficult to imagine that events can be the starting point of transformations. The possibility of abrupt change is excluded by their strict focus on continuity and the power of structures.

As a consequence of these gaps, neither of the two notions offers a concrete approach for studying events. Because they do not contain a comprehensive

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[1] See Sewell (2005, p. 81–123) and Oudenampsen (2012) for a somewhat similar critique of this event notion in the work of various prominent sociologists (Wallerstein, Scotchpoll, Tilly) and Dutch political sociologists'and political scientists' analyses of the electoral rise of right-wing populist Pim Fortuyn in the 2002 Dutch national elections.

theorization of how and why events can become transformative, it is also not possible to use them to formulate a research strategy. In this dissertation, I argue that a fruitful research approach should center on the relationship between events and the structures through which they acquire meaning. The event is created by those structures, but it can also become an incentive to change them. Thus, the relationship is an interplay.

The following chapters present some examples of this interplay. Yet, in its most basic form it looks like this: on the one hand, structures provide people with interpretative schemes, which they use to make sense of the world, including events; on the other, however, people may be so shocked, moved, or obsessed by a certain occurrence that it becomes for them an incentive to change those very structures.

2.3 Implicit Event Theorizations

I now turn to sociological studies that present more elaborate theorizations of events. We can start with the three founding fathers of sociology, who all paid attention to the phenomenon at some point in their careers.

Most of Karl Marx's work deals with the structural conditions for the occurrence of one specific event: the communist revolution (for example, Marx and Engels, 2018 [1848]).

Émile Durkheim famously writes about "collective effervescence," moments of intense group identification and unification, which can result in huge social transformations. His descriptions of these moments are rather similar to how I conceptualize events in this dissertation. The following citation captures the core of Durkheim's argument:

> In certain historical periods, under the influence of some great collective upheaval, social interactions become more frequent and active. Individuals seek each other out and assemble more often. The result is a general effervescence characteristic of revolutionary or creative epochs. Now, this hyperactivity has the effect of generally stimulating individual energies. People live differently and more intensely than in normal times. The changes are not only those of nuance and degree; man himself becomes other. He is moved by passions so intense that they can be assuaged only by violent, extreme acts of superhuman heroism or bloody barbarism. This

explains the Crusades, for example, and so many sublime and savage moments during the French Revolution. Under the influence of general exaltation, the most mediocre and inoffensive burgher is transformed into a hero or an executioner (Durkheim, 2001 [1912], p. 158).

Max Weber (1978 [1922], pp. 212–301), the third sociological founding father, introduces the concept of charismatic authority. According to him, charismatic leaders can excite crowds during "moments of distress" and thus develop into revolutionary forces (*Cf.* Tiryakian, 1995, p. 272).

Other sociologists write about events like the founding fathers: not mentioning them explicitly, yet studying phenomena that are similar to them. This dissertation focuses on events at the macro level, within national contexts. However, there exist numerous sociological analyses of the signification of remarkable occurrences at the micro level. For example, Dewey (1903) addresses "problematic situations," occasions which confront people to such an extent that they serve as inspiration to alter their lives. Garfinkel's ethnomethodological "breaching experiments" (1967) can be considered inquiries into the creation of events at the micro level. By inciting his students to provoke their family members, Garfinkel instructs them to cause eventful situations. How would they respond to unexpected behavior from a person whom they knew through and through? Furthermore, one of the frames that Goffman (1974, pp. 345–377) distinguishes is the "breaking frame" – a worldview that diffracts the hegemonic ideas in a given context. One could argue that the more successful such a frame is, the bigger a rupture it will create, and the more eventful the resulting situation.

When it comes to analyses of events at the meso or macro level, there are, for example, the notions of 'inertia' and 'path dependence.' Although these notions do not instruct a strict research focus on events, scholars who work with them often assign them an important role in social life. In both cases, the specific hypothesis is that events which happen at an early point during the course of a social history are more significant than ones that occur later on. For instance, Becker (1995: 301) analyzes how difficult it is to bring innovation into the existing "package" of the art world, because "it is always easier to use the already present elements of the package" than to come up with new ones. Prominent path-dependence scholar Mahoney (2000: 533-535) states that the more or less coincidental circumstance that

the steam engine was developed in England made the country the first nation in the world where the Industrial Revolution would commence.

Then there are sociological analyses in which events are central, but that make no references to the specific concept. Zolberg (1972, p. 183) introduces – and Tarrow (1993) uses it later – the term "moments of madness" to capture periods in which (it seems as if) "everything is possible" and revolutions might happen. As empirical illustrations, he refers to the revolutionary situations in Paris in 1848 and 1968. Swidler (1986) writes about "unsettled times," which she opposes to "settled times," to address those periods when social confusion exists and societies are more open to adopting fundamental cultural change:

> Culture has independent causal influence in unsettled cultural periods because it makes possible new strategies of action-constructing entities that can act (selves, families, corporations), shaping the styles and skills with which they act, and modeling forms of authority and cooperation (Swidler, 1986, p. 280).

Collins (2004a) describes four phases in the process to create solidarity that groups undergo as a result of an external shock, such as a terrorist attack:

> Underlying these divergent processes of target seeking is a common social dynamic: a process of collective focus of attention, which builds up to a peak within a week or two after a dramatic crisis and that keeps people entrained from two or three months before beginning to decline toward normalcy, a condition reached around six to nine months. The two- to three-month plateau is the dangerous period for enemies and group members alike. An extremely high level of collective solidarity is also collective hysteria: what people do during that period is not judged by themselves as falling into normal standards of behavior; they are both more heroic, more altruistic, and more fearful and vicious than at other times (Collins, 2004a, p. 86).

What these three concepts have in common is that they all put an emphasis on remarkable occurrences, followed by relatively short periods (moments of madness,

unsettled times, four phases of group solidarity) of transformation – rather similar to Durkheim's explosions of collective effervescence. For a while, normal rules do not apply and there is room for the invention of new thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

2.4 The Sociology of Events

There is also a body of research in which the term 'event' is explicitly used. This is the literature upon which I build most in this dissertation. For example, Berezin (2009) employs the term to explain the electoral rise of National Front in France. She argues that the party's electoral victory in 2002 would have been much less conceivable without the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. If this treaty had not been signed, then far-reaching European integration would not have taken place and, she claims, the anti-European sentiments from which the National Front benefited would not have become so widespread in France. Das (1995), then, examines on the basis of ethnographic research which "critical events" were important for social developments in India in the 20th century. Staggenborg (1993) uses the same concept to study how social movements employ remarkable occurrences in order to rearrange political opportunities (see also Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996). Kingdon (2011 [1984]) analyzes "focusing events": moments that figure as starting points for an increased public emphasis on certain topics of discussion. A central aspect for these researchers is transformation. According to them, events present "templates of possibilities" (Berezin, 2012); they offer people prospects for change which would have been more or less unthinkable without them.

Beyond this, there exist event analyses in which transformation is not as central, but which aim to show that the framing of the same significant occurrences can vary vastly among different national contexts. For instance, Hoffman and Durlak (2018) expound upon the distinctive responses to the Fukushima disaster in American and German policy debates, while Snow et al. (2007) demonstrate variations in the framing of the French riots of 2005 in newspapers from six Western countries (see for other examples Koopmans and Vliegenthart, 2010; Legewie, 2013; Semetko et al., 2003; De Vreese, 2001). Such cross-national event studies align with a field of research that points out how political and cultural attitudes or processes often differ substantially from country to country, as a result of distinctive "cultural repertoires" (Lamont, 1992; Lamont et al., 2016), "cleavage structures" (Kriesi et al., 1995; Kriesi et al., 2008), and "discursive opportunities" (Koopmans and Olzak, 2004; Koopmans et al., 2005).

However, the most extensive elaborations on events can be found in two books: *Logics of History* (2005) by William H. Sewell and Robin Wagner-Pacifici's *What is an Event?* (2017). Sewell is a historical sociologist who has been making a strong case for including events in sociological research agendas – to take their transformative working seriously, and, to quote Della Porta (2008, p. 29) again, to not only see them as dependent but also as possibly independent variables. *Logics of History* is his attempt to come to an "eventful sociology" (Sewell, 2005, pp. 110–113). Sewell claims that social life is generally full of continuity. Most occurrences that people experience are too common to encourage them to start imagining social changes. And even if happenings are shocking, they rarely lead to transformation, because they are neutralized by or absorbed into the social structure. Yet, events are exceptions to these processes, as they bring about possibilities for sudden transformation:

> While the events are sometimes the culmination of processes long underway, I would claim that events typically do more than carry out a rearrangement of practices made necessary by gradual and cumulative change. Historical events tend to transform social relations in ways that could not be fully predicted from the gradual changes that may have made them possible (Sewell, 2005, p. 227).

Sewell's illustrative case is the French Revolution, or more specifically, the storming of the Bastille, on July 14, 1789. He argues that this assault did indeed stem from existing social structures (the specific situation in Paris in 1789 – Parisians were hungry – in combination with long-standing desires among French citizens, such as the call for a more democratic society). However, the fact that this storming actually took place was so surprising to many observers that they believed it was necessary to adapt their worldviews. They were so overwhelmed by ordinary citizens' ability to unleash an uprising and even bring about a revolution that they revised some of their most fundamental political concepts in a very short time period:

> The novel articulation that makes this happening a momentous event in world history is an act of signification. Terms – for example "Bastille" and "revolution," but also "people," "liberty," "despotism," and so on – took on authoritative new meanings that,

taken together, reshaped the political world. This implies that events are, literally, significant: they signify something new and surprising. They introduce new conceptions of what really exists (the violent crowd as the people's will in action), of what is good (the people in ecstatic union), and of what is possible (revolution, a new kind of regeneration of the state and the nation). The most profound consequence of the taking of the Bastille was, then, a reconstruction of the very categories of French political culture and political action (Sewell, 2005, p. 245).

This novel view on politics subsequently inspired many other revolutionaries, such as Lenin in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century and Mao in China some years later (Sewell, 2005, p. 96). Because the French Revolution had taken place, these two men had confidence that effecting a political revolution was possible.

What marks for Sewell an event is what he, building on Sahlins (1985), calls a "conjunction of structures": the coming together of elements (in this case major political change brought about by ordinary citizens) that were previously not united (Sewell, 2005, pp. 219–224). Such a conjunction of structures creates a rupture, a break with normal life. During this time frame, fundamental transformations can take place. In the case of the French Revolution, this not only entailed the adjustment of the central definitions of politics. Change also manifested itself in more material matters, such as the drafting and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights along with the deposing of King Louis the XVI.

Wagner-Pacifici's *What is an Event?* (2017) relies heavily on Sewell's work, but is at the same time an extension of it. Whereas Sewell mainly focuses on that one event (the French Revolution) and the weeks of rupture in the summer of 1789, Wagner-Pacifici argues for a long-term perspective. According to her, events do not stop when the rupture is over. They can regain importance many years later. This can happen through various "forms": they might be quoted in a governmental document, form a painter's source of inspiration, or inform plans for the construction of a new building. And they appear in different "flows": at one moment, they are discussed vehemently, while during another, they remain at the background (Wagner-Pacifici, 2017, p. 10–15). The central point here is that events are not fixed entities. The meanings and importance of the same event can differ between social contexts and time periods.

Wagner-Pacifici uses 9/11 as an illustrative example. She indicates that it figures in the *9/11 Commission Report*, but also in discussions about an annual commemoration at Ground Zero (Wagner-Pacifici, 2017, pp. 126–139). Similarly, we could say that the French Revolution figures in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as in the French National Day on 14 July, the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. Summarizing her vision of events, Wagner-Pacifici characterizes them as "restless" (see also Wagner-Pacifici, 2010). She explains this concept based on the case of the French Revolution:

> It was an event initially experienced as a rupture, as relatively sudden, as something new, something unexpected, and something that was, ultimately, a turning point for individual identities, institutions, and political and social practices. From one point of view, then, it is a settled event, insofar as its status as an event seems fixed. From another point of view, it remains unsettled (as are all events, according to the approach of this book), because in order to stay alive, it requires continuous revisitings and refigurations in such forms as scholarly articles and books, annual holidays, rhetorical appeals, and commemorative ceremonies. Thus, restlessness is the sine qua non for the existence of events (Wagner-Pacifici, 2017, p. 88).

2.5 Additions to the Sociology of Events

Although the studies discussed in the last two sections have contributed to giving events a more central place in sociology and provide interesting analyses of them, I think there are a few points which bear problematization. The first one is that almost all these approaches employ a limited notion of the temporality of events. Most scholars who study events – Wagner-Pacifici (2017) with her emphasis on eventful "forms" and "flows" being the main exception – implicitly assume that they only provide stimulus for change during relatively short time periods, the first days or weeks after their occurrence. We can see this in the terminology scholars use: "four *phases* of group solidarity" (Collins, 2004a), "*breaks* with normal life" (Sewell, 2005), "unsettled *times*" (Swidler, 1986), and "*moments* of madness" (Zolberg, 1972).

The question is, however, how well such notions capture events as an entire phenomenon. Take the example of the Holocaust. It has been more than seven decades now since the Second World War came to an end. Yet, the extermination of the Jews is still considered highly relevant today. Alexander (2002), for instance, shows how the Holocaust continues to figure as a key event in contemporary discussions about ethnic, racial, and religious injustice, in particular those concerning genocides (see also Levy and Sznaider, 2004). Sewell (2005, p. 96) himself gives a perfect illustration of how an event can be regarded significant many years after its occurrence, when he indicates that Lenin and Mao were inspired by the French Revolution. Looking at these examples, it might seem obvious to state that events can have long lives. However, as the terminology of the previously mentioned scholars illustrates, this is not how events are commonly theorized or studied.

A second point where existing research on events can be ameliorated is through introducing a methodology that combines the possibility of making a long-term analysis of events with investigation in distinctive social contexts. Many studies explore how the same event is framed in different countries, yet their approaches are quite diverse. For instance, Legewie (2013) compares survey responses on feelings about immigrants conducted before and after the Islamic fundamentalist attack on Bali in 2002, whereas Snow et al. (2007) examine references to the 2005 French riots in newspaper articles. I propose a straightforward research approach, which can be employed to study all kinds of events using a myriad of data sources, in differing social contexts, over long periods of time.

A final point where existing analyses of events can be improved is through deepening our understanding of their origins and of the transformations related to them. Event scholars have formulated the fundamental reasons why certain occurrences turn into events, instead of into ordinary happenings. For example, because they form a "conjunction of structures" (Sahlins, 1985; Sewell, 2005). However, why does such a conjunction arise in the one social context and not in another? And how can we explain that even when a conjunction of structures comes about, the transformations that result might still differ between social contexts? As both Sewell (2005, pp. 244–268) and Wagner-Pacifici (2017, pp. 7–8) indicate, a great deal more can be unearthed concerning the processes pertaining to the origins of events and the transformations that follow their occurrence.

Thus, what should be added to existing analyses is a research approach to events: 1) which makes it possible to study them over long time periods; 2) in varying

social contexts; 3) in order to come to a deeper understanding of why they arise and the transformations related to them.

2.6 Towards an Inductive Approach to Studying Events

To make these contributions, I employ an *inductive approach to studying events*. This approach implies that the researcher herself does not determine what the event is, the issues to which it can be linked, or how long it lasts, but that she follows as openly as possible the lead of the event data. In this dissertation, this is done by tracing *direct references* to 9/11 in the American, French and Dutch public spheres, during the period of 2001 to 2015.

Although there are differences in the object of analysis, this approach has affiliations with the Actor-Network-Theory-perspective (ANT) of social reality. ANT's main aim is also to follow the signification of objects within social spaces as openly as possible, by studying the relations that actors have to them, without assuming that the objects have inherent meanings. Through applying this perspective, ANT scholars have, for instance, "followed around" the construction of scientific facts (Latour and Woolgar, 1979), laws (Latour, 2010), and diseases (Mol, 1999).

This approach also has affiliations to the event approach of Wagner-Pacifici (2010; 2017). She does not bound the temporality of events either, but aims to follow their "forms and flows" through different social contexts and time periods. I would say, however, that the inductive event approach is a little more radical than Wagner-Pacifici's. She characterizes the drawing of event boundaries as the "paradox of the event": "you cannot have an event without boundaries, and you cannot definitively bind an event" (Wagner-Pacifici, 2010, p. 1356). In my view, such an approach still clings too much to a perspective according to which the researcher himself decides where and when an event stops. Instead, not trying to find the boundaries of events at all and just studying the associations that actors themselves make with them as openly as possible – in this case within the context of public spheres, but in principle it could be *any* context – probably delivers more surprising, and therefore more interesting, results. Consequently, the approach I propose is not only inductive in how it analyzes events. It is also inductive in the sense that it can bring about unexpected research puzzles (the puzzles which are derived from my analysis at the end of Chapter 3 might serve as evidence for this argument).

Furthermore, following direct event references also helps to solve the issue of the isolation of impact. This is a methodological problem in event research, which I

already addressed briefly while discussing the turning points-event notion earlier on in this chapter: when can we deem a transformation an event effect and when should it be regarded as a result of other developments that happened before and after the event's occurrence? A possible answer to this problem could be to study both what was going on prior to and following the event. Everything that occurs afterwards can then be considered its effects. This is a rather common way to study events (see, for instance, Berezin, 2009; Fetzer and Soper, 2005; Geiß et al., 2016; Legewie, 2013; Sander and Putnam, 2010).

It does, however, not solve the problem. Take the example of post-9/11 developments in the Netherlands and France. It is argued that the occurrence of 9/11 helped Pim Fortuyn substantially with his political rise during the 2002 Dutch national elections (Buijs, 2009, pp. 422–423), and that it stimulated Jean-Marie Le Pen to some degree in reaching the second round of the French presidential elections in the same year (Berezin, 2009, pp. 140–141). The general increase of anti-Muslim sentiments after the event would have created a favorable discursive space for both politicians.

Several event-related questions can be posed about such analyses. Is this anti-Muslim element really something that has arisen as a result of 9/11? Or is it the outcome of other developments that occurred in these two countries after the event? And how have such developments – for instance the emerging competition of Fortuyn and Le Pen vis-a-vis the other Dutch and French party leaders – influenced these two electoral success stories? In social life, a wide variety of interactions usually take place around the same time. At the moment an event occurs, so many other things are happening more or less simultaneously, that it is difficult to indicate event effects just by looking at what happened before and after its occurrence. Studying the direct references made to the event is a possible solution to this dilemma. For instance, if Dutch citizens say that they are going to vote for Fortuyn because 9/11 has taken place, or if other politicians claim that due to its occurrence there should be more discursive space for Fortuyn's anti-Islam discourses, we would have an indication that these transformations are direct event responses.

2.7 Assumptions of and Limitations to the Inductive Approach

The concrete methodological applications of the inductive event research approach are mapped out in the next chapter. Yet, here, it is worthwhile to reflect on the assumptions and the limitations inherent in applying this approach.

Its central assumption is that events primarily happen as the result of a cognitive process. The definition of events that I follow – happenings that people consider to be so shocking, remarkable, or significant that they adjust their thoughts, feelings, and actions in response – implies that impact is created through cognition. As Sewell (2005, p. 245) states in the second quote above, events result in transformations of structures via an "act of signification." A happening gains its significance by ways of a thought process. Once that process has taken place, emotions (anger, joy) or material consequences (the introduction of a new parliamentary system, the beheading of the king) may follow. But signification starts with the *realization* that something special has occurred. The fact that causality flows like this is one of my reasons for focusing this study on public spheres: those are key places for societal acts of event signification.

A limitation to the inductive approach is that it is not suited to indicate "cognitive shifts" – to refer again to Sewell – between the situation before and after the event. It is inherent to the approach that empirical investigation can only occur for periods in which 9/11 has already taken place, because only then were there references to it. This means that strict adherence to the inductive approach rules out the possibility of investigating whether the framing of issues such as safety or Islam has been different before and after the Twin Tower attacks. Consequently, it cannot indicate if and how framings have changed since 9/11. However, as I argued in the previous section, measuring impact with such a pre- and post-event analysis is complicated in any case. The inductive event approach has a distinctive measurement of impact. It investigates what is done *with* or *because of the event*, and not so much if this is *different from what happened before the event*.

Another limitation of the approach is that it does not offer an elaborate theoretical model of the working of events. This is the other side of the coin of keeping the meanings of the event as open as possible. Since the approach presumes a minimalist event definition – events are what people make of them – it is not possible to say anything more about them before the commencement of empirical investigation than that they are happenings which are considered important and that result in transformations. Yet an advantage to keeping the event's meanings open is, as mentioned above, that this can generate research results which offer unexpected analytical puzzles. That, in turn, provides the possibility to think about solutions to them which make for theoretically innovative additions to the sociology of events.

Chapter 3

Applying the Inductive Approach. 9/11 as an Event Framed Uniformly From a Foreign-Affairs Perspective and Diversely From a Domestic-Affairs Perspective

3.1 Introduction: Studying Three Framing Aspect of Events Inductively

As I argued in the previous chapter, the best way to study the framing of events is to investigate them as openly as possible, in varying social contexts, over long periods of time. Yet how concretely do we engage in such an investigation?

Since the body of literature on events does not offer much in the way of conceptual or methodological tools for this approach, we need to look elsewhere. Works on social problems and framing provide more direction. The following three aspects these works highlight are relevant to analyzing events:

1. The amount of *attention* that they receive. Hilgartner and Bosk (1988, pp. 53–56) quantify media attention as an indicator of the societal importance given to social problems. The more attention paid to a problem, the higher the chance that citizens will be worried about it and that politicians or policy makers are going to be forced to respond accordingly. Similarly, we may assume that the more attention is given to an event, the higher its societal and political significance will be.

2. The *issues* that are attached to them. To make sense of events, scholars engage in interpretative work, which Entman (1993, p. 52) calls *problem definition* and Snow and Benford (1988) define as *diagnostic framing*. What kinds of issues are exemplified by them? In relation to which public debates do they have relevance? For example, Benson and Saguy (2005) show that events and developments related to immigration and sexual harassment are framed rather differently in the U.S. and France. With regards to sexual harassment, they find that the American press often uses a discrimination frame to cover incidents, whereas the French press generally tends to frame them as acts of abuse of power. Such differing framings pave the way for varying societal and political responses to the same social problem in the two countries.

3. The *implications* that are inferred from them. People do not only *diagnose* events, they also ascribe courses of action to them, engaging in what Entman (1993, p. 52) calls *suggesting remedies*. Snow and Benford (1988) name it *prognostic framing*. By declaring that attitudes and policies should change in response to a significant occurrence, people push for the transformations that Sewell (2005, pp. 226–228) and Wagner-Pacifici (2017) associate with events (which thus distinguishes them from ordinary happenings).

Given the fact that the framing of events can differ substantially among social contexts and time periods, it is important to allow for a diversity of framing possibilities and not presume that an event is naturally related to a specific issue or type of policy change. Therefore, I aim to examine the *attention* events receive, the *issues* to which they are linked, and the *implications* that are attributed to them to as openly as possible. I follow others who use an inductive research strategy to study framing processes (e.g., Biber 2009; Tognini-Bonelli, 2001; Törnberg and Törnberg, 2016).

In the coming sections, I begin with an analysis of 9/11's framing in articles in national presses. I then substantiate this investigation by considering how 9/11 is framed in election manifestos and prominent policy documents. Subsequently, I use the empirical conclusions that emerge from these analyses to indicate some sociological processes that may be more generally in play for events. I end the chapter by deriving three research puzzles from my results, which form the basis for the analyses in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

3.2 Data and Methods Used in Analyzing National Newspapers

3.2.1 Corpus

I study the framing of 9/11 in national newspapers by analyzing direct references to the attacks. This leaves the exact contents of the framing open and thus aligns with my aim of making an inductive event investigation. To do so, I examine newspaper articles that I collected using Lexis Nexis in which the term '*September 11*' ('*11 septembre*' in French and '*11 september*' in Dutch) appears. I chose this term after a process of trial and error: searching for other terms yielded less fruitful results.[2]

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[2] 'World Trade Center' and 'Twin Towers' were useful for the first week after 9/11, but not for any other weeks. 'Ground zero' did not bring up many search results for any period. '9/11' was a difficult term because this also gave many articles mentioning sports

I selected different newspapers for each of the three research steps. To measure the amount of *attention*, I focused on newspapers with comparable quantities of political news content, because 9/11 was most often mentioned in those sections. For this step, I therefore made use of two elite newspapers from each country: *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* from the United States, *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* from France, and *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Volkskrant* from the Netherlands. The corpus consists of 99,238 articles (65,428 American, 22,920 French, and 11,070 Dutch). To control for newspaper size, I compared the number of articles each newspaper published weekly during ten weeklong periods during the years 2001 – 2015. Both Dutch newspapers averaged approximately 775 articles per week. The French and American newspapers were larger: *Le Monde* had 1.3 times more articles, *Le Figaro* 1.5, *The Washington Post* 1.9, and *The New York Times* 2.5.

To be able to say as much as possible about the *issues* and *implications* related to 9/11 in national newspapers from the three countries, I selected articles from all the newspapers available via LexisNexis: *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *La Croix* and *L'Humanité* for France; *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *Trouw*, *Algemeen Dagblad,* and *De Telegraaf* for the Netherlands; *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *New York Daily News* for the United States. The prominent national newspapers *The Wall Street Journal* (American) and *Liberation* (French) are not available on LexisNexis. The *New York Daily News* is a local newspaper, though it also reports on national and international affairs; I included it in order to cover America's lowbrow, tabloid press. The entire corpus consists of 141,454 articles (80,013 American, 41,220 French, and 20,221 Dutch).

3.2.2 Operationalization: Attention, Issues, Implications

Attention – To chart cycles of attention for 9/11, I employed the basic method of word counting. I measured how many newspaper articles per year in each of the countries mentioned the event in the period 2001–2015, and then standardized these numbers with regards to respective newspaper sizes (see Alimi and Maney (2018, pp.

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statistics ('9 against 11') or time schedules ('from 9 to 11'). The additional work of filtering the articles would have been worthwhile had this provided qualitatively different results. However, an exploratory analysis revealed that articles associated with this search term were not substantively different from those associated with 'September 11.'

9 – 12) for a comparable analysis of the intensity and duration of event media attention).

Issues – To analyze the *issues* related to 9/11, I used the topic-modeling technique Latent Direchlet Allocation (LDA).[3] The central feature of topic modeling is that it provides clusters of word associations – topics – that often show up together in text corpora (Blei, 2012; Grimmer and Stewart, 2013). Since this is very much an inductive research technique (*Cf.* Wagner-Pacifi et al., 2015, p. 3), it aligns with my aim to investigate the framing of 9/11 as openly as possible across different country contexts over time. Even though adding a time series analysis component is not the most common way to do topic modeling, other scholars apply the technique similarly (for example, Hall et al., 2008; Marshall, 2013; Miller, 2013).

In order to make cross-national and longitudinal comparisons, I split the corpus into 42 separate subcorpora, one per country for each of the 14 years between 2001 and 2015. Before running the topic models, I cleaned the data by deleting stop words and commonly used phrases. As is customary in topic modeling, I experimented with the number of topics. I settled for 10 topics for subcorpora of up to 1,000 articles, and 20 topics for ones with more than 1,000 articles (for similar results with a topic-modeling analysis of newspaper articles, see Marshall (2013)). This yielded a database of 240 topics for the United States and 170 each for France and the Netherlands.

To find meaningful patterns in the database, the topics required interpretation. A sociologist with expertise in each of the three countries assisted me in this process. We coded the topics independently from one another, looking at the 15 most frequently mentioned terms within each respective topic. The Krippendorff alpha of the coding was 0.93, which is a highly acceptable score for intercoder reliability (Krippendorff, 2013, pp. 277 – 287). When a topic did not make sense, we used a topic-modeling tool that indicated for each newspaper article how representative it was of a topic. Then we read the five most representative articles. If this procedure still did not identify a topic, we coded it as 'unclear.' All topics deemed 'unclear' were not included in the analysis.

Each topic was coded for two aspects. First, on the *issue* it was about. There were no pre-defined categories for this coding. Each topic was given a short description that we thought fit best. This provided a list of more than 100 topic

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[3] To execute the analysis, I used the RStudio package Quanteda (Benoit et al., 2018).

codes, many of which were very specific (for instance, a Dutch one in 2002 about safety issues during the Winter Olympic Games). To facilitate the comparison, we united all these topics, generating a list of 12 aggregated topics: Memories of 9/11; Islam; Iraq War; Afghanistan War; Safety; Terrorism; Economy; Media and Arts; International Relations; National Politics; Air Traffic; and American Politics/Society. By way of illustration, the appendix at the end of the dissertation provides an overview of four of the topics from the database and the topic codes assigned to them (Appendix A), as well as a table with examples of the specific topics that were transformed into aggregated topics (Appendix B). We could assign 98% of the specific topics to the 12 aggregated topics; the remaining 2% were coded as 'other.'

A second aspect according to which topics were coded was whether the event became 'domesticated.' Domestication is here defined as: a topic which refers to developments or events inside the borders of the country for which the code was given. The idea of including this aspect emerged during the coding process, when it appeared that it was an aspect for which significant, meaningful differences were present among the three countries. This finding may be considered a fruitful outcome of using the inductive approach to research events.

The concept of domestication is commonly not used like this in social scientific research on events. Usually, it is employed by scholars demonstrating that globalization does not (yet) create one uniform media landscape across national contexts, because international events and developments often receive specific national framings (Alasuutari et al., 2013; Clausen, 2004; Gurevitch et al., 1991; Joye, 2015; Lee and Yang, 1996; Olausson, 2014). Thus, the interpretation of domestication I use here, which focuses specifically on the *extent* to which events become associated with domestic issues, is to the best of my knowledge a new lens through which to analyze this phenomenon. It is, though, very similar to ways in which sociologists study the diffusion of cultural products. They employ Wallerstein's world-system theory (2004) to investigate how languages (De Swaan, 2001), books (Heilbron, 1999) and the arts (Janssen et al., 2008) are domesticated – that is: used, bought, or appreciated – to varying degrees in different national contexts.

The distinctions between what is foreign and what is domestic are obviously more gradual than dichotomous. For instance, EU policies, in which France as well as the Netherlands are involved, are, on one hand, foreign: created in Brussels during meetings that include ministers and other political actors from many different

countries. On the other hand, they are also domestic because the EU makes all sorts of decisions that have major consequences for the national governments and citizens of its member states. In this dissertation, I consider a topic as foreign when it is *primarily* concerned with affairs taking place outside a nation-state's borders. A topic is domestic when it primarily relates to affairs happening within its borders. Thus, EU policies are more foreign than domestic because they do not involve France or the Netherlands specifically, yet rather EU member states as a whole (see Appendix A for other coding examples). If it was unclear to one of us whether a topic was foreign or domestic or if the topic was too vague it was coded as 'unclear.'

When topic codings according to both aspects were complete, I investigated in each subcorpus (by country and year) the percentage of content a single topic added to its total size. These percentages were then used to depict the relative sizes of the aggregated topics and of the distribution between foreign and domestic topics for each subcorpus.

Implications – I researched implications by looking for sentences or paragraphs containing claims that certain ideas, policies, or institutions should be supported, rejected, or transformed as a result of 9/11. In this process, I made no distinction between implications that were expounded by politicians, journalists, academics, or actors from any other profession – all were coded. Every citation that contained an implication was coded with respect to two aspects:

- Regarding which *issue* should the change take place? To make the results comparable to those from the topic-modeling analysis, I used the list of aggregated topics and counted how many implications were related to each of them.
- A more specific interpretation of the citation. Why was 9/11 considered a cause for transformation? Here I chose not to aim for systematic comparison, but instead to provide interpretative analysis.

Since it was not feasible to undertake this analysis for all the articles in the corpus, I conducted it for articles from five time periods. Three of these involved the two weeks immediately following a terrorist attack: 9/11 itself, the train attacks in Madrid in March 2004, and the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris in January 2015. I included the latter two attacks to examine if and how the framings of 9/11 changed under the influence of new events. To find newspaper articles about these cases, I added 'Madrid' plus 'train,' and 'Charlie Hebdo,' respectively, as search terms.

The other two periods of analysis entailed two weeks during "settled times" (Swidler, 1986): weeks in which there were no events (e.g., terrorist attacks, military invasions, or national elections) that could easily be associated with 9/11. One was during the fifth year after the attacks (in 2006), the other in the tenth year (in 2011). These periods were investigated to see what role was (still) accorded to 9/11 in settled times.

