



Master's thesis

Not One of Us: National identity versus Islam - A comparative discourse analysis of the Danish People's Party, the Party for Freedom and the Sweden Democrats



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& the Sweden Democrats

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the communication of the Danish People's Party (DPP), the Party for Freedom (PVV) and the Sweden Democrats is analysed. The particular focus is on the three parties' paradoxical presentation of national identity including values such as liberal-mindedness and tolerance while simultaneously arguing for intolerance towards Islam and Muslims. In other words, the focus of this thesis is answering the question 'Why, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, is it necessary to be intolerant towards Islam and Muslims in order to remain tolerant and liberal?'. Before analysing the communication of the three parties, the political and cultural contexts in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden are examined. This background analysis shows how the immigration and multiculturalism debates have developed in the latter part of the 1900s up until today. It is seen that Denmark and the Netherlands today have very restrictive immigration policies and allow for a tone in the debate that many consider too harsh. In Sweden, it is not quite as harsh, although the debate seems to have become a little more critical than it used to be. The background analysis furthermore shows that particularly Danes have a clear vision of what Danish national identity is, whereas the Dutchmen are more polarised, partly showing an identity crisis. Concerning religion, the Danes and the Swedes value secularism, but still regard Christianity as important. In the Netherlands, the relationship with religion is more polarised in that a large percentage of the Dutch are non-ecclesiastic, but at the same time, three Christian parties have seats in parliament. All three nationalities seem to view themselves as tolerant and liberal, just as all three nationalities' attitudes towards Muslims and Islam are fairly polarised. The analyses of the DPP, PVV and SD's communication show very similar portrayals of national identity. All three parties emphasise liberal-mindedness, tolerance and free speech as important values of their respective national identities. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of secularism, but simultaneously argue for the importance of Christianity for their respective societies, although to differing degrees. Particularly the DPP emphasises the influence of Christianity on Danish society, whereas the PVV focuses on religion the least. All three parties are positive towards tradition and the way things used to be in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, but simultaneously criticise Islam for being a backwards religion. Islam, the parties argue, is an intolerant, suppressive and even violent ideology that strives for political influence. Hence, according to the three parties, allowing Islam to influence society essentially means allowing for society to become Islamic. Thereby, intolerance towards Islam is necessary in order for Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden to remain liberal and tolerant.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1967, Denmark legalised porn as the first country in the world, just as having prostitution as one's primary source of income has been legal for more than ten years in Denmark (Graugaard et al, 2004). In 1983, Denmark passed one of the most liberal Aliens Acts at that time (Hansen S. M., n.d.). Furthermore, in 1989, Denmark was the first country in the world to enact a law granting same-sex couples the opportunity of entering into registered partnerships and thereby acquiring the same rights as heterosexual married couples, just as it is now legal for same-sex couples to adopt (Boele-Woelki, 2003). All of these things have contributed to Denmark generally being perceived as one of the most tolerant and liberal countries in the world. However, in the Danish parliamentary election in 2001, *Dansk Folkeparti* (Danish People's Party, DPP) won 12 per cent of the votes and subsequently gained what turned out to be a very influential role as supporting party to the Liberal-Conservative coalition minority government (Meret, 2009). Following the election, the coalition government and the DPP made several amendments to the Aliens Act and today, Denmark today has one of the most restrictive Aliens Acts in Europe (Hansen S. M., n.d.). Can the Danes then still consider themselves to be among the most liberal and tolerant nationalities in the world?

During the 17th and 18th centuries, immigrants formed the majority in Amsterdam. It became the refuge for many political fugitives, a city of infinite tolerance and freedom (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). Prostitution has been legal in the Netherlands for several hundred years and in 2000, parliament officially legalised owning a brothel, although it had actually been tolerated for many years (Simons, 2008). In the 1970s, parliament passed a law legalising so-called *soft drugs*, arguing that any being should be allowed to decide on matters concerning their own health, which is also the reason for euthanasia being legal in the Netherlands under certain regulations (Skelton, 2005). In 2001, the Netherlands became the first country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage, simultaneously legalising adoption by same-sex couples as one of the first countries in the world (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2009). For a long time, the Netherlands has been considered probably the most tolerant and liberal country in the world, but like the case with Denmark, it now has one of the most restrictive Aliens Acts in Europe. In 2002, the anti-immigration party *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (Pim Fortuyn List, LPF) was elected into parliament with 17 per cent, becoming part of the government coalition (Mudde, 2007a). In the Dutch parliamentary election in 2010, the 'blond bombshell', Limburg-born politician Geert Wilders and his radical right party *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (Party for Freedom,

PVV) won 15.5 per cent of the votes and today functions as supporting party to the conservative-liberal/centre-right Dutch government (Chadwick, 2010). A similar question to the one above can be posed to the case of the Netherlands: Can the Netherlands still be considered to be perhaps the most tolerant and liberal country in the world when having one of Europe's most restrictive Aliens Acts?

Like the Netherlands and Denmark, Sweden too is often considered to be one of the most liberal and tolerant countries in the world. However, in Sweden, prostitution is illegal, politicians across the sceptre are tough on drugs, alcohol may not be purchased after 7pm and in many parks it is illegal to consume alcohol (The Local, 2005). Since 2009, Sweden does allow for same-sex marriage, just as same-sex couples have had the right to adoption since 2002 (BBC, 2009). But the area in which Sweden is particularly known for being liberal is immigration. Sweden's generous asylum policies have allowed several thousands to settle in Sweden and today, almost a fifth of the Swedish population is foreign-born (Demstader, 2010). For a long time, Sweden was seen as the Nordic exception, immune to the right-wing influences that had gained ground in both Norway and Denmark. However, in the 2010 Swedish parliamentary election, the radical right party *Sverigedemokraterna* (Sweden Democrats, SD) was elected into parliament for the first time with 5.7 per cent of the votes (Schmidt, 2009). Is Sweden heading the same way as the Netherlands and Denmark? And what is the future of Swedish tolerance if the SD gains in popularity?

As can be seen above, these three countries present an interesting paradox, i.e. the dilemma between liberal-mindedness and tolerance, on the one hand, and radical right support, on the other hand. In the case of Denmark and the Netherlands, how can two of the most liberal and tolerant countries in the world have two of the most restrictive Aliens Acts in Europe? Can the Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes still be perceived and perceive themselves as liberal and tolerant while having relatively successful radical right parties? Is it really possible to remain liberal and tolerant and still vote for the radical right?

1.2. PROBLEM FORMULATION

In this thesis, I will analyse how the DPP, PVV and SD themselves attempt to address this paradox. Do the three parties find it contradictory to vote for them while considering liberal-mindedness and tolerance important values? I will analyse how the three parties present their

own national identity and how they portray immigration and multiculturalism in relation to this identity, meaning in which way is it possible to limit immigration and curb multiculturalism without compromising values such as liberal-mindedness and tolerance? I find it interesting to analyse in how far these values are important for the DPP, PVV and SD and the way in which they choose to present these values. Though all three parties oppose immigration in general, they seem to have a specific focus on Muslim immigration and Islam as a religion. In fact, the DPP and PVV have become famous, or infamous, for some rather controversial statements about Muslims and Islam. The PVV was only founded in 2005, but the DPP has existed since 1995. However, it is particularly after September 11, 2001, when two planes hijacked by Islamic al-Qaeda terrorists crashed into the Twin Towers and subsequently killed more than 2700 people that the DPP has focused on Muslims and Islam as their primary object of concern. Geert Wilders has stated directly that his and the PVV's purpose is to stop Islam (Rossi, 2010), just as the 2010 election video of the SD has been the object of much debate due to its portrayal of Muslims. Thus Islam and Muslims have rapidly become the main objects of concern for the DPP, PVV and SD. I will therefore focus on the three parties' portrayal of Muslims and Islam, particularly the reasons presented by the DPP, PVV and SD for it being necessary to restrict Muslim immigration. I.e. is Islam somehow a threat to national identity? In which way is Islam and Muslims harmful to society in the eyes of the three parties?

In relation to national identity, common for Danish, Dutch and Swedish society is the fact that they are all highly secular. Church attendance is low in all three countries and many Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes do not believe in God. Yet, all three countries are founded upon Christianity and Christian traditions are still upheld in all three countries to some extent. Thus this creates a very complex dynamic and I find it interesting to see how the DPP, PVV and SD approach this topic. Since all three parties specifically focus on Muslims, they already deal with the concept of religion. The question is if they deal with Islam versus Christianity or Islam versus secularism, or perhaps a bit of both? Can secularism somehow be beneficial to the DPP, PVV and SD when attempting to argue for restrictions on Muslim immigration?

In order to understand both the political and cultural contexts that the three parties function in, I will first investigate how the immigration and multiculturalism debates have developed in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. How have particularly Denmark and the Netherlands gone from having some of the most liberal immigration policies to having some of the most

restrictive? How did Sweden go from being the ‘Scandinavian exception’ to now having a radical right party in parliament? What have influenced the immigration and multiculturalism debates in the three countries? After this analysis, I will investigate how the Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes view themselves as well as how they view Islam and Muslims in order to see in how far the DPP, PVV and SD’s portrayals of national identity corresponds with the general perceptions within their respective countries. This background analysis, i.e. the investigation of the immigration and multiculturalism debates as well as perceptions of national identity and Muslims and Islam, furthermore indicates which factors it may be beneficial for the DPP, PVV and SD to focus on in order for their communication to be successful. E.g. if Christianity is seen as an important aspect of national identity, it may be beneficial for the parties to emphasise Christianity. If this is not the case, too much emphasis on it may alienate many voters.

I will frame my analysis around the following research questions:

- How do the DPP, PVV and SD present the national identity of their respective countries?
- Which role does liberal-mindedness and tolerance play for the three parties?
- Is Islam portrayed as a threat to national identity? How?
- Which kind of language and images do the parties make use of?
- How do the parties portray Muslim immigration and multiculturalism?

This will help me answer my problem formulation:

Why, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, is it necessary to be intolerant towards Islam and Muslims in order to remain tolerant and liberal?

1.3. OTHER AUTHORS’ EXPLANATIONS

In this section, I will discuss some of the existing literature on the radical right. This serves two ends; one is to investigate some of the approaches others have taken to the topic in order to see if any of these approaches are applicable to my thesis, the other is to draw out how my thesis differs from the vast load of literature that already exist on the radical right. Much of the literature on the radical right tends to attempt to explain the success, or, in some cases, failure, of radical right parties. Many different explanations abound, all of which have proven applicable to some cases, but insufficient in other cases. These explanations tend to be divided into two categories: *demand-side* explanations and *supply-side* explanations. The demand-side means factors in society that increase the demand for radical right parties, i.e. “the perfect

breeding ground” (Mudde, 2007b, p. 202), e.g. economy and the influx of immigrants, but also which kind of voters vote for the radical right and why. The supply-side rather refers to the radical right parties themselves and how they function as actors, but also e.g. their organisation. In short, the supply-side is concerned with how the parties make use of the opportunities presented to them (Eatwell, 2003). There are a wide variety of both kinds of explanations and many of them tend to overlap.

Previous literature on the radical right seems to focus particularly on demand-side theories. Some of the most prevalent demand-side explanations focus on modernisation processes, social cleavages, resentment and protest (Meret, 2009; Mudde, 2007b). Explanations focusing on the influence of modernisation processes such as globalisation and social cleavages hold that the radical right attracts so-called ‘losers of modernisation’ (Mudde, 2007b). These losers of modernisation could be unemployed, but also people in lower paying, low-skilled jobs perhaps under the threat of being laid off due to competition from foreign workers, hence people afflicted by the process of globalization (Norris, 2005). However, according to e.g. Bjørklund and Andersen (2002), countries with successful radical right parties do not necessarily have high levels of unemployment. This is e.g. the case with the three case studies in this thesis. Thus voting for the radical right is not just a reflection of feelings of resentment and of being marginalised. Rather, voting for the radical right may be based on sentiments that are actually widespread in society (Bjørklund & Andersen, 2002). Explanations focusing on feelings of protest hold that voters vote for the radical right because they are dissatisfied with mainstream parties’ policies. Hence, the voters protest against mainstream parties by voting for the radical right (Voss, 2007). However, Kitschelt (1997) argues that although most radical right parties do present a protest against the political status quo, they do so with such saliency and with a vision of a political order that go far beyond general discontent. Furthermore, Norris (2005) has shown that radical right voters actually are generally more content with government performance than other voters. Indeed, reasons for voting for the radical right are often similar to the reasons for voting for any other party (Van der Brug & Fennema, 2003). These are just a small excerpt of the many demand-side explanations that have been applied in order to explain the success of the radical right.

On the supply-side, such aspects as party organisation and party leadership have been used to explain the success of radical right parties. However, one of the explanations most applied is

the political opportunity structure (POS) theory. The POS theory is fairly broad and embodies many different aspects. It helps to explain why new parties are able to emerge by listing a number of political opportunity structures, some, but not all, of which must be present for a new party to emerge and be successful among the electorate (Rydgren, 2006). One of these structures refers to the particular political system within a country, i.e. the proportional versus first-past-the-post system, the former of which presents greater opportunities for a new party to enter the political scene. Another aspect of this theory is the opportunities that arise for new parties when mainstream parties move towards the centre of the political compass in order to attract more votes. Voters may thereby feel that there is not much difference between the various parties. This thus resembles the protest thesis from above in some respects (Rydgren, 2006). The problem of the POS theory is that it does not apply to all cases. In some countries where there seem to be great opportunity of radical right parties succeeding, none have been able to break through. In other countries, where the electoral system does not seem to open up for radical right parties, they have been successful in terms of votes nonetheless (Eatwell, 2003).

Conclusively, what appears from this review of radical right theories is that no single theory exist that can explain the success or even emergence of radical right parties. Because radical right parties operate within a vast variety of contexts, a single explanation for their success or failure cannot be established. Only focusing on the demand-side tends to present a rather one-dimensional picture of radical right parties as passive onlookers. At the same time, the parties do not operate independent of various demand-side factors. It is for this reason that I will be focusing on the context, presented as immigration and multiculturalism debates as well as perceptions of national identity and Muslims and Islam within Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, as well as the communication of the DPP, PVV and SD within their party programmes, hence both the context and the radical right as actors. Furthermore, my thesis differs from much of the radical right literature in that I will carry out comparative case studies, which there seems to be a lack of (Meret, 2009; Norris, 2005). However, for exceptions, see e.g. Meret (2009) and Mudde (2003). In addition, I will not be analysing why the DPP, PVV and SD have been successful, but rather how they argue.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this section, I will first and foremost present the objective of this thesis and how I will achieve it. In addition, I will present which research methods, theories and data I have chosen and why these are particularly relevant for this thesis. As appears from the introduction (pp. 1-4), I have chosen Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden and their respective radical right parties, the Danish People's Party (DPP), the Freedom Party (PVV) and the Sweden Democrats (SD), as cases. In this section, I will present the criteria for selecting these specific countries and parties.

2.1. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS

The objective of this thesis is to answer the problem formulation '*Why, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, is it necessary to be intolerant towards Islam and Muslims in order to remain tolerant and liberal?*'. Thereby, the research will take shape as explanatory research characterised by the 'why'-question. This method of research entails explaining how and why there is a relationship between two aspects of a situation or phenomenon (Kumar, 2005). In this thesis, the relationship between Danish, Dutch and Swedish national identity and Islam as seen by the DPP, PVV and SD will be analysed. By investigating the general perception of national identity and the level of scepticism towards Islam and Muslims and towards multiculturalism, I will understand to some extent the political and cultural contexts in which the DPP, PVV and SD function. I will in the following chapter (3.2 and 3.3) conceptualise national identity and multiculturalism as the two terms are understood in this thesis. The general perception of national identity help me to see in how far there is a correlation between this perception and the perception presented by the three parties. I.e. if Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes generally view themselves as liberal and tolerant, how can the three parties maintain this perception while still arguing for restricting Muslim immigration? I will when possible include surveys performed among the voters in relation to both national identity and the view of Muslims and Islam, but also in relation to immigration and multiculturalism. This has its importance because it shows in how far the voters have a similar perception of these factors as the DPP, PVV and SD have. In order for their argumentation to be effective, it must have some relation to the general perception and therefore it is reasonable to expect that the three parties will attempt to argue in line with the general perception to some extent. Thus an objective of this thesis is to show in how far this is the case.

I do not directly seek to explain why the DPP, PVV and SD have been relatively successful among the electorates as this would require much more space and time than this thesis provides. However, one might argue that a successful argumentation is part of the reason for voters voting for a specific party. As Berman (1997) argues, radical right parties are “the active shapers of their own fates” (Berman, 1997, p. 102), meaning that the way in which they e.g. shape their policies, portray themselves and argue for their views influence whether or not they are successful. In the Netherlands, the former Minister for Integration and Immigration Rita Verdonk founded the right-wing party *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands) in 2008, but at the elections in 2010, the party did not get enough votes to even enter into parliament (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010). In the same election, the PVV entered as the third largest party, thus showing that not just any anti-immigration party could gain votes, but that the party itself mattered. For that reason, the way which the DPP, PVV and SD chose to argue is important for their electoral success and for that reason, I am focusing on their communication.

2.1.2. Explanatory research

David de Vaus (2001) argues that whether the research question is descriptive or explanatory drastically affects the way in which a researcher develops the research design. One example is the collection of data. When a researcher wants to explain why there is a relationship between two aspects of a situation, it is necessary to have certain hunches or expectations of the outcome because the researcher must know where to begin the research and which factors to examine. Thereby, the researcher collects data that relate to these hunches and expectations. They may be contradictory, but by analysing them, the researcher investigates which, if any, of the hunches and expectations are valid (de Vaus, 2001). As appears from the introduction (pp. 1-4), I expect much of the DPP, PVV and SD’s argumentation against immigration to relate particularly to Muslim immigration, just as I expect the three parties as well as the Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes in general to value liberal-mindedness and tolerance. Therefore, I am focusing on the paradox between a national identity including liberal-mindedness and tolerance and intolerance or, at least, scepticism towards Muslim immigration. As already argued, my main objective is not to explain why the DPP, PVV and SD have been successful, but rather to explore their communication, i.e. why, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, it is necessary to be intolerant towards Islam and Muslims in order to remain tolerant and liberal. However, at the same time, I have also argued why I believe their communication to be part of

the reason for their success. Along this line, one might argue that the parties' communication on other matters is of greater importance than their communication on national identity and Muslim immigration. Considering the fact that we at present are experiencing a financial crisis and subsequently, economy was the most important issue in both the Dutch and the Swedish election in 2010 (Shilton, 2010; Euronews, 2010), one might argue that the parties' communication concerning economics would be of greater importance. However, seen as the party programmes of radical right parties are primarily socio-cultural and not socio-economic (Mudde, 2008), it seems reasonable to argue that economics would not be the primary reason for a voter to vote for these parties. All three parties selected for this analysis have developed economic policies, but neither the DPP nor the PVV list economic policies among their core issues, whereas the SD includes the creation of more jobs as one of their core issues. Furthermore, the PVV was elected into parliament already in 2006, just as the DPP has held its position as supporting party to the government since 2001, i.e. before the financial crisis. In addition, it has been concluded by others (Oesch, 2008; Ivarsflaten, 2005) that voters voting for the radical right are much less influenced by the socio-economic dimension, and much more by the socio-cultural. As Mudde writes, "it's not the economy, stupid" (Mudde, 2007b, p. 119). Thereby, the DPP, PVV and SD's communication within the socio-economic dimension is not unimportant, but the communication within the socio-cultural dimension matters more.

