

THE DUTCH, THE UN-DUTCH, AND THE SEMI-DUTCH:
THE POLITICS OF MULTICULTURALISM AND MUSLIM MINORITIES
IN THE NETHERLANDS

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
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April 2010

To my parents

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IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of
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April 2010

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ABSTRACT

THE DUTCH, THE UN-DUTCH, AND THE SEMI-DUTCH: THE POLITICS OF MULTICULTURALISM AND MUSLIM MINORITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

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The history of Muslim existence in Europe has also been a history of crises. The crisis is partially of the liberal democracy. Indeed, in Europe, the limits of toleration, the limits of freedom of speech, and the limits of religious freedom are being discussed especially regarding the new Muslim presence. Moreover, after the Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004, and the London bombings on 7 July 2005, many analysts, observers, intellectuals and opinion formers not only concluded that multiculturalism had failed but also accused it of being responsible for the bombings and the murder. Even those who do not directly blame multiculturalism tend to believe that multiculturalism needs to be reconsidered, and may be replaced by “integration,” which is very frequently used interchangeably with “assimilation.”

The Dutch case is one of the best cases to study the above discourses. Although the Netherlands is still a liberal frontrunner when it comes to issues like homosexuality, soft-drugs, prostitution and euthanasia, it is also considered as one of

the sharpest u-turns from hospitable and tolerant policies towards immigrants. With this u-turn, not only the entrance of new immigrants and refugees from non-Western countries is complicated, but also the focus turned towards the integration of the second and third generation immigrants, especially the Muslims. Not surprisingly, some positive and negative examples of integration have come into prominence, and some good and bad Muslim subjectivities have been formed.

After analyzing primary and secondary sources on Muslim integration and 44 in-depth interviews conducted in the Netherlands in 2008, this dissertation has four major conclusions. First of all, the history of a negative portrayal of Muslims in the Netherlands is much older than the post-September 11th discourse of the “war on terror.” Secondly, while the religious people in general are found “irritating” as soon as they carry their religious reasoning into the public sphere, Muslim people, for their new demands, increasing populations and public appearances in the big cities, are found more irritating than the conservative Christians. Thirdly, the retreat from multicultural policies has simultaneously taken place with the increasing Muslim determination to make use of community level rights and the growing visibility of Muslims in the public spheres of major Dutch cities. And finally, the debates about everyday-life practices aimed at either forming some acceptable models of Muslim subjectivity that coexist with Western liberal democracy or denigrating some other models that are perceived (or presented) as threats to liberal democracy.

ÖZET

HOLLANDALI, YARI-HOLLANDALI VE HOLLANDALI OLMAYAN:

HOLLANDA'DA ÇOKKÜLTÜRCÜLÜK VE MÜSLÜMAN

AZINLIKLARA YÖNELİK POLİTİKALAR

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Avrupa'da Müslümanların tarihi aynı zamanda krizlerin de tarihidir. Bu bir ölçüde liberal demokrasinin de krizidir. Gerçekten de son zamanlarda liberal demokrasilerde, farklılıklara tahammülün, ifade özgürlüğünün ve dini özgürlüğün sınırları Müslümanların Avrupa'daki varlıkları üzerinden tartışılmaktadır. Dahası, 11 Mart 2004'teki Madrid bombalamaları, Theo van Gogh'un 2 Kasım 2004'te Amsterdam'da öldürülmesi ve 7 Temmuz 2005 tarihli Londra bombalamalarının ardından birçok analist, gözlemci, entelektüel ve kamuoyu oluşturan kimseler tarafından sadece çokkültürcülüğün sonu ilan edilmemiş, ayrıca bombalamalardan ve cinayetten de kısmen çokkültürcülük sorumlu tutulmuştur. Çokkültürcülüğü direk olarak suçlamayanlar bile bir revizyon ihtiyacından söz etmişler ve terimin zaman zaman "asimilasyon" ile eş anlamlı olarak kullanılan "entegrasyon" ile yer değiştirmesi gerektiğini söylemişlerdir.

Bu söylemleri incelemek için en iyi örneklerden biri de Hollanda'dır. Homoseksüellik, uyuşturucu, fuhuş ve ötenazi gibi konularda halen bir liberal öncü

olan Hollanda, çoğunluğunu Müslümanların oluşturduğu göçmenlere dönük toleranslı politikalardan en keskin u-dönüşünün yaşandığı ülkelerden biri olarak kabul edilir. Bu u-dönüşü ile birlikte sadece Batılı olmayan ülkelerden gelen göçmenlerin girişleri zorlaştırılmamış, aynı zamanda ikinci ve üçüncü nesil göçmenlerin- özellikle de Müslümanların- entegrasyonuna dönük politikalara ağırlık verilmiştir. Bu süreçte, entegrasyonun olumlu ve olumsuz bazı örnekleri öne çıkmış ve “iyi” ve “kötü” Müslüman olmaya dair prototipler belirlemiştir.

Birinci ve ikinci el kaynaklar ve 2008 yılında Hollanda’da yapılan 43 derinlemesine mülakat incelendikten sonra bu çalışmada dört ana sonuca ulaşıldı. Birinci olarak, Müslümanların olumsuz bir şekilde tasvirinin tarihi 11 Eylül sonrasındaki “teröre karşı savaş” söyleminden daha eskiye dayanıyor. İkinci olarak, (mensubu oldukları din ne olursa olsun) dindar insanlar dini argümanlarını kamusal alana taşıdıkları anda genel olarak “rahatsız edici” bulunuyorlar. Müslümanlar ise yeni talepleri, çoğalan nüfusları ve büyük şehirlerde gün geçtikçe artan görünürlükleri ile muhafazakâr Hıristiyanlara göre daha rahatsız edici bulunuyorlar. Üçüncü olarak, çokkültürcü politikalardan el çekmek hemen hemen Müslümanların cemaat bazında hakları talep etmeleri ile aynı zamanlara denk düşüyor. Ve son olarak, gündelik hayata dair bazı pratiklere dönük söylemler Batılı liberal demokrasilerde var olmaya uygun Müslüman öznellikleri oluşturmak ve liberal demokrasiye tehdit olarak algılanan diğer bazı modelleri de kötülemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Although the Netherlands is still a liberal frontrunner when it comes to issues like homosexuality, soft-drugs, prostitution and euthanasia, it is also considered as one of the sharpest u-turns from hospitable and tolerant policies towards immigrants (Entzinger, 2003). Gerald de Hemptinne, Agence France-Presse's correspondent in The Hague, describes the recent changes in Dutch society with the following words: "While most people are proud of the accomplishments of the country's liberal policies, such as the legalization of gay marriage, prostitution and euthanasia, they also increasingly see a down-side to being open minded" (de Hemptinne, 2003). The "down-side to being open minded" is not a feeling about gays, prostitution, or soft drugs, but about Muslims. The "down-side" of democracy as implied here is the difficulty that the Dutch are having in dealing with the issue of non-Western immigrants in general, and Muslim immigrants in particular, in democratic ways. This is exactly the case in the Netherlands since the early 1990s, and especially since the murder of Theo van Gogh.¹ Another observant of the Dutch case, Fred Halliday (2007), comments that none of these are particular to the Netherlands: "The

¹ Theo van Gogh, a Dutch movie maker, was murdered on 2 November 2004 by a radicalized second generation Moroccan Muslim. Van Gogh had a deserved reputation for offensiveness and vulgarity. In the few years before his death, he had focused increasingly on the problems with immigration and Muslim intolerance. Finally, he directed a short, critical film, named Submission, on the position of women in Islam, written by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, then a member of parliament from Muslim background. For a detailed analysis of the murder of Theo van Gogh, see Buruma (2007).

questions of immigration, secularism, multiculturalism, gender that the Dutch are talking about are also being debated in all other major countries of western Europe.” Yet a Dutch commentator, Theo Veenkamp (2004), suggests that the Netherlands has “something to offer” because, he continues, “Holland is (...) founded on a conscious choice for tolerance and diversity. Erasmus and William of Orange, the nation’s founding father, laid the cornerstones of a deeply-rooted, at times almost invisible, but quite durable common frame of reference, which helped us over successive generations always in the end to find refuge – despite our equally deeply-rooted divisions and intolerance – in constructive consensus.”

All these three observations about the recent social and political atmosphere of the Netherlands are correct. There is a significant increase in the anti-immigrant and anti-Islam sentiments in the Netherlands, which has a deserved reputation of a tolerant and cosmopolitan country. Furthermore, the Netherlands is considered as one of the most significant retreats from multiculturalism (Entzinger, 2003). Once assumed as an ambitious example of applying multiculturalist policies, now the Netherlands is shown as one of the significant evidences of the failure of multiculturalism. Yet, this confusion about what to do with the settled immigrant minorities, most of who are non-Western and Muslim, and how to respond to this new diversity should be evaluated within the broader context of Europe, where the limits of toleration, the limits of freedom of speech, and the limits of religious freedom are being discussed especially regarding the new Muslim presence in Europe (Bauböck, 2002). The debate has been going on since the Rushdie Affair,²

² Salman Rushdie, a British novelist from Indian origin, published his novel, *The Satanic Verses*, in 1988. The novel’s bitter satire on Islam provoked uproar in all over Islamic world. Soon after, Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran issued a fatwa, sentencing Rushdie to death for writing the book. Many Muslims in Britain supporting Khomeini’s fatwa burned the book in protests and threatened Rushdie. As a result, Salman Rushdie was forced to go into hiding for many years. Tariq Modood (2009: 174) argues that, since the Rushdie Affair, the political opposition to (politicized) Muslims mostly has

and reached its peak since the September 11 attacks in New York. Still, with its highly developed and firmly established understanding of individual and community level rights, the Netherlands may be one of the countries to find a settlement to the challenge of Muslim presence in Europe. The goal of this dissertation is to find out what the Dutch model says about the direction of a possible accommodation of Muslims in liberal democracies.

1.1. Europe and the New Islamic Presence

To understand the Dutch case, one should first look at Europe's broader environment. Bhikhu Parekh (2006: 179), a prominent theorist elaborating on the question of multiculturalism, starts one of his articles with the following sentence: "In many influential circles in Europe, it is widely held that its over 15 million Muslims pose a serious cultural and political threat." He states that this discourse against Muslims interestingly cuts across political and ideological divides and is shared alike by conservatives, fascists, liberals, socialists and communists although in different degrees. Indeed, for most, Muslims are held responsible for the failure of a peaceful multicultural society (Modood, 2003). Even the advocates of multiculturalism usually present Muslims as a potential problem for multiculturalism.³

It is argued that Muslims, despite having their second and third generations in Europe, have failed to integrate unlike other minorities in Europe (Hagendoorn and Pepels, 2003); that they do not feel at home in European societies and prefer to live

come from secular and liberal intelligentsia, rather than from Christians or right-wing nationalists. For a short review of the Rushdie Affair, see Phillips (2006).

³ For example, Will Kymlicka (1995) attempts to restrict multiculturalist policies with national minorities while he presents the issues regarding Muslims as problems to be solved by exemptions. Kymlicka (2005: 83) also admits that there is a positive correlation between discontent about multiculturalism and the presence of Muslims in liberal democracies. This is basically because Muslims are perceived as illiberals who are against freedoms, and therefore, who do not deserve multicultural rights (Modood, 2007).

among themselves;⁴ that they see themselves as a part of universal *Ummah*, and have little loyalty to their country of settlement;⁵ that they show no commitment to Western democratic institutions and do not respect the liberal freedoms; that they do not encourage their children to get Western education and be good citizens;⁶ that “Islamist ideology,” which can easily attract average Muslims, “preaches violence;”⁷ that their everyday-life practices such as praying five times a day or using headscarf do not fit into the logic of modern life,⁸ and so on. Muslims in Europe are portrayed as an alienated underclass with anger that is directed to the very society they live in, and a potential source of unrest and violence.

Such theses have been stated more explicitly after the September 11 attacks, which formed among the Western publics a *total suspicion* on Muslims. By total suspicion, I mean a state of mind that sees a Muslim suspicious (if not as a substantive threat) until he/she proves to be a good Muslim. This suspicion is not only about a feeling that perceives some extremist Muslims as a physical threat to security, but also seeing all Muslims potentially disloyal to the nation state, clash with liberal norms and values, harmful to the welfare state, and grow hostile sentiments to the Western world. Different than the “clash of civilization” thesis, however, this suspicion aims not at building a language of clash between two blocs,

⁴ A very significant grievance about this came from Shadid Malik, Britain’s first Muslim minister. Malik said that “Muslims today (...) feel like the Jews of Europe” (Milmo 2008). This feeling, for him, diminishes their attachment to the host societies.

⁵ See Sayyid (2000) for a detailed analysis of European discourse on Muslims’ attachment to *Ummah*.

⁶ These last two points are emphasized very much by Dutch liberals. For example, Rotterdam municipality issued a ten-rule system called Rotterdam Code, “in which we say that when you have children, you should take responsibility to raise them, to make them good citizens; you also should accept other people’s sexual preferences, like homosexuality, etc. These kinds of rules. And they are actually a list of what Western, liberal, modern society is all about. (...) These are the things how this society works” (interview with Marco Pastors, July 22, 2008).

⁷ Interview with Paul Clietur, professor of law (August 04, 2008).

⁸ Many Dutch think that Muslim habits and the logic of “nowadays society” are in contradiction with each other. For example, one of my interviewees says that “Well, fine that you are educated but you still educated like 200 years ago. I mean, you are not in *nowadays society*... Then I say ok go, and live in your holly island, but leave me alone (interview with Marjolinde de Jong, The Hague City councillor, July 30, 2008). For a detailed analysis for the Dutch and their perceptions of Muslim everyday life practices, see Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007).

the West on the one hand, and Islam on the other hand. Rather, it aims at distinguishing between “good Muslims” and “bad Muslims,” in other words, emphasizing a clash within Islam (Mamdani, 2002). As Mahmood Mamdani (2002: 676) argues, this difference between good and bad Muslims is not like a difference between good and bad persons, or between criminals and civic citizens, who both happen to be Muslims. Bad Muslim refers to political Islam or Islamism that “hijacks” the genuine/moderate Islam, which is the religion of good Muslims.⁹ Arun Kundani (2008) calls this new approach to Islam as “aggressive new liberalism” that calls for defending liberal values against Islamism,¹⁰ which, for liberals, is the greatest evil. For the new liberals, it is not only a question of security, but an easygoing approach against Islamic fundamentalism ends up with a restricting attitude towards freedom of speech. For them, trying not to provoke Muslims should not deprive the liberals and seculars of criticizing religion (Ash, 2006). At this point, a very clear tension between new liberals and multiculturalists comes to surface. The subject of the tension is what constitutes “the greatest challenge of democracy today.” For multiculturalists, the greatest challenge facing democracies today” is “finding morally defensible and politically viable answers” to the recognition claims of minorities (Kymlicka, 1995: 1). For new liberals like Paul Berman in the U.S., Timothy Garton Ash in Britain, or Paul Cliteur in the Netherlands, giving “politically correct” responses to difference claims is “one of the greatest challenges to freedom in our time” because it strengthen the hands of those who “want to squeeze the oxygen pipe of free expression” (Ash, 2006).

This new approach leads up rejecting multiculturalism as a naïve ideology and policy. Indeed, after the September 11 attacks, besides “bad Muslims,” there

⁹ Bassam Tibi (2008) is a prominent example among Muslims emphasizing the conflict within Islamic civilization between the extremists (in his words “jihadists”) and the moderates.

¹⁰ What this research understands from Islamism will be discussed below.

appeared another target that was subjected criticism: multiculturalism. In fact, after the Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004, and the London bombings on 7 July 2005, many analysts, observers, intellectuals and opinion formers not only concluded that multiculturalism had failed but also accused it of being responsible for the bombings and the murder.¹¹ For example, in the Netherlands, Paul Scheffer (2000) declared that multiculturalist policies had been failed to integrate Muslim immigrants, and even helped their segregation. Or just after the London bombings in July 7, 2005, the bombers are called by Gilles Kepel (2005) as the children of Britain's own multicultural society. London bombings were more shocking for the Western public in the sense that most of the perpetrators were born or raised in Britain. William Pfaff (2005) declared that "these British bombers are a consequence of a misguided and catastrophic pursuit of multiculturalism".

Even those who do not directly blame multiculturalism tend to believe that multiculturalism needs to be reconsidered, and may be replaced by "integration," which is very frequently used interchangeably with "assimilation" (Kundani, 2007). Indeed, integration is a vague concept. Its definition not only differs among social scientists, but each country also has a different understanding of what integration is depending on its citizenship concept and its historical development. Although integration was used in most countries to replace the notion of assimilation and to indicate a greater degree of tolerance and respect for ethno-cultural differences, I argue that its definition is case dependent. If there is a stress on socio-cultural integration, then integration is a politically correct way of saying assimilation, which is a process where the relationship between the minorities and the majority is seen as

¹¹ For a review of the debate, see Modood (2005).

a one-way process at the expense of the former. It involves the least change in the side of the long-established groups in the society while the newly-settled groups are expected not to disturb them, and furthermore, become like them in the ways of doing things. But when the stress is on socio-economic integration, then integration refers to a position that is something between pluralism and assimilation.¹²

The use of integration concept on Muslims has been widespread since the September 11 attacks. Furthermore, an invisible but very sensate *integration-meter* has been testing Muslims living in the West European countries. It is invisible because not only is there no institution or machine to test a person's integration, but also, as argued above, there are no standards and rules to decide what integration is. It is only a discourse that is articulated around via politicians, media, intellectuals, and people in the streets, work places, and schools. It is very sensate because any person who is in the suspect category, such as Muslims, can feel the consequences of its influences in his/her life directly or indirectly. For instance, that person may not be employed because the employer thinks that he/she is not integrated. Some people may harass him/her on public transportation merely with a gaze because they think he/she does not belong. Police officers may treat him/her badly because they consider him/her as a potential trouble-maker. A teacher may canalize him/her to lower-quality schools because of the prejudice that an immigrant pupil is likely to be an unsuccessful student. Or a person may even be denied entry into the country as a resident because he/she seems to be likely to fail integration in the future. Such examples about everyday life can be numerous.

¹² Throughout the text, I will use the term in this second meaning. Socio-economic integration refers the capacity of newcomer to participate socio-economic life. This requires knowing the language, having education or vocational skills. Socio-cultural integration, on the other hand, refers to full adaptation to the culture of host country. It requires a change in life style. For these concepts, see Hagendoorn et al. (2003).

A very recent example of such value judgments about a person's integration came from France. The Council of State, France's highest administrative court, upheld a decision to deny citizenship to a veiled Muslim woman of Moroccan descent in June 2008. According to the ruling of the Court, "She has adopted a radical practice of her religion, incompatible with essential values of the French community, particularly the principle of equality of the sexes" (Bennhold, 2008). This Moroccan woman, named Faiza Silmi, was an "import bride,"¹³ married a Moroccan man who already had French citizenship, had come to France in 2000, and had two children there. Nevertheless, when she applied for French citizenship in 2004, her request was denied because of "insufficient assimilation" into France (Bennhold, 2008). Referring to the right of religious freedom, she appealed the decision to a higher court. The government commissioner, who reported to the Council of State, said that Ms. Silmi "lives in total submission to her male relatives. She seems to find this normal, and the idea of challenging it has never crossed her mind." The Court followed the commissioner's opinion, and upheld the decision. In this case, there are two very ambiguous concepts that are "insufficient assimilation" and "radical practice of religion." The French authorities thought that the way she dressed (*niqab*, a facial veil) was a "radical practice of religion" and a sign of "insufficient assimilation."

While there has been a delicate balance between secularism and freedom of religion in French republican tradition, this ruling seems to carry a desire to intervene into a person's way of exercising religion in her private life. Ms. Silmi, on the other hand, says in an interview she gave to the New York Times that she wears *niqab* not because her husband told her to do so, but because it is her "choice" (Bennhold,

¹³ This is a term used in the Netherlands for woman who is born and raised in their countries of origin, but come to the host country by marrying a man already living in that country. Immigrants and their children are likely to get married with people from their countries of origin.

2008). She continues, “I take care of my children, and I leave the house when I please. I have my own car. I do the shopping on my own. Yes, I am a practicing Muslim, I am orthodox. But is that not my right?” Her final words pose a crucial question: Is being an orthodox Muslim not a personal right? The Court justified its decision by saying that Ms. Silmi was too radical to be a citizen of France. Then the answer to Ms. Silmi’s question depends on the answer to the question of what constitutes radical Islam. Answering such questions, however, has become a complicated one in Europe since September 11th, 2001 as the existence of Muslims in Europe is discussed in terms of a security issue.

As the “West versus the rest” approach, which was mostly fed by theses of Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel P. Huntington (1993), is not very functional for the new situation where the rest resides in the West, new approaches were needed to deal with the permanent¹⁴ and multitudinous¹⁵ Muslim existence in Europe. The most recent and popular approach among Western intellectuals and politicians is the “new liberalism,” which was first formulated by Paul Berman (2004) as a “mental war” against Islamism, and re-conceptualized by Gordon Brown as a “*new cold war* against Muslim extremism” fought from the “soft power” of cultural influence (Jones, 2007). New liberals differentiate between Islam as a faith (Roy, 2007b) of average Muslims living in Europe and Islamism as a dangerous and violent ideology. They stress the “clash within civilizations,” in other words the difference between extremist and moderates within Muslims, and invest on the latter (Kundani, 2008: 42). The new shining stars of this cold war are repentant Islamists or ex-Muslims

¹⁴ Most Muslims came to Europe as guest workers, who were thought as cheap labor to work in lowest level blue collar jobs and then go back to their countries of origin. Nevertheless, they generally stayed, and brought their families, too.

¹⁵ The majority of the non-Western population in Europe consists of Muslims. Over 15 million Muslims live in Western Europe today that is approximately five percent of the population, and it is expected that a quarter of European population will be Muslim by 2050 (Telegraph, 8 August 2009). In major cities like Amsterdam, the population of Muslims sometimes reaches up to 30 percent.

such as Ed Husain in Britain or Ayaan Hirsi Ali in the Netherlands who confirm the fears of liberal intellectuals and politicians. Also, different than old-school conservatives, who emphasize Judeo-Christianity as the basis of Western identity, the new liberals emphasize the Enlightenment and its legacy of secular liberalism. This explains why ex-supporters of multiculturalism (e.g. liberals and the left) have reservations about applying the same terms to Muslim minorities in Europe that is the battlefield of the new cold war between *illiberal* Islamists and *liberal* norms and values of Europe; and multiculturalism, for new liberals, is strengthening the enemy.

Nevertheless, there are some serious paradoxes in this approach. First of all, defending liberal norms, values, and life styles results in not only a retreat from multiculturalism but also with suspending or even sometimes losing personal freedoms and liberties. Secondly, the difference between Islamist and Muslim, or Islamist and terrorist is most of the time so blurry that any Muslim is susceptible until proving himself/herself to be a good Muslim. Defining a political ideology as dangerous may be likely to cause a collective punishment of the members of a group.

There are two easy explanations for all these confusions and paradoxes about Muslim existence in Europe. The first explanation argues that, by securitizing the existence of already residing Muslims and the arrival of new ones, the responses to the September 11 attacks radically changed the ways Muslims are perceived. Indeed, many social scientists have worked on the racial constructions being applied to Muslims as a uniquely fundamentalist, threatening, violent, uncivilized, intolerant, irrational “other” (Muscati, 2003). The second explanation, on the other hand, focuses on the historical hostility between Muslims and Christians as the West is constituted by Christianity, the Muslim world suffered much from colonialism and still carries anger and vengeful feelings towards the Christian West (Lewis, 1990).

These are appealing explanations, yet they are only partially true. Furthermore, they obstruct the asking of theoretical questions and construction of scientific studies. Such generalizing explanations do not answer the questions posed by the above very short analysis.

To begin with, although it is assumed that liberal democracy celebrates and lives with ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, or at least is tolerant of differences, the relationship between liberal democracy and cultural diversity is much more problematic than the theory suggests. The questions are whether the so-called universal values of liberalism (i.e. liberty, equality, rights, neutrality, autonomy) are really culture-free, to what extent the public-private distinction is functional to answer the challenges of new cultural and religious diversity, and whether the principles of liberal settlement with Christian denominations are adequate to reach a settlement with the new Muslim population, or whether there is a need for new principles and institutions to accommodate Muslims.

Secondly, such broad generalizations do not help articulate the reasons of a so-called failure of integrating Muslims into the European societies. Whose failure is that? Is it the failure of multiculturalism or integration/immigration policies? Or more deeply, is it the failure of liberal democracy? Perhaps, there is also a failure in constructing a European identity that consists of liberal democratic values, that is shared by all the European societies, and that is showed to immigrants as a goal to reach in their integration task. Otherwise, is it the failure of Muslims to form a liberal European Islam? And is it at all legitimate to talk about a Muslims in Europe as a monolithic bloc?¹⁶ What if one form of European Islam goes against the expectations

¹⁶ Indeed, there is a great deal of diversity in the affiliations to Islam. As Buijs and Rath (2008: 6) argue, there are “negative” affiliations such as a refusal to proclaim the faith, silent agnosticism, or indifference and “positive” affiliations that vary from not involving in organized forms to being

of how European Islam would look like? For example, what if some Muslims in Europe become assertive to defend Muslim identity or prioritize their Muslim identity over other identities while internalizing liberal rights and freedoms, speaking European languages, and being familiar with European ways of presenting themselves? Is Europe ready to welcome this *new Islamism* that does not have a project to constitute an Islamic state, but does challenge nationhood by prioritizing Islamic identity over the national identities of both the host country and the country of origin? As Alev Çınar (2005: 9) argues, Islamism can be defined as an ideology that “uses selective postulates from Islam” to constitute a political project or an alternative national identity. For new liberals, this political project is a *thick* venture that aims at destroying European nation states and democratic values. However, Çınar’s definition does not necessarily suggest Islamism as a revolutionary ideology. It can be a *thin* political project as one of the answers of how to be a Muslim in Europe, or in other words, how to defend Muslim identity with peaceful means in a liberal democracy without targeting to overthrow it. Liberal democracies and multiculturalist theoreticians must deal with these various forms of Islamism that can be a part of identity politics in Europe.

Moving from the above discussion, the departure points of this dissertation are as follows:

- I- The shocking violent incidents initiated by Muslims (e.g. September 11th, 2001 attacks in New York, July 7th, 2005 bombings in London, or the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on November 2nd, 2004) are not the prime constitutive factors of the negative Muslim image in the minds of European people. Rather they only exacerbated the negative

involved in militant organizations. These also change depending on the citizenship models and integration policies of the host society.

evaluations about Muslims and put such critics of Muslims at the center of European political discourse.

- II- Liberal democracy's discontent with religion is the prime reason for the negative Muslim image in Europe. As the Muslim identity is thought of as a public religious identity, and all Muslims are thought of as religious people, the liberal settlement of restricting religion in the private sphere is seemingly being challenged by Muslims who have increasingly become more visible in the public spheres of Europe.
- III- Questioning multiculturalist policies goes hand in hand with the Muslim presence in Europe. In other words, the presence of Muslims in Europe is tempting many Europeans to question multiculturalism and perhaps even the core principles of liberal democracy. As such, debates elicited by increasing Muslim presence in Europe are uncovering a great deal about the limits of religious and cultural tolerance in liberal democracies.
- IV- The debates aim at or end up with constructing and investing several Muslim subjectivities as alternatives to unwelcome versions of being Muslim in Europe.

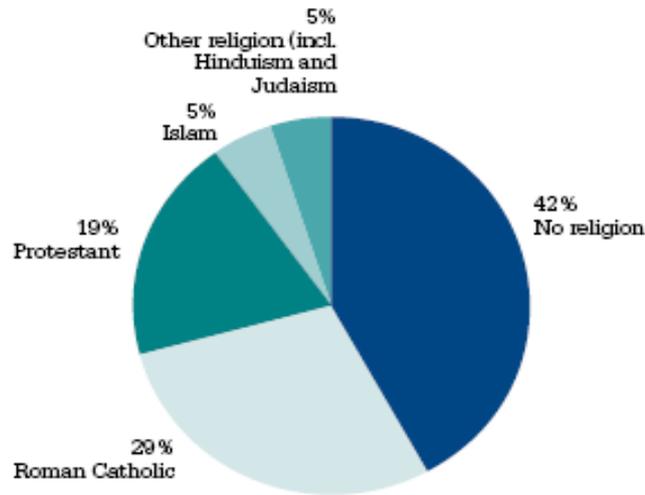
To support these claims, I will analyze the political and intellectual elite's discourse about Muslims in the Netherlands and their integration into Dutch society because there has been very lively public debate about Muslims in that country before and after the murder of Theo van Gogh by a Muslim in November 2004.

1.2. The Dutch Case

The Netherlands is a good case to support the above claims. First of all, the Netherlands has a considerable Muslim population (see Figure 1.1), consists of labor

migrants and refugees, and the debate about their integration has been ongoing since the 1980s. This integration debate started acquiring a cultural and religious tone, and the debate about the incompatibility of Islam with liberal values became a central topic in politics in the early 1990s, much before the September 11 attacks. The Netherlands also had two very dramatic events that catalyzed the cultural and religious tone in the integration debate, brought about proliferation of sweeping statements about Islam, and securitized the issue of Muslim minorities. The events are the murder of Pim Fortuyn, a right-wing, anti-immigrant populist politician by a white Dutch animal rights activist and the murder of Theo van Gogh by a second generation Moroccan-Dutch. Since then, the Netherlands witnessed a significant rise in the anti-immigrant and anti-Islam discourse, which damaged its image as a liberal and tolerant society. Although the Netherlands is still a liberal frontrunner when it comes to issues like homosexuality, soft-drugs, prostitution and euthanasia, it is also considered as one of the sharpest u-turns from hospitable and tolerant policies towards immigrants. With this u-turn, not only the entrance of new immigrants and refugees from non-Western countries is complicated, but also the focus turned towards the integration of the second and third generation immigrants, especially the Muslims. Not surprisingly, some positive and negative examples of integration have come into prominence, and some good and bad Muslim subjectivities have been formed. In short, the Netherlands has all the conditions to see whether the arguments of this dissertation can be supported. It has an established and institutionalized liberal tradition of religious and cultural toleration; it has a considerable Muslim population; it has an experience of employing multiculturalist policies; it has its own shocking violent incident initiated by a Muslim; and it has some prominent Muslim figures who acquired prominence as good or bad examples of Muslim integration.

Figure 1.1 - Religion in the Netherlands
(Source: CBS, the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics, *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*)¹⁷

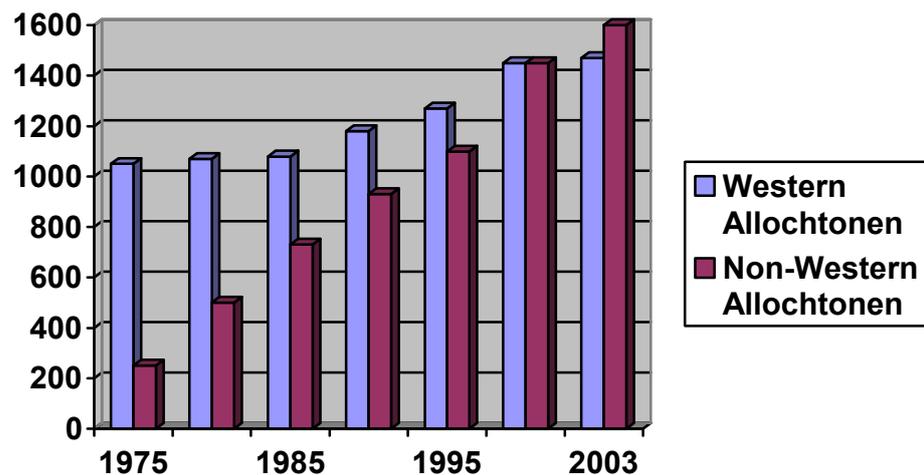


It is important to note that although the Netherlands has been striving with accommodating its post-war immigrants for almost four decades, there is no settlement yet, and the process of dealing with Muslim minorities is still going on. The reasons lie in the numbers and the quality of immigrants. The number of immigrants has been steadily increased since the 1950s first with those coming from former Dutch colonies and later with the guest workers from Mediterranean countries (see Figure 1.2). The adaptation of the immigrants coming from the Dutch Antilles and Surinam, former colonies of the Netherlands, was relatively easy because they knew the Dutch language and they were familiar with the Dutch customs. On the other hand, the earlier guest workers from South Europe stuck to the logic of being a “guest,” and most of them left after earning enough money. Nevertheless, the guest workers coming from Turkey and Morocco neither knew the language nor did they go back to their countries of origin even if staying was not their initial intention. The

¹⁷ The figure is taken from the October 2009 Fact Book of *Forum*.

number of guest workers from Morocco and Turkey increased rapidly in the 1980s because of family reunification and later with family formation of the second generation who preferred to get married with persons from their countries of origin. For the immigrants of Turkish and Moroccan descent, there are some commonalities among which their low socio-economic levels and religion are the most significant ones. While the former aspect causes a problematic process in the integration of these immigrant groups and their children, the second aspect triggers a rise in the perceptions of the non-integration of Muslims.

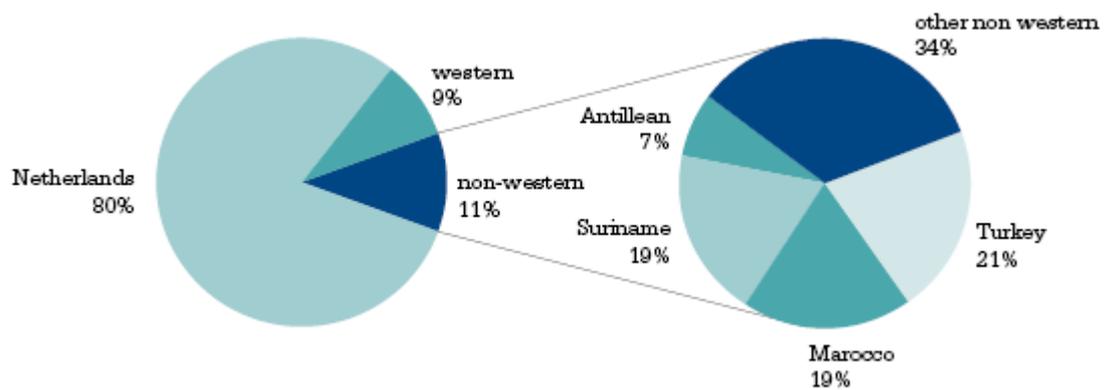
Figure 1.2 - Number of Western and Non-Western Allochtonen, 1975-2003 (x 1000, Souce: CBS)



In the end, the Netherlands has 3.2 million people who are classified as *allochtoon*, which literally means “not from here,” foreigner, or alien. In the official use (e.g. in the statistical category used by the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics, CBS), it refers to people who are originated from or have at least one parent born in a foreign country. According to this definition, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and her son, crown prince Willem IV, are also *allochtonen*. However, in popular speech nowadays, the term is generally used to refer to non-Western

immigrants and their descendants. Hardly ever, would a white Western immigrant be labeled as *allochtoon*. According to 2009 data of the CBS, out of 3.2 million *allochtonen*, there are 1.7 million people of non-Western origin, which accounts for 11 percent of the total population (see Figure 1.3).

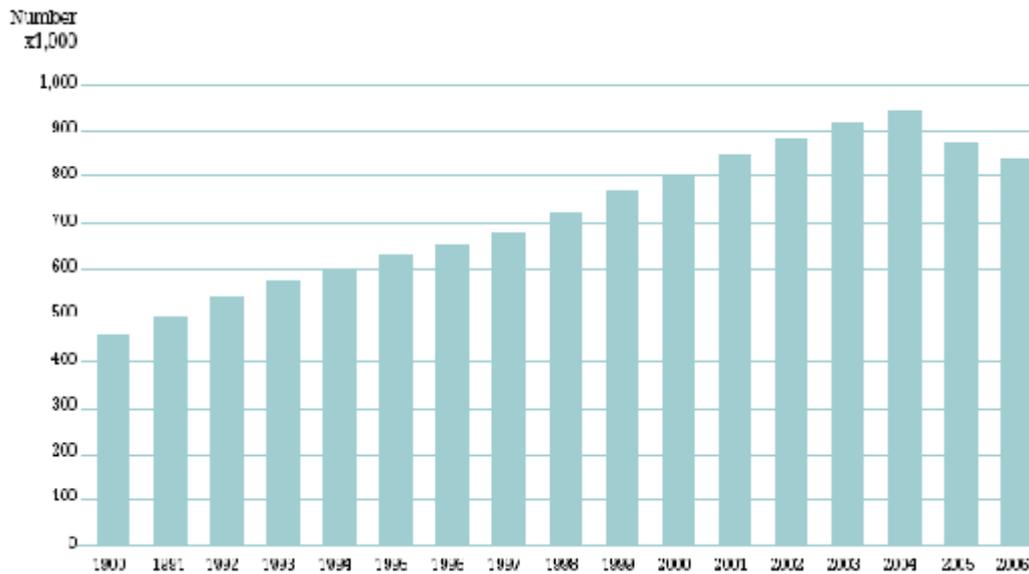
Figure 1.3 - Number of non-Western ethnic minorities in the Netherlands
(Source: CBS)¹⁸



If Turks, Moroccans and other ethnic groups who are predominantly Muslim are summed together, the largest religious group within the *allochtonen* is Muslims, whose population is about 877,000. Except for the last few years of tight immigration policies, the numbers of Muslims have steadily increased in the Netherlands (see Figure 1.4).

¹⁸ The figure is taken from the October 2009 Fact Book of Forum.

Figure 1.4 - Number of Muslims in the Netherlands since 1990 (Source: CBS)¹⁹



A particular kind of multiculturalism, which was mostly fed by the remnants of the Dutch pillarization system (*verzuiling*)²⁰, had been employed until the late 1980s in the Netherlands to open a space for the newcomers in the society. However, since the 1990s, integration of the immigrants has become one of the hottest issues in Dutch politics. As the integration of certain immigrant groups, especially that of Muslims, is considered a failure, the success of the Dutch way of multiculturalism has also been questioned. The most famous of such critics is Paul Scheffer’s “*Het Multiculturele Drama*” (the Multicultural Tragedy), which even became the topic of

¹⁹ The figure is taken from the October 2009 Fact Book of Forum.

²⁰ Pillarization (*Verzuiling*) is a kind of vertical pluralism, where the society was viewed as resting upon the four basic pillars: Roman Catholic, neo-Calvinistic (*Gereformeerd*), liberal protestant, and humanist or socialist. Every pillar had its own schools, shops, youth organizations, recreation facilities, churches (only the religious pillars), radio and TV broadcasting corporations, newspapers, literature, trade unions, employer organizations, political parties, universities, leisure organizations. Although pillarization has waned away since 1960s, there are still remnants of the system especially in school system, political parties, and media.

a parliamentary debate in early 2000.²¹ When the Dutch film maker Theo van Gogh was murdered by a Muslim, who happened to be a second generation Moroccan, the Dutch way of tolerance and multiculturalism was largely proven as a failure for most of the Dutch and European people. All these debates that revolved around multiculturalism, tolerance, liberalism, and Muslims will provide plenty of material to test the validity of this study's arguments.

1.3. Methodology and Research Map

The present research consists of four chapters: a theoretical chapter on multiculturalism, liberalism, religion, and Muslims in Europe; a case discussion chapter on how all these theoretical debates are relevant in the Netherlands; an empirical chapter that includes the content and discourse analysis of 43 in-depth interviews conducted in the Netherlands; and finally, a conclusion aimed at generalizations about the Dutch and wider European case.

The first chapter has three parts. The first part is a literature review on multiculturalism and its critique about the deficiencies of liberalism. Although multiculturalism is part of the liberal paradigm, it does have serious critics that call liberalism to give up its over-emphasis on consensus and unity, acknowledge and let go of its Eurocentricism, and modify its understanding of the public sphere. Tariq Modood aptly describes the relationship between multiculturalism and liberalism in the following words: "Multiculturalism is a child of liberal egalitarianism but, like any child, it is not simply faithful reproduction of its parents" (Modood, 2007: 8). Multiculturalists argue that the new diversity experienced in European and other

²¹ When Scheffer's article triggered a hot public debate about the failure of Dutch multicultural policies, a parliamentary debate was held in the Dutch Lower House, *Tweede Kamer*. This unprecedented discussion without a legislative agenda took two days, and spokespersons from all parties engaged in "collective soul-searching" about integration policies (Lechner, 2002: 3).

Western societies needs liberalism to re-evaluate itself and adapt to the new situation. Otherwise, a crisis may be very close. Or a crisis is already here, and adaptation of liberalism into new diversity will be the only solution. Although multiculturalism was first employed as a policy to grant rights to “the losers of nation building” (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 12), namely the indigenous minorities and blacks, this dissertation focuses on the *post-War immigrant minorities*, who are the most recent newcomers. There are two reasons for this preference. First of all, this dissertation deals with multiculturalism debates in Europe, where multiculturalism would be irrelevant if post-War immigrant minorities are not put at the center of attention. Post-War immigrants (mostly guest workers and asylum seekers) from non-Western countries brought an unprecedented ethno-religious diversity as a very new phenomenon for those relatively homogeneous societies of Western Europe. Secondly, the debates about the crisis of advanced liberal democracies and the failure of multiculturalism are centered on accommodating the post-War immigrant minorities that consist of the most recent, most alien, most strange, most black, most disadvantaged, and mostly Muslim communities.

The second part of the first chapter deals with the position of religion in liberal democracies in general and the debates about Muslims in European liberal democracies in particular. This research puts a special emphasis on religion because of the fact that one important characteristic of post-War immigrants is their difference from the majority in terms of their religion. Orthodox multiculturalists such as Will Kymlicka do not usually include religious minorities into their framework because of the belief that liberal principles of equality of treatment and religious freedom are enough to ensure not being discriminated against based on religious belief and practice. Nevertheless, it appears to be troubling to preserve a

religion or culture that is alien to the receiving society which holds long-established public culture and structurally privileged religions. Therefore, multiculturalism in Europe has to deal with a two-phase-problem with religion: first, religion itself is considered suspicious, and second, non-Christian religions exacerbate that suspicion. There is no doubt that Islam is the most suspicious among the non-Christian religions in Europe since Rushdie Affair, and especially since the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, the Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004, and the London bombings on 7 July 2005. Because of these reasons, the debates about Muslims in Europe can be the best domain in which to see the limits of liberal tolerance on differences. As the limits are constrained with the existence of the “home-grown terrorists” who committed the above attacks and with the increasingly assertive claims of Muslims in Europe, a parallel debate about the end of multiculturalism has been going on. In the third and final part of the first chapter, an overall evaluation of this debate about the end of multiculturalism will critically be introduced.

The second chapter searches for the reflections and indications of the first chapter’s theoretical discussion in the Netherlands. Since the Netherlands has a reputation for being a cosmopolitan and liberal country, first, I will give some background information about Dutch cosmopolitanism and pillarization, which has made up the culture and institutionalized system of the Dutch liberal democracy, respectively. Later, how this liberal democracy accommodated its newcomers in the post-war era and what kinds of policies were employed for the immigrant minorities will be elaborated upon. Finally, the debates about Muslims, the largest group among post-War immigrant minorities, will be analyzed. There will be a special emphasis on the discourse in the 1990s, the Pim Fortuyn case, the environment after the

murder of Theo van Gogh, and the most recent anti-Islam discourse that has become concrete with Geert Wilders in the political arena. After that, what kind of Muslim subjectivities are promoted in the Netherlands will be explored. This chapter will be an analysis of secondary sources, news articles, and reports in English. Some Dutch newspaper pieces will also be examined with the help of Dutch speaking colleagues.

The third chapter is a content and discourse analysis of 43 in-depth interviews conducted in the Netherlands. The interviewees were selected from three basic areas: policy making, advising to the policy makers, and involvement in the debates about policy making in integration (See Appendix A for the list of interviewees). Policy makers were members of the Dutch Lower House (*Tweede Kamer*) and city councilors from three major cities (The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam). Advisors to the policy makers were the researchers of relevant ministries and academics, who are actively involved in the public debate about Islam and integration or wrote influential reports and papers about the integration of immigrants. The third group consisted of some significant individuals and representatives of relevant institutions and organizations (e.g. successful persons from immigrant background, representatives of multicultural organizations). The interviews were semi-structured. In other words, they were structured by an interview guide with a number of issues to be covered in the interview. But they were also open so as to allow the interviewee to discuss what he or she considered important as long as it fit with the issues from the interview guide. The major themes of the interview guide were prepared after making a substantial literature review on the Dutch and European experience about immigration, integration, multicultural society, multiculturalism, liberal democracies, and religion in the public sphere. There were four major subjects to explore. The first group of questions aimed at

learning how the interviewee defined Dutchness and integration, and which particular groups he/she thought of as having problems to integrate. The second group of questions was about Muslims in general. The third group of questions aimed at understanding where religion is placed in the Dutch public sphere, and whether Muslims are put into a different position than the conservative Christians as a religious group in this regard. And the last cluster of questions focused on some specific topics that are related to the Muslims in the public sphere such as headscarf, Islamic schools, handshaking, and gender and sexual issues (See Appendix B for a detailed list of interview questions).

Finally, in the fourth chapter, I draw conclusions involving whether the mood of the debate about Muslims in the Netherlands has changed since the September 11 attacks in New York and the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004, whether the general thoughts about the position of religion in the public sphere and thoughts about Islam differs, whether questioning multiculturalism and liberal rights goes hand in hand with increasing Muslim existence in the Dutch society, and whether any Muslim subjectivities were constructed and invested in the debate. This will not only involve understanding the direction of Dutch integration policies, but also it will be an attempt to make generalizations for wider Europe. As this research focuses on the discourse about Muslims in Europe, it identifies various emerging Muslim subjectivities as well. Furthermore, this research aims at contributing to the theoretical debates about liberal democracy, multiculturalism and limits of tolerance. Therefore, this chapter ends with an attempt to offer some suggestions for a multiculturalist policy that attempts to respond to the question of new multicultural diversity in Europe.

CHAPTER 2

MULTICULTURALISM, POST-IMMIGRATION MINORITIES, AND MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

2.1. Introduction

If the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century is an age of nation states searching for homogeneous national identities, from the 1960s onwards would be the age of difference claims. Various groups ranging from women and homosexuals to national minorities, who claimed to have different identities and lifestyles from the majority, have been searching for recognition and rights at the group level. Claiming that they are subjected to discrimination and disadvantage because of their difference, groups such as blacks, ethnic communities, diasporic communities, women, gays, and immigrants have asked for group level rights that range from positive discrimination to self-government. As Spencer (1994: 559) argues, “unifying meta-discourses such as Western civilization,” and the proponents and executors of those discourses such as “white males” are thought to be oppressing powers to be fight against.

By then, many presumptions of liberal nation states have been questioned: whether being a citizen guarantees to be equal with all other citizens, whether the principle of individual equality overcomes group level discrimination, whether there is a genuine way of being part of a nation (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994). The concept of citizenship was at the center of these questions. It was argued that citizenship is not just a difference-free legal status and a set of rights and responsibilities, but it is about a certain kind of politics, about identity, in other words, it is about identifying oneself with a political community. Although it was first Marshall (1965) who saw that previously excluded groups, namely the working classes, should be integrated into the concept of citizenship, his emphasis on socio-economic status overlooks many other groups who feel excluded because of their socio-cultural identity such as blacks, women, ethnic and religious minorities, and gays (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 370). It was widely argued that citizenship has not been culture-free as it is assumed, but rather it presupposes a cultural homogeneity (Solomos, 2001). For example, it is based on a male breadwinner model of nuclear family (Modood, 125-126). Many cultural pluralists such as Iris Marion Young (1989) argue that common rights of citizenship, which is defined by and for white men, cannot accommodate the special needs of minority groups. Therefore, Young suggests that integrating such groups requires a conception of right that is not based on individual but takes into account specific requirements of different groups, in her terms “differentiated citizenship” (Young, 1989). She argues that differentiated rights are necessary to deal with “oppression” which may take the form of exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and “random violence and harassment motivated by group hatred or fear” (Young, 1989: 261).

In the beginning, especially the blacks and women seek the same kind of public recognition of collectivity with other groups in the name of equality of human race. Later, however, the difference itself acquired the political value, and difference related needs were brought at the center of political discourse; and furthermore, considering nationalism and racism as the roots of all the evil, claims of group difference became central to the progressive politics (Song, 2007). Within this environment, which is named as “the global liberal zeitgeist” by Spencer (1994: 554), the governments of West European and North American (“Western” from now on) countries could not help but give a political response to the fact of “multi”, and even some of them took an active role in the reproduction of alternative cultures and life styles (Kymlicka, 1997: 72). This latter policy is named as multiculturalism.²²

Ontologically multiculturalism prioritizes the group over the individual. However, not any group is taken into multiculturalist framework, but only “social groups” whose boundaries drawn by “cultural forms, practices, or way of life.” Being a part of a social group is not the result of choice but of some existential “thrownness” (Young, 1990: 42-48). Although every society – either modern, pre-modern or post-modern – consists of such social groups, each society is constituted by a particular way of life, or “culture.” In other words, usually one dominant group manages the “universalization” of its culture, and so dictating its way of life as the “norm” (Young, 1990: 59). According to Young, the task of multiculturalism is to unmask

²² Culture traditionally has two meanings: one is manifested in the singular and other is plural. The former is distinct from other social spheres and practices within collectivity. It claims context-transcending universal truths crystallized in the Anglo-French “civilization” that is the highest stage in human development to which other parts of the world are expected to aspire. The plural understanding of culture, on the other hand, is an outcome of specific activity, the experience on which society rises and collectivity is established. German romantics and historicists like Herder talked of particularity of national *Kultur* as against cosmopolitanist French culture (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 3). This latter notion of culture was adopted by modern anthropology. Clifford Geertz (1973: 49) argued against universalism as saying that human beings are “incomplete or unfinished animals who complete or finish” themselves “through culture – and not through culture in general but through highly particular forms of it: Dobuan and Javanese..., academic and commercial.” Multiculturalism inherited anthropology’s relativist, anti-elitist, and comprehensive notion of cultures in the plural.

this false universalism of the dominant group, and to give voice to other groups that have been “culturally oppressed.”

Besides these intellectual critiques of multiculturalists thinkers, multiculturalism as a word or a policy first appeared in Canada and Australia in the early 1970s, and the term was later used in the policy documents in the U.S. and U.K.²³ Post-colonial societies like Canada, perhaps because of not building their citizenship concepts on an ethnic community²⁴, were able to employ multiculturalist policies in order to deal with the claims of its old and new minorities. This, for them, appeared as the best way of coexisting under the roof of a neutral state. The most famous multiculturalist policy paper is the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988), which declares that the Canadian government recognizes and promotes the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage. It promotes the full and equal participation of individuals and communities of all origins by believing that they would contribute the continuously evolving Canadian society. Canadian government was also eager to eliminate any barrier to such participation. It was followed by the Employment Equality Act (1995), and of course supported by Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom and the Canadian Human Rights Act.²⁵ Multiculturalist approach rejected cultural assimilation as a policy goal and intended to promote tolerance of and respect for cultural difference. Within this policy, the difference is not only referred as something to be respected, but it is also combined with egalitarian goals as granting minorities equal access to societal

²³ In Canada, Trudeau used the word “multiculturalism” in 1971 for the first time to designate the state policy towards immigrant groups and other minorities.

²⁴ Ethnic community, or *ethnie* in Anthony D. Smith’s words, is a community that existed prior to and during the present nation states (Smith, 1986).

²⁵ Studies show that this most ambitious experience of multiculturalism was relatively successful. For example, in a study on the second generation immigrants from non-European origin found that the situation of the group in question is the best amongst the thirteen Western countries studied (Heath and Cheung, 2007).

institutions and an equal share in its products and services (Vermeulen and Pennix, 2000: 1).

Nevertheless, it is not only post-colonial societies that employed multiculturalism. Former colonial powers of Western Europe such as Great Britain or the Netherlands also attracted to the idea of multiculturalism when they had to deal with their increasingly multi-ethnic societies of post-War period. The report of the Commission for Multi-Ethnic Britain (CMEB), *the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*²⁶ (2000), similar to Canadian Multiculturalism Act, took a multiculturalist stand and talked of the idea of “community of communities and individuals” (para. 4.19). It pointed out different kind of racisms and argued that to deal with them there was a need to go beyond the concept of a liberal citizenship. It concluded there was also a need for a sense of belonging to the polity where all the citizens share it. To reach such a goal, the report argued that the meaning of Britishness should be more inclusive and dynamic. In the Netherlands, Minorities Memorandum (*Minderhedennota*) of 1983 described the immigrants as “cultural” or “ethnic” minorities, acknowledged the fact that the Netherlands was a “multiethnic” and “multicultural” society, and rejected assimilationism (Scholten, 2008: 80).

Countries like Britain and the Netherlands were trying to adapt to a new situation. While, in traditional understanding, only “the losers of nation building” (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 12), namely blacks and indigenous minorities, are considered as minority, new identity categories showed up in the second half of the twentieth century in the Western world such as women, gays, immigrants, or Muslims. Traditional minority categories and race relations were not answering the demands made by these new groups. Nor was the classical left-right discourse

²⁶ The report is also known as the Parekh Report, named after its chair, Lord Professor Bhikhu Parekh.

adequately representing these marginalized people. Yet, there were a few crucial questions: Which groups will be entitled to claim minority rights? What kind of rights will be entitled? Would these rights be organized as exemptions, as temporary measures, or as permanent rights? These are the major issues to be discussed in the literature about multiculturalism. Kymlicka and Norman (1994: 372-377) suggest that dividing group rights into three categories is an answer to the above concerns. For disadvantaged groups like the poor, blacks, women, gays, Kymlicka and Norman argues, “special representation rights” as temporary measures are to be applied. For immigrants and religious groups, “multicultural rights” are needed to integrate them to wider society. But again these rights too are temporary. National minorities that are “‘cultures’, ‘peoples’, or ‘nations’ in the sense of being historical communities, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given homeland or territory, sharing a distinct language and history”, on the other hand, enjoy claiming and having permanent and inherent “self-government rights” (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 372).²⁷ They argue that these group rights do not undermine the integrative function of citizenship. On the contrary, they are for inclusion, not separation because what is in question here is the groups that want to be included in the larger society even if they feel excluded (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 373). There are some reserves, however, to the multicultural rights that would take the form of withdrawal from the larger society. Kymlicka and Norman (1994: 374) claim that this is more likely to be the case for religious minorities than ethnic ones.

Only one year after his article with Norman, Will Kymlicka modified the types of cultural groups and rights in his well-known *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995), where he categorizes the cultural groups as national and ethnic, and the

²⁷ According to Kymlicka there are two kinds of limits of these claims: external protection and internal restriction.

corresponding rights they can claim as self-government, polyethnic, and special representation rights. This categorization of Kymlicka has received much critique. First of all, the term “polyethnic rights” was criticized on the grounds that it only includes ethnic groups to have such rights, and excludes religious groups. Not only that but also members of national minorities sometimes possess polyethnic rights rather than claiming self-government rights²⁸ (Carens, 1997). Since Kymlicka’s *Multicultural Citizenship*, there have also been several attempts to make better and more inclusive categorization. For example, Carens (1997: 37) proposes to use “recognition rights” instead of polyethnic rights to avoid the awkwardness mentioned above. Joppke and Lukes (1999), on the other hand, suggests that there are three forms of multicultural group rights: exemption, special benefits, and the right of self-government.²⁹

In spite of different naming, everyone seems to agree on the necessity of the self-government rights of the national minorities. Another agreement is on the enduring nature of self-government rights and polyethnic (or recognition/exemption) rights. These rights are not seen as temporary measures because it is highly possible that the cultural commitments they respect and protect are enduring ones. They differ

²⁸ Carens (1997) gives the example of francophone in Canada outside Quebec. They have a variety of linguistic rights that cannot be categorized as self-government rights and that seem very similar to the sort of rights that Kymlicka discussed under the heading of polyethnic rights.

²⁹ Joppke and Lukes (1999) suggest that there are three forms of multicultural group rights: (1) *exemption* from certain legal standards and duties. Such exemptions are common practice in liberal states, often on the basis of religious freedom, which is a constitutionally guaranteed right in most liberal states. For example, allowing Hindus to scatter the ashes of their dead in rivers, allowing Jewish and Muslim method of not stunning animals before slaughtering them, tolerating Asian practice of arranged marriages, allowing Sikhs not wearing helmets on motorbikes. If they do not touch upon the core values of majority society such exemptions are trivial and routinely granted because no majority society interests are involved. (2) *Special benefits* granted to individuals qua group membership. While more precarious than exemptions because costing scarce majority society resources, special benefits are uncontroversial if no majority society interest is directly touched. Privileged treatments, as it is called affirmative action in the U.S., which entail reverse discrimination, are controversial. Except positive discrimination for women, no country but the U.S. has instituted an elaborate programme of privileged treatment for minority groups. Affirmative action is justified by two rationales: past discrimination and diversity. If past discrimination is removed, affirmative action is less morally compelling. (3) The right of self-government.

from other forms of group specific rights that are intended to overcome historical disadvantages (e.g. affirmative action), which would no longer be necessary once the disadvantages are eliminated (Carens, 1997: 38). On the other hand, historical disadvantages are in many cases presented as the condition for having multicultural rights. Yet, this justification for cultural pluralism is criticized on two grounds. First, the victim discourse may encourage the groups to turn inwards and lose their identification with larger society (Cairns, 1993; Glazer, 1983). Second, if only oppressed groups are entitled to “differentiated citizenship,” the representatives of minority groups may spend most of their political energy to establish a perception of disadvantage rather than working to overcome it (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 372).

2.2. Multiculturalist Critique of Liberalism

The above-mentioned practical objections, however, only minor comparing to the tensions between liberalism and multiculturalism. While it is true that multiculturalism presupposes the institutions and political norms of liberal democracy as it is one of the answers to the question of how different cultures/life-styles/practices/values can coexist in liberal democracies, multiculturalism does also challenge some of the liberal norms. In Modood’s words, “multiculturalism is a child of liberal egalitarianism but, like any child, it is not simply faithful reproduction of its parents” (Modood, 2007: 8). To begin with, all multiculturalists, from more radicals like Irish Marion Young to more liberals like Will Kymlicka, champion the concept of “differentiated citizenship,” which suggests that citizenship rights should not be based on individual, but take into account specific requirements of different groups (Young, 1989). This is clearly an approach against the concept of universal, undifferentiated citizenship that many theorists have assumed was an essential

element of the liberal democratic ideal. Since liberalism had grown alongside nationalism and a national identity, a feeling of unity and consensus was believed to be good for well-functioning of democracy, differentiated citizenship and recognition demands from ethnic and cultural groups were not welcomed very much even if they were demanded in the name of liberty and freedom (Kymlicka, 1995: 50). On the other hand, multi-nation states such as Canada or Belgium, states with indigenous peoples such as the U.S.A. or Australia, and states with ethnic minorities and newly-settled immigrants such as the most of West European countries were having problems with their minorities as they insisted to deal with them within the boundaries of liberal norms and institutions. All these groups, as having distinct histories, languages, cultures and religions, were making demands to be recognized by the state. They were asking for laws and policies that would enable them to survive as distinct groups.