I found that 80 was the maximum number of 9/11-related articles for each of the five periods in each country, with the exception of the period immediately following the attacks, which yielded a greater number of search results in all three countries. Therefore, I took a random sample of 80 articles per country for this period and included all available ones for the other periods.

3.3 9/11 in National Newspapers

3.3.1 Attention

Not surprisingly, 9/11 received the greatest amount of attention in all three countries immediately after the attacks (Graph 3.1). Furthermore, for the entire period, American newspapers gave more attention to the event than either French or Dutch ones. The French and Dutch cycles were largely similar – with the exception of the first two years following the event, when it received more attention in French newspapers. However, what is perhaps most remarkable is that 9/11 continued to receive attention long after its actual occurrence. We can take the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* as an example. In the corpus, this is the newspaper that printed the fewest articles related to 9/11; yet in April 2015 it still published 13 articles mentioning it.

Graph 3.1: Standardized Attention Cycles for 9/11 during the Years 2001–2015
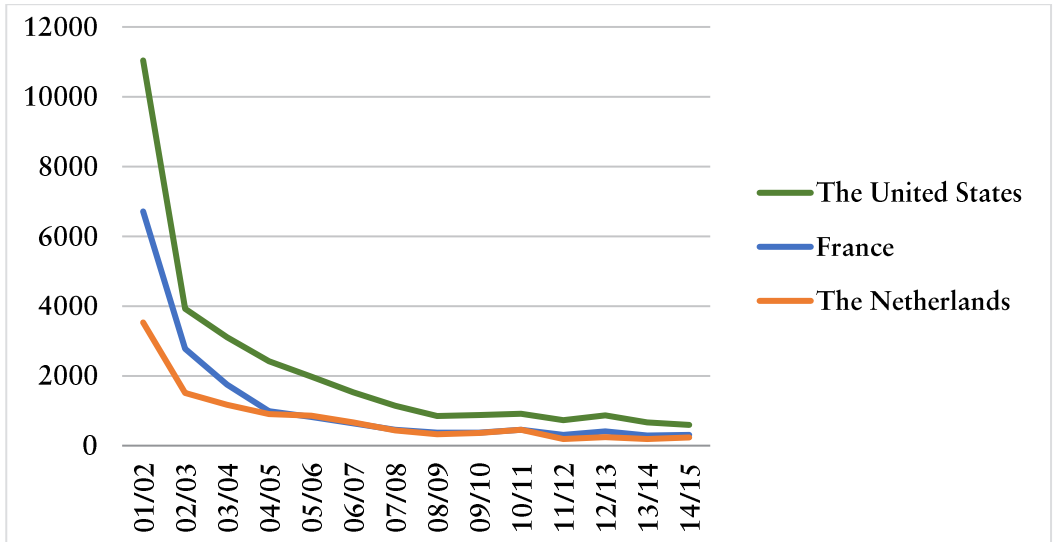
3.3.2 Issue Attachment

What about the issues related to 9/11? I found strong similarities among the three countries with respect to how events were linked to foreign affairs (Table 3.1). The Iraq War received considerable attention in each of the countries in the first years after 9/11 (almost always above 10% until 2007–2008). For the Afghanistan War, this was the case during almost the entire period under analysis. This also held true for the topic of Terrorism, which nearly every year scored higher than 10% in all countries. These findings of cross-national similarities in attaching 9/11 to foreign affairs topics corroborate results from earlier research (Entman, 2003; Gershkoff and Kushner, 2005; Hoffman, 2002; Jackson, 2005). Cross-national differences surely exist. For instance, during certain years, the topic of Economy, which mostly includes newspaper articles about the impact of 9/11 on the global economy, received greater attention in France than in the other two countries. Yet, in general, there exists a high degree of uniformity in the contents of foreign affairs topics.

This is not at all the case when it comes to the topics about domestic affairs (Table 3.2). Both the U.S. and the Netherlands had one specific domestic topic which received substantial attention during almost the whole period of research, while these two topics were largely absent in the sources from the other two countries. For the

United States, this is Safety (with an attention rate of at least 10% every year) and for the Netherlands it is Islam (at least 10% in 11 out of 14 years).[4] In American newspapers 9/11 has thus become a 'domestic safety event,' while in Dutch ones it has turned into a 'domestic Islam event.' For the first 14 years following the event, I found only two topics in American sources that connected Muslims living in the U.S. to the event, whereas in Dutch newspapers, such topics were present over the course of 12 years.

This finding for the American case may appear somewhat startling, considering that American Muslims have faced a backlash in everyday life since 9/11 (Bakalian and Bezorgmehr, 2009; Cainkar, 2009; Ewing, 2008; Peek, 2011). There is also evidence that, even before the political rise of Donald Trump, anti-Muslim attitudes had become part of mainstream American public discourses (Bail, 2014a). In the next Chapter I will delve deeper into this result, but here it is at least important to mention that my results nuance the idea that 9/11 has been a catalyst for the public stigmatization of American Muslims (Garg et al., 2018; Woods and Arthur, 2014).

Literature on the impact of 9/11 in France generally assumes that is has not been great (Bowen, 2007, pp. 92 – 97; De Wenden, 2011, p. 90). My findings corroborate this, though only partly. Whereas American newspapers emphasize the meanings of the Twin Tower attacks with regards to domestic safety affairs and Dutch ones often focus on Muslim integration, Graph 3.2 indicates that such domestication processes did not take place in France. There, 9/11 was seldom related to domestic issues, with domestic news about the event not exceeding 16%. The last year of the analysis, when topics related it to the Charlie Hebdo attack (see the implications analysis in the next section), was an exception. However, this French 'non-domestication' of 9/11 does not imply that it has been insignificant for French public actors. As Graph 3.1 indicates, they have discussed it extensively, even more than their Dutch counterparts, but have mostly done so in the context of foreign affairs.

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[4] Memories of 9/11 is also prominent among the American domestic topics; this is far less the case in the French and Dutch ones. I will not examine this difference, as it is rather obvious that more attention is given to victims of the attacks in the country where they lived and died.

Table 3.1: Foreign Affairs Topics

The United States	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Islam	0	0	0	0	0.04	0	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Iraq War	0	0.12	0.11	0.15	0.23	0.22	0.16	0.11	0.1	0	0	0.03	0.06	0
Afghanistan War	0.13	0	0	0	0	0.04	0.07	0.09	0	0.09	0.09	0.12	0.06	0.07
Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.02	0	0	0.09	0.08	0
Terrorism	0.1	0.22	0.24	0.2	0.05	0.15	0.09	0.1	0.23	0.26	0.14	0.1	0.2	0.14
Economy	0.11	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
International Relations	0	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Air Traffic	0	0.04	0	0.08	0	0	0	0	0.06	0	0	0	0	0.08

France	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Memories	0.13	0	0	0.03	0.04	0	0	0	0	0.25	0	0	0	0
Islam	0	0	0	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.09	0
Iraq War	0	0.21	0.23	0.09	0.1	0.14	0.11	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Afghanistan War	0.23	0.07	0	0	0.05	0.11	0.14	0.14	0.16	0	0.18	0.24	0.12	0.13
Safety	0	0	0.08	0.07	0.03	0	0.13	0	0.11	0	0.16	0.29	0.14	0
Terrorism	0.32	0.18	0.28	0.26	0.25	0.29	0.19	0.19	0.22	0.19	0.24	0	0.12	0.33
Economy	0.23	0.12	0	0	0.08	0.08	0.11	0.22	0.21	0	0.16	0.1	0	0
Media/Arts	0	0.11	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0.12	0	0
International Relations	0	0	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.04	0.12	0	0	0.16	0	0	0	0
Air Traffic	0	0	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1
American Politics/Society	0	0.15	0.08	0.15	0.09	0.1	0.12	0.25	0.2	0.18	0	0	0.14	0
Other	0	0	0	0.06	0.04	0.06	0	0	0	0.11	0.12	0.14	0.28	0

The Netherlands	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Memories	0.05	0.03	0.04	0	0.09	0	0	0	0	0.12	0.13	0	0	0
Islam	0	0	0.03	0	0	0	0.08	0	0	0	0.14	0	0	0
Iraq War	0	0.26	0.23	0.14	0.06	0.2	0.13	0	0.18	0	0	0	0	0
Afghanistan War	0.05	0	0.04	0.03	0.13	0.04	0.09	0.17	0	0	0.2	0.16	0	0.09
Safety	0.05	0	0	0	0.08	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.21	0.16	0.19
Terrorism	0.23	0.2	0.19	0.35	0.19	0.18	0.1	0.12	0.19	0.34	0	0.36	0.23	0.32
Economy	0.12	0	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.07	0	0	0	0	0
Media/Arts	0.08	0.08	0.06	0	0.06	0.1	0	0	0.1	0	0.1	0	0.14	0
International Relations	0.11	0.07	0	0	0.11	0.03	0	0.12	0.07	0	0.12	0	0.29	0
Air Traffic	0	0	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Politics/Society	0	0	0	0.07	0.02	0.07	0.13	0.29	0	0.14	0.11	0.11	0	0.09
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.08	0	0	0	0

Table 3.2: Domestic Affairs Topics

The United States	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Memories	0.37	0.15	0.18	0.12	0.24	0.2	0.23	0.18	0.19	0.3	0.24	0.07	0.11	0.14
Islam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.08	0.06	0	0	0	0
Safety	0.1	0.14	0.15	0.15	0.26	0.26	0.23	0.19	0.14	0.16	0.34	0.1	0.09	0.23
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.08	0	0.05
Economy	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.09	0.05	0	0	0.07	0.07	0.07
Media/Arts	0	0.1	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.01	0	0.08	0	0.06	0.04	0.14	0.07	0.05
National Politics	0.06	0.09	0.15	0.14	0.03	0.07	0.11	0.14	0.1	0.06	0.11	0.2	0.17	0.18
Air Traffic	0.07	0	0.06	0	0	0	0	0	0.04	0	0	0	0.06	0
Other	0	0	0	0.05	0.04	0	0	0.04	0	0	0	0	0.03	0

France	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Islam	0	0	0.04	0	0.04	0.06	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0	0	0.11	0.11	0.15
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.24
Economy	0	0.08	0.05	0.07	0	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.04
Media/Arts	0	0.04	0.05	0.06	0	0	0.08	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Politics	0.1	0	0	0	0.1	0.04	0	0	0	0.11	0.14	0	0	0
Air Traffic	0	0.04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0	0	0	0

The Netherlands	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Memories	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.04	0	0.04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Islam	0.05	0.12	0.16	0.14	0.17	0.2	0.19	0.21	0.25	0.11	0.21	0	0	0.23
Safety	0.04	0.05	0	0.03	0	0	0.09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terrorism	0	0	0	0.04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media/Arts	0.04	0	0.08	0	0	0.03	0.1	0	0	0.1	0	0.16	0	0.08
National Politics	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.04	0	0	0.14	0.11	0	0	0	0
Air Traffic	0.07	0.12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.18	0

Graph 3.2: Percentages of 9/11-related News About Domestic Topics
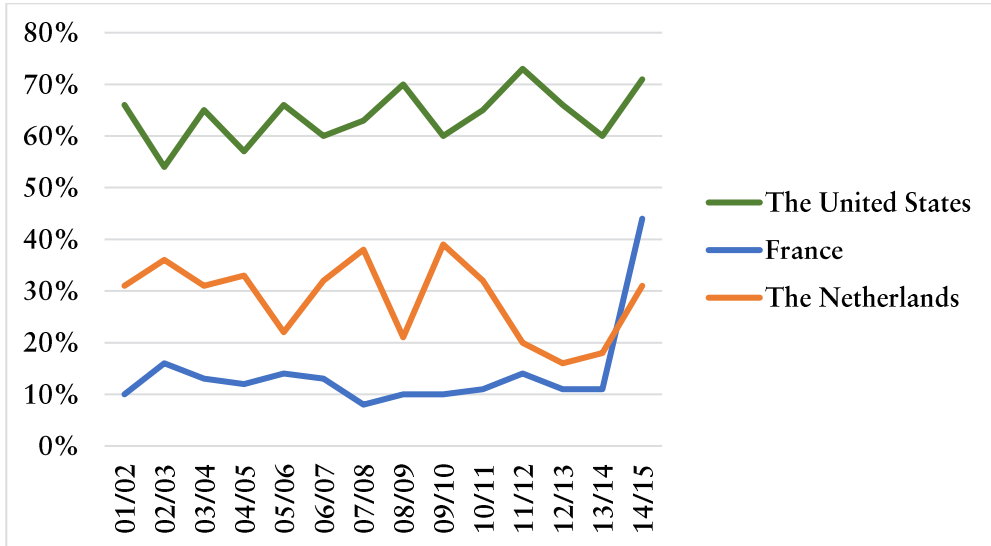
3.3.3 Implications

I now turn to the analysis of the implications that public actors ascribe to 9/11. Considering these implications not only gives insight into the transformative effects of the event, but also allows me to provide a more in-depth and interpretive perspective on its general framing. In the first weeks after the attacks, an intense urge to take action is apparent in all three countries (Table 3.3 and 3.4). The American columnist Anthony Lewis writes, for instance, on September 12, 2001:

> The terrorist attack should inspire reflection about all of our national security policies, including the proposed missile defense system. Its critics have always said that this country will be in greater danger in the future from suitcase bombs or other terrorist devices than from missiles, and their case has now been devastatingly made. Whatever direction policy takes, we need joint action to protect the world from terrorism, nuclear or otherwise (Lewis, 2001, p. 27).

The intensity and magnitude of the implications which are attributed immediately after the event reflect a sentiment that the world has changed and that action must be taken – a sentiment which is captured in event literature, through concepts like "unsettled times" (Swidler 1986) or "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972). The appearance of such an intense statement with such a clear implication is less imaginable five years later in each of the three countries. An example of a statement representative of the intensity of the implications which were inferred from 9/11 around that time comes from an opinion piece in *Trouw* (June 10, 2006), concerning integration policies for Dutch immigrants[5]:

> Why is it that the debate on integration in our country is so narrow-minded that it is only focused on the level of Dutch language that immigrants should be able to speak? Because of the 'multicultural drama' and '9/11,' the Dutch political climate has changed dramatically, and immigrants are bullied (Kurvers, 2006, p. 14).

On the one hand, 9/11 is very much present in this citation (it has led to a change in political climate). On the other hand, the climate is already there. No new consequences are related to the event.

However, it regains salience in the periods immediately following the Madrid and Charlie Hebdo attacks – many new implications are put forward in response to those events. This pattern suggests that events can suddenly prompt transformations again after a period of relative silence. In these cases, the memory and imagery of 9/11 are reactivated by the other attacks. For instance, in the United States, the train attacks in Madrid are often framed as a 'reminder' or 'wake-up call' that terrorism remains a big threat, reaffirming the status of 9/11 as a foundational experience. An editorial commentary in *The Washington Post* after the Madrid attacks (March 12, 2004) illustrates this kind of discourse:

> The Bush administration's clumsy diplomacy and its critics' hyperbolic charges of "unilateralism" sometimes obscure the fact that the United States has had true and valuable allies in the war on terrorism. Yesterday one of the best of those, Spain, suffered a blow as shocking and as terrible as any the enemy has landed since Sept.

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[5] All English translations of Dutch and French citations are mine [TvD].

11, 2001 …. The horror of Madrid only confirms that a broad and determined alliance is the only answer to terrorism. It reminds us that the United States neither fights, nor suffers, alone (The Washington Post, 2004, p. A22).

Table 3.3: Implications for Foreign Affairs

Case	Numbers/ Primary Contents	The United States	France	The Netherlands
9/11	Number	14	14	13
	Primary Contents	Afghanistan War (12), Terrorism (2)	Terrorism (6), Afghanistan War (2), Islam (2), Economy (2), Safety (1), Air Traffic (1)	Afghanistan War (6), Terrorism (4), Islam (2), International Relations (1)
Madrid	Number	15	12	8
	Primary Contents	Terrorism (9), Iraq War (3), International Relations (3)	Terrorism (7), Safety (3), Islam (2)	Terrorism (5), Safety (3)
5 years	Number	3	3	4
	Primary Contents	Terrorism (2), International Relations (2)	Afghanistan War (1), Safety (1), Terrorism (1)	Terrorism (2), Safety (1), International Relations (1)
10 years	Number	0	0	2
	Primary Contents			Safety (1), International Relations (1)
Charlie Hebdo	Number	4	0	2
	Primary Contents	Terrorism (2), Iraq War (1), Safety (1)		Terrorism (2)

Table 3.4: Implications for Domestic Affairs

Case	Numbers /Primary Contents	The United States	France	The Netherlands
9/11	Number	19	1	12
	Primary Contents	Safety (16), Islam (2), Economy (1), Arts/Media (1)	Islam (1)	Islam (9), Terrorism (2), Arts/Media (1)
Madrid	Number	4	2	7
	Primary Contents	Safety (3), Islam (1)	Islam (2)	Islam (4), Safety (2), Economy (1)
5 years	Number	7	1	4
	Primary Contents	Safety (4), National Politics (1), Arts/Media (1), Islam (1)	Islam (1)	Islam (3), Safety (1)
10 years	Number	6	0	4
	Primary Contents	Safety (4), Arts/Media (1), Memories (1)		Islam (2), Arts/Media (1), Other (1)
Charlie Hebdo	Number	2	18	13
	Primary Contents	Safety (2)	Safety (9), Terrorism (4), Islam (4), Arts/Media (1)	Islam (11), Safety (2)

It turns out that most of the patterns I discovered in the investigation of implications are similar to the ones found in the topic-modeling analysis. In both cases, I find *uniformity* in the framing concerning foreign affairs and *variation* with respect to domestic affairs. In all three countries, most of the foreign affairs implications are related to the issues of the Afghanistan War, Terrorism, and Safety (Table 3.3). With respect to domestic affairs, we can see that the number of domestic implications in France is considerably lower than in the other two countries (with the period after the Charlie Hebdo attack as an exception). This confirms that 9/11 is a kind of *non-domestic event* in France – French public actors consider it an important occurrence, but not for their domestic affairs (Table 3.4). Furthermore, in the United States,

similar to the topic-modeling analysis, Safety is the domestic issue with the greatest number of implications in all five periods, while in the Netherlands it is Islam.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 further show that there is a high degree of *stability* in all three countries in terms of the issues to which these implications refer. Thus, both my topic-modeling and implication analysis indicate that 9/11's issue attachment does not change much over the years. While events can be restless, as Wagner-Pacifici (2010, 2017) theorizes, I find that the issues related to 9/11 in all three countries have remained stable; the similarities and the differences among them have been persistent.

Analysis of the implications also offers insight into the specific discursive processes behind these general framing patterns. An important finding is that they represent *omnipresent trends* in each of the countries and not (just) the specific framing of 9/11 by one distinctive group. In the United States, the link between 9/11 and safety affairs is created by both left- and right-wing actors from all sorts of professions (politicians, journalists, social scientists), and made in newspapers with all political leanings. Indeed, there exist discursive differences among them (Democrats tend to be less in favor of the introduction of the Patriot Act than Republicans) – but everyone relates 9/11 to Safety.

In France, I find that public actors tend to infer implications from 9/11 almost exclusively at the level of global or European Union politics. After the Madrid attacks, many make a plea to introduce a *European* Patriot Act (a copy of the American policy answer to 9/11) and not a *French* one. The following quote from an article in *Le Monde* (March 13, 2004) is illustrative of the general response in France during this period[6]:

> The European Union must conclude before the end of the month, as it did most recently in July 2002, an update of its Action Plan against terrorism, which was adopted in September 2001, during the weeks after the attacks in New York and Washington (Ferenczi, 2004).

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[6] The page number of this article was not included in its Lexis Nexis version, and neither was it in the newspaper's online archives. This is also the case for two articles from *Le Figaro* that I cite in Chapter 6.

After the attack on Charlie Hebdo, many implications are indeed attributed to 9/11. Yet, the event *by itself* does not suddenly become relevant to French national politics. The Charlie Hebdo attack is regularly framed as the 'French 9/11,' implying that 9/11 was *not* 'French.' The event is often mentioned by way of comparison: should the French copy the American response to the Twin Towers attacks now that they have experienced a terrorist attack claimed by Muslim fundamentalists in their own country? This is, for instance, exemplified by articles with titles such as "That's It, We Have Our Own 9/11" (Aubenas, 2015, p. 17) and "Why a French Patriot Act Is Impossible" (Follorou and Johannès, 2015, p. 4). Therefore, the core French framings of 9/11 remained the same after the Charlie Hebdo attack: an American and international watershed moment, yet not an event of domestic French importance.

In the Netherlands, 9/11 has become much more domesticated than in France. As previously mentioned, the central issue of discussion in Dutch newspapers has been what the attacks on the Twin Towers should imply for the integration process of Muslims into Dutch society. Participants in this discussion often state that there is a need to reevaluate the position of Islam in the Netherlands due to a series of Islam-related events. When a participant actually criticizes this discourse, this series is often presented as a counter-argument. This happens to Dutch-Moroccan writer Hassnae Bouazza, some days after the Charlie Hebdo attacks. In an interview with *De Volkskrant* (January 12, 2015) she claims that she does not agree with the idea that the fact that Dutch Muslims belong to the same religious group as the perpetrators obliges them to publicly condemn the incidents. The interviewer then responds with the following statement:

> When you sum up the things that have happened in recent years – the fatwa against Salman Rushdie, the threatening of Geert Wilders and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, 9/11, the attacks in Madrid and London and now Paris, the numbness of the Islamic State – one might imagine there is a problem with Islam … (Bockma, 2015, p. 14).

3.4 Going Beyond Newspapers: 9/11 in Party Manifestos and Policy Documents

National newspapers cover an important part of what is generally taking place in a country's public sphere (*Cf.* Bail, 2014a; Koopmans et al., 2005; Uitermark, 2012). Yet, investigating 9/11's framing in other parts of the American, French and Dutch public spheres is likewise informative. First of all, because it provides triangulation. To what extent are my findings generalizable to the three national publics spheres as a whole? Secondly, such an analysis can reveal what public actors have been doing with regards to 9/11 concretely, beyond inferring implications from it. Indeed, discursive changes in and of themselves can be considered social transformations. Public discourses often have compelling effects on people's daily lives (Bröer and Duyvendak, 2009; Koopmans and Olzak, 2004). We could thus assume that what has happened in national newspapers in reference to 9/11 has also had various concrete consequences for American, French, and Dutch citizens. For instance, the increase in public stigmatization of Islam in Dutch newspapers following 9/11 has probably made the everyday lives of Dutch Muslims more difficult (Buijs, 2009; Slootman, 2014; Vermeulen et al., 2012, pp. 342 – 344). However, what have been the reactions to 9/11 in more policy-oriented parts of the three national public spheres? Have the implications that were attributed to the event become more than implications because they have actually influenced politics and policies?

In order to answer this question, I present an analysis of 9/11's framing in two types of documents, which represent two different parts of contemporary national public spheres: the election manifestos of political parties (politics) and prominent policy reports (policies). I investigated the connections made to 9/11 in these documents by using the search terms that I mentioned earlier in this chapter: 9/11, September 11, Twin Towers, Ground Zero, and World Trade Center. I employed all the search terms because there were not many documents to analyze, and I wanted the analysis to be as thorough as possible. The party manifestos I retrieved from the Manifesto Project website (https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/), an international collaborative that aims to stimulate research on electoral programs in over 50 countries across the globe. I found the policy documents on Google. To analyze the texts, I focused on the same framing aspects explored in the newspaper articles: the *number of times* 9/11 was mentioned, the *issues* it was connected to, and the political or policy *implications* related to it. Given the small number of documents needing analysis, I did all of the coding manually.

3.4.1 Party Manifestos

References to 9/11 in party manifestos can be considered more concrete forms of event responses than those in newspaper articles. Whereas politicians and other public actors can make claims in a newspaper article without subsequently taking action, in national electoral programs it gets more serious: they indicate what kinds of policies political parties seek to develop in years to come.

What kinds of associations with 9/11 emerge in these party manifestos? In the U.S., 9/11 is very much a part of the political programs of both the Democrats and the Republicans during the first presidential elections following September 11, 2001: those of 2004. In the Democrats' manifesto, it is the main point of reference. Its first sections (pages 3 – 20, out of a total of 40 pages) deal with the issue of making the world a safer place through battling terrorism (Democratic National Convention Committee, 2004). Furthermore, several other sections are devoted to national security. The first of these national security sections starts with a reference to 9/11:

> The first and foremost responsibility of government is to protect its citizens from harm. Unfortunately, Washington today is not doing enough to make America safe. … We have made some progress since the terrible attacks of September 11th. We have taken steps to secure our airports. After resisting Democratic efforts for months, the Administration finally agreed to create the Department of Homeland Security. … But we have not done nearly enough (Democratic National Convention Committee, 2004, p. 16).

In the Republican program for 2004 there is a glaring reference to 9/11 on its second page:

> When America was struck by terrorists on September 11, 2001, President Bush immediately realized that it was an act of war, not just a crime. Working with Congress, the President drew up plans to take the fight to the enemy, vowing to bring the terrorists to justice, or bring justice to the terrorists. And together, the President and Congress took steps to help the wounded, honor the dead, and

secure our homeland (Republican Party Platform Committee, 2004,
p. 2).

The remainder of the Republican manifesto consists of six different chapters, each
addressing a different policy goal. The first and, by far, largest chapter (39 out of a
total of 92 pages) is entitled "Winning the War on Terror." It mainly concerns two
issues likewise present in the Democratic manifesto: fighting terrorism internationally
and building a safer America at home.

Thus, in the U.S., 9/11 is still very much 'alive' three years after its
occurrence. Four years later, in 2008, the situation is a bit different. The issues of
terrorism and domestic safety are still present in the platforms of both the Democrats
and the Republicans. Yet, these issues are no longer as central as they were in 2004.
In the Democrats' manifesto, they are only mentioned in subsections of one of its
four main sections (Democratic National Convention Committee, 2008, pp. 28 –
33). The Republican program starts with a segment, "Defending Our Nation,
Supporting Our Heroes, Securing the Peace," in which 9/11 is rather central. It is
presented as a turning point in national public discourse about terrorism and
national security:

> The attacks of September 11, 2001 were a pivot point in our
> national experience. They highlighted the failure of national policy
> to recognize and respond to the growth of a global terror network
> (Republican Party Platform Committee, 2008, p. 2).

However, this segment concerning 9/11 is only one main sections out of nine. It no
longer takes up nearly half the party platform.

Four years later, then, the event is a key point the Democrats' manifesto. The
first page presents an argument that President Obama deserves to be reelected
because, among other things, he dealt properly with the post-9/11 situation:

> Today, our economy is growing again, al-Qaeda is weaker than at
> any point since 9/11, and our manufacturing sector is growing for
> the first time in more than a decade (Democratic National
> Convention Committee, 2012, p. 1).

The two main issues related to 9/11 in the 2012 Democratic party program are still terrorism and domestic safety. This is also the case for the 2012 Republican program (Republic Party Platform Committee, 2012). However, a less central role is given to it than in the party's 2008 platform. For instance, there is no main section with a title linked to terrorism or safety. The salient issues for the Republicans during this election are economic ones.

Thus, the investigation of manifestos of the two major American political parties for the first three presidential elections after 9/11 is a corroboration of the results from the analysis of national newspapers. The event remains prominent in the first years after its occurrence. Later, it is less so, but still clearly present. The primary issues consistently linked to it are terrorism and domestic safety. Any relation of American Muslims to 9/11 is absent from all six party manifestos.

In France, there is no mention at all of 9/11 in any party program during any of the three first national elections after its occurrence (even though many more parties compete in French national elections than in American ones). It is not mentioned in 2002, nor in 2007 or 2012. Even the National Front – which embraces anti-Islam rhetoric as one of its main party standpoints – makes no reference to the event. This result is also more or less a corroboration of the results of the analysis of the French newspaper analysis – except that the party programs even make no link between 9/11 and foreign affairs.

In the Netherlands, the event is still very much 'alive' during the first national election after it occurred, in spring 2002. Of the ten parties that won seats in parliament, five make references to the event in their election manifestos: the right-wing populist party of Pim Fortuyn (LPF), as well as the Social Democrats (PvdA), the Greens (GroenLinks), the Orthodox Christians (ChristenUnie) and a populist, center-oriented party (Leefbaar Nederland). The Greens mention 9/11 at the beginning of their manifesto, where they sum up the lessons that the Dutch should – according to them – learn from the event:

> Many parts of this election program have become more topical since 11 September. This applies both to the urgent need for conflict management and to present solutions for hotspots such as Afghanistan and Israel/Palestine and to conflict prevention in other parts of the world. Closer to home, this program offers starting points for improving relations between the autochthonous Dutch

population and immigrants, who have been under increased pressure in the Netherlands since 11 September (Programcommissie GroenLinks, 2002, p. 4).

This reference is representative of the issue attachment in all the programs of Dutch political parties for the three national elections (2002, 2006, and 2010) I analyzed. Most of the references to 9/11 in these programs were either related to terrorism/the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars (five times) or the position of Muslims or other immigrants in Dutch society (four times).

In 2006, four parties mention the event: the PvdA, GroenLinks, ChristenUnie and SGP (another Orthodox Christian party). The ChristenUnie frames it as a discursive turning point in (international) safety affairs:

> After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York (2001), the international security situation has changed drastically. Domestic and foreign security issues are increasingly intertwined. Fundamental changes such as globalization, migration, the threat of international terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have made the connection stronger (Partijbureau ChristenUnie, 2006, p. 40).

In 2010, only one party still refers to 9/11: the right-wing populist PVV (Freedom Party). It wants to demonstrate how threatening Muslims are to the Netherlands, and the West in general:

> In many places we see that Islam is gaining control over territory. Of course there are many moderate Muslims. But a substantial number of Muslims are not. There is broad support among Mohammedans for the introduction of Sharia, the jihad attacks of 11 September, and an aversion to Jews and the West (Partij Voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 13).

Thus, Dutch electoral programs corroborate my analysis of Dutch national newspapers. In both types of texts, 9/11 is related to the same core issues (terrorism and Islam), and these links are made by political parties of all political colors. The

intensity of focus on the event is greatest during the first election after September 2001, and then decreases with each subsequent election.

3.4.2 Policy Documents

A possibly even more concrete form through which events find their way into policies is via policy documents. What lessons are drawn from 9/11 in those texts? From each country, I examined a prominent governmental policy report published a few years after the event: the American *9/11 Commission Report*, the French government's Stasi Commission recommendations, and the Dutch report of the parliamentary investigation into integration policies. While these are only three reports, all three have become extremely important documents in the years following publication; many politicians and other public actors have interpreted them as sources of inspiration or strong criticism.

The *9/11 Commission Report* came out in July 2004 (The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004). It was requested by the U.S. Congress to draw the lessons from the event. What it analyzes and recommends is very similar to what I have found concerning 9/11's framing in the other two parts of the American public sphere. As the report is entirely related to the event, quoting from it to show what it is mostly about would lead to cherry picking. Therefore, it is best to look at the core contents of each of its chapters.

The document contains 13 chapters. About half of them deal with terrorism, for example, Chapter 2, "The Foundation of the New Terrorism," and Chapter 12, "What to Do? A Global Strategy." Two chapters are specifically dedicated to American national security policies: Chapter 1, "We Have Some Planes," and Chapter 3, "Counterterrorism Evolves." There is also a chapter on the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars: Chapter 10, "Wartime". There is no reference at all in the report to Islam as a potential domestic American problem. Indeed, associations with the religion are made, but this happens always in the context of international Islamic terrorism.

The Stasi Commission issued one of the most prominent French governmental reports in the past several decades (Commission Stasi, 2003). President Chirac set up the commission to reflect on the application of *Laïcité* (the separation between church and state) in 21st century France. This was considered particularly important because of Islam's increasingly prominent role in French society (Bowen, 2007). The references to 9/11 in this 2003 report can be briefly summarized: they are

not there. Although the first three chapters of the report (pages 10 to 49) include descriptions of recent foreign and domestic political and societal developments, they contain no references to 9/11. The event thus does not seem to play a prominent role in French policy debates about church and state.

The situation in the Netherlands is different. During the annual Budget Debates (*Algemene Beschouwingen*) on 18 September 2002, about a year after 9/11, the political leader of the PvdA, Jelte van Nieuwenhoven, states the following:

> After September 11, the ubiquitous feelings of insecurity and suspicion towards people with a different background have also increased in the Netherlands. There already existed important problems with integration in the big cities. In order to strengthen social cohesion, the government must strongly promote integration and work on increasing mutual respect. The government's plans, however, are extremely disappointing (Tweede Kamer, 2002a, p. 2).