2.2. METHODS

2.2.1. The comparative research design

As can be understood from the above, I will analyse all three cases focusing on the same aspects, namely the forming or accentuation of a national identity and the portrayal of the possible threat Islam poses to this identity. After analysing the individual cases, I will compare the findings and on the basis of the similarities between the cases, if any exist, I will be able to say something more general about the three parties and the way in which they argue. Therefore, the comparative research design seems most applicable. The comparative research design may encompass both a few and many cases. When a quantitative research strategy is used, the comparative research design is essentially two or more cross-sectional studies, whereas when a qualitative research strategy is used, it resembles a multiple-case study (Bryman, 2008). In this thesis I will make use of a qualitative research strategy (see 2.2.2., pp. 10-11) and thus the comparative research design will resemble the multiple-case study. In essence, a multiple-case study design is one where more than one case is examined. Although

the purpose of this type of design is to investigate similarities or differences between two or more cases, it is still important to examine the single cases on their own merits. This means that the researcher should be careful of not being fixed upon too narrow a focus before performing the analysis, but instead keep in mind the different contexts of the cases. Thus it is possible to examine similarities or differences between cases that may explain a situation or phenomenon, but these are not necessarily the only explanations (Bryman, 2008). For that reason, it is important to examine each case separately and consider the specific political and cultural contexts before analysing the communication of the DPP, PVV and SD. At the same time, it is important to keep the same focus in all three case studies to be able to compare the results. E.g. in Denmark, the path towards more restrictive immigration policies has been developing over a long time, whereas in the Netherlands it has been more rapid. However, the end results are similar, i.e. both countries have some of the most restrictive immigration policies today. Thus there are differences, but the results are similar.

2.2.2. The qualitative research strategy

As mentioned above, I will make use of a qualitative research strategy in this thesis. Qualitative research differs from quantitative research on more than just the lack of quantification. It also entails an element of induction and exploration rather than the deductive testing of given theories. Put simply, this means that the researcher performing qualitative research is more tentative in forming ideas of what is important and is less rigid in analysing the topic, but considers the complexities and differences between individuals. Concerning answering 'why'-questions, researchers employing a qualitative research strategy seek to answer how certain factors affect an individual's life, which in turn affects his or her actions or position towards the phenomenon that is being studied (David & Sutton, 2004; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). I will make use of a qualitative research strategy in that I will perform an in-depth analysis of the selected cases. I will attempt to understand aspects concerning the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and multiculturalism in the individual cases, i.e. do we see elements of conflicts between the perception of national identity group and the attitude towards Islam? How do the DPP, PVV and SD respond to this? In that sense I am analysing the cases on their own merits and I am aware that there may be differences between the cases. Perhaps there are important dimensions in one of the cases that do not exist in the other cases. An example is the policy of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has been openly pursued as a policy in both Sweden and the Netherlands, whereas Danish politicians have stressed that Denmark does

not strive to be a multicultural society (Hedetoft, 2006). This may infer some differences between the cases. Thus I will consider the complexities of the individual cases when analysing the cases and when comparing the findings.

2.3. CASE STUDIES

2.3.1. Choosing cases

The comparison of the chosen cases will be based on a parallel design, meaning that they will not be compared until all three cases have been analysed (de Vaus, 2001). I will thus compare the conclusions of all three cases and establish an overall conclusion on this basis. In other words, there will be a section for each of the cases and after those there will be a section where the findings are compared. However, I will analyse the chosen cases focusing on the same factors, i.e. national identity and the attitudes towards Muslims and Islam as well as the three parties', the DPP, PVV and SD, communication. Furthermore, I will apply the same theory, i.e. social identity theory, as well as the conceptualisations of the radical right, national identity and multiculturalism. In some countries, the success of radical right parties may be particularly advanced or hindered by the structure of the political system, e.g. in countries with a two-party system. In other countries, the success of radical right parties may be influenced by internal conflicts. These reflections all relate to the theory of political opportunity structure, presented in the literature review (pp. 4-6). Thus in order to ultimately compare the cases, it is necessary to ensure that there are no overriding differences that render it impossible to compare the chosen cases. In this thesis, three cases have been chosen that have several similarities. As mentioned, the cases are Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, all in which successful radical right parties exist; the Danish People's Party in Denmark, the Freedom Party in the Netherlands and the Sweden Democrats in Sweden. There are several similarities between the three countries. Geographically, they are all small countries with relatively small populations. All are parliamentary democracies and constitutional monarchies, have multiparty systems and no authoritarian legacy. Although the parliament in the Netherlands is bicameral, where in Denmark and Sweden it is unicameral, the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* (Lower House) is considered the most important by far and resembles the Danish *Folketing* and the Swedish *Riksdag* in that it is in the Lower House that legislation may be initiated and amended (Arter, 1999; Andeweg & Irwin, 2002). Furthermore, the populations of all three countries are rather homogeneous in terms of the makeup of ethnicity. In the Netherlands, an estimated 80.7 per cent are ethnic Dutch (CIA, 2010); in Sweden, an estimated 85.9 per cent are ethnic Swedes (Bureau of

European and Eurasian Affairs, 2010); and in Denmark, 90.1 per cent are ethnic Danes (Larsen, 2011). This does not necessarily entail that a strong sense of national identity exist. However, it does entail that a vast majority of the population in all three countries share a common history and language. All three countries are known to be tolerant towards e.g. homosexuality and they belong to the group of the most secularised countries in Europe.

2.3.2. Similarities between the parties

Another reason for choosing the three abovementioned countries is the fact that their radical right parties belong to three different stages. The DPP became the Danish government's parliamentary basis in 2001, three years after being elected into parliament for the first time (Brunbech, 2010). Thus the DPP is rather well-established. The PVV became the Dutch government's parliamentary basis in 2010, four years after being elected into parliament for the first time (Der Spiegel, 2010). Thus the PVV is moving from stabilising towards being a well-established party. Lastly, the SD was in 2010 elected into parliament for the first time (Olsson, 2010). Thus the SD is in between a break-through phase and stabilising. In terms of organisation, all three parties are highly centralised. Although no information on the PVV's organisation can be found on the party's website, the party is known for having a strict party discipline. In addition, although other candidates feature on the electoral list, Wilders is the only actual member of the PVV and he alone decides who can run for the PVV and which issues are included in the party programme (Rijlaarsdam & Staal, 2010). The leadership of the DPP is less rigid, but Kjærsgaard is still seen as a strong and undisputed leader. However, she is surrounded by two highly skilled and relatively young politicians who are to a great extent included in the management of the party, i.e. Peter Skaarup and Kristian Thulesen Dahl (Andersen, n.d.). SD party leader Jimmy Åkesson as well as Björn Söder, Mattias Karlsson and Richard Jomshof, also called the *gang of four*, restructured the SD remarkably through the 2000s and excluded members that were too extreme for the image they wished for the SD to have (Schmidt, 2011). Thereby, one can conclude that the SD too is a fairly centralised party. In addition, Åkesson is emphasised on the SD's website and a small biography of him can be found on the SD's website, whereas other members are listed by name and title only (Sverigedemokraterna, n.d.). In terms of policy, it appears from the three parties' party programmes that the core issues include immigration, security and welfare. The three parties have previously interacted with one another to some extent. Both the PVV and the SD have drawn inspiration from the DPP. When negotiating with other Dutch parties concerning the

formation of a government, the PVV drew inspiration from the *Danish model*, i.e. functioning as a parliamentary basis for the government without being a part of the coalition (Tyler, 2010). Furthermore, the PVV has previously been consulted by Morten Messerschmidt, MEP of the DPP, on opportunities of tightening Dutch immigration laws in accordance with EU legislation (Ritzau, 2010). Also the SD has been consulted by the DPP on how to appear as a representable party (Halskov & Aagaard, 2010). Furthermore, SD leader Jimmie Åkesson stated that the SD aims at lowering integration down to a level on par with that of Denmark, just as he argued that the DPP and SD have several similarities and often reach the same conclusions (Schmidt, 2011). All in all, the parties seem to have several similarities and it should therefore be possible to compare the findings of the three cases.

2.3.3. The time dimension

Most case studies incorporate some form of a time dimension (de Vaus, 2001). In this thesis, I will analyse the communication of the DPP, PVV and SD from 2001-2011. The reason for choosing this particular time period is first and foremost that it covers the period in which all three parties have experienced important electoral success. Furthermore, it marks the period in which the relationship between Muslims and Christians, or rather Westerners, has gained increasingly more and more attention, particularly in the media. It started with the attacks on September 11, 2001, and was only enhanced by the attacks in London on July 7, 2005. A report executed by the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia in 2006 stated that subsequently, an anti-Islam stance has risen throughout Europe, making much of its Muslim population feel that they have been held responsible for the terrorist attacks (New York Times, 2006). Two wars followed in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, in Afghanistan and Iraq. Both Denmark and the Netherlands sent troops to Iraq and although Sweden did not participate in the war, it is the country in which most Iraqis have applied for asylum (Hawley, 2007). Thus all three countries have in one way or another been affected by the attacks.

2.4. EMPIRICAL MATERIAL

The empirical material I wish to employ can be divided into two sections. First is the material relating to the discussion of immigration and multiculturalism as well as the general perception of this discussion, of national identity and of Islam and Muslims. Here, I will particularly attempt to draw out the opinions of the voters concerning Islam and concerning multiculturalism. For that purpose, I will use secondary material, here referring to data collected by institutes such

as Pew Research Center, TNS Gallup or similar, which perform interviews, polls and surveys among the public on a variety of issues. For the analysis of the DPP, PVV and SD's communication, I will use primary material such as election videos, newsletters and press releases, but with a particular focus on party programmes. In addition, I will make use of secondary material in the form of e.g. interviews with MPs in periodicals. Ellinas (2010) argues that some radical right parties do not have the organisational capacity to reach voters on their own. For those parties, the media can function as a channel to promote the party and give the impression that the party has a large following (Ellinas, 2010). In line with this argument, one might argue that media such as TV-channels and newspapers can help to gain exposure for the party and its policies. However, this was not the case for the SD during the 2006 and especially the 2010 elections. Here, the SD was excluded from participating in TV-debates and several large newspapers refused to include SD's ads. However, a few newspapers, e.g. *Aftonbladet*, were willing to print a debate contribution by Åkesson (Nord, 2010). Thus the possibility of collecting material in which the SD presents its view on national identity and Islam through these media is somewhat limited. I am therefore excluding TV-debates.

Instead, I will primarily use material that is accessible through the parties' websites, particularly party programmes, as mentioned. All three parties have fairly comprehensive websites on which they make available a wide range of material, e.g. election videos and press releases. Unlike other media, the parties are not dependent on any third party to press their material when they communicate through their websites. In that sense, they have full control in selecting the material that they find best portrays their policies and opinions. In addition, Sweden e.g. is one of the countries in the world with the most extensive internet usage (Nord, 2010). In the Netherlands, 30,000 voters entered political parties' websites in 1998. By 2002, that number had risen to 1 million and by 2003, it had risen again by 100,000 (Boogers & Voerman, 2004). In addition, surveys performed by the Danish union for interactive media FDIM showed that in 2007, 59 per cent of the respondents answered that the websites of the Danish political parties had to a large degree, to some degree or to a smaller degree influenced their vote, whereas only 39 per cent said it had no influence (Jensen, Klasttrup, & Hoff, 2008). Thus the internet is becoming an ever important media for political campaigning and marketing. For this reason, I find the parties' websites applicable sources for the collection of data to analyse their discourse on national identity and Islam. As for party programmes, it has been argued that party programmes are officially endorsed by members of the party and as

such can be said to representative for the parties' position on the issues presented in the programmes (Meret, 2009; Mudde, 2000). In addition, when looking at e.g. Dutch voters, 48 per cent of those voters who entered political parties' websites did so to look for information on the parties' opinions (Boogers & Voerman, 2004). Thus party programmes do matter and I therefore find it useful to utilise them.

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this thesis, I will use theory as a tool. This means that theory is used to help interpreting material and make sense of it (Thomas, 2011). David de Vaus calls case studies in which theory is used in this way *clinical case studies*. These types of case studies are case centred rather than theory centred and theories are used to understand a case (de Vaus, 2001). In that sense, I will be using theory deductively, meaning that theory is used as a means to understand a certain action or phenomenon and to attempt to define it (Henn, 2006). However, my use of theory also carries elements of induction as I wish to attempt to draw out generalisable inferences from my analyses (Bryman, 2008). In the theoretical framework of this thesis, I will first conceptualise the radical right. The reason for including the conceptualisation of the radical right in my theoretical framework is that it includes categorisations of the discourse of the radical right, which will help me analyse the DPP, PVV and SD's party programmes. Thus it may to some extent function as a theory. Thereafter, I will conceptualise national identity and multiculturalism. The reason for including these two conceptualisations is that they too function as theories to some extent in that they explain the functions of national identity and the pros and cons of multiculturalism. Furthermore, they are important elements in social identity theory, which I will attempt to apply to this thesis. This theory was developed by the Polish social psychologist Henri Tajfel and is as such a psychological or sociological theory, but has been used in several academic fields. It concerns group behaviour and conflict and explains why individuals categorise themselves as part of a group and the consequences of this action. The reason for choosing this theory is that it helps me to understand why e.g. the Dutchmen in some instances divide the Dutch and Muslims into different categories and subsequently, become sceptical of Muslims. In addition, it explains what national identity means for its members and why it is important for individuals. It further explains why it can be very effective for radical right parties to emphasise national identity and portray Islam as a threat to this identity.

2.6. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As can be understood from the problem formulation (pp. 2-4) and the objectives of this thesis outlined on pp. 5-6, I wish to perform a discourse analysis. A discourse analysis can be said to be an approach applied to other forms of communication than naturally occurring talk. It might be applied to e.g. texts such as newspapers and includes the French philosopher Michel Foucault's views of communication. Foucault argued that the linguistic categorisation and depiction of an object shape the way in which the object is understood, i.e. the discourse may shape how a phenomenon is viewed (Bryman, 2008). This is particularly applicable in this thesis, as one of my hypotheses is that the success of radical right parties could originate from these parties' abilities to present Islam as a threat towards national identity, one that must be dealt with and curbed, which they alone are willing to ensure. There are many different views of what a discourse analysis is. In this thesis, I will focus on discourse analysis as the social construction of reality, which relates to Foucault's view of communication. It entails that discourse is seen as both shaping the world as well as being shaped by it and that discourse must be seen in relation to the context. This means e.g. examining the use of expressions and the connotations these have. A word or expression may have different meanings depending on the discourse and the context in which the language is used. A word such as 'queer' could be used positively, perhaps even as an endearing term, in one discourse, whereas it could be used as a negative, derogatory term in another discourse. Therefore it is necessary to examine the whole discourse, the context and the participants in the discourse, i.e. the sender and the receiver. In other words, one must examine the full picture (Paltridge, 2006). Thus in order to understand and analyse the discourse of the DPP, PVV and SD, it is important to understand the broader context. As already mentioned, the context in this thesis is limited to the immigration and multiculturalism debates as well as the general perceptions of national identity and Muslims and Islam within Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. Understanding the context will help me to understand why the DPP, PVV and SD argue the way that they do and what it means.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, I will present the theoretical position I will take in order to analyse my topic. I will first conceptualise the radical right, national identity and multiculturalism. As already argued, these conceptualisations are included in the theoretical framework because they to some extent function as theories and because national identity and multiculturalism are important aspects of social identity theory. I will in the end of this chapter describe the main features of this theory and reflect on its function in relation to national identity and multiculturalism and in relation to this thesis.

3.1. CONCEPTUALISING THE RADICAL RIGHT

Most authors of writings on the radical right begin their research by attempting to define what the radical right is. However, all come to the conclusion that there is not a set recipe for what the radical right embodies. Nonetheless, it is important to conceptualise and define what I understand by the term radical right, although it may entail generalising. Earl Babbie argues that conceptualisation “produces a specific, agreed-on meaning for a concept for the purposes of research” (Babbie, 2007). I use the term radical right to describe parties that may be situated in between right-winged parties such as the Conservatives and extreme right-winged parties with a fascist or Nazi agenda. However, some radical right parties, e.g. the DPP, PVV and SD, are very much in favour of welfare, though primarily for those ‘entitled’ to it, i.e. natives. Thus they are difficult to situate on a political compass. The reason for calling them radical *right* parties is particularly grounded in their immigration policies. That is not to say that all radical right parties have more or less the same policies concerning immigrants; rather, some of the parties appear more extreme than others. E.g. the Austrian radical right party FPÖ have on several occasions deliberately associated itself with the Austrian neo-Nazis by e.g. joining rallies with the neo-Nazis (Briggs, 2009), whereas DPP leader Pia Kjærsgaard calls Nazism the ultimate invective and seeks to distance the DPP with Nazism as far as possible (Kjærsgaard, 2004). Even so, on the basis of the three selected parties, I believe it is possible to outline some of the main characteristics that the three parties and some other radical right parties share.

Mudde (2008) argues that there can be said to be a radical right trinity comprising corruption, security and immigration. Particularly the latter two are strongly interrelated (Mudde, 2008). This resembles what Hainsworth calls the ideological mission of the radical right, namely to

save “the endangered nation and people from cosmopolitan, decadent, alien and anti-national influences” (Hainsworth, 2008, p. 67). One characteristic of the radical right belonging to the issue of corruption is the populist element particularly of their rhetoric. The radical right often seem to address itself to the ‘people’ or the ‘common man’. In that sense, these parties are seemingly strongly anti-elitist parties (Bornschieer, 2010). However, they direct themselves to a specific group, namely members of the people with whom they share “historico-cultural traditions” (Hainsworth, 2008, p. 19). They tend to use direct, everyday language in order to show that they are in fact down-to-earth parties with whom the people can relate (Hainsworth, 2008). This type of discourse can further be described as being a polarising ‘us versus them’ discourse that allow the radical right to establish a new collective identity amongst its electorate (Bornschieer, 2010). This type of rhetoric will be analysed in this thesis particularly in connection to the parties’ discourse on Islam. In addition, radical right parties often have hierarchical structure with a strong, charismatic leader that has the latitude to quickly and directly respond to the mood among the public without having to consult with other party members (Bornschieer, 2010). As already seen, this is to different extents the case with all three parties chosen for this thesis.

