

Seeing past the 'post-9/11' framing: The long rise of anti-Islam politics in the
Netherlands

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Abstract

In the early 2000s, anti-Islam parties rose to unprecedented prominence in the Netherlands. Within the Dutch polity, the parties' mainstream popularity is widely understood as a product of the post-9/11 climate; defined by "Islamist" terrorist attacks throughout Western Europe, and concurrent political discourses on the "crisis" of multiculturalism. Researchers critical of this interpretation have analysed anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands as a product of the post-9/11 security climate. Yet framing anti-Islam politics as 'post-9/11', underestimates the long-term presence of anti-Islam politics and disguises systemic issues of minority discrimination that have long plagued Dutch society. In order to 'see past' the post-9/11 framing, this paper examines the history of anti-Islam politics within the broader historical context of the Dutch 'multicultural myth' and issues of including newcomers into *Dutchness* since 1945. The curious trend amongst Dutch politicians to circulate anti-Islam politics through independently released books/films is explored and its significance discussed.

Dedication

To my parents, who continue to share with me their eternal delight and curiosity in learning and who teach—through example—the importance of heartfelt hard work and mindful engagement with the social issues that shape our world. And to my dear friend Iefke who in no small terms taught me Dutch, and revealed the untranslatable *gezelligheid* of the Netherlands, that is worlds away from the subject of this work.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Introduction.....	6
Chapter 1. Hidden in plain sight: A literature review of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands.....	12
Chapter 2. Research Methods.....	42
Chapter 3. Beyond 9/11: The forgotten history of anti-Islam politics and its relationship to <i>Dutchness</i>	57
Chapter 4. Anti-Islam materials: An underestimated component of Dutch “Islamization” politics.....	93
Conclusion.....	122
Bibliography.....	123

Introduction

While working on this thesis I was often asked how, not being of Dutch heritage, I could possibly be interested in Dutch politics. While often meant as a mild tease or a polite inquiry at home in Canada, I thought during my field research trip to the Netherlands this question would go unasked. Yet Netherlanders were often self-effacing and quick to say that Dutch national politics were unremarkable. By way of introduction, Dutch researchers also often note that before the rise of anti-Islam parties during the early 2000s, politics in the Netherlands were dull and stable.¹ Perhaps the more exact version of this sentiment is that politics were stable for the Dutch majority.

For Dutch minority communities, national politics have never been stable or friendly. Since 1945—the beginning of de-colonization, subsequent post-colonial immigration and increasing cultural diversity within the Netherlands— successive choruses of Dutch politicians have labelled newcomer communities as impossibly alien and incompatible with Dutch society.² The first wave of post-colonial immigrants came from Indonesia (1945-1960), particularly after the Indonesian War of Independence (1945-1949).³ In the 1970s, post-colonial immigrants typically came from Surinam and from Antilles in the 1980s.⁴ Although post-colonial immigrants were routinely problematized by Dutch politicians, because of their historical ties to the Netherlands post-colonial immigrants have been (marginally) more accepted into *Dutchness* than economic migrant groups from Turkey and Morocco. During the 1960s-1970s, Moroccan

¹ See Anderweg and Irwin, *Government and Politics of the Netherlands*, xiii.

² Jones, *Biology, Culture and 'Post-Colonial Citizenship' and the Dutch Nation, 1945-2007*, In *Dutch Racism* 315, 317 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi B.V, 2014).

³ Bosma, *Introduction*, In *Post-colonial immigrants and identity formations in the Netherlands* 7, 9 (Ulbe Bosma ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

⁴ *Ibid*, 10.

and Turkish settlers came to the Netherlands through what was to be the temporary “guest workers” program. Moroccan and Turkish newcomers were often seen as ‘orientalised others’ from countries with no historical connection to the Netherlands.⁵ Since their arrival, scholars have noted that Dutch Muslims have occupied the most problematized status within Dutch society.⁶ As a result of the pre-existing laws of religious accommodation, the establishment of Islamic cultural/religious institutions during the 1970s and 1980s was a relatively smooth process. However, Dutch historians and social scientists have noted that the civic establishment of Islam in the Netherlands greatly outpaced public acceptance, creating a very difficult environment in which these new Dutch citizens were to integrate.⁷

In the 1980s, fringe political parties emerged campaigning against the multicultural character of Dutch society, and often focused on the presence of Dutch Muslims.⁸ Then in the 1990s, anti-Islam sentiments entered mainstream politics by way of conservative opposition leader Frits Bolkestein. In remarks that would spark the infamous “national minorities debate” of 1991-1992, Bolkestein said Dutch culture must be protected against Islam, and that the growing “problem” of minority integration should be handled “with guts”.⁹ Since the late 1990s, anti-Islam politicians have also personally released anti-Islam books and films as works of ‘culture’; a curious trend that increased

⁵ For the seminal articulation of orientalism theory see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

⁶ Laarman, *Discussions on intermarriage in the Netherlands, 1945-2005*, in *Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands* 49, 68 (Ulbe Bosma ed, Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

⁷ Rath et al., “The politics of recognizing religious diversity in Europe: Social reactions to the institutionalization of Islam in the Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain”, 68.

⁸ Art, *Inside the radical right: The development of anti-immigrant parties in Western Europe*, 78; Williams, “Can leopards change their spots? Between xenophobia and trans-ethnic populism among West European far right parties”, 113.

⁹ Prins, “The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism”, 367.

during the 2000s and has subsequently impacted the normalization of anti-Islam politics and national security.¹⁰

In recent years, political discussions centred on the “problem” of Dutch Muslims have reached a fevered pitch. According to Dutch racism and discrimination researchers Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving, “the Netherlands echoes, if not leads, a wider European trend, where offensive statements about Muslims are an everyday phenomenon”.¹¹ As a result, examining anti-Islam politics appears to be of topical relevance for the Netherlands and may also provide a window into similar political mobilizations of fears of “Islamization” in other European countries. However in stark contrast to the history discussed above, the rise of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands is often socially understood as a response to increased anxieties of “Islamist” extremism in the post-9/11 moment. Specifically, the assassination of anti-Islam politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002, and terrorist murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, are considered the foundation for the normalization of anti-Islam politics within mainstream Dutch society.¹²

There is a well-established body of scholarship dedicated to understanding how the post-9/11 security climate negatively impacts western Muslims.¹³ By way of example, racism and security researcher Liz Fekete identifies how post-9/11 political discussions of national security/terrorism are able to legitimize Muslim prejudice; effectively

¹⁰ See Press Release, “The Netherlands Still a Preferred Target for Jihadists”, Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, December 19, 2008.

¹¹ Essed and Hoving, *Innocence, smug ignorance, resentment: An introduction to Dutch racism*, In *Dutch Racism* 9, 9 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi B.V, 2014).

¹² See Buruma, Ian. *Murder in Amsterdam: Liberal Europe, Islam, and the limits of Dutch tolerance*, 2006; Donadio, “Provocateur’s Death Hunts the Dutch”, *New York Times*, October 31, 2014.

¹³ See Roach, *The 9/11 effect: Comparative counter-terrorism*, 2011; and Vecsey, Bakalian and Bozorgmehr eds., *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans respond*, 2009. Full bibliographic information provided in works cited.

securitizing the “problem” of cultural diversity in Europe.¹⁴ However, Fekete’s contention that it is “impossible to divorce the current debate on the ‘limits of cultural diversity’ from the war on terror”, is worthy of debate.¹⁵ The post-9/11 security climate fixated on an evolving “Islamic” threat certainly augments anti-Islam politics. Yet it is only the most recent veneer for the same style of anti-Islam politics—warning of cultural clash and security threats—that emerged in the Netherlands and throughout Western Europe during the 1980 and 1990s.

In order to compliment and balance the dominant analysis of anti-Islam politics as a ‘post-9/11’ issue, this thesis argues that the history of anti-Islam politics in European countries such as the Netherlands requires greater consideration. A ‘post-9/11’ framing of analysis underestimates the long-term history of anti-Islam politics and the underlying issues of discrimination within Dutch society. It also risks inadvertently supporting the narrative of anti-Islam politicians who present Islam as a post-9/11 security threat, and their parties as a legitimate response provoked by recent incidents of “Islamist” extremism. As the history of anti-Islam politics briefly outlined above suggests, Dutch anti-Islam parties can be traced back to the 1980s, while anti-Islam sentiments appear rooted in entrenched forms of racial ‘othering’ that have plagued the Netherlands since its newfound multicultural diversity in the postwar period (since 1945). Through an exploratory analysis into the content and cultural presence of anti-Islam materials (books and films) authored by politicians since the late 1990s, it is also contended that Dutch politicians were active agents in the gradual normalization anti-Islam politics. As seen today, anti-Islam politics in the 1980 and 1990s also discussed the security and cultural

¹⁴ Fekete, “Anti-Muslim Racism and the European Security State”, 4-5.

¹⁵ Ibid, 5.

“threat” of Islam alongside the problem of Muslim integration.¹⁶ As a result, the normalization of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands during the 2000s is arguably better understood as a gradual realization, which was also actively encouraged in recent years by Dutch politicians through their anti-Islam cultural production materials.

In Chapter 1, the seemingly disparate literatures regarding Dutch anti-Islam politics will be reviewed and connected. Given the tendency to not label anti-Islam politics explicitly, the ‘hidden’ nature of anti-Islam research and the implications of this will also be considered. Chapter 2 will provide a summary of the research methods applied during this study. In particular, the interdisciplinary approach and theoretical considerations informing my analysis of the history of anti-Islam politics will be discussed. The exploratory research on the anti-Islam cultural materials authored by Dutch politicians will also be detailed and its intended contributions explained. In order to ‘see past’ a post-9/11 framing, this thesis will then explore the evolution of Dutch anti-Islam politics in the context of the Netherlands’ social-political history since 1945 (Chapter 3). Within this chapter fixed notions of Dutch identity (*Dutchess*) will be problematized. Recent historical research questioning the existence of a multiculturalist era in the Netherlands will also be presented. Drawing on this research, it will be argued that the “crisis” of Dutch “multiculturalism” should be considered a euphemism for anti-Muslim racism. Lastly, Chapter 4 explores the underestimated anti-Islam cultural production materials (books and films) created by Dutch politicians and their potential significance to the normalization of anti-Islam politics. Based on the conducted field

¹⁶ Prins, 387; Williams, 113.

research interviews with Dutch security practitioners and academics, the potential security risks of anti-Islam materials and politics are also discussed.

At the beginning of this analysis, it is worth noting that anti-Islam parties to date have not received support from the majority of Dutch citizens. In its attention to the history of anti-Islam politics past and present, this thesis does not intend to suggest that anti-Islam politics dominate the Dutch national discourse without peer. However, much to the dismay of many citizens, anti-Islam sentiments are indeed now an established and persistent feature of mainstream Dutch politics. Anti-Islam politics have become a part of the country's political and cultural imagery at home and abroad, and are worthy of greater examination.

Chapter 1. Hidden in plain sight: A literature review of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands

Introduction

A curious phenomenon exists within social sciences and humanities research regarding Dutch politics. Since 2002, self-professed anti-Islam parties have existed in the Netherlands. First, the Free Pim Fortuyn (LPF) party was established in 2002 and remained active until 2007. In 2006, the Freedom Party (PVV) emerged on the scene and is the third largest party today. Yet despite both LPF and the PVV's overt stance on the alleged threat of the Netherlands' "Islamization", works that refer to the parties as 'anti-Islam' are rare.¹⁷ Instead, LPF and the PVV are often categorized within the political literature under a variety of broader terms including far-right, populist, and nativist parties.

Anti-Islam politics are also often addressed within the broader literature examining multiculturalism, gender and sexuality, and nationalism in the Netherlands. Since the politicization of these themes tend to impact all Dutch minority groups, scholarship is right to advance more universally applicable discussions. In virtually all of the works discussed in this review, however, references to political discrimination against Dutch minorities were, on examination, almost exclusively about Dutch Muslims. Despite the consistent problematizing of Dutch Muslim communities by politicians since

¹⁷ For a notable exception see Jan Erk, "The Famous Dutch (In) Tolerance", *Current History* (2011): 110-116.

the 1980s, anti-Islam politics appears to be an understudied research subject in its own right.¹⁸

This literature review aims to connect and examine the dispersed scholarship on anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands. Works from the aforementioned umbrella research themes that discuss anti-Islam politics in relation to multiculturalism, party-type, gender and sexuality, and nationalism were selected for review. The emergent discussions of cultural production materials (books and films) authored by anti-Islam Dutch politicians will also be explored. Taken together, scholarship from these seemingly disparate fields of study reveals the multifaceted character of anti-Islam politics in modern Dutch society. In the following sections, I will focus on the anti-Islam literature ‘hidden’ across the larger thematic conversations of these research fields. First, the basic elements of multicultural theory will be discussed in order to unpack the underlying social issues affecting this “crisis of multiculturalism”. It will also be argued that this “multicultural crisis” is a euphemism for anti-Muslim racism in Europe. The work of Dutch historians who are challenging the conventional history of Dutch multiculturalism—in the wake of “crisis” politics— will then be examined.

Next, the case for explicitly referring to parties as ‘anti-Islam’ within the political literature will be made by tracing the existence of Dutch political parties campaigning against the multicultural character of Dutch society since the 1980s. Drawing on the

¹⁸ In contrast to the dominant framing of anti-Islam parties as a product of the ‘post 9/11’ moment, a number of pioneering works have emerged in recent years which call this interpretation into question. Researchers have argued that contemporary political criticisms of Dutch Muslims reflect a long-term political discourse in the Netherlands that emerged in the 1980 and 1990s. See Verkaaik, “The cachet dilemma: Ritual and agency in new Dutch nationalism”, 71; Prins, “The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism” 369; and Akkerman, “Anti-immigration parties and the defence of liberal values: The exceptional case of the List Pim Fortuyn”, 346.

work of sexuality and gender studies, how anti-Islam parties actively politicize women's and gay rights to legitimize their claims of "protecting" Dutch culture from Islam will then be considered. In the final section, the curious trend of anti-Islam books and films authored by Dutch politicians will be discussed and shown to be critically underrepresented in the political literature at present. The relevance of these anti-Islam materials to Dutch politics and national security will also be advanced. In conclusion it will be argued that Dutch anti-Islam parties should be labelled explicitly, based on the insightful observations of specifically anti-Islam content within these separate research fields. This will help foreground the political agenda of anti-Islam parties and unify the important research on this subject currently dispersed within different fields of scholarship.

Unpacking the "Crisis" of Multiculturalism

Any exploration into the history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands has much to gain from its contextualization within the germane themes of multicultural theory. In his seminal work, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1995), Canadian political philosopher Will Kymlicka contributes a landmark argument for how societies should respond to minority discrimination within 'immigrant multicultural' countries like the Netherlands.¹⁹ According to Kymlicka, the staying power of tensions between majority and minority cultures has much to do with a reliance on traditional [universal] human rights to address cultural minorities' issues. Declarations of human

¹⁹ According to Kymlicka, 'immigrant multiculturalism' refers to societies that more recently became multicultural (in terms of demography not necessarily policy) due to immigration. In contrast to societies that are historically very diverse.

rights, he reasons, do not help societies answer questions of their daily application such as: what are the responsibilities of minorities to integrate? Or conversely, what constitutes reasonable accommodation?²⁰

According to Kymlicka, tensions around the requirements of reasonable accommodation and cultural integration of immigrant minority communities in Western nations are further complicated by the absence of a liberal minority rights framework. This framework, he reasons would act as a guiding supplement to help multicultural societies navigate these highly complex questions. Without an established theory of minority rights, tensions will remain high and the basic human rights [of minorities] will not be respected.²¹ Kymlicka's position on multiculturalism continues to spark debate within the literature.²² However it appears that there is ample consensus from critics and supporters studying the Netherlands that he has identified a critical disconnect between the language and the application of human rights.²³ Within broader discussions of the "failure" of multiculturalism, this disconnect is often articulated in references to the Netherlands having reached "the limits of Dutch tolerance" towards its minority cultures.²⁴ As result, it is of significant consequence to both the perception and lived experience of Dutch minority communities.²⁵ More than any other group, the requirements of Muslim integration— with its branches of accommodation for language,

²⁰ Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, 5

²¹ *Ibid*, 5

²² See Kymlicka 1996, 2001, 2007 for the main development of the theory. Cf Brian Barry (2001) for the criticism of minority rights' protection of individual rights. For an equally well-known and controversial feminist critique cf Susan Okin (1998), which questions if multiculturalism supports patriarchal systems.

²³ de Been, "Continuity or regime change in the Netherlands: Consociationalism in a deterritorialized and post-secular world", 532; Joppke, "The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: Theory and policy", 239.

²⁴ See Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 2006; also Cendrowicz, "The New Dutch Government: An End to Tolerance?", *Time*, October 14, 2010.

²⁵ de Been, 532; Joppke, 239.

and religious and cultural values— has been a highly contested topic within Dutch multicultural politics since the 1980s.²⁶

Focusing on the discrimination of Dutch Muslims within the “failure” of multiculturalism politics does not, of course, mean to diminish the discrimination faced by the Netherlands’ other visible and religious minority communities. To this end, *Dutch Racism* (2014) edited by Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving is a comprehensive and timely study. The authors take a relational approach to their explorations of the unique characteristics of Dutch racism within today’s “crisis” of multiculturalism.²⁷ A key takeaway from this anthology is that discrimination against different Dutch minority communities occurs in concert and that the interconnectivity of discrimination is important to observe.²⁸ At the same time however, discussing the multiculturalism backlash in relation to Dutch minorities as a non-descript collective group, presents the risk of being imprecise and reductive. Since the Dutch Muslim community is the overwhelming subject of this “failure” discourse, anti-Islam politics can reasonably be understood as synonymous with discussions of the “failure” of multiculturalism politics. Given the diversity within the Dutch Muslim community it could also be argued that in focusing on anti-Islam politics as a ‘stable category’, and not discussing the differences of discrimination e.g., between Dutch-Moroccan and Dutch Turkish Muslims, that this thesis remains too broad.²⁹

²⁶ Shadid, “Public Debates over Islam and the Awareness of Muslim Identity in the Netherlands”, 10.

²⁷ The impact of Dutch racism within the Netherlands’ contemporary borders and former colonies is also a major theme of this work.

²⁸ See Goldenberg, *Racisms in orange: Afterword*, in *Dutch Racism*, 407-416 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi B.V., 2014).

²⁹ Shadid, “The Integration of Muslim Minorities in the Netherlands”, 359. As the largest Muslim communities, anti-Islam politicians tend to focus on Dutch Turkish and Moroccan communities and treat Muslims as a homogenous category. In reality Dutch Muslim communities are highly diverse and represent streams of Islam practiced in Surinam, Indonesia, Pakistan and Tunisia (among others).

In recent years numerous books, anthologies, and articles on the “crisis of multiculturalism” in Europe have emerged. In their critical study, Alana Lentin and Gavin Titley (2011) expertly unfold the post-9/11 “crisis” as portrayed by politicians including PVV leader Geert Wilders.

The range of processes of social dissolution and varieties of anomie that multiculturalism is held responsible for is scarcely credible. Blamed for everything from parallel societies to gendered horror to the incubation of terrorism...it [multiculturalism] provides a mobilizing metaphor for a spectrum of political aversion and racism that has become pronounced in Western Europe.³⁰

A similar understanding of the “crisis” is also articulated within *The Multiculturalism Backlash*, edited by Steven Vertovec and Susanne Wessendorf (2010).³¹ A distinction between these two works is that Lentin and Titley also contest the idea that a “coherent era” of multiculturalism existed in Europe.³² This argument raises an important dimension of “crisis” politics, especially when considering the historical origins of multicultural politics in the Netherlands, and will be explored later in this chapter.

However an understated issue within the majority of “crisis” literature is that within this discourse, politicians overwhelmingly target European Muslims. Based on the examples given, scholarly analyses of “crisis” politics were also found to inadvertently confirm the discourse’s attention to Islam. By way of example, Derek McGhee (2008), Peter Hervick (2012), and the anthologies of Lentin and Titley, and Vertovec and Wessendorf discussed above, repeatedly highlight key themes of the “crisis” such

³⁰ Lentin and Titley, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism*, 3.

³¹ Vertovec and Wessendorf, *Assessing the backlash against multiculturalism in Europe*, in *The Multiculturalism Backlash* 1, 12 (Vertovec and Wessendorf eds., Routledge, 2010).

³² Lentin and Titley, 11.

terrorism, gender inequality, and “value clash” in reference to Islam.³³ Given the focus on European Muslims, why “crisis” politics should be understood or discussed as a broadly “multicultural” critique, remains unclear. In the interests of greater transparency, it is arguably worth specifying that the “crisis” of multiculturalism has evolved into a specific “crisis” of Islam in Europe. In this way, “crisis” narratives are also revealed to be much closer to the “clash of civilizations” discourse that emerged in the early 1990s, than a new post-9/11 phenomenon.³⁴ Given that the conflation of Islamic culture and the “failure” of multiculturalism is overly espoused by Dutch anti-Islam politicians, the problematizing of Islam should arguably be teased out further within the “crisis” literature.³⁵ Further complicating this “crisis” literature however, are the recent debates on whether or not Dutch society should even be considered multicultural.

Dutch Multiculturalism? A history in review 1945—2001

The alleged narrative of a post-9/11 crisis or “failure” of multiculturalism has called into question conventional narratives of the Netherlands’ immigration and integration history since 1945. Until the early 2000s, the Netherlands was widely heralded, at home and abroad, as a leading example of multiculturalism.³⁶ The ideal-type multiculturalism

³³ McGhee, *The End of Multiculturalism? Terrorism, Integration, and Human Rights*, 29; Hervik, “Ending tolerance as a solution to incompatibility: The Danish ‘crisis of multiculturalism’”, 220; Lentin and Titley, 21; Prins and Saharso, *From toleration to repression: The Dutch backlash against multiculturalism*, In *The Multiculturalism Backlash. European discourses, policies and practices* 72, 76 (Steven Vertovec and Susan Wessendorf eds., Routledge, 2009).

³⁴ See Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations”, *Foreign Affairs* 3 (1993): 22-49. Clash politics are exemplified by Huntington’s essay, which posits that fundamental cultural differences between Western and [Middle] Eastern cultures will be the main source of conflict in the future.

³⁵ By way of example see Geert Wilders’ November 28, 2014 speech at the Front National congress, <http://www.geertwilders.nl/index.php/94-english/1897-video-speech-geert-wilders-congress-of-the-front-national-lyon-29-11-2014>;

³⁶ Duyvendak and Scholten, “Beyond the Dutch ‘Multicultural Model’”, 331; Sunier and van Ginkel, *At Your Service*, In *Neo-Nationalism in Europe and Europe: Perspectives from Social Anthropology* 107, 109 (Andre Gingrich and Marcus Banks eds., Berghahn Books, 2006).

model has been defined by Dutch political scientist Maarten Vink as the scenario in which:

the government endorses the principle of cultural diversity and actively supports the right of different cultural and ethnic groups to retain their distinctive cultural identities.³⁷

Before the rise of the anti-Islam parties in the early 2000s, it was generally assumed that an ideal-type of multiculturalism existed in the Netherlands. Specifically, the social integration policies directed toward new immigrant communities during the 1970-1990s, were often portrayed by the government and academics as a natural extension of the traditional Dutch social model known as pillarization.

In brief, from the 1890s until the late 1960s, Dutch society was organized around religious, social, and political divisions and this arrangement became known as pillarization (*verzuiling*).³⁸ Briefly defined, the social pillars of Dutch society were divided along Christian confessional denominations (Protestant and Catholic) and ideologically (Liberal-Conservatives and Socialists). Segregated social institutions and services such as schools, hospitals, newspapers and public broadcasters, were critical components of the pillar system and shaped the fabric of daily life in the Netherlands.³⁹ Under the guiding spirit of Dutch politics referred to as accommodation (Dutch tolerance), each social or pillar group was considered “separate but equal”.⁴⁰ However according to Vink, it is a persistent myth that multicultural integration was achieved through the “multicultural legacy” of pillarization.⁴¹ Vink’s examination of integration

³⁷ Vink, “Dutch ‘Multiculturalism’ Beyond the Pillarization Myth”, 337.

³⁸ Ibid, 342.

³⁹ Anderweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*, 2nd ed., 35.

⁴⁰ For the classic study of Dutch accommodation see Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation* (Oakland: California University Press, 1968).

⁴¹ Vink, 339.

policy documents during this period reveals that there was never an intended ‘culture of equals’ within Dutch integration policy. In fact, the 1982 Minority Memorandum affirms the primacy of the majority culture on the grounds that it is, “after all anchored in Dutch society”.⁴² As a result, conventional arguments that the Netherlands’ newcomer minority cultures were integrated into Dutch society through a pillarization-inspired social model are found wanting.

