

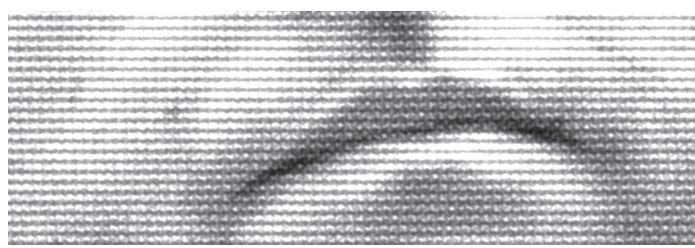
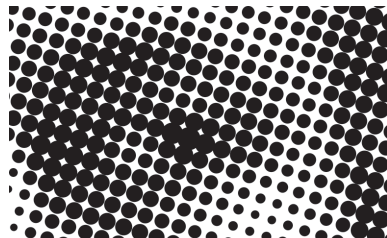
borderless



The new
R I G H T in the
NETHERLANDS



ALEX DE JONG



Borderless brochure Published by Grenzeloos

The New Right in the Netherlands

Alex de Jong is a historian, co-director of the International Institute for Research and Education in Amsterdam and an editor of the website Grenzeloos. From 2008 to 2013 he was editor of the journal Grenzeloos. He also wrote the brochure 'The long march of the SP, from maoist splinter to social-democratic mass party.'

This brochure can be ordered by transferring €4 to account NL25 INGB 0005 5716 38, Grenzeloos, mentioning: 'The New Right in the Netherlands' please indicate clearly to which adres the brochure should be sent. Contact us if you want to order multiple copies: redactie@grenzeloos.org.

Borderless brochure Published by Grenzeloos
www.grenzeloos.org

Price: € 2,50

layout: Fleur Heinze



'The Dutch people has no equal'¹ - National-populism in the Netherlands

The Netherlands has a reputation for being a tolerant, open society. Part of the explanation for the durability of this myth is that the Netherlands for a long time lacked a party like the French *Front National* or the Belgium *Vlaams Blok*; a party that was commonly recognized to be racist and on the far-right and which also had electoral success. But in recent years, the Dutch far-right has evolved into one of the most successful ones of the European continent in terms of electoral success and influence on national politics. In some respects its leader, Geert Wilders, has overtaken other parties such as the Danish People's Party on the right and he is looking to form an alliance with the former bogeymen *Front National* and *Vlaams Belang*. That Wilders, after years of trying to keep his distance from them, even tried to form a caucus in the European parliament with these parties is indicative of his political evolution.

Geert Wilders has become a major political figure in the Netherlands. At the elections in 2012 his PVV (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*, Party for Freedom) gained over ten per cent of the vote and played a crucial role in the formation of the first administration of prime minister Mark Rutte from October 2010 to November 2012. In many ways Wilders is the political heir of Pim Fortuyn, a Dutch politician who after a meteoric rise was murdered on May 6, 2002 and who played a crucial role in mobilizing a new right-wing current in Dutch politics. After his death, a number of would-be heirs came and went until Wilders managed to stabilize his position. In the years since Wilders left his old party, the right-wing liberal VVD (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy), he has steadily moved further right. As he did so, he has exercised considerable influence on Dutch politics and society. Wilders is now the most prominent representative of a 'national-populist' current in the Netherlands. We will see how Pim Fortuyn played a crucial role in shaping this national-populism.

Populism is here defined as an ideological feature, and not merely as a political style. Populism 'considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite,' - it argues that politics should be an expression of the will of this 'people'.² The 'people' then are not

¹ Quote from the 2010 election program of the PVV. PVV, *De agenda van hoop en optimisme. Een tijd om te kiezen; PVV 2010 - 2015*, 2010, p. 5.

² Cas Mudde, *Populist radical right parties in Europe*, Cambridge University

the whole of society, but rather that part of the whole that is considered pure and whose political will is considered legitimate. The 'people' is a partial object that stands in for the whole. Who is part of the 'people' is not objectively given: the borders of this category are socially contested, the selection of those considered part of it and those who are not is a political act. Selecting and representing this 'people' creates a new agency out of a heterogeneous group.³

Different kinds of populism use different criteria to shape this new agency. Populism is often combined with other ideologies to produce the criteria that shape the borders of 'the people'. The criteria can be social-economic as in the contradiction between those from 'below' and those who are 'above' in the rhetoric of left-wing populists like Hugo Chávez. But the criteria can also be cultural, for example when populism is combined with nationalism which strives for the congruence of the nation and the state, of the cultural and the political. Fortuyn's populism was nationalist in that it called for the assimilation of an 'alien' minority culture into 'Dutchness'. In this combination, in 'national-populism', the populist 'people' and the nation tend to overlap. The term 'people' has an historical, ethnic connotation, and the partial object that stands in for the whole in national-populism is a nation that isn't equal to the citizenry.

Nationalist trailblazers

Fortuyn combined his Dutch nationalism with populism and right-wing, anti-left liberalism, laying the ideological groundwork for a new current in Dutch politics. Wilhelmus Simon Petrus Fortuijn was born in 1948 in a catholic, petty-bourgeois family in Driehuis, a small town in the north of Holland (he would later spell his name as 'Fortuyn', considering this looked more distinguished). After studying sociology, he taught 'critical sociology' at the University of Groningen in the early seventies. In 1972, he applied for membership in the Dutch Communist Party but he was rejected because of his association with Ger Harmsen, a Marxist who had broken with the party in the fifties. Fortuyn joined the social-democratic PvdA (Partij van de Arbeid, Labour Party), of which he would remain a member until 1989. In 1990 he would move to port-city Rotterdam, the second largest city in the country. During the eighties and nineties, as his views became more and more right-wing, Fortuyn first worked for different government organisations and then created his own political consultancy firm. From 1991 to 1995 he was a professor by special appointment at the Erasmus University Rotterdam teaching

Press: Cambridge, 2007, p. 23.

³ Ernesto Laclau, *On populist reason*, Verso: London 2005, p. 204.

'employment conditions in the public service'. Years later, Fortuyn would still (wrongly) claim the title 'professor'.

During the nineties Fortuyn became a public figure. He wrote a regular column in Elsevier, a right-liberal weekly, and started to appear on television. On *Business Class*, a talk-show produced and hosted by businessman Harry Mens, 'professor Pim' became one of the regular commentators on current affairs, arguing for strict neoliberal economic policies and cutting back social services. Fortuyn put down his thoughts in several books. A book like *De verweesde samenleving* ('The Orphaned Society'⁴) showed him to be a conservative cultural pessimist, decrying the loss of community in the modern Netherlands, the decline of patriarchal authority figures (hence the title) and the erosion of (vaguely defined) social norms and values. In *Tegen de islamisering van onze cultuur* ('Against the Islamization of Our Culture') he in particular declared 'Islamic culture' to be a threat to Dutch society. According to Fortuyn, under the influence of individualism and 'cultural relativism', Dutch people risked, losing their own identity to this 'backward' culture.⁵

The threat was a monolithic 'Islamic culture', framed as naturally grown, uniform, and a-historical. From Fortuyn's perspective, 'Islam' was not only a religion, it was a world-view and political ideology as well. Fortuyn deemed Islamic culture to be incompatible with being Dutch and motivated his anti-immigration policies as a necessary defence of Dutch society against the 'Islamic threat'. In August 2001, Fortuyn called for a new 'cold war', this time against Islam; 'I also favour a cold war against Islam. I see Islam as being an exceptional threat, as a society hostile to ours'.⁶

Fortuyn was not the first to employ such a discourse. An important step in introducing such views into the Dutch political mainstream was a 1991 speech by future European Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Frits Bolkestein. He was then the political leader of the right-wing liberal VVD, one of the major parties in Dutch

⁴ Pim Fortuyn, *De verweesde samenleving. Een religieus-sociologisch traktaat*, Uithoorn: Karakter, 2002.

⁵ Rob Witte, 'Al eeuwen lang een gastvrij volk' *Racistisch geweld en overheidsreacties in Nederland 1950 - 2009*, Aksant: Amsterdam 2010, p. 133. Pim Fortuyn, *Tegen de islamisering van onze cultuur: Nederlandse identiteit als fundament*, Utrecht: Bruna, 1997. Pim Fortuyn, *De verweesde samenleving. Een religieus-sociologisch traktaat*, Uithoorn: Karakter, 2002.

⁶ Aangifte tegen Fortuyn wegens discriminatie, *De Volkskrant*, 2 November 2011, online at [<http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/605866/2001/11/02/Aangifte-tegen-Fortuyn-wegens-discriminatie.dhtml>].

politics. In a speech for a meeting of the Liberal International in 1991 Bolkestein posited a contradiction between European and Christian civilisation and the culture of the Middle-East and Islam.⁷ In this discourse, democracy and Human Rights became products of a single European culture, instead of the results of political conflicts inside different cultures. Likewise, Fortuyn assimilated political concepts like the separation of church and state or equal rights for women and homosexuals into the supposedly threatened Dutch culture.

Bolkestein was a pioneer of a discourse that declared that the 'integration' into society of (Islamic) immigrants to the Netherlands (mainly migrant workers and their families who had begun immigrating to the Netherlands in the sixties) had failed. He argued that this failure was due to their 'culture', that this meant the 'integration' of their children had also failed, that because of this failure, their children were part of the culture of their parents and not that of their homeland, and that it was the responsibility of migrant communities to overcome this supposed failure.⁸ Before then, such rhetoric about such a binary contradiction between Islamic and European culture had been the domain of marginalized far-right parties but Bolkestein was a respected member of the political establishment.

Unlike the elitist Bolkestein, who cultivated a patrician image, Fortuyn combined the culturalist principle that people's behaviour is determined by closed cultures, with populism. For Fortuyn, Dutch 'culture', including the democratic gains he claimed were part of it, were in danger because for years the elites of the Netherlands had refused to recognize the 'threat' of Islamic culture due to being 'blinded' by progressive and multiculturalist ideology, Fortuyn appealed to 'the Dutch people' to defend their culture.

In Fortuyn's discourse Dutch people are construed to be tolerant while society's cultural 'others', especially Muslims, are construed as intolerant. An illustration of this is the early 2001 'El Moumni affair'. In May 2001 the Rotterdam imam El-Moumni, who is of Moroccan descent, made comments on national television arguing that homosexuality was an illness threatening reproduction and society in general. The comments caused upheaval in Dutch society: people especially took offence because these views came from a cultural other, from 'the outside'. In public discourse, Islam has become more and more construed as antagonistic to modern, tolerant, Dutch 'values'. Being 'tolerant' of homosexuality is considered one of the markers of Dutch culture and one of the demonstrations of the

⁷ Witte, (2010), p. 100.