Another feature of the radical right belonging to both security and immigration in the trinity is a strongly nativist ideology. This type of ideology can be understood as one that postulates that states should be inhabited by the natives of the particular state. Non-native elements, meaning both people and ideas, are seen as a threat to the homogenous state (Mudde, 2007b). We here see the security element of the trinity. Thus it refers to the threat of the dissolution of national culture, values and customs, i.e. national identity. Nativism does not necessarily include racism and xenophobia. Rather it is the opposition to those who are unwilling or unable to assimilate with the national identity that is prevailing in the state in which they reside. This means that immigrants are not unwelcome per se as long as they blend in and absorb the norms and values commonly propagated within the given state. Thus mass-immigration and multiculturalism is not to be desired, according to the radical right (Betz, 2007). In respect to the three parties chosen for the case studies, there is scepticism towards immigration, but as long as there is a willingness to assimilate, the parties do allow for immigrants entering the respective countries, but to a limited extent. However, as far as Muslims are concerned, there is a strong anti-immigration stance among the parties. Paul Hainsworth argues that this anti-immigration stance in general extends to refugees and asylum seekers, and immigration and

multiculturalism are seen as the ultimate threats to national identity (Hainsworth, 2008). The group of foreigners most often singled out generally by the radical right is Muslims. This originates particularly in the 9/11 terrorist attacks and other events related to conflicts between Muslims and Western non-Muslims. These cultural conflicts have led to a “[...] reaffirmation of Europe’s Christian identity” (Liang, 2007). This is seen in the fact that several radical right parties appeal to the general public by referring to Christian values and ensuring the public that they will not let Islamists undermine these values (Liang, 2007).

Although the economic policies of the radical right are of secondary importance, as argued earlier in this thesis, the radical right still has economic policies. Kitschelt (1997) argued that the economic policies of the radical right tend to combine a 1980s neoliberalism with nationalist protectionism. However, Hainsworth argues that the economic policies of the radical right are not constant or static, but changes with the popularity and level of influence the parties hold as well as the particular context (Hainsworth, 2008). In addition, Mudde questions whether the economic policies of the radical right are in fact neoliberal or whether only the rhetoric is. He argues that radical right parties view the national market positively, but that they are more sceptical towards the global market. In fact, globalisation in the eyes of the radical right can lead to relocation of businesses from the native state to a foreign state and thus laissez-faire policies in too wide a degree can be a threat to the nation state (Mudde, 2007b).

3.2. CONCEPTUALISING NATIONAL IDENTITY

National identity is a complex term and as such is difficult to conceptualise. Nonetheless, I will attempt to draw out the main points of the term as it is understood in this thesis. National identity in Western Europe has been argued to have been established by intellectuals through such actions as the writing of national histories, the advancing of national historical monuments and the painting of national landscapes (Thiesse, 1999). Anthony D. Smith has constructed a list of five fundamental features of national identity: “a historic territory or homeland; common myths and historical memories; a common, mass public culture; common legal rights and duties for all members; and a common economy with territorial mobility for members” (Smith, 1991, p. 14). These are the basic features of national identity, but what is even more important for this thesis are the functions of national identity, i.e. what does national identity mean to its members? These can be divided into external and internal functions and go hand-in-hand with the elements of national identity. The external functions

can further be divided into territorial, economic and political. The first, territorial, refers to the nation's defined social space within which its members live and work. This space further has a historic and spiritual value for the nation's members (Smith, 1991). For the individual, the territorial boundaries of a nation signal who belongs to the national collective group of the individual and who does not. Ultimately, people belonging to the collective group are regarded as more 'humane', whereas people belonging to other national collective groups are regarded as unknown, even at times as potential enemies (Guibernau, 2007). Economic consequences refer to the control of resources and manpower. It is on the basis of national identity that resources are allocated among the nation's members. In addition, national identity has a political function. Political officials, regulation and government all strive towards advancing national interests, which in turn reflects the will and national identity of the members of a nation (Smith, 1991). Even more importantly, national identity works as the legitimization of common laws and duties which define the values and character of a nation and which reflect customs and traditions of its members. By appealing to national identity, politicians and governments can seek legitimization for social order and solidarity (Smith, 1991). In fact it is the political state that constructs "a cohesive society through a set of strategies designed to generate a culturally and linguistically homogenous citizenship" (Guibernau, 2007, p. 24). In that sense, the state promotes a national culture and an official language. As mentioned, these functions are external functions that in many ways define how society works within a nation.

However, national identity also has an internal function for the individual members of a nation. It provides a collective for the individual to belong to and identify him- or herself through. Through compulsory education, all members of a nation are introduced to values, symbols and traditions of a nation and thus all members share a common awareness of their own national identity. Through such symbolic and material items such as language, historical monuments, particular geographical features, a specific mentality, costumes, national dishes, national emblems etc., members are reminded of their shared identity and thus feel a bond to other members of the same national identity. In addition, national identity provides members with a means to define themselves in relation to other nations in the world. The members of a nation can understand who they are through their national identity as well as understand how they differ from members of other national identities. The difficulty in analysing national identity lies in the fact that it is subject to a rather normative interpretation, i.e. not everyone perceives national identity the same way (Thiesse, 1999; Smith, 1991). For the individual, national

identity does not have particular political or territorial importance. Rather it concerns the questions of ‘who am I?’ and ‘who are we?’. It is essentially a definition, a means of interpreting the self (Guibernau, 2007). In relation to radical right parties appealing to national identity it is therefore necessary to appeal to a more general sense of national identity, something that as many people as possible can relate to in order for the radical right’s communication to be effective. E.g. in Sweden, only 23 per cent answered that they believe in God in a survey executed by the European Commission in 2005, with 53 per cent answering that they believed in some sort of spirit (Nordstrom, 2010). In that respect, solely appealing to Christianity as an element of Swedish national identity might not particularly advance the Swedish Democrats. That is not to say that Christianity cannot feature as an element of the SD’s portrayal of national identity, rather that it could be advantageous for the party to include other elements. Thus appealing to national identity requires a certain balance. It is important not to be too limited, but the appeal must also not be too broad as the point of appealing to national identity is to differentiate the national group with other groups.

3.3. CONCEPTUALISING MULTICULTURALISM

Put simply, multiculturalism “refers to a *de facto* situation marked by the coexistence of groups associated to culturally distinct heritages” (Bousetta & Jacobs, 2006, p. 26). It implies that immigrants should be given equal rights in all areas of society, but without having to completely conform to the national culture and value-system. However, there is an expectation of immigrants conforming to certain key values. One can differentiate between on the one side, a *laissez-faire* type of multiculturalism, in which ethnic communities are accepted, but where the government does not actively ensure social justice, and on the other side, a type of multiculturalism that is a direct policy of the government. This type of multiculturalism implies an acceptance of cultural diversity and the state’s willingness to guarantee equal rights (Guibernau, 2007). This is the type of multiculturalism which has been implemented in both Sweden and the Netherlands. Other words have previously been used to describe the same phenomenon. Some of these include *cosmopolitan*, *plural societies* and *multi-ethnic societies*. Watson (2000) argues that the reason for multiculturalism being the preferred word originates in the fact that culture is a positively valued word in contrast to e.g. race. Culture has a specific meaning and importance both emotionally and nostalgically and is associated with a particular way of living that speaks to the individual’s sense of belonging and identity. Because individuals recognise the importance of culture to themselves, they also understand the

meaning and importance of culture to others. Thus multiculturalism refers not only to a difference between individual cultural groups, but also to the fact that this difference originates in a universally shared attachment to culture and thereby, an implicit recognition of all cultures being equal (Watson, 2000). A multicultural society has been argued to be one that is unitary in the public domain, but which encourages diversity in the private domain. In a liberal democracy, this leads to the question of how far cultures and values that directly oppose the norms of liberal democracy should be tolerated. Particularly the different views of gender roles between some cultures can be very problematic. How would a society function in which the unitary public domain advocates equal rights between men and women, but where certain groups are allowed to follow their own rules? Thus multiculturalism is not unproblematic (Guibernau, 2007). Another problem with multiculturalism originates in the argument that an individual's self-worth is closely tied to his or her cultural identity. In line with this argument, Watson argues that it would be possible to strengthen the nation by enhancing one common culture for all of the nation's citizens, a culture that provides the individual with a strong sense of belonging and a cultural identity. This is e.g. the case with the United States, where individuals may belong to various ethnic backgrounds, but where the collective whole is American (Watson, 2000).

3.4. SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Social identity in social identity theory is an individual's knowledge of belonging to a social category or group. A social group in this theory is understood as a number of people who categorise themselves as belonging to the same social category (Stets & Burke, 2000). Social identity theory is concerned amongst other things with group conflict, i.e. conflicts between two or more groups. According to this theory, the self is reflexive. This means that the self can see itself as an object and categorise, classify and name itself in relation to other social categorisations, i.e. various identity groups. This process is called *self-categorisation* (Stets & Burke, 2000). According to this theory, all individuals have a need for positive self-evaluation. In order to obtain positive self-evaluation, the individual has a need for thinking well of the group he or she belongs to, i.e. the *in-group*. This in turn necessitates that the individual is able to differentiate between the in-group and other groups, i.e. *out-groups*. By seeing the in-group in a positive light and the out-groups in a negative light, the individual will feel better about the in-group and thus also about him or herself. This will, however, make the individual respond

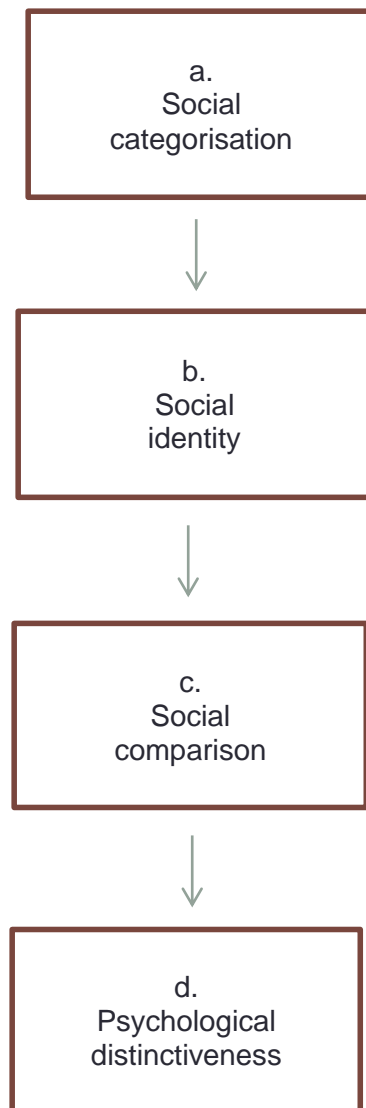
positively to members of the in-group, but negatively to members of the out-groups (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007).

Turner and Tajfel (1986) performed a series of experiments known as *minimal group experiments*, in which the participants were divided into fictitious groups. The experiment showed that just categorising themselves as members of a group led to in-group favouritism among the participants of the experiment. After categorising themselves as members of a group, the participants would seek to enhance their self-esteem by positively differentiating the in-group from out-groups. This means that an individual defines who she or he is in terms of 'we' rather than 'I' (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; University of Twente, n.d.). This is a crucial point for this thesis because it explains what national identity means to its members. Because individuals define themselves as 'we', i.e. on the basis of the in-group, an attack on this group is essentially an attack on the self. Thus if Islam is portrayed as a threat to national identity, it is ultimately portrayed as a threat to all individual members of that in-group. In that sense, a conflict between the in-group, i.e. national identity, and the out-group, i.e. Islam, works at a group level, i.e. the nation, but also on a very personal, individual level.

These are the basic premises of the theory. The theory indicates that there is a general tendency towards categorisation and prejudice towards out-groups. However, one might argue that real life is not quite as black and white as the theory suggests. There are people who do not prefer their own national identity over others and people who leave their home countries because they prefer another country. Thus the radical right cannot rely on this tendency towards categorisation; they have to spur it on. If we take the example of the Netherlands, we might question if any Dutchman would feel negatively towards Muslims if the differences between the two groups would not be emphasised, both by some Muslims themselves and by the media and political parties. E.g. some Muslim women wear headscarves, whereas ethnic Dutch women do not. Here a difference becomes apparent between the two groups. Now there is an opportunity for the radical right to present this difference in a negative light, e.g. that Muslim women are suppressed and forced to wear headscarves. The radical right can thus indicate that Dutch women are independent and free and that Muslim women are the opposite, i.e. they are different and thus do not belong to the same category as Dutchmen. Thus the influence of agents is an important aspect of this theory.

Turning back to the theory, it should be mentioned that it is often split into two versions. The first version is in line with Tajfel and Turner's experiments as it states that the mere categorisation with a group creates bias in favour of the in-group. As Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007) argue, if a fictitious group in an experiment can spur loyalty towards the in-group and negative bias towards other groups, then one can only imagine the power of a group in which its members share traditions, history, culture, symbols etc., hence national identity. The second version of the theory argues that it is not the categorisation that is essential; it is rather the context in which people are categorised. This context could be political, but also social. That means that in a positive context, positive bonds between groups will be formed and in a negative context, negative bonds will be formed. Thus categorisation can produce both friendship and respect, but also rejection and discrimination (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). Hence we see the importance of agents in this version of the theory. If the radical right aims at creating bias in favour of the in-group and prejudice towards out-groups, it must as an agent ensure that the context in which the categorisation takes place is negative. This could e.g. be done by presenting differences between the in-group and out-groups in a negative light, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. According to the first version, policies that emphasise differences in group identity are dangerous. The ultimate example of this kind of policy is multiculturalism. On the contrary, the second version argues that since multiculturalism aims at producing a positive context, it may produce positive bonds between different groups rather than emphasise the differences (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007).

The various points mentioned above can be summarised into this model:



*Figure 1: Causal sequence of the four main concepts involved in social identity theory
(Oakes, 2001, p. 35)*

4. ANALYSIS

This section includes the analysis of the three cases. The analysis will be divided into case studies, i.e. Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. In each case study, I will describe the history of the radical right as well as the development of the immigration and multiculturalism debate in the respective country. Thereafter, I will investigate the perception of national identity and of Muslims and Islam. This will lead me to the analyses the party programmes of the three parties, the DPP, the PVV and the SD. In the analyses, I will first focus on the parties' depiction of national identity. Thereafter, I will move on to the parties' attitudes towards multiculturalism and lastly, the parties' portrayal of Muslims and Islam. All translations are done by me.

5. DENMARK

5.1. BACKGROUND

5.1.1. Historical background of radical right in Denmark

Pia Kjærsgaard, the leader and co-founder of the DPP, was for a long time a member of another radical right party, the Progress Party, which entered into the Danish political scene in 1973. Under the leadership of Mogens Glistrup, the Progress Party ran on a platform of a strong sense of anti-establishment and an opposition to the Danish welfare system (Ignazi, 2006). However, as Glistrup was sentenced to a two years jail term in 1983 due to tax fraud, Kjærsgaard took control of the party and moved it towards a more moderate position. Glistrup strongly opposed these alterations and was subsequently forced to leave the party in 1990 (Ignazi, 2006). Kjærsgaard further de-radicalised the party and by 1994, the Liberals and Conservatives agreed to run their election campaigns alongside the Progress Party. It was not all members of the party that agreed with Kjærsgaard's radicalisation and consequently, Kjærsgaard left the party shortly after the elections together with approximately one third of its members (Ignazi, 2006; Meret, 2009). In 1995, Kjærsgaard and the faction that had left the Progress Party along with her formed the DPP. They did not carry on with the more moderate stand that Kjærsgaard had implemented in the Progress Party. Rather, the DPP was strongly anti-immigrant and xenophobic (Ignazi, 2006). Although the party won 7.4 per cent in the 1998 general elections and gained a seat in the European Parliament in 1999, the then Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen remarked that in his eyes, the DPP would never be '*stuerene*' (housebroken), meaning the party would never be acceptable to him. Even so, the party has only grown in popularity since, making it the third most popular party in Denmark in the 2007

parliamentary elections (Meret, 2009; Davies & Jackson, 2008). The DPP today has a hostile position towards the European Union and claim to be defenders of national sovereignty. It is pro-welfare, but anti-immigration. The DPP holds no ministry positions, but has still been successful in influencing the legislative process. Several strict laws on immigration have been passed, e.g. the 24-year-rule which is aimed at hindering arranged marriages. It has even been argued by the European Network Against Racism that Denmark has turned overnight from a tolerant to a racist society, to which the DPP's answer is '*Denmark for the Danes*' (Davies & Jackson, 2008).

5.1.2. Immigration and multiculturalism in Denmark

The current Danish Aliens Act was passed in 1983 and was considered to be one of the most liberal Aliens Acts in Europe at that time (Hansen S. M., n.d.). The law reflected the fact that Denmark wished to be seen as a humanitarian frontrunner and affirmed the rights of asylum seekers. No less than 155 voted in favour of the law and only 12 voting against it (Hansen S. M., n.d.). However, the law has since been tightened to the point that Denmark today is seen as having the most restrictive immigration policy in Europe (Reimann, 2011). One aspect of the Danish 1983 Aliens Act was asylum seekers' right to family reunification. This aspect effectively led to the fall of the liberal-conservative government under Poul Schlüter in 1993 as it became apparent that the government had shelved Sri Lankan Tamil asylum seekers' applications for family reunification (Rehling, 2011). Despite Schlüter's reassurances that 'nothing had been swept under the carpet' in his notorious 'carpet speech', a commission appointed to investigate the case found that then Justice Minister Erik Ninn-Hansen had deliberately disregarded the applications for family reunification, well-knowing that despite of peace agreements in 1987, Sri Lanka remained dangerous for Tamils. Ninn-Hansen's actions as well as Schlüter's 'carpet-speech' led Schlüter to announce in 1993 that the government would be stepping down (Rehling, 2011). The following year, the Danish Aliens Act underwent several alterations designed to make it more restrictive. One of the changes related to the aspect of family reunification, as it was now a requirement that asylum seekers could support their spouses before a reunification was possible (DR Nyheder, n.d.). In 1998, the Aliens Act was further tightened in response to the general public mood in the country that seemed to be more and more sceptical of immigration (Hansen S. M., n.d.). The social democrat-social liberal government found it increasingly difficult to cooperate on immigration issues and this was partly the reason why they lost the in the 2001 general elections (Andersen & Nielsen, 2003).

In the elections, the political debate was more concerned with immigration than it ever had been and it gained much attention from the outside world, where e.g. the German Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker accused the Danish elections of being populist and Europe-hostile (Andersen & Nielsen, 2003). The elections were held in November, just two months after the terrorist attacks on September 11 and Islam entered into the political debate (Smitt & Larsen, 2006). Following the elections, the new liberal-conservative government under the leadership of Anders Fogh Rasmussen and with the support of the DPP made some of the most radical changes to the Danish Aliens Act so far. Among the most significant was the fact that permanent residence permits would only be granted after 7 years residence in Denmark unlike the prior 3 years as well as the so-called 24-year-rule, which aimed at hindering arranged marriages by requiring that both spouses should be at least 24 years old, along with other requirements (Hansen S. M., n.d.). Particularly the changes in 2001 have made Denmark known for having one of the most restrictive Aliens Acts in Europe and the Danish immigration debate has been criticised for being too harsh, a major change from the liberal 1983 Act. However, surveys carried out by TNS Gallup in 2011 show that 60 per cent of the Danes find the tone in the immigration debate to be either 'fair' or 'too soft', with only 33 per cent finding it 'too harsh' (Berlingske Tidende, 2011). Furthermore, in 2011, the Danish government released a report stating that due to the restrictions made to the Danish Aliens Act, Denmark had effectively saved 6.7 billion euros, prompting Danish Minister for Integration Søren Pind from the centre-right party *Venstre* to state that he had no scruples in making further restrictions on those who might be suspected of being a burden to Danish society (Reimann, 2011).