Dutch political scientists Jan Duyvendak and Peter Scholten have similarly rejected the existence of a unified Dutch multicultural model.⁴³ In their thorough case study, Duyvendak and Scholten analyse immigrant integration policy documents since 1970 alongside scholarship on this topic by Dutch researchers. The authors found that over time, researchers examining this topic began to interpret the model-type of multiculturalism as an accurate historical analysis of Dutch integration policies during the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, by the late 1990s Dutch researchers helped produce a political discourse in which politicians could re-frame unpopular integration policies by saying they were oriented towards multiculturalism even though this was not the case.⁴⁴ As evidence of this pattern, Duyvendak and Scholten point to the political re-framing of past Dutch integration policies as “multicultural” in recent years, noting that the first time the term multiculturalism enters the policy discourse was in 1995.⁴⁵ This observation carries even greater resonance when viewed alongside the emergence of anti-Islam politics in the 1980s and 1990s. Vink, Duyvendak, and Scholten would likely agree that debunking the myths surrounding multicultural integration policies in the Netherlands is

⁴² Ibid, 345.

⁴³ Duyvendak and Scholten, “Beyond the Dutch ‘Multicultural Model’”, 339.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 346, 333.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 339.

a critical first step to improving our understanding of anti-Islam politics today. For as the authors point out, criticisms of minority integration policies— especially in connection to Dutch Muslims— are not a distinctive rupture from Dutch politics in previous decades as is often claimed.⁴⁶

It is worth mentioning that scholarship has not universally rejected the influence of pillarization or dismissed the idea that a successful multicultural policy existed in the Netherlands. In his most recent work on the Netherlands, German political sociologist Christian Joppke states that Dutch society has dramatically shifted from multicultural policies towards policies of civic integration; a position which arguably posits the existence of a multicultural era.⁴⁷ This can also be said of culture and diversity scholars Baukje Prins and Sawitri Saharso’s 2010 chapter; “From toleration to repression: The Dutch backlash against multiculturalism”, which offers a chronology of multiculturalism from 1994-2002.⁴⁸

While Dutch legal theorist Wouter de Been appears to agree with Vink that a pillarization-style pluralism does not mirror the Netherlands’ social diversity today, he also advocates the benefits of reconceptualising the pillarization model. Specifically, de Been proposes a revised pillar model could help address the alleged risk of Dutch Muslims forming an “unattached, parallel community”.⁴⁹ Alternatively, political scientist Bhiku Parkeh has gone so far as to contend that today Dutch Muslims are “a part of

⁴⁶ Vink, 337; Duyvendak and Scholten, 339.

⁴⁷ Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State”, 249.

⁴⁸ Prins and Saharso, *From toleration to repression: The Dutch backlash against multiculturalism* (see Chap 1 n. 31).

⁴⁹ de Been, “Continuity or regime change in the Netherlands: Consociationalism in a deterritorialized and post-secular world”, 535.

pillarization”.⁵⁰ Given the diverse interpretations of Dutch multiculturalism within the field, it appears there are increasingly more researchable questions than answers. While the lack of consensus within the literature provides a less cohesive historical grounding for this thesis's approach to Dutch multiculturalism, it also illuminates important areas of contention. Keeping in mind this array of interpretations will help guard against an overly definitive portrayal of Dutch multicultural history within this work. Irrespective of the historical ‘reality’ of multiculturalism in the Netherlands, political parties have campaigned against the cultural diversity of Dutch society since the 1980s. Not unlike the “crisis” of multiculturalism politics today, the focus of these parties was also Dutch Muslims. In addition to their size, the main difference between the anti-Islam politics of the 1980s/1990s and the early 2000s was that the post-2000 parties (LPF and the PVV) openly campaigned as being specifically critical of Islam. Yet this consistent political focus on Dutch Muslims since the 1980s and emergence of self-identified ‘anti-Islam parties’ during the 2000s is curiously absent within the political party literature.

Dutch Anti-Islam parties in the ‘right of centre’ party literature

Political scientists and historians are often given the difficult task of assessing the extremity of a political party's ideology along the classic “left-right” spectrum. Since the Second World War, neo-Nazi, neo-fascist groups have typically occupied the representation of the new ‘extreme right’, recognizable by their rejection of democracy, overt racism, and violence. However in the postwar period, a new crop of parties also

⁵⁰ Parekh, *Europe, liberalism and the ‘Muslim question’ in Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach* 179, 191. (Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou and Ricard Zapata-Barrero eds., Routledge 2006).

emerged in Western Europe that accepted democracy and were against violence, but were still aggressively further right on issues of pluralism and minority cultures than traditional socio-economic right-wing parties. As a result of this new political space, research on the ‘right of centre’ remains enriched but also inundated by party-type classifications.

Examples of the most accepted terms in the literature include: radical right (Roger Griffin, 2000, Sarah de Lang, 2007), right-wing populist (Betz, 1993), populist radical right (Cas Mudde, 2013), populist right (Simon Bornschier, 2010), nativist right (Hans Georg-Betz and Susi Meret, 2009), far-right (Ferruh Yilmaz, 2012), and anti-immigration (Linda Bos and Wouter van der Brug 2010).

Even when the research focus is limited to Western European polities, the sheer volume and subject breadth of party literature and terminology is striking. All works reviewed herein noted the robust research discussion on party-type categories, but also lamented the limitations presented by the low levels of consensus around category criteria.⁵¹ Political scientist Cas Mudde and historian Roger Griffin have been particularly vocal on this issue. These scholars argue that the field’s strong preference to view party developments in concert means that little criteria consensus greatly affects the coherency of the literature across temporal, national, and linguistic boundaries.⁵²

An important consequence of this definitional debate is that Free Pim Fortuyn (LPF) and the Freedom Party (PVV) have been categorized under each term listed above and therefore have been understood in overlapping yet varying research contexts. To

⁵¹ See van Kessel, “Explaining the Electoral Performance of Populist Parties”, 69; Vossen, “Classifying Wilders”, 184, Wigger; “Rethinking Anti-Immigration Rhetoric After the Oslo and Utøya Terror Attacks”, 589; and Ennser, “The Homogeneity of West European Party Families”, 155. Tim Bale’s 2012 book review “Supplying the Insatiable Demand: Europe’s Populist Radical Right” is also a tremendously helpful survey of the ‘right of centre’ literature.

⁵² Mudde, “Three decades of populist radical right parties in Western Europe: So what?”, 5; Griffin, “Interregnum or End Game?”, 164

illustrate, LPF and the PVV are most often labelled populist by researchers and the media.⁵³ However Cas Mudde, a leading far right studies expert, did not include LPF or the PVV in his most recent survey: *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (2007). In fact, Mudde only classified the PVV as part of the populist radical right for the first time in 2013.⁵⁴ Taking into consideration the strong variations in terminology and party categorization, this research project will not use the aforementioned terms to classify LPF or the PVV.

While the prominence of Islam within LPF and the PVV politics is often noted within the literature, it has scarcely been the primary subject under observation.⁵⁵ Using the term anti-Islam will allow this thesis to circumvent debates on whether LPF and the PVV are best considered as extremist, populist, or nativist parties. Instead, it will be able to draw on all party-type research that discusses LPF and the PVV's positions on Islam. 'Anti-Islam' also has the added benefit of foregrounding the research subject i.e., anti-Islam politics, and as such it is not obscured by broader party-type euphuisms. An emerging research conversation also arguably supports this framing. Hans-Georg Betz and Susi Meret's 2009 article explicitly addresses the political mobilization against Islam by Western European parties.⁵⁶ In their detailed survey, the political centrality of Islam to (in their view) nativist right-wing parties is compellingly traced through a variety of party materials including campaign documents, interviews, and conference proceedings. Betz

⁵³ Lucardie. *The Netherlands: Populism versus Pillarization*, in *21st Century Populism: The Specter of Western European Democracy* 151-165, (Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnel eds., Palgrave Macmillan 2007); Vossen, 180; and van Kessel, 69.

⁵⁴ Mudde, 3.

⁵⁵ Noted exceptions include Cherribi, *In the House of War*, 2010 and Erk, *The Famous Dutch (In)Tolerance* (see chap.1, n.1).

⁵⁶ Betz and Meret, "Revisiting Lepanto: the political mobilization against Islam in contemporary Western Europe", 313-334.

and Meret notably interpret the political mobilization against Islam as a defining component of each discussed party including LPF and the PVV. This appears to be one of the first party-type works to do so explicitly.⁵⁷

During the 1980s, political parties also emerged in the Netherlands that could arguably be referred to as anti-Islam parties. The consecutive National Centre Party (NCP), Centre Party (CP), and the Centre Democrats (CD) are often classified as either far-right or anti-immigration parties.⁵⁸ However scholarship often only refers to each party's treatment of Dutch Muslims when discussing their political behaviour.⁵⁹ While it is likely that these parties also politically targeted other Dutch minority groups, the fact that each author elected to only mention each party's focus on Dutch Muslims reasonably suggests they were the main target group.

The politics of the twentieth century Dutch anti-Islam parties are also indicative of what Martin Barker referred to as "the new racism".⁶⁰ In his 1981 analysis, Barker outlined how post-colonial European societies moved away from overt biological racism toward accepting a cultural critique of immigrant cultures that discreetly problematized race. Briefly defined, cultural racism is the belief that cultures are immutable and that certain non-western cultures threaten the natural national identity of European societies.⁶¹ When unpacked, perceptions of incompatibility between western and non-western cultures are indicative of biological racism. For the hierarchy of cultures used to assess

⁵⁷ Ibid, 316.

⁵⁸ Erk, 110. National Centre Party (National CentrumPartij, NCP) of 1979-1980, the Centre Party (CentrumPartij, CP) of 1980-1984, the Centre Democrats (Centerdemocraten, CD) of 1984-2002.

⁵⁹ Williams, "Can Leopards Change Their Spots? Between Xenophobia and Trans-ethnic Populism among West European Far Right Parties", 113; Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*, 79.

⁶⁰ Barker, *The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe*, 1981.

⁶¹ Ibid, 20-22.

cultural compatibility is informed by the idea that non-western cultures, “belong to inferior races”.⁶² When considering the Netherlands’ anti-Islam parties of the 1980s and 1990s, it is also worth noting that this “new” racism also reflects pre-existing orientalist depictions of Islam and Islamic culture that will be discussed in greater detail shortly.

Although anti-Islam politics emerged throughout the 1980s and 1990s, it was not until the arrival of LPF (2002) and the PVV (2006) that anti-Islam politics gained significant electoral recognition and mainstream status. As a result, LPF and the PVV’s political ideology has been widely examined. In essence, the parties’ shared ideology is widely acknowledged to be comprised of a highly vocal critique of immigration and multicultural integration, paired with an equally vocal “defence” of social liberal values. In her 2005 case study of the Netherlands, Dutch political scientist Tjitske Akkerman made significant inroads connecting these two positions. Akkerman argued that the “defence” of liberal values is only invoked by the parties to create support for anti-immigration arguments.⁶³ Building on Akkerman, Stijn van Kessel’s 2011 assessment of the rise and reception of LPF and the PVV concluded that Dutch citizens widely believed immigration and minority cultural integration were, “the most important [political] issues at stake”.⁶⁴ Unlike the traditional Dutch parties, certain Dutch citizens believed LPF and the PVV were taking these issues seriously.⁶⁵

The findings of Linda Bos and Wouter van der Brug’s 2010 study on voter criteria also found evidence to reject the common perception that PVV voters are typically

⁶² Fennema, “Some Conceptual Issues and Problems in the Comparison of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe”, 497.

⁶³ Akkerman, “Anti-Immigration Parties and the Defence of Liberal Values”, 341, 351.

⁶⁴ Van Kessel, “Explaining the Electoral Performance of Populist Parties”, 85.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 85.

cynical and therefore vote by different criteria than supporters of mainstream parties. Just like traditional Dutch parties, new parties such as the PVV still need to be seen as “legitimate and efficient” options.⁶⁶ While the research cited directly above describes LPF and the PVV’s paradoxical ideology in the broad language of anti-immigrant, ‘monoculturalist’, or populist politics, their ideology can be described even more specifically as anti-Islam. Within each article, virtually all descriptions of the LPF/PVV parties and the party leaders relate to Islam; no other cultural or minority group is mentioned. Consider the following examples:

1) a) ...the paradoxical defence of liberalism is exclusively related to anti-immigration policies. Those parties... build their case on the defence of democracy, freedom of expression, separation of church and state, and the equality of men and women, a defence rallied against the threat of an ‘Islamization’ of Western culture. Akkerman, 341

b) He [Pim Fortuyn] feared that the ‘Islamization’ of Dutch culture would leave little room for freedom of expression, individual autonomy and the emancipation of women and homosexuals²⁵. Ibid, 341

2) ...he [Geert Wilders] is considered to be the most radical in his opinions, talking about the ‘Islamization’ of the Netherlands and a ‘tsunami of Muslims’.” Bos and van der Brug, 782

3) a) The [PVV] manifesto of 2010 nevertheless argues that the PVV is not a one-issue party. “Economically it [the Islamization of the Netherlands] is a disaster, it damages the quality of our education, it increases insecurity on the streets, causes an exodus out of our cities, drives out Jewish and gay people, and flushes the century-long emancipation of women down the toilet’ (PVV, 2010, p. 6).” van Kessel, 86

b) The [LPF] programme also speaks of problems caused by the social-cultural backwardness of large groups in society and related problems like criminality and discrimination of women, especially in fundamentalist Islamic circles. Van Kessel, 74

⁶⁶ Bos and van der Brug, “Public Images of Leaders of Anti-Immigration Parties”, 793.

These examples illustrate that Muslim integration and Islam's alleged incompatibility with Dutch society were the main political issues of LPF and the PVV. This disproportionately high level of political attention paid to Islam and Dutch Muslim communities further signals that anti-Islam politics is an important issue needing further examination on its own terms.

In recent years, the PVV's anti-Islam politics have also displayed more transnational elements including representation in the European Parliament (EP). Since the 2009 EP elections, the PVV has maintained a modest but consistent representation of four seats as part of the 'Non-Attached' parliament group. Leading up to the May 2014 elections, it was widely reported within the media that this election would yield greater representation for the 'Non-Attached' parties, giving them more collective bargaining power.⁶⁷ In his tempered pre-election analysis however, Cas Mudde rejects the media's 'rise of the far-right' forecast by underlining that the recent electoral growth of these parties in 9 out of 28 member states is comparatively low.⁶⁸ Mudde also notes that historically 'Non-Attached' parties do not work well together and that this is unlikely to change⁶⁹. However, low electoral growth does not explain the PVV's increasingly successful collaboration with likeminded parties via the European Alliance for Freedom (EAF).

In 2013, the EAF began as a partnership between PVV leader Geert Wilders and Front National (FN) leader Marie Le Pen. The EAF now describes itself as a "pan-European movement", which contains an incoherent grouping of national and regional level parties

⁶⁷ Higgins, "Populists' Rise in Europe Vote Shakes Leaders", *New York Times*, May 4, 2014.

⁶⁸ Mudde, "The Far Right and the European Elections", 100.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 103.

and individual parliamentarians.⁷⁰ While the political platform of the EAF is not exclusively related to Islam, Muslim immigration and integration within the EU and the “Islamization of Europe” are core subjects of each member party.⁷¹ Writing for *Policy Network* in February 2014, Mudde’s contemporaries Sarah de Lange, Matthijs Rooduijn, and Joost van Spanje, argue that the EAF coalition is a far more important development than the comparatively low far-right electoral growth might suggest. According to the authors, the EAF signals an unprecedented willingness for cooperation and equally unprecedented unity in perspective.⁷² Unlike previous generations of far-right parties, “...all participating parties adhere to a European form of nationalism, linking national norms, traditions and values to a common European history of enlightenment and the French revolution”.⁷³

Although Islam is not overtly mentioned in their official political platform, material on the EAF’s website indicates the movement is unabashedly supportive of anti-Islam politics.⁷⁴ In November 2014, the centrality of the “Islamization of Europe” to EAF politics was demonstrated by a gathering of parties, including the PVV, at the FN congress in Lyon. At the meeting, guest speakers discussed Islam as one of the leading threats to Europe.⁷⁵ To date, research unpacking the implications of this curious

⁷⁰ See “About” of the EAF website: www.eurallfree.org/q=node/65

⁷¹ Henderson, “Marine Le Pen ‘loses immunity’ over comparing Islamic prayers to Nazi occupation”, *The Telegraph*, June 1, 2013.

⁷² de Lange, Rooduijn and van Spanje, “The Le-Pen-Wilders’ Alliance Will Change European Politics”, *Policy Network*, February 2014.

⁷³ Parties referenced by de Lange, et al.: Freedom Party of Austria (FPO), Northern League (NL), Swedish Democrats (SD), Flemish Block (VB), Freedom Party (PVV) Netherlands, and the Front National (FN) France.

⁷⁴ In December 2014, the EAF newsfeed contained links to media coverage of the Pegida protests in Germany against Islamization, introduced by captions of support for the protesters.

⁷⁵ PVV, “Video-speech Geert Wilders-Congress Front National, 29 November, 2014”, <http://www.geertwilders.nl/index.php/94-english/1897-video-speech-geert-wilders-congress-of-the-front-national-lyon-29-11-2014>

“transnational-nationalism” driving anti-Islam politics, is not immediately apparent and deserves further attention. At present, the most unequivocal unpacking of anti-Islam politics is situated within the literatures of sexuality and gender studies.

Mobilizations of sexuality, culture, and women’s rights language in anti-Islam politics

In contrast to the multiculturalism and political party literatures, researchers examining Dutch sexuality and gender politics have explicitly identified the mobilization of women’s and gay rights discourses against Islam as a defining characteristic of anti-Islam politics. LPF leader Pim Fortuyn, who was openly gay, instigated a national discussion on Islam’s alleged treatment of homosexuality in his 2001 election campaign. Dutch politicians Geert Wilders and Ayaan Hirsi Ali subsequently folded the language of gay rights discourses in the Netherlands into their own criticisms of Islam.⁷⁶ As noted by Paul Mepschen et al., despite the relatively short history of gay rights in the Netherlands, anti-Islam politicians hold up gay rights as a seemingly eternal cornerstone of Dutch society. Dutch society’s appreciation for gay rights is then contrasted with deeply orientalist depictions of Muslims and Islamic culture as backward, static, and universally unaccepting of homosexuality.⁷⁷ The authors argue that this intersection of issues placed gay politics (although not LGBTQ politics) at the heart of national immigration and integration politics.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Mepschen et al., “Sexual Politics, Orientalism and Multicultural Citizenship in the Netherlands”, 963.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 963.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 963.

While using the term LGBT instead of gay rights, Gert Hekma and Jan Duyvendak seem to agree with Mepschen et al., that women's rights and LGBT politics have transitioned from the periphery to a central discussion across the political spectrum.⁷⁹ They argue:

Although the populist and right-wing parties may have had self-serving reasons to support women's and LGBT rights, the performative effect of their pro-gay and pro-feminist stances should not be underestimated: almost the entire Dutch political spectrum from the far left to the far right now supports progressive positions that remain embattled in most other western countries. Hekma and Duyvendak, 626

However this perspective runs counter to the authors' example that in contrast to Fortuyn's public speeches, LPF did not include gay rights within the party program.⁸⁰ Even more importantly, can this type of dialogue be beneficial or authentic given that it is established at the expense of Dutch Muslims, especially those who identify as LGBTQ? While Hekma and Duyvendak do advocate the need to denounce support for gay and women's rights discourses that are predicated on Islamophobia, their argument for the consideration of performative support is still worth debating. The value of performative politics becomes even more difficult to square alongside arguments that religious discrimination against Muslims is also deeply motivated by racial discrimination compounded by perceptions of "the Orient".

In his seminal theoretical work *Orientalism* (1979), Edward Said articulates the problematic ways in which the west has traditionally perceived, romanticized, and stigmatized 'the Orient': a breadth of geography including the Middle East and North Africa. For centuries, western material/visual culture and political discourses focused on

⁷⁹ While mentioned throughout both articles, the explicit mobilization of women's rights curiously appear to be only stated by Mepschen, et al., and Hekma and Duyvendak, they are not discussed in detail.

⁸⁰ Hekma and Duyvendak, "Queer Netherlands: A puzzling example", 626.

‘the Orient’ have created a thick yet disingenuous conceptual frame through which all possible knowledge is now understood and informed.⁸¹ Since orientalism also informs perceptions of immigrant communities from ‘the Orient’, Said’s text is arguably the foundational work of all contemporary explorations on the intersections and perceptions of Islam, race, and culture. Said’s theory of orientalism is not without controversy. In his 2013 article for *World Affairs*, international relations scholar Joshua Muravchik argues that Said overstates his position that all Western knowledge is essentially orientalist. Muravchik accuses Said of “painting with a broad brush” in order to arrive at a more seemingly definitive argument than at a position which acknowledges some western scholars were guilty of orientalist constructions while others were not.⁸² In 2006, historian Robert Irwin published one of the strongest criticisms of Said’s methodology and narration of Middle Eastern history titled, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and its Discontents*. However, given this project’s central exploration of how belonging to a European national identity is socially withheld from Muslims, *Orientalism* remains highly instructive for its articulation of how Muslim ‘others’ are created through western European politics and visual culture. Orientalism theory also illuminates the multifaceted nature of Muslim discrimination concurrently expressed through cultural, religious, and racial prejudice.

Racism is an undeniable feature of Dutch anti-Islam politics past and present. In her efforts to observe the inherent intersectionality of religious and racial discrimination, gender studies scholar Fatima El-Tayeb utilizes Moustafa Bayoumi’s concept the ‘racing

⁸¹ Said. *Orientalism*, 3.

⁸² Muravchik, “Enough Said: The False Scholarship of Edward Said”, *World Affairs*, April/March 2013, <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/enough-said-false-scholarship-edward-said> (date accessed September 6, 2015).

of religion’ to discuss the politicized discrimination against Muslims in the Netherlands. In her book, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (2011), El-Tayeb argues that increasingly discussions of “Culture” have, “replaced race in discourses directed at migrants and minorities—gender and sexuality on the other hand appear as constants, exemplifying both racial and cultural difference”.⁸³ This euphemistic framing allows for racial discrimination to go unnamed by the promoters of “Culture”. Culture’s ability to close down discussions of racism also makes it more difficult to address. Social activism researcher Miriyam Aouragh has similarly discussed “intolerance in the name of tolerance”, which is a powerful trope within Dutch anti-Islam politics. The creation of a false dichotomy between Islam and Dutch culture has powerfully stripped anti-Islam sentiment “of its racist features and block[ed] the debate even more forcefully”.⁸⁴ While El-Tayeb’s focus on the racing of Islam in Europe is expertly reasoned, her explicit exclusion of religion and the nation as anti-Islam frames is worth questioning. The following section will discuss the importance of the nation (nationalism) to Dutch anti-Islam politics.

A New Anti-Islam Nationalism

Anti-Islam politics are heavily informed by what researchers have called the “new Dutch nationalism”. According to Dutch anthropologist Oskar Verkaaik, a new form of Dutch nationalism emerged in the early 2000s that is characterized by its opposition to “internal migrant Others, especially Muslims”.⁸⁵ As Prins, Akkerman, and Mepschen et al. have

⁸³ El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, 83. For the original account see Moustafa Bayoumi, “Racing Religion”, *The New Centennial Review* 6, no. 2 (2006): 267-293.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 359.

⁸⁵ Verkaaik, “The cachet dilemma: Ritual and agency in the new Dutch nationalism”, 71.

similarly observed, Verkaaik contends that this new nationalism is mobilized through the language of values especially “gender equality, sexual emancipation, and freedom of speech”.⁸⁶ This constellation of recurring social issues, now under the guise of nationalism, is continually contrasted against Islam, which speaks to the layered depth of anti-Islam discursive politics. It also illustrates what Verkaaik calls the “social elasticity” of new nationalism, i.e., its potential appeal to Dutch society across the political spectrum.⁸⁷

An imagined Dutch nation and culture (*Dutchness*), is in many respects both the battleground and goal of Dutch anti-Islam politics.⁸⁸ Anti-Islam politics are arguably an ongoing construction of an imagined Netherlands and Dutch people in which there is no space for Islam within the national identity. In their survey of the "new Dutch nationalism", cultural anthropologists Thijl Sunier and Rob van Ginkel argue this discursive shift needs to be understood within the broader milieu of existing neo-nationalist research. Specifically, the authors support a leading perspective within the field (also adopted by Verkaaik) which argues that neo-nationalism is organized around conceptions of internal not external borders.⁸⁹ Sunier and van Ginkel conclude that this "new nationalism" is linked to Dutch political discourses on Islam, immigration, and visible minorities dating back to the 1980s. Although elementary notions of Islam and Muslims were brought to the Netherlands' through its colonization of Indonesia, curiously Dutch society “at large” only became familiar with Islam after the Second

⁸⁶ Ibid, 71.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 71.

⁸⁸ For the classic study of nationalism see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2006.

⁸⁹ Sunier and Ginkel, 118.