This disappointment is present among a wide group of politicians. One day after van Nieuwenhoven gave her speech, the leader of the Socialist Party (SP), Jan Marijnissen, proposes starting a parliamentary investigation into "failing Dutch integration policies" (Tweede Kamer, 2002b, p. 44). The parliamentary motion heralding this investigation, supported by various political parties, speaks of integration policies that have been "unsuccessful," and claims that a parliamentary commission should come up with "building blocks for new policies" (Tweede Kamer, 2002b, p. 46). In short: 9/11 is more or less presented as the direct reason to write this parliamentary motion. In the report by the Integration Commission, which comes out in 2004, there are various references to the event. For instance, one depicts it as a recent occurrence that shows that Dutch Muslim organizations and the government should engage in dialogue (Commissie Blok, 2004, p. 496).

3.5 Overall Empirical Conclusions

The findings from all three countries are highly robust: in each country, 9/11 has been framed in very similar ways within their respective national newspapers, election manifestos, and prominent policy documents.

In the United States, many proposals for societal and political transformation were derived from 9/11 over a period of several years. The majority

of these related to domestic issues. Among those domestic issues, safety was prominent: all the national newspapers and election programs I analyzed are full of links between 9/11 and that issue (*Cf.* Entman, 2003; Jackson, 2005). The event has thus become a domestic 'safety event', while it has hardly prompted any public discussion about the position of Islam in American society. That issue is scarcely mentioned in national newspapers and is completely absent from election programs or the *9/11 Commission Report.*

In France, proposals for transformation have been derived less frequently from 9/11 than in the U.S. And among these only a few were related to domestic issues. In the French context, 9/11 has therefore become a *non-domestic event.* Furthermore, neither national election programs nor the Stasi Commission's report mention it. Thus, when it comes to concrete political or policy consequences, it is a question whether 9/11 has been of any importance for either national or international French politics.

In the Netherlands, the event has been linked to domestic issues to a greater extent than in France. The dominant topic of discussion has been Islam's position in Dutch society (*Cf.* Entzinger 2006; Van der Veer 2006). Many newspaper articles did relate 9/11 to this issue and various election programs did so as well. Moreover, the event was mobilized as an important reason for initiating a parliamentary investigation into Dutch integration policies.

The framings of 9/11 in all three countries in all three sectors of their public spheres largely share (with French election programs and the Stasi Committee report being exceptions) how they relate the event to international issues. In each country, the Twin Towers attacks have been mainly associated with issues of terrorism and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (*Cf.* Entman, 2003; Gershkoff and Kushner, 2005; Hoffman, 2002; Jackson, 2005). Moreover, the connections with both foreign and domestic affairs have been largely consistent over time in all three countries.

Thus, in sum we can speak of 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch public spheres as an event that has received *stable*, *uniform* framings when it comes to *foreign issues*, and *stable*, yet *diverse* framings concerning *domestic issues*.

3.6 Generalizing about Events from the Case of 9/11

This analysis does not only teach us something about 9/11. It also hints at sociological processes that may be more universally in play with regards to events. What are the potential lessons about events that may be drawn from the case of 9/11?

First of all, it is important to note that *the same event can receive highly different framings in varying social contexts*. In the U.S. and the Netherlands, 9/11 has become an event which is considered significant to domestic political issues. Yet, the main issues associated with the event are distinct: safety versus Islam. This result might not come as a surprise, given the fact that many other studies (Hoffman and Durlak, 2018; Koopmans and Vliegenthart, 2010; Legewie, 2013; Semetko et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2007; De Vreese, 2001) already indicate similar findings regarding issue association, though their cases were less global than 9/11. However, that such a process of 'event domestication' has hardly taken place in France provides – to the best of my knowledge – a new insight: even the most global occurrences do not always turn into important events in every domestic political context.

Next, a second lesson is that *events can have long and structured lives*. In my analysis of newspaper articles, the number of attributed implications is highest during the first weeks after 9/11. Yet I also came across many 9/11-related implications in the four other periods under investigation. In the previous chapter, I quoted event scholars who use the concepts of "breaks with normal life" (Sewell, 2005), "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1986) and "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972) to capture the transformative dynamics of events. The theoretical rationale behind these three concepts is as follows. The occurrence of the event preludes a period of rupture in which change can take place. After a relatively short period of time, things return to normal, with the transformations that happened during the rupture as additions to the pre-event situation. My analysis suggests that this conceptualization paints a too static picture of events. Indeed, the period directly after an event is pivotal for the occurrence of change. However, the 'madness' or 'unsettledness' accorded to events is dynamic. It may pop up again many years later. The Dutch political party PVV, for instance, made use of 9/11 in its 2010 election program to argue that Islam is a dangerous religion.

My analysis suggests that this 'popping up' of transformative responses is more likely to arise when a new event occurs that can be easily associated discursively with the old event. Subsequently, during a brief time period, new

implications may be inferred from it. However, the role that is accorded to the old event around the framing of the new event is a specific one. In the period directly after its occurrence, 9/11 *by itself* provided public actors with enough cause to propose dramatic changes. Yet, after the Madrid attacks, (only) the *sum* of 9/11 and these new incidents is considered a cause to engage in transformations. The same applies to the Charlie Hebdo assault: in the Netherlands, that event enters the '9/11 – van Gogh murder – Charlie Hebdo' series of Islamic terrorist attacks which indicate to many Dutch public actors that there is a problematic relationship between Muslims and Dutch society.

An event *by itself* may also still be considered a cause for transformation during 'normal' times, many years after its occurrence. In the case of 9/11, we see that public actors continued to infer implications from the event during "settled times" (Swidler, 1986) in 2006 and 2011. However, we can also note that a substantially lower number of implications was related to the event in those two periods than after the occurrence of the two new events. Moreover, the implications appeared less frequently with the passing of time. The urge for change linked to 9/11 in all three countries turned out to be a lot stronger in 2006 than it was in 2011.

This analysis thus confirms Wagner-Pacifici's thesis about the restlessness of events (2010, 2017): in differing national contexts, 9/11 has been interpreted as a cause for transformation during long time periods. As such, its existence as an event is not yet over. However, the term 'restless' suggests that events can attach themselves easily to shifting issues and that they can constantly be interpreted as a reason to start all kinds of societal and political changes. Such a typification does not entirely account for what has been going on in the case of 9/11.

The main national issues of reference in each of the three countries did hardly change through the years. Moreover, the number of implications attributed to the event did not just soar or drop at any given moment. In all three national contexts, they underwent the same pattern: they peaked in the first weeks after the event, then dropped gradually, only to increase again after the occurrence of discursively related events. These framing patterns are not fluid enough to call them restless.

3.7 Three Event-related Research Puzzles

Finally, we can consider what this chapter's analysis brings up in terms of new research puzzles. I propose there are at least three substantial ones. Solving them could possibly deepen our overall understanding of the transformative working of events, as well as of the specific political and societal developments that have occurred as a response to 9/11 in the U.S., France, and the Netherlands.

The first puzzle is why it is that, although 9/11 has been domesticated to substantial degrees in both the U.S. and the Netherlands, this has not produced associations of the event to the same domestic issues. In the U.S., 9/11 has been primarily connected to domestic safety, while in the Netherlands, it has become a domestic Islam event. This must have something to do with the interplay between the event and country-specific structures (to which I referred in Section 2.2.3). What kind of theoretical framework do we require in order to deepen our understanding of this interplay? How can we apply it empirically to the case of 9/11 in the American and Dutch public spheres? In the next chapter I will work on finding answers to these questions.

The second puzzle is: how it can be that, on the one hand, I discovered rather uniform associations with 9/11 in terms of foreign affairs, but that, on the other, the political stances and policies of the American, French, and Dutch governments regarding these affairs have not always been similar (for instance, towards the Iraq War)? How are we to understand this (apparent) paradox? This puzzle will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The third puzzle is: how it is possible that such different degrees of 'domestication' of 9/11 have occurred within the three countries? In the United States, there has been a high degree of domestication, in the Netherlands a fair degree, and in France hardly any at all. Do these differences reveal something in general about orientation towards international affairs in the three countries, or are these patterns specific to the case of 9/11? The United States is the country where the event took place, which makes it logical that it has had such a high degree of domestication. But this does not account for the difference between France and the Netherlands. Thus, why did I encounter a significant difference in domestication between those two countries? I will discuss this puzzle in Chapter 6.

Chapter 4

How 9/11 Received Different Domestic Framings in the American and Dutch Public Spheres. Relating Cultural Repertoires, Cleavage Structures, and Discursive Opportunities to Events

4.1 Introduction

The first puzzle I brought to light at the end of previous chapter is: how it can be that 9/11 has been related to different domestic issues in the United States from in the Netherlands? Whereas in the American public sphere 9/11 has become a 'safety event' and a link to Islam is more or less absent, in the Dutch one it has turned into an 'Islam event' and a connection to safety is almost completely non-existent. Why is it that the same event can have such different domestic associations in two country contexts? How can existing theories help us unpack this puzzle?

In recent decades, various sociological and political science approaches to making cross-national comparisons of cultural and political behavior and attitudes have emerged. Among the most fruitful and prominent are "cultural repertoires" (e.g., Lamont 1992; Lamont, 2000; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000; Lamont et al., 2016), "cleavage structures" (e.g., Kriesi et al., 1995; Kriesi et al., 2008; Kriesi and Pappas, 2015), and "discursive opportunity structures" (e.g., Koopmans and Olzak, 2004; Koopmans et al., 2005; Bröer and Duyvendak, 2009). Many scholars employ these concepts when engaging in comparative research across countries.

All three perspectives have been interesting, widely cited additions to the literature, yet share one common theoretical problem: they do not provide a satisfactory answer to the question of how social change, specifically change in response to events, comes about. Like in the two dominant event concepts discussed in Chapter 2, each of these approaches treats events as a 'black box.' Either they are presented as occasions that simply 'take on the color' of long-term trends (which is very similar to the *corollaries of structures*-notion from Chapter 2). Or they are conceptualized as shocking occurrences that spontaneously create a radical break

from existing cultural or political traditions (like the *self-evident turning points*-notion).

The aim of this chapter is to understand the various domestic framings of 9/11 in the U.S. and the Netherlands, through relating these three perspectives to event literature. I propose that this can be done not by thinking about events and cultural repertoires/cleavage structures/discursive opportunities as separate social entities, but instead by conceptualizing them as strongly connected phenomena. Without repertoires, cleavages, and discourses, people cannot make sense of life, and events cannot occur. However, it is also difficult to imagine that the disruptive power of an event never inspires a social transformation. I introduce a typology to help understand why some happenings do not become events (meaning that the existing repertoires, cleavages, and discourses remain the same), and others do (resulting in transformation). This typology suggests that happenings either turn into events, since they are significant confirmations of existing cultural or political patterns ('focusing events'), or because they constitute a break with them ('shock events').

In the second part of this chapter, I focus on the puzzle of why 9/11 has been associated with different domestic issues in the American and Dutch public spheres. My typology explains this variation, analyzing how public actors in the two countries have drawn links between 9/11 and safety or Islam as domestic issues in national newspapers and legislative debates.

4.2 Events in Cultural Repertoires, Cleavage Structures, and Discursive Opportunities

The three perspectives I review differ substantially with respect to the types of behavior and attitudes they aim to analyze. Lamont's work is cultural sociological. In various books, Lamont and her collaborators show that the "symbolic boundaries" – conceptions of good and bad, who belongs and who does not – drawn in the national contexts of the United States and France are vastly different: among upper middle-class men (Lamont, 1992); among working-class men (Lamont, 2000); and in various fields and settings, such as debates over racism, journalistic habits, and the Rotary Club (Lamont and Thévenot, 2000). They explain these variations in particular by using the concept of "cultural repertories": the sets of dominant cultural notions that exist in given national contexts.

Kriesi's concept of "cleavage structures" attempts to understand the hierarchy of "cleavages" – religious, economic or socio-cultural chasms – in national

political contexts. By employing this concept, Kriesi et al. (1995) explain the different degrees of success that new social movements have enjoyed in Western European countries. The perspective has also been reversed, to investigate whether globalization processes (Kriesi et al., 2008) and the recent economic crisis (Kriesi et al., 2015) have led to a convergence or divergence of cleavage structures across countries.

The work of Koopmans likewise addresses the structural aspects of national political landscapes. However, Koopmans is less concerned with the saliency of national debates, instead focusing on specific discursive notions: what ideas are socially (un)acceptable and how does this affect social life? Using the concept of "discursive opportunity structures," Koopmans and his collaborators reveal how different forms and levels of media attention to radical right-wing violence in German regions influence its nature and scope (Koopmans and Olzak, 2004), as well as the extent to which ideas of cultural and ethnic citizenship vary between Western European countries (Koopmans et al., 2005).

Apart from the different types of behavior and attitudes they aim to understand, what all three of these perspectives have in common is the vision that cross-national differences in the prominence of certain discussions or ideas are not determined by variations in objective factors like population size or the economic situation *as such* (Lamont, 1992, pp. 134 – 136; Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 145 – 164). Instead, the importance of such factors is always mediated by the meanings attached to them within given repertoires, cleavages, and discourses. For instance, following Kriesi's notion of cleavage, we could argue that population size becomes more significant in a country's political discussions if demographic issues increase in saliency.

Notwithstanding the important contributions these perspectives have made to understanding cultural and political behavior and attitudes, what is missing from each is a thorough answer to the question of their relation to events. Indeed, events are incorporated at different points in the aforementioned books and articles. Yet the theoretical problem is that this is mostly done in such a way that it appears to be obvious *a priori* how events 'work'. Consequently, they become 'black boxes' – social entities whose ontological statuses are assumed to be clear, without further explanation. Sometimes, they are presented as an outcome of existing 'interpretative structures' (a term that I use from this point on to refer to cultural repertoires, cleavage structures, and discursive opportunities, taken together). This is the case, for

example, in Lamont et al. (2016) regarding responses to stigmatization among marginalized groups in the United States, Brazil, and Israel, as well as in Koopmans and Olzak (2004) about the relationship between media attention and radical right-wing violence. Both works suggest that cultural repertoires or discursive opportunities 'color' the framing of a certain happening, or even cause it.

This is how social life often takes shape. Yet, there is also the possibility that certain happenings are perceived as being so remarkable that they are not only colored by existing interpretative structures, but a situation arises in which structures themselves are transformed. This is where the notion of the event becomes relevant.

Although these three perspectives purport that social life is more continuous than mutable, scholars who employ one of them at some point in their work refer to the possibility of transformation in response to events. For instance, Lamont (1992) claims that the French Revolution has been an important factor in the creation of French cultural repertoires:

> The French equivalent of "Americanism" can be found in the Republican ideals of the French Revolution, which still survive today. These ideals include the Jacobin obsession with equality, universalism, and national unity that negates particularism based on locality, corporate membership, and birth (Lamont, 1992, pp. 137–138).

Yet, although this claim seems plausible, Lamont's book does not give proof that this causal link indeed exists. The approach of Kriesi et al. (2015) to the recent economic crisis offers more in this regard. It analyzes how the crisis has had varying effects on the success of populist political parties in European countries. However, while Kriesi et al. (2015, p. 7) take this event as a starting point, they do not conceptualize exactly how it 'works.' The crisis is defined as a series of points in time after which there either has or has not been an effect. Their book lacks an explanation of the circumstances under which economic crises lead to political change. Thus, the missing link in each of the three theoretical perspectives is an understanding of how a happening can become an incentive to transform the existing interpretative structures.

4.3 Bringing Events in: a Typology

In order to make this link, I propose not examining interpretative structures and events as isolated phenomena in which either structure determines event (Lamont et al. 2016; Koopmans and Olzak, 2004) or event determines structure (Kriesi et al., 2015). Instead, I argue that structure and event should be conceptualized as strongly linked to one another. Without interpretative structures, making sense of an event is impossible. For instance, an economic crisis is only considered a crisis within a context of shared assumptions about economic adversity. However, it is also difficult to imagine that the disruptive power of events will never compel people to change the interpretative structures by which they live. Following Sewell (2005, pp. 226 – 228), we can conceptualize social life as a sequence of happenings. Sewell's central theoretical claim concerning events is that they are exceptional happenings that bring people into conflict with their own worldviews, which they then consider changing as a result.

The question is then: when do happenings become events? This must have something to do with the happening's relation to existing interpretative structures. Event literature offers different views of this relationship. Some scholars suggest that events occur when a happening is *in contradiction* with dominant interpretative structures. Sewell (2005) argues this in his analysis of the storming of the Bastille, as does Sahlins (1985) regarding Hawaiians' misidentification of Captain Cook as their God Lono. Both scholars consider the happening's shock effect central. It is precisely because it was so unexpected that ordinary citizens would start a revolution in 1789 in France or Hawaiians were confronted with the appearance of one of their gods that these happenings became events.

Many other event scholars pay less attention to the relationship between happenings and interpretative structures. As we saw in the previous chapters, Berezin (2009), Swidler (1986, pp. 278 – 280), Wagner-Pacifici (2017), and Zolberg (1972, pp. 183 – 184) consider the temporality of events – the point in time at which they take place or their duration – is more important than their relationship to interpretative structures.

Yet, in Kingdon's (2011 [1984]) book on policy processes it is key. He claims that happenings do not become important (eventful) because they are *in contradiction* with existing central debates or discursive notions, as Sewell (2005) and Sahlins (1985) suggest, but rather since they are *in consonance* with them. He develops the idea of "focusing events" to describe this kind of happenings. His

analysis deals with the American policy agenda during the 1970s. A prominent focusing event in this period was the collapse of Penn Central railroad station in 1970. This incident became a symbol for problems in the American transportation system, which had already been under discussion for some time (Kingdon, 2011 [1984], p. 96). Kingdon formulates the character of focusing events thus:[7]

> In general, such as symbol acts (much as personal experiences) as reinforcement for something already taking place and as something that rather powerfully focuses attention, rather than as a prime mover in agenda setting. Symbols catch on and have important focusing effects because they capture in a nutshell some sort of reality that people already sense in a vaguer, more diffuse way (Kingdon, 2011 [1984], pp. 97 – 98).

So, in event literature we find two notions – 'shock events' and 'focusing events' – which resemble opposing views on the relationship between events and interpretative structures. I propose incorporating them into a single theoretical framework, in which each event can be positioned on a gradual axis between shock and focus. In the case of a shock event, a break with the existing dominant interpretative structures occurs. Consequently, observers often describe this type of event using grand characterizations, such as "this is totally unexpected" or "the world will never be the same again." Conversely, in the case of a focusing event, the happening confirms dominant interpretative structures, and is thus characterized by phrases such as "we already knew that…" or "this happening proves that…." Because of the stronger emphasis on continuities, the resulting changes will often be smaller compared with the responses to shock events – the radicalization of dominant discursive notions (focus) versus the sudden emergence of new ideas (shock).

A typology that includes these three distinct kinds of happenings – ordinary happenings, shock events, and focusing events – is illustrated in Table 4.1. The vertical axis shows the degree to which the happening is unexpected or surprising. The horizontal axis indicates the extent to which it provides a motive for transformation. A shock event happens by surprise, whereas a focusing event is

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[7] Kingdon's conceptualization of focusing events is not the sole prominent use of the term in event literature. Birkland (1997) and Alimi and Maney (2018) use it later to refer to occurrences that attract significant attention (*receive focus*). Because in this chapter I examine social change and not attention, I employ Kingdon's definition.

caused by confirmation. An ordinary happening is an occurrence so common that it is not remarkable enough to become an event (Sewell, 2005, pp. 226 – 228). Finally, there is a type of happening that does not incite transformations, even though it is surprising. These include occasions that have the potential to shock, but for which there exists no vocabulary to transform them into 'big' occurrences, or for which there are political or moral reasons not to do so. An example of the former would be a 'family drama,' a person killing family members. In many Western countries, the media treat such incidents with shock, but they are hard to link to a larger social problem. An example of the latter is the denial of a crisis for political reasons, e.g., Western communists' historic refusal to acknowledge the existence of the Soviet Gulag. I call these kinds of happenings 'inconceivable happenings.'

Table 4.1: A Typology of the Relationship between Different Types of Happenings and Interpretative Structures

| | | *Extent of Transformation* | |
		Transformation	*No Transformation*
Extent of Surprise	*Surprise*	Shock Event	Inconceivable Happening
	No Surprise	Focusing Event	Ordinary Happening

This typology offers the possibility of categorizing happenings/events into the three theoretical perspectives that I reviewed in the previous section. It provides a framework for understanding how they are colored by cultural repertoires, cleavage structures, and discursive opportunities, and the cases in which interpretative structures can themselves be transformed. Thus, it is a specification of the claim I made in Section 2.2.3, where I stated that the relationship between events and structures takes the form of interplay. In the remainder of this chapter, I apply this framework to make sense of the differing associations which have been made between 9/11 and domestic issues in the American and Dutch public spheres.

4.4 Methodology and Case Selections

The two graphs below – created through the topic-modeling analysis from Chapter 3 – give an overview of these differing associations. They illustrate the relative sizes of the topics (measured as percentages) in American and Dutch newspaper articles

about 9/11 that have addressed it as a domestic safety and Islam event, respectively.

Graph 4.1: Yearly Percentages of American and Dutch Newspaper Articles Presenting 9/11 as a Domestic Safety Event
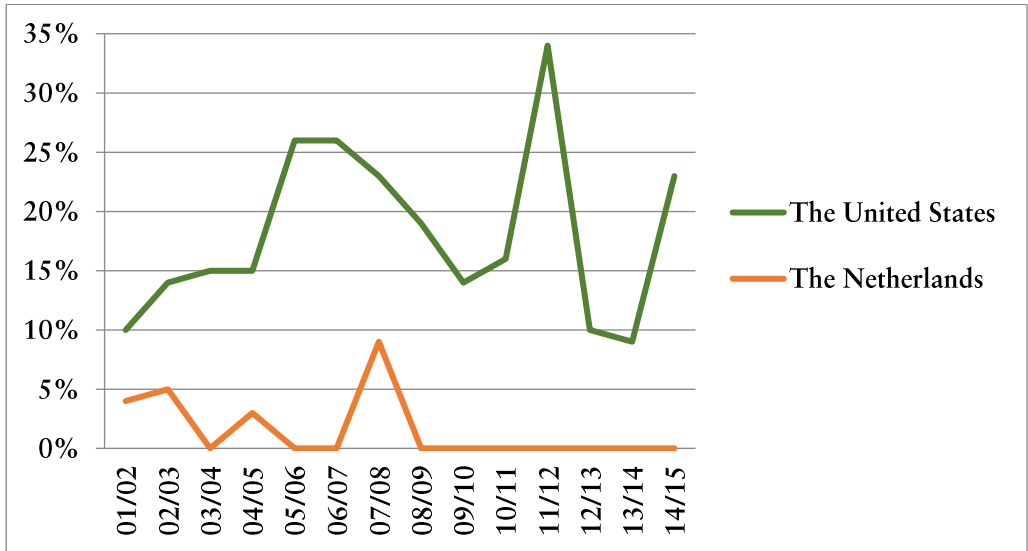
Graph 4.2: Yearly Percentages of American and Dutch Newspaper Articles Presenting 9/11 as a Domestic Islam Event
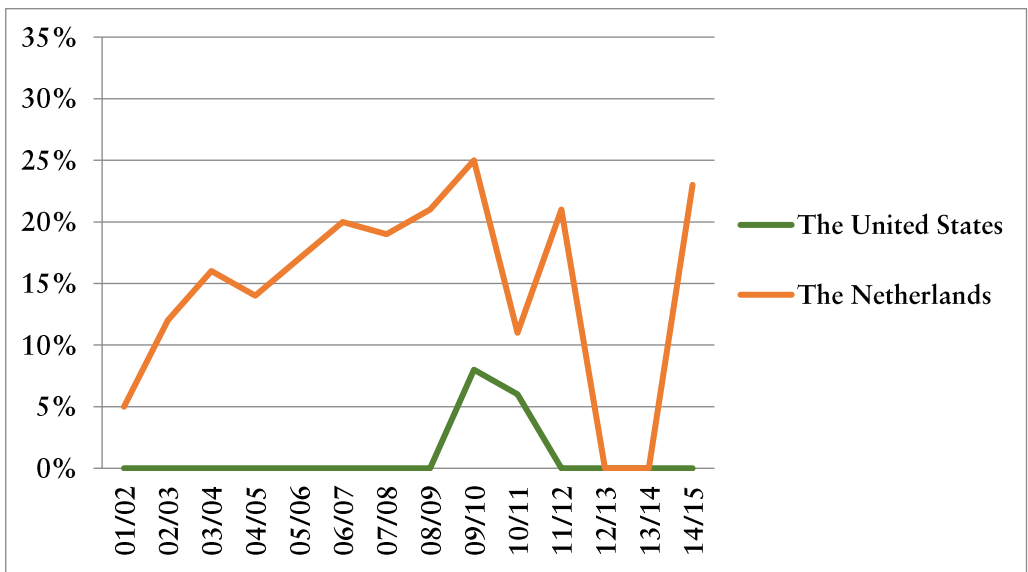
What are the reasons for this variation? I answer this question by analyzing two sources: national newspaper articles and debates in national legislatures. The newspaper articles come from the same sources analyzed in Chapter 3. The debates I accessed through the American website, congress.gov, and the Dutch, officielebekendmakingen.nl. I examined articles and debates with references to 9/11 (which I measure again with 'September 11' and '11 september') and terms related to the two issues ('Islam,' 'Muslims,' 'safety,' 'security').

Because my goal is to disclose what underlies the links with safety and Islam as domestic issues, I explore the data by engaging in a qualitative content analysis (*Cf.* Kohlbacher, 2006; Kuckartz, 2014; Macnamara, 2005, pp. 14 – 18), and try to answer the following questions. How is 9/11 framed with regard to safety and Islam? Is it interpreted as a significant happening? If so, is this because it is a confirmation of debates that were already going on, or since it is in opposition to them? Moreover, if 9/11 is not considered a significant happening, why is that so?

I continue using an inductive approach to researching events. In this chapter, that entails following the factors and justifications public actors mobilize in articles and speeches in order to claim that 9/11 is significant or not and to link it to safety or Islam as domestic issues. I convey these perspectives by using citations representative of various framings of the event, with a specific focus on those public actors who possess the discursive power (Koopmans and Olzak, 2004; Uitermark, 2012) to significantly influence existing interpretative structures. Obvious examples of such actors are the U.S. president or the Dutch prime minister.

My investigation mainly focuses on the first month after 9/11. This gives an overview of the initial phase in which the associations between the happening and the two issues are created. However, one of the remarkable things of the results from Chapter 3 is that they indicate that these associations are rather consistent over time. To understand why this is the case, I also analyze associations made during various random months – Swidler's (1986) "settled times" – as well as the first weeks following the most important domestic terrorist attack committed by Muslim extremists in each country. In the Netherlands, this is the murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in November 2004 (*Cf.* Buruma, 2006; Eyerman, 2008) and in the United States it is the attack on the gay night club in Orlando in June 2016. I include an analysis of these events to discover whether the justifications for connections made to 9/11 during new "unsettled times" are different from those made in "settled times."

4.5 9/11 in the American Public Sphere: A Shocking Safety Experience and the Moral Rejection of a Religious Component

Why is it that 9/11 has been so strongly associated with the issue of safety in the American public sphere? It is an obvious case of a shock event. 9/11 is depicted as an occurrence which breaks firmly with existing American notions of national safety. Immediately after the attacks, it is evident to nearly all American politicians and commentators that radical policy shifts regarding this issue must be implemented. Newspaper articles from the days following 9/11 use a wide variety of typifications, all of which indicate that the experience surpasses the scope of possible scenarios imagined by Americans. An article in *The Washington Post* from the day after the attacks (September 12) states, for example:

> The nightmare scenario of the post-Cold War era – terrorism at home aimed at innocent civilians – hit with a terrible swiftness and frightening power that even the experts had not imagined, and it is clear that Sept. 11 has become the defining day of Bush's presidency (Balz, 2001, p. A02).

The fact that "even" experts did not expect the attacks elevates the element of shock. An article in the *Daily News* on the same day claimed:

> With the nation's illusion of safety and security in ruins, Americans begin the slow and fitful process of healing from a trauma that feels deeply, cruelly personal (Evans and Hackett, 2001, p. 58).

The term "illusion" is significant – it indicates that there existed an assumption, which after the attacks is considered totally inaccurate. What is interesting about many of the analyses from the first days following the event is that they take the long-term history of terrorism in the world into consideration, but nonetheless emphasize that even with this knowledge in mind the occurrence of 9/11 is still very surprising.

For example, Eleanor Holmes Norton, a Democratic delegate to the House of Representatives, declared at a Congress meeting on September 11 that these attacks "transcended" all existing discussions about national safety:

> This shows us that whatever we were doing should be history, and that we need to start all over again. We are much too late in recognizing that the nature of war has changed dramatically …. Today, we looked like we were operating in the 19th century (Tucker and Kovaleski, 2001, p. B01).

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In other words, the logic of confirming or negating expectations is used to amplify the enormity of the event – Americans could imagine many bad scenarios, but this one nevertheless exceeded all realms of possibility.

The fact that in the United States 9/11 is a shock event connected to safety affairs may also be derived from the almost unanimous call by American public actors for strong a policy response. Even those critical of the introduction of stricter security measures see the attacks as an inevitable motive for implementing radically new policies. They may be skeptical of and unwelcoming to such actions, but this occurrence is so big and shocking that they consider thinking otherwise no longer a viable political choice. A *New York Times* editorial commentary proposed, for example (September 12, 2001):

> Inevitably, the attacks will make daily life in the United States more complicated. Security will be tightened at private buildings and federal offices. Airport checks will be stricter and more frequent, requiring passengers to arrive earlier. In general, it will be harder to get about (Apple, 2001, p. 1).

What are the reasons for this immense shock to American public actors' perceptions of safety? Among the various justifications given, two stand out. The most important is the sudden realization that the United States is not as militarily impenetrable as it had long considered itself to be. This discourse is, for instance, put forward by *New York Times* columnist Michael Gordon (September 12, 2001): "Nobody doubts America's clear military superiority. But the lesson of yesterday seemed to be that even such power is vulnerable and may offer no effective redress against terror"

(Gordon, 2001, p. 24). Another salient reason for the shock is the realization that the United States has not been attacked since World War II, and even for a much more substantial period not on its own territory. Accordingly, Heidi Evans and Thomas Hackett, *Daily News* staff writers who were already quoted above, claim (September 12, 2001): "It's a nationwide anxiety that people elsewhere in the world have long experienced, but not here" (Evans and Hackett, 2001, p. 58).

These two elements of the interpretative structures that are being challenged come together in the omnipresent comparison to the December 7, 1941 Attack on Pearl Harbor. In the first week after 9/11, only the comparison with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy is made more frequently in the materials I analyzed (375 versus 428 hits, out of 2842 articles). The Pearl Harbor Attack also came unexpected and similarly undermined American feelings of military superiority. In addition, the fact that Pearl Harbor happened six decades prior to 2001 indicates for many American public actors how relatively safe their country has been during the years in between.

In the years that follow, the strong association between the issue of safety and 9/11 persists, and the reasons given change little over time. This becomes clear after the Orlando shootings, when *USA Today* (June 14, 2016) writes:

> There would be other incidents over the years, but nothing like Sept. 11, 2001, when attacks on Americans became a local story everywhere, changing all of us in so many ways forever. Suddenly, our two great oceans seemed not to offer the kind of protection we had imagined, our mighty military able to do only so much to keep our enemies, foreign and domestic, away (Gabordi, 2016, 2A).

But why is there no clear link in the U.S. between 9/11 and the societal status of American Muslims? While several reasons explain the framing of the event as a domestic safety issue, only one clear reason exists why it is not dominantly interpreted as a domestic Islam issue: the ethos of the dominant American interpretative structures demands that people not be judged on the basis of religion. This makes it morally unacceptable for politicians and commentators to problematize the societal status of American Muslims as response to 9/11. When there are discussions about the danger of Islam among American political and cultural elites in the weeks following the event, this is mostly presented as an external

problem rather than a domestic affair (*Cf*. Alba and Foner, 2015, pp. 125 – 130; Cesari, 2013, pp. 2 – 3). Perhaps Muslims living in Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia are dangerous, but not those living in the United States. Indeed, during the period after 9/11, there was a backlash in everyday life against American Muslims (Bakalian and Bezorgmehr, 2009; Cainkar, 2009; Ewing, 2008; Peek, 2011). For instance, a substantial number of mosques were attacked. However, among American public actors, there is no acceptance for this type of behavior – it is generally condemned. It is likewise considered unacceptable to ask American Muslims to 'take a stance' against Islamic terrorism.