⁸ Willem Schinkel, *De gedroomde samenleving*, Klement: Kampen, 2011.

superiority of this culture in contrast to 'Islam culture' which is construed as homogeneously and inherently homophobic. This theme has remained an important element in Dutch national-populism. Increasingly restrictive demands regarding immigration and (Islamic) culture are framed as defence of 'Dutch tolerance'.⁹

From the margins to the centre

Open anti-immigrant sentiments had generally been 'repressed and stigmatized' in the Dutch public sphere, which was characterized by a strong drive towards consensus and thus the avoidance of political conflicts. Fortuyn attacked this culture of seeking consensus as such and attacked Muslims for their supposedly 'backward' culture, but not for their ethnicity as such or for being immigrants.¹⁰ In this way, Fortuyn could distance himself from the pseudo-scientific biological racism of the extreme-right which at the time that was too strongly associated with the horrors of Nazism to be politically successful. Fortuyn's avoidance of the charge of 'racism' by claiming he wasn't targeting individuals or a 'race' but a 'culture' or 'religion' remains a standard argument on the Dutch right. In practice, the categories constantly overlap and the distinction often becomes meaningless. In the mid nineties, Fortuyn for example wrote that he considered it impossible for people to 'leave their culture behind'.¹¹ And in a famous interview with the daily *De Volkskrant* Fortuyn's discussion of 'Islam' segued into linking crime to ethnicity; 'Moroccan youth never steal from a Moroccan. Did you ever notice that? But we can be robbed.'¹² Characteristically, 'Moroccans', included people who were born and raised in the Netherlands, with the Dutch nationality.

⁹ Paul Mepschen, 'Against Tolerance: Islam, Sexuality, and the Politics of Belonging in the Netherlands' June 13, 2009 in *MRZine*, online at [<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2009/mepschen130709.html>].

¹⁰ Merijn Oudenampsen, 'Explaining the swing to the right. The Dutch debate on the rise of right-wing populism' in Ruth Wodak, Majid Khosravini, Brigitte Mal (ed.) *Right-wing populism in Europe. Politics and discourse* Bloomsbury Academic: London, 2013, p. 203.

¹¹ Pim Fortuyn, *De verweesde samenleving. Een religieus-sociologisch traktaat*, Uithoorn: Karakter, 2002, p. 198.

¹² Frank Poorthuis and Hans Wansink, 'Pim Fortuyn op herhaling: 'De islam is een achterlijke cultuur' May 5, 2012 in *De Volkskrant*, online at [<http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/611698/2012/05/05/Pim-Fortuyn-op-herhaling-De-islam-is-een-achterlijke-cultuur.dhtml>]. This is a republication of the original interview of February 9, 2002.

After the end of the Second World War, extreme-right and anti-immigrant parties remained small in the Netherlands.¹³ Small, far-right groups in which ageing Nazi's played leading roles like the *Nationaal Europese Sociale Beweging* (National European Social Movement) were banned by the government. During the sixties, the *Boerenpartij* (Farmers Party, BP) had some electoral success, winning up to seven seats in parliament. Although not radical-right wing as such, the BP's 'diffuse national-conservative programme'¹⁴ did attract a part of the far-right. The association with the far-right and old Nazi's placed a heavy burden on the party and it was plagued by splits. By the end of the sixties, it had lost its appeal. During the seventies, the Dutch far-right was dominated by the *Nederlandse Volks-Unie* (Dutch People's Union, NVU), a clear neo-Nazi party. It never grew beyond a few hundred members and was nearly banned as a criminal association.

In an attempt to escape the legal restrictions Dutch law places on propagating racism and the association with historical Nazism, more 'moderate' members of the NVU and other far-right activists organized several far-right parties during the eighties. The *Centrumpartij* (Centre Party, CP), and its successors (*Centrum Democraten*, CD and *Centrumpartij '86*, Centre Party '86) had some more success. This so-called 'centre-current' tried to keep its distance from historical Nazism and fascism and from openly (biologically) racist statements, instead focusing on opposing 'immigration'. The centre-current had some electoral success in the eighties and early nineties. The CP won one parliament seat in 1982 and its successor CD won three parliament seats in 1994. Different far-right parties were able to win dozens of council seats in those years.

But these parties were badly organized and lacked competent activists. Their appeal was severely limited by their association with violence, anti-Semitism and historical fascism. The centre-parties were excluded by the other political parties, and put under pressure from anti-racist activists and media. The centre-current never stabilized as a factor in Dutch politics, instead remaining a fairly marginal and isolated grouping of outcasts and the querulous.

Fortuyn however was very different. Like Bolkestein, he strongly distanced himself from the extreme-right parties at time and from any historical references to fascism. Fortuyn was a supporter of parliamentary democracy. Maybe unexpectedly considering his moral conservatism, Fortuyn flaunted his homosexuality. This too helped

¹³ Cas Mudde, *The ideology of the extreme right*, Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2000, p. 117 - 121.

¹⁴ Mudde, (2000), p. 118.

him to avoid being marginalized as 'far-right'. Another element that set Fortuyn apart from the existing far-right was that he wasn't anti-Semitic. He also was a supporter of Israel and a right-wing Zionist, which he saw as part of his opposition to 'Islamization'.

Instead of just representing a anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim potential in society, Fortuyn also won new support for his ideas, a mix of moral conservatism and economic liberalism that integrated elements of the Dutch progressive liberal hegemony that had come into being after '68'.^{15, 16} By linking his attacks on the Muslim minority to Muslims' supposed views on democracy, women's rights and equal rights for homosexuals, he also appealed to people who considered themselves to be 'progressive'. Fortuyn's political innovations allowed people to support an anti-immigrant politician without breaking the taboo on (biological) racism. This way, Fortuyn did more than represent an already existing constituency, he was very successful in shaping and voicing anti-immigrant and anti-minority views.

In biological racism 'inheritance determined all the essential characteristics of human beings. And the quality of inheritance rested not only on individuals and families, but on the entire racial group to which they belonged'.¹⁷ In national-populism, cultural othering has replaced racial othering; 'culture' has replaced 'race' as the category of a hierarchical difference between a inferior 'out-group' (for Fortuyn and those following in his tracks, the target are especially Muslims) and the superior in-group. It is 'a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences'.¹⁸

During the nineties, Fortuyn had without success tried to start a political career in right-wing parties. But in the parliamentary elections of 2002 Fortuyn became the frontrunner for a new national party, *Leefbaar Nederland*, (LN 'Liveable Netherlands'). LN was built

¹⁵ Merijn Oudenampsen, 'De politiek van populisme onderzoek. Een kritiek op Diplomademocratie en de verklaring van populisme uit kiezersgedrag' in: Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) '*Power to the people!*' *Een anatomie van het populisme*, Den Haag: Boom Lemma, 2012, p. 17 - 49. Merijn Oudenampsen, 'De revolte van nieuwrechts. Neoconservatisme en postprogressieve politiek', in: *Krisis. Tijdschrift voor actuele filosofie*, #1, 2013, p. 72 - 88.

¹⁶ Rogier van Reekum, 'It's the performance, stupid!' in Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) '*Power to the people!*' *Een anatomie van het populisme*, Den Haag : Boom Lemma, 2012, p. 53.

¹⁷ Eric D.Weitz, *A century of genocide. Utopias of race and nation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, p. 49.

¹⁸ Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, nation, class. Ambiguous identities*, London: Verso, 2005 [1991], p.21.

on the success of similar local parties like *Leefbaar Rotterdam* (LR). A few months before, Fortuyn was a candidate for LR and won 30 % of the vote. *Leefbaar* combined a populist style of claiming to speak on behalf of 'common people' with criticism of various issues that were seen as neglected by the other parties, varying from insecurity in the public domain to the problems caused by bureaucracy, from trains arriving too late to long waiting periods for certain kinds of medical treatment. Fortuyn wasn't the ideal candidate for *Leefbaar Nederland*. Some of the people who launched the party had only recently left the PvdA and especially on social-economic issues were closer to a vague left-centrism than to Fortuyn. Fortuyn's cold war against Islam did not necessarily appeal strongly to them. But *Leefbaar Nederland* lacked suitable candidates and the skilful Fortuyn had already built himself an audience.

The marriage of convenience between LN and Fortuyn did not last long. A few months before the elections, on February 9, 2002, in an interview with *De Volkskrant*, one of the major news papers in the country, Fortuyn declared that he wanted to abolish Article 1 of the Dutch constitution. This article bans discrimination and declares equal treatment for everybody. Fortuyn wanted to abolish it because it prevents policies discriminating against Muslims. He also argued against the Geneva treaty on refugees because he wanted to drastically restrict immigration. Especially singled out again were Muslims and people whose ethnic origins are in Muslim majority countries. In the same interview Fortuyn declared the Netherlands was 'full', and said that if it was up to him, not a single asylum-seeker would be allowed in the country.¹⁹ The LN leadership, already uneasy with Fortuyn, had earlier forbidden him to make such statements and he was removed from the party.

In April 2002 Fortuyn had already formed his own party; the *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF). Including on economic issues the LPF was clearly more right-wing than *Leefbaar Nederland*. In late 2001 Fortuyn declared that the only possible coalition-partners for a government with the LPF were the VVD and the Christian-Democratic CDA. Fortuyn wanted to further liberalise the labour market, push down wages and drastically cut social security. Fortuyn had gathered substantial support criticising long waiting lists for certain kinds of medical care and shortcomings in care for the elderly. He maintained a neoliberal response to these issues; no extra government spending but further liberalisation of healthcare, higher costs for patients and arguing that making those working in the caring sector work 'more efficient'

¹⁹ Frank Poorthuis and Hans Wansink, (2012).

would supposedly solve the problems.²⁰ Fortuyn boasted the LPF received millions of Euros from his contacts in the real-estate sector. Referring to the elections in May that he hoped to win; 'don't be surprised if after May 15 the land policies change drastically'.²¹

The incumbent government, the 'purple' coalition of the PvdA and liberals, became hugely unpopular around the turn of the century. Fortuyn played an important role in fermenting this dissatisfaction. During the nineties, the Netherlands was governed by 'Purple' coalition governments that combined the main parties of the 'right' and the 'left', the VVD and the PvdA. Ideological differences largely disappeared from the political mainstream as both parties subscribed to an agenda of neoliberal economic policies and liberal policies on issues as gay and women's rights and individual self-determination. Lacking ideological clashes, Dutch politics became highly technocratic.