World War.⁹⁰ A commonly proposed explanation for this more recent attention to Islam is the low level of Muslim Indonesian immigration to the Netherlands during the post-war period. Although Indonesia was and remains the largest Muslim country in the world, Indonesian immigrants to the Netherlands were primarily Christians from the Moluccas who fought alongside the Dutch during the Indonesian War of Independence (1945-1949).⁹¹ It was not until the Netherlands' guest worker policy of the 1970s-1980s that Muslim communities from Turkey and Morocco became established in Dutch society (in terms of community size and cultural visibility), and became a subject of negative political attention. Said differently, the Netherlands' internal identity border is drawn in connection to the longstanding anti-Islam discourse that emerged in the late 1970s-1980s. Much like how researchers have focused on the mobilization of sexuality and culture against Islam, the "new Dutch nationalism" literature suggests that imaginary borders of *Dutchness* are used to restrict who and what can be considered Dutch."⁹²

However what appears to be an underexplored theme of the "new Dutch nationalism" is that contemporary anti-Islam politics are also oriented towards re-imagining Dutch history. Based on the statements of anti-Islam politicians like Geert Wilders, it would be easy to conclude that the borders of the Netherlands never shifted from a small, homogenous land in Europe. In reality, the Dutch borders were porous during the colonial period and remain so to this day.⁹³ By downplaying this 'multicultural' history, anti-Islam politicians create internal borders against the

⁹⁰ Shadid, "Integration of Muslim Minorities in the Netherlands", 359.

⁹¹ Jones, Guno. *Dutch politicians, the Dutch nation and the dynamics of post-colonial citizenship*, In *Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands* 27, 33 (Ulbe Bosma ed, Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

⁹² *Ibid*, 111.

⁹³ The Kingdom of the Netherlands is currently comprised of the Netherlands, and the islands Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, Saint Eustatius, Saba, and part of Saint Martin; located in the Caribbean.

Netherlands' longstanding relationship with Islam. To illustrate, modern Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, was a part of the Netherlands from 1800 until 1949. Regardless, anti-Islam politicians have consistently presented Islam as external to the Netherlands' national history. Further research is needed to determine if anti-Islam politicians are silent on the Netherlands' colonial history not out of sense of 'colonial guilt' but as a way to downplay the country's 'multicultural' history that is at odds with the ethnically homogeneous *Dutchness* they advocate. As will be discussed in the next and final section, further research into the curious history of anti-Islam books and films authored by Dutch politicians is also needed.

Cultural Production: An overlooked theme in anti-Islam politics

There is a curious tendency among prominent Dutch politicians to communicate their criticisms of Islam through personally authored cultural production materials (books and/or films not officially tied to their political party).⁹⁴ This phenomenon began in the 1990s with Fritz Bolkestein who was a former leader of the opposition and conservative party the VVD.⁹⁵ Bolkestein wrote two books on Islam while in office: *Islam en de democratie: Een ontmoeten* (Islam and democracy: An Encounter, 1994), followed by *Moslims in de Polder* (Muslims in the Polder, 1997). However likely due to the specific country focus and uncommon language of publication these books are not publically accessible via Canadian or American library loan, and unfortunately cannot be examined. However Bolkestein is often quoted for saying that the achievements of European

⁹⁴ Anti-Islam politicians present their works as informed pieces of scholarship. Framing the books and films as cultural production materials disputes this position and further signals they are problematized within this thesis.

⁹⁵ Peoples Party for Freedom and Democracy, (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD)

civilization including, “the universal values of secularization, freedom of speech, and the principle of non-discrimination” need to be defended from Islam.⁹⁶ In light of such comments, it is reasonable to conclude that his books were written in a similar vein of anti-Islam critique.

During the 2000s, the production of anti-Islam materials by prominent Dutch politicians increased and was widely publicized within the media.⁹⁷ In chronological order the materials are listed below; ‘B’ and ‘F’ identify books and films respectfully.

1) Pim Fortuyn, *De Islamisering van onze Cultuur: Nederlandse Identiteit als Fundament* (The Islamization of our Culture: Dutch Identity as Foundational), 1997, 2nd edition 2001. B.

2) Fortuyn, *De Puinhopen van Acht Jaar Parse* (The Ruins of Eight Purple Years), 2002. B.

3) Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Submission*, 2004. F.

4) Hirsi Ali, *Mijn Vrijheid* (released in English as *Infidel*), 2006. B.

5) Wilders, *Fitna*, 2007. F.

6) Wilders, *Marked for Death: Islam’s War Against the West and Me*, 2012. B.

At present, *Submission* appears to be the only anti-Islam material to have garnered the attention of academic inquiry.⁹⁸ In this modest body of work, the main themes tellingly echo the problematic portrayals of Muslims in Dutch anti-Islam politics. Iveta Jusova, a professor of comparative women’s studies in Europe at Antioch University, explores how *Submission* reaffirms the false orientalist binary created between Islam and

⁹⁶ Prins, 367.

⁹⁷ Staff writer. “Volkskrant en Trouw Meest in de Ban van Fitna”, *Volkskrant*, April 30, 2008. According to a study by the *Volkskrant*, 1297 domestic news articles were written on *Fitna* between the film’s initial announcement on November 27, 2007 and its release on April 8, 2008.

⁹⁸ While no literature analyzing the content of *Fitna* could be located, Sipco Vellenga and Gerard Wieggers discuss the reactions of Dutch religious organizations to *Submission* and *Fitna* (2013). Sabina Mihelj et al., explore online conversations and reactions to *Fitna* on Youtube (2011). See bibliography for full citations.

women.⁹⁹ She argues that *Submission* “deploys and manipulates...a repertoire of visual stereotypes that have long been associated in Western cultural imagination with perceptions of Muslim women as sexual objects and victims of their culture”.¹⁰⁰

Contemporary philosopher Marc de Leeuw and media and gender studies scholar Sonja van Wichelen provide a similar analysis of the film. They argue that *Submission* is a deeply orientalist film that presents Islam as a non-western and non-modern “Other”, which reinforces fears and negative perceptions of Muslims within Dutch society.¹⁰¹

Although studies of the remaining anti-Islam materials could not be located, even a cursory review reveals these works also echo the politics of their authors. Yet despite their commonalities, the political relevance of the materials is arguably understated within the literature. By way of example, when discussing LPF leader Pim Fortuyn’s commentary on the “Islamization” of Dutch society, scholars often reference his 1997 book on this topic.¹⁰² However the connection between the book and its influence on Fortuyn’s political campaign is not discussed. Similarly, while De Leeuw and van Wichelen discuss the significance of Ayaan Hirsi Ali as the co-creator of *Submission*, they curiously downplay her status as a high profile politician of the VVD party. Instead the authors argue that Hirsi Ali was generally considered more of an activist than politician during her political career.¹⁰³ Within the previously discussed political party

⁹⁹ Jusova, “Hirsi Ali and Van Gogh’s *Submission*: Reinforcing the Islam vs. women binary”, 148-155.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 150.

¹⁰¹ de Leeuw and van Wichelen, ““Please, go wake up!” *Submission*, Hirsi Ali, and the ‘War on Terror’, in the Netherlands”, 328-329.

¹⁰² Vollard, “Re-emerging Christianity in west European politics: The case of the Netherlands”, 90.

¹⁰³ Leeuw and van Wichelen, 330.

and gender studies literatures, anti-Islam materials were also often mentioned but not considered in connection to the author's political persona.¹⁰⁴

Curiously, there also appears to be a complete absence of research analyzing the significance of the materials as a collective and curious phenomenon. The original research direction of this thesis was also to conduct an in depth discourse analysis of the anti-Islam materials authored by politicians. However while conducting the initial review it became clear that the core message of Dutch anti-Islam materials is virtually uniform. Each work merely displays different approaches to advocating why Islam is dangerous and incompatible with Dutch society. As result, the more intriguing research question is arguably: what can be learned from studying the potential significance of the materials as a collective force within public thought? Given the considerable presence of Dutch anti-Islam materials within the Netherlands and also internationally within the broader trend of "Eurabia literature", such an examination appears particularly relevant to Dutch and European politics today.

In 2006, journalist Matt Carr published the first academic article detailing the rise of a new type of book that advocated Europe was in danger of an Islamic takeover (i.e., of becoming "Eurabia").¹⁰⁵ Within the article Carr charts the growth of the genre, identifies its core arguments, and profiles its main texts. According to Carr, in recent years books advocating Europe's Islamization are no longer commonly perceived as Islamophobic conspiracy theory literature. Instead, the books are inching "ever closer towards mainstream respectability".¹⁰⁶ In concurrence with the far-right party literature

¹⁰⁴ For sources that briefly mention *Fitna* see: Van Kessel, 84; Vossen, 23; Betz and Meret, 320. For *Submission* see: El-Tayeb, 96; Buruma, 176-185, Vink, 338.

¹⁰⁵ Carr, "You are now entering Eurabia", 2006.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 1.

previously discussed, Carr also notes that the anti-Islam arguments present within “Eurabia” books were traditionally raised by taboo fringe parties on Europe’s far-right and have since moved into mainstream political agendas.¹⁰⁷ In her analysis of the presence of the genre in Norway, social anthropologist Sindre Bangstad concludes that a clear connection exists between the content of “Eurabian” books by Norwegian authors e.g., Peder Are “Fjordman”, and the politics of the anti-Islam Norwegian Progress Party (FrP). Bangstad notes that FrP has frequently cited Eurabian texts and aimed to “promote and legitimize this genre”.¹⁰⁸ While this connection between “Eurabia” texts and Norwegian politics is important to note, Bangstad and Carr do not identify any Norwegian politicians as contributing authors of the genre. To date, scholarship indicates that the Netherlands is the only country with politicians that have written “Eurabia” texts.¹⁰⁹ This buttresses the argument that Dutch anti-Islam materials are worthy of further consideration as key part of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands.

Lastly, a serious consequence of overlooking the importance of anti-Islam materials is missing their ability to impact national security and social stability. Due to their inflammatory and offensive content, both films *Submission* and *Fitna* have already been connected with disturbing the national security in the Netherlands. *Submission*, is widely recognized as having prompted the murder of the film’s director Theo van Gogh.¹¹⁰ The release of *Fitna* in 2008 was also a key factor that led the Dutch National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism (NCTV) to raise the national threat level from limited

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Bangstad, “Eurabia Comes to Norway”, 386.

¹⁰⁹ Bangstad identifies books by Dutch politician Geert Wilders and former Dutch politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali as critical texts of the “Eurabian” genre; see 371 and 377.

¹¹⁰ Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 4; Eyerman, *The Murder of Theo van Gogh: From Social Drama to Cultural Trauma*, 30

to substantial.¹¹¹ In light of the recently released collection of anti-Islam cartoons by Geert Wilders in June 2015, it appears that inflammatory cultural production will likely continue to play a role in Dutch anti-Islam politics and requires further analysis.¹¹²

Conclusion: The case for explicitly naming Dutch anti-Islam politics

Existing research overwhelmingly suggests a sustained anti-Islam political discourse has existed in the Netherlands since the 1980s. Observations of anti-Islam politics are scattered throughout research on multiculturalism, ‘right of centre’ politics, gender/sexuality, nationalism, media/film studies, and the “Eurabia” genre. Although these research conversations are at present disconnected, they provide rich details and a sound context for a case study on anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands. As a result, this thesis hopes to examine and connect these separate conversations and make the history of Dutch anti-Islam politics, now hidden in plain sight, more explicit in the process.

¹¹¹ Press Release. “The Netherlands still a preferred target for jihadists”, *Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism*, December 19, 2008.

¹¹² PVV, “Video Mohammed Cartoons-Geert Wilders”, June 20, 2015, available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dc0yJF9dxx0> In his introduction to the cartoons, Wilders says that he released the cartoons in defiance of the recent attack on the “Mohammed Cartoons” exhibit in Garland Texas. He continued to say, “...the Muslims, i.e., the terrorists don’t want the cartoons to be seen...but to protect freedom of speech we cannot be afraid...we must do the opposite of what they want”. Translation by author.

Chapter 2. Research Methods

Introduction

This chapter will discuss this study's approach to researching the history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands. In contrast to the 'post-9/11' narrative frame, the importance of examining the long-term history of anti-Islam politics is presented and followed by a summary of the interdisciplinary perspective and theoretical works guiding my approach. Primary research regarding the content and circulation of anti-Islam cultural production materials in the Netherlands is then introduced. The anticipated contribution of this exploratory research is also outlined. My fieldwork in the Netherlands and subsequent "Expert as Source" interviews are also discussed.¹¹³ For clarity, specialized definitions of terms critical to the research subject are provided and briefly explicated. Finally, outstanding research concerns are considered.

Beyond the post-9/11 moment: Questioning the dominant temporal framing of anti-Islam political research

The advent of the term 'post-9/11' has turned the September 11th terrorist attacks against the United States into a standard framing for many of today's global issues.¹¹⁴ In addition to its ubiquity within media and western political discourses, a post-9/11 framing is also often referenced or utilized within academic research from a variety of fields.¹¹⁵ This

¹¹³ Interviews were conducted with approval from Carleton University Research Ethics (Project #14-0579).

¹¹⁴ Post-9/11 and its various synonyms e.g., "after 9/11" or "since 9/11".

¹¹⁵ See Grillo, *British and Others: From 'Race' to 'Faith'*, In *The Multiculturalism Backlash* 50, 53 (Steven Vertovec and Susanne Wessendorf eds., Routledge, 2010); Keeble, *The 9/11 novel: Trauma, Politics and Identity* (McFarland and Company Publishers, 2014); and *Music in the Post-9/11 World* (Jonathan Ritter and Martin Daughtry eds., Routledge, 2007).

periodization is of course appropriate and beneficial in a number of research contexts, such as examinations of the anti-terrorism legislation introduced after 9/11 in numerous countries including the Netherlands.¹¹⁶ However, ‘post-9/11’ has also arguably become over utilized and implicitly trusted within research on contemporary social issues; particularly those related to Muslim communities in Western nations.¹¹⁷ To illustrate, the rise of anti-Islam parties and politics in the Netherlands is often explained as a product of the ‘post-9/11’ era.¹¹⁸ Particularly, the assassination of Dutch anti-Islam politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 and terrorist murder of anti-Islam filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, are generally posited to have galvanized public fears of “Islamist extremism” and support for anti-Islam parties. The significance of these atrocities to Dutch anti-Islam politics is discernible and should not be ignored. However, the standard rationale that the murders caused anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands requires investigation and is the purpose of this study.

Given what historians tell us about the need to think critically about periodization, it stands to reason that there are potentially serious implications to using ‘post-9/11’ as an undisputed frame for the history and social causes of Dutch anti-Islam politics.¹¹⁹ The approach of this study has therefore been to ‘see past’ the post-9/11 framing by researching the history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands. This timeline brings into

¹¹⁶ Van Sliedregt, "European Approaches to Fighting Terrorism", 418.

¹¹⁷ See *Beyond 9/11: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Twenty First Century U.S American Culture*, (Christian Kloeckner, Simone Knewitz, Sabine Sielke eds., Peter Lang, 2013).

¹¹⁸ See Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 2006; Kenan, *Multiculturalism and Its Discontents: Rethinking Diversity after 9/11*; Cf, Lentin and Titley, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism*, 2010.

¹¹⁹ Kaufmann, “Periodization and its Discontents”, 1. According to Thomas Kaufmann, in his 1967 *Philip Maurice Denke* lecture, art historian Ernest Gombrich deftly referred to the period divisions of history as a “necessary evil”. While parameters are needed to make the scope of analysis reasonable, periodization is inevitably fraught with the same methodological problems effecting “historical knowledge and its representation”. Baker, “History and Periodization”, 135.

focus ample research suggesting that anti-Islam politics and parties emerged in the Netherlands during the 1980s. Research also suggests that contemporary anti-Islam politics reflect long-term and systemic issues within Dutch society regarding the acceptance of Muslim communities and fixed notions of *Dutchness*.

Interdisciplinary approach and theoretical considerations

Within its main historical analysis (Chapter 3), this study examines the history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands since 1945. In attempting to make the history of anti-Islam politics—hidden in plain sight—more explicit, this study connects and draws on research from a variety of disciplines and fields. In particular, the arrival and perceptions of Dutch Muslim communities, and the emergence of anti-Islam politics within Dutch society were examined by drawing on research from the disciplines of history, political science, sociology and political philosophy; and the fields of multiculturalism, gender and sexuality, and racism studies.

Anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands arguably represent an unabashed belief in the “clash of civilizations” and the “Orient”. As a result, Edward Said’s theory of *Orientalism* grounds this study’s understanding of the interconnectivity between racial, cultural, and religious discrimination at work within Dutch anti-Islam politics. As mentioned within Chapter 1, Said argues that for centuries western knowledge of North Africa and the Middle East has been falsely constructed. Following the Renaissance, orientalism gained momentum in Europe as a result of European countries’ privileged ability to visit and engage with the ‘Orient’; the lens of cultural observation was not

mutual.¹²⁰ As a result, orientalist perceptions became widely accepted within European society and remain a “highly invested filter” that informs all possible understandings of the diverse people, culture, histories collapsed under the ‘Orient’.¹²¹ According to Said, orientalist conceptions of Islam and Muslim communities are so entrenched we cannot think outside of them. However he argues that it is still important “to try and grasp...the sheer knitted together strength of Orientalist discourse”.¹²² I aim to meet this request by maintaining a self-critical awareness of the potential false knowledge brought to this study, even as it endeavours to examine the negative political depictions of Islam and Muslims in the Netherlands.

Anti-Islam politics are also heavily informed by understandings of national identity. As a result, Benedict Anderson’s classic theoretical work on nationalism guides this study’s approach to understanding the role of *Dutchness* in anti-Islam politics. Anderson argues that nationalism or *nation-ness* is best considered as a unique “cultural artefact” that did not exist before the 18th century.¹²³ A key characteristic of nationalism is its ability to cultivate within individuals a deeply felt sense of emotional connection to an imagined community, such as the Netherlands. National communities, Anderson argues, are distinguishable by the style in which they are imagined.¹²⁴ However the imagery of a community may not be inclusive of all.

Within Europe’s more recent immigrant-multicultural societies including the Netherlands, traditional notions of national identity have not sufficiently expanded to

¹²⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 3.

¹²² *Ibid*, 6.

¹²³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 13.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 15.

include the multifaceted cultural identities of newer citizens, e.g., Netherlanders of Moroccan heritage. Particularly within the context of anti-Islam politics, belonging to the Netherlands' national identity (*Dutchness*) is not necessarily granted by citizenship.¹²⁵ Instead *Dutchness* is defined traditionally, by a demographic homogeneity of 'whiteness' not seen in the Netherlands since before the beginning of post-colonial immigration in 1945. The arrival of decolonization however, did not dismantle deeply entrenched perceptions of racial minorities as inferior 'others'.¹²⁶ Analyses of *Dutchness* then, must also consider the Netherlands' colonial framework when attempting to understand how, in the words of post-colonial theorist Guno Jones, "the real Dutch" and "the un-real Dutch" 'others' have been constructed.¹²⁷ In light of the historical intersection between decolonization and arrival of cultural diversity in the Netherlands, post-colonial readings of *Dutchness* provide an essential theoretical grounding for this study.¹²⁸

Anti-Islam politics are also reflective of neo-nationalism. In brief, neo-nationalism refers to the newer features of nationalism in light of global shifts such as the end of the Cold War.¹²⁹ While still concerned with visions of the primordial nation, neo-nationalist movements also focus on current politicized issues such as immigration. As a result, in contrast to traditional conceptions of national identity and the nation state as pitted against an 'external other', neo-nationalist theorists have noted that the 'external

¹²⁵ Jones, *Biology, Culture, "Postcolonial Citizenship" and the Dutch Nation, 1945-2007*, In *Dutch Racism* 315, 332 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi, 2014).

¹²⁶ Childs and Williams, *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory*, 218.

¹²⁷ Jones, 336.

¹²⁸ Bosma, *Why is there no post-colonial debate in the Netherlands?*, In *Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands* 193,193 (Ulbe Bosma ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2012). In addition Bosma (2013), *Dutch Racism* (particularly the works of Kwame Nimako et Al., Guno Jones and Joesph Jordan), edited by Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving (2014), has been an instrumental guide to this project's understanding of Dutch colonial/post-colonial history and its implications to *Dutchness*.

¹²⁹ Banks and Gingrich, *Introduction*, In *Neo-nationalism in Europe and Beyond* 1, 2 (Andre Gingrich and Marcus Banks eds., Berghahn Books, 2006).

other' is also understood as existing within the state.¹³⁰ An emphasis on national origins is not exclusive to anti-Islam politics or the Netherlands. However, it is worth considering how Dutch anti-Islam politics benefit from mainstream expressions of neo-nationalism such as the standard use of identity categories *autochtoon* (individuals of Dutch ancestry) and *allochtoon* (individuals of non-Dutch ancestry), within Dutch integration politics.¹³¹

A Note on Key Terms

Specialized definitions of concepts that are critical to this study are included below. As needed, the reasoning behind the definitions has also been briefly discussed.

Anti-Islam politics: refers to political parties and political discourses that promote intolerance, discrimination, and racism against Islam and Muslims.¹³² Specifically in the Netherlands, anti-Islam politics **a)** advocate the removal of Islam from Dutch society **b)** claim Dutch liberal values are threatened by the presence of allegedly illiberal Muslim values, and **c)** promote the view that Islam is inherently violent and/or synonymous with terrorism.

Anti-Islam cultural production materials: books and films created by Dutch politicians that meet the criteria of anti-Islam politics outlined above. Referring to these works as

¹³⁰ Sunier and Ginkel, *At Your Service*, In *Neo-Nationalism in Europe and Europe: Perspectives from Social Anthropology* 107, 118. (Andre Gingrich and Marcus Banks eds., Berghahn Books, 2006).

¹³¹ Yanow and van der Haar, "People out of place: allochthony and autochthony in the Netherlands' identity discourse — metaphors and categories in action", 233.

¹³² This definition is inspired by Ibrahim Kalin, *Islamophobia and the Limits of Multiculturalism*, In *The Challenges of Pluralism in the 21st Century* 3, 4 (John L. Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin eds., Oxford University Press, 2011). The focus of Islamophobia research appears to be measuring xenophobia and fears of Muslims in public perceptions, particularly via the tone and influence of local media coverage and survey polls. As the term suggests, Islamophobia also focuses on the psychological aspects or phobic fears of 'othering'. Since it does not focus on politics, Islamophobia is therefore understood to be an important aspect of the anti-Islam politics but not a sufficient frame for this thesis.

cultural production materials (or anti-Islam materials for brevity when possible) is meant to signal that their content is problematized within this study. The creation of anti-Islam materials is not exclusive to Dutch politicians, however an adapted definition is used to clarify that all references to ‘anti-Islam materials’ in this study refer to materials created by this group.

Multiculturalism: refers to the cultural and religious plurality within a society as a concept, social model, or social aim. This study is concerned with how multiculturalism is presented and does not wade into the discussion on what ‘is’ multiculturalism. However the polysomic nature of the term often goes unstated and benefits from observation.¹³³

Dutch Muslim community: Individuals who belong to the cultural and religious community of Islam. It should be stressed that this study focuses on how Dutch Muslims are perceived and depicted within anti-Islam politics. The inherent complexities or ‘reality’ of the Netherlands’ Muslim communities are not explored.

Violent extremism: “refers to the process of taking radical views and putting them into violent action. It is not limited to any specific race, ethnicity, religion or culture. There is no single profile or pathway for individuals who come to embrace violent extremism”.¹³⁴

Violent extremism is often referred within academia, politics, and journalism as “Islamist extremism”. Recently however, efforts have been made by leaders in these

¹³³ Common definitions of multiculturalism include: As a concept: “a conceptual grab bag of issues relating to race, culture and identity”. Mills (2007) quoted in Lentin and Titley in *The Crises of Multiculturalism*, 11; as an ideal type-multicultural social model: “the government endorses the principle of cultural diversity and actively supports the right of different cultural and ethnic groups to retain their distinctive cultural identities”. Vink, “Dutch ‘Multiculturalism’ Beyond the Pillarization Myth”, 337; and as a social aim: “multiculturalism matches with the public recognition of cultural identities, with equal rights for ethnic, racial, religious, or national minorities”. Kastoryano, “Multiculturalism”, 1029.

¹³⁴ Public Safety Canada. “Violent Extremism”, March 4, 2014.

fields to mirror the definitions and more neutral language of “violent extremism” used by security officials, whenever possible. The rationale for this being that “Islamist” implicitly suggests groups or individuals who commit violence “in the name of Islam” are somehow legitimate representations of the faith. Referring to individuals and groups as violent extremists takes away this discursive opportunity of credibility.¹³⁵ Within this study, the term “Islamist extremism” is used only to indicate how violent extremism has historically been portrayed by Dutch anti-Islam politicians or understood within Dutch society.