The actions of President George W. Bush in the weeks following the attacks are exemplary of greater American discourse regarding this issue. A few days after the event, he visits the Islamic Center in Washington and declares that "Islam is peace." In *The Washington Post* (September 14, 2001), his stance is quoted thus: "We should not hold one who is Muslim responsible for an act of terror" (Von Drehle, 2001, A01). Beyond this, in his first speech to Congress after 9/11 (September 20, 2001), he has a special message for American Muslims:

> We respect your faith. It is practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah (Congressional Record, 2001a, p. S9553).

What is remarkable is that this stance is appreciated by actors of all political stripes. Journalist Walter Shapiro, a liberal, for instance writes in a column (September 14, 2001), "President Bush should be hailed for his unequivocal efforts to prevent ethnic and religious scapegoating" (Shapiro, 2001, 6A). The historical references used in these expressions of appreciation allude to episodes in American history when ethnic minorities were scapegoated – e.g., Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor in 1941 and American Muslims following the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993 – and those actions are now generally strongly condemned.

In the American public sphere, 9/11 thus appears to be an 'inconceivable happening' with regards to the issue of Islam. The happening is shocking, but it is unthinkable to draw the conclusion from it that there is something wrong with Muslims living in the United States. To entertain such an idea is generally considered

immoral and un-American.

These findings nuance the idea that the Twin Tower attacks have been a catalyst for explicit public stigmatization of American Muslims, which is, for instance, suggested by Garg et al. (2018) and Woods and Arthur (2014). They likewise confirm analyses by scholars who claim that American public actors in fact framed Muslims positively in the aftermath of the event (Bail, 2014a; Ibrahim, 2014, p. 117–119; Nacos and Torres-Reyna, 2004). Bail's analysis is particularly worth mentioning, as it is very similar to my findings. He writes:

> Though the September 11th attacks profoundly disrupted the cultural environment inhabited by civil society organizations vying to shape shared understandings of Islam within the United States, this book reveals that the event itself did not create a "butterfly effect" or groundswell of anti-Muslim sentiment within the American public sphere. To the contrary, American public opinion of Islam became *more* favorable after the attacks, and the vast majority of civil society organizations within the cultural environment continued to produce pro-Muslim messages for several years after the event. The event also did not create the type of political instability highlighted by opportunistic models of collective behavior. The Bush administration immediately voiced pro-Muslim messages, and sharply rebuked those with anti-Muslim views (Bail, 2014a, p. 135).

It should be noted, though, that simultaneous to these explicit pro-Muslim messages anti-terrorism discourses and policies have been developed in response to 9/11, which have often resulted in implicit forms of stigmatization of American Muslims. Byng (2008) indicates that even though these discourses and policies were presented as 'neutral,' in practice they targeted Muslims much more often than other social groups. Divulging such forms of colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003) is difficult using the methods I employ in this dissertation (i.e., searching for explicit links between events and issues).

Another, possibly even more important remark is that while my analysis (see Chapter 3 and the previous section) indicates that there is no link between 9/11 and Islam as a domestic issue in the years following the event, Bail's investigation (2014a)

shows that anti-Muslim messages have gained prominence in the American public sphere during this period. The question, however, is whether 9/11 played a significant role in this development.

My analysis of the Orlando shootings in June 2016 suggests that this is not the case. Indeed, in the first days subsequent to the tragedy – in contrast with the period following 9/11 – various politicians and commentators claim that this attack points to a larger 'Islam problem.' The most prominent examples of people expressing this opinion are Donald Trump (by then a presidential candidate), who proposes a ban on Muslims entering the United States, and Senator Marco Rubio, also a presidential candidate, who states that this attack does have a religious component: "Common sense tells you he specifically targeted the gay community because of the views that exist in the radical Islamic community with regard to the gay community" (Tumulty, 2016, A01). Basically only right-wing politicians and commentators employ this discourse. President Barack Obama and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, for example, are reluctant to 'play the religious card' (Healy and Kaplan, 2016, A01).

9/11, however, plays hardly any role in the anti-Muslim discourses. Donald Trump is actually one of the few public actors who makes a reference to the event, stating that it revealed problematic aspects of Islam, because – he claims – Muslims in New Jersey were cheering in response to it (Johnson, 2016, A04). When most other politicians and commentators mention 9/11, it is (still) only as the biggest terrorist attack in American history and as a shocking safety event.

The question as to why this is the case is worth exploring. It may be that 9/11 has become "locked in" – to use the terminology of path dependency scholars (e.g., Mahoney, 2000) – as a non-domestic American event regarding Muslim integration. This would imply that a lack of public stigmatization of American Muslims right after 9/11 makes it harder to engage in stigmatization at some later point in time – even though attitudes towards Muslims have generally become more negative over the years. Proving such a hypothesis is difficult, however.

Be that as it may, Wagner-Pacifici (2010, 2017) reminds us that the meanings of events are always open to change. My analysis ends with the summer of 2016, so it does not include an investigation of the situation during Trump's presidency. Given its disruptive character, it is not unthinkable that the link Trump has made between 9/11 and the position of American Muslims is (going to be) adopted by other public actors.

The results of the analysis of the links between 9/11 and the two domestic issues in the American public sphere are summarized below in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: 9/11 and Safety and Islam as Domestic Issues in the United States

		Extent of Transformation	
		Transformation	*No Transformation*
	Surprise	Safety (Shock Event)	Islam (Inconceivable Happening)
Extent of Surprise			
	No Surprise		

4.6 9/11 in the Dutch Public Sphere: A Confirmation of the Problematization of Islam and Safety as a Foreign Affair

The Dutch public discussion about Muslim immigrants after 9/11 is completely different from the American one. The opinion that the relationship between Muslim immigrants and Dutch society is problematic is widely present. Not only right-wing public actors, but also leftists express this sentiment. For example, left-wing columnist Jan Blokker comments sarcastically that several days before 9/11, the Dutch Islamic Broadcast Society (NMO) aired a video featuring cruel quotes from the Quran about non-believers (September 15, 2001):

> Even though Lower Manhattan had not yet been destroyed, and 5,000 to 10,000 more Americans were alive than two days later, the September 11th hijackers had already bought their [plane] tickets, and they undoubtedly felt strengthened in their resolve to commit their murders by the fact that the NMO was transmitting this message not less than five times a day (Blokker, 2001, p. 3).

Journalist Henk Muller from the left *De Volkskrant* writes (September 15, 2001):

> There is some kind of natural dissension between the character of Islam and the essence of democracy ... Whereas democracy embraces pluriformity, Islam is – at least in its fundamentalist form – absolutist (Muller, 2001, p. 5).

During the first week after 9/11, a lot of discussion about Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations"-thesis ensues. The event is generally interpreted as confirmation of his idea that Islam has a problematic relationship with the Western world. Even though he is an American scholar, I found 15 references to Huntington in a total of 64 Dutch Islam-related newspaper articles published during the first week after the attacks, whereas I only came across one such reference among 299 articles from U.S. newspapers for the same period.

Later, many Dutch public actors believe Huntington's thesis to have been further confirmed, when surveys indicate that substantial numbers of Dutch Muslims say they respect the terrorists and it is reported that a significant amount of Muslim children did not want to remain silent during 9/11 commemoration ceremonies in schools. Right-wing commentator Sylvain Ephimenco is very critical of this behavior. He states in "An Open Letter to Muslims in the Netherlands" (September 29, 2001):

> How salutary it would have been – this is only a personal wish – if, in order to narrow the divide, shortly after the attacks, Muslims and non-Muslims had come to together in the streets to express their aversion to terrorism. Evidently, it is never too late. Neither is it too late [for Muslims, TvD] to abandon the familiar stands of victimhood, so that the prejudices of non-Muslims can be debunked (Ephimenco, 2001, p. 11).

The existence of this type of opinion reveals a significant difference between the Netherlands and the U.S.: whereas castigating native Muslims citizens for their responses to the attacks is nearly absent from the American early post-9/11 context, it is omnipresent in the Dutch one.

At the same time, the astonishing terms used by American public actors, which turn 9/11 into a shocking safety event, are not found in Dutch associations of the event to Islam. Indeed, the attacks themselves are represented as a shock. However, that Muslim terrorists are responsible does not cause much surprise. What is striking, when analyzing the links drawn between 9/11 and Dutch Muslims in the first month after the event, is that they reveal indications that critical discourses about this group had already been 'in place' for at least several years. For example, journalist Dirk Vlasblom writes two days after the attacks: "Since the end of the Cold War, the Western world has a new enemy: Islam in its fundamentalist form"

(Vlasblom, 2001, p. 13). Another article (*De Volkskrant*, September 15) makes a clear link to Dutch public discussions in the Netherlands after the Salman Rushdie affair:

> They [a Turkish-Dutch organization, TvD] distributed a press release stating that an attack on the West is also an attack on the Western freedom of religion, and therefore, in fact, also on Islam itself. This is a big improvement compared to 1988, the year in which the British-Indian writer Salman Rushdie was subject to a fatwa by the Ayatollahs for his book, *The Satanic Verses.* At that time, Muslim intellectuals were more reticent (Hilhorst and Wansink, 2001, R1).

A different reference often made is to the heated discussions about the Dutch Imam El Moumni, who in spring 2001 called homosexuality "a disease." If we analyze the discourses regarding this incident used by two of the commentators quoted above, then it seems that the tendency to problematize the societal position of Islam did not arise suddenly after September 11, 2001. Jan Blokker announced his fear – again sarcastically – that El Moumni's ideas would gain wider acceptance (May 12, 2001): "Soon no homosexual will dare walk around in his thong when the weather is nice, out of fear of religious Turks or Moroccans, who have been indoctrinated by their mosques to wage jihad" (Blokker, 2001, p. 2). Sylvain Ephimenco wrote an "open letter" (as he did after 9/11) to El Moumni in *De Groene Amsterdammer* (June 9, 2001).[8] He ended it with a reaction to another imam, who had claimed that Muslims ought not to be friends with non-Muslims: "Dear Imam, if this really is a generally accepted view by you and your colleagues, then my opinion is correct: Islam is a disease which should be cured over time" (Ephimenco, 2001, p.55).

In sum, three elements are central to the association of 9/11 with Dutch Muslims: (1) it is very prominent; (2) there has been a widely felt urgency to problematize the relationship between Islam and Dutch society, even among leftist public actors; and (3) there is little shock, but instead a strong continuity such that

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[8] *De Groene Amsterdammer* is not a newspaper, but an opinion magazine. Consequently, it is a different kind of data source than the rest of the materials I analyze in this chapter. I make use of this source because it was the specific outlet in which Sylain Ephimenco published his "Open Letter" regarding the El Moumni affair.

9/11 is related to Dutch political discussions about Islam already taking place and to previous events in the category of 'problematic Muslim incidents.'

All this implies that my analysis goes against the idea that 9/11 was the main turning point, a shock event, in Dutch political debates about Muslim immigrants – an idea which is rather dominant in social science literature concerning public responses to the attacks in the Netherlands (Buijs, 2009, p. 422; Roggeband and Vliegenthart, 2007, pp. 306 – 315; Tillie, 2008, pp. 19 – 21). Instead, it undergirds work which claims that the development of this discussion has been much more gradual, and that the public problematization of the relationship between Islam and Dutch society had already started during the 1980s and 1990s (for instance, van Reekum, 2016; Uitermark, 2012). In the Dutch case, 9/11 is thus a focusing event regarding the issue of Islam.

And what about Dutch responses to 9/11 concerning the issue of safety? Those are actually expressed in more shocking terms than those made regarding the issue of Islam. Although the initial reactions in the Netherlands are framed in less alarming terms than in the United States, they still contain indications of surprise and shock. For instance, one day after the event, Prime Minister Wim Kok (PvdA) states in parliament on behalf of the Dutch government: "The indescribable catastrophe which has hit the American people, fills us with bewilderment and horror" (Tweede Kamer, 2001a, p. 6255). In addition, in her yearly speech from the throne, which took place a week after 9/11, Queen Beatrix says that the attacks "remind us of the fragility of our existence" (Van Es and Kalse, 2001, p. 27). Security expert Uri Rosenthal writes in an opinion piece (September 18, 2001):

> The events were literally unthinkable: they embodied a combination of at least three terrorist acts; an attack on the icons of what was once called the military-industrial complex; an acute threat of a prospect of more similar attacks; and an incomprehensible number of deaths in New York (Rosenthal, 2001, p. 7).

In the first week after 9/11, it seems that likewise in the Dutch public sphere the event is going to be associated with a loss of safety – both nationally and internationally. However, in subsequent weeks, it is rarely linked to Dutch national safety concerns. No domestic safety policies are proposed in response to it. In

November 2002, the Dutch government presents a white paper in which it lays out its national safety strategy, but this document does not contain any references to 9/11 (Tweede Kamer, 2002c). A few years later, in 2004, an identification requirement – the obligation to show one's passport in public – is introduced. However, in the parliamentary debate about this bill, Minister of Justice Piet-Hein Donner (CDA, Christian Democrats) explicitly states that this is intended to be a broad safety measure rather than a specific policy proposal for fighting terrorism (Tweede Kamer, 2004, p. 1759).

The year 2004 is also the year of the Van Gogh murder. During the first month after this event, 25 articles are published in Dutch national newspapers that contain the term 'safety' (along with 'Van Gogh' and '9/11'). Yet most of these articles – around 15 of them – do not contain general policy proposals to increase safety, but concern the specific issue of Islamic terrorism. They, for instance, include suggestions to hold more public debates which involve Dutch Muslims and non-Muslims and to intensify the proliferation of 'de-radicalization programs' for Muslims extremists. So, the combination of 9/11 and the Van Gogh murder is mostly presented as two 'Islam events,' rather than as two 'safety events' – even within newspaper articles that contain the term 'safety.' In those articles that relate the events to broader safety measures, those are mostly framed as an international rather than a national Dutch issue.

For instance, an article discussing a policy report, which came out two weeks after the Van Gogh murder, claims:

> Since the 11 September 2001 attacks, the lack of international cooperation between intelligence and security services has been considered one of the biggest obstacles in the fight against international terrorism. Security services stick to national borders, whereas terrorist networks are characterized by the fact that they can no longer be linked to one, two, or even ten countries (Schoof and Verlaan, 2004, p. 3).

Why no substantial association between 9/11 and domestic safety issues is created, is not ever made explicit; implicitly, however, Dutch public actors give various justifications. Two arguments appear to be dominant. Both indicate that regarding the issue of safety, 9/11 has become an 'inconceivable happening' in the Dutch public

sphere. The first occurs in the above citation: the Netherlands is considered simply too small a country for a big problem like terrorism. A problem of such an immense scale needs to be tackled at an international level.

Furthermore, changes in security policies are viewed with greater ambivalence in the Netherlands than in the United States. Many Dutch public actors question both their effectiveness and moral justness. This view is demonstrated in the following quote from an opinion article by technology lawyer Anne-Marie Kemna (October 2, 2001):

> Apart from the discussion regarding civil rights, it is also highly questionable whether terrorist and criminal organizations can be detected with large-scale detection practices, the introduction of an ID requirement, and restricting encryption. Is this the right way to target such groups (Kemna, 2001, p. 7)?

A summary of the analyses of the associations between 9/11 and the domestic issues of Islam and safety in the Dutch public sphere is provided in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: 9/11 and Safety and Islam as Domestic Issues in the Netherlands

		Extent of transformation	
		Transformation	*No Transformation*
	Surprise		Safety (Inconceivable Happening)
Extent of Surprise			
	No Surprise	Islam (Focusing Event)	

4.7 Conclusions

This chapter explains why 9/11 has become associated with vastly different domestic issues in the American and Dutch public spheres. To do this, I relate three theoretical approaches that examine cross-national cultural and political differences – cultural repertoires, cleavage structures, and discursive opportunities – to the concept of events. I claim that the best approach is not to conceptualize events and interpretative structures as separate social entities, but rather to develop a typology to understand how and why some happenings are 'just' reproductions of said

structures, while others become so significant that they are used to transform those very structures. My typology yields this dissertation's third major event lesson (next to the ones outlined in section 3.6): *changes as a response to an event can happen either through shock or focus.* They come about because they are either a significant rejection or a significant confirmation of the ideas and expectations that comprise a country's interpretative structures.

An empirical application of this typology shows that in the U.S., the historical uniqueness of experiencing an attack on one's own territory, in combination with the existence of a dominant discourse about national military superiority, has caused 9/11 to become a 'domestic shock event' pertaining to the issue of safety. As a result of the ubiquitous moral rejection of the public problematization of religion, the attacks have not developed into a 'domestic Islam event.' In the Dutch case, 9/11 has turned into a 'domestic focusing event' about the issue of Islam. Many public actors saw it as a significant confirmation of the negative view on the relationship between Muslim immigrants and Dutch society, which they had already been cultivating for some years. It has not evolved into an event about domestic safety, since they have deemed the Netherlands as too small a country for a big problem like terrorism and because they have been ambivalent regarding the effectiveness and moral justification of implementing stricter national security policies.

Because my theoretical aim is to contribute to understandings of cultural repertoires, cleavage structures, and discursive opportunities, I have not attempted an empirical application of each perspective separately. Yet, my results give indications of how the three types of structures in the two countries have (or have not) transformed in response to 9/11. American cultural repertoires regarding domestic safety have probably become more fragile. The issue of safety has most likely also gained more salience within the American cleavage structure, and the dominant discursive notions have developed more favorably towards strict security policies. On the issue of Islam, 9/11 has not been an event in the American public sphere (yet), so no substantial changes have come about as a response.

In the Dutch case, 9/11 has been a focusing event regarding the idea that Muslim immigrants' relationship to the Netherlands is problematic. This has presumably caused a strengthening of anti-Muslim repertoires, an increased salience of discussions about the issue of immigrant integration, and fewer discursive opportunities to refer to Islam positively. Regarding the issue of safety, 9/11 has not

been an event in the domestic Dutch context, so it has also not resulted in a transformation of interpretative structures.

How might future research employing one of the above approaches incorporate the typology I have outlined? Analysis of events related to the concept of cultural repertoires could investigate the ways in which a happening is linked to dominant repertoires (in the case of this chapter, for instance, the American idea of military superiority), and whether it is considered a challenge to them. When employing the cleavage structures-perspective, an event analysis might search for happenings frequently mentioned in prominent debates. If that were the case, it would suggest that they have played or are still playing a significant role in the creation of its saliency. Finally, research using the discursive opportunities-approach could indicate how a happening gets connected to notions of what is (un)acceptable to say in the public sphere (in the context of this chapter, for instance, different American and Dutch justifications for making certain kinds of statements about Muslim immigrants).

Chapter 5

The Twin Tower Attacks as a Justification for War? Varying Discursive Links between 9/11 and Invading Afghanistan and Iraq in American, French, and Dutch Legislative Speeches

5.1 Introduction

The second puzzle that emerged from Chapter 3 is what differences exist beneath the apparently uniform connections made in each country between 9/11 and international issues. My analysis reveals that in all three cases substantial associations have been made between the event and the issues of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars and terrorism. Yet, we know that each country's political stances and policies regarding these issues have not always been similar. For instance, the American and Dutch governments were (politically) in favor of the Iraq War, whereas the French government was against it – to mention the probably most famous example of dissonance. This raises the question: to what extent has 9/11 played a role in the development of political stances and policies concerning these issues in the three countries? Are the differences and similarities in these national political stances and policy outcomes related to differences and similarities in national understandings of the event?

In this chapter, I answer these questions by focusing on the creation of discursive links between 9/11 and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. More specifically, I analyze legislative speeches in which the decisions to start these two wars (in the American case) and the questions of whether or not to support and/or join them (in the French and Dutch ones) were justified. Why should Afghanistan or Iraq (not) be invaded? What role does 9/11 play within the lines of argument used in favor of or against starting these military campaigns? Legislative speeches regarding questions of war and peace make for interesting data, as they present politicians with 'moments of truth,' when they have to justify choices about matters of life and death. Consequently, they will generally feel the need and will be pressured to explain their viewpoints – including the roles they accord to events – more clearly than when they

speak about issues with less far-reaching consequences (*Cf.* Chouliaraki, 2005, pp. 2 – 5).

Justifications of matters of war and peace form a specific type of event implications, the transformative event responses I analyzed in Chapter 3. In international relations literature, quite some attention is paid to the relationship between events and support for warfare. A prominent example is research into the 'rally round the flag effect'; the hypothesis that political leaders' sympathy scores will increase in response to a traumatic event. Trauma is assumed to offer a window of opportunity to introduce policy shifts, such as starting or ending a war (Baum, 2002). Several researchers, mostly focusing on the United States, demonstrate the existence of this effect: shortly after the occurrence of traumatic events, the approval rates of American presidents tend to rise (Baker and Oneal, 2001; Baum, 2002; Lee, 1977; Mueller, 1970). Other scholars examine the relationship between war-related events and support for war among publics (Berinsky, 2007; Jakobsen and Ringsmose, 2015, p. 215). For example, a sudden increase in the number of casualties during wartime often results in a decrease in war support (Baum and Groeling, 2008; Klarevas, 2002; Smith, 2005).

In this chapter I ask the same question investigated by these scholars: to what extent do responses to events affect support for war? My empirical focus is, however, different. Instead of studying the relationship between events and *public* support for war, I look into the relationship to support for war *among politicians*. What warfare implications have politicians derived from 9/11?

5.2 Debating the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars: Existing Insights

Before answering this question, I review the existing literature: what do we already know regarding American, French, and Dutch political discussions of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars and about the ways in which 9/11 has been related to them? There is a substantial body of literature on the American opinion climate preceding both wars, in which the role accorded to 9/11 is frequently addressed. Entman (2003), Kellner (2007), and Kerton-Johnson (2008) demonstrate that, immediately after the attacks, President Bush was able to make one central frame hegemonic: 9/11 was an event that proved the necessity of starting a 'war on terror.' In the ensuing period, this frame was adopted by basically all American media and used by public actors to justify the invasions of both Afghanistan and Iraq. Ryan (2004) reaches a similar conclusion. In the weeks following 9/11, editorial comments

in U.S. national newspapers unanimously agreed that invading Afghanistan was a logical and legitimate response to the attacks. McCartney (2004) focuses on the wave of nationalism after the event and indicates how this made American foreign policies less isolationistic. The general assumption was that starting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq would prevent the United States from enduring another similarly devastating act of terrorism. Chang and Mehan (2008), Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005), Gershkoff and Kushner (2005), and Krebs and Lobasz (2007) all focus on the framing of the Iraq War. Analyzing opinion articles and President Bush's speeches, they come to a unanimous conclusion: presenting the invasion of Iraq as part of the 'war on terror' (because of the possible link between Al Qaeda and the Iraqi regime) was a dominant line of argument in American public discourse.

Most of the numerous studies on the climate of American opinion concerning these two wars pay little attention to debates in Congress. President Bush's prominent role in decision-making processes about the wars is clearly demonstrated. Yet, without the approval of majorities in the Senate and House of Representatives, they never could have been launched. Sohnius (2013) presents an exception to this pattern, by comparing newspaper and congressional debates about the Iraq War as part of a larger investigation of American debates concerning warfare. However, 9/11's role is not central in her analysis.

Analyses of French and Dutch political debates about the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars are scarce. The debates in France are briefly addressed in studies of the country's foreign policies during the years of the invasions (Howorth, 2003) and its domestic version of the 'war on terror' (Gregory, 2003). Furthermore, Eckert (2013), Gaffney (2004), and Lorda and Miche (2006) focus on the climate of French opinion about the Iraq War. Gaffney (2004) begins with an historic overview of the political relationship between France and the United States and concludes that a strong urge in both countries to dominate the stage of world politics caused their conflict over the invasion of Iraq. Lorda and Miche (2006) present a detailed discourse analysis of an interview with President Chirac on French television, in which he outlined his arguments for not supporting the war. Eckert's analysis (2013) appeared in the same edited volume as Sohnius (2013). She compares debates in newspapers and the French parliament on the Iraq War, as part of a larger study of French debates about warfare. Like Gaffney (2004), she concludes that the fight for hegemony in world politics has been an important element in the political process that resulted in the French 'no' regarding the invasion.

The Netherlands is only analyzed in relation to the two invasions in comparative, cross-national studies (Goldsmith et al. (2005) for Afghanistan and Schuster and Maier (2006) for Iraq).[9] An important insight in Schuster and Maier's article (2006) is that the Dutch government supported the Iraq War (politically) because the Netherlands is a relatively small country, and small countries are often inclined to follow their large allies. They find confirmation of their hypothesis in that smaller European countries were more often prone to support the war than larger ones.

Thus, for both France and the Netherlands, paying some extra attention to the climate of opinion that proceeded the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions would be an interesting addition to the literature. Moreover, considering the specific contribution I aim to make in this Chapter, it is important to note that analyses of 9/11's role within legislative justifications for both invasions are basically non-existent for the two countries.

5.3 Data and Methods

The data I use for this chapter's analyses come, like the materials I examined in the previous chapter, from legislative digital archives.[10] I collected speeches delivered in the period leading up to both invasions. For Afghanistan, this period is relatively short: from September 11, 2001 to the date of the invasion, October 7, 2001. The period for Iraq starts in fall 2002, when legislative debates are taking place in each of the three countries about the Iraqi regime's refusal to allow NATO inspections, to March 20, 2003, the day of the invasion. I examined various legislative settings in which speeches were given: from small committee meetings in which only foreign affairs specialists were present to plenary debates that included (nearly) all legislators; and from addresses by individual politicians (such as Bush's speech to Congress shortly after the attacks) to declarations made during debates in which potentially all legislators were involved. I paid special attention to speeches made during crucial periods, such as the first days after 9/11, or the final days before the

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[9] Interestingly, substantial attention is actually paid to the climate of opinion during the decision-making process surrounding the possible military involvement of the Netherlands in Afghanistan, in 2006 (Dimitriu, 2012; Dimitriu and De Graaf, 2016; Kaarbo and Cantir, 2013).

[10] For the United States, they are available at www.congress.gov; for France, at www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/debats and www.senat.fr/seances/seances.html; and for the Netherlands, www.officielebekendmakingen.nl is the main website.

invasion of Iraq. During such periods, politicians used the most explicit and elaborate justifications pro or contra the wars. For the U.S., my corpus consists of 10 speeches regarding the Afghanistan War and 17 concerning the Iraq War. For France, these numbers were 14 and 16, respectively, and for the Netherlands they were 18 and 24.[11]

Since I aim to understand how politicians made specific discursive connections between 9/11 and these two wars, I investigated the data using qualitative content analysis (*Cf.* Macnamara, 2005: 14–18; Kohlbacher, 2006; Kuckartz, 2014). I focused on two central empirical questions:

1) To what extent was there consensus over supporting or not supporting the invasions in each country?

2) What arguments were mobilized in favor or against invasion?

Because I am specifically interested in the place of 9/11 in these debates, I analyzed sections of speeches in which the event was mentioned more extensively. Which warfare implications were derived from it? And based on what reasons?

5.4 Speeches on the Afghanistan War (2001)

5.4.1 The United States: An Attack on the American Nation which Requires Rapid Repercussions

On September 20, 2001, nine days after the Twin Tower attacks, President Bush speaks to Congress for the first time about the event (*Cf.* Entman, 2003; Kellner, 2007). In his Address to the Nation, he implies that he considers 9/11 an attack specifically targeted at the United States. Thus, Bush primarily frames it as a national, rather than as an international event. He defines the event as an act of war and places it in a line of prior acts of war that the United States has suffered from during its history (including, first and foremost, the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941):

> On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of
> war against our country. Americans have known wars, but for the

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[11] These differences are related to the varying national legislative contexts in which the speeches were delivered. The American ones were made as part of various occasions on which – given the two-party character of the American political system – only a few speakers were participating. The French and Dutch speeches were made on a couple of occasions on which – given the multiparty character of both countries' political systems – many speakers were involved.

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past 136 years they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war, but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks, but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack (Congressional Record, 2001a, p. S9554).

Later in his speech, he shifts perspectives and focuses on the terrorists' reasons for committing the attacks:

Americans are asking: Why do they hate us? They hate what they see right here in this Chamber, a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms, our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other (Congressional Record, 2001a, p. S9554).

Although the values to which Bush refers can be considered general Western values or even human rights, he frames them explicitly as *American.* It is not *everyone* who is posing a question, but specifically *Americans.* And the terrorists, according to Bush, specifically hate the things they see *in Congress.*

He then announces what the United States is going to do to respond to these acts of war. Again, the emphasis is on the decisions that the *United States* will make. It is the leading nation; others can (or should) follow its initiative:

We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe havens to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists (Congressional Record, 2001a, p. S9554).

A week and a half later, Scott McInnis, a Republican member of the House of Representatives from Colorado, speaks in Congress. His perspective is very clear: it is Bin Laden who – like a "disease" – has specifically targeted the United States:

> This Bin Laden is the most vicious cancer that you have ever encountered. It is not a cancer that you can negotiate. The President of this country has made it very clear we will not negotiate with this cancer. It is a cancer that you have no choice but to eradicate, because if you do not, it will be a battle you wish you would not have lost. We cannot, as an American Nation, we cannot as a free world, any country in this free world, afford to lose this battle (Congressional Record, 2001b, p. H6121).

So, the dominant vision in the United States during the first weeks after the attacks is that it is primarily the American nation that was targeted on September 11. That these attacks could also be seen as attacks on the Western or the free world is only mentioned at second instance. Furthermore, the general conviction is that Bin Laden and his fellow terrorists are responsible – and hence should suffer.

The literature indicates that this latter thought was a widely shared view in the American public sphere during the first weeks after 9/11 (MacCarthney, 2004; Ryan, 2004). This can also be deduced from the overwhelming support for the "Authorization for Use of Military Force against those responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001 and any associated forces", a resolution accepted on September 14. It passes in the Senate with 98 votes for, 0 against, and 2 abstentions. In the House of Representatives, the outcome is 420 for, 1 against (Barbara Lee, a Democrat from the State of California), and 10 abstentions.

When it turns out that Bin Laden is hiding in Afghanistan and the Taliban Regime is not willing to extradite him, a proposition is put forward to invade the country. Voices critical of this decision are – except for Barbara Lee – absent. On October 5, 2001, Benjamin Gilman (a Republican member of the House of Representatives from New York) gives the following explanation for the invasion, in which he emphasizes that 9/11 was specifically an attack on America:

> In view of these facts, there can be no doubt that the Taliban shares responsibility for the September 11th terrorist attack on our nation.

In waging this war that has been thrust upon us, our objectives must include not only the capture of Osama bin Laden and the destruction of his terrorist organization, but also the removal from power of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (Congressional Record, 2001c, p. E1821).

5.4.2 France: An Attack on an Ally which (According to Most) is Allowed to Strike Back

On the same day that the "Authorization for Use of Military Force" passes Congress, the French parliament's Commission of Foreign Affairs and Defense holds a special meeting about 9/11. President of the National Assembly Raymond Forni begins by saying that the United States has been targeted by an act of terror and that the country deserves a worldwide expression of solidarity:

The perpetrators of the attacks chose to strike at the heart of the American nation. It is the American people who have been targeted in their flesh; it is against them that these acts of heinous terrorism were launched. But it is up to everyone around the world to condemn them (Assemblée Nationale, 2001a, p.1).

Chairman of the Commission of Foreign Affairs Francois Loncle (PS, Socialist Party) likewise supports the Americans and suggests a possible counterattack:

We must show our sympathy and solidarity to the American people. France has to a large extent already done so. Transatlantic coordination is more than ever indispensable. Before we strike back, we must identify those responsible for the attacks, rebuild the chain of command, and gather irrefutable evidence (Assemblée Nationale, 2001a, p.2).

What is central in these responses and in many others made in French parliament during the first weeks after 9/11 are three thoughts: 1) It is specifically the United States, and not any larger geopolitical mass, that was attacked; 2) France is an ally of the United States and should therefore express solidarity and support a potential counterattack (Howorth, 2003, p. 177); and 3) This sense of solidarity is intensified

through France's membership in NATO, of which one of the most fundamental rules is that an attack against one ally is considered an attack against all member states (Gregory, 2003 , pp. 139 – 143).

Thoughts 1 and 3 are clearly present in the words of Chairman of the Commission of Defense Paul Quilès (PS) during the same meeting on September 14, 2001:

> The battle of the United States, perhaps with the help of certain elements of its state apparatus, against the terrorist networks that attacked it is legitimate; so much suffering and humiliation cannot go unpunished …. The United States calls for our solidarity: it is right to provide it, both in the rescue operations and the search for those who are responsible. According to Article 5 of NATO, each member state should judge the actions that it wants to take, when an external attack hits one of its fellow member states (Assemblée Nationale, 2001a, p.3).

