THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

NATIONALIST-POPULIST RHETORIC & THE DEMISE OF DUTCH MULTICULTURALISM: WHAT FUTURE FOR MUSLIM MINORITIES

MARE S. VISSE

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This research sets out to explore the implications on Muslims following the demise of multiculturalism and the rise of nationalist populist rhetoric in the Netherlands. For decades the Netherlands enjoyed a stable political system, a lengthy tradition of liberalism, tolerance and more recently multiculturalism. The apparent ease with which the Netherlands integrated immigrants in Dutch society through its ambitious policy of multiculturalism attracted the attention of many other European states experiencing problems assimilating ethnic minorities. But since the emergence of Pim Fortuyn in 2002, populist parties emphasizing anti-immigrant feelings have taken up an important position within the Dutch political landscape. Today, Geert Wilders’ Freedom Party (PVV) whose objective is fighting the Islamization of the Netherlands and restoring the Dutch national identity is the third largest political party in the country and xenophobia and Islamophobia have reached unprecedented heights in recent years. These developments challenge the legitimacy of Muslim presence and citizenship in the Netherlands. This raises the question of how deep the roots of Dutch multiculturalism and tolerance have been in the past. In other words: did multiculturalism in the Netherlands ever take root? The fact that the above described developments not only occur in the Netherlands but are part of a larger trend in Europe raises the question whether a multicultural Europe in times of a financial and economic downturn can exist and what this means for the future of Muslim minorities in Europe and in the Netherlands in particular. In order to answer questions raised above, this study has made use of secondary literature (including a review of the media) regarding the developments of the debate on Islam, immigration and integration and employed a case-study based upon interviews, focus-groups and surveys in Amsterdam among Muslim youth focusing upon the future of race-relations in the Netherlands in the context of Geert Wilders rise to power.
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### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Centre Democrats (Centrum Democraten)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Christian-Democratic Appeal (Christen-Democratisch Appel) Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Christian Union (Christen Unie)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D66</td>
<td>Democrats ’66 (Democraten ’66)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GL</td>
<td>Green Left (Groen Links)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HAVO</td>
<td>Higher General Secondary Education (Hoger Algemeen Vormend Onderwijs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPF</td>
<td>List Pim Fortuyn (Lijst Pim Fortuyn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>Middle Vocational Education (Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>Labor Party (Partij van de Arbeid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVV</td>
<td>Freedom Party (Partij voor de Vrijheid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Socialist Party (Socialistische Partij)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Social and Cultural Planning Office (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToN</td>
<td>Proud of the Netherlands Party (Trots op Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>The United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMBO</td>
<td>Preparatory Middle Vocational Education (Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
<td>People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VWO</td>
<td>Pre-university Education (Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWII</td>
<td>World War 2</td>
</tr>
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GLOSSARY

**Allocchtenen (plural Allochtoenen).** Dutch word. “Semantically, the word derives from the classical Greek words „alloς”—other- and „chtōnοs”—land.” (At home in Europe project 2010, 16) According to the Central Statistical Agency (CBS) an “allochtroon” is “a person of whom at least one of the parents was born abroad”. A distinction is made between persons who are born abroad (first generation) and persons born in the Netherlands (second generation). A further distinction is made between “western” and “non-western” (CBS 2011).

**Autochtoon (plural Autochtoenen).** Dutch word referring to person of whom both parents are born in the Netherlands, disregarding the country in which a person is born him/herself. (CBS 2011). Usually this term is used to refer to “refer to a person or people of the indigenous population of a country or area” (At home in Europe project 2010, 16)

**Asylum seeker / refugee.** The term „asylum seeker“ refers to “someone who has applied for protection as a refugee and is awaiting the determination of his or her status”. Refugee is used for “a person who has already been granted protection” (UNESCO 1995-2010).

**Citizenship.** “The status of having the right to participate in and to be represented in politics. It is a collection of rights and obligations that give individuals a formal juridical identity.” (UNESCO 1995-2010).

**Country of origin.** This term refers to the “country in which the person was born, country of nationality or country whose language is the person’s mother tongue” (European Reintegration Networking sd).

**Discrimination.** This term includes direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination takes place when “one person has been treated less favorably than another person, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of racial or ethnic origin”. Indirect discrimination occurs “where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons of a racial or ethnic origin at a particular disadvantage when compared with other persons unless that provision, criterion, or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary” (At home in Europe project 2010, 16).

**Ethnicity.** The term ethnicity is used throughout this thesis to refer to “membership of a group which may share language, cultural practices, religion or common identity based on a shared history” (Ibid.).

**Hijab.** The Arabic word hijab is employed throughout this thesis to refer to the headscarf worn by Muslim women.

**Host country.** A “country in which a person stays without being a national” (European Reintegration Networking).

**Marginalized groups.** This term refers to groups which “can be part of an ethnic or racial minority and a sub-category of minority groups” or “they can also be characterized and distinguished from other groups by suffering socio-economic disadvantage and a powerless position in society or in a group” (At home in Europe project 2010, 17). In this thesis marginalized groups or persons will refer to those experiencing social exclusion, disregarding whether they belong to a minority or majority group.
**Migrant.** “Any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country” (UNESCO 1995-2010) This includes students, children and family dependents. This term does not include asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons. In certain countries the term „migrant” also refers to “a person born in the country to which their parents migrated” (At home in Europe project 2010, 17).

**Minority.** While there is no universal definition of this term under international law, certain countries define minorities based upon what is recognized by national laws. In this thesis, the term will refer to “ethnic and religious groups which are not the dominant groups in society” (At home in Europe project 2010, 17).

**Muslim.** This thesis relies upon the identification of the respondents themselves as being Muslim, including those who see themselves as Muslim more in a cultural context than in a religious context (Ibid.).

**Native Dutch.** The term „native Dutch” is used in this thesis as the English translation of the Dutch word autochtoon, in other words a person born of Dutch parents. (At home in Europe project 2010, 17)

**Niqab.** A veil worn by some Muslim women covering the hair and face, except for the eyes. (Meriam Webster dictionary).

**Non-Muslim.** In this thesis, a non-Muslim is referred to as “anyone who does not define himself or herself as belonging to the Islamic faith” (UNESCO 1995-2010).

**Non-western allochtoon.** This term refers to „allochtoon” with an ethnic background from one of the countries in Africa, Latin-America and Asia (excluding Indonesia and Japan) or Turkey. (CBS 2011).

**Openbaar Ministerie (OM).** Public prosecution. The OM is the only authority in the Netherlands which can bring criminal suspects to court. The OM ensures that crimes are identified and prosecuted.

**Race.** This term is used throughout this report “in the content of discrimination on the grounds of race, which occurs where people face discrimination because of their presumed membership of groups identified by physical features such as skin color, hair of physical appearance” (At home in Europe project 2010, 17).

**Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal.** The Dutch Lower House of Parliament. Together with the „Eerste Kamer der Staten Generaal” they form the parliament.

**Western allochtoon.** An “allochtoon” with an ethnic background from one of the countries in Europe (excluding Turkey), North America and Oceania, or Indonesia or Japan. (CBS 2011).
I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the cultural, societal and political problems that arise when Western and Islamic cultures meet and the incorporation of Muslim minorities in Western Europe. In other words this study is concerned with issues of ethnic diversity and tolerance. It is therefore a political discussion with a focus on religious and cultural identities. The emphasis will be upon the Netherlands, as this country has a long tradition of “one of the most ambitious policies of multiculturalism” (Sniderman and Hagedoorn 2007, xi).

1.1 Research problem

For many years, the Netherlands was an example for tolerance and the multicultural dream. Already during the 17th century, Amsterdam used to be a popular European city, in part due to its reputation for liberalism and tolerance. “The Netherlands offered asylum to religious and political refugees who could find protection from persecution and enjoy freedom of thought and belief” (Ibid., 12). Today the Netherlands is associated with more modern forms of tolerance such as “coffee shops selling soft drugs, legal prostitution, euthanasia, and gay marriage” (Ibid.).

Further, it was one of the first countries that publicly expressed its opposition towards the apartheid regime in South Africa. The Netherlands, through the use of the famous Polder model came to a high degree of welfare and social protection. Even more remarkable was the apparent ease with which the Netherlands absorbed large flows of migrants; the guest-workers during the 60s and the 70s and later the political and economic refugees. In dealing with the increasing ethnic and cultural diversity in the country, the collectivistic response to the notion of tolerance was multiculturalism (Harrison 2010).

The premise of multiculturalism refers to the ideal of a society in which minorities have the right to hold on to certain aspects of their culture and language. It is a society in which minorities are treated equally and have equal access to facilities of the welfare state, the
rule of law, labor market, education, economic activity and political representation. Further, they have the right to express themselves as a (minority) group, and all citizens from both the dominant group as well as (minority) groups are committed to the democratic state and its constitution (Sleegers 2007, 9).

For years, the Netherlands served as a guide for the rest of Europe in which tensions between the native population and newcomers became more visible and right-extremist political parties gained in strength such as the Nationaldemokratische Partei in Germany, the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs in Austria, the Lega Nord in Italy, the Front National in France and the Vlaams Blok in Belgium. It seemed as if the Netherlands were immune for the extreme-right trend (Pels 2005). This has changed recently. Since the beginning of the 21st century also the Netherlands is witnessing the emergence of extreme right-wing populist parties, most notably today Geert Wilders Freedom Party (PVV), voicing concerns about the large number of immigrants -and in specific the increasing Muslim community- in the country and the problems that come with integrating them in society.

With Paul Scheffer’s article „the multicultural drama“ in 2000, the events of 9/11, the political murders of Fortuyn and Van Gogh, and the movie „Fitna,“ a warning against the Islamization of the Netherlands by Wilders, ethnic tensions and Islamophobia are increasing. Discussions about the Dutch national identity and social cohesion have become prominent issues within the public debate on immigration and integration and remarkably more strict demands are placed upon adaptation, integration and loyalty of immigrants to the Dutch state.

The aim of this thesis is twofold. First, through a literature review I have set out to understand why the Netherlands within one decade changed from its longstanding multicultural tradition to a law-and order approach with an accent upon force, assimilation and adaptation motivated by considerations of national identity, social cohesion and security. And just as important, what this teaches us about the roots of Dutch multiculturalism and tolerance.

Second, through a case study of Muslim youth in Amsterdam I have tried to provide new knowledge on the effects of the contemporary situation in the Netherlands on the direction in which race-relations are heading. The focus thereby lies with Geert Wilders, the most
recent, influential and outspoken anti-Islam politician in the Netherlands and how his political arguments in which issues of national identity and forced adaptation are focal points of attention influence the personal experiences and behavior of Muslim youth with regard to their host society.

1.2 Hypothesis

The explosion of popular support for Pim Fortuyn and Geert Wilders, who strongly criticize the multicultural society, suggests that multiculturalism has never taken strong roots in the Netherlands. In fact, it appears to be a policy imposed upon the Dutch population by the political elite, forced to respond to practical problems and wishing to put the power of the government to human use. It is anticipated that multiculturalism was kept alive due to political correctness, which with the emergence of outspoken critics such as Fortuyn and Wilders has disappeared completely out of the political debate. Hence, the superficial cover of multiculturalism started to crumble.

With the demise of multiculturalism, the discourse changed to one that can be described as assimilationism. It is to be expected that this change in discourse will lead to increasing polarization and ethnic tensions. With the emphasis upon national identity, the Dutch are more likely to perceive that their national identity is threatened. As they perceive ethnic minorities to be the main threat, they are likely to reject them. As Sniderman and Hagedoorn (2007, 6) summarize: “valuing a collective identity increases the likelihood of seeing it threatened and seeing it threatened increases the likelihood the majority will reject the minority”. To put it differently, emphasizing Dutch national identity will undermine societal support for diversity – in lifestyles and religions- among its inhabitants.

At the same time, because migrants are for a large part excluded from the Dutch national identity due to its narrow character, it is expected that throughout the fieldwork in Amsterdam, a similar reaction would be found among the Muslim youth. From Tajfel and Turner’s social identity theory, as discussed in Chapter 2, it follows that in order to maintain their positive self-image Muslims will identify less with „being Dutch” and more with their
ethnic or religious identity. I will argue that it is not multiculturalism and the emphasis upon national identity that provides the foundation for diversity, but a policy based upon tolerance, rights and duties.

1.3 Methodology

This research is meant to be exploratory in nature and as mentioned above, data collection will involve a literature review and a single case-study based upon a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The literature review will focus upon the factual integration of Muslims in Europe in general and in Dutch society in specific. The emphasis thereby will be upon the development of the Islam debate in nature, tone and content in Europe and the Netherlands and the implications for the Muslim communities. The insights from the literature study will serve as a reference frame for the analysis of the research data obtained from the field.

The case-study serves to explore the contemporary and real-life nature of the research problem. Case-studies are particular suitable for studying complex social phenomena in which the boundaries between the phenomenon to be investigated and its context are not always clear. The aim of the case study is not to make generalizations for the entire Muslim community in the Netherlands, but rather to point attention to and to suggest possible links between the emphasis upon national identity and forced adaptation to Dutch culture, norms and values upon race-relations. In order to truly examine the experiences of Muslims, on a sensitive topic like the increasing levels of Islamophobia, the case-study has used a qualitative research component in the form of in-depth interviews and focus groups. The research approach is based upon the „interpretive paradigm, allowing for a holistic approach to the research subjects involved. (Dickson-Swift, James and Liamputtong 2008, 7). “It sees individuals in their social contexts and allows the research agenda to be shaped by both the researcher and the research (...) and it seeks to develop an understanding of the „world view” of the research participants” (Ibid.). The advantage of employing a qualitative research design in case-studies is that it does not “assume prior knowledge of people’s experiences” but
“allows people to develop and express their own reality” (Ibid.). In order to increase the validity of the study, an additional quantitative survey was conducted allowing triangulation of the research results – making use of three different sources to find converging findings before any conclusions are drawn. For a more detailed overview of the case-study approach, please refer to chapter 5.3.

All research subjects which have participated in this research have done so voluntarily, after being fully informed about the procedures of the study, and were given the possibility to withdraw from interviews or focus-groups at any given point in time. Because this research explores politically sensitive issues “conflicts over publication are likely to be particularly stark” (Lee 1993, 184). Therefore “robust techniques for preserving confidentiality are indispensable” (Ibid., 164). Hence, all the names of the case-study participants are fictitious and any resemblance to actual persons is purely coincidental. This is with the exception of officials, both Dutch and Dutch-Muslim, who specifically requested to have their names and titles included. Data on the site of the study, gender, age and socio-economic background by itself does not allow identification of the subjects and have therefore remained unaltered.

1.4 Justification and social relevance

The anti-multiculturalism movement and increasing levels of xenophobia and Islamophobia are current and important issues. There exists a growing body of scholarly literature on the demise of the Dutch multicultural society, and the changes in discourse in terms of immigration and integration policies over the years. With this thesis, I have tried to make a modest contribution to this body of literature through examining the increasing popularity of the far-right in the context of politics as identification, which to my knowledge, very few have done before.

Further, also the PVV and Geert Wilders have received a considerable amount of scholarly attentions. Social scientists have made attempts to define the party character of the PVV (Monitor Racism & Extremism 2008; Fennema 2010); Wilders role and influence upon
the Media (Van Zoonen 2008) and attempts have been made to explain the electoral success of the PVV and Wilders (Dotinga; Van der Hoven-Van der Zee 2010). Remarkable in this picture is that there has been very little attention for the way in which the Muslim community experiences these developments. In fact, except for a couple of newspaper articles and one or two TV documentaries, there has not yet been any serious scientific attempt made to analyze how Muslim youth experiences the rise of the “Islamophobic” PVV and its effect upon the social climate in the country.

With the case-study on Muslim youth in Amsterdam I hope to provide insight in their point of view. This might help in developing strategies for dealing with the problems of an increasingly ethnic diverse society without blaming one specific group. Moreover, understanding the ways in which Muslims experience the rise of an anti-Islam political party, whether and to what degree this stimulates polarization, and more specifically into the tactics they adopt in dealing with this have global relevance as the challenges and tensions that the Netherlands face between its Muslim inhabitants and the native population on a small scale can be applied to many other European countries that have also seen an increase in populist parties over the years.

1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis is made up of five chapters and a conclusion. Chapter two provides a discussion of the immigration and integration debate within the European context and shows how the entire debate on Islam is shaped by an identity concern. The theoretical considerations discussed in this chapter will serve to explain and understand the situation in the Netherlands which will be discussed in chapter three. In this chapter a description will be given on how the leading example of a multicultural society resulted in a multicultural drama due to a number of national and international events leading to an increase in xenophobia and the emergence of extreme-right populist parties appealing to anti-immigrant sentiment. Chapter 4 consists of two parts. The first part will look at the political ideas of the Freedom Party (PVV) headed by Geert Wilders. The second part of this chapter will provide a description based upon collected
newspaper articles, press-releases and interviews, on the societal and political reactions towards the PVV's electoral victory in June 2010 and the newly formed minority cabinet to which the PVV provides parliamentary support since October. Chapter 5 is a case-study on the influence of the rise of the PVV, and in a broader sense the emphasis upon the dominant Dutch culture, norms, values, national identity and the related increase in anti-Islam sentiment among politicians, upon the lives of Muslim youth in Amsterdam and what this means for race-relations in the Netherlands in general. Chapter 6 provides the conclusion of this thesis in which the hypothesis given above will be defended based upon the data collected throughout the chapters.
II

‘US’ AND ‘THEM’: ISLAM, IDENTITY AND THE FAILURE OF MULTICULTURALISM

– SOME CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS -

The increasing anti-Muslim sentiments, emphasis upon national identity and demands for forced adaptation of migrants in the Netherlands are not an isolated phenomenon. In fact, it is part of a larger trend occurring all over Europe. Therefore, in order to understand the contemporary situation in the Netherlands, it is beneficial to first look at the context in which the Dutch Islam debate should be placed: Europe’s immigration history in general and the position of Islam and Muslims in specific. The first part of this chapter will discuss how the economic logic behind immigration, and also integration in its early stages, has made place for a cultural discourse, in which issues of identity have become the focal point of attention. The second part of this chapter will look at why it is in specific Muslim minorities that seem to present a problem in Europe’s integration efforts. The focus thereby will be upon how differences are constructed as part of creating a unified European identity and how Islam is used to support this identity formation (Zemni 2002). Ultimately, the theoretical and conceptual considerations raised in this chapter will offer „the glasses” through which the situation in the Netherlands will be viewed.

2.1 Background: Post-World War II Muslim Immigration to Europe

According to the „European Union’s strategy report on immigration” (June 2009), there live today approximately 18, 5 million registered non-Western citizens and an expected 8 million unlawful immigrants in the Union (Council on Foreign Relations). However, it is unclear what the precise number of Muslims is since the majority of EU countries do not register their inhabitants by religion. Therefore numbers are based upon estimations of immigrants which originated from Muslim majority countries (Buijs and Rath 2002, 7). A recent overview by a 2008 Brookings study gives the following picture: the country with the highest percentage of Muslims is France (8%), followed by the Netherlands (6%), Germany (4%) and the UK (3%).
In some of the major European cities, Muslim communities exceed 20% of the total population. The overall Muslim population in Western Europe (including immigrants and native born) is approximately 20 million out of the 500 million European Union residents (Council on Foreign Relations 2009).

A brief review of the literature concerning Muslim immigration to Europe reveals that there exist significant differences across countries with regard to the extent and nature of interactions between Muslim immigrants and their host-societies. While a complete review of such diversity is outside the scope of this thesis, I will briefly discuss the major differences here. Overall, the interactions between Muslims and their host-society differs according to four main aspects; 1) the origin and timing of migration, 2) size of the immigrant communities, 3) citizenship and civic inclusion policies, and 4) models of integration (Bail 2008, 39).

West Europe generally experienced post-war immigration earlier than Southern or Eastern Europe. According to Castles and Miller, there are three major trends of immigration between 1945-1970: guest-worker migration; post-colonial migration and refugee movements (Ibid.). While the reasons behind guest-worker recruitment differed slightly from country to country, the majority experienced a sharp increase in economic growth and a lack of people due to the loss of men during WWII. This in combination with corporate pressures for cheaper workers and a fear of inflation led many countries to import workers from outside of Europe. (Musayev sd, 8). Until 1973, France, Britain, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland all initiated active labor recruitment to help rebuild their shambled societies after the war and to fill their needs for low-skilled workers in mines, factories and construction sites (Ibid.).

Active recruitment of foreign workers also occurred in the United States, Canada, the Gulf States and a bit later South East Asia. The extended opportunities for migrants came in different forms – mainly as permanent legal immigrant status in North America and Australia and mostly as “guest workers” or “temporary workers” in many Western European countries (Chiswick 2005, 1).
The vast majority of Muslim immigrants came to Europe in search of a more prosperous life. Most of them entered Europe through a guest-workers permit until the mid 1970s. After foreign labor recruitment had ended Muslims mainly entered Europe through family re-unification. Most of them originated from the Mediterranean countries; Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Due to differences in sources and timing of labor recruitment, Muslim immigrants are not equally spread out across Europe. “Belgium, the Netherlands, France, the Nordic countries and especially Germany have been labor catchment areas for (ethnic Turkish or Kurdish) immigrants from Turkey, while the Benelux and France have received large number of Moroccans” (Buijs and Rath 2002, 6). Within these countries, Muslim migrants clustered together at the heart of the manufacturing industry and within these cities they were gravitated to underprivileged neighborhoods.

Significant post-colonial immigration from the MENA, Asia and the Caribbean between 1950 and 1975 took place in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Britain. (Bail 2008, 39). Britain attracted mainly Caribbean’s, Indians, Bangladeshis and Pakistani’s, among which many Muslims. Post-colonial immigrants from North African Islamic countries, such as Morocco and Algeria came to reside in France, and the Netherlands received a number of Muslims from its former colonies, Indonesia and Surinam (Buijs and Rath 2002, 4). While they had equal political rights and a similar socio-economic position to the guest-workers, as ex-colonial subjects they enjoyed the right to citizenship unlike the labor immigrants.

Additionally, the influxes of political / religious refugees and asylum seekers fleeing to Europe from civil wars, famine and ethnic conflicts in Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Afghanistan increased significantly since the beginning of the 1980s and added to the growing Muslim immigrant communities (Ibid., 5).

The attitude towards migrants in European societies has significantly fluctuated over the years. As Glavanis puts it; “European countries have encouraged or discouraged immigration depending on the economic and/or demographic needs of the country at any given time so the sense in which migrant labor has been welcome or unwelcome has ebbed and flowed over the past forty years” (1996,18). Following economic decline throughout the
1970s as a consequence of the oil crisis, European governments recognized that the influx of migrant workers was not always a positive experience. A rise in unemployment and a worsening social economic position caused a wave of resentment towards migrant workers. Social groups in unfavorable positions directly competed with immigrants for employment and social services. This development has stimulated a societal and political climate generating xenophobia and racism\(^1\) - a hostile attitude towards migrants- and nationalism -a demand placed upon the state for better protection of its own population against foreigners-. (UNESCO). Further, an increase in the competition among states led to a reduction in social services, schooling and healthcare to all populations, thereby further exacerbating tensions between communities. Studies have demonstrated that “severe economic inequalities and the marginalization of persons from access to basic economic and social conditions give rise to tensions and manifestations of racism and xenophobia” (UNESCO). The main targets are persons considered as outsiders usually immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers.

The general assumption had been that when the need for foreign labor diminished, the guest-workers would go back to their countries of origin as readily as they had come. However, although many Muslim migrants were unemployed, they decided to stay as job opportunities in their home countries were even bleaker than in Europe. Due to growing fears that guest-workers were looking for permanent settlement, European governments initiated between 1973 and 1975 a migration stop and introduced “restrictive measures to deter immigration and to put a stop to recruiting foreign labor” (Ben-David 2009). However, after recruitment ended, the number of foreign workers only declined in a number of countries. In between the time a halt on immigration was first proposed and the time it was actually implemented, migrants were able to continue sponsoring the immigration of their extended families due to a relaxation of restrictions on family reunification. Consequently the size of foreign populations increased almost everywhere (Massey 1994, 185).

But the indigenous populations of Western Europe did not vote “to have the Turks

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\(^1\) Xenophobia, focused upon cultural inequalities, differed from the way in which racism was defined historically, namely in terms of biological inequalities (UNESCO).
and Moroccans in Amsterdam, the Kurds in Sweden, the Arabs in London and the Pakistanis
and Indians in Bradford and West Yorkshire” (Ajami 2009). European society increasingly
became divided by identity issues. At one side there was the population who wanted to keep
their countries as they were. At the other side there were the political elite insisting upon the
inescapability and legitimacy of the influx of immigrants (Ibid.).

During the 1960s and 1970s, xenophobia for the first time came to be openly
promoted in politics. “Political parties on the extreme right and in some cases on the left
quickly seized upon the issue [anti-immigrant feelings] in order to exploit it for electoral
gains” (Betz 1994, 71). In Germany, appealing to the increasing hostility towards migrant
workers was one of the major reasons behind the electoral success of the National Democratic
Party at the end of the 1960s. In France it was the Communist party that started to promote a
policy of race, directed primarily against Muslim immigrants and other non-European
immigrants. In the late 1960s and through the 1970, also in Switzerland anti-immigrant parties
regularly called for referenda to give the population the choice as to whether measures were
needed to stop or even reverse the Überfremdung (“foreignization”) of the country. Lastly, in
the UK it was the emergence of the National Front that played up the issue of growing
hostility towards immigration during the early 1970s (Ibid.). In conclusion, inter-communal
tensions in Europe are thus based upon an economic basis which in turn is articulated in
cultural terms. Hence, anti-immigrant or xenophobic sentiments have both an economic and
cultural basis to them.

Nevertheless, the political parties in Europe appealing to anti-immigrant sentiment
failed to obtain a broad level of support. A number of reasons contributed to this. First,
European governments needed cheap immigrant labor and hence they would not allow
immigrants to be problematized. Second, discrimination simply did not sell in the late 20th
century the way it did in the 1930s, and third those countries with large immigrant populations
had already taken steps to curb immigration influxes (Betz 1994, 71).

All of the above described factors led to more pressing situations in certain countries
to the development of citizenship and civic inclusion policies. “While citizenship policy is
well established in „old” citizenship countries such as France and Germany, many „new” immigration countries such as Spain and Italy did not develop citizenship laws until the mid 1980s” (Bail 2008, 40). There exists however, variations among the “old” immigration countries. A classical contrast can be made between France and Germany. While in France children of immigrants born in the country have the right to citizenship, in Germany those who did not have blood-based ancestry remained foreigners, regardless of where they were born. This difference between citizenship based upon a “civic” and “ethnic” criteria are applied throughout Europe. According to an increasing number of studies, the majority of states fall firmly within the civic side of the dichotomy (Ibid.).

2.2 Philosophies of integration

A closely related concept to citizenship, are philosophies of integration, or public ideologies about inclusion and exclusion of immigrants that have emerged over the past decades. Most of the integration philosophies draw in one way or another upon the legacy of nation building or colonial strategy. Vasta (2007, 4) makes a distinction between the following models:

- Assimilation/republican model which stresses total assimilation of immigrants in the host country (France);
- Guest worker models (the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and recently in the UK);
- Race Relations which follows a pluralist model (the UK);
- Auslanderpolitik (foreigners policy) in which immigrants and their children are treated as “permanent guests” with very few rights to obtain benefits from the state (until recently in Germany);
- Multiculturalism (Canada, Australia, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and the UK);
- Integration (the Netherlands, UK, Denmark, and Germany).

The three central models prevalent today are assimilation, integration and multiculturalism. Assimilation is the process of becoming similar or of making or treating as similar (Brubaker
2001, 534). In this model, immigrants are expected to give up their own cultures and traditions in order to assimilate into their new society. The recognition of different cultures other than that of the host society is loathed in this model (Ibid.).

Within the academia on one hand and the popular and political discourses on the other hand, the term integration seems to be used to refer to two different processes; as a form of assimilationism or as an approach somewhere in between assimilationism and multiculturalism. Policies and public attitudes are often based upon the assumption that integration is a one-way process. In this sense of integration, migrants are expected to integrate in the host society without any adaptation of the existing culture. As such, integration implies assimilation in which immigrants are supposed to give up their language and cultural norms, values and traditions (Castles, et al. 2002, 13). Contrary to the above described view of integration, a large number of scientific researchers emphasize that integration is a two-way process requiring adaptation of both the migrant and the host society. In this view, integration can only be successful when the host society accepts immigrants in social interaction and provides access to jobs and services (Ibid.).

While there exist a multitude of definitions of multiculturalism, we can generally condense them in three key-points; the demographic, the anti-discriminatory or anti-racist and the identititarian. The demographic emphasis refers to the simple fact that the majority of societies have become more multicultural. Hereby is meant that mainly through modern migration diversity of religion, ethnic origin and language has increased. The second facet, anti-discriminatory or anti-racist represents a call for a more open and tolerant society. Multiculturalism represents the idea “that a just, open and fair-minded society should respect ethnic and religious differences and should take all reasonable steps to ensure non-discrimination in employment, education and access to all kinds of goods and facilities” (Fenton 2010, 182). Lastly, the third facet of multiculturalism, the identititarian, places the emphasis upon ethnic groups and cultural identities. The basic argument of the identititarian element is that individuals belong to (ethnic) groups which each have a distinctive culture. Membership to an ethnic group provides an individual with a crucial cultural identity.
Just treatment of individuals must therefore respect this identity and non-oppressive societies will provide for some public recognition to cultural differences (Ibid.).