Primary Research: Examining the relationship between anti-Islam cultural production materials and anti-Islam politics

In the ‘post-9/11’ narrative framing, increased anxieties of terrorism are often credited for making anti-Islam politics suddenly no longer socially taboo in the Netherlands.¹³⁶

However this analysis does not consider the ability of politicians to actively participate in the normalization of anti-Islam politics within mainstream society. As an alternative way of analyzing the normalization of Dutch anti-Islam politics, primary research was conducted into the following curious trend. Since the late 1990s, high-profile anti-Islam politicians have personally written and released books and films criticizing Islam. These materials are worth investigating because they are publically presented by the authors as ‘cultural’ works, not as propaganda pieces for their respective parties. In so doing, the highly offensive anti-Islam political message of the materials is subverted. Instead, anti-

¹³⁵ See Obama, “Remarks by the President in Closing of the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism” (Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, Washington, D.C., February 18, 2015).

¹³⁶ For more on the normalization of anti-Islam politics see Baukje Prins’ pioneering article, “The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism“, (Chap 1. no. 2).

Islam materials are presented to Dutch society as apolitical, works of “art”. As discussed in Chapter 1, the content of the anti-Islam films *Submission* and *Fitna* have been discussed by a number of scholars. However no scholarship could be located discussing this curious pattern of cultural production amongst anti-Islam politicians in the Netherlands. Research into the potential role these materials played in the normalization of anti-Islam politics could also not be located. As a result, exploratory research on this topic became a key focus of this study and is discussed in Chapter 4.

Based on the pre-9/11 origins of this pattern of materials, coupled with the fact that the number of materials increased during the ‘normalization’ of anti-Islam politics in the early 2000s, this study asked the following questions:

- 1). a) Is it possible that Dutch politicians actively used their anti-Islam books/films as an extension of their politics?
- b) If so, is it possible that these materials played a supporting role in the normalization of the anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands?

It was hypothesized that a relevant connection existed between Dutch politicians and their anti-Islam materials. In order to pursue these questions, exploratory research was conducted into the thematic similarities between the anti-Islam books/films authored by Dutch politicians and their respective anti-Islam political agendas. To assess this possible connection, the thematic content of the materials was reviewed and then compared with the political activities of the author. A rare advantage of analyzing the thematic content of these anti-Islam materials is that the authors explicitly state their deeply critical positions on Islam. Therefore discussing the content of these materials of ‘anti-Islam’ is not only

the label used by the researcher.¹³⁷ In order to pare down the material content and structure to my analysis, anticipated themes were searched for within the materials. Theme criteria were based on this study's review of the secondary literature and media coverage examining the politics of each author discussed in Chapter 1. Anticipated themes included:

- The cultural Islamization of the Netherlands
- Islam's backwardness and inherent incompatibility within Dutch society demonstrated by intolerance of gay and women's rights
- National security/Islamist terrorism
- The failure of multiculturalism/Muslim integration in the Netherlands

The examined materials were (reluctantly) collapsed into a single category during this analysis. As scholars of visual culture and literature rightly tell us, the medium of a source is not neutral and requires evaluation on its own terms. It also follows then that a close reading of the materials requires exploration in its own study. Research that critically engages and problematizes the structural differences between the materials is also needed. During this study, themes I would have liked to explore include: the structural significance of anti-Islam political manifestos authored by Pim Fortuyn, and the anti-Islam autobiographies of Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Geert Wilders. The difference between the dramatized style of Hirsi Ali's anti-Islam film *Submission*, and the documentary style of *Fitna* used by Wilders is also worthy of further analysis. The structure of the materials undoubtedly shapes the audience/readers interaction with the

¹³⁷ However, to guide my reading of the schematics of anti-Islam materials, a close reading of *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984), by French philosopher and theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard was conducted. According to Lyotard, metanarratives are "systems of thought", story structures, which present knowledge as "parts of connected, yet to be unified whole subjects", i.e. metanarratives suggest that objective truth exists and is knowable. The danger of metanarratives then, is that they present simple, sweeping explanations to complex issues by loosely connecting subjects that may bear no logical relation, such as the connections forged within anti-Islam readings of Dutch society/history. (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 33, 37.

ideas, and also their perceptions of the author as a reliable narrator or “authority” on Islam.

Once a connection between anti-Islam politics and the materials was identified, the presence of anti-Islam materials within Dutch society was selected as an indicator of normalization.¹³⁸ To avoiding value laden questions of popularity, the visible presence—in contrast to the absence—of the materials was chosen because it can be roughly measured by the volume of anti-Islam materials circulating within Dutch society. The visible presence (or absence) of the materials is easily demonstrated by mainstream cultural criteria such as: book sales/library catalogues, film viewership, and media attention. It was hypothesized that if little or no discernible presence of the materials could be found within the Dutch cultural landscape, it would likely mean that the materials did not play a significant role in normalizing anti-Islam politics.

The presence of the Dutch anti-Islam materials was explored by consulting the Netherlands’ bestseller data of the *Stichting Collectieve Propaganda van het Nederlands* (CPNB).¹³⁹ CPNB is a foundation that promotes Dutch literature and also provides domestic bestseller information including its weekly bestseller list “De Bestseller60”. As a way to explore the circulation of the anti-Islam materials as cultural works, and also to get a sense of where the materials are physically located, the holdings of anti-Islam materials within libraries in the Netherlands and internationally were explored through

¹³⁸ Questions regarding the presence of anti-Islam materials within Dutch society invariably rely on German philosopher Jürgen Habermas’ pioneering conceptualization of the public sphere and discussion of the innumerable meanings of ‘public’. If the public sphere can be understood, in part, as space of interaction where citizens engage with political leaders, it is worth asking if anti-Islam materials reflect a desire of politicians to circumvent debate within “the political public sphere” by circulating their anti-Islam beliefs in works deceptively presented as ‘cultural’ not political. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (translated by Thomas Burger, 1991 edition), 2, 222.

¹³⁹ Directly translated (CPNB), stands for the “Dutch Foundation of the Collective Propaganda”, however in this context a better translation for propaganda would be “of public works”. <http://web.cpnb.nl/home.vm>

WorldCat. WorldCat is an online network database that connects catalogue information of libraries from around the world.¹⁴⁰

Finding a similar approach to measuring the presence of anti-Islam films *Submission* and *Fitna* proved more difficult. Since the films were not released commercially, figures on their viewership (e.g., sales) were not available. As an alternative, I consulted studies conducted by media scholars and the Dutch newspaper *Volkskrant*, into the Dutch media's coverage of the films. The films' viewership numbers on *YouTube* were also examined. As discussed within the context of the anti-Islam material analysis (Chapter 4), each consulted measure of 'presence' contains its own limitations. However, the selected measures provide a rough outline of normalization, and this style of exploratory research is consistent with the qualitative and interdisciplinary framework of this thesis.

Field Research

Between August and December 2013, I visited the Netherlands in order to conduct field research for this study and pursue further Dutch language training. During this period, five "Expert as Source" interviews were conducted with Dutch scholars and practitioners engaged in Dutch political research and security/intelligence studies. Interviews were conducted in order to incorporate expert and also local perspectives. The interviews added balance to this study by introducing alternative conceptualizations of the subjects at hand and challenging my own preconceptions. The format of the interviews was semi-structured, allowing for natural progressions in the conversation led by the expert.

¹⁴⁰ See WorldCat; <https://www.worldcat.org/default.jsp>

However each expert was asked to assess the significance of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands and/or the potential security threat of anti-Islam politics and materials. Experts and practitioners were interviewed from the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism Studies (ICCT) at University of Leiden, and the European Union Radicalization Awareness Network (EU-RAN). All interviews were conducted in accordance with pre-authorized approval from Carleton University's Ethics Review.¹⁴¹

During this period, I studied full time in the University of Amsterdam's intensive Dutch language program (INTT), which presented an unanticipated research opportunity. On entering the program it was discovered that INTT follows the government curriculum for the official *Nederlands als Tweede Taal* (Dutch as a Second Language) state exam which is primarily directed at new citizens. As a result, this provided an informal opportunity for "participant observer" research into how conceptions of Dutch identity (*Dutchness*) and historical themes critical to this study such as pillarization and multiculturalism are understood by the Dutch government and actively presented to non-Dutch natives.¹⁴²

Research issues

In this study, the history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands is examined at the national level. In addition to being consistent with the majority of research on this topic, it is also hoped that a national framing will enable this study to be of relational relevance to future research on international anti-Islam party politics, which are presently active

¹⁴¹ Ethics clearance received for project: #14-0579.

¹⁴² Burnam et al., *Research Methods in Politics* (2nd edition), 264.

throughout Europe. A local focus would likely not be able offer this same level of applicability outside of the Dutch context. However, compelling arguments for the need to study anti-Islam politics at a local level were encountered within the literature. Primarily, a fascinating study by Dutch political scientists Caelesta Poppelaars and Peter Scholeten, raises the important observation that while a ‘backlash’ against multiculturalism/Islam in the Netherlands is clearly demonstrated within national politics, this ‘turn’ is much less visible in local/municipal politics.¹⁴³ According to researchers, this could be because national politics “tend to operate a higher level of abstraction than local politics, since it is primarily at the latter level where concrete issues have to be solved”.¹⁴⁴

Intriguingly, this is at odds with the more favourable municipal showing of anti-Islam politicians during the 1980s and 1990s that is often mentioned by historians in contrast to the weaker results of national anti-Islam parties’ at the time.¹⁴⁵ Lastly, Dutch social scientists have also observed the limitations of examining the establishment of Islamic cultural institutions during the 1960s-1970s as represented within the national political discourse. Since it is local government that primarily oversaw and participated in the establishment of Islamic institutions, this local political history should be considered.¹⁴⁶ In light of these observations, the local history of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands is suggested to be an important historical component deserving of further

¹⁴³ Poppelaars and Scholten, “Two worlds apart: The divergence of local and national immigration policies in the Netherlands, 336.

¹⁴⁴ Verbeek, Scholten and Entzinger, “Final Country Report: The Netherlands”, 5.

¹⁴⁵ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 80.

¹⁴⁶ See Rath et al., “The politics of recognizing religious diversity in Europe: Social reactions to the institutionalization of Islam in the Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain”, 67.

research. It is also speculated that this history will further buttress the argument that anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands are not adequately represented by a 'post-9/11' framing.

Chapter 3. Before 9/11: The forgotten history of anti-Islam politics and its relationship to *Dutchness*

Internationally, the Netherlands is often considered a shining example of multiculturalism in action.¹⁴⁷ However since the early 2000s, multiculturalism continues to be widely depicted as a failure within Dutch politics. In the ‘post-9/11’ context, multiculturalism is now routinely blamed for the increased risk of homegrown terrorism and alleged “culture clash” between Dutch liberal and Muslim values.¹⁴⁸ These developments are said to have exhausted the feasibility of multiculturalism in the Netherlands and revealed it to be an untenable social model.¹⁴⁹ During the early 2000s, public support for a ‘post-multicultural’ society was pointedly demonstrated by the formation of explicitly anti-Islam political parties. In 2002, the Free Pim Fortuyn (LPF) party was established and led by its namesake. Then in 2006, the Freedom Party (PVV) was founded and led by long-time conservative politician Geert Wilders.¹⁵⁰ The parties advocated for the revival of monoculturalism (of *Dutchness*) in the Netherlands, against the encroaching presence of Muslim communities.¹⁵¹ From the outset both party leaders lamented the problems of multiculturalism almost exclusively with reference to the Dutch Muslim communities.

By way of example, Fortuyn advocated that immigration from Muslim countries be stopped altogether since Islam— especially in the post-9/11 period— had revealed

¹⁴⁷ Entzinger, *The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism: The Case of the Netherlands*, in *Toward Assimilation Citizenship* 59, 59. (Christian Joppke and Ewa T. Morawska eds., Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

¹⁴⁸ Gozdecka et al., “From multiculturalism to post-multiculturalism: Trends and paradoxes”, 52.

¹⁴⁹ Lentin and Titley, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age*, 35.

¹⁵⁰ In Dutch the party names are List Pim Fortuyn and Parti voor de Vrijheid.

¹⁵¹ For more on the ‘post-multiculturalism’ debate, see Gozdecka (chap. 3 n. 2). For a more optimistic reading of ‘post-multiculturalism’ cf Kymlica (2010).

itself to be a backward religion and culture harmful to women's and gay rights.¹⁵² During the PVV's first year in parliament, Wilders explicitly argued that Islam is not a religion but a violent terrorist ideology, which, "wants to destroy Dutch society and turn the Netherlands into Nederabië, a Muslim province in the continent Eurabia [Islamised Europe]".¹⁵³ Since their inception, both parties achieved significant electoral success by becoming two of the largest parties in mainstream politics; a status only previously held by the traditional parties. In the May 2002 national election, LPF won an unprecedented number of seats as a newcomer party, and became the second largest party. While the LPF never managed to succeed once in office, this election is still considered the "biggest electoral upset" in Dutch history.¹⁵⁴ Since the last national general election in 2012, the PVV is the third largest party in the Netherlands.¹⁵⁵

Amidst this political turbulence, two seminal murders occurred which are often viewed as instrumental to the anti-Islam parties' lasting success. On May 6th, 2002, Pim Fortuyn was assassinated nine days before the general election in which his party dominated. Fortuyn's murder marked the first political murder in the Netherlands since the 17th century. His killer, Volkert van de Graaf, testified in court that he believed Fortuyn was a threat to the social cohesion in Dutch society and that he killed Fortuyn in order to protect Dutch Muslims.¹⁵⁶ Two years later, polemic filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered by Dutch native Mohammed Bouyeri for his film *Submission—Part 1*, an inflammatory critique of Islam's treatment of women co-authored by then Dutch

¹⁵² Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics in the Netherlands*, 2nd ed, 16.

¹⁵³ Wilders, "Genoeg is Genoeg: Verbied de Koran", *Volkskrant*, August 8, 2007. Translation by author.

¹⁵⁴ Vink, "Dutch 'Multiculturalism' Beyond the Pillarisation Model", 338.

¹⁵⁵ Erk, "The Famous Dutch (In)Tolerance", 111.

¹⁵⁶ Evans-Pritchard and Clements. "Fortuyn Killed 'to Protect Muslims'", *The Telegraph*, March 28, 2003.

politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The rise of anti-Islam parties LPF and the PVV, and the proximity of the murders were a shock to the Netherlands' international and self-perception as a country and people known for their tolerance and liberal values. As a result of this eventful period Dutch politicians, Western media, and academics alike have devoted significant attention to discussing Dutch anti-Islam parties and associated political figures within a post-9/11 framework.¹⁵⁷

As a result, Dutch anti-Islam parties and politics are frequently presented as the product of the post-9/11, 'post-multicultural' moment. At first glance, this eventful period may appear to evidence a causal relationship between a new post-9/11 reality and the rise of anti-Islam parties. However a post-9/11 analysis of anti-Islam parties and post-multicultural (anti-Islam) politics relies on two key false assumptions. The first is that anti-Islam politics are new to the Dutch political landscape. The second is that multiculturalism existed in the Netherlands before its alleged collapse in the post-9/11 environment. This chapter posits that the generally accepted framing of Dutch anti-Islam political parties as being the result of a new post-9/11 reality is a political red herring. A post-9/11 framing overlooks evidence that suggests the "failure" of multiculturalism, culture clash, and the security threat of Islam to Dutch society were already topics of national discussion and political agitation during the 1980s and 1990s. A post-9/11 framing also eschews important investigations into how the role of the Netherlands' colonial legacy contributes to the perception of Dutch racial minorities as problematized

¹⁵⁷ See Corder, "Europe's Multiculturalism Questioned After Islamist Terror Attacks", *Toronto Star*, February 19, 2015; Donadio, "Provocateur's Death Hunts the Dutch", *New York Times*, October 31, 2014. Malik, *Multiculturalism and Its Discontents: Rethinking Diversity after 9/11* (Seagull Books, 2013); Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam* (Penguin, 2006).

‘others’, external to *Dutchness*; particularly within political discourse.¹⁵⁸ Since the beginning of post-colonial immigration to the Netherlands in 1945, Dutch politicians have played a critical role in routinely problematizing the arrival of new minority communities as “unreal” Netherlanders, in contrast to “real Netherlanders”.¹⁵⁹

Although after 1945 Dutch society certainly became much more multicultural in terms of demographics, recent scholarship suggests that a consistent multiculturalist policy perspective was never introduced.¹⁶⁰ Whether these integration policies were in fact multicultural has also been contested.¹⁶¹ These discoveries compellingly suggest that 21st century anti-Islam parties are not only a response to the ‘post-9/11’, ‘post-multicultural’ moment as supporters and detractors both often conclude. The absence of a definitive multicultural policy or social aim suggests that today’s anti-Islam politics likely reflect a more entrenched form of socio-political discrimination against Dutch Muslim communities. Recalling the forgotten 20th century origins of Dutch anti-Islam politics is integral to more accurately contextualizing the staying power of anti-Islam parties today and measuring changes and continuity within the discourse over time.

Through an exploration and analysis of the history of multiculturalism in the Netherlands, this chapter aims to demonstrate that the roots of contemporary anti-Islam politics lie in the complicated social processes of immigration to the Netherlands and fixed notions of *Dutchness* since 1945. The first section will look at how, contrary to the ‘multicultural myth’, multiculturalism was not an explicit policy or social aim in the

¹⁵⁸ Jones, *Biology, Culture and ‘Post-Colonial Citizenship’ and the Dutch Nation, 1945-2007* in, *Dutch Racism* 315, 316 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi B.V, 2014).

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 332.

¹⁶⁰ Scholten, “The Dutch Multicultural Myth”, 113.

¹⁶¹ Maarten Vink. “Dutch ‘Multiculturalism’ Beyond the Pillarization Myth”, *Political Studies Review* 5, (2007): 337-350.

Netherlands before its alleged collapse in the ‘post-9/11’ moment. Building on this analysis, the subsequent section will argue that despite the perception of the Netherlands as a nation with traditionally multicultural policies, national identity narratives of *Dutchness* were not multicultural. In fact, ideas of ‘what’ and ‘who’ is Dutch appear to have remained a largely homogenous and exclusive identity category since 1945. Instead of research on minority integration (which overwhelmingly points to high levels of integration), socially accepted conceptions of *Dutchness* are often used to measure and label Muslim integration as a failure within post-multicultural politics.¹⁶² As result, understanding the relationship between the identity boundaries of *Dutchness* and the Netherlands’ history of immigration is integral to understanding the entrenched discrimination of post-multicultural politics.

Lastly, the development of anti-Islam politics during the 1980s and 1990s is outlined, and the changes and continuities from 1980 to present are considered. Anti-Islam politics originally emerged within the anti-immigration ‘fringe’ parties of the 1980s led by Hans Janmaat.¹⁶³ In the early 1990s, anti-Islam politics entered the political mainstream through the conservative party (VVD) led by Frits Bolkestein.¹⁶⁴ The gradual movement of anti-Islam ideas from the political fringe to the conservative mainstream strongly suggests that the normalization of anti-Islam politics during the 2000s was not a “sudden” shift triggered by the post-9/11 climate, as it is often depicted. The continuity in

¹⁶² Entzinger, “The Growing Gap Between Facts and Discourse on Immigrant Integration in the Netherlands”, *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 21, no. 6 (2014): 693-707. Entzinger provides an illuminating account of how negative perceptions of Islam have become the societal ‘measuring stick’ of Muslim integration.

¹⁶³ Centre Party (CP), and the Centre Democrats (CD).

¹⁶⁴ Peoples Party for Freedom and Democracy, (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD)

anti-Islam politics since the 1980s—portraying Islam as culturally incompatible and a security threat—is also presented as an important challenge to interpretations of the post-9/11 period as marking ‘the beginning’ of the political securitization of Islam. In conclusion, it will be argued that in order to draw attention to the underlying social issues which appear to have normalized the presence of anti-Islam parties with mainstream politics, further research on the rise of LPF and the PVV is needed which looks beyond a ‘post-9/11’ frame of analysis.

The Dutch multicultural myth: its origins and implications

As discussed, the colourful politics and dark events of the 2000s provide a deceptively plausible explanation for the rise of anti-Islam parties in the Netherlands. However, the widespread misconception that multiculturalism is both a longstanding policy and social aim in the Netherlands is arguably a much more important factor buttressing support for anti-Islam politics. In stark contrast to the current post-multicultural political discourse—which claims the Netherlands’ ineffective tradition of multiculturalism must be stopped—a growing number of Dutch researchers particularly Jan Duyvendak, Peter Scholten, and Maarten Vink, have respectively pointed out that Dutch immigrant integration policy documents from 1978-present contain little (if any) content that can reasonably be considered multicultural.¹⁶⁵

Within the twentieth century policies and surrounding political discourses, the term ‘multicultural’ was used to describe the new diversity of minority communities. At the time, multicultural did not carry the normative connotations that are attributed to it

¹⁶⁵ Despite significant immigration to the Netherlands since 1945, the first social integration policy was established in 1978.

today.¹⁶⁶ According to Maartin Vink, even within the 1983 Ethnic Minorities Memorandum— which he argues contains the most multicultural policy elements— it is clear that multicultural integration was still expected to privilege the majority local culture (*Dutchness*). Within the Memorandum, integration was explicitly described as “a confrontation between unequal partners”.¹⁶⁷ Not to be undervalued, the 1983 Memorandum and subsequent policies were aimed at ensuring the rights of minorities to participate in Dutch society. The policies resulted in important anti-discrimination legislation and organizing bodies such as the Equal Treatment Commission (1994), to that effect. However, minority cultures were still expected to ultimately adapt to the needs of the dominant Dutch society. This policy language appears to be much closer in tone to cultural assimilation than evidence of a strong policy of multiculturalism. According to Duyvendak and Scholten, policy discourses that favoured a more assimilationist and conservative approach to integration were also present during the 1980s and 1990s. This further suggests that even during the “Golden Age” of Dutch multiculturalism, a multiculturalist approach was at most one of many competing approaches being considered to manage the Netherlands’ new cultural diversity.¹⁶⁸

Among this group of researchers, there is a strong consensus that the multicultural components of Dutch integration policies decreased since their initial period of introduction in the late 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁶⁹ Yet curiously, political discussions of multiculturalism in the Netherlands increased throughout the 1980s-1990s and spiked

¹⁶⁶ Vink, 344.

¹⁶⁷ Dutch government. “Minderhedennota”, Tweede Kamer, 1982-1983, 16102, No. 20-1, 1983. As quoted in Vink, “Beyond the Pillarisation Myth”, 345.

¹⁶⁸ Duyvendak and Scholten, “Beyond the Dutch ‘Multicultural Model’”, 345.

¹⁶⁹ Scholten, *The Dutch Multicultural Myth* in *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity* 97, 107, (Raymond Taras ed, Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

dramatically in the 2000s. A compelling explanation for this inverse relationship between policy and discourse is that pejoratively labelling a policy as multicultural became a way for politicians to discredit past policies as ineffective. In so doing, they created space for their own policy agendas. Scholars have referred to the concurrent decline in “multicultural” integration policies and rise in political discussions of multiculturalism as the Dutch ‘multicultural myth’.¹⁷⁰ An important consequence of blaming multiculturalism is that it simultaneously suggests that older integration policies were in fact multicultural.¹⁷¹ Said differently, politicians ‘perform’ multiculturalism and this performance continues to create the myth of Dutch multiculturalism today.

The history behind the Dutch multicultural myth importantly reveals that the anti-Islam parties (LPF and the PVV) were not pioneers but inheritors of the argument that multiculturalism is a “failure”. Politicians were calling multiculturalism a failure long before the post-9/11 moment and the longevity of this ‘performance’ undermines analyses explaining anti-Islam politics as a ‘post-9/11’ phenomenon. As will be discussed later in this chapter, Dutch Muslims are the main community routinely blamed for the “failure” of multiculturalism since their arrival in the 1970s. It comes as no surprise then that the primary argument of post-multicultural politics today is that the Netherlands has *always* been ‘too lenient and too tolerant’ in its approach to the integration of Muslim communities. Specifically, Muslim communities are not seen as integrated because they held on to alleged cultural values at odds with Dutch values.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Scholten, *The Dutch Multicultural Myth* 97, 119.

¹⁷¹ Duyvendak and Scholten, “Beyond the Dutch ‘Multicultural Model’”, 345.

¹⁷² Ghorashi, *Racism and “the Ungrateful Other” in the Netherlands*, in *Dutch Racism* 101, 112 (Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving eds., Rodopi B.V, 2014). See also Vasta, “From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands”, 714.