Second tension between liberalism and multiculturalism is that the liberal notion of individual equality is inadequate for multiculturalists. Equality should be applied to groups, not just individuals (Parekh, 2000; Taylor, 1992; Young, 1990). Charles Taylor (1992) talks of two kind of equality: *equal dignity* and *equal respect*. The former is about the commonalities of all the human beings. It is color-blind, culture-blind, gender-blind, and so on. The notion of equal respect, on the other hand, is based on differences by arguing that group identities of individuals can be subject to established inequalities and discrimination. These two notions of equality have a mutual relationship that without equal respect, equal dignity is threatened as well. A similar distinction is made by Iris Marion Young (1990). She talks of two kind of equality. First kind of equality comes from the impartial and consistent application of a single set of rules or norms. Second, on the other hand, comes from a

set of rules or norms that do not advantage or disadvantage the different groups. The former is not enough because it cannot answer the question of whose rules they are and who made the rules. Modern nation-state has the goal of creating a common culture to foster its unity. Multiculturalists are troubled with this idea because such common culture would inevitably reflect the bias of the long-established culture (Parekh, 2000: 221). For some, public recognition of group identities is necessary because any public space, policy or society is structured around certain kinds of understandings and practices which prioritize some cultural values and behaviors over others (Young, 1990). In other words, no public space is culturally neutral. To deal with the same problem, Taylor (1994) brings the notion of “politics of recognition” that consists of giving group identities a public status. Parekh (2000) also suggests that the concept of equality should be applied to groups and not just individuals.

Indeed, the very first issue raised by the theorists of multiculturalism is how to protect minority rights vis-a-vis the majority. As Kymlicka (1995: 1) argues, “minorities and majorities increasingly clash over such issues as language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims, immigration and naturalization policy, even national symbols, such as the choice of national anthem or public holidays. Finding morally defensible and politically viable answers to these issues is the greatest challenge facing democracies today.” This challenge apparently became more serious with the arrival of immigrants from non-Western countries in the second half of the twentieth century because their claims not only challenged the conception of a unified, undifferentiated citizenship, but they were also perceived as non-liberals challenging the liberal norms and values (Kelly, 2002). While some takes this challenge as a positive development that could be an

antidote against the prevalent “white” cultural hegemony (e.g. Young, 1998), some others consider it as a serious assault on the shared communal values and solidarity necessary for social cohesion and integration (e.g. Schlesinger, 1992). The latter can be perceived a non-liberal approach to cultural diversity. However, a liberal may also find herself/himself defending common values at the expense of different cultures. At this point, while Paul Kelly (2001) argues that the privileging of liberal freedoms over cultural traditions cannot simply be justified on the grounds of “this is how we liberals do things around here,” Andrea Baumeister (2000) warns that some degree of conflict in a plural society is inevitable, and that liberals should think about the ways of building institutions that can accommodate non-liberals.

Some multiculturalists also argue that religious neutrality of secular public sphere in liberal democracies may be a myth (Modood, 2007). Indeed, Bhikhu Parekh (1994), with his conception of “religionization of culture,” emphasizes the influence of majority’s religion in the making of the public sphere. Concerning religion, liberalism is vulnerable to the following objections. According to Veit Bader (1999: 599-603), liberal political philosophy excels in the construction of ideal models of well-ordered states, societies and reasonable citizens. Yet, in the real world, there are structural inequalities among organized religions. The principles that might be appropriate in an ideal world can sustain discrimination and inequality in the real world. Second, too much consensus is assumed in liberal theories while moral, social and political pluralism is underestimated (Gutmann and Thompson, 1990; Thieman, 1996). The third objection is concerned about the conceptual dichotomies such as private versus public (from Locke onwards) or social versus political (Rawls, 1993) that are used by most liberal philosopher. An important consequence of such dichotomies is to preclude religious arguments from the public

realm or to allow them only in social but not in political discourse (Rawls, 1993: 14). A multicultural equality, however, may not be possible today without a discussion of the merits and limits of secularism. As argued by Tariq Modood (2005), pursuing secularism as an ideology to oppose different cultures based on some religions such as Islam and their public recognition is a challenge to both pluralism and equality, and thus to some bases of contemporary democracy.

Another major criticism to liberalism is on the “internal” and “external” group rights. Internal rights are the rights of a group against its own members, used to force individuals within the group to obey traditional customs or authority. External rights, on the other hand, are the rights of the group against the larger society, used to provide support for the group against economic or political pressure from outside for cultural assimilation. In Western democracies, group-differentiated rights are almost always external rights, since internal rights are clearly inconsistent with liberal democratic norms (Kukathas, 1992). Unlike Charles Taylor, Kymlicka wants to prohibit such “internal restrictions” within his liberal theory of minority rights, but concedes that “liberals have no automatic right to impose their views on non-liberal national minorities” (Kymlicka, 1995: 171). According to most multiculturalists, community’s right to self-preservation is a value as important as individual choice (Parekh, 1997: 60). While a cultural community should encourage individual autonomy, it should also be able to maintain a structure of constraints and to enjoy such powers as it needs to do so. Individuals also may voluntarily accept such constraints because sometimes the costs of being out of group are much more than the costs of sacrificing some degree of individual liberty. In this regard, Parekh (1997: 61) also argues not to privilege political communities over religious ones in

terms of internal restrictions because most of the time the former is no less restrictive than the latter.

2.3. Multiculturalism and Post-Immigration Minorities

Since multiculturalism most of the time concerns national or indigenous minorities, whether including the demands of post-immigration minorities into the multiculturalist framework is a subject for discussion. By post-immigration minorities, I mean the post-War immigrants (guest workers, refugees and asylum seekers) who came to and settled in the prosperous West European and North American countries mostly for economic but also for political reasons, and predominantly from non-Western countries. In the host countries, they do not try to establish their own idioms as official at the expense of native majority languages; they do not claim a territory where they can rule themselves through their own institutions of government. Nor do they try to destroy the societies they enter. Therefore, when it comes to immigrant minorities, the governments are never under pressure of giving the same political autonomy that national and indigenous minorities are claiming (Bauböck, 2002: 3). Post-immigration minorities only ask respect for their cultural traditions and religious beliefs, and some legal regulations accordingly. While these demands do not pose a fundamental threat to social cohesion or national unity of the host society, it is puzzling that most critics of multiculturalism target not the more demanding claims of national or indigenous minorities, but the demands coming from post-immigration minorities.

There are three possible reasons for this differential treatment. First of all, post-War immigration brought an unprecedented ethno-religious diversity as a very new phenomenon for those relatively homogeneous societies of Western Europe.

Immigration from predominantly non-Western countries, of non-white people into predominantly white societies of Western Europe created a new situation. These culturally different and socio-economically poor immigrants were different than previous ones, who mostly came from East and South European countries that made them easier to absorb (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000). A racial, ethnic and religious diversity, then, has become the norm in the big cities of Europe and North America and this diversity has considerable effects on political, social, economic and cultural life of the countries in this part of the world.

Second, the issues regarding post-migration minorities not only involve political demands that multiculturalist theory traditionally deals with, but they also involve racism against alien/un-settled groups and their everyday practices and life styles. This racism, which Tariq Modood (1997) names “cultural racism,” is different than the earlier forms that are directed against settled groups such as blacks or Jews. After the Holocaust and anti-racist struggle in the post-War period, classical understanding of racism based upon biological theories of superior and inferior races was no longer intellectually and politically viable as a public discourse. Nevertheless, it did not mean a termination of racism. Rather, there emerged a “new racism” that is based upon cultural differences, upon attributing majority culture some implicit characteristics such as “whiteness” and “Christianity” (Gilroy, 1991). For Modood (1997: 155), there is nothing new with this cultural racism; in fact, it is biologist racism that is the exception, and a Eurocentric culturalism is the prevalent form of racism in the Western history. Cultural racism emphasizes cultural differences, and after that, vilifies, disdain, marginalizes, or demands cultural assimilation in the name of being civilized (Modood, 1997). Still, racism based on skin color operates in conjunction with cultural racism because the latter is directed primarily against non-

whites rather than against white minorities (Modood, 1997: 163). Post-immigrant minorities, who are colored, culturally alien, and socio-economically disadvantaged, are openly subjected to this form of racism. It has become aggressive and politically acceptable especially after the shocking violent incidents initiated by second generation immigrants in various European countries. As Baukje Prins (1997: 121) argues with regard to Dutch case, this kind of racism can even be presented as normal and innocent reactions of common people that are normally suspicious of the outsiders and rightfully angry with the trouble and disorder caused by the newcomers. Furthermore, because of its civilizing mission, cultural racism may even assert to play the role of an emancipatory and enlightening force for the members of non-Western cultures, especially for women and gays, who supposedly have been (and will forever be) suppressed and subjected to the violence by the backwards cultures of non-Western migrants.

Third dimension is the overlapping nature of ethnic/cultural lines with low socio-economic situation and high criminality rates. Such figures are also thought to be as the particular characteristics of the migrant groups (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000). Therefore, post-immigration multiculturalism has the tough task to defend the rights of these alien, un-enlightened, backward, un-educated, criminal and violent immigrants. This is a reason why progressives and leftists, who are traditionally for the rights of disadvantaged groups, have joined to the critics of multiculturalism besides with conservatives and the far-right. While the main concern of the left is the fear of a loss of securities allegedly guaranteed by the welfare state, the right wing politicians mobilize the population around the defense of securities associated with national sovereignty.

As Modood (2007) argues, this new situation requires a broader understanding of multiculturalism, which would take into account some specific contemporary issues and distinctive demands of post-immigration minorities. Post-immigration multiculturalism is not a consequence of a political movement as it is the case in black movement, women movements or gay pride mobilizations, but it is about a more fundamental movement of peoples from one country to another (Modood, 2007: 2). These newcomers are not only socio-economically disadvantaged as they have low or no education and lack vocational and language skills, they also structurally disadvantaged as their cultures and religions are alien and their communities have less or no socioeconomic/sociocultural resources comparing to long established cultures, religions and communities of the receiving society. However, most multiculturalist theoreticians treat immigrant groups different than the conquered nations or indigenous ethnic groups. For example, Will Kymlicka, one of the most prominent defender of multiculturalism, designs his multiculturalist framework within the clear lines of “societal groups”, or in other words, “nations.” For Kymlicka (2001b: 18), a nation is a societal culture that consists of a language, a set of social structures, norms and relationships, institutions, customs and cultural ways, and a defined territory. Such groups give the person the environment to develop a sense of social belonging and individual agency. Kymlicka then argues that the liberal freedom to choose one’s own path in life depends, in significant ways, upon having access to a societal culture, because it is only in the context of a societal culture that we can understand the options available to us and make intelligent judgments about which ones to pursue. In other words, a societal culture provides the context within which meaningful choice is possible (Kymlicka, 1995: 83). In this light, access to a societal culture can be seen to be a fundamental

interest of human beings, the sort of thing that Rawls calls a “primary good” (Carens, 1997: 41).

This is certainly a liberal interpretation of nation that places individual as the highest good, and it suits national minorities successfully to the multiculturalism. Post-immigration groups, however, do not fit into this framework. So rather than designing permanent multiculturalist policies for post-immigration minorities, Kymlicka goes with temporary measures that would lead them to integrate the wider society. Voluntarily choosing to leave their own country in order to make a new and better life in another, immigrants have a duty to integrate into that country, and that country, having allowed the migration, has a duty to integrate them and their descendants as full and equal co-citizens into the life of the nation, a process that would end up with “hyphenated identities” such as Mexican-American or Moroccan-Dutch (Kymlicka, 1995: 96-97).

There are several reasons for putting immigrants into a different category. First and foremost, they are not “societal cultures.” Second, they have voluntarily uprooted themselves from their natural homes. Third, immigrant communities are culturally fragmented and cannot be reproduced in their host countries. And finally, they arrive at the receiving country with the awareness of its different culture, and implicitly accept to abide by the norms and practices that culture consists of. Therefore, Kymlicka (1997: 170) argues, they have no right to self-government, to provision of public services in their mother tongue, and so on. Still, they may ask for stronger anti-discrimination regulations, exemptions from laws and regulations that unjustly disadvantage them, the right of retaining mother tongues, the affirmation of their presence in the symbols of the state, and so on. As an answer to these demands, receiving societies should institutionally provide greater recognition and

accommodation of immigration cultures such as considering holidays, dress-codes or dietary restrictions (Kymlicka, 2001a: 33). However, the aim of all these should not be reproduction of their cultural identities, but integrating into the mainstream society. While, “multicultural citizenship” is the *right* and goal of “societal cultures,” all the above measures are thought as the means to alleviate the painful process of integration which is the *obligation* and goal for immigrants. Modood (2007: 33) calls this as “sweetening the integration pill with polyethnic rights”.

Putting the immigrant minorities into a different basket misses the point that immigrants come from a societal culture with various values, conceptions, and commitments that shape the “meaningfulness” of choices (Carens, 1997: 45). It is true that immigrants leave behind their nation and are unable to create a new “societal group” as they lack the political, economic and other institutions. They can be too few and most probably too dispersed geographically. However, a sense of ethnic or religious identity can be a very important dimension of life for many immigrants and their descendants. If culture is valuable from the standpoint of political liberalism because it enables a meaningful range of choices in the conduct of our lives, and because it forms the horizon for developing a life-plan in the first place, then, normatively and analytically, the cultures of immigrants are no less valuable and significant than the societal cultures of receiving societies. Privileging “institutionalized cultures” over the less formal and less recognized cultures of newcomers can be seen as confusing societal cultures with dominant cultures (Benhabib, 1999: 55). According to Seyla Benhabib (1999), Kymlicka’s definition of culture and his privileging of societal cultures marginalize and disenfranchise other forms of collective identity formations which coalesce around different identity-markers. This is, Benhabib argues, an illiberal conclusion.

Secondly, placing post-immigration minorities in a secondary position because they choose to be a minority is unfair. The dichotomy between voluntary migrants, on the one hand, and the conquered and incorporated minorities, on the other, disregards some realities (Carens, 1997; Modood, 2007; Young, 1997). An important fact that should not be disregarded is the colonial legacy: former imperial countries such as Britain, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and France have received migration mostly from their former colonies. Also, many asylum seekers' first and foremost motivation is to save their lives, and that should not be considered as a voluntary migration. The responsibility of some Western countries are obvious as many of the conflicts either directly or indirectly interfered by them. They even have some responsibility for the economically motivated migrants, as the victims of global capitalism which has made West European and North American countries richer and, on the contrary, the peoples of many African and Asian countries harder to make a living. In other words, none of these migrations is voluntary in the sense that they are for pleasure.

Another misleading point is the categorization of groups within the ethnicity-nation identification, which presented as a dichotomy by Will Kymlicka (1997). There are many groups that do not fit into this opposing and mutually exclusive dichotomy. African-Americans, Jews, forced labor, guest workers, colonial subjects, and political and economic refugees are all anomalies that cannot be categorized under any "ethnic" grouping. They are neither nations nor voluntary immigrants; and these anomalies account for large portion of the subjects of multicultural question (Young, 1997: 50). This distinction that is frequently used by Kymlicka in the name of multiculturalism is also paradoxically diminishing the possibility of multicultural

society since it offers only two options for cultural minorities: establishing a separate and distinct community– a “societal” culture– or integrating (Young, 1997: 51).

Kymlicka implies that national or indigenous minorities deserve the multicultural and self-government rights not because of power politics,³⁰ but simply because they survived a long period of suppression. They used to be subject to the same sort of pressure to accept linguistic and institutional integration as immigrants, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries. But over the course of this century, a new pattern has emerged. Rather than pursuing integration, states have accorded national minorities various self-government powers, which enable them to live and work in their own educational, economic and political institutions, operating in their own language (Kymlicka, 1997: 73). Kymlicka does not make clear that whether immigrant minorities have to prove that they will survive against discrimination or integration pressures to deserve multicultural rights. It is not answered why they have to face with the same kind of unjust treatment and integration pressure, and why they cannot utilize the already acquired multicultural rights. Furthermore, limiting the privilege of multicultural citizenship to “societal groups,” and depriving post-immigrant minorities from such rights make multiculturalism irrelevant for most of the west European countries (Modood, 2007: 31-36).

As the discussion so far makes clear, when it comes to the immigrant minorities, the scope of the debate shifts from multiculturalism to integration. According to Benhabib this is not even integration, but assimilation as she argues that “polyethnic cultural rights are to be subordinated to assimilation to mainstream national cultures” (Benhabib, 1999: 55). The purpose of special rights given to

³⁰ Kymlicka (1997: 74) aptly argues that power politics do not explain differential treatment between national minorities and immigrants because many immigrant groups have become extremely powerful, both economically and politically, while some national minorities have been effectively marginalized.

immigrant minorities, for Kymlicka (1995: 180), is not to help preserving and reproducing their culture, but to “ensure their integration into a common culture,” and to develop in them “a sense of shared loyalty to a common civilization.” According to Kymlicka (1997: 74), not only government policies aimed at integrating the immigrants into common culture, but also immigrants too have integration oriented desires and expectations. Therefore, differential treatment transforms from self-designed policies of the governments to the legitimate answers given to the different demands of immigrants on the one hand and national minorities on the other. Immigrants, in this point of view, have learned what to demand, what their limits are, and what is the most beneficial for them: integration. However, this is also problematic as it fails to make a distinction between inclusion in socio-economic sphere and political processes, and inclusion in the dominant national culture (Young, 1997: 52). Or best, it is expected that integration in one sphere would automatically make integration in the other sphere possible; in other words, economic integration would bring cultural integration, or vice versa (Hagendoorn et al. 2003).

Integration is a very vague concept. Its definition is not only differs among social scientists, but each country also have a different understanding of what integration is depending on its citizenship concept and historical development. Still, as Vermeulen and Penninx (2000) rightly argue, integration was used in most countries to replace the notion of assimilation and to indicate a greater degree of tolerance and respect for ethno-cultural differences. Though conceived in somewhat different ways, definition of integration varies in the degree of pluralism implied. A famous, often quoted pluralist definition is given by the British Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins who in 1996 described the ideal of integration as “not a flattening process of

assimilation, but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance” (quoted by Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000: 1). Integration may also be understood in a more assimilationist sense. This is the case when integration is associated not with the maintenance of group boundaries and uniqueness, but with their dissolution as integration is measured by the degree of normative consensus and intermarriage with the indigenous population. Integration has also been defined as a two-stage process of assimilation, or as being neither pluralism nor assimilation, but something in between.³¹

According to Kymlicka (1997: 77), the aim of a liberal theory of minority rights is to define fair terms of integration for immigrants, and to enable national minorities to maintain themselves as distinct societies. However, the outcomes of defining the “fair terms of integration” may be painful for immigrants as they are not an active agent of this defining process. First, they have to strip their illiberal customs and behaviors whenever they are pointed as illiberal by the wider society, and second, they will have to comply with the established behavior, life-style, and dress codes of the dominant culture. Kymlicka (1997: 76) argues that if immigrants are allowed or encouraged to establish their own society rather than pressuring them to integrate into institutions which operate in the dominant language, this would simply result in the long-term marginalization of immigrant groups. It means that the basic principles of liberal democracy that are freedom and equality are only possible for immigrants within mainstream institutions.

Surely Kymlicka, as a multiculturalist, takes this as a two-way process: on the one hand, it involves promoting linguistic and institutional integration, so that immigrant groups have equal opportunity in the basic educational, political and

³¹ See Vermeulen and Penninx (2000) for different definitions of integration.

economic institutions of society; and secondly, it involves reforming those common institutions so as to accommodate the distinctive ethnocultural practices of immigrants, so that linguistic and institutional integration does not require denial of their ethnocultural identities. (Kymlicka, 1997: 76). Nevertheless, in his view, liberal society has right “to compel respect” for liberal principles if the immigrant minorities are non-liberal (Kymlicka, 1995: 170). And he never draws the limits of compelling. Once this “compelling” starts, it does not only contend with purely “liberal principles” but always adds cultural flavors into those principles that are defined, exercised, and compelled by the dominant majority culture. There are always questions of who defines and what the defining criteria of being liberal or non-liberal are. It is likely that, in European case, these are defined in favor of dominant (Christian) culture. Kymlicka is actually aware of the danger that identifying “we” as liberal and a minority as illiberal may end up with a “pseudo dialogue about the ‘clash of civilizations’” (Kymlicka, 1997: 84). However, he does not propose a solution to that except trusting the liberal democracy, which is still struggling to find a way to accommodate newcomer non-Westerners who are most of the time non-liberal, and who are usually happened to be Muslims. But, is it only Muslims that liberalism has problems with? To answer this question, it is necessary to see where liberalism places religion generally.

2.4. Multiculturalism and Religion

Prevailing idea about religion, which is also shared by most liberal philosophers like John Rawls, assumes that both religious practice and pluralistic democracy are best preserved by precluding religious argumentation from the public realm and by putting moral ideas off the conversational agenda of the liberal state

(Thiemann, 1996). According to Modood (2007: 23), Rawls appeals to the founding period of the liberal state, namely sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a time period when religion was a principle and persistent source of ideology, political identity, oppression, violent conflict and war in Western Europe.³² Separating religion from politics was the solution of liberalism, consequently, religion largely became a private matter, and the public morality was identified with secular morality (Audi, 1991). That is the liberal ideal model that the public life and politics on the one hand, and the religion on the other do not need to interact nor intervene each other, and that is the best interest of both sides. This belief is mainly motivated by two concerns: first, by an old Lockean fear that public and political religions inherently threaten political unity and stability,³³ and secondly, by the liberal notion that treats humans as free, equal and reasonable persons which requires abstracting them from all their particularities especially from religious beliefs and practices (Bader, 1999: 598).

There is a widespread agreement that modernity entails the overall decline of religion and that secularism plays a decisive role in democratization (Norris and Inglehart, 2004). Secularism thought to be central to the peaceful coexistence of different religious groups and non-believers. However, today, Europe is experiencing certain problems with the accommodation of some ethnic and religious groups that arrived to Europe via migration in the second half of the twentieth century. According to Delanty (2008), secularism is partially the reason for the marginalization of these newcomers because secularism does not directly lead to pluralism. While secularism concerns church-state relations, pluralism is about the

³² This is early Rawls of *A Theory of Justice* (1971). He changed his position considerably in *Political Liberalism* where he shifted from metaphysical conception of justice and liberalism to *political* conception of liberalism. See, Bader (2009) for a detailed analysis of the changes in Rawls' perspective on the relationship between state and religion.

³³ Liberalism has evolved especially to solve religious struggles. Therefore, neutrality and toleration are considered to be liberal values. According to Rawls, in a just society, state does not claim any ethical or religious view, but it should be neutral between all reasonable views (Rawls 1993). By reasonable, he means the views with which a dialogical consensus can be built.

coexistence of culturally distinct groups. Western secularism, furthermore, has often been linked with intolerance of non-Christian religions even if it reached peace between long-fighting intra-Christian sects (Connolly, 1999). Therefore, in a time of influx of non-Christian and culturally distinct groups, re-devising secular relations in order to deal with new cultural and religious pluralism is one of the most important challenges of Europe. The challenge grows as the level of global anxieties about religion, especially about Islam, enters into a critical period.

The answer given to this challenge depends on the version of secularism adopted by the particular state since there is no one way of establishing church and state relations. It would be a mistake to claim that following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, when European states agreed not to wage war against each other because of religious reasons, Europe entered a post-religious era and an overarching model of secularism has prevailed since then. It is true that most countries rejected established churches; yet, they gave a privileged role to the religion of majority population. Delanty (2008: 82) argues that there were various models of secularism were established since the late seventeenth century depending on which state tradition that country is coming from. If it is “constitutional conservative tradition,” secularism entailed an official church established by the state and thus controlled by the state. If it is associated with “republican tradition,” the state separates the church from public domain, in other words, privatizes religion. According to Delanty (2008: 84), in neither version religion disappears from the society; on the contrary, it is institutionalized, in the first case as an official religion, and in both cases, in the private domains and in some social institutions such as health or education. Secularism meant most of the case setting the conditions to existence of religion in the public sphere rather than eradicating religion from society.

Consequently, European secularism has been highly ambivalent: on the one hand, there has been no fundamental obstacle to a limited presence of religion in the public sphere and a long tradition of freedom of worship; and on the other hand, the existence of established or socially privileged churches often led to discrimination against members of other faiths, especially non-Christian religions. In other words, it is not true that newcomers in the Western countries are just troubling with integrating into neutral, secular, religion-free societies and polities. The issue is not that some people are insisting to preserve a religion or culture that is not secular. But it is preserving a religion or culture that is alien to the receiving society which holds long-established public culture and socially privileged religions. In European case, it has to be asked that whether the cultural identity of Europe can be described as Christian. Although there is no Christian unity to Europe, there is evidence of a residual Christianity: most Europeans are affiliated to a church while being otherwise unreligious, many countries have very strong Christian political parties, several have state churches, and throughout Europe there are Christian commemorations and festivities, which are all reminders of the Christian background to European modernity (Delanty, 2008: 86).

In short, multiculturalism in Europe has to deal with a two-phase-problem with religion: first, religion itself is considered as suspicious; and second, non-Christian religions exacerbate that suspicion. Considering the former point, it is thought that taking religion into account when organizing the public life is not necessary because separation of church and state, religious freedom and toleration of different religiosities together with the unfaithful and atheists as the most central features of liberalism already assures the non-imposition of any conception of the good. Kymlicka (1995: 108) as a liberal multiculturalist criticizes this liberal

assumption in two regards: first, it is unfair to ethno-cultural groups, and second, the strategy is incoherent because neutrality is an impossible goal. Considering the first point, Kymlicka (1997: 72) argues that liberals are wrong in assuming that adopting the same sort of strategy for ethno-cultural groups that is adopted towards religious groups is adequate for answering the demands coming from ethnic and national minorities. Liberals say that all the religious groups should be protected from discrimination in the public sphere, but the maintenance and reproduction of them should be left to the free choices of individuals in the private sphere. In Kymlicka's view, dynamics for ethno-cultural groups are different than those of religious groups.

Secondly, applying the principle of non-discrimination in the public sphere and value-neutral public space is incoherent because, as Kymlicka argues, any kind of polity, including a liberal democracy, have to make some decisions on the issues such as which language(s) to be recognized as official, which days to be decided as official holiday, what kind of internal units (e.g. any federal governments) to be designed, and so on. The history shapes one or more dominant cultural, linguistic or religious groups that fashion rules and institutions. According to Kymlicka, this assumed value-neutrality is unfair to ethno-cultural groups because "state unavoidably promotes certain cultural identities, and thereby disadvantages others" (Kymlicka, 1995: 108).

Kymlicka's point about false-neutrality is shared by all the multiculturalists; nevertheless, he was criticized as well because of concerning only ethno-cultural groups, and neglecting ethno-religious ones, especially the newcomer immigrant groups whose religious identities are visible in the public spheres of receiving countries. According to Modood (2007: 25-30), the same liberal value-neutral framework puts ethno-religious minorities to the same handicapped position. The

liberal neutrality in relation to religion is as problematic as it is to ethno-cultural groups. When Kymlicka sees this problem, for example in the case of Sikh men driving motorcycle without helmets, he is usually sympathetic to give rights to religious minorities (Kymlicka, 1995: 31), however, the key term he uses for solving such problems is “exemptions” while for non-religious groups he argues in favor of state support that goes beyond exemptions (Modood, 2007: 26). In one of Kymlicka’s work (1998) where he defends Canadian multiculturalism, he devotes one chapter on whether multiculturalist policies should be extended to include some non-ethnic groups (primarily gays and lesbians and people with disabilities) but religion is not even mentioned. Kymlicka’s other reason against religion is the assumption that giving religions autonomy may harm the liberal principle of freedom of conscience (Kymlicka, 1995: 35-38).³⁴ However, this does not explain why we should treat religious groups different than ethnic or national communities. It also disregards the fact that internal oppression of un-religious groups is not less than that of religious ones.

Modood (2007) calls this blindness of liberal multiculturalism on religion as a “secularist bias”. A possible reason for this blindness is that the optional status of religion. While every state must, for example, use a language and so a choice must be made on that regard, religion is optional, a state does not have to decide on religion. However, just like having a mother tongue different than official language is not about individual choice, being a part of a religious group different than the majority religion is a human condition that is not about choice, but coming from birth. What is about choice is to assimilate into the majority identity, but multiculturalism is a policy type that looks for other ways than forced or voluntary

³⁴ For his critique of Ottoman *millet* system as a model of religious autonomy, see the same book, pp. 156-157.

assimilation. And besides, multiculturalist policies are not only about the unavoidable and absolutely necessary state measures, but multiculturalism claims to take into consideration what is important and valuable for different groups of citizens. Therefore, putting religion aside or not giving it primary importance would be incoherent for a multiculturalist framework especially when it is considered that some cultures are centered around religion. On the other hand, the question why imagining multi-language state is easier than imagining multi-religious state is not answered although there are examples of it. India, for instance, regulates and incorporates several organized religions and their legal principles. Or in the Netherlands, as I will elaborate in the next chapter, the social, political and economic life is organized around religious lines until the 1960s, and still religion plays a major role in some social institutions such as schools, media, and sport clubs.

Therefore, without questioning the problematic relationship between religion and liberalism and without discussing the merits and limits secularism, a multicultural equality does not seem possible. Muslims can be considered as the most problematic community in this regard because they are not only handicapped by liberalism's suspicion about religion in general, but also are subjected to cultural racism, which was discussed above.

2.5. Multiculturalism and Muslims

During the 1980s, Muslim organizations became increasingly active as channels for political expressions of growing numbers of Muslims in Europe. Starting with educational campaigns in Britain and later in other Western European countries, Islamic activism started to turn more political with the "Rushdie affair" originating in Britain and the "headscarf affair" in France. Furthermore, when some

Muslim groups protested against British and French involvement in the first Gulf War, the question whether Muslims could be trusted as citizens was asked more explicitly than ever. And finally, some shocking violent acts involved by Muslims such as September 11 attacks in New York in 2001, murder of Dutch film maker Theo van Gogh in 2004 in Amsterdam, and July 7 bombings in London in 2005 created a *total suspicion* of Muslims among Western publics. Since then, Muslim assertiveness is commonly associated as an unwanted and illegitimate child of multiculturalism because the actors involved into post 9/11 violence in Europe were homegrown Muslim youth. Indeed, all these brought multiculturalist policies under question not only by conservatives and the far-right but also by centre-left including those of the previous supporters of multiculturalism (Bader, 2005).

Bhikhu Parekh, a prominent theorist that elaborates on the question of multiculturalism, starts one of his articles with following sentence: “In many influential circles in Europe, it is widely held that its over 15 million Muslims pose a serious cultural and political threat” (Parekh, 2006: 179). He states that this discourse against Muslims interestingly cuts across political and ideological divides and is shared alike by conservatives, fascists, liberals, socialists and communists although in different degrees. Indeed, for most, Muslims are held responsible for the failure of a peaceful multicultural society. Even the advocates of multiculturalism usually present Muslims as a potential problem for multiculturalism.

It is argued that Muslims, despite having their second and third generations in Europe, have failed to integrate unlike other minorities in Europe; that they do not feel at home in European societies and prefer to live among themselves; that they see themselves as a part of universal *Ummah* (community of believers), and have little loyalty to their country of settlement; that they show no commitment to Western

democratic institutions and do not respect the liberal freedoms; that they do not encourage their children to get Western education; that they do not integrate into the capitalist economy; that their everyday practices such as praying five times a day or using headscarf do not fit into the logic of modern life, and so on. Muslims in Europe are portrayed as an alienated underclass with anger that is directed to the very society they live in, and a potential source of unrest and violence.

Before that, Islam has not been a European issue. It has largely been about external politics of some European states until there emerged a series of cultural challenges to the idea of a homogeneous Christian and white European identity, which began with the post-1945 settlement of Islamic ethnic minority communities in many West European states. Islam has become to represent a major cultural and intellectual challenge to the construction of European identity since 1970s, when debates over multiculturalism raised in 1970s. Although the idea of an Islamic threat is not rooted in any easily observable continuous tradition of European political discourse, Muslims became the major target of long tradition of racism that was previously rooted in the othering of social and population groups settled in Europe such as Jews, gypsies and Slavs (Rich, 1999: 449). Especially with the advent of the War on Terror as the “grammar of global governance” since September 11, 2001, Islam and Muslims placed at the center of European political discourse (Sayyid, 2009: 187).

It is true that the majority of non-Western population in Europe consists of Muslims. Over 15 million Muslims live in Western Europe today that is approximately five percent of the population, and it is expected that a quarter of European population will be Muslim by 2050 (Telegraph, 8 August 2009). This is itself enough to put Muslim population at the center of arguments on multicultural

policies. However, since the September 11 attacks, regardless of the size of the Muslim population, they have been subjected to new political and security measures as it has been the case in the U.S., Canada or Australia where Muslims constitute only a very small minority. And today, in Western Europe, the most important cultural racism is anti-Muslim racism, or as some call “Islamophobia” (Modood, 2007: 45).

It is under these circumstances that Muslims are facing the pressure of integration. It is extremely a painful task to develop a sense of national citizenship in west European countries most of which pursue a confrontational posture against many Muslim countries and to integrate into societies where Islam is characterized as alien, backward and violent. Therefore, expecting that the recognition of Muslim identity and integration of Muslim communities are to take place soon is a highly optimistic perspective. Nevertheless, the way Muslims are treated is not only one dimensional. There has been much attention drawn to the first dimension that is stigmatization, discrimination, and exclusion of Muslim identity, and it still deserves more attention. A second dimension is the attempt of forming desirable Muslim subjects. There are governmental and non-governmental technologies that seek to produce certain desired effects and avert certain undesired events. As McGhee (2008: 7) argues, when it comes to Muslim communities, the desired effects of these technologies are docility, moderation, patriotism, participation, responsibility and obedience.

A similar two dimensional process is working out considering the Muslims themselves, and again the second dimension of this process is mostly overlooked by analysts and governments: on the one hand, Muslim identity is revitalized, Muslims continue to establish distinct communities, and demands for recognition and intra-

group autonomy are increased, on the other hand, as Modood (2007) argues, Muslims were mostly successful in dealing with the challenges of dual loyalties and at the same time not giving up on either set of commitments. According to Modood (2007: 139), commitments will have an effect on each of the commitments; they will interact with each other, leading to some reinterpretation on both (or all) sides. This was clearly visible in the way Muslims responded the crises in different Western countries, such as murder of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands in 2004 or Cartoon Crisis in Denmark in 2008. Hybrid identities are on the rise, and the studies not taking them into consideration will inescapably fall into the “clash of civilizations” discourse.

2.5.1. Totalizing Discourses on Islam

Indeed, most of the time, various totalizing descriptions of Muslim subjectivity end up with a total suspicion of Muslims in the Western world, and therefore, undermine the possibility of multicultural society and politics.

2.5.1.1. Orientalism

First group of totalizing descriptions of Muslims consists of implicit or explicit versions of Orientalist discourse. As Said (2003: 40) puts it, “the Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, ‘different’; thus the European is rational in the eyes of Europeans, virtuous, mature, ‘normal’”. This dichotomous reading applies with the same terms to the comparisons of Muslim minorities and European majorities nowadays. Muslims represent the Oriental in Europe. This way of dealing Muslims is a legacy of colonial times. The exclusion and inferiorization of “the others” during colonial and imperialist wars are now taking place within the national

boundaries of West European countries (Kamali, 2008: 305). As colonizing powers conceived their enterprise as culture-blind and pedagogical project to turn other peoples into adults (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 4), Western countries also thinking of their established culture as universal and that of immigrants as particular.³⁵ This imperialist and Orientalist way of thinking is intrinsic to the articulation of liberal political theory as well (Dossa, 2002: 739). “White liberals” including the fathers of liberal theory such as Adam Smith were always inclined to see nonwhites as biologically and culturally inferior, needing tutelage and control (Dossa, 2002).

Multiculturalists such as Parekh (2000: 45) critically tackle liberal political theory’s “moral monism”³⁶ inherited by colonialism and its intrinsic suspicion of non-liberal cultures and faiths. However, Muslims usually stands for an exception as most of the supporters of multiculturalism talk of the need for internalization of liberal norms and values by Muslims, if not imposing them (e.g. Kymlicka, 1995: 167). What is also important here is that when it comes to Muslims, “liberal values” become a very vague concept. As Kelly (2001) and Levey (2009) argue, many people in the West confuse the core liberal values with the sentiment, “this is how we do things here”. A good example of this is the debate about Muslim women’s clothing. Commonly the objection to *hijab*, *nikab* or *burqa* is simply considering such apparel as different, strange or arguing that “I have to see the person’s face when I talk to her.” Western democracies should find a more coherent, principled

³⁵ As Todorov (1993) suggests, one social underpinning of universalism is imperialism and colonialism, the subjugation of the Rest by the West.

³⁶ According to Parekh (2000), there are two major Western approaches to understanding culture: moral monism and cultural pluralism. Moral monism has always been connected with “naturalism,” the notion that human being has a universal and rationally knowable nature. Parekh rejects this monist view, and argues that human beings are culturally embedded, and that cultures mediate structure, and develop human capacities in distinctive ways. He also does not accept the notion that there is a single master value that various ways of life can be reduced to which could possibly mediate them in a culturally neutral fashion. Parekh, however, criticizes cultural pluralists such as Montesquieu because they have a tendency for not recognizing internal cultural diversity, for viewing cultures static and closed entities, for cultural determinism, and for dissociating culture from broader political and economic structure of society (Parekh, 2000: 77-79).

and convincing ways to answer Muslims, other than making an arbitrary definitions of liberty such as “you can take it off, but you can’t put it on; you can strip down, but you can’t cover up” (Levey, 2009: 22).

2.5.1.1.1. Muslims as a Challenge to Secular

The most significant field of executing this dichotomous perspective is secularism. Islamic presence made European states to open up an agenda, which, after hundreds years of struggle and discussion, was thought to have been overcome, namely state-religion relationship. Under European experience, religious faith and practice had become an individual right within liberal democracies, and protected by both democratic constitutions and supra-national legal instruments such as European Convention on Human Rights. However, Muslims’ challenge of preserving and practicing their religion and expressing themselves politically and culturally happens in societies that are shaped by values which are historical outcomes of Roman and Christian experiences. It is true that Muslims are asked to participate and integrate into Western societies. However, when they attempt to do it together with their cultural and religious identities, they are perceived as a threat to the very society they live in (Levey, 2009). The response of West European societies to this challenge is to argue frequently that Muslim minorities in Europe are in need of secularization. In European imagination, being Muslim is taken as a religious identity, and that religious essence is constantly being undermined by the temptations of the political (Sayyid, 2009: 199). There are two options left for Muslims: either being good Muslims and turning Muslim identity to a pure faith that is exercised in the private sphere (Roy, 2007b) or not being Muslim at all. Both ways are the ideal solutions of secularism for finishing religious disputes and wars. Yet, the political Muslim

identity, they perceive, is challenging that Western secularist enterprise, and perhaps threatening to subvert it.

But is it really a challenge? If secularism meant a settlement between Catholics, Protestants and non-religious people, then inclusion of Islam into that settlement is a challenge because in this case secularism becomes an agreement that guarantees the Protestants' right to establish their own churches and institutions and the non-believers' rights to not attend any church (Levey, 2009: 11-14). With their demands for new holidays, new working hours, dietary requirements, using headscarf at workplaces, praying during work hours, and so on, the existence of Muslims requires some new regulations and laws. While Muslims can have their freedom of establishing mosques, schools or other institutions within the conditions of the above agreement, their everyday life demands exceeds that settlement. Therefore, existence of a new religion with new demands is a real challenge and requires a new agreement. Nevertheless, there is no a church-like Islamic authority to make this agreement. In this case, as Modood (2009) argues, "less corporatist, less statist and less churchy", in other words, "a pragmatic, case-by-case, negotiated approach" is necessary to answer Muslims' demands. And European secular states do have this tradition of finding pragmatic solutions to demands coming from Christians and Jews.³⁷ So, why not find such pragmatic solutions to Islamic demands? Why resist? Why employing an ideological secularism when it comes to Islam? Before answering that, we should discuss whether Islamic presence challenges secularism if we simply define it as the separation of religion and politics. There is not a real challenge to European secularism in this case either because, as various scholars argue, the majority of Muslims in Europe does not ask for *shaira* rule, and they mostly are

³⁷ For different examples of such pragmatic solutions, see, Bader (1999, 2009), Delanty (2008), and Modood (2007, 2009).

“nominal Muslims” (Ramadan, 1999), and increasingly they tend to be non-traditionalist/non-ideological/participants with their individualistic approaches to being Muslim (Saeed, 2009). So why all the time considering the existence of Muslims as a fundamental challenge to European secularism? My answer to this and the above questions is that because the existence of Muslims is challenging the imagination of Europeans that see Islam as alien. Liberal democracies, as argued above, already have problems with religion itself. However, they found some practical solutions to deal with more familiar religions. With alien religions, that practical side vanishes. Ideological secularism then appears only as a tool to keep Islam as alien, as outsider, as non-European, as non-Western. In other words, secularism becomes an identity issue for Europeans.

In this case, secularism works to make sure that Western historiographical hegemony is being maintained (Sayyid, 2009). Culturally offensive citizenship tests, the attack on the veil, the demands that Muslim conform to Western (i.e. secular) values, and so on can all be read as the consequences of the perception that Western historiographical hegemony is challenged by the quest for Muslim autonomy in Europe. Therefore, secularism today concerns not so much separating religion from politics, but depoliticizing Muslims, and doing it sometimes with the hands of governments (e.g. Dutch government’s attempts of forming Muslim umbrella organizations, raising imams and teachers, subsidizing Euro-Islamic activities, etc.). Muslim here is referred as a religious subject position, and by that it represents anti-secularism. Only way of dealing with it is to depoliticizing Muslim subjectivity, because otherwise, the articulation of a Muslim identity points to a historical community, who embody a counter-history to the dominant historiographical hegemony, or, in Sayyid’s terms, to the “Plato-to-NATO sequence” (Sayyid, 2009:

198). Since political identity is a modern identity, depoliticizing Muslim identity has a very important function: marking Muslim subjectivity as pre-modern, and by doing that, drawing and policing the boundary between modern and pre-modern, or between Western and non-Western (Sayyid, 2009).

However, Muslim identity cannot simply be reduced to religious identity. First of all, just because there is a perception of Islamic challenge to Western historiographical hegemony, it is a political identity. Secondly, forming a relationship between the self and Islam has a very significant political position taking effect. There are various positions to be taken ranged from uncritical affirmation to total rejection, and each subjectivity has its buyers in the political discussions on Islam in Europe. And third, it is not a religious identity because a person in Europe, whether or not he/she is practicing Muslim or feel subscribed to Islam, is defined as Muslim just because of the simple reason that he or she was born into a Muslim family or identified with a Muslim community or country. This last one too presents a reason to consider Muslim identity as political because being identified as Muslim in a society where looking like a Muslim creates suspicion, hostility and discrimination has some important political implications and consequences. Therefore, by promoting religious leaders, West European states are not actually recognizing Muslims, but reducing it to religious identity, and overseeing its political consistence. The lesson for multiculturalism is that, as Jones (2006) argues, the recognition should be directed at a group of people rather than at a system of belief.

2.5.1.1.2. Muslims as a Challenge to National

The second field of executing Orientalist discourse is nationalism since the assertion of Muslim subjectivity presents a serious challenge to the idea of nation. Reading Muslim subjectivity as fundamentally attached to the *Ummah* is a consequence of perceiving Islam as an anachronistic presence in today's world (Sayyid, 2000: 34). It is true that Muslims from different ethnicities and traditions converge around commonalities as they share the stories begin with revelations received from the Prophet to the civilizations established by their ancestors; they share the experiences of constituting a significant minority in all the migration countries, especially in the urban areas of developed world, and they share the anger of imperialist aggression directed at their or other Muslims' home countries. However, it is wrong to read the identity established by the *Ummah* as similar to identities that are more familiar to Western minds such as class, kinship, caste, or ethnicity. The Muslim *Ummah* is not a nation, and rejects its limits. Nor is the *Ummah* an outcome of a common market as European Union. It is not a common way of life, a civilization or a linguistic community either.

Being Muslim is something attached to the wider community of Muslims, but in the European case, it is more about converging around mundane commonalities than a belief. And these mundane commonalities most of the time form an identity building process that is shaped by outside effects such as discrimination, exclusion, stigmatization, etc. rather than in-group commonalities that are fond of race, ethnicity, language, faith, history, homeland, or even a coherent religious identity. Also, as each formation of identity, Muslim identity too is formed in relation to other identities: it is ethnically colored, class divided, and gendered. This complexness of Muslim identity challenges first the idea of nation and the analytical tendency of dividing collective identities as building blocks. And finally, Islam in Europe is seen

as a serious problem of national unity by highlighting the problem of integration of a group into the boundaries of a nation and questioning the loyalty of that group which is thought loyal to the *Ummah*, a community bigger than the nation. Internationalization of the disputes about Islam in Europe, such as Rushdie affair in Britain or Cartoon crisis in Denmark exacerbates the tension between the European nations and their Muslim minorities.

2.5.1.2. Incompatibility of the Ways of Life

Second group of totalizing descriptions of Muslims consists of the prejudices about the incompatibility of Muslim and European ways of life. Gender related issues are at the center of this incompatibility. It is a very common perception among Western public opinions that Muslims badly treat women, the equality between men and women does not exist in Islam, or Islamic faith has a violent doctrine about homosexuals. Although after the September 11, these issues have been discussed more publicly and boldly than ever before, these beliefs about Muslims were not a product of the post-September 11 period. On the contrary, they only provided the basis for reactions to Muslims after the shocking violent events like September 11 attacks. Indeed, the critics of Muslim treatment of women and gays easily became the critics of multiculturalism as it is thought that multiculturalism did not question these when accommodating Muslims (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007).

Being intolerant to non-Muslims and being inherently violent and fanatic are other widely held prejudices about Muslims. Especially after September 11, many left-wing and liberal intellectuals, who are traditionally tolerant of minorities, attacked multiculturalism as responsible for creating safe heaven for intolerant Islamic radicalism. For example, Hugo Young (2001), a liberal columnist of the

Guardian, wrote that multiculturalism was “a useful bible” for fundamentalist Muslims for whom the “civic duties of loyalty, tolerance, justice and respect for democracy” are secondary or even not important at all comparing to their religious priorities.

The next step after this framing Muslims as intolerant is to portray Muslims as susceptible terrorists: if you are not tolerant of others, if you are not respectful democracy and its peaceful methods, then you are of course inclined to employ more violent methods such as terror. Profiling European jihadists also helps to increase suspicion over Muslims because none of their characteristics distinguishes them in any significant way from the broader population of European Muslims: most of them had been born in Europe or come to Europe in childhood, many were poor, and they ranged widely in age (The Terrorist Next Door, *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2007, p. 32).

2.5.2. The New Liberals and the New Cold War

These two totalizing discourses, which were mostly fed by the theses of Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel P. Huntington (1993), provided and continue to provide the basis of conservative and neo-conservative campaigns on Islam. However, as the “War on Terror” lost its popularity at home in the U.S. and abroad, and “Shock and Awe” proved to be not very successful in Iraq and Afghanistan, a new version of “War on Terror” has taken place. It was first formulated by Paul Berman (2004) as a “mental war” against Islamism, and then Gordon Brown renamed it as a “new cold war against Muslim extremism” fought from the “soft power” of cultural influence (Jones, 2007). Arun Kundani (2008) calls this as

“aggressive new liberalism” and identifies its important differences from the “clash of civilizations” thesis.

2.5.2.1. Islamist versus Muslim?

While “clash of civilizations” takes the Islamic tradition inherently violent and draws high walls between “pre-modern” Islam and “modern” West³⁸, the new liberals focus on Islamism as a modern phenomenon rather than making generalizing descriptions about the nature of Islam. Islamism (not Islam) is taken a similar ideology as communism or fascism³⁹, and for fighting it, new liberals stress the “clash within civilizations,” in other words the difference between extremist and moderates within Muslims, and invest on the latter (Kundani, 2008: 42). There are two benefits in this new method: first, by not attacking Islam itself, they were freed from the charges of being Islamophobic or racist, and second, by identifying Islamism as a modern ideology, they made a difference between Islamists and Christian and Jewish fundamentalists, who are generally tolerated (Kramer, 2003). However, associating Islamism with violence or defining it as a political project that aims at overthrowing liberal democracy has an important side effect. Even if that definition of Islamism seems to target a very specific group of Muslims, it, at the same time, puts those Muslims who are peaceful but assertive to defend Muslim identity in a suspect category. In fact, there are Muslims in Europe such as Tariq Ramadan, who prioritize their Muslim identity over other identities while internalizing liberal rights and freedoms, speaking European languages, and being familiar with European ways of presenting themselves.

³⁸ Edward Said’s *Covering Islam* (1997) illustrates this way of reading and presenting Islam.

³⁹ Paul Berman (2004: 60), for example, describes Islamism as “Muslim totalitarianism – Muslim variation on the European idea.” Nick Cohen (2007), similarly, describes it as the transposition of European fascism into the Muslim world.

Is Europe ready to welcome this *new Islamism* that does not have a project to constitute an Islamic state, but does challenge nationhood by prioritizing Islamic identity over the national identities of both the host country and the country of origin? As Alev Çınar (2005: 9) argues, Islamism can be defined as an ideology that “uses selective postulates from Islam” to constitute a political project or an alternative national identity. For new liberals, this political project is a *thick* venture that aims at destroying European nation states and democratic values. However, Çınar’s definition does not necessarily suggest Islamism as a revolutionary ideology. It can be a *thin* political project as one of the answers of how to be a Muslim in Europe, or in other words, how to defend Muslim identity with peaceful means in a liberal democracy without targeting to overthrow it. Liberal democracies and multiculturalist theoreticians must deal with these various forms of Islamism that can be a part of identity politics in Europe. Nevertheless, the new liberals insist on focusing Islamism as a thick political project, and building up a cold war discourse against it.

The shining stars in this cold war are repentant Islamists or ex-Muslims such as Ed Husain (2007) or Ayaan Hirsi Ali (2006, 2008) who confirm the fears of liberal intellectuals and politicians. Another very important difference between conservatives and new liberals is that while the former emphasize Judeo-Christianity as the basis of Western identity, the new liberals emphasize the Enlightenment and its legacy of secular liberalism. This explains why ex-supporters of multiculturalism (e.g. liberals and the left) have reservations about applying the same terms to Muslim minorities in Europe that is the battlefield of the new cold war between non-liberal Islamists and liberal norms and values; and multiculturalism is strengthening the enemy.

Surely, the discontent about multiculturalism amongst the center left is not simply a post-9/11 phenomenon. Before September 11, leftist intellectuals supported the rights of suppressed minorities, but at the same time criticized cultural essentialism and taking culture as a social category that blurs and even distorts the class struggle (Zizek, 1997). However, leftist criticism of multiculturalism today is strongly associated with the presence and activities of Muslims (Modood, 2007: 12). Kymlicka argues that there is a positive correlation between discontent about multiculturalism and the presence of Muslims in liberal democracies. He stated that “if we put Western democracies in a continuum in terms of proportion of immigrants who are Muslims, this would provide a good predictor of public opposition to multiculturalism” (Kymlicka, 2005: 83).

2.5.2.2. Is New Liberalism Different?

If Kymlicka is right to establish a direct correlation between increasing Islamic presence in the West and the rise of criticisms of multiculturalism, then there are some legitimate questions to ask: Is it really Islamism or Islamic presence itself standing as an excuse of not giving recognition rights to Muslim minorities? If there is a difference between Muslims and Islamists, why not give multicultural rights to Muslims? Is the rise of Islamism a direct consequence of the rise of Islamic presence in Europe? And, is multiculturalism responsible for all these? These questions suggests that there is also something puzzling in the justifications of new liberals and left when they differentiate themselves from right-wing Islamophobics, xenophobics, and racists.

First of all, the difference between Islamists and Muslims is most of the time blurry. For example, Martin Amis (2007), in his article “No, I am not a racist,” first,

expresses “respect” for Islam, and adds, “but we do not respect Islamism.” By arguing that the Islamic world has been totally lost to the Islamists, Amis loses the differentiation between Muslims and Islamists (Kundani, 2008: 43). In an interview he also says that “the Islamists are gaining on us demographically at a huge rate. A quarter of humanity now and by 2025 they will be a third... We are just going to be outnumbered.” Not only he falls into “clash of civilizations” discourse by placing we, the humanity and they, the Islamists (or perhaps Muslims) into opposite sides, he also ends up with collective punishment: “The Muslim community will suffer until it gets its house in order” (quoted in Kundani, 2008: 43). Those who present themselves as the champions of liberal norms and values lecture and warn European Muslims to cast out extremist, and just after that, to prove that they do not hide an extremist in very deep inside. Confusing between Muslims and Islamists, most liberals propose to formulate a program of forceful integration of Muslims into European values at the expense of current naïve multiculturalism (e.g. Anthony, 2007; Berman, 2004; Cohen, 2007; Hitchens, 2007; Scheffer, 2000).

Secondly, new liberals and the left think that they are different in the sense that they do not have Islamophobic or racist stereotyping. However, the threat of Islamic extremism has increasingly become the dominant theme not only in the media coverage of Muslim communities in Europe, but also in the essays of liberal and leftist public intellectuals since September 11 (Modood, 2005; Kundani, 2008). Whenever the issue is Muslims, thoughts on or examples of irrational Islamic extremism is accompanied with the Muslim existence. Another common theme that frequently repeats in the discussion about Muslims is their intolerant and inegalitarian views in relation to personal sexual choices, women, and non-Muslims. This too causes broad generalizations and stereotyping. It implies that the majority

deeply believe in sexual, racial and religious equality, in freedom of expression, or in the rule of law while Muslims essentially inclined to be intolerant and violent to sexual and religious differences. Therefore, when liberal and leftist intellectuals criticize Muslims and multiculturalism in the name of defending liberal democratic norms and values, and when they do this repeatedly as they are teaching children, they actually are being essentialist with broad generalizations and stereotyping.

Thirdly, new liberals and left do not differentiate between Islamist dynamic and terrorist dynamic. Islamism is a political ideology that is an outcome of partially political issues (e.g. foreign policy, wars, occupations, injustice) and partially sociological issues (e.g. generational gap, identity search of youth, the increase in the educational level). Although terrorism may be the outcome of similar reasons, canalling political ideology into violent methods has a different dynamic. The aim of using these two terms interchangeably and considering a widespread sociological trend as a unilinear process of terrorist radicalization is nothing but denying a Muslim's right to be socially responsible and politically active. Here, an attempt to depoliticize Muslim identity and searching for apolitical reasons of terrorism becomes very common. For example, Shiv Malik (2007), in his widely cited *Prospect* article on the biographies of London bombers, argues that the terrorist attacks were rooted not in political grievances, but in the generational gap between a parental folkloric Islam and a new global Islam. He fails to see that this generation gap may explain why some young British Muslims are attracted to Islamism or Wahhabism, but it does not explain why these young people ended up with violent attack in London. David Goodhart (2007), the editor of *Prospect*, similarly suggests that making the link between terrorism and political issues is just a way for Muslims to escape responsibility of non-integration, criminalization and radicalization. Events

such as 2005 riots in France are too seen as Islamist manifestations rather than consequences of the social factors that some “underclass” communities face.

2.5.2.3. Muslims ≥ Islamists ≈ Terrorists

This perspective has two outcomes: on the one hand, Islamism becomes the only political ideology whose free expression is in danger of being criminalized in the West (Kundnani, 2008: 46), and on the other hand, Muslim community is threatened by collective punishment for not preventing their youth to become politicized. “If Islamism is the greatest evil,” then, as Kundnani (2008: 46) puts, “an illiberal ideological war in defense of liberalism is the lesser evil.” The outcome is losing or suspending many personal rights and liberties not only for Muslims but also for all the citizens. Especially young Muslims are ending up in the prison for accusations such as possessing pamphlets, videos, records or emails found in their computers, attending anti-war demonstrations, and visiting dangerous websites.⁴⁰

These are seen as evidences of “encouraging” or “glorifying” terrorism. The new crime of glorifying terrorism introduced in the UK under the Terrorism Act 2006. It is not about preventing incitement to violence, which is already being criminalized by a nineteenth century legislation, but, as Tony Blair made clear at the UN Security Council meeting on 14 September 2005, it is about criminalizing “a movement with an ideology and a strategy”, which only be defeated when “the Council united... in fighting the poisonous propaganda.” For Blair, “the root cause of terrorism... was not a decision on foreign policy... but was a doctrine of fascism” (quoted in Kundnani, 2008: 46). Overall, implication of these that Muslims are likely

⁴⁰ For a very detailed survey of such assaults on personal liberty, see, Atkins et al. (2007).

to be Islamist if they are let alone, and Islamists are susceptible terrorists. I formulate this as following equation: Muslims \geq Islamists \approx Terrorists.

The results for Islamists are criminalization of their political views, arresting them and their sympathizers as susceptible terrorists, and deporting them into the custody of torturers (in Guantanamo Bay, in planes designed for torture, or in their countries of origin). Among liberals, a dramatic example of supporting the criminalization of Islamists is Nick Cohen, who, during the 1990s, was one of the few journalists exposing the British government's attacks on civil liberties, now writes that governments should set aside concerns that foreign extremists might be tortured if they are deported – for Islamists, civil liberties no longer apply (Cohen, 2006). Liberalism's internal tensions about the limits of freedoms are most clearly visible and the "liberal rage" is harshest when it comes to Muslims. Arun Kundani (2008: 45) argues that the roots of this "liberal rage" lie at the slogan of French revolutionaries: "No freedom for the enemies of freedom," and it is manifested most explicitly by Paul Berman (2004: 170): "A liberal society must be, when challenged, a warlike society."

The results for wider Muslim community is being subjected to increasingly popular calls and policy measures that embark on a programme of forceful integration into so-called European values. Kundnani (2007) calls this as a shift from multiculturalism to "integrationism." In this way, there is a never ending integration test – a control mechanism that checks Muslims continuously, a discipline apparatus that teaches, corrects, reclaims, and cures Muslims, a "panopticon" that aims at controlling the thoughts, the hearths, the will, and the inclinations of Muslims. Some public figures are presented as the good examples of integration and Muslims are recommended to follow the foot-steps of those. One of the best examples of

integration is Ed Husain, who was Islamist once, but after the September 11 attacks, successfully escaped from “the psychological damage caused by Islamism,” wrote his confessions in *The Islamist: Why I joined radical Islam in Britain, what I saw inside and why I left*, and launched the Quilliam Foundation whose goal is the promotion of true Islam that is depoliticized and integrated.