An event that according to the imam Wahid Pedersen and the religion sociology researcher Brian Jacobsen has caused a radicalisation in the political debate, meaning that the limits to what is legitimate to say have been expanded, is the so-called Mohammed cartoons crisis (Klitgaard, 2007). This crisis broke out after the Danish newspaper *Politiken* had printed 12 illustrators' drawings of Mohammed and resulted in Denmark's worst foreign policy crises since World War II (DR Nyheder Research, 2006). Several Muslim countries withdrew their ambassadors to Denmark, thousands of people protested, Danish goods were boycotted by several Muslim countries, embassies were set ablaze and people died during protests (CBC News, 2006; The Times, 2006). Opinion polls performed by Rambøll Management showed that in the wake of the cartoons, the Danish Social Democrats had lost nine mandates compared to the national elections one year prior, whereas the DPP had gained eight (Ritzau, 2006a). A

survey performed by Catinét Research almost a year after the publication of the Mohammed cartoons showed that nearly one in four or 23.4 per cent of Danes felt more negative towards Islam and Muslims living in Denmark after the crisis, with only 2.4 per cent feeling more positive (Ritzau, 2006b). Thus the crisis had an important influence on the Danish immigration and multiculturalism debate.

Concerning multiculturalism, Danish politicians have for a long time stressed that Denmark is not and does not intend to become a multicultural society. In fact, Hedetoft (2006) calls Danish multiculturalism an oxymoron. He argues that “cultural diversity [...] is officially frowned on as an alien, ‘un-Danish’ notion” and that “multiculturalism has been portrayed as out of sync with [...]” Danish political culture (Hedetoft, 2006, p. 1). When Pind took office in March 2011, he declared that he preferred a policy of *assimilation* rather than integration, meaning that non-Danes should abandon their own culture and adopt Danish culture rather than be integrated as an added part of the whole while keeping their own culture. He argued that immigrants come to Denmark not to change it, but to become Danish. He furthermore argued that Danish values were under threat by multiculturalism and that multiculturalism brought with it female oppression and child abuse (Jensen K. N., 2011; Ritzau, 2011). This is an example of the development of the Danish immigration and multiculturalism debate. Though not a member of the DPP, Pind’s arguments here are not unlike those of the DPP. A report from 2001 by a think tank within the Danish Ministry of the Interior emphasises seven factors required for successful integration, whereof five of the factors are requirements aimed at immigrants. Thus the emphasis is on immigrants adjusting to Danish society, rather than Danish society accommodating immigrants and their culture (Gundelach, 2002). As of July 5, 2011, Denmark has tightened border control, resulting in much criticism from several European countries, particularly Germany. German Foreign Ministry official Warner Hoyer e.g. accused Denmark of ‘playing with the fire of nationalism’ (The Local, 2011).

5.1.3. Danish national identity

Gundelach (2002) argues that Danish national identity is ever changing and redefined and therefore one cannot define Danish national identity in any specific terms. He argues that values and norms such as liberal-mindedness, a strong sense of equality and the appreciation of homogeneity are often said to be typically Danish, but these are still rather vague terms. In an article in *Information* from 2008, it was argued that Danes generally regard being Danish as

synonymous with being Christian, although in a very implicit form. It was argued that Danes emphasised history as a part of being Danish, although many Danes do not actually know Danish history. The same is the case with Christianity. Danes generally find Christianity to be an important part of being Danish, although many Danes do not know much about the religion and rarely attend church (Lehmann, 2008). Even so, approximately, 87 per cent of the Danes are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (Andersen & Lüchau, 2004). For Danes, religion is a private matter and therefore not a matter that should be included in e.g. political discussions (Borre, 2004). If one should list a number of aspects and values contained in Danish national identity, it can be mentioned that Danes are generally among the most content and happy in the world. According to Gundelach (2004), happiness particularly relates to the country in which a person lives and to close social networks, signifying that Danish are happy living in Denmark and have close social networks. Danes value democracy and its values highly and are generally content with its development in Denmark. This, Gundelach argues, is connected to the fact that Danes from an early age are socialised within Danish democracy and are taught democratic values (Gundelach, 2004). Here we thus see the political function of national identity (cf. pp. 19-21). Generally, Danish political values are centred in the middle of the political compass, although nationalism is fairly strong in Denmark. Hence Danes have a strong sense of national identity (Gundelach, 2004). Danes are content with and presumably proud of the Danish welfare system and there is a strong sense of solidarity, at least among the Danes (Gundelach, 2004).

5.1.4. Danes on multiculturalism and Muslims

I have already described the political debate on immigration, but how do the Danes in general view Muslims, Islam and multiculturalism? A survey performed by TNS Gallup in March 2011, shortly after Pind took office, showed that 58 per cent of the respondents agreed with Pind that multiculturalism had repressed Danish culture and almost half of the respondents felt that in the public sphere, Islam had been taken too much into consideration. However, 54 per cent preferred a multicultural society to a monocultural society (Ritzau, 2011). Interestingly, in a poll also performed by TNS Gallup less than a month later, i.e. in April 2011, 20 per cent of the respondents answered that immigrants should live solely according to Danish norms, whereas 72 per cent answered that immigrants should live primarily according to Danish norms (Sloth & Krogh, 2011). This thus shows that neither assimilation nor multiculturalism is preferred; rather integration seems to be desired. Concerning Danes' views of Muslims and Islam, in a

survey carried out by Voxmeter for Aarhus University in 2010, a relatively high percentage of the respondents answered 'don't know' to many of the questions concerning their view on Muslims and Islam. This indicates that some of the respondents either did not want to express their opinion or had yet to make up their minds about Islam and Muslims and are thus susceptible to the influence of others, e.g. the DPP. In the survey, the majority, 67.5 per cent, did not view Islam as a threat to Denmark, but 61 per cent of the respondents viewed Danes' relationship to Islam as a religion as bad or very bad. According to the survey, 90 per cent would not mind living next door to a Muslim, but at the same time a small majority of 42 per cent would not wish their son or daughter to marry a Muslim (Nannestad, 2011). The article from *Information* mentioned in the paragraph above argued that Danes' scepticism towards Muslims and Islam originates in the secular nature of Denmark and Danes. Here is an interesting paradox; Denmark is secular, yet many Danes see Christianity as a part of Danish national identity. Generally, Danes are tolerant of other religions, but when meeting people of strong faith, many Danes become wary, feeling that they are being enforced a religious dogma that they do not believe in (Lehmann, 2008).

5.2. THE COMMUNICATION OF THE DPP

5.2.1. The DPP on Christianity

Having described the background, I will now turn to the analysis of the communication of the DPP. I will first describe the DPP's website and thereafter move on to the DPP's party programme¹. Already on the banner of the website of the DPP, one can see the visualisation of the party's portrayal of national identity (see picture 1 below). Pictures of cornfields, sand dunes and churches intermix with *Jellingestenene*, the symbol of Denmark's transition to Christianity; *Holger Danske*, the hero from Danish folklore; and a stork, Denmark's unofficial national bird (Dansk Folkeparti, 2011). Thus the DPP's portrayal of national identity here entails both religion and history, which is clearly in line with the perception many Danes have of what it means to be Danish if the aforementioned article from *Information* is to be believed. In the party's political programme, the DPP devotes a complete section to the meaning of Christianity in Denmark. According to the DPP, Christianity has had and still has a great influence on Danish society. In fact, the DPP states that Christianity is "uadskillelig fra

¹ The party programme of the DPP is called *Arbejdsprogram*, i.e. 'Work programme'. I am here analysing the newest version, which is from 2009. A short version of the programme was released in 1995, but was expanded upon in 1997 and again in 2001. The DPP's reason for updating the 2001 programme is in their own words that many of their suggestions have been successfully carried out (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b).

befolkningens liv” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b), i.e. ‘inseparable from the lives of the population’. The DPP acknowledges that Denmark is a secular country in which the law is above religion, but even so, the party states that religion, faith, values, traditions, customs and opinions are vital for the development of a society. However, according to the DPP, it is only the Judeo-Christian, Western culture which has broken with medieval world views and created and fostered tolerance and freedom, the foundation of democracy. In addition, the DPP argues, it is only in the Judeo-Christian culture that human rights are consolidated (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b). This is clearly a reference to Islam. The DPP has previously referred to Islam as a religion stuck in the Middle Ages. E.g. MP Morten Messerschmidt has stated that the European Community do not have room for Islam’s medieval dogmas and that “islamisme er en taberkultur og skaber et samfund, der ikke er værd at leve i” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2007a), i.e. ‘Islamism is a loser culture and creates a society not worth living in’. The DPP warns that tolerance which is common for Judeo-Christian cultures must not be taken too far. Tolerance should not be seen as a prohibition on criticising norms and cultures which are criticisable in the eyes of Western secular societies, the DPP believes. The DPP will not stand idly by while Danish norms, morals and culture are attacked (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b).

The party finds that religious freedom is important, but it is Danish culture and Christianity which should be protected and defended, not Islam (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b). Interesting here is the way in which the DPP balances Christianity and secularism. Denmark is portrayed as a secular, democratic, liberal and free country, which simultaneously is greatly influenced by Christianity. This seems to be somewhat of a paradox, but the DPP does not see secularism and the state subsidising the Lutheran-Evangelical church as contradictory. This in many ways corresponds to the perception of some Danes that Denmark is a secular country, but that Danish national identity is connected to Christianity. Referring to social identity theory, the DPP here highlights Christianity as belonging to Danish national identity. Thus those who belong to the national identity group, the in-group, are all influenced by Christianity in some way. That means that those who adhere to another religion, particularly Islam, do not belong to the in-group. In fact, the DPP argues that it is important to keep in mind the fact that the European civilisation is built upon a break with religious fanaticism and dumbing down as this helps people to understand the conflict between the European civilisation and other civilisations which have not gone through these reformations (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009b). Hence, e.g. Middle Eastern countries and the people living there are still marked by religious fanaticism, according

to the DPP. In that sense, Muslims do not belong to the in-group and, according to the DPP, there exists a conflict between the out-group and the in-group.



Figure 2: Still photo of DPP's website banner (Dansk Folkeparti, 2011)

5.2.2. The DPP on national identity

According to the DPP, the Danish monarchy is an intrinsic part of Denmark's political and cultural history and is loved as a symbol of Danish solidarity. In fact, the DPP argues that Danes connect the royal family with their national identity (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009c). Interestingly, both the queen and her two sons are married to non-Danes and thus a big part of the royal family is not ethnically Danish. Other than the royal family, the DPP argues that "ytringsfrihed, og ligeværd, frisind og tolerance, humor og flid blandt de danske værdier, vi sætter højest", i.e. 'the freedom of speech and equality, liberal-mindedness and tolerance, humour and diligence are amongst those Danish values that we value the highest'. Denmark is one of the richest, most free and equal countries in the world which, the DPP argues, is the result of the diligence and solidarity of the Danish people (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Here we see the DPP emphasising solidarity as part of Danish national identity, which is in line with the general with of the Danes. To ensure that Denmark will remain a free country worth living in, there are certain threats that must be dealt with, the DPP points out (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). In fact, this is the main theme of the first chapter in the DPP's party programme. The list of threats include e.g. the EU's threat to Denmark's sovereignty and national identity; the lack of influence the *people* have on the political process, thus showing the DPP's populist nature (cf. p. 18); and immigration, more specifically Muslim immigrants (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d).

In the variety of material available on the website of the DPP, the party often refers to the protection and further development of Danish culture, but what exactly is Danish culture? The DPP argues that what characterises Danish society is democracy, a high production, the welfare state and a peaceful atmosphere and mind-set (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Again, here is a correlation between the DPP's view of national identity and the view of the Danes in

general. The DPP argues that Danish culture is made up of the sum of the Danes' values, faith, religion, language, norms, attitudes and traditions (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009e). The DPP does not specify what exactly these terms mean; it is implied. In a sense, the DPP here insinuate that those belonging to the in-group, i.e. those who share Danish national identity, know what these terms mean, those who do not, belong to the out-groups. This is evident in the DPP's election video from 2007, which shows pictures of what is often considered to be typically Danish, but which is never really specified (see picture 2 below). There are pictures of yellow fields with a farm and *Dannebrog*; pictures of marguerites, the unofficial national flower of Denmark; pictures of the diligence the DPP argues characterises Danes in the form of carpenters, farmers and fishermen; and pictures of the young helping the elderly, i.e. solidarity (Dansk Folkeparti, 2007b). The pictures could essentially be from any Western European country, with the exception of the presence of *Dannebrog* and a single picture of *Jellingestenene*, but somehow they come across as unequivocally Danish. There are mostly pictures taken in the summer, people are smiling and the background music is soft and happy. There is a certain Morten Korch² feeling to the election video, meaning the Denmark here presented resembles a pre-industrial Denmark, harmonious and peaceful, emphasising traditions. Thus this portrayal is somewhat old-fashioned, which here is something positive, unlike in the context of Islam (cf. p. 32). At one point during the video, the text 'but something threatens' rolls across the frame and the music changes to dramatic tones with Muslim prayers being sung in the background. A clip of the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on September 11 is followed by pictures of protesters burning *Dannebrog* and protesters holding up signs saying e.g. 'behead those who insult Islam', a reference to the Mohammed crisis, which was fairly beneficial to the DPP (cf. pp. 28-29). Interestingly, these pictures are all grey and dark without any nature (Dansk Folkeparti, 2007b). Thus this video is a clear example of how Islam is presented as a threat to Danish national identity. Furthermore, the portrayal of national identity in this subtle, implied manner is a clear appeal to ethnic Danes. The DPP does not attempt to explain what it means to be Danish because the Danes already know. Instead the party uses images and symbols that many Danes will recognise, but which immigrants may not understand in the same way. In that sense, it is a clear appeal to Danish national identity.

² Morten Korch was a Danish author writing about Denmark in the first half of the 1900s. Many of his books have been made into popular films.



Figure 3: Still photos from DPP's 2007 election video (Dansk Folkeparti, 2007b)

5.2.3. The DPP on multiculturalism

Having appealed to national identity and presented in a very positive light what that includes, the DPP warns against what might happen if Denmark allowed for the influence of other cultures or even became a multicultural society. According to the DPP, the Danish way of life is unique and is dependent on Danish culture. Because Denmark is a small country with a small population, Danish culture and thus the Danish way of life could not be sustained if Denmark allowed for mass-immigration of people with different religions and cultures than Christianity and Danish culture, according to the DPP. The DPP argues that a multicultural society lacks cohesion and solidarity and is often marked by open conflict. Indeed, “Et identitetsløst, multikulturelt Europa vil ligge åbent for antidemokratiske og voldelige bevægelser” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009e), i.e. ‘a multicultural Europe devoid of an identity would be open to anti-democratic and violent movements’. This kind of argument is called a *slippery slope argument*, claiming that allowing for a seemingly harmless thing will lead to disaster (Stenvoll, 2008). Here we see that for the DPP, allowing for multiculturalism, which might seem harmless, will eventually lead to violence and the end of democracy. In fact, the DPP argues that Denmark becoming a multicultural or multi-ethnic society could lead to reactionary cultures hostile to development, breaking down the stable and homogenous Danish society (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009a). Again, this is a slippery slope argument. Here we may refer to social identity theory (pp. 22-25), where one version of the theory argued that social categorisation does not necessarily lead to negative differentiation, but rather depends on the context. Here, the DPP ensures that the context surrounding multiculturalism is highly negative, thereby attempting to persuade voters of not wishing multiculturalism implemented in Denmark and of negatively differentiating the in-group from out-groups, thus showing an ‘us versus them’ rhetoric (cf. p. 18). The DPP argues that Danish culture is under pressure and therefore finds it important for all politicians to strengthen ‘Danishness’ (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009e). The DPP recognises that

Denmark has been influenced by other cultures throughout its history. These influences have been processed and shaped and have become a part of the distinctive character of Danish culture and thus limited immigration will not harm Danish national identity, the DPP argues. However, because of the massive population growth in the 20th century as well as lacking social and economic development in the third world, the ‘developed world’, hereunder Denmark, has experienced a large intake of immigrants from these countries, according to the DPP. This kind of immigration is not natural and opening up the Danish borders is not the solution to the problems of the third world, the DPP states. Rather, the DPP argues, “Danmark er danskernes land” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009a), i.e. ‘Denmark is the country of the Danes’. Taking in large amounts of immigrants would make it impossible to integrate them, the DPP states. In addition, the DPP argues, many immigrants wish to carry on living in accordance with their own culture which can eventually lead Denmark down the same path as their home countries.

5.2.4. The DPP on Islam and Muslims

The DPP argues that heavy immigration from countries far from Danish and European culture and lifestyle has brought a large and ever growing group of Muslims to Denmark, some of whom have no intention of integrating. Fanatical Muslim imams are only making the problem bigger by attempting to hinder young Muslims ‘choosing the Danish freedom’, the DPP claims. The DPP argues that some areas of Denmark have become actual ghettos and that these are at times characterised by violence and general disorder. In fact, the DPP argues, illiteracy and female oppression have become part of the everyday life of the Danes (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Particularly Muslims have been proved difficult to integrate, the DPP claims. In fact, according to the DPP, “Der findes intet samfund i verden, hvor en fredelig integration af muslimer i en anden kultur har været mulig [...]” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009a), i.e. ‘there is no society in the world in which peaceful integration of Muslims into another culture has been possible’. Here, we see the nativist, ‘us versus them’ nature of the DPP’s communication. The DPP singles out Muslim immigration as being problematic and not immigration in general. Indeed, the party has already argued that Judeo-Christian cultures are alike. Thus it is a matter of ‘us the Westerners’ versus ‘them the Muslims’ for the DPP. Therefore, the DPP has declared that Denmark must fight not only Islamists and terrorists, but also Islam as a religion. According to the DPP, Islam is a political movement and those who adhere to Islam are subject to the laws of Islam, not the laws of Denmark. Islam and democracy are incompatible and therefore, Denmark must ensure that there will never be a Muslim majority, according to the

DPP (Ipsen & Cordsen, 2010). The DPP argues that in school, children must learn “faren ved totalitære styreformer og religioner, heriblandt nazisme, islamisme og kommunisme” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009f), i.e. ‘the danger of totalitarian forms of government and religions, hereunder Nazism, Islamism and Communism’. What should be especially noted here is the fact that Nazism and Islamism are here put into the same category and even mentioned in the same sentence. In fact, Kjærsgaard even stated that she would not repudiate the fact that the DPP is an anti-Muslim party and that Islam should be restrained by all means (Lehmann, Kjærsgaard: Islam må ikke brede sig, 2010). The choice of words here is interesting, i.e. anti-Muslim rather than anti-Islam. This indicates that the party is against not only Islam as a religion, but also against Muslims as people. There is, however, a chance that the journalist has quoted Kjærsgaard wrongly and that she meant anti-Islam, not anti-Muslim. Therefore it is difficult to make any certain conclusions based on this statement.