2.3 Permanent Settlement of Muslim migrants

The Muslim immigrants who initially migrated in response to the short term labor demand had by the mid 1980s become full families – husbands, spouses and children- who left behind everything to start a new life in Europe. Besides the scale of immigration, also the character of immigrant communities changed as they became concerned with topics such as schooling, proper housing and health care. The fact that the immigrant workers now had their families by their sides also changed their attitudes toward cultural and religious values (Ben-David 2009). While the initial immigrants, mostly single men, generally chose to either isolate themselves from their new society or to experience the liberal Western lifestyle, the arrival of their families changed this attitude and led them to transport their Islamic norms, values and culture into their new environment. Moreover, while temporary workers had accepted the basement of a building in their street as temporary mosques to fulfill their prayers, with an increasing number of Muslims and family reunification this was not satisfactory any longer (Ibid.).

As the permanent Muslim settlement developed into a long process of building new social relationships and confronting their new society, Muslims started to demand recognition and began to organize their community in a number of ways. “They established institutions varying from mosques, halal butchers, schools, press agencies, broadcasting organizations, and cemeteries rights through to political parties, and have worked for the routine appointment of Muslim spiritual advisers in hospitals, prisons, the armed forces, and similar mainstream organizations” (Buijs and Rath 2002, 15). As such, Muslims became a permanent part of Western European landscapes.

Until the 1970s Muslims lived a rather isolated life and did not attract much attention and European governments did not occupy itself much with the presence and development of Islam (Ibid.). Well into the 1970s, it was expected that the communal identities of migrants would gradually disappear in favor of citizenship and loyalty to the state. Another assumption
made was that the role of religion in the lives of immigrants would be reduced to the private sphere of the home; “one could look forward to the existence of ethnic minority communities who were integrated to the extent that their religion would have a place similar to that of the private Christianity of Protestant northern Europe or laicized Catholic France” (Nielsen 2004, vi). However, a substantial proportion of the Muslim communities refused to adhere to these expectations and instead started to express their Islamic identity in a more visible way (Glavanis 1996, 7). “With the establishment of ‘visible’ communities there also came more concrete markers of ‘difference’, which have often, resulted in resentment, suspicion and mistrust from the host society” (Ibid., 18).

International events towards the end of the 1970s such as the Iranian revolution in 1979, the fatwa issued in 1989 by Iran’s spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini against the Indian author Salman Rushdie for his book “Satanic Verses”, the Gulf War and the Palestinian intifada in the 1990s, and 9/11 in the USA highlighted the separateness of Muslim identity within Western society, and provided material for debating the place of Islam and Muslims in Europe (Buijs and Rath 2002, 22). Further, within numerous individual countries, debates erupted amongst others about the establishments of mosques and Islamic schools or the right to express critique upon Islam as a religion or wearing a hijab. But while numerous European countries experience similar problems, they show differences in their discussion, recognition and institutionalization of Islam.³

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² To talk, however, of a singly Muslim community in Europe is misleading. “Even within individual countries, ethnic diversity, sectarian differences, cleavages within communities arising from sociopolitical and generational splits and the nonhierarchical nature of Islam itself means that Europe’s Muslims will be more divided than united for decades to come” (Savage 2004, 30). Muslims are thus not a monolith, just like the European Christians and Jews.

³ For example the hijab. In France, those who support a law that forbids Muslim women to publicly wear a hijab refer to the state’s secular ideology to support their argument. In doing so, any compromise is basically excluded from the outset. (Buijs and Rath 2002, 24). Germany shows a similar picture. Government officials and public servants in Germany have to abide by the religious neutrality principle. This principle has been used by a minister of education to refuse a job vacancy to a Muslim woman working as a school teacher because she wanted to wear a headscarf during class. While previously the school teacher had worn her headscarf without any problems, she was now judged to breach religious neutrality with her behavior (Ibid.). Britain is a different case. In Britain, those who favor a ban on the hijab cannot appeal to a similar constitutional argument. Instead the issue is about the requirement to wear school uniforms. Arguments for school uniforms include the principle of equality and to show loyalty to the education institution. Consequently the debate about the hijab is resolved in a straightforward and practical way: the hijab is allowed if matching the color of the
2.4 Socio-economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions

When looking at the socio-economic position and political rights of immigrants in Europe, it is remarkable that Muslims generally hold less favorable labor market positions and that their entitlement to political rights is often met with distrust. Country specific and comparative studies show that compared to natives and non-Muslim migrants, male Muslim immigrants generally face higher unemployment rates, and female Muslim immigrants lower labor market participation rates and poorer educational achievement. It appears that their religion, Islam, is one of the main reasons for the perceived discrimination. In Belgium, Phalet after accounting for differences in social class and human capital, found considerable ethnic penalties for education and employment achievements for Turkish and Moroccan Muslims and no disadvantage, or less, for Southern European migrants (ERCOMER). While it is a fact that Muslims are mostly concentrated in sectors heavily influenced by economic reform, which partially explains their disadvantaged position, there is also evidence that indicates discrimination against Muslims, especially against Moroccans. Recent research in the Netherlands (Andriessen, Dagevos, Nievers, & Boog, 2007) reaffirms this thought as it shows that the disadvantaged labor market position of ethnic minorities, which might be ascribed to discrimination, is larger for Muslims -Turkish and Moroccans- than for the non-Muslim minorities -Surinamese and Antilleans- (Ibid.).

Political participation of Muslims varies widely across European countries as they are generally based upon national approaches to the inclusion of (Muslims) immigrants in the society. As discussed previously, second generation Muslim immigrants in France automatically become French citizens -which is different from the policy in Germany- and therefore hold a strong vote. In Germany until 2000, due to a restrictive naturalization policy, many Turkish Muslims were excluded from political participation. In the Netherlands, even non-naturalized immigrants are allowed to participate in national elections after having lived uniform (Ibid.). “In the Netherlands, finally, the Secretary of State for Education has repeatedly made clear that the objections to wearing headscarves are not important enough to impose a ban” (Ibid.).
in the country for over five years. Also in Britain, Muslims residing in concentrated areas as have been able to find political representation to realize their religious demands (Ibid.). Despite the fact that Muslims enjoy significant political rights in the majority of West European countries, political parties appealing to anti-immigrant sentiment have sprung up.

2.5 Why do other ethnic minorities in Europe not face similar problems?

Today, numerous European immigration countries seem to develop a desire for cultural homogeneity (Vasta 2007, 8). Discussions regarding Islam in Europe have become more strongly connected to discussions on assimilation and complete conformity to the host society. This is not surprising since most of the Muslims in Europe are immigrant or belong to the second or third generation children of immigrant settlers. However, it is remarkable that numerous questions surrounding integration which have barely anything to do with religion, for example the high rates of unemployment being a strain on the welfare systems of many countries, are discussed as problems of the “Islam” and of “Muslims.” However, when this discussion is about other religious groups in Europe, this happens to a lesser degree, or not at all (Sleegers 2007, 60). As such, the integration discussion becomes a discussion about Islam. When one talks about Muslims, their religious beliefs, life philosophy, diversity and differences in opinion are often coupled to the necessity for integration.

Justified by the terrorist attacks, European countries one by one started to impose stricter security measures. This translated into the introduction of restrictions on wearing Islamic clothes such as niqab, in public spaces and governmental building, as they came to be seen as a symbol of failed integration and a threat to national security. In addition, it was argued that face-covering clothing oppresses Muslim women and clashes with fundamental Western values. France was among the first countries in attempting to stop the spread of Islam through a ban on wearing any religious symbols in public school, including the hijab worn by Muslim women. Belgium became one of the first countries to pass an all-encompassing ban. Swiss followed soon, after the country voted in favor of a ban on the construction of minarets on mosques. There are also growing anti-Islam movements in Germany, Switzerland and
Denmark, Norway, Italy and the Netherlands which aim to place restrictions on the *hijab*.

Within the coming years, a battle over Sharia courts can be expected, with Norway taking the lead (Mauro 2010). The support for political parties that express a hard line on assimilation and Islam is growing. According to a survey carried out by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes project in April and May 2010, 82 % of the French population supports such a ban on face veils, 71 % support in Germany, 62 % in Britain and 59 % in Spain (Spiegel Online 2010).

Prejudice and hostility towards Muslims, also called *Islamophobia*” started to adopt strong appeal since 9/11. It should be made clear from the beginning that Islamophobia is different from other forms of discrimination as the anti-Islam and anti-Muslim discourse that has developed is “highly politicized in an international arena in a way that social and political discourses about other religions and peoples has not” (Glavanis 1996, 70). Glavanis summarizes the core identifying characteristics of Islamophobia as follows; “the perceived emergence of an Islamic threat, nationally & internationally; an extension of Xenophobia and racism to religious hatred; the perception of „otherness‟ for Muslim peoples, communities and nations; and finally the exclusion of Muslim viewpoints from mainstream debates” (Glavanis 1996, 71).

Muslims came to be seen as a threat to the host society and Islam is regarded as incompatible with central European values, especially with regard to male-female relations and the relations between parents and children (ERCOMER). They are often perceived as completely different and therefore typify a sense of „otherness‟. Consequently “stereotypical perceptions of Muslims peoples, communities and nations have developed which place Muslims and non-Muslims on a binary table of opposites” (Glavanis 1996, 71). While Muslims are viewed as being oppressive towards their women, other cultures and religions are perceived as having overcome patriarchy; Islam is seen as a monolithic fate in which there is no place for internal debate, other religions are seen as encouraging diversity and having healthy internal debates. (Ibid.). Lastly, critique on behalf of the Muslim community towards Western cultures and societies within cultural, social and political debates are almost never
taken seriously resulting in the exclusion and non-recognition of the idea’s put forward by Muslim scholars and hence the marginalization of the Muslim perspective.

Despite a stronger emphasis upon assimilation into secular Europe, the second and third generation Muslims is resisting assimilation more forcefully than did the first generation. Studies conducted in France and Germany show that second and even more so, third generation Muslims are less integrated in the host-societies they are residing in then their parents or grandparents were. “As they publicly advocate integration, many Europeans and Muslims in Europe remain convinced that their respective values are not only incompatible with each other but also that the other’s values directly challenge their own identity” (Savage 2004, 43). These mutual perception support the separate existence of each group within Europe.

Perceived discrimination in terms of employment, education, housing and religious practices compels the majority of the new Muslim generations to take Islam as their badge of identity. Higher unemployment rates, lower educational achievements and a minimal participation of Muslim women in the labor market contribute to isolation and self encapsulation of Muslim communities in Europe. Therefore it is not surprising that a French study revealed that; “Muslim identification with Islam was stronger in 2001 than it was in 1994 or in 1989, with the number of those declaring themselves, ‘believing and practicing’ Muslims increasing by 25 percent between 1994 and 2001” (Ibid., 31).

A growing sense of Muslim solidarity erupted with the results that “a Dutch Muslim teenager in Rotterdam may identify more closely with fellow Muslims in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia than with his non-Muslim neighbors” (Paris 2007). Consequently, Muslims in Europe have developed strong feelings of sympathy with Muslims suffering all over the world. They are convinced “that their own exclusion and the persecution of their brothers originate from the same roots: rejection of Islam by the West” (Ibid.).

Muslims in Europe are “willing to integrate and respect national norms and institutions as long as they can, at the same time, maintain their distinct Islamic identity and
practices (...) they fear that assimilation, that is, total immersion into European society, will strip them of this identity” (Savage 2004, 31). However, this is what many European governments are demanding nowadays; “to have Europe become a melting pot without accommodation by or modifications of the existing culture” (Ibid.). In conclusion, a separate Islamic identity became increasingly pronounced in the aftermath of 9/11. This was as much a matter of “Islamophobia” as of self-segregation of the Muslim communities.

The question remains however, why is this hardening of identities not universal? In other words, why do the protestant and Jewish minorities in Europe not face similar problems? What is it within the European culture that treats Islam different from other faith traditions? I will argue that this is because the European identity and the local identities beneath her (Dutch, French, British, German) are based upon a discourse in which European countries collectively see themselves as the centre, the champion of universality with all her positive characteristics (democracy, tolerance, human rights, pluralism...), while the „Other” under the guise of a pluralistic discourse is denied its right to be different. (Zemni 2002a). To illustrate this mechanism, I will focus upon two issues. The first issue involves the alleged “unique” character of Islam as a mirror image of a Christian Europe. The second idea on the other hand, will discuss the growing overlapping of the terms Islam, fundamentalism and terrorism.

### 2.6 Europe, Identity & Islam

Glavanis argues that the settlement of Muslim immigrants is disturbing for Europeans for three main reasons; (1) It problematizes the historical conventions governing Europe's identity; (2) It problematizes the Westphalian order of nation-states based upon the notion of modernity; (3) It present scholars with a key challenge, that is how to conceptualize ethnic identities (Glavanis 1996., 12).

What follows will be a more in depth discussion of the above mentioned reasons. First, a traditional enemy of early Europe was the Muslim Turk, and this helped shape the
evolution of an identity that was Christian and Western. As Glavanis argues, “one of the
main exclusions around which the identity of Europe was constructed was that of Islam, thus
the Muslim presence impacts on the nature of modern European identity in that it challenges
the very idea of Europe” (Ibid.). Even during the creation of the European Union, policy
makers had to make it clear where Europe geographically began and where it ended. In other
words, Europe’s boundaries had to be defined. The question then was: who was eligible to
join the EU and on which basis? (Zemni 2002, 161).

Policy makers, however, struggled to specify what defines Europe. The language
criteria could not account for a valuable identity marker as there existed a cacophony of
different languages within the Union. Also religion turned out to be a useless marker to
account for inclusion/exclusion as there existed many different religious doctrines and an
increasing number of atheist and agnostics (Ibid.). Therefore, Europe is a rather unclear
geographical unit. As such, Europe is more a cultural concept than a geographical unit. In this
sense the EU defined itself “as the locus of modern civilization” and as “the carrier of the
universal values of democracy, tolerance and human rights” (Ibid.).

The formation of the EU serves as a good illustration of how an identity is
constructed. The formation of identities always occurs in the context of a conflict situation as
an identity can only be formed in relation to an „Other“. An identity discourse therefore
always makes a distinction between „Us“ and „Them“(Ibid.). The creation of Europe as a
„closed space and as a meaningful and distinct historical and cultural concept is related to the
idealization of Europe” (Fokion, Apostolos and Ioannis 2006, 2). As Coulby and Jones (1995)
state; “the version of history which invented the notion of a „Great European Tradition”
stressed a clear and unquestioned „heritage” from Ancient Greece, through the Roman
Republic and Empire to the Renaissance and hence to the Western European countries of the
Enlightenment” (Ibid.).

Acknowledgement and / or respect for other cultures outside of Europe did not fit in
this tradition. As Zemni puts it: “Wars of religion, civil wars, the treatment of gypsies,
discrimination based upon religion, race, culture or color are all but mere „accidents” on the
golden paved road of European democracy and human rights” (Zemni 2002, 162). The hegemonic discourse on European identity can therefore best be seen as a power process in which mechanisms of concealment and self-censorship are at work (Ibid, 163). Therefore it is not surprising as Jones C. (1994) notes that “many living, learning and teaching within the EU, define themselves, their Europe and their „Europeanness” through the claimed inferiority and more certain fear of „Others” defined as non-European and living outside of Europe” (Fokion, Apostolos and Ioannis 2006, 2). This conception of European cultural supremacy lays the foundation for the nationalist basis upon which European citizenship is constructed and offers the basis for racist knowledge. The construction and promotion of a European identity might pave the way for a new form of racism, euro-racism, as non-Western citizens are excluded and seen as inferior (Ibid., 3).

As citizens, Muslims are expected to abide by Westphalian conventions, which is the concept of nation state sovereignty based upon territoriality and the lack of a role for external interference in domestic structures. For Muslims, this means that “he must respect laws and must serve his homeland in accordance with the requirements of citizenship” (McPhee 2005, 11) and “accept no higher loyalty than that of the state, even if the state is not inclined to reciprocate that loyalty” (Glavanis 1996, 13). However, as McPhee explains:

“For the faithful Muslim citizen, above citizenship there is his faith, with its laws, its practice, its principles and its values…. He is therefore confronted with a dilemma. The law that governs citizenship is sometimes in contradiction with the one of his faith (…) Facing this situation Muslim citizens have to “either expose themselves to a refusal on behalf of the authority and, in the name of secularism, to live a reduced and incomplete Islam in relation to divine prescriptions; or to claim from this authority a larger political, legal and cultural field in order to express legally and live indispensable Islamic values” (McPhee 2005, 11).

The way in which the European Union defined itself as the locus of secular modernity thus seems to represent a problem for the inclusion of Muslim populations. Muslim cultural practices have in many member states been (unjustly) stereotyped as „backward” and „traditional”. “If we consider that notions of modernity are tied in with notions of
"Europeaness" than it follows that those who are considered un-European will tend to be seen as un-modern" (Glavanis 1996, 16). This perspective denies the fact that different cultures can have different ways of being contemporary or modern. Moreover, assuming that secularization is part of modernity, people with religious affiliations (Muslims) are put into question. Therefore, Muslim settlement is seen as interrupting the idea of the progressive nature of historical developments (Glavanis 1996, 18).

As a result, the debate regarding the inclusion of Muslims in the European union has increasingly become defined in terms of culture rather than in social, economic or political terms. As Barry Buzan states: “a societal Cold War between Islam and Europe is in fact functional for the latter as it would serve to strengthen European identity at a crucial time for its ongoing unification” (Zemni 2002, 163). A similar conclusion is reached by others, including Etienne Balibar who argues that “the immigrant (not only the Muslim) is by definition a ‘second class citizen’ because while the European identity is getting a more real content, immigrants are excluded from full inclusion in the Union they are helping to build up” (Ibid.). Delgado-Moreira makes a similar point; “the construction of a European identity is neglecting the cultural demands of the minorities within the member-states and fails to produce a pluralist reading of identity” (Ibid.).

2.7 Concerns over National Identity and Terrorism

A concept related to that of a European identity is the issue of multiple national identities within the EU. Contrary to the America’s, national identities in Europe are much more blood and soil-based (ethnic as opposed to civic) and therefore merely accessible to the indigenous populations of the country (Fukuyama 2006, 14). With the increasing numbers of migrants and the subsequent multicultural backlash, concerns erupted about the issue of identity, specifically regarding religious and ethnic identities vis-à-vis an assumed homogenous national identity (Vasta 2007, 3).

There exists the fear that the historic Western values of enlightenment will be destroyed due to high numbers of immigrants whose values are seen not only as different but
also as inferior. It is argued that a high degree of ethnic and religious variety in Europe—especially the norms and values of certain ethnic and religious communities—might undermine social cohesion as it challenges Western values of enlightenment. “The presence and recognition of such different values or, put another way, the loss of common values, and the promotion of cultural diversity through multiculturalism will only exacerbate the problem, that is undermining democratic values” (Vasta 2007, 18). For example, according to the Cantle report 2001 core national values had lost in importance due to multiculturalism (Ibid.). Taking this argument a step further, some conclude that multiculturalism will lead to a sort of tribalism and ethnic segregation of migrants and minorities from the rest of society (Ibid., 3).

This is an interesting paradox. Multiculturalism, which is itself rooted in enlightenment norms of tolerance, is increasingly being rejected because it accepts different value systems (i.e. Islam) that are seen as inferior to that of the West. Western values, which are supposed to be defined by its adherence to enlightenment norms, as such provide the basis for discrimination and restrictions on individual freedom.

Especially after 9/11 and the bombings in London and Madrid, the concern has arisen in Europe that particularly Muslims did not integrate. The immigration and integration debate in some European countries has been characterized by the thought that „our” norms, values and culture are better than that of immigrants. The fear that immigrants threaten national cohesion and solidarity among the populations of member states is mainly directed towards Islamic values. Therefore, part of the political and public debate emphasizes “the need to reassert core values which are typically associated with Christian, Western, European liberalism, and contrasted with those thought representative of Islamism: segregation and suppression of women (veiling), forced/arranged marriages, female circumcision, separate education, the power of religious as opposed to secular authorities” (Ibid., 12). The difficult process of the inclusion of Muslims is processed onto a religion, Islam, through questioning its compatibility with Europe and its ability to take on the universal values of the West. As such, Muslim migrants are kept outside of the collective European national identities (Kastoryano 2004, 2).
In “Who are we? The Challenges to America’s National Identity”, Huntington (2001) theorized the fear that large numbers of immigrants will threaten national identity. Huntington argues that “the factors which made assimilation work in the past (before WW1) are no longer present” (Huntington 2001). Before, immigrants came from a variety of countries i.e. Italy, Ireland, Poland, Greece, and China, whom after arrival dispersed across the country. Currently the influx of immigrants into the US is endless, much of it illegal, and overwhelmingly Hispanic (primarily Mexican) concentrated in the Southwest, Texas and California (Ibid.). The continuing immigration of Mexican immigrants into the US limits the willingness for cultural assimilation. Due to the increasing size of the Mexican community, they do not consider themselves any longer as a minority in the US that need to accommodate the dominant groups and adapt to the American culture. On the contrary they start to identify themselves more with the Mexican culture and identity. “Sustained numerical expansion promotes cultural consolidation and leads Mexican Americans not to minimize but to glory in the differences between their culture and US culture” (Ibid.). Continuation of this large influx of Mexican immigrants into the US (without improved assimilation) could possibly lead to a division of the US into a bi-lingual and bi-cultural country (Ibid.).

Far right political parties in Europe adopt this line of reasoning and perceive immigrants as a threat to the indigenous populations in terms of their culture and economic security (Zemni 2002). As such, they are opposed to multiculturalism in which immigrants are entitled to keep their own cultural and religious identities (Marranci 2004). That multiculturalism is losing and xenophobia gaining in strength throughout Europe is illustrated by Vasta:

“In Sweden, despite a policy of multiculturalism and integration, ethnic segregation and high immigrant unemployment persists (…) The Danes, who have had a version of multiculturalism and integration for at least a decade, are calling for a policy of inclusion informed by homogeneity (…) In France, the republican model insists that ethnic groups do not exist, therefore immigrants are meant to access all rights and services through mainstream services even if the majority of the population in the locality are immigrants and ethnic minorities (…) Britain and the Netherlands have both had variations of multicultural policies until recently, and in both countries
there has been an ideological shift in policy towards integration, social cohesion and assimilationism” (Vasta 2007, 9).

While the remaining centre and left political parties protect the multicultural concept and hence legitimize their political existence in the context of anti-racism they hold some dangerous ideas in common with the far right parties under the guise of democracy (Zemni 2002, 169). While the far-right political party’s try to get rid of Muslims in order to control Islam, the centre and left tries to control it through an attempt to create their personal vision of Islam. For example, Blommaert and Verschuren (1992) found evidence that “several Belgian government institutions, NGOs and intellectuals are pushing forward an agenda that clearly tries to shape Islam and Muslims the way they want them to be” (Ibid.). While there is a growing body of European Muslim intellectuals, the Muslim voice is barely heard in this debate. The hype threat of “Islamic fundamentalism” is used to reduce the influence or even silence the Muslim voices as it diverges from what the political establishment wants to hear (Ibid.). In conclusion, despite different models of integrating immigrant minorities into European societies – assimilation, integration and multiculturalism- none of them have seemed to have worked. On the contrary, Muslim communities are now increasingly stigmatized – not just by the right but in all levels of society- and have started to express their Islamic identity more forcefully. As a result, governments are even attempting to promote “good Islam” while monitoring “bad Islam.”

Another issue contributing to the marginalized position of Muslims in Europe is the idea that Islam equals terrorism and fundamentalism. The fear of terrorism after the attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) affected the Europeans more directly than 9/11 and significantly increased the already hostile attitude towards Muslims in Europe (Ibid., 10). The attacks “materialized the long-nurtured suspicion and fears about the „violent facet” of Islam (…) and by misappropriating Islamic symbols the terrorists have forfeited the possibility that European society might accept Islam unconditionally” (Silvestri 2007, 122). Many argued that the terrorist attacks proved that there indeed exists a “Muslim conspiracy” aiming to take over the West, and “that there was something inherently wrong, backward and violent with the
religion” (Ibid.).

As a consequence the penetration of Islam in the public sphere in Europe and the emergence of Islamism in the Arab world are frequently connected. As such, Muslims are in an increasing manner viewed as a threat. However, so far there has not been any proof for the increasing visibility of Muslims in Europe and the diverse manifestations of Islamism in the Arab world. In a culturalist vision of the world in which is no place for contexts, it is simple to depict Islam as the “new enemy” after the defeat of communism (Zemni 2002a). These simplistic generalizations are however rooted in a complex socio-economic ideology and are even part of the academic circles. The most obvious expression is Huntington’s clash of civilizations. In his book “The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order” Huntington (1996) argued that the prevalent confidence of the West in the universality and superiority of its own values of enlightenment and political structures is naïve as persisting on democratization and forced adaptation of Western norms will only provoke and irritate other civilizations. Conflict then will be “particular prevalent between Muslims and non-Muslims” (Huntington 1996, 208). He states a number of reasons for this. First because both Christianity and Islam are universal, teleological, and missionary religions aiming to convert others. Moreover, also the contemporary Islamic resurgence and the fast increasing Muslim population in combination with the superior attitude of the West that everybody should adopt the values of enlightenment, will enrage Muslim extremists. These factors combined, will according to Huntington lead to a bloody clash between Islam and the West.

2.8 Two Theories: Politics as Identification and Social Identity Theory

According to Edward W. Soja “there has been a general movement from a politics of equality defined traditionally in economic terms to a „specifically cultural politics” aimed at understanding how differences between people are intrinsically created, externally imposed, and culturally represented through a politically charged process of identity formation” (Naff and DeLeon 2003, 4). This has manifested itself in numerous academic traditions and disciplines. The commonality that these approaches share is their emphasis upon the concept
of identity in order to understand all socio-economic, political and cultural phenomenon (Glavanis, 1996, 12). Two related terms “identity politics” and politics of identification” are frequently used to refer to new kinds of social mobilization based upon diverse collective identities (Kenny 2004, 3).

Politics of identification differs from identity politics which starts with “somebody declaring themselves to have a particular identity option” (Glavanis 1996, 12). This is not the same as the concept of politics as identification which holds that “ultimately all politics is about identification” (Ibid.). Politics is about establishing a social order and hence subject positions needs to be defined. It is through political activity that people are connected with collectives or projects by an “animated effort to define and defend who I am, or we are, or you are, or hope to be, or hope to be seen to be” (Parker 2005, 53). This is done through comparisons, decision making and commitment to values, interests, groups and individuals. Therefore, we identify ourselves with the selections and commitments we make within politics (Ibid.). Politics of identity thus gives individuals “a connection to political projects based on elements that are very basic to their self-conception” (Kenny 2004, 3). The business of politics is therefore “an act of identification: without subject positions a social order cannot be formed” (Glavanis, 1996, 12). While this does not mean that all individual subject positions i.e. identity options, has a well-thought-out political option, but it does mean that it is unthinkable for a political project not to have a linked identity. Therefore, the process of identification is essential to politics (Ibid. p.13).

The concerns that feed the social forces driving this politics, however, differ according to national contexts. For the Canadians and Australians, the forces leading to politics of identification are the struggles of the native peoples over land rights. In the United States, politics of identification is centered on the tensions between religious groups and the state. In West Europe, the idea of politics of identification is widely regarded as “the product of political conflicts associated with the clash between the cultural practices of the majority and various immigrant and religious minorities” (Kenny 2004, 3).

Related to identity politics and politics of identification is Tajfel’s social identity
theory which is considered to be one of the most influential theories on group conflicts. According to the theory, individuals have the need for a positive self-evaluation.

“To think well of themselves, people need to think well of the groups they belong to. To think well of the groups they belong to, they need to distinguish them from others, putting their group in a light that shines to its advantage and puts other groups in a light that shines to their disadvantage (Sniderman en Hagendoorn 2007, 75).”

It follows that when people think less of other groups in order to think well about their own group, they will respond more positively to others who they categorize as belonging to the same group as they do themselves. By the same logic, then, people will respond more negatively to others belonging to a different group. The “minimal group” experiment illustrates this point;

“Some people are told, on a purely random basis of course, that they have counted more dots than there are in a picture; others are told that they have counted fewer dots. Everyone then is asked to allocate rewards to others. All they know of the others is that they are either an “over”-or “under”-counter of dots. They then favor those who made the same mistake as they, at the expense of those who made the opposite mistake – even though this means minimizing the total award to their own group” (Sniderman en Hagendoorn 2007, 75).

In the above example, the subjects are complete unknown to each other; do not share a common history or common future; and are organized according to an unimportant principle. Yet, this is sufficient to induce a bias in favor of one’s own group at the expense of the other group (Ibid.). As such, one can imagine the power of groups which draw on common history, experiences, loyalties, socialization and common institutions. Another version of the social identity theory asserts that it is not categorization per se, but the context in which the categorization takes place. Positive evaluative contexts will lead to positive bonds and friendships between groups and negative evaluative contexts will lead to rejection and discrimination as in-group favoritism and out-group bias (Ibid., 76).

The first version then can be seen as a warning against policies that underline differences in group identities such as multiculturalism which publically categorizes groups. This warning is turned on its head when we apply the second version of the social identity
theory. Since the aim of multiculturalism is to create positive evaluative contexts, and the second version of the theory asserts that it is not categorization per se but rather the evaluative context, it does not necessarily lead to in-group favoritism and out-group bias. Luckily it is not up to me to decide between the two versions, as they both hold the same prediction for the problem I am addressing here. My concern is what will happen when identities are emphasized, in a context that is inherently negative; the battle of real politics in which nobody has the power to ensure that it will be positive (Ibid.).