Tariq Ramadan, on the other hand, once presented as a positive example of a pro-integrationist Muslim leader, failed the test, according to leading liberal columnist David Goodhart (2007), when he argued that “a link exists between terrorism and foreign policy” (Ramadan, 2007). Since then, he was among usual suspects and his level of integration has been continuously tested in an invisible integration-meter. Being on the alert about Ramadan was already there as he was the grandson of Hasan El-Benna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (Berman, 2007). In early 2009, when he was accused of using discriminatory remarks about women and homosexuals, his position as the integration advisor in the Rotterdam municipality was seriously questioned (*NRC Handelsblad*, 2009a). Although the Rotterdam municipality, upon investigation, declared that the accusations unfounded, within the extremely heated political environment of the Netherlands, it was a sign of things to come. Erasmus University, where he was the chair of Identity of Citizenship Program funded by the Rotterdam municipality, declared at that time that Ramadan’s contract was extended until February 2011, and stated that Erasmus considers itself “a sanctuary for scientists, where research and debate are stimulated. (...) The university does not concern itself with personal statements made by scientists as long as they are not a violation of Dutch law or stand in the way of independent and good research and education” (ibid). Nevertheless, he finally lost his visiting professorship post at Rotterdam Erasmus University and integration advisor

post at Rotterdam Municipality after he hosted a TV show in Iranian PressTV, a worldwide news network in English, just before 2009 elections in Iran.

For Ramadan (2009), all these were “not Western” at all. But for others who do not like him, Ramadan did not understand Western sensibilities; in other words, he was not Western enough. It was not important that he was born in Switzerland, grew up and was educated in Europe, thought in Western universities, criticized the authoritarian regimes in the Muslim world, never accepted terrorism and violence, and called Muslims in Europe to actively participate into the societies they live in. The prevailing War on Terror mentality could not accept any approach looking critically to the Western and Israeli foreign policy or to the use and reproduction of the fear of terror and Islam for political purposes. Ramadan, as a critical intellectual, was seen too political.

Although the aim is to depoliticize Muslims, both the appreciation to Ed Husain and the anger to Tariq Ramadan have political motivations. In the former case, it is politics that drives Husain’s approach to Islam. “The new cold war” discourse and the government’s agenda of trying to promote a compliant British version of Islam are perfectly consistent with the declared goals of Husain’s Quilliam Foundation: the creation of “rehabilitation centres” to counter Islamist ideology; public pressure on Islamist groups to jettison the ideas of Maududi and Qutb; financial support for the promotion of the “correct” forms of Islam; and a media ban on “Islamist extremists”, especially Hamas.⁴¹ In Ramadan’s case too politics drives the anger because his political approach to the reasons of terrorism is not in line with the “new cold war” discourse. Multiculturalism is something to reject for the

⁴¹ For the full text of the recommendation, see *Pulling Together To Defeat Terror: recommendations for uprooting Islamist extremism* (London, Quilliam Foundation, 2008).

followers of this political perspective because it facilitates the flourishing of Muslim political identity.

Therefore, the European liberals may desire to deny the recognition rights of Muslims when it is still possible, when Muslims as latecomers of identity politics are not fully equipped yet, when it is still not too late. And this desire may lure many others: why do we bother giving multicultural rights to Muslims when multiculturalist theory itself gives a possibility for denying them as discussed above? Indeed when it comes to Muslim identity, most multiculturalists demand higher standards for Muslims comparing to other assertions of identity (Modood, 2007: 134). Or is it not about Muslims, but multiculturalism has really failed? To understand this fully, it is necessary to analyze the end of multiculturalism discourse, and see whether it has to do with Islamic presence in the Western world, or there is something else?

2.6. End of Multiculturalism?

There is no monolithic society; each has some degree of diversity on moral values and political identities. The core question is on the limits of pluralism; and therefore, the core problem is to establish a balance between pluralism and the coherence of a society. Opponents of multiculturalism believe that liberal democracies have been excessively tolerant in this regard. They insist that social cohesion in societies of immigration must be built on shared values and identities. Since the early 1990s, and especially after the September 11 attacks and other shocking violent events such as London and Madrid bombings, riots in France, or murder of Theo van Gogh, the respect for diversity has become conditional on a new duty to integrate at the level of shared values. There appeared a need to rebalance the

emphasis of previous immigrant policies that welcome and foster cultural diversity, and that are easygoing on the flow of new immigration.

2.6.1. Public Debates

Just after the September 11 attacks, many left-wing and liberal intellectuals and politicians attacked multiculturalism as responsible for creating safe heaven for Islamic radicalism. For example, Kenan Malik of the Commission for Racial Equality argued that multiculturalism was more successful to segregate communities than racism (Malik, 2002). Hugo Young (2001), a liberal columnist of the Guardian, wrote that multiculturalism was “a useful bible” for fundamentalist Muslims for whom the “civic duties of loyalty, tolerance, justice and respect for democracy” are secondary or even not important at all compared to their religious priorities. Paul Berman (2004) called liberals to be more aggressive and committed than fall into multicultural naivety.

The above examples are initial responses to the September 11 attacks. But, it was the July 7, 2005 London bombings that caused a new peak in the discussions against multiculturalism since the bombers were homegrown – the children of Britain’s own multicultural society (Kepel, 2005). For Western people, it was shocking to see that most of the perpetrators were born or raised in Britain that gave them all the possibilities of a decent life and freedom of worship in an environment much better than their countries of origin. William Pfaff (2005) declared that “these British bombers are a consequence of a misguided and catastrophic pursuit of multiculturalism”. Martin Wolf (2005) wrote that multiculturalism’s lack of the notion of core political values “is dangerous because it destroys political community” and “devalues citizenship. Francis Fukuyama (2005) also joined the critics and

discussed that “countries like Holland and Britain need to reverse the counterproductive multiculturalist policies that sheltered radicalism.” and Gilles Kepel (2005) warned: “We Europeans cannot – must not – bury our heads in the sand.”

Some more theoretical concerns were made after those came with the first shock wave. It was argued that cultural separatism caused by multiculturalism was a challenge to national identity that is necessary for a well-functioning liberal democracy (Meer, 2006). Trevor Phillips said that multiculturalism was out of date because it failed to make minorities to be truly British (Baldwin, 2004). Michael Gove (2006), a liberal conservative MP in Britain, argued that “temporary curtailment of liberties” is needed for the defense of Western civilization. Christopher Hitchens (2007) stated that Islamists took advantage of Britain’s multicultural naivety. Similar arguments became the topic of some bestsellers such as Nick Cohen’s *What is Left: How Liberals Lost Their Way* or Andrew Anthony’s *The Fall-Out: How a Guilty Liberal Lost his Innocence*.

Even those, who do not directly state that multiculturalism was the cause of bombings, suggested that multiculturalism was to be reviewed, and perhaps replaced by integration. Actually, this trend started before the September 11 attacks and London bombings. Such discourse became prominent with David Blunkett’s arrival at Britain’s Home Office in June 2001 and his response to the riots in some northern English cities (Modood, 2005). In the Netherlands, the government stressed the priority of integration in its May 1994 *Contourennota*, which replaced 1983 *Minderhedennota* (Minorities Memorandum).

2.6.2. Theoretical Debates

2.6.2.1. Multiculturalism as against Class Struggle

Although the rise of critics has a lot to do with the terror events by Jihadi networks and ethnic riots in big cities, earlier criticisms from the left are not expressed directly as a response to such phenomena, but are more about principles. According to this leftist criticism, culture as a social category blurs or even distorts class struggle, and furthermore, multiculturalism is a scam on the part of global capitalism (Zizek, 1997). However, the left had also been gradually entering into a culturally colored anti-immigrant discourse. In the pre-September 11 period, a significant example of this is Paul Scheffer, a left-wing academic and a prominent name in the Labor Party in the Netherlands. In his popular “Het Multiculrele Drama” (2000), Scheffer argues that because of naïve multiculturalist policies of Dutch governments so far, a socially disintegrated Muslim underclass was about to be formed, and the reason was more to be accounted to the Islamic rejection of basic Dutch norms and values and the failure of Dutch multiculturalism to see that rather than the social and economic exclusion of Muslims.

2.6.2.2. Multiculturalism as against Universal Citizenship

For the critics of multiculturalism, it is usually considered as a polemical attack on key tenets of liberal values and policies such as universalism, nationhood, citizenship and priority of individual. It also received counter attacks against its relativism, fragmentation, and even illiberalism. It is not surprising that the rise of multiculturalism and renewed interest in citizenship coincide. Both are answers to the question of how to integrate different communities into political system as loyal subjects to the state. It is argued that the health and stability of a modern democracy

depends not only on the legal structures and institutions but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994). It is thought to be a cure to the potentially competing identities such as national, regional, ethnic or religious. This is the reason why civic virtues and citizenship identity are emphasized more often than before in the citizenship literature that in the past focused more on “citizenship-as-legal-status” while now lays more stress on “citizenship-as-desirable-activity” (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 353). Thomas H. Marshall’s *Citizenship and Social Class*, the most influential work on citizenship after the WWII, defines citizenship almost entirely in terms of possession of rights which he divides into three categories: civil rights, political rights and social rights. This postwar conception of “passive” citizenship is criticized by new right and left of neglecting citizenship responsibilities and virtues and excluding social and cultural pluralism.⁴²

It is argued that to anchor in individuals a sense for the sacredness of culture is not the task of the state or of the legislatures. Politics should only provide culture with the conditions of its own regeneration with the institutions of a free civil society and a free public sphere (Benhabib, 1999: 57). Citizenship rights should not be constitutionally group-differentiated; ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups can be given special privileges and immunities only in order to assure the fulfillment of their universal citizenship claims. In the cases of oppression, special group rights can be seen as fulfilling the promise of universal citizenship rather than creating enclaves of maintaining particularistic forms of identity. The task of the liberal democratic state cannot be to preserve the frozen beauty of these traditional life-forms. Rather the state must assure the protection of each of its citizens (Benhabib, 1999: 58). If states

⁴² See, Kymlicka and Norman (1994) for a review of such critiques.

get into the business of protecting of such alleged cultures, they can only create inauthentic Disneylands (Waldron, 1992: 763).

2.6.2.3. Multiculturalism as Minority Nationalism

While multiculturalists argue that liberalism is Eurocentric, multiculturalism is criticized as “minority nationalism” that is ethnocentric and disinclined to accept diversity (Spencer, 1994). According to this view, multiculturalism is seen the ideology of those who are deprived from power. For example “if American nationalism were in the deprived power position of African American nationalism, it would advocate multiculturalism, and vice-versa” (Spencer, 1994: 556). Therefore, according to Spencer (1994: 560), if whites, the “oppressors” advocate multiculturalism, it is because of feel of guilt, in other words, “political correctness.” Spencer argues that there is no need for multiculturalism in a country where the prevailing ideology is “cosmopolitan liberalism” that devalues cultural identity, and advocates a national identity established by an affiliation with the democratic political values of a state that is based on the consent of the governed, the rule of law, human rights, and free association (Spencer, 1994: 562). Spencer’s argument goes in line with the claims that blame multiculturalists being essentialist.

2.6.2.4. Multiculturalism as Essentialism

Indeed, it is argued that cultures do not exist as suggested by multiculturalists who supposedly claim that cultures are discrete, frozen and homogeneous and portray the society as an entity made of several distinct culturally homogeneous groups whose members share the same essential characteristics (Dirlik, 1990; Alund and Schierup, 1991; Waldron, 1992; Yuval-Davis, 1992). As Yasemin Soysal (1996:

7) observes, “the cultural complexity offered by immigrants is beyond the taxonomical capacity of the official.” This version of multiculturalism is called “mosaic multiculturalism” that takes culture monolithic and relates it with a territory. It finally ends up with the fragmentation of the society, and this fragmentation usually forms ghettos – neighborhoods of underclasses, and all the problems coming with them: crime, violence, riots, etc. While mosaic multiculturalism is an inaccurate account of and inappropriate response to the mixed-up world, “hodgepodge multiculturalism”, which concerns aesthetic sides of cultures, expressed in world music, fashion, literature, and cuisine, cannot make any political claims (Joppke and Lukes, 1999).

Some others, on the other hand, argue on the complete structured nature of cultures that are not real but analytical categories (Baumann, 1996), that are not “things” in the world but rather “perspectives on the world” (Brubaker, 2005), or that are “narratives” of the self (Hall, 1992). However, none of these, according to Modood (2007) challenges the political multiculturalism. After all, multiculturalists do not claim any essentialist status for cultures, but suggest a multiculturalist political response to a social situation especially where there are identifiable and distinct cultures even under conditions of domination or interaction, and more importantly where discrimination takes place on the name of group identities. Also, culture or ethnicity may be human products, but this does not put them in a less normatively important or less sociologically real position than other human products such as class, political ideology, or nation. In most places, cultural, religious and ethnic identities gain political significance.

2.6.2.5. Multiculturalism as against Reality

Another theoretical critique deals with the changing nature of ethnicities that multiculturalism cannot apprehend. Assuming identities as stable and hermetically sealed is problematic. Identities cannot be kept separated from others; they are not hermetically sealed entities that are internally consistent and which necessarily exclude other identities (Jones and Krzyzanowski, 2008: 42). Most of these criticisms follow Stuart Hall's highly influential "New Ethnicities" article (1992b). Hall, in that article, argued that black people do not constitute a singular group any more, but there are more plural, cross-cutting and mixed identities within black people. Following Hall, some argued that global cities as London, New York, Amsterdam or Paris appear as centers for hybrid identities (Back, 1996; Keith, 2005), or found that many ethnic minority people do not claim single group identity and do not define themselves in terms of difference (Cohen, 1999), or although there are high levels of self-identification, they are co-exist with different identities and are subject to change (Modood et al. 1997). Identities are constructed, both internally—by us through our self (re)presentation and alignment with others— and externally— by the powerful other, such as institutional gatekeepers who can set threshold criteria for entry to groups either through membership in a formal sense (such as with citizenship requirements) or in less formal or symbolic everyday ways (Jones and Krzyzanowski, 2008: 45). It is true that identities are more fluid, hybridic and more individualistic than they used to be. However, this does not mean that identity has become a largely symbolic concept for individuals and groups. Loss of identity cannot be generalized for all groups some of which are still highly visible and are subject to exclusion and discrimination.

2.6.2.6. Multiculturalism as anti-National

Perhaps, the most standard and influential critic of multiculturalism is that it disunites or fragmentize the national societies (Schlesinger, 1992), or in Kymlicka's words (1997: 80), it would lead us down a "slippery slope," where more and more groups would demand more and more rights, leading to the eventual disintegration of society. While redirecting loyalties from the nation to the cultural group, multiculturalism still has to reckon with a world in which states are the main agencies of political organization. Not providing an organizational alternative, multiculturalism behaves like a parasite, feeding upon elements of modern states—such as universal language of citizenship as a prerequisite for equality and recognition claims—while doing nothing to sustain and reproduce these elements (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 8-9). Kymlicka (1997) answers this concern for "slippery slope" by arguing that first we should accept the fact that ethno-cultural groups are not totally amorphous and are not capable of making radical changes in their demands from day to day, and second, there are deep and relatively stable differences between various kinds of ethno-cultural groups. Therefore, according to Kymlicka, categorizing groups and specifying the demands they can make is the answer. Yet, as it is argued above, categorizing groups hierarchically is problematic as well.

2.6.2.7. Multiculturalism as a Parasite of the Welfare State

Multiculturalism is criticized in its relationship to welfare state. The critics are twofold. On the one hand, it is argued among the right-wing circles that multiculturalism is out of date as the neoliberalism is on the rise claiming that slim governments and free-markets are not only essential to democracy but also favorable to equity, personal responsibility and collective well-being. Indeed, most defenders

of multiculturalism are also strong defenders of welfare state since both of them flowing from the same underlying principles of justice and distribution. On the other hand, some others, mostly in left-wing circles, argue that multiculturalism weakens the welfare state because the outcomes of multiculturalism (namely the socioeconomic isolation and segregation of immigrants) gradually erode the interpersonal trust, social solidarity, and political coalitions that sustain the welfare state.⁴³ As Kymlicka (2004) argues, this critic of multiculturalism and some actual retreats from multiculturalist policies are not relevant considering national and indigenous minorities, but “bad” immigrants, who maybe seen as illegal or lazy, or as prone to criminality, fanaticism or terrorism. If there is a popular perception about immigrants, then the support for welfare state loses its popularity. People start claim that “why would I pay for these lazy and criminal people?”. In most West European countries, most people face, what Pearce (2004) calls as, “a progressive dilemma” between redistribution and recognition, and withdraw their support from multiculturalism. The most significant example of this is the Netherlands, which for many years had a reputation for its respect for immigrant minorities and its strong welfare state. Dutch welfare provisions has decreased significantly since 1998 and strong integrationist policies has taken effect since 2002 (Entzinger, 2006).

As the discussion so far made it clear, multiculturalism was criticized theoretically by nationalists and liberals during the 1990s, when multiculturalist pioneers such as Kymlicka, Taylor or Parekh published their major works, far before the September 11 attacks in 2001. Critics usually blamed multiculturalism as being essentialist, not understanding the changing nature of cultures, undermine the social

⁴³ For the discussion, see Banting and Kymlicka (2006).

cohesion, and assaulting the principles of liberal democracy such as individual freedom and equality of citizens. However, the claim that multiculturalism practically ended up with disaster has become very frequent only after the September 11 attacks and other shocking violent events in Europe such as London bombings in 2005, or the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004.

CHAPTER 3

MULTICULTURAL NETHERLANDS AND THE MUSLIM MINORITIES

3.1. Introduction

1990s was a decade of prophecies. Everyone was trying to find an answer for what would be the future of the world after the Cold War. It was said that a “clash of civilizations” was inescapable (Huntington, 1993). Some thought that the world had seen enough, the liberal democracy was the ultimate victor, and this was the “end of history” (Fukuyama, 1990). Many other predictions derived from these two prophecies have spread over the world. Nevertheless, no one has foreseen that many achievements of the liberal democracy were to be lost or suspended in the Western world. One of the most dramatic examples of this is the Netherlands. Once known with its cosmopolitanism, acceptance of difference, guaranteeing of religious freedom, and being a heaven for refugees escaping from religious and ethnic wars, the Netherlands has very quickly shifted through coercive and assimilationist policy for not only newcomers but also for its second and third generation non-Western immigrant minorities. How did this stable liberal democracy suddenly start being

very demanding to its immigrant minorities, blaming almost exclusively the immigrants for their lack of integration, and threatening them with sanctions and fees? How did the Netherlands, famous with its religious pluralism and tolerance, severely stigmatized one of its religious groups, namely Muslims, for being backward, and blamed Islam for being not compatible with its norms and values? How did a political tradition, known with its “burgher virtues” and politically correct language, turn almost overnight into very “frank” that did not hesitate to hurt some of its citizens? How did a society, where public discussion of national identity used to be taboo, start searching for national canons in its history to revive national identity?

Globalization and European Union process were two important factors (Lechner, 2008). There is no doubt that post-September 11 discourse about Islam had an impact. The murder of film director Theo van Gogh by a young, second generation, extremist Muslim in 2004 also seriously changed Dutch political landscape (van Bruinessen, 2006). However, to understand what was going on in that country, a deeper analysis is needed. The shift from multiculturalism to integrationalism took place in the early 1990s, long before the murder of Van Gogh (Prins, 1997; Scholten, 2008). Fritz Bolkestein, then the leader of the right-wing liberal People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), brought the issues about immigrant minorities and Islam at the center of political discourse in early 1990s. Paul Scheffer wrote his well-known article “*Het Multiculturele Drama*” in January 2000, more than one year before the September 11. And there are doubts that whether Dutch multiculturalism was really an outcome of a conscious policy making or giving some arbitrary and provisional responses to some certain developments (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000). To understand why the Netherlands had done what

it has done with its immigrant minorities, one should look at what Dutch identity was about, how its cosmopolitanism took shape, how its pillarisation system dealt with religious groups, and how all these affected its policies on immigrants after the World War II.

3.2. Dutch Identity and Cosmopolitanism

The Netherlands has a reputation of being a small cosmopolitan country that is open to external influences and tolerant to all kind of differences. Nevertheless, this cosmopolitanism does not mean identitylessness. As Goudsblom (1967: 6) argues, although the Netherlands, owing to its location and small size, has always been open to foreign influences, and even if being European or Western is a significant element of Dutchness, the Dutch as a “distinct nation” is recognizable from its landscape, houses, and people. In fact, the Dutch were highly successful in keeping both their culture and their political culture to themselves (van Sas, 1993: 8). Ernest Renan, for instance, whose *Qu'est-ce Qu'une Nation?* (What is a Nation?, 1882) is one of the classic texts of nationalism, singled out the Netherlands as one of his archetypical nations. How come a country and a nation, which is small in size, open to outside influences, and even having more than one names to be referred (the Netherlands, Holland, the Dutch), was able to develop a national identity and unity?

A sense of Dutch national consciousness was already present during the seventeenth century and was based on memories of the struggle for national independence against the Spaniards in the sixteenth century (van Sas, 1993: 10). In the first year of its independence, the Republic of Seven United Provinces, a confederation consisted of Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel, Gelderland, and Utrecht was founded. Within this political union, national

institutions developed and a sense of national identity emerged. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Dutch nation as a distinct social and cultural unit was well established (Goudsblom, 1967: 14). The struggle against the Spanish and Catholicism left a twofold legacy: political and religious liberty, both of which became inseparable parts of Dutch political identity (Spruyt, 2007: 315). After Spaniards, another fight against a common enemy, the water, also helped developing a unity and shaped Dutch identity. This fight deeply influenced their character and way of doing politics, which is popularly named as “poldermodel” (Goudsblom, 1967: 11). This important characteristic of Dutch people is presented in the famous proverb: “God made the world, but the Dutch made Holland!” Trying to keep the Dutch “low lands” dry is the direct source of the Dutch poldermodel, a consensual method of deliberation on all levels (Spruyt, 2007: 315).

A third, perhaps the most influential effect, was Dutch people’s success in trade. As Turner (2002: 53) argues, with the rise of early capitalism in Europe, the need to exchange had an unanticipated consequence of promoting cosmopolitanism. Being an important center of trade, the Netherlands, especially Amsterdam, experienced this consequence very significantly. In addition, after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, Jewish traders began to settle in Amsterdam and freely exercised their religion. While the Calvinist authorities attempted to control religious pluralism and restrict the entry of Catholics and Jews into mainstream society, especially the Jews were mostly respected as a consequence of their commercial success in long-distance trade. Attempts to secure religious uniformity were constantly undermined by the economic needs of a trading society, where not only religious fragmentation but also liberal and secular views flourished as well (Smith, 1973). Calvinism has never won over the entire population, nor did it gain complete

political control. Even one of the first constitutional drafts of the Republic (1579) stated that “no one may be prosecuted or investigated in the cause of religion” (Goudsblom, 1967: 18).

It is true that the Dutch Reformed Church was the only religious organization that was officially recognized, and public worshipping of other churches and religions were banned. The minorities of Roman Catholics, Protestant dissenters, and Jews suffered serious discrimination, especially in being ineligible for public office; however, they were tolerated, and although it was against the law, they were usually allowed to conduct their worship publicly (Goudsblom, 1967: 18). Nevertheless, there are two points to make. First, tolerance and cosmopolitanism was an unwanted and unanticipated consequence of the necessities of trade. And, second, the extent of such tolerance should not be exaggerated as the civic calm was periodically fractured especially throughout the 17th century with various attempts to purge the northern cities of Jews and heretical sects. Despite these attempts, the Netherlands was regarded as the home of liberal tolerance, and the principle of religious freedom became a tenet of the republic. In a famous poem on the “Character of Holland”, Andrew Marvell observed:

Hence Amsterdam, Turk, Christian, Pagan, Jew,
Staple of sects and mint of schisms grew:
That bank of conscience, where not one so strange
Opinion but finds credit and exchange. (Marvell 1681, quoted in Turner 2002: 53)

This cultural diversity that was described by Marvell provided the background to Spinoza’s democratic and republican theory of urban space. His rationalist critique of religion thus paved the way for an open and tolerant society (Turner, 2002: 53). In the *Tractatus*, Spinoza commented on the civil liberties and tolerance that were possible in Amsterdam. He observed that, when commercial

exchanges were undertaken, the trader's "religion or sect does not matter, for it has no influence on the decision of lawsuits; and no sect whatsoever is so detested that its members (provided that they harm no one, give everyman his own, and live decent lives) are refused the protection of the civil authorities" (Quoted in Turner, 2002: 54).

Another significant influence to Dutchness came from the burghers of Holland, the most powerful, wealthy and dominant province of the Republic. Its dominance is so strong that the whole country is very commonly referred as Holland in national and international public. As Goudsblom (1967: 29) argues, modernization for the Netherlands mostly meant assimilation of formerly isolated regions into the advanced institutions and system set by Holland. In this assimilation process, the dominant group and role-model for others was Holland's elite, the affluent and powerful burghers. It was they who first established a nationwide network of administration and trade. Other provinces started adopting not only the institutions but also the language and the standards of behavior used and set by the Holland's burgher elite. Indeed, the pillarization system that was effective until the 1960s and the politically correct language that still prevails in the Dutch politics are all outcomes of the codes of behavior installed by these burghers. Since the Netherlands has modernized gradually, without revolutionary shocks, the Dutch social structure and national culture show a marked continuity with the patterns set in previous centuries (Goudsblom, 1967: 72). In other words, pillarization was a modernized way of arranging society and politics according to its traditional religious pluralism.

3.3. Pillarization (*Verzuiling*), Post-Pillarization and Religion in the Modern Netherlands

Although there is a “postnational” trend in the treatment of immigrants in Europe (Soysal, 1994), still the definition of immigrants and approaches to post-immigrant minorities are connected with the nation-state and citizenship conceptions of each country. For example, in Germany’s exclusionary ethnic understanding of citizenship, immigrants are named and treated as “foreigners”; within the constitutional conservative tradition of British polity, they are framed as “racial minorities”; and within the pure civic understanding of French citizenship concept, they are merely named as “immigrants”. In Netherlands too, it has been associated to nation-building legacies as the tolerance towards religious and cultural differences, which was institutionalized under the name of *verzuiling*⁴⁴ (pillarization, or “vertical pluralism” as Moberg (1961) calls it) until the 1960s. A basic knowledge of this particular Dutch tradition is necessary to understand the way new immigrant groups were treated after the War. Indeed, Dutch model of multiculturalism or its pluralistic notion of integration in 1970s and 1980s can be read as an accommodation of new groups within what was left from pillarization system (Waadenburg, 1988). It is especially crucial for understanding the position of new religions because, as Vermeulen and Penninx (2000: 28) argues, of all cultural diversity existing in the Netherlands, it was the religious diversity that was institutionalized most within the pillarization.

The system of pillarization developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was systemized in the period from 1870 to 1920, and since then, pillars were considered a characteristic feature of Dutch society. Sociologically,

⁴⁴ The Dutch term *verzuiling* is derived from the word *zuil*, which means a column or pillar, so pillarization would be a close English cognate (Moberg, 1961).

pillarization consists of the division of organizations and activities into three, sometimes four, chief systems, each of which has a different religious or philosophical tradition (Moberg, 1961: 172). The image of the pillar refers to the vertical element of structures that support a common roof – the Netherlands. Separate organizations were established to maintain distinctions in all areas of life because each group has somewhat different doctrines, principles and life styles. Establishing the pillarization system was led by religious groups, namely Protestants and Catholics, who had already established their own organizations in all spheres of public life, and forced non-religious and relatively more secular political movements (liberals and socialists) to organize themselves in similar ways. Therefore, the society was viewed as resting upon the four basic pillars: Roman Catholic, neo-Calvinistic (*Gereformeed*), liberal protestant, and humanist or socialist (Lijphart, 1968). Since it was organized all the spheres of life, and the members of each group had spent all his/her life from birth to death within the boundaries of the pillar, it can be argued that the pillarization is actually based on different life styles. People from the same background were regionally concentrated and each pillar lived as a different social compartment, spent a great deal of time in different kinds of environments, and received different kinds of instruction in such subjects as religion and history (Goudsblom, 1967: 50-57). Every pillar had its own schools, shops, youth organizations, recreation facilities, churches (only the religious pillars), radio and TV broadcasting corporations, newspapers, literature, trade unions, employer organizations, political parties, universities, leisure organizations⁴⁵ (Gowricharn and

⁴⁵ As Gowricharn and Mungra (1996: 116) argues, most of the time this vertical organization exceeded class contradictions thanks to the unequal development of classes in different pillars. Since the pillars were religiously homogeneous, the religious issues have not been inductive to create tensions within the pillars. Class issues on the other hand have been issues both between and within blocs (Lijphart, 1968: 116). Socio-economic issues in time diminished the loyalties to the confessional

Mungra, 1996: 116). Laws and regulations were developed in which state funds and resources were distributed among different pillars. In short, in the era of pillarization, the Netherlands is considered as a plural society “divided into clearly identifiable and measurable segments which have their own separate social and political organizations” (Lijphart, 1968: 11).

The forces leading to pillarization are ascribed to the emancipation of Catholics and of small traders, craftsmen, farmers and laborers of protestant descent (called *kleine luyden*). These people belonged to the minorities of that time and had less prosperous position (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996: 116). The strategy to improve their position was to concentrate in certain regions, to build up institutions of their own and using these as their base to compete with established groups. In other words, it was a model for emancipation, and right to establish schools and universal suffrage were two major issues that were central to emancipation-through-pillarization model. Before that, there was a very strong Calvinist domination. After the independence, Calvinists, led the revolt against Spain, managed to take charge of schools, to make membership in the Dutch Reformed Church a prerequisite for appointment to civic office, and to forbid by law worshipping in all other churches (Goudsblom, 1967: 17). The very first expression of pillarization was the establishment of Catholic State Party in 1880 which was the outcome of Catholic self-expression in newspapers, literary journals and history books to break the linkage between national identity and Protestantism (Moberg, 1961: 173). Controversies on education is also a field where the roots of pillarization can be traced. Catholics and neo-Calvinists, united in a “monstrous alliance” to demand equality for religious schools (Moberg, 1961: 174). This battle between repressed

formations. This, in the post-pillarization era, helped the easier contact of the people from the same class even if they are from different pillars.

and dominant groups was settled in favor of the former (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996). By the “education pacification” of 1889 and the “great pacification” of 1917, repressed groups won their objective of equal government subsidies for all schools (Moberg, 1961: 174). After all, they acquired the constitutional right to exercise and institutionalize their own life styles and religion. And it was not only religious groups, but also the social democrats and liberals adopted a similar strategy with the important difference however that they never resorted to isolation (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996). Still, they too built their own institutions in confrontation with the established groups, and produced their own subculture and organizations, thus constituting two separate pillars.

There was almost no relationship between the pillars except that of among the elites; in fact, there was a mutual latent hostility. There was a strong identification with one’s own pillar. Party loyalties had usually been strong and the popular vote very stable (Lijphart, 1968: 25). Increasing competition between religious groups led to efforts to protect the members of each religious community from conversion. It was believed that the higher the walls between the religious groups, the more protection will the members get from the influence of those who were *andersdenkende* (having other points of view) (Moberg, 1961: 174). For that reason, group exclusiveness was fostered deliberately by each church to shelter members from influences that are considered as detrimental to its way of religious faith and practice. At the same time, the pillarization system was about respecting, or perhaps ignoring the lifestyles of other groups. Competition was contained while commodity and labor markets were segmented. According to Gowricharn and Mungra (1996: 117), the Dutch political culture should be marked with this pattern of “peaceful coexistence”, and however, this feature is often confused with the celebrated Dutch

tolerance. In other words, the Dutch society is not traditionally tolerant, but ignorance and indifference are better terms to define inter-group relations. As long as they do not intervene each other, which was institutionalized under pillarization, a peaceful competition existed. As Lijphart (1968) argues, Dutch model challenges the classical liberal assumption that for a viable and stable democracy, general will and consensus is crucial. Although the social communication across class and religious boundary lines is minimal, Dutch democracy is stable and effective.

There were two major political functions of this system. First, it formed a very powerful mechanism to control in-group structure. It was a mobilization model from above, and therefore, elite formation was crucial for pillarization. Each pillar required strong leadership, discipline and social control, as well as the containment of internal opposition. Due to this power base, the leaders of the pillar could develop an extensive network with elites of other pillars, deal effectively with them and contain conflicts between pillars. Indeed, Lijphart (1968), who made this particular Dutch system known to international public, defined this system as “elite-cartel democracy.” As elites developed mechanisms to compromise, the second major function of pillarization came to surface, namely pacification. Pacification and stability required compromises, a practice which enabled the minorities to acquire equal rights. *Pacification* thus enables *democratization* and hence *emancipation*. These were three important outcomes of pillarization (Lijphart, 1968). In other words, the Dutch political elite have been highly successful in finding pragmatic solutions to the problems before they become serious fault lines between ordinary people.

When it came to 1950s, the Netherlands’ picture is that of a socially divided but politically stable democracy. While in the middle of nineteenth century, more

than three-fourths of all elementary school pupils attended public denominational schools, the situation was almost reversed in 1957: only 28 percent still attended public schools and 72 percent were in the private schools established along pillar boundaries (Lijphart, 1968: 52). Division of elementary education not only separates the children belonging to different blocs physically but also instills different values in them. What schools teach goes beyond the teaching of different religious beliefs, and reproduces separate subculture of the bloc rather than an integrated national culture. As Gadaurek (1961: 545-546) points out, the national history taught in these private elementary schools is merely the country's past interpreted from each bloc's point of view rather than a truly national history, and these versions are in contradiction to each other. Even at the public universities, extracurricular life was far from integrated: most student clubs were (and still are) separately organized on a bloc basis (Lijphart, 1968: 52).

Some argue that because of pillarization, the Dutch could not develop a proper answer to "who we are?" question, and a sense of national identity was lacking, or at least ill-developed (Spruyt, 2007: 317). Nevertheless, when it is asked whether this is a system where several nations inhabit the same country, Lijphart's answer is that "it is a nation divided, but not one divided against itself" (Lijphart, 1968: 70). First of all, there was a desire to preserve existing system, and second, there existed a feeling of belonging to a common nation as well as to one's own bloc (Lijphart, 1968: 78-79). As Goudsblom (1967: 6) argues, even in the 1960s, ethnic make-up of the country was almost completely homogeneous: "No less than 96 percent of the people living in the Netherlands today were born there, and for most of them Dutch is their mother tongue." The Netherlands has hardly ever experienced internal threats to its nationhood. Instead of opposing the national structure as such,

the formerly excluded minorities have claimed an equitable share in it, seeking integration according to the typical pattern of *verzuiling* (Goudsblom, 1967: 121). For example, Catholics, who were subject to systematic discrimination, and, in particular, were excluded from all governmental jobs, did not turn against the Dutch nation. Instead, the Catholic minority always fought for emancipation within the nation. And finally, in the liberal constitutions of 1798 and 1848, they received self-government and religious freedom (Lijphart, 1968: 80-81). The aim of this system was, in Goudsblom's words, a "segmented integration": they aspire to participate in all national decision-making and to benefit fully from all national facilities while at the same time maintaining internal unity and cohesion (Goudsblom, 1967: 124).

From the 1960s onward, pillarization has eroded. The most significant changes in Dutch population's religious affiliation are that there is a decrease in Dutch Reformed Church's registered members from 54.6 percent in 1849 to 28.3 percent in 1960 and an increase in the percentage of non-religious people from none in 1849 to 18.4 percent in 1960.⁴⁶ A centralized, strong welfare state, urbanization, secularization, class-orientations, changing life styles, individualization and intermarriages struck at the roots of the pillar system. The pillars are no more distinct blocs, and ideological or religious affiliation is presently less emphasized. Dutch society became increasingly secular and subjected to universal ideologies. Moreover, the Netherlands was transformed from a very religious country into one of the most secularized in Europe. This transformation implies an ideological "de-pillarization" (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000: 28). However, many pillar-features are still present (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996: 118). Institutions and organizations of the pillars are still functioning, although reduced in size and significance, and changed in character.

⁴⁶ These numbers are the census results from Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics (Goudsblom, 1967: 51).

For example, political parties, trade unions, schools, hospitals, media, universities and football clubs are still mostly organized along lines of the traditional pillars. Its pacification and the emancipation functions seem still relevant, perhaps in a different form. For instance, mainstream Catholic and Protestant political parties fused and became one Christian-democratic bloc, named Christian Democratic Appeal (the CDA).

Another new phenomenon was the arrival of people from other than Dutch-ethnic descent to the Netherlands first from its former colonies and later from South and East Europe and the Mediterranean region (mostly Turks and Moroccans) as “guest workers”, and more significantly, their decision to stay and constitute new ethnic and religious minorities in the Netherlands. So the question since then is whether these immigrant groups should build their own pillar, or whether building such new ethnic and religious pillars would help their emancipation. The debate about these questions went hand by hand with the discussions about multiculturalism. Those against pillarization, the left and liberals, or in another word, seculars, are also harsh critics of multiculturalism. For example, when Fritz Bolkestein, then the leader of right-wing liberal party, the VVD, launched the statement that, Muslims, the most crowded and significant immigrant group in the Netherlands, should adjust themselves to Dutch customs in order to integrate, Ruud Lubbers, the Prime Minister from the Christian Democrats at that time, countered that Muslims should build a pillar of their own to achieve their goals and emancipate (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996: 114). The central issue was whether the emancipation-through-pillarization model could be used in order to alleviate the problems of migrants in general and Muslims in particular. Those in favor of pillar model emancipation argued that Catholics and other groups did achieve upward

mobility through self-organization. Although there has been de-pillarization and secularization, religious background may still serve as important in immigrant identity and organizations. It is also argued that since freedom of religious and educational organization is constitutionally guaranteed, there is no valid reason to deny migrants this right to establish their own organizations and even build a pillar on their own (Lijphart, 1968; Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996: 118).

Many politicians however disagreed with Lubber's suggestion in the continuity of pillarization (Prins, 1997: 115). Liberals, for instance, never believed in the collectivistic outlook of pillarized society in the first place. Social democrats, on the other hand, object to the comparison between present-day position of ethnic minorities and the earlier position of religious-political groups because the latter did not really occupy a minority position. Their members, for example, were all white, hence not confronted with racial discrimination, and they were all Dutch citizens, and as such enjoyed equal political and civil rights. Those against pillarization also argue that immigrant minorities are too small to constitute a political group of any significance. Worse, they are internally divided. For example, Muslims are divided in ethnic lines (mostly Turks and Moroccans), or immigrants coming from Turkey divided among ideological (left-right), religious (Alevi-Sunni), and ethnic (Turk-Kurd) lines. This is evident especially since minorities do not have powerful organizations such as trade unions, employer organizations and the like. Not having distinct political and economic elite is another problem to establish a pillar. Furthermore, the traditional pillar encompassed the total life of individuals. However, migrants constitute predominantly an urban problem and they are very mobile. They also argue that since pillarization encourage segregation at the bottom and integration at the top, it may not serve the integration of migrants in Dutch

society. And finally, referring to Islam and the increasing secularization therein, it was emphasized that for many Muslims this is an identity rather than a religion. Shadid (2006) argues that a pillar based on this identity may contribute to the “cultural emancipation” of minorities but it is unlikely that it will have effects on their social and economic position.

Regardless of the debate, immigrants, as soon as they realized that there was no going back home and the Netherlands was their new home, made use of what was left from pillarization. Muslims for instance applied for establishing an Islamic broadcasting service, which was granted by the Directorate for the Media in 1985, making the Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Service a part of subsidized public broadcasting system. In 1994, a Hindu broadcasting service was also added. In the schooling arena, Muslims and Hindus have been founding primary schools since 1988, in full accordance with the rules of Dutch law since 1988. Ten years later, there were more than thirty such schools. This is higher number than any other Western European immigration country. For example in 1997, the Netherlands had 29 Islamic and 3 Hindu schools. At roughly the same time, Belgium and Germany each had one Islamic school that was recognized and funded by the governments. In France and Great Britain, no such denominational schools existed (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000: 28).

An immigrant pillar may be economically, socially and politically functional. But as important as that there is the cultural and psychological security it provides. The surrounding world becomes recognizable and their degree of “feeling at home” may increase, which in turn would boost their desire to integrate in the host society. After all, it seems that these assumptions played a role when policymakers have made new laws and regulations about immigrant minorities especially during the

1970s and 1980s. The Netherlands followed its traditional pattern of pillarization, and aimed at establishing a state-regulated but self organized separate Muslim pillar. Lately, however, the Dutch public has been expressing second thoughts and the governments seem ready to pass more restrictive legislation, setting clear limits to the kinds of un-European, un-modern norms and habits (Casanova, 2009: 141). The official attitude towards migrant pillars is also ambiguous. On the one hand, there is the recognition that migrants are entitled to have their own provisions and life styles; on the other hand, there is a reluctance to stimulate those initiatives. There is a fear of social separatism and weakening of the social cohesion (Gowricharn and Mungra, 1996: 126). However, the fears seem to be exaggerated because, first of all, migrants do not constitute a monolithic bloc that share one overarching identity. Rather they have multiple identities. So there is no isolation at the base. The migrants also do not constitute an organic whole. Some socialize in predominantly Dutch circles while others are strongly integrated in the Muslim community (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000).

The pillarization has waned away, and there has been a great deal of secularization in Dutch society. However, as mentioned above, certain institutions and organizations are still effective, and the political culture of pillarization will normally not vanish overnight. The problem is not whether Muslims or immigrants are able to build a pillar. It is true that a Muslim or immigrant bloc as such does not seem possible because there is no homogeneity, regional concentration, nor leadership. But what is more interesting is that Muslims or other immigrant minorities are resisted when they try to make use of their constitutional rights to organize and establish institutions. There are two important points to make here. First of all, it seems that the Dutch have not learned their lessons from the emancipation

struggles of their suppressed groups. Emancipations cannot take place in such short periods and reaching a settlement between groups needs patience. Yet, the discussions about immigrant or Islamic organizations are very impatient to find a settlement to the problems. They also expect these newcomers improve socio-economically and socio-culturally very soon. It was only early 1980s that the Dutch government recognized the fact that the immigrants would stay and be a minority within. Just after ten years, in the early 1990s, the complaining about immigrants with a special emphasis on Muslims already started (Shadid, 2006). Ten years is a very short period of time to accommodate immigrants that are alien groups with lack of necessary resources to participate into the society. Even the Catholics are an indigenous religious group with strong foundation and powerbase, their struggle to acquire the right to receive state subsidies for their denominational schools had took over a hundred years from the Education Act of 1806, which established a virtual monopoly of religiously neutral public schools, to the “great pacification” of 1917, when Catholic schools, along with all other private and public schools, started receiving state funds.

Secondly, the standards asked to be reached for Muslims are always relatively more demanding. During the pillarization and de-pillarization era, minorities other than Muslims were only asked to comply with the rules of the game at the elite base. As Lijphart (1968: 122-137) describes, the political culture of pillarization makes politics as a “business” that is played by elites, who are oriented towards results. There is an “agreement to disagree”, and de-politicization and secrecy are central to continue the system. An important effect of these rules is to make politics dull and to keep popular interest at low level. In other words, the political culture developed by and instilled in the elite, not to the mass culture. Muslim community, on the other

hand, is required to change its culture and life-style as a whole. All the pragmatic characteristics of Dutch political culture that accommodated the demands of different groups seem to have troubles to accommodate Muslims. The reason cannot only be the fear from and exclusion of religious reasoning because Dutch society is accustomed to such reasoning in the public sphere. In fact, it had been predominant in the political discourse until 1970s. In the election manifestos of 1963, the Catholic Party proclaims that it wants to “give form and content to the society of tomorrow based on the Christian view of life.” Or the Christian Historical Union states its conviction that “God’s word” must be the “foundation and guideline” in policy making. The Anti-Revolutionary party also affirms as the first of the “principal points of a policy that will serve our people and the world”: “the recognition of God’s majesty in and above the present tumultuous events and of man’s dependence on His mercy in Jesus Christ, and so the requirement of obedience to His commandments” (Lijphart, 1968: 140). Today too some conservative Protestant political parties are free not to accept women candidates in their ballots, or their constituencies are free not get immunization for their children, but still they can be a part of the coalition government or be represented in the Tweede Kamer, the second chamber of Dutch parliament.

The answer of why the Dutch became very intolerant to immigrants and Muslims in spite of they are accustomed to religious diversity can be found Goudsblom’s conclusion to his analysis of Dutch society in 1967, long before immigrants became an issue. According to Goudsblom (1967: 151), the idea of tolerance is matched by the idea of orderliness. Therefore, different thoughts, lifestyles and religions are tolerated as long as they do not interfere with the prevailing social order. As Goudsblom argues, at points where the norm of

orderliness is supposed to be violated, the tolerance of social system ends, and divergence comes to be defined as “deviance”. However, this only explains only one side of the medal, and furthermore, hides the other side by making anti-immigration, anti-Islam, or xenophobia as the outcomes of some legitimate and innocent feeling: the anger and fear caused by broken social orderliness. Although the end of multiculturalism discourse gains its legitimacy from this “innocent” feeling, the mentality is more than innocence. According to Buruma (2006), an important remnant of pillarization is the “club mentality,” which forms the insiders and outsiders referring to some unwritten rules. This mentality is tolerant as long as those do not belong do not bother. This was a limited pluralism that took place in the context of shared values. As Spruyt (2007) argues, the differences were among various groups of Christians and, later, also secularized Christians. But this common foundation was perished intellectually and practically with secularization and relativism of 1960s and 1970s, equality of the welfare state, and the influx of immigrants. Conservative intellectuals like Bart Jan Spruyt (2007: 320) frankly points out Islam– “a religion that was essentially anti-Western”– as the reason why pillarization, which worked well with other groups, did not, and cannot, work well with post-immigration minorities.

3.4. Post-Immigration Minorities and Dutch Multiculturalism

The concept of multiculturalism has covered various topics, ranging from concerns about immigration in the 1950s and 1960s to the dangers of marginalized immigrant groups in the wake of the attacks since 2001. In the Netherlands, it is taken for granted that the multicultural experiment has largely failed and that the Dutch government’s policies of the last three decades have been unable to achieve

the integration of immigrants and participation of all citizens. Islam, particularly its fundamentalist aspects, is attributed a key role in this negative view on multiculturalist policies (Pennix, 2005). This downturn is often associated with a series of major, negative events. The first was the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, which due to its link with fundamentalist Islam became associated with the integration problems of Muslim minorities in the Netherlands. The next events were the assassinations of the popular politician Pim Fortuyn in the run-up to parliamentary elections in 2002⁴⁷ and of the controversial director Theo van Gogh in 2004, who made a short, critical film, named *Submission*, on the position of women in Islam, written by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a member of parliament from Muslim background. These events have strongly impacted the directions, intensity and mood of the discussions on the multicultural society in the Netherlands.

Although the Netherlands is used to the plural society and even institutionalized it within the pillarization system, the concept of multiculturalism has never been a discussion about indigenous minorities (e.g. Catholics, Jews, or Frieslanders⁴⁸), but about immigrants; and not about Western immigrants, but non-Westerners only. Spruyt (2007) argues that because of the weak foundations of Dutch national identity as an outcome of pillarization, the Netherlands employed the most extreme forms of the doctrine of multiculturalism after 1968. However, there are doubts whether the policies developed to accommodate newcomers were the fruits of deliberate decisions. Indeed, the Dutch immigration and integration policies have undergone notable changes over the past decades since 1970s, and multiculturalism, if employed any, was only one of the stages in this process. While for some time the Netherlands was celebrated for its multiculturalist, in other words

⁴⁷ Although Pim Fortuyn was murdered by an animal rights activist, his death left a legacy of a strong debate on immigration and multiculturalism since his populist discourse mostly relied on such issues.

⁴⁸ Friesland, with its distinct people and different language, is a northern province of the Netherlands.

inclusive, policies towards its newcomers, since the mid-1990s, there has been an increasing emphasis on integration and adaptation to Dutch norms and values. Indeed, the Netherlands is now considered as one of the most striking examples among countries that have renounced multiculturalist policies (Entzinger, 2003). This trend in the Netherlands is accompanied by a change in the style of making politics: from “political correctness”, which was a tool in the Dutch tradition of conflict avoidance, to what Prins (1997) calls “new realism”, which has not hesitated to politicize immigration and integration issues and polarize Dutch public on these matters.

A brief history of immigration in the Netherlands may help to understand how and why immigration and integration policies have developed as such. Policies on immigrant minorities have changed dramatically about once every decade along with the way immigrants are defined (e.g. “guest workers”, “ethnic or cultural minorities”, “allochthonous” (or “not from here”). Although the Dutch government publicly recognized that the most immigrants would stay in the Netherlands and began to develop a coherent policy towards immigrants only in the beginning of the 1980s, there was also an active public involvement with the situation of immigrants since their arrival.

3.4.1. Before the 1980s: The Years of Wishful Thinking

The Netherlands, as a prototypical welfare state, saw it as its task to care for everyone, including the immigrants who are brought to the country to help it to be more prosperous (Entzinger, 2006). The objective, in those days, of course could not be integration, but that at least the “temporary” guests workers should be provided with a decent reception and it should be ensured that they could preserve their

“cultural identity” for not having difficulty when they go back their home countries. To this purpose, special social work agencies were set up for them with public money; rules were laid down which required employers to provide decent accommodation for their foreign workers; and most of the welfare state provisions such as employment benefits, public assistance, healthcare and housing subsidies were also made available to the temporary migrants. The first immigration associations were also warmly supported by the state. And finally, with the Law on Primary Education in 1974, mother tongue teaching for migrant children was introduced in primary schools after family reunion had begun to gain momentum. This would enable the children to retain their cultural identity and it would facilitate their reinsertion upon returning home (Entzinger, 2003: 61).

Indeed, these points were clearly stated in Foreign Workers Memorandum in 1970: “More than on promoting their integration as such, policy needs to be directed at providing the group the chance to retain its own identity. This means that the group is stimulated to develop self activities. A group-focused approach is essential to this aim. (...) For foreign workers, who will generally remain in our country for only a short time, the emphasis will be mainly on retention of identity. Re-integration after return to the home country will than be the least problematic.”⁴⁹ If this statement is divided into two, and only the first part is read to anyone, it would sound as a deliberate and ambitious multiculturalist policy: “providing the group the chance to retain its own identity,” stimulating the group to develop self-activities,” “the essentiality of a group-focused approach.” However, all these have a precondition: immigrants’ returning back to their home. In this case, it becomes a wishful thinking rather than a coherent multiculturalism.

⁴⁹ Foreign Workers Memorandum Parliamentary Document TK 1969-1970, 10504, nr.1:12, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 79).

A second wishful thinking in a subsequent policy paper was also accompanied: the Netherlands “was not and should not be a country of immigration.”⁵⁰ The norm of not being a country of immigration provided an argument for not developing a policy for immigrant integration as well. If there was a question of integration, then it would mean that the guest workers were staying and the Netherlands was a country of immigration. In 1974, Van Amersfoort gave a wake up call to that wishful thinking in his influential study, “Immigration and Minority Formation,” which for the very first time defined immigrants as ethnic or cultural “minorities.” He defined ethnic minorities as social groups or “collectivities” with strong internal bondings, problems of political participation and weak social positions. In this respect, Van Amersfoort calls for government intervention so as to prevent, what he names, “minority formation” (Scholten, 2008: 89). The result is that specific policies would be needed for specific collectivities to prevent this process of minority formation.

3.4.2. 1980s: Balancing between Multiculturalism and Universalism

Approximately at the same time of Van Amersfoort’s warnings, Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) published its report *Ethnic Minorities* in 1979. The report openly stated that there was an urgent need to change policy on immigrants because most of them would not return their home-countries, the Netherlands was to be their new home. The Council claimed that a concerted policy effort was needed to promote their incorporation. The government endorsed the Council’s views with its “ethnic minorities policy” first as a draft Minorities Memorandum in 1981, and finally in an official Minorities Memorandum

⁵⁰ Foreign Workers Memorandum, Memorandum of Understanding, Parliamentary Document 1973-1974, TK 10504, nr.9, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

(*Minderhedennota*) in 1983. As the name suggests, this policy perceived migrants as ethnic groups rather than individuals (Entzinger, 2003: 62). For the first time, the presence of specific immigrant groups was recognized to be permanent. “The new policy is based on the assumption that ethnic minorities will remain permanently in the Netherlands (...) thereby distancing itself from the idea that their presence would have been of temporary order.”⁵¹ Stressing their permanent position in Dutch society, immigrants were described, named and framed as “cultural” or “ethnic” minorities. Assimilationism and differentialism were explicitly rejected.⁵² The frame underlying the minorities Policy had characteristics of a multiculturalist as well as a universalist frame. On the one hand, policy discourse stressed “mutual adaptation” in the context of the Netherlands as a “multi-ethnic” or “multicultural society”⁵³. On the other hand, this mutual adaptation not only involved social-cultural emancipation of minorities and combating discrimination, but also enhancing the social-economic participation of members of minorities.⁵⁴ The combination of multiculturalist and universalist elements is also manifest in the combination of a group and individualistic focus in the official policy aim; “to achieve a society in which the members of minority groups that reside in the Netherlands can, each individually as well as group-wise, enjoy an equal position and full opportunities for development.”⁵⁵

This policy’s objective is popularly known as “integration with retention of identity,” which according to Entzinger (2003: 63) is threefold: emancipation in multicultural society, equality before the law, and promoting equal opportunity in the

⁵¹ Minorities Memorandum, Parliamentary Document, TK 1982-1983, 16102, nr. 21:10, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

⁵² Reply Memorandum to WRR report Ethnic Minorities 1979, Parliamentary Document, TK 1980-1981, 16102, nr.21:102, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

⁵³ Minorities Memorandum: 107, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

⁵⁴ Minorities Memorandum: 10, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

⁵⁵ Minorities Memorandum: 12, (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 80).

job market and education. The first objective is reminiscent of the Dutch tradition of institutionalized pluralism, known as pillarization (*verzuiling*). While preservation of ethnic identity was earlier considered as a precondition for a successful return, it became an instrument in promoting emancipation in the multicultural Netherlands under the new policy (Entzinger, 2003: 64). Pillarization's notion of strengthening group identity as means of promoting emancipation is vividly present in the minorities' policy. For doing that, Muslim and Hindu schools were subsidized by the state on the same conditions as Protestant, Catholic or Jewish schools, and certain activities organized by the mosques such as social work, language training, courses for women were financially supported (Shadid and van Koningsveld, 1992). Elite formation was also encouraged by setting up consultative councils for ethnic minorities both at local and national levels. However, as Entzinger (2003: 65) argues, this occurred mostly at the initiative of the authorities seeking to justify their policies, rather than migrants' own request. Another interesting point is that the policies designed to retain one's own cultural identity in order to encourage immigrants to return their countries of origin, now employed to embed immigrants to their new country. In Sniderman and Hagendoorn's words (2007: 1), "a policy that began with one aim was committed to opposite one". In other words, the commitment was made first, and much later the possible consequences of this policy were discussed. Unfortunately, this one of the most ambitious commitment to multiculturalism was not an outcome of a deliberate discussion.

In these years, rather than fostering policies of affirmative action in the workplace, it is aimed at undoing the rapidly expanding rate of unemployment among ethnic minority groups by improving their starting position, i.e. by providing facilities for training and education (Prins, 1997: 114). In terms of the causal theory

underlying the minorities' policy, an important premise was that social-cultural emancipation of minority groups would also favor social-economic participation of individual members of these groups (Hagendorn et al. 2003). Although the slogan "general when possible, specific when necessary" was introduced, the policy was mainly directed at specific groups. For instance, it was believed that by maintaining group-specific facilities for Immigrant Minority Language and Culture classes, the social cultural emancipation of these groups could be furthered, which would also eventually benefit individual social economic participation (Scholten, 2008: 80). Still, contrary to what Cliteur (2007) suggests, this multiculturalist value orientation did not involve a strong cultural relativism. The goal was that to take up minority groups in the collective bargaining culture of Dutch democracy (Prins, 1997: 114). None of these were new for Dutch society as the right to organize oneself in order to preserve one's religion is laid down in the Dutch constitution. This constitutional rule was, and still is, fundamental to the pillarized structure of Dutch society.

Indeed, as mentioned above, Ruud Lubbers, then the prime minister, suggested that the underlying principle of pillarization furthers the emancipation of individuals through a strengthening within one's own circle first: "In my political-social analysis, I – Christian Democrats– am convinced that integration within the larger society is improved when you start with respecting people's roots, with understanding where they come from (...) everything which is familiar, affirmative, emancipatory for one's own group is good till the point where it really causes trouble for others" (quoted in Prins, 1997: 115). Another leading Christian Democrat, Piet Hein Donner, talked about the limits of toleration of distinct cultural roots. For him, if two-thirds of the Dutch population would want to introduce *shaira*, then there is nothing we can, or should, do about it because the source of right and law is the

wishes and desires of the majority (Spruyt, 2007: 318). As all other conservative Christians do, Donner thinks that the claims of the state have to take second place to the claims of religions. It seems that Christian Democrats, who formed the governments in most of the parts of the twentieth century, make use of the discussion about the place of Islam for their wider arguments about the place of religion. This was an important inner impulse that prevented to criticize multiculturalism, which thought as a kind of continuation of pillarization system.

Another strong inner impulse was about the heritage of World War II. The Holocaust had taken place in the lifetime of many of the leading politicians, officials, and ordinary people. Immigrant minorities have been seen in the light of the Holocaust. They thought as powerless and dependent, in need of the help and protection of the Dutch; and not tolerating immigrants' way of life and to oppose multiculturalism was thought as manifestations of lack of humanity and labeled racist and xenophobic (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007:2-15). Multiculturalism was the moral right.

3.4.3. 1990s: Shifting through Universalism

Concerning immigrants, Entzinger (2003) identifies three major changes taken place in the early 1990s. First of all, ethnic minorities had almost doubled in size with continuing immigration, family reunions, importing marriage partners from the countries of origin, and high birth rates. Secondly, besides those coming from traditional countries such as Turkey, Morocco and Surinam, the Netherlands also started receiving high numbers of refugees and asylum seekers after 1985. And finally, a second generation, born and educated in the Netherlands, was emerging. Therefore, *Minderhedennota*, a policy targeted at a limited number of clearly defined

“ethnic minorities”, had become more difficult to implement when these minorities become larger, more numerous, and more heterogeneous. Moreover, the social and economic situation of minorities did not improve as much as it was expected (Entzinger, 2003: 70). And there was an increasingly popular belief that even if socio-economic integration takes place among the second and third generation Muslims, they still likely to reject the society and culture into which they were born, in other words, they are less integrated than their parents (e.g. Cliteur, 2007). Government started to raise doubts by the end of the 1980s about whether the current approach of the Minorities Policy should be continued, as especially in material domains (housing, education, labor) the results proved disappointing⁵⁶.