Fortuyn however presented himself as a newcomer, as somebody who would use his political power to improve Dutch society, and not just manage it. Fortuyn attacked the consensus-oriented model of politics as such because he saw it as hindering the introduction of the drastic kind of neoliberal structural reforms he wanted. His polemical style and sense of sarcasm appealed to many. Unlike the existing far-right at the time, or the national-populists who would come after him, he did not pose as an underdog, instead he showed off his personal wealth. The dandy-esque Fortuyn clearly stood out among the colourless technocrats of the major parties. Many of the frustrations people felt with the neoliberal Purple coalitions were blamed by Fortuyn on the supposed softness and naivety of the social-democrats of the PvdA. Fortuyn provided people with targets that could be made responsible for their problems; the smug 'left-wing elite' that had become alienated from the 'real world' and Muslims whose alien culture supposedly eroded the values that had kept Dutch society together.

But on 6 May, 2002, Pim Fortuyn was killed by an environmental activist, Volkert van der Graaf. At his trial, Van der Graaf declared he had killed him because Fortuyn was 'scapegoating' Muslims and was a threat to disadvantaged groups in society. The murder led to an dramatic uproar. It was commonly (although incorrectly) claimed this was the first political murder in the Netherlands since 1672. Thousands of people gathered to watch the car that brought

²⁰ Ewout Irrgang et al., *Leest u zijn boeken maar. De pimpelpearse antwoorden van Pim Fortuyn* Rotterdam: Wetenschappelijk Bureau SP, 2002, p. 20 - 22.

²¹ Ewout Irrgang et al., (2002), p. 33.

Fortuyn's body to his funeral, emotional viewers threw flowers in front of it. For many people Fortuyn had already become a hero figure and now he was a martyr.

The elections nine days later caused a political earthquake that left deep traces in the Dutch political landscape. On 15 May, 2002 the LPF received 15,7 % of the vote: with 26 seats (out of 150) it became out of nowhere the second party in parliament. With over 80 %, the turn-out for the elections was exceptionally high. The PvdA was hammered; it lost 22 of its 45 seats. Fortuyn had succeeded in pulling the political debate to the right. In the days after his death a strongly anti-left sentiment took hold in the country. Right-wing media commentators and Fortuyn's followers blamed his death on the supposed 'demonization' of him by progressive critics. 'The bullet came from the Left' was an oft repeated phrase. This, and Fortuyn's 'martyrdom', made criticising his ideas more difficult.

Together with the CDA and the VVD, the LPF formed a coalition that would last only 3 months. The inexperienced LPF quickly tore itself apart in fights between feuding individuals. Most of the LPF-parliamentarians were clearly inexperienced and none of them could assume the leadership role Fortuyn had. The coalition collapsed mid October. In the following elections of January 2003, the discredited LPF received only 5,6 % of the vote. The new coalition was made up of again the VVD, CDA and another liberal party, D66 (formerly known as 'Democrats 66'). The PvdA recovered and won 42 seats, becoming the second largest party. But the potential for an anti-immigrant party to the right of the VVD hadn't disappeared and different political forces would try to appeal to Fortuyn's followers. Of several would-be heirs, Geert Wilders has been the most successful. He has also moved much more to the right than Fortuyn ever did.

In Fortuyn's footsteps

Geert Wilders was born in 1963 in Venlo, in a catholic family in a small city in the periphery of the Netherlands. His father was deputy director of a factory producing printing and copying equipment. After high school, Wilders visited Israel and worked in a kibbutz north of Jericho. Several times, he had to seek shelter in a bunker during attacks. According to himself, during this time he fell in love with Israel, a country he considers his second home, and made him realize the risks of 'Islamic terrorism'. After returning to the Netherlands, he did his military service and started an unfinished law study. He became a public servant and worked for the Sociale Verzekeringsbank, the institute responsible for national insurances.

He would later say that this is where his distaste for bureaucracy comes from and that he became politically active because of his aversion to left-wing ideas.²²

Wilders had always voted VVD and in 1990 he decided to apply for a job with its parliamentary group. His inside knowledge of the complicated system of national insurances was an asset and he became an assistant to the parliamentary group. Wilders strongly admired Bolkestein and became a close associate of his. In 1997, Wilders became a member of the city-council of Utrecht where he had been living since 1985, and after the elections of May 1998 he became a member of the national parliament. Wilders would live in Utrecht until 2004 and claims that his time there was another key-point in his biography. When he moved to Utrecht, his neighbourhood (Kanaleneiland) was a quiet middle-class part of town. In recent years, it has become known as a neighbourhood with high crime-rates, high unemployment and a large Muslim community. Wilders says he witnessed dramatic changes, talking about all the times he 'had to run from his car to his front-door to come home safely'. In reality, he lived in the wealthier south of the neighbourhood and his memories of the time seem to be quite exaggerated.²³

In the late nineties and early 2000's, Wilders was known as a hard-working parliamentarian on the right wing of the VVD. Wilders regularly criticized the Labour Party, until 2002 coalition-partner of the VVD and, following the lead of his mentor Bolkestein, he made the supposed threat of Islamic fundamentalism one of his main themes. The 9-11 attacks came for Wilders as a confirmation of his worst fears. But in these years Wilders was also criticising Fortuyn for not distinguishing between ordinary Muslims and fundamentalist terrorists and for attacking Islamic culture as a whole. Wilders lost his seat in the elections of May 2002, but returned to parliament when a number of VVD parliamentarians who became functionaries in the new government had to give up their seats.

In the meantime, Bolkestein had left Dutch politics to become European Commissioner for Internal Market and Services. A few years later Wilders found another source of political inspiration in Ayaan Hirsi Ali. Hirsi Ali's father had been an opponent of Somali dictator Muhammad Siad Barre and the family left the country when Hirsi Ali

²² Hanan Nhass, 'Ik word gek van dat poldergedoe', in: *Trouw* July 23, 2003, online at [<http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/nieuws/archief/article/detail/1781138/2003/07/23/ik-word-gek-van-dat-poldergedoe.dhtml>.]

²³ Koen Vossen, *Rondom Wilders. Portret van de PVV*, Boom: Amsterdam, 2013, p. 20.

was six years old. Hirsi Ali came to the Netherlands in 1992 when she was 23 years old. To escape from an arranged marriage and apply for asylum, she changed her name and incorrectly claimed she came directly from a disaster area in Somalia. She became a Dutch citizen in 1995 and started to work for the scientific bureau of the PvdA in 2001. She became known for her criticism of the treatment of women in Islamic communities but felt the PvdA did not support her enough, especially after she started to receive threats from right-wing Muslims. Hirsi Ali moved from attacking certain abuses in Muslim communities like female genital mutilation to attacking Islam as such. In the post-Fortuyn Netherlands, there was a large audience for this argument. In 2002, the VVD offered her a high place on its list of candidates list and she became a member of parliament for the party.

A former fellow-parliamentarian of Wilders said that Hirsi Ali had a 'magical effect' on him.²⁴ Wilders and Hirsi Ali together developed what they called a 'critique of the Islamic religion' that saw the behaviour of Muslims as determined by their religion and that blamed the social-economic misery and lack of democracy in many Islamic countries as well as sexism and racism inside Muslim communities on the determining factor of their 'backward' culture. Together with Hirsi Ali, Wilders argued that liberal freedoms like the freedom of religion should 'under certain circumstances' not apply to Muslims and called for a 'liberal jihad' against radical Islam. A few years later Wilders would declare he had come to fully agree with Fortuyn's views on Muslims.²⁵

After the political earthquake of 2002, the VVD was divided on how to proceed. Unlike Bolkestein, who had sought to push the political debate to the right, its party leader after 1998, Hans Dijkstal, had a more centrist profile. Wilders would later criticise him for squandering Bolkestein's heritage. The VVD lost 13 seats in 2002, many of them to the LPF, and Dijkstal was replaced by more right-wing party-leaders. However, a part of the VVD still wanted the party to become broader and move closer to the social-liberalism of a party like D66.

On the other hand, Wilders wanted the party to become more right-wing, to fill the gap left by the implosion of the LPF and to appeal to right-wing Christian-Democrats. He argued for deeper cuts in social services, more restrictions of immigration and tougher law-and-order policies. Wilders was also fundamentally opposed to Turkey becoming a member of the European Union, a minority view in the VVD at the

²⁴ Paul Lucardie and Gerrit Voerman, *Populisten in de polder, Boom:* Amersfoort 2012, p. 153.

²⁵ Lucardie, Voerman, (2012), 154.

time. After he had been known for years as being on the right wing in the party, he became more and more isolated in the parliamentary group. It was not only the positions he took that isolated him but also his blunt and polarising way of voicing them, which other party-members felt was damaging the relationships with other parties, and that he openly criticized the VVD leadership. In June 2004 Wilders drafted a discussion document that argued for a rightward shift in the VVD. The paper was meant for internal discussion but was leaked to the media (a deliberate move by Wilders, according to his biographer Meindert Fennema).²⁶ For the VVD leadership, this was the last straw. In September 2004, the VVD and Wilders parted ways. Wilders kept his seat in parliament as a one man fraction and immediately declared he wanted to organise a new political movement.

Declaration of Independence

It would take Wilders two years before he organized a new party, the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV, Freedom Party). In the meantime, he refused an invitation to join the remnants of the LPF.

In these years, Wilders is best described as a neoconservative. In words that came close to George W. Bush 'compassionate conservatism', Wilders stated that his new movement would be 'social, right-wing and decent'. Wilders was a strong supporter of Bush, a 'president with guts' and of his 'war on terror'. He started collaborating with the Edmund Burke foundation, a new organisation of right-wing intellectuals that was trying to promote (neo)conservative ideas in the Dutch public debate. Around the same time Wilders started to receive death threats, something that would take on a whole new significance in the autumn of 2004.

In the morning of 2 November, 2004 the film-maker and columnist Theo van Gogh was murdered by an Islamic fundamentalist, Mohammed Bouyeri. Van Gogh was delighted in making reactionary statements, insulting gays, women, Jews and most of all Muslims to whom he consistently referred in terms like 'goatfuckers' or 'pimps of the prophet'. Van Gogh was also a supporter of Pim Fortuyn and Rita Verdonk, the right-wing VVD minister of immigration between 2003 and 2006. Verdonk implemented anti-migration policies that led to the deportation of refugees that had been in the country for years

²⁶ Meindert Fennema, *Geert Wilders. Tvenaarsleerling*, Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010, p. 82. Meindert Fennema is emeritus professor in Political Theory at the University of Amsterdam. However, his biography of Wilders presents a quite novelised story.

and loudly refused the calls for an 'amnesty' for undocumented migrants.