Based on preconceived notions of “Islamic culture”, this conclusion paints a remarkably different picture of Dutch society than the one reached in minority integration research. Integration research clearly indicates an overall steady increase since the 1990s, when considering more objective determinant fields such as education and employment.¹⁷³ It is also worth highlighting that integration ‘progress’ was also made in the face of significant institutional marginalization and discrimination often encountered by Muslims within these same fields.¹⁷⁴ The disparity between political portrayals of Dutch Muslim communities and their participation in Dutch society speaks to the danger of the Dutch multicultural myth, which seems to breed frustration towards Muslims based on ahistorical narratives of the Netherlands’ “too generous” multicultural integration policies. Decades in the making, the multicultural myth continues to bolster anti-Islam party arguments that Muslim integration/multiculturalism have irreversibly “failed” in the Netherlands. Although the political performance of multiculturalism is critical to the multicultural myth, it alone does not satisfactorily account for the widespread belief in the Netherlands’ tradition of multiculturalism within Dutch society.

The much-celebrated history of the Dutch ‘polder model’ also appears to promote the myth that the Netherlands has long been a normatively multicultural society.¹⁷⁵ Emerging in the 16th century, the polder model is the classic depiction of Dutch governance, which emphasized equal accommodation (tolerance) of religious difference

¹⁷³ Duyvendak, et al., ‘Zelforganisaties van migranten’, *Aanvullend bronnenonderzoek Verwey-Jonker Instituut* 12, no. 4 (2003): 108–63. As quoted in Scholten, “The Dutch Multicultural Myth”, 115.

¹⁷⁴ Erk, 112.

¹⁷⁵ I.e., a society in which multiculturalism is a valued social norm. For further explanation see (chap. 1 page 7).

in the public sphere.¹⁷⁶ A metaphor for the polder-dyke land reclamation process used throughout the Netherlands, the polder model is often discussed as having a moral or normative dimension of promoting cultural differences. As Randerraad and Wolffram have pointed out, the polder narrative has resulted in a tendency to view Dutch social politics and governance as a fluid continuum of tolerance since the 1600s.¹⁷⁷

In addition to disguising periods of social and political unrest, this simplified version of Dutch political history also fails to mention the pragmatism behind ‘Dutch tolerance’ stressed by historians. Since the 1600s, Dutch leaders have pursued policies of religious tolerance chiefly as a means of pacification. While of course effective and significant, ‘Dutch tolerance’ did not tend to reflect a deep-seated social norm or desire to promote the equality of different groups; a quality often associated with multiculturalism today.¹⁷⁸ As a result, the polder model of ‘Dutch tolerance’ is often conflated with a multicultural social model. This is particularly true of Dutch society during the 20th century.

From 1890 until the late 1960s, the polder model resulted in a highly structured (pillared) Dutch society, which clumsily translates into English as pillarization (*verzuiling*).¹⁷⁹ Ever pragmatic, the Dutch social pillars were set up to preserve the peace through the creation of “separation but equal” societies. The pillars governed every facet of daily life and were divided along the Christian dominations (Catholic and Protestant), and ideologically (Liberal-Conservatives and Socialists). Each pillar also had its own set

¹⁷⁶ The ‘polder system’ also refers to consensus democracy in all political areas. Iconic examples include the Netherlands’ extensive waterway systems, equal funding for denominational education, Dutch neutrality during the First World War, and universal suffrage in 1919.

¹⁷⁷ Randerraad and Wolffram, *Dutch Administrative Culture in a Historic Perspective* 41, 40, in *Polder Politics*, (Frank Hendriks and Theo A.J. Toonen eds., Ashgate, 2001).

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 40-43.

¹⁷⁹ Anderweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*, 2nd ed., 35.

of institutions including: newspapers, radio broadcasters, schools, and grocery stores. The communities lived separately and significant interaction occurred only at the elite political level.¹⁸⁰ Pillarization was not a social model structured to support multiculturalism, however it is often discussed in such terms today.¹⁸¹ By way of illustration, Vink's comprehensive review of pillarization scholarship concludes that academics have often tended to assume a high degree of continuity between pillarization and the allegedly "multicultural" integration policies of the 1970-1990s.¹⁸² In other words, just like twentieth century integration policies, pillarization is also often retroactively understood as multicultural.

On closer examination, however, multiculturalism does not adequately describe the pillar system. For the vast majority of the pillarized period, (i.e., before postwar immigration) Dutch society was highly ethnically homogenous. By the end of the nineteenth century, foreigners (defined at the time by birth outside of the Netherlands) constituted only two percent of the total population.¹⁸³ While there were serious contentions between communities, an often-overlooked point is that regardless of their pillar each citizen still automatically belonged to the same main national identity culture of *Dutchness*. Regardless of pillar heritage, individuals saw themselves as legitimate Netherlanders and were also perceived this way by members of other pillars. While in many ways an impressive organizational structure, pillarization was formed and structured to accommodate native groups of denominational difference within a

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 23-25.

¹⁸¹ Randeraad and Wolffram, 55.

¹⁸² Vink, 342-343.

¹⁸³ Wintle, *An economic and social history of the Netherlands, 1800-1920: demographic, economic, and social transition*, 336.

nationally homogeneous culture. This is strikingly different than the normative and structural multiculturalism retroactively transcribed onto the history of pillarization today.

Perhaps buttressing this point is that the Dutch Jewish community noticeably did not have pillared community status. Before its near complete destruction during the Holocaust, the Dutch Jewish community was sizable and rooted in the Netherlands since the late fifteenth century.¹⁸⁴ Although, religious groups were legally given equal status in 1796 (ending officially allowed anti-Jewish policies), unofficial anti-Semitism remained present within the Netherlands.¹⁸⁵ During the nineteenth century and early twentieth century (until the German occupation of the Netherlands during the Second World War), the Dutch government confined public expressions of Jewish culture and community presence to religious practices.¹⁸⁶ Since the Dutch pillars were religious but also social-political entities, the intentional containment of Jewish culture and communities within the public sphere may help explain the curious absence of a Jewish pillar within Dutch society. This absence suggests that while pillarization was in some respects a highly successful model for the majority groups of Dutch citizens, it was not necessarily wholly inclusive or multicultural in nature.¹⁸⁷ An absence of new cultural-religious pillars (especially a Muslim pillar) despite the influx of post-colonial and ‘guest worker’

¹⁸⁴ Joods Historisch Museum. “Vierhondred jaar joden in Nederland”. Since 1492, Jewish immigration to the Netherlands occurred from Spain, Portugal, Germany, and Eastern Europe.

¹⁸⁵ Wintle, *An economic and social history of the Netherlands, 1800-1920: demographic, economic, and social transition*, 336.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 336.

¹⁸⁷ According to J. Blom, the highly pillarized (segregated) structure of Dutch society before and during the Second World War may help explain why the Dutch were comparatively less concerned by the danger of anti-Jewish measures than other western European countries. Pillarization did not encourage cross-cultural solidarity, which may be one reason little action was taken to defend the Dutch Jewish population. See Blom. “The persecution of Jews in the Netherlands: A comparative western European perspective”, 345.

immigration between 1945-1970 is further evidence that the Dutch pillar system did not take on a multicultural structure.¹⁸⁸ In the absence of a multicultural structure, it also stands to reason that a normative social valuing of multiculturalism did not develop through pillarization. Regardless, the structure and social norms of pillarization were often thought to have instructed the “too generous” multicultural integration policies of the 1970s-1990s.

An unintended consequence of the Dutch multicultural myth is that it arguably provides a basis on which anti-Islam politics are built. The ubiquity of *multiculturalized* re-tellings of pillarization history and the concomitant immigrant integration policies since 1970, may help anti-Islam politicians achieve a false legitimacy in their argument for a return to monoculturalism. For the subtext of the myth is that, “historically”, multiculturalism worked in the Netherlands but when new immigrant communities arrived they took advantage of ‘our’ system and did not integrate. As will be explored in the following section, contrary to the multicultural myth, the Netherlands’ approach to its unexpected diversity and integration in the postwar period was often incoherently structured with respect to policy. Dutch society was also not always welcoming, particularly in terms of creating space for new communities to become legitimate carriers of *Dutchness*.

¹⁸⁸ Rath, et al., “The Politics of Recognizing Religious Diversity in Europe: Social Reactions to the Institutionalization of Islam in the Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain”, 59.

Ignoring multicultural diversity: new citizens and old notions of “Dutchness” in the postwar era (1945-1980)

Anti-Islam politics are based on the perceived impossibility of integrating Muslims into Dutch society and culture (*Dutchness*).¹⁸⁹ In order to contextualize the emergence of anti-Islam politics during the 1980s-1990s, it is important to first discuss the postwar society into which Turkish and Moroccan Muslim communities settled during the 1960s and 1970s. This section will argue that despite the cultural diversity of the Netherlands since 1945, notions of *Dutchness* remained fixed by traditional and colonial sensibilities through which non-white ‘Others’ are cast outside the possibility of belonging to *Dutchness*.

At the end of the Second World War, the Netherlands was in a state of “profound national crisis”, including a crisis of identity.¹⁹⁰ Government reconstruction efforts were aimed to address the more tangible needs of the country chiefly its physical and economic reconstruction. However the government also paid significant attention to repairing the social fabric damaged by the war and German occupation of the Netherlands from 1940-1945. According to postwar historian Pieter Lagrou, the Dutch ‘reconstruction ethic’ focused on repairing a national identity and sense of unity tattered by the destruction and trauma of the war.¹⁹¹ The creation of a homogenous wartime experience was considered critical to the success of all reconstruction efforts and was actively constructed by the government. In order to achieve this national aim, the government recognized that

¹⁸⁹ This ‘impossibility’ is informed by orientalist perceptions of Islam in which Muslims are depicted as a backward and static ‘other’. See Said, *Orientalism*, 284-288.

¹⁹⁰ Lagrou, “The politics of memory. Resistance as a collective myth in post-war France, Belgium and the Netherlands”, 528.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 534.

fostering a renewed sense of pride in being Dutch (*Dutchness*) was a necessary first step. As a result, the behaviour of Dutch society during the war was moralized and turned into a national “spirit of resistance” against the Nazi occupation. Any effort to highlight the exceptionality of resistance groups—who in reality operated on the fringes of Dutch society—was deemed to be “unDutch”.¹⁹² Equally suppressed by similar means were discussions of “the treatment of Jews and other ethnic minorities during the occupation and anxieties related to the arrival of refugees from former colonies”.¹⁹³

This nationalist postwar identity project aimed at reaffirming a homogenous and united Dutch people was so successful that it transcended the postwar years and still carries meaning today. Drawing on the work of postwar, collective memory historians such as Pieter Lagrou, scholars seeking to make sense of the sharp divisions in Dutch identity politics today have convincingly argued that the tightknit identity of *Dutchness* created during the postwar reconstruction efforts remains the bedrock of today’s contemporary notions of *Dutchness* today.¹⁹⁴ However a problematic and overlooked consequence of this highly nationalist postwar reconstruction effort is that a national identity emphasizing sameness was cemented into public consciousness just as Dutch society began to radically diversify for the first time since the 17th century.¹⁹⁵ The Second World War triggered the collapse of the Dutch colonial empire and with it an influx of new citizens from the former colonies. The majority originally came from

¹⁹² Ibid, 535.

¹⁹³ Eyerman, *The Assassination of Theo van Gogh: From Social Drama to Cultural Trauma*, 127.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹⁵ According to de Jong, the arrival of Jews to the Netherlands (see chap.3 n. 30) and French Huguenots during the 1600s introduced a form of western [confessional] pluralism in the Netherlands with little if any non-western elements. de Jong, “Cultural diversity and cultural Policy”, 362.

Indonesia, which was the first Dutch colony to formally achieve independence in 1949.¹⁹⁶ In the early postwar period, the Dutch widely perceived their country as impoverished, overpopulated, and with little employment opportunities.¹⁹⁷ In accordance with the negative public perceptions of immigration at the time, immigration from the former colonies was notably presented to the public instead as repatriation.¹⁹⁸

Strictly speaking, repatriation implies a return to an individual's country of origin, which was not the reality for the majority of 'repatriates' to the Netherlands. The classification is also important because it implies a cultural sameness between of repatriates and the former metropole, which was also largely absent. To be fair, the reasons behind the government's decision to use the term were also related to the historical particularities of the late 1940s; namely the vast international movement of displaced persons as a result of the war.¹⁹⁹ However a consequence of "repatriation" was that it obscured the growing reality of the Netherlands as a country of invisible immigration. This imprecise portrayal of an important historical shift allowed the Netherlands' newfound cultural and ethnic diversity to be quietly ignored by the

¹⁹⁶ These were the Indische Nederlanders (those of mixed descent or white Netherlanders born in the colony) the majority of whom had Dutch citizenship, and the Christian Ambonese Moluccans who were Dutch "subjects" and fought alongside the Dutch against the nationalists during Indonesian war of Independence (1945-1949). Jones, *Dutch politicians, the Dutch national and the dynamics of post-colonial citizenship* 27, 32 in *Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands*, (Ulbe Bosma ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

¹⁹⁷ Pennix et al., *The impact of international migration on receiving countries: the case of the Netherlands*, 7.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 102.

¹⁹⁹ Smith, *Introduction in Europe's Invisible Migrants* 9, 20 (Andrea L. Smith ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2003). After 1945, terminology on refugee status was introduced into international law and subsequently considered inappropriate for post-colonial populations. The end of the colonial era was also perceived as sudden embarrassment. The term repatriation offered a way to circumvent this humiliation and may have been seen as a way to quell public anxiety about the new arrivals by [artificially] stressing their belonging to the nation. Smith, 20-21.

government and within Dutch society.²⁰⁰ Coupled with the social taboo of discussing race after the war, the language of repatriation arguably set a path and precedent for tacitly keeping new cultures and groups outside of the Dutch national identity (*Dutchness*).²⁰¹ This fixed identity is arguably illustrated by the successive national political discourses that targeted post-colonial immigrant communities after their arrival.²⁰²

Unfortunately, the beginning of decolonization of the Netherlands does not mark a distinct endpoint of colonial sensibilities.²⁰³ As with other European colonial powers, the Netherlands' highly structured framework of viewing non-white 'others' as inferior remained in place.²⁰⁴ At the outset of the post-colonial period, traditional notions of *Dutchness* began to be defined at the exclusion of the (now localized) 'others'. Since 1945, Dutch politicians have invariably deemed each new immigrant community too alien and wholly incompatible with Dutch society until another group arrived and took its

²⁰⁰ In her 2003 work *Europe's Invisible Migrants* (see chap. 3. no. 42), anthropologist Andrea Smith referred to Europe's post-colonial migrants as "invisible migrants". Smith's meaning was to highlight that post-colonial migrants traditionally underrepresented in academic literature however the notion of invisible immigration (inspired by her work) arguably works well in the Dutch context.

²⁰¹ Due to its proximity to the race based language of Nazi Germany, overt discussions of race became taboo in many European countries after the Second World War. Yanow and van der Haar, "People out of place: allochthony and autochthony in the Netherlands' identity discourse — metaphors and categories in action", 228.

²⁰² Following independence, post-colonial immigration would also occur from New Guinea (1958) Surinam (1970s) and Antilles and Aruba (1980s). Bosma, *Introduction in Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands* 1-26, (Ulbe Bosma ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

²⁰³ Childs and Williams, *An introduction to Post-Colonial Theory*, 1.

²⁰⁴ Scholars including Usma Bosma and Kwame Nimako have noted that Dutch colonialism remains a significantly unproblematized history. Nimako et Al., note that the historiography is more likely to discuss Dutch colonialism in terms of trade than enslavement or racism ("Chattel slavery and racism: A reflection on the Dutch experience", in *Dutch Racism*, 34). Bosma argues that it is not amnesia but a "lack of moral indignation" which is to blame for the general absence of a post-colonial debate in the Netherlands. As a result "the colonial past and the concepts of post-colonialism and multiculturalism are hardly connected". (Bosma, "Why is there no post-colonial debate in the Netherlands?", in *Post-Colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands*, 193.)

place as the new ‘greatest’ outsider.²⁰⁵ Said differently, the integration of minorities and minority cultures was routinely seen as impossible. This cycle of rejecting difference (i.e, saying what *Dutchness* is not), appears to have re-enforced traditional ideas of what is *Dutchness*. As a result, conceptions of *Dutchness* became increasingly fixed and a meaningful level of social belonging was generally not extended to newcomer communities despite their citizenship.

The notion of invisible immigration also captures the government approach and public response to the permanent settlement of Moroccan and Turkish communities during the 1970s. In the 1960s, the Dutch government began actively recruiting foreign “guest workers” (*gastarbeiders*) to address what it believed would be a temporary labour surplus. However, the majority of workers chose to stay in the Netherlands and brought their families through the reunification policies in place from the initial post-colonial immigration movements.²⁰⁶ The first foreign workers were originally from Italy and Spain, however the largest worker groups ultimately came from Turkey and Morocco. Since the Dutch government viewed the foreign workers as temporary communities, they were encouraged to preserve their own cultural identity.²⁰⁷ This temporary acceptance of ‘multiculturalism’ is significant because it unwittingly helped establish Muslim cultural communities and institutions in the Netherlands.

However when it became clear that they were staying, Turkish and Moroccan communities were not welcomed into notions of *Dutchness*. Just as with the preceding post-colonial immigrant communities, political discourses emerged questioning the

²⁰⁵ Jones, “Dutch politicians, the Dutch nation and the dynamics of post-colonial citizenship”, 45.

²⁰⁶ Essed and Nimako, “Designs and (co)incidents: Cultures of scholarship and public policy of immigrants/minorities in the Netherlands”, 288

²⁰⁷ Scholten, 100.

possibility of Moroccan and Turkish integration. Except unlike the post-colonial immigrants, these groups had no historical affiliation with the Netherlands, which made their situation more precarious. As countries of the ‘Orient’, the distinct cultures of Moroccan and Turkish communities were collapsed together and eclipsed within Dutch orientalist “knowledge” of them.²⁰⁸ When Moroccan and Turkish communities settled in the Netherlands, they also introduced a new faith (Islam) into the social milieu; a point of increased public attention and anxiety when it became clear the communities were permanently settled.²⁰⁹ Although certain segments of Dutch society had been in contact with Islamic culture (Indonesia) since the 1800s, common familiarity with Islam within Dutch society is paradoxically a more recent (post-war) phenomenon.²¹⁰ As mentioned in Chapter 1, while post-colonial immigrants came to the Netherlands from Indonesia in the late 1940s and 1950s, these individuals were not Muslims but overwhelmingly Christians from the Moluccas who fought alongside the Dutch during Indonesia’s War of Independence (1945-1949).²¹¹ As a result, Turkish and Moroccan Muslims (and those perceived as Muslims) were often seen as even further removed from the ideal of *Dutchness* than the post-colonial immigrants. Following their arrival during the 1970s-1980s, Turkish and Moroccan Muslims occupied the most problematized social status in the Netherlands and continue to do so today.²¹²

Irrespective of the increasingly multicultural reality of Dutch society, the boundaries of what or who could be considered representative of Dutch culture remained

²⁰⁸ See Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

²⁰⁹ Shadid, 356.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 357.

²¹¹ Jones, 33.

²¹² Laarman, *Discussions on intermarriage in the Netherlands, 1945-2005*, in *Post-colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands* 49, 68 (Ulbe Bosma ed., Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

guarded by tradition. Supporting this interpretation is the absence of any immigrant integration policy (multicultural or otherwise) during the postwar period. Amazingly, despite the significant and diverse movement of peoples from around the world to the Netherlands since 1945, the first official integration policy was adopted in 1978. While measures existed beforehand to process new arrivals, these reflected an “ad hoc” approach. There was no official policy that dealt with “the legal status and social integration” of post-colonial migrants or guest workers.²¹³ Although the introduction of a Dutch integration policy in the late 1970s was in keeping with the general shift towards integration policy implementation in Western Europe at the time, it is still worth questioning why the first comprehensive integration policy came into being three decades after immigration to the Netherlands significantly and consistently increased. In addition to their intended benefit for recipients, integration policies are also important for the message they transmit to the broader public. The Dutch government’s repeated decision to ignore its new status as an immigration country likely contributed to the perception that the Netherlands “was not and should not be a country of immigration”.²¹⁴ This was a strongly held sentiment in Dutch society throughout the postwar period (1945-1978). Dutch immigration expert Han Entzinger aptly referred to this disconnect between public perception and the changing reality of Dutch society as “the tension between norm and fact”.²¹⁵

Government research on the growing presence of minority communities during the 1970s, also demonstrates how the Netherlands’ multicultural diversity was

²¹³ Vink, 346.

²¹⁴ Scholten, 100.

²¹⁵ Entzinger, “Nederland immigratieland?”, *Beleid en Maatschappij* 2, no.12, (1975): 326–336. As quoted in Scholten, “Beyond the Dutch ‘Multicultural Myth’”, 100.

historically positioned outside of *Dutchness*. In 1971, a government commissioned report introduced the categories *autochtoon* (individuals of Dutch birth and ancestry) and *allochtonen* (individuals of non-Dutch birth and ancestry) into the emerging integration policy discourse. The category *allochtonen* contains the subgroups ‘western’ and ‘non-western’ however the structure of these groups is not equal. Regardless of how many generations have lived in the Netherlands, descendants of non-western immigrants (the majority of whom are visible minorities) remain counted within government data (e.g., 4th generation Moroccan-Dutch). Conversely, the descendants of western (typically white) immigrants are not counted.²¹⁶ This allows even the first generation of western immigrant descendants to belong to *Dutchness* from birth. According to social scientists Dorva Yanow and Marleen van der Haar, looking at the embedded structural hierarchy of the *autochtoon—allochtonen* identity categories reveals that the immigrant integration debates in which they remain used are, “in all but name, a racial discourse— one perhaps all the more powerful for being carried out in disguise...”²¹⁷

This prejudicial categorization powerfully suggests that the social integration of non-western descendants, including Moroccans and Turkish communities, into *Dutchness* is also functionally understood as impossible. While not uncontroversial today, the use of *autochtoon* and *allochtonen* within Dutch media, politics, and society has continued since the 1970s. This implicitly re-enforces negative social perceptions that Turkish and Moroccan communities cannot ever really be seen as “Dutch” or reflective of Dutch culture. In March 2014, Dutch youth of Moroccan heritage raised this long-term issue

²¹⁶ Yanow and van der Haar, “People out of place: allochthony and autochthony in the Netherlands’ identity discourse — metaphors and categories in action”, 236.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 229.

through a twitter campaign called #bornhere; in which participants posted pictures of themselves holding their Dutch passports.²¹⁸

The posts were in response to the March 18, 2014, PVV campaign rally in the Hague during which party leader Geert Wilders asked the crowd, “Do you want more or less Moroccans in this city and in the Netherlands?” The crowd chanted, “*minder, minder*” (“less, less”). To this Wilders replied, “Yeah, then we will arrange it”.²¹⁹ Of course, the politics of Wilders and his supporters are not representative of how all Dutch citizens feel about their fellow Muslim citizens. However incidents such as this arguably indicate that the *autochtoon* centered *Dutchness* engrained during the postwar reconstruction period has not grown to comfortably include immigration populations and their decedents.

However it is important to note that this closed-down identity of *Dutchness* has always been at odds with the institutional support available to Muslim communities. Thanks to pillarization, the Netherlands’ extensive pre-existing legislation on the rights of religious groups to organize and the practical procedures required, made it relatively easy for Muslim communities to establish themselves institutionally within the Dutch public sphere. Despite recurring public protests against the official organization of Islam within Dutch society, the deciding government and juridical bodies largely supported community appeals.²²⁰ Throughout the 1970s-1980s, the Dutch government and Muslim community organizers worked in partnership to build mosques and Islamic primary

²¹⁸ Ruijgrok. “#bornhere. Twitteractie tegen Wilders”, March 20, 2014. *Trouw*.

²¹⁹ NOS. “PVV anhang scandeert: minder Marokkanen”, March 19, 2014, translation by author.

²²⁰ Shadid, 371.

schools, and to develop regulations for culturally related institutions such as halal butcheries and the practice of circumcision.²²¹

However by being a continual subject of cultural criticism, Dutch Muslims often paid a high price for gaining institutional visibility at a rate that outpaced public opinion regarding the place of Islam within Dutch society. According to Jan Rath et al.'s 1999 landmark study on the institutionalization of Islam, the majority of Dutch society felt Muslims (as individuals) of course had the right to equal treatment and participation within Dutch society. However they were strongly opposed to the organization of Islamic communities within Dutch society.²²² The prevailing opinions of Islam in Dutch society were that it was a pre-modern religion and culture incompatible with democracy, opposed to the separation of church and state, and an advocate for outdated views on the social status of women. As a result, Rath et al. concluded that Dutch Muslim communities had to develop "under rather unfavourable conditions".²²³

These preconceived views of Islam held during the 1970s-1980s, are immediately recognizable in the politics of the anti-Islam party leaders Pim Fortuyn and Geert Wilders outlined at the outset of this chapter. Despite the largely progressive government and juridical measures to accommodate Islamic cultural organizations in the Netherlands, Dutch society was largely unwilling to allocate a place for Islam within the cultural fabric and identity of Dutch society. This fixed identity of *Dutchness* arguably helped create space for the anti-immigration parties that emerged in the 1980s-1990s, which unsurprisingly, focused on the "problem" of Islam in the Netherlands.