At that point in time, it is not yet clear how the United States is going to respond to 9/11. Yet on October 3, it is very much so, when Prime Minister Jospin (also a member of PS) announces the attitude of the French government toward the invasion of Afghanistan. In his speech the three thoughts mentioned above are again present:

> Our solidarity is first of all with the United States, our ally to whom we owe our victory over Nazism, the friendly people with whom we share the affirmation of democratic ideals. In agreement with the president of the republic, the government subscribes the commitment, made in Article 5 of NATO, to support the response of our assaulted ally, in manners we deem appropriate. France will take responsibility, alongside the United States, in the long-term task of eradicating terrorism (Assemblée Nationale, 2001b, p.6).

Jospin's call for solidarity and his analogy to liberation from Nazism are especially interesting elements in this quote. They imply that the French government believes there is a need for reciprocity: the United States helped France conquer Nazism; now France has to help the United States conquer terrorism. They also imply that 9/11 is

primarily an attack on the United States, and only from a legal perspective – due to the articles of NATO – an attack on France.

Not all French politicians are, however, in favor of an armed initiative. Leader of the French communists Robert Hue condemns the acts of terrorism and expresses solidarity with the United States. But he does not want France to participate in a military response. He argues that an invasion would increase tensions and humanitarian problems in the region around Afghanistan:

> We would be opposed to it [invading Afghanistan, TvD]. First of all, we would be opposed to participation of France in one way or another. As you will have understood, this opposition is not related to any kind of anti-Americanism. It is dictated by humanitarian reasons, by the desire to avoid new regional and international tensions, and by the concern not to see America once more participate in an adventure which will ultimately harm itself (Assemblée Nationale, 2001b, p.11).

5.4.3 The Netherlands: An Attack on an Ally and on a Community of Values which (According to Most) Makes Striking Back Legitimate

The Dutch parliamentary speeches regarding invading Afghanistan in many ways mirror the French ones. In the Netherlands, a majority of members of parliament likewise favors a military response. The only party that opposes this (at first) is also the most leftist one, the SP (Socialist Party).[12] Moreover, Dutch and French speeches are similar in their rhetoric. In the first meeting of the Dutch Commission of Foreign Affairs held after 9/11, on September 13, Maxime Verhagen (CDA, Christian Democrats) gives a speech expressing solidarity to an ally, in which he makes a comparable analogy to World War II as Jospin:[13]

> Mister Verhagen (CDA) agrees with what Prime Minister Kok said yesterday in parliament about the mind-blowing terrorist attack that has hit the United States. Solidarity includes, apart from abhorrence,

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[12] Another leftist party, GroenLinks (the Green Party), was in favor of the invasion during the first debate I discuss here, but withdrew its support later on.
[13] There are no transcriptions of this parliamentary meeting, only summaries of what various speakers said. Thus, this citation does not come from a primary text.

support and mourning, also the willingness and determination to battle terrorism together with allies. In this context, he refers to the determination of the United States on the beaches of Normandy in 1944 (Tweede Kamer, 2001b, p. 1).

Furthermore, during the parliamentary debate in which the decision is made whether or not the Dutch government should support the invasion of Afghanistan, on October 9, Ad Melkert (leader of the PvdA, Social Democrats) also uses the argument that an attack on a fellow NATO member state should be considered an attack on all member states:

> After the horrifying September 11 attacks, NATO members, including the Netherlands, leave no room for misunderstanding concerning the applicability of the United States' right to self-defense and of the Alliance as a whole against the perpetrators (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, p. 430).

This is a dominant line of argument among politicians in favor of the invasion. In France, it was likewise present. Next, the arguments of opponents to the invasion are also very much similar to the ones presented by the French communists. Jan Marijnissen, party leader of the SP, also mentions humanitarian problems and local tensions as possible negative consequences:

> The bombardment by the United States and the United Kingdom of Afghanistan are, according to us, inhumane. All experiences from the past show that around these kinds of massive attacks with bombs and cruise missiles innocent people die, new flows of refugees arise – the suggested number is 4.5 million, of which more than half are already refugees – and poverty and illness among the population increase (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, p. 443).

There is nevertheless an important difference between the French and Dutch speeches about Afghanistan. Whereas French politicians (like their American counterparts) mainly see 9/11 as an attack on the United States, the Dutch ones stretch its framing. Almost all of them interpret it as an assault on 'Western values' or 'human values.'

Jan Peter Balkenende (who later on became prime minister, but then was parliamentary leader of the CDA) says, for instance, during the October 9 parliamentary debate:

> We are talking about a blatant violation of universal human rights. This applies internationally and it also applies to our own country. The Netherlands is an open and tolerant country and openness and tolerance can only exist under conditions of mutual respect and the recognition of common rules. My predecessor has already linked the topic of terrorism to the issue of values (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, p. 435).

Further on in this debate, Prime Minister Kok (PvdA) agrees with this reasoning:

> The attacks in the United States were also an attack on our values—I am saying this together with Balkenende and others—and our democratic principles that unite all of us in democratic countries (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, p. 452).

In this line of argument, the Netherlands is not only part of the attack because the United States is an ally and NATO member state, but also since it belongs to a universal or Western community of values. In the Netherlands, 9/11 is therefore not only framed as an attack on *American* society, but to a certain extent also on the moral foundations of *Dutch* society.

Furthermore, another line of argument is also more present in the Dutch speeches than in the American or French ones. This concerns the invasion's possible direct consequences for Dutch society. Ad Melkert (PvdA), for instance, is in favor of an invasion, as he believes that it can help battle terrorism, which Dutch citizens are afraid is going to erupt in their own midst as well:

> In our own country many people are anxiously following the occurrences. They are wondering what the situation is going to be like here and, for that reason, they do understand Dutch support for the international actions (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, p. 431).

Jan Marijnissen (SP) uses a comparable line of argument, albeit to make a plea *against* the invasion:

> If we want to battle terrorism successfully, then we must start by acknowledging that the world has really become a village. We cannot afford to feel safe and privileged within the European Fortress. After all, we are one another's neighbors, whether we live in Asia, in America, or in Africa. What hits one person immediately has consequences for someone else (Tweede Kamer, 2001c, 442).

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5.4.4 Conclusions Regarding the Afghanistan Speeches

In all three countries, 9/11 was considered an attack on the United States and responding with military intervention was seen as legitimate by most politicians (Table 5.1). In the United States, this was mainly related to the will to reciprocate. The link made between 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan was the result of a moral or emotional line of argument (*Cf.* Saurette, 2006). Such a link was also present in France and the Netherlands. Many politicians in both countries wanted to express solidarity with their ally. However, they often used juridical reasoning as well: the NATO rules that a country which has been attacked is allowed to strike back and that it deserves support from fellow members were frequently presented as an argument. The fact that this did not happen in the United States is logical: the American government made the decision to go to war, so it did not have to discuss possible support for a fellow NATO member state.

Thus, we can conclude that emotional and moral condemnation of the 9/11 attacks was a shared framing element in all three countries, which preceded the shared link to the Afghanistan War. Their common membership in NATO 'bounded' this link because the organization's rules force member states to discuss the military intervention plans of a fellow member.

However, there is a difference among the three countries with respect to framing of the connection between the attacks and the subsequent invasion. Is this something that primarily involves the United States and Afghanistan, the Taliban, and Bin Laden? Or does this also concern the rest of the world, or at least the West? In the United States and France, the dominant vision was that it primarily involves the former links. This was also the case in the Netherlands, yet the latter link was also drawn frequently. According to most Dutch politicians, the invasion of

Afghanistan was legitimate because they considered 9/11 (partly) an attack on human/Western values (that is: the rule of law, freedom, democracy), and thus on Dutch ones. In the United States and France, the event was framed as an attack on similar values. Yet in those countries, these values were, in the case of this event, presented as being American rather than universal or Western.

Furthermore, in the Dutch parliamentary speeches, I also found a focus on the invasion's possible domestic consequences in the Netherlands. Thus, even the international aspects of the framing of 9/11 in the Netherlands were more frequently linked to domestic issues than in France. In the United States, a domestic link was present as well. However, this was related to the fact that the country was actually targeted by Al Qaeda, and not because, as in the case of the Netherlands, the attacks 'rebounded' to the country through its membership in a community of Western or human values.

Table 5.1: Main Links between 9/11 and the Afghanistan War in Legislative Speeches

	The United States	France	The Netherlands
Role of 9/11 in Speeches	Very Prominent	Very Prominent	Very Prominent
What Was Primarily Attacked on 9/11?	U.S.	U.S.	U.S. and Western World
Pro/Contra Invasion	Unanimously Pro	Almost Unanimously Pro	Almost Unanimously Pro
Dominant Type of Argument	Emotional and Moral	Emotional, Moral, and Juridical	Emotional, Moral, and Juridical
What Kind of Event Is the War? (In Terms of Consequences)	Foreign, a little domestic	Foreign	Foreign, a little domestic

5.5 Speeches About the Iraq War (2002–2003)

5.5.1 The United States: A Polarized Debate with a Prominent Role for 9/11

In January 2003, President George W. Bush gives his yearly State of the Union address. In his speech, he draws direct links between safety issues in the world order after 9/11 and the current situation in Iraq:

> Since September 11th, our intelligence and law enforcement agencies have worked more closely than ever to track and disrupt the terrorists … Today, the gravest danger in the war on terror … the gravest danger facing America and the world … is outlaw regimes that seek and poses nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. These regimes could use such weapons for blackmail, terror, and mass murder. They could also give or sell those weapons to their terrorist allies, who would use them without the least hesitation ... America is making a broad and determined effort to confront these dangers. We have called on the United Nations to fulfill its charter, and stand by its demand that Iraq disarm (Congressional Record, 2003a, p. S1665).

The war on terror, in other words, is fully operational, and Bush considers making certain Iraqi weapons of mass destruction do not get into the hands of terrorists an important part of it (*Cf.* Gershkoff and Kushner, 2005; Krebs and Lobasz, 2007). Further on in his speech, he refers to this aim more explicitly:

> Before September 11, 2001, many in the world believed that Saddam Hussein could be contained. But chemical agents and lethal viruses and shadowy terrorist networks are not easily contained. Imagine those 19 hijackers with other weapons, and other plans – this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take just one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. We will do everything in our power to make sure that day never comes (Congressional Record, 2003a, p. S1666).

However, whereas in the speeches about starting a war in Afghanistan, there was a high degree of consensus among American politicians about the justness and

necessity of this action, this is not the case with regard to a war in Iraq. The division of opinions is such that many Democrats are against an invasion while many Republicans support it. In the days before the State of the Union, various members of Congress reflect on what Bush is going to say. Senator Dick Durbin, a Democrat from Illinois, dismisses the President's words on Iraq as some sort of non-issue:

> I know what is going to be said tonight. The president is going to speak to us about Iraq. I think it bears repeating, as I said last week, America's future is about more than Baghdad. It is about the challenges that moms and dads across America worry about every single day. It is about more than Iraq (Congressional Record, 2003b, p. S1503).

However, Senator Larry Craig (a Republican from Idaho) considers the Iraq issue an extremely important topic:

> Clearly, we have a role, as a very powerful country, in working with our allies to make sure terrorism and terrorists have no safe haven anywhere in the world. That is why our president insisted that U.N. resolutions be enforced and that we go back into Iraq, as the United Nations inspections team has over the last several months, to determine whether Saddam Hussein was living up to U.N. resolutions that largely were to disarm and neutralize him after the Desert Storm war over a decade ago (Congressional Record, 2003c, S1501).

The line of argument among many Democrats is that, while terrorism is a serious problem: 1) no clear link between the Iraqi regime and Al-Qaeda has been found; and 2) invading Iraq will probably be detrimental for security. Shortly after the State of the Union, six Democratic Senators come up with a resolution, in which they claim that Iraq should not be invaded. Among their reasons are the following two:

> - Whereas no evidence has been presented to the Senate or the American people to link Iraq with the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

> - Whereas there is growing concern that war with Iraq would greatly heighten the threat of terrorist attacks on United States citizens at home, including the possibility of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapon attacks (Congressional Record, 2003d, p.4).

The line of argument Republicans take, which in the end is the legitimation used for the invasion, consists of two reasons, that both oppose the Democrats' statements: 1) there probably is a link between Iraq and Al-Qaeda; 2) an invasion is needed to stop terrorism. House Member McInnis (whom I already cited in the section on the Afghanistan debates) gives on March 19, 2003 – literally the evening of the invasion of Iraq – an exposition of this line of thought:

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> How much would we pay, how much would we give to have prevented the attacks of 9/11? To those who protest the war, I respectfully ask, was September 11 not enough? Was not September 11 enough to convince you this is not a game? This is not politics as usual. This is not Vietnam. This is like no other war. This is the prospect of a Holocaust on our shores, on America's shores, among our communities, killing our families, injuring our neighbors, destroying our way of life for generations to come. …. Leadership is never easy, nor is it always popular, which is why we are so grateful for the nations and the leaders who stand with us, more than 30 of them, the third largest coalition in a century, people who are willing to say to international terrorism, enough. Enough. I am convinced, looking back, if more had stood with us, if France and Germany had put world security ahead of their shortsighted political ambitions, that we may well have disarmed Iraq and exiled Saddam Hussein without a shot being fired. Sadly, we will never know (Congressional Record, 2003e, H2126).

Yet, even though there is a high degree of polarization over the decision to invade Iraq, all American politicians share some ideas during the months leading up to the start of the war. The first is that 9/11 is still very much part of their considerations about the invasion. The second is that this is, among other things, caused by a fear

that new terrorist attacks or other security-related incidents are going to happen on American soil (*Cf*. Chang and Mehan, 2008; Krebs and Lobasz, 2007).

5.5.2 France: Overall Opposition in the Name of International Justice and a Powerful Republic

Whereas there is little political consensus in the United States during the months prior to the Iraq War, there is a lot of agreement about the issue in France. The agreement is even stronger than it was during the period prior to the Afghanistan War. However, whereas in the case of Afghanistan, nearly all French politicians were in favor of invading, in the case of Iraq, nearly everyone takes the opposite stance. On February 26, 2003, the most important French parliamentary debate over the Iraq War takes place. Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin (UMP, Conservative Party) opens the session and claims that, according to the French government, the strategy of making UN inspections under conditions of the international rule of law should be further pursued:

> In this context, the question that arises today is simple: should we consider disarmament by the United Nations Monitoring Committee a deadlock or do we feel that the inspection possibilities offered by the United Nations Resolution 1441 have not yet been fully exploited? We consider that the inspections have shown results and that they can still give some results.
>
> …. France has never excluded the use of force to enforce the law. As the president of the republic has recently pointed out, France is not a pacifist country, which is proven by our military commitment today on multiple grounds. But the use of force is not justified in the present circumstances because there is a credible and effective alternative to war: to disarm Iraq through inspections (Assemblée Nationale, 2003, p.2).

Further on in his speech, Raffarin emphasizes that the United States and France have the same aim – no more weapons of mass destruction in/for Iraq – and that their relationship is good, even though the countries differ in their visions on the means through which this aim should be achieved:

> As Colin Powell recently reminded us, we are old allies, we cooperate on many important issues, among which the fight against terrorism. I want to say here in front of the national parliament that a telling testimony of that is the French people's vast movement of sympathy and solidarity with the American people that manifested itself since September 11, 2001, and which has not faded ever since. Concerning Iraq, we share the same goals with all those who voted in favor of Resolution 1441. We differ when it comes to the means of achieving them. We have a duty to be truthful towards allies who respect each other (Assemblée Nationale, 2003, p. 4).

Raffarin mentions 9/11 in his speech, as do other speakers. For all French politicians it has the same meaning: it was a shocking attack on the United States, and the country deserved an expression of full solidarity as a response; the fight against terrorism is important, yet it is not a justified reason to ignore the international rule of law and invade Iraq.

This emphasis on the international rule of law is probably the most dominant element in the French Iraq speeches (Lorda and Miche, 2006). Alain Bocquet (member of parliament for the French communists, so not an ally of the right-wing UMP government) also refers to it in his speech, though, unlike Raffarin, he is disparaging of the American government:

> Who wants to believe the justifications that George Bush has built end to end? UN inspectors report a lack of clear evidence of the alleged links between the Iraqi regime and Al Qaeda. As for weapons of mass destruction, it is hard to believe that the current violations can justify the outbreak of a large-scale military enterprise with disproportionate risks. The UN inspection process therefore supports those who refuse the American policy of force. This must be pursued, especially since the actions taken on the ground, from

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1991 to 1998, by the emissaries of the United Nations, did more for disarmament than the previous war on Iraqi territory (Assemblée Nationale, 2003, p. 7).

Beyond this, Bocquet explicitly claims that France (or Europe) should adopt an important role internationally with regard to Iraq:

> The world needs France and Europe to play a resolute role. Our country and others, in conjunction with popular intervention, need to show that we have been able to curb the hawkish pressures and that war was not inevitable, that an exceptional situation could be created (Assemblée Nationale, 2003, p. 7).

This sentiment is also present in Francois Hollande's speech (then a member of parliament for the PS, later president of France):

> France must promote not only international law, but also international institutions, and their capacity to act. It must strengthen their means. And from this perspective, the fight for another globalization is inseparable from the struggle for peace. It is the same struggle as when it comes to setting rules for the circulation of goods, for the circulation of capital, which must be conducted to bring about peace (Assemblée Nationale, 2003, p. 17).

Even though this is not expressly mentioned, the French 'no' seems to be a means to position the country as an important actor in the international field of power, an actor that will not simply adhere to the United States' decisions. This is a dynamic which is also analyzed by Gaffney (2004, pp. 262 – 263) and Schuster and Maier (2006, pp. 231 – 232): maintaining a good relationship with the U.S. is important for France, but at the same time the country wants to be an important player on the political world stage.

5.5.3 The Netherlands: A Polarized Debate with a not so Prominent Role for 9/11

In Dutch parliamentary speeches on going to war with Iraq, 9/11 is as visible as it is in French debates: politicians sometimes mention it; yet, it is not as omnipresent as it was during the debates about initiating the Afghanistan War. This is an important difference with relation to speeches in the U.S., where the event is an important marker in the arguments almost all politicians make. However, apart from this, the Dutch speeches are more similar to the American than to the French ones. There is also a high degree of polarization between the Dutch political left and right, in which the left is often against the war and the right is for it (a pattern Schuster and Maier (2006, pp. 233 – 234) also find in other West European countries).

What is also similar to the American speeches is that when 9/11 is mentioned, it is done by both politicians who are for and against an invasion. During the parliamentary debate in which it is decided whether or not the Netherlands will support the war – on March 19, 2003 – Wouter Bos (party leader of the PvdA) articulates his party's ambivalence about the issue as follows:

> This morning's opinion polls show that in the Netherlands less than 25% of the population supports the decision of the United States to start a war. The public here and in many United Nations countries are not convinced of the severity of the threat and the need to end the diplomatic option. The link with the multi-headed post-9/11 monster of terrorism, which also, according to us, should be fiercely contested, is not sufficiently demonstrated to anyone but Cheney and Rumsfeld (Tweede Kamer, 2003a, p. 3283).

The link between 9/11's terrorism and the situation in Iraq is, according to Bos, not proven satisfactorily enough to take action. Maxime Verhagen (CDA), on the other hand, is convinced that such a link exists and considers recent terrorist incidents an important reason to support the invasion:

> From the start, we have had two main principles in discussions on Iraq. The first was that having weapons of mass destruction, be they either biological or chemical, in the hands of a dictator such as Saddam Hussein would be an unacceptable risk. This has always

been the United Nations' line as well. Moreover, the terrible attacks of 11 September have proven that terrorist organizations stop at nothing. We should prevent at all costs these kinds of organizations from getting access to such weapons (Tweede Kamer, 2003a, p. 3276).

Similar to what we observed in speeches made in the U.S. Congress, two questions are becoming intertwined here. The first is whether or not the link between Al Qaeda and the regime of Sadam Hussein has been sufficiently proven. Leftist parties do not believe it has; right-wing ones do. The second question is whether invading Iraq will have a positive or negative effect on the battle against terrorism. As the above citation shows, Maxime Verhagen thinks it will have a positive effect. Boris Dittrich of D66 (social liberals) foresees a deleterious one:

We are highly worried about the consequences of this war for the Iraqi population and the region – I am thinking about the Turkish – Kurdish question and the Israeli – Palestinian conflict – for the refugee problems that will arise and the reconstruction of Iraq, which creates all sorts of complications, such as the divided Iraqi opposition, a lack of democratic consciousness, and a nascent terrorism (Tweede Kamer, 2003a, p. 3294).

We can thus conclude that in the Netherlands there is much greater polarization than in France over the relationship between Al Qaeda and invasion, as well as about starting a war in Iraq . Another difference is that, whereas in the French speeches a clear ambition to adopt an important role on the political world stage is apparent, a dominant sentiment in the Dutch ones is that a small country like the Netherlands is highly dependent on its larger ally, the United States (see also Schuster and Maier, 2006, pp. 231 – 232). This situation is taken into account by several Dutch politicians when they reflect on their reasons for favoring or opposing the invasion. D66 – which votes against supporting a war – makes this very explicit in a speech by its party leader Thom de Graaff during a debate in January 2003, which was a response to the American State of the Union:

I will honestly say that the easiest thing to do for the Netherlands would be to give unconditional support to the United States, in words and eventually also in deeds. The Netherlands would prove a reliable transatlantic partner. We would join important European countries. We could count on the protective umbrella of the world's only existing superpower. We could use the sensitive rhetoric of standing strongly together and giving something back for all the support that the United States has given to us. And we could stand up for the struggle against terrorism and the transatlantic bond as a warranty for our freedom (Tweede Kamer, 2003b, p. 2830).

5.5.4 Conclusions Regarding the Iraq Speeches

What politicians in all three countries shared was the conviction that Sadam Hussein was a dictator and that it had been terrible if he had possessed weapons of mass destruction. However, beyond this basic level of agreement, there were substantial cross-national differences (Table 5.2). In France, there existed a general consensus that the path of international diplomacy had to be further pursued. The entire political caste was against invasion. In the United States and the Netherlands, there was a high degree of polarization. In both countries, the left (in the U.S., most Democrats and in the Netherlands, SP, PvdA, GroenLinks, and D66) were against and the right (Republicans in the U.S. and in the Netherlands, CDA, VVD, and LPF) supported invasion (*Cf*. Schuster and Maier, 2006, pp. 233 – 234).

9/11 held dissimilar significance within the debates. Indeed, the idea that the event could be linked to war through the issue of terrorism was present in all three of them. However, the extent to which this idea was a central part of lines of argument differed substantially. In the U.S., 9/11 was more or less the key point in every speech. The Iraq War was permanently linked to the war on terror, and thus to 9/11. In France and the Netherlands, the speeches centered much more on the regime of Sadam Hussein and the question of whether or not he possessed weapons of mass destruction, without many explicit links to the issue of terrorism.

Furthermore, the ways in which 9/11 was framed in each country as either an international or national event mirrored the ways in which this occurred in speeches about the Afghanistan War. In the United States and France it was mainly portrayed as an attack on the United States, while in the Netherlands it was also seen

as an attack on the West (even though a direct connection with domestic Dutch issues was absent from the Iraq debates).

What seems to be important in explaining the different stances of French and Dutch politicians regarding the Iraq War is thus not so much their various understandings of 9/11, or the extent to which they still considered it an important event in spring 2003. Other differences between the two countries seem to have greater relevance here. A significant one that emerged from this analysis is the role each country sought to assume on the political world stage. Whereas various French politicians saw the Iraq War as a chance for their country to position itself prominently, many Dutch politicians (including leftist ones, who were against the invasion) believed that the best thing to do in view of the global field of political power was to support the U.S.

Table 5.2: The Main Links Between 9/11 and the Iraq War in Legislative Speeches

	The United States	**France**	**The Netherlands**
Role of 9/11 in Speeches	Prominent	Small	Small
What Was Primarily Attacked with 9/11?	U.S.	U.S.	U.S. and Western World/Values
Pro/Contra Invasion	Polarized	Unanimously Against	Polarized
Dominant Type of Argument	Emotional, Moral, Juridical, and Societal	Juridical, Societal, and Political (Big Country)	Juridical, Societal, and Political (Small Country)
What Kind of Event Is the War? (In Terms of Consequences)	Foreign	Foreign	Foreign

5.6 General Conclusions

Analysis of legislative speeches shows us that, although links between 9/11 and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars were made in all three countries, there are clear differences in the ways in which these were specifically drawn. In the speeches regarding Afghanistan, the event was considered a *casus belli* in each country; yet, for Iraq this was only primarily the case in the U.S. (*Cf.* Chang and Mehan, 2008; Krebs and Lobasz, 2007). This finding is a confirmation of the pattern I revealed in Chapter 3: in the U.S., 9/11 remained for a longer period (in this case until March 2003) an occurrence to which many explicit policy implications were attributed than in the other two countries. This finding is also a contribution to literature on the relationship between war-related events and public support for warfare (Berinsky, 2007; Jakobsen and Ringsmose, 2015, p. 215) and the rally round the flag thesis (Baum, 2002; Baker and Oneal, 2001; Lee, 1977; Mueller, 1970). Similar to the literature on events that I cited in Chapter 3 (Sewell, 2005; Swidler, 1986; Zolberg, 1972), these works tend to focus on transformations in support for war directly after the occurrence of an event. The fact that support for launching a war in Iraq in the U.S. was still connected with 9/11 suggests that it would likewise be interesting to study potential effects of war-related events over longer periods of time.

Furthermore, the answer to the question 'who or what was under siege on 9/11?' also varied among the countries. In the U.S. and France, prior to both the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, the event was framed as an attack especially, or specifically, against the U.S. In the Netherlands, it was more seen as an event that targeted the West as a whole, or human rights more generally. When debating an invasion of Afghanistan, this was even linked to possible domestic effects on Dutch society. Here, we can observe a process of 'domestication', a process which in the general framing of 9/11 has been much more common in the Netherlands than in France (as we saw in Chapter 3). At the same time, something that was present in France before the Iraq War, but almost absent in the Netherlands, was a need to assume an important position on the political world stage. These two processes emerge from a general difference in national cultural repertoires used to approach foreign events (see also Gaffney, 2004, pp. 262 – 263; Schuster and Maier, 2006, pp. 231 – 234). I further elaborate on this matter in the next chapter.

These insights also provide an answer to the puzzle I presented at the beginning of this chapter: uniform cross-national links between 9/11 and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars in combination with differing national political stances

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and policy outcomes regarding these issues. That in all three countries the event was perceived as a justification for going to war in Afghanistan has a lot to do with a shared understanding of the Twin Towers attacks as an occurrence of the highest political urgency, in September and October 2001. By the time a war in Iraq became a political issue, this sentiment was only still substantially present in the U.S. Most politicians in France and the Netherlands did not share this sentiment any longer. Consequently, they considered other justifications to support or not support the Iraq War. This then resulted in the French 'No' and the Dutch 'Yes.'

In terms of contributions to event literature, this chapter supplements the two general event lessons formulated at the end of Chapter 3: 1) *even when an event is linked to same issues in different national contexts, the discursive meanings of these links may still be highly distinctive*; 2) *events can have long lives, in the sense that they can be seen as causes of war many years after their occurrence.*

Finally, it is interesting to reflect on the very fact that a need to engage in warfare was derived from the occurrence of a terrorist attack, and why this happened. This has been a unique response to the wave of Islamic terrorist attacks that has taken place in the Western world over the last two decades. Spain, the United Kingdom, and France were all hit by Al Qaeda or ISIS attacks after 2001, but none of these countries responded by planning to invade another country. Indeed, there are several possible explanations for these different responses, but an evident one is that the U.S., being the most powerful country in the (Western) world, for military, economic and symbolic reasons can go to war more easily. In other words, if 9/11 had happened in another country, then there probably would not have been any invasions to be debated.

Chapter 6
Two Cultural Repertoires for Domesticating Events. Interpretations of 9/11, the Southeast Asian Tsunami, the Arab Spring, and the Trump Election in French and Dutch National Newspapers

6.1 Introduction

The third puzzle that emerged from my analyses in Chapter 3 is related to the variation in 'domestication' of 9/11 in the French and Dutch public spheres. For almost the entire period researched (2001–2015), we observe a pattern in which the event is to a lesser degree related to domestic issues in France than it is in the Netherlands. French public actors have mainly discussed it in the context of foreign affairs, linked to topics such as terrorism and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, while Dutch ones have, for instance, also made it a central reference point in debates over the integration of Muslims in its society. The results of the previous chapter indicated that, even when 9/11 was associated with the Afghanistan War, a foreign affair, traces of domestication were present in Dutch parliamentary speeches. Some politicians considered the event an attack on the community of values to which the Netherlands belongs (human rights or Western values). French politicians, by contrast, framed the occurrence exclusively as an assault on (the values of) another, allied nation.

The question now is: how are we to understand this pattern of differing degrees of domestication in France and the Netherlands? Is it something that only applies to 9/11, and not to other international events in the two countries? Or is it pervasive? If it only applies to 9/11, why is that? And if the pattern is more broadly applicable, what explains that?

Answering these questions will not merely tell us something about the framing of 9/11 in the French and Dutch public spheres. It will also help us gain a better understanding of the interplay between structures and events, or specifically, the boundaries (Lamont and Molnar, 2002) that define when an event that happens outside a nation-state's borders is regarded as significant to discussions and policy-

making around its domestic affairs. As such, this chapter contributes to literature that examines the connections between the foreign and the domestic more generally: those of international relations and of nationalism (for instance: Anderson, 1983; Calhoun, 2007; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawn, 1990; Holsti, 1995; Hopf, 1998; Wallerstein, 2004).

6.2 Cases, Data, and Methods: Topic-Modeling of National Newspaper Articles Concerning Four International Events

The first question that this chapter tackles is whether the variation in domestication of 9/11 in the French and Dutch public spheres indicates national domestication patterns with applicability to other international events. To investigate this, I examine 9/11's framing with that of the following three event cases:

- the Tsunami in Southeast Asia in December 2004;
- the Arab Spring, which started in 2011 and resulted in several revolutionary regime changes;
- the political rise and election of Donald Trump as president of the United States in 2016.

These are all events which, like 9/11, occurred during the first decades of the 21st century. They therefore took place in the same era. Beyond this, each of them attracted significant attention in France and the Netherlands (see Graph 6.2 later in this chapter). Furthermore, the events took place on different continents (Asia, Africa, and North America) and constitute distinctive types of occurrences: 9/11 is a terrorist attack, the Tsunami a natural disaster, the Arab Spring a revolutionary period, and the election of Trump is a remarkable electoral result. To control for the effects of affective bias towards the United States – it is possible that variations in anti-American sentiments between French and Dutch public actors produce differing national domestication patterns – Trump's political rise has been added as a second American case. Thus, the results for two American events can be compared to those of two non-American ones. Analyzing events with such a diversity of characteristics can reveal whether the results from Chapter 3 are caused by characteristics specific to 9/11 or if they represent more or less constant, early 21st-century event domestication patterns in the two countries.

The methods and data used in this chapter are the same as those employed in the second newspaper analysis in Chapter 3, the investigation that made evident 9/11's different degrees of domestication: using topic modeling to investigate

national newspaper articles. Topic modeling's inductive character helps to fulfill the purposes of this chapter, like it did for those of Chapter 3: to unpack the phenomenon of event domestication as openly as possible. The specific newspapers investigated here are also the ones included in my analysis in Chapter 3 (all those available from the two countries in LexisNexis): *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *La Croix*, and *L'Humanité* from France; *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *Trouw*, *De Telegraaf*, and *Algemeen Dagblad* from the Netherlands. Domestication processes are examined over a period of a year after the occurrence or commencement of each of the four events.[14] This time span was chosen because the number of articles about the Tsunami and Arab Spring dropped so much in the second year after they took place that there was not enough data to allow for the creation of substantial topics. Even though the framing of events can change over time, as I demonstrated previously (*Cf.* Wagner-Pacifici, 2010, 2017), focusing on a time span of a year gives an indication of processes of domestication during the primary and consequently highly important period of meaning-making.