2.9 Sub-Conclusion

From the above, it can be concluded that immigrants, while initially welcomed in Europe to work as cheap laborers have since temporary guest work turned into permanent settlement become scapegoats for all the ills of the increasingly culturally diverse European societies. Due to the economic crisis, increasing globalization, and home-grown Islamic terrorism, the economic logic behind foreign labor recruitment, steadily came to be expressed in cultural terms with an emphasis upon a unified European identity based upon the universal values of enlightenment and democracy.

Europe continues to base her identity and self-image upon the idea of universal tolerant democracy. But this sort of universalism is still a-symmetric: what applies to us, does not apply to them. Under the guise of openness and pluralism, Muslims are still treated in a paternalistic way. It is as if Europe in her multiculturalists discourse officially says: “the others enrich us” but in reality it thinks: “a little bit different is allowed, but make sure that you don’t differ too much”.

Due to the perceived rejection and discrimination, a growing feeling of solidarity erupted among the Muslim populations in Europe. This has led them to pronounce their Muslim identity more forcefully making the differences between the native homogeneous populations and the Muslim immigrants more visible and problematic. Not surprisingly then, the growing Muslim presence in Europe is seen as a cultural threat for the European way of life. On one side there is the Muslim population which insists on preserving their Islamic
identity and greater legal rights to certain benefits and privileges as an ethnic minority. At the other hand there is Europe’s continuing problem with a multicultural identity, which is not supported by a large part its inhabitants. This view has lead to a widespread fear for ethnic tensions and social conflict. Political parties on the right, and in some cases on the left, are playing into these xenophobic and Islamophobic feelings among the indigenous populations, thereby increasing the polarization between Muslims and non-Muslims.

As such, the debate on immigration and integration has become embedded in terms of binary oppositions that tend to give labels to all the different identities present (Zemni 2002). As a result all participants, no matter whether they occupy a dominant or subaltern position, become obligated to articulate themselves within an discourse defined by issues of identity.
III

THE DUTCH ISLAM DEBATE: IDENTITY & FEELINGS OF FEAR

This chapter will look at the Netherlands and the place of Muslims in Dutch society. As noted in the previous chapter, many countries in Western Europe experience a toughened attitude towards immigrants, and specifically towards Muslim immigrants, during the past years. This shift in policy - and the corresponding public backlash has been particularly extreme in the Netherlands (Entzinger 2006, 1). Why did a country known for its tolerance and acceptance of differences shift so dramatically towards a policy perceived to be assimilationist? Why such a stable and liberal country suddenly demands conformity and blames its immigrants for their failure to integrate? Why does it also threaten the immigrant community with coercive interventions and fines if they refuse to meet the terms of new regulations? And why does the Netherlands, which used to be known for its tolerance towards different religions, now all of a sudden blame the Muslims for practicing a backward religion? (Entzinger 2006, 1)

I will argue that government policies have changed because the growing Muslim presence in the Netherlands is increasingly perceived as a threat. While in defining this threat politicians are raising concerns over safety measures (terrorist attacks) and economics (employment) the central concern is identity and the assumed threat which Islam poses for Dutch culture (Savage 2004, 44). This has resulted in a shift from social class (foreign laborers) or race issues (Moroccan) to culture (Muslims) as the defining characteristic of the „Other”. As such, Islamophobia has become socially acceptable to large parts of the Dutch population which had previously withstood racism. (Van Bruinessen 2006, 2).

In order to illustrate this argument I will track the specific roots and developments of political and societal attitudes towards Muslims and Islam in the Netherlands. But before we can grasp the contemporary problems in the Netherlands, it is useful to understand the historical basis of the current processes. Therefore, I will start this chapter with a short historical overview of the ways in which the public and political establishments have thought
about migration and integration and in specific the place of Muslims in Dutch society since its first encounter with the world of Islam (Ghorashi 2006, 4).

3.1 The Dutch Encounter with the World of Islam

As a colonizer of Indonesia, the Netherlands used to be one of the largest Muslim countries in the world. However, most people experience the encounter of Muslims in their daily lives as a matter of recent history. This can be explained by the limited impact that the presence of Muslims in colonial territories had on the situation in the Netherlands. Prior to World War II, only “a handful of Indonesian students paid a brief visit to their colonial mother country and in the 1950s, a few Islamic Moluccans and „Hindustan” Surinamese decided to settle” (Rath, Sunier and Meyer 1997, 389). Until 1950, the number of Muslims in the Netherlands did not exceed a couple of hundred (Harchaoui 2010, 6). However, in the decades that followed, this number increased dramatically. During the 1960s and 1970s while the Dutch economy was expanding like many other West European countries, a deficit of low qualified - laborers mostly in the industrial sectors emerged and immigrants from Turkey and North Africa were brought to the Netherlands to fill this void. This trend caused a sharp increase in the number of Muslims migrating to the Netherlands, many of which did not originate from post-colonial migration that is migration from former Western European empires in Africa, Asia and South America to Western European countries (Rath, Sunier and Meyer 1997, 389).

Table 1. Absolute numbers of Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands since 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total non-natives</th>
<th>Total non-Western</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Dutch Antilles, Aruba</th>
<th>Surinam</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19751</td>
<td>1 347 683</td>
<td>250 813</td>
<td>30 481</td>
<td>27 217</td>
<td>87 474</td>
<td>55 639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1 617 219</td>
<td>475 873</td>
<td>69 464</td>
<td>40 726</td>
<td>157 081</td>
<td>112 774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>1 819 531</td>
<td>657 445</td>
<td>111 795</td>
<td>53 020</td>
<td>197 395</td>
<td>153 164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2 086 924</td>
<td>865 697</td>
<td>163 458</td>
<td>76 552</td>
<td>232 776</td>
<td>203 647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2 449 184</td>
<td>1 128 979</td>
<td>218 578</td>
<td>86 192</td>
<td>276 023</td>
<td>263 791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2 775 302</td>
<td>1 408 767</td>
<td>262 221</td>
<td>107 197</td>
<td>302 514</td>
<td>308 890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3 122 717</td>
<td>1 699 042</td>
<td>315 821</td>
<td>130 538</td>
<td>329 430</td>
<td>358 846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3 287 706</td>
<td>1 809 310</td>
<td>341 528</td>
<td>134 774</td>
<td>338 678</td>
<td>378 330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS Statline
In 2009, the number of Muslims in the Netherlands was estimated to be approximately 907,000, which is 6% of the population. The majority of these Muslims (73%) came from either Turkey or Morocco (Harchaoui 2010, 6). Table 1 gives an overview of the increase in absolute numbers of Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands since 1975 compared to other non-natives in the Netherlands (Van Genugten 2010, 7). Initially the idea behind the recruitment of guest-workers was that it would be of a temporary nature. It was assumed that the migrant workers would after having worked for a couple of years re-migrate to their countries of origin with the money earned. Within this line of reasoning the guest-workers were not only permitted but also encouraged to hold on to their cultural and religious identity. A good example illustrating this discourse was the introduction of classes from 1974 onward for immigrant children in „mother tongue languages” – that is education in the primary language of their parents - during school time. in order to facilitate their eventual re-migration (Entzinger 2006, 3). At this time, no government policies existed yet to integrate migrants in society which resulted in little interaction between the Dutch citizens and the newcomers (Schaake 2006, 2).

Despite the intended temporary nature of guest-workers, many Muslims decided to stay and settle permanently in the Netherlands. Although recruitment of guest workers had stopped abruptly as a result of economic decline after the oil crisis in 1973, the number of Muslims kept increasing due to family-reunification, marriage and natural growth. On top of that also many refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing from countries such as Bosnia, Somalia and Pakistan came to the Netherlands. (Glavanis 1996, 107). The effect of all this was that the position of Muslims and Islam in Dutch society became more visible and active in a number of societal spaces. “It can therefore be stated that the native Dutch population only became aware of “Islam” with these family reunion waves” (Van Genugten 2010, 8).

Once the government realized that Muslims and Islam were part of Dutch society, new steps were taken in the development of Islam and more emphasis was placed upon integrating these groups into Dutch society. As such, the government developed the Ethnic Minority policy (EM policy) in 1983, a multiculturalists approach to integrate newcomers.
(Bruquetas-Callejo, et al. 2005, 15). The key word of the policy document was „integration” which was defined as a process to make the immigrant an accepted part of Dutch society while keeping their cultural identities (Sleegers 2007, 15). With the promotion of an equal socio-economic status for migrants and endorsing cultural and religious identities (aimed to prevent ethnic minority formation) emancipation of minorities was regarded as important. Therefore, their participation in both the public and political spheres needed to be stimulated. “An important assumption was that development of identity (both individual and group) would stimulate the minority’s emancipation within the community and would have a positive influence on its integration in broader society as well” (Bruquetas-Callejo, et al. 2005, 15).

As such, Islam became institutionalized and the government supported the creation of a „Muslim infrastructure” including Islamic schools, mosques, a Muslim broadcasting service and Islamic caregivers in health care facilities4 (El Madkouri 2009, 1). However with the increasing visibility of the Muslim community, they also became more vocal. Language barriers were overcome and Muslim voices became more widely heard. In a rapidly secularizing society, Muslims started to demand more forcefully their place (Duyvendak, Hurenkamp and Tonkens 2008, 5). They emphasized their Islamic background and claimed the right to make their own choices and put forward demands to make space for Islam based upon the freedom of religion and freedom of speech (Ewoud Butter Blog 2009). With increasing dialogue the native Dutch population also came to hear different opinions regarding gender equality, homosexuality, sex, abortion, euthanasia and freedom of expression through which diversity in society became more obvious (Van Genugten 2010, 10).

3.2 Public & Political debate until the 21st century

Cultural tensions and identity problems were already recognized by the government during the 1970s and 1980s, but cultural differences on its own were not considered a factor blocking the process of fitting immigrants into the society. The raised problems were interpreted by the

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4 The process of institutionalization is dynamic process and still continues today. While new institutions appear, others become of less importance or disappear completely. For example, recently Muslim cemeteries have been founded as well as a government funded Master’s degree program in Islam at VU University Amsterdam and Imam Courses. (Madkouri, 2009,1)
political establishment mainly as a direct consequence of the low socio-economic position of migrants (Van der Brug, et al. 2009, 6). Despite the recognition of integration problems the political parties were not willing to abandon the idea of integration with preservation of cultural identities, except for the Dutch politician Hans Janmaat and his right-wing party, the Centrum Democrats.

Janmaat stood up for the interests of the indigenous workers and the middle class. His favorite topic was the minority policy, in which he took a position opposite to that of the other parties (Hoetink 2008). The declining economy, unemployment and cuts were according to Janmaat undeniably connected to the large number of migrants entering the country. He was against the multicultural society and advocated the preservation of the own culture. During the 1982 parliamentary elections, Janmaat managed to obtain one seat, which he accepted under loud protest from a crowd of demonstrators (Ibid.). The viewpoints of Janmaat with regard to mass-immigration, so shortly after the Holocaust, led many to condemn the Centrum Democrats. Scientific research about the consequences of migration and maintaining statistical databases of minority groups was not considered relevant at this time. (Hoebink 2010) Some later called this restraint „political correctness“. In parliament, all the established parties isolated and ignored Janmaat, as did the media, which participated in the consensus and ignored the voice of the Centrum Democrats (Hoetink 2008).

Despite the first signs of dissatisfaction among the native population, especially among the lower classes which directly competed with immigrants for jobs and social benefits the problems related to the increasing cultural diversity were kept outside the political agenda. The dominant political and public discourse did not allow that the presence of migrants would be problematized. Policy proposals (both within the political as well as the public sphere) were characterized by tolerance towards minority groups and a careful attitude with regard to placing demands upon them (Sleegers 2007, 17). However, this discourse came to be challenged on several fronts during the 1990’s.

After the fall of the Berlin wall, the end of communism and the condemnation of Dutch media of the issued death penalty against Salman Rushdie by Ayatollah Khomeini, a
discussion about Islam as a new threat to the liberal values of the West slowly developed. Consequently, the position of non-Western migrants in Western societies, in particular Muslims, also became a topic of discussion (El Madkouri 2010, 1). This international development was translated in the Netherlands by Frits Bolkestein who was at that time the leader of the Conservative Liberals. During an international conference in Luzern, Switzerland, in 1991 he gave a speech about the new strategy of the NATO and the defeat of the Soviet Union and connected this with the position of Islam in the West (El Madkouri 2010, 1). He argued that by allowing migrants to keep on to their cultural identities the achievements of the Western cultures were undermined. He saw the large number of Muslim migrants as the main reason. He considered Islam to be a religion hostile towards fundamental Western values such as liberalism, secularism and freedom of speech (Sleegers 2007, 18). According to Bolkestein: “It should be made crystal clear to Muslims living in the Netherlands that any kind of bargaining about principles of Western liberalism was out of the question” (Prins 2002, 367).

Bolkestein argued that the government, in its eagerness to help ethnic minorities, had adopted an approach that was too soft and tolerant. In his view, the government had in its attempt to help ethnic minorities become emancipated themselves, instead made them more reliant upon the welfare state which would permit them from not integrating fully into Dutch society and instead retreat into their own group. His speech challenged the prevailing discourse in which immigrants were defined as socio-economically marginalized communities which were in need of support. While Bolkestein received a lot of criticism, as there still consisted consensus that the Netherlands was a reasonable and tolerant country in which non-discrimination was an important fundament, he also received a considerable share of support (Sleegers 2007, 18).

Not long after Bolkestein’s speech, the political establishment came to look critically at the Ethnic Minority Policy which was considered to have failed in the areas of labor and education. Critique was mainly focused upon the collective character of the policy and the overwhelming emphasis upon culture. As a result a new republican policy approach to
integration (Contourennota 1994) was formulated (Bruquettas-Callejo, et al. 2005, 12).

A shift became visible from a focus upon migrant groups to the centrality of the individual. The integration of migrants is more and more seen as their individual responsibility. Further, the term citizenship is introduced. Starting point of citizenship is that citizens have rights and duties, including migrants (Sleegers 2007, 19). Another shift occurred from emphasis upon cultural and religious aspects to the importance of socio-economic integration. “This led to new directions of policy implementation throughout the 1990s including, at one hand of the spectrum, the nationally instituted courses given to newcomers as an introduction to Dutch society, and at the other end, more area-based and urban policies” (Bruquettas-Callejo, et al. 2005, 12). The term minority policy is replaced with the term integration policy. Key in the integration policy of the 90s is the improvement of the socio-economic position of migrants. Specific attention is given to employment, education and political participation rather than to cultural integration and adaptation to the Dutch culture. Preservation and development of the own culture are from that point on the responsibility of the individuals themselves. It is no longer the task of the government to create space for that. All political parties supported the idea that the experience of the personal religious or cultural identity should be possible as long as this is not in conflict with Dutch law (Sleegers 2007, 19).

In conclusion, during the 1970s and 1980s and early to mid 1990s, the dominant political discourse emphasized tolerance towards migrants. All established political parties speak and act accordingly. Only small parties such as the Centrum Democrats and individuals go against this current but are excluded from the discussion (Ibid., 20). Although problems regarding the increasing culturally diverse society are noticed they are not directly related to cultural or religious differences within the population. Until the year 2000 it appears that migrants who are socially and economically integrated are an accepted part of Dutch society (Ibid., 21).

Slowly but steadily, however, this emphasis upon tolerance changes and negative voices about integration become louder. The idea of migrants adapting to the Dutch culture
similarly takes up a prominent place in the public debate. National events starting the year 2000 provided concrete occasions for the debate about the place of Islam in the Netherlands. The national identity has gained a prominent place within this discussion in which the Dutch identity is represented as a fixed set of characteristics to which migrants have to adapt. What follows is a description of these events and the effects they had upon the Islam debate.

### 3.3 Paul Scheffer and the Multicultural Drama

While Bolkestein, and before that Janmaat, had triggered the discussion regarding the position of Islam and Muslims in Dutch society, it was Paul Scheffer who managed to involve all parties. In 2000 Scheffer published an opinion article in *NRC Handelsblad* [Dutch newspaper] titled; “The multicultural drama” regarding the failure of immigrant integration. Scheffer thought that the emancipation of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands was poor. He argued that Dutch society and the government had for too long held on to the ideal of integration with the preservation of cultural identities. According to Scheffer an ethnic lower class was developing. He called the split that was formed due to the increasing ethnic lower class the multicultural drama. His main frustration was the indifference of the government and society and the attitude that everything would be fine with the migrants (Scheffer 2000).

Scheffer warned that the Dutch were not cohesive enough to deal with cultural differences. More to the point, he believed that Islam was a problem for Dutch society. The role of the Islam is not comparable to that of the Christian religions in the Netherlands (Ibid.). Muslims would have problems accepting the separation between church and state and would sometimes hold hateful ideas regarding the society (he specifically points towards Moroccans and Turks). Moreover, Islamic law would not be compatible with Dutch law. Scheffer found it alarming that nobody listened to the stories about tensions between different cultures, even though problems had only been increasing since the arrival of the first generation immigrants (Sleegers 2007, 23).

His solution to the multicultural drama was that the Netherlands should have more national awareness and less indifference towards its own society. The Dutch language, culture
and history needed to be stronger defined and propagated, so that migrants knew in which kind of society they would have to integrate. Scheffer nevertheless had sympathy for the difficult situation in which migrants found themselves and acknowledged the enormous adjustments they had to make when moving from their countries of origin, where they often lived in the countryside, to usually a large city in the Netherlands in which they were forced to deal with new freedoms, to integrate and to give up their own traditions. In his eyes this would logically cause an inner-battle for migrants between the culture from the mother country and that of the country in which they had settled (Ibid., 24).

The concerns among the Dutch population with regard to multiculturalism had until Paul Scheffer only been represented by the political right. But, Scheffer had presented the problems of the multicultural society as a social question. Because the problems surrounding ethnic minorities was presented as a social question, the political left had no choice but to respond, with which the debate on Islam became to occupy the entire political spectrum. Slowly but gradually all political parties acknowledged there was a problem. Member of Parliament for the PvdA, Saskia Noorman-den Uyl said in April 2000 that the social debate on minorities and integration was a merit. It was for the first time that critique upon multiculturalism was seen as a merit. Similar concerns expressed by Janmaat 20 years before and by Bolkestein 10 years before were not so much welcomed then. Finally, both the right and the left were ready to debate the multicultural society and the position of Islam (Tillie 2009, 8).

In May 2001, an incident happened that served as a proof for the multicultural drama of Scheffer. Imam Hall El Moummi from Rotterdam declared in a television show that homosexuality was a contagious disease. Although he spoke negatively about homosexuality, he rejected violence against homosexuals. This incident delivered the proof of the multicultural drama from which Islam was seen as the cause. The incident further evoked a discussion about a number of new aspects; (1) The boundaries of Dutch tolerance towards the excesses of Islam in Dutch society; (2) The relation between constitutional rights; freedom of religion, freedom of expression and the anti-discrimination principle; and (3) The role of
mosques in the integration process; content of speeches and the size of the constituency (El Madkouri 2010, 4).

3.4 September 11 and Effects upon the Islam Debate

The 9/11 attacks triggered an enormous eruption of public distrust against Islam, globally and nationally, and marked a turning point within the debate about Islam. Generally speaking, from this point on Muslims became stigmatized. It was not just Islam, as a religion, that was the problem, but also Muslims were now seen as the embodiment of the problem. This was translated in more tensed relations between the Muslims and the indigenous population (El Madkouri 2010, 4). While previously the debate was specifically about integration and the multicultural society in relation to Islam, from now on the debate was focused upon the idea of Muslims being a “Fifth column” in Dutch society. The direct reaction of politicians and the media upon these attacks was that they were an impingement upon the Western world and its norms and values. Although prime minister Kok at first advocated a controlled reaction, after the American government had expressed her displeasure, also he went on a war path (Douwes, de Koning and Boender 2005, 148).

While Muslim representatives and opinion leaders publicly disapproved of the terrorist act, at the same time there existed a parallel view that the „ordinary Muslim” supported the attacks. As a consequence a feeling prevailed that ordinary Muslims remained apathetic towards Western societies. The pressure upon Muslims in the media, public opinion and society increased. The society expected a clear answer from Muslims and a firm stance against terrorism in the name of Islam. A number of incidents proved the idea that Muslims formed a problematic group and affirmed the thought of “Them” (the Muslims) against “Us” (the West). First, the TV broadcasted images of celebrating Moroccan youth in Ede, expressing their joy about the terrorist attacks. Second, Muslim spokesperson’s who appeared in the media were unable to distance themselves enough from the Jihadist ideology in the eyes of the Dutch viewers and failed to formulate convincing answers upon the questions and expectations that arose from a boiling society (Ibid.).
In addition, a number of opinion polls that were held among Muslims shortly after 9/11 confirmed the negative perceptions about Muslims in Dutch society. The first survey [the Contrast Survey] was published on September 18 by Foqez Etnomarketing. The survey concluded that two-thirds of the Dutch Muslims showed little to complete understanding for the motivations of the hijackers behind attacks and that a small percentage (5%) approved of the attacks (Fennema 2001, 12). These results caused a lot of unrest and fear among the Dutch population and politicians. Prime minister Kok and minister of Integration policy Van Boxtel said to be shocked by the number of Muslims that showed understanding and/or approval for the 9/11 attacks (Nieuwenhuizen 2003, 2). According to the minister, a good integration policy should have led to a unified and unequivocal condemnation of terrorist acts (Fennema 2001, 13). The survey results also caused a lot of critique. Some researchers called the results not representative and the validity of the survey was questioned. But then new statistics appeared which confirmed the previous results of the Contrast-Survey. In fact, according to Intomart not 5% but 10% would support the 9/11 attacks completely (Ibid., 12).

Simultaneously surveys were conducted among the native Dutch population. According to a survey by the Volkskrant [Dutch newspaper] 62% of the respondents thought that Muslims who supported the terrorist attacks should be deported outside the country. A number of other surveys followed which concluded that there existed a general feeling of fear towards Islam and Muslims among the Dutch population. According to the outcome of a survey carried out by research institute Interview/NSS a large group of the native Dutch citizens had become less tolerant towards migrants since 9/11 (Nieuwenhuizen 2003, 2).

With the publicity surrounding the understanding of Muslims for 9/11, mosques, Islamic schools and individuals in a number of Dutch cities became target of violent attacks. Mosques in The Hague reported vandalism, racist graffiti and bomb alerts. A mosque in Apeldoorn experienced threats and windows were smashed. In Alkmaar mosques were dealing with arson or attempted arson. Similar threats were received in many other cities. Also Islamic schools faced threats, vandalism and arson. Furthermore, there were a number of separate incidents in which individuals were the target of violence. A Turkish man was
purposefully hit from behind by a car, Afghani refugees were severely mistreated and Muslim women wearing a headscarf offended (van Donselaar and Rodrigues 2003). It was suggested that these attacks were the result of 9/11 (Fennema 2001, 13). The Muslim community in the Netherlands reacted on multiple occasions outraged by the way the media dealt with the issue of Islam and September 11. The media often relied for their information upon the Contrast-survey. According to the Muslim community, the representation of Muslims that was said to have understanding for the attacks would have been exaggerated while the majority rejected the terrorist attacks resolutely. But the media however emphasized the first part of the results and devoted little attention to the last. According to many, the media was therefore to be blamed for the marginalization of Islam (Van den Bos 2002).

In the years that followed, a number of other opinion polls were conducted. In August 2002, an opinion poll regarding the feelings of Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands since 9/11 revealed that one-third felt less welcome. Two other surveys were conducted in 2002 and 2003 by TNS NIPO and commissioned by Een Vandaag [Dutch TV program.] The survey of 2002 was mainly about the attitudes of native Dutch citizens towards Muslims. The Survey concluded that 6 out of every 10 citizens were scared for violent actions on behalf of Muslim extremists in the Netherlands (Nieuwenhuizen and Visser). Further, half of the Dutch population after 9/11 said to view Muslims in a different way. From this 50%, the majority (95%) said to have a more negative view. According to the same survey, 85% of the Muslims did not agree with the statement “I feel welcome in Dutch society.” While 52% of the Muslims thought they worked hard enough to integrate, only 9% of the native Dutch population agreed. Further, from the non-Muslims, 51% agreed with the statement that the increasing number of Muslims in the Netherlands makes them feel anxious (Ibid.). From this abundance of surveys we can conclude that among the Dutch population a general feeling of fear towards the Muslim communities emerged in the years following 9/11 and that a large discrepancy exists between the Muslims and non-Muslims regarding the degree within which Muslims integrate in Dutch society (Nieuwenhuizen 2003, 3).

In conclusion, the debate about Islam and Muslims in Western societies changed
radically in content, tone and background of the participants after 9/11. Islam became strongly associated with violence and terrorism and Muslims were viewed as aggressors and potential terrorists. The worldwide adopted split between “Them” (Muslims) and “Us” (the West) was also adopted within the Dutch Islam debate. As such, Islam becomes a homogenous, global entity which substance is interpreted in terms of its most severe manifestations (El Madkouri 2010, 5).

3.5 Pim Fortuyn & the Revival of Right-Wing Populism

In the wake of 9/11, Pim Fortuyn a “leading exponent of folk nationalism and pride in Dutch identity” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 4) entered the political scene with his newly founded party List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) bringing all the elements discussed above together thereby making the changes of the immigration and integration debate a permanent fact (Prins 2002, 12). Fortuyn had already reacted for years against the free character of Dutch integration policies. In his book “The alienated society” (1995) he put emphasis upon the norms and values of the Judeo-Christian culture. Fortuyn’s following book “Against the Islamization of our culture” (1997) emphasized the Islamic threat for Dutch society, specifically for her norms and values. (Van der Brug, et al. 2009, 9).

Penninx summarizes Fortuyn’s political message as follows; (1) The suggestion that immigration and integration policies failed; (2) The threat that Islam, and specifically fundamentalist Islam, poses for democracy (3) the allegation that the political establishment was to be blamed for this failure as they had closed their eyes for the real problems in society because of their political correct speech and (4) that the indigenous Dutch population was the victim of all this (Penninx 2005, 8). Fortuyn ended of what was called „political correctness” and indirect language. His motto was: “I say what I think and I do what I say”. One of the things he thought and said was; “Islam is a backward religion” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 4). Fortuyn said what many people had thought for a long time but had not expressed out loud for fear of being seen as racist or xenophobic. In other words, he freed the feelings of which people previously had been ashamed. The widespread acceptance of these feelings is
welcomed in the Netherlands as the end of „political correctness” (Van Stokkum 2010, 120). This “opened the floodgates of an aggressive, angry and resentful xenophobic and especially anti-Muslim, discourse that no one has been able to shut again” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 4).

Ten days prior to the expected national victory of the LPF, on May 6, 2002, Fortuyn was assassinated (Pennings 2002, 4). While many people had feared this was the work of Muslim extremists, the murderer turned out to be a Green activists: Volkert van der Graaf. Nevertheless, the assassination caused a shock within Dutch society. Many demonstrations of mourning and love for Fortuyn sprung up throughout the country. At the day of the funeral “the masses of sympathizers lining the route Fortuyn’s body took behaved in ways unknown in the Netherlands and more reminiscent of popular devotion towards holy men in southern Europe” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 5).

Despite the assassination of Fortuyn, the government decided not to postpone the elections. Although the LPF failed to provide for stability after the murder of its leader, it managed to secure 26 out of 150 seats in the national elections (Penninx 2005, 8-9). The new right-wing government coalition consisted of the CDA, VVD and LPF with Balkenende as its prime minister (Entzinger 2006, 9). Fortuyn, and the LPF after his death, were responsible for a new agenda with regard to issues surrounding integration and ethnic & cultural diversity. The presence of a large fraction that considered this as top priority demanded from the other political parties to take a firm stance on such issues. The new right-wing government was extremely unstable and fell within less than four months after its founding. New elections were held in the beginning of 2003 in which the LPF saw its number of seats in parliament being reduced from 26 to only 8 (Ibid.). Even though the LPF seemed to have lost its popularity the harm was already done. “Other political parties had to a large extent taken over the populist thinking on immigration and integration in their political programs and a new

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5 Volkert van der Graaf worked for an environmental protection agency and fought against environmental violations and animal cruelty. As a motive for the murder, Van der Graaf declared that he saw Pim Fortuyn as a threat for the weak in society. Fortuyn symbolized for Van der Graaf everything that he resented; an extrovert vain creature with power. Which he considered to attack the weaker people in society and as such was developing into a real threat leading to a major disaster. (Nova TV 2004)
integration policy was now led by a special minister for immigration and integration of the Liberal Party, Mrs. Rita Verdonk” (Penninx 2005, 9). A new coalition was formed, again headed by Jan Peter Balkenende but this time the Fortuynists were swapped for the Democrats.

3.6 Assimilationist policies

A third policy shift occurred at the start of the twenty-first century. Immigration and integration became full-fledged politicized topics. The prominent view was that integration had not been successful and that the social unity of Dutch society was at risk. In 2003 the Integration Policy New Style was formulated (Bruquetas-Callejo, et al. 2005, 12). The Integration Policy as formulated during the 1990s was in the beginning of the 21st century “reframed from a problem of social-economic participation to a problem of social-cultural adaptation” (Scholten 2010, 8). The emphasis upon „active citizenship” from the integration policy shifted to a focus upon „common citizenship”. As such, “the unity of society must be found in what members have in common (…) that is that people speak Dutch, and that one abides to basic Dutch norms” (Scholten 2010, 8). Socio-cultural differences between migrants and the native population were no longer considered a colorful supplement to society but rather as an impediment to migrant integration. Further, the Integration Policy New Style became coupled to the societal and political anxiety regarding the protection of the Dutch national identity and social unity (Ibid.).