In its party programme, the DPP points out that tolerance does not mean that one should be lenient towards other people’s intolerance. Therefore, Denmark should e.g. not allow for the hijab, the Muslim headscarf, because it is a symbol of female oppression, the DPP argues (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009a). According to the DPP, many immigrants from non-Western countries are committing violent crimes in a much larger number than the Danes and they are heavily influenced by a religion, a culture and norms which have made their own countries “fattige, ufrie og utålelige at leve i” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d), i.e. ‘poor, un-free and unbearable to live in’. Here we see the security element in the DPP’s communication (cf. pp. 17-18), i.e. non-Western immigrants create an insecure society because they are violent. Here again we see the nativist nature of the DPP’s argumentation, i.e. ‘non-Western’. What should be particularly noted is the generalisation made by the DPP. The party’s characterisation of ‘problematic immigrants’ is very general, i.e. ‘non-Western’. In addition, the party writes that these immigrants are influenced by ‘a culture’, almost as if all non-Western immigrants share one culture, as if they are all the same. Again, we see here a slippery slope argument, i.e. that if the Danes let these immigrants have too large an influence, Denmark might end up as the home countries of these immigrants. In the DPP’s party programme, it is stated that many Muslims are illiterate, meaning that members of this group are likely uneducated and thereby maybe unemployed (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Indeed, the DPP points out the large strain this group puts on the Danish state, which must finance their livelihood and education (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Thus these immigrants are idle, unlike the diligent Danish people,

according to the DPP. In addition, this group oppresses women and it is violent, the DPP claims. Hence, according to this depiction, members of this group are intolerant unlike the tolerant Danes. Again, the DPP points out the strain this group puts on the Danish police and on the state because of their criminal behaviour. Thus the in-group, i.e. the Danes, is financing the out-group which in turn refuses to integrate and even poses a threat to Denmark and Danish national identity. Therefore, the DPP argues, Denmark must make demands of the immigrants who enter Denmark and ensure that they adapt to Danish society and not vice-versa (Dansk Folkeparti, 2009d). Of course the DPP has already pointed out that Muslims cannot be integrated, hence Muslim immigration should be hindered.

5.2.5. Conclusion

In the DPP's party programme, a lot of attention is paid to Danish national identity, but it is never really defined in any specific terms. Christianity is a part of Danish national identity, according to the DPP, but in a way that can be difficult to understand. The DPP emphasises the importance of secularism, but at the same time also emphasises the importance of Christianity. However, this view seems to be in line with the general perception of Christianity in Danish society. Furthermore, the DPP points out that Danes are liberal, tolerant and hardworking, but for the DPP, this does not conflict with the DPP's arguments for restricting immigration, particularly Muslim immigration. Tolerance is an important value for the DPP, but it should only be employed to a limited degree. According to the DPP, it is thus possible to pick and choose what to be tolerant towards and yet still remain tolerant. One should e.g. not be tolerant towards Islam, the DPP argues. According to the DPP, Islam is not a religion, it is a totalitarian ideology on par with Nazism. Allowing for Islam to influence Danish society could very well signify the end of Danish national identity, according to the DPP. Thus the only way of protecting it is to restrict Muslim immigration and force immigrants to integrate into Danish society, the DPP argues, because it is immigrants that must adapt to Denmark, not vice versa.

6. THE NETHERLANDS

6.1. BACKGROUND

6.1.1. Historical background of radical right in the Netherlands

The Dutch radical right party *Centrum Democraten* (Centre Democrats) seemed to gain little ground in the Netherlands under the leadership of Hans Janmaat during the 1990s. However, this was about to change as in August of 2001, the openly homosexual and very flamboyant Pim Fortuyn announced that he would be running in the upcoming parliamentary election. However, he neglected to mention exactly which party he was running for. He could see three options suitable for him: the new party *Leefbaar Nederland* (LN)³, the centre-right party *Christen Democratish Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal, CDA), or founding his own party (Holsteyn & Rydgren, 2004). Eventually, he joined the LN and became its leader in November of the same year. 2002 was set to be an election year for the Netherlands. The prospects of a successful election for the LN deemed very likeable, but then a bomb dropped. An interview with Fortuyn was published in *de Volkskrant* in which Fortuyn declared that Islam was a backwards culture and that no more asylum seekers should be granted a residence permit (Holsteyn & Rydgren, 2004; Mudde, 2007a). The LN was quick to remove Fortuyn as leader, but he returned the favour by stating that he would be establishing his own party, the *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF). Because of Fortuyn's remarkable charismatic appeal, a large majority of LN's supporters switched their allegiance to the LPF immediately, showing how the person had become just as important as the party (Mudde, 2007a). From February until May, LPF was based around Fortuyn. However, he had stopped making public appearances because of threats made against him and in March, he was attacked by extreme left-wing activists throwing pies at him (Holsteyn & Rydgren, 2004). Then on May 6, only nine days before the elections, the news of Fortuyn's assassination shook the country. His funeral was broadcast on national TV and mass hysteria broke out. At the elections, the LPF was successful despite of, or perhaps partly because of, its leader's death, winning 17 per cent of the votes and entering into government. However, only two years later, the party was slowly dissolving and is today all but no-existing (Mudde, 2007a).

The empty space Fortuyn left behind him was filled only a few years later by Geert Wilders. When he first entered into politics in 1990, Wilders joined the conservative-liberal *Volkspartij*

³ LN was a populist, anti-establishment party which sought to further democratise the Netherlands e.g. by implementing more referenda

voor de Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD) and worked as a speech writer for the party. In 1997, he was voted city councillor in Utrecht and became an MP the year after. However, when in 2004, the VVD declared its support for the emitting of Turkey into the EU, Wilders left in protest (BBC, 2010a). He sat alone as an independent until in 2005, he decided to establish his own party, the *Partij Voor de Vrijheid* (the Party for Freedom, PVV). Running on an EU-sceptic, strongly anti-Islam platform, the PVV has quickly made its way into Dutch politics, going from 5.9 per cent of the votes in 2006 to 15.5 per cent in 2010 (Mudde, 2010). The success has come at a price for Wilders, who for several years has lived under 24-hour protection due to death threats made because of his radical anti-Islam statements and his Islam-critical film *Fitna* released in 2008 (Traynor, 2009). After the 2010 elections, the PVV became kingmaker in the forming of a coalition government. The party now functions as supporting party to the Dutch government and is thus in similar position as the DPP (BBC, 2010b). However, the extent of the party's influence on the government's decision-making is yet to be seen.

6.1.2. Immigration and multiculturalism in the Netherlands

The Netherlands has had a long tradition of tolerance and of immigration. Already in the 17th century, the Netherlands offered asylum to religious and political refugees. Today, approximately 17 per cent of the Dutch population are *allochtonen* (foreigners) particularly from Morocco, Surinam and Turkey, who also make up the poorest groups in Dutch society (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). The Netherlands has a history of different religious groups functioning separately, but still within the country. Traditionally, the southern part of the country was Roman Catholic and the northern part was Protestant. At one point, the Netherlands was characterised by a phenomenon called *verzuiling* (pillarization), meaning that there were separate labour unions, newspapers, universities, political parties etc. for Protestants, Roman Catholics, socialists and liberals (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). Furthermore, Protestants were divided into two subgroups, *hervormden* and *gereformeerden*, meaning reformed and Calvinists, respectively (Arbouw, 2008). As the Netherlands became more and more secularised by the 1960s, this structure was abandoned and by the 1990s, the policy of multiculturalism gained a foothold. This policy stretched so far that minority groups got "instructions in their own language and culture; separate radio and television programs; government funding to import religious leaders [...] and publicly financed housing set aside for and specifically designed to meet Muslim requirements [...]" (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007,

p. 15). Dutch politics became characterised by consensus, also known as the *Polder Model*. This term originates in Dutch consensus politics concerning economics, but has been widened to refer more generally to Dutch decision-making with recognition of plurality. Hence politicians across the political compass agreed on carrying forth multiculturalism. This left virtually no room for *autochtonen* (natives) to express their discontent and those who did complain were often labelled racist or xenophobic (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007; Krebbers, 2005).

It was not until Fortuyn entered the political scene in 2001 that voters dissatisfied with multiculturalism were provided a voice. It must be mentioned that the radical right Centre Democrats did run for elections throughout the 1990s, but never really gained ground, partly due to internal strife and bad publicity, e.g. in the form of an Amsterdam Centre Democrats council member who admitted to having started several fires in centres providing services for foreigners in the 1980s (Mudde & Holsteyn, 2000). Here we could argue that a vote for Fortuyn could have been a protest vote against other Dutch politicians' consensus on multiculturalism. However, since the Centre Democrats did not receive many votes, the protest thesis cannot fully explain Fortuyn's popularity. Rather it seems it also abounds in Fortuyn's own capabilities, e.g. his argumentation. By the 2000s, many voters had become concerned about the large numbers of immigrants coming to the Netherlands and the rising social problems this had brought, e.g. crime among immigrants, the large numbers of immigrant women seeking refuge in shelters for abused women, unemployment among immigrants and immigrants on social welfare (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). Fortuyn criticised multiculturalism in part because of the social problems he believed it brought, but also because he believed it legitimised Islamic repressive practices. This was partly correct. Various Dutch governments had long allowed for Mosques to be built throughout the Netherlands, some of which preached a fundamentalist, radical form of Islam far off the beaten track from Dutch liberal values (Rovers, 2004). In addition, Dutch governments had financed the 'import' of imams based on their knowledge of Islam. However, many of these imams had little knowledge of how to unify being a Muslim while living in Western Europe. One imam e.g. compared homosexual men to pigs. Fortuyn pointed out that the imam had every right to call Fortuyn a pig because of his sexuality, but he also pointed out that this showed that Islam was an intolerant, backwards religion that had no place in the tolerant Netherlands (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). After the attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, images of Moroccan youths in Ede, a town in the so-called 'bible belt' of the Netherlands, celebrating the attacks were televised across the

Netherlands, thereby providing evidence for the radical right that Islam and the Netherlands could not be unified (Pietersen, 2009).

6.1.2.1. Murder of Theo van Gogh

Although Fortuyn died before the elections, his demands for restricting immigration into the Netherlands were met to some degree. The new CDA Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende had during the elections promised to tighten immigration and demand foreigners to integrate (BBC, 2002). Whereas earlier there had been a consensus on multiculturalism, several parties across the spectrum now agreed that there was a need for a more strict integration policy under the motto 'we have all we can take' (Victor, 2004). The turn in the immigration debate was further spurred on by the murder of the film director Theodoor 'Theo' van Gogh, who along with feminist activist and politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali made the film *Submission*, a film about a young Muslim woman forced into marriage, beaten by her husband, raped by her uncle and punished for adultery (Leung, 2005). Because of this film, considered by many Muslims to be highly offensive, and because of van Gogh's radical criticism of Islam, the 26-year-old Dutch-Moroccan Muslim Mohammed Bouyeri murdered van Gogh in November 2004 in a very brutal manner (Buruma, 2006; Rovers, 2004). In the wake of the murder, several radical-right groups protested the murder of van Gogh, saying that they had had enough and that it was 'time for action'. Furthermore, it was shortly after the murder that Wilders announced that he would be founding a new party, the PVV (Victor, 2004). In the weeks after the murder, 20 mosques and two Muslim schools were attacked and fire-bombed and churches were attacked in retaliation (Victor, 2004). Critics of multiculturalism argued that the murder of van Gogh reflected a much too soft policy on integration (Hajer & Uitermark, 2008). Interestingly, Bouyeri had seemed rather well-integrated and well-educated on the surface (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). An eyewitness to the murder of van Gogh said, "If I say 'fucking nigger' to a Surinamese, I'm called a racist, even though he can call me a whitey. You can no longer say what you think these days. No, we've become foreigners in our own country" (Buruma, 2006, p. 1). Thus there was the perception among some Dutchmen that Muslims or ethnic minorities enjoyed a form of special treatment. Both Fortuyn and van Gogh had propagated the importance of free speech and tolerance and that anyone who could not tolerate being offended once in a while had no place in the Netherlands (Rovers, 2004; Buruma, 2006).

6.1.2.2. Dutch immigration policies today

Balkenende had already by the beginning of his term announced that Dutch norms and values applied to all citizens in the Netherlands and only those who agreed to integrate on this basis would be allowed to stay in the Netherlands. Language courses paid by immigrants themselves became a test of immigrants' willingness to integrate and in 2006, a video portraying images of 'Dutch liberal culture' was sent to 138 Dutch embassies to be seen by prospective immigrants (Schaake, 2006). The biggest example of a stricter integration policy was reflected in the then Immigration Minister Rita Verdonk's decision to deport 26,000 asylum seekers in 2004, some of whom had lived in the Netherlands in more than five years (Victor, 2004; Schaake, 2006). By 2006, the number of asylum seekers had dropped by 80 per cent since 2000 and for the first time since the 1960s, more people left than entered the Netherlands (Graff, 2006). Like Denmark, the Netherlands has been criticised for its tone in the immigration debate and the EU has expressed its concern over Dutch immigration policies (DutchNews.nl, 2011). In addition, Human Rights Watch has criticised Dutch integration tests for targeting immigrants of particular nationalities, especially Turks and Moroccans, just as the Council of Europe's human rights commissioner has criticised Dutch family reunification policy for focusing on restricting and reducing the number of immigrants (Human Rights Watch, 2008; DutchNews.nl, 2011). Currently, men and women in the Netherlands wishing to bring in a foreign partner must earn at least 120 per cent of the official minimum wage, just as their partner must pass a language and integration test and be at least 21. The current centre-right government made up by the VVD and CDA under the leadership of Mark Rutte and with the support of the PVV is moving towards raising the age to 24 as in Denmark (DutchNews.nl, 2011). Thus we see some clear similarities between the Dutch and Danish immigration debate and its development. Another example that shows the change in the Dutch immigration and multiculturalism debate is the fact that Wilders was acquitted of inciting hatred and discrimination against Muslims despite making some rather controversial statements, e.g. that removing all violent and vindictive parts of the Qur'an, it would be reduced to the size of a Donald Duck comic. Even so, the court found that Wilders' statements fall within the acceptable political debate (Astrup, 2011). Hence strongly criticising Islam is now an acceptable part of the Dutch political debate.

6.1.3. Dutch national identity

In general, the Dutch see themselves as "nation of tolerant, hardworking, straight-talking individualists who bicycle around a flat landscape dotted with windmills and crisscrossed by

dikes” (International Herald Tribune, 2007). However, in an interview, the Argentine-born Dutch Princess Máxima said that she did not find there to be a particular Dutch identity. In her opinion, the Netherlands was simply too complex to sum up and no typical characteristics of a Dutchman could be listed (Gottlieb, 2007). The statement did not sit well with many Dutchmen. Wilders called her statement ‘well-intended, political correct chitchat’, while others protested her claim that there was no Dutch identity, although admitting that it was ever developed and refined (Gottlieb, 2007). The reason why Princess Máxima’s statements caused such a stir should be seen in the context of the identity crisis the Netherlands has been said to be experiencing. Fortuyn was one of the first in Dutch society to express concern over the future survival of Dutch identity in multicultural Netherlands. Hirsi Ali agrees, saying that the Netherlands is no longer a homogenous society, but a migrant country on par with the US (International Herald Tribune, 2007). The conservative journalist and writer Bart Jan Spruyt argues e.g. that because of multiculturalism and lax immigration policies, Dutch identity is in danger of become eradicated (International Herald Tribune, 2007). Indeed, a survey performed by *Radio Nederland Wereldomroep* showed that 65 per cent of the respondents disagreed with the statement that no Dutch identity exists (RNW Internet, 2007). Thus 35 per cent either did not find there to be a Dutch identity or were not sure. This indicates that there might indeed be an identity crisis in the Netherlands. Considering the former pillarization of Dutch society and the multicultural policies that followed, it seems the Netherlands is not very homogenous, at least not compared to Denmark. As in Denmark, Christianity has previously had a great influence of Dutch society, cf. pillarization. However, today the Netherlands is one of the most secularised countries in Europe. In 1966, 33 per cent of the Dutch characterised themselves as non-ecclesiastic, whereas in 2006, that number had risen to 61 per cent (Vellenga, 2008). In fact, the American Mathematician Daniel Abrams has predicted that within the coming decades, religion will likely die out in the Netherlands (Rasmussen, 2011). Even so, there are three Christian parties in Dutch parliament (The Economist, 2009). Hence religion plays a complex role in the Netherlands and the Dutchmen seem to be rather polarised on the matter.

4.1.4. Dutchmen on multiculturalism and Muslims

For Muslims in the Netherlands, religion is also somewhat complex. Particularly among Moroccan and Turkish second generation immigrants in the Netherlands, there is a strong identification with Islam (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). Many of these immigrants identify less and less with the home country of their parents, but Islam is seen as not just a religion and

a set of beliefs, but as an identity marker. For them, Islam is more important than shared language and origin, which in turn can be seen as “the expression of a sense of connectedness with an ‘imaginary community’ of believers; a trans-national religious community that is no longer linked to the country of origin” (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). This is then in stark contrast to the way in which the Dutch identify themselves, as religion seemingly plays an increasingly smaller role in many Dutchmen’s lives. Parts of the pillarization of Dutch society still exist today and some, e.g. Spruyt, believe that Islam may become a new pillar (International Herald Tribune, 2007). Focusing on the general Dutchman’s view on Islam in the Netherlands, a survey performed by Pew Research Center showed that in 2006, 32 per cent of the Dutch were very concerned about Islamic extremism within the Netherlands and 44 per cent were somewhat concerned. 88 per cent of the Dutch responded that they saw Islam as being the most violent religion in the world. In addition, 45 per cent viewed Muslims favourably, whereas 51 per cent viewed Muslims unfavourably (Pew Research Center, 2006). Approximately half of the native Dutch population think that there are too many immigrants in the Netherlands and would not want to live next door to an *allochtoon*, i.e. a foreigner (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). In addition, 47 per cent of the respondents in an opinion poll from 2004 said that they feared that it was only a matter of time before they would have to live according to Islamic law in the Netherlands (Demant, Maussen, & Rath, 2007). In that sense, the Netherlands seems hugely polarised as far as Muslim immigration and Islam is concerned and there seems to be a large percentage of the Dutch population who would have a positive attitude towards suggestions for restrictions on Muslim immigration.

6.2. THE COMMUNICATION OF THE PVV

6.2.1. The PVV on national identity

I will now turn to the analysis of the PVV’s party programme, starting with describing the party’s website. Seemingly, the front-page of the PVV’s website is devoid of the national symbols and monuments that characterised the website of the DPP. However, by taking a closer look at the PVV’s website, the specific colours used by the PVV become apparent; red, white and blue, the colours of the Dutch flag. There are even areas of the website with a greyish colour, which could resemble silver as the white bar in the flag is officially supposed to be. Thus there are clear appeals to national identity on the website. The logo of the PVV is a flying seagull, also in red-white-blue. There has been quite a lot of speculation as to why the PVV has chosen the seagull as its logo. The Dutch historian Gjalt Zondergeld e.g. argues that the seagull of the PVV

resembles that of the Dutch Nazi party NSB, which used the seagull to symbolise freedom and national unity. However, Wilders denies this claim, calling it ‘the work of a sick soul’ (Rooijackers, 2008). In any case, it is another example of the appeal to national identity in terms of the colouring of the bird.