For 9/11, this includes the period of September 2001 to September 2002. In the case of the Tsunami it is December 2004 – December 2005, for the Arab Spring January 2011 – January 2012. For Trump's political rise, it runs from the year in which he gained in the opinion polls and was elected up to the moment of his inaugural speech, January 2016 to January 2017. The following search terms were used (each translated into French or Dutch): 'September 11,' 'Tsunami' + 'Asia,' 'Arab Spring' and 'Trump.' For 9/11, this gave me a corpus of 12,084 French articles and 7,592 Dutch ones; for the Tsunami, the numbers were 2,244 and 2,487; for the Arab Spring 874 and 777; and for the political rise of Trump 3,925 and 5,467.

The topic-modeling analysis was employed in exactly the same way as in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2), so I will not expand here on the specific procedures. Running the topic models produced lists of words that were then coded as either 'foreign' or 'domestic.' The same coder who helped me make the initial topic-modeling analysis assisted me again. Our Krippendorf alpha (Krippendorf, 2013, pp. 277 – 287) for the investigation was 0.91, which is a fine intercoder reliability score. Even though, as I mentioned in Chapter 3, the differences between what is 'foreign'

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[14] Both the terms 'occurrence' and 'commencement' are used here because neither the Arab Spring nor the Trump election are individual events, but came about during periods of months. Strictly speaking, it would therefore be better to refer to them as *disruptive periods* instead of *events*. Yet, for reasons of readability and overall coherence, I call them events.

and what is 'domestic' are ambivalent and not dichotomous, this score indicates that it is possible to reach a substantial level of agreement regarding this coding problem.

Overall, 130 topics were produced for a total of eight cases (four events in two countries each). Eight times we tagged a topic differently; twice it was clear to neither of us whether the topic was foreign or domestic; and once we both considered the topic too vague to give it any code. None of these 11 topics were included in the final analysis that is employed in this chapter.

6.3 Domestication Scores

An overview of the results of the domestication analysis is shown in Graph 6.1. The percentages refer to the sizes of newspaper articles that relate an event to a domestic issue (measured as: the relative size of the topics coded as 'domestic'). The most remarkable result is that for each event the degree of domestication is greater in the Netherlands than in France. The difference is greatest for 9/11 (21%) and smallest for Trump's election (10%). The Tsunami and the Arab Spring rank in between at 11% and 18%, respectively.

Graph 6.1: Domestication Scores of the Four International Events in French and Dutch Newspapers
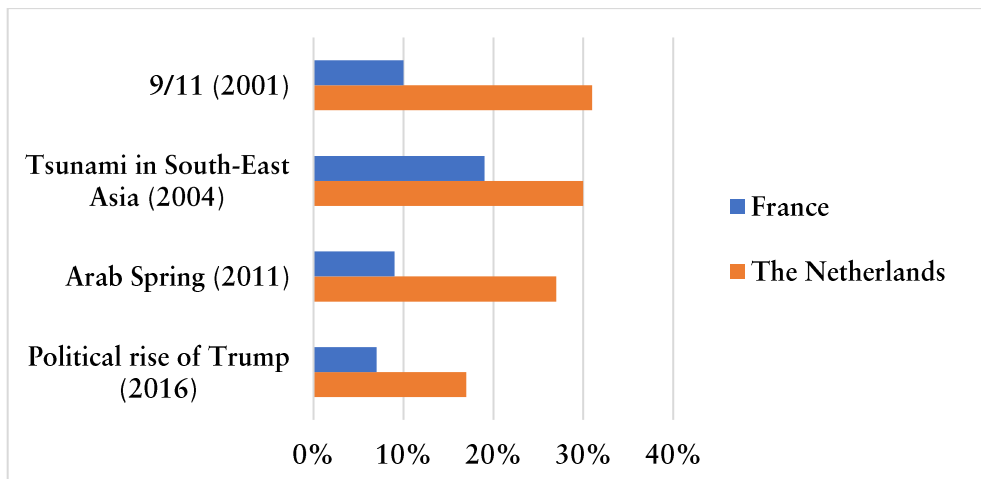
Clearly, this does not indicate that how these events were discussed in each country was entirely different. Graph 6.1 shows that for each event, over 70% of the newspaper coverage in both countries was related to foreign affairs. Many of these affairs were quite similar.

For instance, in the case of 9/11, a topic about the Afghanistan War is present in the data from both countries, which even includes many similar terms ('Taliban,' 'Bin,' 'Laden,' 'Terrorism,' 'Army'). Beyond this, French and Dutch newspaper articles about the Twin Tower attacks often focus on more or less the same specific subject. On September 21, 2001, *Le Figaro* publishes an article entitled, "The Taliban are Organizing Themselves to Face an Increasingly Probable American Attack" (Bouilhet, 2001). As this title suggests, the article reflects on the preparations that Taliban troops are making to confront an American invasion of Afghanistan. *De Volkskrant* publishes on October 8, 2001 an article which also deals with this subject, called, "Taliban May Be Able to Resist an American Attack" (Kester, 2001, p. 2). As a last example of cross-national parity, in the case of the Tsunami, both the French and the Dutch data include a topic on the ways in which Thailand and Sri Lanka have been hit by the disaster, which contain the same terms: 'disaster,' 'victims', and 'missing.'

However, notwithstanding these similarities, the cross-national differences in degrees of event domestication are remarkable. As they are present for all four cases, it would be reasonable to conclude that they are not (only) caused by dominant French or Dutch attitudes toward a specific country or location or that they stem from a 'good fit' between a specific type of event with salient French or Dutch public discussions. This conclusion brings up the second question this chapter aims to answer: why is that these four international events are consistently domesticated to larger extents in Dutch newspapers than in French ones?

6.4 Are Differences in Domestication an Expression of Varied Attention Levels?

Could it be that varying levels of attention for foreign affairs play a role? It is possible that French newspapers are simply not terribly interested in international events? They might consider them occurrences that take place in distant places, not really worth reporting about extensively, let alone to relate them to French domestic affairs. To test this hypothesis, I have investigated the attention given to these four events (measured as the number of articles published about them) in the two

countries during the first year after their occurrence or commencement. I performed this in the same way I developed an analysis of the cycles of attention paid to events in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2): only selecting articles from two elite newspapers in each country (*Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* in France and *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Volkskrant* in the Netherlands) and controlling for newspaper size.

Graph 6.2 indicates the results. It shows that the differences in degrees of domestication are not just an expression of variations in attention levels. After each event, attention levels are more or less the same in both countries. Moreover, for 9/11 it is substantially higher in France (as we already saw in Chapter 3). Thus, the lower degree of domestication in French newspapers is not related to a lower level of interest in foreign affairs.

Graph 6.2: Attention Rates for the Four International Events in French and Dutch Newspapers
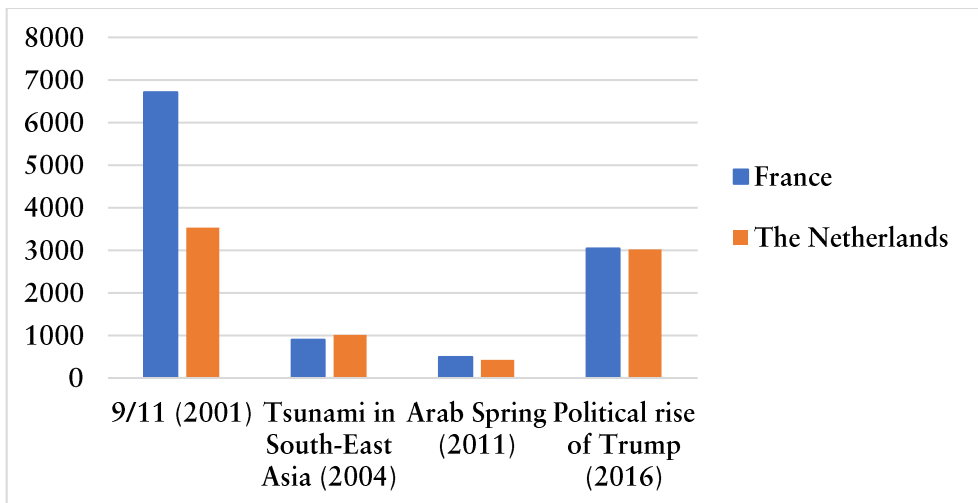
6.5 Four Types of (Non-)Domestication of International Events

Where do these varying degrees of domestication come from then? To obtain an answer, we need to unpack the phenomenon of domestication further. Doing so entailed performing an in-depth inquiry into the results of the topic-modeling analysis. For each topic, I read the 40 most representative newspaper articles (see Section 3.2.2 for further explanation) and investigated whether or not they indicated expressions of (non-)domestication and what forms these expressions took. Open coding made clear that topics could be arranged into four different types of (non-)domestication.

    1) the event as an entirely foreign affair;
    2) the event as a foreign political affair;
    3) the event as a domestic political affair;
    4) the event as a personal disruptive affair.

The first two types are forms of non-domestication, the latter two represent domestication. The next sections indicate the meanings of these four types and the extent to which they are present around the four international events in the two countries.

6.5.1 The Event as an Entirely Foreign Affair

The *event as an entirely foreign affair* accounted for the largest portion of newspaper content in both France and the Netherlands (see tables 6.1 and 6.2): for each event, at least 54% of the content occurred in this category. The category includes all topics for which the event was framed as something completely foreign (non-domestic), that was not in any way related to a domestic French or Dutch political or societal issue. The topics coded within this category often bore great similarity in the two countries. Examples were already given in Section 6.3.

Table 6.1: Topic Sizes for Four Types of (Non-)Domestication in France

	1. Entirely Foreign	2. Foreign Political	3. Domestic Political	4. Personal Disruptive
9/11 (2001)	66%	24%	10%	0%
Tsunami (2004)	54%	27%	10%	9%
Arab Spring (2011)	70%	21%	9%	0%
Trump's Political Rise (2016)	79%	15%	6%	0%

Table 6.2: Topic Sizes for Four Types of (Non-)Domestication in the Netherlands

	1. Entirely Foreign	2. Foreign Political	3. Domestic Political	4. Personal Disruptive
9/11 (2001)	64%	5%	22%	8%
Tsunami (2004)	60%	10%	9%	21%
Arab Spring (2011)	58%	15%	18%	9%
Trump's Political Rise (2016)	75%	8%	12%	5%

6.5.2 The Event as a Foreign Political Affair

In the category *the event as a foreign political affair*, the percentages are higher in France than in the Netherlands, for all four cases. The differences range from 6% (the Arab Spring) up to 19% (9/11). As with the topics in the first category, topics in this second one framed the event from a foreign perspective. Yet, they also included clear French or Dutch involvement. The event became an issue of importance to each country's foreign policy agenda.

Close examination of the empirical material pertaining to 9/11 and the Arab Spring illustrates these processes. During the first months after the Twin Tower attacks, policy discussions concerning a variety of issues took place in the international political arena: a military invasion of Afghanistan, security measures, and the fight against terrorism, among others (see also Chapters 3 and 5). Several French newspaper articles reporting on these discussions depict that France is playing a central role in them. President Jacques Chirac is the first international politician to visit the United States after 9/11. A reflection in *Le Figaro* (September 18, 2001) about this visit implies that Chirac seeks to use this occasion to discuss policy proposals and shows that France is – together with the United Kingdom and Germany – a very central partner to the United States during the initial post-attack period:

> On Wednesday, the president of the republic will visit New York at the invitation of Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan. Jacques Chirac wants to involve the UN in the fight against international terrorism. He states that the United Nations has a great deal to lose if it was removed from a global crisis like this one. ... The Europeans asked Jacques Chirac to inform them about the

talks. He promised to telephone from Washington Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder, whom he will meet in Berlin on Wednesday. The British prime minister even plans to go to Paris for breakfast at the Elysee Palace (Rousselin, 2001).

The general Dutch public attitude to their country's involvement in international politics during the first post-9/11 weeks is much more modest. This can be culled from newspaper reports about its participation in EU meetings. For example, an article in *NRC Handelsblad* (October 26, 2001) states:

> For a small member state, especially if it holds the chairing role in the EU, relationships with the EU's three large ones [Germany, France, and the U.K., TvD] are dialectically difficult. In areas that are intergovernmental, such as defense policies, where qualified majorities and 'enhanced cooperation' are explicitly excluded, the large ones inevitably tend to pursue, likewise due to the pressure of circumstances, a politics of fait accompli (Eyskens, 2001, p. 7).

Dutch newspaper articles about such international meetings often employ the term 'small member state.' Here, this term refers to Belgium, which was EU Chair in autumn 2001, but it is also employed frequently to characterize the Netherlands' status. The reference usually implies that a small member state must be careful and modest in interactions with large member states. This idea is also apparent in the following citation, which is a reflection on a call for Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs – Jozias van Aartsen (VVD, Liberal Party) – to take political action during an EU meeting (November 29, 2001):

> If it is left to VVD members Weisglas and Wilders, Van Aartsen is going to put a clear message on the table: Iran's support for terrorism should be stopped. This is not a comfortable assignment for a minister from the small Netherlands, at a time when the EU is seeking a cautious approach toward Iran. It is true that Iran is still on the American list of 'enemy countries.' But since the terrorist attacks of September 11, the dividing line between good and evil in the world is slightly different (Trouw, p. 8).

Thus, in the period right after 9/11, it is much more common for French politicians to take a leading role in international politics than for Dutch ones.

Ten years later, during the Arab Spring, similar processes occur. In March 2011, there are preparations for a military intervention in Libya. Among the French elite, there exists a strong belief that their country should play an important role in this campaign. A group of intellectuals with various political sympathies (among others: Bernard-Henry Lévy, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and André Glucksmann) publishes a call for intervention in *Le Monde* (March 17, 2011), under the roaring title, "Yes, We Must Intervene in Libya, and Quickly!" The following excerpt from this article makes their wishes clear:

> We therefore urge the French Government to do everything possible with its partners to ensure that the United Nations respects its commitment to the "responsibility to protect" and that Europe takes responsibility and proves that its wish to see the Libyan colonel leave is not wishful thinking. A Security Council meeting is urgently needed to mandate a response. But this does not serve as a good alibi for our inaction against crime. It is not up to the Russian and Chinese governments to force us to allow Libya's democracy to be massacred. It is now, immediately, that we must act (Bruckner et al., 2011, p. 20).

A few days later, a foreign affairs editor of *Le Figaro* publishes a hymn to the French role in the intervention ("The Sarkozy Moment," March 19, 2011):

> In the case of Libya, Nicolas Sarkozy is again proving his ability to step onto the international stage during the most critical moments. The president of the republic already demonstrated his ability to manage crises as president of the European Union, in the second half of 2008. The war in Georgia and the outbreak of the global financial crisis gave him the opportunity to rally the international community to seek and find solutions (Rousselin, 2011, p. 19).

The point here is not so much that all French public actors applaud the intervention. At a later stage, it is also criticized. It is rather that the two excerpts show it is

perfectly normal for the French political elite to claim an important role in the international political arena. This is in sharp contrast with Dutch public discourses about the Libya intervention. The Netherlands makes a very small military contribution to it, yet ambivalence prevails even regarding that initiative. War historian David Barnouw for instance says in an interview with *Algemeen Dagblad* (March 24, 2011):

> After the Second World War, we participated out of fear for communism. Now we are doing it because we want to play a role on the world stage. As we once had colonies, we cherish the idea that the Netherlands is a medium-sized country. This is nonsense, of course, it is tiny. But we absolutely do not want to be as insignificant as Denmark. We want to play with the big boys (Oomen, 2011, p. 3).

Thus, also in the case of the Arab Spring, we see that while French politicians easily adopt a significant position in the international political arena, Dutch politicians may be derided by the country's elite if they want to play even a minor role.

6.5.3 *The Event as a Domestic Political Affair*

The third category of topics concerns framing *the event as a domestic political affair.* These topics demonstrate links between an event and debates over domestic French or Dutch issues. After three of the four events, such topics occurred more often in the press from the Netherlands than from France; only in the case of the Tsunami was the French score higher, by one percentage point.

Illuminating framing patterns behind this generally higher Dutch score manifest themselves in the case of the Arab Spring. In the Netherlands, these uprisings are strongly linked to debates on the role of Islam in its society. While they are happening, commentators use the unfolding events to prove that their discursive position in the Dutch Islam debate is correct. Journalist Rob Vreeken, for instance, interprets the demonstrations as a sign that commentators highly critical of Islam's democratic potential are wrong (*De Volkskrant*, March 5, 2011):

> As far as the sun rays of the Arab Spring are reaching the Netherlands, they are putting the notorious Islam haters in the

shades. Their one-dimensional world view has been disjoined. The clash of civilizations, the global dichotomy of us (the Western civilization) and them (the Islamic world), all of it has been swept aside in one historical arm swing, by the rebellious civilians on the Arabian liberation squares. More than anything they prove that they long for democracy, for the rule of law, for freedom, 'just like you in Europe' (Vreeken, 2011, p. 11).

However, a few months later, publicist Chris Rutenfrans claims that the Arab Spring confirms the thesis that there is a clash between the Enlightenment and Islam (*De Volkskrant*, May 7, 2011):

> Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, the populism of Fortuyn and Wilders derives its arguments against Islam from the principles of the Enlightenment. Soon the thought arises that this Enlightenment originates in Western culture, and that it would be extremely difficult for Islam to master that Enlightenment. See the tragedy of the Arab Spring, the 'hunger for democracy' that does not lead to democracy, but to an exodus to Western Europe (Rutenfrans, 2011, p. 6).

By contrast, hardly any domestication process of the issue of Islam takes place in France during the Arab Spring. Even National Front leader, Marine Le Pen – from whom one might expect it the most – does not relate the uprisings to debates about the position of Muslims in French society.[15]

During the year of the election of President Trump (2016 – 2017), we can observe similar differences between the two countries. In France, this event is only linked to domestic affairs in topics about French upcoming presidential elections in May 2017 (which include terms such as: 'France,' 'Campaign,' 'Hollande,' and 'Candidate'). In the Netherlands, connections to its upcoming parliamentary elections of March 2017 are drawn as well. However, in the Dutch topics, the Trump event is also associated with a wide variety of domestic issues. For instance, it occurs in a discussion about 'the angry citizen' (a topical Dutch phrase, which is mostly used to refer to potential populist voters) and the power of facts in the

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[15] At least, I found no newspaper article in my analysis in which she drew such a link.

struggle to change his political attitudes. In this discussion, some claim that the electoral success of Trump indicates important lessons for how to deal with those angry Dutch citizens. One of them is philosopher Kees Vuyk, who writes in *NRC Handelsblad* (December 3, 2016):

> Talking about general interest, universal principles, and the truth will only increase chaos. We must connect abstract thinking patterns with the everyday life of ordinary people. That is not an easy task. It means immersing ourselves in their lives, really being interested in them. It also means counteracting them, starting a fight, showing emotion. Just like what happened at the height of the emancipation movement between parents and children. Emotion now comes only from one side. (Remember the debates between Trump and Clinton.) That does not work. It only stokes the fire of the angry citizen (Vuyk, 2016, p. 4).

6.5.4 The Event as a Personal Disruptive Affair

The fourth and last category of topics frames *the event as a personal disruptive affair.* This type of domestication refers to a process by which an event, even though it occurs in a distant location, is experienced so intensely by some people that their own psychological state of well-being is affected as a result.

This type of framing was present for all four events in the Netherlands. In France, it only occurred around the Tsunami. During its aftermath, a lot of attention is paid to the victims of the natural disaster in both countries. However, in the Netherlands, many newspaper articles additionally mention the responses of Dutch celebrities, people not directly involved in the disaster. Those people not only consider the Tsunami something terrible for *people living in Indonesia or Thailand*; they claim it also caused disruption *in their own lives*.

For example, producer Theu Boermans was working on a performance of Gilgamesh, an old epic which includes a flood and premiered the day after the Tsunami. In an interview, he reflects on it as follows (January 28, 2005):

> This cannot be true, I thought. But natural disasters have always had a place in world literature, so you cannot preclude these kinds of coincidences (De Telegraaf, 2005, p. 13).

Later in the interview, he indicates that the event has inspired him: "Moreover, such a link between plays and reality to Boermans once again proves the need to make theater." Thus, although the Tsunami happened far away, Boermans considers it of great interest to him and his work.

In the year Trump became president, this kind of emotional involvement is also clearly present in the Netherlands. In many newspaper interviews, Dutch celebrities state that this event psychologically affects them, claiming it is an important occasion in their own lives. For instance, singer Jett Rebbel says this in response to a question asking with whom he would most definitely not want to be locked in a room for 24 hours (*Algemeen Dagblad*, December 31, 2016):

> Geert Wilders. I cannot think of anyone who is further away from
> me politically. One of my songs, "Blonde Like You," is about him.
> And about Donald Trump, by the way (Raatgever, 2016, pp. 8-9).

Acting in a theater adaptation of *The Kindly Ones*, a novel about the Holocaust, Hans Kesting relates his role to contemporary events and concludes (*De Telegraaf*, March 12, 2016):

> I think that Wilders and Trump are a horror. That they get the
> chance to continue to spread their poison. How they continue to
> peek in that wound without offering alternatives. History has shown
> that extreme systems such as National Socialism were not created
> from one day to the next. For years, there was a focus on gut
> feelings (De Telegraaf, 2016, p. 2).

The point with these examples is that for many (famous) Dutch citizens there are apparently not clear affective boundaries (Lamont and Molnar, 2002) between things happening abroad and in the Netherlands. They can become enraged by Trump and call out Wilders and Trump in a single breath. It makes little difference to them that one is an American politician, while the other is Dutch. This type of event domestication seems to be a specific form of "distant suffering," experiencing psychic pain because of things going on in a faraway location (*Cf.* Boltanski, 1999; Joye, 2015). When this type of emotional involvement occurs in the French press, it is usually in interviews with *American* celebrities. Examples of *French* celebrities who

express personal rage at Trump are at least not present enough to generate a separate topic in my analysis.

6.6 Two National Cultural Repertoires of International Event (Non-)Domestication

Graph 6.3 gives an overview of the overall differences between the two countries with regards to each of the four types of event (non-)domestication. What are the scores and how should we interpret them? To start with the two types of non-domestication: the French press is somewhat more likely to view *an event as entirely foreign* and quite more likely to view it as a *foreign political affair.* From the newspaper article excerpts in section 6.5.2, it is evident that French public actors believe they can and must play an important role in international politics. Consequently, they have a stronger tendency to turn events into topics pertaining to French foreign policy. Dutch public actors, however, state that they come from a small country, which should be modest in its ambitions for playing a significant role in the field of world politics. In fact, if Dutch politicians try to make some kind of international political impact (as in the invasion of Libya), they may be derided by their own elite.

Graph 6.3: Overall Differences Regarding Four Types of (Non-)Domestication of Four International Events in France and the Netherlands
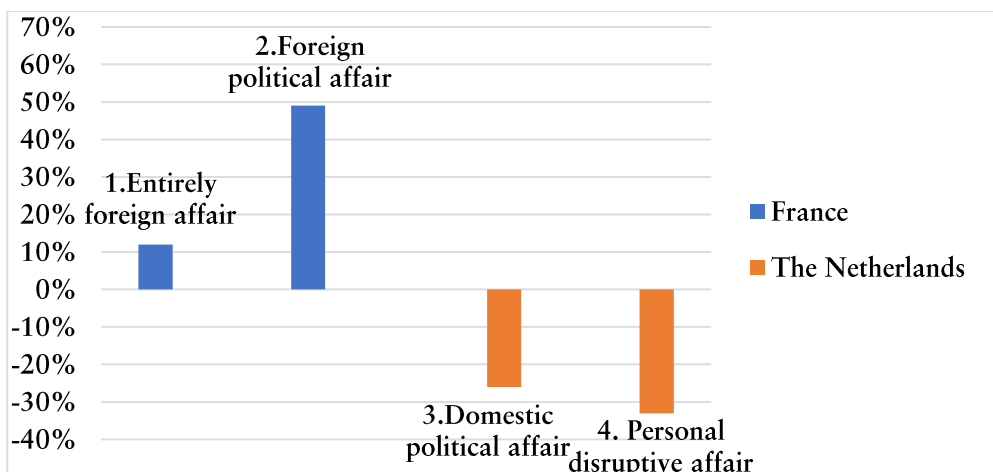
These findings corroborate earlier insights. In the previous chapter, we saw that, especially with regards to starting a war in Iraq, French politicians aspired to a more prominent position in international decision-making processes than did their Dutch counterparts (*Cf.* Gaffney, 2004; Eckert, 2013; Schuster and Maier, 2006). International relations literature offers further proof of this cross-national differentiation. Gordon (1993) demonstrates that, even though France has lost its position as the world's most powerful country (as it was in the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century), its politicians have aimed to play an important role in international politics during the 20th century. This was very much the case when De Gaulle was president, in the first decades after the Second World War (Gordon, 1993, pp. 14 – 22). He strived for a *French Grandeur*, which implied, among other things, that the country attempted to be important in world politics, and independent from the United States. Since, French politicians have continued to opt for such a position (Gordon, 1993, pp. 183 – 185).

Research on the current period confirms this picture. Grossman (2010), Irondelle (2008), and Schmidt (2007) reveal that France, notwithstanding the difficulty of keeping up with the economic rise China and Germany, maintains the goal of playing a leading role in international politics. Rowdybush and Chamorel (2012) summarize this attitude prior to 2012 the French presidential elections as follows:

> Even as the world's fifth largest economy, a population of more than 65 million, and a global presence, there are definite limits to what France can accomplish. It is only by working closely with others, especially Europe and the United States, that France can hope to have an impact and influence that matches its aspirations. That said, the French will continue to speak out, offer criticism, and attempt to be an initiator rather than merely a reactor. No matter who is elected this spring, France is unlikely to abandon its efforts to lead, come up with new ideas, and be one of the major international players (Rowdybush and Chamorel, 2012, p. 177).

Thus, although France is no longer among *the most* powerful countries in the world, it still has the ambition and resources to be a prominent actor in international politics.

The Dutch situation is distinctive. Interestingly, there exists far less literature on the Dutch than on the French role in the field of world politics (which might be an expression of the different power positions the two countries occupy). However, Duco Hellema's *Dutch Foreign Policy* (2009) is a standard work. He paints a picture of a country that was, in the 16th and 17th centuries, big on the international stage, yet which is certainly after decolonization no longer an important actor. Economically successful, indeed, but also a small country: "the Netherlands is thus seen over a large part of its history as a small, 'satisfied power,' which explains its inclination to neutrality" (Hellema, 2009, p. 41). This description aligns with those of the modest role that Dutch politicians have played in the international decision-making processes surrounding the four events analyzed in this chapter.

Examining the scores for *the event as a domestic* and *as personal disruptive affair* (Graph 6.3), we also see clear differences between the two countries. The score of the Netherlands is higher for each. The personal disruptive affair scores seem to indicate that the affective boundaries (Lamont and Molnar, 2002) which define to what extent foreign events become significant for people's psychological well-being are drawn differently in the two countries. While French newspapers did not report on national celebrities experiencing the four international events as ruptures in their personal lives, this was rather common in the Dutch press.

Similar differences seem to be present when it comes to French and Dutch framings of events as domestic political affairs. If we reconsider the Dutch excerpts concerning these two types of domestication, we see that these patterns arise (at least partly) from a strong focus on things going on in one's own society or individual lives. Thus, foreign events are not only significant for Dutch citizens because the people who are directly involved suffer (after the Tsunami) or make progress (during the Arab Spring), but also since they are relatable to an important issue in their own lives.

These results do not stand on their own either. Various scholars show that Dutch public actors during the last two decades have developed strong nationalist sentiments that are manifested through the "culturalization" of domestic political affairs (Duyvendak, 2011; Kešić and Duyvendak, 2016; van Reekum, 2014). The issue of Dutch national identity is prominent in many topical public debates, such as

those about immigrant integration or racism, in which Muslims or the prohibition of *Zwarte Piet*, a tradition of wearing black face, from the annual Sinterklaas Festival are framed as threats to this identity. While current research only focuses on discussions of domestic issues, this analysis indicates that similar processes seem to manifest themselves in debates about foreign affairs.

This presents a new paradox (or perhaps an additional one) regarding how contemporary Dutch nationalism has been characterized: exclusion via emphasis on the importance of progressive, 'Dutch' values (Duyvendak, 2011; Kešić and Duyvendak, 2016; van Reekum, 2014). In the case of event domestication, the paradox is that an open international orientation can also provide grounds for celebrating and emphasizing one's own, domestic lifeworld – everything that happens in the world qualifies as a reason for reflecting on the state of affairs in Dutch society.

In the case of France, there exists a different cultural repertoire (Lamont, 1992; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000) for the (non-)domestication of international events. The tendency of French public actors to aspire an important position for their country in the international political field is also a form of nationalism. Yet it manifests itself in a distinctive way: the country is considered capable of dealing with the important problems of the world – hence the term *French Grandeur* (Gordon, 1993; Rodybush and Charamoul, 2012; Schmidt, 2007).

6.7 Conclusions

This chapter attempts to solve the puzzle of why 9/11 in the Dutch public sphere has become domesticated to a larger extent than in the French one. In the first part of the chapter, I show via a topic-modeling analysis that distinct domestication patterns have not only been present for this case, but have also appeared in response to three other recent international events: the Tsunami in Southeast Asia, the Arab Spring, and the political rise of Donald Trump. This implies that differences in degrees of domestication between the two countries occur not only in reaction to events with certain characteristics (for instance, ones related to terrorism) or that happen in a specific location. These findings provide additional evidence for one of this dissertation's main lessons regarding events, namely that *the framings of the same event can vary substantively between different national contexts*: not only in terms of central issue attachment (in this study: safety in the United States and Islam in the

Netherlands), but also when it comes to the extent to which an event is considered relevant to a country's domestic affairs.

In the chapter's second part, I deepen the topic-modeling investigation to unpack the phenomenon of event domestication further. My analysis indicates that in France international events are more often than in the Netherlands seen as entirely foreign occasions or as important with reference to the country's foreign policy agenda. In the Netherlands, they are more frequently considered of significance to the country's domestic affairs or absorbed into the psyche of national celebrities.

This analysis also provides an explanation for why domestication patterns of the four international events differ in the French and Dutch public spheres: the patterns express rather stable, compelling cultural repertoires that participating actors employ to respond to the occurrences (see also Chapter 4). As the international relations and nationalism literature from the previous section suggests, these repertoires of event domestication probably stand for more widely applied ways in which these actors relate to foreign affairs: the *Grandeur* of the French, who aim to be a key player on the political world stage, versus Dutch concerns about the domestic, which transform international issues into topics of relevance to one's own, societal or individual lifeworld.

A next question then is: where do these varying cultural repertoires come from? When I introduced the concept of domestication (Section 3.2.2), I indicated that scholars who focus on the domestication of cultural products – languages (De Swaan, 2001), books (Heilbron, 1999) or forms of art (Janssen et al., 2008) – often use world-system theory (Wallerstein, 2004). It would be interesting to relate this theory's implications, specifically its hypothesis of the pivotal role of a country's power position in the world-system, to the topic of event domestication. For instance, it might be intriguing to see whether varying domestication patterns among countries with a comparable level of political dominance, ones that are just as powerful (or powerless) as France or the Netherlands, exist. For example, to what extent does the French repertoire of event (non-)domestication differ from that of the other major player in the contemporary European Union, Germany?

A last issue that requires reflection is the question of change in domestication patterns. Both the French and Dutch patterns have been more or less stable for the period in which the four international events took place (2001 – 2017). Yet, given the typology I introduced in Chapter 4, it is possible that the repertoires which inform these stable domestication processes would change in response to an event.

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We do not have to go back far in French or Dutch political history to find examples of such transformations. For instance, Kennedy (1999, p. 223) claims that the Srebrenica Massacre in 1995, in which the Dutch army was unable to protect the Bosnian citizens from being exterminated by Serbian soldiers, resulted in a more modest perspective among Dutch public elites regarding their aims of bringing international justice to the world. Thus, the role Dutch politicians were trying to play on the political world stage prior to this event may have been less passive than it is now and the Dutch tendency to domesticate international events smaller.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: The Fruits of Using an Inductive Approach to Research Events

7.1 Introduction: Opening the Black Box of the Event Inductively

The most important actor during the first years of 9/11's worldwide aftermath was probably President George W. Bush. It was he who announced a few days after the attacks the commencement of a 'war on terror,' and he who gave this statement consequences by introducing the Patriot Act and starting the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. In his memoir – *Decision Points* – Bush pays special attention to his personal experience of the event.[16] He writes:

> When I woke up on September 12, America was a different place. Commercial aircraft were grounded. Armed vehicles patrolled the streets of Washington. A wing of the Pentagon had been reduced to rubble. The New York Stock Exchange was closed. New York's Twin Towers were gone. The focus of my presidency, which I had expected to be domestic policy, was now war. The transformation showed how quickly fate can shift, and how sometimes the most demanding tasks a president faces are unexpected (Bush, 2010, p. 139).