Most of these measures left little span for the acknowledgment of migrant’s cultural identities. Even the CDA emerged as a nationalistic party and a proponent of assimilationism despite the fact that they were traditionally the supporters of pillarization and hence of multiculturalism (Entzinger 2006, 10). These developments resulted in the contradiction that while immigrants were initially encouraged to keep on to their own cultural en religious identities they now were held responsible for their lacking identification with the Netherlands (Ibid.).

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6 For an explanation of this term, please refer to section 3.9.
Table 2. Dutch integration policies < 1978 - > 2003

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<tr>
<td>Terminology</td>
<td>Integration with retention of identity</td>
<td>Mutual adaptation in a multicultural society</td>
<td>Integration, Active citizenship</td>
<td>Adaptation, „common citizenship”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Classification</td>
<td>Immigrant groups defined by national origin and framed as temporary guests</td>
<td>Ethnic or cultural minorities characterized by social-economic and social-cultural problems</td>
<td>„Citizens” or „Allochtonous”, individual members of specific minority groups</td>
<td>Immigrants defined as policy targets because of social-cultural differences</td>
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<td>Causal Stories</td>
<td>Social-economic participation and retention of social-cultural identity</td>
<td>Social-cultural emancipation as a condition for social-economic participation</td>
<td>Social-economic participation as a condition for social-cultural emancipation</td>
<td>Social-cultural differences as obstacles to integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative perspective</td>
<td>The Netherlands should not be a country of immigration</td>
<td>The Netherlands as an open, multicultural society</td>
<td>Civic participation in a de-facto multicultural society</td>
<td>Preservation of national identity and social cohesion</td>
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The above table (Scholten 2010) illustrates that the Netherlands did not adopt a single immigration and integration model, rather what we see here is an evolution over time of Dutch policy towards its Muslim minority. While before 1978 there basically was a policy of non-integration, this changed during the 1980s into a policy of multiculturalism which then revamped during the 1990s into an integration approach with more universalist traits and post 9/11 into a policy with distinctive assimilationist features (Scholten 2010, 1). The policies are sometimes so different that they seem to contradict one another. The multiculturalists’ approach of the 1980s for example is in sharp contrast to the more assimilationist policy of today (Ibid., 9).

3.7 New Realism

Sociologists Baukje Prins came with the term „new realism” to describe the newly emerging genre of public discourse. New realists, according to Prins are opinion makers (i.e. politicians, publicists, scientists) who define the Dutch identity as modern, tolerant and open, and who want to protect these features. They have the fortitude to face the facts and speak openly about the truths which the political elite have neglected. New-realists thus offer resistance to the power of the left with their political correct speeches regarding totalitarianism, racist
discrimination, intolerance and its cultural relativism (Prins 2002, 5-6). As such, they see themselves as appointed spokespersons of the common people (i.e. autochtonen) who experience the problems of the multicultural society in their daily lives. Being Dutch is in the eyes of new realists the same as “normal” or “being normal”, non-Dutch are not normal. “We” are therefore in the position to determine what we will accept from “Them” (the non-Dutch) and to which degree minorities can experience their own culture and religion. Prins classifies Pim Fortuyn and Frits Bolkestein under the new realists and calls Paul Scheffer a new realist “with a social face” (Ibid.).

Also in the media a similar shift as described by Prins became visible; “from problems with immigrants to problems with their backward culture to Islam as the cause of all unwelcome cultural phenomena” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 12). Topics such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriages and honor killings became more and more identified with Islam and served as perfect examples to argue against cultural relativism. “Anti-Semitism, petty crime, discrimination of and violence against homosexuals, which previously were attributed to social problems of poor neighborhoods and lack of parental control were increasingly attributed to Islam as a causal factor” (Ibid.).

3.8 Hirsi Ali & Van Gogh

The emergence of the duo Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Theo van Gogh at the end of 2004 gave another dimension to the Islam debate; it marked the start of using different forms of mass media (TV and internet) to promote political ideas. Due to a combination of media and the closer proximity of the experienced threat of Islam after the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) the Islam debate hardened even further.

The Somali politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali gave the Islam debate new impulses for a number of reasons. First, her Muslim background plays a significant role. As a Somali woman, victim of female genital mutilation, a forced marriage and ex-Muslim, she was in a position to inform the Dutch public about the “truth of Islam” in a manner that many other columnists were not. Second, the Islam debate became more emotionally laden and politicized
due to the threatening reactions towards Hirsi Ali’s public pronouncements (El Madkouri 2010, 7). Her input was mainly concerned with the subordinate position of women in Islam. In her first book “De Zoontjesfabriek: over vrouwen, Islam en integratie” (The little son factory: about women Islam and integration) that was published in 2002, she criticized the position of women and the complete submission of Muslims to their faith. Similar to Bolkestein and Fortuyn, Hirsi Ali also argued that Islam as a religion contains norms and values that are opposite to the Western liberal values such as freedom of speech secularism and especially equality between men and women. Further, for Muslims the Quran is more important than the constitutions and hence it is difficult for them to live and integrate in Western societies (Ibid., 7).

Through irreverence towards prophet Muhammad and any other wholly persons in Islam, Hirsi Ali determined the tone of the debate. For example, she described prophet Muhammad as a “tyrant” and a “pervert” in an opinion piece in Trouw [newspaper] in January 2003. Muhammad, according to Hirsi Ali, was a tyrant because of his dominance as a political and military leader, but also “perverse” because of his marriage with a 9-year old girl (Cliteur 2009, 149). Besides opinion pieces and interviews, she also made use of another medium to air her ideas, namely a movie. Together with producer Theo van Gogh, Hirsi Ali produced a short move titled „Submission” in June 2004. The movie displayed naked bodies of women upon which Quran texts were written about Islamic rules concerning the relation between men and women. The movie was perceived by many Muslims as insulting (El Madkouri 2010, 8).

Not long after the public release of „Submission” on November 2, 2004, van Gogh was murdered in Amsterdam. What many people feared did in fact occur: what people thought had happened to Fortuyn had befallen Theo van Gogh (Van Bruinessen 2006, 6). Van Gogh’s killer, Mohammed Bouyeri, was a Dutch-Moroccan adolescent, well educated and reasonably integrated. He shot Van Gogh in public, attempted to cut his throat and left a written letter on the body with a butcher’s knife leaving no doubt as to why Van Gogh was killed and who was the next target; Hirsi Ali. Due to increasing death threats and commotion surrounding the legitimacy of her asylum procedure Hirsi Ali has been living in the US since 2006.
Hans Janmaat (CD)

Pim Fortuyn (LPF)

Ayaan Hirsi Ali (VVD)

Theo van Gogh (film producer)
“The killer, Mohammed B., was discovered to belong to a group of radicalized young Muslims of mixed ethnicity who had been planning to carry the global jihad into Dutch society” (Van Bruinessen 2006, 6). Although the group was characterized by amateurism, their very existence and their single successful terrorist act, the murder of Van Gogh, left a huge impact on the Dutch society.

“Van Gogh’s violent death transformed him instantly into a symbol capable of uniting the most diverse groups in Dutch society” (Ibid.,7). Despite the fact that numerous Muslim organizations expressed their disapproval of the murder, Van Gogh became “canonized as a martyr and saint in the new cult of Dutch identity” even more strongly than after Fortuyn.

“Islam now defined this identity by being its most relevant “Other” (Ibid.). Directly after the murder, the incident was framed in two dominant ways (Penninx 2005, 9).

In the first interpretation, the assassination was seen as an attack upon the freedom of expression and hence directly upon the democracy principle. It was argued that Van Gogh was killed because of his blatant statements on Islam and Muslims in public (Ibid., 9). Van Gogh had used a confrontational style in expressing his opinion. He used for example the word “goat-fuckers” to refer to Muslims. The fact that Submission was broadcasted on public TV and that both Van Gogh and Hirsi Ali had received multiple death threats for the way in which they portrayed Islam supported this argument. In describing the murder as threat to the principles of democracy, the earlier statements made by Bolkestein on the incompatibility between Islam and democracy were confirmed. Simultaneously it also supported Fortuyn’s argument that Islam was a „backward religion‟ In short, Islam as a religion became suspect, not individuals with extreme views. (Ibid.).

The second interpretation framed Van Gogh’s murder as the crucial proof for the malfunctioning of Dutch immigration and integration policies, specifically with regard to the Muslim immigrants who live a segregated live with their own schools, mosques and organizations with fanatical and fundamentalists imams (Ibid.).

Besides the media, also politicians framed Van Gogh’s murder in such a way, particularly the LPF and the VVD made remarks to this effect. Rita Verdonk, the integration
and immigration minister used Van Gogh’s assassination as a reason to implement new
compulsory integration policies and introduced stricter inspections of mosques, imam’s,
harsher naturalization policies and the risk of losing Dutch citizenship (Ibid.). This in turn
further increased the split in society. Certain groups associated with extreme-right movements
attacked Muslim symbols and Islamic schools and mosques were set on fire (Ibid.). The
severity and magnitude of this wave of violence towards Muslims took on unprecedented
proportions in post-war Dutch society. The murder led to countless Islamophobic and racist
statements on the internet but also public destruction and discriminating statements on the
street. Especially in the first weeks after the murder, at least thirty mosques were target of
attacks, most of them involved arson. Similar to the period after 9/11 also a number of Islamic
schools were target again (Anne Frank Foundation 2004).

Muslims were put under great pressure to demonstrate their allegiance to the Dutch
democratic state and to condemn the murder. Muslim representatives complied to a large
degree to this demand, but not precisely in the same manner as requested: “Yes, indeed they
declared themselves in favor of freedom of speech, but then not only for Van Gogh, but also
for Muslims and their religious leaders (…) and yes, they were all for integration, but not for
the kind that is assimilationist and demands to forget about their Muslim religion” (Penninx
2005, 10).

3.9 A double identity crisis
With the victory of Pim Fortuyn and the emergence of political figures such as Hirsi Ali and
Van Gogh, the Dutch suddenly had no problem anymore speaking openly about their
dissatisfaction with the multicultural society and xenophobia. But why was this not the case
before? I will argue that secularization and “de-pillarization” played an important role in this.
Dutch society until the 1960 was divided in four major groups; the Catholics, the Protestants,
the Liberals and the Socialists. Each of these groups lived separately in their own strata. This
phenomenon of parallel societies became known as stratification. The motto was “live and let
live, but not in my backyard” (Schaake 2006, 2). “The Catholics, the Protestants, the Liberals
and Socialists each had their own communities, political parties, social networks and schools. In the stratified Dutch society, everybody knew who he was, where he belonged and through which political party he was represented. Due to the “de-pillarization” during the 1960s as a consequence of globalization and the emergence of the welfare state (people were now no longer dependent upon their own pillar for social support) identity problems arose. Who are we? Where do I belong? (Kallenberg 2010, 2).

At the same time, Muslims started to organize themselves around their faith. According to the social identity theory, people look for a positive self-image. Attacking the ethnic or religious aspects of a particular group, in this case Muslims, usually leads to a defensive reaction in which the negative characteristics of the other group and the positive characteristics of the own groups are emphasized (Shadid 2009, 19). Therefore it is not surprising that Moroccan and Turkish Muslims in the Netherlands, during the aftermath of September 11, the assassination of Van Gogh and the emergence of the Islamophobic Freedom party started to emphasize their Islamic identity more forcefully.

Muslims became more frequently approached as „Muslims” and less as migrant or Moroccan or Turkish. As such, and interplay seems to emerge; the more Muslims are approached as being „Muslim” the more they define themselves as Muslims. Indeed, when they are critically approached on the basis of their religion, they are forced to take a stance. Therefore, because in their daily lives they are continuously reminded of their “Muslimness”, they tend to define themselves more in those terms of this sub-identity and act accordingly (Ketner 2009, 82-83). While some see this behavior as radicalization or as a lack of integration, in reality it is a reaction upon the continuing societal exclusion and their status as second rang citizens (Shadid 2009, 19). Due to the fact that Muslims defined themselves more strongly based upon their religion, a feeling among the native population emerged that while “a collective [Islamic] entity was being built up at the moment theirs were being built down” (Van Genugten 2010, 10).

In the contemporary political and public climate, developments in the recent past are represented as a multicultural drama and integration policies are considered as failed. The
dominant political discourse is mainly focused upon stimulating the connection between immigrants and the native population and the connection of immigrants with „the Netherlands” based upon Dutch norms, values and culture (Sleegers 2007, 51). According to this view, Dutch society needs to cultivate and guard her own national identity and demand from newcomers (and those who came to the Netherlands in the past) to adapt. No tolerance and acceptance, but demands and sanctions (Dijkstra, et al.).

Therefore, politicians, opinion leaders, journalists, columnists etc. started to determine the core of the Dutch identity and the characteristics to which migrants need to adapt. The former minister of education from the Christian Democrats, Verhoeven, initiated in 2005 a Commission on the Development of a Dutch Canon to construct a shared Dutch history, culture and society. Although the commission distanced itself from the idea of a fixed Dutch identity, the Canon nevertheless came to be seen by some as an instrument to stimulate identity awareness (Sleegers 2007, 51). The Canon which was presented in 2007 by the commission van Oostrom, has since August 1, 2010 officially been included in the core targets for primary and secondary education (De Canon van Nederland).

Over the years, discussions about „being Dutch” have led to a more and more dominant ideal type of the national identity; modern, Western, secular, sexually liberated, open, tolerant, freedom of speech and individualistic (Sleegers 2007, 51). Until recently, the Dutch identity was not very explicit, but there was nevertheless an implicit consensus – of behavioral code and appearance – of who was or was not a real Dutch citizen (the Dutch citizen is white with a Jewish/Christian background). Through the influence of categorical thinking, it became natural that migrants with their deviant culture live in the Netherlands, but can never be a real “Dutch citizen”. By the most they can assimilate till descent citizens who can be tolerated (Ghorashi 2006, 30). The term „national identity” is thus most of the times not displayed as a dynamic concept, but as a clear-cut testing frame which newcomers are supposed to meet (Driouich 2007, 5).

As such, identity politics after years of absence was reintroduced in the Netherlands, but this time in a unique form. Historically identity politics has been reserved for the
marginalized, ethnic, religious or cultural minorities, which wanted to protect their deviant
group identity – rooted in traditions and practices – against the dominant culture of the
majority. Also in the Netherlands, such politics was being played for decades; however, the
relevance quickly disappeared after the de-pillarization, secularization and individualization of
the society (Jensen and Wijnberg). With Pim Fortuyn, identity politics returned to the Dutch
political spheres, however, in its reversed form. Not the marginalized minority, but the
dominant majority of the population raised their collective identity as spearhead of a political
battle.

3.10 National identity and exclusion

The implicit content of the Dutch identity and the subsequent processes of inclusion and
exclusion have as result that numerous persons who were either born or grew up in the
Netherlands and hence have the Dutch nationality are not considered as „one of us”.
Expectations of integration, and especially of assimilation, are therefore paradoxical. While it
is expected from newcomers that they integrate, or in fact assimilate, and become „Dutch”,
they continue to be forced in a subculture by the native population. Native Dutch citizens
continue to see „others” as „outsiders”, even though they demand that they do not behave as
outsiders (Frank 2006).

The cultural construction of “Us” and “Them” also has social consequences. Cultural
exclusion causes societal exclusion. Muslims experience a more negative labor market
position. Unemployment among Turkish and Moroccan immigrants has since the 1980s been
significantly higher compared to the native Dutch. For example, in the second part of 2009,
11. 2% of the non-Western migrants (which consists for a large part of Muslims) is
unemployed, compared to 3, 8% of the native Dutch (Harchaoui 2010, 16). Unemployment
among immigrants is higher than what should be expected based upon education, language
and skills. Negative perceptions cause employers to be less likely to hire Muslims. Research
shows that 6% of the employers do not want to fill a vacancy with an immigrant, and 18%
says only to do so when there is a lack of native applicants (Kruisbergen and Veld 2002, 75).
Another example of social exclusion can be found in education. Segregation in primary and secondary education did not decrease. As such, the separation between pupils with a non-Western background and native Dutch pupils continues. Despite the fact that immigrant children are doing much better than their parents or grandparents, Moroccan and Turkish children still usually enter lower forms of education. They also tend to leave school without any qualifications more often than their native Dutch peers. “In the 2007/08 academic year, 8.6% of Moroccan pupils left the education system early, which is double the number of native Dutch children” (Harchaoui 2010, 14). A final example of social exclusion is the unequal income distribution between immigrants and native Dutch. “The average net disposable annual income for Turks and Moroccans is estimated at EUR 23,200 and EUR 21,300 respectively, compared with EUR 30,200 for native Dutch” (Ibid.,16).

This social inclusion turns around the issue: it is not that Muslim minorities necessarily seek to separate from Dutch society – as the Pim Fortuyn identity politics would argue – but the structural discrimination and exclusion in Dutch society makes integration a genuine challenge for the Muslim communities. The paradox is that while Muslims are criticized for not assimilating, but through such criticism, assimilation becomes almost impossible. As noted earlier in this chapter, excluding non-natives in general and Muslims in specific from Dutch society, will automatically lead that in order to maintain a positive self-image Muslims will start to define themselves as opposite to those who exclude them. As such, they will more strongly develop their own identity as being opposite to that of the Dutch identity. The more people experience exclusion, the more negative characteristics they will ascribe to the Dutch. The processes of exclusion thus make migrants strangers in Dutch society. It goes without saying that this without a doubt will have a negative effect upon their integration in the society.

3.11 Contemporary position Islam debate: Geert Wilders
The debate on Islam in the Netherlands continues in 2010. The negative discourse about Islam and Muslims in Dutch society that has been produced over the past two decades by numerous
opinion makers, publicists and politicians continues to be expressed upon diverse podia. The flow of ideas continues and the tone of the debate is still hard and negative.

Fortuyn’s populism has been continued in recent years by Geert Wilders „Freedom Party” (PVV) and Rita Verdonk’s party „Proud of the Netherlands” (ToN) which sprung up in respectively in 2006 and 2008 after Hirsi Ali and Van Gogh had been eliminated from the debate. Both Wilders and Verdonk used to belong to the liberal party (VVD) and both plead for an extreme-right wing populist direction.

Like Fortuyn also Wilders and Verdonk agitate against the political establishment. The vision of Proud of the Netherlands and PVV is similar to that of the LPF and focuses upon “issues related to crime and security, and claims for lower taxes and a smaller, more efficient bureaucracy” (Van Kessel 2010, 18). The difference between ToN and PVV is that while also Verdonk stresses the importance of Dutch national identity, she is far less radical as compared to Wilders in her critique upon the Muslim community. For Wilders, almost all of the social problems are the result of the alleged incompatibility between Islam and democracy while Islam is not mentioned at all in ToN’s party program (Ibid. 15-18).

ToN, officially presented to the Dutch public in April 2008, rose rapidly in the opinion polls to 24 seats in 2008. However, her success quickly deteriorated in the period that followed. In the beginning of 2009, only two seats were left for ToN (Synovate 2009) and during the national elections in June 2010, ToN did not manage to obtain even one seat (Tweede kamer verkiezingen 2010). The PVV, on the other hand, did exceptionally well. While Wilders had already obtained 9 out of 150 seats in Dutch parliament during the general elections in 2006, this number rose to 24 after the 2010 elections thereby becoming the third largest party in the country (Van Kessel 2010, 16). With Wilders increasing popularity, it seems unlikely that the debate about Islam in the Netherlands will soon end. In the next chapter, I will discuss Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party in more detail.
Geert Wilders after his electoral victory on June 9, 2010. (Source: ANP)

Maxime Verhage (CDA), Mark Rutte (VVD) and Geert Wilders (PVV) after the new a minority cabinet VVD-CDA with parliamentary support of the PVV was sworn in on October 14, 2010.
III

THE PVV AS A NEW ELEMENT IN DUTCH RACE RELATIONS

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the emergence of extreme right and populist parties in the Netherlands that appeal to anti-immigrant sentiment, have been in different degrees successful throughout different time periods. The first electoral success of extreme right was in 1984, when 2, 5% of the voters voted for Janmaat and the Centrum Democrats. Their success, however, quickly vanished. At the 2002 elections, the LPF obtained 26 seats and with that directly entered parliament. After the success of such anti-immigrant political parties, other anti-immigrant political formations sprung up such as the Freedom Party (PVV) and „Proud of the Netherlands” (ToN). While after the assassination of Fortuyn, the success of the LPF and ToN remained limited, the constituency of the PVV kept increasing. The rapid increasing popularity of the PVV has turned Wilders into a dominant force within the contemporary Dutch debate on immigration and integration. This chapter will therefore focus upon the emergence and rise to power of the PVV in terms of its stances on immigration and integration and the reactions from civil and political society upon this development.

4.1 Rise of the PVV

Geert Wilders is one of the most controversial and outspoken critics of Islam in the Netherlands who came out of the anti-multiculturalism movement (Eisenberg 2009, 77). Wilders political party, The Freedom Party (PVV) was officially founded on February 22, 2006. The central tenet of the party is “fighting Islam” and so-called “left wing hobbies” such as development and aid. The PVV participated for the first time in the general elections of 2006 in which it obtained 5, 9% of the votes and 9 (out of 150) seats in parliament. During

7 Left hobbies is a term that refers mainly to government measures aimed to help certain groups in society; development, climate research, projects to stimulate social cohesion, social welfare and subsidies for art, culture, persons and/or organization. According to Wilders, such „left” measures are a financial burden upon Dutch society and cuts in the government budget should begin here.
the following national elections in June 2010, the PVV increased its number of seats to 24 and became the third largest political party in the country.

The PVV-constituency exists of slightly more men and lower educated. In terms of employment, the PVV-voter is similar to the average Dutch citizen, although they are slightly more often unemployed. But overall, the PVV’s constituency is represented by diverse social categories. Moreover, PVV-voters are represented across the country, but proportionally the PVV enjoys more popularity in the South. (Hooghuis and Bank 2009). The most important motive for people to vote for the PVV is their sympathy for Wilders. Many think that with Wilders something will actually change. The low levels of confidence in the current government thus seem to play a crucial role in their voting behavior. A vote for the PVV is thus also a vote against the political establishment. Despite a number of issues such as the proposal to tax headscarf’s, the PVV voters overall agree with the majority of Wilders standpoints. PVV-voters not only have a more negative attitude towards “allochtonen,” they also state to have more negative experiences with this group. Not surprisingly, their level of tolerance towards non-natives is lower than among the rest of the Dutch population. Another important reason to vote for Wilders is his opposition to financial cuts in education and aid and development to third world countries. PVV-voters see the political establishment as greedy imposing too high taxes both on the national and local level so that every month, they have left too little of their salary (Ibid.). Wilders argument to let the consequences of the financial crisis weigh heavier upon the “expensive left-wing hobbies” and to spare the native Dutch population thus seems to be an important factor behind the PVV’s success.

The process of cabinet formation following the 2010 general elections resulted after 127 days of negotiations in a minority cabinet of the VVD and CDA with an agreement for parliamentary support of the PVV to have a small majority in the House of Representatives.8

8 Initially there was no willingness from the Christian Democrats to negotiate with the PVV. Therefore, the formation of Purple-plus-cabinet (VVD, PvdA, D66 and GL) was first explored. When it appeared that that this coalition was unattainable, a minority coalition between VVD, CDA with support of the PVV was reconsidered. On 28 September 2010, the negotiators reached a consensus about a draft coalition- and parliamentary support agreement. The parliamentary support agreement contains agreements between the three parties with regard to healthcare, security, immigration policy and
While the PVV is officially not part of the new Dutch cabinet, one can easily find Wilders’ influence within the new government coalition. While there will not be a ban on the Quran or a tax upon Muslim headscarf’s, or a large scale deportation of Muslims, the new government will introduce a complete ban on wearing *burqas* and a ban on headscarves for police and justice employees. Further, “conditional passports for new immigrants will be introduced which can be withdrawn within the first five years if a crime is committed” (Tyler 2010). In addition, Wilders also accomplished to get more strict immigration and integration policies. A number of the procedures related to the new immigration and integration policy, such as provisional passports for newcomers might violate existing EU regulations. It is explicitly stated within the agreement that “it will try to find as much leeway as possible within existing treaties governing immigration and integration, and if needed renegotiate the treaties” (Ibid.). Simultaneously, the new coalition will aim to amend existing EU immigration and integration regulations. The Freedom Party thus has a significant impact upon the new cabinet (Ibid.). Also on the European level, the PVV is growing in influence. With its anti-Europe campaign, the PVV won 4 out of the 25 Dutch seats during the European parliamentary elections in June 2009. The PVV became thereby the 2nd largest Dutch political party, after the CDA, – in the European Parliament (NRC Handelsblad 2009).

4.2 Nationalist & Populist Rhetoric

The PVV has refined its electoral program under the banner of nationalist-populist slogans. Wilders appeals to the common people and harshly criticizes the political elite. The party suggests a “split” in the country. At one side there is the “elite” or “political establishment” with its so called ideals, who are not willing to acknowledge the problems of the street. While government cuts. Other topics are dealt with in the coalition agreement between the VVD and CDA (Montesquieu Instituut 2010). While some Christian Democrats, in particular some older members of Turkish or Moroccan background, objected to collaboration with the PVV, the VVD remained relatively quiet. A day later the fractions of the VVD and PVV accepted the draft agreement (Van Genugten 2010). The fraction of the CDA suspended its final decision until after the CDA conference on October 2 and unanimously voted for the coalition with VVD and the PVV on October 5. On October 14, 2010, the new Cabinet-Rutte was sworn in (Kabinetsformatie 2010).
Wilders mainly agitates against the political elites and their “expensive left-wing hobbies” such as the multicultural society, development and foreign aid, the PVV’s social-economic program is rather “eclectic and includes various left-wing measures” (van Kessel 2010, 7). For example, the PVV is against; “raising the pension age; easing the rules for laying off employees; more marketization in the health care sector; and cutting down financial support for students” (Ibid.).

At the other side, there is a significant part of the population which is unsatisfied due to the experienced problems of the multicultural society in their daily lives. These Dutch citizens want to feel at home and safe again in their country. Emphasizing the voice of the people and representing this voice constitutes an important part of the PVV’s identity. This is illustrated in Wilder’s „declaration of independence” of 2005 in which he says; “I do not want this country to be hijacked by an elite of cowardly and frightened people (from whichever party) any longer (…) Therefore, I intend to challenge this elite on all fronts and I want to return this country to its citizens” (Ibid., 6).

4.3 Wilders Campaign against the Islamization of the Netherlands

At the same time the PVV also focuses upon the clash between the Dutch culture and the Islamic culture which is another feature of populist parties. On 6 September, 2007, in front of the entire Dutch Parliament, Geert Wilders expressed his thoughts on the multicultural society. He proclaimed that „multiculturalism” leads to Islamization of the Netherlands and destroys the European civilization (Eisenberg 2009, 77):

“Madam Speaker, the Islamic incursion must be stopped. Islam is the Trojan Horse in Europe. If we do not stop Islamification now, Eurabia and Netherabia will just be a matter of time. One century ago, there were approximately 50 Muslims in the Netherlands. Today, there are about one million Muslims in this country. Where will it end?…No Islamic tradition must ever be established in the Netherlands: not now and also not in a few centuries” time” (PVV Newsletter 2007).

The PVV argues that cultural differences and Islam form the largest obstacle in successful integration of immigrants in Dutch society. The PVV uses the issue of „immigration” to

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9 See footnote 6
threaten people that national identities may be challenged by the Muslim immigrants.

According to Wilders;

"The Netherlands is on the verge of a ‘tsunami of Islamization’ (...) Their intolerance and violent culture will affect Dutch society 'in the heart of our identity'” (Ten Hoove and du Pre 2006).

In Wilders rhetoric the Dutch culture is superior to the Islamic culture. In “De Spits” [Dutch newspaper] of 9 November 2006, Wilders said for example: “The Dutch culture is a thousand times better than Islam.” Earlier he already said in “HP De Tijd” [Dutch newspaper] of 6 February 2004 that: “Our norms and values are of a higher, better, more pleasant and more human level of civilization than that of Muslims.” Wilders presents the increasing number of Muslims in the Netherlands and support for Islam as a violation of Dutch identity. In order to protect the Dutch culture from the Muslim threat, Wilders proposed in his election campaign “Klare Wijn” 10 (Partij voor de Vrijheid 2006) to abolish article No.1 from the Dutch constitution which reads: “All persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex or on other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted” (Dutch constitution of 1983).

Instead, he proposed to establish the Judeo-Christian and humanistic tradition as the dominant culture of the Netherlands (Partij van de Vrijheid 2006a). He further advocated to discontinue admitting immigrants from Turkey and Morocco and to send non-Dutch citizens who commit a crime back to their countries of origin. Moreover, Wilders promoted a legal prohibition on building new mosques and establishing new Islamic schools within the next five years, as well as banning women from wearing an Islamic headscarf in public functions. Lastly, Wilders pleads for a withdrawal of voting rights for non-Dutch citizens during municipal elections; naturalization only after ten years of lawful residence with the prerequisite of being fully employed and free of any criminal offense and no social welfare for immigrants during the first ten years of their stay in the Netherlands (Partij voor de Vrijheid

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10 “Klare wijn” refers to the expression “klare wijn schenken” meaning to provide clarification and to correct what was crooked.
A little later on, in August 2007, the PVV extended its political program by advocating a ban on the Quran. In a letter to the Volkskrant [Dutch newspaper] titled “Genoeg is genoeg: verbied de Koran” (Enough is enough: forbid the Quran) Wilders argued;

“Ban the Quran just as also Mein Kampf was banned! Give a signal (…) that the Quran in our country can never be used as an excuse for violence or as a source of inspiration (…) I’ve had enough of Islam in the Netherlands, do not allow any more Muslim immigrants into the Netherlands. I’ve had enough of the worshipping of Allah and Mohammed in the Netherlands; no more mosques! I’ve had enough of the Quran in the Netherlands; forbid that fascist book” (Wilders 2007).