When all these became clear, the WRR issued another report in 1989 after the government asked for its advice. The new report is called *Allochtonenbeleid* (Immigrant Policy), which stated that in the implementation of its first report the government had put too much weight on facilitating multiculturalism, and too little on promoting immigrant participation in society at large. In the Council’s view, a further continuation of the ethnic minorities’ policy would make the immigrants even more dependent on public support and therefore vulnerable and subject to further marginalization. As an alternative, the Council recommended putting more emphasis on education, employment policies and Dutch language training so that the migrants would be better qualified to participate in their own capacity. The emphasis on culture in the Council’s report was only very limited relegating it to private sphere (Entzinger, 2003: 70). According to Vermeulen and Penninx (2000: 212), the WRR in its 1989 report underscored the fact that the development of the social position of immigrants is greatly determined by general economic developments and their

⁵⁶ Action Programme 1988, Parliamentary Document, TK 1987-88, 20260, nr.2, (quoted by Scholten 2008: 82).

effects on the labor market. If the socioeconomic status of the immigrants is bad, it is mostly the outcome of the downturn or change in the industries where immigrants are hired rather than of their socio-cultural background. Immigrants coming from Turkey and Morocco, who were mainly brought over to the Netherlands to prolong the lifespan of outdated industries, were the first victims once the companies finally had to cut back or close.

Another influential argument came from Roelandt and Veenman (1993) who spoke of an “ethnic underclass” in the Netherlands. Their arguments are based upon the large target groups of *Minderhedennota* run the risk of ending up in a vicious circle of marginalization and of becoming an underclass. This basically meant that more people becoming dependent on welfare, hence a heavy weight on the state budget, whereas feelings of frustration could grow into a potential threat to the stability of society at large (Prins, 1997: 116). Indeed, the debate about the ethnic underclass was a characteristic of the early 1990s, a period of recession and high levels of unemployment. However, since 1994, developments in the economy and the labor market have taken a positive turn, and the debate has subsided (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000: 216). Roelandt and Veenman (1993) also maintained that it is too soon to speak of the emergence of an underclass because lack of upward mobility was not yet a phenomenon regarding these ethnic groups especially when it is considered that the majority of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation youth are still in school.

Simultaneously, there had been lively public debates going on, both stemmed from the Council’s report and independent from the report. An important debate among politicians and intellectuals was about the nature and compatibility of immigrant cultures. Frits Bolkestein, then the parliamentary leader of the People’s

Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the right-wing liberals, stated in the Liberal International in September 1991 that Islam and Western values were irreconcilable. He argued that immigrants should adapt to the dominant cultural pattern and follow the existing rules whenever these rules clash with their own cultural background. This was, according to Bolkestein, was a more realistic approach to immigration and integration issues comparing to that of “politically correct” style of Dutch political elite (Prins, 1997: 118). Bolkestein was harshly criticized at the time by pro-multiculturalists, but he also received support, especially the electoral support, which became clear at the subsequent elections as the VVD increased its seats from 22 to 31 in 1994, and to 38 in 1998. For the very first time, a representative of a mainstream political party rather than a far-right politician had brought this issue up⁵⁷. The Netherlands appeared to have a “silent majority,” that consists of those tired of promoting cultural diversity, but hesitated to talk about it, perhaps because of fearing to be accused of racism (Entzinger, 2003: 71).

Finally in 1994, in May 1994, the government published its policy document *Contourennota integratiebeleid etnische minderheden*, which replaced the 1983 *Minderhedennota*. In the new approach less emphasis was put on promoting and facilitating multiculturalism, while the need for integration was underlined more strongly, in particular through an increased participation in education and labor. In other words, the *minorities* policy became *integration* policy. Integration, specifically defined as “a process leading to the full and equal participation of individuals and groups in society, for which mutual respect for identity is seen as a necessary condition” (*Countourennota*, 1994: 24, quoted by Entzinger, 2003: 72). Only looking at this sentence, the departure from the minorities’ policy does not

⁵⁷ Openly racist parties have never played a prominent role in Dutch politics. Anti-immigrant parties, such as the *Centrumpartij*, have never obtained more than two percent of the national vote (but more than that in several of the larger cities).

seem very extreme, except that the word “mutual” indicates that a more active involvement is expected from the native Dutch population. With respect to the policy instruments, however, the *Countourennota* strongly contrasts with its predecessor (Entzinger, 2003). The three main dimensions characterizing the minorities’ policy—the social and economic, the legal and political, and the cultural dimensions—are still to be found within the new integration policy. However, their relative weight has shifted. The emphasis is no longer on culture. When it talks of culture, it emphasizes the fact that culture is not a static concept, it develops in interaction with other cultures, and members of the groups may decide which components or versions they would like to retain or abandon.

Concerning to the socio-economic integration, its major aim is to help overcome social deprivation by providing instruments for anyone who is in a disadvantaged situation, not only immigrants, but every one. In this policy, known as *inburgering*, (civic integration, mainstreaming or citizenizing) especially the local authorities decided to drop the term “ethnic minorities” and to replace it by “(im)migrants” or by the newly created word *allochtonen* (Entzinger, 2003: 73).⁵⁸ These terms can be used much more readily to designate individuals, rather than communities.⁵⁹ Taking immigrants as individuals and citizens is a strong signal of changing the lanes from multiculturalism to universalism. *Countourennota* (p. 8) makes it clear that the “primary goal” was “realizing active citizenship of persons

⁵⁸ *Allochtoon* literally means “not from here”. The term became widespread in the Dutch discourse since the early 1980s. Initially, it simply referred to people born outside the Netherlands. If a person’s mother or father is born outside of the Netherlands, he/she is considered as *allochtoon* as well. However, according to this definition, even the Dutch queen, whose father was born in Germany, would count as *allochtoon*. Then, in everyday usage, an indigenous Dutch black citizen, born in the Netherlands of parents born in the Netherlands, would often find himself/herself referred to as *allochtoon*, whereas a French immigrant may be regarded as foreigner, but not as *allochtoon*. In other words, in daily life, the terms *autochtoon* and *allochtoon* actually are used to distinguish between white Dutchmen and people of color (Prins, 1997: 113).

⁵⁹ However, there was a major contradiction: although the emphasis is on providing opportunities for individuals, the effects of this policy can only be measured at the group level (Entzinger, 2003: 73).

from ethnic minorities” (quoted by Scholten, 2008: 84). It was assumed in this policy that the social problems provoked by immigration could be solved by assisting immigrants to integrate into Dutch society primarily by providing Dutch language courses, vocational training and courses on Dutch society and culture. The reasoning behind this was that although it might be ideal for immigrants to maintain their cultural ways and their own language, not being familiar of the ways and language of the host country may well work against their integration, while also do not help preventing discrimination from the native population (Hagendoorn et al, 2003: 1). With these in mind, Parliament approved in 1997 the *Wet inburgering nieuwkomers* (Law on Civic Integration for Newcomers). It requires that newcomers, if necessary, take lessons on language training, social and civic skills, and labor market orientation (Entzinger, 2003: 77). This ambition to familiarize all newcomers with the language, culture and society of the Netherlands was something unthinkable under the Minorities’ Policy. Cultural elements of *Minderhedennota* were mostly abandoned. It also meant the denunciation of the pillarization philosophy. Consequently, checking the credentials of the institutions that receive public subsidies has become stricter (Entzinger, 2003: 77-78). There was also a radical reversal from the assumption that socio-cultural emancipation would eventually benefit socio-economic participation to the belief that socio-economic participation was an important condition for socio-cultural emancipation (Hagendoorn et al, 2003).

3.4.4. 2000s: Culture all that Matters

In the early 2000, the debate about multiculturalism and immigrant integration reached a peak and attracted an unprecedented amount of public attention. This new peak was triggered by Paul Scheffer’s long article, “*Het*

Multiculturele Drama” (the Multicultural Tragedy), in the newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* on 29 January 2009. Paul Scheffer is not only a professor of history, but also a prominent member of the Labor Party⁶⁰. The “tragedy,” in his view, is that an “ethnic underclass” is developing that consists of people who do not feel attached to Dutch culture and society and who are unwilling and unable to integrate. According to Scheffer, current immigration policy, or rather lack of one, had created this underclass whose assimilation into Dutch society was unlikely. Different than the ethnic underclass discussion in early 1900s, which mostly concerned in socioeconomic position of ethnic groups, this argument blamed the incompatibility of immigrant cultures, mostly Muslims, to Dutch culture. Eventually this would undermine social cohesion and the functioning of the liberal democratic state, particularly because of the supposedly illiberal ideas of Muslims. In Scheffer’s view, the trouble is that the Dutch elite have remained largely indifferent to these developments. Their cosmopolitan ideology and politically correct language have prevented Dutch politicians from demanding the newcomers to adapt to Dutch norms and values. Respect for cultural identity has prevailed over defending the principles of liberal democracy. The only possible answer, in Paul Scheffer’s perception, is a “civilization offensive,” which includes more obligatory policy efforts to overcome deprivation as well as demanding from the immigrants to adapt to the principles of liberal democracy. Other scholar and intellectuals from liberal right agreed Scheffer. Paul Cliteur (2007), for example, argue “the right of Western world to defend itself”. Moreover, immigrants should have a much better knowledge of “our” culture and history. This nationalist accent is something new in the debate. However, this nationalism intermingles with a Euro-centrism: defending a wider “our” than the

⁶⁰ He even thought to run as a candidate for the PvdA’s parliamentary leadership (Nisnews Bulletin, February 9, 2005)

only Dutch. Therefore, forming a new alliance that cuts across the left and right ideological divides, Scheffer, Cliteur and other “new realist” intellectuals attack multiculturalism for its relativism that fails to recognize and value “our culture”, ideals of Enlightenment and principles of liberal democracy.

As mentioned above, in 1991, the right-wing liberal Frits Bolkestein argued that whenever there is a clash between “Muslim” and “Western” values, Muslims should abandon those values in question. The social democrat Paul Scheffer went further and underlined the need for a shared ideology that consists of not only liberal democratic principles but also in Dutch history. This according to Han Entzinger (2003: 80) comes much closer to assimilation in its traditional meaning. Both Scheffer and Bolkestein actually ask the question of how to cope with those who do not share a sense of belonging and who may not adhere to the principles of liberal democracy. Their close-to-assimilationist approach, however, seems to overlook how to preserve social cohesion without damaging the liberal principles of freedom and tolerance. They do not bring a novelty in that respect. But what was fresh in this debate is that it gave assimilationism a respectable voice, it brought anti-immigrant discourse at the very center of the political and intellectual debate. In short, they found a way to be assimilationist, anti-immigrant, anti-Islam and anti-multiculturalist without being called racist. In the end, one was the leader of a central-right party and the other was a respectable figure of the center-left. They do not deny that some degree of pluralism is unavoidable, but argue that dominant values of a society set the limits of that diversity. As argued above, the Dutch people are not among the most nationalist peoples in Europe and the tragic memories from World War II make nationalism a susceptible ideology in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, as Entzinger (2003: 83) argues, classical nationalist considerations, such as the right to protect

one's language and culture, an emphasis on common descent and the importance of a shared history are increasingly heard as arguments to support the need for immigrant incorporation since the late-1990s. The majority in the Senate that rejected the option of dual citizenship in 1997 largely based itself on such considerations, as well as on the view that loyalty to a nation-state can only be exclusive. The loyalty issue is always at the stake when talking about Muslims. Furthermore, most of the time, the fundamental issue is not diversity but loyalty. Many, including a lot of the most tolerant, believe that Muslim immigrants continue to give loyalty to the country they come from, not to the country they have come to (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007: 11).

In this new decade, once again a significant change took place in the discourse, categories, theories and values used for depicting the issue of immigrant integration. The universalism of the Integration Policy of the 1990s has transformed into a more assimilationist type of policy framing in the early-2000s. This was clearly stated in the memorandum "Integration in the Perspective of Immigration" where the government indicated that the Integration Policy would have to be recalibrated in the context of recent events (such as 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Scheffer debate on the multicultural tragedy) that had created more and more concerns about public support for the Integration Policy⁶¹. This memorandum established a more systematic connection between immigration and integration policy; the level of immigration would have to be adjusted to the extent to which immigrants would be effectively integrated in Dutch society, with civic integration courses as a crucial link between immigration and integration (Scholten, 2008: 86).

⁶¹ Parliamentary Document, TK 2001-2002, 28198, nr.2, (quoted in Scholten, 2008: 85).

After Scheffer's *Multicultural Tragedy*, another phenomenon that strongly influenced the immigration and integration policy was the rise of Pim Fortuyn, a populist politician, who argued that "the Netherlands is full" and a halt to immigration is necessary. Shortly before his assassination in 2002, he stated in a BBC interview that "I just say, the Netherlands is a small country (...), we are already overcrowded, there's no more room and we must shut the borders" (quoted in van Selm, 2005: 2). According to Frits Bolkestein, the political pioneer of anti-immigration discourse, Fortuyn's popularity was understandable as the government had only watched the influx of the new immigrants and the lack of integration of old immigrants: "In fifteen to twenty years, the majority of the residents of the four major cities will be of foreign descent, with all the problems this brings with it. The politicians who have allowed this, led by Wim Kok, then the Prime Minister from PvdA, carry a heavy responsibility. Their dawdling and delays, their lack of understanding and short-sightedness are partly responsible for the rise of Pim Fortuyn" (Nisnews Bulletin, March 3, 2002, "Bolkestein: Kok's dawdling Contributed to Fortuyn's Rise"). Although Bolkestein accused Fortuyn not to have solutions for the immigration problems, he became so popular with such discourse that many argued he would be the next PM if he was not killed on May 6, 2002, just nine days before the elections (Nisnews Bulletin, May 8, 2002, "Fortuyn was the Misunderstood Messiah"). His party, LPF won 26 seats and became the coalition partner although it lasted only 87 days, largely as a result of the inexperience of LPF cadres (van Selm, 2005: 3). Still, LPF's manifesto calling for halting new immigration and integrating existing immigrants more effectively became a guiding document for many politicians, including the members of governments since then. The word "multicultural" almost disappeared from political propaganda and party

plans, and rather an extra effort to make immigrants understand the norms and values of Dutch society has become the central agenda of governments and political parties.

A memorandum in response to a report from the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP- *Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau*)⁶² in 2003 would mark a more significant frame-shift. In this memorandum, the minister of Immigration and Integration described the contours of a so-called “Integration Policy New Style,” which involved a turn from universalism toward assimilationism.⁶³ The philosophy of this new policy elaborated further in a Reply Memorandum to an advisory report from a Temporary Parliamentary Research Committee on the Integration Policy, shortly known as the Blok Committee, named after its chair Stef Blok. Whereas the Integration Policy had focused primarily on social-economic participation, the focus now shifted toward social and cultural distance between migrants and Dutch society (Scholten, 2008: 86). In particular it complicates issues because “when groups are put up against each other, as societal institutions are not sufficiently effective for ethnic groups and as large parts of the minority population do not actively participate in the economy, the continuity of society is at stake.”⁶⁴ In order to support “the continuity of society”, the focus has to be put on the bridging of differences rather than on the reproduction of the cultural identities. Integration Policy New Style stated that the *Countourennota* “put great stress on the acceptance of differences between minorities and the native population. There is nothing wrong with that, but it has often be interpreted as if the presence of *allochthonous* minority groups in itself would have been valuable, an enrichment tout court. One disregards that not everything that is different is also valuable. With the cultivation of the own cultural

⁶² The SCP became more popular among government circles in 2000s and almost replaced the WRR’s earlier function.

⁶³ Parliamentary Document, TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.1, (quoted in Scholten, 2008: 86).

⁶⁴ Parliamentary Document, TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.1:8, (quoted in Scholten, 2008: 86).

identities it is not possible to bridge differences. The unity of our society must be found in what the members have in common. That is (...) that they are citizens of one society. Common citizenship for *allochthonous* and *autochthonous* residents is the goal of the Integration Policy. (...) Common citizenship involves that people speak Dutch, and that one abides to basic Dutch norms.”⁶⁵

Even if citizenship remained the primary means for categorizing minorities, the focus shifted from active and responsible citizenship with a strong universalist implication to “common” or “shared citizenship” with a more assimilationist meaning. Common citizenship involves a sort of citizenship based on common values and norms; it involves “speaking Dutch and complying with basic Dutch norms, [such as] doing your best to provide for your own life-support and observing laws and regulations”. It brings with it a willingness for “taking care of social environment, respecting physical integrity of others, also within marriage, accepting the right of anyone to express one’s opinion, accepting the sexual preferences of others and equality of man and woman.”⁶⁶ Rather than social-cultural emancipation being a condition for social-economic participation (as in the Minorities’ Policy) or social-economic participation being a condition for social-cultural emancipation (as in the Integration Policy), the new causal story stated that social-cultural differences could form an obstacle to social-economic participation. The normative perspective underlying the Integration Policy New Style had more to do with concerns about national social cohesion and national identity than earlier policies (Scholten, 2008: 88).

⁶⁵ Paliamentary Document, TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.8, (quoted in Scholten, 2008: 86).

⁶⁶ Paliamentary Document, TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.1: 8-9, (quoted in Scholten, 2008: 87).

3.5. Integration Discourse and Muslims

Muslims constitute the majority of *allochthonous* population in the Netherlands. It has two paradoxical implications. The growing visibility and institutionalization of Islam in Dutch society has been interpreted both as an indication of successful multiculturalization as well as an indication of the need for a tougher approach to integration. Indeed, Muslims in the Netherlands, because of the co-optation of the Dutch government and the inclusive policies, mostly remained calm in the internationalized crises such as Rushdie Affair. As Buruma (2007) argues, there had always been indifference among low-educated Muslims, but the well-educated used to be optimistic and ambitious. Especially the Moroccans convinced that the Netherlands was the country where they belonged and where their future lay. After 2000, however, not the celebration of multicultural society but a tougher approach to integration prevails among public debates and policy preferences of Dutch governments. The reason lies behind this is not only that Muslims constitute an underclass with many socioeconomic problems, but also that the idea of Islam as a distinct civilization is a very articulated discourse (Eyerman, 2008: 102-105). In other words, Muslims were thought as fundamentally different, if not they are all fundamentalist. Anti-Islam statements of ministers, officials and intellectuals, who receive high levels of media coverage, increased the negative public mood about Islam among low and middle classes (Peters, 2006; van Bruinessen, 2006). This caused resentment among second and third generation Muslims, which in turn ended up with a defensive identity building among them, named as “hurt pride” by Buruma (2007).

As argued above, while until the 1990s the policies aimed at improving socio-economic integration of immigrants, sometimes individually and sometimes as ethnic

groups, in the post-September 11 era, mostly because of the media-fuelled discourse about Islamic extremism, the Dutch policymakers generally lost their emphasis on immigrants as individuals or ethnic groups, and started converging a significant majority of immigrants into the category of Muslims, and consequently almost equalizing integration and immigration policy as the government's measures about Islam – a religion that is already associated with violence, the repression of women, lack of separation between church and state, lack of democratic values as tolerance, and persistence of old-fashioned and strange customs. Especially, the emergence of homegrown Muslim extremists strengthened the Islamization of immigrants and has thrown the existing models of immigrant integration into crisis.

In this regard, there are two issues need elaboration: first, how Muslims are perceived in the media and popular public debates, and second, how Muslims are expected to be, in other words, what kind of Muslim subjectivities are promoted.

3.5.1. Perceptions of Muslims

As Shadid and van Koningsveld (2002) argue, in the media, Islamic culture is simplified from an outsider's point of view and often stigmatized as a problematic issue. While the heterogeneity and dynamism of Islam are overlooked and diverse insider voices are neglected, the differences between Islam and the Dutch (or West) are emphasized. A study, initiated by Tweede Kamer to make a content analysis of domestic reporting about integration and immigrant minorities from 1998 to 2002, also found that the debate about Islam is largely conducted by native Dutch opinion makers, and religious issues dominated the discussions about immigrant minorities (Peters, 2006). In other words, whenever there was an issue about the disintegration of a Moroccan, Islam was put under the spotlight. In 2002, when El Moumni made

tendentious statements about homosexuality, a peak was reached in the amount of articles that dealt with the incompatibility of Islam and Western values (d'Haenens and Bink, 2006: 137). Here Islam is presented as an *alien* culture that bothered the life of *normal* Dutch people. Indeed, today, 63 percent of the Dutch population believes that Islam is incompatible with modern European and Dutch way of life (Spruyt, 2007).

Stigmatization of Muslims did not happen overnight. But according to Shadid (2006) there has never been a healthy approach to immigrant minorities from Muslim countries. He divides the last four decades into three periods: the period of negligence throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the period of awareness and ethnicization of Islam during 1980s, and the period of stigmatization and exclusion since the 1990s (Shadid, 2006: 12). D'Haenens and Bink (2006) affirm in their study that there was a steadily growing number of Islam related articles from 1998 to 2004 in the Netherlands and in these articles most Muslim actors are merely mentioned, usually referred as Muslim rather than giving reference to their ethnicity, and mostly not quoted or even paraphrased. In the newspapers, the label "migrant" is rarely used, the terms like "ethnic minority" or "foreigner" had almost gone out of use. Although the majority of second and third generation Muslims are Dutch citizens, only very few of them labeled as "Dutch", but rather as "Muslim". The champion of the most frequent appearance in the newspapers is Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an ex-Muslim and an MP at the time, as a strong critic of the backwardness of Islam and a defender of the emancipation of Muslim women. Statements of imams were also regularly quoted or paraphrased, along with Ahmed Aboutaleb, alderman of Amsterdam, a moderate Muslim and an example of successful integration (d'Haenens and Bink, 2006: 142).

According to d'Haenens and Bink's (2006) content analysis of mainstream Dutch newspapers, Islam generally portrayed as an "extremist" religion and contrasted with the "civilized" Christian norms and values of the West. Islam often has negative connotations as it becomes a subject of a newspaper article mostly in relation with crime, violence, terrorism, and, intolerance against gays and non-Muslims. The intensity of such correlation and the number of such articles, not surprisingly, increased with the September 11 attacks and the murder of Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004. After that date, more and more articles focused on Dutch Islam rather than on foreign Islam, and manipulated the idea that "society breeds more Mohammed B.s"⁶⁷ as the headline of an *Algemeen Dagblad* article puts it on 12 November 2004 (d'Haenens and Bink, 2006: 146). Seeing Muslims as religious zealots who are inclined to violence has raised the doubts about multiculturalism, tolerance, freedom of religion, and political correctness. A further analysis starting from the early 1990s is necessary to understand how Dutch public opinion has come to this point. Otherwise, this entire environment is to be explained simply as a post September 11 phenomenon. However, as Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007) argue, the strains between Muslims and Western Europeans were evident before the upheaval. The beliefs of each about the other were not a product of September 11 or murder of Theo van Gogh. Quite the contrary, they provided the basis for reactions to these events.

⁶⁷ Mohammed B(ouyeri) is the killer of Theo van Gogh.

3.5.1.1. “New Realism”: Politically Incorrect Truths about Muslim Immigrants

Previously accepted and promoted ethnic and religious differences became the subject of critics in the 1990s among intellectuals and politicians. There are two striking points about these critics. First of all, they did not only come from the far-right, but from the respected figures of the political central. And second, critics cut across ideological and political divides, and shared by central left and right. The first person who systematically analyzed the current policies as outcomes of politically correct Dutch elite and offered a more realistic approach to ethnic minorities is Herman Vuijsje, a social democrat. In his *Murdered Innocence: Ethnic Difference as a Dutch Taboo* (*Vermoorde Onschuld: Etnisch Verschil als Hollands Taboe*, 1986), Vuijsje argues that, because of the guilty conscience regarding to lack of Dutch effort to save Jews from the ethnic cleansing in the Second World War, Dutch progressive intellectuals, politicians and opinion-makers have become overcautious by putting a ban upon any negative mentioning of ethnic or racial differences (Prins, 1997: 117). For him, this is dangerous as it can cause more racist attitudes among frustrated people. To prevent that a more realistic approach that emphasizes the responsibilities of being Dutch citizen was necessary. He called this approach as “new realism” that criticizes both the care-oriented policies of Christian and social democrats and the politically correct representation of social reality as championed by the left. These approaches have been not only too soft on ethnic minorities, but also put a taboo on critically questioning their different habits, cultures and beliefs.

In the early 1990s, Frits Bolkestein, then the parliamentary leader of the liberal right wing party, the VVD, appeared as the most eager supporter of such

realism. He argued, in a *de Volkskrant* article on September 12, 1991,⁶⁸ that “the integration of minorities should be taken in hand by guts” (quoted in Prins, 1997: 118). According to Bolkestein, European civilization is sustained by the values rationalism, humanism and Christianity, a sum of which bring a number of fundamental political principles, such as secularism, freedom of speech, tolerance and non-discrimination. The civilizations that do not have these principles, which have gained universal validity, are inferior to those having them. As expected, Bolkestein argues next that the world of Islam does not score well in these principles. So the crucial question is that how the Netherlands that has received enormous numbers of immigrants from the Muslim world will deal with its Muslim minorities. Bolkestein’s answer is simple and straightforward: bargaining about the above-mentioned principles is out of the question. If a compromise is not possible, “we have to defend the achievements of our own culture”, and this requires “guts” and “creativity”, not “taboos” (Prins, 1997: 119). At the time, Bolkestein has received many critics.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, VVD’s votes increased, and since then, gutful characters to break up the taboos on ethnic issues became usual players in the very central of the Dutch politics.

The ultimate question behind the discussion was that how and to what extent members of minority groups can be allowed to hold on to their own religious,

⁶⁸ This article was based on his speech given at a conference of the Liberal International in Luzern (Switzerland) on the September 9th, 1991.

⁶⁹ Bolkestein was accused of rousing public sentiments against members of ethnic and racial minorities, thus blocking the possibilities for interethnic understanding and dialogue. It was also stressed that Bolkestein made a tendentious choice of examples when arguing for the inferiority of Muslim culture vis-à-vis Western values. Some others argued that the Dutch break their own principles frequently; for example, there is a Dutch political party which excludes women as members, and a Catholic church which bars women from religious office. It is also asked which of Dutch values the immigrants should adopt: Should they do their prayers on Sunday, or should Muslim women go to nudist beaches? Some wonders who “we” are. Is inquisition, Hitler, or Stalin in our side? Does Gandhi belong to us or them? It was argued also that Bolkestein did not see the diversity within Islam. And finally, Bolkestein was accused of contradicting his liberal position by demanding an uncompromising assimilation. See Prins (1997) for a detailed analysis of the discussion.

cultural and ethnic identity within the confines of a modern society such as the Netherlands. Here, the question implies that the Netherlands does not have an ethnic, religious or cultural identity, but rather the Dutch society is a liberal, tolerant and pluralist one. In other words, the most essential characteristic of Dutch identity is considered as its non-identity, its fluidity, its openness to differences. Actually, this side of Dutch culture is shared by Bolkestein's adversaries as well. However, first of all, marking Dutchness as neutral, any other ethnic, religious and cultural identities became as not neutral, not normal; the Dutchness becomes norm, and others as deviances. A hierarchy follows: the prerequisite of a peaceful co-existence is the transformation of deviant ways of lives through universal Western values as embodied in the Dutch. Another implication of hierarchy is that deviant others cannot fully participate into public discussion, but they mostly are under discussion (Prins, 1997: 126). Secondly, the new realists, in the name of defending liberal values, claim to have the position of openly (or "realistically") criticizing these deviant cultures and habits of newcomers that cause many troubles in the society. And finally, they claim to do this on behalf of indigenous Dutch population, so they gain a power position of representing masses. They regularly suggest that they are giving voice to the common people who otherwise would not be heard.

The position of women is a focal interest of new realists to prove the virtue of their argument. For instance, when Bolkestein condemns the integration policy known as "retaining identity while integrating", first he suggests Islam's incompatibility with liberal values such as non-discrimination, and then, he refers to "the way women are treated in the world of Islam" by giving examples of a Turkish theologian approves of beating women, marrying off girls against their will, 20 percent of Moroccan and Turkish girls not attending school, mothers needing

permission from their husbands to participate in educational support programs for their children, and girls wearing headscarf that stands for suppression of women sexuality and men's control over women (quoted in Prins, 1997: 128). He did not answer why Muslim women should not wear headscarf while some Dutch women wear scarfs, caps or hats. Nor did he mention Christian churches that bar women from religious offices, or Dutch-Reformed Party's standpoint against abortion, euthanasia, or women having political posts. Yet, this discourse was to the point in a time period when integrationalism was on the rise. It helped to differentiate between majority and minority, to show a direction to integration, and to find a moral basis for calling immigrants to assimilate into a superior culture. The picture was clear: bad immigrant men are called for integration while victimized immigrant women depicted as allies who are ready to get sheltered in the modern Dutch society and emancipated.

Many incidents and statements that otherwise would be defined as racist are, according to Vuijsje and Bolkestein, normal and innocent reactions of common people that are normally suspicious of the outsiders and rightfully angry with the trouble and disorder caused by the newcomers (Prins, 1997: 121-122). What lies behind this innocence is their realism towards ethnic and racial others. Therefore, another dimension is added to Dutch identity here: the Dutch are realistic, sober, honest and straightforward, and the politically correct language of political elite is only distorting this very Dutch identity. As Prins (1997: 123) aptly identifies, there is a paradox in this Dutch identity: on the one hand, the Dutch are assumed to be led by Enlightenment values, and on the other hand, they can easily be governed by primitive and repressed emotions such as hate, anger, racism that easily would be manifested with violence.

Islamic violence and terrorism, on the other hand, cannot be explained by political reasons or defined as an outcome of Western policies for the new realists. Bolkestein frequently refer it as a product of resentment, going back to the loss of Islamic power in past centuries (Halliday, 2007). In the end, socio-economic problems of the Middle East were the responsibility of irrational rulers of Arab world and Iran. Similarly, if Muslims in the Western world are not well-off, it is because they do not behave responsibly and pursue secondary education or find a job. In other words, for the new realists, while the Dutch are rational and responsible even when they are angry, Muslims are only irrational and irresponsible. There are no political reasons if there are angry Muslims, Western colonial history does not have any share in the socioeconomic problems of the Middle East, and discrimination, xenophobia and racism do not play a major role in socio-economic disintegration of Muslims in the Western countries.

Although Vuijsje and Bolkestein claimed that they were representing average Dutch people, this discourse found its resonance in politics and received a great deal of response from the masses with Pim Fortuyn in the early 2000s. Until Fortuyn, more discussions are needed to turn the anti-immigrant/Islam discourse an issue to talk without fearing to be blamed as racist. As mentioned before, when integration policies had shifted from universalism to assimilationism in the late 1990s, the Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) played a prominent role with its reports. Paul Schnabel, the chair of SCP, also joined the discussions.

The most influential discussion against the integration policies and multiculturalism came from Paul Scheffer (2000), a professor of sociology, a prominent name of the center-left and a member of Labor Party. Scheffer's widely circulated long newspaper article, "*Het Multiculturele Drama*" (the Multicultural

Tragedy), attracted an unprecedented amount of public attention. He analyzed the dangers of isolated, alienated immigrant communities undermining the social cohesion of Dutch society. The “tragedy,” in his view, was that the formation of an “ethnic underclass”, “who are lagging behind, without any prospects, and who will constitute an increasing burden on Dutch society.” This ethnic underclass consists of people who do not feel attached to Dutch culture and society and who are unwilling and unable to integrate. For this non-integration, he blamed the incompatibility of immigrant cultures, mostly that of Muslims, to Dutch culture. Accordingly, the illiberal beliefs of Muslims would undermine both social cohesion and the functioning of the liberal democratic state. The Dutch elite’s indifference to these developments, in Scheffer’s view, was only worsening the situation. Because of their cosmopolitan ideology and politically correct language, respect for cultural identity has prevailed over defending the principles of liberal democracy, and this prevented Dutch politicians from seeing the reality and demanding the newcomers to adapt to Dutch norms and values. The only possible answer, in Scheffer’s perception, is a “civilization offensive,” which includes more obligatory policy efforts to overcome deprivation as well as demanding from the immigrants to adapt to the principles of liberal democracy. Not only that but he also added a nationalist accent to the discussion, and argued that the immigrants should have a much better knowledge of “our” culture and history. The divide between the Muslim underclass and the rest of the population was, in his view, accentuated and broadened by the difference in culture. The remedy he proposed was “Dutchification”, the imposition of Dutch identity and values upon the newcomers.

Along with Scheffer, many other intellectuals, journalists and academics (e.g. Paul Cliteur, Hans Jansen, Herman Philipse, Leon de Winter, Bart Jan Spruyt) have

criticized multiculturalism and Muslims. Their approach to Islam is similar to that of American neo-conservatives. However, they differ from their American counterparts in their religiosity. Dutch critics of Islam are staunchly unreligious and, often, opposed to religion (Peters, 2006). With the tone of the public debate led by these intellectuals and with the anti-Islam wave came after the September 11, the migrants' culture was not only problematized and prominently put on the political agenda, but also this culture was increasingly identified as Islam, rather than the rural culture of the Rif mountains and Anatolian villages. Muslims, in this debate, were regarded as being imprisoned in their religion, which prevented them from becoming modern, autonomous individuals and active citizens (Peters, 2006: 3). In other words, criticism against Islam is often presented and justified as criticism of religion in the name of modernity and Enlightenment. This makes the critics more acceptable than the xenophobic and racist standings. The critics of Islam assert that the debate about immigration and Islam has for a long time been censored by political correctness. Subsequently, they started identifying what is incompatible in Islam with their Dutch way of life: inferiority of women, intolerance attitude towards homosexuals, and the lack of separation between the state and church in Islam. Because of their apparent rejection of biological and ethnic racism, this critic has been intellectually and politically more acceptable than the anti-Muslim sentiment or xenophobia of lower classes and far-right politicians, and made it possible to disseminate such discourse to Dutch middle class (van Bruinessen, 2006: 8).

Paul Cliteur and Herman Philipse are the most prominent names in this debate. They criticize cultural relativism and multiculturalism in the name of Enlightenment values. In their view, certain cultures, notably Islamic ones, are in many respects (e.g. gender issues, separation of church and state) inferior to Western

culture and therefore it would be unwise to allow those cultures to flourish in the Netherlands. The integration of immigrants necessitates a degree of cultural assimilation, and they have to give up attitudes that are incompatible with Enlightenment values. They, as van Bruinessen (2006: 11) points out, argue that not just fundamentalist Islam but Islam as such is inherently incompatible with Western modernity. Such examples as female genital mutilation, honor killing, forced marriage, which previously attributed to the social problems and rural cultures of uneducated Moroccan and Turkish immigrants, have increasingly been identified with Islam in the public debate. The shift from referring to ethnic origin and social class to the culture and especially Islam coincided and correlated with, and perhaps fueled by, increasing social acceptance of anti-immigrant resentment. Previously regarded as racist, this anti-immigrant resentment and xenophobia became legitimate as Islam, an anti-modern, unenlightened and illiberal religion, has become the focus of debate. Although this debate, as Peters (2006) argues, a debate among non-Muslims *on* Islam, help coming from some Muslims and ex-Muslims is always welcome. Cliteur, for example, frequently calls “Freethinkers” of Muslim background to formulate and disseminate this message, in other words, to approve his fears and to warn Western public about Islam (van Bruinessen, 2006: 11).

The most rigid version of this discourse is the proclamation of a “liberal jihad” responding to the threat of Islamic jihad. The term was first used in a newspaper article in 2003 written by two Dutch parliamentarians: Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Geert Wilders, both members of liberal VVD (Spruyt, 2007: 325). To show how to practice liberal jihad, Hirsi Ali one day walked into an Islamic schoolyard, asking the pupils to show her where Allah could be seen and choose between Allah and the Dutch constitution (ibid). In other words, according to liberal jihadists, a Muslim

believer or a pupil of an Islamic school is a potential warrior of Islamic jihad who should be stopped preemptively. In the liberal jihad view, to be Western is to be defined only by adherence to the fundamental and universal truths of democracy and the Enlightenment. For them, if a person or society has not reached the “universal truths,” it is because of religion, and in this case, because of a particular religion, Islam, which nowadays threatens liberal Western world. In their political view, freedom of religion is no longer necessary. What is more fundamental is the freedom of speech, or in this case, freedom to criticize religion. Their suggestion to establish social coherence is to unite around modernity and the Enlightenment. There should be no freedom to dissent from the essential Western values such as freedom of men and women, accepting gay rights, etc. Apparently, this political standing is different than that of more conservative new realists, e.g. Bolkestein, Scheffer, or Fortuyn, who stressed the need for a solid cultural foundation other than universal Enlightenment values to uphold the liberal democracy.

3.5.1.2.Pim Fortuyn: Turning the Netherlands Upside Down

As Buruma (2007: 53) argues, although the politicians like Bolkestein or intellectuals like Scheffer very explosively discussed the integration issues and the failure of Dutch policies, such discourse had never become prevalent among the Dutch politicians thanks to the legacy of World War II, that is believing that nationalism and racism as the roots of all the evil. Any inclination of using exclusionary and accusatory language about immigrant minorities is thought as questioning the European ideal and racial equality. The governments of 1990s that made up by social democrat PvdA, right wing liberal VVD, and reformist liberal

D66⁷⁰ continued traditional Dutch style of making politics: consensus seeking and being politically correct for not breaking the political stability. Nevertheless, there were an increasing number of people who believed that Europeanism and multiculturalism were the ideals of a complacent elite that were not aware of the reality, of the problems being faced in the neighborhoods. The masses were expecting a politician who has the guts to break up all the political correctness. That politician was Pim Fortuyn, an ex-leftist, a professor of sociology, a gay, an outsider, “a political celebrity” (Eyerman, 2008: 38). In van Bruinessen’s (2006: 4) words, “a very effective debater, emotional, vain, outrageous, funny, and eloquently speaking a language common people could understand, he moved like a destructive hurricane over the political landscape”. He became enormously popular when he began criticizing and ridiculing both the right and left wing Dutch political elite.⁷¹ His most influential arguments and virulent critics were on multiculturalism and the neglect of the problems of average Dutch people. His most popular slogan that points out these problems was “the Netherlands is full”. First he spoke of these as the leader of *Leefbaar Nederland*, but later he forced to resign because of his “soloist” tendencies and especially after he made some controversial statements about the lack of integration of Muslims, backwardness of Islam and closing the borders to new refugees and immigrants in an interview in the national daily *De Volkskrant* on 9 February 2002 (van Tijen, 2002: 2). Yet, his expulsion from this party did not stop Fortuyn, as he already believed that he would be the next prime minister of the

⁷⁰ These governments that ruled the country throughout the 1990s are popularly named as “purple” coalitions, referring to the mix of the three party colors: red, blue and green.

⁷¹ The popular *memnuniyetsizlik* about the elite politics first signed itself in local politics. Many locally initiated parties, often named *Leefbaar* (Livable) followed by a town, raised issues about the quality of everyday life of autochthon Dutch, especially the influx of immigrants and refugees whose cultures are alien to Dutch. After the success of such *Leefbaar* parties in some big cities in the mid-1990s, an initiative was made to unite them under the umbrella of a national *Leefbaar Nederland* party. They chose Pim Fortuyn as the leader of this new party (van Tijen, 2002).

country.⁷² He established a new political party after his name: the List of Pim Fortuyn (*Lijst Pim Fortuyn*).

Many people from the left defined Fortuyn as an opportunist and a media personality who was able put his personal charisma and connections to great political use while others saw Fortuyn's success as not so much a matter of charisma, but as representing a previously untapped constituency (Eyerman, 2008: 39). From the former perspective, those who voted for him, not because they shared any set of particular beliefs or political ideology, but as an expression of discontent with the current political leadership. For the latter, however, there already existed a Dutch culture and way of life and a sense of nationality which was overlooked by political elite since the World War II, and it is now represented and defended by Fortuyn. Connecting all these to Fortuyn's charisma would be a simple explanation. However, the second explanation does not fit the Netherlands' exceptional political tradition where nationalist parties have never gained a significant power. Hence, considering the rise of Fortuyn in line with the current European voting trends (e.g. the rise of Le Pen in France or Haider in Austria) normalizes Fortuyn's popularity, but does not answer how an almost anti-nationalist nation, a cosmopolitan society, and a political tradition that is marked by its politically correct language and pragmatism could let Pim Fortuyn play such a decisive role.

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that Fortuyn has some important differences from his counterparts in other European countries. First of all, he refrained from using ideological or racist statements⁷³; instead he continuously

⁷² After he left the party meeting where he dismissed, Fortuyn shouted at the press that "watch me, I will be the next prime minister of this country" (quoted in van Tijen, 2002: 3).

⁷³ Far-right and openly racist politicians have never been successful in the Netherlands. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was only politicians of the extreme right, Joop Glimmerveen and Hans Janmaat, who openly spoke out against immigrants, called for an immigration stop and a policy of returning foreigners to their country of origin. The former has never made into mainstream politics; the latter

repeated the phrase “the Netherlands is full”, which rather had socio-economic and demographic connotations. Indeed, Fortuyn hated being compared to notorious figures of the European far-right; furthermore, he did not even regard himself as particularly right-wing (Buruma, 2007: 46). According to de Winter (2005), Fortuyn was “a liberal with respect to individual freedom and a conservative with respect to social norms and values;” in other words, he was “a classic tolerant Dutchman.” Yet, how the ordinary people perceived his message is another story, especially when taking into account other remarks he made about Islam and Muslims (Eyerman, 2008: 40). One statement that caused an acceleration of Fortuyn’s meteoric rise was “Islam is a backward religion” in an interview in February 2002 (van Bruinessen, 2006: 4). However, he later corrected himself and said that most Muslims in the Netherlands are from backward part of their countries and adhere to backward prejudices and attitudes that do not fit in a modern liberal society (van Bruinessen, 2006: 5). He also had a similar approach to Islam in his *De Islamisering van Onze Cultuur* (Against Islamization of Our Culture), which did not receive much interest in its first show-up in 1997, but triggered a hot debate and increased Fortuyn’s popularity with its revised version in 2002, just after the September 11. The book, according to van Bruinessen (2006: 5), does not contain many sweeping statements about Islam, but rather it is more a diatribe against multiculturalism. Fortuyn argued in this book that there was a range of views in Islam, from fundamentalist to the liberal, and insisted that “not every form of Islam can be equated with its fundamentalist interpretation” (quoted in van Bruinessen, 2006: 5). In a newspaper interview on 28 August 2001, he called for a “Cold War against Islam”.

was elected into parliament, but was completely quarantined by his colleagues (van Bruinessen, 2006: 9).

Secondly, he was a political outsider who did not come through the established ranks, and his discourse was cutting across the political right-left distinctions (Eyerman, 2008: 40). As opposed to the established politicians and opinion leaders, Fortuyn's style of making politics is summarized as "I say what I think, and I do what I say" (van Bruinessen, 2006: 4). He was not a defender of any particular ideology and belief, but rather his program can be defined with negatives: he was against bureaucracy, the political elite, and immigration (Buruma, 2007: 39). In one thing he was certainly positive: freedom of speech. Indeed, Fortuyn stated that the Dutch constitution's first amendment that forbids discrimination "on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex, or on any other grounds" should be scrapped, as it contradicted the older and more fundamental constitutional article protecting "freedom of expression"⁷⁴ (van Tijen, 2002: 3). Hence, Fortuyn became a champion of freedom of expression, a "Homeric hero" of individual liberty whose words and deeds are the same.⁷⁵

Even if Fortuyn was different than Heider or Le Pen, he did play with the same anxieties that increased the popularity of far-right in across Europe. To a confused and anxious people, who are afraid of being swamped by immigrants and worried that pan-European and global institutions were rapidly taking over their lives, Fortuyn was giving very simple answers and solutions to complicated problems (Buruma, 2007: 47). By successfully playing on the fear of Muslims, he was satisfying a wide range of people, who are displeased with Islamic appearances in their country, who are afraid of losing jobs, who are discontented with Muslim immigrants exploiting the welfare state. But at the same time, when he was asked if

⁷⁴ Article 7: "No one shall require prior permission to publish thoughts or opinions through the press, without prejudice to the responsibility of every person under the law".

⁷⁵ As Redfield (1975: 21) argues, a Homeric hero has no inner voices. He expresses himself completely in words and acts, and thus completely known to his fellows, "he says and does what he is."

he hated Muslims, by answering that he was having sex with Moroccan boys, Fortuyn was saving himself to be called as racist, being a champion of freedom of speech as an openly declared gay, and gaining sympathy of masses with his simple, funny and self-confident attitudes. As a “Janus-faced priest” with an eclectic discourse (van Tijen, 2002: 3), Fortuyn was attracted both lower class Dutch, who were anxious for competing with the immigrants for jobs and housing, and the elites, who felt threatened by backward, and unenlightened Muslims (van Bruinessen, 2006: 4). His style not only opened the way of an aggressive, angry and resentful xenophobic, and especially anti-Islam, discourse which seemingly had been suppressed for fear of being considered racist, but also being very appealing in the elections, Fortuyn became a model of success in the politics in the Netherlands.

His personal story ended when he was shot to death on May 6, 2002, just nine days before the national elections. Everybody thought in the beginning that the killer was a person from immigrant origin, or more specifically, a Muslim. When it was declared that the killer was a white Dutch animal right activist, there was both surprise and relief. Since the political assassinations are very rare in the political history of the Netherlands,⁷⁶ the murder of Pim Fortuyn shocked the Dutch. Nevertheless, as Eyerman (2008: 40) argues, the greatest shock of the past few years was not his murder, but rather his completely unexpected rise to power. Indeed, the political language that has been shaped by the burgher virtues has never allowed an openly anti-immigrant politician become as popular as Pim Fortuyn, who, if not killed on May 6, 2002, just nine days before the elections, was likely to be the prime minister of the Netherlands in 2002. He was a new type of political figure, a

⁷⁶ Still the Dutch have seen the assassination of the most important leader of the Netherlands, Willem the Orange, the leader of national independence fought against the Spaniard and the founder of the republic. Fortuyn’s death is the first political assassination since

celebrity, whose popularity does not fit the traditional political categorizations, such as the left-right divide.

After Fortuyn, the political atmosphere with regard to foreigners and Muslims hardened and became polarized more than ever. Proposing anti-Islamic measures and making statements about Islam became a routine among politicians and officials. Indeed, as Dick Pels argues, his ideas dominate The Hague after his death (Nisnews Bulletin, May 5, 2004). Coming from ministers, important politicians and local councilors, these proposals and statements had a great impact on the public mood. In 2004, for example, the government announced new regulations to curb the establishment of new Islamic schools (Shadid, 2006). On November 12, 2004, Tweede Kamer passed a motion inviting the government to introduce legislation making it impossible, after 2008, to bring in imams from abroad. It also called to investigate the possibilities of barring foreign radio and television stations (Peters, 2006: 4). In 2005, a majority of the Tweede Kamer demanded that the government introduce legislation banning the wearing of face veils in public. In the end, the “Islamization of migration” (Peters 2006) made it possible to express xenophobia in a socially, politically, and intellectually more accepted way. Whereas in 1980, resentment against foreigners was expressed with slogans like “our own people first” or “the Netherlands is full,” after Fortuyn, pointing out “politically incorrect” truths such as Islam’s backwardness and violence, and disintegration of Muslims became daily issues of political discourse. French historian Christophe de Voogd, author of the History of the Netherlands, considers it striking that the tone on immigration has radically reversed: “I recently saw your minister for Integration on television. Everyone must and will learn Dutch and adapt to your standards and values. This attitude was unthinkable only three years ago” (Nisnews Bulletin, May 7, 2004).

These feelings, furthermore, are shared by a large proportion of the Dutch population. According to an opinion poll held during the Spring 2006, 63 percent of the Dutch regarded Islam as incompatible with modern life in Europe and 43 percent believed that Islam was not a religion of peace (Peters, 2006: 5). Breaking taboos and clearing away the remnants of political correctness, Dutch “new realism” has formed a political discourse where previously most taboo-breaking statements became ordinary and familiar today. For example, the statements for which right-wing populist Hans Janmaat was indicted and sentenced court (e.g. “when we come to power, we shall abolish multicultural society”) seem to be innocent and reasonable compared to what has now become mainstream discourse (van Bruinessen, 2006: 17). “New realist” columnists and politicians have been successful to persuade and mobilize ordinary people that their thoughts about Muslims and immigrants are justified and they can express them without fear. It, not surprisingly, ended up with radicalizing the public discourse further.

Two most significant heirs to Pim Fortuyn are Theo van Gogh, a film maker and media celebrity and Geert Wilders, who left VVD to establish a new party, Party for Freedom (PVV). The former was killed after “Submission”, a short movie he made together with Ayaan Hirsi Ali about women in Islam, and the latter is now enjoying a burst in his party’s votes.

3.5.1.3. The Murder of Theo van Gogh: the Prophecy Comes Through

Since the political assassinations are very rare in the political history of the Netherlands,⁷⁷ the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh shocked the Dutch. Nevertheless, as Eyerman (2008: 40) argues, the greatest shock of the past few years

⁷⁷ Still the Dutch have seen the assassination of the most important leader of the Netherlands, Willem the Orange, the leader of national independence fought against the Spaniard and the founder of the republic. Fortuyn’s death is the first political assassination since

was neither the murder of van Gogh nor that of Fortuyn, but the latter's completely unexpected rise to power. Indeed, the political language that has been shaped by the burgher virtues has never allowed an openly anti-immigrant politician become as popular as Pim Fortuyn, who, if not killed May 6, 2002, just nine days before the elections, was likely to be the prime minister of the Netherlands in 2002. He was a new type of political figure, a celebrity, whose popularity does not fit the traditional political categorizations, such as the left-right divide.

When Pim Fortuyn was murdered, some feared and some others hoped that the killer would be a Muslim extremist. Later, when the killer was identified as a white, native Dutch animal rights activist,⁷⁸ there was both relief and surprise, and both because of the same reason: he was not Muslim (Eyerman, 2008: 38). However, the prophecy was told once. The relief was only temporary; there was no escape, as Oedipus could not escape from his destiny. The prophecy was finally realized with the murder of Theo van Gogh on November 2nd, 2004. The killer was Mohammed Bouyeri, a radicalized young Muslim from Moroccan descent. The murder was theatrical: Bouyeri first shot van Gogh, then slit his throat, and finally, with a separate knife, neatly pinned a five-page note to his chest. After giving the corpse a few hard kicks, Bouyeri walked away calmly, made no serious attempt to escape. When police arrived, he answered them with bullets. He wanted to die as a martyr of Islam, but he was caught injured (Buruma, 2007: 3).

Van Gogh had a deserved reputation for offensiveness and vulgarity (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007: 3). According to Leon de Winter (2005), who previously got his share from van Gogh's offensive language, in the course of his twenty years in the public eye, van Gogh "grossly insulted at least half of the nation."

⁷⁸ He was killed by an animal-rights activist because, as the killer argued, he made certain statements like "the best place to have an animal is around your neck" (Schnabel 2006: 178).

His films were intended to shock; his newspaper columns were exercises of insulting. In the few years before his death, he had focused increasingly on the problems with immigration and Muslim intolerance. He repeatedly labeled Muslims as people who have intercourse with a species of mountain ram⁷⁹. With his habit of insulting people, he was an unlikely candidate for the saintly and heroic role as “martyr for the freedom of speech” that was suddenly ascribed to him (van Bruinessen 2006). His offensive language did not only target Muslims but many others such as Jews and feminists. For example, he had engaged a polemic against Leon de Winter, a well-known Dutch Jewish writer, in which he had not shied from outrageous comments that most people considered as anti-Semitic (van Bruinessen, 2006: 7).

The note he pinned to van Gogh’s body was written in Dutch, contained an indictment of Western society and was addressed not to van Gogh but to Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the screenplay writer of the *Submission* (Eyerman, 2008: 1). It contained a direct death threat to Hirsi Ali, while two other politicians were explicitly mentioned: Jozias van Aartsen, the leader of the VVD, and Job Cohen, the (Jewish) mayor of Amsterdam. Later, it is reported that, Ahmed Aboutaleb, then the alderman for diversity in Amsterdam, a practicing Muslim of Moroccan descent (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 5). In ten days following the murder, various mosques and Islamic schools were attacked and besmirched with racist symbols (Nisnews Bulletin, 10 November 2004). According to the Financial Times columnist Simon Kuper (2004), this rise of racist attacks was something unexpected in the Netherlands, a country known with its tolerance, so he defined the situation as “trouble in Paradise.” In the beginning, the debate about the murder was focused on Mohammed Bouyeri and “Hofstad group” (an extremist youth group of Bouyeri and his friends), and the

⁷⁹ In Dutch, he literally used the expression “goat fuckers”.

major question was whether Jihad had now come to the Netherlands. For example, the deputy prime minister Gerrit Zalm, who once called Fortuyn dangerous because of his blunt words about Islam, declared war on radical Islamism (Bawer, 2004). Or the parliamentary leader of the VVD, Jozias van Aartsen, immediately labeled the murder an act of terrorism (van Selm, 2005: 4). But soon after, the discussion was broadened, and targeted the “soft” integration policies that failed to integrate Muslim community because the murderer identified as having dual Dutch and Moroccan citizenship, and he confirmed that the motivation was his religious feelings (ibid). After that the target of critics was shifted from a small extremist organization to the environment where it flourished: multiculturalist policies of the Dutch government and local administrations. Such critics were already there, but lacked a serious support. With the murder, however, not only their conviction was strengthened, but also their audience widened (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 9).

For Leon de Winter (2005), the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh marked “the end of the Holland of Erasmus and Spinoza.” In his view, the murders were direct consequence of Dutch political elite’s inability to first deal with the civil disobedience of 1960s and 1970s and later with the influx of Muslim immigrants, both of which has shaken the foundations of Holland’s traditional tolerant society. Similarly, Paul Scheffer, in an interview given to *Agence France Presse* (July 8, 2005), argued that the murder was “not an isolated incident,” and it was an outcome of “a prolonged period of instability” of Dutch society. He was also blaming the Dutch way of doing things. According to Scheffer, “Srebrenica⁸⁰ revealed what we are... We have a great talent for avoiding conflicts.” Because of the same reason, Dutch “tolerance became indifference... but that is not sustainable in the long run.”

⁸⁰ He is referring to the Srebrenica massacre where the Dutch peacekeepers failed to prevent the killing of almost eight thousand Muslims.

Naima Azough, a Green Left MP from Moroccan descent, also blames the murder and Dutch politicians but from a different point of view than Scheffer's. For Azough, center-right politicians' critics of Islam encourage the radicalization of young Muslims who feel offended and employ a defensive identity building (ibid).

All blaming the murder, however, there were two diverging discourses among the Dutch public. On the one hand, there were optimists, who support the coexistence of cultural differences, view integration as a two-way process, and consider intolerance and discrimination as serious obstacles to the emancipation of minorities. For them, whose most prominent figure is the Amsterdam mayor Job Cohen, the murder was an attack on the shared core values of the country such as tolerance, diversity, and freedom of speech. On the other hand, there were pessimists, who viewed the cultural differences as threat, saw political correctness and multiculturalism as naïve not taking the problems seriously. A rising figure of pessimists at the time was the then Minister of Integration Rita Verdonk, known as "Iron Rita," who argued that the murder was a part of an attack against those who supported an uncompromising attitude towards immigrants in general and Muslims in particular (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 10). Though the latter were pessimistic about the multicultural society, they were very optimistic about their political fortune as the public mood has become more receptive to the politicians and intellectuals who clearly use anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim discourse. Since then, as *the New York Times* puts it, "tolerating intolerance" against Muslims has become a component of Dutch tolerance (Bawer, 2004). Indeed, Afshin Ellian (2004), a columnist and professor of law from Iranian descent, called all intellectuals to criticize Islam, arguing that genuine tolerance has its origins in the possibility to criticize religion. The call was an outcome of his clear-cut analysis of the event: van

Gogh was killed because he criticized Islam, and “Mohammed B.” took the Prophet “Mohammed A.” (ibn Abdullah) as a direct example of his act. For Ellian (2005), Mohammed Bouyeri did not act because he was discriminated against, not because he was unemployed, not because of racism, or not after reading the texts of Hirsi Ali. He acted according to the rules and tradition of political Islam. A Dutch national Muslim, born and raised in the Netherlands, killed a film-maker because, motivated by religious feelings, he did not like the content. He was a well-educated person, talking fluent Dutch. But was he integrated? According to Rita Verdonk, he was not. From now on, socio-cultural variables prevailed over socio-economic variables when talking about the integration of Muslims.

3.5.1.4. Geert Wilders: The Rise of the Extreme

After the murder of van Gogh, the negative image of immigrant has narrowed as “Muslim immigrant”. There was already a constituency ready to buy this discourse, which has been processed by the intellectuals like Paul Scheffer, Paul Cliteur or Bart Jan Spruyt, and more importantly proved to be useful and manipulated by politicians like Pim Fortuyn. Geert Wilders was the most eager candidate to take over this entire heritage. As an MP from VVD, he was already a well-known critic of Islam before the murder of van Gogh, but he successfully utilized the extremely sensitive environment of the Dutch public after the murder. Dissatisfied voters blame established political parties of having glossed over the cultural and religious differences between native Dutch people and the immigrants, and that feeling has created fertile ground for Wilders’ movement to flourish. When he resigned from the VVD, as an independent MP, he continued to be one of the most outspoken members of the parliament, and according to a poll held just after the

murder of van Gogh, the popularity of Wilders even exceeded the popularity of the parliamentary leaders of most political parties, including the Prime Minister Balkenende (Nisnews Bulletin, December 22, 2004). The Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid, PVV) led by Wilders won 9 out of 150 seats in the Lower House in November 2006 elections. When the discussions on his anti-Islam movie, *Fitna*,⁸¹ were hot, he was voted as the Holland's most effective politician (The Observer, February 17, 2008). In January 2009, almost a year after *Fitna* aired, he increased PVV's seats from 9 to 20 in the polls (Nisnews Bulletin, January 27, 2009). In the Europe Parliament elections, PVV came out as the second. In short, he successfully appealed to the anti-Islam prejudice to make a political fortune.

Calling Islam a backward culture, he followed Fortuyn's footsteps, and even left Fortuyn behind in being "politically incorrect," which was broadly welcomed by the vast majority of the public especially the aftermath of the murder of van Gogh. He, for example, openly called for "assimilation," a taboo word in the Netherlands: "I am not concerned with the religion but with the political culture of Islam. Why are we afraid to say that Muslims should adapt themselves to us, because our standards and values happen to belong to a higher, better, more agreeable and more humane level of civilization? No integration. Assimilation!" (Nisnews Bulletin, February 6, 2004). He started criticizing his colleagues in the *Tweede Kamer* to be "coward" on Islam, and stated that if he had power, a ban on headscarf would be introduced immediately (ibid). Wilders has also called the prime minister a "professional coward," people from the Dutch Antilles "thieves," and refers to Moroccan youth as "street terrorists" (van Outeren and Stokmans, 2008). He seems to have violated

⁸¹ *Fitna* means "strife" in Arabic.

every unwritten rule of political behavior – a strategy that has earned him voter support and media exposure on which he has built a political career.