Van Gogh's murderer originally planned to kill Hirsi Ali. Van Gogh had cooperated with her to make the film '*Submission*' in which women tell of the way their oppression was justified by appeals on Islam. Probably because she was too well protected, Bouyeri chose to kill Van Gogh instead. Like Fortuyn's murder earlier, Van Gogh's death sent shock waves through Dutch society. The fact that the murderer was a Dutch Moroccan was taken as proof of the correctness of their anti-Muslim views by national-populists. In their eyes, 'the Left' had murdered Fortuyn, and now its 'ally', Islamic fundamentalism, had killed another one of them, Van Gogh, because he warned against the 'dangers' of Islam. Dozens of mosques and scores of people were attacked. The *Monitor Racisme en Extremisme*, a regular publication by the anti-racist Anne Frank foundation and the University of Leiden, recorded 106 cases of anti-Muslim violence between 2 and 30 November.²⁷ In the aftermath of Van Gogh's death, Wilders received extra protection. For a while, he lived at a military base and he is still under constant protection.

In the months after November 2004, Wilders' popularity increased sharply and in March 2005 he started to organise his new party. In the manifesto of his new movement, *Onafhankelijkheidsverklaring* ('Declaration of Independence') Wilders declared himself to be an opponent of the 'complacent political elite' that supposedly rules the Netherlands and that doesn't care enough about preserving 'our democratic rule of law, our safety, our prosperity and our independence'. According to Wilders, the European Union is becoming a 'superstate', threatening Dutch sovereignty. The supposed submission of the Netherlands to this EU superstate is the work of a political elite that is blinded by 'the so-called progressive spirit of the times'. Because of this, Dutch political life is dominated by 'political correctness, a megalomaniac administration, multiculturalism and submission to the bureaucrats in Brussels'.

Wilders wrote his 'Declaration of Independence' in cooperation with Joost Eerdmans, an LPF parliamentarian and Marco Pastors, who at the time was city councillor for *Leefbaar Rotterdam*.²⁸ But attempts of Wilders to form a new party with remnants of Fortuyn's parties failed – Wilders wanted to have complete control over the new party, hoping that this way he could avoid the fate of the LPF. Pastors and Eerdmans would later form their own national-populist party, *EenNL* (One Netherlands).

²⁷ Witte, (2010), p. 141.

²⁸ Fennema, (2010), p. 100.

A third collaborator in writing the manifesto was Bart Jan Spruyt, chair of the Edmund Burke foundation. Founded in 2000, the Edmund Burke foundation was a prominent voice of Dutch conservatism after the turn of the century. Spruyt took as his inspiration the conservative Heritage Foundation think-tank in the United States. Through publications and lecturers, the Edmund Burke foundation sought to spread the influence of (neo)conservative morality and of free-market ideas. For this, it received hundreds of thousands of Euros from the Baan brothers, Dutch software millionaires, and from corporations like Microsoft and pharmaceuticals producer Pfizer.²⁹

True to its neoconservative inspiration, the 'Declaration of Independence' was a mixture of nationalist rhetoric, moral conservatism, nativism (for example; immigrants should only after ten years and without a criminal record be able to apply for Dutch citizenship and only after this have a right to social security) and free-market policies. Wilders supported a flat (low) tax rate, abolishing the minimum-wage and attacking workers rights. The exception to such policies was the proposal to inject more money into care for the elderly. Before Wilders, Fortuyn had already skilfully exploited public indignation at the sometimes deplorable situation of the care-dependent elderly.

Spruyt saw it as one of his tasks to educate Wilders in the 'conservative canon' of thinkers like Thomas Hobbes, Edmund Burke and Leo Strauss.³⁰ Part of this was a tour around the US in early 2005 where Spruyt introduced Wilders to (neo)conservative think tanks and politicians. Among others, Wilders visited the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute and spoke with numerous Republican politicians like former Reagan and Bush advisor Richard Perle.³¹ Since then, Wilders has maintained good contacts with the US right.

In May 2005, Wilders used the referendum on the introduction of an European Union constitution to further build the nationalist and anti-EU side of his profile. Wilders campaigned against the constitution with nationalist rhetoric (the slogan was 'Nederland moet blijven', 'The Netherlands must remain'). Turnout for this referendum was 63 %, with almost 62 % voting against the proposal, despite that almost the whole parliamentary spectrum being in favour of the constitution. According to Martin Bosma, considered the 'ideologue' of the PVV,

²⁹ Pieter van Os, 'De Amerikaanse lobby. Hoe Pfizer en Microsoft Nederland beïnvloeden', in: *De Groene Amsterdammer*, #41, 2005, online at [<http://www.groene.nl/artikel/de-amerikaanse-lobby>].

³⁰ Vossen, (2013), p. 47.

³¹ Vossen, (2013), p. 49.

the result showed that 'the ideas of the elite are not the opinion of the people'. In reality, the most visible political force in the No-camp was the left-wing SP. Motivations for the no-vote varied from nationalism and anti-immigrant feelings to the desire to protect what was left of the welfare state against EU-regulations and a rejection of the neoliberal course of the EU.³²

The cooperation between Fortuyn-influenced populists and neoconservatives was not without contradictions. The populists were less consistent than somebody like Spruyt in their support for unfettered free-market policies and small government, as the example of more government spending for care of the elderly already showed. During the 2006 election campaign, it became clearer how anti-foreign sentiments took precedence over free-market principles. For instance, playing on nativist sentiments, the PVV supported closing the Dutch labour market to Poles. Education, a core issue for a conservative like Spruyt, disappeared into the background.

In 'Declaration of Independence' and the other early PVV programmatic document, *Een Nieuw-Realistische Visie op Samenleving en Politiek* ('A New Realistic Vision on Society and Politics') the populist discourse of 'the people', who are sensible, good and grounded in reality in opposition to a corrupt, ideologically blinded and weak political elite, sat uneasy with the conservative insistence on the cultivation of virtue and its disdain for mass-culture.³³ Proposals to make more public posts electable, e.g., mayors, police commissioners and members of the juridical courts, to abolish the senate and to introduce binding referenda were in contradiction with (neo)conservative elitism.

The cooperation between Spruyt and Wilders couldn't last. After his foundation had already significantly lost support because he had become too closely identified with one specific (and new) political party, Spruyt broke with Wilders in the summer of 2006, shortly before the elections. In January 2007 he would describe the PVV as 'the embodiment of a panicky kind of conservatism that is in between prudent conservatism and fascism, with a natural predisposition to the latter'.³⁴

³² Willem Bos, 'Netherlands: A vote against neo-liberalism', in: *International Viewpoint* June 10, 2005, online at [<http://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article815>].

³³ Geert Wilders, 'Een Nieuw-Realistische Visie op Samenleving en Politiek', in: *Elsevier*, March 21, 2006 online at [<http://www.elsevier.nl/Algemeen/nieuws/2006/3/Een-Nieuw-Realistische-Visie-op-Samenleving-en-Politiek-ELSEVIER071305W/>].

³⁴ Vossen, (2013), p. 59.

Around that time, Wilders also had to compete with other right-wing newcomers. Except from EenNL, there was another national-populist party, *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands, TON). In 2006, VVD minister-Rita Verdonk tried to strip her fellow party-member and former ally Hirsi Ali of her Dutch citizenship because of the incorrect statements she had made in her request for asylum. Verdonk broke with the VVD after an unsuccessful attempt to become its political leader and in 2007 founded TON in an attempt to capitalize on the support for nation-populism.

In the previous years, the Netherlands also saw a number of large left-wing mobilizations. In the years before the US invasion of Iraq, there were large anti-war protests and 2004 saw the largest trade-union demonstration in Dutch history in protests against pension reforms. These mobilizations however failed to produce significant changes in government policies, leading to further disappointment with the established parties and on the left a strong growth of support for the SP. This party has its roots in the Maoist movements of the seventies. During the nineties it succeeded making an electoral breakthrough and metamorphosed into a social-democratic party in the early 2000's. In 2006, its number of seats in parliament jumped from 9 to 25.

In this turbulent political landscape, Wilders' popularity after the EU constitution didn't seem to last: polls in 2006 predicted the PVV would maybe get one seat in parliament. But Wilders managed to turn the fortunes of his fledgling party around. Wilders focused more and more on anti-immigrant and anti-Islam rhetoric. In 2006 he declared his fight against the threat of a 'tsunami of Islamization' to be the most important issue; 'if we don't defend ourselves against this, all the other points in my program will turn out to be irrelevant'.³⁵ All Muslims are enemies because 'their behaviour flows from their religion and culture.' Wilders made clear he didn't believe that any kind of Islam could be part of Dutch society.³⁶ It was especially Wilders' relentless attacks on Muslims and Islam, with restrictive proposals and martial rhetoric that went further than that of his competition on the right, that set him apart.

Wilders especially singled out Moroccan migrants and their children. Highly publicised cases of harassment, rape and other violence against women and gays, a supposed new, imported strain of crime

³⁵ Sanne ten Hoove, Raoul du Pré, 'Wilders bang voor 'tsunami van islamisering'', in: *De Volkskrant*, October 6, 2006 online at [<http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/786026/2006/10/06/Wilders-bang-voor-tsunami-van-islamisering.dhtml>].

³⁶ Sanne ten Hoove, Raoul du Pré,, 2006

that was blamed almost completely on Dutch-Moroccan youth (consistently referred to as 'Moroccan youth', denying that they are part of social life in the Netherlands), played an important role in creating support for Wilders' anti-Muslim positions and his law-and-order proposals. These moral panics in which certain cases of crimes were made into symbols of a supposed general decline were exploited and fed by Wilders.³⁷ Exploiting reflexes conditioned by the climate of the 'war on terror', Wilders blamed these crimes on 'street terrorists'. By blaming issues varying from crime to the costs of social security on Muslims, Wilders distinguished himself from other right-wing groups with what in Dutch political jargon is euphemistically called 'criticism of Islam'.

Although since the rise of Fortuyn the placid political debate in the Netherlands had become significantly more turbulent, Wilders stepped it up with personal attacks on political opponents, a very combative tone and discriminatory rhetoric against Muslims. In this manner, he constantly stood in the limelight of the media, managing to mobilise and shape the diffuse anger and anxiety and broad groups of (potential) voters.

The elections showed that Wilders had hit his stride. In its first elections, the PVV won 5.9 % of the vote: 9 out of 150 seats in the parliament. After a brief period of popularity TON floundered, with most of its supporters switching to Wilders, and *EenNL* narrowly missed winning a seat and ceased to function. The PVV was the only party to the right of the VVD that managed to get into parliament. Wilders successfully rallied a significant part of the right-wing constituency; about three of seats came from ex-LPF voters and almost four seats came from former VVD and CDA voters. People who hadn't voted in 2003 provided Wilders with one seat and one more seat came from people who before had previously voted for one of the left parties.³⁸ After the elections of 2006, in February 2007, the CDA formed a coalition with the Labour Party and a smaller protestant party, the ChristenUnie (CU). This was the fourth coalition led by CDA Prime-Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende and already the fourth since Fortuyn upset the Dutch political landscape.