In the same article, Wilders argues that Islam is an ideology that advocates the elimination of non-Muslims (Ibid.). Wilders thus makes a direct connection between the Islamic culture and criminal behavior. In another piece in the “Volkskrant” Wilders said;

“One out of five Moroccan youth is registered as a suspect with the police. Their behavior stems from their religion and culture (…) The pope was right: Islam is a violent religion (…) It is in the nature of this community” (De Volkskrant 2006).

The quotes above illustrate how Wilders makes use of deductive reasoning: (1) The Quran contains calls for violence. (2) Muslims believe the Quran literally. (3) Muslims are violent. Many of Wilders arguments such as the example above are not true (i.e. not all Muslims interpret the Quran literally) but by building his statements upon the above mentioned logic deduction, his findings seem to be more accurate than they actually are (Van Leeuwen 2009).

On 28 November 2007 Wilders announced in “De Telegraaf” [Dutch newspaper] to be working on a movie about the Quran. On 9 February 2008, he released the title of his movie; Fitna. Initially, Wilders had hoped to broadcast Fitna on television but due to the commotion surrounding the movie, neither the public nor the commercial channels wanted to cooperate.
The pictures above form a compilation of images from Wilders film “Fitna” and the responses it triggered: Dutch flags are burned, demonstrations against Wilders, debates among Muslim youth, newspaper articles reading; Jihad against Wilders, Hirsi Ali and Wilders in hiding-HITLIST.
After a number of failed attempts, the movie was finally released on March 27, 2008 around 7pm on the British website Liveleak. In Fitna Wilders sketched a “horrifying picture of blood-thirsty Muslims who wanted to destroy our Judeo-Christian civilization” (De Haan 2008). Fitna is often referred to as the embodiment of Wilders anti-Muslim rhetoric by which he warns against the possibility that in a couple of years the largest Dutch cities will consist mainly of „allochtonen”. 11

Fitna was not only intended to mobilize fear for Muslims, its announcement also caused fear and has hence appeared to create a crisis. “When the Dutch government took precautions by briefing Dutch embassies about Fitna in countries where the earlier scandal of the „Danish cartoons” had resulted in vehement reactions, Wilders stated that “not the government of prime-minister Balkenende, but fear of Islam rules in the Netherlands” (Ibid.). Wilders himself was also accused of inciting fear. According to Alexander Pechtold, leader of the progressive liberals, Wilders himself was “a frightened man.” Some of the commentators which sided with Wilders saw in these reactions the confirmation that certain politicians aimed to minimize “the fear of the Dutch people for Islam” (Ibid.).

During the following year, 2009, Wilders again came up with a new policy proposal. He gave a speech in September before the full Dutch government in which he called for a “head-rag-tax”: a 1000 euro tax-license for Muslim women who want to wear a headscarf. He justified his proposal as an effort to “clean up the streets” as he views it as “pollution of public space” (Trouw 2009).

"We're sick and tired of the headscarves. And we'll do everything we can to get rid of them. We've already proposed a law to ban the niqab and this is a way to get rid of headscarves, which pollute the Dutch landscape. It's not just that they're ugly; they're also a sign of the repression of women. We want to oppose that” (Tyler 2009).

Such a tax was only proposed for Muslim women and not for Christian women or other forms of head-covering garments. The money collected by the tax would according to Wilders go to women’s emancipation programs (Ibid.). A last point worthy of attention is the way in which

11 For a complete description of the movie „Fitna” please refer to appendix I.
the PVV links the demise of the welfare state to the increasing numbers of Muslims in the Netherlands. This is illustrated in the PVV’s election manifesto of 2010:

“Our pride, to which the Dutch for decades have given part of their salaries: the welfare-state, has now become a magnet for Islamic fortune-hunters. It is no longer a shield for the weak, but a pickup counter for a disproportionate number of Muslim immigrants. Henk and Ingrid are paying for Ali and Fatima.”

As illustrated above, for Wilders, the issue of „Islamization” thus touches upon a range of social issues: economics, security, education, women’s emancipation and the rights of Jews and gay people.

Maarten van Leeuwen, a linguistic from the University of Leiden analyzed Wilders political speeches about Islamization and concludes that Wilders systematically uses a certain knowledge domain (the domain of war) to present his message about Islamization (Van Leeuwen 2009, 4). The war metaphor offers Wilders the possibility to make a clear role distribution “between good and evil, between aggressor (Islam), victims (millions of Dutch people) cowards (the Dutch government) and defenders of freedom (Wilders and his Party for Freedom)” (Ibid.). His consistent use of articles throughout his speeches contributes to the creation of clear boxes. By speaking of “the Dutch citizen”, “the political elite” or by saying that “the Islam” is dangerous he creates apparently clear and defined categories with which he ignores the fact that in reality within such a group a lot of diversity exists (Ibid., 3).

4.4 Racism & Discrimination

Wilders differentiates between people and groups based upon culture and religion. He continuously speaks in terms of “Us” versus “Them.” The earlier mentioned slogans of its 2010 election manifesto illustrates this clearly; “Henk and Ingrid [two Dutch names] pay for Ali and Fatima.” In other words, the Dutch society is victimized and the Muslim communities are blamed. “Us” in the perspective of the PVV exclusively refers to the Judeo-Christian and humanitarian culture of the Netherlands, the Dutch identity or Western values (Oner 2004, 29). The differentiation the PVV makes between “Us” and “Them” is seen between natives and immigrants from other EU countries, but a higher differentiation is made towards
immigrants with a non-Western background, especially from Islamic countries. This group of people is increasingly ethnicized and made more foreign (Ibid.). Hence, differences are artificially maintained and stereotypes created. This is an old, often used strategy by the established group to dominate and maintain power over newcomers (Sleegers 2007, 62).

The PVV, however, does not directly remake the traditional fascist or racist ideologies. Instead its racism is translated into public discourses that are permissible (although barely) within the current spectrum. The PVV “does not speak on „the size of brains of the black race‟, „the form of the nose of Semitic people” or „the physical inferiority of Asians‟ but instead talks about our own people first and stop migration” (Zemni 2002, 163). Such statements illustrate how Wilders places the Dutch culture as superior over the Islamic culture. This moves the debate out of physical or racial traits into the realm of culture which has in the end the same effect as the traditional or fascist or racist ideologies in the sense that it differentiates one group from another.

This complete rejection of the Islamic culture, Muslims and foreigners as an inherently violent threat to the Dutch culture and society in combination with a call to evict or stimulate (re)migration of immigrants from the Netherlands is a straightforward plea for the exclusion of a large population in the name of a presupposed „own‟ people or culture.

4.5 Wilders on trial

Based upon Wilders statements on Islam made in the media and the release of „Fitna‟, the public prosecutor (OM) received dozens of reports against Wilders for inciting hatred and group insult (Openbaar Ministerie 2010). Many people saw Wilders statements on Islam through diverse media channels as a hate campaign against Muslims. But the OM decided in 2008 not to pursue a case and stated that Wilders comments had been made in the context of public debate;

„That comments are hurtful and offensive for a large number of Muslims does not mean that they are punishable. Freedom of expression fulfils an essential role in public debate in a democratic society. That means that offensive comments can be made in a political debate” (Openbaar Ministerie 2008).
Diverse persons and organizations disagreed with this decision and filed through an „article-12 procedure” a complaint against the decision at the Amsterdam Appeals Court, the second highest judicial authority in the country. Contrary to the public prosecutor, the Court decided that there was enough reason to prosecute Wilders for inciting discrimination, hatred and group insult (Art.1 2010). Statements that have led to Wilders prosecution include amongst others the following phrase from his movie Fitna; “The Islam wants to dominate and is looking to destroy our civilization. In 1945 Nazism was defeated, in 1989 communism and now the Islamic ideology needs to be overpowered” (Een Vandaag 2010). And in the Volkskrant [Dutch newspaper] of 8 august 2007: “The core of the problem is fascistic Islam, the sick ideology of Allah and Mohammed as laid down in the Islamic Mein Kampf: the Koran” (Ibid.). And in the Pers [Dutch newspaper] of 13 February 2007: “The Islam is a violent religion. If Muhammad lived here today, the Dutch lower house would agree immediately to deport him out of the country” (Ibid.).

After the court ruling in January 2009, the public prosecutor decided to prosecute Wilders on five counts namely; Group Insult (Penal Code 137c); Incitement to hatred of people, namely Muslims, because of their religion (Penal Code 137c); Incitement to discrimination against people, namely Muslims, because of their religion (Penal Code 137d); Incitement to hatred of people, namely non-Western immigrants and / or Moroccans, because of their race (Penal Code 137d); and Incitement to discrimination of people, namely non-Western immigrants and / or Moroccans, because of their race (Penal Code 137d) (Het Wilders process). Wilders trial started in January 2010 and is at the date of writing this thesis still ongoing. Both proponents and opponents of Wilders hope that this trial will make clear where the boundaries of freedom of speech lie.

4.6 Societal and political reactions: Friends & Enemies

With the presentation of the coalition- and the parliamentary support agreement in October 2010, the Netherlands has now for the first time in history a far-right government. Despite Wilders increasing support, he is not everywhere welcomed. Here, based upon statements
given in the media and interviews held with politicians, academics, youth workers and Islamic organizations in Amsterdam,\textsuperscript{12} I will sketch a picture of the national echo created by Wilders political march.

4.6.1 Politicians

In response to the new cabinet formation, several foreign political figures have commented about this development. Remarkable, is that the only strong regional reaction came from Turkey, which is not so surprising since Turkey is a predominant Muslim country.\textsuperscript{13} While there are other regional politicians expressing regret about the formation of a Dutch cabinet coalition with Wilders, they have stated not to take any measures or sanctions against cooperation with the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{14}

The same trend is visible on a national level. Despite certain opposition leaders, such as Alexander Pechtold\textsuperscript{15} and Tofik Dibi (GL)\textsuperscript{16} who openly called Wilders a racist or Egbert Schuurman (CU)\textsuperscript{17} who refused to provide support to the new government in the Dutch Upper House, very few political parties have condemned the new government coalition. As such, there is little principled resistance to the PVV. The racist nature of a party which is now represented in the Dutch cabinet is played down or even denied. The following quotes below by politicians from different political parties illustrate this point;

\textsuperscript{12} For a complete list of the persons interviewed for this thesis please refer to Appendix II
\textsuperscript{13} Burak Özüergin, spokesperson of the Turkish minister Ahmet Davutoğlu of Foreign Affairs, told the General Dutch Press Bureau (ANP) in response to the planned visit of the House of Representatives to Turkey in January 2010 that Wilders is a fascist and a racist and that he is not welcome in Turkey. Turkish media added that in case Wilders will be part of the delegation, all government doors would remain closed (Trouw 2009).
\textsuperscript{14} Jean-Luc Dehaene, Belgium’s former prime minister and member of European parliament, indicated the position of the PVV in the Netherlands as a threat to democracy which warrants close monitoring from the European Union. Also, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel declared that she regretted the formation of a Dutch cabinet coalition with Wilders but will, for now, continue cooperation with the Netherlands (Dutch News 2010).
\textsuperscript{15} Alexander Pechtold described the PVV as an extreme-right and racist formation during the fall congress of D66 in Breda in December 2010 (Algemeen Dagblad 2009).
\textsuperscript{16} Dibi called Wilders in an interview a „racist“ and linked his policies to the idea of the „Übermensch“ within Nazism. Wilders demanded an apology but Dibi refused. (Tofik-Dibi blog)
\textsuperscript{17} According to Schuurman, parties like the PVV are a threat to the Dutch democratic rule of law. Accession to the cabinet might lead to numerous severe and perhaps violent consequences. As such the Christian Union refuses to support the PVV in the Upper House (Schuurman 2010).
Jeroen Dijselbloem (Social Democrats): "I think he's anti-Islam. That would be more precise" (Tyler 2009).

Harry van Bommel (Socialist Party): "At least he uses a form of politics that discriminates between Muslims and non-Muslims. You could call that racism" (Ibid.).

Gerrit Zalm (former minister of finance): “I don’t think that Wilders is a racist. He has extreme statements about Islam and generalizes and tars everybody with the same brush, from extreme to moderate Muslims. I find that fundamentally flawed, but that doesn’t make it racist. He also collaborated with Hirsi Ali, well she was black, if I recall correctly, so that was not the point” (Joop.nl 2010).18

Also the local politicians interviewed in Amsterdam for this thesis did not mention the words racism or extreme-right. They rather spoke about a “conservative trend” or “populism” or “a right-wing colleague”. Although neither of the interviewed politicians supports Wilders in his ideas and actions and expressed their discontent with Wilders increasing popularity and power within parliament, none of them adopted a very strong stance against Wilders.

“Although I am angry about some statements Wilders makes, I am happy that the dissatisfaction among the population, which I have witnessed for years, is finally given a voice by the PVV” (Andries Tijssens, D66, Amsterdam North).19

“The PVV will „rise and fall“. It is not a stable political force. Nevertheless, I am scared what kinds of reactions might come from the society / the impact it will have. Wilders stimulates polarization. Populists make a lot of promises, which they cannot always make true. Eventually, Wilders support will fall” (Kees Diepenveen, GL, Amsterdam North).20

“I am not extremely worried about the PVV. It is unlikely that the PVV will be capable of deporting Muslims en-masse, impose a head-tax, or to establish the Judeo-Christian culture as the dominant culture of the Netherlands. To do so, he will need to change the Dutch constitution, which he can only do if he has an absolute majority in the house of representatives. Which he will never get” (Bob Plantinga, VVD, Amsterdam North).21

Silencing, down-playing or denying the racist nature of Wilders statements doesn’t only happen on the level of politics. Also academics make similar statements. During an interview about the nature of the PVV and its affects upon society with a professor in social and cultural philosophy, the professor remarked that:

18 During the TV show Knevel & Van den Brink, former minister Zalm (VVD) was asked whether he thought the PVV was a racist political party. This because former prime-minister Van Agt had declared so the previous night.
19 Interview Andries Tijssens, Amsterdam, 30-08-2010
20 Interview Kees Diepenveen, Amsterdam, 03-09-2010
21 Interview Bob Plantinga, Amsterdam, 25-08-2010
“Wilders does not openly make any racist remarks. He doesn’t say that Muslims are biologically inferior to Europeans. Therefore, the PVV is not a racist party.” 22

Andreas Kinneging, professor of legal philosophy and Herman van Gunsteren, professor of political theories, both from the University of Leiden made similar remarks (Visscher 2009):

“Pechtold called Wilders a racist. This while a racist is somebody for whom the white race is superior. I have never heard such a sound from Wilders” (Prof. Dr. Andreas Kinneging, legal philosopher).

“Every party can form a threat for the democracy. Let opponents of Wilders come with a substantive answer. If he wants to shoot Moroccan rioters in the knees, do not immediately label him as racist” (Prof. Dr. Herman van Gunsteren, Political Scientist).

These politicians and academics adopt thereby a very outdated view of racism, namely purely on the basis of race or skin color. This definition has been outdated for almost half a century, In 1966, the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination was signed, also by the Netherlands, which adopts the following definition;

“In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” (Article 1, Part 1).

This structural denial and down-playing of racism in the Netherlands is a remarkable phenomenon. In a time in which freedom of speech is celebrated, and everything can be said without „political correctness”, there are very few willing to call Geert Wilders statements what they are: racist. It seems that in the Netherlands the idea surfaces that racist politicians only exist abroad. The Dutch have no problem to convict De Winter and Le Pen for their viewpoints, but seem to have more constraint when it comes to Wilders (Danen 2009).

On March 22, 2008 activists in collaboration with „Nederland Bekent Kleur”23 (the Netherlands acknowledges color), organized a protest against racism in Amsterdam in the

22 Interview Renee Boomkens, Rijks Universiteit Groningen, 06-09-2010.
23 The organization „Nederland bekent kleur” is a national anti-racism organization which is fighting every form of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism or any other sort of discrimination. It is an independent organization, which aims to improve the multicultural society in the Netherlands.
context of the *International Day against Racism* the previous day (Schmits 2008).

Additionally, there was the intention to offer a petition against the “intolerant and discriminatory views of the Freedom Party” to the following members of parliament: Femke Halsema (GL), Sadet Karabulut (SP) and Khadija Arib (PvdA). Despite earlier promises on behalf of the politicians to be present at the manifestation, a few days before the event they jointly cancelled. Their explanation was that the event would be exclusively targeted at Wilders and his film „Fitna” and not against racism in general which is remarkable since the film „Fitna” was never mentioned by the organization (Ibid.). The manifestation received little attention in the media, until suddenly newspaper headlines appeared such as; “*House of Representatives boycotts Nederland Bekent Kleur*” and “*Members of Parliament are not coming.*” So, while the media seemed to have little interest for the protest against discrimination, the politicians who decided not to attend the manifestation were hot news. Despite a few comments – in an interview or in parliament – politicians silenced Wilders racism completely. Karabult commented; “you demonstrate against ideas, not against persons.” and Arib stated that:“Nederland Bekent Kleur is against polarization, but now stimulates polarization itself,” to be continued with “it is about anti-racism, and not about being anti-Wilders (...) We will not participate in this attack” (Folkerts 2008).

That racism is silenced or downplayed in the Netherlands doesn’t mean it is not there. The Commissioner for the Human Rights of the European Council said in March 2010 that he had “serious concerns about the racist and intolerant developments” in the Netherlands. In an earlier report, the Council had already wondered why the PVV was met with so little resistance from other political parties (Danen 2009). Moreover, the Anne Frank Foundation in collaboration with researchers from the University of Leiden concluded in its eight monitor on racism & extremism that the PVV is an extreme right party and that the problem of „Islamophobia” has increased significantly over the past two years. This is, according to the researchers, due to the increasing levels of violence against the Muslim community and more tolerance towards anti-Muslim expressions. Also public opinion about Muslims has become more negative. Further, the extreme-right landscape in the Netherlands would have changed
over the years due to increasing extreme-right street-activism and the way in which the radicalizing PVV has manifested itself (Elsevier 2008). Part of this conclusion is confirmed by a report of the Association of Dutch Municipalities, which concluded that many communities in the Netherlands suffer from extreme right-wing youngsters, more so than from Muslim extremism (Danen 2009). Peculiar, however, is that while Van Donselaar et al. initially characterized the PVV as extreme-right, in the more recent “trend analysis polarization and radicalization” of 2009, Van Donselaar took a step back from this conclusion, according to himself because he didn’t catch the party on anti-Semitism or other neo-Nazi ideas (Het verraad van links 2009).

In conclusion, politicians refuse to acknowledge the growing problem with racism in the country (Danen 2009).24 The clearest example to illustrate this point was Rita Verdonk’s famous speech when she launched her own political party Proud of the Netherlands (ToN). In this speech Verdonk said;

“There are penetrating studies that accuse us of discrimination. The Dutch do not have it in themselves to discriminate!” (Trots op Nederland 2008).

Political Scientist, Rob Witte, comes to a similar conclusion in his book “Al eeuwenlange een gastvrij volk” (for centuries a hospitable peoples) that racist violence has been structurally present in the Netherlands since WWII. However, in the dominant self-image of the Netherlands during the past decades, there was never space for acknowledging the existence of racism. Witte observed that the victims during this period have been different groups of people. First, it were the guest-workers (Italians, Spanish, Turkish and Moroccans), then the asylum-seekers and now the Muslims. Characteristic is that the nature of racist incidents is denied by the government, except when the perpetrators belong to neo-Nazi groups (NRC Handelsblad 2010).

24 One of the prominent political and journalistic web-logs in the Netherlands.
4.6.2 Media

The media plays another significant role in the national echo created by Wilders. The Dutch news monitor conducted a research on how much different media outlets pay attention to Wilders. The monitor concluded that Wilders has a higher news value than any other political party in the Netherlands. The flow of information is fueled by diverse players. A speech or statement by Wilders is followed by a series of reactions from specialists and other politicians. These reactions in turn trigger comments and opinions from citizens on online forums and opinion pages (Schaper, et al. 2010).

The tone of discussions in response to newspaper articles and opinion pieces are often tough, if not hateful and offensive. Ewoud Butter25 chief editor of www.republiekallochtonie.nl, a website monitoring information flows pertaining to the integration of non-Western migrants and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands remarked that; “if the content is not moderated things get easily out of hand.”26 Despite the abundance of extreme language use on the internet, there are plenty of websites of which the content is not moderated. Both youth with extreme-right attitudes and ultra-orthodox Muslims often do not meet a counter voice.

When looking at the way in which is being reported about Wilders, it is noteworthy to mention that foreign media have regularly characterized the PVV as “far-right” or “right-extremist.” The Dutch media on the other hand seems to have much more difficulties with labeling Wilders as extreme right and racist (Danen 2009). Even though they are generally critical about Wilders, they rather speak about the PVV as the “new-right radical” or “populist” or “anti-immigrant” and about Wilders as an “Islam critic”, a “media maven”, a “fanatic” and as a “right colleague”. While Fortuyn was often compared with extreme-right colleagues and extreme right figures from the WWII such as Mussolini and Hitler, thereby emphasizing the reprehensive nature of his views, Wilders is compared with far less extreme

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25 Ewoud Butter is besides free-lance writer, the editor in chief of the web-log www.republiekallochtonie.nl which hosts articles, opinion pieces and background articles on the integration of non-Western immigrants and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. Moreover, he is working as a policy employee at ACB Kenniscentrum (ACB Knowledge Centre), which does research, develops projects and gives advice on the broad domain of diversity and integration.

26 Interview Ewoud Butter, Amsterdam, 9-10-2010
colleagues. Regardless of comparisons with extremists such as Fortuyn and Vlaams Belang, Wilders is also put in line with somewhat moderate politicians such as Rutte, Marijnissen and Kant. By comparing Wilders with these „common” politicians, his extremism is reduced. In this respect, the media helps to normalize his views by associating him with more mainstream leaders. An explanation for this might be the critique the media received after the murder of Fortuyn. The media would have demonized Fortuyn and incited hatred against him, thereby invoking the murder. In order not to be accused of something like that again, the media is critical about Wilders, but no longer by comparing him to right-wing extremists from WWII (Vlielander 2009, 64).

4.6.3 Muslim organizations

While there have been multiple researches regarding the discontent among the Dutch public with the multicultural society (who votes for the PVV and why) there has been very little written, both academically as well as by the media about the experiences of Muslims with the increasing power of the PVV and their reaction to the new government coalition. The little press coverage that there is suggests that there is either a very mild response (the Muslims do not have a strong opinion on the matter) or that the press is more interested in discussing other aspects of the commotion surrounding the new government coalition thereby ignoring the Muslim voice. Here based upon the statements by Muslim representatives found in the press and interviews held with Islamic organizations in Amsterdam, I will give a brief overview of the general opinion prevalent among the Islamic organizations.

All organizations and representatives that have expressed an opinion on the matter stated to be worried about the new coalition agreement. The general fear is that it might lead to government policies based upon stigmatization, unequal treatment and discrimination of Muslims. The “Contact Orgaan Moslims Overheid” (Muslim Government Liaison) stated that the ban on wearing headscarf’s among police officers and judicial workers is at odds with the

27 The leading extreme-right political party in Belgium
right of religious freedom (NOS Nieuws 2010). According to Article No. 1 and 6 of the Dutch constitution:

“All persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race, or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted” (Article 1 on equality, Dutch Constitution).

“Everyone shall have the right to manifest freely his religion or belief, either individually or in community with others, without prejudice to his responsibility under the law” (Article 6 on religion / belief, Dutch constitution).

According to Abdou Menebhi, Chair of the Dutch-Moroccan Network, such developments can only lead to dislocation of Dutch society and increasing tensions between communities. Giving space for the deterioration of the basic principles of the constitutional state equals legitimizing that part of the Dutch population is treated as second class citizens. In terms of civilization it is a relapse to the time of slavery and apartheid (Republiek Allochtonie 2010a).

The representatives of the As-Souannah Mosque in The Hague reaffirmed Abdou Menebhi’s fear of increasing ethnic tensions. The Sheikhs declared that the PVV”s aim of making the Netherlands „more Dutch” will impede on the process of building a peaceful mutual future between Muslims and non-Muslims. An open anti-Islam policy will according to them cause exactly what the PVV fears the most; it will lead to more hatred, fear and violence (Forum Islam City 2010). Further, it emphasized that demanding a one-way adaption of Muslims to the Dutch culture, norms and values will not lead to anything.

In addition, the organizations seem to be particularly unsatisfied with the coalition construction. Yasmine El Ksaihi, Chair of the Polder Mosque in Amsterdam West, explains that in case Wilders would have been officially part of the Dutch cabinet, he would have been forced to abide by the parliamentary rules of conduct with regard to his statements on Islam and as such forced into a more moderate standpoint regarding immigration and integration. But with the construction of providing parliamentary support without actually being part of

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28 The “Nederland’s Marokkaans Netwerk” (Dutch-Moroccan Network), is an umbrella organization consisting of 25 Islamic organizations throughout the country.

29 Sheikh Fawaz Jneid (head Da”vah commission), Abdullhamid Taheri (Chair As-Souannah Foundation), Aboe Ismail (Head Dutch Da”vah commission As-Soennah) and Drs. Abdurrahmaan Kat (Chair advise commity As-Soennah)
the cabinet, he does have a say in government policy but remains free to say whatever he wants. 30 Halim El Madkouri, program manager at FORUM (institute for Multicultural issues) adds that this gives the PVV relatively a lot of power. 31

Blame is not only put on the PVV. Muslims also feel abandoned by the CDA, VVD, as well as other political parties. Initially many thought that Wilders was just one person with crazy ideas; an exception from the mainstream. However, the coalition illustrates that the CDA and VVD are willing to collaborate with the PVV and that other political parties, except for a few individuals, agree to this. The lack of political support for the position of minorities, and in specific Muslims, has lead to a general feeling of disappointment. 32 The HTIB (Turkish Workers Association), a non-profit organization that strives to improve the positions of Turkish-Dutch citizens, explained the consequences of the coalition CDA-VVD with PVV support for the Muslims as follows; While the PVV initially adopted rather leftist stances with regard to government cuts, the CDA and VVD advocate more far-reaching cuts which has been translated in the coalition agreement. The PVV’s concessions for cuts in social service will give it in turn free rein to blame Muslims of social problems (Republiek Allochtonie 2010). With this construction the PVV will thus keep its freedom to continue blaming the Muslim community for all the problems in society (Ibid.).

4.6.4 Anti-Racism Organizations and Anti-Wilders Initiatives

Another prominent response comes from anti-racism and anti-Wilders organizations that have sprung up over the years. These organizations are dedicated to spread an anti-Wilders and pro-tolerance and pro-multiculturalism message. Besides ”Nederland Bekent Kleur” (discussed previously) there is the “Platform tegen Vreemdelingenhaat” (Platform against Xenophobia), an umbrella for diverse migrant and anti-racism organization who share a concern about the decreasing level of tolerance in the country with the emergence of Wilders. 33 Amongst its initiatives was an anti-Wilders demonstration held in Amsterdam on 30 October, 2010 in

30 Interview Yassmine El Ksaihi, The Polder Mosque, Amsterdam, 11-10-2010
31 Interview Halim El Madkouri, Utrecht, 24-08-2010
32 Interview Yassmine El Ksaihi, The Polder Mosque, Amsterdam, 11-10-2010
33 www.platformtegenvreemdelingenhaat.nl
response to a homage attributed to Wilders from the extreme-right members of the English defense league (Ibid.). Another similar initiative is: “Wilders sluit ook jou uit!” (Wilders also excludes you!). This initiative consists of a group of prominent Dutch public figures which aim to challenge the racist character of the PVV and advocated for a strong counter voice against racism and social exclusion.\textsuperscript{34} Also anti-Wilders topics on online forums have sprung up for everybody who doesn’t agree with Wilders ideas. For a list of anti-Wilders initiatives please refer to Appendix III. Many of these initiatives have an activist character. For example, on the website of the Anti Fascist Action one can order posters and stickers that read: “Wie laat zichzelf leiden door een clown?” (Who lets himself lead by a clown?) to be distributed in public spaces.\textsuperscript{35} Further, they have organized several protests and demonstrations against Wilders.

\textbf{4.7 Conclusion}

From the overview of Wilders political career, we can conclude that over the years Wilders critiques upon Islam and especially upon Muslims as a population have radicalized. This trend coincides with his increasing popularity among the Dutch population. In the opinion polls held one month after the elections, the party stood even at 33 seats (Algemeen Dagblad 2010). And in December 2010, Wilders has been nominated best politician of the year 2010 by the Dutch public. In the yearly elections of EenVandaag [Dutch news and actuality program] Wilders received 17, 5\% of the votes (EenVandaag 2010a). It appears that the more critical Wilders is of Muslims, the more popular he becomes.

A large scale neo-conservative transformation is occurring in Dutch politics and society: racism and discrimination are increasingly being tolerated. The discussion in the Netherlands about political correctness has caused the boundaries of freedom of speech to collapse. Everything can and should be said, even if it is hurtful. With Fortuyn and Geert Wilders it has become politically correct not to be politically correct, and offending people has

\textsuperscript{34} www.wilderssluitjouuit.nl
\textsuperscript{35} http://www.afanederland.org/
become the norm. Politically incorrect statements deserve recognition now for civil courage, especially when made under death threats one is easily entitled a heroes status. Thus far, political correctness had kept the lit of racism and discrimination down. However, with extreme right-wing populist politicians such as Wilders, who take great advantage of the situation that saying whatever you think has become a virtue, anti-immigrant sentiment came to the fore. In that sense, Wilders is right. A large part of the Dutch population prefers an ethnic homogenous country.