Post-Fortuyn political environment was actually perfectly favorable for politicians like Wilders. Old-school politicians like Hans Dijkstal, the former parliamentary leader of the VVD, were surprised with the quality of the discussions. Previously considered as the most right-wing parliamentary leader of his time, Dijkstal stated that the debate on immigrants in the Netherlands has begun showing characteristics of fascism in an interview with *Algemeen Dagblad* daily (quoted in *Nisnews Bulletin*, June 8, 2004). He considers VVD Integration Minister Rita Verdonk's plan to introduce labels indicating immigrants' degree of integration repellent: "It begins to smell very much like the Jewish star," which the Nazis forced Jews to wear during World War II. Wilders termed his former leader's remarks as "scandalous, stupid and unacceptable" (*ibid*).

Wilders resigned from VVD in September 2004 because he thought that the party was not hard enough on immigration and integration issues, and he was strictly against Turkey's possible EU membership⁸². His position was seen as a direct attack on the government coalition, of which the VVD was a partner (Stokmans, 2008). After his resignation, Wilders cooperated with Bart Jan Spruyt for a while. In a newspaper article coauthored by the two, they argued that "the Netherlands must be protected against the import of the Islamic culture, which will only kill our tolerance and democracy" (quoted in *Nisnews Bulletin*, October 23, 2004). Their target was not only Islamic terrorism. Wilders and Spruyt argued that Islamic culture too threatens the democratic constitutional state. Intolerance among Muslims is attributed to "the nature of Islam," which, according to them, has wanted from the

⁸² Indeed, his view that Turkey should never be allowed to join the EU was very central issue that led him break up with the VVD. Later in his party programme, he also proposed the Netherlands to leave the EU if Turkey is accepted (*Nisnews Bulletin*, March 15, 2005).

beginning to be a “political order” in which “a separation between the worldly and spiritual domain is impossible.” Wilders and Spruyt also criticize multiculturalism, which they call as the “nihilistic cultural relativism” that in their view has prevailed in the Netherlands for long time. According to Wilders and Spruyt, the excessive respect for other cultures and religions produces a lack of a strong immigration policy, obligation-free integration programmes, and a “preference for having tea with radical Imams rather than having them prosecuted, deported and their mosques closed.”

Just after the murder of Theo van Gogh, Wilders officially announced to set up a new right-wing political party with collaboration with Bart Jan Spruyt⁸³. He stated that they will be joined by “Fortuynists or others” in their combat with crime and Islam (Nisnews Bulletin, November 6, 2004). His political discourse seemed to be successful. For example, when he was still an independent MP, Geert Wilders was voted as the second best politician after Wouter Bos, then the leader of PvdA (Labor Party), 12 percent and 20 percent respectively (Nisnews Bulletin, December 22, 2004). On March 13, 2005, when he presented the manifesto of soon-to-be-established party, there was great attention and debate about it. In this programme, which he calls as his “Declaration of Independence,” besides the measures such as cutting up the bureaucracy, Wilders proposed to have a separate status within the EU in order to carry out an independent immigration policy (Nisnews Bulletin, March 15, 2005). The immigration policy, for him, should allow a maximum of five thousand refugees in a year, and put a stop to the importing of marriage partners from countries like Turkey and Morocco. He also wants to ban new Islamic schools and headscarves in public functions and to introduce automatic life sentences for

⁸³ Later, however, Spruyt withdraw from Wilders list because he thought that there was no unity within right-wing parties (Nisnews Bulletin, August 18, 2006).

anyone convicted for the third time of a violent crime. According to a poll conducted by Maurice de Hond, if the elections were held just after Wilders declared his programme, his party would win 12 seats in the 150-member Lower House (*Tweede Kamer*). The support for some of his proposals, however, was higher: 89 percent want radical mosques closed, 53 percent wish to ban headscarf in public duties, and 62 percent plead for more attention to national identity in schools (Nisnews Bulletin, March 16, 2005). Those who would vote for Wilders are mostly interested in his proposals in halting immigration and reducing crime. Wilders finally established his party, *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (the Party for Freedom, PVV). He said that he wanted to revive traditional liberal principles with the new party. In November 2006 elections, he won 9 seats in the 150-seat Tweede Kamer.

Media's attention to Wilders is noteworthy. In an annual study presented by *Intermediair Magazine* on March 22, 2005, for the last one year, Wilders was the most quoted Tweede Kamer member in the media. *Intermediair* establishes a correlation with Dutch media's habit to pick up clear language on Islam and the popularity of Wilders. Indeed, moderate immigration spokespeople such as CDA MP Mirjam Sterk, PvdA MP Nebahat Albayrak and *GroenLinks* (Green Left) MP Naima Azough received little publicity (37th, 76th, and 80th in the list respectively) while politicians like Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Pim Fortuyn List MP Joost Eerdmans scored in the top ten. Interestingly, newspapers considered as leftist (*De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *Trouw*) gave far more coverage to people considered right-wingers, such as Wilders, Hirsi Ali and Pim Fortuyn List MPs, than the more populist newspaper *De Telegraaf* (*Nisnews Bulletin*, March 23, 2005).

As *Intermediair* rightly identifies, Wilders' anti-Islam and anti-immigration statements have been received the most media coverage. How he approaches to Islam

is an ambiguous one. The clearest example of this ambiguity is that statement where he argued that “I do not hate Muslims. I hate their book and their ideology. I have a problem with Islamic tradition, culture, ideology. Not with Muslim people” (The Observer, February 17, 2008). According to Wilders, “Islam is not a religion, it is an ideology – the ideology of a retarded culture” (ibid). Not only that but he calls Koran as a “fascist book” similar to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, equates prophet Mohammed with Hitler, and defends that Koran should be outlawed in the Netherlands because it breeds “a fascist ideology that wants to kill everything we stand for in a modern Western democracy” (Crouch, 2008).

His thoughts on multiculturalism is also very much connected with his views on Islam. As all other right-wing politicians across Europe, Wilders wants the European Judaeo-Christian tradition to be formally recognized as the dominating culture, or *Leitkultur*. The cultural relativism might be a moral good, but, for Wilders, it is not applicable especially if it is Islam that is to be included. Wilders argues that “There is no equality between our culture and the retarded Islamic culture. Look at their views on homosexuality or women” (The Observer, February 17, 2008). However, as Pim Fortuyn, he does not like to be linked with right-wing fascist figures of Europe. Rather, he prefers to be known as “a libertarian provocateur like Pim Fortuyn or Theo van Gogh” (ibid). Many others also think that he is not a right-wing populist, but “a radical liberal” with guts to show Europe the real face of Islam (Broder, 2008). For Wilders, what he fights, namely Islamization, is a threat to Dutch model of tolerance, and he only defends the right of expression, the most important good of Western world. Stopping the Islamization of the Netherlands requires very drastic measures: “No more mosques, no more Islamic schools, no more imams” (The Observer, February 17, 2008). With this approach, he is more

closed to new liberals rather than old-school white racists. But he exceeds the limits. While new liberals try to establish a boundary between good Muslim and bad Muslim, Wilders does not feel to be very fastidious about the words. He directly blames Islam, and establishes a direct link between terrorism and Islamic culture, which, for Wilders, is a violence-breeding ideology. It is not a coincidence for him that “almost all terrorists are Muslims” (ibid).

His short movie about Koran, *Fitna*, and the discussions it bred can be seen as a laboratory to understand where the Netherlands and Europe evolving through with dealing their Muslims and how Muslims are responding to that. There were two important legacies that influenced the mood of discussions at the time: the first was the murder of Theo van Gogh because of the short movie he made in 2004 and the second was the crisis sparked by the publication of cartoons of Prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper in September 2005. As explained above, the murder of van Gogh was not only strengthen the correlation between Muslims and violence, which was strongly established after the September 11 attacks, it also affirmed the clash between Muslim sensibilities on the one hand, and liberal-democratic values on the other. These two phenomena were repeated in the Danish Cartoon affair. But the latter also made it clear that the internationalization of the “Muslim anger” and the “clash” was very likely to happen⁸⁴. Dutch government, officials and the public

⁸⁴ On September 30, 2005, *Jyllands-Posten*, the Danish right-of-centre newspaper, published twelve editorial cartoons under the heading “The Face of Mohammed.” Most cartoons offer a negative portrayal of the Prophet Mohammed, with several associating him with violence. The one that gave the most offence, and was the most widely portrayed in news reports, is of Prophet Mohammed with a bomb in his turban, with a lit fuse, and the *shadah* or Islamic creed written on the bomb. On October 9, the Islamic Society in Denmark demanded that *Jyllands-Posten* apologize to all Muslims and withdraw the cartoons, and five days later up to five thousand people staged a peaceful demonstration outside the Copenhagen office of the newspaper. Violence, however, also began to enter the picture as two of the cartoonists went into hiding after receiving death threats. Shortly afterwards, the controversy was internationalized as an Egyptian newspaper published six of the cartoons and ambassadors from ten Muslim countries requested a meeting with the then Danish Prime Minister, Andres Fogh Rasmussen. He refused to meet them, and at the same time, refused to distance himself from the cartoons on the grounds of respecting freedom of speech. For a detailed analysis of the Danish cartoon affair and its implications for the liberal democracy, see Levey and Modood (2009).

feared a repetition of the Danish cartoon affair crisis from the very first moment when Wilders declared that he was making a movie about Koran (Burke, 2008). Wilders made it clear before airing his movie that the message to be given in the short movie and the messages given by Submission and Danish cartoons were the same: The Koran is “the source of inspiration for intolerance, murder, and terror” in Wilders’ words (ibid). As Levey and Modood (2009: 220-221) argues, targeting of Muslims as violent and dangerous, Danish cartoons constitute a form of racism. The same is true for the Submission or the Fitna. The attempt to target, denigrate and thus exclude members of a cultural group simply by virtue of their membership is a form of racism. However, in all three cases, the initiators and supporters claimed to be champions of Enlightenment and freedom of expression against a religion that is unenlightened, intolerant, and un-modern. Indeed, the real issue at the stake was the broader argument about the tension between the freedom of expression and freedom of religion (or freedom of insulting and excluding the members of a faith).

The tension was apparent in the statements of Dutch officials. For example, Maxime Verhagen, then the Foreign Minister, said that “freedom of expression does not mean the right to offend” while the supporters of Wilders was arguing that it was “all about free-speech” (quoted in Burke, 2008). For some he is defending traditional Dutch values while others think that he is a right-wing extremist, who, for his own political gain, is risking his country’s good name as a cosmopolitan and tolerant society (Crouch, 2008). The Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, distancing himself from the project and worrying about security at home and at embassies abroad, pointed out the successful balance built by the Dutch tradition: “The Netherlands has a tradition of freedom of speech, religion and beliefs. The Netherlands also has a

tradition of respect, tolerance and responsibility. Unnecessarily offending certain groups does not belong here” (quoted in McGroarty, 2008).

When finally the *Fitna* was showed in a website on 27 March 2008, much of the public sentiment was that of a relief because the movie was not as stirring as expected (Clark, 2008). The movie was repeating the images from the attacks on Twin Towers, London and Madrid bombings, showing images of gays hanged or women stoned or circumcised in some Muslim countries, and preachers calling to fight Jews, all of which accompanied by specific verses from Koran. If one thing Wilders succeeded, it is to include all the clichés about Islam into ten minutes short movie. His message was simple and clear: be cautious about the purpose of Muslims that is to conquer Europe and the world, and destroy the freedom and democratic systems. In other words, he continued the fight *Against Islamization of Our Culture*, which was openly declared by Pim Fortuyn in 1997, allied by Theo van Gogh until his death in 2004, confirmed by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an ex-Muslim and an MP. Towards the end of the movie, a hand is shown grabbing a page of the Koran; the image is accompanied by the sound of tearing paper. The screen then goes blank and subtitles explain that the sound was that of a page being torn from a telephone book. Wilders, in the end, states that “it is not up to me, but to Muslims to tear the hate-showing pages out of the Koran.”

On 28 June 2008, the front-page headlines of major Dutch newspapers reflect the public relief.⁸⁵ It seemed that the only surprise of the movie was its lack of surprise. *Trouw*’s headline expresses that the best: “*Fitna* offends but does not surprise.” *De Volkskrant*’s headline is a kind of summary of the reaction of the Dutch press to anti-Koran movie: “A sense of relief over the ‘mildness’ of *Fitna*.”

⁸⁵ I relied on the pres reviews made by Radio Netherlands (www.radionetherlands.nl). It is an English webpage that makes a daily review of Dutch newspapers, gives major news, publishes opinion pieces, and opens debate about Dutch politics.

AD focuses on the reaction of Muslim communities: “The movie *Fitna* gets a mild reception.”

Geert Wilders said that his purpose was to spark debate on Islam. By implying that there is a need to “tear malicious verses out of the Koran,” he perhaps wanted to encourage discussions among Muslim community to reform their religion as it happened with Christianity in the First Council of Nicaea in the fourth century. However, neither it stirred a new discussion on Islam, nor caused any violent reactions from Muslim community (*NRC Handelsblad*, “Calm response so far to anti-Koran Film,” March 28, 2008). Some Muslim leaders even said that “the film has had a positive effect in that it has brought organizations closer together and given them the chance to discuss the situation immediately with ministers (ibid). Officials were also revealed by the calm reactions from Muslims. For instance, Justice Minister Hirsch Ballin, after meeting the leaders of Muslim communities, stressed the importance that the movie did not lead any division within the Netherlands, and “the picture of Islam sketched by Wilders was not ours” (ibid). Still, the representatives of Dutch government were careful to distance themselves from the movie, and most agreed with Muslims in that the movie has a discriminatory language. PM Balkenende, for example, expressed his regrets about the movie: “The film equates Islam with violence, we reject this interpretation. The vast majority of Muslims reject extremism and violence and in fact the victims are often also Muslims. We therefore regret that Mr. Wilders has released this film, we believe it serves no other purpose than to cause offence” (quoted in Clark, 2008).

The discussions on *Fitna* made three points clear. First of all, neither before nor after did Wilders face legal problems. Muslim population’s demand for banning the movie before it came out was not realized; and after airing the movie, Wilders

was not prosecuted in charges of discrimination or hatred.⁸⁶ The Dutch constitution does not allow censorship. According to article 7 of the constitution, there is the freedom to publish or show anything without prior consent in the Netherlands. The same constitution is also very sensitive about freedom of religion, protection from discrimination and the right to equal treatment as well. However, article 10, section 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights defines the ‘conditions and restrictions’ that need to be prescribed by law and that should be “necessary in a democratic society”. It also allows for restrictions to freedom of expression “for the protection of health or morals”. However, in practice the European Court of Human Rights tends to allow publications that may shock, offend or disturb and permits member states a wide margin in deciding where morals should be protected (Jensma, 2008). Article 29 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights also states that individual rights must be limited when it comes to respect for the freedoms of others and where the public order makes this necessary. Still, since nobody knew the content of Wilders’ movie,⁸⁷ a preemptive legal action to stop showing the movie was technically not possible. Such crimes as “attempted insult” or “conspiracy to insult” do not exist in Dutch law (ibid). Wilders also saved himself from prosecution after showing his movie. This second chapter of the story gives a lot of hints about how much Dutch public culture has changed recently. Comparing the anti-multiculturalist and anti-immigrant statements of an extreme right-wing MP Janmaat, who was prosecuted, fined, and driven out of politics in 1997, and the Wilders’s

⁸⁶ He had two legal charges, however, one because of using mistakenly a photograph of a rapper Salah Edin as Mohammed Bouyeri, the killer of van Gogh, and another for using Danish cartoonist Kurt Westergaard’s cartoon, an image of Prophet Mohammed with a bomb in his turban, without permission (Clark, 2008). The short movie starts and ends with animated version of the cartoon. In the beginning, the bomb fuse is triggered, and in the end, the fuse on the turban is lit. Then, there is a sound of explosion. According to Wilders, the noise is the “roar of thunder and lightening,” not a bomb explosion. But there is a widespread agreement that he replaced the explosion with the sound of thunder to avoid legal repercussions (Traufetter, 2008).

⁸⁷ He refused to show the movie to nobody, including the PM Balkenende.

movie, the former seems polite in today's standards, and the latter would possibly be charged of "hate propaganda" five teen years ago (ibid). Even if the Netherlands Islamic Federation sued Wilders, arguing that Wilders had broken the law by comparing Islam with fascism, calling the Koran as the Islamic version of Hitler's Mein Kampf and the Prophet Mohammed as a barbarian, according to the decision of a district court in The Hague, all these statements of Wilders are legal and he did not incite to hatred or violence against Muslims (Nisnews Bulletin, April 8, 2008). The court argued that "the right of freedom of speech is decisive here," and it did not have authority to push Wilders to apologize because "regret cannot be forced with a verdict" (ibid).⁸⁸

Secondly, responses from the majority of Muslim communities were calm comparing to the protests during the Rushdie affair or Danish cartoon affair. Spokesperson of a Moroccan organization, *Landelijk Beraad Marokkanen*, said that "The concerns I had about unrest and the like have now been reduced considerably" after he watched the movie (quoted in Traufetter, 2008). A Turkish representative too said that the movie would not provoke Dutch Muslims, but he was not sure about the Muslims in other countries (ibid). The spokesperson of the Contact Group Muslims and Government said he believed that Wilders "is seeking the limits, but not crossing the line" (quoted in Sterling, 2008). Hence, it can be argued that the formation of a European Muslim subject, who give his/her reaction via democratic and non-violent means, has been mostly done. Nevertheless, although the reactions were mild as the images shown in the movie were repetitions of images everybody is used to, Muslims were still annoyed and they express their annoyance with peaceful methods. The reason of annoyance was made clear in the words of Mohamed Rabbae, the

⁸⁸ The Court also interestingly and unexpectedly joined the debate by arguing that the Netherlands Islamic Federation is failed to refute Wilders' claims that Islamism is a fascist ideology and Mohammed is a barbarian (Nisnews Bulletin, April 8, 2008).

spokesperson of National Moroccan Council: “it [*Fitna*] gave the impression the Koran justifies violence, and that is really wrong” (ibid). Indeed, by focusing on the fight against the Islamization of Dutch and other Western societies, Wilders, in *Fitna*, gives the message that all Muslims are suspect because they all have Koran at their homes. Therefore, the movie possibly offend the moderate Muslims most because it does not give any room for them to be the equal citizens of the Netherlands or any Western society. Wilders clarified this point in a post-Fitna interview with Spiegel: “that [moderate Islam] is a contradiction. It is going to be a long time before we see a new Koran, an equivalent to the New Testament” (March 31, 2008). According to Wilders, the immigrant youth is inclined to be criminals because their guiding culture is fed by Koran even if they do not carry Koran under their arms. The solution he proposes is “to push harder for a kind *Leikultur*, a guiding culture. Not a monoculture but a culture that draws on our Christian, Jewish, humanistic traditions and that poses a challenge to the Islamic problem” (ibid). Placing a culture in an inferior position and making generalizations of the members of that culture is not racism for Wilders, it is not even nationalism. “It is patriotism... This is pride in our culture” (ibid). As a result, while Muslims get used to be criticized and give democratic reactions to the critics, the standards for their complete integration are to be increased by Wilders. His growing popular vote, as became clear when the PVV came out as the second biggest party in the 2009 European Parliament elections in the Netherlands⁸⁹, may, in the close future, carry his position on Islam and integration to the political centre. At this political climate, Dutch (or any Western society’s) identity is labeled as secular but Christian, liberal

⁸⁹ In the European Parliament elections, Wilders’ PVV won 5 seats out of 25, equal to Christian Democrats and more than the Dutch Labor Party, PvdA. The PVV received 15 percent of the votes, came out as the second biggest party in general. In Rotterdam, it scored as the biggest party with 22 percent votes (Telegraph, June 4, 2009).

but not very open to differences, tolerant but intolerant to non-Western, and humanist but detested religious humans; a clear distinction (and clash) between Muslim sensibilities and liberal democratic values is drawn; and Muslims are asked to strip all their religious sensibilities from public sphere. For now, it seems that Muslims will be subjected to the continuing integration test until an imam will stand up and says “for us, homosexuals are entitled to equal rights and every one has the right to abandon their faith,” which conservative Christians are not entitled to pronounce.

Third, as Buruma suggests in an interview with Spiegel (March 28, 2008), Wilders directs his messages at Dutch and wider Western public to make his point about the dangers of Islam, rather than calling Muslims to reform their religion. His message was mostly criticized by the Dutch and European political elite. PM Balkenende stated immediately after the movie was shown in a website that “We believe it serves no other purpose than to cause offence” (quoted in Clark, 2008). In a special parliamentary session to debate the *Fitna*, no other parties supported Wilders than his PVV, and all questioned Wilders about why he made the movie, and what he is trying to achieve (Tyler, 2008). PM Balkenende demanded an apology from Wilders: “to the people of good will, who belong to Islam, who fully respect the Dutch rule of law, who want to live in peace here with others, and those people who have reacted with such restraint. If apologies are to be made, it is by you, to those people” (ibid). These words were supported by a rare gesture of MPs by hitting on their desks. Wilders’ answer was the *Fitna* should lead the debate on Islam in the Netherlands. During the debate Wilders came under strong attack from other members of parliament. Christian democratic Pieter van Geel told him that “Your film is vicious and unnecessarily offensive.” According to Mark Rutte, parliamentary leader of the VVD, which Wilders used to be a member of, Wilders was “a trouble-

maker, a political pyromaniac.” And Femke Halsema, leader of the left-wing Green party GroenLinks said that, by likening Islam to terrorism, Wilders implied that “every believer is a fascist and a potential terrorist” and he was “passing sentence on all Muslims” (all quotations from *NRC Handelsblad*, April 2, 2008). European Union foreign ministers meeting in Slovenia have also condemned the *Fitna*. The ministers have the same opinion as the Dutch government. They reject the film because it equates Islam with violence, but say Mr. Wilders had the right to make it under the principles of free speech (Radio Netherlands, March 29, 2008). Even Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the script writer of the *Submission*, criticized the movie as “provocation” (Burke, 2008). Nevertheless, a considerable amount of average Dutch people was agreed with Wilders, whose electoral support has increased since then.

Fourth and finally, all actors in this episode (Wilders and his supporters, Muslims, Dutch government representatives and officials, the media and the experts) accepted the purely religious character of the problem. Some agreed Wilders that Koran is a violence-breeding book, some opposed him believing that Islam is actually a peaceful religion, and some others argued that a partial reform would make Muslims easily adapt to modern world. For all these positions, being a Muslim in Europe is taken as a religious identity, and it is suggested that this religious identity must, first of all, stay away from political temptations, and second, reform itself and, before becoming a pure faith that is exercised in the private sphere, confess its sins against non-Muslims, ex-Muslims, homosexuals, and women. At this point, Wilders is more demanding and less patient comparing to most of his opponents who think that Muslims are on their way to reach that point. All the participants of this discussion miss the point that being a Muslim in Europe is a political identity, and a religious reform per se would not solve the problems of Muslim communities living

in Western liberal democracies (as explained in chapter 2, page 18-20). In the end there will always be more conservative Muslims, more moderate Muslims, new Muslims and ex-Muslims. Each subject position will have a political consequence. On the other hand, whether to accept an orthodox Muslim as a fellow free citizen of a European country is a political question as well.

3.5.2. Promoted Muslim Subjectivities

The note pinned to Theo van Gogh's body was not only a threat to Hirsi Ali, Ahmed Aboutaleb and their supporters, but it can also be read as a message to wider Muslim community which implicitly said that the integration models as represented by Hirsi Ali and Aboutaleb as alternative to Mohammed Bouyeri's way of integration should not be followed, and even eliminated. Hirsi Ali was a fallen Muslim who abandoned her roots to join the other side and thus a traitor. As Eyerman (2008: 36) notes, she was a model and symbol of successful integration, whose success was intertwined with the abandonment of Islam. She was also represented the civilization that Bouyeri wanted to destroy (Buruma, 2007: 219). On the other hand, Ahmed Aboutaleb, a Moroccan descent (just like Muhammed Bouyeri) and the Alderman of Amsterdam at the time, was representing another successful model of integration, where the abandonment of Islam was not necessary, but rather being a Muslim with no problems with norms and values of Dutch culture is advocated. The former model, embodied in Hirsi Ali's body, can be considered as a call to "new realists", who insist that Muslims have to distance themselves from Islam in order to be admitted as equal citizens. The latter model, on the other hand, demands from Muslims to adapt to Dutch habits and become active and responsible citizens.

3.5.2.1. Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian: Abandoning Islam to be Dutch

On 29 August 2004, Dutch public television broadcasted a short film named *Submission*. It was based on the Dutch MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali's book with the same name and directed by the film maker Theo van Gogh. The book and the movie depict four short stories of four different Muslim women in a country named "Islamistan." The first woman is caned for fornication, the second is forced a marriage with an unpleasant man, the third is beaten by her husband, and the fourth is raped and impregnated by her uncle (Hirsi Ali, 2006: 141-150). All these women give their *submission* to their fate because Islam means *submission*. In other words, Hirsi Ali suggests that Islam and the oppression of women are identical. She supports her argument with verses from Koran, which, in the movie, were projected on the almost naked bodies of some women.⁹⁰ What she does, Hirsi Ali thinks, should not provoke violence, but discussion. Indeed, it did stir discussion, but along with the murder of the director. She is seen as a dangerous agitator by some, and at the same time, as a hero coming from Muslim world to awake the Dutch from their deep sleep, just like Afshin Ellian, another critic of Islam.

Both Hirsi Ali and Ellian arrived in the Netherlands as political refugees; they very successfully managed to learn Dutch and get degrees from universities, and became influential figures in the discussions on Islam, Muslims, and integration. Ayaan Hirsi Ali arrived in the Netherlands in 1992 to escape from a forced marriage that was supposed to take place in Canada at the age of 22, she quickly mastered the language, became a Dutch citizen, obtained a degree in political science from Leiden University, worked in a research position for the Dutch Labor Party (Partij van de Arbeid- PvdA), and finally became a member of parliament for the Liberal Party,

⁹⁰ This was only the part I. Hirsi Ali stated that there will be two subsequent parts. The second will be about four men who have trouble following God's commands, and in part III, God will answer.

VVD. In 2004, the same year of van Gogh's murder, she was selected as "Dutchman of the Year". Next year, she was named as one of the hundred most influential persons of 2005 by TIME magazine. Her story in the Netherlands ended when she was resigned her parliamentary post in May 2006 because of allegations that she falsified her original application for political asylum, and left to the U.S.A. to work for American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think-tank based in Washington D.C. Hirsi Ali is a very significant figure as she carries all the repressed identities in her background: she is a first generation immigrant, a black, a woman, a Muslim.⁹¹ Nevertheless, she managed to be a member of Dutch parliament and became a "heir to Spinoza" as historian Jonathan Israel wrote (quoted in Bruma, 2007: 24) or a "daughter of Enlightenment" as the New York Times (April 3, 2005) called her.

Even if she is a fierce critic of Islam, she has gained subjectivity and become a political celebrity by claiming to be the voice of Muslim women, who, in her view, "need a woman to speak out on their behalf" since "all their official spokespersons are nearly all men" (Hirsi Ali, 2006: 5). She recommends Muslim women to "benefit more from the dominant Western culture that ... offers them good opportunities to shape their lives", and of course, she is "the living proof" of that (ibid: 6). Here, she overlooks two points. First of all, she thinks that there are completely separated two cultures that are purely exclusive each other: Muslim culture on the one hand and Western culture on the other. The fact, however, is that Muslims in the West breed hybrid identities by keeping their Islamic identity alive while participating mainstream society. Here, we come to the second point she overlooks: Muslim women do not have to abandon their religion to utilize the opportunities given by the country they live. There are alternative success stories to Hirsi Ali's version. Indeed,

⁹¹ Indeed, she was raised as a "good Muslim" according to her words, and even joined the Muslim Brotherhood in Kenya (Hirsi Ali 2006: IX).

Time Magazine's February 11, 2008 issue features them on its cover: "Europe's Muslim Success Story" (Power, 2008). As the Time article suggests, European Muslims are no longer destined to be an underclass with no education and jobs, nor is it a closed community, but on the contrary, Europe is experiencing the rise of a Muslim middle class. Second and third generation Muslim women are getting education and seeking for career, and some of them demand to do these without stripping the manifestations of their faith. The increasing number of incidents and discussions about the hijab in the public spheres of Europe can be read as a proof of this demand of Muslim women. As Muslim women succeed, more and more alternative models other than Hirsi Ali appear. For example, one of the Muslim professionals covered by the Time story is Famile Arslan, the first lawyer with hijab in the Netherlands. Another successful example for Muslim women is Mahinur Ozdemir, who was elected as the first women with hijab in the Belgium Parliament. Therefore, the only Other of Hirsi Ali is not Mohammed Bouyeri, but there are a wide range of others.

Hirsi Ali's approach to multiculturalism is seen clearly in the way she explains why she transferred from Labor Party to Liberal Party. She states that the liberal tradition's individual rights concept is more relevant to her fight for the rights of Muslim women than the collective interests of the left (Hirsi Ali, 2006: 2, 68). According to her (2006: 68), "social justice begins with the freedom and integrity of the individual", and still treating immigrants as a group is not "in touch with reality". In Hirsi Ali's view (2006: 69), Labor Party's respect for one's right to be attached to his/her group identity is the same with saying that "they have a right to their own backwardness". Here Hirsi Ali equates Muslim community's culture with backwardness by giving examples from the lives and family structures of the first

generation Turkish and Moroccan immigrants who are at the very bottom of lower classes with no education, no language, and no vocational skills, and who until 1990s were not asked to learn language or get educated, but do the dirty works in the Netherlands. Such a community, which does not have the means to communicate with the wider society, continued to be a closed community because they keep on importing brides from their countries of origin, and therefore, they remain to be first generation for longer than the expectations. While explaining this phenomenon with sociological factors, Hirsi Ali (2006: xvii) mostly blames Islam, and partially blames “the adherents to the gospel of multiculturalism” that refuse to blame Muslims and that do not help in reforming Islam”. Muslim treatment of women was the major driving force that made Hirsi Ali as a critic of multiculturalism. Parallel to her views about multiculturalism, she defines integration as something close to cultural assimilation: “It is illuminating to understand the notion of integration as a process of civilization of specific groups of Muslim migrants with the receiving Western society. Doing so renders unnecessary the sham debate about the equivalence of cultures” (quoted in Peters, 2006: 6).

Afshin Ellian has a similar story and standpoint with Ayaan Hirsi Ali, except the former chose a career as an academic and columnist rather than involving active politics. Ellian, born in 1966 in Tehran, joined a left wing movement that initially fought side by side with Islamists resisting the rule of the Shah; and after the Islamic revolution, he turned against the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini. At the age of seventeen in 1983, he escaped to Pakistan, and later Afghanistan, where he studied medicine for two years. In 1989, when the Afghani authorities had agreed to turn over dissident intellectuals to Iran, Ellian and approximately seventy other intellectuals were chartered to European countries. Ellian arrived in the Netherlands and he was

granted the option to study at the University of Tilburg as a refugee. He graduated in Criminal Law, International Public Law and Philosophy. He continued working at the Amsterdam Center for International Law (ACIL) and completed his PhD in 2002, after which he joined the faculty of Law in the University of Leiden, where he became a professor although not publishing any serious work in his field other than his PhD dissertation. He has been teaching in Leiden and writing newspaper columns harshly critical of political Islam until this day.

As Ronald Plasterk pointed out in a *de Volkskrant* article on July 15 2005, Ellian is famously known as a “foreign lapdog of the right” whose mission is to criticize “the soft multi-culti left” for their easygoing approaches to Muslim communities in the Netherlands (quoted in Buruma, 2007: 24). Indeed, his critics most of the time targets Dutch political establishment rather than Muslims themselves. For Ellian (2005e), Muslim communities in the Netherlands feel at home there because they are “allowed to co-exist with their own culture (suppression of women, abuse of children, religious intolerance and cultural backwardness) as a separate community in Dutch society.”⁹² He argues that politically correct Dutch elite’s manner of forbidding to criticize “far-reaching Islamification of our cities and schools” is nothing but a “moral terror” (ibid). Here, a monolithic Islamic culture is drawn and equalized to suppression, intolerance and backwardness– the “anti” of Dutch and Western identities– and therefore, intolerance against Muslims is justified in the name of liberalism and the Enlightenment. All the Muslims want to live under the *shaira* rule, for Ellian, but a liberal democracy cannot survive when part of population believes that divine laws trump those made by man (Buruma, 2007: 25). It becomes then a matter of survival, which should be fought with force if necessary.

⁹² By now, if it is not stated any other source, the quotations from Ellian’s writings are taken from the English translations of his columns posted in his blog.

He argues that the Dutch sensibility to protect disadvantaged groups, which is a legacy of World War II, is only a weakness in this fight. What enraged Ellian was not just inability of Muslims to understand and abide by the laws that guaranteed their liberty, but the inability of Europeans to appreciate what they had. “What they had” is of course what Muslims do not have. With this language, Ellian contributes to the “us” and “them” discourse, which appeal to some conservatives because the Enlightenment values are coded not just as universal, but as “ours,” that is European, Western values.

Indeed, Afshin Ellian frequently uses the words “we” and “they.” With the latter, he refers to the unenlightened/conservative Muslims. By “we,” on the other hand, he refers to the Dutch and Westerners. For example, in an interview given to *Die Welt* (November 10, 2004), he talks about immigration issues as a pure-conservative Dutch politician like Frits Bolkestein: “Lately we have brought these problems upon ourselves. We have brought in Moroccans to work, and we should have made clear to them that they either return or give up their native land.” It is quite interesting that he, coming to the Netherlands from Afghanistan in 1989, sees himself as more Dutch and Western than the Muslims, who came to the Netherlands much before him or who were born and raised there. For him, to be Dutch is not about holding Dutch passport, the length of duration or even being born in the Netherlands, but about “giving up” Islamic habits, and learning and absorbing the Enlightenment values.

For him, accepting Muslims as they are is an outcome of a lack of confidence in Western civilization. The same is true about the possible entrance of Turkey into EU. In Ellian’s view, accepting Turkey into EU would spell the end of Europe, not as geographical entity, but as a community of values born of the Enlightenment. Now,

Mohammed B.s were threatening these values with direct influence from Koran and Mohammed A., the Prophet⁹³ (Ellian, 2004b). Ellian shares the same perspective with Hirsi Ali by presenting Islamic culture as a monolithic bloc. He sprinkles here and there some anti-racist statements such as “[T]hankfully there is still a great majority of Muslims that does not or barely lives in this tradition”⁹⁴ (ibid), or he says that “it is racist to think that Muslims are too backward to think of themselves” (quoted in Buruma, 2007: 28), but he continues, “[H]istory teaches us that terror and Islamic culture are deeply related to each other” (Ellian, 2004b). Ellian never clearly distinguishes between Islamism and Islam, which he thinks inherently violent, or between Islamists and Muslims, who, he thinks, must continuously prove that they are not Islamist.⁹⁵ Ellian’s suggestion to solve the Muslim problem fundamentally is the rise of a Muslim Voltaire, a Muslim Nietzsche, in other words, people like “us, the heretics— me, Salman Rushdie, Ayaan Hirsi Ali” (Buruma, 2007: 25).⁹⁶ The issue is, then, not only defending the Enlightenment, but also, as he stated in an interview with *Die Welt* in November 10, 2004, only a week after the murder of van Gogh, Islam needs to go through an Enlightenment.

Secondly, and more naïvely than Hirsi Ali, Ellian reduces the whole Western world into the Enlightenment. He cannot accept the inclusive responses given to post-immigration minorities by different liberal democracies of Europe. These responses only breed political Islamists, he argues. That is why he calls Mohammed

⁹³ “Mohammed A. is the way Ellian calls the Prophet Mohammed, referring to his father’s name, Abdullah. By doing that he establish a direct correlation with Mohammed B., the murderer of Theo van Gogh.

⁹⁴ By the “tradition,” he refers to some “slaughtering” took place during the life time and after the Prophet Mohammed.

⁹⁵ For instance, he argues that Muslims are “still insufficiently active in the battle against terrorism. The Muslim communities could provide valuable information about terrorists” (Ellian 2005a).

⁹⁶ Although being a Nietzsche in the newspaper articles is a tricky task, his titles are clear expressions of his desire and attempt to be a Nietzsche from Islamic background: “In Favor of a Drunken Allah,” “Cube of Lies,”⁹⁶ “Koranic Verses are a Mental Drug for Jihadists.”

Bouyeri a “polder-mujahedeen” to indicate his home-grownness (Ellian, 2005b).⁹⁷ For Ellian, it is “a battle between freedom and the mercantile spirit,” where the mercantilist mentality of the Dutch political elite has prevailed over freedom of speech and democracy in the Netherlands since the 1970s (Ellian, 2005c). He thinks that the European intellectuals, who defend the rights of disadvantaged minorities, including Muslims, have lost the guts and stomach to fight for Enlightenment values (Buruma, 2007: 25). He sees himself as a person who experienced the tyranny and brutality of political Islam in Iran at the first hand, and came to the Netherlands to awaken the Dutch from the naïveté of their unconcerned multiculturalism on Muslim minorities. Because of his own past, Afshin Ellian (and Ayaan Hirsi Ali) is accused of fighting the battle of his own past (Buruma, 2007: 31). To protect democracy against Islamism, Ellian proposes to make a constitutional amendment similar to German constitution’s Article 18, which says “He who abuses freedom of expression, specifically freedom of press, freedom of education, freedom of gathering, privacy of correspondence, freedom to property, and rights to asylum, against the free democratic legal order, will lose the said basic rights.(...)” (Ellian, 2005d). By doing that, he equates Islamism with fascism, but as Geert Wilders does, Ellian too does not differentiate between radical Islamist ideologies and Islam, which he thinks inherently against the all components of the Enlightenment. For not giving a room to religious people who want to live in democratic societies with their religious sensitivities, Ellian and others like him are sometimes called “Enlightenment fundamentalists,” which implicitly points out the brutal experiences of French Revolution (Buruma, 2007: 27).

⁹⁷ Dutch political system is popularly called polder-model. For more details, see p. 80.

3.5.2.2. Ahmed Aboutaleb: Moderating Islam to be Dutch

Ahmed Aboutaleb was born in the Rif mountains of Morocco in 1961, and arrived to the Netherlands in 1976 when he was 15 years old. Although started from a very difficult position, he managed to learn Dutch, got a degree in telecommunications, worked as a radio reporter, became the chair of Forum, a multicultural organization, joined Social Democrats. In his political career, Aboutaleb has first served as an alderman in Amsterdam from 2004 to 2007, and later as the State Secretary of Social Affairs and Employment from February 2007 to January 2009. Finally, he got appointed as the mayor of Rotterdam on 5 January 2009. As a successful example of integration, “Ahmed [Aboutaleb] is an exception in the Netherlands today” says Paul Schnabel (2006: 172), the director of the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau. For Geert Wilders, nevertheless, it is a fundamental mistake to give Aboutaleb such important governmental posts because he holds dual citizenship from the Netherlands and Morocco, so his loyalty is questionable (van Outeren and Stokmans, 2008). According to Mohammed Bouyeri, on the other hand, Aboutaleb was a Muslim, who had allegedly turned against his brothers by collaborating with the enemy, and so, a potential target (Buruma, 2007: 219). His response to Bouyeri was to attend the commemorations of Theo van Gogh. On the day of van Gogh’s murder, he joined thousands of people in Amsterdam, and complained the lack of attendance of Muslims: “Even though they might have found van Gogh an asshole, they should have been there to defend the rule of law” (quoted in Buruma, 2007: 249). Later, attending the first anniversary of the murder, Aboutaleb explained the reporters that he was there in support of the constitution, which, according to him, had been brutally assaulted by van Gogh’s murder (Buruma, 2007: 229). In both cases, he implied how the majority of Muslims do not

care about the rule of law and the constitution. His solution to this problem was nothing different than that of far-right politicians: love or leave. Indeed, in a speech to fellow Muslims in Alkabir Mosque in Amsterdam on November 4th of 2004, the day after the murder of van Gogh, he said that tolerance was not a one-way street. Amsterdam was a city of diversity and freedom, and “those who can’t share those values had better draw their own conclusions and leave” (Eyerman, 2008: 42). Different than far-right politicians, however, he was giving immigrants the right to choose from two possible options: either to be a part of the society and stay, or to leave if not sharing the “collective core values,” which are, for Aboutaleb, the freedom of religion, the freedom of speech and the principle of anti-discrimination (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 11). He, however, misses three points. First of all, integration of a group into a society is not a matter of a deliberative choice or a conscious decision of the group, but rather, it is a matter of time. Secondly, the “core values” he talks of may contradict each other, or when used irresponsibly, may harm the liberal democracy. For example, freedom of speech can be tool for diminishing the freedom of religion, or not discriminating when criticizing religions may hurt the disadvantaged religious groups more than the established religions. Thirdly, in the media, his speech was covered as a single story line: “if you don’t like it here, leave!”, or with a more straightforward message, “*koffers pakken!*” (pack your suitcases!), which in turn used as a part of the discriminating language against Muslims (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 16).

Collaborating with the enemy has been the most popular accusation against Aboutaleb. Once in a television talk show, he was accused by Abdelhakim Chouaati,

a history teacher of Moroccan descent of being an NSBer,⁹⁸ a Nazi collaborator, and Aboutaleb threatened him to sue (Buruma, 2007: 248). Since “NSBer” is a generic term to abuse in the Netherlands, the accuser’s use of it can be a sign of a well-integration into Dutch society as he also speaks Dutch fluently. Hence, here we have a fight between two models of integration: one model is accusing the other, and another model is threatening to sue the former. In the chat-rooms of *alqalem.nl*, a website for young Moroccans, Aboutaleb is frequently called a traitor, a kiss-ass, a “subsidy whore,” or a Bounty, after a famous coconut-filled chocolate bar – brown on the outside, white on the inside (Buruma, 2007: 249). According to the objective criteria of integration (e.g. talking the language, getting education, having job), these Moroccan youth at *alqalem.nl*, Abdelhakim Chouaati, and even Mohammed Bouyeri are all well-integrated people⁹⁹. Aboutaleb too, wherever he speaks, has presented himself as an exemplary Dutch citizen from Moroccan descent (Eyerma, 2008: 41). But what makes Aboutaleb different, or in Schnabel’s words, “an exception” within wider immigrant community? Perhaps he is an approved model of integration by not the objective criteria but by some other informal criteria of integration. According to Buruma (2007: 249), the reason is that Aboutaleb speaks out against the violent prejudices of religious zealots, promotes integration and takes part of government. According to Paul Schnabel (2006), his commitment to become a part of the receiving country is a profound difference. Schnabel argues that there have not been so many people that came into the Netherlands from Morocco or Turkey with that sort of positive intention to become a real part of Dutch society. As most of the youth

⁹⁸ Interestingly, in *stormfront.org*, a website of neo-Nazis, Aboutaleb was denounced as a slave to the worldwide Jewish conspiracy, led by “the arch Zionist Cohen”, the mayor of Amsterdam (Buruma, 2007: 249).

⁹⁹ Bouyeri was well educated and fluent in Dutch. A few years earlier than murdering van Gogh, he even featured on the cover of a Dutch magazine as an example of the success of integrating Muslims into Dutch society (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007: 3).

do not see Aboutaleb as their role model, the possibility of vanishing of his exceptionality in close future is not likely for Schnabel (2006: 172). Since the differences in the society are not evolving through Aboutaleb's way, Schnabel argues, the multicultural society can end up as a "nightmare." However, Aboutaleb is more optimistic than Schnabel on the future of the multicultural society. What makes him appealing to the Dutch political elite is that he offers a relatively realistic solution to "the Muslim problem" comparing to the "abandoning Islam" solution offered by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian. Rather than using the dichotomy of Dutch majority and Muslim minority, he comes up with a new categorization: on the one hand, there is "the well-meaning people," who constitute the majority regardless of their ethnic origin or religious leaning, on the other hand, "the ill-meaning people," who consist of extremists from all ethnic and religious backgrounds (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 11). He is also appealing because Aboutaleb complains about the passivity of Muslims to defeat and terminate the extremists within. By doing that, he articulates the concerns of the majority of Dutch population.

He, as a pious Muslim, most of the time talks to the believers. Muslims, according to Aboutaleb, "must not allow their faith to be hijacked by fanatics" (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 10). He never suggests Muslims to be less faithful. Indeed, Aboutaleb pleaded, against many trends of modern society, for separate swimming lessons for girls and boys¹⁰⁰, while he also told Muslims who could not abide the open society to pack their bags and leave (Buruma, 2007: 250). The main problem, for him, is "the matter of priorities, the fact that many Muslims find the law less important than an insult to the prophet" (Buruma, 2007: 251). According to Aboutaleb, religion should be a private affair, in which the state has no business

¹⁰⁰ Swimming is a mandatory course in elementary schools in the Netherlands.

interfering, and vice versa. He sees the generational distinctions about the way they identify with religion. For the first generation, who is barely literate, “religion is a matter of hearsay couched in cultural patterns. They pray five times a day, they wear beards. Jihad for them is not so much armed struggle as simply being a pious Muslim.” The literate young, on the other hand, is not satisfied with the religion as hearsay, and they, then, make an effort to “consume religion in a strange language.” Aboutaleb thinks that this is a serious handicap as “Koran is a complicated text, difficult to interpret, both in sociological and linguistic terms.” Therefore, it makes him laugh “when a kid like Mohammed B. thinks he can derive enough knowledge from Koran in English and Dutch to think it is his duty to gun a person down”.¹⁰¹ Interestingly, Aboutaleb’s feelings about the second and third generation Muslim youth overlap with complaints about them coming from anti-Islam intellectuals such as Paul Cliteur that they are less integrated culturally than their parents, and so, they are likely to be terrorists. The youth needs guides to understand Koran, and certainly, the Salafi imams and the books of Ibn Taymiyah are not proper ones for Aboutaleb. Hence, he is angry with Tawheed Mosque, where Mohammed Bouyeri used to pray, and where Ibn Taymiyah’s *Fatwas on Women* was presented pious Muslims as a guiding book. It not only says that it is the duty of men to beat their women with rods if they should be caught telling a lie, but also contains a passage about homosexuals who should be dropped to their deaths from five-story towers. Aboutaleb thinks that centers like Tawheed Mosque and ignorant youth make it so much harder for peaceful Muslims to become accepted citizens in a European democracy, and to feel at home there, without drawing undue attention to themselves (Buruma, 2007: 252).

¹⁰¹ Quotations are from the interview with Aboutaleb conducted by Buruma (2007: 251-252).

Aboutaleb had a reputation as a defender of an approach to ethnic diversity based on mutual adaptation and empathy, and within the environment where this position was attacked heavily after the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, he continued defending the policies that encouraged multicultural society (Hajer and Uitermark, 2008: 5, 9). Yet, at the same time, he was harsh against radical Muslims and critical about Muslim community for not sufficiently isolating and fighting them. For this reason, he is not liked by Muslim community, but, except the extreme voices like Geert Wilders, he is much appreciated by the Dutch political elite and wider Dutch community. And Ahmed Aboutaleb has received the praises for his balanced and moderate position after the murder of van Gogh. First, he was elected the best alderman in Amsterdam in 2005, later he became the deputy minister of social affairs and employment in February 2007. But biggest praise came in January 2009, when he was appointed as the mayor of Rotterdam, the second largest city of the Netherlands with 584,000 population, 36 percent of which consists of non-Western immigrants (Radio Netherlands). With this appointment, he became the first Muslim, first Moroccan, first foreign-born Dutch citizen, and first person with dual-nationality to be the mayor in the Netherlands. Not surprisingly, it bred a great deal of debate. *Leefbaar Rotterdam*, with its 14 seats in 45-seat Rotterdam City Council, was the fiercest critic of the appointment. Ronald Sorenson, who became the leader of the party after Pim Fortuyn, stated that “He comes from Amsterdam and supports Ajax [Amsterdam’s football club], but even worse, he has two passports (*NRC Handelsblad*, “First Muslim Mayor of Rotterdam will need to find allies,” 20 October 2008).

Previously, just after the murder of van Gogh, he proved his loyalty by criticizing Muslim community for not sufficiently fighting extremists within and

calling them to leave if not integrating. Now, as the mayor of a city with large population of Muslims, he could not continue that discourse by directly targeting the people he is in charge of. But rather, he chose to disparage the alternative models of integration. The most popular among them was Tariq Ramadan, who once presented as a positive example of a pro-integrationist Muslim leader, and therefore was employed by the Rotterdam municipality as an advisor on integration “to build bridges between the different communities in Rotterdam” as the city executive stated in 2006 (*NRC Handelsblad*, 2009a), and invited to teach at Rotterdam Erasmus University. After a debate on Ramadan hosting a television show in Press TV, the Iranian worldwide 24-hour news network in English, during the elections in Iran, he was first fired from his position in the municipality and then from his post as the chair of Erasmus University’s Identity and Citizenship Programme, which was funded by the Rotterdam municipality. For Ramadan, Ahmed Aboutaleb is the primary responsible for his dismissal because Aboutaleb saw him a problem for his career as the mayor and therefore did not stand up against his dismissal (*NRC Handelsblad*, 2009b). According to Ramadan, before becoming the mayor, Aboutaleb told him that he was doing good job, and the Netherlands needed more people like him; however, as the mayor Aboutaleb “did not want to give the impression that he was looking out for other Muslims” (ibid).

In the dismissal of Tariq Ramadan in the hands of Ahmed Aboutaleb, there was actually a battle between two competing models of integration. Ramadan was born in Switzerland, grew up and was educated in Europe, thought in several European universities, and worked with some European governments. Aboutaleb, on the other hand, was not born in Europe, arrived to the Netherlands in the age of 14, but he was educated and got a career in politics as a Moroccan Dutch. However,

Ramadan's integration was questioned, he was accused of not understanding Western sensibilities, and he was expelled by a municipality that was led by Aboutaleb. In reality, however, it was not Ramadan's integration that was under question here, but rather a preference between two perfectly integrated people with highly symbolic power. The most significant difference between the two is that Ramadan is an international figure while Aboutaleb is a national one. Some other problems come along with this internationality. First of all, it touches upon the internationality of Islam, which as argued in the second chapter (pp. 57-58) challenges the national and inflames the fear of Islam as a huge bloc. Secondly, it becomes easier to establish a connection with global Islamist jihad. Indeed, Afshin Ellian, another model of integration, involves into the debate, and says that "Tariq Ramadan is an Islamist par excellence," and if there is any small bridge built by Ramadan, the Dutch "should destroy it as quickly as possible because the other side of the bridge would end up with "Islamic fascism" (Ellian, 2009). Aboutaleb, on the other hand, speaks to Dutch Muslims, and most of the time, on behalf of white Dutch. If there is a problem, it is his double-nationality, which only questioned by extremist Geert Wilders, and did not block him to become the first deputy minister and first mayor of Muslim origin. The preference of Aboutaleb's model over others (Ramadan's model and Hirsi Ali's & Ellian's model) was made in spite of his reputation as a practicing Muslim. Therefore, being a good Muslim Dutch does not require abandoning Islam, but rather transforming Islam into a faith exercised in the private spheres or mosques, something parallel with Calvinism. The comparison with Ramadan makes clear that being a good Muslim Dutch also requires not touching Islam related international issues from a highly political perspective as that of Tariq Ramadan. He was one of the first Muslim thinkers in the West to oppose the fatwa against Salman Rushdie,

and he has been critical of the regimes in Muslim world for their lack of freedom of expression and inequality of women. Nevertheless, he refuses “to be swayed by propaganda claims” not only from Iran, but also from Israel, which “asserts, all the while proclaiming its innocence, that Iran is the main obstacle to peace (Ramadan, 2009), and from Western states, which refuse the connection between terrorism and their foreign policies (Ramadan, 2007).

3.6. Conclusion

In the Netherlands, the media and opinion leaders, including politicians, seeking media coverage have played key roles in the dramatic and rapid shift in public discourse about multiculturalism, immigrants, integration and Islam. Highly active and influential intellectual elite has led the discussions and some ultra-liberal politicians both exacerbated and canalized anti-Islam/immigrant sentiments. International events such as September 11, London and Madrid bombings along with national events such as the murder of Theo van Gogh only increased the effect of liberal intellectuals and politicians. Although the perception of Dutch culture is under threat appears to be more widespread than an awareness of what this culture consists of, the perception of threat of Islam against the Dutch and European culture was crucial in the increasing popularity of anti-Islamic discourse. Interestingly, however, in the Netherlands, those take confrontation with Islam as a fuel to the idea that Europe exists also the strongest opponents of deepening the European Union. Another significant difference of Dutch anti-Islam is its way of justifying itself. Anti-Islamic intellectuals and politicians are not racist or ultra-nationalists in the Netherlands, but rather the progressives who suggests that they defend the values of Enlightenment and liberal democracy. For them, freedom of religion is an important

good of liberal democracy, but not absolute. What is more central to the liberal democracy is freedom of speech, which should not be restricted even if it hurts a minority.

Looking at how policy-makers blamed immigrants and how integration policies became more strict and demanding, it appears that the integration expectations in the Netherlands have been very impatient and have many flaws in that respects. First of all, policymakers wish to see a clear-cut generational evolution, where each generation integrates better than its predecessor until the newcomers fully assimilate into the receiving society. However, as Vermeulen and Penninx (2000: 208) suggests, this is very hard to follow especially considering the Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands because of the long duration of their still coming immigration. New first generation immigrants keep coming. Secondly, setting and finding a place in a new society take time, and this is neglected both in 1989 WRR report and parliamentary memorandums in 1990s and 200s.

However, the impatience of politicians and anti-Islamic sentiments of intellectuals do not change the fact that a considerable Muslim community now lives in the Netherlands, they will continue to live, and perhaps increase in the number. Almost 20 percent of the population are either foreign born or have at least one or two foreign born parents. Their level of education is lower and level of criminality is higher comparing to the native Dutch. There is a concentration of immigrants in the densely populated West. Almost one third of the Amsterdam population is foreign born, and three in five Amsterdam school children are of immigrant origin. Corresponding numbers for Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht are only slightly lower. Therefore, there is the problem of controlling these substantial and potentially problematic Muslim communities some models of integration has to be presented to

these Muslims. Two models come into prominence. The first is abandoning Islam to be Dutch, whose most important examples are Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian. The other is moderating Islam to be Dutch, which is associated with Ahmed Aboutaleb. Since the possibility of becoming widespread among Muslim community is not a realistic expectation for the former, Aboutaleb model has been invested more firmly than the others in the Netherlands. Aboutaleb, as a practicing Muslim who does not touch internationality of Islam and is not interested with the global injustice and aggression against Muslims, is thought as a cure to the radicalization among small groups of young Muslims and a direction to the majority of Muslims for privatizing their religion.

CHAPTER 4

THE DUTCH, THE UN-DUTCH, AND THE SEMI-DUTCH

4.1. Introduction

This chapter consists of discourse and content analysis of the forty four interviews conducted from April 2008 to January 2009 in the Netherlands. The interviewees were selected from three basic areas: policy making, advising to the policy makers, and involvement in the debates about policy making in integration (See Appendix A for the list of interviewees). Policy makers were members of the Dutch Lower House (*Tweede Kamer*) and city councilors from three major cities (The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam). Advisors to the policy makers were the researchers of relevant ministries and academics, who are actively involved in the public debate about Islam and integration or wrote influential reports and papers about the integration of immigrants. The third group consisted of some significant individuals and representatives of relevant institutions and organizations (e.g. successful persons from immigrant background, representatives of multicultural organizations).

Table 4.1 - Distribution of interviewees with regard to occupation

Occupation	Number
Members of Parliament	13
City Councilors	9
Bureaucrats	7
Academics	7
Others	7
Total	43

Especially when selecting the politicians to interview, an extra effort was made to have a balanced sample of interviewees with regard to the current popularity rates of political parties. During the interviews were conducted, the Dutch coalition government (named after its prime minister as the fourth Balkenende cabinet) was formed by the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA- *Christen Democratisch Appel*), Labor Party (PvdA- *Partij van de Arbeid*), and Christian Union (CU- *ChristenUnie*). The last one is a small Protestant political party with the left wing ideas on economics, immigration, and social and environmental issues. Several spokespersons from each political party are interviewed. Besides Christian Union, there was another small Protestant political party named the Political Reformed Party (SGP- *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij*) represented in the Dutch Lower House (*Tweede Kamer*) with two members. However, they refused to hold an interview because of a heavy schedule.¹⁰² Another, political party that refused my request for interview was the Party for Freedom (PVV- *Partij voor de Vrijheid*), which is known with its leader Geert Wilders and his anti-Islam and anti-immigrant statements.¹⁰³ Besides these two

¹⁰² They kindly refused my request on account of the fact that they are only two persons who have to deal with all the issues regarding to their political party.

¹⁰³ I tried twice to meet either their leader Geert Wilders or another MP from their party. When they replied that none of them available, I asked to hold this interview with any of their spokespersons, not necessarily an MP, they said that only Geert Wilders himself can talk about these kinds of issues, and he cannot do it at the moment because of a very busy schedule.

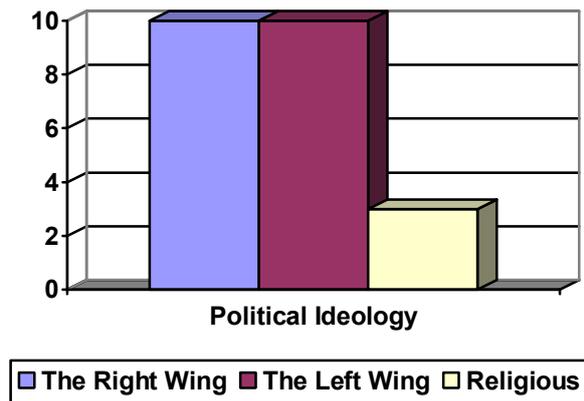
political party, I conducted the interviews with all other political parties represented in the *Tweede Kamer* and in the city councils of Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam. On the left, there are Socialist Party (SP- *Socialistische Partij*) and Green Left (GL- *Groen Links*). After the CDA, the second biggest right wing political party is the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD- *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*). Democrats 66 (D66- *Politieke Partij Democraten 66*) is another small political party with liberal leftist ideology represented in the *Tweede Kamer*. Other than these political parties who are represented in the *Tweede Kamer*, I included two local political parties that are Livable Rotterdam (LR- *Leefbaar Rotterdam*), a right wing political party that has a widespread grassroots in Rotterdam, and the Muslim Democratic Party (MDP- *Moslim Democratische Partij*), a small political party represented in the City Council of The Hague. In addition to trying to have a balanced representation in the sample, I also tried to reach the integration and immigration spokespersons of the political parties, and mostly I succeeded. Furthermore, among the persons interviewed, there are very significant politicians such as Frits Bolkestein, who started the integration debate in the early 1990s with a special emphasis on Muslim immigrants, Stef Blok, who chaired the parliamentary committee that studied and wrote a report on the last thirty years of integration policies,¹⁰⁴ and Marco Pastors, who became the most prominent name and the leader of Livable Rotterdam after the assassination of Pim Fortuyn in 2002.