Figure 4: Still photo of PVV's logo and website menu bar (Partij Voor de Vrijheid, 2011)

Overall, the party programme of the PVV resembles that of the DPP in its structure, but it is not as extensive. This is likely due to the fact that the PVV is a much newer party than the DPP. It is the first party programme of the PVV, whereas that of the DPP is the party's third version. In addition, the PVV has not had as much time to develop its policies and opinions as the DPP has. Therefore, I will make use of secondary material to a greater extent in this case than with the previous case. In the preface of the PVV's party programme entitled *De agenda van hoop en optimisme* (the programme of hope and optimism), the PVV professes that the party believes that “[...] de mooiste dagen van Nederland voor ons liggen” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), ‘the best days for the Netherlands lie before us’. Why should it not be so, the PVV asks, since “Nederlanders zijn een volk dat zijn gelijke niet kent” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), ‘the Dutch are a people which know no equal’. The PVV then relates how the Netherlands was born out of a rebellion and transformed from being just a swampy marsh into something everyone else is jealous of. The PVV describes the Netherlands as being characterised by solidarity and prosperity, a country with freedom for everyone and where people are tolerant towards those who are also tolerant (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). Here, the PVV is already giving support to an argument that will be made later in the party programme, i.e. that one should not be tolerant to those who are intolerant, hence Islamists. The PVV then goes on to describing the history of the Netherlands; how the Netherlands became independent and was able to compete with the greatest powers in the world (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010).

According to the PVV, the Dutch flag is the “[...] symbool van vrijheid. Van een volk dat zelf zijn eigen lot bepaalde” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), ‘symbol of freedom. Of a people who

own their own faith'. We here see clear appeals to national identity in the form of a shared history as well as in the form of a national symbol, i.e. the flag. This reference to the history of the Netherlands is a means for the PVV to attempt to invoke a certain feeling of national pride in the Dutch. In line with social identity theory, it is likely that many Dutchmen will respond positively towards this presentation of their identity group. The PVV here appeals to the in-group by briefly mentioning historical facts about the Netherlands that one must either be Dutch, or a historian, to know. It is necessary for the PVV to make voters feel part of an in-group made up by ethnic Dutchmen in order for the voters to understand the seriousness of what the PVV discusses next in the preface, i.e. Muslims, who, according to the PVV, belong to the out-group. According to the PVV, democracy in the Netherlands is in its biggest crisis since Johan Rudolph Thorbecke, who drafted a revision of the constitution of the Netherlands, which limited the power of the king and expanded the power of the *Staten-Generaal*, the Dutch parliament. In 2010, the PVV argues, many Dutchmen are questioning if their future is still in the Netherlands. A "losgeslagen elite" (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), 'rogue elite', controls the Netherlands both from the EU and from The Hague. Contrary to these elites, the PVV is a party made up of ordinary people, who will work to better the lives of other ordinary people. We here see clear populist elements in the communication of the PVV (cf. pp. 17-19).

Unlike the DPP, the PVV does not focus on Christianity as an element of Dutch national identity. The PVV does mention that Dutch society is founded upon Judeo-Christian, humanist values, but stresses the importance of secularism (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). In this way, the PVV as well as the DPP can reach both religious as well as non-ecclesiastic voters. However, unlike the DPP, the PVV does not reflect on the meaning of Christianity for the Netherlands. This may originate in the fact that Wilders himself is agnostic, but perhaps also in the fact that the Dutch are fairly polarised concerning religion. The PVV generally spends less time on explaining what Dutch culture is compared to the DPP and Danish culture. In addition, the PVV does not mention the Dutch royal family like the DPP mentions the Danish royal family. In fact, Wilders has criticised both Princess Máxima, as mentioned earlier, and the Dutch Queen, calling her Christmas Day speech 'multi-culti nonsense' (Associated Press, 2007). Thus there are definite differences between the two party's portrayals of national identity. Perhaps this difference originates in the fact that the Danes are much more homogenous than the Dutch and that there does seem to be wide agreement among the Danes on what Danish national identity is. In the Netherlands, there does not seem to be as much consensus. However, one might argue

that if there is indeed an identity crisis in the Netherlands, it would be beneficial for the PVV to emphasise Dutch identity in its party programme, thus presenting an identity the Dutch could feel included within. On the other hand, perhaps the less specific the PVV's portrayal of Dutch national identity is, the more Dutchmen will agree with it, i.e. fewer will feel alienated.

6.2.3. The PVV on multiculturalism

According to the PVV, many of the Netherlands' problems can be traced back to multiculturalism. In fact, the PVV calls it the "multiculturele nachtmerrie" (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 7) 'the multicultural nightmare'. This nightmare, Wilders argues, was propelled by the former government with Balkenende at the helm. In a speech in the Dutch parliament in 2009, Wilders argued that the Balkenende government had handled integration well, that is the integration of the Netherlands into *Dar-al-Islam*, the Islamic world. In fact, he argued that elites across Europe had 'opened the floodgates' and that in 'only a little while' one in five Europeans would be Muslim (Bodissey, 2009). In fact, the PVV argues that European elites are slowly letting Europe turn into Eurabia (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). Again here we see the PVV's populist rhetoric. Furthermore, this could be labelled a slippery slope argument. If the influence of Islam is not restricted, Europe will become Islamic, the PVV argues. Wilders describes multiculturalism as the perception that all cultures are equal and where the state should not promote any *leitkultur*, i.e. a form of guiding culture that all must comply to. For Wilders, the premise of multiculturalism is flawed as in his opinion, all cultures are not equal (Wilders, 2011). Wilders uses the fall of Rome as an analogy for Europe falling to Islam. Barbarian immigrants were the reason for Rome's fall. Similarly, Muslim immigrants will be Europe's fall if nothing is done to prevent it, Wilders argues (Wilders, 2011). Here it should be noted that Wilders is actually comparing Muslim immigrants with Barbarian immigrants. He has used similar analogies before, e.g. calling Islam a Trojan horse (Macintyre, 2010). Again, here we see a slippery slope argument.

Because of multiculturalism, beliefs and behaviour that is against national norms and values are allowed and will slowly change society until it is at last an Islamic society, Wilders argues. Multiculturalism, according to Wilders, has made the Europeans so tolerant that they tolerate the intolerant (Wilders, 2011). Both the DPP and the PVV argue that tolerance is a value intrinsic to both Danish and Dutch culture, yet they also argue that one should not be so tolerant that one accepts intolerance. So in essence, one should only be tolerant to a certain

degree. According to the PVV, it is now frowned upon to be patriotic in the Netherlands and children in school learn more about how Islam is an asset to the Netherlands than about Dutch history. Elitism and multiculturalism have allowed for the Islamisation of the Netherlands, the PVV argues, which presents a major threat to the essential parts of Dutch culture as the PVV sees it; namely “de vrijheid van homoseksuelen en de gelijkwaardigheid van mannen en vrouwen” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 33), ‘the freedom for homosexuals and the equality between men and women’. Again, it comes back to tolerance, freedom and liberal-mindedness, much like with the DPP. Overall, there does seem to be agreement between the two parties on the fact that tolerance does not mean that one should accept intolerance, which Islam stands for, according to both parties.

6.2.4. The PVV on Islam and Muslims

The Netherlands is year after year experiencing record-breaking mass immigration, the PVV argues, causing the Netherlands to become more and more Islamised. According to the PVV, larger numbers of ‘idle’ Muslim immigrants come to live off Dutch welfare paid for by Dutch workers. As the PVV’s slogan goes, “Henk en Ingrid betalen voor Ali en Fatima” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), ‘Henk and Ingrid pay for Ali and Fatima’. We here see clear similarities to the DPP’s presentation of ‘some’ Muslim immigrants as unemployed and idle, living off Danish taxpayers’ money. In that sense, this portrayal of Muslims and of Islam works both in terms of presenting the out-group in a negative light (idle and lazy), but also in terms of advancing members of the in-group, who are then the opposite of members of the out-group (diligent and industrious). Henk and Ingrid are both very common, albeit old-fashioned names in the Netherlands. Interestingly, the preface starts out with the line “Noem ons maar ouderwets” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 5), ‘Just call us old-fashioned’. In fact, in the section on education in the party programme, the PVV even suggests that teachers should be referred to as ‘master’ or ‘teacher’ (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). This is in stark contrast to the fairly liberal education system existing in the Netherlands today, where children and students often refer to their teacher by first name. Thus there seems to be a definite attempt of presenting the party as old-fashioned to some extent, meaning that the party stands for the good, old Netherlands before it became ‘Islamized’. It is interesting how being old-fashioned in this context is positive, whereas in relation to Islam, being old-fashioned is negative. Thus for the PVV, the terms old-fashioned is clearly context dependent, as was the case with the DPP. For the PVV, the choice is clear: the Dutch can either vote for Islam or they can vote for the

Netherlands (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). In that sense, Islam is simply incompatible with all that the Netherlands stands for, according to the PVV.

According to the PVV, Islam is “vooral een politieke ideologie; een totalitaire leer gericht op dominantie, geweld en onderdrukking” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 13), ‘above all a political ideology; a totalitarian doctrine intend on dominance, violence and suppression’. This is more or less the same way of presenting Islam as the DPP. Like the DPP, the PVV concedes to the fact that there are indeed moderate Muslims, but that ‘a substantial portion’ is not. In fact, there is “brede steun” (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010, p. 13), ‘broad support’, among Muslims for the introduction of sharia and for the jihad attacks on September 11 as well as an aversion towards Jews and the West, according to the PVV. Similar to the DPP, the PVV does not make use of concrete numbers or statistics, but uses words such as ‘many’ and ‘several’. Thereby, voters do not know exactly how many Muslims actually wish for the introduction of sharia etc., but are left with the impression that it could very well be the majority. The DPP and PVV agree that no moderate version of Islam exists. Wilders has previously argued that he does not hate Muslims, he hates Islam. For him, Islam is not a religion, but an ideology of a ‘retarded culture’ (Traynor, 2008). The PVV argues that Islam is based on inequality; Muslims are seen as superior and all kafirs (non-Muslims) as inferior. In addition, according to the PVV, Islam strives for world domination and it is the duty of all Muslims to commit jihad. The Qur’an prescribes a conduct that is against Dutch law, the PVV argues. This is exemplified in the PVV’s party programme by anti-Semitism, discrimination against women, the killing of infidels and holy war in order to ensure world dominance for Islam. In that sense, Islam is actually against democracy, according to the PVV. For that reason, the PVV argues that all immigration from Islamic countries should be prohibited (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). Thus we here see clear nationalist elements in the PVV’s communication (cf. pp. 17-19). The PVV points out that despite of the fact that some Muslims may be moderate; the very fact that they are Muslims makes them different from the Dutch. According to the PVV, Muslims belong to a religion that incites intolerance and violence. Thus Muslims who do not denounce those parts of Islam make up a dangerous out-group, which may threaten the in-group, i.e. Dutch national identity.

Wilders argues that the Scandinavian insistence on free speech and the right to provoke is what drives him, but this free speech does not seem to apply to Muslims. At least, Wilders argues for the banning of the Qur’an, which he has compared to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (Traynor,

2008). In the party programme, the PVV advocates a ban on both the Qur'an and the burqa, just as it suggests a tax on headscarves (Partij voor de Vrijheid, 2010). Although Wilders claim not to hate Muslims, but Islam, and not to attack people, but rather the ideology he sees Islam as, he as well as the PVV still portray 'a substantial part' of Muslims as being lazy, intolerant and criminal. In a sense, the party argues that those who believe in Islam also believe in suppressing women, hating homosexuals and Jews and accepting e.g. honour killings. Thus it is difficult to grasp what constitutes a moderate Muslim if Islam is an unacceptable ideology, just as it was difficult to grasp with the DPP.

In a video spot on the PVV's website (see figure 5 below), Wilders claims that the sluices are still wide open and more and more immigrants arrive in the Netherlands. According to Wilders, Dutchmen are confronted with mass-immigration every day; burqas, headscarves, minarets and crime (Partij Voor de Vrijheid, 2011). Interesting here is the fact that things such as headscarves are put in the same category as crime. This could be interpreted in two ways; either headscarves and burqas are as bad for society as crime or crime is as intrinsic to Islam as headscarves and burqas. Either way, it is a highly derogatory portrayal of Islam. In the video, Wilders argues that the problems of mass-immigration to the Netherlands are far from solved. As examples of this claim, he presents certain findings from a number of studies. One such example is the fact that more than 60 per cent of Turks residing in the Netherlands find that Dutch women have too many rights. Another example is the fact that more than half of all Muslims living in the Netherlands understand the motivation behind the attacks on September 11. Here the PVV indicates that understanding the motivation behind the attacks is the same as agreeing with them. Thus in this depiction, more than half of all Muslims living in the Netherlands agree with the attacks on September 11. The video starts out showing planes landing and taking off at Amsterdam airport. This image works both as a symbol of immigrants arriving in the Netherlands and as a reference to terrorism. The video thereafter shifts to images of Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands, whereof many of the women are wearing headscarves. Meanwhile, Wilders presents various facts about Muslims in the Netherlands and in the background, music in dramatic tones is played (Partij Voor de Vrijheid, 2011). In that way, it resembles the 2007 election video of the DPP. Like the DPP, the PVV seeks to draw out the ways in which Muslims seemingly do not belong to Western society by focusing on crime, terrorism and intolerance and how Muslims and Islam are a threat to Dutch society.

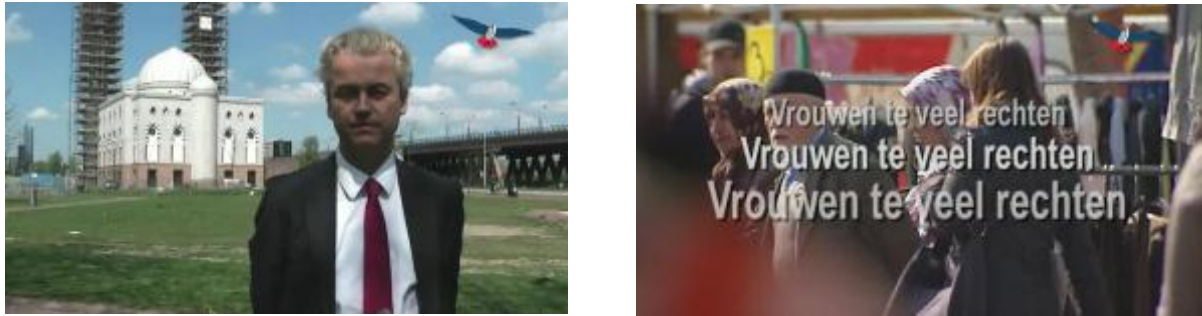


Figure 5: Still photo from PVV video spot (*Partij Voor de Vrijheid*, 2011)

6.2.5. Conclusion

In its party programme, the PVV particularly emphasises Dutch history and how great the Netherlands used to be, but, the PVV argues, many Dutchmen are disillusioned today because of the direction they see the Netherlands going towards. The Dutch, according to the PVV, are liberal and tolerant people, who respect the rights of homosexuals and the equality between men and women. However, Islam is threatening to alter Dutch society, making it an intolerant, Islamic society, the PVV believes. The PVV presents Islam as a totalitarian ideology, which brings with it crime, intolerance towards homosexuals, suppression of women and jihad. The PVV does not explain what Dutch culture is, unlike the DPP concerning Danish culture, and it also does not touch so much upon Christianity in the Netherlands. The PVV seems to value secularism the most, but it does argue that Christianity includes humanism and thus is more compatible with Dutch society. The PVV agrees with the DPP in that Muslims cannot be properly integrated into Western society. At least, the PVV argues that all immigration from Muslim countries should be prohibited, not just restricted. Overall, for the PVV, the element of Muslim immigration seems to be the most important point, whereas the DPP spend a lot of space on describing what Danish national identity is and how important it is. Thus the PVV is more oriented towards the Western world, whereas the DPP is mostly oriented towards Denmark. However, this may also relate to the fact that there is not as strong a sense of what Dutch national identity is among the Dutch as there is of Danish national identity among the Danes. Indeed, as shown in this case study, some argue that the Netherlands is experiencing an identity crisis. Therefore, the reason for the PVV not emphasising Dutch culture may be that the PVV does not wish to alienate its voters.

7. SWEDEN

7.1. BACKGROUND

7.1.1. Historical background of the radical right in Sweden

In the early 1990s, the Swedish radical right party *NyDemokrati* (NyD) was elected into parliament. The party ran on a platform of economic reform and restricted immigration. For many years, Swedish political parties had more or less agreed on Swedish immigration policy and even when parties left or right of the centre made advances to discuss aspects of immigration, it did not inflame the general public (Rydgren, 2006). Starting a year after the 1986 parliamentary resolution on a new immigration policy and culminating in 1989, when the Social Democrats took the initiative on a resolution to implement interim ceilings on asylum figures, a dissolution of the immigration consensus was brought to fore. Much critique was aimed at the government for being too strict on immigration, but simultaneously anti-immigration voices grew louder. In fact, a survey around the time showed that 61 per cent of the Swedes found that Sweden had been taking in too many immigrants. In addition, taxes were rising and the Swedish working class was decreasing (Rydgren, 2006). Thus the setting was exactly right for the entrance of the newly-established NyD in 1991. Winning 6.7 per cent of the votes, the party entered the Swedish parliament with a sweeping 25 seats (Davies & Jackson, 2008). But as quickly as the NyD rose, it faded almost just as quickly. Members of the NyD argued publicly on several occasions and the party was never able to establish a functional party structure. In 1994, it gained only 1.23 per cent of the votes and in 1998, it was down to just 0.2 per cent. With the quota for gaining seats in the parliament being 4 per cent in Sweden, the NyD was thus set out of influence (Hainsworth, 2008; Davies & Jackson, 2008; Rydgren, 2006).