Remarkable is that although the concept of political correctness has ended when it comes to talking about issues related to immigration and integration, when the discussion is about the racist nature of the PVV it seems as if political correctness is still in place. Barely anybody has the moral fiber to say that Wilders is a racist. Therefore, perhaps political correctness did not completely disappear, but rather changed its position. Renee Danen, chair of the anti-discrimination organization “The Netherlands acknowledges color” states that labeling the PVV as racist, or acknowledging racism in general, is a new taboo in the Netherlands since a couple of years (Danen 2009). The fact that there are barely any studies or scientific articles calling the PVV racist or extreme-right is indicative for this trend.

Despite criticism here and there, politicians have generally silenced, down-played or ignored the racist nature of the PVV under the banner of „freedom of speech” and continued collaboration with the party. This suggests that the PVV is seen as a regular political party which abides by the democratic principles of the Dutch constitution and the European Convention on Human rights, and is as such protected by the Dutch government. The media, while being critical, stays away like the politicians of condemning Wilders as „extreme-right” or „racist”. Wilders is never compared to extreme-right figures from WWII, as they used to do with Fortuyn, thereby condoning his racist statements.

The Dutch people voting for the PVV do not necessarily have racist motives to do so. There are many other reasons: safeguarding social security; a tougher approach to criminality; as a protest voice against the political establishment; or as dissent against the famous „Polder model”, making compromises, rules and bureaucracy. Many of the PVV-voters are not
convinced racists. But, they are people who do not find Wilders convinced racism an insurmountable problem. They might not have so much problems with Muslims themselves, but at the same time they are not so much bothered that somebody else talks Islamophobic hate speech on their behalf. Not only virulent racism, but especially also the banal, unconvinced racism should worry us. Because the last is what characterizes Wilders constituency. Also those who say they have nothing against Muslim but just want descent elderly care. Their racism is not worrisome, but the fact that they do not have a problem with Wilders racism is. Especially these people are dangerous because they make the PVV large.

There are not so many convinced racists. But there are plenty of banal racists, who do not worry so much about others being racists. Such racism can easily lead to virulent racism, even though in a civilized country this might take a couple of decades. Hitler took more than twenty years. As a politician, you do not need to do much to escalate ethnic tensions. A modest inflammatory mechanism is adequate since there is more than enough combustible material. Now the politeness is gone, the true feelings of politicians, media and citizens are revealed. Wilders racism is accepted by the mainstream political parties and anti-Muslim feelings are present among the population.

While anti-immigrant sentiment had already been bubbling underneath the layer of multiculturalism and politeness it has only come to the surface with Fortuyn and continues to become louder with Wilders. But, while Wilders electoral support is growing, so too is the opposition to his views. Civil society – anti-racism organizations, anti Wilders initiatives and a number of individual social scientists, journalists and opinion leaders – are more and more forcefully expressing their opposition to the PVV. Unfortunately, their voice within the national echo created with Wilders political rise has so far remained marginal. With a marginal opposition, nobody seems to be able to stop the Netherlands from becoming a racist country.

The voice of the Muslim community, around which the entire debate is focused, has been largely ignored or underrepresented. Despite a few press releases, there has been little attention for their opinions and concerns by the media. Therefore, in chapter 4, through a case-
study among Muslim youth in Amsterdam I will look at how the Muslim youth in Amsterdam experience the increasing popularity of Wilders, the impact it has upon their personal lives and their sense of belonging to the country.
V

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PVV: AN IMMIGRANT PERSPECTIVE

From the previous chapter we can conclude that the PVV adopts firm stances against Islam. With its parliamentary victory last June, the PVV now has a significant say in generating government policies affecting the rights, position and status of Muslims. Numerous actors in civil society have voiced their concern regarding this development for the Dutch Muslim population. However, the voice of the common Muslim citizen remained largely unheard.

Do Muslims still feel at home in the Netherlands? How do they handle living in an environment that is increasingly anti-Islamic? Do they face more discrimination with the increasing popularity of the PVV? What are their concerns? How do they see their future? What are the implications of emphasizing the Dutch national identity as „Christian and white” in political discourse for the identification of Muslims with the Netherlands? Are Geert Wilders” arguments for an unequal treatment of Islam and exclusion of Muslims from Dutch society likely to stimulate hate, fear and distrust among the Muslims against the Dutch population and hence increase polarization? Who do the Muslims see as responsible for the increasing Islamophobic discourse, and if they were the Dutch head of state, what would they like to change in the country?

These are important questions that so far have remained unanswered. Through a case-study based upon surveys, interviews and focus-groups, I have tried to find answers to the above posed questions. In this chapter, I will discuss the results of the case-study. But before doing so, I will first briefly describe the geographical area of the study, the research sample, the process of recruiting respondents and the methodology used.

5.1 Muslims in Amsterdam

The research for this case-study was conducted in Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands. While Muslims live in many Dutch cities, nationwide, the majority of them live in
Amsterdam, which made this city a logical choice to conduct my fieldwork. The current
ethnic composition of Amsterdam’s population is shown in the Table below.

### Table 3. Composition of Amsterdam population, by native and largest ethnic groups, 2007–2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Number of persons 2007</th>
<th>Number of persons 2008</th>
<th>% 2008</th>
<th>1st generation 2008</th>
<th>2nd generation 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>382,104</td>
<td>381,374</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>40,218</td>
<td>28,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>68,878</td>
<td>68,813</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>34,390</td>
<td>32,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>66,256</td>
<td>67,153</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21,523</td>
<td>17,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>38,565</td>
<td>38,913</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11,290</td>
<td>11,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>11,290</td>
<td>11,440</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7,017</td>
<td>4,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-Western</td>
<td>71,269</td>
<td>72,175</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>48,470</td>
<td>23,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westerners</td>
<td>104,742</td>
<td>107,422</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>57,963</td>
<td>49,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>743,104</td>
<td>747,290</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>209,581</td>
<td>156,335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek (O+S) Amsterdam, 16 April 2009*

The percentage of Dutch stood at 51% as at January 1st, 2008. The remaining half of the
population is a mix of Western (14%) and non-Western citizens (35%). Of the non-Western
citizens, 58% are 1st generation and 42% are 2nd generation immigrants (Eurofound 2009, 12).
While the Surinamese continue to form the largest ethnic community in the Netherlands
(68,313 persons) the Moroccan group keeps expanding and has almost reached a similar
number (67,153 persons). As such, they are expected to form the largest ethnic community in
the future (Ibid.).

The Muslim community in Amsterdam makes up approximately 12% of the
population (90,000 people) in 2008 (At home in Europe project 2010, 19). Most of them have
a Turkish or Moroccan background. Others are from Surinamese, Egyptian, Iranian, Iraqi and
Pakistani descent. The Muslim population in Amsterdam is relatively young. According to the
data of O+S, approximately two-third of the Muslims living in Amsterdam is younger than 35
years old (Balagobind 2008, 28). A little more than 50% are first-generation immigrants, and a
little less than 50% belong to the second generation (At home in Europe project 2010, 19).
Some Muslims are highly educated, and some lack any qualifications. Their incomes vary
between minimum wages to wealthy two-income families. Also, the role that Islam plays in
the lives and identities differs. The Muslim population in Amsterdam thus cannot be seen as a
homogeneous group with a shared social background, ethnicity and culture (Ibid.).

5.2 Research sample
Wilders often targets Moroccans specifically as the evil-doer in society. But overall, he criticizes Islam as a religion and not a specific ethnic group. Therefore, Muslims from different ethnic backgrounds, levels of education, lifestyles and religious views were included in this study in order to provide a good representation of the diverse social-cultural society in Amsterdam. I have chosen to focus upon Muslim youth as they generally are either born in the Netherlands or grew up there. As such, they are likely to hold a different perspective upon the exclusionary practices of the PVV as their parents or grandparents who came to the Netherlands at a later age and hold stronger ties with their mother countries. While Muslims are mainly concentrated in the Western part of the city (see figure 1), they are present in almost every neighborhood though in more limited numbers.

Figure 1: Muslims in Amsterdam according to neighborhood. CBS (percentages, 2006)

As opinions and experiences of Muslims living in predominant Muslim neighborhoods might differ from those living in more mixed or pre-dominantly white neighborhoods, this study has tried to include Muslims from all city districts. Inclusion into the research sample is thus
based upon (a) belonging to the Islamic faith; (b) having Dutch citizenship; (c) within the age range of 15-35 years and (d) living in Amsterdam.

5.3 Case-study approach

The case-study began with 20 semi-structured interviews36 in order to explore the feelings, opinions, experiences and attitudes among Muslim youth in Amsterdam. The participants of the in-depth interviews were mainly recruited during events organized by mosques and Muslim organizations (such as debate nights and Iftar gatherings during the month of Ramadan). During a debate organized by the Councils of Mosques North Netherlands (Raad van Moskeeën Noord-Nederland) in Amsterdam West, I made contact with an Egyptian youth Imam. After I informed him that I was doing my research for the American University in Cairo, he saw me as a sort of compatriot with which he could discuss recent developments with regard to the status of Muslims in Europe and stated to be willing to help me in my search for participants. This Imam has played a crucial role in this research as he has provided for many respondents through his professional and personal network.

The majority of the respondents had a Moroccan background (11). The remaining participants were Turkish (4), Egyptian (1), Lebanese (1), Surinamese (1), Antillean (1) and Yugoslavian (1). This group consisted of 12 men and 8 women. Most of the interviews lasted in length between 30 minutes to one hour and were held face-to-face in a neutral setting such as a café. In some cases, upon request of the participants, interviews were conducted per telephone. The interviews were semi-structured37 as I was not just interested in facts but more in ideas, experiences and opinions of the respondents. The aim was not so much about providing for an objective analysis of factual events / happenings as a result of Wilders political rise, but more about the subjective meaning of these events and feelings of the respondents. Table 4 gives an overview of the interviewees and their demographic attributes.

36 For an overview of the topics discussed during the interviews please refer to Appendix VI
37 Semi-structured interviews are interviews in which questions and answers are not strictly predetermined but topics are set.
Table 4. Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resp. No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic origin</th>
<th>Born in the Netherlands</th>
<th>Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Moheb</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>WO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fouzia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>WO</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ahmad</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hakan</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Messud</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Otmani</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Amnas</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jamila</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Soumeya</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mohammed A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>VMBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Khalid A</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>VMBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Rashid A</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yasmine</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Amina</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>MBO</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>HBO</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</table>

M: Moroccan, T: Turkish, C: Croatian, S: Surinamese, E: Egyptian, L: Lebanese

Further, two focus groups were held in order to explore some issues that came forward as salient during the interviews more in more detail. The first group discussion consisted of 5 persons (all Moroccan) and was held in Moroccan youth center Argan in Amsterdam (table 5). The second focus group consisted of 10 persons (all Moroccan and 1 Surinamese) and was held in youth center Le Papillon in The Hague (table 6). The participants of the focus groups varied in age between 20 and 34 years old. The focus group in The Hague served as a control sample with the independent variable being the inclusion of the PVV within the municipal council. The aim of the control sample was to see whether the partaking of the PVV in the municipal council had an effect upon the way Muslim youth experience the impact of the PVV upon their lives. Since there were no significant differences in the opinions and experiences of the participants from the focus group in The Hague compared to the discussion group in Amsterdam, the findings of this group discussion will be reported together with the findings from the focus group in Amsterdam.

38 For an overview of the focus-group topics please refer to Appendix V
Table 5. Respondents Focus-group 1, Moroccan Youth Centre “Argan” Amsterdam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resp. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
<th>Born in the Netherlands</th>
<th>Job</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hasna</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>WO</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Imad</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>HBO</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tofik</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mohammad</td>
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<td>M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Respondents Focus-group 2: Le Pupillion, Cultural Berber Center, The Hague

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resp. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
<th>Born in the Netherlands</th>
<th>Job</th>
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<tr>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MBO</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ibrahim</td>
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<td>HBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mohammed C</td>
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<tr>
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<td>MBO</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M: Moroccan, S: Surinamese

In order to triangulate the research findings to ensure the highest attainable accuracy and credibility of the information gathered an additional survey with closed questions was carried out during the first two weeks of October 2010. Initially, the survey was send online on a random basis to Muslim youth under the age of 35 in Amsterdam through the network of a number of key institutions and figures (the Polder Mosque, Youth Center Argan in Amsterdam West and a number of youth leaders from diverse projects). Due to a limited number of responses, the rest of the respondents were recruited on the street, café’s, and parks in diverse neighborhoods. The target of recruiting a minimum of 10 respondents in each city district was reached.\(^\text{39}\) In total, 100 respondents between the age of 17 and 30 years participated in the survey (37 women, 61 men). The respondents represent diverse ethnic origins, however the vast majority belonged to a Moroccan (50%) or a Turkish (26%) background.\(^\text{40}\) The remaining respondents were from Dutch (6) Surinamese (2), Egyptian (8), Hindustani (2), Tunisian (2), Lebanese (1), or Eritrean (1) descent. Besides differences in age

\(^{39}\) Appendix III, Question 1
\(^{40}\) Appendix III, Question 1
and neighborhood, the respondents also showed a diverse picture in terms of educational background ranging from university degrees to general secondary education. From the 100 respondents, 10 are unemployed, 23 are students and the remaining 85 respondents work in different fields.

As noted previously in chapter 1, this research explores politically sensitive issues in which human subjects are involved. To safeguard the confidentiality of participants all names have been changed. Aggregated data such as statistics and personal opinions through interviews and focus groups by itself do not permit the identification of the participants and is therefore reported factually. The case-study overall produced a tremendous amount of data. In analyzing the data, the conclusions of the literature review served as criteria against which the data gathered in the field were measured and linked (Yin 2009). Through pattern-matching, I determined whether similar patterns within the literature and in the field did or did not occur. Naturally, with the analysis of the information obtained, much of the data has been omitted due to spatial limitations leading to a simplification of the respondent’s stories (Ibid.). Therefore, the presentation of this case-study should be seen as the construction of data around issues that I have judged to be important. This means that no matter how precise I try to be in this endeavor, I cannot and will not be completely objective, nor can I make all the judgment calls I have made, easily transparent. Nevertheless, I will try to present ample evidence to support my arguments well.

It has to be noted that based upon this case study it is not possible to make generalizations for the entire Muslim community in Amsterdam or the Netherlands. As the research sample is small, idiosyncratic and the data collected for a large part non-numerical, it is impossible to establish the probability of which the results are representative of the larger population. Therefore, the aim of this study is rather to point attention to and to suggest possible links between the PVV’s politics of identification and the effect upon the lives of Muslim youth living in Amsterdam.

41 Appendix III, Question 1.
Moroccan Youth Center “Argan” at the Overtoom in Amsterdam West

The Polder Mosque in Amsterdam Slotervaart
5.4 Results from the case-study

The data gathered from the interviews, focus-groups and surveys will be discussed in three parts (I) A picture of respondent’s experiences in relation the political rise of the PVV, its effect upon the inter-ethnic relations and feeling of belonging in Amsterdam; (II) A description of what the participants view as the causes of possible negative experiences and (III) An overview of the participant’s desires in terms of the nature and character of Dutch society in the form of recommendations.

I. experiences of Muslims in the context of Wilders increasing powers

Muslims on Wilders

Despite the different research methods employed, and despite the different ethnic, social, and religious backgrounds of the participants in the case-study, there were significant similarities in their responses. Their reactions to Wilders came forward during the interviews and discussion groups in expected and unexpected moments and in varying intensity. The higher educated Muslims generally used more text and were a bit more nuanced in their view points than the lesser educated Muslims in explaining their opinions. The latter, often doubt their knowledge about the politician and are not quite sure about what they think. Those, who classified themselves as „devout Muslims” generally had more problems with Wilders attacks upon Islam than upon specific ethnic groups, while those who classified themselves as „liberal” did not make this specific distinction.

But overall, there was a strong unanimous negative reaction to Wilders and his politics. Wilders emphasis on the native-Dutch and their supposed higher moral order is enormously insulting to Muslims. The experienced injustice channels into a collective anger focused upon Geert Wilders. From the survey sample, in response to Wilders statements on Islam and Muslims, 57 % felt insulted, 43 % felt discriminated and 50% said to be angry. 42 The statements given during the interviews and focus-group discussions give a similar picture.

42 Appendix IIII, Question 2
The higher educated Muslims react predominantly edgy to Wilders. Naomi: “Wilders is always negative about Muslims, and sometimes he is bluntly racist” Hasna agrees; “Wilders is not a good person,” and Fouzia: “Wilders makes use of Islam for his own political career.” Ahlem says therefore; “I do not have anything positive to say about this man.” And Ibrahim wonders: “I understand Wilders tries to address certain problems prevalent in society, but why does he have to blame the Muslims for that?” And Abdel: “Wilders has created a very bad image of Muslims in the media.” Tofik summarizes; “He creates stereotypes about Muslims.” Also Khalissa is annoyed; “Wilders tarts all Muslims with the same brush.” Annas feels underappreciated; “Wilders statements are denigrating. It makes me feel like a second-class citizen. Like I am less valuable.” For Rashid Wilders is “a radical politician.” Mohammed C. and Soumeya agree; “It is allowed to express your opinion, but Wilders misuses his rights as a politician. It is a one-way conversation. He avoids debates.”

The lower educated Muslims are also upset. For Hakan it is clear: “Wilders has definitely something against Islam and Moroccans.” Messud: “As if he wants to through them out of the country.” Rashid B. clarifies: “He is on a cold war against Islam and wants less Muslims in the Netherlands.” Khalid A. is also annoyed; “It is very bad what Wilders says about Muslims and his ,head-rag”tax”. He should not be allowed to govern the country.” For Ismael Wilders is unfair: “According to Wilders, Moroccan youth are criminal. Why does he only point to the Moroccans? There is crime everywhere!” Khalid B. clarifies; “Wilders is not objective” and Mohammed B. adds; “He wants to shock people with his statements in order to maintain his dominant position.” Otmani; “Wilders is a hate-full person. The comments he makes about Islam incites hatred against Muslims.” And Kemal; “His opinion is wrong. There are also good Moroccans.” Mohammed A, Amina, Kemal and Rashid were furious. Mohammed yells; “He is a sick person who needs to be thrown out of the country!” Rashid A. agrees; “If I see Wilders in person, I will spit him in his face.” And Amina: “I want to puke when I see Wilders on TV with his fake blond hair. He is so hypocrite; while he wants to exile all Muslims, he grew up in Indonesia himself, which is also a Muslim country!” Kemal explains; “We do not easily hate somebody, but Wilders is someone we really hate.”
The devout Muslims, Moheb, Ahmed and Mohammed A, are mainly upset by Wilders attacks upon Islam as a religion. Mohammed; “It hurts when Wilders speaks bad about the prophet, but he will be punished for that because also he is a creature of Allah.” And Ahmed “Wilders always blames Islam and not the people. There is a difference between the religion and how people behave. Wilders doesn’t make any distinction between that.” And Moheb: “When Wilders speaks about certain ethnic groups (i.e. Moroccans) I don’t care so much, but when he speaks about the religion, it becomes very unpleasant.”

While the Muslims react differently to Wilders, the vast majority is critical to very negative. The most widely heard accusation during the interviews and focus-group discussions is that Wilders tries to make Islam look bad and Muslims as second-class citizens. That Wilders sees all Muslims alike, forms a second major frustration. With that Wilders does not acknowledge the great diversity existing within the Muslim community and ignores the differences in ethnic and cultural backgrounds, education and ways of life, which the Muslims experience as unfair. With the assumption that Wilders power is increasing, their sense of being underappreciated in Dutch society grows. While the Muslims do not have equal means to embark upon a strong opposition, the released dissatisfaction fuels in a high degree their collective sentiments.

At the same time, during the interviews and focus groups many participants stated that they got used to the insulting and shocking speeches of Wilders (and before that Hirsi Ali and Fortuyn) and hence became indifferent to whatever Wilders says. Jamilla: “In the beginning it was shocking, but now I don’t care so much anymore.” Also some participants in the focus groups made similar remarks. Mohammed B; “In beginning Wilders was very shocking for the Islamic community in the Netherlands. To be attacked by a person who was not well known at all was very confronting. But if you keep hearing the same insults over and over again, at a certain point it stops hurting.” And Abdelmalik: “I don’t care about Wilders. He is a populist. He plays in to the ego of the Dutch by saying such bad things about Islam.” Also Ilham thinks Wilders is not worth her attention; “I never really listened to him. I don’t know exactly what he says. His opinion is not important for me.” And Ismael: “I see him as a
disturbed person; I don’t give him any attention.” From the survey sample, 9 % said they got used to Wilders insults and 11 % said to be indifferent.43

Some Muslims didn’t want to participate in this research for that reason. Others agreed as a favor to the researcher. One girl, half-way through the interview stated to be not interested in the topic at all and did not want to continue the discussion any further. They are not very interested in debates and discussion on the internet, in the mosque, at school or at work, and often skip newspaper articles or switch off the TV when it is about Wilders. Ignoring Wilders, serves as a pleasant way of control over a situation of inequality. At the same time they suppress their violent anger towards Wilders, for the benefit of themselves, their family and social group. With this technique of self-control, anger turns into restrained indignation (Van Tilborgh 2006, 198). Nevertheless, many stated that their interest is being aroused again due to the possibility that Wilders might provide parliamentary support for the new government, which is a totally new development in Wilders war on Islam.

Muslims about the Elections & cabinet formation

At the time the research was conducted, the cabinet formation was still ongoing. While there were speculations about a minority cabinet with support of the PVV, this was not made official until after the interview period had ended. Overall, the majority of the Muslims that I spoke seemed to be sincerely concerned about their future and the future of the Netherlands. What will Geert Wilders do? Can I be evicted with my two passports? Do I need to take off my veil? Is the Netherlands still a safe place for Muslims? Will the Quran become a forbidden book? Is the mosque allowed to stay open? Do we have to emigrate? And, what will happen now?

Most of all, the participants are worried about Wilders effect upon the social climate in the country and the way in which the rest of the population will think about and treat Muslims. Many fear that xenophobia and in particular Islamophobia will increase. For example Amina, a 22-year old mother who works in a hair-salon: “When somebody keeps

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43 Appendix III, Question 2
saying he doesn’t want you here, that you have to leave, then you start worrying whether the rest of the population also thinks like that.” Ali emphasizes the devastating effect of Wilders high rate of appearance in the media: “There are a lot of places where people do not like Muslims. That has to do with figures such as Wilders and the media who distribute this to parts in the country where people do not have personal experiences and base their ideas solely upon what they hear from others.” Also Kemal is worried that Wilders appeals through the media will affect the way in which people will think about and treat Muslims: “If people continue to hear Wilders speak about terrorism in the name of Islam repeatedly for a long time then people will draw the conclusion that being Muslim equals terrorism. This will not be beneficial for the atmosphere in the country.” Ahmed, Khalissa, Soumeya, Naomi, Rashid, Messud, Ahlam, Ibrahim, Tofik, Mohammed C., Ismael and Abdel all made similar statements. From this it can be concluded that Muslims attach great value to the way in which non-Muslims think about Muslims.

On the second place, the interviewees and focus-group participants are worried about what Wilders might be able to change in terms of freedom of religion and the equality principle. Hasna: “Now Wilders, only” provides parliamentary support, but perhaps in the future he might become the largest political party in the Netherlands.” And Khalissa; “Wilders is scary. The last thing I want to do is compare Wilders with Hitler, but Hitler adopted the same strategy as Wilders does now. Standing up at the right time and say what the population wants to hear. We have an economic crisis, high unemployment, and high rates of criminality. Wilders singles out one group which he blames for all problems in society. Who knows how this will end.”

A number of participants pointed out the Dutch and European laws and regulations as a boundary which Wilders cannot cross. Mohammed; “What can he do? Close the borders? He can’t. The Netherlands is part of the EU. There are a lot of laws and regulations. Abdel; “You cannot just change the laws in the Netherlands.” And Imad: “He cannot introduce the extreme measures he wants. The other political parties abide by freedom of religion.” And Zakariya; “The constitution will not change but in real life situations, xenophobia will
increase.” And Ali: “I am not so worried that legally speaking a lot will change. The only thing that can change is how people address you or treat you when walking on the street.” The rest of the participants are not as sure as Mohammed, Imad, Abdel, Zakariyya and Ali. They argued that it is hard to predict what will happen. Not only the Netherlands, but many other European countries have drastically changed their immigration and integration policies over the last decades. For example Hasna: “I also didn’t expect Sarkozy to be able to introduce a ban on the Niqab in France. Wilders will get a position in which he can change things. You don’t know his strategy.” And Tofik: “What was thought impossible a couple of years ago is now widely expected.” And Moheb: “I don’t think that Wilders can change anything. Unless we go back to the question which of the other political parties has a heart for the cause of Muslims. Are they only being hypocritical in order to gain votes and then later on agree with Wilders? Then we now that their intentions are not pure.” Those who attend an education point out the effects of the previously discussed problems upon finding an internship or a job. Especially, the female interviewees who wear a veil are concerned about their prospects of finding a job or internship.

The results from the survey show a similar conclusion. Approximately 2/3 of the respondents experience the increasing popularity of Wilders as a frightening thought. Most of all they fear that the PVV incites hatred and racism against Muslims (77%) and that an increasing part of the population develops feelings hostile towards Islam and Muslims (61%). In the first place, they thus seem to fear for their position in society. On the second place, they are concerned about the position of their religion. Almost half of the respondents said to be scared to lose the right to freely practice their religion or some of their rights as an ethnic minority. The possibility that they will be forced to give up their cultural identities, stricter immigration policies or the physical presence of extreme right-wing youth on the street comes last.  

Moreover, the interviewees and focus-group participants collectively expressed their disappointment in the Dutch population while simultaneously ventilating criticism upon their

44 See Appendix III, Question 4
own community. Naomi: “If you see that the PVV during the elections became the big winner and that so many people voted for him, is painful. It hurts that he gets so much support from the population.” and Tofik: “The fact that the Dutch population does not stand up for us like a couple of years ago hurts me more than Wilders insults.” Mohammed is more disappointed in the Dutch government; “Balkenende didn’t have the balls to take stance against Wilders such as Angela Merkel did. I have the feeling that we can only get a counter movement, once the government openly brands Wilders as a fascist or a racist, which for now they don’t.”

Also from the survey-sample more than half (57%) expressed their discontent with the way other political parties react to Wilders inclusion in parliament and 31% is only satisfied with a number of individual politicians in their reaction to Wilders. Overall, the Muslims feel abandoned by the population and the government who protect the PVV and principally offer too little resistance against Wilders’ war against Islam.

Surprising is that while a significant number of the participants said to be disappointed in the Dutch population for voting for the PVV, they nevertheless expressed understanding for their voting behavior. From the survey sample, this was 50%. From the interviews and focus-groups it can be concluded that those who said so, all referred to Wilders socio-economic standpoints and not about his views on immigration and integration. For example Khalissa: “Perhaps I would have voted for the PVV myself, if I wasn’t Moroccan. So much money gets lost in subsidies and integration projects. I work very hard and paying such high taxes is not stimulating. Therefore I can understand that people want to change this.”

And Anna; “If Wilders would not speak in such a bad way about Islam, the PVV would actually be a good opposition party to the established political elite”.

Further, about 2/3 of the interviewees and focus-group participants, especially the higher educated Muslims, agreed with Wilders critique upon Muslims on some accounts. The most frequently mentioned example is the high rate of criminality among Moroccan youth. All interviewees agree that this is a fact and that it is just as unpleasant for them as for the

45 See Appendix III, Question 5
46 See Appendix III, Question 3
native-Dutch. However, many of them have the feeling that the group of youth resorting to criminal behavior is small, but that it has a large impact upon the entire Muslim community. There exists a general feeling of either being held accountable for their behavior, or being compared to such thugs. Hasna; “The higher educated, well integrated and socially active Muslims keep trying not to be associated with this group. However, in the media and politics, we keep being viewed as one coherent group. As a result, also the well integrated Muslims are structurally discriminated.”

A point on which the opinions differed greatly concerns the question of how the Muslim community should handle the phenomenon Geert Wilders. Most of the interviewees seem to think it is best to ignore Wilders completely. It is reasoned that by giving him attention, and specifically by reacting aggressively towards his statements and proposals, Muslims fuel Wilders support. Hence, his increasing popularity will be to blame upon the Muslims. At the other end, a significant number of the interviewees believe that a loud protest voice from the Muslim community is necessary for example through voting for a political party which is taking stance against the PVV, petitions or by organizing protests and demonstrations. Lastly, there is also wide support for engaging in debate with Wilders and his constituency and to work on the problems prevalent within the Muslim community itself such as unemployment and youth criminality.

**Inter-ethnic interactions**

Most of the interviewees think that Wilders accession to the cabinet will lead to a more polarized society. The impression the native-Dutch have about Muslims, which was already not very positive, is made even worse by Wilders. Moheb; “I have the feeling that people are scared. They are more distant.” They see the emergence of a „split” and even „a full war”.

Naomi: “I think it will lead to a lot of negative consequences. I am truly worried. I think that it will cause a larger separation between different populations. A larger split between Muslims and persons belonging to a different religion.” Soumeya sees Wilders effect upon society not so much between Muslims vs. non-Muslims but between opponents and
supporters: “Wilders creates a dichotomy. He wants to make a distinction between the people who support him and those who don’t.”