The sample is also balanced when an ideological distribution is made. The CDA, VVD, and LR are considered as the right-wing and the SP, PvdA, and GL are categorized as the left wing. Although the CU and MDP have left wing agendas in socioeconomic issues, they are put into a different category as religious political

¹⁰⁴ This committee is popularly known as Blok Committee, named after its chair Stef Blok.

parties since both of them say that their political ideology is inspired by their religion. The distribution according to political ideology is displayed in the Graph 4.1.

Figure 4.1 - Distribution of politicians interviewed according to political ideology



Coming to bureaucrats, I aimed at talking with policy advisors in the ministries such as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration and the Ministry of Interior Relations that are the prime responsible bodies on integration and immigration. Besides, the representatives of some governmental research bodies that are influential in policy making such as Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP- *Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau*) or Council for Social Development (RMO- *The Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling*) are also interviewed. The former is a government agency which conducts research into the social aspects of all areas of government policy. Its main fields are health, welfare, social security, the labour market and education. As mentioned in chapter 3 (p. 111), it has increasingly been influential in the government's integration policies. The latter also advises the Dutch government on social issues. In its recommendations and reports, the Council examines and explains the significance of new social developments in terms of

policy. Integration as an important new social development has been one of the major research field of the Council.

Finally, I also interviewed some academics and representatives of some important institutions in terms of integration, and a few persons who are regarded as successful in terms of integration. Academics I interviewed are among those who actively involved in the debates on integration and Muslims in the Netherlands, or who wrote reports that have stirred up debate and positively or negatively influenced government policies.

The questions were prepared after making a substantial literature review on the Dutch and European experience about immigration, integration, multicultural society, multiculturalism, liberal democracies, and religion in the public sphere. The questions were semi-structured, and depending on the duration of the interview, the interviewee is asked from 6 to 12 questions. There were four major subjects to explore. First group of questions aimed at learning how the interviewee defines Dutchness and integration, and which particular groups he/she thinks as having problems to integrate. The second group of questions was about the Muslims in general. The purpose of these questions was to understand whether the interviewee thinks Muslims as a more problematic group, whether he/she changes or adds new requirements to the integration definition he/she made before, and whether Muslims are considered in a different way than the other immigrant groups. Third group of questions aims at understanding where religion is placed in the Dutch public sphere, and whether Muslims are put into a different position than the conservative Christians as a religious group in this regard. I added this category because the reason behind Muslim integration can be related to Dutch majority's view about religion. I expected that the answers given to these questions can give some clues

about whether the issues about Muslims stemmed from the level of religiosity attributed to them, or because of some other reasons. And finally, the last cluster of questions focuses on some specific topics that are related to the Muslims in public sphere such as headscarf, Islamic schools, handshaking, and gender and sexual issues (See Appendix B for a detailed list of interview questions).

4.2. General Thoughts on Dutch Integration Policies

Before starting with the core questions, I asked to the interviewee to tell me his/her initial thoughts about the Dutch integration policies. Integration is “one of the most sensitive subjects of the Dutch politics” as it is emphasized by Stef Blok¹⁰⁵, the chair of the parliamentary committee on evaluating the success of integration policies. Although the definition of integration ranges from more assimilationist approaches to more accommodative forms, everybody agrees on two points. First of all, the Dutch governments had “underestimated the challenge of being a multicultural society”¹⁰⁶ for very long time until “the real situation became undeniable.”¹⁰⁷ This is the most common response given when interviewees are asked to give their initial thoughts about the Dutch integration policies.

For a long time period, we thought that it would be okay. We thought that we should not have high demands on the people who came. They would find their way on their own. It is the Dutch way, the way we deal with the issues in the Netherlands: let people live their own lives, give them freedom, and everything will be ok. So it is almost being indifferent. It looks like we are tolerant, but actually we are indifferent. We ignored the fact that it is really difficult to become a part of this society because it is a complex society.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Stef Blok, MP from the VVD.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Madeline van Toorenburg, MP from the CDA.

The second point of agreement is that neither the changes through more strict policies nor the focusing on Muslims were not unexpected consequences. The problems with immigrants and Muslims were already there, but making the political decision to do something on it was a gradual process. Until it was realized that, in Bolkestein's words, "the stroller breaks the camel's back" with the murder of Theo van Gogh, there had been a series of signs such as the persistence of culture and religion,¹⁰⁹ the first generation's lack of language skills even after 30 years in the Netherlands,¹¹⁰ high unemployment, school-dropout and crime rates among the immigrant children,¹¹¹ concentration of immigrants in some neighborhoods and the growing distance between them and the indigenous Dutch people,¹¹² the international context concerning the Middle East and Islam,¹¹³ and the rise of anti-immigrant populist Pim Fortuyn.¹¹⁴ There have been some "wake-up calls"¹¹⁵ starting with Frits Bolkestein's article in 1991, then Paul Scheffer's article, *Het Multiculturele Drama* in 2000. When the final calls came with the 9/11 and the murder of Theo van Gogh, long-lasting indifference cost a lot according to most of the interviewees. It was no more possible to "balance the political debate" and "control the over-reaction."¹¹⁶ According to Fatma Koşer Kaya, political parties were also to blame because they either did not bring the issues into the political agenda, or when they did, they simply could not balance their responses about the multicultural society: "the right said that 'the Netherlands is full, let's return the immigrants back their home' and the left said 'you talk very improper, let's not talk about these'." Such way of making politics locked the Netherlands, Kaya argues, and in the end the problems and discontent

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Kathleen Ferrier, MP from the CDA.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

¹¹¹ Interview with Madeline van Toorenburg, MP from the CDA.

¹¹² Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from the SP.

¹¹³ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Tofik Dibi, MP from the GL.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Tofik Dibi, MP from the GL.

about the immigrants were “exploded” within the xenophobic and anti-Islamic environment of post-9/11 world.

Besides these convergent points, there are also divergences along the ideological lines about the current state of integration policies. Some of the left wing politicians, especially the representatives of the SP argue that they first came up with the idea that the Dutch governments should pay more attention to the integration of immigrant minorities in the 1980s, when they were criticized as being racist, and “in the 90s, the liberals lead by Bolkestein took up these issues, and (...) said the same what we [the SP] said 10 years ago.”¹¹⁷ They seem to be favorable that now most of the politicians realized that “the multicultural aspect was not so good as people thought before” and pleased that the integration is emphasized stronger nowadays, but they also argue that understanding integration not as “participation” but as something close to cultural assimilation by right-wing politicians is not the appropriate solution.¹¹⁸ They want to make their difference clear by defining integration different than the right wing liberals.¹¹⁹

Second point of divergence is on deciding what the major mistake of immigration and integration policies was. While everybody agrees on the fact that there was no integration policy until the end of 1980s which left some irreparable outcomes, the majority, and mostly the right wing liberals, argue that valuing immigrant cultures and relying very much on multiculturalist policies was the greatest mistake.

The greatest mistake of Dutch immigrant policies was to put too much effort on keeping identity, instead of telling immigrants that they should have adjusted to Dutch society. This adjustment should have go

¹¹⁷ Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from the SP.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Sadet Karabulut, MP from the SP.

¹¹⁹ These differences in the definition of integration will be discussed below.

on in learning the language, learning labor skills, and also little bit about knowing the culture of the country where they immigrated to.¹²⁰

We always thought that differences in standards and values would get smaller over time. That was the multicultural model. But at the end of 90s, and especially in the beginning of this millennium, it appeared that what we hoped was not happening. People were not getting closer to each other. On the contrary, the difference was getting bigger. (...) Many people thought that these problems would all go by themselves. They didn't want to talk about it. People who complained about this situation could not express themselves because there was a ban on speaking about it. You could not be critical about your neighbors because you might be called racist. (...) Tolerance was the official word for this behavior. But in practice it was actually ignorance, denial, and not caring about it. You be tolerant on things that you accept.¹²¹

Government helped them [immigrants] to keep in their own culture, gave them some lessons, keep them addressed with their own cultures so that they would not be estranged from their home countries. The idea of multiculturalism started in that circumstance, you should not make Dutch citizens of these people. Gradually it became clear that people were bringing over their families from abroad, applying for Dutch citizenship, and staying here. That brought about a change in policy of course. And we started thinking about how to define a good Dutch citizen. From there on, we had more stress on integration, assimilation, subscription to *minima moralia* of Dutch or European citizenship.¹²²

Some others usually the leftists, on the other hand, generally think that the greatest mistake was not supporting multiculturalist policies with socioeconomic measures in job market, education and housing.

Within this whole new social class of migrant workers and their families, there was high unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, segregation, living in the forest areas of the cities, etc. There was a real problem in socioeconomic terms and cultural terms already in Holland. (...) He [Pim Fortuyn] appealed quite a group of voters because there were socioeconomic problems among the migrant communities within our society.¹²³

¹²⁰ Interview with Robert Flos, city councilor of Amsterdam, the VVD.

¹²¹ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

¹²² Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

¹²³ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

Finally, the conservative Christians criticize the expectation that religiosity would decrease automatically and argue that the greatest mistake was the sharp return from community based policies to the policies that focus on the individual and the Dutch identity.

When immigrants started coming in the 1960s, the policymakers thought first of all that people would integrate automatically. Second, people coming from those remote areas of the world had some outdated habits such as being religious. Once they were used to modernity, policymakers thought that they were secularized because modernity meant secularism. Once they integrate to modernity, they would forget their outdated habits like religion. These things did not happen. People did not lose their faith. Integration doesn't go automatically.¹²⁴

Until the 90s, the integration policy said that you can be a part of your group, learn your mother language at schools. This stopped. And the focus was on Dutch identity. Now policy says that "learn to be Dutch". This debate appealed so many people that the more right wing parties saw there was a lot of electoral gain in that area. So they had some sort of competition each other on who can say the hardest, the toughest about immigrants. And the debate became more and more aggressive and harsh. However, they were not really solving the problems.¹²⁵

The outcome of all these mistakes, as everybody agrees, was first the rise of "openly anti-immigrant populist" Pim Fortuyn and then "openly anti-Islamic populist" Geert Wilders,¹²⁶ who "tries to become a big person through the worries of people."¹²⁷ Although the discourse and style of Fortuyn and Wilders are not generally accepted, most of the people I interviewed appreciate the existence of the "worries of people." As Ed Anker puts, it was a "feeling under belly," which "might not be rational but real."

¹²⁴ Interview with Kathleen Ferrier, MP from the CDA.

¹²⁵ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

¹²⁶ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

¹²⁷ Interview with Madeline van Toorenborg, MP from the CDA.

4.3. How to Become a Good Dutch?

After having some ideas about the interviewee's general thoughts about the post-War history of Dutch immigration and integration policies, the respondent is asked to give his/her understanding of integration. To understand adequately what the interviewee means, the subject is explored with a set of questions. The interviewee is first asked to define what Dutchness is, then define what integration is, and finally articulate his/her definition of integration by talking about the groups that fail to integrate and the reasons behind that failure.

4.3.1. Dutchness

One of the major themes explored in the interview questions is what Dutchness is. The goal is to identify what they have in mind when they call immigrants to integrate into "Dutch society," or in other words, how they define the major characteristics of the Dutch society. Rather than directly asking them how they describe Dutchness, I invited them to be my "integration coach" and tell me how I could be a "good Dutch." A accompanying question was how they fill the "norms and values" basket, which has very frequently been used in the integration discourse, especially by the Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende. Some of them attempted to describe Dutch identity independent from the integration issues. For them, being tolerant in public but conservative in private, always searching for the better, believing in Europe, loving money or being a kind of stingy, and trade are the main characteristics of the Dutch. They mentioned that if I am in the Netherlands, I should be aware of these characteristics first. Two most clear examples are following, and both came from two Christian Democrat MPs:

The most founding element is that you count your Euros everyday. Dutch are very tough on money. In public we are very tolerant. But in

our private sphere, we are rather conservative. There is a division between our public opinions, where we have to behave with a lot of tolerance, and our private surroundings, where we are very conservative. It is not only family, but in villages, in clubs, in sport clubs, etc. For example, our sport clubs are very segregated especially on denominational lines. Dutch history is about trade and religion. We have reverence and salesmen. Our national history is a story of the balance of these two powers.¹²⁸

This country gets stronger by farming, struggle against water. We dealt with those issues, and that make us people who try to achieve to make it better place. We are not very satisfied people. We believe in Europe because we know that we are a small country. At the same time we try to participate to the world. Even though we are so small, we are also very powerful because our economy and business is very good.¹²⁹

However, for an outsider, being a good Dutch not only requires to understand these basic characteristics and absorb some of them, but also there are some extra obligations. Indeed, for most of the interviewees, it was difficult to explain what Dutch identity is or what so-called Dutch “norms and values” are, but explaining immigrants the conditions for being a good Dutch citizen was relatively an easy task. The first and most common answer given to this question is “speaking Dutch.” Obeying the constitution and law and being tolerant to differences are the second and third most-pronounced requisites.

Being Dutch is having the Dutch nationality. You can become a Dutch simply by naturalizing. [After I asked how to become a “good Dutch,” then his answer was:] You should speak the language, obey the law, vote, and find a good job. You do not have to like gays. It is okay as long as you do not beat them. You are free on your likes and dislikes. It is not true that there is an inner-core in Holland, and that you should be a part of that inner core to be a proper Dutch. We are a country of 16 million people, and there are all sort of boys and girls here. Many of them well-behaved, many of them badly-behaved. But there are liberties and freedom for all, but within the law.¹³⁰

Knowing the language. Then in a way being tolerant, living together and respecting each other’s way of life.¹³¹

¹²⁸ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

¹²⁹ Interview with Madeline van Toorenborg, MP from the CDA.

¹³⁰ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

¹³¹ Interview with Madeline van Toorenborg, MP from the the CDA.

First thing is that you have to speak Dutch. It is a big problem because we have people here for 30-40 years who can speak Dutch very poor. That is the problem of our government. Until the end of 80s, there was not such an emphasis on speaking Dutch. So it is not right to blame them only. To be a good Dutch, you have to study and you have to work. This is the biggest problem.¹³²

However, especially the conservative Christians are critical of newly invented “Dutch norms and values” such as being tolerant to sexual preferences, and they think that not following such norms do not make them less Dutch. The question here is then why pushing immigrants to follow such norms and values. Relatively more liberal Christians of the CDA, on the other hand, argue that the big cities insist on the accommodation of its public codes to the same degree whether you are coming from a different country or from a little town in Holland.

Or if you look at the sexual moral of this society, I cannot identify myself with the ruling sexual moral... [It] is a bit loose. For Christians that doesn't work. For example, I have quite strict sexual moral. Am I less Dutch? What is Dutch? So it is easy to say “act Dutch”. But it is not easy to define what Dutch is? I don't know what Dutch identity is. But I think the most important component of Dutch identity is difference and living with it... I don't understand when politicians say that in Holland we are used to shake each other's hand, so everybody should shake others' hands, and a Muslim man must also shake the hand of a woman. It is not law, it is not tradition. We didn't invent handshaking, it is not something typical Dutch.¹³³

For example, I am from south, so I am Roman Catholic. If you come to this area from south, it is like immigration. We have a different dialect, and the life is so relaxed there. But here it is very tough.¹³⁴

Therefore, the conservative Christians are tend to keep the requirements of being Dutch rather simple because they also do not agree with the majority's secularist and liberal definitions of Dutchness: “If you are in Holland, you have to learn three things: speaking Dutch, riding a bicycle, and swimming.”¹³⁵ Judith Sargentini, a Green Left city councilor, also agrees on keeping the Dutchness simple.

¹³² Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from the SP.

¹³³ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

¹³⁴ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

¹³⁵ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

For her, talking about “norms and values of Dutch society” is nothing but “cherry-picking.”¹³⁶ She argues that “people living in big cities do not fit into that moral cherry-picking.” Surely, this “cherry-picking” does not have an ambition to transform indigenous Dutch society, but the immigrants. Nevertheless, since a significant amount of Dutch society does not fit into those norms and values any more, it may lose its power of persuasion on the immigrant communities, and turns into an arbitrary tool to decide who is integrated and who is not, or who belongs and who does not.

4.3.2. Integration

As discussed in the second and third chapters, integration is a very vague concept; its meaning varies among the citizenship traditions and political ideologies. Even in a particular citizenship tradition, standards of being integrated change through time, mostly the threshold of being integrated is increased, more and more criteria are added to the requirements of integration. This is one of the main problems in the inconsistency of Dutch integration policies for Jurriaan Omlo, a researcher at RMO.

I think the problem is that the rules of the integration are continuously changing. So if you say at this moment that people who have not reached certain goals, that is not fair because the goals have changed and aims have changed through the years. And that first it was only that they have to learn the language, then they have to learn cultural values of the Netherlands. In the beginning, of course economic participation, but at the end of the 1990s more and more people said that cultural integration is also important. And furthermore, after that not only cultural integration was important, but also psychological identification, you have to feel Dutch.¹³⁷

To understand the major inclination in the Netherlands, I directly asked my respondents to define integration. Among all other criteria for being considered as

¹³⁶ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

¹³⁷ Interview with Jurriaan Omlo, Policy Adviser, Council for Social Development.

integrated, speaking the language scored the highest. Since there is a consensus on it, I put speaking Dutch into a different basket. Rather than a criterion of integration, it can be regarded as a prerequisite of integration. As Madeline van Toorenburg puts it, “speaking the language (...) is not the solution, but without speaking the language there is no solution.”

After speaking Dutch, the most used concept to define integration is “participation.” 34 out of 43 respondents (% 79) explained integration almost the same as participation (See Table 2 for the frequencies of different meanings attributed to integration). They not only talk about participation in job market or education, but also active involvement into social and political life. Most of them also mention that active participation not only requires the will on the part of immigrant minorities but also equal opportunity and acceptance on the part of the host society. Obeying the constitution and law and having a job are the second and third in the list. After that, adapting to democratic values (e.g. tolerance, the equality of men and women, respecting sexual preferences) scores as the fourth criterion to be integrated. Absorbing the behavioral codes of the host society’s public sphere is also presented as a necessary condition. Those who mentioned this also made a differentiation between public and private spheres. They appreciate the right of exercising culture or religion in the private sphere and establishing institutions based on culture, religion or ethnicity, but in the shared areas of public sphere (e.g. public transportation, shops, job places) there are some behavioral codes that should be followed by anyone living in the Netherlands regardless of his or her ethnic or religious background. Some others, on the other hand, talk of a cultural adaptation that goes beyond these public codes, and include all spheres of life.

Looking at the requirements of integration given in Table 4.2, it is possible to cluster some of them together (See Graph 4.2). If integrating needs an effort on the side of immigrants, then the minimal requirements of integration are to be able to survive in the host country, to obey the law and constitution of it, and to have a job that helps living a decent life.

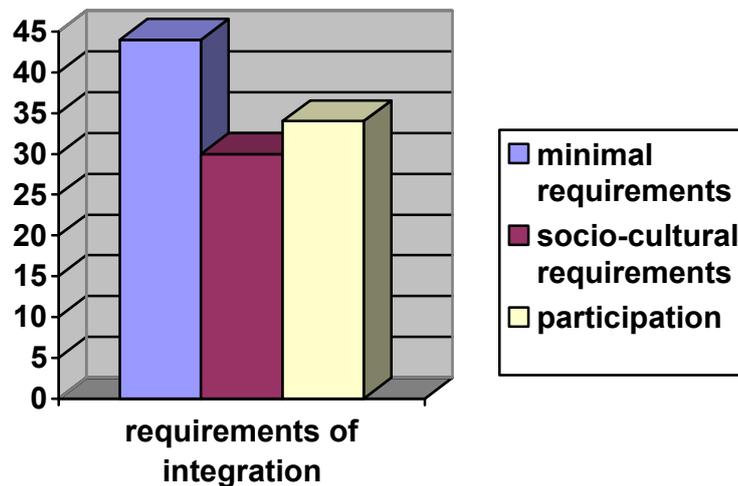
Table 4.2 - The frequencies of different meanings attributed to integration by the interviewees

Integration	Frequency	Percentage (out of 43, the total number of interviewees)	Percentage (out of 112, the total number of frequency)
Participating	34	% 79	% 30.3
Surviving	8	% 18.6	% 7.1
Obeying the Law and Constitution	18	% 41.8	% 16
Having Job	18	% 41.8	% 16
Following Democratic Values (e.g. being tolerant)	14	% 32.5	% 12.5
Following Behavioral Public Codes	9	% 20.9	% 8
Cultural Adaptation	7	% 16.2	% 6.2
Being Honest	2	% 4.6	% 1.7
Riding Bicycle	1	% 2.3	% 0.9
Swimming	1	% 2.3	% 0.9

Nevertheless, although not as frequent as the minimal requirements, some interviewees came up with other requirements for integration such as following democratic norms and values like tolerance or man and woman equality, following behavioral public codes of the host country especially in the shared places like public transportation, and cultural adaptation to the norms and values of the host society. Participation, on the other hand, seems to be an overlapping point of these two

clusters. While it asks a more active involvement of the immigrants than the first cluster suggests, but not necessarily requires a full cultural adaptation, or in other words, assimilation.

Figure 4.2 - Different requirements of integration



After all, however, if to make a categorization, there are generally two different opinions about when to admit a person as integrated. One group strictly limits the term with socioeconomic variables, and says that if a person survives in a society, then he or she is integrated.

Integration is being able to work here and have relationship with indigenous people. You are integrated if you can find your own way here, if you establish a life in this country, and if you have relations with other people.¹³⁸

It is about diminishing the enormous differences between average Dutch population and migrant population. Unemployment among migrants is still three times as high as the average Dutch. The Education level so much lower than average. Poverty is so much lower than average. So the process of integration on community levels to get rid of these differences slowly and certainly. In individual level it means a migrant or his/her children is able to participate in an equal way in the labor market, in the school system, in political system, in society as a whole. So the equal participation would be the individual goal.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Interview with Sadet Karabulut, MP from the SP.

¹³⁹ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

Others, on the other hand, argue that integration requires adapting to some of the values of the majority, especially in the public sphere. For example, Frits Bolkestein suggests that the people have to adopt the circumstances in which they are living. “When in Rome, do as the Romans,” Bolkestein says. Interestingly, when talking about socio-cultural adaptation, Bolkestein always refers to the situation of Muslims before I ask anything about them. He continues, “of course this does not mean that Muslims have to be Christian. But they should adapt to the basic principles of the society in which they are living. For example, the equality between men and women, freedom of speech, etc., that sort of basic things.” Win van de Camp and Jan de Wit, who admit that the Dutch are very conservative in their private sphere, but very liberal in the public sphere, calls immigrants follow the Dutch public codes as well:

In general I say, please become a member of Dutch society. Take your job, take your responsibility to your community, establish your Turkish football club, be religious, or follow the doctrine of Mohammed in your life. But in public life, try to be a Dutchman, be with the Dutch.¹⁴⁰

You have to change, you have to adopt the way people live here. That is not to say you have to assimilate. Of course we cannot ask the people exactly behave and do things as we Dutch do. But in the public atmosphere, where we meet each other, you have to be like Dutch man or woman. What you do in your home, how you are living with your family is your own business.¹⁴¹

Both groups, however, criticize the policy known as “retaining identity while integrating,” which prevailed in the 1970s and 1980s. The most representative thoughts on the failures of that policy come from Stef Blok, who chaired the parliamentary committee that evaluated the Dutch integration policies since 1970:

This policy was left because of the lack of integration became a major problem. I use integration here not in cultural terms but more

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from the SP.

in socioeconomics. There was a difference between the richness of different cultures as it was shown in TVs and what people see in their neighborhoods. We had problems in education. Immigrant children needed basic knowledge, and because of that Dutch children received less attention. Another problem was about state spending for cultural activities. Also there was the rising crime rate, which was denied in the beginning.¹⁴²

Defining integration as a two way process is also common especially among the left wing politicians.

I always give the example of a traffic line. When a car wants to change the lane, and get into between two cars, it is like integration. As a person to be integrated, you have to be motivated, not just stay in your own little safe community but to do something, to go to school, to have a job. If you don't, you are not going to survive in the society. The car that wants to change the lane is like the immigrant. But the other cars in the other lane have to make a space that this car needs. So integration has two ways. We have in the parliament debates about integration, and we always talk for example about integration courses for immigrants. But a lot of Dutch citizens also need integration courses as well. They have to accept that Holland is not a white country anymore, and it will never become a white country again.¹⁴³

Integration is a two-way road. Because of that we should make immigrants and indigenous Dutch people interact as much as possible. We can do it with a better housing policy, with a better education policy.¹⁴⁴

You should also demand from the wider society. This is because you can show perfect interest in integration to society, you can speak Dutch perfectly, but if you do not get the space to participate, you cannot participate. We do have problems in this respect. For example, when it comes to labor market, the migrants are sometimes discriminated. Or young people in the schools sometimes cannot get space for them in our education system.¹⁴⁵

In the end, however, many of the interviewees dislike the term and offer alternative concepts such as participation or emancipation.

¹⁴² Interview with Stef Blok, MP from the VVD.

¹⁴³ Interview with Tofik Dibi, MP from the GL.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Sadet Karabulut, MP from the SP.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Kathleen Ferrier, MP from the CDA.

I don't like the concept of integration, it is not a clear concept. Are Chinese people here, for instance, integrated? Maybe no, maybe yes. But City Council promotes China town for the sake of tourism. But how about those radical Muslims, who speak Dutch perfectly, who are well-educated, who have jobs, but kill other people, as it was the case in the murderer of Theo van Gogh, are they integrated? I don't think the term is really helpful to explain these. I think *emancipation* is a better term and goal to develop and make something of your life, and make your world bigger because you need other people.¹⁴⁶

We need to focus on participation. Working, involving children's schools, being part of society. *Participation*: that is the key word now. No longer only about speaking language, but participating... Participate, not assimilate. Not forgetting who you are, what your roots are. Respect differences as long as you participate.¹⁴⁷

It does not matter how well educated you are or how fluent your Dutch is as long as you stay in your own community and do not participate to the discussions in this country. It is actually very much about *participating*. You are a part of this country as much as you participate.¹⁴⁸

Famile Arslan, the first lawyer with headscarf in the Netherlands, think that integration in any case implies assimilation because what is in question there is the adaptation of a small minority of people into a majority. This in the end presumes the superiority of the majority's culture. Famile Arslan offers the citizenship concept, which she thinks is enough for everything. Equal citizenship opens the way for preserving cultural identity while being a part of a bigger group.¹⁴⁹ Kars Veling, who is the principle of a public school that mostly consists of immigrant children, shows himself to the students as an example of such concept of citizenship and the power of the will of participation. According to Kars Veling, considering himself as significantly different than the majority of the Dutch, as long as a person has the motivation to achieve something, he/she can be successful regardless of his/her background or religion because the Dutch society provides that chance.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Madeline van Toorenborg, MP from the CDA.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Fatma Koşer Kaya, MP from the D66.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Famile Arslan, a lawyer from Turkish background.

I am a Protestant Christian, and I am still active in the church. I do have strong connections with my religious community, and I am above average of being religious. But in the end, I can be the principle of a school here in The Hague, and this is not a religious school. So I show my students that I can make the connection, I have the motivation connected with my religion and background to be active in the situation where I am. So I am not saying religious things are to be abandoned from the world and from the past. I don't say stay where you are, and we will try to find a place for you. But I say that you are an immigrant and that is a challenge. I could have chosen in my life to stay in my small Christian circle. But I have chosen to be a part of broader society, and it is possible, I can show that. And I ask the students here why they don't try that.¹⁵⁰

4.3.3. Groups Having Difficulty to Integrate

After I asked about Dutchness and integration, I tried to learn which particular groups are having difficulties in adapting to the Dutch society, and why. I wanted to see whether they will show only Muslim minorities and blame their culture, or they will pronounce some other groups and blame policies rather than the immigrant cultures. Although accepting that some immigrants are doing bad in terms of integrating into the society, a considerable proportion of the interviewees suggested that it is the policies that are prime responsible in the situation of these immigrant groups. Saadet Karabulut, a Socialist Party MP from Turkish origin, is one of the fierce critics of policies. Karabulut thinks that if there are some immigrant people in bad position, it basically stemmed from “the mistakes we had done in the past and the mistakes we are still doing.” For Karabulut, cultural difference is not the vital problem in the Netherlands, but the segregation of immigrants, who are also segregated among smaller groups, on the one hand, and the autochthon Dutch on the other hand. She implies that she is not for multiculturalist policies as she thinks they cause cultural segregation, but Karabulut supports the maximum contact between the

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

immigrant minorities and the host society in schools, in neighborhoods, in work places.

Although many interviewees mentioned the shortcomings of the policies, most of them focused on the faults on the account of newcomers. First of all, it is widely accepted by the interviewees that the socio-cultural structures of the countries of origin or of the particular regions where immigrants are coming from play great role in the late integration. Many interviewees accept the fact that the majority of the immigrants from former colonies and the guest workers from Turkey and Morocco came from the most backward regions of these countries. Therefore, these immigrants with no education, no skills, and no previous experience of living in a big city had by and large hard time in integrating. For instance, Ed Anker argues that “the problems might be quite specific for religious minorities from Turkey or Morocco. I don’t know a lot about Turks but Moroccans who came here in the 60s and 70s were usually from poorer areas and also more religiously fanatic areas. If children of immigrants had better education here, the whole society would emancipate better as well.”

Yet, except Anker and a few others, such arguments are usually followed by sweeping statements about Muslim minorities. For example, Marco Pastors, the leader of Livable Rotterdam and a member of City Council of Rotterdam, argues that generally people coming from non-democratic countries, where also the level of education is low, have harder time compared to those coming from democratic countries with higher levels of education. Pastors acknowledges that Dutch-Antilleans, having the same problems, adapted to the Dutch society “because they had been familiar to the Dutch rules, customs and language” and “they are mostly Christian” while Turks and Moroccans have been failed in this regard. The reason,

according to Pastors, is that “they have skepticism towards Christian world, and they think that we, the Dutch, are the part of Christian world.” He admits that “historically speaking, that is correct.” But this Christianity has brought about the “openness and tolerance to other groups” while “in Islamic experience, you see a kind of intolerance towards differences.” Socio-economic factors, for Pastors, only exacerbate the problems.

Such comparison of Muslims with other ethnic or religious groups and portraying Muslims as less integrated is in fact very common. Some representative examples are as follows:

Muslims are very much mixed with culture. The distance between the Muslims from Morocco or Turkey and our society is bigger than that of Polish people or Catholics and Dutch society. (...) The things we take for granted are further for Muslims such as equality between men and women, freedom of speech. It is not easy for them look at our society as respectful because we do many things very different than they used to.¹⁵¹

They [Muslims] are narrow-minded. They are afraid of Western freedom, consumption. They are afraid of sexual relations. They stay very much together. And they are permanently influenced by their countries of origin. Hindus, Surinamese, and people from Antilles have more open approach to the new society where they arrived. Muslims are much more conservative. And yet, there are big differences between a Moroccan from Barber area and a Turkish girl from Istanbul. But a girl from Van is also different from the Istanbul girl as well.¹⁵²

Besides these uncivilized, uneducated immigrant groups coming from rural areas of their countries of origin, two other specific groups mentioned frequently are the so-called “import brides” and the “usual suspect” Moroccan youth, who are inclined to involve criminal activities. Indeed, even if controlling the political ideology of the interviewees, the high level of criminality rates among Moroccan youth is one of the most stated problems concerning the integration of immigrant

¹⁵¹ Interview with Madeline van Toorenborg, MP from the CDA.

¹⁵² Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

groups. Judith Sargentini, for example, picks the whole Moroccan community as the most problematic group for integration because as she aptly states that “the Dutch society judges them on the young, troublesome Moroccan boys.” Coming to “import brides,” Marjolein de Jong, a Member of City Council of The Hague, has very much problems with Muslim boys going to their countries of origin to pick their wives. This, for de Jong, stagnates integration because the import wives do not know Dutch, and do not know anything about the Dutch society; therefore, they cannot equip their children to be successful in schools and work places.

Two or three years ago, Dutch government started the policy that those brides have to take exam in Dutch in the embassies before they come to the Netherlands. They learn a little bit Dutch for this exam. But these husbands got a certain idea about women, they lock them in the house, and they are not allowed to go out any more. So these women forget Dutch in a few months. What can you do? You cannot force them. This is a difficult group for integration. And they are examples for their children. There are children here who go to school but cannot speak proper Dutch. They are not able to go to university, they cannot find proper jobs. I don't understand anyway why these men go to a small village in far-away country to get wife. There are lots of women here.¹⁵³

Religious fundamentalism of any kind, on the other hand, is thought of as one of the prime factors for the lack of integration. For example, Kathleen Ferrier, a Christian Democrat MP, argued that religious fundamentalists have hard time to accept some of the laws in the Netherlands where homosexual marriage or euthanasia are permitted. Ferrier admits that not only Muslims, but also Christian fundamentalists too have problems in accepting these. However, according to Jeroen Dijsselbloem, Labor Party's spokesperson on integration, Islamic fundamentalism differs from Christian fundamentalism on a very important regard: violence. Recent attacks from Muslim extremists, Dijsselbloem argues, “planted to our hearts and minds the fear and doubt. Fear is that this new religion in society is a threat to our

¹⁵³ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, D66.

liberal way of life. The doubt is that whether we can trust the Muslims among us.” Adding the uneducated brides coming from the countries of origin, criminal youth, and concentration of Turks and Moroccans in certain neighborhoods in the big cities of the Netherlands make Muslims not only problematic groups in terms of integration, but also, in the perceptions of the Dutch society, Muslims are regarded as the least likely group promising improvement even if there are considerable improvements in the education level of the second and third generation Turks and Moroccans. It turns out to be a vicious circle. Even if import brides, criminal Moroccan youth or Islamic extremists constitute a small minority among Muslims, their overall effect is so strong that the majority of the Dutch do not appreciate the progress in education and employment, and the worse, Muslims are discriminated because of their *perceived* non-integration. For Professor Rinus Penninx it stems from the double-sided vulnerability of Muslims: “On the one hand, they were vulnerable in socio-economic sense, such as low class, low skills, etc. They made up the vulnerable part of the labor market. But at the same time, these groups were looked at as culturally different. And combination of these two made Muslims look very dangerous.”¹⁵⁴

4.4. Discourse of Non-Integration of Muslims

After it became clear that the most of the interviewees put Muslims in a more problematic category than other contemporaneous and older newcomers, the next step was to observe what they generally thought about Muslims and Islam. To learn that, I asked them why they think there is still a very strong discourse on the non-integration of Muslims even if there are considerable improvements in the language

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Rinus Penninx, Professor of Sociology at University of Amsterdam.

skills, education and employment rates of second and third generation Muslims.¹⁵⁵ The answers can be categorized into four: regarding the characteristics of the Dutch society, regarding the characteristics of the Muslim communities in the Netherlands, regarding the rise of Islamic extremism and securitization of Muslim immigrant issue, and regarding the otherness of Islam to the West.

Starting with the last one, Professor Veit Bader states that “Muslims have always been the other in the European self-definitions.” It used to be a strong enemy with its hard power, then it became the unenlightened and backward, and now it is an unenlightened threat. For van de Camp, “the liberals of the West are very arrogant to Islam” because of this perception of Muslims as unenlightened, and so not civilized. Therefore, being Muslim in Europe goes beyond the challenges of being immigrant or newcomer, and becomes a domain on which identity and belonging discourses are executed. It is a “genealogy of integration,” in Willem Schinkel’s words, where the discourse of the non-integration of an ethnic or religious group has a lot to do with the host society’s attempt to draw the boundaries of its identity. Willem Schinkel compares his situation with a Moroccan colleague at the Erasmus University. He says that as “a non-Dutch white person born in the Netherlands,” issue of integration has never been raised for him, his being has never been problematized by autochthon Dutch, or no one has ever called him immigrant. Nevertheless, his Moroccan colleague is still called second or third generation immigrant despite the fact that he was born, raised and educated in the Netherlands. Schinkel argues that, by being a Moroccan Dutch, “he forms a hybrid, but he is definitely not an immigrant.” Even

¹⁵⁵ Besides reminding them some hard data showing this improvement, I also told them my personal experiences in the mosques, for example, where I saw Turkish or Moroccan pupils talking to each other in Dutch rather than their mother tongues. When I said that I was surprised to see that, Sadet Karabulut agreed, and said that “That is right, I also have seen similar things. I have organized activities with young people to deal with integration issues. There were clear differences between generations. With these young people, we had to do the meetings in Dutch not in Turkish.”

calling him “well-integrated” serves to define him as the other because it implies he does not belong even if he is integrated.

If you are well integrated, you are still on the other side, and you have to prove yourself. You can always go back and start bombing, etc. This is living under the stigma of integration for me.¹⁵⁶

Secondly, what exacerbate the rigorousness of Muslim otherness in the imagination of Europeans is the rise of Islamic extremism and the securitization of Muslim immigrant issue. For Paul Cliteur, it is a “big drama in a certain sense that the terrorist threat did not come from the parents, but from the sons.” He argues that for the majority of the “Muslim immigrants,” it goes better; however, “it goes worse and worse for a smaller group.” Yet, Cliteur claims, “even if it is going worse only for one percent of Muslims,” the Dutch society still has “a problem of tremendous magnitude because terrorism requires only a few.” Many of the respondents simply accept the fact that the negative view about Muslims partially or mostly is an outcome of the Islamic violence especially since September 11. Nevertheless, some of them not only establish a cause and effect relationship, but also accept the accuracy of establishing a link between Islam or Islamist ideology and violence. Frits Bolkestein is a good example of this discourse from the right wing.

(...) Then we had the murder of Theo van Gogh. That was inspired by Islam if you like. His murderer has said so. I think it is not true to say that Islamic religion is prone to violence. I think that is wrong. But it is true to say that he and others like him appealed to the Islamic religion for what they had done. The same thing goes to the people who attacked the World Trade Center in 2001.¹⁵⁷

As the new liberals do, Bolkestein tries to make a distinction between the majority of Muslims and extremist Muslims when talking about the Muslims in the West, and yet, he almost equalizes Islamists and extremists or terrorists. He does not explain what the “Islamist tendencies” are. It is not clear whether a person, who

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Schinkel, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Erasmus University.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

prioritizes his/her Islamic identity over other identities such as ethnicity or nationality, is inclined to use violence.

Let's not judge all the Muslims with the same standards. Yes, there are problems on integration. What I see problematic about Moroccans especially, but also Turkish Muslims, is that they seem to be more and more influenced by Islamist tendencies. I do not think that is a good phenomenon. It is worrying if young people in particular appeal more and more to Islamist ideology, like the murderer of Theo van Gogh.¹⁵⁸

This line of view is not only articulated by right wing liberal intellectuals or politicians like Paul Cliteur or Frits Bolkestein, but to some extent it is also shared by the leftists. For example, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, an MP from Labor Party, thinks that talking about Islam with such intensity is very recent, and it owes a lot to the murder of Theo van Gogh by “a Holland-grown up Islamic terrorist.” He argues that Islam since then has become as a serious threat to the “Dutch liberal way of life,” which was represented by van Gogh. When I asked him how he defines this “liberal way of life,” he explained it very simply as freedom of speech, equality between men and women, between gays and non gays, etc. In other words, according to Dijsselbloem, the fear caused by Islamic extremism, which attacks “the Western way of life,” is real, it is not something constructed.

I think the real root of this fear, this worry are the terrorists, the terrorist attacks in London, in Madrid, the murder of Theo van Gogh, New York. All these showed how vulnerable we are. If you want to damage the western way of life, if you want to destroy our safe-havens, it was shown how easy it can be done. And it is very hard for present generation of politicians to overcome that fear. Right wing politicians like Geert Wilders are feeding that fear. They have not created it. The greatest challenge for us is to how we can take it away. Not so much by shutting up Wilders. I would like to shut him up, but there are no legal ways to do that. But the real challenge is how we get into the hearts of Dutch people who are worried about Muslims in our society.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

Nevertheless, for van de Camp, a Christian Democrat MP, second and third generation Muslims “believe more in McDonald’s and Nike” rather than the hardcore doctrines of political Islam, or even than god. He states that “ignoring this identity of the majority of Muslims” and concentrating on the very small minority of extremists is “a political disease” not only in the Netherlands, but also all over the world.

Thirdly and the most commonly, the persistence of the non-integration of Muslims discourse, for most of the interviewees, has very much to do with the socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the Muslim communities in the Netherlands. Low levels of education, high levels of school drop-out rates, and high levels of criminality among the Muslims are counted as the most pronounced socio-economic problems,¹⁶⁰ which in turn boost unemployment and ends up with a vicious circle. Stef Blok, the chair of the parliamentary committee searching the success of integration policies, admits that “[T]here is progress, but you cannot deny the problem. For example, school drop-out rates are dramatic among especially young Turks and Moroccans. And they are nearly 100 percent was born here. This says that the problems are persistent among second and third generation. People from Surinam and Dutch Antilles came to the Netherlands almost in the same time period with Moroccans and Turks, but their school drop-out rates much lower. I think that the main reason for that is language although there might be some other problems. Surinamese and Antilleans knew Dutch. Many Dutch and Moroccan families do not speak Dutch at home.” Such problems, some argue, cause young Muslims to give up pursuing success in the society and end up in radical Islamist circles. For example,

¹⁶⁰ Most of the interviewees associate these problems with Muslim communities, namely Turks and Moroccans, without referring to detailed hard data differentiating among ethnic groups and relying oversimplified generalizations. Stef Blok, however, as one of the most knowledgeable politicians on integrations issues, admits that while there are “enormous differences between crime participation of ethnic groups and Dutch people,” the highest ranking was among the young people from Dutch Antilles, then from Moroccans and Somalians, not Muslims as a whole. Attributing all the problems of different ethnic groups to Muslims contribute to the formation of racialization of Muslims.

Wim van de Camp suggests that “if your parents are angry with you, you did not finish your school, you don’t have money, your girlfriend broke up with you, then all these push you in a certain group. These groups can be involved with terrorist thoughts and acts.”

Nevertheless, the leftists and Christian Democrats are usually optimistic about the improvements especially in the socio-economic sphere and realistic about the fact that adapting to a new society needs time. For instance, according to Cathleen Ferrier, a Christian Democrat MP, considering the second and third generations, “very positive things are happening in schools, in streets, in job market.” Ferrier suggests that the Dutch “should not rush everything, these things take time.” Tofik Dibi, more than optimistic, relies on the rise of a Muslim middle class that will soon or later become undeniable. Dibi thinks that, as this middle class get bigger and the Dutch get tired of talking about Islam, “things will change.”

The right wing liberals, on the other hand, either categorically reject the existence of such developments, or accept them partially but focus on the socio-cultural issues. Some liberals describe socio-cultural aspects of integration in terms of mundane habits in public life. Stef Blok gives the example of searching for job, which, he thinks, is culturally bound. A person from Turkish origin may be disqualified in job interviews although he or she has the necessary vocational skills because of not following the expected types of behavior. However, most liberals are more demanding about cultural integration than Stef Blok. A very representative example is Marco Pastors, the leader of Leefbaar Rotterdam:

The debate is not always about actual problems. There are people saying that “we see people working, we see their criminality rates drop,” but we still see high figures of marrying someone from your country of origin, we still see religious behavior growing stronger contrary to what we expected. They say that things are getting better, but the question is whether in the end everybody becomes more

individual and free member of our society or it is going to the other direction. One important problem is that there are no real spokespersons of the subject. Another problem is that when politicians and Muslim representatives talk, they talk about socio-economic things, and not cultural things. And religion is the most difficult part of cultural thing. We should say that we have rules in this country, and they apply to the religions too, and no religion is an exception. Individual freedom is an important part of these rules. If you don't address these, socio-economic things may get better, but the other things keep being negative.¹⁶¹

Nevertheless, in Pastors' view, there are a few things that differentiate Islam from other religions. First of all, "Muslim community is seen as a competitor instead of a simple community because of Islam's criticism towards the modern, Western, democratic state." For him, "Islam's theoretical challenge to modernity can just become practice in the Netherlands." Only solution, Pastors argues, is that the rise of "a Muslim group saying that they have found a way for Islam to live in a multi-religious democratic society, they accept that people leave Islam freely, they accept Muslims to be homosexuals." Secondly, the number of Muslims settled in the Netherlands much higher than other religious groups. Pastors supposes that there would be a situation as well if the city of Rotterdam had one hundred thousands voodoo fans, but that is the population of Muslims living in Rotterdam. Therefore, from this point of view, what matters is not how to accommodate a different group and its demands by using the institutions off liberal democracy, which is assumed to be the most hospitable political regime that celebrates and lives with ethnic, religious and cultural diversity, or at least is tolerant of differences, but it is a matter of not being bothered by weird and alien claims of a minority, or perhaps keeping it as invisible as possible in the public sphere.

Frits Bolkestein, an icon figure of the right-wing liberalism in the Netherlands, explains the prescription for the illness of Muslim non-integration with

¹⁶¹ Interview with Marco Pastors, City Councillor of Rotterdam, the leader of Leefbaar Rotterdam.

a generic expression: “When in Rome, do as the Romans.” He adds, “of course this does not mean that Muslims have to be Christian. But they should adapt to the basic principles of the society in which they are living. For example, the equality between men and women, freedom of speech, etc., that sort of basic things.” According to Bolkestein, Muslim women are promising in this regard:

There are significant problems, but also there are some developments in particular among the women. To me, Dutch women with Islamic background are the most hopeful examples of integration. These women finally have freedom, and they are going to use it. And you can see some outstanding examples of girls who really go for it to university. I found it very encouraging.

The image of Muslims then appears as a community dominated by men, who have problems with the basic principles of a liberal society such as equality between men and women or freedom of speech and have control over women. Here, non-integrated Muslim men are rebuked and called for integration while Muslim women are depicted as allies, who are ready to get sheltered in liberal Dutch society and to emancipate. Women, according to this point of view, as they get educated, will strip off their headscarf, which is a symbol of men domination, in other words, they will be enlightened. Tofik Dibi argues against this position and says that: “They have to understand that if a woman wears headscarf, it is not because she is forced by her husband, it could be just because she wants that. In a liberal society, it should be taken normal. But in this climate where we are, everybody forgot that we are a liberal society.”

For Fatma Koşer Kaya, a left-wing liberal MP, it is up to Muslims to break up the negative stereotypes. Koşer Kaya complains about Turkish community’s indifference about the debates, news, and politics in the Netherlands. “It is Turkish televisions are being watched, Turkish newspapers are being read,” she says. Koşer Kaya argues that it is not fair to be indifferent regarding to the Dutch society and at

the same time getting angry with the Dutch for their indifference regarding to the immigrant communities. She gives the example of organ donor that has been discussed in the Netherlands. According to her, the Dutch authorities have discussed about putting Muslims in the end of organ waiting list because they do not donor their organs, and Muslims were not aware of this discussion. She actively involved in the increasing the awareness of the importance of organ donor among Muslims, and such efforts, she says, received great sympathy in the Dutch public. Koşer Kaya thinks that these kinds of initiatives would invert the negative image about Muslims: “Better than talking about who the guilty is, we should ask ourselves what we can do.”

The fourth and final reason for the persistence of the non-integration of Muslims discourse stems from the worldview of the majority of the Dutch society. According to Jan Willem Duyvendak, a professor of sociology and the former director of the Verwey-Jonker Instituut,¹⁶² Holland is a progressive country, and the widespread belief on a Muslim non-integration is partially an outcome of that characteristic of the Dutch. Because of the de-pillarization¹⁶³ since 1960s, Dutch public sphere, especially in the big cities, has been witnessed a decline in the public appearance of religion. Nevertheless, entrance of Muslims with life-styles and agendas similar to the religious communities of the pre-1960s made the majority of

¹⁶² Verwey-Jonker Instituut (VJI) is a research institute of social issues. It was highly criticized for its contribution to Blok Committee’s conclusions. At that time, the Institute, led by Professor Duyvendak, wrote a report for Blok Committee on whether integration policies had been successful. In its report, VJI concluded that integration was rather successful, the policies did play rather positive role, the policymaking was not a total failure, and a lot of immigrants were integrated. These conclusions were found too optimistic and reacted very negatively during the rise of anti-immigrant sentiments of the post-Fortuyn era. In Professor Duyvendak’s words, “most politicians said that it cannot be true, that was what they believed.” At that time, Professor Duyvendak was also personally criticized by inserting his left-wing ideas to the report as he was a member of Green Left. However, he says that the report was based on the hard data on the structural elements of integration such as housing, education and work. and in these areas, there have been developments (Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak).

¹⁶³ For the analysis of the pillarization and de-pillarization, see Chapter 3, pp. 82-94.

Dutch society afraid of opening the debates that already discussed and closed, and receiving some new demands that are not familiar. Dutch people, Duyvendak states, are convinced that “Muslims are serious about their belief, and it is visible, for example, with the headscarf.” So this new “public religion” worries the Dutch people in general. Stef Blok, from right wing VVD, agrees with Duyvendak, and states that while education, crime, welfare spending, and unemployment are the main reasons for the unrest about immigrants, anti-Muslim sentiments have cultural motivations as well because it is very “visible.” The Dutch people can see that “Muslims dress differently, they go to mosque frequently, and so on.” However, as Blok suggests, “the Dutch stopped going church,” and they are “happy” about that. He thinks that “when people see these Muslims, they consider that this is a conservative reaction that we used to have, but don’t want anymore.” He continues, “Yes, non-Western religions may receive more attention, but this is already a non-religious country. Majority do not want to be bothered with religion.”

Marjolein de Jong, a liberal leftist city councilor from The Hague, also finds puzzling that Muslims are getting stricter and more conservative comparing to the decline of religion all over the world. De Jong is angry with imams in Holland and in all over world that are “preaching to go back to a thousand years ago” or “growing groups that get more and more conservative.” To deal with these increasingly conservative Muslims, she proposes to show them “there is more to do in life than just going mosques or secluded way of Islamic behavior.” It is interesting that the whole Muslims are portrayed as religious people by the Dutch. They think that imams or fundamentalist groups represent the entire Muslim community, which consists of religious people that “do not enjoy life,” are very “serious” about their religion, and live “secluded” lives from the ordinary people. As Tofik Dibi argues,

this has a lot to do with the media's focus on the extreme examples of the fundamentalists in the Netherlands and abroad. As most interviewees focus on either fundamentalism or growing secularization among Muslims, they miss one possible direction. That is expressed by Hasan Küçük, a Muslim Democrat city councilor of The Hague: "We have already made the decision. We will stay here in the Netherlands. This is our home. However, we will not forget our language, we will not forget our religion. That is what we are."

As most of the interviewees admit, some violent acts initiated by Muslims since the September 11 attacks are the prime reasons for the strong feeling that Islam is a threat in the Dutch society, and it breeds prejudices about Muslims. The worse, however, there are politicians who "build a career on a populist speech, and other parties take part of that when they see that the votes are flowing away."¹⁶⁴ Judith Sargentini, a Green Left city councilor of Amsterdam, thinks that blaming newcomers in general and Muslims in particular is the easiest way to talk about the problems of a society. She thinks that, in this case, it is very functional "to please the autochthon Dutch that fear from the changing society" and it appeals many politicians and columnists because using such discourse make them more popular than they can ever be. Kars Veling admits that it is hard for Muslims to be the part of the whole while they are considered different. He thinks that connecting being Dutch and being Muslim is possible, but he is "not very hopeful of competence of Dutch society and politicians to be aware of that because of the very polarized and populist politics of current Holland."

Ed Anker, among with many others, is optimistic about the third generation that most likely will find a way to be a Muslim Dutch. Yet Anker thinks that there is

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

“a small group that does not want to integrate partly because of the hostile environment against Muslims fed by politicians like Geert Wilders.” Sadet Karabulut also agrees with Anker, and states that “the populist right-wingers use these small groups to provoke prejudices. Ordinary Muslims and the Dutch are influenced from this discourse which directs them some unhealthy ends. Young Muslims, even if they are successful in school or work, get tired of these discussions, and withdraw themselves into their shells.”

4.5. Conservative Christians vs. Muslims

As argued above, one of the prime reasons for the prevalence of Muslim non-integration discourse is regarding Muslims as a community that is serious about their religion. At this point, it was necessary to make a comparison between the perceptions of Muslims and other religiously conservative communities that are also serious about their religion. If it is only the level of religiosity, then the indigenous Dutch who are religious should also be perceived as negatively as Muslims. Therefore, another major group of questions articulated in the interviews was about the way religion positioned in the public sphere in general, and whether Christianity and Islam are treated differently in this regard. To understand that, first I asked to my interviewees about the challenges of being a religious person in a secular society, and then the similarities and differences between the experiences and challenges of conservative Muslims and conservative Christians. The first question differed accordingly the religiosity of the interviewee. If the respondent was a religious Christian, the question formulated as asking his/her personal experiences. However, if the respondent was not religious, he/she was generally asked to talk about his/her observations about religious Christian communities, and how he/she feels about

them. It is important whether they place conservative Muslims into a different position than the conservative Christians. If they do that, then it is essential to understand the reasoning behind this differential treatment. This could partially answer why multiculturalism or liberal democracy that is in theory open to differences have hard time to accommodate new Muslim minorities.

The most common answer to this question is that although religious conservatism is generally disliked, conservative Christian Dutch people are excused because, first, they have always been a part of the Dutch society, second, their population is small and gradually decreasing, and third, they usually live in small villages in the countryside. Muslims, on the contrary, are harder to tolerate because they are new and strange, their population is steadily increasing, and they are mostly settled in big cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

But the point is that if you show your religion, for instance, in a job interview, if you say that you are very strict Calvinist person, a lot of employers would take another applicant. These conservative Calvinists in Holland are a *very small community*. They are very active in small business, and usually take care of themselves. Or if a person in workplace speaks out loudly for Pope and his resistance against abortion, this person would stay alone in the remaining of his working life. Similarly, when a job applicant enters the room with headscarf, people say that religion is very important for you, and you are free, but I don't want to be *bothered by your religion* here.¹⁶⁵

Now we have conservative Christians, the "Bible Belt" people, you can compare them with Muslims. But the difference of course is that we take them as *exceptions* in this society. They are not very much liked by most of the Dutch people. But they were *always part of this society*. It is different from people coming from outside. Catholics had some similarities in the sense that they were loyal to the pope rather than the national authority. But this is not the case anymore.¹⁶⁶

In the Netherlands, we have always been tolerant for minorities as long as *they are small*. For example, the "Bible Belt" we have in Holland. These are people who are very orthodox Christians. They have a political party as well, which basically does not allow women to be active in the party. They represent the minority of orthodox Christians.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Stef Blok, MP from the VVD.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director, Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

A lot of these people do not understand the majority, they don't agree with the majority on man and woman equality. We have always accepted them, because it is a *relatively small community*. For example, they do not want to have immunization for their children because they say it is the will of god. Normally, you could be prosecuted for this because you deny your kid to have help, you put your kid in danger, and by doing so, you also endanger entire society because you can spread disease. But we have an *exception* for this group. It is because we have a long history of killing each other on the basis of religion. So in Holland we have a tradition of being very careful with religious people and people with consensual objections. But another reason is that this is a *small group*. But if this group gets bigger, then we would have tensions about it.¹⁶⁷

It is the fear of orthodoxism, but there are not so many orthodox. Muslim orthodoxism is not accepted, and not very welcomed. It is because they *live in the big cities* where people are secular. But we have orthodox Christian communities *living in small towns*. We let them do their stuff for centuries. We could not care less. They live in places where I have ever go to, places where you cannot get money from ATM machines on Sunday. You can get money on Saturdays, but they block it on Sundays. They would find me inappropriate on Sunday, so I don't go there. So yes, secular society does not like orthodox Muslims but that is because they see them on the streets. (...) But they [conservative Christians] are not in Amsterdam, and since we don't see them, we forgot about them. Now Muslims doing this [establishing schools and other institutions] in big cities, and we don't know how to respond. I think we should change the law for the general. No schools for the bible either.¹⁶⁸

They [conservative religious people] want to go back a hundred years. They don't look to the future, they only look to the past. We have conservative Protestants in our Bible Belt. They don't watch TV, they do nothing on Sunday but go to church 2-3 times, they all wear these long dresses. If one children breaks out for freedom and want to go somewhere, sometimes these children are thrown out from the family. So it is a bit the same. They don't allow their children get injection for diseases. They don't want insurance in case their house burns down because, for them, all these are the will of god. I don't know what to do with them. They all go to school, they know how to read and write, so they know what they are doing. But I cannot understand it. It is the same with extremist Muslims and Protestants. I don't get either of them. (...) 99 percent of conservative Christians *live in small villages* in the Bible Belt in Holland. If you don't want to see them, you don't go those villages. But the majority of conservative Muslims *live in big cities* because that is where they were brought as work force in the 60s and 70s. So the other people live in that city get confrontation with

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

them in daily basis because you see them in the daily basis. That is one of the reasons that you get more irritated. If you see conservative Christians in daily basis, that might be *irritating* as well. Living in a small village and big city are completely two different experiences.¹⁶⁹

Sometimes conservative Christians say or ask some undesired things, but we still find them cute because this “Bible Belt” is something *folkloric, old-fashion, touristic*. Conservative Muslims, however, have to explain about themselves more than conservative Christians.¹⁷⁰

In short, the religious people in general are found “irritating” as soon as they carry their religious reasoning into the public sphere. For this reason, Muslim people, for their new demands, increasing populations and public appearances in the big cities, are found more irritating than the conservative Christians. When putting the issue in this way, anti-Islamic sentiments sound innocent to some extent. Nevertheless, there are more to catch in the interviews I conducted.

4.5.1. Muslims as Religiously Serious

First of all, most interviewees established parallels between the Muslims as a categorical group on the one hand, and conservative Christians on the other hand. In other words, all Muslims are portrayed as religious people, who dislike gays, who have different views on man and woman relations and raising children, and who are loyal to their religious leaders rather than other entities they are tied such as nation-state. The great deal of diversity among Muslims from being ex-Muslim to extremist Muslim vanishes in this discourse where every person coming from a country with Muslim majority is defined with referring to Islam. It might be true that, as Blok argues, “Showing your religion is a handicap in the Netherlands.” However, Muslims are generally *ex-ante* handicapped. They are accepted as prioritizing their religious identity before making a self-expressed conservatism. It is possible that a person is

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Channa Samkalden, Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

considered to be serious with his/her religious identity only because of the simple reason having a Muslim name like Mohammed. Therefore, Muslims only have chance to overcome that handicap once they prove that they are not religious Muslim as expected. This is a different experience comparing to that of autochthon Dutch, who are not handicapped as soon as they remain silent and do not show their religiosity. Muslims are thought to be religious beings until they prove otherwise while autochthon Dutch are taken as a secular entity until they declare their religiosity. Stef Blok partially accepts this but rejects its relationship with religion: “Then you are talking about discrimination because of race, because of look, and that is not religion. Of course there is discrimination in the Netherlands, but probably less than other West European countries.” However, being Muslim is at the center of this “discrimination.” Therefore, the only issue is not being a very secular country and being irritated from religious reasoning, but there is a new kind of racism in question that is directed at the members of a particular religion. Or in other words, it is possible to talk about the racialization of religion. Only very extreme examples, who proved their non-Muslimness like Ayaan Hirsi Ali or Afshin Ellian are put into a different category, but still they too are valued for their centrality to give messages to Muslim community as a whole.