In 1988, the radical right party *Sverigedemokraterna* (Sweden Democrats, SD) was founded. Although founded at a time when immigration was one of the primary issues of discussion, the SD did not manage to rise to success as rapidly as the NyD. Besides being anti-immigration, the SD did not really have a party programme (Rydgren, 2006). In addition, and even more problematic, it was difficult to distinguish between the SD and fascist, Nazi groupings. E.g. it was not uncommon to see supporters of the SD *heil* (Schmidt, 2009). However, when Mikael Jansson assumed leadership of the party, it underwent several alterations in order to make it appear more respectable. A uniform ban was imposed in 1996 and in 1999, the SD openly dissociated itself from Nazism. Furthermore, the SD moderated several aspects of its party

programme, which had featured e.g. the banning of adoption from outside of Europe, but maintaining the party's anti-immigration stance (Rydgren, 2006). The more moderate version of the SD did, however, not lead the party to electoral success and it was believed by many that Sweden would be the Scandinavian exception. The Swedish author Jan Guillou even commented that the Swedes were different from the Danes, who in his eyes were xenophobic to their very core (Guillou, 2010). By the 2000s, the so-called *Lunda-flokken* or *the fantastic four*, consisting of the current SD leader Jimmie Åkesson as well as Mattias Karlsson, Björn Söder og Richard Jomshof, had started reforming the party into being sceptical of multiculturalism, rather than racists. A wide range of members were ousted for being too extreme (Schmidt, 2011). Even so, the vast majority of the mainstream parties along with the media still found the SD to be too radical. Both in the 2006 and 2010 elections, the SD was frozen out by the biggest newspapers in Sweden and was not allowed to participate in the important last TV debate just before the 2010 elections (Nord, 2010). In spite of this, the SD managed to get 5.7 per cent of the votes, winning 20 seats in the Swedish parliament in the 2010 parliamentary elections (Schmidt, 2009). The current Prime Minister Frederik Reinfeldt has promised not to cooperate with the SD and thus the extent to which the SD can influence Swedish politics is limited. This has not deterred Åkesson's resolve to impact Swedish politics and the SD's presence in parliament will be used as an outlet for promoting SD's political programme (Schmidt, 2011). It is, however, still unknown whether the SD will go the same way as the NyD or whether it is here to stay.

7.1.2. Immigration and multiculturalism in Sweden

Modern Swedish immigration policy has its roots in the 1975 amendment of the 1954 Aliens Act, which objectives were equality, freedom of cultural choice and cooperation and solidarity (Jederlund & Kayfetz, 1999). The equality objective referred to the fact that immigrants should have the same opportunities, obligations and rights as the Swedes; the freedom of cultural choice objective referred to the fact that minority groups should be allowed to decide themselves in how far they wished to adopt Swedish cultural identity and in how far they wished to enhance their own cultural identity; and lastly, the cooperation and solidarity objective referred to the fact that immigrants and Swedes should cooperate on resolving issues of common interest (Jederlund & Kayfetz, 1999). In 1997, this immigration policy was further consolidated as Swedish immigration policy was changed into an integration policy. Thus the focus was moved from solely immigrants to include Swedes as well. The motivation behind the

change in policy was the belief that by focusing solely on immigrants, a perception of 'us' versus 'them' would easily arise, i.e. that 'they' must adjust to 'us'. By carrying out an integration policy, making demands of both Swedes and immigrants, it was believed that a perception of 'we must adjust to each other' would arise instead (Open Society Institute, 2007). Thus, a country that used to be one of Europe's most ethnically homogenous countries had effectively become a multicultural society (Blanc-Noël, 2010). For a long time, multiculturalism in Sweden went undisputed. Criticism of Swedish immigration policy was written down as racism or xenophobia, much like in the Netherlands before 2002 (Hansen & Hansen, 2003). When in 2002, a mainstream political party suggested that basic Swedish language skills ought to be mandatory for citizenship, the party was accused of "catering to xenophobes" (Ritter, 2010). Many Danish politicians have criticised Sweden for insisting on 'political correctness' to the extent that it hinders a free debate and thereby restricts free speech (Hedetoft, 2006). In turn, Swedish leaders have heavily criticised the strict immigration laws imposed in Denmark since 2002 and have expressed their horror over some of the DPP's statements throughout the 2000s (Ritter, 2010). However, the possible problems of the freedom of cultural choice objective were brought to the fore in Sweden with the honour killing of the Kurdish-born Fadime Sahindal in 2002. The murder led many Swedes to question if enough had been done to integrate immigrants into Swedish society, particularly regarding Muslims immigrants (Hansen & Hansen, 2003).

Today, almost one fifth of the population in Sweden is made up of immigrants and Sweden has one of the most lax and generous immigration policies in Europe. It is thus the polar opposite of Denmark, which has one of the toughest (Demstader, 2010; Traynor, 2010). Some Swedes are proud of living in a multicultural society, but possible negative effects of multiculturalism have been the object of some discussion, particularly in the media. E.g. Malmo has been highlighted as an example of the negative effects Swedish immigration policy can have. Approximately 40 per cent of Malmo's population is made up of immigrants and according to official statistics by 2005, unemployment exceeds 50 per cent in some immigrant neighbourhoods (Caldwell, 2005). It is believed that in the Herrgarden part of Malmo, unemployment reaches as high as 90 per cent (Brown, 2010). In addition, Sweden has one of the highest rape rates in Europe (The Local, 2009). This tends to be particularly blamed on immigrants on many blogs supporting the radical right. Lately, some indications of somewhat of a tightening of Swedish immigration policy has been seen. Despite not participating in the war

in Iraq, Sweden is the country which has received the most Iraqi asylum-seekers, which in 2007 prompted the Swedish government to tighten Swedish asylum laws, demanding that the Iraqis had to prove they were in direct, personal danger in Iraq in order for them not to be sent home (Cox & Edmonds, 2007). Larsson and Sander (2007) argue that Swedish multiculturalism is somewhat schizophrenic. On the one hand, diversity and difference is celebrated, but on the other hand, difference is seen as a potential problem that can only be solved by limiting difference. An example of this is the fact that Swedish immigration policy encourages cultural diversity, yet when some Muslim groups attempted to establish Muslim pre-schools and schools, it received extremely negative responses. Many Swedes saw Muslim schools as harmful to integration and to society at large (Larsson & Sander, 2007). Thus scepticism of Swedish multiculturalism does exist in Swedish society to a certain extent. The most direct prove of this is the fact that the SD were voted into parliament in 2010 with 6 per cent of the votes. On the other hand, it must also be mentioned that in response to the SD winning 20 seats, more than four thousand people gathered in Stockholm to protest against racism followed by other, smaller demonstrations across Sweden (Simpson, 2010a). This shows the fact that Sweden is not on the same stage as neither Denmark nor the Netherlands and that the SD has not, yet, become acceptable in Swedish society. The SD and its members have still not become quite *stuerene*, as Poul Nyrup Rasmussen coined it (cf. p. 26).

Another point showing the difference between particularly Danish and Swedish society is the fact that also a Swedish cartoonist made a drawing of Mohammed, here depicting him as a dog (Politiken, 2007). However, perhaps from having watched the Mohammed crisis unfold in Denmark less than two years prior, the Swedish government reacted fast to Vilks' drawings. The Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt met with representatives from various Islamic organisations to discuss the situation and any possible crisis was averted (Thuesen, 2007). The reason for the situation not escalating to the point that the Danish Mohammed crisis did can partly be attributed to the Swedish government's quick reaction. However, the researcher Fariba Parsa argues that it also relates to the specific contexts within which the two situations unfolded. Denmark, Parsa argues, is more closed off than Sweden is. It is difficult to get a residence permit, a job and to have one's family brought to Denmark. Therefore, some Muslims in Denmark very particularly sensitive to what they saw as an attack on their religion (Thuesen, 2007). In Sweden, however, many saw Vilks as a provocateur who was himself to blame for the trouble he had after the publication of the Muhammad drawing. There was general agreement

that he had every right to draw the cartoons, but many questioned if it was really necessary to do so (Schmidt, 2010). Thus we see clear differences between Denmark and the Netherlands on the one side and Sweden on the other. Whereas in Denmark and the Netherlands, the discussion of Islam and Muslims has been very prominent for a number of years and is not always 'politically correct', the same discussion in Sweden is at a very different stage, where it is not quite acceptable to be too critical of Islam and Muslims. This was e.g. reflected in the fact that the SD was excluded by the largest newspapers in Sweden during the 2010 elections.

7.1.3. Swedish national identity

As already mentioned, Sweden used to be a highly homogenous and rather isolated society due to the fact that Sweden because of its climate was not previously considered an attractive place for immigration. For many years, Swedish society was heavily influenced by Evangelical Lutheran Christianity, but, as already mentioned, in a survey from 2005, only 23 per cent of the Swedes answered that they believe in God (Nordstrom, 2010; Larsson & Sander, 2007). Like Denmark and the Netherlands, Sweden is highly secular. In a World Value Survey from 2008, only 5 per cent of the Swedish respondents answered that religion was important (Demstader, 2008). However, professor Valerie DeMarinis argue that despite of the survey, Christianity is intrinsic to Swedish culture. She argues that perhaps Christianity as a religion is seen as unimportant in Swedish society, but that the symbols and traditions of Christianity still play a great role in Swedish culture (Demstader, 2008). Indeed, 69 per cent of the Swedes are members of the Church of Sweden (Andersen & Lüchau, 2004). Thus it seems the influence of Christianity on Swedish national identity is as complex as its influence on Danish national identity. Another important aspect of Swedish national identity is the Social Democratic notion of *folkhemmet* (the people's home). This ideology was an attempt to find a middle-way between capitalism and socialism and it effectively created the Swedish welfare state. Larsson and Sander (2007) argue that it can be seen as an attempt to create a 'unity society' made up of people with a shared origin, race, culture and religious tradition. The ideology came into being in the 1930s, when Sweden experienced a period of strong nationalist sentiments, Larsson and Sander argue. The Swedish race was at the time argued to be superior and Larsson and Sander therefore argue that the ideology of *folkhemmet* carries a certain notion of nationalism (Larsson & Sander, 2007). Even today, the notion of *folkhemmet* still plays a great role in Swedish society (Weiss, 2010). Generally, the Swedes are often said to view themselves as more universalistic than its Norwegian and Danish neighbours. This can e.g. be seen in the

differences between the Danish national anthem '*Der er et yndigt land*' (There is a lovely land), which focuses solely on Denmark; and the Swedish national anthem '*Du gamla, Du fria*' (Thou ancient, Thou free), which features the line "*Ack, jag vill leva, jag vill dö i Norden*" (Eriksen, 1997), 'Oh, I want to live, I want to die in the North'.

7.1.4. Swedes on immigration and Muslims

Larsson and Sander (2007) argue that in Sweden as well as many other countries throughout the world, a 'religio-political awakening' has been seen among Muslims. Many Muslims are mobilising in Sweden not to Islamise society, Larsson and Sander argue, but to attain recognition, power and influence in order to establish their own identity and ensure their survival. This is happening at a time in which the media in Sweden and other countries have paid particular attention to the 'dramatic rise' in Islamic fundamentalism, Sander and Larsson point out. This mesh between a religio-political awakening and sensationalist media easily creates a concern among the ethnic Swedes that Sweden's Muslim population maybe poses a threat to Swedish society. Thus a divide between 'us' and 'them' arises, which Larsson and Sander argue is still based on "common racial heritage, common history, common language and common religion" (Larsson & Sander, 2007, p. 212). Scepticism of Islam in Sweden is reflected in a study carried out by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication already in 1991, in which 65 per cent of the respondents answered that their attitude towards Islam as a religion was somewhat or very negative, 53 per cent responded positively towards the suggestion that Muslim immigration into Sweden should be restricted and 77 per cent responded negatively towards the idea of increased support of Muslims in order for them to retain their own identity (Larsson & Sander, 2007). More recent studies show similar attitudes towards immigration and Islam. According to the Novus Opinion Survey from 2010, 73 per cent of the Swedes perceived immigration and integration as a problem (Simpson, 2010b). In a survey on globalisation and foreign policy performed by TNS, 56 per cent of the Swedish respondents agreed with the statement that there was too much immigration into Sweden, just as 56 per cent of the Swedish respondents agreed with the statement that Islamic fundamentalism was a threat to Swedish society (Open Europe, 2007). These surveys show some of the scepticism of Swedish immigration policy that exists in Swedish society. As regards Muslims and Islam, a survey carried out by the Swedish Board of Integration in 2004 shows that 67 per cent of the respondents did not find Islamic values compatible with the basic values of Swedish society. In addition, 46 per cent did not think that Muslims were 'like the

Swedes' (Euro Islam, n.d.; Open Society Institute, 2007). Thus it seems that the Swedes are fairly polarised as far as Muslim immigration and Islam is concerned.

7.2. THE COMMUNICATION OF THE SD

7.2.1. The SD on national identity

Having now described the context of Swedish immigration and multiculturalism debate as well as Swedish national identity, I will turn to the analysis of the SD's party programme, beginning with the party's website. The website of the SD underwent a complete reconstruction on June 20, 2011 in order to make it simpler (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011a). Although the purpose of the reconstruction was to make the website simpler, it can be difficult to get an overview of the party's opinions and goals. Under the menu *Våre åsikter* (Our opinions) one finds five different sub-menus, each explaining the opinions and politics of the party. For the PVV, the party's election manifest also functioned as its party programme and for the DPP, the party's *arbetsprogram* (working programme) functioned as its party programme. The SD's election manifest describes what the SD is working towards and it thus corresponds with both the PVV's and the DPP's party programmes. I will therefore analyse the SD's election manifest as its party programme. However, the SD's party programme is fairly brief compared to the party programmes of the PVV and DPP and therefore, I will draw in some of the other material found under the *Våre åsikter* menu.

The banner on the website of the SD features the party's logo *blåsippan* (hepatica) and the slogan *Trygghet & Tradition* (Safety and Tradition). Interesting here is particularly the term 'tradition' as it carries connotations of something that is old-fashioned, holding on to Swedish norms and values. Here, as with the DPP and PVV, something that is old-fashioned can then be something positive, depending on the context. The background on the website is a field of sunflowers underneath a blue sky, not much different than the images used by the DPP. Like the PVV uses the colours of the Dutch flag, the SD uses the colours of the Swedish flag, yellow and blue, throughout the website (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011b). Thus we here see similar appeals to national identity as with both the PVV and the DPP. According to the SD, it is a "Sverigevänligt parti, fritt från stelbent blockpolitik och fritt från ideologiska skygglappar" (Sverigedemokraterna, 2010, p. 2), 'Sweden-friendly party, free of rigid bloc politics and free of ideological blinkers'. The SD argues that it is neither a left nor a right party; rather it is a social-conservative party, emphasising welfare as well as traditionally conservative values. This is in

many ways a reference to the *folkhemmet* ideology, which also involves aspects of both sides of the political sceptre. Like with *folkhemmet*, the goal of the SD is to create a Sweden that is economically stable, but which at the same time ensures the general welfare of its (Swedish) citizens. The SD believes in flexibility in the sense that all matters must be evaluated independently and not be decided upon because of ideology. The SD argues that it is willing to work with any other Swedish party as long as it is in the best interest of Sweden (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011c).



Figure 6: Still photo of SD logo and website menu bar (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011b)

According to the SD, it is a party that puts Swedish interests above anything else. The Swedish cultural heritage is of the utmost importance for the SD. In schools, the SD argues, the experiences and knowledge of former generations as well as Christian ethics and Western humanism must be emphasised. Furthermore, a profound understanding and acceptance of Swedish cultural heritage must be conveyed from one generation to the next, the SD emphasises. Indeed, in the Sweden of the SD “präglas samhället av en gemensam svensk kultur som skapar sammanhållning och solidaritet mellan medborgarna” (Sverigedemokraterna, 2010, p. 7), ‘society is characterised by a common Swedish culture which creates unity and solidarity among the citizens’. We here see several parallels to the PVV and the DPP. Like the DPP and the PVV, the SD refers to Sweden’s past as something important and great. In addition, we here see Christianity and ‘Western humanism’ emphasised, much like both the PVV and the DPP did. In SD’s Sweden, freedom and openness are matter of courses. However, what must be defended is Swedish cultural heritage, “ett folkhem byggt på en gemensam värdegrund och svenskarnas rätt att utveckla sin kultur på egna villkor” (Sverigedemokraterna, 2010, p. 4), ‘a people’s home built on common values and the Swedes’ right to develop their culture on their own terms’. We here see the reference to *folkhemmet*, a reference to a glorious past when Sweden was viewed as superior, at least by the Swedes. Thus it is an appeal to a sense of national pride based on the achievement of establishing the Swedish welfare state, characterised by solidarity. Taking a closer look at images used by the SD on the party’s website, they are very similar to the images used by the

DPP. The website features one picture of an overview of Stockholm, but the rest of the pictures include nature and smiling people, particularly children. On all the pictures, the sun is shining and the grass is green, see e.g. figure 7 below. The SD thus portrays Sweden as idyllic, happy and cosy. Thus the SD has here laid out what it believes Sweden is and what the Swedes stand to lose if foreigners are allowed to change Sweden.



Figure 7: Still photo from the website of the SD (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011e)

From all of this emerges the question of what Swedish culture actually embodies. The SD even comments itself on the website that people have often posed that question to the party. In the party programme, there is no answer to that question, but on the website under *Vår politik A till Ö* (Our politics from A to Z), the SD has made a section describing what the party considers Swedish culture to be. According to the SD, Swedish culture is everything from what the Swedes produce, such as music, literature and art, to such things as Swedish traditions, ceremonies and celebrations, to how the Swedes are, quiet, reserved, cautious and hospitable. Even external phenomena such as clothing, food and décor can be considered cultural markers, the SD argues. However, one of the most important cultural markers is values, the SD believes (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011d). SD concedes to the fact that culture is difficult to define: “Om vi skulle göra en lista på 100 saker som vi anser ingår i svensk kultur, och person från ett annat land skulle göra en likadan lista över vad som ingår i det landets kultur, så skulle förmodligen en del av dessa 100 saker vara samma på bägge listorna” (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011d), ‘If we were to make a list of 100 things we believe are parts of Swedish culture and a person from another country were to make a similar list of what is included in that country’s culture, a few of these 100 things would probably be the same on both lists’. Thus it is not the elements in themselves that matter, but rather the particular composition, the SD argues. According to the SD, cultures develop over time and new traditions etc. are often introduced

into the Swedish culture. This does, however, not mean that anything can become a part of Swedish culture, the SD argues. For the SD, a good prerequisite for something to become a part of Swedish culture is that something similar to it already exists in the culture. E.g. the Christian Christmas could be absorbed into Swedish culture as the Swedes already celebrated Yule (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011d). Hence, Muslim norms and traditions can likely not be absorbed into Swedish culture. The SD presents a long list of what can be considered typically Swedish, e.g. bringing a lunch box to work, watching Donald Duck on Christmas, Astrid Lindgren and to not intrude. Thus Swedish culture includes many different things and can be difficult to define, but it is essentially what makes up Swedish society and it is “det som binder oss samman” (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011d), i.e. ‘that which binds us together’. The SD here clearly refers to the Swedes as ‘us’, meaning that immigrants are ‘the others’. The point here is that Swedish culture is a lot of things and one must essentially be Swedish to fully know what these things are.