The results from the survey confirm this conclusion: 77, 6% of the respondents think that the PVV will have a negative impact upon the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and 49, 5% of the respondents think that the Dutch have changed their perception of Muslims in a negative way due to Wilders. At the same time, a large number of the respondents (42, 3%) acknowledge that also their perception of the Dutch has changed due to the recent political developments.47

Taking distance from the Dutch as a consequence of a general feeling of distrust by Muslims due to the election results also came forward during the interviews. Mohammed A: “You never know whether the person sitting next to you in the train, or your neighbor, or your colleague voted for the PVV”. Or Fouzia; Sometimes you hear people making certain remarks or behave in a certain way that you think; that is probably a PVV-voter”. Khalissa: “Everybody in my environment says to be against the PVV. But then, who votes for this man? There should be someone? You can never know. But, at least until now, I do not let it influence my thinking and behavior in my daily life.”

Although the majority of the interviewees feel that a large part of the Dutch population is against them, they nevertheless feel that they are not alone in their opinion on Wilders. They feel supported by friends who would also reject Wilders. Abdelmalik illustrates this point clearly: “You also have a lot of non-Muslims who think Wilders is scary. When I talk to acquaintances which are non-Muslim, they also think very negative about him.” And Otmani; “I have plenty of Dutch friends who also think that Wilders is bad news.” The majority of the interviewees and focus-group participants stated to interact with acquaintances from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, including native-Dutch on a frequent basis. Messud: “I have a lot of Dutch colleagues with which I get along very well. Sometimes we go out for a drink after work.” And Otmani: “I have a lot of Dutch friends, mainly at school. Outside of school I hang out mostly with Moroccan guys from my neighborhood.” Generally,

47 See Appendix IIII. Question 3
contact with non-Muslims is less frequent than with Muslims. Anas, “I have a diverse group of friends. Different nationalities. But I do have mostly Moroccan friends which is logical. When you have more in common with each other, you socialize more easily. That has nothing to do with religion or ethnic background.” and Khalissa; “I have a very mixed network, partly due to my job. In my free time I socialize mainly with „allochtonen“. They are more family oriented.” Or Rashid: “Very different. I have a lot of friends, but in the end I hang out mostly with „allochtonen.“ While most of the interactions with people outside their own ethnic or religious group occur within the context of work and school, more than half of the participants stated to also have such interactions during their free time. These findings challenge the popular idea that Muslims are an isolated group which only interact with people belonging to their in-group. The results from the survey support these findings: 44, 3% of the respondents stated to interact with people from a different ethnic or religious background on a frequent basis. They thereby give a message to Wilders and other Islam critics that their close environment does not only comprise co-religionists, but also gives space for people from different cultures and religions. Moreover, this also proofs that while Muslims feel stereotyped and negatively judged by the Dutch, they do not completely close themselves of from contacts with them. However, 63, 6 % of the survey respondents think that more initiatives should be taken to stimulate inter-ethnic interactions. Only 18, 8 % is not in favor of this.

*Feelings of stigmatization*

The experiences of Muslims to be treated unjustly and stigmatized is a shared experience, not only by Wilders, but also in their daily lives. Almost all persons spoken to for this research have experienced feelings of injustice, stigmatization, and discrimination in varying degrees from a single experience such as receiving a dirty look on the street, to structurally being denied certain night clubs in Amsterdam. For example Moheb feels Muslims are not treated the same as Europeans and Jews: “We Muslims have Islamic clothes. A lot of fuss is made

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48 See Appendix III, Question 3
49 See Appendix III, Question 6
when we wear this publicly. But if a Jew wears a kippa, nobody says anything. The same with a European woman who decides not to work and stay home to take care of the children. She will be seen as a good house wife. But if a Muslim woman stays home to take care of the children, she is seen as being oppressed.” Ahlem faced discrimination in her search for a student room; “Recently I had found a nice student room and the landlord had agreed with me moving in. However, when we met to sign the contract and he saw me with my veil he told me that the room is only for girls with blond hair and blue eyes.” And Naomi faced discrimination when applying for a job: “I applied for a function in a university. During the first conversation they were very enthusiastic. The second meeting was also great. Until a woman entered the room and told her colleague that they should check me at the AIVD. If this was part of the procedure I wouldn’t have had a problem with it. However, I knew they did that just because I am a Muslim. Eventually I denied the job, even though I got hired.”

From the survey 29, 4% stated to experience more discrimination since the emergence of Wilders. While the participants of the interviews and focus-groups found it hard to measure whether discrimination and anti-Muslim sentiment had increased due to Wilders and his predecessors, the majority thought it did. Moheb: “Discrimination against Muslims has definitely increased over the years. Our parents never had such experiences.” Or Ahlam; “When my parents came here, people were curious about our culture and wanted to get to know ,bouklava” and ,ousous”. Today this is different; people do not welcome us with open arms anymore.” Muslims have started with a counter-reaction to the increasing anti-Islam and anti-Muslim sentiments. This varies from organizing inter-ethnic neighborhood gatherings, debates, anti-Wilders demonstrations, to creative responses such as cabarets addressing the issue of discrimination, to reporting racism at local bureaus set up for this reason, while other retreat themselves and become completely isolated.

Muslims about the „Us” versus „Them” dichotomy

Many Muslims conclude that they are the outsiders of the society. From the interviews and

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50 Dutch security services
51 See Appendix III, Question 3
focus-groups there was plenty of evidence that the Muslims experience the situation as hierarchical. Many expressed distrust, gossip or indifference. They identify themselves more with the group who posses less power than with the party who controls the situation. As Amina puts it: “We are at the bottom and Wilders at the top. It is difficult to fight against that as a Muslim.” The ways in which Muslims experience the viewpoints presented in the media supports their perception that they are an explicit different group than the native-Dutch. The frequent use of the dichotomy “Muslims” and “non-Muslims” in other words supports the ordering of the social world as also Muslims see it. When people experience that others are just like them and that they belong to the same group, we can speak about social identification. This process is stimulated among Muslims as they feel personally and collectively attacked by Wilders. Mutual compassion emerges through a religious connection and the feeling of shared injustice inflicted upon them by the Dutch.

*In-group favoritism*

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory, members of a group favor their own group at the expense of other defined groups. In-group favoritism came clearly forward during the interviews. While Muslims react to Wilders and the recent social developments in different ways, they are all critical to very negative. The Muslims almost unanimously describe Wilders statements as hurtful and insulting. At the same time, they take initiatives to publicly promote their own, different perception of Islam. The strong reactions can be seen as an unconscious acknowledgement of the symbolic power which Wilders apparently influences upon them. This could mean that the Muslims feel threatened by Wilders in the affection they feel for their familiar community and their beloved religion. Wilders statements about the „despicable Islam” have been humiliating for Muslims in front of the entire country. Suddenly their view of a pleasurable society is at stake, and a new reality emerges in which veils are threatened to be banned, their jobs are no longer assured, and an unsafe environment for their children dooms up (Van Tilborgh 2006, 132).

In dealing with this fear of being attacked by Wilders and his constituency the
participants adopted different strategies when speaking about Wilders or the Dutch in which the in-group is favored at the expense of the out-group (Wilders, his constituency and/or the Dutch). Those who felt angry often made such statements in the form of a joke, or laughed when saying so. For example Ismael: “*At one side you become angry. You love the prophet like your father and mother. If somebody talks in a bad way about the prophet, this will make you angry. But at the other hand I also see him as a clown [laughing].*” Or Abdelmalik: “*I think his whole concept is a joke: he is against Islam, but not against Judaism [laughing].*” Or Messud: “*Geert Wilders is at the number one of my hate-list [laughing].*” and Jamilla: “*Certain remarks Wilders makes, such as a head-rag tax, make me laugh.*” Laughing while responding to Wilders statements can be seen as a tactic employed by Muslims to invalidate his sayings. As such, the Muslims place themselves above Wilders and his ridiculous ideas (Van Tilborgh 2006, 196-197). By not taking him serious, they feel superior over Wilders.

Further, the Muslims also create counter attacks. Speaking in a negative way about the Dutch is another tactic employed by Muslims to make themselves feel better about their own group and to restore their confidence and pride. For example Rashid: “*The Dutch are a little bit stupid. Wilders treats us all alike. So we will do the same.*” And Khalid B: “*Wilders says that Islam is a totalitarian ideology. But if I look back in history, I have to say that the Jewish-Christian tradition is a totalitarian ideology and perhaps still is. The Dutch colonized many countries and suppressed, exploited and killed many people.*” An alternative way to de-legitimize Wilders influence is describing him as not qualified and knowledgeable to make any valuable statements on Islam. He would not have any knowledge about the religion and just base his ideas upon bad personal experiences. Khalid: “*Wilders doesn’t know what he is saying. I don’t even think that he has ever read the entire Quran!*” And Rashid: “*Wilders does not even has a university degree!*” or Amina: “*Wilders used to live in the ,Kanaleneiland* neighborhood in Utrecht, a predominant Muslim neighborhood full of criminality. His entire idea about Islam is based upon that experience.*” Further, he is often described as an ally of Israel, and a Zionist. Kemal: “*Wilders is a Zionist! He has personal connections with Israeli ministers, gives speeches over there, sometimes wears a kippa and
has even lived there for two years.” This strategy is employed in reaction to all insulting remarks they have heard from Wilders.

**Identification with the Netherlands**

The majority of the participants culturally identified themselves with the Netherlands. But before their identification with “being Dutch” they see themselves first of all as Muslims. Any nationality, whether Dutch or Moroccan or Turkish comes second. A separation is thus made between a religious identity and an identity based upon nationality in which the former takes precedence over the latter. Mohammed; “I see myself first as Muslim. After that it depends where I am. At home, I am Moroccan; outside I am Dutch and Moroccan.” And Khalid: “I see myself as Dutch and Moroccan. That I am a Muslim has nothing to do with my nationality.” As such, they are developing a fluid identity which is Dutch, Moroccan and Muslim. This finding is supported by the survey-results. 73% of the respondents identify themselves simultaneously in terms of their religion, their Dutch nationality as well as their ethnic background. 52

From the statements received during the interviews and focus-groups it seems that the Muslims born in the Netherlands more strongly identify with the Netherlands than those who were not. For example Moheb, who was born in Egypt and came to the Netherlands as a teenager; “I definitely do not feel Dutch, mostly because of the negative stereotypes and discrimination.” And Ahmed, born in Lebanon, who came to Amsterdam as a young child: “I am not nationalistic and am not tied to a country.” Another explanation for their less strong identification with the Netherlands might be that these participants also classified themselves as „devout Muslims”. Therefore, it is not clear whether a sense of belonging is negatively influenced by a visible religious identity or by being born abroad or perhaps by both.

The gap between the Muslims and non-Muslims, however, is worrisome. When asked whether the Muslims also thought if other people saw them as Dutch, approximately ¾ thought that others don’t see them as Dutch but rather as „foreigner”, „immigrant”, „Muslim”,

52 See Appendix III, Question 7
or „Arab”. The reason stated for that was most frequently ethnic appearance. Comments in the interviews and focus groups also show how the desire to be seen as Dutch in combination with the feeling that they will never be accepted as such leads to frustrations. Ahmed; “I don’t look Dutch; therefore people don’t see me as such. I think that even our children will still not be socially accepted as Dutch.” And Fouzia: “People who don’t know me personally think I am a foreigner.” Mohammed; “Physical appearance plays a large role. Because I wear a djellabah people immediately classify me as a foreigner or Muslim.” And Annas; “I am born here. But I don’t think that the ,native Dutch” see me as such. For them I will always be a stranger which they tolerate.” This gap suggests that while many Muslims who identify themselves as Dutch nationals do not feel recognized in this way (At home in Europe project 2010, 52).

Islam and Identity

All the Muslims who participated in this research emphasized the important role that religion plays in their life. Islam is referred to as a moral frame of reference. For example, the participants explained that it is not allowed to use violence against homosexuals or to steal, and thereafter pray and claim that you are a Muslim. The idea that Islam is a beautiful and peaceful religion and that therefore a terrorist cannot be a Muslim, is mentioned by almost all participants. Many pointed out that Wilders attempt to curtail Islam in the Netherlands has the opposite effect. It’s a paradox, the more Wilders speaks about certain negative aspects of the religion, the stronger people feel connected to their religion. In Messud’s words; “People are getting stronger in their faith when Wilders is attacking their religion. Due to the verbal attacks, people start to explore their faith and then come to the conclusion that actually they have a beautiful religion. This man is talking nonsense. Therefore, by attacking Islam Wilders achieves the opposite of what he wants; less Islam in the Netherlands.” Ahmed sees a similar silver lining of Wilders crusade against Islam; “Wilders war on Islam has also positive sides. He indirectly promotes Islam. Some people believe Wilders and others start to think about it and learn about Islam because they are intellectual people. In the end those will convert. It’s
a paradox.” Due to the moral panic in the Netherlands about Islam, Muslim youth start to focus more upon their religion and use this in the development of their identity. As the social problems with Moroccan youth are reduced to a problem of religion rather than socio-economic problems and discrimination ignored, many participants feel stigmatized. The Dutch Islam debate is based upon the assumption that Muslims can only be „real Dutch” once they let go of their religion and that people can only have one nationality. With that, the fact that Dutch Muslims due to their religion are per definition internationally oriented including the subsequent loyalties is ignored. While most participants are willing to compromise in order to be seen as „Dutch” none of them are willing to completely give up their ethnic or religious identity. From the survey sample, 36.1% strongly agreed and 41.2% agreed with the statement that “Forcing Muslims to give up their cultural/religious identity creates frustration and anger.”

Sense of belonging and future perspective

The majority of the interviewees stated that the Netherlands has become a different country, a less pleasant country to live in. Not only because of Geert Wilders, but also because of Fortuyn and before that 9/11. Also from the survey sample 55, 7 % stated that they feel less welcome in the Netherlands as compared to the period prior to Fortuyn, Hirsi Ali and Wilders. Nevertheless, from the 35 Muslims I have spoken to for this study, either through an interview or through a focus-group discussion, 30 stated to feel at home in Amsterdam and foresaw a positive future for themselves. Fouzia: “I really feel at home here in Amsterdam and see a positive future for myself. With Wilders, the Netherlands doesn’t become a more pleasant place to live in, but I have my work, family and personal social life. It is mainly something that happens on the TV, and you can shield yourself of to that.” Otmani: “I have a good life here, despite the circumstances. Because there live so many people with different ethnic backgrounds in Amsterdam, I think that the atmosphere here is better than in the rest of the country.” Hakan: “I feel at home here, Amsterdam is a very tolerant city.” Rashid: “I grew up

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53 See appendix III, Question 6
here, studied, worked and have my family here. Although I feel a bit less comfortable in the Netherlands due to the current developments, I don’t really notice this in my direct environment. This makes it better.” The 5 who didn’t feel at home referred to racism and discrimination as the main cause. The experience of Muslims on a local level seems to be more positive from their overall perception of the Netherlands. Collectively the participants see their future in the Netherlands for different reasons; friends and family, good job prospects, or being integrated in the society. From the survey sample, this was 71, 4 % While a few participants stated to have thought about emigration, they stated this was for reasons other than Wilders.54

II. Addressing the underlying causes of discomfort

While Muslims direct their frustration, anger and fear at Wilders through the public debate, it became clear throughout the case-study that Wilders can be seen as a symbol of larger grievances felt within the Muslim community. A number of interrelated issues, not directly related to Wilders, came up as major sources of frustration. First of all, the media appears for Muslims to be one of the main frustrations in their daily experiences. From the hundred survey respondents, the media was mentioned 67 times, as the party to blame for the increasing anti-Islam sentiment in society.55 Also the interviewees and focus-group participants collectively pointed to media as an important problem. Ahmed: “Wilders and the media are interconnected. Without the media Wilders is nothing. Without Wilders, the media has less sensational news.” All of the interviewees feel in a more or lesser degree stigmatized by the media. The media would be on Wilders side and devote a lot of attention to distributing his views. Otmani: “The media goes to little villages where a lot of PVV-voters are and starts interviewing them. You don’t see them in neighborhoods where a lot of Muslims are.” And incompetent non-Muslims would report about Muslim affairs with their emphasis upon negative incidents. Zakariya blames the media for broadcasting news that sells rather than the

54 See appendix III, Question 3
55 See appendix III, Question 8
facts; “A large part of the Dutch population, especially the lower educated, get its
information from newspapers such as Spits and Metro [freely distributed newspapers] or
showbiz programs aired on commercial TV who want to sell rather than produce facts. If
people hear daily that Muslims are bad, it becomes a fact.” Soumeya points to the
inconsistencies when reporting about Muslims: “When Maryam Hassouni won an Emmy
Award, the newspaper headlines said: Dutch-Moroccan actress wins award. In the same
newspaper another headline stated: „Moroccan pickpocket steals purse old lady”. With
positive news, the media emphasizes the Dutch-Moroccan identity. With negative news, the
media emphasizes the Moroccan identity.”

It seems that the case-study participants are not aware that there is a small but
significant group of journalists, social scientists, professors, and bloggers who are
fundamentally opposed to Wilders and the PVV. That many of the settled are on their sides is
apparently not widely known. Many of them feel that they are underrepresented in the media
and that the media does not offer a counter voice against Geert Wilders. Therefore, their
impression is that Wilders can say about Islam whatever he wants. The Muslims place
themselves thereby in a paradoxical situation. At one side they ask attention for their
marginalized place within the media which would support Wilders. Emphasizing this situation
of exclusion has the advantage of keeping a position of opposition. At the other hand, the
Muslims also do not want to give Wilders an easy victory by adopting the role of victim.
Therefore they also point out that the media gives some space for the vision of Muslims.
Moheb for example said: “The media gives to little attention to the voice of Muslims (...) But
it does happen. One time I was asked by RTL4 to say something about Wilders with a couple
of other guys. This was also broadcasted.” Participating in public debates also brings the
possibility of being humiliated. Therefore, the Muslims make a strict separation between the
debates within the media and those in their personal environments, which they experience as
much more positive.

The participants also ventilate critique upon their own community in their
contribution upon the current situation. Approximately 1/3 of the survey respondents put part
of the blame on orthodox and criminal Muslims (mentioned 34 times)\textsuperscript{56} for putting the Muslim community in a bad light. The liberal Muslims are confronted with the critique which the conservative and orthodox Muslims have upon their lifestyle. At the same time they feel criticized by the right-wing natives who view all people with an Islamic background as the same and do not pay any attention to individual differences. The liberal Muslims who are in favor of an open approach to Islam now feel sandwiched between the orthodox Muslims at one side and the right-wing natives at the other. For example Jamilla: \textit{“We have not been critical enough with regard to certain aspects of living as Muslims in a Western country such as homosexuality. Now this debate is hijacked by a group of Muslims which does not represent my opinion and the right-wing elite who constantly forces me to defend myself.”}

The criminal Muslims are blamed for irresponsible behavior giving a bad name to the religion. Ilham: \textit{“It is a very small portion of the Moroccan youth in bad-socio economic positions, with little structure at home who destroy the image of Islam for all of us.”} And Rashid expresses that as a consequence also the normal hard-working Moroccans are viewed as crime suspects; \textit{“I always feel like a suspect when a crime happens in my neighborhood due to the way people look at me, simple because I am a Moroccan. I do not wish to be associated with such thugs.”}

Further, the interview and focus-group participants explain that they are bothered by the fact that the Muslim community is viewed as a homogenous group, both by the government as well as by the population. There exists the desire to be seen as individuals. They are tired from all the political and public discussion about ethnic groups. Moreover, they feel that while there is a lot of debate about the position of Muslims, there is very little discussion in which they themselves are engaged. One of issues that causes a lot of annoyance is the separation made between “allochtonen” and “autochtonen”. The experience is that the participants as „non-Westerners” can never escape the stamp of “allochtoon” even though they are born in the Netherlands. Otmani: \textit{“We are still not accepted and are kept being viewed as “allochtonen” despite the fact that we are born here.”}

\textsuperscript{56} See appendix III, Question 8

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The government and the Dutch population are mentioned respectively 21 and 16 times by the survey respondents. The focus-groups and interviews illustrate that they hold the government mainly responsible for ethnic segregation in neighborhoods, inconsistent integration policies and the protection of racist parties such as the PVV. The fact that government policies on integration have changed significantly over the years is a source of frustration and confusion. The word „integration” itself is a vague concept to the vast majority of the participants. “When are you integrated?” and “what does integration even mean?” were statements frequently expressed. Another source of frustration is the fact that there is a high degree of ethnic segregation in terms of the housing situation and education. There are primarily Muslim neighborhoods and schools. As a result neighborhoods with high concentrations of Muslims emerged with a lacking social-economic position. The participants hold the government responsible for the segregation. The previous discussion on crime among Moroccan youth is by the participants often explained as a result of ethnic segregation and lacking socio-economic positions. Kemal: “The behavior of criminal Moroccan youth has nothing to do with their culture or religion. Such behavior is strictly forbidden in Islam and a shame in the culture. It is a result of poor upbringing and high concentrations of the same sort of people in one neighborhood. Then people don’t feel they have to adapt.”

Further, they blame the political elite for not taking stance against Wilders. The experience is that Wilders is being protected and even supported by the other political parties. Even Femke Halsema from the Green Left, who is widely seen as a politician who has heart for the cause of the Muslims is seen to have wandered over. All politicians have at some point made negative remarks about either Islam or Muslims. As such, the trust in the political parties is slowly disappearing. Many still vote, but mostly as a counter vote to the PVV.

Content wise, the majority feels that none of the political parties represent their needs and viewpoints sufficiently. Only a small number of the participants and survey respondents blame the Dutch population. They are mainly blamed for being intolerant, narrow-minded,

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57 Appendix III. Question 8
58 See appendix III, Question 8
too nationalistic, and for discriminating behavior but mainly for letting Wilders play into the
general feelings of dissatisfaction they experience.

**III. Addressing the Needs & Desires**

The participants were also asked about what they would like to change in Dutch society as
well as to offer possible solutions to the problems they experience. However, most of them
didn’t see it as their task to offer solutions. They see this as the responsibility of the
government and politics. Some of the respondents find the problems they experience so large
that they cannot imagine any solution. Based upon the received interviews, focus-groups and
comments during the survey, a list of recommendations has been formulated reflecting the
needs and desires of the participants. The desires of the participants are grouped into
recommendations to a) the government, b) the media, and c) the citizens.

**A. Government**

The recommendations here address the desires of the Muslims for further engagement by
national and local politicians in the following policy areas;

i. The government should return to a multiculturalists approach (no assimilationism)
and adopt a clear integration policy.

ii. The government should take effective measures against racism and criminality in
society. In politics, the government should not tolerate the discriminatory practices of
the PVV and exclude such parties from being members of parliament.

iii. The government should determine the boundaries of „freedom of speech”. Due to the
current discourse in which everything can be said under the banner of „freedom of
speech” certain expressions and statements made by political figures have had a
negative impact upon the Muslim community. As such, the government should make

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59 In the survey these questions were posed in the form of an „open-question”. Therefore in the
presentation of the results, the opinions of the survey-respondents, the interviewees and the focus-group
participants are not presented separately.
it clear that „freedom of expression” does not include insulting or stigmatizing certain individuals / groups.

iv. There should be less talking about Islam in politics and more emphasis upon real problems such as the economic crisis and high unemployment rates. The government should tackle the socio-economic exclusion Muslims face and take steps against residential segregation in neighborhoods, ethnic segregation in schools and stimulate equal opportunities on the labor market.

v. Muslims feel as a separate group outside of society. More emphasis should be placed upon what connects citizens rather than upon what separates them. At the same time, the government should keep stimulating interactions between people with diverse ethnic backgrounds to maintain and increase inter-ethnic interactions.

B. Media

With regard to the role of the media as a major source of frustration in their daily lives the participants emphasized the desire for;

i. More journalists and reporters with an Islamic background or who at least have knowledge about Islam in order to produce fair media coverage.

ii. More balanced media coverage: media should not devote so much of their time and space to one controversial figure such as Wilders.

iii. Muslim representatives should invest in knowing how to make use of the modern media in order to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.

C. Citizens

Not only the government and its institutions are blamed for stigmatizing the Muslim community; also many citizens are dragged into this habit. The participants expressed the desire for at one hand a more tolerant and respectful attitude of citizens towards others and at the other hand to raise more awareness and knowledge in the Netherlands about what Islam is really about. Muslims should thereby not fall into a „victim role” but actively address the
problems in their own community. By adopting an open attitude towards others and by taking responsibility for one’s own behavior, many of the participants think that stigma’s can be removed.

5.5 Conclusion

The data of the case-study suggests first of all that despite differences in ethnic background, age, education, gender and neighborhood, Muslims are overall very negative about Wilders political appearance. Muslims feel predominantly insulted, anger, resentment, and fear with regard to Wilders public statements on Islam. The majority is concerned about Wilders effect upon Dutch society at large and the interethnic relations and the position of Islam as a religion in the Netherlands.

The Muslims, like Wilders opponents, believe his words are a destructive influence on Dutch society. While Muslims do not recognize themselves in the image Wilders constructs of them, by constantly reacting to his words they acknowledge his influence. As such, Wilders and Muslims are tied together in an unequal power relationship. Many conclude that in the social hierarchy, they continue to be seen as outsiders. In their reactions to Wilders, Muslims have adopted a number of tactics to delegitimize his statements and to restore their self-confidence and pride. In these tactics in-group favoritism [the Muslim community] is clearly expressed at the advance of the out-group [Wilders and the Dutch]. It is not an open rebellion, but rather an oppositional sub-culture in which the situation of unequal distribution of power is not taken for granted.

Wilders claims about the supposed higher moral and social order of the Dutch fuels the collective sentiment of the Muslim community. With Wilders continuing attacks upon Islam, Muslims have initiated more interest in Islam in order to explain and defend their religion. Moreover, while the majority of the participants culturally identified him/herself as Dutch, they do not feel accepted as such. This in combination with the continuing stigmatization and socio-economic exclusion in society makes the Muslim youth emphasize their Islamic identity above other parts of their identity. This indicates that forced adaptation,
as promoted with the more recent assimilationist policies, has the opposite result. As such, the differences between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities have become more apparent. Despite the fact that the majority of the participants feels that anti-Islam sentiment in society is increasing, they feel at home in Amsterdam and see their future in the Netherlands. The fact that they mostly interact in their own social networks which consist either of other “allochtonen” sharing their injustice or “autochtonen” friends by whom they feel supported might account partially for this outcome.

Wilders public attacks of Islam hampers the integration of Muslims in a number of ways; it stimulates socio-economic exclusion, increases stigmatization & discrimination, and causes Muslims to focus more upon their Islamic identity and thereby take distance from the Dutch, as the perceived out-group. It is a paradox: Wilders blames Muslims for refusing to assimilate, but such critiques and stigmatizations, makes assimilation impossible. Moreover, Wilders political speech, in which he leaves nothing unsaid, has an extraordinarily detrimental effect upon the traditional tolerance and inclusive nature of Dutch society. With Wilders proposals for an unequal treatment of Islam in Dutch society as compared to Judaism or Christianity, multiculturalism has for good disappeared. Further, as the case-study shows, Muslims more and more have the feeling to be seen and treated as a homogeneous group. The effect of Wilders Islamophobic discourse - attributing to all members of a given community the negative characteristics of a few- is widely felt. The result is that Muslims are increasingly judged by their physical appearance rather than upon the content of their character.

So far, there has been a very calm, moderate, mature and political sophisticated reaction from the Muslim community in response to recent developments. The Muslims are equally critical of Wilders as of the behavior of certain members of their community. As discussed above, the tactics employed by Muslims such as ignoring or not taking Wilders seriously, have contributed in controlling the increasing ethnic tensions. This illustrates that the Muslim community holds a realistic view of the situation.

This situation, however, might not be tenable forever. The future looks bleak and problematic for Muslims in the Netherlands. One should ask what will happen if the Muslim
community does not raise a strong opposition. Will Islamophobia get worse? Will there be ethnic clashes and bloodshed? If so, will the Muslim community still be able to continue ignoring the increasing Islamophobic manifestations? The tactic of ignoring or delegitimizing might in the long run lead to a boiling Muslim community which has been hoarding all their pains, anger and frustrations for years. If pushed to the extreme they might explode into a violent reaction. Therefore, the tactic of ignoring, while keeping the situation under control for now, is not a durable solution for the future
VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of this research was to examine the forces behind the demise of the Dutch multicultural society and the subsequent rise of the Islamophobic Freedom Party and how this development effects the way Muslim youth in Amsterdam experience their position in society and relations with the natives.

6.1 Multiculturalism has never taken root in the Netherlands

The policy shift in the Netherlands from multiculturalism to an emphasis upon national identity fits into the general trend that is visible throughout Europe. As illustrated in chapter 2, European societies, despite different models employed to incorporate ethnic minorities, have faced a particular challenge as it comes to Europe’s Muslim community, as both Europeans as well as Muslims came to emphasize their cultural identities more forcefully. Although a bit later than the majority of European societies, this process also happened in the Netherlands. Chapter 3 has shown that in the Dutch de-pillarized society, Muslims were granted, out of the longstanding Dutch tradition of religious tolerance, the opportunity to maintain their particular ethnic and cultural identities. This idea of a tolerant and multicultural society was for long maintained.

Only a few years ago to criticize multiculturalism was to risk charges of racism. In Western Europe, the climate of opinion has changed. Multiculturalism still has many supporters, particularly among the more politically engaged, but it now has many critics, including some of the most politically engaged. What is responsible for so profound a change? The answer appears obvious. The post-September 11 world is very different from what preceded it. How could it not be? What had been inconceivable had become not merely conceivable but had been witnessed as it were, firsthand through images televised around the World (Sniderman and Hagedoorn 2007, 124). Yet the results from this research indicate that the bases for the political challenge to multiculturalism were laid before September 11, which
is also to say not because of it.