Ronny Naftaniel, the chair of CIDI, agrees on the fallacy of this totalizing discourse when I asked him to compare the experiences of Jews and Muslims in the Netherlands: “The more Muslims are identified as Muslims, the bigger the antagonism between the Dutch society and Muslims. They [Wilders and Verdonk] don’t distinguish between ordinary people who contribute to this society and those fundamentalist people who want to change the society into Islamic one. The former deserves to be welcomed, to work, to learn, to laugh, to be part of the society.

Fundamentalists are a very small minority, and these people should be forced. But this is a totally different thing than putting every Muslim in the same corner.” Others also take Muslims as a religious group that has parallel problems and experiences with conservative Christians:

Dutch people are mostly irreligious, not having religion, or having negative emotions regarding religion in general. So they don't really like orthodox Protestants as well. Last week, there was a huge discussion about Christian Union because they were discussing whether gays or lesbians could represent their political party. Ten years ago everybody would say whatever they think about this. Nowadays, however, they are fiercely attacked. They were as discriminated as Muslims are.¹⁷¹

In the Netherlands we have laws that permit homosexual marriages or euthanasia. These kinds of laws for many religious fundamentalists are difficult to accept. And this is not only for *Muslims*, this is also Christian fundamentalists. So *some autochthon Dutch* people also have problems in accepting these.¹⁷²

For Duyvendak, the discrimination against Muslims and attacks against conservative Christians have the same motivation, which can be described as being disturbed (sometimes disgusted) by religion. Muslims and conservative Christians are put into the category of those who take the religion seriously in their private and public life while the majority of the Dutch is considered as non-religious. However, as Willem Schinkel admits, “usually conservative Christians are not problematized, but Islam.” Schinkel says that only sometimes a small conservative Christian party is criticized for not allowing women to be eligible to get elected in elections. As argued above, there are three most common answers to why Islamic conservatism is less tolerated than Christian conservatism: Muslims are new and strange, their population is steadily increasing, and they are mostly settled in big cities. Then it became clear that Muslims as the entire group is taken as a religious community, and their experiences are compared with those of conservative Christians. This perhaps

¹⁷¹ Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

¹⁷² Interview with Kathleen Ferrier, MP from the CDA.

exacerbates the anti-Islam sentiments because religious conservatism is already something disliked in the Netherlands, and seeing whole Muslims community as religiously conservative only increases the negative feelings towards them as immigrants with a lot of socio-economic problems. Then, it is very likely to confuse between the religious demands of some conservative Muslims (e.g. establishing Islamic schools, using religious ornaments like headscarf, having more places of worship) and cultural recognition demands of ordinary Muslims (e.g. having holidays in Islamic fests). The latter not only concerns religious Muslims but also all the immigrants coming from Muslim societies and sharing some habits such as celebrations or mourning ceremonies that have become cultural commonalities though having religious roots. Many Turks or Moroccans in the Netherlands, even if they do not fast in Ramadan, may like to celebrate Eid of Ramadan with their families. Or they might like to be buried according to Islamic rules although they are not practicing Muslims.

4.5.2. Islamic Conservatism as Violent

Secondly, interviews made it clear that there are more reasons for not tolerating Islamic conservatism as much as Christian conservatism. Most interviewees tend to believe that Islamic conservatism or fundamentalism breeds violence while Christians live in their small villages in peace, and when they come to the big cities, they have learned not to interfere in others' business.

Conservative theistic believes have in common of course such as about the relationship between man and woman, how children should raise. The only difference is that Islamist ideology preaches violence. Islamist youth in Holland are receptive to radical preaches who preach violence as the solution. You don't have that with conservative Christians. At least not yet, this can come of course.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

Christians is a group that is getting smaller. And they have been here for a long time. That is where we come from actually. Also, there is no violence, terrorism, and threats.¹⁷⁴

There are similarities, but they differ at least in one respect. Dutch conservative Christians don't have radical, extremists. People see in televisions the radical groups among Muslims, and they are afraid.¹⁷⁵

This belief in the likelihood of Muslim conservatives to use violence can easily be canalized to a prejudice against all Muslims because first of all, as argued above, there is a tendency to see being Muslim the same as being religiously conservative, and secondly, as argued in chapter 2, the profiles of "Muslim terrorists" imply that any young Muslim men can be terrorist. Kars Veling and Tofik Dibi warn about the rise of this kind of prejudice in the Dutch society:

Life here can be more challenging for a conservative Muslim than a conservative Christian because in Dutch society there is a strong feeling that Islam is a threat, so there are prejudices. It seems to be difficult to be a part of a whole while you are different.¹⁷⁶

When Muslims come together, it really has negative connotations in Holland. It is like they are planning a bombing or attack. You see that in the discourse always.¹⁷⁷

Considering Muslims as inclined to use violence actually emphasizes their undemocratic roots, indicates their alienage to democratic life, and stresses their distance to democratic values such as tolerance and freedom of expression. Conservative Christians, on the other hand, are regarded as loyal players of democratic game even if they have some outdated practices and demands. Furthermore, they are thought as believers of a religion which is, for some interviewees, one of the prime roots of Western democracy and tolerance.

Muslims are new in this society, they don't have hundreds years of religious wars. We have to tell them that they are welcome but there

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Carlien Boelhouwer, city councilor of Amsterdam, the SP.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Tofik Dibi, MP from the GL.

are few rules even for religions, and you have to accept that. [The Prime Minister] Balkenende doesn't do this. I think it is sending a confused message because he implies that being religious is better than being not religious. But in a secular society with many atheists, who are as good or bad as other people, you cannot say that. This is a confusing signal to Muslims, who are in general not used to live in a multi-religious state and not used to a clear separation between the government and church. So you should say that as a person I am a Christian, as a society we have a Christian history. But Christian world has developed a model in which all religions, not only Christians, but also Jews, Muslims, Hindu can live together in peace. (...) If you have a Catholic school, you know that everything will be ok. But for Muslims, they are new and difference is bigger. There is skepticism about Islam. It comes to surface every time when people build a mosque or start a school. On the legal level, all the religious groups are the same, but on emotional level, on cultural level, it is not the same yet. It is not as culturally harmless as a catholic initiative.¹⁷⁸

It is ok that you do different things, but you should explain why you are doing or not doing. There are conservative Christians for example saying the same things about homosexuals, but they are good Dutch citizens.¹⁷⁹

(...) The only way a religion can develop is getting used to criticism. This is the way Catholicism had liberalized in 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. That was only because some external forces criticized the church. A lot of problems we are having now in the 21st century are the problems we had in 16th and 17th centuries. William of Orange was murdered by a catholic fanatic in 16th century. In 1570, the pope ordered Catholics in Great Britain to murder the queen Elizabeth. Doesn't that resemble the situation where Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 ordered Muslims to kill Salman Rushdie? Development of Islam is necessary. In 1960s, many people criticized the Protestantism here in the Netherlands. But now nobody dares to criticize Islam. (...) There are some parallels with the conservative Protestants living in the Bible Belt who for example do not let their children get immunization. They say that it is their religious belief. It is a bit the same discussion. But there has been a kind of compromise and solution with them in Dutch history.¹⁸⁰

4.5.3. The Lack of a Shared Experience

Thirdly, there are important hints in the way conservative Christians look at the issue. They both self-reflect how it is like to be a religious person in a highly

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Carlien Boelhouwer, city councilor of Amsterdam, the SP.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

secular society, and whether the challenges of being a religious Christian differ from those of religious Muslims. It is important to mention here that the persons I talked are not from small villages, but from the political elite. Most of them are from the Christian Democrats, one is from more religiously conservative Christian Union, and another is the principle of a public high school and the former leader of Christian Union. Therefore, they encounter non-religious people in daily basis, and experience the challenges of being a religious person. When looking at their responses, it becomes clear that the question of belonging has crucial importance. They usually start with comparing the problems of Muslims with the problems they had in the past or with the problems they are still experiencing today as religious people.

The mainstream liberalism in this society does not want to be bothered with religious type of things. It is everyday reality for me. I am a Christian politician. They ask what you need your faith for when you are working in politics. (...) Homosexuality kind of matters is not only related to Muslims. For example, a member of our party said that in this party, Christian Union, homosexuals should not be allowed to be representative. (...) That is a debate that still is going on in this party. It is a big issue now in Holland. (...) I don't believe that when you walk out of the door, you can leave your religion at home. For me it is quite normal that my religion has some manifestations in public. So I have my Christian political party. That is why I wouldn't have a problem with a Muslim political party. Or I don't have any problem people wearing Christian or Muslim religious symbols. (...) In my experience, I have to constantly defend my religious values against others. For example, if I said that I don't have sex before marriage, my friends look at me and say, "what, why?" I want to have the possibilities to act according to my faith. And I want people respect that. But they don't. (...) So people take us less seriously. Strange thing is that if you are really a liberal, you would say that you respect that. We should give space to each other, respect each other. This is less and less the case.¹⁸¹

In the whole discussion of sexual programs in TVs, you see that Roman Catholic Church and Islamic movements are finding each other, they can have similar opinions. We all should be patient. We as Roman Catholic people had to fight for a hundred years to have processions in public.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

¹⁸² Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

I am a Protestant Christian, I am still active in the church. I do have strong connections with my religious community, I am above average of being religious. But in the end, I can be the principle of a school here in The Hague, and this is not a religious school. I could have chosen in my life to stay in my small Christian circle. But I have chosen to be a part of broader society, and it is possible, I can show that. (...) You must be aware of the fact that, yes we have Protestants, Catholics, but our country and our society are secularized. For example, the majority of the Dutch society is very hostile now to Christian Union because of its opposition to genetic engineering. The leader of Christian Union is threatened in the newspapers. They say that he is fundamentalist, radical, he is a dictator. There is another political party named SGP. In that party they say that women should not be in office. The majority of the Parliament thinks that this party should not get money from the state. Some others even say that we should forbid that party. Or, for example, try to say something about homosexuality. You can say almost nothing. So, yes there are means to influence and express your voice, but don't think that it is easy.¹⁸³

After they talk about their personal and community level experiences, they propose some recommendations derived from their experiences not only to Muslims but to the Dutch majority.

We a kind of lost the knowledge on how to have this society together. This happened in the 80s when we got richer. We didn't need each other anymore. Then we had Muslim immigrants, something completely different, and we already forgot how to react on that. The reaction should be that you are Muslim, it is ok, be Muslim please, don't bother me too much with it, and we will find a way to work with each other. So you participate as a political party, or maybe as a Muslim in another political party, you participate and still have your own space to be yourself. Muslim immigrants would find their way of getting a base in our society, so they can emancipate when Muslims have their own schools, their own stores, and their own political party. With all these, they would participate our democratic society, they could show themselves, translate their values into political IDs. I am an Orthodox Christian, and grew up in a small pillar. We had out Church, schools, newspaper, union, and so on. But I am quite happy that I left that behind me. So I will not say that it is the best thing to have a pillar because in pillar system the focus is quite internal, except the top whose orientation is external. But it might be a way to start participating. Someone may say this is the best thing, and they should stay in their pillar forever. But it might be a vehicle to learn participating to our society.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

Here, Ed Anker defends Muslims' right to build their own community level institutions. However, this activity to organize around public institutions should be oriented towards participating into the wider society, and not aim at creating a closed community as religious groups used to have in the past in the pillarization system. He thinks that participating requires schools, stores, unions, political IDs, and political parties, which Muslims do not have. Rather than defending emancipation in the individual level with learning Dutch, getting education, and finding job, he proposes a community level emancipation. For him, participation is a social learning process that may take time, and basically this follows the same logic for everyone including Muslims. Wim van de Camp and Kars Veling, on the other hand, admits that being a Muslim in a non-Muslim society is more challenging than a conservative Christian who shares the same history and experience with less religious Christians, liberals, leftists, and atheists.

As a Christian, I am always a little bit afraid of liberalism. Liberals in the Netherlands say that if you don't have the period of Enlightenment, you are not a very civilian in a Western society. This Enlightenment is very important in the discussion with Islamic people. I think we have to develop a kind of European Islam like Turkey try to do.¹⁸⁵

Most of the immigrants here do not have a long tradition of dealing with the state and church relationship as Dutch Christians and Western Europe are used to have. I can see, as a Dutch Christian and Western European, a tradition from Roman Empire, the relationship between the Catholic Church and the emperor, the reformation, and everything. If you are coming from mountains in Morocco, and your parents are used to live in a neighborhood where being a Muslim is not choice but is everywhere, you don't have a tradition of thinking about the relationship between religion and public life. So it is very hard for them to deal with living as a Muslim in a non-Muslim surrounding. I am sure it is possible. But it will not be the Islamic culture and way of life people are used to in Afghanistan or Morocco. If we have an Islam in Europe, it will be a western Islam. It is an Islam that is self-conscious, but able to connect the Islamic ethic norms and religious belief with being in a society that is not Muslim. It sounds very simple, but it is

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

not. Muslims sometimes have a dilemma whether they are first citizens of Holland or Muslim. But connecting these two is possible.¹⁸⁶

Both van de Camp and Veling talk about a shared experience about state and church relationship that was drawn from the Roman Empire to the Enlightenment. This ensures conservative Christians, though not accepting the prevailing secular public ethic, to be accepted as they are since they are thought as legitimate actors who are well aware of and will not challenge to the established church and state relations. Muslims, on the contrary, first need to get familiar with where religion is positioned in Europe, and simultaneously develop a European Islam. Not sharing the majority's culture and religion and being a newcomer, therefore, can be a painful process until Muslims adapt to the host society's culture, and, at the same time, host society gets familiar with the Muslim culture and accepts it as insider. For Ahmet Akgündüz, the rector of the Islamic University of Rotterdam, this, requires the existence of Muslim elite, which has not been fully formed yet. In this regard, the experiences of Muslims might be more comparable to those of Jews. Ronny Naftaniel, the director of Center for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI), recommends the Dutch and Muslims to be patient:

Although there was some tiny Jewish community here, most came from Spain or Portugal in the 17th century. So yes, it is a migrant community, but an old one. And also they were deprived from many rights until the Napoleonic times. Only after they got full rights, they started to move up and opened up. So indeed there are similarities. Muslims came here as foreign workers, and that is relatively very new. I think in a hundred years, you will see similar developments.¹⁸⁷

4.6. Muslims in the Public Sphere

So far, the interview questions aimed at learning the interviewee's general thoughts about Muslims and digging up such thoughts by asking the interviewee to

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Naftaniel, Director, Center for Information and Documentation on Israel.

compare Muslims with non-Muslim immigrants and with conservative Christians. To find more specific answers to the question of why Muslims are harder to be accommodated comparing to other ethnic or religious groups in the Netherlands, some more specific issues are needed to be explored. When looking at the public debates about Muslims in the Netherlands, there can be identified many issues from headscarf to organ donating. However, for the sake of the interview, a few issues that have representative power had to be chosen. Issues regarding Muslims can generally be categorized into two: thick issues and thin issues. If an issue can strictly be regulated with law or constitution and mostly is about institutions, then it is a thick issue (e.g. Islamic schools, mosques, Islamic political parties). Thin issues, on the other hand, are those related more to the everyday life practices of Muslims (e.g. handshaking, praying). They are hard or impossible to be regulated by law, but the host society's perceptions about them may cause serious outcomes for Muslims as individuals.

In each host society, different issues can get prominence. In the Dutch case, Islamic schools and headscarf are the most popularly discussed thick issues regarding Muslims. As mentioned in chapter 3, the Dutch constitution not only allows private religious schools, but also provides them with public funding. Therefore, there is no legal barrier to establish an Islamic school in the Netherlands. However, existing Islamic schools or establishing new ones always breed discussion. Headscarf is another popular debate about Muslims. Although any kind of religious symbol is allowed in public, Islamic headscarf causes to reconsider this religious freedom. Some new regulations or constraints about using religious symbols are now a part of political debate. But more than headscarf, the discussions for now are mostly about burqa or veiling.

Choosing the thin issues is relatively easier in the Dutch case because two issues can be distinguished without any difficulty: handshaking and sexual/gender issues. As discussed above, the Dutch society is very much secularized and it is very progressive in terms of the freedom for sexual choices. Since the Netherlands has this deserved reputation of having sexual freedom especially for gays, the Muslims are usually subjected to pressure to tell their ideas about gays and men/women equality. It is not surprising that there are plenty of debates about these issues. The handshaking issue, on the other hand, has become very prominent in the public debate after an imam refused to shake a women minister's hand, and the latter made a big issue about it in 2004.

4.6.1. Islamic Schools

Not surprisingly, general positions on religious schools go parallel with political ideology. On the one hand, the left and right wing seculars support mixed public schools where religious orientation does not matter, on the other hand, religious Christians want to continue holding the educational rights that they acquired long time ago.¹⁸⁸ The issue of Islamic schools very frequently becomes a battlefield where these two sides, namely religious people versus seculars, fight rather than Muslims fighting against entire white Dutch people. However, those against religious schools do not categorically against Islamic schools. Some of them think that if there is a constitutional right, Muslims are equally entitled to establish Islamic schools. Still, they suggest that it is better not to fund any religious schools with state money. Right wing liberals are relatively straighter in this regard. They defend to abolish the right for establishing religious schools, which they think are

¹⁸⁸ See Chapter 3, pp. 85-86.

bad for social cohesion. Most of them think that “there should not be Christian or Muslim schools with special rules and regulations” because it only serves to “divide the society.”¹⁸⁹ Frits Bolkestein’s thoughts are very much representative in this regard:

Muslims have constitutional rights to establish Islamic schools. But I oppose that because I think that divided schools lead to divided society. My idea is all we together go to public schools. I am not in favor of religious schools or single-faith schools.

Bolkestein does not target specifically Islamic schools, but the whole educational system, which is divided along faith categories. Besides being against religious schools, many right wing politicians and intellectuals think that Islamic schools are not good for integrating Muslim youth into the wider society. Stef Blok admits that there is a cultural reason for that, not because Islamic culture is worse than the majority of Dutch culture, but simply because the Dutch culture is shared by the majority:

In the research [of Blok Committee], we can see that there is a positive effect of mixed school on integration. It is because there people speak Dutch, you have more people with typical Dutch culture– it is not necessarily better than other cultures, but it happens to be the dominant culture here. An Islamic school, by definition will not be mixed, so following the logic, if mixed schools are good for integration, then Islamic schools do not promote integration as much as mixed schools.

According to Blok, although previously Catholic schools positively influenced the emancipation of Catholic community, Islamic schools would not have a similar function “because language and culture matters.” From this point, a differentiation is made between Christian schools and Muslim schools as the Christian denominations, regardless of the differences they have, are already “Dutch,” speak Dutch, and loyal to the Netherlands while Muslims are considered as

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

not Dutch and suspiciously not loyal. Marco Pastors, the leader of the right-wing Leefbaar Rotterdam, discusses the Islamic schools in terms of cultural integration:

First of all, there is a general feeling in the society that *Islam is not integrated* at this moment in the way it should be. If you have a Catholic school, you know that everything will be ok. But for Muslims, they are *new* and *difference* is bigger. There is skepticism about Islam. It comes to surface every time when people build a mosque or start a school. On the legal level, all the religious groups are the same, but on emotional level, on cultural level, it is not the same yet. It is not as culturally harmless as a Catholic initiative. It is important whether an Islamic school is a sign of emancipation or is it a sign of building your own society in this society. We do not want the latter. In other words, whether that initiative helps to build a culture of accepting the *dominance of standards and values* that we have here which are based upon a *Christian history*— we cannot help it, that is what it is—, or it is an initiative to start its own society that is in the end maybe *hostile* towards our society.

Marco Pastors, is an “atheist,” in his words. But as the above quotation makes clear, he acknowledges the Christian roots of Dutch society, which he is a part of. An Islamic school, Pastor argues, must be aware of this fact, and should orient itself and its pupils through the “dominant standards and values” of Dutch society which is historically Christian. He implies that all Muslims categorically regard Christianity as “hostile,” and Islamic schools re-produce this conviction. For Pastors, as long as Muslims are thought as “threat to the rest of the society,” Islamic schools will not be accepted. There is “an entry level acceptance;” nevertheless, Pastor argues that “we have not reached that stage yet.” For him the main reason is the questionability of Muslim loyalty, which became clear as some Muslims in the Netherlands cherished 9/11.

Other seculars, however, argue that there should not be made different value-judgments between Islamic schools and Christian denominational schools. If there is a constitutional right, all parties should enjoy it. However, they still think that Islamic schools are not really good for Muslim pupils. The reason is not that they are

Islamic, but, first and foremost, the simple fact that the quality of education is low in these schools comparing to the other schools in the Netherlands. Secondly, the pupils in these schools do not learn proper Dutch, and consequently they later have hard time to be successful in every level of their life in universities, in job market, and in social spheres.

The problem about Islamic schools is not so much about their religious aspects, but main problem is that they are seen as schools with low quality. They are seen as diminishing the chances of educational achievement of Muslims. There is also the problem about sexes. Male and female pupils are separated. That gives impression that there is a violation of a right and basic value. But in the end these schools exist, and they can exist, it is constitutionally guaranteed.¹⁹⁰

We come from a tradition in which the Catholics had their own schools, Protestants had their own schools, and there were public schools for the liberal and the socialists. But I do not think we should go back to that system. That would lead to some sort of double segregation. In Holland, we do not have an apartheid policy.¹⁹¹

If the quality is under control, then there is no problem. Recently, inspectors reported that a school in Rotterdam, Ibn Khaldun School, has poor level of education. That is an individual school. But when that is an Islamic school, you see a high amount of attention in media. There is a selective bias in that.¹⁹²

We should change the educational system. I think every child should grow up with different people in the class, different socioeconomic background, with different social classes. It should be a different environment than your home. And if you want to learn more about Islam, then there can be selective courses. The public schools should offer possibility to learn different languages, to learn more about several cultures and religions. I think many Muslim families do not send their children to Islamic schools because of the simple fact that they are very disorganized, have poor education.¹⁹³

This group thinks that if Islamic schools are bad for integration because they preach outdated beliefs, it is also the case for conservative Christian schools.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Paul Tesser, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

¹⁹² Interview with Willem Schinkel, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Erasmus University.

¹⁹³ Interview with Rachida Azough, Art Director, Kozmopolis.

I am for mixed schools. As you know, every religious group can establish their own schools in the Netherlands. Obviously Muslims have this right, and we have some Islamic schools, too. However, if you ask me whether they are good for integration, I think they are not because all of them are mono-cultural, they only have children from immigrant background, or sometimes only from one ethnic background. It is not good for living together. Orthodox Christian schools are not good either. If we are to change this, we should change the law, not only target Muslim schools. Those who support the existing education law are very hypocrite. We, however, only want to have all of our children together in mixed public schools.¹⁹⁴

There is debate about Muslim schools because it is new, it is in big cities. We see young girls with headscarf in the school yards. We have not seen such things since the 50s. It attracts attention. (...) There are very orthodox Christian schools too, and they are also not good for integrating into wider society. But they are not in Amsterdam, and since we don't see them, we forgot about them. Now Muslims doing this in big cities, and we don't know how to respond. I think we should change the law for the general. No schools for the bible either. Only public schools.¹⁹⁵

Veit Bader, on the other hand, argues that this presumption that religious schools are generally bad for integrating into the modern society is an outcome of a secularist bias. He suggests that religious schools are better in teaching pupils about citizenship values than public schools, and that funding religious schools help assuring to have the loyalty of religious communities.

When you fund schools publicly, you have right to scrutinize them to control. So it is better to have publicly funded schools under the eye of public than privately hidden schools. Also if you let them establish institutions, that make them more loyal to you, they feel they are welcome. But if you forbid, you create resistance. (...) Empirically it is quite clear that, in many European countries, religious schools not only outperform public schools when it comes to cognitive skills, but funnily enough, also when it comes to learning of civic virtues, democratic virtues. A kind of paradoxical that officially hierarchical and autocratic Catholic Church has schools, where kids learn better to behave in decency and democracy than public schools.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Sadet Karabulut, MP from SP

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Veit Bader, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

Ahmet Akgündüz, inspired from the experiences in Rotterdam Islam University, supports this idea, and argues that “When radical students come to school, most of them moderate their understanding of Islam. Only a very small minority drop the school when they insist on their extremism. Therefore, such Islamic schools only help building up Muslim elite that would help Muslims integrate into this society better.”¹⁹⁷ Ejder Köse, a lawyer from Turkish background, also thinks that “when a child learns his/her identity, the chances of understanding the fundamental values of the host society is higher.”¹⁹⁸ And finally, Christian politicians agree with Veit Bader as well. For them, every religious group should have the right to establish private schools, and subsidizing them is necessary. But more importantly, they think that denominational schools have functioned well for the emancipation of Catholics in the past, and if the education quality is controlled, it may have the same function for Muslims. Relatively more conservative Christians identify “quality” with teaching Dutch and establishing a tie between the Muslim identity and being a citizen of the Netherlands.

I think it would be strange to subsidize a religious movement, and don't subsidize other movements. (...) I always make comparison with Orthodox Christians in the Netherlands. They used their own pillar as a way to emancipate themselves. Muslim immigrants would find their way of getting a base in our society, so they can emancipate when Muslims have their own schools, their own stores, and their own political party. With all these, they would participate our democratic society, they could show themselves, translate their values into political IDs.¹⁹⁹

Looking at the Dutch society now, it is very hard to have an Islamic school. I was the principle of a conservative Christian school. I was convinced that it was possible to help our students to be citizens, responsible members of society from their own background. So I am not opposed to the schools for children with the same background as long as it tries to make a connection between that background and wider society, asks the question of how to be part of society, how to

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Ahmet Akgündüz, Rector, Islamic University of Rotterdam.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Ejder Köse, a lawyer from Turkish background.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

take part what is going on politically and economically. But if the religious school becomes a kind of ghetto, it is a school that is not open to the society. For example here we have Islamic primary school in The Hague, I think it is a good school now because it is open to Dutch society. It can be an emancipating power in the society.²⁰⁰

Christian Democrats, on the other hand, are in favor of intervening in the philosophy of Islamic schools as well. Or in other words, they desire these schools spread a more westernized Islamic doctrine.

CDA's starting point in that discussion is the constitution, which permits religious groups establish private schools. So, if there is an Islamic school, we will accept it, we will fund it, but we won't stimulate it because there are problems with integration aspect. Therefore, there are two aspects in this discussion. In one way, there is the discussion of constitutional rights. But on the other hand, some Islamic schools keep their teaching very narrow to the religion and language. You see that many second generation immigrants do not send their children to Islamic school because children's language skills are not good in the end of school comparing to those graduated from Dutch schools. So there is a tension between these constitutional rights and outcomes.²⁰¹

The idea that religious schools are not good for integration is nonsense. However, as every school has the same rights, all schools have some obligations as well. We have very strong inspection system. They look at every school if the standards are met, whether the level is ok. For example there are teachers who are former communists, and they put communistic ideas into the heads of those 12-13 year old children. Of course that is not desirable. That is discussed. The same way, if there are very strong anti-Western ideas in an Islamic school, that is not desirable either. While gay-marriage is legal in the Netherlands, teaching children that homosexuals should be thrown out of window is not helpful. It is the task of inspection bodies to find such things.²⁰²

Some others, however, accuse Christians to have a different agenda when supporting Muslim's right to establish their own schools. For example, Willem Schinkel argues that middle class Christians are not sincere at all when they defend Muslims' right to establish such schools. He thinks that they just want their schools stay as safe heavens for the children of white middle class families. Jan Willem

²⁰⁰ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

²⁰¹ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

²⁰² Interview with Kathleen Ferrier, MP from the CDA.

Duyvendak, too, emphasizes the white families' inclination to send their children religious schools that are free from the pupils of disadvantaged immigrant families.

Once you want to allow Christian schools, which many people still do want, then it means Muslim schools to be allowed as well. (...) And of course it has to do with the practical issues. If you are a Christian school, you can say that you prefer not to have Muslim children, and that means that you do not prefer children with less advantaged background. So, large part of the underclass cannot get into those schools.²⁰³

Interesting thing is that most Muslim children go to public schools rather than Islamic schools whereas most white Dutch children go to religious schools. Not because of schools are religious but schools are white. So they won't abolish that because then they have to interfere in the rights of white middle class parents. And they will never do that.²⁰⁴

Dijsselbloem thinks that the central and local governments should intervene into this formation of white and black schools:

It worries me to hear that so many politicians say there is little we can do about this. Parents can choose the schools. So it is just fact of life that white parents will send their children to different schools than migrant parents. I do not believe that at all. I think the local governments should have the authority to break through these mechanisms. And local governments can do that by making sure that different parents from different background have equal chances to get into that school or this school.²⁰⁵

Especially for the left wing politicians and intellectuals, the real problem is not about the quality of a few Islamic schools, which do not even attract so many Muslim families, but the insistence of the majority of Dutch people, who want to continue sending their children to so-called "white schools," all of which are private Christian schools. This attitude, for them, forces Muslims to be satisfied with "black" public schools, whose population mostly consists of pupils from immigrant background because Muslims do not have necessary social and financial capital to establish private Muslim schools with high quality. Interestingly, the same white

²⁰³ Interview with Willem Schinkel, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Erasmus University.

²⁰⁴ Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

²⁰⁵ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

Dutch majority also hesitant of existing Muslim schools or is worried with the attempts to establish new ones. In other words, Muslims are in a very difficult situation. On the one hand, they do not have enough means and experience to establish good-quality private schools. On the other hand, even if they constitutionally have the right to establish schools, their attempts arouse Dutch majority's suspicions. And in the end, they are condemned of not being integrated.

Tofik Dibi aptly mentions this dilemma.

People discuss that Islam is a different type of religion than Christianity and Judaism because they say Islam is more like an ideology and wants to rule the world. So in the discourse you always have this almost apartheid state of mind when laws and policies related to Muslims are being discussed whether it is school, or mosque, or marriage. (...) In the past, such schools help the emancipation of Catholics, Protestants, and it was normal. Now when it comes to Muslims, they say that Muslims will stay in their own world, they are going to teach children their own rules, they are going to be isolated from society, etc. Who know what is going to happen. When Muslims come together, it really has negative connotations in Holland. It is like they are planning a bombing or attack. You see that in the discourse always.²⁰⁶

According to Channa Samkalden, if a just proportionality was the starting point, the Netherlands "should have hundreds of Islamic schools." Nevertheless she also argues that the odds to break this vicious circle are fairly low:

Considering equality and anti-discrimination, Muslims are entitled to the same rights. Legally, the question is quite solid. But there are few drawbacks. One is that our society is based on the old idea of pillarization, and all the other groups have schools, newspapers, and all the institutions. They have been established in the society in such a long time, they don't have to fight for these rights any more. But Muslims still have to establish mosques, schools, etc. And it is difficult especially in this political climate. Some municipalities, for example the city of Amsterdam, give some special treatment to Muslims to overcome their disadvantaged situation. But sometimes the same cities try to discourage establishing Muslim schools thinking that they are not good for integration. So the problem is complicated. It is also sensitive too because such issues get so much public attention. (...) Somehow people find it quite scary idea that we would have hundreds Islamic

²⁰⁶ Interview with Tofik Dibi, MP from the GL.

schools in the Netherlands. We have a discussion on financing private education, but it is not likely to change considering the political and legal structure. But it is perhaps good because we reconsider our state and church relations.²⁰⁷

4.6.2. Headscarf

Another issue that has to do with Muslims' public visibility is the headscarf. It also has a woman aspect. Not surprisingly, when this Muslim public visibility and Muslim woman issue get together, a debate is inescapable. As Duyvendak argues, headscarf not only makes it clear for the Dutch that Islam is a public religion, but also it symbolizes the seriousness of Muslims about their belief.²⁰⁸ This generates a two-layered tension. First of all, being serious about the belief is reacted negatively in a society where the public role of religion has seriously declined. Secondly, the claim of being a public religion doubles the tension because the claim is made in a society that is historically Christian. Raşit Bal, the coordinator of the Imam School at Hogeschool Inholland, indirectly agrees with the second point by saying that a conservative Christian has to make an extra effort to show his or her religiosity, but for Muslims, a headscarf is enough. Perhaps, because of these reasons, when I asked my interviewees generally about religious symbols in public sphere, they mostly focused on Muslim headscarf without I ask specifically about Islamic symbols or hijab.

There is one shared view about wearing religious symbols in public sphere. While it is accepted as a freedom of religion, some public offices should be free from religious symbols because of their assumed neutrality. And headscarf is assessed within this general precondition about wearing religious symbols. Willem Schinkel observes that "there is a development towards the banishment of symbols of identity

²⁰⁷ Interview with Channa Samkalden, Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

²⁰⁸ Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

from such public spaces that are controllable by the state” such as schools and courtrooms. But Schinkel adds that in public sphere in general, it is impossible to prohibit any religious symbols, including headscarf. Paul Cliteur, on the other hand, not only observes, but also promotes such distinction between, in his words, “political and social,” both of which are two different “public domains:”

In society, every individual has the right to express the religious beliefs. Here on the streets you can wear a headscarf, you can pray, and all. It is public sphere. But it is wrong when the prime minister would wear a headscarf or pray. It is both public domains. But there you have to make a clear separation.²⁰⁹

All of the interviewees admit that any kind of religious symbols are allowed in the public sphere, and Islamic headscarf cannot be an exception in that. Along with other symbols, there are some limits such as “public safety and health.”²¹⁰ While it is free to use headscarf for a ministry official²¹¹ or for a member of parliament,²¹² in some civil service sectors (courts, police departments, public schools), all religious symbols can be forbidden as well.

In public space, religious symbols should be allowed. But in the court room, I would have problem if a judge using a religious symbol. Lawyer wouldn’t bother me, but judge. This is a specific case. There are a lot of other cases where we have an easy way to dealing with this: it is okay as long as it is not against public security and public health.²¹³

However, when it comes to headscarf, some more limits are added to the usual ones with different justifications other than public safety and health. Wim van de Camp, a Christian Democrat MP, points out this arbitral nature of limiting the use of headscarf, which has a lot to do with “how we judge the integration.” He admits

²⁰⁹ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²¹⁰ Interview with Bouchra Talidi, Policy Official, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

²¹¹ Interview with Paul Tesser, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

²¹² Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director, Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

²¹³ Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

that, for a majority of the Dutch, “if a woman with headscarf work in a factory, it does not bother anyone. But if you work in public service, that can be a problem.” He gives his father as an example who “is a little bit afraid when he has to go to a woman with headscarf to ask to renew his passport. He feels that he is going to Morocco or Turkey.” In other words, for those who are used to “white Holland,” a person with headscarf cannot be regarded as Dutch, and therefore, should not be seen in white-collar work places. But as Tofik Dibi argues, “Holland is not a white country anymore, and it will never become a white country again.” For those who accepted this fact, only limitation for headscarf is that drawn by law and no differential treatment can be in question. Nevertheless, their own value judgments about Islamic headscarf imply that most interviewees are likely to further the limits of using headscarf if it was legally possible. Considering liberals and leftists, a negative view on religion seems to be the reason for this. However, a negative view about Islam is shared alike by seculars and conservative Christians. Especially, the belief that Muslim women wear headscarf only because of pressure coming from their families or communities is very widespread. Some examples are as follows:

Personally I think that there is a pressure to wear headscarf. If there wasn't, not a lot of women would wear it. From a feminist perspective, I would like them to take it off.²¹⁴

I still think the majority of those women who walk around in long dresses with everything covered, it is not that they want to do it, they are told by men to do it. Then I don't like anymore.²¹⁵

I think everybody should be allowed to dress freely, but if you see a tendency to dress Islamic more and more among young people here in the Netherlands, that is not the way it should go. There should be a tendency that it gets less.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

²¹⁵ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

²¹⁶ Interview with Marco Pastors, MP from the LR.

This kind of value-judgements, for Rachida Azough, has a reversal effect. She thinks that if “a lot of girls wearing headscarf nowadays, it is more a sign of these girls saying ‘I am a Muslim, so what? I am the one who decides what I am.’ Criticizing their religion, their heritage, their parents has this effect.”

What is very interesting about the responses to the questions about religious symbols and headscarf is that almost all interviewees jumped from headscarf to burqa as a more objectionable Islamic symbol. This kind of exaggerating or focusing on the extreme actually appears as an important tool to criticize the existence of Muslims in Europe. It is common that a person commenting on Muslims starts with talking about average Muslims, and suddenly leaps to bombs and terrorist acts. Similarly, the interviewees first talked about headscarf shortly, and many of them suggested that headscarf is okay. But then all of a sudden, most interviewees started talking about how ugly and offensive burqa is. It seems that there is a widespread fear on the likelihood of any Muslim to turn one day into the most extreme forms of exercising Islam.

If you look at headscarf issue, it is less a problem in the Netherlands than Turkey. If you are an MP, and want to use headscarf, nobody would say no to that. But burqa is an *extreme* of course. Everybody would feel very *uncomfortable* about it and even *threatened*. The idea that you cannot see the face of a woman is an *insult* for a Dutch man, it suggests that it is the only way to look at a woman is with sexual intentions. This is an insult towards a western man.²¹⁷

Headscarf is ok. But you should see everybody’s face. I don’t like people walk around without seeing their face. How would you feel if the rest of Holland would walk around with masks, and could not see anybody’s face? You would feel a bit *uncomfortable* in a way because you could only see a little bit eyes. It is a bit tough from French court²¹⁸, but in a way I can understand the reasoning. When you go to street, you should uncover your face. And if you don’t want to do it, then you should go somewhere else.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director, Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

²¹⁸ Referring to the French Constitutional Court’s decision to deny a veiled Muslim woman’s application for citizenship.

²¹⁹ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor from the D66.

How you dress yourself in public is also problem. Headscarf is not such a big problem, but burqa is. As Socialist Party, we say that civil servants, especially teachers, should not wear burqa. It is because you don't know who the person is. In my opinion, a woman should not wear this because it is *not beautiful*.²²⁰

Do not get me wrong, I think burqa is very *unkind* to women, I hope to see them very little.²²¹

Nevertheless, none of the reasoning mentioned above can be set forth as justifications for banning an outfit, including burqa. Someone cannot be asked to change her or his manner of dressing because others think it is not beautiful, or they feel threatened, or it makes them uncomfortable, or it insults them. But coming to burqa, banning it becomes a widespread possibility in Holland and other Western societies. The reason can lay in the fact that fundamentalist Islam is widely associated with violence and seen as a threat to Western norms and values. Therefore, burqa, as an *extreme* version of Islamic clothing can be taken as something to eradicate from Muslim communities, just like the need for eradicating terrorists among Muslims. However, as a few of the interviewees admit, burqa is worn only by a very small minority of Muslim women.

At the moment we have a huge discussion about burqa. I think it is totally ridiculous discussion basically. The government is taken hostage by this little symbol.²²²

Ministers get together to discuss about burqa. It is insane. There are much bigger problems in this country.²²³

These are always hot discussion although I hardly ever seen a woman with burqa. I have never seen burqa in The Hague, in Utrecht, I think I have seen once in Amsterdam, and maybe she was a tourist. Teaching in a school with burqa might not be acceptable.²²⁴

²²⁰ Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from the SP.

²²¹ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

²²² Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

²²³ Interview with Fatma Koşer Kaya, MP from the D66.

²²⁴ Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director, Social and Cultural Planning Bureau

While the freedom of religion along with expressing it with any kind of symbols is a long-established tradition in the Netherlands, even the most ardent followers of this tradition, namely Christians, are confident to deny some conservative Muslims' right to use burqa. Among the politicians, bureaucrats, intellectual, and NGO representatives, only a few mentioned the significance of this deviation. They still admitted undesirability of burqa while acknowledging the right of wearing burqa for the sake of equality. Jeroen Dijsselbloem, an MP from Labor Party, is one of the few who emphasize such double-standard:

Funny thing is that we have Christian political parties in politics. They always stand for freedom of religion also in the public sphere. So they say if the people show their belief in the way they dress, that is fine, you do not have to leave your religion at home. But now we are talking about Muslims, and these Christian parties say that we should forbid burqa in our country. Do not get me wrong, I think burqa is very unkind to women, I hope to see them very little. But if a woman want to wear burqa on her free will, it is her right not only at home, but also in streets.

4.6.3. Gender and Sexual Issues

The position of women and homosexuals in Muslim communities is an issue where almost all parties agree each other and ideological divides nearly vanish. Although I never asked the interviewees about Islam, on the one hand, and women and homosexuals, on the other hand, many of them mentioned the poor position of Muslim women and the intolerance of Muslims against homosexuals especially when they talk about the integration of Muslims and the limits of religious reasoning in the public sphere. Many of the interviewees bring especially the woman issue when they talk about integration. For example, Robert Flos first mentions learning the language as an obligatory requirement of integration, and as a second issue, talks about the need for changing the way Muslims look at women.

It is not acceptable if Muslim girls are kept at home because their parents think that they should not get education because they are women. Equality of men and women, and gay rights, and freedom of expression are some basic values that we cannot compromise.²²⁵

Why do respondents talk about gender and sexuality issues before being asked? Perhaps, it is mostly because the respondents feel obliged to say something about these issues as, in the Netherlands, they are the first two topics circulated in the popular public debates about Islam. But most of them also seem to affirm the picture of Islam which hypothetically leaves no option for women and homosexuals but desperation, domination, and pain. When talking about these issues, it is very common to use a language of “we and they.” “We” (the Dutch, or European, or Westerners), in this discourse, already accept the equality of men and women and respect sexual preferences, whereas “they” (Muslims, or non-Europeans, or non-Westerners) are not able to grasp and understand these rights. After a while, confessing the Islamic backwardness on gender issues and sexual preferences and desiring for improvement in these issues become a prerequisite for Muslim integration as learning the language is a prerequisite for all other immigrants to integrate.

As Madeline van Toorenborg, a Christian Democrat, states when she is talking about the difference of Muslims from other ethnic and religious minorities, the majority of the Dutch believes that “the things *we* take for granted, such as equality between men and women, are further for Muslims” and therefore, “it is not easy for *them* to look at our society as respectful because *we* do many things very different than *they* used to.” This belief, according to Blok, is as influential as the

²²⁵ Interview with Robert Flos, city councilor of Amsterdam, the VVD.

9/11 on the negative perceptions about Islam: “The feelings toward Islam among large part of population are negative because of mostly 9/11, but also because of the position of women.” Blok goes a step further and argues that “the position of women and homosexuality, which are clearly described in Dutch law,” can even be “reasons to intervene into private sphere.”

The equality of men and women and the respect for gay rights are usually counted as the basic principles of Dutch society along with the freedom of expression.

Of course this does not mean that Muslims have to be Christian. But they should adapt to the basic principles of the society in which they are living. For example, the equality between men and women, freedom of speech, etc., that sort of basic things.²²⁶

Tolerance towards differences... Respect gays, women rights... (Sargentini, answering what makes up the Dutch society).

Freedom of speech, equality between men and women, between gays and non-gays, etc. (Dijsselbloem, answering what the liberal way of life is).

The thing what Dutch state should tell is what our own values are, such as no violence, respect one another, principle of equality between man and woman, no sexual discrimination.²²⁷

We developed here a Rotterdam Code, a ten-rule system, in which we say that when you have children, you should take responsibility to raise them, to make them good citizens; you also should accept other people’s sexual preferences, like homosexuality, etc. These kinds of rules. And they are actually a list of what Western, liberal, modern society is all about. (...) These are the things how this society works.²²⁸

What is interesting here is that, as Jan Willem Duyvendak points out, the convergence of people from different ideological leanings: “In Holland, from Green Left to Verdonk or Wilders, everybody has the same agenda, it is all about emancipation, individual rights, gay rights, equal rights for men and women, and so

²²⁶ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

²²⁷ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²²⁸ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

long.” Rachida Azough also thinks that in the Netherlands “left wing topics such as religion, Islamic way of life, women issues, and homosexuality are used for right wing agenda.” Although Azough and Duyvendak are correct on saying that the right wing politicians make use of these issues to hit Muslims, this does not change the fact that most of the Dutch right wing politicians are actually liberal when it comes to individual rights.

They [right wing politicians] think that Muslims are very conservative on these topics, and partially they are right. So, cultural cleavage in Holland is constructed as being bigger than Germany, or other societies. Wilders and Verdonk don’t stop talking about gay rights. Social movements of women or gays are a kind of collaborating Wilders and Verdonk. They are not extreme right wing; they are the front line of the struggle. But that is very instrumental and opportunistic because they just use it to hit Muslims. They are not extreme right, conservative people. On topics like euthanasia, woman and gay rights, they are rather progressive. They are conservative in the sense that they think everybody in the country should have the same morals.²²⁹

There are some nuances, however, in the widespread convergence on the freedom of expression of the sexual preferences and women rights.

4.6.3.1.Civilizing and Testing Functions

First of all, the belief that the equality of men and women is not respected by Muslims is more widely pronounced than their disrespect to homosexuals. Perhaps the reason is that the women rights are better established than the gay rights. However, nearly everyone sees the gay rights as a field to test Muslim integration as it is the most problematic issue. Women issue, on the other hand, is considered as a field to transform Muslim communities from backward, rural, and patriarchal to modern and contemporary. In other words, although women and gay rights usually

²²⁹ Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

considered together, they seem to have two different functions. While the women rights discourse is to civilize Muslims and minimize the internal restrictions within Muslim community, the gay rights discourse is to make Muslims get used to freedom of expression and live with differences. For example, following quotations make the connection between the gay rights and freedom of expression very clear:

If you express yourself within law– of course you cannot run around naked– we believe that you will have a better life. We have this rule because we had a lot of people suffered of not being able to express themselves, such as homosexuals. You don't have to become homosexual, but you have to respect them, or when you are a homosexual or somebody in your family, your son, your daughter, you cannot hide and punish them.²³⁰

When a religious person tells me that I have to do certain things only certain ways, and if I don't do it in that way, he or she doesn't like me, it is the limit. I cannot accept it. When for example, if a Muslim says that I cannot accept you because you are gay, it is discrimination.²³¹

The issues about Muslim women are, nevertheless, put into a different basket. To begin with, as Blok argues, for the majority of the Dutch or Western people, it is almost a scientific fact that Muslims treat women badly. When he talks about the findings of Blok Committee, he states that “We also looked at some other policy areas, for example the position of women. In this respect, especially the minority groups from Muslim descent were very backward position comparing to for example those of Surinam.” Paul Schnabel, the director of Social and Cultural Planning Bureau, argues that this perception of Muslims as backward people was widespread long before Muslims are associated with terrorism: “They could be backward people, they could have old-fashioned ideas about many things, they were not maybe very emancipatory towards women, etc. But the whole idea about terrorism, danger and threat was never there.” In other words, regarding Muslims as threat after 9/11 is not the root of the negative perceptions about them. These feelings were already there.

²³⁰ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

²³¹ Interview with Carlien Boelhouwer, city councilor of Amsterdam, the SP.

But they have transformed into “challenge” and “threat” to liberal (or Western) way of life only after 9/11. Paul Tesser touches upon this inclination of Muslims to be threat in his answer to my question of how to be a good Dutch with my Muslim background. Before Tesser shows me the way to be a good Dutch, first he feels to makes sure to eradicate the more likely direction that is expected from me as a Muslim: “There will be problem if you are challenging these bases of democratic society, and thinking that it is only Islam should exist, all other religions are false, believing that there cannot be freedom for women. So if you are supporting the basic values and rights, freedom of speech and opinion, you will be accepted.”

Muslim women are always put into passive position, and to break the domination of Muslim men, they need and welcome help. Portraying Muslim women in such way becomes clear, for example, when the respondents talk about their personal thoughts on headscarf:

Personally I think that there is a pressure to wear headscarf. If there wasn't, not a lot of women would wear it. From a feminist perspective, I would like them to take it off.²³²

They learn a little bit Dutch for this exam [the integration test hold in the embassies prior to coming to the Netherlands]. But these husbands got a certain idea about women, they lock them in the house, and they are not allowed to go out any more. So these women forget Dutch in a few months. And I still think the majority of those women who walk around in long dresses with everything covered, it is not that they want to do it, they are told by men to do it. Then I don't like it anymore.²³³

To me, Dutch women with Islamic background are the most hopeful examples of integration. These women finally have freedom, and they are going to use it.²³⁴

Islamic institutions are, on the other hand, thought as impediments to the women and gay emancipation. Paul Tesser, for example, answering the question about the effects of Islamic schools, says that “There is also the problem about sexes.

²³² Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

²³³ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66

²³⁴ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

Male and female pupils are separated. That gives impression that there is a violation of a right and basic value.” Similarly, Kathleen Ferrier argues that “While gay-marriage is legal in the Netherlands, teaching children that homosexuals should be thrown out of window is not helpful.” In addition, Ed Anker, a conservative Christian MP, mentions the influence of radical imams in the mosques. When I ask him why sexual issues triggers hot discussion when it comes to Muslims although conservative Christians have similar agendas, he answers that he thinks “it is because the way spiritual leaders, the imams, talk about it. They do not talk in Dutch, they don’t know Dutch way of debating it. So they use a quite harsh language, such as comparing gay people to dogs, or saying that there are Surahs which say that you should throw gay people from buildings. Such words are not helping at all.”

Multiculturalism too, for some, is considered as not helping Muslims to reach desired levels of integration:

But individual should have the right to reject the group identity, depart from the group. Disagreeing with the group makes the society improve. It is always the case in the history. For example women in Muslim group should say that “I disagree with my father or brothers, and I have the right to make my own decisions.” It is liberal democracy that makes this possible. But multiculturalism makes it harder because you lay more stress on group identity.²³⁵

The policy which formulated as keeping the cultural identity while integrating was about providing all kind of facilities and never demanding anything, and accepting things which we find as not acceptable in our own society such as treating women badly.²³⁶

It is thought that multiculturalist policies, or in Dutch case, the policy known as “retaining culture while integrating” do not create conditions where newcomers get familiar and appreciate to the culture of host society. Pastors argues that immigrants should respect the home country where they increase their levels of life

²³⁵ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²³⁶ Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director of Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

standards, and change some of their behaviors, mostly the ones pertaining to gender roles and sexual preferences:

Migrants go to a country to increase their level of life standards and they should respect the country that welcomes them. I think minorities thought about this very little. They just thought that I am here, that is good, I can get my unemployment benefit, I can behave my wife as I am used to, I can force my children to marry with those I choose, I can still hate homosexuals. But these are all different here than those where people come from.²³⁷

Some interviewees accept the fact that there are some conservative Dutch communities too dislike gays. Nevertheless, they still argue that Muslims differ from conservative Christians in one important regard: violence. It is widely believed that Muslims are inclined to use violence against homosexuals. For example, Bolkestein, when answering how a Muslim person can become a good Dutch, firstly and straightly gets into the sexual preferences issue. It is like a Muslim is intrinsically inclined to use violence against gays: “You do not have to like gays. It is okay as long as you do not beat them.” Cliteur targets Islamists in this regard although he does not make a clear differentiation between regular pious Muslim and Islamist: “Conservative theistic believes have in common of course such as about the relationship between man and woman, how children should raise. The only difference is that Islamist ideology preaches violence.”

4.6.3.2.A Battlefield between the Secular and Religious

Secondly, these issues, rather than a fight between Muslims and non-Muslims, sometimes become a battlefield where secular and pious groups continue a fight on the limits of religious reasoning in the public sphere. In this fight, the latter has seriously lost ground since the 1960s, and they might see Muslims as new allies

²³⁷ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

against seculars. Seculars, on the other hand, do not want to lose what they acquired after long fights against established churches. Nevertheless, both sides may not be happy to open up these agendas again because while seculars are simply do not want to be bothered with these topics, the religious Christians do not want to lose some of the exemptions they already have. Indeed, there is a silence acceptance of some conservative religious people's preferences as long as they do not intervene into the lifestyles of other people. However, because of the very harsh debates caused by the existence of Muslims in the big cities of Europe, conservative Christians are afraid that the silence acceptance of some of their preferences will be lost.

Seculars are more confident comparing to religious Christians. They regard the demands of Muslims as issues they dealt and closed in the past.

You have to understand that in the last fifty years, this society has developed enormously. This liberal way of life has only been here for only 40 or 50 years. In the 1960s, sexual revolution started, people started making their own choices, choice of partner, who they have sex with, what kind of sex they have, whether with a man or woman. These are all recent things. We all in this society cherish this freedom to make your own decisions. (...) You still cherish this freedom you have even if you do not use it. Then all of the sudden there is a group within society who seems to have norms and values and cultures of our grandparents'. That is hard to understand for our society.²³⁸

We wanted to be this very liberal, progressive country, and we don't like conservatism anymore. That might explain why an openly gay man could be the leader of a political party. It would be unimaginable to have such a gay leader in other countries. Here nobody bothered.²³⁹

Look at the Dutch society and politics. People say things based on religious reasoning, because it is written in bible. For example, just a few months ago, we had here in the city council a debate on homosexuality. The right wing Christians and Islamic party were against this homosexual emancipation because they said, according to bible and Koran, we are not supposed to accept homosexuals. Then everybody started laughing. When they had this kind of reactions, they don't use that as an argument no more.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

²³⁹ Interview with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

²⁴⁰ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

Conservative Christians, on the other hand, seem to understand what Muslims go through by showing the parallels between them and Muslims. For example, Kars Veling, the former leader of Christian Union, thinks that there is so much pressure on the conservative religious people about women and sexual issues. For them, conservative religious people should be free within their institutions. He gives the example of SGP, a very conservative political party that is then represented in the parliament with two MPs: “In this party they say that women should not be in office. The majority of the Parliament thinks that this party should not get money from the state. Some others even say that we should forbid that party. Or for example try to say something about homosexuality. You can say almost nothing.” Ed Anker is also critical of the prevailing sexual norms in the Dutch society. Anker asks whether he is less Dutch because he cannot identify himself with the ruling sexual moral. He argues that his party, Christian Union, is under attack because of its views on homosexuality. In Christian Union, homosexual representatives are not allowed. Anker says that there is a debate going on about this now, and they, he states, “were a kind of hunted down in the holes by the journalists.” The example Ed Anker gives is the gay marriages. In Anker’s view, although he is convinced that they cannot do anything to prevent gay marriages, at least they ask the right not to perform gay marriage if the civil servant is against it.

As a Christian political party we have specific views on marriage. For example we are not pro-gay marriage. But almost the most of the Netherlands is. So we are a kind of losing the battle, or we have already lost it. Now there is a debate going on. If you are a civil servant, can you be forced to perform a gay marriage? Of course, some of the Christian civil servants have some principal and ethical problems with gay marriage. We always say that you cannot force a civil servant to perform that, so make someone else marry them. The public opinion is that every civil servant should do what his task is, and he has to marry gay people. There is no room for objections. In our opinion, that

is an un-Dutch solution because they are closing down the roads for Christian civil servants.²⁴¹

Although, as Anker states, “homosexuality kind of matters are not only related to Muslims,” but it is a common issue for every religious group, there is an undeniable difference between the gravity and tone of the reactions directed at Muslims and conservative Christians when they make statements about sexual matters. For Anker, it has to do with imams who do not know how to discuss matters in Dutch way. However, only very few of the interviewees clearly emphasize that there was a double standard between the reactions given to Muslims and Christians.

We have SGP in the parliament. It didn't accept women as members, I think now it does, but not in important positions. It would be unimaginable a Muslim political party does this. There would be a huge discussion, and no one would accept that. But SGP has been in the parliament forever with is 2-3 members, it will not get bigger and it will not diminish either. But I am not sure whether we should accept or not accept something just because it is not big or harmless. That is not a democratic standard. That is not an honest way of making exceptions.²⁴²

Muslims are a little bit behind from other migrants and white Dutch considering the homosexuality or position of women, but it is not a huge difference. Indigenous population didn't accept homosexuality until 20 years ago. A lot of Dutch people living in more rural areas, ad even in major cities like Amsterdam or Rotterdam, have not accepted homosexuality. I know white Dutch people who stop communicating their children when their son becomes a homosexual. This is very Dutch too. And I know Moroccan homosexuals who go to their parents every week. They don't talk about homosexuality, but family knows, a kind of acceptance has come about, and they love each other, they accepted. (...) If we want Muslims become more tolerant towards homosexuality, we should say that we, in the Dutch society, all have some problems with homosexuality, we have Dutch farmer, we have Moroccan father, we have a conservative Christian or Jew neighbor, and so on. Show that it is a joint problem; it is not only a problem of Muslims, but it is our problem.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

²⁴² Interview with Channa Samkalden, Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

²⁴³ Interview with Rachida Azough, Art Director, Kozmopolis.

A Muslim Democrat city councilor of The Hague, Hasan Küçük, is also very much critical of such double standard against Muslims, and he states that this is the major motivation behind the founding of their party, *Moslim Democratische Partij*.

If a person swears our prophet or Allah, or if a person makes provoking statements, it is freedom of speech. But when a Muslim or imam said something in the same way, then we are having problems. Why? It is because the latter has a different look.²⁴⁴

4.6.3.3.Expected Directions of Change

Thirdly and finally, while some of the interviewees think that there is development with regard to gender issues and sexual preferences, others suggest that disrespect towards women and gay rights is growing stronger among Muslims. Here again homosexuality stands as a more problematic domain as most of the respondents express relatively more optimistic views on the position of women in Muslim communities. Not only that but, as argued above, Muslim women are thought as the prime agents of Muslim transformation in Europe. Bolkestein, for instance argues that besides some socio-economic and socio-cultural problems among Muslim minorities, there are also some developments in particular among the women.” Bolkestein thinks that Muslim women living in the Netherlands are “the most hopeful examples of integration.” Muslim women, who have been dominated by Muslim men for very long time, “finally have freedom,” according to Bolkestein, and “they are going to use it.” It is very “encouraging” for him to see more and more Muslim girls going to universities. Liane van der Linden, the director of Kozmopolis Rotterdam, also thinks that although people in the Netherlands are very prejudiced about the way Muslims treat women, the equality between men and women is not very much missing in many Muslim families. And according to Wim van de Camp, a

²⁴⁴ Interview with Hasan Küçük, city councilor of the Hague, the MDP.

Christian Democrat MP, it is “inescapable” that in time, there will be influence about respecting women rights among all Muslims families. Nevertheless, there are pessimists too who think that women and homosexuality related issues do not go to the expected direction.