The PVV had now taken shape as a party in which Wilders had gathered a number of trusted supporters like Fleur Agema, spokesperson on healthcare, and Martin Bosma, text-writer and ideologue. One of the first acts of the PVV in the new parliament was

³⁷ Stuart Hall, et al., *Policing the crisis. Mugging, the state and law & order*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013 [1978] contains the classic discussion of the use of moral panics by the Right.

³⁸ Vossen, (2013), 63.

to object against the appointment of two state secretaries, Ahmed Aboutaleb and Nebahat Albayrak, because in addition to their Dutch nationality they respectively also have the Moroccan and Turkish nationality. People born in the Netherlands from Moroccan or Turkish parents automatically also have the nationality of their parents and it is difficult or, in the case of the Moroccan nationality, even impossible to renounce it. In August that year, Wilders also demanded banning the Koran, calling it 'the *Mein Kampf* of a religion that aims to eliminate others'. In an interview for the Danish television Wilders called for the deportation of 'tens of millions' of Muslims from Europe for breaking laws and/or the thought crimes of feeling sympathy for 'jihad' and not sharing 'our norms and values'.³⁹

When Wilders was accused of inciting hatred and tried in court in 2011 he was acquitted on basis that his statements were directed against a religion, and not against individuals.⁴⁰ In his closing statement, Wilders re-affirmed that in his eyes there is no distinction between what he considers true Islam and the aims of individual Muslims. The closing statement also explained the role of the phantasm of the 'left-wing/multicultural elite' in his conspiratorial world-view. 'Throughout Europe', Wilders declared, 'multicultural elites are waging a total war against their populations, with as prize mass-immigration which will eventually result in an Islamic Europe – a Europe without freedom; Eurabia'.⁴¹

Part of the PVV's nationalism is its opposition to the European Union. For the European elections, the PVV presented a concise election program of 331 words, calling for a Dutch veto-right to stop 'mass-immigration', never allowing Turkey to join the European Union and limiting international cooperation to economic affairs. Opposition to the supposed 'Islamization' of Europe was prominent; Islam was mentioned four times.⁴² In these elections, the PVV again drew votes from across the political spectrum but mainly from the right; over 23 % came from former VVD voters but 16 % came from the the left-wing SP which is also known as a 'Euro-sceptical' party. The SP's

³⁹ NOS *Wilders op de Deense televisie* June 16, video online at [<http://nos.nl/video/36125-wilders-op-de-deense-televisie.html>].

⁴⁰ Rechtbank Amsterdam, *Uitspraak van de rechtbank Amsterdam in de zaak Wilders*, June 26, 2011, online at [<http://www.rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie/Rechtbanken/Amsterdam/Nieuws/Pages/Uitspraak-van-de-rechtbank-AmsterdamindezaakWilders,23juni2011.aspx>].

⁴¹ Geert Wilders, 'Het laatste woord van Geert Wilders bij het proces', online at <http://www.pvv.nl/index.php/component/content/article.html?id=3939:het-laatste-woord-van-geert-wilders-bij-het-proces>].

⁴² PVV Verkiezingsprogramma Europees parlement 2009.

opposition to the EU is based mainly on the lack of democracy at the European level and the neoliberal economic policies of the EU, but the party has played on nationalist feelings and used nationalist imagery to gather support.⁴³ With a turnout of a bit over two-thirds, the PVV came second with almost 17 % of the vote (772.746 votes).

Polls predicted a strong increase for the PVV in national elections as well but after the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008, Wilders' popularity declined somewhat, although polls still predicted 15 seats in mid 2010.⁴⁴ Both the VVD and the PvdA tried to make the parliamentary elections of that year about social-economic issues. In response, the PVV tried to connect its anti-Islam and anti-migration positions to economic issues. Gone is the talk from Wilders' 'Declaration of Independence' about cutting back in 'the 'gains' of the trade-unions', a flat tax rate, abolishing the minimum wage and liberalisation of the law on dismissals.

The 2010 program of the PVV is an example of 'welfare-chauvinism'.⁴⁵ The PVV now promised a defence of the welfare state, rejected liberalization of the law on dismissals, demanded keeping the retirement age at 65 and not increasing the Own Risk in the national health insurance. Proposals to preserve social rights are combined with proposals to exclude minorities from those rights, by making social security dependent on length of citizenship and language skills, and denying social security to people wearing a burqa or niqab, etcetera. The PVV also poses as a defender of small entrepreneurs, claiming its proposals to lower taxes and leave the European Union would benefit them. The anti-EU position of the PVV likely appeal to small entrepreneurs who feel threatened by increasing international competition.

The 2010 PVV program claimed that 'only the PVV defends the welfare-state and that is why we plead for a stop on immigration from Islamic countries. It's one or the other; either a welfare-state or an immigration-country'.⁴⁶ This link between 'Islam' and social rights is indicative of the evolution in the ideology of the PVV; a few years before, 'Islamization' was supposedly one of several problems facing

⁴³ NOS *Analyse: PvdA verloor amper aan PVV*, online at [<http://europakiest.nos.nl/nieuws/artikel/id/tcm:44-526405/title/analyse-pvda-verloor-amper-aan-pvv.html>]. For example, the SP campaigned against the EU constitution with a map of Europe from which the Netherlands was missing .

⁴⁴ Lucardie, Voerman, (2012), p. 173.

⁴⁵ Mudde, (2000), p. 181.

⁴⁶ PVV, *De agenda van hoop en optimisme. Een tijd om te kiezen; PVV 2010 - 2015*, 2010, p. 21.

Dutch society. By 2010 it had become the root cause of social problems, of crime, of the national deficit, and of attacks on social rights...

Supporting austerity

The elections of 2010 brought the PVV its biggest success so far; over 15 % (1.454.493 votes in total) or 24 out of 150 seats. As in earlier elections, the PVV had its best results in the periphery of the Netherlands and among voters with middle and lower incomes. Moreover, the PVV's new-found attention for social issues and protecting the welfare state (for some) also brought it new voters; around 1 in 5 votes came from people who before had voted SP or Labour Party. The PVV scored its highest percentages in the countryside and in smaller cities, with high results in the commuter towns around the big cities such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht. On average, PVV voters have strong, right-wing and anti-Muslim views on migration (expelling undocumented workers, forced assimilation of immigrants, a ban on immigration from Islamic countries). On other social-economic issues, like inequality of incomes, their views are less pronounced and can be characterized as centre-left.⁴⁷ The primary motivation for many PVV voters is Wilders' anti-Muslim and anti-immigration stance, while social-economic issues are secondary.⁴⁸

After the elections of 2010, the PVV did not enter the government, rather they decided to support it from the outside. The Dutch electoral system of proportional representation of parties on a national basis in parliament means that to have a majority, parties need to form coalitions. Usually, such government coalitions consists of three or four parties. In 2010, the VVD and CDA formed the government coalition but to have a majority for its proposals in parliament, it needed the support of the PVV. The PVV promised to support the new right-wing government but did not take part in the coalition and nor did it provide any members for the cabinet. Since its support was crucial, the PVV was in a strong position to make demands and by remaining outside the coalition it could avoid being identified too much with the government. This set-up was inspired by similar governments in Denmark where the right-wing Danish People's Party also gave support to right-wing governments from the outside.

⁴⁷ Lucardie, Voerman, (2012), p. 176 - 177.

⁴⁸ Chris Aalberts, *Achter de PVV. Waarom burgers op de PVV stemmen*, Delft: Eburon, 2012, p. 200.

As Wilders put it: 'our profile is culturally conservative but this year we have again shown, we can make inroads in support for the left. They don't own issues like healthcare, unemployment benefits or protection against redundancy.' But when explaining his vision for the new government, Wilders said it would make the Netherlands 'a country where criminals are dealt with more strictly, where there's more safety in the streets, where the immigration influx is limited, where we have more pride in our culture, where the left is in disarray and is fighting among themselves'. In his 2012 book *'Marked for Death'*, Wilders described the role of the PVV in this government as support for an austerity plan in return for them to 'restrict immigration, roll back crime, counter cultural relativism, and insist on the integration of immigrants'.⁴⁹

The government of VVD Prime-Minister Mark Rutte reflected a number of priorities of the PVV; it declared that 'a very substantial' lowering of non-western immigration into the country was one of its top goals. It proposed doing that through further limiting the right to asylum and restrictive immigration policies. Among typical PVV positions the new government proposed were criminalising undocumented migrants and revoking the Dutch nationality of criminals with double nationalities. In return for policies like these, the PVV gave up many of its 'left-wing' social-economic demands, instead supporting 18 billion Euros in austerity measures. Contradicting its election promises, it voted against equal rights for precarious workers to sick-pay and unemployment benefits; moreover it supported increasing the cost of healthcare and extending market mechanisms in health-care provision. The party also made a U-turn on the hotly debated Joint Strike Fighter and joined the other right-wing parties to increase the retirement age to 67. The PVV election programme had stated its opposition to raising the retirement age was non-negotiable.

Those choices did not seem to hurt the PVV much. In the regional elections of 2011 it scored 12 % – lower than in the national elections but this is not surprising considering the appeal of the PVV is largely that of Geert Wilders and that it was the first time the party participated in such elections.

Crisis and radicalisation

Things started to change when it became clear in early 2012 that economic growth was not about to recover. Economic growth,

⁴⁹ Geert Wilders, *Marked for death. Islam's war against the west and me*, Regnery Publishing: Washington, 2012, p. 450.

measured in GDP, in 2011 was only 0.9 % while during 2012 there was a 1.2 % decline. The government agency, The Central Bureau for Statistics predicted a budget deficit of 4.5 % for 2013. In order to comply with the EU limit of a 3 % deficit, billions more in cuts were needed. After weeks of negotiations, the PVV withdrew from the talks with the VVD and CDA, leading to the dissolution of the government at the end of April 2012. At the following elections, the PVV took a heavy blow, losing ten seats. Even so, with 15 seats it is the third party in parliament (the left-wing SP also has 15 seats). The big winner of the 2012 elections, with over 26 % of the vote, was the VVD which has moved further right in recent years. The new government coalition consisted of the VVD and the Labour Party who had come in second in the election. Mark Rutte again became Prime Minister.