²²¹ Rath et al., "The politics of recognizing religious diversity in Europe: Social reactions to the institutionalization of Islam in the Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain", 59.

²²² Ibid, 63.

²²³ Ibid, 63.

Before 9/11: the forgotten anti-Islam politics of the 1980s and 1990s

As discussed at the outset of this chapter, the standard explanation for the rise of anti-Islam parties (LPF and the PVV) is that they are a product of the ‘post-9/11’ moment. In the Netherlands, this period is defined by seismic events that occurred in the early 2000s and remain discursively related to Dutch Muslim communities. Chief among them being: the increased threat and perception of “Islamist” homegrown terrorism in Western Europe, the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh, and prevalent politics on the ‘failure’ of multiculturalism.

While attention paid to the ‘problem’ of Dutch Muslim communities is often thought of as a new phenomenon, Dutch politicians have voiced their concerns about a culture clash between Dutch and Muslim values and the national security threat posed by Islam since the 1980s. This importantly reveals that the origins and success of LPF and the PVV cannot be fully explained as a product of the ‘post-9/11’ moment. Instead, the long-term development of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands needs to be considered. Looking at the evolution of anti-Islam politics importantly reveals more ideological continuities than changes within anti-Islam politics since the 1980s. Taken together, these details provide a more historically nuanced research framework for examining anti-Islam parties than is available through a ‘post-9/11’ framing.

Anti-Islam politics first appeared within the Dutch anti-immigration parties of the 1980s-1990s.²²⁴ The first anti-immigration party, National Centre Party (National CentrumPartij, NCP), was short lived (1979-1980). NCP was forced to disband due to

²²⁴ Fennema, “Some Conceptual Issues and Problems in the Comparison of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe”, 473. Anti-immigrant parties of this time are also often called populist radical right, ethnic nationalist, and nativist right parties. For further discussion on party terminology see chap.1 p. 14-16.

public outcry after its first general meeting ended in an attack on Moroccan immigrants who were seeking refuge in a church.²²⁵ NCP co-founder Henry Brookman promptly established a replacement called the Centre Party (CentrumPartij, CP) which was active from 1980-1984. Led and personified by Hans Jhaat, the CP and its successor party the Centre Democrats (Centerdemocraten, CD) (1984-2002) were the notable and comparatively successful anti-immigrant parties of the 1980s and 1990s.²²⁶

While it may appear to be a matter of semantics, a close reading of the existing academic literature suggests the primary focus of the CP and CD parties was not the Netherlands' immigration policy but its established minority communities. This clarification is important because it highlights that the main concern of both the CD and CP parties was actually an alleged incompatibility with immigrant cultural groups. In particular the parties problematized Dutch Turkish and Moroccan Muslim communities, which were increasingly visible within the public sphere by 1980.²²⁷ According to anthropologist Wassif Shadid, the CP party aimed to politicize longstanding prejudicial ideas about Muslims originally introduced to Dutch society during the colonial period.²²⁸ Building on its predecessor's positioning, the CD party portrayed Dutch Muslims as 'social outsiders'. By the early 1990s, CD party literature also discussed the danger Islam posed to Dutch society.²²⁹

²²⁵ Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*, 79.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, 79.

²²⁷ Fennema, "Some Conceptual Issues and Problems in the Comparison of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe", 447.

²²⁸ Shadid, 358. During the colonial period, the Netherlands occupied the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), the largest Muslim country in the world.

²²⁹ Williams, "Can leopards change their spots? Between xenophobia and trans-ethnic populism among West European far right parties", 113.

Janmatt and his anti-immigrant parties were socially ostracized and as a result did not attain significant political representation in national politics.²³⁰ However the sheer formation of the CP and CD parties is important to note because it clearly demonstrates that a political appetite for anti-Islam politics emerged in the Netherlands before the anti-Islam parties of the early 2000s. Further, while the CD and CP parties may have been electorally ineffective, Janmatt's depictions of Islam as culturally incompatible and a security threat to Dutch society remained part of the Dutch political landscape. During the 1990s, the CD and CP's style of anti-Islam politics gradually transitioned from what was the "unthinkable" fringe into mainstream politics.

During the 1990s, opposition leader Frits Bolkestein appears to have singlehandedly introduced the argument that Dutch culture needed to be protected from Islam into mainstream politics.²³¹ While the content of Bolkestein's comments on Islam were often similar to Janmatt's, his oratory style and status as a major politician somehow made the criticisms more palatable. Bolkestein unabashedly believed Western culture was superior to and incompatible with "Islamic culture". He argued Islam did not value freedom of speech, separation of church and state, and equality between men and women.²³² Bolkestein was also one of the most influential actors of the Dutch multicultural myth. His assertion that the Netherlands' multicultural policy approach was "too soft" and was being taken advantage of by minority cultures prompted the "National Minorities Debate" of 1991-1992.²³³ This was not an official debate but a national

²³⁰ Art, 86. CP gained one parliamentary seat in the 1984 elections and in 1994 CD gained three seats.

²³¹ From 1990-1998, Frits Bolkestein was the leader of the centre-conservative party, Peoples Party for Freedom and Democracy, (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*, VVD).

²³² Uitermark, *Dynamics of Power in Dutch Integration Politics*, 82.

²³³ Prins, "The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism", 369.

conversation that focused primarily on the allegedly problematic integration of Dutch Muslims. The debate dominated Dutch media and politics and was likely a critical vehicle that helped transition anxieties around Islam from the socially condemned fringe politics of Janmatt into mainstream conversation. Bolkestein's politics and the Minorities Debate also demonstrate how Dutch Muslim communities, because of the presumed qualities of their faith and culture, were politicized, problematized, and placed outside of the Dutch national identity (*Dutchness*) before the 'post-9/11' moment.

In the late 1990s, Pim Fortuyn also began to speak publically about Islam's incompatibility with Dutch society. Before entering politics in 2001, Fortuyn was a businessman and former sociology professor at Rotterdam's Erasmus University. In 1997, Fortuyn appeared on the current affairs program *Lagerhuis* (The Lower House) to discuss his new book *Tegen de Islamisering van onze Culture* (Against the Islamization of our Culture). As indicated by the title, the book argues why Islam cannot be integrated into Dutch society (*Dutchness*); a topic closely echoing the anti-Islam rhetoric introduced by Bolkestein earlier in the decade. During his appearance on *Lagerhuis*, Fortuyn entered a heated discussion with host Marcel van Dam regarding the status of women within Islamic communities. Fortuyn argued that Islam condones violence against women and received favourable support from the live audience.²³⁴ This argument would become a key part of his political platform in 2001. Like Bolkestein, Fortuyn was a controversial but respected public personality. Although his views on Islam were often met with criticism, Fortuyn's growing celebrity at the time arguably indicates that his politics were

²³⁴ VARA Programma, "Pim Fortuyn en Marcel van Dam". *Lagerhuis*, 1997, translation by author.

not successfully likened to those of CP leader Hans Janmaat (and therefore socially stigmatized), despite their similarities.

The 1990s were also a formative period for the anti-Islam political evolution of Geert Wilders. At age 27, Wilders began working as a speechwriter and assistant for the Peoples Party for Freedom and Democracy, (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD) in 1990. By then the VVD was led by Bolkestein whom Wilders regarded as a mentor. In a 1999 interview Wilders, who was then a newly minted MP for the VVD remarked that, “Bolkestein was controversial, but he could motivate. I learned a lot from him”.²³⁵ In his comprehensive discourse analysis of Wilders’ speeches and interviews from 1990-2010, Dutch political scientist Koen Vossen confirms that Bolkestein’s influence on Wilders’ ideological development and rhetorical style was palpable.²³⁶

Therefore it is not surprising that a key policy issue for Wilders was always the alleged security threat of “Islamic extremism” in Dutch society. In 1999, Wilders presented an extensive research report to Parliament on this topic.²³⁷ Discussing the findings of his report Wilders stated that:

Thanks to immigration from Middle Eastern countries, Islamist extremism will be the biggest issue in the next ten years in Europe and the Netherlands... Islamist extremism is already a problem here [Netherlands] but nothing is being said about it.²³⁸

The reasoning behind this statement is that in addition to prospective Muslim immigrants, the established Dutch Muslim communities were also a security threat to Dutch society.

²³⁵ Lammers. “Het is Leuk, die Heftige Reacties”, *de Trouw*, December 17, 1999, translation by author.

²³⁶ Vossen, “Classifying Wilders: The ideological development of Geert Wilders and his Party for Freedom”, 181.

²³⁷ *Ibid*, 182.

²³⁸ Lammers, “Het is Leuk, Die Heftige Reacties”, *Trouw*, December 17, 1999. Translation by author.

Of course, historically and to date, this has not been the case in the Netherlands. However monolithic understandings of Islam such as this make no distinction between violent extremist groups that misappropriate the name of Islam and the religion practiced peacefully around the world.

Recalling Wilders' attempt to securitize the presence of Dutch Muslim communities during the 1990s undermines the standard analysis that Islam only became perceived as a domestic security threat in the Netherlands during the 'post-9/11' period. It also challenges the credibility of Western politicians today, including Wilders, who present the rise of anti-Islam parties as a legitimate and informed response to the 'post-9/11' security climate. Despite the imprecise language of "Islamist extremism" often used in western political discourse and media since 9/11, intelligence experts have consistently stated that Islam is not inherently connected to violent extremism.²³⁹ Therefore, it can be said that when focusing on Muslim communities and the coming threat of "Nederabië", Dutch anti-Islam parties do not provide an accurate or sober assessment of domestic security threats. Rather, their analyses reflect prejudicial conceptions of Islam as a source of culture clash and security threat, which have steeped in Dutch politics for over three decades.

While the main political allegations depicting Islam as a security threat and incompatible culture have remained in place since the 1980s, the language used by Dutch politicians to express these views is now much more inflammatory and yet also seen as

²³⁹ It is only within the last year that the language around terrorism and extremism has progressed to actively avoid referencing "Islam" which bestows a false sense of legitimacy on those who commit violence. For an important demonstration of this change in discourse *see* Obama, "Remarks by the President in Closing of the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism"(Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, Washington, D.C., February 18, 2015).

less controversial. To illustrate, in keeping with public sentiment the Netherlands' Court of Justice found anti-immigrant party leader Hans Janmaat guilty of inciting racial hatred for publically voicing his desire to "abolish" the Netherlands' multicultural society in 1996.²⁴⁰ While certainly unpleasant by today's standards, in hindsight Janmaat's comments were notably less severe than those regularly made by Fortuyn and Wilders in the 2000s.²⁴¹ Among Fortuyn's more famous routine quips was that Islam is an "achterlijke cultuur" (backward or retarded culture). He was also fond of saying that, "If I could somehow go around the law, I would prevent any more Muslims from coming here, I would!"²⁴² Despite this regular commentary, Fortuyn was never charged with hate speech.

Again in contrast to Janmaat, Wilders was acquitted in 2011 of inciting hate and discrimination against Muslims by repeatedly comparing the Quran to Mein Kampf and calling Islam a fascist ideology.²⁴³ As a result of his comments advocating for fewer Moroccans in the Netherlands in March 2014, there have been renewed attempts to have Wilders tried again, however progress on his potential conviction remains unclear.²⁴⁴ When examined, the anti-Islam politics of Fortuyn and Wilders are easily comparable to Janmaat's, yet Fortuyn enjoyed and Wilders continues to enjoy far greater electoral support and public tolerance. Tracing the gradual acceptance of anti-Islam politics from the Netherlands' political fringe to the mainstream suggests that anti-Muslim sentiment in the Netherlands cannot be fully understood if treated as a new social issue of the 'post-

²⁴⁰ Verkaaik, "The cachet dilemma: Ritual and agency in new Dutch nationalism", 71.

²⁴¹ Ibid, 71.

²⁴² Remie, "De Extravagante Uitspraken van de Flamboyant Pim Fortuyn", *NRC*, May 6, 2012. In this case, "the law" is likely a reference to article 6 of the Dutch constitution on anti-discrimination. Translation by author.

²⁴³ Hink, "Wilders op Alle Punten Vrijgesproken", *NRC*, June 23, 2011.

²⁴⁴ Heijmans and Stoker. "Wordt Wilders Nu Wel Verooreeld?" *Volkskrant*, December 18, 2014.

9/11' moment. Recognizing the twentieth century origins of anti-Islam politics provides a more reasonable account as to why the LPF and PVV anti-Islam parties emerged and were successful in the early 2000s.

The development of anti-Islam politics since 1980s, suggests that successful anti-Islam parties would likely have surfaced in the Netherlands regardless of the murders of Theo van Gogh and Pim Fortuyn, and the augmented security climate of the 'post-9/11' moment. This long-term trajectory also contextualizes and supports what Dutch political scientist Jan Erk argues is the increased normalization (mainstreaming) of Dutch anti-Islam politics. Erk argues that contrary to references within the media to the PVV as belonging to the "far-right", anti-Islam politics are now a normative position shared by the majority of Dutch political parties. "There is nothing marginal about his [Wilders'] message in the contemporary Netherlands".²⁴⁵

Before 9/11 in Western Europe

Looking at the emergence of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands since the 1980s, also importantly reflects a wider societal trend. A significant number of Western European countries— whose current anti-Islam politics are also often researched by academics and presented by politicians as a product of the 'post 9/11' moment— also had political parties during the 1980s and 1990s which focused on the cultural incompatibility and "threat" of Islam.²⁴⁶ While not exhaustive, below are some brief descriptive accounts

²⁴⁵ Erk, 12.

²⁴⁶ Given the similar patterns of immigration to Europe particularly from Turkey and North African countries including Morocco in 1970s-1980s, it is not surprising that Muslim communities were a focus of anti-immigrant parties in other Western European countries.

from European history that illustrate the seemingly overlooked pattern of anti-Islam politics originating in 20th century Europe.

Within its 1991-1992 party documents, France's National Front (FN) party introduced a list of "50 anti-immigration measures" intended to prevent the localization of Islam in France, which it deemed "totally incompatible" with French society.²⁴⁷ At the time, FN was a fringe party led by Jean-Marie Le Pen who the French media often referred to as "the devil".²⁴⁸ Today however, FN is run by Jean-Marie's daughter Marine and has evolved into one of France's largest parties. According to public opinion polls, there is a real possibility that Le Pen could oust current president Francois Holland in the 2017 elections.²⁴⁹ Like Wilders, Le Pen has also made comments connecting Islam and Nazism. In 2010, she compared Muslims praying publically in French society to the Nazi occupation.²⁵⁰

According to sociologist Ferruh Yilmaz, a hostile public discourse on Muslim integration has also existed in Demark since the 1980s.²⁵¹ This translated into action in the late 1990s, when the Danish People's Party (DPP) first attempted to block the building of mosques by arguing that Islam and Muslim culture were incompatible with Danish society's Christian "way of thinking".²⁵² In 1999, DPP party leader Pia Kjaersgaard also charged that immigrants with a Muslim background had "absolutely no

²⁴⁷ Betz and Meret, "Revisiting Lepanto: the political mobilization against Islam in contemporary Western Europe", 314.

²⁴⁸ Alduy, "The Devil' Daughter", *The Atlantic*, October 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/10/the-devils-daughter/309467/>

²⁴⁹ Anne Penketh, "Front National Wins Seats in French Senate for First Time". *The Guardian*, September 28, 2014.

²⁵⁰ Staff writer. "Marine Le Pen "Muslims in France 'Like Nazi Occupation'", *The Telegraph*, December 20, 2010.

²⁵¹ Yilmaz, "Right-wing hegemony and immigration: How the populist far-right achieved hegemony through the immigration debate in Europe", 372.

²⁵² Betz and Meret, 326.

wish to be part of Danish society”.²⁵³ From 2001 to 2011, the DPP was a coalition party of the government, and in the June 2015 elections became the second largest party in Denmark.²⁵⁴ Lastly, in Belgium, the Vlaams Blok (VB) (today Vlaams Belang) anti-immigrant party targeted Turkish and Moroccan guest workers within its first party manifesto in 1980. VB dedicated increasing energy to depicting Belgium’s emerging Muslim communities as incompatible with Belgian society throughout the 1980s and 1990s.²⁵⁵

As in the Netherlands, the anti-immigrant parties of France, Denmark, and Belgium during the twentieth century were considered fringe parties and supporting their politics was socially taboo. Today however, the general focus on anti-Islam politics and the status of these parties have both moved into the mainstream. In order to understand this transition better, further research into the continuities and similarities of anti-Islam party politics throughout Europe since the 1980s is needed. Further research could potentially revolutionize current approaches to discussing today’s anti-Islam parties. When discussed as a group, parties like FN, VP and DPP are instead often vaguely labelled within the media as Europe’s “far right” or “populist” movements of the ‘post-9/11’ era, which does not accurately portray their politics or history. As explored above, the post-1945 political history of the Netherlands and descriptive accounts above suggest that anti-Islam politics have been simmering in Europe for decades.

²⁵³ Ibid, 314.

²⁵⁴ Crouch and Eriksen, “Denmark Swings to the Right as Centre-Left Accepts Defeat”, *The Guardian*, June 19, 2015.

²⁵⁵ Mudde, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right* (Manchester University Press, 2000). 97–98. As quoted in Williams, 113.

It is also interesting to note that European countries with particularly loud political conversations on the post-9/11 “failure” of multiculturalism including Italy, Germany, France, and Switzerland, had (like the Netherlands) minimal multicultural policies before and after 9/11. According to the Queens University Multicultural Policy Index, on a scale of *Strong*, *Modest*, and *Weak*, the aforementioned countries consistently maintained '*Weak*' levels of multicultural policies from 1980 to 2010.²⁵⁶ Since each country's policy history is a thesis topic in its own right, research into the potentially similar histories of a 'multicultural myth' was not conducted for this chapter. However statements from British Prime Minister David Cameron (2010) and German President Angela Merkel (2011) that “multiculturalism has failed”, suggest that a similar 'performance' of multiculturalism may be at work.²⁵⁷

Given the former colonial status of Italy, Germany, France and Britain, patterns of constructed 'otherness' similar to “real and unreal” *Dutchness*, are also likely to have occurred during their respective decolonization processes. For at the root of European multiculturalism/integration politics is the sense that citizens belonging to racial minorities (the now internal 'others') have somehow failed to belong. It is worth asking in future research if historically, the belonging of minorities in each nation's 'imagined community' was ever seen as possible by the majority, or truly exists as an option for European minorities today.

²⁵⁶ "Multiculturalism Policy Index, <http://www.queensu.ca/mcp/> March 4, 2015”.

²⁵⁷ Staff. “Full transcript David Cameron Speech on radicalisation and Islamic extremism Munich”, *The NewStatesmen*, February 5, 2011; Staff, “Merkel says German Multicultural Society Has Failed”, *BBC*, October 17, 2010.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to demonstrate that Dutch anti-Islam politics are best understood as a complex and long-term social issue informed by a disguised immigration history, exclusive notions of *Dutchness*, and the persistent “multicultural myth”. Examining the evolution of Dutch anti-Islam politics since the 1980s also revealed important similarities to other European polities; further evidencing that anti-Islam politics within Europe are not adequately captured by a ‘post-9/11’ framing. When cultural diversity is not understood as a society’s strength, minority communities often face discrimination.²⁵⁸ In the context of the Netherlands’ continued discomfort with its identity as a multicultural society since 1945, the emergence of anti-Islam politics in the 1980s reinforces this idea.

In addition to the Dutch academics mentioned in this chapter, many Dutch citizens and organizations are troubled by the mainstream status of anti-Islam politics today and its impact on Dutch Muslims.²⁵⁹ Within these circles, the longer political history of Muslim discrimination is recognized. However a national discussion focused on the Netherlands’ historic responses to multicultural integration (instead of the purported actions of minorities) has not yet occurred. Instead of examining Dutch society’s complicated history with diversity as the potential bedrock of anti-Islam

²⁵⁸ Boutilier, “Defining Pluralism”, 10.

²⁵⁹ For example, “Meld Islamofobie” is a Dutch social media group aimed at documenting and raising awareness of incidents of Muslim discrimination in the Netherlands. See <https://www.facebook.com/MeldpuntIslamofobie?fref=ts> ; “ACT?” is part of an international research project that monitors developments related to anti-Islam politics and perceptions of Muslims in the Netherlands. It also provides an online platform for creative anti-discrimination initiatives such as the “Gezillig: Dutch Muslims Present Happy Dutch Muslims”. See <http://religionresearch.org/act/> ; See also “Monitor Racisme en Extremisme”, a research hub of the Anne Frank House that studies racism and political extremism in the Netherlands, <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Education/Monitor-Homepage/Racism-monitor/Islamophobia-on-the-rise/> .

politics, the advent of the ‘post-9/11’ moment provided a highly plausible and tidy explanation for the rise of LPF and PVV parties.

Yet as discussed herein, a ‘post-9/11’ framing misses the long-term history of anti-Islam politics and in doing so cheats Dutch society from a chance to critically self-reflect on its treatment of Dutch Muslims. Instead, a ‘post-9/11’ narration of anti-Islam parties inadvertently contributes to the effective stereotyping of Islam as a security threat and backwards, incompatible culture. For suggesting that anti-Islam parties are a response to the actions of violent extremists conjoins the vast majority of peaceful Muslim citizens into a highly problematized identity category. Put differently, accepting a ‘post-9/11’ framing of anti-Islam parties in the Netherlands and throughout Europe inadvertently legitimizes those parties who claim their purpose is to combat Europe’s greatest 21st century threat: “Islamization”. In reality, concerns about the place of Islam and Muslims within Dutch society predate today’s post-9/11 security concerns and are informed by fixed notions of a Dutch identity and misconceptions of Muslim communities. Raising awareness about the long-term presence of anti-Islam politics is arguably a key step to delegitimizing anti-Islam parties today and making space for Dutch Muslims inside *Dutchness*.

Chapter 4. Anti-Islam materials: An underestimated component of Dutch

“Islamization” politics

On the morning of November 4, 2004, Dutch national Mohammed Bouyeri, a radicalized violent extremist, killed Theo van Gogh in the streets of Amsterdam due to the content of his anti-Islam film *Submission-Part 1*.²⁶⁰ The attack deeply shocked Dutch society and remains an enduring source of cultural trauma.²⁶¹ Although van Gogh was often publically reviled for his offensive politics against Muslims, posthumously he became a martyr symbolizing Dutch culture and freedom of speech.²⁶² Bouyeri’s ominous promise of future violence also made headlines when the police revealed he had pinned a death threat to van Gogh targeting anti-Islam politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The note warned that she, “...will kill herself against the force of Islam” and that “the Netherlands will also be destroyed”.²⁶³

The importance of *Submission* to van Gogh’s murder is well known within Dutch society and the film’s deeply offensive content has also been analyzed by a number of scholars.²⁶⁴ However the significance of Hirsi Ali’s authorship of the film script for *Submission*, given that she was a politician for the VVD conservative party at the time, has received little academic or media attention. While the circumstances of van Gogh’s

²⁶⁰ Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 4. Since no ‘part 2’ of *Submission* has been released, ‘part 1’ will not be repeated.

²⁶¹ Eyerman, *The Assassination of Theo van Gogh: From Social Drama to Cultural Trauma*, 22.

²⁶² In the Amsterdam city archive’s permanent Treasury Exhibit, van Gogh was one of a select group of Dutch citizens canonized as an embodiment of values important to Dutch society. The van Gogh instillation is said to represent *vrijheid van meningsuiting* (free speech), and includes several dozen handwritten notes originally placed where he died. Some of the messages read: “Theo, you always were and always will be my hero”, “your commitment to freedom of speech was a shining example”, and “THANK YOU. For opening our eyes”. Translations by author. Stadsarchief (November 14, 2014).

²⁶³ Bouyeri, “Open Brief aan Ayaan Hirsi Ali”, *NRC*, November 5, 2004. Translation by author. This letter was widely reprinted by the major Dutch news outlets.

²⁶⁴ See Jusova, (Chap 1. no. 81) and de Leeuw and van Wichelen (Chap 1. no. 82).

terrorist-murder remains a singular event in Dutch history, *Submission* fits into a larger pattern of inflammatory books and films created by Dutch anti-Islam politicians.²⁶⁵ Since the late 1990s, a small yet consistent number of high profile politicians have— independent of their party—written books and/or films extolling the dangers of Islam to the culture and safety of Dutch society.²⁶⁶ Although gaining traction by the late 1990s, anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands were generally considered socially taboo during the twentieth century.²⁶⁷ Scholarship tends to agree that this changed in the early 2000s due to the rise of anti-Islam parties *Free Pim Fortuyn* (LPF, 2002-2007) and the *Freedom Party* (PVV, 2006-present).]²⁶⁸

As a result of this more recent shift, there is a tendency within western media to explain the rise (i.e., normalization) of anti-Islam politics as a ‘post-9/11’ phenomenon; based on increased fears and incidents of “Islamist” extremism.²⁶⁹ However this framing arguably presents the normalized status of anti-Islam politics as a secondary reaction or legitimate response to terrorism. As discussed in chapter 3, anti-Islam politics focused on the alleged cultural incompatibility and security threat of Islam emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, and are informed by systemic exclusion of minorities within the identity of *Dutchness*. This suggests that anti-Islam politics more likely became normalized slowly over decades and appeared in the twenty-first century irrespective of 9/11. Instead of

²⁶⁵ For brevity, anti-Islam books and films authored by Dutch politicians will be referred to as anti-Islam materials.