This description gives rise to several intriguing event-related questions. How can it be that America had – according to President Bush – turned into a different place over the course of one day? Which processes create the rupture he depicts? And when and why does it end?

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[16] I argued in Chapter 1 that it is, for reasons of reliability, problematic to use people's memories when researching events. Memoirs are based on memories, so it is somewhat dubious to begin my conclusions with this reference. Yet, what Bush describes here is actually very similar to what he said in the speeches he gave during the first weeks following the event. See, for instance, Chapter 5, but also reconstructions in Entman (2003) and Kellner (2007).

In Chapter 2, I outlined two dominant notions sociologists often use as lenses to look at events. The first views them as *self-evident turning points*. This notion assumes that events are watershed moments, which can bring about radical transformations in a very short time period (for instance, over the course of a day). The second is the *corollaries of structures*-notion, which posits that events are actually not that significant to social life, but rather remarkable expressions of societal conditions or conduits for long-term developments. This dissertation's starting point was the observation that because sociologists often regard events through those two lenses they frequently remain a black box in their research. The turning points-notion takes the origins and consequences of events for granted. The corollaries-notion does not seriously engage with the transformative power of ruptures (e.g., the unexpected emergence of demanding tasks, which Bush suddenly had to face).

One of this dissertation's central contributions is introducing a methodology that opens this black box: an *inductive approach for studying events.* This approach is inspired by sociologists who have opened the event box before (Sewell, 2005; Wagner-Pacifici, 2010, 2017 and also Berezin, 2009; Kingdon, 2011[1984]; Sahlins, 1985; Staggenborg, 1993; Swidler, 1986; Zolberg, 1972), and assumes that the meanings and consequences of events are not *a priori* clear. How many consequences an event has, how radical they are, how long an event remains significant, what issues will be attached to it? The approach's central proposition is that it is best to look at all of these questions as openly as possible, because doing so will likely result in research outcomes that are surprising and (therefore) insightful.

I have applied this approach, following the direct associations that were made with 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch public spheres during the first 14 years after its occurrence (2001 – 2015). Studying direct associations is an effective way to analyze the meaning-making processes of an event as openly as possible: the event can be whatever an actor – in the case of this study, participants in a public sphere (politicians, journalists, writers) – makes of or relates to it. To be able to both investigate general framing patterns and guarantee depth of inquiry, I chose to examine associations with 9/11 using a mixed methods combination of quantitative and qualitative forms of text analysis (*Cf.* Bergman, 2010; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004): topic modeling, word counting, largescale handmade coding, and precise interpretation of specific citations. I employed these methods to study a wide variety of data sources: national newspapers, legislative speeches, election

manifestos, and policy documents. This has resulted in a range of empirical and theoretical contributions.

7.2 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch Public Spheres

My most concrete, empirical contributions lie in augmenting the body of research regarding recent political developments in the United States, France, and the Netherlands, with a specific focus on the role that those accord to 9/11. We can discuss these contributions by country.

7.2.1 The United States: A Shocking Safety Event

In the United States, 9/11 is usually considered a shocking experience for American citizens and public actors. Scholars characterize it as a watershed moment: there is an America before, and an America after September 11, 2001. They claim that American national interpretative structures – a term I developed in Chapter 4 to encompass meaning-making systems (frames, repertoires, cleavages, discourses, et cetera) – regarding terrorism, national safety, warfare, and Muslim stigmatization have changed substantially in response to 9/11 (see Bakalian and Bezorgmehr 2009; Blalock et al., 2007; Entman, 2003; Ewing, 2008; Garg et al., 2018; Gershkoff and Kushner, 2005; Hoffman, 2002; Jackson, 2005; Peek, 2011; Woods and Arthur, 2014). Thus, continues their reasoning, it has been a pivotal event in launching the war on terror, passing the Patriot Act, initiating the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, and increasing discrimination against Muslims.

My findings to a large extent corroborate these claims. In Chapter 3, we saw that, in the first days after 9/11, many public actors expressed the urge that security inside and outside the United States should be increased drastically. In Chapter 4, I delved deeper into this call for action and discovered the occurrence was a shock event regarding American safety perceptions. This shock was so great that comprehensive policy changes such as introducing the Patriot Act appeared sensible responses to many public actors.

We also saw that 9/11 figured prominently in debates about going to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Chapter 3 showed that American newspapers, election manifestos, and the *9/11 Commission Report* all closely linked the event to these two military campaigns. Chapter 5 then demonstrated that it was important in considerations by American politicians to support or not support each operation. The shock of 9/11's occurrence was a collective focal point in speeches made in

Congress regarding whether or not to go to war, in both cases. Nearly all American politicians – regardless of whether they were proponents or opponents of invasion – interpreted it as an astonishing sign that the United States was not as safe as they had thought. The element of shock is of relevance here. For American public actors, 9/11 has become an event in accordance with Sahlins' (1985) and Sewell's (2005) theories: an occurrence that entails a radical revision of existing interpretative structures and policies.

Such a revision I find to a considerably lesser extent, though, when it concerns public attitudes about American Muslims. Yes, they had to face a backslash in their everyday lives during the direct period after 9/11; for instance, their mosques were damaged more frequently than before the event (Bakalian and Bezorgmehr, 2009; Cainkar, 2009; Ewing, 2008; Peek, 2011). However, such a backlash was hardly explicitly visible in the discourses of American public elites. To the contrary: American politicians, also those belonging to the right, stated that Muslims living in the United States should not be stigmatized because of or blamed for the attacks (*Cf.* Bail, 2014a, p. 135; Ibrahim, 2014, p. 117 – 119; Nacos and Torres-Reyna, 2004). This became apparent in the actions of President Bush during the first weeks after the event (Chapter 4). He visited a mosque in Washington and pronounced there that "Islam is peace." And in his first speech to Congress following the attacks he spoke in sympathizing terms about American Muslims.

This does not mean that this group was not publicly stigmatized in implicit ways. For instance, Byng (2008) argues that public discourses on and policies implemented to improve domestic safety in the aftermath of 9/11 were indeed portrayed as neutral, meant to target potential terrorists from all social groups. Yet, he adds, between the lines it was clear that their central targets were (American) Muslims. Such forms of colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003) may remain unnoticed when using the research methods I have used, which focus on explicit associations between the event and groups/issues. However, the fact that such explicit forms of Muslim stigmatization were nearly absent from the American public sphere directly after 9/11 is interesting in and of itself – and is in sharp contrast with what happened in the Netherlands (see section 7.2.3).

Beyond this, in subsequent years, explicit stigmatizations of American Muslims have not been a dominant element in the overall framing of the event in the United States, notwithstanding the fact that negative discourses about them have become much more mainstream (Bail, 2014a). The point, though, seems to be that

the Twin Tower attacks have, at least up until the end of my research period (2015), not played any important role in these developments. Why not is difficult to pinpoint. As I argued in Chapter 4, it could be that the event in the United States has become "locked in" (Mahoney, 2000) as a safety event. This means that a lot of discursive work would be required to start using it frequently in discussions about other issues. Between 2001 and 2015, the pattern was anyhow that there was little to no link between 9/11 and explicit public stigmatization of American Muslims.

7.2.2 France: A Non-Domestic Event

With regards to 9/11 in France we encounter a very different pattern. In the literature, it is assumed that the event was rather unimportant in the French public sphere, because the country had experienced many incidents of Muslim terrorism before the year 2001 (Bowen, 2009, pp. 442 – 444) and its public actors had already intensively discussed the role of Islam in French society (De Wenden, 2011, p. 90). My findings partly corroborate these views. They indicate that in France 9/11 has indeed not turned into a domestic event. As Chapter 3 showed, the level of event domestication (the degree to which a foreign event is linked to affairs that take place within a country's borders) has been low.

Consequently, it seems implausible that the spectacular 2002 election result of National Front leader Jean Marie Le Pen – he reached the second round in the presidential elections for the first time – was related to the occurrence of 9/11. Berezin (2009, pp. 140 – 141) claims that the event may have helped him electorally because it created a more favorable discursive space for his political visions of safety issues and Islam. Yet, there was hardly any association between the event and any French domestic issue during the year 2001 – 2002. Moreover, in the National Front's 2002 election manifesto, references to the Twin Tower attacks were completely absent.

However, the event has still received a significant amount of French newspaper attention (Chapter 3), and not only in articles that solely covered reactions in the United States or other parts of the world. In Chapter 5, we saw that French politicians have been heavily involved in the international political reaction to 9/11. They expressed concern over what had happened to their ally and supported it in its plans to invade Afghanistan.

Chapter 6 indicated that this pattern is certainly not unique to the case of 9/11. It seems to be part of a more generally applicable cultural repertoire (Lamont,

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1992; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000), which French public actors employ in relation to international events. They are usually not that inclined to connect those to domestic French issues. Yet they actually do include them in discussions of the country's foreign policy agenda. The Southeast Asian Tsunami (2004), the Arab Spring (2011), and the Trump Election (2016) have not only been experienced as distant events, to which France should not relate. French politicians have also expressed a desire to participate internationally as part of their aspiration to perform *French Grandeur* (Gordon, 1993) at the political world stage. For instance, in the first weeks after 9/11 France was actively involved in debates about changes of international terrorism policies. Furthermore, during the Arab Spring President Sarkozy was the main international leader seeking to liberate Libyans from their dictator Gaddafi. These actions were actively supported by French public elites of all political colors.

7.2.3 The Netherlands: A Focusing Islam Event

The Dutch framing of 9/11 has included substantial domestication. Though not as much as in the U.S., over the years the domestication level has been higher than in France. The issue that time and again occurs in these framings of 9/11 as a domestic event is the integration of Dutch Muslims (Chapter 3). Whereas American public actors were careful not to explicitly blame Islamic practices and values for what had happened, Dutch ones on both the left and the right frequently proposed such a frame (*Cf.* Entzinger, 2006; Van der Veer, 2006). A considerable number wanted Dutch Muslims to take a stance against the terrorists so as to indicate that they were not 'part of the problem.'

This pattern continued in subsequent years: 9/11 was often mentioned in connection to a series of Islamically inspired terrorist attacks that occurred in Western Europe during this period (the bombings of the Madrid trains and the London metro, the death of Dutch moviemaker Theo van Gogh, the storming of Charlie Hebdo, and the murders at Bataclan). For a large number of Dutch public actors, this series indicated that the relationship between Islam and the West/the Netherlands was not very easy, if not to say very problematic. It thus became an important discursive element in discourses and policies seeking to legitimize assimilation of Dutch Muslims.

However, while the American framing of 9/11 as a safety event was the result of an experience of shock, the framing of it as an Islamic problem in the

Netherlands was the consequence of a process of confirmation (Chapter 4). Most Dutch public actors appeared to be little surprised that Muslims had committed the attacks. They interpreted 9/11 as a significant confirmation of a negative image of Islam which they had already developed during the 1980s and 1990s. Thus, my analysis supports work by scholars who claim that in the Netherlands the event has been only one of the various important moments in a gradual discursive development towards an increasingly assimilationist view of immigration, specifically with regard to Muslims (van Reekum, 2016; Uitermark, 2012). And it provides nuance to the claim that the attacks have been the major turning point in this process (Buijs, 2009, p. 422; Roggeband and Vliegenthart, 2007, pp. 306 – 315; Tillie, 2008, pp. 19 – 21).

More may be said about the high degree of domestication of 9/11 in the Netherlands. As with the low degree of domestication in France, it seems to be part of a national cultural repertoire which is present in meaning-making processes about a variety of international events. Chapter 6 indicates that after the Tsunami, the Arab Spring, and the Trump Election, the degrees of domestication in articles printed in Dutch newspapers were also higher than in French ones. My interpretation of this difference is twofold. On the one hand, the higher Dutch degrees of domestication are the result of public elites holding a modest view of what the country is able to accomplish in the field of international politics (*Cf.* Hellema, 2009). They already consider it quite something if the Netherlands joins the 'big boys,' such as the United States and France, in foreign affairs meetings. Also, when Dutch politicians try to make a splash on the political world stage, as in the case of military participation in the invasion of Libya, they may be derided by their own intellectuals.

On the other hand, there is also a strong tendency in the Netherlands to 'absorb' international events into the own lifeworld. Chapter 6 shows that every event, wherever in the world it takes place and whatever characteristics it has, for Dutch public actors can become a reason to reflect on the domestic state of affairs. This can be considered an open international attitude, since foreign events are relevant enough for them to play a role in discussions about domestic issues. At the same time, it is a form of nationalism because, even when these actors relate to things that are going on outside the borders of their own nation-state, they prioritize debating Dutch interests. This is why I concluded that both the French and the Dutch repertoires of interpreting international events include nationalism: using them to display *French Grandeur* on the world stage versus employing them to discuss the state of affairs in the Dutch nation-state or lifeworld.

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7.2.4 Overall Framing Patterns: Cross-Nationally Diverse, Substantially Uniform on a National Level

In addition to these cross-national differences, I have also found similarities among the three cases – mainly when it comes to the central international issues associated with 9/11. In all three countries, the event has over the years been used as legitimation to change international terrorism and aircraft policies (*Cf.* Hoffman, 2002; Jackson, 2005). Beyond this, links between the attacks and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars were made in each country. The implications for warfare present in these discussions, however, differed (Chapter 5). In the period prior to the Afghanistan War, the central argument in each of the three national legislative debates was similar: 9/11 was considered a legitimate reason to invade. Yet, during the months before the Iraq War, only in America was the event still used as justification for war. In French and Dutch debates, it played a background role. Other sentiments and arguments were presented as more decisive reasons to support the war or not (for instance, international law and fears of diplomatic repercussions from the United States). Thus, even when the event in all three countries was attached to the same issue, the main arguments to make this link differed significantly.

This brings me to a more general empirical conclusion of this dissertation: although globalization is a social fact, a single global or Western political and media culture surely does not exist yet (*Cf.* Kuipers, 2015). If we consider how a very global event such as 9/11 (Habermas in Borradori, 2003, p. 28) has received substantially differing national colorings, this indicates that variations among nation-states are still important, and therefore worth investigating (Fourcade, 2011; Koopmans et al., 2005; Kriesi et al., 2008; Lamont and Thévenot, 2000). The other events studied in this dissertation – the Madrid train attacks, the Charlie Hebdo assault, the Tsunami, the Arab Spring, and the Trump election – were researched less thoroughly than 9/11. Yet it seems that comparable conclusions may be drawn regarding those cases. See, for instance, the variation in domestication patterns of international events between France and the Netherlands (Chapter 6).

Another general empirical conclusion is that these three public spheres have produced substantial degrees of national uniformity in the framing of 9/11. This uniformity manifests itself with regard to the *time period* for which actors treated 9/11 as an event (longer in the United States than in France and the Netherlands), the *territorial level* at which the main political responses to it occurred (in the United

States mainly nationally, in France almost exclusively internationally, the Netherlands both) and the *central domestic issues* to which 9/11 was linked (safety in the United States, Islam in the Netherlands). The important discussions in each country have concerned *what* the transformations around these central (domestic/foreign) issues should be and how *radically* they should be applied. For example, to what extent should privacy be sacrificed in the name of safety (the United States) and to which degree do native Muslims have to justify themselves for the attacks (the Netherlands)?

Even when Dutch public actors did not want to turn 9/11 into a Muslim issue, which might have been the preference of a considerable proportion of those on the left, they had to relate to the dominant framing in order to participate meaningfully in the larger debate. The excerpt from the Green Party's 2002 election manifesto in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4.1) is an illustrative example. Although the manifesto aims to diminish the conflict between immigrants and the native Dutch population, by linking 9/11 and this conflict, it nevertheless reinforces the framing of the event as an Islam/immigrant integration issue. We could call this phenomenon the effects of *discursive pressures* that accompany participation in national public spheres.

7.3 Three Central Event Lessons

From these concrete, empirical insights, we can move up a level of abstraction, and review what this dissertation adds to sociological knowledge concerning events. These contributions can be summarized as three central event lessons.

7.3.1 Differing National Contexts, Differing Framings

The first lesson is that *the framing of events can differ substantially among national contexts*. This lesson follows logically from the overall empirical conclusion outlined above. As much as 9/11 was a "historic world event" (Habermas in Borradori, 2003, p. 28), experienced intensely in many countries, it has received considerably varying framings in three countries that politically and culturally resemble each other closely. Earlier research on cross-national event framings indicates similar results (Hoffman and Durlak, 2018; Legewie, 2013; Semetko et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2007; De Vreese, 2001), although these studies deal with occurrences that were probably experienced less as global events than 9/11.

Yet, when it comes to varying domestication patterns, this cross-national distinction is – if this is understood as the degrees to which an event is linked to domestic issues, and not as the same event being related to different issues in differing national contexts (Alasuutari et al., 2013; Clausen, 2004; Gurrevitch et al., 1991; Joye, 2015; Lee and Yang, 1996; Olausson, 2014) – to the best of my knowledge a new point in event literature. Other analyses show that the extents to which cultural products find their way in different national contexts can vary significantly (Heilbron, 1999; Janssen et al., 2008; De Swaan, 2001), and this also appears to be true for events. In France and the Netherlands, this difference is not only apparent for 9/11, but also for three other international events, which are considerably distinctive in terms of location and type of occurrence (Chapter 6). This indicates that such characteristics have little effect on processes of event domestication, but that mainly national interpretative structures are important. Public actors in differing country contexts live with varying cultural repertoires, which guide them in responding to international events in the context of either foreign or of domestic affairs. That, in turn, produces rather consistent national degrees of event domestication.

7.3.2 Long, Structured Lives

The second central event lesson this dissertation offers is that *events can have long, structured lives*. Not only in the first weeks and months following September 11, 2001 the Twin Tower attacks were considered an important event. Many years after its occurrence, politicians and writers continued to mention it as a legitimate reason to initiate transformations. This happened most often in the United States. However, in France and the Netherlands, 9/11 was also from time to time an important point of reference. The Dutch Freedom Party (PVV), for instance, mentioned the event in its 2010 election manifesto to claim that Islam is threatening to the Netherlands and/or the West.

My findings add nuance to existing event concepts, such as those that describe them as "breaks with normal life" (Sewell, 2005), "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1986), and "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972). These concepts depict events as occurrences that are only considered a cause for transformation for a short time period, just after they have taken place. My analysis indicates that even though the biggest ruptures occurred in all three countries during the first month after 9/11,

it continued to have salience as an event long afterwards. Thus, these scholars have formulated an idea regarding the working of events which it too static.

Wagner-Pacifici (2010, 2017) did already propose that events can have long lives. She typifies them as "restless," and argues that their significance and the issues connected to them can shift over time. My findings, however, indicate that the long-term meaning-making processes related to 9/11 have been rather structured. In the period 2001 – 2015, in each country a set of prominent issues was consistently associated with 9/11. Furthermore, the number of implications that were inferred from the event decreased gradually each year in all three cases. Only after the occurrence of new events to which the Twin Tower attacks could be easily discursively connected (the Islamist Madrid and Charlie Hebdo attacks), did big calls for change recur in each country. The old event, 9/11, and the new event were then jointly used in pleas for transformation. These patterns paint a picture of the evolution of event framing which is less fluid than the term 'restless' implies.

7.3.3 Two Paths of Transformation: Shock and Focus

To further explore the relationship between events and interpretative structures, I developed a typology (Chapter 4) that offers the third central lesson regarding events in this dissertation: *changes in response to events take place either through shock or confirmation.* Theoretical approaches to explaining political and cultural differences and similarities between national contexts – "cultural repertoires" (Lamont, 1992; Lamont et al., 2016), "cleavage structures" (Kriesi et al., 1995; Kriesi et al., 2008) and "discursive opportunities" (Koopmans and Olzak 2004; Koopmans et al., 2005) – do not offer a satisfactory answer to the question of when happenings are the catalyst for transforming interpretative structures, and thus become events, and when they take on the color of those structures, and remain 'ordinary happenings.'

On the basis of event literature, I offered an answer to this puzzle. Happenings become 'shock events' (Sahlins, 1986; Sewell 2005) if they indicate a radical refutation of dominant interpretative structures. As I described in the last section, this turned out to be the case for the American experience of 9/11 as a safety event: it broke with the existing belief that the country was a secure, military impregnable territory. Happenings turn into 'focus events' (Kingdon, 2011 [1984]) if they constitute significant confirmation of existing interpretative structures. As mentioned, 9/11 became such an event in the Netherlands, since many public actors

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saw it as further proof of their opinions about Islam, opinions they had already been developing for several decades.

With the introduction of this typology, a bridge is also created between the notions which depict events as *self-evident turning points* and *corollaries of structures*. In Chapter 2, I explained that both notions fall short of being sociological theorizations of events in their entirety because they lack important elements regarding their constitution (either their origins and consequences or their surprise effects). The typology combines both elements. It assumes that events do not have an automatic, natural impact, but that this is mediated by the relationship of the event to a specific interpretative structure. Yet, it also indicates the specific conditions under which a change in that structure can occur as the result of an event, namely when it is a significant refutation or confirmation of dominant convictions.

7.4 Sociological Theory and Social Change

We can still go up a level of abstraction, by considering how this research contributes to sociological theory in general, more precisely, to theories of social change. In Chapter 2, I formulated an *inductive approach to researching events*, which does not make *a priori* empirical claims about the working of events, but rather leaves their meanings open.

7.4.1 Open Meanings in Theory, Structured Ones in Practice

An important contribution of this dissertation is that the meanings of events are indeed open *in theory*, in the sense that they are not naturally associated with certain issues or implications. Actors can always apply a wide range of frames to them. Yet, *in practice* I find – as outlined in the last section – rather structured meaning-making patterns for the case of 9/11.

Perhaps this is a more common pattern in social life: although in principle nothing is natural for people and they are constantly constructing things socially, these constructions often *appear* to them as self-evident, which in turn results in considerably fixed meaning-making processes. Indeed, Berger and Luckman (1966) conclude in their classic book that reality is socially constructed. However, they also add that constructions can become so heavily institutionalized that people consider them normal, logical, and/or objective. Bourdieu develops the concept of "habitus" to explain this phenomenon: "through habitus, we have a world of common sense, a world that seems self-evident" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 19).

The story, though, is somewhat more complicated. For while actors immediately after an event occurs state that it is natural it should have a certain impact – see the quote from Bush, who on September 12 already knew he was going to start a war in response (*Cf.* Entman, 2003; Kellner, 2007) – they also believe that 'everything' is possible. That a period of open debate will arise, in which a whole horizon of new options will reveal itself. However, in practice, this horizon appears to be limited. In my research, most national public actors from day one after 9/11 are very much in agreement about what the event 'stands for' in their country context. The respective interpretative structures in each of the three public spheres were already so compelling that if, for instance, in October 2001 French public actors had aspired to turn 9/11 into a topic of domestic importance, they would have had a hard time accomplishing this. They probably would have marginalized themselves – in section 7.2.4 I already referred to this phenomenon as *discursive pressure*.[17]

Thus, we might conclude that the ideas of "breaks with normal life" (Sewell, 2005) or "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972) do not only need nuance because they imply that events can only be considered reasons for transformation during a short period of time. They also overestimate how open the situation is in that initial post-event period. After 9/11, in each of the three countries, there were only a few discursive paths that could have been taken. There was a rupture, but this was already strongly directed toward a certain path, and it would probably have been very difficult to change it. See gain the excerpt from Bush's memoir: he describes a situation of chaos, in which the event's core implication was crystal clear (starting a war with terrorists).

This dissertation thus confirms Durkheim's theory of events as moments of "collective effervescence" (Durkheim, 2001[1912]), during which people merge in ritual, and almost automatically, instructed by dominant national interpretative

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[17] An interesting concrete example of this kind of marginalization happened to Dutch public historian and Americanist Maarten van Rossem shortly after 9/11. In the years prior to event, he was a frequently invited guest by Dutch media. However, when in the first days following the attacks he claimed on public television that the rupture was a strong overreaction (basically implying that 9/11 was not that big an event), he was heavily criticized. As a result, he was banned from public television (for a while) and lost his weekly column in *De Volkskrant* (see Derksen (2004) for a short summary of this controversy). A micro-sociological study of such cases of public ostracism in the aftermath of events could potentially expose interesting insights regarding the compelling forces of interpretative structures.

structures, introduce new political ideas or radicalize their existing ones. This is in contrast with the idea that in reaction to an event people are going to reflect comprehensively on their existing interpretative schemes, which they then, after a few weeks or months, when the "break with normal life" (Sewell, 2005) or the "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972) come(s) to an end and all viewpoints have been exchanged, are going to adjust.

7.4.2 Originating from Compelling Structures, Major Consequences as a Result

But if these meaning-making processes have been so strongly structured, why is it then that there was such a great rupture in response to 9/11? Do structured framing processes and controversy not conflict with each other? My conclusion is that happenings become events precisely because they touch strongly upon the most fundamental aspects of existing structures. In the U.S., 9/11 turned into a safety event since: 1) Americans believed that they were living in a military impenetrable country; 2) they inferred from the event that this idea was not as true as they had believed. The attacks became an Islam event in the Netherlands as a result of the fact that: 1) the Dutch attached great importance to progressive, 'Western' values such as individual freedom and tolerance towards a diversity of attitudes and lifestyles; 2) 9/11 confirmed for them the idea that Islam poses a potential threat to these values.

Thus, it is exactly because the interpretative structures are so compelling that happenings can turn into events. Deep societal convictions are significantly disproved or confirmed by them. These compelling structures mediate to a large extent the consequences that are going to follow from the event. If 9/11 invalidates the deep conviction of the United States as a safety utopia, then the direct implication is that the American government must come up with a powerful solution to this tragic conclusion. This solution had to specifically concern the issue of safety, and not another issue that theoretically could have been linked to the event, such as the (in)compatibility of Islamic and Western values or the dominant position of the United States in world politics. If a happening does not touch upon a deep societal conviction, a fundamental aspect of existing interpretative structures, it will rarely turn into an event.

Does this mean that this dissertation wipes the image of events as possible reasons for major changes from the map? And is it therefore a confirmation of the structuralist event notion that I outlined in Chapter 2? No is the answer to both

these questions. My analyses show that 9/11's occurrence has been a key element, and perhaps even the decisive one, in starting the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, the introduction of the Patriot Act in the United States, and the reinforcement of anti-Muslim sentiments (and the rise of right-wing populist parties) in the Netherlands. Indeed, another event might have taken place that could have had equally major consequences. Thus, 9/11 was not the *only* possible way through which these transformations could have happened. But there was *an* event needed that touched upon these specific deep societal convictions, in order to initiate similar rapid changes. If not, then each country's national interpretative structures would have evolved slowly, and perhaps even in a different direction.

The consequences of an event can therefore be great, while their main discursive directions are more or less fixed from the first moment after its occurrence. Thus, it is also, to a certain extent, possible to predict the changes that will follow from it. This can be done by taking the typology from Chapter 4 in hand: indicate the dominant national interpretative structures around the time of the event's occurrence – which issues are salient and what self-images or discursive norms are compelling – and observe the extent to which it is a significant refutation or confirmation of them. If it is a refutation, then it may turn into a shock event (Sahlins, 1985; Sewell, 2005), resulting in radical transformations of the existing structures. If the happening is a remarkable confirmation – an occurrence that fits existing expectations, but is an extreme case of them – it can become a focusing event (Kingdon, 2011 [1984]), with reinforcement of already existing political and cultural trends as an outcome.

7.5 Ideas for Future Research
7.5.1 Other Methods, Different Data
This dissertation paves the way for a range of future event analyses. New research could, first of all, make use of other methods and data. In a review essay, I reflect on the pros and cons of employing ethnographic methods to research events (van Dooremalen, 2017). My conclusion is, in short, that ethnography is an excellent method for investigating the ruptures which are part of events. Being present at their locus can bring the researcher close to the emotions of the moment, which are much harder to grasp by (just) examining public data sources. At the same time, it is difficult to conduct ethnography of one event at different locations over a long

period of time. For instance, to investigate the effects of 9/11 in three countries over 14 years ethnographically would require a great deal of research time and money.

Another interesting data source for event analyses are the opinions of ordinary citizens. One reason not to use these data for this study was related to reliability problems (see footnote 16, in this chapter): how do we know that citizens can many years later still give an adequate picture of what they were thinking about 9/11 in 2001 or 2003? In the years following the attacks, however, the attendance of the internet as a dominant form of communication has ensured that people's opinions have become increasingly accessible and can be preserved for long periods of time. The existence of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram means that today, not only are the opinions of the elite public, but also those of ordinary citizens (*Cf.* Bail, 2014b; Boy and Uitermark, 2016). The inductive approach to researching events that I developed can also be used to study these types of data sources. What do ordinary citizens, for example, say on social media about the Arab Spring or the election of Trump, over a period of several years, in different national contexts?

7.5.2 The Historic and Institutional Construction of Eventfulness
It would also be illuminating to do more with the aspect of time. The notion of the event itself could be *historicized*. Events are socially constructed, so this also holds true for societal modes of thinking (cultural repertoires) about the boundaries of what is a happening and what an event. Therefore, depending on dominant societal modes of thinking, the number of events that occur can differ substantially across social contexts and time periods. If people are socialized with the idea that history can be divided into periods that are ushered in and out by events (the turnings points-notion), this might imply that they experience more events than when they grow up with a more gradual notion of historical development (the corollaries of structures-notion).

Following such a constructionist reasoning, we can also wonder whether there is an institutional aspect to the origin of events. Most media are nowadays actively involved in the creation of events. Alexander (2009, pp. 83 – 86) calls this the transition from *old to new media reflexivity*: instead of describing political developments as natural processes, media have started to raise awareness about the fact that those include streams of spinning and framing. Consequently, they have adopted a more performative function in the political field. For example, during

election time they search for 'game changers,' the electoral equivalent of events, which could suddenly shift popularity from one politician or party to another. Elchardus (2002) coined the term "drama democracy" (*drama democratie*) to point to a similar phenomenon: the contemporary urge of media to view political affairs from a compelling perspective, full of spectacle.

The consequences of this trend present an interesting topic for event research: does the media's increased appetite for events actually cause more events, and do social changes therefore occur more often, happen more quickly, and have more radical outcomes?

7.5.3 *Future Framings of 9/11*

Seen from the perspective of world history, 9/11 has only taken place recently. The famous 1972 statement of the Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai about the French Revolution – "it is yet too recent to oversee its impact" – is a reminder for modesty concerning the empirical robustness of my conclusions. Perhaps the 'real' implications of 9/11 will only become visible many decades later, when the event has merged into a more general political judgment about the beginning of the 21st century. At the same time, a central point in my dissertation is that the framing of events by definition has an open character, so basically there is never a right moment to make up the final balance (*Cf.* Wagner-Pacifici, 2010, 2017).

The bandwidth of the possible future framings of 9/11 is therefore broad. What we can say on the basis of my research is that it all depends on how the dominant interpretative structures develop. Their substance is, however, by definition open too. We cannot make any sensible predictions about their evolution that extend beyond one or two decade(s). Therefore, a few hundred years from now, 9/11 might still count as an important event in many locations across the globe, which, like the French Revolution today, keeps on serving as a source of inspiration for all sorts of political discussions and policy choices. Yet, it is equally plausible that it will be regarded as an occurrence that should be seen in the context of its time: big and significant at the beginning of the 21st century, but in the year 2301 or 2701 not really something to take into account when considering one's worldview.

7.6 Sociologists and Events: Three Concluding Thoughts

This dissertation started out with the formulation of a paradox: events are often present in sociology, but they are not often seriously sociologically analyzed, they frequently remain a black box. Although it was not the central objective of this PhD Thesis, it is, after making all the empirical analyses, still interesting to reflect briefly on this issue. Why have events regularly been a sociological black box?

I formulate three concluding thoughts here – more precise elaborations of them will have to take place elsewhere. First: it is possible that sociologists usually consider their ideas about the workings of events so obvious that they simply do not regard the topic interesting enough to research in detail. If they are already reasonably certain that 9/11 is an important event that has triggered all kinds of changes (as assumed by those scholars who depict events as self-evident turning points), why should they still research it? And, if they think that events are not that significant because they are only the conduits for long-term transformations (as proposed by scholars who consider events corollaries of structures), what then is the point of proving this once again?

This dissertation, though, indicates that detailed event analyses are necessary to make because their meanings and (lack of) impacts can never be taken for granted. We need inquiries into the structural situation in which events occur to understand why certain happenings become turning points while others do not. For scholars advocating structuralist notions of social life, it is also important to pay serious attention to events, as this can enrich their viewpoints concerning the dynamics of social change.