The VVD-PvdA government has become increasingly unpopular. Until a few weeks before the 2012 elections, polls predicated that the SP could become the biggest party but it lost a lot of potential votes to the Labour Party that tacked left and presented itself as the alternative for a new VVD government. The new government disappointed many PvdA voters who were hoping to prevent a return of the VVD as a government party. Meanwhile, many VVD-voters were dissatisfied that it, after waging a campaign with a strong right-wing profile - partly to attract PVV voters - formed a coalition with the PvdA. Polls show a decline in support for both government parties but it is especially the PvdA that is losing support. In the municipal elections of March 2014, the PvdA was hammered, losing a third of its votes compared to 2010 and the major cities, including decades old strongholds like the capital Amsterdam.

After it pulled the plug on the government in 2012 and lost ground in the elections, many commentators predicted the decline of the PVV. Supposedly, the party had shown it was unable to govern or realise its proposals. Another view is that the PVV seems to have consolidated itself. In the two cities where it participated in the municipal elections, it lost only slightly, still coming second in The Hague (the seat of government) and retaining its position as the largest party in Almere, a commuter city near Amsterdam. Polls in September 2014 predict a strong growth of the PVV in national elections - if it maintains its position in the polls, it would reach size roughly the same as in 2010.

In late 2013, Geert Wilders declared an alliance with the French National Front (FN) with the intention to form a new caucus in the European parliament. In the summer of 2013, Wilders invited Vlaams Belang leader Philip Dewinter for to cooperate in the European

parliament. Like the FN and Vlaams Belang, other potential partners in the alliance are usually considered to be far-right parties, like the Swedish *Sverigrdemokraterna* (Swedish Democrats) and the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ, Freedom Party of Austria). This step surprised many since Wilders, like Fortuyn before him, had always been careful to keep his distance from parties like FN, VB and FPÖ, who for decades have been the core of the European far-right. Some years earlier, Wilders had declared he wanted 'nothing to do with the Mussolini's and Le Pen and others like them' and until early 2013 he kept his distance from parties like Vlaams Belang.⁵⁰

However, in recent years, the core of the European far-right has been converging with the trajectory of Wilders. The FN has been evolving towards positions that are closer to those of Wilders. The FN today denies its anti-Semitic past and tries to win support among right-wing Zionists. In a 2011 interview with Israeli daily Haaretz, Marine Le Pen declared that 'the National Front has always been Zionist and always defended Israel's right to exist.'⁵¹ Her statement that 'radical Islam' has created in France 'entire regions where it's better not to be a Jew, a woman, a homosexual or even an ordinary white Frenchman' illustrates how close Le Pen and Wilders are ideologically. Both pose as the defenders of certain gains of modernity against a supposed Islamic threat. The FN, like the VB and FPÖ, still has in it remnants of an older European far-right which is anti-modernist and anti-Semitic and references historical fascism, but this side has been marginalized enough for Wilders to feel he can now ally himself with such parties.

Then there is also Wilders' political trajectory. Starting out as a conservative liberal, he moved, after a brief flirt with neoconservatism, to populist far-right positions. His hostility towards people he considers 'Muslims' has intensified. In 2007, Philip Dewinter of the VB said that a proposal like banning the Koran went too far and that Wilders was 'radicalising'.⁵² One symbolically charged moment in this political evolution was a speech Wilders gave a few days before the municipal elections, on March 19. Wilders invited his audience to respond to three questions 'that define our party': 'do you want more or less European Union?', 'do you want more or less

⁵⁰ Paul Belien, 'Wilders Looks for European Allies, Suggests Reuniting Flanders and Netherlands', in: *The Brussels Journal*, May 12, 2008 online at [<http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/3244>].

⁵¹ Adat Primor, 'The daughter as de-demonizer' in: *Haaretz*, January 7, 2011, online at [<http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/the-daughter-as-de-demonizer-1.335743>].

⁵² Robin van der Kloor, 'Dewinter: Wilders radicaliseert', in: *Elsevier*, August 9, 2007 online at [<http://www.elsevier.nl/Politiek/nieuws/2007/8/Dewinter-Wilders-radicaliseert-ELSEVIER132772W/>].

Labour Party?' (these questions were answered with chants of 'less, less') and finally: 'do you want fewer or more Moroccans in your city and in the Netherlands?'. 'Fewer! Fewer!' the crowd chanted, with Wilders answering: 'Then we're going to organise that.'

Like his meetings with the VB and FN, this was another step in Wilders rightward evolution. Where before his racism was cultural it now transitioned into ethnic racism. This wasn't completely new for Wilders who uses religious, cultural and ethnic descriptors interchangeably and we have seen how cultural racism segues easily into somatic racism. What was different was the form, the openness of the racism and how he invited his supporters to join him, projecting a more activist and militant image.

Since 2013, the PVV has slowly extended its field of activity. In 2010 when Wilders was tried for inciting hatred, the PVV organized a small support rally for him but for a long time this was the only extra-parliamentary activity of the party. However, in early 2013 the PVV opened a website to give juridical advice to people objecting to the construction of mosques in their neighbourhood and in February that year Wilders declared a 'resistance tour' throughout the country to collect signatures against the government's austerity policies. On September 21, on the same day that left-wing organisations organized an anti-austerity protest, the PVV organized its first large demonstration, with a couple of thousand of participants. Wilders' speech at the rally was a mix of nationalist rhetoric, attacks on austerity policies and against his usual targets like the EU, 'corrupt Greeks', 'mass-immigration' and Islamization. Something that was new about this rally was the presence of activists from a large range of small neo-fascist and Nazi groups. Wilders doesn't feel the need to distance himself any more from such groups. After media reports of 'princes flags' at the demonstration (orange-blue-white flags that are associated with the pre-war Dutch fascist movement) PVV parliamentarians wore pins with that flag.

The potential of the PVV to mobilise supporters on the 21 September, 2013 was remarkable considering its weak organisational structure. The PVV doesn't have members, branches or other publications than a website. This way, Wilders is not accountable to anybody. He determines who will be candidate in elections for the PVV and who of its representatives are allowed to talk to the media. Wilders is a prominent figure in the media, regularly drawing attention with statements intended to provoke, but refuses to participate in news-programs and talk shows, saying he distrusts the 'left-wing' media. However, the PVV and Wilders reach a large audience through right-wing blogs and social media.

Power and influence

Fifteen years ago, Wilders objected to how Fortuyn attacked 'Islam' in its totality but in more recent years he has become even more systematic than him in excluding people that he categorizes as 'Muslims' and essentialist Islam and Muslim. For Wilders, followers of Islam are necessarily fundamentalists, hostile to democracy and human rights. Other kinds of Muslims do not exist for Wilders. If a Muslim doesn't agree with the interpretation of Islam that Wilders considers to be the only possible one, this believer is said by him to practising *takkiya*. This dispensation, Wilders claims, allows Muslims to dissimulate their true religio-political intentions.

In Wilders' national-populism, culture functions in a manner analogous to how race functions in biological racism; heredity is taken as determining the characteristics of human beings and cultural othering serves the same functions as racial othering; and rights are denied to the group on the outside. For the PVV, Muslims should be subjected to other, more oppressive laws and regulations than people in the 'in-group'; their holy book should be banned, there should be a special tax for wearing head-scarves, unlike other religious groups they should not be allowed to organise their own schools, etcetera. This metamorphosis of racism is not a new development, already in the 1950's Frantz Fanon noted how 'old-fashioned positions' 'the 'vulgar, primitive, over-simple racism' that 'purported to find in biology [...] the material basis of the doctrine [...] tend in any case to disappear. This racism that aspires to be rational, individual, genotypically and phenotypically determined, becomes transformed into cultural racism. The object of racism is no longer the individual man but a certain form of existing. [...] 'Occidental values' oddly blend with the already famous appeal to the fight of the 'cross against the crescent.'⁵³

The ideology of the PVV was described by political historian Koen Vossen as a square with four corners; 'Islam alarmism', populism, nationalism and law-and-order thinking.⁵⁴ We've seen that out of these four, what Vossen calls 'Islam alarmism' is the most important one. The other three elements are related to it and Wilders has shown he is willing to compromise on many points while his anti-Muslim view has steadily been intensifying. The cultural racism in Dutch national-populism has an important role in integrating different ideological elements.⁵⁵ In the case of Wilders, it makes his social-

⁵³ Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African revolution*, New York: Grove Press, 1967, p. 32 -33.

⁵⁴ Vossen, (2013), 65

⁵⁵ Paul Mepschen, 'Gewone mensen. Populisme en het discours van

economic positions coherent to his supporters by blaming the deficit on (Islamic) mass-immigration and Muslim welfare scroungers.

Wilders' ideology has undergone repeated changes in the last 15 years but he rarely elaborates on the reasons for these changes. Early PVV documents written during his 'neoconservative phase' are unavailable on the PVV website. During this phase, Wilders also published the autobiographical '*Kies voor Vrijheid*' (Choose Freedom) but this book can be considered outdated as well.⁵⁶

The PVV today is a nationalist party that demands that the state implements a policy of cultural internal homogenisation. It supports a strong state and is welfare-chauvinist. One source to understand the current PVV ideology is Wilders' *Marked for Death: Islam's War against the West and Me*. In *Marked for Death*, Wilders gives four priorities for his movement; 'defend freedom of speech, reject cultural relativism, counter Islamization, and cherish our national identity.' The defence of freedom of speech means for Wilders the abolishing of laws against hate-speech.⁵⁷ The PVV is hardly consistent in defending the freedom of speech, as is shown by such demands as banning the Koran or suggesting closing the offices of Greenpeace because the organisation supposedly damages the national image.⁵⁸

Rejecting cultural relativism means 'our civilized Western culture is far superior to the barbaric culture of Islam' - 'the West owes nothing to Islam'. Wilders wants this version of history made into laws that state 'our societies are based on Judeo-Christian and humanist values.' Countering 'Islamization' means 'stopping *all* immigration from Islamic countries'. This is an example of how for Wilders 'Islam' functions as an ethnicity. Only through 'national identity' and by rallying around a national flag can 'liberty' be defended according to Wilders. Wilders sees the European Union as a conspiracy of 'multiculturalists'; 'they want to dissolve our sovereignty in a giant, Europe-wide bureaucracy that they control.' In this book, written for the market of American right, the PVV's welfare-chauvinism and supposed defence of gay-rights are largely absent.

verdringing in Amsterdam Nieuw West' in: Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) '*Power to the people!*' *Een anatomie van het populisme* Den Haag: Boom Lemma, 2012.

⁵⁶ Geert Wilders, *Kies voor vrijheid - een eerlijk antwoord*, Groep Wilders: Den Haag, 2005.