²⁶⁶ Unfortunately due to accessibility constraints, select anti-Islam materials written by Dutch politician Frits Bolkestein during the early 1990s could not be analyzed herein including *Islam en de democratie: een ontmoeten* (Islam and democracy in conversation), 1994; *Muslims in de Polder* (Muslims in the Polder), 1997. Additionally, there are no copies available in Canada or public loan via RACER’s partner libraries in the United States. For further information on Bolkestein please see Chap. 3 pages 25-27.

²⁶⁷ Prins, “The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism”, 364.

²⁶⁸ See Prins (chap. 1 no. 2); Verkaaik (chap.1 no. 67)

²⁶⁹ See Deutsch and Escritt, “Anti-Islam Politician Wilders Aims to ‘Paralyze’ Dutch Government”, *Reuters*, January 23, 2015.

viewing the normalization of anti-Islam politics as an unplanned or knee-jerk response to the nebulous post-9/11 security climate, the consistent production of anti-Islam materials beginning in the late 1990s arguably indicates that Dutch anti-Islam politicians were, like previous generations of anti-Islam politicians, actively trying to facilitate this normalization. However the success of their non-traditional political activities has not yet been given serious academic attention.

Based on a content analysis of the materials and exploratory research into their cultural presence within Dutch society, this chapter argues that anti-Islam books and films written and produced by Dutch politicians have played a significant part in the normalization of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands since the late 1990s. The materials enabled Dutch politicians to disseminate criticisms of Islam outside of traditional politics thereby increasing the potential audience and influence of their message. The considerable volume of book sales, public accessibility of the materials, and the media coverage of the films, suggests the materials helped normalize anti-Islam politics by bringing discussions of the threat of “Islamization” into mainstream society through “cultural” products. Through select examples it will also be demonstrated that anti-Islam materials appear capable of influencing traditional government politics/policy, and of threatening national security.

To begin, this chapter will indicate through a content analysis that anti-Islam materials are a vital extension of anti-Islam politics. The potential influence of anti-Islam materials on Dutch traditional policy and politics will be discussed in connection to the government’s 2006 immigrant integration test and preparation film *Naar Nederland* (To the Netherlands), and the unsuccessful trial of Geert Wilders for hate speech in 2011

following the release of *Fitna* (2008). The findings of the exploratory research into the materials' presence within Dutch culture will then be discussed. While by no means exhaustive, the purpose of this research is to offer an analysis of the normalization of anti-Islam politics 'outside' of a post-9/11 framing. In conclusion, the potential security issues posed by the omnipresence of anti-Islam materials within Dutch society are considered in connection to interview conversations with Dutch political researchers and security practitioners.

Dutch cultural production materials: A vehicle for anti-Islam politics

In addition to Hirsi Ali, Dutch politicians creating cultural production materials include anti-Islam party leaders, Pim Fortuyn of *Free Pim Fortuyn* (LPF, 2002-2007) and Geert Wilders of the *Freedom Party* (PVV, 2006-present). The materials are listed below in chronological order; 'B' and 'F' identify books and films, respectively.

- 1) Pim Fortuyn, *De Islamisering van onze Cultuur: Nederlandse Identiteit als Fundament* (The Islamization of our Culture: Dutch Identity as Foundational), 1997, 2nd edition 2001. B.
- 2) Fortuyn, *De Puinhopen van Acht Jaar Parse* (The Ruins of Eight Purple Years), 2002. B.
- 3) Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Submission*, 2004. F.
- 4) Hirsi Ali, *Mijn Vrijheid* (Infidel), 2006. B.²⁷⁰
- 5) Wilders, *Fitna*, 2007. F.
- 6) Wilders, *Marked for Death: Islam's War Against the West and Me*, 2012. B.

²⁷⁰ Unfortunately a Dutch language version of *Infidel* could not be publically accessed.

The majority of these works have received academic attention individually. However the fact that only anti-Islam politicians (in contrast to other Dutch politicians) appear to have created cultural production materials to further their agenda, has not been discussed within the scholarship. The potential significance of this pattern of publication amongst successive ‘generations’ of anti-Islam politicians is also not readily apparent within the literature.²⁷¹

A content analysis of the books and films reveals that each material reflected at least one of the anticipated themes outlined in Chapter 2 (Research Methods).

- The cultural Islamization of the Netherlands
- Islam’s backwardness and inherent incompatibility within Dutch society demonstrated by intolerance of gay and women’s rights
- Islam as a national security/Islamist terrorism
- The failure of multiculturalism/Muslim integration in the Netherlands

The thematic focus of the materials reflects the main anti-Islam political message of their author. Although Pim Fortuyn, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Geert Wilders have many ideological similarities, each politician tends to focus on a specific grievance against Islam. As evidenced by his 1999 report to Dutch parliament on "Islamist extremism", Wilders has primarily focused on the security threat of Islam in the Netherlands throughout his political career.²⁷² In 2002, Pim Fortuyn centred his campaign strategy on his ability to be the only one who would “stand up” to the Islamization of Dutch culture.²⁷³ Meanwhile Hirsi Ali, a colleague of Wilders from the conservative party VVD

²⁷¹ The scholarship discussed within this thesis does not appear to have commented on either the anti-Islam materials as a collective and pattern amongst Dutch anti-Islam politicians, or the relevance of the materials to the authors' political activities. For further discussion see (Chap 1. pages 23-25).

²⁷² Vossen, “Classifying Wilders: The ideological development of Geert Wilders and his Party for Freedom”, 181. During the 1990s, Wilders was an MP for the VVD conservative party before founding the PVV in 2006.

²⁷³ Prins and Saharso, *From Toleration to Repression: The Dutch Backlash Against Multiculturalism*, In *The Multiculturalism Backlash: European Discourses, Policies and Practices* 72, 78. In *The*

(2003-2006), takes a more gendered approach, concentrating on domestic violence against Dutch Muslim women. It should be noted that Dutch Muslim women activists did not take issue with Hirsi Ali's commitment to targeting domestic abuse per se; rather, they contested her assertion that domestic abuse happens because of Islam.²⁷⁴

By way of example, the following passages below from Fortuyn, Hirsi Ali, and Wilders' anti-Islam books, reflect the particular anti-Islam political agendas of each author:

- The Netherlands today is characterized by cultural relativism... In our so-called multicultural society, Islamic (fundamentalist) culture and traditional Dutch society are encountering each other... our disinterest in our own culture and society that has led to the current situation in which our original [Dutch] culture is now being put on the defensive. Fortuyn, *Tegen de Islamisering van onze Cultuur*, 15. Translation by author.
- Men all over the world beat their women, I am constantly informed. In reality, these westerners are the ones who misunderstand Islam. The Quran mandates these punishments... I wanted secular, non-Muslim people to stop kidding themselves that Islam is peace and tolerance. Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*, 307.
- Islam is not a religion... it is a totalitarian system aiming for political domination of the world. The Nazis understood this too, recognizing in Islam a kindred evil soul. Wilders, *Marked for Death*, 42.

Writing in 1997, Fortuyn's statements appear reminiscent of conservative VVD party leader Frits Bolkestein's anti-Islam remarks in the early 1990s.²⁷⁵ However as Fortuyn's career progressed, his argument for the 'defence' Dutch culture became more nuanced and successful. Fortuyn faulted Islamic culture for its alleged treatment of homosexuals and women's rights, which he held up as exclusive proponents of Dutch "culture".²⁷⁶ As

Multiculturalism Backlash. European discourses, policies and practices 72, 72 (Steven Vertovec and Susan Wessendorf eds., Routledge, 2009).

²⁷⁴ See Cherribi, *The House of War: Dutch Islam Observed*, 199-201.

²⁷⁵ Prins, "The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism", 367-368.

²⁷⁶ Mepshen et al., "Sexual Politics, Orientalism and Multicultural Citizenship in the Netherlands", 98.

the text above demonstrates, a tactic of Hirsi Ali's is to position criticisms of Islam as Western naivety in contrast to herself as an authority on Islam. However Hirsi Ali is not a religious scholar. As a result Hirsi Ali has often been accused of overstating her knowledge of Islam and sensationalizing translations of the Quran to fit her political agenda.²⁷⁷ Within the text above and his public remarks, Geert Wilders' comparisons between Islam to Nazism are routine. In addition to being highly sensational (and widely circulated within the media as result), this derogatory comparison has unfortunately served as an effective way for Wilders to keep conflating discussions of Islam with security threats.²⁷⁸ Although the majority of the materials examined were created during the early 2000s, it is important to note that the contained anti-Islam ideas are (contrary to the post-9/11 framing), overwhelmingly consistent with the criticisms of Islam raised by Dutch politicians Hans Janmaat in the 1980s-1990s, and Frits Bolkestein during the 1990s. The similarity of anti-Islam politics since the 1980s yet absence of a concerted body of anti-Islam materials before the 2000s is intriguing. Offering Dutch citizens the same anti-Islam arguments in a new "cultural" fora appears to have introduced an important non-traditional outlet that greatly aided the normalization of anti-Islam politics during the early 2000s.

The jarring imagery and captions within the anti-Islam short films *Submission* (2004), written by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and directed by Theo van Gogh, and *Fitna*, written and produced by Geert Wilders (2008), also promote their respective political criticisms

²⁷⁷ See a revealing exchange between Ayaan Hirsi Ali and British anti-extremism activist Maajid Nawaz in their debate on *Intelligence Squared*, October 6, 2010. Nawaz asks Hirsi Ali about her knowledge of Arabic and then re-translates her translation of an excerpt from the Quran, calling her language exaggerated. 40 min., 7 sec to 41 min., 4 sec. 40:07-41:04. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFvklPpGZtA>

²⁷⁸ See Mock, "Dutch MP to be Tried for Views on Islam", *The Independent*, January 22, 2009.

of Islam. Through a series of monologues, *Submission* depicts different narratives of abuse suffered by Dutch Muslim women.²⁷⁹ The women are in full cover yet the material is sheer, revealing their naked bodies. The back of a woman is also lashed repeatedly at the outset of the film. What is particularly interesting is that each abused narrator talks directly to the audience [Allah] and says she understands why she must suffer.²⁸⁰ In this way, *Submission* portrays Hirsi Ali's understanding of Islam as the root cause of domestic abuse and subjugation within Dutch Muslim communities.

Fitna begins with a split screen shot juxtaposing alleged verses of the Quran in Dutch, with footage of the 9/11 attack on the twin towers.²⁸¹ This scene sets up Wilders' argument that Islam and terrorism are synonymous. Towards the middle of the film, a new section is introduced by the caption: "The Netherlands under the spell of Islam?" displayed across a blood red sky.²⁸² It then proceeds to an animated graph detailing the increasing number of Muslims in the Netherlands since the 1940s. The graph is projected over images and music intended to suggest the danger of this increasing population.²⁸³ Together, these scenes emulate Wilders' numerous political statements saying that Islam is a violent ideology and that the local Dutch Muslim community should also be considered a potential security threat.²⁸⁴

Importantly, passages within Wilders and Hirsi Ali's autobiographies suggest that the authors also considered the films to be an extension of their political beliefs. In *Infidel*

²⁷⁹ Presumably to include international audiences, in the original version the monologues are spoken in English with Dutch subtitles. This arguably suggests the women represent Dutch Muslims but could also symbolize 'all' Muslim women.

²⁸⁰ For example see *Submission*, 3 min., 56 sec., to 4 min., 9 sec.

²⁸¹ *Fitna*, see 2 min., 7 sec.

²⁸² *Ibid*, 9 min., 39 sec.

²⁸³ *Ibid*, 10 min., 6 sec. Translation by author.

²⁸⁴ Hirsi Ali and Wilders, "Het is Tijd Voor Een Liberale Jihad", *NRC*, May 4, 2004.

(2006), Hirsi Ali discusses how— before deciding on the video format of *Submission*— she knew she wanted to take anti-Islam politics into a new arena. “Political speeches are fine, but it’s time now for satire, for art, for movies and books. Creative people with a dissident message...need to get their own message across with pictures, not just with words.”²⁸⁵

Hirsi Ali then describes her original idea to create a provocative art exhibit on the place of women in Islam that is quite similar to the content of *Submission*.

There would be a woman flogged for adultery, a woman beaten repeatedly, a woman imprisoned inside her house. One of them would be wearing a transparent *hidjab*, and each would have words of the Quran written across her flesh...The exhibit would illustrate with simple images the suffering endured by the women in the name of Allah. *Infidel*, 307.

According to Wilders’ second autobiography *Marked for Death* (2012), he ultimately decided to make *Fitna* in the style of a documentary film in order to reveal “the ongoing Islamization process in the Netherlands. My movie shows real-life images from real life Islam.”²⁸⁶

Wilders and Hirsi Ali also both appear to have intentionally used their status as politicians to disseminate their films through public broadcasting. After extensive negotiations with the Dutch broadcaster VPRO, Hirsi Ali revealed *Submission* on the Dutch television show *ZomerGasten* (Summer Guests) in 2004.²⁸⁷ In 2015, there is still an ongoing dispute between the network and the program producers as to who officially gave the ‘go ahead’ to show the anti-Islam film.²⁸⁸ In addition to its highly controversial content, a film screening went against the conventional set up of the program. As a result,

²⁸⁵ Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*, 307.

²⁸⁶ Wilders, *Marked for Death*, 189.

²⁸⁷ Takken, “Makers Zomergasten ruziën over Submission”, *NRC*, January 12, 2015.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

it is quite likely that Hirsi Ali's status as a high-profile politician ultimately made the screening possible.

Likely due to the aftermath of *Submission*, Wilders' attempts to similarly debut *Fitna* on Dutch television were unsuccessful, as he could not find a willing network.²⁸⁹ Instead Wilders launched the video online through LiveLeak, a more extreme web-based content sharing channel. While impossible to confirm, according to Wilders over 3 million people watched the original uploaded version.²⁹⁰ In marked contrast to 2008, and perhaps owing to outrage over the *Charlie Hebdo* murders in France that were widely seen as an attack against political expression, it is worth noting that as of June 2015, Wilders has allegedly secured broadcast time for his recent short film *Mohammed Cartoons*, depicting a series of comics about the Prophet Mohammed.²⁹¹ Despite recent efforts to move away from referring to "Islamist" extremism, coverage of incidents such as the *Charlie Hebdo* murders add to the conflation Islam and terrorism since the distinction is not always made or well explained.²⁹² This evolving political climate, in which the role of free speech is currently being hotly contended, may help further normalize Wilders views.

Based on an interview with Wilders, journalists Anthony Deutsch and Thomas Escritt wrote that Wilders sees vindication for his anti-Islam politics in the attacks, and is optimistic that the concerns over the events in Paris could translate into support for the

²⁸⁹ Wilders, *Marked for Death*, 189.

²⁹⁰ Wilders, 190.

²⁹¹ Lotenberg, "'Misverstand' Ront Uitzending Filmpje Wilders Mohammedcartoons", *NRC*, June 20, 2015.

²⁹² See Wallace-Wells, "Charlie Hebdo and the Shifting Nature of Islamic Terrorism", *New York Times Magazine*, January 14, 2015.

PVV leading to “greater national influence”.²⁹³ While Wilders aims to legitimize a ‘post-9/11’ conflation of terrorism and Islam, this element of anti-Islam politics must be grounded within his long-term (pre-9/11) argument that Islam is a security threat. Without this historical grounding, coverage runs the risk of presenting anti-Islam politics as a response to recent terrorist attacks that is legitimate.

That Hirsi Ali and Wilders also circulated their films within Dutch political circles further underlines the explicit political relevance of their anti-Islam materials. Prior to the public broadcast of *Submission*, Hirsi Ali said she gave a private screening to a select group of cabinet members including then Defense Minister Henk Kamp. On viewing the film, Kamp allegedly responded, “What a cruel world we live in”.²⁹⁴ Since Hirsi Ali is the narrator it cannot be said definitively that Kamp’s response (if authentic) was supportive of the film which she suggests: “he [Kamp] was emotionally caught up in the film...it was moving to see him so stirred by it”.²⁹⁵ However if true, the defence minister’s negative perception of Islam is important to note, a position he held from 2002 until 2007. Although Dutch parliament refused to screen *Fitna*, a parliamentary debate on the film was held in April 2008, signalling its recognized importance to Dutch politics.²⁹⁶ The motivations behind the decision to debate *Fitna* in Dutch parliament appear manifold. At the time, numerous reports had already been filed against Wilders for hate speech.²⁹⁷ Given that MP’s are rarely charged due to the heightened freedom of speech

²⁹³ Deutsch and Escritt, “Anti-Islam Politician Wilders Aims to ‘Paralyze’ Dutch Government”, *Reuters*, January 23, 2015.

²⁹⁴ Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*, 315.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 315.

²⁹⁶ Staff writer, “Fitna Debated in Dutch Parliament, Wilders Denies Softening Film After Pressure”, *Der Spiegel*, April 2, 2008.

²⁹⁷ Van Spanje and de Vreese, “The good the bad and the voter: The impact of a hate speech prosecution of a politician on electoral support”, 119.

protection afforded by their profession, this would be an important matter for parliament. It is also possible that Wilders' opponents requested the debate over concerns about the security risks of the film's content. During the parliamentary session, then Justice Minister Ernst Ballin revealed meeting notes between himself, Geert Wilders, Minister of Home Affairs Guusje ter Horst, and the national anti-terrorism Coordinator (NCTV) which reveal the Ministers' expressed concerns over the film's content.²⁹⁸ Since Wilders' announcement of the forthcoming film in late 2007, the content of *Fitna* insured it was a lightning rod for media attention within the months leading up to and after the release, which will be discussed in the following section.

In his capacity as leader of the PVV, Wilders has since successfully shown *Fitna* to international audiences including screenings in Italy, Denmark, Israel, the United States, and the United Kingdom.²⁹⁹ In 2010, Wilders visited the UK to host a screening of *Fitna* in the House of Lords. Wilders was originally invited to screen his film in 2009, by former United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) leader Lord Pearson however on arrival he was turned away at Heathrow airport. Home Secretary Jacqui Smith denied Wilders entry on the grounds that his visit was poised to foment social unrest and potentially incite violence in the UK and was therefore a security issue.³⁰⁰ According to *The Telegraph*, the Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen said the Netherlands would press for the ban to be overturned.³⁰¹ Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende

²⁹⁸ Staff writer, "Fitna Debated in Dutch Parliament, Wilders Denies Softening Film After Pressure", *Der Spiegel*, April 2, 2008.

²⁹⁹ Liphshiz, "Dutch Lawmaker Banned from U.K to Take Anti-Koran Film on 'World Tour'", *Haaretz*, February 13, 2009; O'Conner, "Mr. Wilders Goes to Washington", *New York Times*, February 26, 2009; Jones, "Geert Wilders Anti-Islam Film Gets House of Lords Screening", *The Guardian*, March 5, 2010.

³⁰⁰ Siddique and Walker, "Far-right Dutch MP Refused Entry to UK", *The Guardian*, February 12, 2009.

³⁰¹ Hope, Bingham and Waterfield, "Dutch MP Geert Wilders Deported After Flying to Britain to Show Anti-Islam Film", *Telegraph*, February 12, 2009.

also issued an official statement publically condemning the film, but did not say the film was beyond the limits of freedom of speech.³⁰²

In 2010, the UK's Asylum and Immigration Tribunal overturned Geert Wilders' entry ban on the grounds of free speech.³⁰³ Despite the initial disapproval of Wilders' politics demonstrated by both the Dutch and British governments, the decision to ultimately yield on how offensive or dangerous his views are suggests an increased acceptance of anti-Islam politics in recent years. When seen as part of the longer political conversation of anti-Islam politics in Western Europe, a plausible explanation for this reaction by both leaders is also issue fatigue. By 2010, Wilders and the PVV are well established and while the content is still shocking, the existence of anti-Islam politics itself was likely then a normalized part of the political landscape.

In contrast to Hirsi Ali and Wilders, who created their anti-Islam materials once in office, Pim Fortuyn released his anti-Islam books during his entrance into politics.³⁰⁴ Fortuyn's anti-Islam books were arguably a means to introduce and pre-circulate his political platform. His infamous appearance on the Dutch current affairs program *Lagerhuis* (LowerHouse) in 1997 to introduce *Tegen de Islamisering*— the content of which was hotly contested by host Marcel van Dam— was also perhaps an orchestrated opportunity for Fortuyn to introduce himself politically. The book was re-released in 2001, during Fortuyn's entry into politics and brief role as the leader of the centrist party Liveable Netherlands (LF) before founding Free Pim Fortuyn (LPF). In his follow-up

³⁰² Dutch Government. "Official statement by Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende on Wilders' film", March 27, 2008.

³⁰³ Prince, "Geert Wilders: Showing My Film was a Victory for Freedom of Speech", *Telegraph*, March 6, 2010.

³⁰⁴ As discussed in Chapter 3, Pim Fortuyn was assassinated in 2002 before the national election.

book, *De Puinhopen van Acht Jaars Paars* (The Ruins of Eight Purple Years, 2002), Fortuyn presents a broad condemnation of the past government coalition and offers his political manifesto.³⁰⁵ While the content of *De Puinhopen* is certainly broader than that of *Tegen de Islamisering*, the book reiterates Fortuyn's arguments about the dangers of the Netherlands' cultural Islamization.³⁰⁶

The advantageous timing of these books during Fortuyn's entrance into national politics strongly suggests he recognized political literature as a medium through which he could preview his political agenda within Dutch society. Given the use of Dutch and actively sought public viewings and promotions for *Tegen de Islamisering* (1997), *Submission* (2004) and *Fitna* (2008) in the Netherlands, it is not unreasonable to suggest that in creating these materials, each politician saw an opportunity to familiarize Dutch citizens with their anti-Islam political beliefs outside of the traditional political fora. Yet despite the similarities between the politics of anti-Islam politicians and their respective cultural production materials, this connection has not been sufficiently considered within the scholarly literature. Given that political studies research often analyzes parties via more universal measures such as electoral representation or policy implementation, it is quite possible that previous scholarship encountered this pattern but concluded the materials were not essential for analysis.

However, Dutch anti-Islam parties are unique in that their real influence falls outside of traditional measures. As Dutch sociologist Anna Korteweg has expertly argued, anti-Islam parties are most effective in their "power to regulate" the political

³⁰⁵ Staff writer, "Fortuyn Komt met Programma in Boek", *NRC*, March 13, 2002.

³⁰⁶ Fortuyn, *De Puinhopen van Acht Jaars Paars*, 164.

discourse, not in their ability to effectively introduce legislation.³⁰⁷ To use her example, in 2009 Wilders infamously proposed a “head rag tax” be levied against Muslim women wearing a veil, which he argues is a sign of the “Islamic threat” to women’s equality in Dutch society.³⁰⁸ Under the Dutch constitution, Korteweg says this “impossible law” could never pass, however she reasons that is beside the point. The real goal or expectation in proposing anti-Islam policies is that their content will dominate national discussion and this has routinely been the outcome.³⁰⁹ As a result, the PVV has proved masterful at symbolically “regulating” integration and multiculturalism discourses in the Netherlands.

To be successful then, anti-Islam parties arguably only need to spread anti-Islam sentiments within Dutch society. As discussed in Chapter 3, Dutch anti-Islam parties have erroneously yet successfully conflated Islam with integration/immigration and security politics since the 1980s. Over time, the once taboo message of Islam’s erosion of Dutch society became tolerated (normalized) if not condoned within mainstream society. As a result, other political parties are forced to acknowledge what are in effect radical positions, react to them, while in some cases even adopt similar positions, a process Dutch political scientist Joost van Spanje refers to as issue “contagion”.³¹⁰ According to another Dutch political scientist Jan Erk, in the Netherlands contagion has occurred to the point that anti-Islam politics are now a normalized component of Dutch politics and all

³⁰⁷ Korteweg, “The ‘headrag tax’: Impossible laws and their symbolic and material consequences”, 759.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 759.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, 771.

³¹⁰ Van Spanje, “Contagious parties: Anti-immigration parties and their impact on other parties’ immigration stances in contemporary Western Europe”, 564.

political parties.³¹¹ Two notable examples of this normalization will be discussed in the following section.