The thought that sociologists are too certain of their event notions to conduct research on them, however, perhaps positions them too much as un-reflexive believers in their own ideas, who would never be open to falsification or new perspectives. A second concluding thought is then that sociologists often tend not to analyze events because they might experience them as a threat. On the one hand, events can be seen as ultimate moments of sociological sensation. Swift changes could come about; people's attitudes and behaviors are put to the test. Are "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1986) or "moments of madness" (Zolberg, 1972) not the most intriguing periods to investigate sociologically?

Yet, precisely because events may be the beginning of a major transformation, they are also threatening to sociologists – especially to those with a structuralist, continuous notion of social life. Their analyses, which often take years

to develop, can suddenly turn out to be not so adequate anymore. For example, does Trump's electoral victory not indicate that many political and cultural sociologists have been unaware of the extents to which feelings of political resentment were present among the American population (*Cf.* Hochschild, 2016; Wagner-Pacifici and Tavory, 2017)? What does such a conclusion imply regarding the robustness of their theories of American society?

Because researching events could pose a threat to their analyses, it might be safer for sociologists to stay away from them or to relate to them without fully questioning their own theoretical principles. Bensa and Fassin (2002) propose a similar idea in their introduction to a special issue on social scientific approaches of events:

> The more media want to know about events, the more the social sciences tend to ignore them. Our disciplines will most often prefer to show that an event is actually not an event: the novelty is not so new, its emergence is part of a historical perspective, a cultural tradition, a social logic. We will try to reduce the surprise of the event: what happens already happened in the past, in an immediate or distant way – everything had already played out. A posteriori, we could have foreseen the event… (Bensa and Fassin, 2002, p. 5)

British Prime Minister Macmillan famously answered a journalist's question concerning what he feared most as a politician, "Events, my dear boy, events." This could also be a bit true for sociologists. Taking events more seriously might indeed be a threatening exercise, as it means that theories and analyses should potentially be adjusted any time people respond with shock or controversy to an occurrence. However, a constant search for falsification is something that is often considered one of the characteristics of good science.

The relationship towards the media, which Bensa and Fassin mention, brings me to my third and final thought. The fact that events are such unsettled, mad moments, full of rupture, make them in a way the perfect occasions for sociologists to acquire societal recognition. After their occurrence, the media and the public at large are often hungry for analyses, to make sense of the new situation. Sociologists, with their knowledge of social processes, seem to be well-suited to give such enlightening event interpretations.

7

Bourdieu (1988), though, explains in *Homo Academicus* how sociologists are often excluded from public debates, especially around the occurrence of events:

> The researcher can only arrive after the show, when the lamps are doused and the trestles stacked away, with a performance that has lost all the charms of an improvisation. The scientific report, constructed in counterpoint to the questions arising from the immediacy of the event, which are riddles rather than problems, and call integral and definitive action rather than necessarily partial and arguable analyses, lacks the advantage of the fine clarity of the discourse of good sense, which has no difficulty in being simple, since its premise is to simplify (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 160).

Such an exclusion, just at the moment when their insights might be most needed, could stimulate sociologists not to focus their research on events, or even to develop a disdain for them (that is at least how I read this Bourdieu quote). They may find it more exciting to make analyses of structural, long-term social phenomena, such as inequality, identity formation, globalization, et cetera. Public debates on these topics are not limited to the hectic aftermaths of events, and therefore often provide a better discursive space for the deliverance of complex sociological reflections.

The aim of this dissertation has been to develop methodological and theoretical tools to give events a more central place in sociological research. This also means that these tools could be used for responses to future events. For instance, the predictions I formulated in section 7.4.2 may assist sociologists in making tentative judgements about an event's possible transformative workings just after it has taken place, rather than claiming that it is not an event or postponing their interpretations until they have conducted actual research. As such, further pursuing the exploration of events not only serves the discipline of sociology in itself. It can also help sociologists to be better informants of the public at large – "public sociologists" (Burawoy, 2005) – during key historical moments.

Appendices

Appendix A:
Four Topics and their Respective Codes (Chapters 3 and 6)

Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3		Topic 4	
American	American	French		Dutch	
Year 2008/2009	Year 2010/2011	Year 2003/2004		Year 2002/2003	
[1] Obama	[1] Bin	[1] Attacks	(Attentats)	[1] Islam	(Islam)
[2] McCain	[2] Laden	[2] Madrid	(Madrid)	[2] Muslims	(Moslims)
[3] New	[3] Al-Qaeda	[3] March	(Mars)	[3] Dutch	(Nederlands)
[4] Campaign	[4] States	[4] Police	(Police)	[4] Moroccan	(Marrokaans)
[5] Palin	[5] Attacks	[5] Al-Qaeda	(Al-Qaida)	[5] Youngsters	(Jongeren)
[6] First	[6] United	[6] Terrorism	(Terrorisme)	[6] Islamic	(Islamitisch)
[7] President	[7] Saudi	[7] Against	(Contre)	[7] Own	(Eigen)
[8] Time	[8] Al	[8] Terrorist	(Terroriste)	[8] Society	(Samenleving)
[9] John	[9] Qaeda	[9] Terrorist	(Terroristes)	[9] Jahjah	(Jahjah)
[10] Republican	[10] New	[10] According to	(Selon)	[10] Want	(Willen)
[11] Way	[11] American	[11] Spain	(Espagne)	[11] State	(Staat)
[12] Day	[12] Officials	[12] Services	(Services)	[12] Amsterdam	(Amsterdam)
[13] Obama's	[13] Terrorist	[13] Al-Qaeda	(Al-Qaida)	[13] Good	(Goed)
[14] Race	[14] Intelligence	[14] Judge	(Juge)	[14] Say	(Zeggen)
[15] Barack	[15] Laden's	[15] Security	(Sécurité)	[15] Ali	(Ali)
Specific topic:	Specific topic:	Specific topic:		Specific topic:	
American national elections 2008	*Finding Bin Laden*	*Madrid train attacks*		*Integration of Dutch Muslim immigrants*	
Aggregated topic:	Aggregated topic:	Aggregated topic:		Aggregated topic:	
National politics	*Terrorism*	*Terrorism*		*Islam*	
Foreign/Domestic:	Foreign/Domestic:	Foreign/Domestic:		Foreign/Domestic:	
Domestic	*Foreign*	*Foreign*		*Domest*	

Appendix B:
Turning Specific Topics into Aggregated Topics (Chapter 3)

Aggregated topic	Specific topics
Memories	Occurrences of the day September 11, 2001, Memorial meetings, Rebuilding Ground Zero, Memories about 9/11
Islam	Clash of civilizations, Islamic fundamentalism, Integration of Muslims, Discrimination of Muslims
Afghanistan War	Invasion of Afghanistan, Position of Taliban in Afghanistan, Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan
Iraq War	Invasion of Iraq, Weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, Finding Saddam Hussein
Safety	National security policies, European security policies, Border control, Safety at sports/music events
Terrorism	Other terrorist attacks, Finding Bin Laden, War on Terror, Guantanamo Bay
Economy	Domestic economic policies, Economic effects 9/11, Euro-crisis
Arts/media	Media dealing with 9/11, 9/11 in books/films/paintings
International relations	Israel-Palestine conflict, Iran as nuclear threat, American-European relations
National politics	National elections, National political debates
Air traffic	Air traffic after 9/11, Air companies after 9/11
American politics/society	American political elections, American public debates, American public events

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English Summary

The Framing of 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch Public Spheres (2001 – 2015). A Contribution to the Sociology of Events

A Sociological Black Box Opened Inductively

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the sociology of events, by analyzing the framing of 9/11 in the American, French, and Dutch public spheres, during the period of 2001–2015. Events are happenings that people experience as so shocking, remarkable, and/or significant that they adjust their ways of thinking, feeling, and doing in response to them.

After introducing the topic in Chapter 1, I show in Chapter 2 that there exist two dominant notions of events in sociology. The first takes them as self-evident turning points. It supposes that there is a world before and a world after the event's occurrence, and the two are truly different. The second notion entails a diametrically opposed perspective and posits that the transformative power of events is rather limited. In this view, events are only significant illustrations of existing societal phenomena or 'conduits' for long-term processes in a society's economy, culture, or technology, which would have created social changes sooner or later in any case.

The starting point of my research was the observation that because sociologists tend to regard events through these two lenses, the phenomenon frequently remains a black box in their research, thus leaving intriguing research questions unexplored. The first notion lacks an answer to the issues of why happenings turn into events and what is the source of their transformative effects. The second notion meanwhile does not account for the potentially creative power of eventful ruptures.

One of this dissertation's central contributions is the introduction of a methodology that makes it possible to open this black box: an inductive approach to researching events. The idea behind this methodology is that events do not have natural or automatic impacts, framings, or life spans, and therefore it is most

productive to study the meanings that actors relate to them in differing social contexts and time periods as openly as possible.

Uniform Framings in Foreign Affairs, Diversity in Domestic Ones

The actors in this research study are participants in the American, French, and Dutch public spheres (journalists, politicians, policy makers). I follow the meanings they attached to 9/11 during the period 2001—2015 in national newspapers, legislative documents, party manifestos, and policy documents, by applying mixed methods research tools: automated content analysis (topic modeling), word counting, largescale handmade coding, and precise interpretation of specific citations.

In Chapter 3, I present the dissertation's first empirical analysis. It follows, to start with, the framings that have been attached to 9/11 in national newspapers articles. It turns out these framings have been uniform and stable over time in all three countries when it concerns foreign affairs and that they have been different and stable regarding domestic ones. Through the years, in all three countries, the event has been connected to the same foreign issues: terrorism, the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, and air traffic policies. In terms of domestic affairs, the United States and the Netherlands each have one dominant issue which has been discussed prominently in relation to 9/11: safety and the position of Islam in society, respectively. In French newspapers, the Twin Tower attacks have been hardly attached to domestic affairs. They have therefore become a *non-domestic event* in France. These results also hold true for the other types of documents I examined – party manifestos and policy documents – and thus appear to be generally valid in each of the three national public spheres.

The Differing National Meanings and Long Lives of Events

Apart from empirical contributions, these analyses also offer two sociological event lessons. The first lesson is that the meanings of events can differ considerably between national contexts, both in terms of the dominant issues that are associated with them, as well as – probably more surprisingly – the extent to which they are assumed to be relevant to domestic political debates. The case of 9/11 in France shows that even a happening which many people consider one of the most significant global events to ever occur has not had domestic consequences in every country.

The second lesson is that events can have long lives. Years after September 11, 2001, 9/11 in each of the three countries remained a happening that was invoked

to make pleas for political or societal change. This was especially the case in the periods following the terrorist attacks at the train station in Madrid (2004) and in the editorial offices of Charlie Hebdo (2015). In particular after such new events the old event can regain transformative power, as memories about it are reactivated.

9/11 as a Safety Event in the American Public Sphere and an Islamic One in the Dutch Public Sphere

The analysis in Chapter 3 not only offers event lessons, it also produces several research puzzles regarding events. I attempt to solve these in the subsequent three chapters. Chapter 4 addresses the puzzle: how can it be that the same event has been attached to such different domestic issues in the American and Dutch public spheres? To answer this question, I integrate the notion of the event within three prominent sociological and political scientific perspectives, which have been developed to explain cultural and political differences and similarities among countries, and which all posit that dominant 'interpretative structures' play a central role in the construction of debates in national public spheres. I propose as this dissertation's third sociological lesson that events can be related to these structures in two ways. The first is if they radically deviate from them. In that case, they become 'shock events' which enable a revolutionary change in existing attitudes and policies. The second relationship is to confirm existing prominent ideas. Cultural or political tendencies that were already present are then intensified or radicalized as a response. Such happenings are 'focus events.'

On the basis of an interpretative analysis of national newspapers and legislative documents, I show that 9/11 has become a shock event in the United States with regard to the issue of domestic safety, because it has been perceived as a radical refutation of the idea that the country is a safe, militarily impregnable haven. It has not developed into an event concerning the issue of Islam, since, at the time, it was considered immoral and 'un-American' to criticize a religion in public. This does not mean that American Muslims have not experienced stigmatization in their everyday lives as a response to 9/11. Nor does it mean that multiple policy measures which were implemented in the event's aftermath, such as the Patriot Act, have not generated new forms of discrimination against this group. Yet, it does mean that around September 11, 2001, explicit stigmatization of American Muslims hardly existed.

This situation stands in sharp contrast to that in the Netherlands, where in response to the Twin Tower attacks, the position of Muslims in society was widely discussed. This was not, however, which is frequently assumed in Dutch public debates as well as in Academia, a consequence of the fact that 9/11 revealed something new about Islam to Dutch public actors and thus constituted the radical turning point in discussions concerning the integration of immigrants. Most Dutch public actors appeared hardly surprised to learn that Muslim extremists were responsible for the attacks. This was what they had expected, indicated by the critical things they had said about Islam in debates in the years prior to the event; they often referred to these debates in their responses. The attacks on 9/11 is thus a focusing event in the discussion about the position of Islam in the Netherlands. They did not develop into an event about domestic safety because Dutch public actors considered their country too small to manage a problem such as terrorism on its own and were less in favor of giving up privacy in the name of safety than American public actors were.

The Role of 9/11 in Legislative Debates About the Invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq

Chapter 5 addresses the puzzle: why has the framing of 9/11 in the three countries been so uniform with regard to foreign affairs, whereas national political stances have not always been identical (consider, for instance, the Iraq War)? To delve into this issue, I analyzed legislative speeches about the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, with a specific focus on the role of 9/11 accorded in them. One conclusion of this analysis is that, in the American political context, 9/11 was a happening taken into consideration during political decision-making for a longer period than it was in the French and Dutch ones. During the decision-making processes concerning whether to go to war in Afghanistan, the same central implication was attributed to 9/11 in all three countries: the event endowed the United States with the legitimacy to strike back. Yet, when the Iraq War became an issue of debate, about a year and a half after September 11, 2001, only politicians in the US still considered the event a legitimate reason to invade another country. Another important conclusion of the research in this chapter is confirmation of the two event lessons from Chapter 3: the extent to which 9/11 was experienced as a global or national event differed considerably among the three countries. In American and French debates, it was mostly seen as an attack on the United States, whereas in the Netherlands, the event

was also very much experienced as an assault on the West (and therefore also on Dutch, domestic affairs).

The 'Domestication' of Four Foreign Events in French and Dutch Newspapers

The implications of this are further explored in Chapter 6, in which I address the puzzle of why 9/11 in France and the Netherlands has been 'domesticated' (related to domestic affairs) to different extents. This inference gives rise to the question: does this pattern also apply to other foreign events? Therefore, I repeated the analysis I conducted of 9/11 for newspaper articles about three other recent events that attracted considerable attention in both countries: the tsunami in Southeast Asia (2004), the Arab Spring (2011) and the political rise of Donald Trump (2016). This analysis reveals that the pattern is indeed widespread. With regard to every event, the domestication level in the Netherlands turned out be higher than it was in France. After examining these patterns, I conclude that the differences are related to variations in the 'cultural repertoires' that French and Dutch public actors employ to interpret foreign events. The French repertoire foregrounds *French Grandeur*, the idea that France is a unique and important nation-state. As a consequence, French politicians aim to make themselves heard on the international political stage in the aftermaths of events (consider, for instance, the prominent role which Sarkozy played in the deposition of Gaddafi).

The Dutch repertoire is one of modesty. Dutch politicians believe that their country, as a small nation, must not possess ambitions to intervene during the aftermaths of events in other countries. Something however very much present in the Netherlands is a tendency to relate foreign events to domestic debates or individual psychological well-being. For instance, at the end of 2016, several Dutch celebrities referred to the Trump election as one of the year's most radical, stressful moments in their own lives. I rarely came across such statements by French celebrities. Thus, it appears that Dutch public actors are more likely than French ones to use any event, wherever in the world it takes place, as a reason to reflect on their own society or lives.

No Single Global Media Culture, National 'Discursive Pressure' and the Role of the Sociologist in the Aftermaths of Future Events

In the concluding Chapter 7, I present some overall reflections. First, I propose that it is too early to speak of the existence of a single global media culture, in which public debates from different countries are merging towards being identical: even a very global event such as 9/11 has received rather different interpretations in three national public spheres that are relatively similar. At the same time, interpretations of the event *within* country contexts are fairly uniform. There seems to be little room for deviation from the consensus, the 'discursive pressure' to adhere to the national pattern is significant.

The existence of this pressure also reveals that, even though the framing of events is in principle very much open – a primary reason for studying them inductively – in practice they are structured in rather compelling ways. From the very first days after the attacks, the central meanings of 9/11 in each of three national contexts were relatively fixed. The ways in which national interpretative structures compel certain reactions offers insights into the question of how events can occur: when happenings resonate, as confirmations or refutations, with viewpoints that are dominant in public spheres, they can turn into events. This was, for instance, the case with regard to America's safety utopia, which was brutally disturbed by 9/11.

At the end of Chapter 7, I reflect on the role of sociologists during the aftermaths of future events. Events are often a black box for sociologists. Therefore, they usually have little to say about them to the general public. I find this unfortunate. Sociologists could actually play an important role during the aftermaths of events, when the media are hungry for interpretations of ongoing situations. Therefore, further pursuing the study of events can yield sociologists more than only making academic progress.

Samenvatting (Dutch Summary)

De framing van 9/11 in de Amerikaanse, Franse en Nederlandse publieke sferen (2001 – 2015). Een bijdrage aan de sociologie van *events*

Een sociologische *black box* inductief geopend

Het doel van deze dissertatie is het leveren van een bijdrage aan de sociologie van *events*, door middel van een analyse van de framing van 9/11 in de Amerikaanse, Franse en Nederlandse publieke sferen, in de periode 2001 – 2015. *Events* zijn gebeurtenissen die door mensen als zo groot, schokkend en/of significant worden ervaren, dat ze als reactie hun manieren van denken, voelen en handelen herzien.

Na het inleidende Hoofdstuk 1, laat ik in Hoofdstuk 2 zien dat er in de sociologie twee dominante opvattingen over *events* bestaan. De eerste opvatting beschouwt ze als vanzelfsprekende keerpunten. De tweede opvatting heeft een diametraal tegenovergestelde positie, deze gaat er vanuit dat *events* juist een heel beperkte transformerende kracht hebben. Het zijn slechts significante illustraties van bestaande maatschappelijke fenomenen of 'doorgeefluiken' voor langetermijnprocessen in de economie, cultuur of technologie, die vroeg of laat altijd wel tot verandering zouden hebben geleid.

Het startpunt van mijn onderzoek was de constatering dat in beide dominante opvattingen *events* een *black box* blijven, waardoor intrigerende sociologische vragen onbeantwoord worden gelaten. In de eerste opvatting is het onduidelijk waarom gebeurtenissen al dan niet *events* worden en waar hun effecten vandaan komen. De tweede opvatting gaat voorbij aan de creatieve, transformerende kracht die kan ontstaan door de opschudding die *events* teweegbrengen.

Eén van de centrale bijdragen van deze dissertatie is de introductie van een methodologie die het mogelijk maakt om deze *black box* te openen: een inductieve benadering van *events*. Het idee achter deze methodologie is dat *events* geen natuurlijke of automatische impact, framing en levensduur hebben, en dat het daarom het meest productief is om zo open mogelijk, inductief te analyseren welke betekenissen actoren in verschillende sociale contexten en tijdsperioden aan ze geven.

Uniforme framing rond buitenlandse onderwerpen, diversiteit rond binnenlandse

In dit onderzoek zijn die actoren participanten in de Amerikaanse, Franse en Nederlandse publieke sferen (journalisten, politici, beleidsmakers). Ik volg de betekenissen die zij in de periode 2001 – 2015 hebben toegekend aan 9/11 in nationale kranten, parlementaire documenten, verkiezingsprogramma's en beleidsnota's, waarbij ik gebruik maak van een *mixed methods* combinatie van onderzoeksmethoden: automatische tekstanalyse (*topic modeling*), grootschalige handmatige inhoudsanalyse, het tellen van significante woorden, en interpretatieve analyse.

Hoofdstuk 3 bevat de eerste empirische analyse van de dissertatie. Hierin volg ik allereerst hoe er in nationale kranten over 9/11 is geschreven. Ik vind dat er sprake is van stabiliteit en uniformiteit tussen de landen als het om buitenlandse zaken gaat, en stabiliteit en diversiteit wat betreft binnenlandse zaken. In alle drie de nationale contexten is het *event* door de jaren verbonden geraakt met dezelfde buitenlandse onderwerpen: terrorisme, de oorlogen in Afghanistan en Irak, en luchtvaartbeleid. Bij de binnenlandse onderwerpen hebben de Verenigde Staten en Nederland elk hun eigen dominante kwestie waarover in relatie tot 9/11 vaak is gesproken: veiligheid versus de positie van de Islam. In Franse kranten worden de Twin Tower aanslagen nauwelijks aan binnenlandse kwesties verbonden, ze zijn daar een zogezegd *niet-binnenlands event* geworden. Deze resultaten gaan ook op voor andere typen bronnen die ik in Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoek – verkiezingsprogramma's en belangrijke beleidsnota's – en lijken dus algemeen geldig te zijn voor de drie nationale publieke sferen.

De diverse nationale betekenissen en lange levens van *events*

Behalve empirische bijdragen bieden deze analyses ook twee sociologische *event* lessen. De eerste is dat de betekenissen van *events* sterk kunnen verschillen tussen nationale contexten, zowel wat betreft de dominante onderwerpen waarmee ze worden geassocieerd als – waarschijnlijk verrassender – de mate waarin ze van belang worden geacht voor binnenlandse politieke debatten. De casus van 9/11 in Frankrijk toont dat zelfs een gebeurtenis die door veel mensen als één van de meest mondiale *events* ooit wordt beschouwd, niet in elk land binnenlandse gevolgen hoeft te krijgen.

De tweede les is dat *events* lange levens kunnen hebben. Jaren na 11 september 2001 bleef 9/11 in elk van de drie landen van onderzoek een gebeurtenis die werd aangehaald als reden om politieke en maatschappelijke veranderingen door te voeren. Dit was met name zo in de nasleep van de terroristische aanslagen op de trein in Madrid (2004) en de redactie van Charlie Hebdo (2015). Juist rond zulke nieuwe *event*s kan het oude *event* weer een nieuw leven van transformerende kracht krijgen, omdat herinneringen eraan worden gereactiveerd.

9/11 als veiligheids-*event* in de Amerikaanse en als Islam-*event* in de Nederlandse publieke sfeer

De analyse uit Hoofdstuk 3 levert niet alleen *event* lessen op, hij brengt ook verschillende *event* puzzels met zich mee. Die probeer ik in de volgende drie hoofdstukken op te lossen. Hoofdstuk 4 behandelt de puzzel: hoe het kan dat hetzelfde *event* in de Amerikaanse en Nederlandse publieke sferen aan zulke uiteenlopende binnenlandse kwesties verbonden is geraakt? Om hier een antwoord op te geven, integreer ik het concept *event* in drie prominente perspectieven uit de sociologie en politicologie die zijn ontwikkeld om culturele en politieke overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen landen te verklaren, en er allen vanuit gaan dat dominante 'interpretatieve structuren' een centrale rol spelen in hoe debatten in nationale publieke sferen worden gevoerd. Ik stel als derde centrale sociologische les van dit proefschrift dat *events* zich op twee verschillende manieren tot deze structuren kunnen verhouden. De eerste is als ze er radicaal van afwijken. In dat geval zijn ze '*shock events*', die een revolutionaire herziening van bestaande attitudes en beleid op gang kunnen brengen. De tweede manier is via bevestiging van de prominente ideeën die al bestonden. Het bestaande pad dat al was ingeslagen, zal als reactie dan worden geïntensiveerd of geradicaliseerd. Zulke gebeurtenissen zijn '*focus events*'.

Op basis van een interpretatieve analyse van parlementaire debatten en nationale kranten laat ik zien dat 9/11 in de Verenigde Staten een *shock event* rond kwesties van nationale veiligheid is geworden, omdat het als een radicale weerlegging werd gezien van het idee dat het land een veilige, militair onneembare haven was. Het heeft zich niet tot *event* ontwikkeld wat betreft het onderwerp Islam, omdat het rond het jaar 2001 immoreel en 'on-Amerikaans' werd gevonden om in het publieke debat religiekritiek te leveren. Dit betekent niet dat Amerikaanse moslims in hun alledaagse levens naar aanleiding van 9/11 geen stigmatisering hebben ervaren en

ook niet dat allerlei beleidsmaatregelen die in de nasleep van het *event* zijn genomen, zoals de Patriot Act, in de praktijk niet voor extra discriminatie van deze groep hebben gezorgd. Het betekent wel dat van expliciete stigmatisering van Amerikaanse moslims rond 11 september 2001 weinig sprake was.

Dit is in scherp contrast met de Nederlandse situatie, waar naar aanleiding van de Twin Tower aanslagen de positie van moslims in de samenleving breeduit werd bediscussieerd. Dit kwam echter niet, zoals zowel in het Nederlandse publieke debat als de academische literatuur nogal eens wordt verondersteld, voort uit feit dat 9/11 Nederlandse publieke actoren iets nieuws in liet zien over de Islam en daarmee hét radicale keerpunt was in de discussie over de multiculturele samenleving. De meeste Nederlandse publieke actoren toonden immers erg weinig verbazing over het feit dat moslims verantwoordelijk waren voor de aanslagen. Het lag in de lijn der verwachting, vanuit de debatten die ze in eerdere jaren al hadden gevoerd, en waar ze in hun reacties dan ook regelmatig naar verwezen. 9/11 is daarmee dus een *focus event* in de discussie over de Islam in Nederland. Het werd geen *event* rond het onderwerp nationale veiligheid, aangezien Nederlandse publieke actoren hun land te klein achtten om in haar eentje een probleem als terrorisme te bestrijden en omdat ze meer weerzin voelden tegen het opofferen van privacy in de naam van vrijheid dan hun Amerikaanse collega's.

9/11 in parlementaire debatten over de invallen in Afghanistan en Irak

Hoofdstuk 5 behandelt de puzzel: hoe komt het dat de framing van 9/11 in de drie landen van onderzoek zo identiek is geweest rond buitenlandse vraagstukken, terwijl de nationale politieke houdingen ten aanzien van deze vraagstukken niet altijd uniform zijn gebleken (met de Irak oorlog als prominent voorbeeld)? Om hier dieper in te duiken, heb ik een analyse gemaakt van parlementaire speeches over de oorlogen in Afghanistan en Irak, met een specifieke focus op de rol die hierin aan 9/11 werd toebedeeld. Eén van de conclusies die hieruit naar voren komt, luidt dat het *event* in de Amerikaanse politieke context voor langere tijd een gebeurtenis was om in politieke afwegingen rekening mee te houden dan in de Franse en Nederlandse. Rond de besluitvormig over de oorlog in Afghanistan werd er in elk land nog min of meer dezelfde centrale implicatie uit 9/11 afgeleid: het *event* gaf de Verenigde Staten de legitimatie om militair terug te slaan. Op het moment dat de oorlog in Irak bediscussieerd ging worden, zo'n anderhalf jaar na 11 september 2001, golden de aanslagen echter alleen nog voor Amerikaanse politici als een mogelijk geldige reden

om een militaire inval te plegen. Een andere belangwekkende conclusie die uit dit hoofdstuk volgt, is een bevestiging van één van de twee *event* lessen van Hoofdstuk 3: de mate waarin 9/11 als mondiaal dan wel nationaal *event* werd beleefd, verschilde sterk tussen de drie landen. In de Amerikaanse en Franse politieke debatten werd het hoofdzakelijk gezien als een aanval op de Verenigde Staten, terwijl het *event* in Nederland veel sterker als een aanslag op het Westen (en daarmee dus ook op het eigen, Nederlandse binnenland) werd beschouwd.

De 'domesticatie' van vier buitenlandse *events* in Franse en Nederlandse kranten

De implicaties van die conclusie worden verder uitgediept in Hoofdstuk 6, waarin ik de puzzel behandel waarom 9/11 in Frankrijk en Nederland in zo'n verschillende mate is 'gedomesticeerd' (op binnenlandse vraagstukken is betrokken). Die empirische vaststelling roept de vraag op: gaat dit ook op voor andere buitenlandse *events*? Daarom heb ik de analyse die ik voor 9/11 heb gemaakt herhaald voor krantenartikelen over drie andere recente *events*, die in beide landen veel aandacht hebben gekregen: de tsunami in Zuidoost-Azië (2004), de Arabische Lente (2011) en de politieke opkomst van Donald Trump (2016). Hieruit blijkt dat we hier inderdaad met een breder geldig patroon te maken hebben. Rond elk van deze *events* was het domesticatieniveau in Nederland hoger dan in Frankrijk. Door dieper in deze patronen te duiken, kom ik tot de conclusie dat deze verschillen gerelateerd zijn aan twee uiteenlopende 'culturele repertoires' waarmee Franse en Nederlandse publieke actoren zich tot buitenlandse *events* verhouden. Het Franse repertoire heeft als doel de *Franse Grandeur*, het idee dat Frankrijk een unieke en belangrijke wereldnatie is, uit te dragen. Dit zorgt ervoor dat Franse politici zich in de nasleep van buitenlandse *events* veelvuldig op het internationale politieke toneel willen begeven (denk aan de prominente rol die Sarkozy tijdens de Arabische Lente speelde bij het afzetten van Khadaffi).

Het Nederlandse repertoire is er meer één van bescheidenheid. Nederlandse politici menen dat hun land, als kleine natie, geen al te grote ambities moet hebben over bemoeienissen met buitenlandse *events*. In Nederland bestaat juist wel sterk de neiging om buitenlandse *events* aan binnenlandse debatten of het eigen psychische welzijn te verbinden. Veel 'Bekende Nederlanders' haalden in eindejaarsinterviews van 2016 bijvoorbeeld de verkiezing van Trump aan en zeiden dat die voor hen één van de meest ingrijpende, stressvolle momenten van het jaar was geweest. Zulke

uitspraken ben ik bij 'Bekende Fransen' nauwelijks tegengekomen. Voor Nederlandse publieke actoren lijkt dus veel sterker dan voor Franse te gelden: elk *event*, waar ter wereld het zich ook voordoet, kan een reden zijn om te reflecteren op de eigen samenleving of het eigen leven.

Geen uniforme mondiale mediacultuur, nationale 'discursieve druk' en de rol van de socioloog bij toekomstige *events*

In het concluderende Hoofdstuk 7 kom ik tot enkele overkoepelende reflecties. Ten eerste stel ik dat het nog te vroeg is om te spreken van het bestaan van een uniforme mondiale mediacultuur, waarin publieke debatten in verschillende landen identiek aan het worden zijn. Zelfs een heel mondiaal *event* als 9/11 heeft in drie nationale contexten die behoorlijk op elkaar lijken sterk uiteenlopende interpretaties gekregen. Tegelijkertijd zijn die interpretaties *binnen* de landen behoorlijk uniform geweest. Er is daarbij weinig ruimte om van de nationale consensus af te wijken, de 'discursieve druk' om aan het landelijke patroon te voldoen is groot.

Het bestaan van die druk laat ook zien dat hoewel de interpretaties die aan *events* kunnen worden verbonden in principe open liggen – wat een belangrijke reden voor mij was om ze inductief te bestuderen – ze in de praktijk op vrij dwingende wijze worden gestructureerd. Al vanaf de eerste dag na de aanslagen lagen de centrale betekenissen van 9/11 in elk van de drie nationale contexten vast. In de loop der jaren kwam daar weinig verandering in. Deze dwingende werking van nationale interpretatieve structuren biedt ook inzicht in de vraag hoe *events* kunnen ontstaan. Juist omdat sommige gebeurtenissen zo sterk inhaken op dominante denkbeelden in nationale publieke sferen, kunnen ze uitgroeien tot *events*. Dit was bijvoorbeeld zo voor de Amerikaanse nationale veiligheidsutopie, die door 9/11 wreed werd verstoord.

Aan het slot van Hoofdstuk 7 reflecteer ik op de rol van sociologen in de nasleep van toekomstige *events*. Zoals gezegd, zijn *events* voor veel sociologen een *black box*. Daardoor hebben ze er vaak ook weinig over te melden voor een groter publiek. Ik meen dat dit jammer is. Sociologen zouden in de nasleep van *events*, wanneer er opschudding heerst en de media hongerig zijn naar duiding van de ontstane situatie, juist een interessante rol kunnen spelen. Met nader onderzoek naar *events* kunnen sociologen dus ook op maatschappelijk gebied een belangrijke bijdrage leveren.