⁵⁷ Geert Wilders, (2012), p. 448- 479.

⁵⁸ Ron Ritzen, Willem-Jan van Gendt, Wilders' Iran aan de Noordzee. *Waarom de PVV de democratische rechtsstaat bedreigt*, Unibook: Puurs, 2012, 37.

Martin Bosma's *De schijn elite van de valse munters* is the other main source to understand the PVV ideology.⁵⁹ Bosma, parliamentarian for the PVV, is considered to be the ideologue of the party and is text-writer for Wilders. His book deals with the same issues as *Marked for Death*; the supposed danger of Islam, preserving 'national identity' and the traitorous behaviour of the (left-wing) elite. The influence of the American right is also clear in how Bosma categorizes Nazism and fascism as left-wing ideologies, basing himself on a popular book among the US right, Jonah Goldberg's *Liberal Fascism*.⁶⁰ Throughout the book, Bosma argues 'Islam' is a totalitarian ideology with close affinities with fascism. Dutch nationalism remembers Nazism especially as a foreign occupation and this way the PVV associates Muslims with this threat to the 'nation'. Inspired by similar notions, the PVV does the same with the left; national-socialism is supposedly a left-wing ideology, and today's socialists are part of the same political family as the Nazi's.

The PVV's conspiratorial view of Islam, which sees Muslims as involved in an immense conspiracy against 'the west', is inspired by Bat Ye'or, a pseudo-historian who claims the ruling elites in Europe during the 1970's secretly acquiesced in an Arab Muslim plot by allowing immigration into Europe in return for access to oil. She claims that European Muslims are involved in a plot to colonise Europe and turn the continent into 'Eurabia'.⁶¹ Wilders takes Bat Ye'or seriously. His *Marked for Death* repeatedly approvingly quotes her writing and Wilders says Bat Ye'or makes 'a strong case' in her theory of the Eurabia plot. He differs from her in that he thinks the betrayal of the elites is not the consequence of a dependence on oil but of succumbing to multicultural ideology - but he subscribes in essence to her conspiratorial world-view.⁶²

One distinctive characteristic of Wilders' current, and of the new right-wing in the Netherlands in general, is its ambiguous attitude to the heritage of the post-68 social movements. They are vehemently opposed to the ecological movement, the attempts to reform the justice and prison system and of course anti-racism. But (verbal) support for women's rights and those of LGBT's as well as opposition to anti-Semitism have been made into markers of 'Dutchness' and modernity. This is also a prominent theme in Bosma's book, who attacks the 'cultural Marxism' of the 68-ers but also says that 'of

⁵⁹ Martin Bosma, *De schijn-élite van de valse munters - Drees, extreem rechts, de sixties, de Groep Wilders en ik*, Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010.

⁶⁰ Chris Vials, 'The Invisibility of Fascism in the Postwar United States', in: *Against the Current* #168, 2014 .

⁶¹ Matt Carr, 'You are now entering Eurabia', in: *Race & Class*, #48, 2006.

⁶² Wilders, (2012), p. 395.

course', the 'changes of the sixties also had positive aspects. The emancipation of women and gays gathered speed'.⁶³

In Dutch national-populism, the left and progressive background of these emancipatory ideas and how developments were part of social conflict is ignored.⁶⁴ According to this discourse, the process of emancipation in the Netherlands is completed and further emancipation movements are 'out-dated', except among 'backward' minorities like Muslims. The fight against sexism, homophobia and anti-Semitism is redefined as one against 'non-integrated minorities', especially Muslims who are considered to be inherently misogynist, homophobic and anti-Semitic. In the words of PVV parliamentarian Fleur Agema; 'anti-Semitism and homophobia are not Dutch phenomena. They have been imported, for a deplorable part from Morocco'.⁶⁵ The PVV's support for gay-rights is largely rhetoric. The single line dedicated to the issue in its program reads 'we are going to defend our gays against the advancing Islam'.⁶⁶

Wilders' 'minder Marokkanen' ('fewer Moroccans') speech of 19 March 2014 was seen as another sign of the beginning of the end for the party. From the liberal left it was heard that such open racism would not be accepted, even by Wilders-supporters, and that this time he 'went too far'. In the days after March a number of PVV representatives on the local, national and European level did leave the party but the organisation has not collapsed like the LPF did. The European elections of 2014 were a disappointment for the party. With 13.2 % of the vote, it lost one seat – but with 4 seats it has only one seat less than the largest party, the Christian democratic CDA. One reason why the predicted collapse of the PVV did not materialise is that Wilders has succeeded in bringing a large part of supporters further right along with him.

Another reason is that even without the PVV, racism is deeply anchored in Dutch society. A 2010 report showed job applicants with non-western names had less chance to be invited for a meeting with potential employers: on average 9 % less chance for men.⁶⁷ More than a third of Dutch job seekers of Turkish and Moroccan origin

⁶³ Bosma, (2010), p. 69.

⁶⁴ Oudenampsen, (2013).

⁶⁵ Witte, (2010), p. 165.

⁶⁶ PVV, *Hún Brussel, óns Nederland. Verkiezingsprogramma 2012-2017*, p. 45.

⁶⁷ Iris Andriessen, et al., *Liever Mark dan Mohammed? Onderzoek naar arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie van nietwesterse migranten via praktijktests*, Den Haag: SCP, 2010, p. 13 - 15.

experience discrimination when looking for work.⁶⁸ Unemployment among people with a non-western background is 14.2 %, among 'indigenous' Dutch it is 4.3.⁶⁹ Amnesty International has criticized the Dutch police's ethnic profiling, and the dominant nature of prejudices and stereotypes among them.⁷⁰ One 2010 study showed that over a quarter of the 1020 respondents had a negative view of foreigners, with 10 % stating they were racists. Almost three-quarters of Dutch Muslims feel that since the rise of Geert Wilders, Muslims are viewed more negatively and almost a quarter of Muslims experience discrimination on a regular basis.⁷¹

Several attempts have been made to explain the widespread nature of anti-Muslim views in the Netherlands. For example, the sociologist Bas van Stokkom has for example pointed to the gap in values between the highly secular Dutch majority, with strongly liberal attitudes, and those of orthodox Muslim communities.⁷² However, this doesn't explain why the disapproval and hostility targets much broader groups than only orthodox Muslims.

One attempt to explain the popularity of anti-Muslim views in the Netherlands looks at the evolution of the Dutch system of compartmentalisation in society; 'verzuiling', or pillarisation. This system broke down in the sixties. Before that it divided Dutch society in different pillars along mutually exclusive religious and ideological lines. Most of these 'pillars' integrated their members across class lines. For example, the Catholic pillar organised both Catholic bourgeois and Catholic workers who were prohibited from voting for socialist parties or joining socialist unions. Lower-class members of the different pillars were to high degree separated from each other, organized in different parties and unions, and oriented towards different newspapers, radio and television stations. The 'pillar system' broke down in the sixties as Dutch society secularized and

⁶⁸ The Netherlands Institute for Social Research, *Perceived discrimination in the Netherlands* (Den Haag 2014) 17.

⁶⁹ CBS StatLine, Beroepsbevolking; geslacht en leeftijd, online at [<http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=71738NED&D1=22,26&D2=0&D3=0&D4=a&D5=31,36,41,46,51,60,65,I&HD=140304-1009&HDR=T,G4&STB=G2,G1,G3>].

⁷⁰ Amnesty International, *Proactief politieoptreden vormt risico voor mensenrechten in Nederland*, Amsterdam, 2013.

⁷¹ Fatima Zahra Lachhab et al, *Monitoring Islamophobia in the Netherlands – an explorative study Rotterdam: Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond*, 2013, p. 19.

⁷² Ineke van der Valk, *Islamophobia in the Netherlands*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, 2012, p. 12.

religious and ideological ties started to weaken but it left a strong impact on Dutch society.

One legacy of the pillar-system was the consensus-oriented culture in Dutch politics. The elites of the pillars maintained close contact, bridging the divisions between their followers. Different Dutch elites became used to reaching agreements by negotiations among themselves, without involving their supporters. Especially in the nineties, when ideological differences between the major parties faded under the strong influence of neoliberalism, this meant Dutch politics was highly technocratic and many people felt excluded from it. By attacking the consensus model, Fortuyn appealed to many of such people while at the same time making space for a further rightward shift in society. Another legacy of the pillar-system is a weak working class consciousness. Only the social-democratic pillar organised its members to some degree on their own class interests. In the Catholic and Protestant pillars, often the lived religious differences were more important to their members than class differences. A relatively strong working-class identity that could act as a counterweight to the cross-class and nationalist appeals of nation-populism is lacking.

As the pillar-system broke down in the sixties, a new national hegemony took shape. Liberal and secular values became hegemonic and there grew a national self-image of Dutch society as a beacon of enlightenment and tolerance, as a society that had a mission to promote such values across the world. The ritualized memory of the Second World War, of the Nazi-occupation and the Shoah, became an important part of this new hegemony. As we have seen, political movements that were in some way associated with fascism and Nazism were stigmatized and marginalized. The national-populist current that took shape with Fortuyn avoided this stigma by integrating parts of the liberal hegemony, such as the supposed privileged connection between 'Dutchness' and tolerance, equality between men and women and 'acceptance' of homosexuality.⁷³ This way, Dutch nation-populism connected with the existing idea of the Netherlands as a beacon of liberal values.

Wilders has demonstrated that he is a skilful political operator, constantly moving to the right but never going so far that he loses contact with his supporters. Wilders' persistent success should be seen in the context of the political landscape that has moved strongly to the right since the rise of Fortuyn after the turn of the century. Wilders both profits from this shift and pushes it. Prominent elements of the national-populist discourse, like the idea of the 'failed

⁷³ I owe this point to Merijn Oudenampsen.

integration' of Muslims, the need to restrict immigration, and repressive law-and-order policies, have become political common sense. This influence spans across the political spectrum and it is for example the PvdA which now suggests cutting social security to those who 'dress inappropriately' (read: wear a burka or niqab) or who don't speak 'sufficiently' Dutch. Measuring the power of the PVV only in terms of its seats or its relationship to the government coalition ignores such developments. The PVV has been in the vanguard of this rightward shift, dragging other parties with it, and it's too early to know if the party won't be able to keep playing that role.

The main party to the left of the PvdA, the SP, has focused on attacking Wilders' economic choices but has remained largely silent about the PVV's racism or that in society at large. What it doesn't realise is how racism functions to tie voters to Wilders and how it makes neoliberal economic policies plausible by laying the blame on minorities. During the nineties, the SP grew from a small radical party with Maoist roots into mass social-democratic party. Especially since the mid-2000's it has been trying to position itself as a future party of government and it has moderated its positions and discourse. Wilders however, has adopted a tone of angry opposition, of sustained outrage and sarcasm that connects well with a part of potential SP-supporters; disappointed members of the lower working-class. This is also indicated by the considerable exchange of votes between the SP and Wilders.