Snapshots of normalization: A new civic integration law and the hate speech trial of Geert Wilders

While impossible to say definitively, it appears that on occasion anti-Islam materials have influenced government policy through issue “contagion”, and also increased the popularity of the PVV. In 2006, the Netherlands made international headlines for its new mandatory immigrant integration exam and preparatory film *Naar Nederland* (To the Netherlands).³¹² Drafting legislation for the Civic Integration law—which encompasses the integration exam—reportedly began shortly after the murder Theo van Gogh in 2004. The law was also drafted under the direction of former Immigration Minister Rita Verdonk (2003-2007).³¹³ Nicknamed “Iron Rita”, Verdonk took an unabashedly hard stance on immigration.³¹⁴ After failing to achieve significant electoral success with her neo-nationalist party, Proud of the Netherlands (ToN), in 2011 Verdonk encouraged ToN supporters to vote for Wilders and the PVV.³¹⁵ Given Verdonk’s political perspective, it is not surprising that the mandatory integration testing overwhelmingly applies to immigrants from non-western countries and requires immigrants to demonstrate a sufficient knowledge of the Dutch language, liberal values, and history.³¹⁶ In 2013, a

³¹¹ Erk, “The Famous Dutch (In)Tolerance”, 110.

³¹² See Crouch, “Dutch Immigration Kit Offers a Revealing View”, *The New York Times*, March 16, 2006.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ See Ibbitson, “Nothing to Learn from the Dutch and Iron Rita on Immigration”, *The Globe and Mail*, June 6, 2006.

³¹⁵ Staff writer, “Rita Verdonk Leaves Politics”, *Dutch News*, October 21, 2011.

³¹⁶ See the official government “Naar Nederland” website for more information on the exam. <http://www.naarnederland.nl/>

team of Dutch researchers at Nijmegen University criticized the exam for being too costly for immigrants (many of whom are required to apply outside the Netherlands), and also for its propensity to alienate and insult immigrants already well established in the Netherlands.³¹⁷ However in his review of the research findings, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment Lodewijk Asscher confirmed his support of the exam as designed maintaining it “...reflects the minimum requirements needed for successful integration”.³¹⁸

Close to two hours in length, the official purpose of the (for purchase) film *Naar Nederland* is to help prospective citizens pass the integration exam.³¹⁹ However the film has also been a source of controversy.³²⁰ Specifically, for its scenes displaying partial nudity (a woman sun tans topless) and homosexuality, both of which are framed as universally accepted parts of Dutch culture.³²¹ The problem with these scenes is not their content, but that they reveal an assumed and powerful binary between “liberal Dutch values” and the “illiberal values” of non-western ‘others’. The film operates within the foregone conclusion that non-westerners (perhaps especially Muslims) will likely respond unfavourably to these scenes and need to be warned. Abdou Menebhi, chairman of the Emcemo Moroccan interest group in Amsterdam, sees the film as “yet another example” of the government trying to tacitly discourage Muslim newcomers from Turkey and Morocco.³²² Released just two years after the public broadcast of *Submission*, it is especially interesting that the film was chosen as the medium to communicate the

³¹⁷ Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. “Brief van de Minister van Social Zaken en Wekgelegenheid over Integratiebelied”, June 17, 2013.

³¹⁸ Ibid, 2. Translation by author.

³¹⁹ The film is included within the official exam prep kit, which costs € 99, 50 euros.

³²⁰ Corbett, “Testing the Limits of Dutch Tolerance”, *Deutsche Welle*, March 16, 2006.

³²¹ See “Veelgestelde Vragen (FAQ)”, *Naar Nederland*: <http://www.naarnederland.nl/category/faq>

³²² Crouch, “Dutch Immigration Kit Offers a Revealing View”, *The New York Times*, March 16, 2006.

government's official position on what constitutes Dutch culture and the responsibilities of immigrants to integrate.³²³ After van Gogh's murder a common point of speculation within media discussions was around Bouyeri's 'level' of integration in Dutch society.³²⁴ Given that Bouyeri was born in the Netherlands, this conversation is particularly revealing of the strength of fixed ideas of *Dutchness*.

The series of unsuccessful attempts to charge Wilders for hate speech against Muslims between 2007-2010, may also suggest a normalization of anti-Islam politics. Until 2009, previous attempts to charge Wilders for his anti-Islam activities including *Fitna* were routinely dismissed by Dutch Prosecution Services on the grounds that his comments were made "within the context of public debate".³²⁵ In 2011, Wilders was ultimately tried and dismissed of all charges. It is interesting to note that during this period (2009-2011) the electoral popularity of the PVV increased. According to public opinion data compiled by Dutch political scientists Joost van Spanje and Claes de Vreese, the decision to prosecute Wilders increased public support for the PVV electorally "both in the short run and in the long run".³²⁶ The authors further speculate that the publicity of the trial helped the PVV become the "kingmaker" (supporting party) for the 2010 coalition government of the conservative VVD party led by Prime Minister Mark Rutte, and the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA). After the June 2010 national elections, the PVV became the third largest party, which is significant given the Dutch parliamentary structure requires government coalitions. Although not officially a coalition member,

³²³ The film opens with "unscripted" commentary advice from settled immigrants about moving to the Netherlands, including "you must be very independent, and that is not for everyone to do". Min 1., Sec 38. Translation by author.

³²⁴ Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 197.

³²⁵ Mock, "Dutch MP to be Tried for Views on Islam", *The Independent*, January 22, 2009.

³²⁶ Van Spanje and de Vreese, "The good the bad and the voter: The impact of hate speech prosecution of a politician on electoral support for his party", 125.

many of the PVV's key 2010 campaign promises were notably reflected in the Rutte cabinet including the proposal to ban head full face veils, criminalization of illegal residence, and a stricter family unification policy for immigrants.³²⁷ It was also revealed that Wilders had to approve the appointment of certain cabinet ministers including the Minister of Immigration, further indicating his influence on the government.³²⁸ Building on years of unsuccessful legal attempts, the 2011 ruling that Wilders' anti-Islam comments were within the law likely contributed to the normalization of anti-Islam politics. As will be discussed in the following section, the presence of anti-Islam cultural materials (books and films) within Dutch society also helped normalize each author's anti-Islam political agenda.

Exploring the presence of anti-Islam materials within Dutch society

In order to assess the usefulness of this material in propagating its message to Dutch society, exploratory research was conducted regarding the following criteria 1) sales within the Netherlands, 2) public accessibility via library holdings, and 3) viewing/media coverage of the materials. Normalization is defined herein as an accepted (tolerated) feature of Dutch mainstream politics. The considerable presence of the materials within Dutch culture further suggests that the materials likely played an instrumental role within the normalization of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands.

During their political careers, the anti-Islam books written by Pim Fortuyn, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Geert Wilders achieved bestseller status in the Netherlands. In 2002, Fortuyn's *De Puinhopen van Acht Jaar Parse* (The Ruins of Eight Purple Years), was the

³²⁷ Erk, 111.

³²⁸ Ibid, 111.

number one non-fiction national bestseller, and the third bestselling book in the Netherlands overall.³²⁹ While sales did increase after his death, *De Puinhopen* also sold out during the first days of its release, indicating considerable public demand.³³⁰ In 2010, Wilders released his first autobiography: *Kies voor de vrijheid: een eerlijk antwoord* (Choose Freedom: An Honest Answer). According to the Netherlands' national bestseller list "De BestSeller 60", in 2005 Wilders' book stayed on the charts for 18 consecutive weeks.³³¹ Lastly, *Mijn Vrijheid*, the Dutch original version of Hirsi Ali's autobiography *Infidel*, stayed on the national bestseller list throughout 2006-2007, its highest position on the list was seventh.³³²

Bestseller sales arguably reflect that anti-Islam books became a normalized topic within the Netherlands. The considerable volume of domestic sales for each politician also buttresses the argument that anti-Islam texts were an important vehicle for anti-Islam politics. Even if Dutch consumers did not read the book or agree with an author's portrayal of Islam, a willingness to purchase the books or entertain the ideas in this "cultural" format, suggests the books (and therefore the content) were not considered outside mainstream society i.e., not taboo. The books arguably provided a private and

³²⁹ CPNB Top 100. "De best verkochte boeken in de Nederlandse boekwinkels 2002", http://web.cpnb.nl/blobs/cpnb/61970/2010/22/CPNBTOP100_2002.pdf

³³⁰ Boekblad. "Lichte opleving verkoop boeken Fortuyn rondom herdenking", May 3, 2003

³³¹ De Stichting Collective Propaganda von Nederlandse Boeken (Stichting CPNB), 'De BestSeller 60', <http://www.cpnb.nl/bs/index.asp?searchString=Wilders>. Curiously, this book was funded and published by the PVV and therefore falls outside of the sample criteria used for the text discourse analysis (releases independent of the author's political party). However it has been mentioned above since a comparison between *Marked for Death* and the description of *Kies voor de vrijheid* on the PVV's website, suggests the former is an expanded and more pointedly anti-Islam version of the party-funded best seller. See *PVV*. "Wilders Vertelt Eigen Verhaal", April 21, 2005. According to CPNC data Wilders (2012) was not a bestseller in the Netherlands, however it may have been disqualified for consideration since the book was only published in English.

³³² CPNB Stichting. "De BestSeller60", <http://www.cpnb.nl/bs/index.asp?searchString=Hirsi%20Ali>. Hirsi Ali's second autobiography *Nomade* (Nomad), was also a bestseller in the Netherlands. However the text has not been included in this analysis given that it is focused on the author's life and career after she permanently left the Netherlands and Dutch politics.

alternative way to explore anti-Islam politics outside of traditional political formats such as political debates, media discussions and the voting booth. At minimum, the presence of books on the bestseller lists arguably reflects a widespread curiosity in the critique of Islam in Dutch society. By way of introduction to his study on the commercial influence of bestseller lists, Economist Alan Sorensen also notes the lists are not only a reflection of consumer interests. Given that consumers often understand the bestseller lists as a marker of a book's 'quality', bestseller lists also have the capacity to encourage future readers.³³³ This means that the status of anti-Islam books on bestseller lists could increase their circulation and help present their ideas as ones of 'quality'. The findings of Sorensen's analysis also suggests that even if individuals are unfamiliar with an author, they may still be inclined to buy their work if it has been labeled a bestseller.³³⁴ For Dutch anti-Islam politicians, it is possible that being on a bestseller list could help introduce them to individuals unfamiliar with their political careers.

During this period, anti-Islam books written by Dutch politicians were also made available in libraries throughout the Netherlands and internationally. By way of illustration, according to WorldCat, Fortuyn's *Tegen de Islamisering*, is available in 26 locations in the Netherlands including major cities such as Utrecht, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam, and smaller cities and towns such as Bolsward, Almere and Breda.³³⁵ Of course, a library holding cannot determine whether a book is widely read or agreed with. Due to financial limitations however, libraries must often be selective in the books they

³³³ Sorensen, "Bestseller Lists and Product Variety", 715.

³³⁴ Ibid, 737. While Sorensen's sample looked at 'hard-cover fiction' on the New York Times Bestseller List, the research arguments of the text are not specific to the genre and are therefore considered relevant.

³³⁵ WorldCat is the largest online network providing information on library holdings around the world. Since libraries offer to submit their collections to WorldCat, the numbers provide a rough estimate only. Holdings according to WorldCat accessed August, 2014.

choose to acquire for their collection. If we accept this premise, the fact that *Tegen de Islamisering* was purchased by at least 26 independent libraries for circulation, arguably suggests it is has been recognized as an important book of Dutch political culture.

Turning to an international example, Wilders' 2012 autobiography *Marked for Death* is held within libraries in Germany, Egypt, Switzerland, and Egypt. Multiple library holdings were also listed within Canada, Australia, and the United States including at the Defence Intelligence Agency, in Washington, D.C, the US Air Force, in Luke Arizona, and Harvard University.³³⁶ In the US, *Fitna* was also jointly released with “*Islam rising: Geert Wilders’ warning to the West*”, a biographical film on Wilders produced by the American anti-gay Christian Action Network.³³⁷ According to WorldCat, this DVD compilation is held at five US libraries, including the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre in Glyco, Georgia.³³⁸ The international accrument of Wilders’ anti-Islam materials is likely due to his status as one of Netherlands most well-known politicians. As a result, the potential for international ‘contagion’ of Dutch anti-Islam politics is also arguably a point for future research.

As for *Submission* and *Fitna*, multimedia websites appear to be the primary method of access/viewership. Since July 2015, the most popular versions of Hirsi Ali and Wilders’ films *Submission* and *Fitna* have received 227,197 and 452, 578 views on

³³⁶ WorldCat, accessed August, 2014.

³³⁷ The film was released by PRB Films and the Christian Action Network. (CAN is an ultra-conservative right-wing group which has targeted social issues including gay marriage and the presence of Islam in America). <http://www.christianaction.org/can/>
See also *DutchNews*, “Anti gay rights group makes pro-Wilders film”, March 22, 2010. http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2010/03/anti_gay_rights_group_makes_pr/

³³⁸ WorldCat, accessed August 2014.

YouTube respectively.³³⁹ Unfortunately there is no way to identify Dutch viewers and therefore get a sense of the potentially normalized online viewership of the films.³⁴⁰ Viewing information regarding the original airing of *Submission* on the *Zomergasten* television program could also not be located. However according to sociology professor and former Dutch MP Sam Cherribi, domestic surveys indicated that the majority of Netherlanders watched *Fitna* and “found its presence plausible”.³⁴¹ Cherribi also notes that Dutch polling group Peil offered a similar result saying those polled the day after the release of *Fitna* “believed that it was accurate”.³⁴² While assessing the popularity of anti-Islam politics is not the aim of this chapter, this survey data strongly indicates that anti-Islam films also have the ability to garner support for anti-Islam politics.

The considerable media coverage of both *Submission* and *Fitna* is also reflective of the normalized presence of the films within Dutch political discourse. By way of example, a keyword search in *NRC Handelsblad*'s online archive returned a total of 871 articles discussing *Fitna* and 553 discussing *Submission*. Unsurprisingly, the majority of articles were written during the first two months after each film's release.³⁴³ The considerable level of public attention given to the films is discussed within media studies

³³⁹ *Fitna*, uploaded by user “Stop Islamization of the World”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIKCgRlwQUA>; *Submission*, uploaded by user “Native European”; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGtQvGGY4S4>

³⁴⁰ On YouTube numerous copies of the same source exist on different user channels. As result, total viewership numbers are difficult to obtain. Since users can upload/download content at will, the total view numbers are inevitably imprecise as there is no way to document these shifts.

³⁴¹ Cherribi, *An Obsession Renewed: Islamophobia in the Netherlands, Austria and Germany*, In *The Challenges of Pluralism in the 21st Century* 47, 49. (John L. Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin eds., Oxford University Press, 2011).

³⁴² *Ibid*, 49.

³⁴³ 80 articles were written discussing *Submission* between November/December 2004. Between March/April 2008, 208 articles were written on *Fitna*.

research and has also been acknowledged by the Dutch media.³⁴⁴ In 2008, the *Volkscrant* daily newspaper analyzed coverage of *Fitna* within thirteen Dutch newspapers. They found that 1297 articles were written between the film's announcement in November 2007, and the week after its release in late March 2008.³⁴⁵ Reflecting on its findings, the *Volkscrant* said that *Fitna* had clearly triggered a media-storm with "all kinds of politicians, public intellectuals, and stakeholders vying for attention".³⁴⁶

Since intensive media coverage of a subject typically reflects public interest, the considerable presence of the films within the media arguably indicate they became a normalized part of Dutch discourse. On a related point, the coverage itself may also have helped normalize the anti-Islam content of the materials. Even if a film was criticized within an article, by discussing its content the article still creates an opportunity for readers to become familiar with Wilders and Hirsi Ali's political criticisms of Islam without watching the film. As a result, the politically motivated content of the films displaying Islam as a security threat (*Fitna*), and as a source of domestic abuse (*Submission*) became widely known perspectives within Dutch news coverage and normalized in the process. Focusing on the normalization of anti-Islam materials in the Netherlands does not detract from the ample criticism of the books and films written by Geert Wilders, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Pim Fortuyn.³⁴⁷ However the findings of the exploratory research presented above suggest that anti-Islam political books and films are understood as a mainstream element of Dutch politics. Through their cultural production

³⁴⁴ Cherribi, *An Obsession Renewed: Islamophobia in the Netherlands, Austria and Germany*, In *The Challenges of Pluralism in the 21st Century* 47, 49. (John L. Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin eds., Oxford University Press, 2011).

³⁴⁵ Staff writer, "Volkscrant en de Trouw Meest in de Ban van Fitna", *Trouw*, April 30, 2008.

³⁴⁶ Ibid. Translation by author.

³⁴⁷ For example see Cherribi (2010, 2011), and Eyerman (2008).

materials, Dutch politicians appear to have been highly successful in normalizing the presence (if not the content) of their opinions. As a result, the importance of anti-Islam books and films authored by Dutch politicians are worthy of more comprehensive future analysis.

Security risks of anti-Islam materials

The demonstrated capacity of anti-Islam films to impact national security further underlines the need for scholarly analysis of anti-Islam materials. As a result of their highly inflammatory content, *Submission* and *Fitna* have already been connected to security risks to Dutch society. During his trial, van Gogh's killer Mohammed Bouyeri confirmed that the anti-Islam content of Hirsi Ali and van Gogh's film *Submission* was the catalyst for the attack.³⁴⁸ The release of Wilders' anti-Islam film *Fitna* in 2008 was also a key factor in the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism's (NCTV) decision to raise the national threat level from limited to substantial that same year.³⁴⁹ In order to better understand this issue, the author conducted interviews with security practitioners and academics experts in the Netherlands during the fall of 2013. Since Geert Wilders is the only high-profile anti-Islam politician in the Netherlands at present, the interviews were focused on his past and potential future influence on security in the Netherlands.

According to Dutch security and intelligence historian Beatrice de Graaf, NCTV maintains contact with the PVV and remains watchful over the activities of Wilders. The

³⁴⁸ Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, 4; Eyerman, *The Murder of Theo van Gogh*, 30.

³⁴⁹ Press Release. "The Netherlands still a preferred target for jihadists", *Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism*, December 19, 2008.

agency “has its worries about the impact and ramifications of statements and debates originating from PVV-members, most notably from Geert Wilders, as a potential trigger point for radical Islamist activities”.³⁵⁰ In 2007, the NCTV was also concerned about the impending release of the movie *Fitna*. According to de Graaf, agency officials saw an earlier cut of *Fitna* containing footage of Wilders tearing the Quran. Apparently, the agency had a lengthy discussion with Wilders, and the film that was published did not contain this portion anymore, an event [the discussion] Wilders has publically denied.³⁵¹

Omar Ramadan, Head of the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) secretariat, is less satisfied by the thesis that Wilders’ political actions, including *Fitna*, are a main driver for radicalization and retaliatory violence.³⁵²

“Youngsters radicalize for all sorts of reasons, it may be because they feel excluded from society, because they are indoctrinated by an ideology justifying violent extremism or because they cherish the comradeship of recruiters... If an individual doesn’t like Wilders’ activities, becomes radicalized and commits a violent act of terrorism... I still wouldn’t say that it [is fair to say] this is due to Geert Wilders that those individuals radicalized and became terrorists”.³⁵³

However, Ramadan also acknowledges that the highly polarized discussions on the place of Islam in Dutch society—encouraged he says by the media and politicians from all parties—create a difficult environment for Dutch practitioners trying to detect and combat radicalization.³⁵⁴

³⁵⁰ Beatrice de Graaf (Professor, Department of History and Art, Utrecht University), in discussion with author, December 2013, Den Hague, the Netherlands.

³⁵¹ de Graaf, Ibid. Van de Kloor, “Bizar Debat Over Fitna Loopt af Met Sisser”, *Elsevier*, April 2, 2008; Staff Writer, “Fitna Debated in Dutch Parliament: Wilders Denies Softening Film After Pressure”, *Der Spiegel*, April 2, 2008; Oranje and Staal, “Kamer: PVV Isoleert Zich Met Een ‘Heilloze Monoloog””, *NRC*, April 2, 2008.

³⁵² Founded by the European Commission in 2011, RAN is a network intended to promote knowledge the exchange and best practices on combatting radicalization within EU member states.

³⁵³ Omar Ramadan, (Head of RAN secretariat), in conversation with author, December 2013, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Mr. Ramadan’s views are his own do not in any way reflect those of RAN or the European Union.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, Staff writer, “Fitna’ Debated in Dutch Parliament: Wilders Denies Softening Film After Pressure”, *Der Spiegel*, April 2, 2008.

To date, it is only the anti-Islam films that have been connected to security incidents in the Netherlands. However it is worth reiterating that the ideas presented within the films are consistent with the anti-Islam books of Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Geert Wilders, and Pim Fortuyn. While certainly a daunting challenge from a methodological perspective, future research into the possible security risks of anti-Islam narratives within all cultural production formats is arguably needed. Lastly, it is important to stress that potential security threats caused by anti-Islam materials and politics should not only be considered in relation to “Islamist” violent extremism.

In his manifesto “2038—A Declaration of European Independence”, Anders Behring Breivik, the terrorist who committed the 2011 massacre shootings in Norway, repeatedly praised the anti-Islam works of Geert Wilders and similar European figures.³⁵⁵ In the manifesto, Breivik portrayed himself as an anti-Muslim crusader who was acting in self-defence against the growing threat of Islamization in Norway.³⁵⁶ While Wilders vehemently denounced Breivik, the evidence strongly suggests that anti-Islam politics played a key role in Breivik’s radicalization. In the media, Wilders and the PVV party bore much of the immediate criticism for Breivik’s actions.³⁵⁷ Greater scrutiny of anti-Islam politics and the potential security risks they present is arguably a much needed research dialogue. However, Norwegian political scientist Mette Wiggen raises a sobering point that speaks to the dangerous ‘contagion’ of anti-Islam politics. The more complicated and uncomfortable reality Wiggen notes, is that “many of Breivik’s ideas are common amongst the electorate in Norway and in the rest of Europe...mainstream

³⁵⁵ Townsend and Traynor, “Norway attacks: How far right views created Anders Behring Breivik”, *The Guardian*, July 30, 2011.

³⁵⁶ Wiggen, “Rethinking Anti-Immigration Rhetoric after Oslo and Utoya Terror Attacks”, 586.

³⁵⁷ Ibid, Townsend and Traynor.

political parties are to blame for not confronting racism, sexism, and ignorance in debates about immigration and integration”.³⁵⁸ Since the attacks in Norway, Wilders’ style of anti-Islam politics has not become less aggressive or sensational. The recent release of Wilders’ short film *Mohammed Cartoons* depicting a series of cartoons featuring the Prophet Mohammed also indicates his continued interest in disseminating anti-Islam politics through non-traditional political channels. As a result, it is not unthinkable to suggest that anti-Islam politics and materials constitute a real security threat for the Netherlands.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented exploratory research into the curious trend of anti-Islam materials authored by high-profile politicians in the Netherlands since the late 1990s. In contrast to the standard framing of anti-Islam politics as a passive response to the ‘post-9/11’ moment, it has been suggested that openly anti-Islam politicians, Pim Fortuyn, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Geert Wilders actively used their books and films as a means to normalize their political message outside of traditional politics. The surfacing of anti-Islam politics within traditional politics and government policy was also discussed in connection to the 2006 Civic Integration law and government film *Naar Nederland*, and the hate speech trial of Geert Wilders in 2011. Given the considerable presence of the materials within Dutch culture suggested by the exploratory research, it was argued that anti-Islam materials likely played a role in the normalization of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands. The significance of anti-Islam materials authored by Dutch politicians is

³⁵⁸ Wigger, 586.

currently underestimated within analyses of Dutch political history. Based on past connections between Dutch anti-Islam films and national security, and the testimonies of Dutch academics and security practitioners, the potential security risks posed by anti-Islam materials in the Netherlands may provide the strongest argument for increased attention to Dutch anti-Islam materials within the political literature.

Conclusion: Shining the light on anti-Islam politics

In contrast to the standard “post-9/11” narrative framing, this thesis has argued that anti-Islam politics today reflect long-term and systemic issues of minority discrimination within Dutch society since 1945. A post-9/11 framing disguises the emergence of Dutch anti-Islam parties during the 1980s, and detracts from research indicating that the historical tradition of ‘harmonious multiculturalism’— which Muslims are accused of having put into “crisis”—may not have existed. Lastly, a ‘post-9/11’ framing of anti-Islam politics does not take into consideration the active role Dutch politicians played in the normalization of anti-Islam politics. The results of the exploratory research suggest that Dutch anti-Islam politicians used personally released cultural production materials (books and films) to disseminate their political message. At present, the political relevance and influence of these materials to anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands is an underestimated subject within the political literature. Given the demonstrated security risks posed by anti-Islam materials, analyses of the political impact of the materials are argued to be of great importance.

Controlling the tenor of anti-Islam politics in the Netherlands is (of course) outside the purview and responsibility of scholarship. However based on the research reviewed and put forward within this thesis, it is argued that greater signalling between works focusing on Dutch anti-Islam politics is needed. Explicitly labelling “anti-Islam” politics will help connect this research conversation currently separated under a variety of research constellations. In so doing, the rich interdisciplinary conversation on this topic will no longer be ‘hidden in plain sight’.

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