From chapter 3 it can be concluded that politicians in the Netherlands followed the advice of policy advisors and leaders of informed opinion, not public opinion, when they committed themselves to a policy of multiculturalism. They did what they did because they thought they had good reason to do it – they needed cheap skilled laborers to keep the economy going and they wished to put the power of government to human use. To be an attractive receiving country for immigrants, the Netherlands, promoted itself as an open, tolerant and welcoming society. Everybody that refused to keep up that appearance was socially condemned as being racist by the political establishment (Louter 2010).

However, when the economy crashed and Islamic fundamentalism started to make its appearance in Netherlands (in particular the murder of Theo van Gogh) the smile towards migrants disappeared and Dutch tolerance started to show its limits. While the common Dutch citizen already worried for years about the issue of immigration and integration, the political elite, in cooperation with the media, prevented an open debate on this topic. Politicians have kept multiculturalism in place for so long through their control of the public agenda and their concept of political correctness. Mainstream parties on the left and right agreed not to contest it. Voters cannot express opposition to multiculturalism if no candidate opposes it. Political and intellectual leaders in Western Europe have taken the tack that those who question multiculturalism do so out of prejudice. It has followed that they should be shamed out of their opposition if possible, ignored if not (Hagedoorn and Sniderman, 136).

Today, political correctness has completely disappeared from the political debate and everything can be said under the standard of „freedom of speech“. A major factor contributing to that was Pim Fortuyn with his slogan: „I say what I think and I do what I say.” Currently, Wilders has taken a seat in parliament and leaves nothing unsaid. With the end of political correctness, there are no longer boundaries to what can be said. Remarks and comments which were regarded as insulting or inaccurate can now be expressed freely. As such, the surface smile of Dutch tolerance disappeared and Islamophobia came to be publicly promoted by certain individuals like Wilders.
Dutch Muslims have always in more or less degrees experienced social exclusion and discrimination in terms of housing, education and employment opportunities. This leads to the question of exactly how tolerant the Netherlands as a society is. To be tolerant, differences have to be acknowledged and accepted. Because the dominant multicultural discourse prior to 2002, only allowed to speak in careful terms about cultural differences and multicultural problems (one was easily seen as being racist), it seems that tolerance is partially mistaken with indifference among politicians and opinion makers, both at the political and public level.

The reactions triggered by Paul Scheffer’s article “the multicultural drama” and the large support for Fortuyn and Wilders anti-Islam standpoints illustrate that with the end of political correctness (the social norm of not openly discussing certain problems related to the increasingly culturally diverse society) multiculturalism quickly lost its popularity among the population. In the new discourse, all problems in Dutch society related to immigration and integration are almost unilaterally ascribed to differences in culture and religion. Politicians have started to pay more attention to non-Western cultures and Islam, which are viewed as an obstacle to the integration process. Also in the public debate, Islam and the influence of the increasingly visible Muslim population has become problematized. The new discourse demands adaptation from migrants to the Dutch culture, national identity, norms and values which is basically a strong plea for assimilation.

The fact that public attitudes towards migrants have so rapidly changed from tolerance to hostility and that political parties such as the LPF and PVV which see the Judeo-Christian culture as morally superior to Islam, receive so many votes, illustrates that multiculturalism had never taken strong root. This does not mean that the Netherlands is not a pluralist society, on the contrary. But, multiculturalism does not merely exist by the fact that different people with diverse social, ethnic and religious backgrounds live together. The Dutch for years lived together with immigrants under the motto; “live and let live, but not in my backyard” which illustrates that Dutch multiculturalism comes with boundaries. The boundaries of multiculturalism dictate that migrants might be different, but only as long as they do not
offend the native population. Inevitably, there will always be one group which is dominant in
one or more ways. The group which decides which legal system is in force and hence which
legal system defines the boundaries of multiculturalism, is the group that possesses the
political-economic power. In the Netherlands that is therefore the native population which has
the last word as they are justified to make such fundamental choices.

The idea of multiculturalism, and its emphasis upon the equality of different cultures,
is based upon an utopian ideal, which could only have worked if everybody in society shared
this belief. One of the characteristics of culture is that it is defined in relation to other cultures
and hence grants a particular identity to the members of a certain culture. But, as this research
shows, the multicultural ideal in the Netherlands was never shared by the groups whose
existence it was intended to ensure. The leading thought has always been that there are too
many immigrants and that they did not adapt enough to their Dutch norms, values and culture.
It is not completely illogical that the dominant group wants to determine the norms and values
and criticizes those who do not conform. But problems start to appear when those in power,
the political establishment and prominent publicists, focus only upon the majority, which is
what is happening at the moment in the Netherlands. Minorities are no longer represented in
the political and public discussion and hence they have become a marginalized group.

6.2 From Multiculturalism to Apartheid with Wilders?

Another important conclusion from this study regards the future to which the Netherlands is
heading with Geert Wilders. As seen in chapter 4, Wilders frequently proposes measures with
regard to the immigration and integration policy. With the PVV’s parliamentary support to the
new minority cabinet, a number of his proposals are accepted. These include the introduction
of conditional passports for new immigrants which can be withdrawn within the first five
years if a crime is committed, and stricter criteria for family reunification. Other proposals
made, but not yet accepted include the eviction of „allochtonen” criminals after they served
their penalties. This means that migrants are punished harder for the same crime as compared
to the native population.
Despite the juridical and political consequences of such intentions, Wilders plans will lead to a number of negative social effects. The frequency and span of the Islam debate, suggest that the crackdown against Muslims is not only a spearhead of the integration policy, but rather is pursued as an end in itself. It should be noted that when continuing along this path, for a number of reasons a situation in the Netherlands might arise similar to that of the former apartheid regime in South Africa, or a variant thereof.

First, the proposed legislative measures by Wilders will hit the “allochtonen” and in specific the Muslim community, harder. I refer here in particular to the consideration of making ethnic background a factor in determining the nature of the penalty in relation to the same crime. Wilders intends to investigate whether it is possible to withdraw the nationality of already naturalized Moroccans criminals, Muslim husbands who beat their wives or loose- tongued imams and subsequently evict them from the Netherlands to their country of origin or that of their parents. A country with which many immigrants most likely do not have any affiliation with or have turned away from many years ago. Further, the emphasis upon Muslim criminality and the link made between integration and security maintains the persistent myth that Muslims are overwhelmingly responsible for criminality in the Netherlands. As if without Muslim immigrants the Netherlands would be a crime free country. Moreover, the acceptance of Wilders proposal for increasing restrictive measures for family reunification will intervene forcefully in the personal sphere of the groups in question. The danger that in this way laws will be introduced with which people in equal circumstances are treated unequally is not imaginary.

A second reason which justifies the comparison with apartheid is the current ethnic stratification of Dutch society. As shown in Chapters 3 and 5, Muslim immigrants predominantly live in the old city neighborhoods (in Amsterdam mainly in the Western district), their children go often to „black schools” and they experience lower incomes and higher levels of unemployment.

Finally, Wilders plans will reinforce the already existing ethnic split in society and stimulates a continuing negative perception of Muslims. The case-study has shown that
migrants are retreating into their own communities as they are becoming suspicious of the
Dutch (with the exception of “native friends”). Although they see themselves also as being
Dutch, they do not feel recognized as such. The long-lasting emphasis upon national identity,
cultural integration and loyalty to the Dutch state which started about eight years ago
continues to increase the gap between the “autochtonen” and “allochtonen.” No matter how
self-evident the emphasis upon behavior, language and history might seem, this research has
shown that behind the surface the conceptions of Dutch citizenship exclude migrants per
definition and hence closes the doors to participation in society (Duyvendak, Engelen and De
Haan 2008). This provides a social basis for further thinking in terms of “Us” and “Them”
and legitimizes the growing notion in society that a subtle distinction is allowed to be made
between first and second class citizens.

As illustrated in chapter 4, because Wilders is democratically elected and as such
represents the grievances of a significant part of Dutch society, other political parties and the
media are not taking a harsh stance against Wilders. Doing so, would decrease their votes
during upcoming elections. As such, Wilders is given a free pass to continue his war against
Islam, and other political parties have started to adopt similar stances. While the reaction from
the case-study participants towards Wilders is mature and politically sophisticated, it remains
the question how this will play out in the future. As Wilders plans are slowly being realized, it
is not unlikely that the contradictions in the interethnic relations will be intensified and that it
will lead to a further erosion of social and political morale in society. With Wilders increasing
political power, it is probable that the political establishment will push harder for forced
adaptation and that public opinion towards Muslims will become even more negative. Chapter
three showed that interethnic tensions have already increased over the years: attacks upon
Islamic symbols, mosques, and schools and social discrimination have become frequent
occurrences and extreme-right ideas are presented in the media as journalistic entertainment.
It is likely that the aforementioned incidents will start to occur on a more frequent basis. Also,
due to Wilders increasing political power, additional laws curbing Islamic appearances might
be introduced and Muslims might face more difficulties in practicing their religion (i.e.
praying) during working hours or school time.

As demonstrated in chapter 5, the increasing anti-Islam climate and Geert Wilders public insults have led to fear, frustration and anger among the Muslim youth in Amsterdam. While up until this point, they have been able to deal with these developments in a rational and calm manner through a number of tactics such as developing counter-accusations, ignoring or delegitimizing Wilders statements, the question remains; will under escalating circumstances Muslim still be able to react calm and responsible? How will they react if such a negative climate continues to exist for a much longer period of time? Will they leave everything behind and decide to settle in their country of origin, or that is the country which their parents had left behind?

Their choices are limited; (1) leave the country; (2) stay in the Netherlands and assimilate; or (3) stay and hold on to their cultural and religious identities. As the case-study illustrates, for Amsterdam’s Muslim youth scenario number 1 and 2 are not an option. For the Muslim youth, born or brought up in Amsterdam, Morocco and Turkey are holiday destinations. At the same time, although they have interwoven Dutch norms and values into their identities and the way in which they practice their religion, they are not willing to completely abandon their cultural and religious heritage. Therefore the Muslim population persistently will choose option number 3. As such, any policy that assumes that Muslims will sacrifice certain elements of their religion in order to be accepted by the Dutch is bound to fail in the long run.

To sum up, continuing forced adaptation to the Dutch way of life is likely to have a negative effect upon the behavior of Muslim youth. If Muslims, and especially youth, are constantly depicted as „different“ or even as a „threat“ to Dutch society in the long term they will feel attacked in who they are: their self-perception. As such, a risk emerges that they will more strongly emphasize their cultural and religious heritage, retreat into their own communities, or worse radicalize, even more so than is already happening today. If pushed to the extreme between forced adaptation and assimilation or leaving the country, as advocated by Wilders, it is just a matter of time before public clashes will turn violent. If only the social-
cultural background (religion and ethnicity) are brought forward and socio-economic aspects neglected, social cohesion might be at risk.

6.3 Turn the tide

A major cause of the current negative climate is the generalizing and harsh manner in which politicians discuss immigration and integration issues. This has as result that many Muslims have started to feel less at home in the Netherlands. As argued above, a situation like this cannot last forever without any public clashes. To turn the tide a number of effective measures are needed. However, before any policy changes can be successful the phenomenon Geert Wilders and the increasing levels of Islamophobia need to dealt with first.

While Wilders powers are increasing and the PVV’s constituency is growing, for now they still do not make up the majority of the population. As indicated in chapter 5, there is a small but important part of Dutch society which is fundamentally against racism and anti-Wilders. While for the moment this group does not have the political and social power to challenge Wilders, it is hoped for that in the future this part of society is gaining in strength and is able to initiate a charismatic political countermovement against Wilders and hence bring about a reversal in the political balance. For this to happen, a charismatic leader (opposite to Wilders) is needed which can lead a large-scale anti-racism campaign.

However, such an anti-Wilders movement on its own will not be enough. In addition what is needed is a reversal of the current global financial and economic crisis. The establishment of the PVV and Wilders increasing popularity coincided with the economic crisis which hit the Netherlands at the end of 2008. The guest-worker scheme and mass-immigration has from the outset been an issue of capitalism. When the economy is prosperous, immigrants are welcomed to fill the needs for skilled cheap labor in European economies. But in times of an economic downturn, migrants are blamed for unemployment and draining the welfare system. According to the ethnic-competition theory, the level of xenophobia is thus partly dependent upon the economic situation in a country. As migrants often occupy lower socio-economic positions, live in poorer neighborhoods and have lower
skilled and/or lower paid jobs, in times of an economic crisis they are seen as a direct competition by natives with a similar low socio-economic status. As chapter 3 has demonstrated, the PVV adopts a number of eclectic left-wing measures in favor of the native population at the expense of immigrants. Not surprisingly, this has been a major reason among Wilders constituency to vote for the PVV. The conjunction of a charismatic anti-Wilders movement together with a reversal of the economic crisis could improve the existing xenophobic atmosphere in the future considerably.

Only then, an immigration and integration approach based upon tolerance, rights and duties can be initiated. The first thing that needs to be done is to break the “Us” versus “Them” categorization, which has over the years has become normalized. This can among other things be accomplished by abolishing the term “allochtoon.” With this term, both the Dutch princess Maxima as well as the Turkish grandmother who immigrated to the Netherlands during the 1960s, fall into the same social category. Abolishing this term is important as it gives a sign to society that in a democratic society based upon the rule of law, members of the groups in question have equal rights and duties as any other citizens, at least if they are naturalized. In other words, abolishing the term is needed to provide for a mental turnaround among the natives with regard to accepting „allochtoenen” as Dutch.

Further, discriminating statements in both the social as political spheres need to be forcefully contested. This means defining the boundaries of freedom of speech and political correctness. While ignoring problems in society under the guise of political correctness has not proved to be beneficial, making discriminating statements supported by the new discourse in which everything can be said and openly discussed have neither.

A last point of concern is the role of the media. Research has shown that the media directly and indirectly stimulates stereotypes about Muslims. The case-study in this chapter further illustrated that Muslims feel increasingly stigmatized by the media. For balanced and fair media coverage, the media should take serious considerations in adopting a diversity policy, both with regard to the content of the offered programs as to the composition of the

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60 Princes Maxima was born and raised in Argentina.
media organization. Lastly, Muslims should be more intensely involved in media output. This can be done by accepting more Muslim journalists, columnists and editors.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

As the research sample of this study was small and idiosyncratic, it is hard to make predictions on the attitudes of the entire Muslim population in the Netherlands, or even Amsterdam at large. While this research provides a good indication of the prevalent opinions and experiences among Amsterdam’s Muslim youth regarding the impact of Wilders and the increasing levels of Islamophobia upon their lives, further quantitative research is needed to validate the results presented in this thesis for the entire Muslim population in the Netherlands.
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Appendix I: Description of the movie Fitna

Fitna opens with the disputed Danish cartoons of prophet Mohammed. The first shot of the movie shows Mohammed with a turban and a bomb on top of it. The movie consists of two parts. The first part starts with the display of an open book in which the right page reads; Quran, Surah 8, verse 60 and on the left page the text; “Prepare for them whatever force and cavalry ye are able of gathering ... to strike terror... to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies, of Allah and your enemies.” Simultaneously, a male voice recites this text in Arabic. After which video fragments of the 9/11 attacks, the attacks in Madrid of March 11, 2004 and the attacks in London of July 7, 2005 are shown. There are shots of people who jump of the WTC center, and voice recordings of those people who were left behind in the twin tours who, while talking, were scorched by the heat. Dead bodies are lying on the floor of the metro. The havoc is enormous. These shots are alternated with preaching imams; “What makes Allah happy? Allah is happy when non-Muslims get killed. Annihilate the infidels and the polytheists. Your (Allah’s) enemies and the enemies of the religion. Allah, count them and kill them to the last one and don’t leave even one.”

Then a new page with a new verse from the Quran follows, Surah 4, verse 56; “Those who have disbelieved our signs we shall roast them in fire... whenever their skins are cooked to a turn, we shall substitute new skins for them... that they may feel the punishment: surely Allah is sublime and wise.” A man says; “Allah permits us, oh Nation of Mohammed, even the stone will say ,Oh Muslim’ a Jew is hiding behind me come and cut off his head. And we shall cut of his head. By Allah, we shall cut it off! Oh Jews! Allahu Akbar!” This scene is followed by a shot of a little girl. A voice asks her who the Jews are. The girls says; “They’re apes and pigs.” The voice asks; Who said so? The girl responds; “Allah.” The voice asks; Where did he say this? The girl answers; “In the Quran.” The next few shots show a crowd of people dragging a dead body over the ground, an exploded red bus and metro. Then an imam is showed preaching; “The Jews are Jews. They are the ones who must be butchered and killed.” This is followed by a scene showing a group of demonstrators holding up signs stating “Be prepared for the real holocaust” and “god bless Hitler.” This scene is closed by showing a group of Arabic man who bring the Hitler salute.

A new page appears, displaying Surah 47, verse 4; “Therefore when ye meet the unbelievers, ... smite at their necks and when ye have caused a bloodbath among them... bind a bond firmly on them.” After this Surah, a newspaper article is displayed bringing the news of the murder of Theo van Gogh. A sound fragments follows with the voice of Van Gogh’s murderer; Mohammed Bouyeri who says; “If I had the possibility to get out of prison and I had the opportunity to do it again what I did on November 2nd, Allah, I would have done exactly the same!” A crowd of people appears who shout; “Take lessons of Theo van Gogh. Take lessons from the examples you can see! For you will pay with your blood.” A news article appears; “Hirsi Ali and Wilders in hiding. Hit list. Targets in letter Mohammed B. [Bouyeri].” Someone at a Saudi TV channel (Iqra TV) says; “Houses and young men must be sacrificed. Throats must be slit and skulls must be shattered. This is the path to victory.” This is followed by the decapitation of a prisoner, who is first forced to read a statement. The decapitation itself is not shown, but the decapitated head is.

The second part of the movie is titled; “The Netherlands under the spell of Islam.” A frightening image of the influence of the Islam upon the Netherlands is constructed through the use of newspaper articles and film fragments. This part starts with a shot of mosques and a newspaper article stating; “Cabinet: No ban on the burqa.” Visualized diagrams show that the number of Muslims in the Netherland between 1909 and 2004 have raised from 54 to 944,000. A graph displaying the number of Muslims in Europe starts with 54,000 and ends somewhere outside of the film frame. In the frame the question “The Netherlands in the future?” appears followed with shots of gays who are hung, children being circumcised and a veiled women shot through the head. The next scene shows a number of newspaper articles with headlines including; “explosive increase honor killings Amsterdam,” “Jihad-lessons in elementary school,” “Foreign imams allowed in more quickly,” “Almost half young Moroccans anti-western,” “Hamas gathers in Rotterdam,” “Imams don’t like gays,”
“Mosque turning the Netherlands into a Muslim state,” “Girls still genitaly mutilated” and finally “Al-Qaeda proclaims death penalty jihad against Wilders.”

The movie ends with a news paper article stating “Quran license to kill.” Then a Quran is shown and a hand lifting op one page, which disappears slowly from the screen followed by a sound suggesting that pages from the wholly book are being ripped out. However, after this a voice says; “The sound you heard was a page being removed from the phonebook. For it is not up to me, but to Muslims themselves to tear out the hateful verses from the Quran. Muslims want to make way for Islam, but Islam does not make way for you. The government insists that you respect Islam, but Islam has no respect for you. Islam wants to rule, submit, and seeks to destroy our western civilization. In 1945, Nazism was defeated in Europe. In 1989 Communism was defeated in Europe. Now, the Islamic ideology has to be defeated. Stop Islamization. Defend our freedom.”

61 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUeb_13jS18&NR=1
Appendix II: List of interviewed professionals

1) Andries Tijssens (D66, Amsterdam North), Amsterdam, 30-08-2010

2) Kees Diepenveen (GL, Amsterdam North), Amsterdam, 03-09-2010

3) Bob Plantinga, (VVD, Amsterdam North), Amsterdam, 25-08-2010

4) Abdelhak Belkasmi (PvdA, Amsterdam North), Amsterdam, 24-08-2010

5) Cihan Ural (GL, Amsterdam North), Amsterdam, 25-08-2010

6) Renee Boomkens, Professor in social and cultural philosophy, Rijks Universiteit Groningen, 06-09-2010.

7) Ewoud Butter, ABC Kenniscentrum / moderator republiek Allochtonie, Amsterdam, 9-10-2010

8) Yassmine El Ksaihi, Chair women of the Polder Mosque, Amsterdam, 11-10-2010

9) Halim El Madkouri, Program manager religion & Identity at FORUM (institute for multicultural issues), Utrecht, 24-08-2010

10) Roemer van Oordt, Zasja, Project leader anti-radicalization „Preventing is better than healing”, Amsterdam, 7-10-2010

11) Zakariya Lyousoufi, Project leader Social Cohesion City district Slotervaart, Amsterdam, 26-09-2010
Appendix III: Anti-Wilders initiatives online

Nederland Bekent Kleur (The Netherlands Acknowledges Color) 
http://www.nederlandbekentkleur.nl/petitie.html

Stop Wilders Nu (Stop Wilders Now): http://www.stopwilders.nu/

Stop-Geertje.Hyves (Stop little Wilders hyves): http://stop-geertje.hyves.nl/

Anti-Wilders.Hyves: http://anti-wilders.hyves.nl/


StopWilders Facebook: http://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Stop-Wilders/182317335138

Anti-Wilders nieuws! (Anti-Wilders news!): http://www.youtube.com/user/672J

Tegen Haat Zaaien (Against Sowing Hatred): http://www.tegenhaatzaaien.nl/

GeenWilders: http://www.geenwilders.nl/

AntiFacistischeActie (Anti-Facist Action): http://www.afanederland.org/

Gratis stickers tegen de PVV (Free stickers against the PVV): http://nl.indymedia.org/nl/2010/02/65425.shtml

Wilders Sluit ook jou uit! (Wilders also excludes you!): http://www.wilderssluitookjouuit.nl/
Appendix III: Statistics Survey

Q 1: Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City district</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City center</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New-West</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westpoort</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Gender of the respondents](image1.png)

![Figure 2: Ethnic background respondents](image2.png)
Q 2: What do you feel when you hear Geert Wilders speaking about Islam? (Multiple answers possible)
Q 3: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Average score</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The increasing popularity of the PVV frightens me</td>
<td>37,1%</td>
<td>32,0%</td>
<td>15,5%</td>
<td>7,2%</td>
<td>8,2%</td>
<td>2,18</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand why the Dutch vote for the PVV</td>
<td>3,1%</td>
<td>46,9%</td>
<td>20,8%</td>
<td>16,7%</td>
<td>12,5%</td>
<td>2,89</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PVV will not negatively affect the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims</td>
<td>8,2%</td>
<td>8,2%</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>24,5%</td>
<td>53,1%</td>
<td>1,94</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The emergence of anti-Islam parties does not make me feel less welcome in Dutch society</td>
<td>11,3%</td>
<td>17,5%</td>
<td>15,5%</td>
<td>23,7%</td>
<td>32,0%</td>
<td>2,53</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel completely accepted as a Muslim in Dutch society</td>
<td>6,3%</td>
<td>9,4%</td>
<td>19,8%</td>
<td>32,3%</td>
<td>32,3%</td>
<td>2,25</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dutch do not see me more negatively because of Wilders</td>
<td>8,2%</td>
<td>13,4%</td>
<td>28,9%</td>
<td>20,6%</td>
<td>28,9%</td>
<td>2,52</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My perception of the Dutch did not change due to the election results</td>
<td>11,3%</td>
<td>20,6%</td>
<td>25,5%</td>
<td>32,0%</td>
<td>10,3%</td>
<td>2,91</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I frequently interact with people from a different ethnic or religious background</td>
<td>22,7%</td>
<td>21,6%</td>
<td>26,3%</td>
<td>18,6%</td>
<td>10,3%</td>
<td>3,28</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did not experience more discrimination since the emergence of Wilders</td>
<td>15,2%</td>
<td>22,8%</td>
<td>32,6%</td>
<td>20,7%</td>
<td>8,7%</td>
<td>3,15</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a positive future in the Netherlands</td>
<td>14,3%</td>
<td>26,5%</td>
<td>30,6%</td>
<td>19,4%</td>
<td>9,2%</td>
<td>2,83</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the rights I have to practice my religion in the Netherlands</td>
<td>19,6%</td>
<td>45,4%</td>
<td>20,6%</td>
<td>11,3%</td>
<td>3,1%</td>
<td>2,33</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1: Strongly agree; 2: Agree; 3: Neutral; 4: Disagree; 5: Strongly disagree
Q 4: If you experience the increasing popularity of the PVV as a threat, please specify for which reasons. (multiple answers possible)

- The threat that I will have to give up my cultural identity (28, 28.6%)
- The threat that I might lose some of my rights as a Muslim (44, 44.9%)
- The threat that an increasing part of the population develops feelings hostile towards Islam (61, 62.2%)
- The threat that I might lose the right to freely practice my religion (49, 50%)
- Stricter immigration policies (25, 25.5%)
- Physical presence of extreme right-wing youth on the streets (22, 22.4%)
- An unsafe feeling because the PVV incites hatred and racism against Muslims (77, 78.6%)

Q 5: Are you satisfied with the way in which other political parties have deal with Geert Wilders?

- Yes, I am happy with the way they deal with Wilders (3, 3%)
- Only with certain individual politicians (31, 31%)
- No, they let Wilders say what ever they want (57, 57%)
- I don’t know (9, 9%)

Do you think that other political parties are taking an appropriate stance against Wilders?
Q 6: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Average score</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More initiatives should be taken to stimulate inter-ethnic contacts</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcing Muslims to give up their cultural / religious identity creates</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcing Muslims to give up their cultural / religious identity creates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suppression of cultural / religious identities can lead to radicalization</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>2.11%</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppression of cultural / religious identities can lead to radicalization</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1: Strongly agree; 2: Agree; 3: Neutral; 4: Disagree; 5: Strongly disagree

Q 7: By which factor(s) do you identify yourself?
Q 8: Who do you hold responsible for the difficulties you face today as a Muslim in Dutch society? (multiple answers possible)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute numbers</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nobody</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>34,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>16,3</td>
<td>67,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dutch population</td>
<td>16,3</td>
<td>67,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The media</td>
<td>21,4</td>
<td>67,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other political parties</td>
<td>21,4</td>
<td>67,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geert Wilders</td>
<td>21,4</td>
<td>67,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q 9: What do you see as the causes of any discomfort, anger, frustration etc. you face functioning in Dutch society? (Open Question)

Q 10: If you were the boss in the Netherlands. What would you like to change? (Open Question)
Appendix V: Topic-list Focus-groups

Invitation for a discussion group about the rise of Geert Wilders and the PVV.

For who? Muslims between the age of 15-35
Where and when? Amsterdam, 21 September, 2010 at 17:30 pm in Moroccan Youth Center Argan
The Hague, 6 October, 2010 at 18: 30 pm in Youth Center 'Le Papillon'.

To complete my Masters of Arts in Political Science at the American University in Cairo, Egypt, I am doing research on the emergence of right-wing populism in the Netherlands. Geert Wilders and the PVV can be seen as the most recent embodiment of this trend. There has been a lot written lately as to why the Dutch vote for the PVV and where the dissatisfaction with the multicultural society stems from. There is however still very little research done about how Muslims experience these developments, the impact it has upon their personal lives, what they see as the causes of the tense social climate and what they think should change in Dutch society and politics. To get a good picture about this, I need your help! Hereby I invite you to discuss the six questions below in youth centre Argan:

Q 1: How do you feel when you hear Geert Wilders speak about the Islam?

Q 2: Do you feel at home in the Netherlands? Do you think that other people see you as a Dutch citizen? Or rather as a „foreigner” or a „Muslim”? And how do you see this yourself? And how do you see your future here?

Q 3: Do you think that people have started to think differently about Muslims since the emergence of Wilders in Dutch politics and media? and does this affect your personal life? Do you think differently about the Dutch population after the 2010 elections?

Q 4: What do you think has caused anti-Islam sentiment in the Netherlands? Who do you see as responsible for any negative experiences you might have had in participating in Dutch society?

Q 5: If you were the boss of the Netherlands, what would you like to change in terms of the social and political climate? And how do you think this could be realized?

Per question we will take approximately 10-15 minutes for discussion. All in all, the focus group will last for about 1, 5 hour. We will take a short break in between.
Appendix VI: Topic list interviews (case-study participants)

1. How important is being a Muslim for you? Do you feel you have sufficient rights to practice your religion in the Netherlands?
2. What do you think about the government policies on immigration and integration?
3. What do you feel when you hear Geert Wilders speak about the Islam?
4. Do have understanding for those who voted for the PVV?
5. Are you willing to give up more of your cultural and/or religious identity to be accepted as a Dutch citizen?
6. Are you happy with the current social climate in the Netherlands?
7. Did you ever experience discrimination? And how was this before the rise of Geert Wilders?
8. What do you think will the effect of Wilder’s political victory be on the Dutch society?
9. What do you think will happen when Wilders will become part of the new cabinet?
10. Do you feel at home in the Netherlands? How do you see your future here?
11. Do you think that other people see you as a Dutch citizen? Or rather as a „foreigner” or a „Muslim”? And how do you see this yourself?
12. Do you think that people have started to think differently about Muslims since the emergence of Wilders in Dutch politics and media? and does this affect your personal life? Do you think differently about the Dutch population after the 2010 elections?
13. Do you socialize more with people who share your ethnic background or religious beliefs than with people who don’t? and why?
14. [For those who interviewees who stated to have negative experiences participating in Dutch society]: who or what do you see as the cause behind these negative experiences? And who do you see as responsible for solving these issues?
15. What would make your life more pleasant?
16. If you were the boss of the Netherlands would you like to change anything in terms of the social and political climate? And how do you think this could be realized?
17. What can Muslims themselves do to improve their social status?