With the parliamentary left either largely ignoring the various forms of racism or even taking over parts of the national-populist discourse, opposition to the deeply rooted Dutch racism needs to come from somewhere else. The liveliest anti-racist activities have come from outside the established left organisations and structures. There's a strong taboo on the existence of everyday and institutionalized racism in Dutch society since it so strongly contradicts the Dutch self-image as 'open and tolerant'. Many anti-racist organisations and organisations of minorities have become institutionalized, dependent on government funding and are hesitant to rock the boat. The over 5.000 strong anti-racist demonstration of 22 March, 2014, seen as a reply to the 'minder Marokkanen' speech, was a hopeful sign - but really combating the influence of racism in the Netherlands will take much more.

Literature

- Aalberts, Chris, *Achter de PVV. Waarom burgers op de PVV stemmen*, Delft: Eburon, 2012.
- Amnesty International, *Proactief politieoptreden vormt risico voor mensenrechten in Nederland*, Amsterdam, 2013.
- Andriessen, Iris, et al., *Liever Mark dan Mohammed? Onderzoek naar arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie van niet-westerse migranten via praktijktests*, Den Haag: SCP, 2010.
- Andriessen, Iris, et al., *Perceived discrimination in the Netherlands*, Den Haag: The Netherlands Institute for Social Research, 2014.
- Balibar, Etienne and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, nation, class. Ambiguous identities*, London: Verso, 2005 [1991].
- Belien, Paul, 'Wilders Looks for European Allies, Suggests Reuniting Flanders and Netherlands' in *The Brussels Journal*, May 12, 2008, online at [<http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/3244>].
- Bos, Willem, 'Netherlands: A vote against neo-liberalism' in *International Viewpoint*, June 10, 2005, online at [<http://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article815>]
- Bosma, Martin, *De schijn-élite van de valse munters - Drees, extreem rechts, de sixties, de Groep Wilders en ik*, Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010.
- CBS StatLine, Beroepsbevolking; geslacht en leeftijd, online at [<http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=71738NED&D1=22,26&D2=0&D3=0&D4=a&D5=31,36,41,46,51,60,65,I&HD=140304-1009&HDR=T,G4&STB=G2,G1,G3>].
- Carr, Matt, 'You are now entering Eurabia' in *Race & Class*, #48, 2006.
- Fanon, Frantz, *Toward the African revolution*, New York: Grove Press, 1967.
- Fennema, Meindert, *Geert Wilders. Tvenaarsleerling*, Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010.
- Fortuyn, Pim, *De verweesde samenleving. Een religieus-sociologisch traktaat*, Uithoorn: Karakter, 2002.
- Fortuyn, Pim, *Tegen de islamisering van onze cultuur: Nederlandse identiteit als fundament*, Utrecht: Bruna, 1997.

Hall, Stuart, et al., *Policing the crisis. Mugging, the state and law & order*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013 [1978].

Hoove, Sanne ten, Raoul du Pré, 'Wilders bang voor 'tsunami van islamisering'' in *De Volkskrant* October 6, 2006, online at [<http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/786026/2006/10/06/Wilders-bang-voor-tsunami-van-islamisering.dhtml>]

Irrgang, Ewout et al., *Leest u zijn boeken maar. De pimpelpaarse antwoorden van Pim Fortuyn*, Rotterdam: Wetenschappelijk Bureau SP, 2002.

Kloor, Robin van der, 'Dewinter: Wilders radicaliseert', *Elsevier* August 9, 2007, online at [<http://www.elsevier.nl/Politiek/nieuws/2007/8/Dewinter-Wilders-radicaliseert-ELSEVIER132772W/>]. Lachhab, Fatima Zahra et al, *Monitoring Islamophobia in the Netherlands - an explorative study*, Stichting Platform, Rotterdam: Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond, 2013.

Laclau, Ernesto, *On populist reason*, London: Verso, 2005.

Lucardie, Paul en Gerrit Voerman, *Populisten in de polder*, Amersfoort: Boom, 2012.

Mepschen, Paul, 'Against Tolerance: Islam, Sexuality, and the Politics of Belonging in the Netherlands' in *MRZine* June 13, 2009, online at [<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2009/mepschen130709.html>].

Mepschen, Paul, 'Gewone mensen. Populisme en het discours van verdringing in Amsterdam Nieuw West' in: Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) *'Power to the people!' Een anatomie van het populisme*, Den Haag: Boom Lemma, 2012.

Mudde, Cas, *Populist radical right parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Mudde, Cas, *The ideology of the extreme right*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Nhass, Hanan, 'Ik word gek van dat poldergedoe', in *Trouw* July 23, 2003, online at [<http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/nieuws/archief/article/detail/1781138/2003/07/23/ik-word-gek-van-dat-poldergedoe.dhtml>].

NOS Analyse: *PvdA verloor amper aan PVV*, online at [<http://europakiest.nos.nl/nieuws/artikel/id/tcm:44-526405/title/analyse-pvda-verloor-amper-aan-pvv.html>].

NOS *Wilders op de Deense televisie* June 16, video online at [<http://nos.nl/video/36125-wilders-op-de-deense-televisie.html>].

Os, Pieter van, 'De Amerikaanse lobby. Hoe Pfizer en Microsoft Nederland beïnvloeden' in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, #41, 2005, online at [<http://www.groene.nl/artikel/de-amerikaanse-lobby>].

Oudenampsen, Merijn, 'De politiek van populisme onderzoek. Een kritiek op Diplomademocratie en de verklaring van populisme uit kiezersgedrag' in Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) *'Power to the people!' Een anatomie van het populisme*, Den Haag: Boom Lemma, 2012.

Oudenampsen, Merijn, 'De revolte van nieuwrechts. Neoconservatisme en postprogressieve politiek' in *Krisis. Tijdschrift voor actuele filosofie*, #1, 2013.

Oudenampsen, Merijn, 'Explaining the swing to the right. The Dutch debate on the rise of right-wing populism' in Ruth Wodak, Majid Khosravinik, Brigitte Mal (ed.) *Right-wing populism in Europe. Politics and discourse*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Primor, Adat, 'The daughter as de-demonizer' in *Haaretz* Januari 7, 2011, online at [<http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/the-daughter-as-de-demonizer-1.335743>].

PVV, *De agenda van hoop en optimisme. Een tijd om te kiezen; PVV 2010 - 2015* (2010).

PVV, *Hún Brussel, óns Nederland. Verkiezingsprogramma 2012-2017*.

PVV, *Verkiezingsprogramma Europees parlement*, 2009.

Rechtbank Amsterdam, *Uitspraak van de rechtbank Amsterdam in de zaak Wilders*, June 26, 2011, online at [<http://www.rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie/Rechtbanken/Amsterdam/Nieuws/Pages/Uitspraak-van-de-rechtbank-AmsterdamindezaakWilders,23juni2011.aspx>].

Reekum, Rogier, van 'It's the performance, stupid!' in: Justus Uitermark, et al. (ed.) *'Power to the people!' Een anatomie van het populisme*, Den Haag: Boom Lemma, 2012.

Ritzen, Ron, Willem-Jan van Gendt, *Wilders' Iran aan de Noordzee. Waarom de PVV de democratische rechtsstaat bedreigt*, Puurs: Unibook, 2012.

Schinkel, Willem, *De gedroomde samenleving*, Kampen: Klement, 2011.

Valk, Ineke van der, *Islamophobia in the Netherlands* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012.

Vials, Chris, 'The Invisibility of Fascism in the Postwar United States', in *Against the Current*, # 168, 2014.

Vossen, Koen, *Rondom Wilders. Portret van de PVV*, Amsterdam: Boom, 2013.

Volkskrant, Aangifte tegen Fortuyn wegens discriminatie, in *De Volkskrant*, 2 November 2011, online at [<http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/605866/2001/11/02/Aangifte-tegen-Fortuyn-wegens-discriminatie.dhtml>].

Weitz, Eric D., *A century of genocide. Utopias of race and nation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

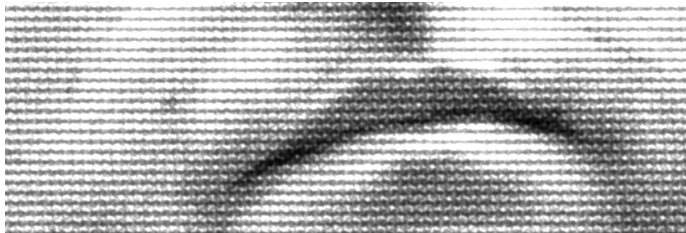
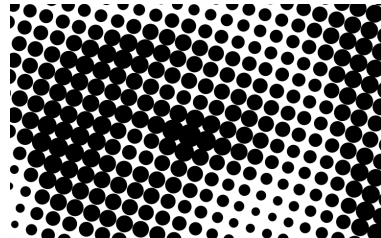
Wilders, Geert, 'Een Nieuw-Realistische Visie op Samenleving en Politiek', in *Elsevier*, March 21, 2006, online at [<http://www.elsevier.nl/Algemeen/nieuws/2006/3/Een-Nieuw-Realistische-Visie-op-Samenleving-en-Politiek-ELSEVIER071305W/>]. Wilders, Geert, 'Het laatste woord van Geert Wilders bij het proces', online at <http://www.pvv.nl/index.php/component/content/article.html?id=3939:het-laatste-woord-van-geert-wilders-bij-het-proces>]. Wilders, Geert, *Kies voor vrijheid - een eerlijk antwoord*, Den Haag: Groep Wilders, 2005.

Wilders, Geert, *Marked for death. Islam's war against the west and me*, Washington: Regnery Publishing, 2012.

Witte, Rob, *Al eeuwen lang een gastvrij volk' Racistisch geweld en overheidsreacties in Nederland 1950 - 2009*, Amsterdam: Aksant, 2010.

Borderless brochures

- * The New Right in the Netherlands
- * The long march of the SP



The New Right in the Netherlands

Dutch society is known as tolerant and open but in recent years the far-right has become remarkably successful in the Netherlands. Its leader, Geert Wilders, is one of the most influential politicians in the country. In this brochure, Alex de Jong discusses the development of the new right in the Netherlands, from Frits Bolkestein and Pim Fortuyn to Geert Wilders. He argues the new right could become so successful because it replaced the biological racism of the traditional far right with a cultural racism in which Muslims are 'the other' on which social discontent is projected.



redactie@grenzeloos.org