7.2.2. The SD on multiculturalism

In the SD’s Sweden, people in need must be helped, but Swedish welfare and the country’s well-being are of primary importance, the SD argues. The SD aims at creating a society based on a high level of solidarity and sense of community, a society where people feel safe and take care of one another. Therefore, the SD argues, the multicultural policies of other Swedish parties are particularly destructive as they create segregated neighbourhoods, cut off from the rest of society (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011e). These neighbourhoods, the SD argues, are characterised by unemployment and crime (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011f). We here see a similar depiction of so-called ghetto areas in Sweden, as the DPP depicted them in Denmark. Like with the DPP and PVV, there are no concrete examples and no direct numbers, but it is still presented in a way that makes the voters believe that it must be a big problem. By not emphasising Swedish culture and discussing what it compromises, Swedes are at risk of becoming rootless and of losing their identity, the SD argues. In that sense, multiculturalism threatens the very identity of the Swedes (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011d). This is thus an example of a slippery slope argument. Therefore, the SD suggests that Sweden should lead an assimilation policy instead of one of multiculturalism (Sverigedemokraterna, 2010). The SD argues that Sweden should stand up for the Western world’s views of the world, which refers to democracy, equality, welfare and human rights (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011c). We here see a depiction of ‘Western values’ very similar to those of the DPP and PVV. All three parties have a

tendency to connect immigration, mostly from non-Western countries, with the possible demise of 'Western values'. Thus (non-Western) immigration is portrayed as a threat. Thereby, the SD can also be characterised as nativist (cf. pp. 17-19). The SD is in favour of restricting immigration into Sweden to the levels of Finland and Denmark and argues that while continuing allowing for mass-immigration, no integration policy will be successful (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011f; Sverigedemokraterna, 2010).

7.2.3. The SD on Islam and Muslims

When reading the SD's party programme and looking through the party's website, Muslims and Islam are seemingly not singled out as the biggest problems in Swedish society the way in which they are by both the DPP and the PVV. In an interview with BBC's Hardtalk in January 2011, party leader Jimmy Åkesson, he explained that the SD wanted to restrict immigration in general, not just Muslim immigrants (BBC, 2011). He acknowledged the fact that many of Sweden's immigrants are Muslim, but that the party did not necessarily single out Muslims. The interviewer confronted Åkesson with statements made by two other SD members, one that many Middle Eastern immigrants have a gene that makes them more violent and another that black Africans are genetically programmed to rape children. Åkesson defended the party, saying that one could find stupid statements by various members of all Swedish parties and pointed out that Per Wahlberg, who made the latter statement, had been forced to step down. However, as the interviewer pointed out that the SD had said that it strived for a safe society and therefore wanted to restrict Muslim immigration especially, Åkesson stated that it is a fact that immigrants commit more crime, particularly of a violent nature, than ethnic Swedes. He thus did not deny the fact that the SD had equated safety with restricted Muslim immigration, but reverted back to the broader description 'immigrants', nonetheless (BBC, 2011). Again, seemingly there is a reluctance to directly say *Muslim* immigrants, which may be related to the particular context of Swedish immigration and multiculturalism debate, where criticising Islam is not quite acceptable. However, when looking at some of the policies of the SD, there is evidence of wanting to limit Muslim influence in Swedish society. The SD e.g. wants to ban headscarves and halal-slaughter (Sverigedemokraterna, 2011g), just as it wants to support women living "under religiöst och hedersrelaterat förtryck i Sverige" (Sverigedemokraterna, 2010, p. 4), i.e. 'under religious and honour related suppression in Sweden'. This is clearly a reference to Muslims and honour killings.

The SD's portrayal of Muslims and Islam is also evident in the party's election video from 2010, in which an elderly woman with a walker is on her way to vote for pension. However, on her way, she is taken over by a group of burqa-clad Muslim women, pushing strollers (see figure 8 below). The video starts out with the message that all politics is about priorities and ends with the statement that the voters now can choose the 'immigration brake' above the 'pension brake' (Schori & Thomsen, 2010). Swedish TV4 refused to air the video as the channel considered it to be hate speech, demonising Islam. However, the SD argued that the video was intended to criticise mass-immigration and the value-system it involves and not to criticise anyone of a particular religion (EU Times, 2010). Perhaps that was not the intention, but the video can easily be seen as critical of Muslims. The video plays on stereotypical depictions of Muslims; that they have many children (hence the strollers) and that Muslim women are suppressed (hence the burqas). It is not said or shown directly in the video, but the way in which the elderly lady walks towards the desk, but is overtaken by the Muslim women looks as if the elderly woman is on her way to collect her pension, when the Muslim women overtake her to collect their welfare check. It gives one the idea that immigration is expensive because Muslim immigrants with all their children live off of society. Furthermore, the way in which the Muslim women with their black burqas blend in with the black background makes them look not as individuals, but as a moving, black mass. In contrast, with her light, beige-coloured coat and white hair, the elderly woman stands out as an individual. In that sense, one can relate to her, but not to the Muslim women, thus creating an 'us' versus 'them' feeling.

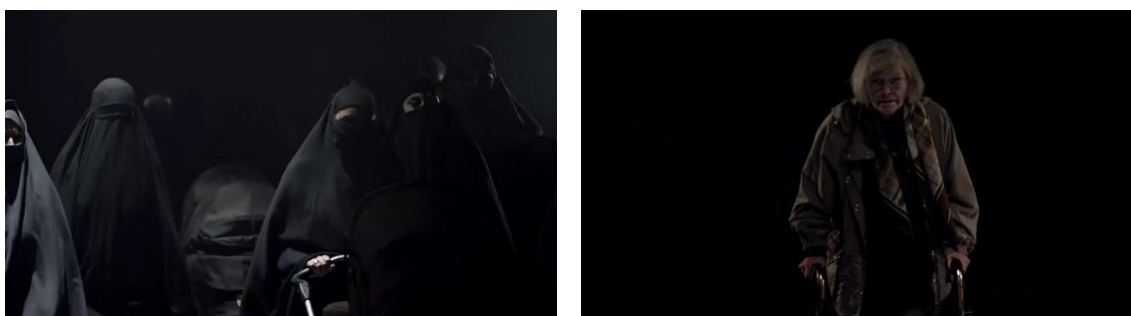


Figure 8: Still photo from SD's election video 2010 (Schori & Thomsen, 2010)

In addition to the video, in a debate article, Åkesson (2009) called Muslims Sweden's greatest foreign threat. In the article, Åkesson argues that multiculturalism is an inherently Western notion and carries the belief that the Western way of life is superior to other ways of life and that everyone therefore strives for this way of life. Therefore, Åkesson argues, Swedish political

elites assume that Muslims will naturally adapt to Swedish way of life and that Islam is ultimately the same as Christianity, except for the fact that Muslims call their god by a different name. Therefore it is also assumed that Islam can be tamed and fit into secular societies the same way that Christianity does, i.e. that it can be retained to the private sphere, Åkesson argues. However, Åkesson states, Islam differs from Christianity on some crucial points such as the distinction between spiritual and worldly power and the use of force. Unlike Christianity, Islam has no message of love and has rejected the Enlightenment and humanism, Åkesson claims. Even so, many leaders think that these matters can be overcome, Åkesson states, but “Såhär långt tvingas man dock konstatera att islam har påverkat det svenska samhället i betydligt högre utsträckning än det svenska samhället har påverkat islam” (Åkesson, 2009), ‘so far one is, however, forced to conclude that Islam has influenced Swedish society to a significantly greater degree than Swedish society has influenced Islam’. Thus Åkesson here indicates that Islam is simply incompatible with Western society. Åkesson then lists how Islam has influenced Swedish society, e.g. that Swedish artists joking with Islam now live under constant death threats; that leading Muslim representatives demand the introduction of Sharia law in Sweden; that Sweden has the most rapes in Europe and that Muslims are overrepresented as perpetrators; and that schools are allowing for the celebration of the end of Ramadan, while school closings in church are banned in more and more schools. If this development is not stopped, what will Sweden be like in a few decades, Åkesson asks (Åkesson, 2009). Again, we see a slippery slope argument, i.e. that Islam may eventually change Sweden into an Islamic country if the current development is not stopped. This is a portrayal of Islam very similar to that of the DPP and the PVV. All three parties seem to argue that allowing for any influence of Islam will potentially mean the end of Christianity and Western way of life. Although Åkesson called the statement that Middle Eastern men have a gene that makes them more violent, he here points out how Muslim men seem to commit more rapes than Swedes. Thus although Åkesson claimed that the SD does not single out Muslims in particular, he does single them out here as being the greatest threat to Swedish society, a threat that within a short time may eradicate all that makes Sweden Sweden. Hence, the SD can then be said to be nativist (cf. pp. 17-19)

7.2.4. Conclusion

As appears from this analysis, the SD devotes a large section in the party programme and on the party’s website to Swedish culture and what it embodies. The SD attempts to specifically

define what some of the elements are, even more so than both the PVV and the DPP. Even so, the SD's portrayal of Swedish national identity prerequisite that the reader, i.e. voter, already has some idea of what Swedish national identity is, as was the case with the DPP and PVV's portrayals of their respective national identities. The SD emphasises openness, hospitality and solidarity as typically Swedish values and does not see it as a paradox to emphasise these values while arguing for restrictions on immigration. Apparently, these values only apply to some degree, in the eyes of the SD. In the party programme, the SD does not to a large extent emphasise Muslim immigrants as the largest problem, but a few interviews and an election video says otherwise. These show a view of Muslims and Islam as a threat to Swedish national identity. The SD points out all the ways in which Islam and Muslims have influenced Swedish society, turning it into something that is no longer Swedish. As with the DPP and PVV, there seems to be the belief that Islam is simply incompatible with Western society and therefore, the party finds that Islam's influence must be stopped.

8. COMPARISON AND DISCUSSION

When we look at the background in all three case studies, we can see several similarities. All three countries have at some point been seen as some of the most liberal countries in the world concerning immigration. This is still the case for Sweden, but not for Denmark and the Netherlands. Both Sweden and the Netherlands have experience with multiculturalism and in both countries there was for a long time no outlet for expressing discontent with the two countries' respective immigration policies. Thus we here see some evidence supporting the protest theory. However, with the Netherlands, an anti-immigration party did exist before Fortuyn entered the political scene, but it did not get many votes. Hence the party in itself is important for its success. For the Denmark and the Netherlands, the immigration and multiculturalism debates seem to be at the same stage today. In Denmark, there seems to have been political scepticism towards immigration for quite a long time, whereas in the Netherlands, the change in the debate has happened more rapidly. Although not all voters in the two countries agree with the DPP and PVV, there seems to be an acceptance of their way of arguing, despite it being rather controversial at times. This is e.g. seen in the fact that Wilders was acquitted recently and in the fact that e.g. Søren Pind, who despite not being a member of the DPP, still argues in line with the party's views. As for Sweden, the debate is at another stage. This is seen in the fact that the SD was excluded from participating in TV debates during the 2006 and 2010 elections and that several thousand protested SD entering parliament. Thus we might expect there being differences between the way in which the DPP and PVV argue and the way in which the SD argues. With all three countries, we see a complex relationship between Christianity and secularism. Secularism is valued highly, but Christianity still has some importance, particularly in Denmark and Sweden. Concerning the view on Islam and Muslims, we see polarisation in all three countries. It seems to be a topic that splits the Danes, Dutchmen and Swedes in half and thus it is likely a topic that is difficult to reach consensus about.

It is not only in relation to the background that the three cases are similar, but also in relation to the discourses of the DPP, PVV and SD. This is e.g. seen in their portrayal of national identity. As was seen in the conceptualisation of national identity, it is a complex term which carries different connotations from person to person. However, as can also be seen in conceptualisation of national identity and in the theory of social identity, the function of national identity is perhaps even more important than what it actually is. The DPP, PVV and SD

all attempt to describe what they perceive their respective national identities to embody to a larger or smaller degree. The SD is the party that describes national identity in most details, followed by the DPP. Both these parties try to describe how their respective national identities differ from other national identities. The SD e.g. mentions Astrid Lindgren and *folkhemmet*, whereas the DPP mentions the Danes' somewhat peculiar relationship with Christianity as well as the Danish royal family. The PVV is the party that focuses the least on national identity. It describes Dutch identity in very general terms, i.e. liberal and tolerant, but it does emphasise the Netherlands' history. Thus it can be concluded that the PVV is more universal, i.e. aiming towards the Western world in general, whereas the DPP and SD are more specifically aiming towards Denmark and Sweden, respectively. That being said, the PVV does argue that the Dutch know no equal, just as the DPP and the SD refer to European and, more generally, the Western culture as resembling Danish and Swedish national identity. Thus all three parties emphasise national identity above anything else, but are also positive towards the Western world in general.

In their way of presenting national identity, the three parties seem to rely on the basic tendency of self-categorisation and the need for positive self-evaluation as outlined in the theory of social identity (cf. pp. 22-25). At any rate, the DPP, PVV and SD describe elements of their respective national identities in positive terms only and are thus essentially flattering the voters. All three parties describe members of their respective national identities to be diligent, tolerant, liberal and open-minded. In that sense, they are presenting a national identity that few voters would not wish to categorise themselves with. The three parties particularly emphasise their countries' history and in many ways glorify the way things used to be. The PVV itself writes that it is an old-fashioned party and the SD includes the word 'tradition' in its slogan. The DPP seems quite old-fashioned in its portrayal of national identity and also emphasises the importance of traditions. It is interesting how traditions and being old-fashioned is something positive in this context, but insofar as Islam is concerned, these terms are used as criticism. Islam is seen by the three parties as a backwards religion, or even ideology, that does not fit in with the developed Western societies. In order to differentiate between when being old-fashioned is positive and when it is negative, the parties use different terms, i.e. tradition versus backwards. Thus, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, being modern is both positive and negative, depending on the context. The same is the case with tolerance. All three parties emphasise tolerance as an important element of their respective national identities, but they

seem to believe that it is only positive to a certain degree. Tolerance towards e.g. Islam should be restricted in the eyes of the three parties. Generally, tolerance and liberal-mindedness are regarded as positive terms, but have different meanings for different people. Thus by not defining what the three parties specifically mean by these words, they are not alienating anyone in their portrayal of national identity.

The three parties all emphasise the importance of secularism, but still argue that Judeo-Christian values have an important place in their respective countries. At least, the three parties argue that the Danes, Dutch and Swedes live according to Judeo-Christian values, which, according to the DPP, PVV and SD, are completely different than the values of Islam. E.g. the parties all argue that Islam does not embrace humanism, which they argue is an important value for Danish, Dutch and Swedish society. Particularly the DPP emphasises the importance of Christianity to Danish national identity, while still stressing the importance of secularism, which makes sense considering the Danes' own view of Christianity and secularism. This complex dynamics between Christianity and secularism can help the three parties to make their point. In all three countries, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, the public sphere is to a large extent secular. However, several Christian traditions are still celebrated, e.g. Christmas. Thus it seems that Christianity in the three countries primarily belong to the private sphere. Thereby, it may be difficult to deal with the presence of another religion as religion is not normally something that is particularly discussed. Seen as the Danes, Dutch and Swedes are used to the separation of politics and religion, being faced with a religion that includes a law (sharia) on all aspects of society, including politics, could be difficult to deal with. Because the Danes, Dutch and Swedes are used to keeping religion private, it may be difficult for them to understand why it is important for some to include religion in all aspects of their lives. Thus there is sort of an 'us' and 'them' division. However, this does not necessarily mean that it will lead to conflict, but this division is used by the DPP, PVV and SD to present Islam as a threat to national identity. According to at least the DPP and PVV, Islam is a totalitarian ideology, i.e. it is a political ideology. That means that according to the parties, Islam strives for political influence and thus those who adhere to this religion, i.e. Muslims, may also wish for their religion to have political influence. Thereby, according to the parties, Muslims may want to turn Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden into Islamic countries.

Both the DPP and PVV directly highlight Muslim immigration as the biggest immigration problem in their respective countries, whereas the SD seemingly argues against immigration in general in its party programme. However, from other material on the SD, it can be seen that it is particular Muslim immigration that according to the SD is a problem. Considering the context of the Swedish immigration and multiculturalism debate, it makes sense why the SD would be reluctant to criticise Islam too directly, as it is not as acceptable in Sweden as it seems to be in Denmark and the Netherlands. Coupled with the fact that all three parties are positive towards Europe, or at least Western Europe, and the Western world in general, it can be concluded that they have a highly nativist discourse. All three parties argue that Western values are not a threat to national identity; indeed countries within the Western world generally share the same values, according to the DPP, PVV and SD. However, the three parties argue that Muslims are difficult, if not impossible, to integrate into Western societies, i.e. they cannot assimilate with Danish, Dutch and Swedish national identity and they instead present a threat to these identities. All three parties argue that many Muslim immigrants present a large financial strain on their societies and that Muslims who do not denounce Islam are simply not capable of functioning within a liberal, free and tolerant democracy. Furthermore, all three parties argue for the importance of hindering Islam having an influence on Danish, Dutch and Swedish society as this would mean that the three countries could no longer remain liberal, tolerant and secular. In the eyes of the DPP, PVV and SD, Islam is an intolerant and fascist religion and therefore, intolerance towards Islam is necessary in order for Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden to remain liberal and tolerant. Thus tolerance sometimes requires intolerance, at least according to the DPP, PVV and SD.

9. CONCLUSION

As appears from this thesis, we see many similarities between the communication of the DPP, PVV and SD. The DPP and SD are particularly focused on their respective national identities and tries to a larger or smaller degree to explain what they perceive their national identities to include. The PVV seems a little less focused on national identity, but does elevate the Dutch people to being the greatest people in the world. All three parties describe members of their respective national identity groups with words such as liberal, open-minded and tolerant. These values are reflected in the equality between men and women and the acceptance of the rights of homosexuals in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, the DPP, PVV and SD argues, but also in the three countries' particular relationship to religion. In the three countries, secularism is highly valued, according to the three parties, but at the same time all three countries were founded upon Judeo-Christian values. Thus Christian traditions are still upheld, but at the same time there is religious freedom and religion is separated from the political sphere, the three parties point out. The three parties have a particular emphasis on tradition in their portrayal of national identity. For them, being old-fashioned is positive, at least in some contexts. However, regarding Islam, the three parties criticise it for being backwards and thereby being out of touch with modern society. One may wonder how the three parties, being old-fashioned and valuing tradition, are not out of touch with society, when Islam is, but we find no answer to that in the three parties' party programmes.

Free speech, liberal-mindedness and tolerance are, according to the three parties, important values that ought to be maintained. However, it is simultaneously these values that may eventually cause these values to disappear from Danish, Dutch and Swedish society, the DPP, PVV and SD argue. This may seem rather paradoxical, but not according to the three parties. They see tolerance towards immigration, particularly Muslim immigration, as the greatest threat to society. Thereby, we may characterise the three parties' communication as a nativist, 'us versus them' discourse. Islam, they argue, is a totalitarian ideology that does not embrace humanism and values intrinsic to Western society, such as free speech. Indeed, according to the three parties, Islam is an intolerant ideology that suppresses women and discriminates homosexuals. All parties portray Islam as a rather violent ideology, one that does not fit in with Western liberal democracies. According to the three parties, the values that characterise Danish, Dutch and Swedish people, i.e. liberal-mindedness and tolerance, will be compromised if Islam is allowed to influence society. In that sense, the three parties are in their own eyes

actually fighting for the maintenance of these values. Multiculturalism particularly reflects tolerance towards Islam and allows for it to influence society, according to the DPP, PVV and SD. For that reason, the three parties argue that multiculturalism should be discouraged and that it is necessary to limit or fully stop Muslim immigration into Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. Thereby, according to the three parties, intolerance is necessary in order for Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden to remain liberal and tolerant.

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