Instead of seeing more liberal views on the position of woman and homosexuals, it appeared, or it proved, that on the streets, in the schools the acceptance was getting less. That is why we had the crisis about integration. There was a difference between theory, which suggested that everything was going to get better, and practice.²⁴⁵

For the right wing liberals, people like Ayaan Hirsi Ali are very important catalysts in transforming Muslims by using woman and homosexuality discourse. Paul Cliteur argues that “Hirsi Ali is a great example, an icon. She means a lot for the emancipation of Muslim women, more than we acknowledge now.”²⁴⁶ However, according to Rachida Azough, the woman emancipation process has already been proceeding independent from Hirsi Ali. In she is disturbed of the exaggerated credit given to Hirsi Ali.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, since the beginning saying that I am the only one who puts this on the agenda, but there have been a lot of Muslim women in the Netherlands, there are many Muslim women who have been fighting past forty years about women issues on the ground. So how come didn't she try to find allies with other women? In the parliament, there is Nebahat Albayrak, Hatice Arip, or my sister Naima Azough, a lot of women putting women issues in their agenda, trying to solve things up. But Hirsi Ali says that they only serve their groups, migrant communities, that they would never put something like this on the agenda. She claims that she is the only sincere actor. Who is behind her? A lot of white, middle age men, who have never opened their mouth about Muslim women or homosexuality at all.²⁴⁷

Highlighting Hirsi Ali and disregarding Muslim women or neglecting the improvements among Muslim women, therefore, would mean to take Muslim

²⁴⁵ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²⁴⁷ Interview with Rachida Azough, Art Director, Kozmopolis.

women as lacking subjectivity. This childlike picture of Muslim woman is very much orientalist.

4.6.4. Handshaking

Handshaking has been one of the hottest debates about Muslims in the Netherlands since an imam refused to shake the Integration Minister Rita Verdonk's hand in November 2004 in a conference of Moroccan imams to decrease the tension in the Netherlands just after the murder of Theo van Gogh. Ahmad Salam, the imam, explained his refusal kindly by saying that "With all respect, but I am not allowed to shake a woman's hand" while the minister made a big issue out of it. First she said that "I am your equal, am I not?", and then said that there was nothing to talk more, and she left the conference (NisNews Bulletin, November 23, 2004). For Veit Bader, professor of sociology, it was a "shame that Verdonk made out of this handshaking a big issue." Nevertheless, for some people, whether a Muslim shakes the hands of persons from other sexes has become an informal criterion of integration since then. While many other issues about Muslims (e.g. headscarf, Islamic schools, mosques) can be the subject of law, the policymakers will not possibly make a law about handshaking. These kinds of everyday life practices, however, can be of great importance as they can cause discrimination or they can have some important functions in the integration discussions. Handshaking then becomes a significant symbol, which sometimes acquire more attention than it actually would receive in normal times. Marco Pastors argues that it is not because handshaking itself is important, but there is so much talk about this because many real issues about integration are not alright.

If everything was alright, handshaking would be no problem. But since there are many things wrong, we have to talk about because it looks

like you are taking distance from society. But in the end, it is not that important itself.²⁴⁸

Still, Pastors admits its symbolical baggage, and the significance of that baggage is increased in the times of crisis. Pastors argues that “symbols are important because what they represent, and you have to address what it represents.” But there are two important questions to ask. First of all, why some particular symbols are “addressed,” and why not others? And second, what is the function of that “addressing”? For example in this particular case, why handshaking is being addressed, and why not other things conservative Muslims do in their everyday life such as not drinking alcohol or not shopping in stores selling alcohol or preferring not to be in places where alcohol is consumed? In the end, drinking wine or beer has a very long history, especially drinking beer can be regarded as something very Dutch, and it is commonly important for socialization. Or why not addressing religious Muslims not going to beach? In a rainy country like the Netherlands, going to beach is a very sociable action in sunny days. Or perhaps more importantly, beaches can even be regarded as one of the symbols of women emancipation because, for example, it is very usual in Holland that topless women get sunbath in beaches without anyone disturbing them. Or praying five times in a day should possibly be addressed more than any other action because it can be very problematic for a working person. In a capitalist society, people are normally very careful about working hours, and praying two or three times in the middle of work may be seen as jeopardizing the productivity. Therefore, it is important to ask why not addressing all these, and why especially handshaking.

Surely, the contribution of Verdonk is undeniable. As Cathleen Ferrier, a Christian Democrat MP, argues “the debate on handshaking is getting tougher in the

²⁴⁸ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

Netherlands thank to Rita Verdonk or Geert Wilders.” Ferrier thinks that it is “nonsense” of Rita Verdonk, who scares Dutch society with “some people want to take away Santa Claus.” If Verdonk did not make it a big issue, handshaking may not be an important public debate even if some people continued complaining his or her hand is not shaken by a Muslim. All my respondents and the imam who refused to shake Verdonk’s hand admit that the Muslims who do not shake the hands of opposite sexes are a very small minority. But with Verdonk case, it suddenly became a very fashionable issue on which politicians, intellectuals, experts, employers, and regular people make comments. But still, this does not explain why especially handshaking is being addressed. Verdonk might focus on something else. Or among the plenty of things she focused, something else might be more central to the public debate than handshaking. When looking at the responses of my interviewees, it is possible to distinguish two answers to the question of why addressing handshaking.

First of all, the handshaking issue is directly linked with the equality of men and women. Therefore, it is not surprising to have handshaking as a big public debate in a society which, as Duyvendak suggests, is a very “progressive” one and whose political elite are very sensitive about “emancipation, individual rights, gay rights, equality between men and women, and so long.” Some examples of this sensitivity regarding handshaking are as following.

If you say I do not want to shake hands of women, you are free not to do so. But in this country it is a norm that we have equality between men and women, therefore, you shake their hands.²⁴⁹

Shaking hands is a symbolic act. It stands for, the way in the West, we agreed one another. But it also shows that we are equals, that men and women are equal.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

When you don't want to shake hand with me, I think you don't respect me as a woman. If he refuses to shake hand with me, then I can refuse to meet him. He loses the chance to participate in society.²⁵¹

I got problem with the religious people who say that I got a religion which forbids me to shake hands with women. Not shaking hands, for me, is another way of saying that I am not on the same level with you.²⁵²

Secondly, it seems that not shaking hand is considered as an assaulting act directed at non-Muslim Dutch. The other things religious Muslims do are put into a different category and non-Muslims usually choose to remain silent about them even if they are not personally pleased with the act. It is because most of other acts are exercised far from the eyes, not in contact with the autochthon Dutch. For example, if a religious Muslim does not attend meetings where alcohol is consumed, it is his or her problem. Or when a Muslim family does not go to beach, it is their choice. As soon as they do not dictate not to drink alcohol or interfere in other people's beach pleasure, Muslims are thought to be free in deciding what to do in their lives. Or some other acts directly fall into the domain of freedom of religion such as praying. Since every person is free to exercise his or her religion and worship, talking against Muslims praying five times in a day is the same as talking against a basic human right. However, handshaking is more controversial as it is most of the time exercised directly in contact with autochthon Dutch who consider the act not only anomalous, but also very un-Dutch, insulting, and religiously too serious.

Even if you do not like each other, even if you think the other one is a bastard or pig or whatever, you show respect by giving hands. I give hands to people I definitely despise. You give hands, that is it. Well, you can say someone does not want to shake hands, but show respect in another way, why such a problem. It is such a problem because it stands for greater thing. It stands for the respect that we for want *our way of life*.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

²⁵² Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

²⁵³ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

In our teacher school, we had some students, who didn't learn to shake hands with women. We didn't allow that. We said that we are a school in Dutch society, we will be open to our surroundings, so if you want to have a position as a teacher here, we ask you to follow *our customs*.²⁵⁴

It is not only Muslims, but conservative Jews also don't shake hands with me either. I don't really care. But still it puts me on the other level than the men who says 'ok, I am very polite, I am integrated, I speak Dutch, I work, and I am educated.' Well, fine that you are educated but you still educated like 200 years ago. I mean, you are not in *nowadays society*. What drives me crazy is that conservative Muslims, Christians or Jews see themselves better, higher than other people because they say look at holly book. They say my little holly book is better and more important than your little holly book. Then I say ok go, and live in your holly island, but leave me alone.²⁵⁵

In the Netherlands, if you refuse to shake hand, it is considered as a great insult. It is more than just a simple ritual. If you don't shake hands, it means that I below you, I don't want to have any contact with you, I hate you, etc. But people can learn to live with this. We can say that let's don't make big issue about it, we can bow our heads, and so on. To learn this would take time. But if you go to a mayor, you should shake hand. It is like if we go to mosque, we take off our shoes, which we don't do in a Dutch church. These are the *standards of that culture*. If you do the opposite, for example get into a mosque with your shoes, it is very *rude and insulting*.²⁵⁶

But lately equal treatment commission has been criticized on its pro-multiculturalist stance. For example, a Muslim woman was fired from a school because she refused shaking hands with men and so it was not good for the function of the school. The commission said that shaking hand was not necessary for her job. But many people criticized this decision because shaking hand was *something we do here*, it is a *norm*, it is a way how people greet each other.²⁵⁷

Similar with the headscarf issue, the majority of the interviewees try to draw a neutral state area or sometimes a domain of Dutch norms and values where, they think, Muslims have to shake hands with opposite sexes although in other areas of public life they are free not to do so. For example, Sadet Karabulut, although respects such choices, thinks that "if you are a civil servant, it is *normal* that you are expected

²⁵⁴ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

²⁵⁵ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Paul Schnabel, Director of the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Channa Samkalden, Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

to shake hands. It is the case even in Turkey. You shake hands, it is normal. But these kinds of things are really exceptions. It is wrong to exaggerate such things, and show like all Muslims do not shake hands.” Although Karabulut acknowledges a Muslim’s right to not shaking hands, she, as implying that handshaking is as normal as breathing, actually universalizes a Western norm as the supreme truth of the Dutch public space. The owners of the following quotes go a step further, and argue that unwritten rules about shaking hands cannot be questioned in some certain public institutions.

We cannot force people to shake hands or not shake hands. But for people working in *public service*, we ask people as we wanted to do. The main point is that you are able to communicate.²⁵⁸

In Amsterdam, some social workers who happened to be religious Muslims visited some poor families and they did not shake hands with women. Amsterdam authorities accepted that. I would not accept that. I think they should shake hands. If they do not shake hands, they should not be hired. The state should not accept this kind of rules. But at the same time, if an individual who is not related with *government*, and who does not want to shake hands, I think he or she has the right. That is his or her private position and right, you may like it or not. But it is different situation if the state takes it over. If the habit in the Netherlands is to shake hand, then you cannot reframe shaking hands. But if a person who does not have any relation with the state and he refuses to shake hand with a minister, it is okay.²⁵⁹

Jan de Wit and Ronny Naftaniel actually defend to make rules in some public institutions, or if it is not legally possible, imply that supervisors should make sure of the implementation of the unwritten rules about handshaking. Others also stand for such unwritten rules, and argue that every person should accept or at least get ready for the “consequences” of not shaking hands because it is a deliberate personal choice.

I don’t think we should forbid that, or make obligation to shake hands. Well that is your choice, but there are *consequences*. There are some certain places such as a company, a school or public service that you

²⁵⁸ Interview with Jan de Wit, MP from SP.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Ronny Naftaniel, Director, Center for Information and Documentation on Israel.

cannot be in. For example, I am a Christian, and I prefer to go to church on Sundays, not to go to business. If that is my choice, I must not choose for a job in a place where on Sundays I am supposed to work. I have right and freedom to be what I am, but I must realize it there are consequences connected to my *choice*. I think that it is the message to the people from other cultures. I wouldn't have a person, who is not shaking hands, as the representative of our school. But of course if I meet an imam or a Hindu, I would be sensitive to the place I am in. I take my shoes off, it is okay with me. As I try to be sensitive and do the proper things, I ask people to do the same here.²⁶⁰

Here, Kars Veling compares himself with a conservative Muslim, and suggests that making a choice should have a consequence for both. However, he, along with many others who make this point, misses the fact that being a conservative Christian in a historically Christian public sphere may not require paying a price as high as a conservative Muslim in the same public sphere. The consequences of choices made by the latter will probably be more grave and burdensome than those of the former. Seculars also take the issue as simply a choice of religious Muslims to live “separate lives” from the Dutch majority.

When I go to a conservative Christian town, or a mosque, I would dress up more appropriate because I am a guest. But if you are my guest, then it would be very nice if you stick to my standards. When you don't want to shake hand with me, then I can refuse to meet you. You *lose the chance* to participate in society. A Muslim can also be a good Dutch citizen of course. But if you are an orthodox Muslim, that is a problem for me. To be a good Dutch, it would be enough you obey the law. And shake my hands when it is appropriate. But still, probably we will not meet at birthday parties. It would be good to connect, but probably it would not happen since you are a conservative Muslim. But that does not mean that you wouldn't find a proper place for yourself in the Dutch society. But you and I would live *separate lives*. But I live separate life from many people. So not very important.²⁶¹

All the discussion about multiculturalism and handshaking kind of issues has to do with not clearly separating between the state and society. If you don't shake hands with someone else for religious reasons, you are perfectly allowed. Saying that I don't want to shake hands is the same as I don't have to have dinner with you, I don't want

²⁶⁰ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from CU.

²⁶¹ Interview with Judith Sargentini, City Councilor of Amsterdam, GL.

to marry you, etc. That is your right. But those in the service of state should not refuse to shake hands as it happened in Amsterdam.²⁶²

Judith Sargentini, a left-wing member of city council of Amsterdam, and Paul Cliteur, a prominent right-wing liberal intellectual, agree on one point that refusing to shake the hands of opposite sexes is a manifestation of being serious about the religion and difference, which ends up with “separate lives.” Nevertheless, living separate lives, which was a deliberate decision of the conservative Christians in the Netherlands and which worked well so far for every parties, is not a destiny that is consciously chosen by Muslims. They probably cannot survive living separately as none of their capitals are self-sufficient comparing to the long established Christian denominations. Furthermore, both conservative Christians and seculars underestimate the consequences of choices of Muslims to be practicing/conservative believers. They are discriminated and marginalized because of their choices, and they do not have an island-like village where they can take shelter and live in peace with other fellow conservative Muslims.

So, what could be the function of this addressing? A two-layered functionality can be discerned. First of all, it reassures the wall between the Dutch and the un-Dutch. Second, it shows the directions for the candidates of semi-Dutch. As very few of the interviewees mention, handshaking is actually not a part of Dutch identity, at least “not something typical Dutch.” For example, Ed Anker states that:

I don't understand when politicians say that in Holland we are used to shake each other's hand, so everybody should shake others' hands, and a Muslim man must also shake the hand of a woman. It is not law, it is not tradition. We didn't invent handshaking, it is not something typical Dutch.²⁶³

Veit Bader also argues that “Dutch people don't shake hands many often.” It is about manners, he thinks, which changes from one region to other region, from a

²⁶² Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²⁶³ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

particular time to another. Yet, it successfully draws the difference between the Dutch and un-Dutch. Talking about handshaking kind of acts provide a concrete ingredient for the self-identity in times of rapidly changing world, where citizens feel insecure and anxious about this change and suffer about identity lose. Willem Schinkel argues that “if we are losing our compass, and don’t know how to deal when a person refuses to shake our hands, then it means we are so uncertain about ourselves.” Schinkel finds it normal that a lot of Dutch people feel strange about not shaking hands, and he adds: “But this is the world we are living in: feel strange and get used to it.” Therefore, establishing a link between not belonging and not shaking hands has a function to resist to the changing world, to have a tool to fill the emotional void caused by the uncertainty about the self.

Secondly, talking about handshaking kind of issues describe the roadmap of integrating, in other words, becoming semi-Dutch by marking not shaking hands as something belong to the immigrants’ past from the countries of origin and Islam’s outdated doctrine. It is a symbol, and symbols are “negotiation material” as Marco Pastors puts it. Marjolein de Jong, for example, is very explicit about this. If a Muslim says that he is not shaking hands with women, but he is polite and educated, de Jong replies, “Well, fine that you are educated but you still educated like 200 years ago.” Similarly, Marco Pastors states that “something in my had says how important could be handshaking, and the other half says that you are not here for free, you have to make some adjustments in order to fit in this new society that is more plural than where you come from.” Both are calls for Muslims to update their lifestyles according to their host country’s culture, which is modern, mature, virtuous, and normal. On the other hand, the reactions to a Muslim not shaking hands

of opposite sexes will usually be like following: “But when people saw it, they will say that it is odd, it is not it should be, it is pity.”²⁶⁴

To call Muslims to update their lifestyles, two major implications are made in the handshaking debate. First of all, it is associated with the extreme, and some direct and indirect connections are made between handshaking and other extremist Muslim acts, mostly terrorism. Exaggeration is the key tool in this discourse. Not shaking hands is usually pronounced together with burqa, violence, and terrorism. For example Paul Cliteur first says that “These greeting symbols such as shaking hand are not that serious actually. But there is a mentality behind not shaking hands. And that mentality is not really fruitful for living together.” Then he continues: “Pluralism is ok, but if you say that you can kill the unbelievers and at the same time you should live peacefully with others, this is nonsense. Especially when violence involved, we should think more.” Therefore, to find the “mentality behind not shaking hands,” he exaggerates the act, and arrives at “killing the unbelievers.” This direct association of not shaking hands and killing unbelievers can be interpreted as a message that preaches to Muslims to be good and moderate Muslims who are not very “serious” about their beliefs that breed violence. Secondly, in most of the quotations above, handshaking is generally discussed in terms of Muslim men refuses to shake hands of women. Here again, when majority of the Dutch talks about Muslims in pejorative way, they mean Muslim men. Muslim women are considered as subjected to domination, and when they are given chance, they will be the prime actors in changing the Muslim communities in Europe.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

4.7. A Hesitant Optimism

Interestingly, the vast majority of interviewees are optimistic about the future of multicultural society in the Netherlands though many of them argue that Muslim minorities still have problems with integration which increasingly polarizes the Dutch politics with the rise of right-wing/anti-immigrant politicians like Geert Wilders. Out of 43, only two of them were openly pessimistic. First one, the former parliamentary leader of Christian Union, is pessimistic because he is very critical of the political discourse employed by most of the politicians at the moment, and he does not expect a change in that.²⁶⁵ Mustafa Hamurcu, a municipal employee from Turkish origin, is also pessimist because he thinks that there is a development through establishing two distinct pillars: Muslims on the one hand, and the white Dutch people on the other.²⁶⁶ Since most of the interviewees are optimistic, then, my final question was about the reasons of their optimism and what kind of developments would ruin the positive improvements they predict.

One group of interviewees argues that debating and settling is an inescapable end in the times of change. They are optimist because they say any debate has to find a settlement regardless how harsh it is. It is the principle of nature for them. Fatma Koser Kaya, Jeroen Dijsselbloem and Stef Blok express this genre of thought very clearly:

The right said that the Netherlands was full, let the immigrants go. The left said that talking this kind of things is unpleasant, let's not talk. But nobody listened what the immigrants said. In the end, the negative feelings have become full to the point of overflowing. But, I believe that in the close future, people will accept each other, and commonalities will be found. Right now we are having really harsh debates, but at the same time, the Netherlands continue in her way to be a colorful country. People will start living together because almost half of the population in the big cities consists of people from immigrant origin. They no longer have the chance to pass by and not

²⁶⁵ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

²⁶⁶ Interview with Mustafa Hamurcu, Policy Advisor, Utrecht Municipality.

touch each other. They have to crash into each other. And they will get used to this.²⁶⁷

I am optimistic because I think what we have experiencing is a necessary conflict, necessary debate. When things are changing in a society, in this case because of massive immigration, then there will be debate and conflict. There are always interests which will be collide, and we have to go through that phase. We had a period of 20 years of standing back to back; we did not face the problems and tensions that were already being built in our society. Now thanks to Fortuyn, Twin Towers, now we have to address these issues, have to have conflict. And not every conflict ends in war, some conflicts lead to good.²⁶⁸

I am optimistic in long run. There will be a balance in the end.²⁶⁹

The second genre of optimists gives credence to the Dutch civil society and tolerance, which, they argue, will absorb these differences as well because the Dutch society and politics have a long tradition of religious, ideological and sexual pluralism, and a substantial experience of solving problems.

I am quite happy and optimistic. I like differences maybe because I am young. But I am also confident with the way we do things, our civil society, and the way our judicial system works.²⁷⁰

Optimistic. Dutch culture is defined by cool-head.²⁷¹

I am optimistic, but there are still some legitimate questions and problems. The questions especially in big cities however get disproportionate high attention. Yet the Dutch institutions are strong and they would solve these problems.²⁷²

Professor Penninx is also optimist, arguing that Dutch tradition of dealing with the religion is promising in this regard. Penninx says that “religion can be easier to be accepted than nationality because the latter is exclusive of other identities.”²⁷³ Nevertheless, most of the interviewees are optimist not because of the features of the Dutch political system, but because of the positive developments they see or expect

²⁶⁷ Interview with Fatma Koşer Kaya, MP from the D66.

²⁶⁸ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Stef Blok, MP from the VVD.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

²⁷¹ Interview with Willem Schinkel, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Erasmus University.

²⁷² Interview with Paul van Sasse van Ysselt, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

²⁷³ Interview with Rinus Penninx, Professor of Sociology at University of Amsterdam.

in the Muslim communities. This is striking because, as argued above, the most interviewees are at the same time blame Muslims for their failure to get integrated. It seems that most people think that the answer is hidden in the problem. Especially the third generation is thought as promising in this regard.

I am really optimistic especially about the third generation. They match perfectly with the Dutch society. They work, they have good income.²⁷⁴

I am optimistic. I believe in individuals and in common sense. But this is a tough kind of emancipation that is going on. But it demands adjustments, and most of the adjustments have to come from immigrant groups. It is hard for immigrants, but this is the things go.²⁷⁵

Optimistic. The feeling of belonging will develop. In 50 years, there will hardly be problem.²⁷⁶

But in the long run I am optimistic because a new generation growing up in big cities is coming up.²⁷⁷

I am pretty optimistic because I think that people just want to survive, and make the best for their lives and future. You will always have people who scream and yell from left wing or right wing, or from whatever religion. But the majority of the people do not want to fight. They just want to have that regular, boring life, having a job, going to school, having some holiday, buying a new car. That is all what they want. People are always afraid of change. A couple years ago we had a lot of discussion about mosques, imams, riots, and so on. But now it is going a lot better.²⁷⁸

I am optimistic. And I do have some reasons to be optimistic especially in the long run especially about the position of Muslims. Many people are very tired of this integration issue. (...) Am also optimistic to the extent that I see a lot of young Muslims are very relaxed and more confident about these discussions comparing to their parents. They are used to be criticized. They don't take it very seriously as it used to.²⁷⁹

I am a little bit more optimistic than I was after the murder of Theo van Gogh. I carried that with me, I carried pessimism for a long time. But I

²⁷⁴ Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

²⁷⁵ Interview with Marco Pastors, City Councilor of Rotterdam, the LR

²⁷⁶ Interview with Carlien Boelhouwer, city councilor of Amsterdam, the SP.

²⁷⁷ Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

²⁷⁸ Interview with Marjolein de Jong, city councilor of The Hague, the D66.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

see many people from immigrant background who make very positive contribution to Dutch society. And that makes me optimistic.²⁸⁰

Nevertheless, this optimism has some conditions. When I asked them about the most detrimental development that would possibly ruin their optimism, the answers were threefold: extremism and violence in general, the irresponsible speeches of the anti-immigrant and anti-Islam politicians, and the international influences. Violence coming from all sides, but especially from the Muslims, is commonly pronounced as the most detrimental phenomenon for the notion of living together.

The most harmful thing is acts of violence. We have seen how it affected our society. I would never thought that it would be possible after the murder of Theo van Gogh hundreds and hundreds of acts of violence and vandalism committed on Muslim schools, mosques, etc. These happened because the murder of Theo van Gogh triggered it.²⁸¹

Optimistic. But we should take care of fundamentalists, should not ignore them. The connection between some Muslims here and Iran, Saudi Arabia is harmful. The effects of the developments in Iran, Afganistan and so on are too large.²⁸²

Murders would be terrible of course. Or some counties abroad like Iran does terrible things.²⁸³

Extremism on both sides would be the most harmful phenomenon. In that case the minorities become very vulnerable.²⁸⁴

New attacks would be very harmful. There was 9/11, murder of Fortuyn and murder of van Gogh, which depressed the society. Hopefully such things will not happen again.²⁸⁵

Irresponsible speeches coming from some Dutch politicians are regarded as the second most feared development that would ruin all the optimism.

²⁸⁰ Interview with Paul Cliteur, Professor of Law, University of Leiden.

²⁸¹ Interview with Jeroen Dijsselbloem, MP from the PvdA.

²⁸² Interview with Wim van de Camp, MP from the CDA.

²⁸³ Interview with Carlien Boelhouwer, city councilor of Amsterdam, the SP.

²⁸⁴ Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

²⁸⁵ Interview with Paul van Sasse van Ysselt, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Interior Relations.

Sometimes Dutch politicians miss the nuances. When we miss the nuances, I think the problems will grow. Nothing is white and black in the world.²⁸⁶

The most harmful thing is that Wilders becomes too big. That would kill our country. We should make sure that other parties have the answers to the problems Wilders addressing. He is addressing issues, but not giving answers. We should give the answers, so Wilders in the end will vanish.²⁸⁷

Wilders certainly is not a good development. His voters usually voted for the first time in their life. So basically he got votes from non-voters. They do not have habit of voting because of their resentful attitudes. There is a lot of resentment among his voters. And their level of education is low. So Wilders not really carries very much weight in Holland. The movie he made is nonsense, it is ridiculous.²⁸⁸

Political discussions would ruin my optimism. There is of course this anxiety among politicians to loose the support of their electorate. But this is temporary.²⁸⁹

What would be really harmful is because of the fear of Muslims, we would damage this civil society, the way this country works. For example, we have freedom of religion in the constitution. If we say we should ban Muslims from the Netherlands, then we say that one religion we don't like in our country. So we have religious freedom, except for Muslims. And that would be the start of I would really fear.²⁹⁰

Those a few names, who are not optimistic at least in the short run, also have some reservations with the way Dutch politics evolves. They argue that as the anti-immigrant and anti-Islam politicians like Geert Wilders and Rita Verdonk become popular, the representatives of the Dutch mainstream political parties employ a negative discourse not to use their seats in the parliament. Also, they think that some very important aspects of liberal democracy, especially the freedom of speech, have been misused by some politicians, and this is the paradox of democracy.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Fatma Koşer Kaya, MP from the D66.

²⁸⁷ Interview with Madeline van Toorenburg, MP from the CDA.

²⁸⁸ Interview with Frits Bolkestein, former MP from the VVD.

²⁸⁹ Interview with Paul Teser, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

²⁹⁰ Interview with Ed Anker, MP from the CU.

I am not very optimistic at the moment. Politicians, including the prime minister, look at the polls and try to say words that their voters would like to hear. I would like to have politicians who overcome that kind of speech. I would like to see political leadership who says that “I am not a Muslim, but I stand the right of Muslims, and I don’t care your criticism.” But I am not really hopeful for that.²⁹¹

I am pessimistic in the short run because the governments are getting harsher and harsher in integration. I am worried about the misuse of the freedom of speech and about the words politicians pick to express themselves.²⁹²

Nevertheless, the same political environment, for some of the interviewees, was necessary for distinguishing and discussing the problems, and in the close future, will help Muslims develop necessary democratic tools to deal with the criticism directed towards them.

I am not afraid of terrorist things because it always is a small insane group, does not represent all. Not all Muslims are saving money to buy bombs. What is more harmful I think is that the tendency to avoid discussion the integration of religion into this society. What is the position of religion, what kind of behaviors should be adopted? All these should be addressed. Also people within Muslim group should say that being Muslim here is different than being Muslim in Turkey or Morocco. In practice it is different. You have to readjust Islamic behavior in the west European world. What is required is what is required from all the other religions. I think you can set some rules about that. The most important one is the individual freedom.²⁹³

I think people are getting fed up with that. We have gone through a very heavy period of discussing all sort of things in a very upfront, very rude, very Dutch way. But as a result, we do have more or less focus now what really problems are, and you can distinguish them from all of the non-problems. We shouldn’t say that all Muslims do this, or we shouldn’t culturalize it, but focus on the particular issue. I think this is the fruit of that long and hard discussion.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ Interview with Kars Veling, former MP from the CU.

²⁹² Interview with Judith Sargentini, city councilor of Amsterdam, the GL.

²⁹³ Interview with Marco Pastors, city councilor of Rotterdam, the LR.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Wendy Asbeek Brusse, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration.

4.8. Discussion

As discussed in chapter 3, multiculturalism was criticized theoretically and practically by intellectuals and policy makers in the Netherlands starting from the early 1990s, far before the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam in November 2004. This discontent about multiculturalism was expressed in connection with the non-integration of Muslims in the Netherlands. Therefore, the analysis in chapter 4 aimed at understanding the reasons lie behind the widespread belief about Muslim non-integration. How the interviewees define Dutchness and integration is important in this regard. The majority of the interviewees evaluate integration in terms of socio-economic variables such as talking the language, having job, and being able to survive in the society. However, participating into the political, economic, and social life also appeared as another very frequent criterion of integration. Most interviewees thought that participation will take place in every spheres of social, cultural, economic, intellectual, and artistic life as Muslims improve the socio-economic elements of integration.

Dutchness, on the other hand, is mostly defined in terms of democratic values such as toleration or gender equality. At the same time, Muslims are thought of as the most problematic group in adapting to these characteristics of Dutch identity. Although those defining integration as following democratic values are less than those defining it as having job, it is clear that an adaptation of a civic culture that consists of democratic values, participation, obeying the law and constitution, and behavioral public codes is counted as a very important component of integration. Summing these three points (defining Dutchness in terms of democratic values, defining integration in terms of a civic culture, and considering Muslims as the most problematic group regarding to democratic values), it can be concluded that the

negative perceptions about Muslims may persist in the short-run. Adding the widespread belief that conservative Muslims are inclined to use violence against women, gays, and non-Muslims, it is likely to have the debate about Muslim non-integration for long time even if they improve their socio-economic level. A cultural suspicion about Muslims seems not to vanish in the close future.

Another conclusion of this analysis is that there is a widespread double standard against Muslims compared to both non-Muslim immigrants and conservative Christians. Especially, the rights and exemptions given to the latter are thought not suitable for Muslims, who ask to acquire them. The reasons for this differ from a general dislike of religion to a more specific dislike of Islam. Nevertheless, in the end, there is a double standard; and worse, most interviewees only put forward some arbitrary and subjective reasons such as leaning on the idea that conservative Christians are more familiar than Muslims. In this chapter, to dig up the reasons for this double-standard, the perceptions of Muslims and other religiously conservative Christian communities are compared. If the problem is solely the level of religiosity, then the indigenous Dutch, who are religious, should also be perceived as negatively as Muslims are. According to the analysis, while the religious people in general are found “irritating” as soon as they carry their religious reasoning into the public sphere, Muslim people, for their new demands, increasing populations and public appearances in the big cities, are found more irritating than the conservative Christians. However, this was not all. Muslims, regardless of their level of religiosity, are portrayed categorically as religious people. Because Muslims are thought of as prioritizing their religious identity even before they make a self-expressed conservatism, Muslims fall into an *ex-ante* handicapped position in a society where showing religion is itself irritating.

Furthermore, most interviewees tend to believe that Islamic conservatism or fundamentalism breeds violence while fundamentalist Christians live in their small villages in peace, and when they come to the big cities, they already know not to interfere in others' business. Considering Muslims as inclined to use violence actually emphasizes their undemocratic roots, and stresses their distance from democratic values such as tolerance and freedom of expression. Conservative Christians, on the other hand, are regarded as loyal players of the democratic game even if they have some outdated practices and demands. Furthermore, they are thought of as believers of a religion which is, for some interviewees, one of the prime roots of Western democracy and tolerance.

Another finding of this chapter is about the versions of Muslim subjectivities that are being formed in the debates about Muslims and their integration. To find out what kinds of Muslim subjectivities are desired or excluded, the interviewees are asked to express their thoughts on specific topics regarding Muslims in the public sphere. The issues were categorized into two: thick issues and thin issues. If an issue can strictly be regulated with law or a constitution and is mostly about institutions, then it is a thick issue. Islamic schools and the issue of wearing headscarves are the most common thick issues in the public debate. Thin issues, on the other hand, are those related more to the everyday life practices of Muslims. They are hard or impossible to regulate by law, but the host society's perceptions about them may cause serious outcomes for Muslims as individuals. The most prominent thin issues in the Netherlands are handshaking and gender and sexual issues.

As the thick issues are related to constitutionally guaranteed rights of religious freedom, most interviewees agree on principle that Muslims are free to have places of worship and to use religious symbols in the public sphere. These issues,

interestingly, become a battle field between religious Dutch and secular Dutch. While the former desire to extend (or at least preserve) such religious rights and privileges, the latter think that the neutral character of the public sphere should be guaranteed by limiting the religious motivations. In other words, debates about Islamic schools and headscarf actually go beyond the Muslim question, and imply that the separation of church and state is still an issue to discuss in Europe. But considering Muslims, although most interviewees accept the fact that Muslims are granted the right of establishing places of worship and using religious symbols in the public sphere, many of them are inclined to make negative value judgments about headscarf and Islamic schools, and likely to further the limits about them.

Thin issues that are related to everyday life practices are more clearly the fields where assessments about ideal models of integrated Muslim subjectivity are articulated. They first reassure the difference between *the Dutch* and *the un-Dutch*, and fill the meaning of Dutchness in a globalizing world of uncertainties. Secondly, by marking not shaking hands or having different understandings of gender roles and sexuality as something belonging to the immigrants' past from their countries of origin and Islam's outdated doctrine, such everyday life practices also show the directions for the candidates of *the semi-Dutch*, describing the roadmap of integration (or in other words, becoming semi-Dutch). This category of semi-Dutch consists of the models of integrated Muslims mentioned in the chapter 3: abandoning Islam and moderating Islam to be Dutch. Interesting point here is that even Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian are not considered fully Dutch, but outsiders who realize the superiority of Dutch culture and Western civilization, and have assimilated into that. The semi-Dutch can also be a practicing Muslim like Ahmed Aboutaleb, can have Islamic schools, and can even wear a headscarf in the public sphere. However,

“un-Dutch” notions about gender roles and sexuality, or practices like not shaking hands of persons from the opposite sex are not welcomed because they are generally associated with the extreme or fundamentalist faces of Islam that recalls extremism, violence, and terrorism.

When these thin issues gain prominence in deciding whether a person is integrated, there appears to be an invisible *integration-meter* that continuously tests a Muslim’s level of belonging to the Dutch society. This research makes it clear that the suspicion about Muslim integration is likely to continue because, as discussed above, Dutchness is defined in terms of democratic values, integration is defined in terms of a civic culture, and Muslims are considered the most problematic group regarding democratic values. Adding the widespread belief that conservative Muslims are inclined to use violence against women, gays, and non-Muslims, it is likely there will remain debate about Muslim non-integration for a long time even if they improve their socio-economic level. A *total suspicion* about Muslims seems not to vanish in the close future.

The interviewees, unfortunately, could not offer satisfactory reasons for treating conservative Muslims different than conservative Christian denominations. The chance is that, in the Netherlands, besides individual rights and liberties, the collective toleration of the practices of minority religions have been very much developed and institutionalized since the period of pillarization. If the belief and fear of Muslims as violent religious people disappears, it might be possible to accommodate Muslim minorities within the Dutch institutional settings because such believes and fears are most of the time presented by the interviewees as an excuse for looking at the community level Muslim rights suspiciously. However, this requires listening up the cultural and religious demands of Muslim communities fairly and

open-mindedly, and then applying the traditional principles of equal treatment to these demands.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This dissertation began with the premise that the assumption that the anti-Muslim sentiments in Europe are solely a consequence of the September 11 attacks may be wrong. Not only that, but also this assumption may hinder making a fruitful analysis on issues like multiculturalism, the limits of tolerance, secularism, and citizenship in liberal democracies. In fact, the existence of Muslims in Europe and the debates around them are central to all these theoretical discussions. As Kymlicka (2005: 83) argues, there is a positive correlation between discontent about multiculturalism and the presence of Muslims in liberal democracies. Also, the rights given to Muslims can be considered as the yardstick for the limits of tolerance due to the simple fact that many works published about tolerance and diversity in the last two decades concern issues about Muslims as religiously, ethnically, and racially the most different and stigmatized immigrants in Europe (Buruma, 2007; Cuperus et al., 2003; Parekh, 2000). Furthermore, the demands of Muslims concerning their religious life are thought of as challenging European secularism (Modood, 2009). And finally, both ethno-cultural (*jus sanguinis*) and a civic-territorial (*jus soli*) bases

of criteria for attributing full citizenship have become questioned with the post-War immigrant minorities, most of whom are Muslims (Koopmans and Statham, 1999: 660).

Starting from this awareness of the chance for making a contribution to the topics mentioned above, this dissertation intended to search for the reasons why liberal democracies have had difficulties accommodating Muslims in Europe. In this research, September 11th in the USA and other similar incidents in Europe (e.g. July 7th bombings in London, Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004) are thought of not as the prime constitutive factors of the negative Muslim image in the minds of European people, but rather as a dynamic that only exacerbates the negative evaluations about Muslims and puts such critics of Muslims at the center of European political discourse. In other words, this dissertation takes the post-crisis debates triggered by September 11th and similar incidents as a domain where anti-Muslim discourse makes itself most visible with all its arguments because such crisis times generate a convenient environment to justify the arguments that would otherwise be considered politically incorrect.

As discussed in chapter 2, multiculturalism was criticized theoretically and practically by nationalists and liberals during the 1990s, when multiculturalist pioneers such as Kymlicka, Taylor and Parekh published their major works, far before the September 11 attacks. Critics usually blamed multiculturalism as being essentialist, not understanding the changing nature of cultures, undermining social cohesion, and assaulting the principles of liberal democracy such as individual freedom and the equality of citizens. However, the claim that multiculturalism practically ended up as a disaster has been articulated very frequently only after

September 11th, and especially after the London bombings on July 7th, 2005. The Dutch case has also followed this partway.

5.1. The Dutch, the Semi-Dutch and the un-Dutch: Politics of Muslim integration in the Netherlands

In this dissertation, the politics of Muslim minorities in the Netherlands were discussed in two different chapters. The first one (chapter 3) is an analysis of the secondary sources, newspaper pieces, and reports about Dutch immigration and integration policies and Muslims in the Netherlands. The other one (chapter 4) was a discourse and content analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted in the Netherlands. There are very important parallels between the findings of these two chapters.

5.1.1. Muslims as a pre-September 11 question

With regard to the first departure point of this research, both chapters made clear that the history of a negative portrayal of Muslims in the Netherlands is much older than the post-September 11th discourse of the “war on terror.” However, until the 1990s, Muslims in the Netherlands were portrayed as guest workers or immigrants from different ethnic origins who had particular socio-economic problems such as low education, little professional skills, not knowing language, and being a closed community with a lack of contact in the wider society. In the 1990s, with the changing international environment in which the communist threat ended and Islam(ism) appeared as a new candidate for the enemy of the Western world, the Islamic identity of immigrants became a priority to other identities such as ethnicity or social class.

Yet, besides this international environment, an important internal dynamic was in effect. Muslims in the Netherlands utilized the tools provided by the Dutch multicultural policies, which were the outcome of Dutch pillarization and cosmopolitanism. In other words, as Muslims became more Dutch in the sense that they utilized the rights provided to them by the Dutch constitution, they began to be perceived as being too assertive and received a reaction by the indigenous Dutch majority. Their integration has increased their visibility as Muslims in the Dutch society, and parallel to that, they, as a community, were charged as not being fully integrated.

5.1.2. Liberal discontent with religion

Another major departing point of this dissertation was that West European democracies' hardship to accommodate their Muslim minorities is owed partially to liberalism's discontent with religion. To test this claim, the Netherlands is one of the best cases because it is a liberal country, which, at the same time, has included the institutionalized religions into the system under its pillarization. As discussed in chapter 3, religious identity was (and to some extent, still is) one of the most important tenets of the Dutch social and political system. Until the 1960s, the Dutch social, political, and economic spheres had been divided among religious lines under the Dutch system of pillarization. Although pillarization has waned since the 1970s, religion still plays an important role in politics and society, and many pillar-features are present in spite of everything. There are still religiously oriented political parties, and private schools are still mostly religious and subsidized by the state. Immigrants, as soon as they realized that there was no going back to the countries of origin and the Netherlands was their new home, made use of what was left from pillarization.

Muslims for instance applied for establishing an Islamic broadcasting service, which was granted by the Directorate for the Media in 1985, making the Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Service a part of the subsidized public broadcasting system. In 1994, a Hindu broadcasting service was also added. In the schooling arena, Muslims and Hindus have been founding primary schools in full accordance with the rules of Dutch law since 1988. Ten years later, there were more than thirty such schools. This is higher a number than any other Western European immigration country.

However, Muslims or other immigrant minorities are resisted when they try to make use of their constitutional rights to organize and establish institutions. There are two important points to make here. First of all, it seems that the Dutch have not learned their lessons from the emancipation struggles of their suppressed groups (e.g. Catholics). Emancipation cannot take place in such short periods, and reaching a settlement between groups needs patience. Yet, the discussions about immigrants or Islamic organizations are very impatient to find settlements to the problems. They also expect these newcomers to improve socio-economically and socio-culturally very soon. Secondly, the standards asked to be reached for Muslims are always relatively more demanding. During the pillarization and de-pillarization era, minorities other than Muslims were only asked to comply with the rules of the game at the elite base. The Muslim community, on the other hand, is required to change its culture and life-style as a whole. All the pragmatic characteristics of Dutch political culture that accommodated the demands of different groups seem to have troubles accommodating Muslims. The reason cannot only be the fear from and exclusion of religious reasoning because Dutch society is accustomed to such reasoning in the public sphere. Still some conservative Christian political parties and institutions have based their political and social discourse on religious reasoning.

In chapter 4, to dig up the reasons for this double-standard, the perceptions of Muslims and other religiously conservative Christian communities are compared. If the problem is solely the level of religiosity, then the indigenous Dutch, who are religious, should also be perceived as negatively as Muslims are. The most common answer to this question is that although religious conservatism is generally disliked, conservative Christian Dutch people are excused because, first, they have always been a part of the Dutch society, second, their population is small and gradually decreasing, and third, they usually live in small villages in the countryside. Muslims, on the contrary, are harder to tolerate because they are new and strange, their population is steadily increasing, and they are mostly settled in big cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In short, while the religious people in general are found “irritating” as soon as they carry their religious reasoning into the public sphere, Muslim people, for their new demands, increasing populations and public appearances in the big cities, are found more irritating than the conservative Christians.

However, this was not all. Muslims, regardless of their level of religiosity, are portrayed categorically as religious people. Because Muslims are thought of as prioritizing their religious identity even before they make a self-expressed conservatism, Muslims fall into an *ex-ante* handicapped position in a society where showing religion is itself irritating. This perhaps exacerbates the anti-Islam sentiments because religious conservatism is already something disliked in the Netherlands, and seeing whole Muslims community as religiously conservative only increases the negative feelings towards them as immigrants with a lot of socio-economic problems. Then, it becomes difficult to differentiate between the religious demands of some conservative Muslims (e.g. establishing Islamic schools, using

religious ornaments like headscarf, having more places of worship) and cultural recognition demands of ordinary Muslims (e.g. having holidays such as Islamic festivals or getting buried according to their customs).

Furthermore, most interviewees tend to believe that Islamic conservatism or fundamentalism breeds violence while fundamentalist Christians live in their small villages in peace, and when they come to the big cities, they already know not to interfere in others' business. Considering Muslims as inclined to use violence actually emphasizes their undemocratic roots, and stresses their distance from democratic values such as tolerance and freedom of expression. Conservative Christians, on the other hand, are regarded as loyal players of democratic the game even if they have some outdated practices and demands. Furthermore, they are thought of as believers of a religion which is, for some interviewees, one of the prime roots of Western democracy and tolerance.

5.1.3. Rise of Muslim presence and decline of multiculturalism in Europe

The third departing point of this dissertation was the claim that questioning multiculturalist policies goes hand in hand with the Muslim presence in Europe. In other words, the presence of Muslims in Europe is tempting many Europeans to question multiculturalism and perhaps even the core principles of liberal democracy. Therefore, this dissertation argues that debates elicited by an increasing Muslim presence in Europe are uncovering a great deal about the limits of religious and cultural tolerance in liberal democracies. In the Netherlands, many achievements of liberal democracy (e.g. freedom of expression, freedom of religion) have been discussed with reference to the Muslim presence. Furthermore, once known for its

cosmopolitanism, acceptance of differences, guarantee of religious freedom, and being a haven for refugees escaping religious and ethnic wars, the Netherlands has very quickly shifted through coercive and assimilationist policy for not only newcomers but also for its already settled second and third generation non-Western immigrant minorities. As discussed in chapter 3, the post-September 11 discourse about Islam had an impact in this alteration. The murder of film director Theo van Gogh by a young, second generation Muslim in 2004 also seriously changed the Dutch political landscape. However, the shift from multiculturalism to integrationalism took place in the early 1990s, long before the murder of Theo van Gogh. The retreat from multicultural policies has simultaneously taken place with the increasing Muslim determination to make use of community level rights and the growing visibility of Muslims in the public spheres of major Dutch cities. First, it was argued that religious and cultural rights, which are granted by the Dutch liberal democracy to every religious group, have adverse effects on Muslims' adaptation to Dutch society. Later, in the 1990s and early 2000s, many politicians, opinion leaders and intellectuals suggested that liberal rights reproduce Muslim practices and habits that are in the end contradictory to liberal norms and values. And lately, it has been discussed that Muslims deserve to use democratic rights only if they assimilate into the liberal democratic norms and values.

While for some time the Netherlands was celebrated for its multiculturalist, in other words, inclusive, policies towards its newcomers, there has been an increasing emphasis on integration and adaptation to Dutch norms and values since the mid-1990s. Indeed, the Netherlands is now considered one of the most striking examples among countries that have renounced multiculturalist policies. Finally, when Paul Scheffer wrote his article "*Het Multiculturele Drama*" in 2000, the idea of

multicultural failure became readily accepted by many Dutch. The “tragedy,” according to Scheffer, was that an “ethnic underclass” was developing that consisted of people who did not feel attached to Dutch culture and society and who were unwilling and unable to integrate. Different than the ethnic underclass discussion in early 1990s, which was mostly concerned with the socioeconomic position of ethnic groups, this argument blamed the incompatibility of immigrant cultures, mostly Muslims, to Dutch culture. Eventually this would undermine social cohesion and the functioning of the liberal democratic state, particularly because of the supposedly illiberal ideas of Muslims. Since then, the argument for defending the principles of liberal democracy prior to respecting cultural identity has gained recognition by many intellectuals and politicians. Also in newspapers, Islam became a subject mostly in relation to crime, violence, terrorism, and intolerance against gays and non-Muslims. The intensity of such correlation and the number of such articles, not surprisingly, increased with the September 11th attacks and the murder of Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004. Seeing Muslims as religious zealots who are inclined to violence has raised the doubts about multiculturalism, tolerance, and freedom of religion. Those still talking in terms of Muslims’ right to exercise their culture are blamed as being “politically correct” and not talking straight.

The important point to make here is that such ideas about Muslims are articulated by not only the far-right politicians but also by the respected figures of the political center. And furthermore, such discontent with Muslim minorities cuts across ideological and political divides, and is shared by central left and right, even by progressive politicians and intellectuals. The reason is that the criticism against Muslims did not target their ethnicity or race, and integration calls did not emphasize Dutchness as a superior ethnicity or culture, but rather criticism pointed out the non-

liberal nature of some Muslim habits that contradict Dutch identity defined as liberal and modern. The ultimate question behind the discussion was then to what extent Muslims can be allowed to hold on to their own religious, cultural and ethnic identity within the confines of a modern society such as the Netherlands. It implied that the Netherlands does not have an ethnic, religious or cultural identity, but rather the Dutch society is a liberal, tolerant and pluralist one. In other words, the most essential characteristic of Dutch identity is considered as its non-identity, its fluidity, its openness to differences. In this discourse, the Dutchness as modern and European becomes the norm, and others are considered as deviants. A hierarchy follows: the prerequisite of a peaceful co-existence is the transformation of deviant ways of life through universal Western values as embodied by the Dutch.

5.1.4. Forming accepted Muslim subjectivities through everyday-life practices

From here, it is possible to jump to the fourth departing point of this research. These debates about what constitutes Dutchness and to what extent Muslims can adapt to that Dutch identity are questions of belonging. On the side of Muslims, feeling at home is a strong indicator of belonging to a host society because whether Muslims feel at home in the countries they reside in has been widely discussed, especially with the intensified debates about their very existence in the Western world after the September 11th attacks. Nevertheless, it is not clear how such feelings are codified in everyday social practice. And secondly, it is not certain that the meaning or requirements of belonging will not change. This dissertation argued that all these debates aimed at either forming some acceptable models of Muslim subjectivity that coexist with Western liberal democracy or denigrating some other

models that are perceived (or presented) as threats to liberal democracy. Chapter 3 and 4 have some parallel findings in this regard. As discussed in chapter 3, while integration debates in the Netherlands promote some certain models, still, a variety of integration models are competing, even Islamism is one of them. For example, Theo van Gogh's murderer, Mohammed Bouyeri, considered himself as a challenge to other models of integration promoted by opinion makers. Indeed, Bouyeri was born in the Netherlands; he was a well-educated person and spoke Dutch perfectly. However, mainstream discourse endorses mainly two models.

The first model is abandoning Islam to be Dutch. The most well-known representatives of this model are Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian, two refugees, who are considered as enlightened persons of Muslim background. Both of them have moved up the career ladder very fast. Approximately ten years after their arrival to the Netherlands, the former, regarded as the "daughter of Enlightenment" (the New York Times, 2005, April 03), became a Member of Parliament, and the latter, considered as the "Muslim Nietzsche" (Buruma, 2007: 25), became a professor of law. They are very much highlighted by the media, and their critiques of Islam and thoughts about the integration of Muslims into Dutch society have frequently appealed to Dutch intellectuals and politicians. In other words, the debates about Islam, Muslims, and integration cannot be understood without their contribution. They are not only presented as ideal examples of integration, but also, with their approval into Dutch society, they prove that Dutch opponents of Muslims direct their criticism not at race, skin color, or ethnic background of Muslims, but their backward and illiberal habits or worldviews.

However, soon after it was realized that these examples were too extreme for the majority of Muslims, who started to get annoyed from the manner of the debates

about them, another model became more prominent: moderating Islam to be Dutch. Ahmed Aboutaleb, current mayor of Rotterdam, is the most well-known example of this model. What makes him appealing to the Dutch political elite is that he offers a relatively realistic solution to “the Muslim problem” compared to the “abandoning Islam” solution offered by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian. Rather than using the dichotomy of the Dutch majority and the Muslim minority, he comes up with a new categorization: on the one hand, there are “the well-meaning people,” who constitute the majority regardless of their ethnic origin or religious leaning, and on the other hand, there are “the ill-meaning people,” who consist of extremists from all ethnic and religious backgrounds. Aboutaleb’s model is also appealing because he complains about the passivity of Muslims to defeat and terminate the extremists within their community. By doing this, he articulates the concerns of the majority of the Dutch population.

Aboutaleb is not only an alternative example to un-practicing Muslims such as Afshin Ellian or Ayaan Hirsi Ali, but also an alternative to some undesired practicing Muslims as well. For example, as discussed in chapter 3, he can be compared with Tariq Ramadan, who, just a few months after Aboutaleb’s appointment as the mayor of Rotterdam, was fired from his posts as the integration advisor to Rotterdam municipality and the chair of Erasmus University’s Identity and Citizenship program funded by the municipality. The preference for Aboutaleb over Ramadan did not stem from the disintegration of the latter, rather it was a preference between two perfectly integrated people with highly symbolic power. The most significant difference between the two is that Ramadan is an international figure while Aboutaleb is a national one. Some other problems come along with this internationality. First of all, it touches upon the internationality of Islam, which, as

argued in chapter 2 (pp.57-58), challenges national identity and inflames the fear of Islam as a huge bloc. Secondly, it becomes easier to establish a connection between Tariq Ramadan and Islamist jihad. The preference of Aboutaleb's model over others (Ramadan's model and Hirsi Ali's & Ellian's model) was made in spite of his reputation as a practicing Muslim. Therefore, being a good Muslim Dutch does not require abandoning Islam, but rather transforming Islam into a faith exercised in the private spheres or mosques, something parallel with Calvinism. The comparison with Ramadan makes clear that being a good Muslim Dutch also requires not touching Islam related international issues from a highly political perspective as that of Tariq Ramadan.

The analysis in chapter 4 has parallel findings with the above arguments of chapter 3. In chapter 4, among other issues, the interviewees were asked to express their thoughts on specific topics regarding Muslims in the public sphere. The issues were categorized into two: thick issues and thin issues. If an issue can strictly be regulated with law or a constitution and is mostly about institutions, then it is a thick issue. Among them, Islamic schools and the issue of wearing headscarves are chosen because they are the most popular thick issues in the Netherlands. Thin issues, on the other hand, are those related more to the everyday life practices of Muslims. They are hard or impossible to regulate by law, but the host society's perceptions about them may cause serious outcomes for Muslims as individuals. The most prominent thin issues in the Netherlands are handshaking and gender and sexual issues.

As the thick issues are related to constitutionally guaranteed rights of religious freedom, most interviewees agree on principle that Muslims are free to have places of worship and to use religious symbols in the public sphere. These issues, interestingly, become a battle field between religious Dutch and secular Dutch.

While the former desire to extend (or at least preserve) such religious rights and privileges, the latter think that the neutral character of the public sphere should be guaranteed by limiting the religious motivations. In other words, debates about Islamic schools and headscarf actually go beyond the Muslim question, and imply that the separation of church and state is still an issue to discuss in Europe. Nevertheless, because these issues are discussed in terms of integration of Muslims, the answers given to these questions are also relevant with belonging and not belonging. Islamic schools and headscarf make it clear for the Dutch that Islam is a public religion, but they also symbolize the seriousness of Muslims about their belief. This generates a two-layered tension. First of all, being serious about the belief is reacted to negatively in a society where the public role of religion has seriously declined. Secondly, the claim of being a public religion doubles the tension because the claim is made in a society that is historically Christian. Although most interviewees accept the fact that Muslims are granted the right of establishing places of worship and using religious symbols in the public sphere, many of them are inclined to make negative value judgments about headscarves and Islamic schools, and likely to further the limits about them.

Thin issues that are related to everyday life practices are more clearly the fields where assessments about ideal models of integrated Muslim subjectivity are articulated. They first reassure the difference between *the Dutch* and *the un-Dutch*, and fill the meaning of Dutchness in a globalizing world of uncertainties. Secondly, by marking not shaking hands or having different understandings of gender roles and sexuality as something belonging to the immigrants' past from their countries of origin and Islam's outdated doctrine, such everyday life practices also show the directions for the candidates of *the semi-Dutch*, describing the roadmap of

integration (or in other words, becoming semi-Dutch). This category of semi-Dutch consists of the above-mentioned models of integrated Muslims: abandoning Islam and moderating Islam to be Dutch. An interesting point here is that even Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Afshin Ellian are not considered fully Dutch, but outsiders who realize the superiority of Dutch culture and Western civilization, and have assimilated into that. The semi-Dutch can also be a practicing Muslim like Ahmed Aboutaleb, can have Islamic schools, and can even wear a headscarf in the public sphere. However, “un-Dutch” notions about gender roles and sexuality, or practices like not shaking hands of persons from the opposite sex are not welcomed because they are generally associated with the extreme or fundamentalist faces of Islam that recalls extremism, violence, and terrorism.

When these thin issues gain prominence in deciding whether a person is integrated, there appears to be an invisible *integration-meter* that continuously tests a Muslim’s level of belonging to the Dutch society. This brings about some fundamental questions. Will prejudices against Muslims be steady even if Muslims improve their socio-economic status, and participate in Dutch society? What reaction would occur if Muslims start involving themselves in the society more and more every passing day, but at the same time, continue to hold their Islamic identity, or start prioritizing their Muslim identity over their ethnic identities, and reflect their Islamic identity in their everyday-life practices? What would be the outcomes if a minority among Muslims stays firmly conservative? What if Muslims do not get secularized as expected even if they increase their socio-economic levels? Or suppose that they become secularized, but not in the way Christians did. What would happen then? This research makes it clear that asking these questions and being cautious about an absolute optimism are legitimate. As discussed in chapter 4, since

Dutchness is defined in terms of democratic values, integration is defined in terms of a civic culture, and Muslims are considered the most problematic group regarding democratic values, the answers given to the questions above may not be very optimistic. Adding the widespread belief that conservative Muslims are inclined to use violence against women, gays, and non-Muslims, it is likely there will remain debate about Muslim non-integration for a long time even if they improve their socio-economic level. A *total suspicion* about Muslims seems not to vanish in the close future.

The chance is that, in the Netherlands, besides individual rights and liberties, the collective toleration of the practices of minority religions have been very much developed and institutionalized since the period of pillarization. If the belief and fear of Muslims as violent religious people disappears, it might be possible to accommodate Muslim minorities within the Dutch institutional settings because such believes and fears are most of the time presented by the interviewees as an excuse for looking at the community level Muslim rights suspiciously. However, this requires listening up the cultural and religious demands of Muslim communities fairly and open-mindedly, and then applying the traditional principles of equal treatment to these demands.

5.2. A New Multiculturalism

To be more optimistic about the above-mentioned questions, some basic concepts of liberal democracy (e.g. diversity, citizenship, separation of church and state) should be reconsidered with an emphasis on Muslims in Europe. Such a pursuit first needs to start with the fact that liberal democracy is under crisis. It has not yet found a way to answer the unprecedented ethnic and religious mix that is a

consequence of the settlement of non-Western immigrants, mostly Muslims, in Western Europe and North America. It seems that liberals have never completely answered Hobbes's question of how to live together in mutual security. There is a small group of cosmopolitanists, who suggest that respect for human rights and a more vibrant civil society would be the cure for the crisis of liberal democracy (e.g. Habermas, 1992; Turner, 2002). Turner (2002: 50), for example, named what is needed as "cosmopolitan virtue" which consists of respecting other cultures and "commitment to protect the cultural diversity of commonwealth". Such cosmopolitanism, however, is not always very popular, especially in times of crisis. It is all too easy in times of fear and panic for ordinary people to be very anxious and to wrap themselves in strong nationalisms, militarisms and other dichotomizing, confrontational ideologies such as the "clash of civilizations" (Modood, 2007: 149). Indeed, across Europe, in rich countries and poor, far right-wing political parties are gaining in strength (Robyn, 2005: 2). As Gerhard Frey, head of the German People's Union, declared, "In France, Italy, Denmark, everywhere the right wing is entering politics and shifting the mainstream body politic to the right ... voting right wing for young people in Germany today is now part of their culture, like techno music and rollerblading" (quoted in Robyn, 2005: 3). In Austria, Jorg Heider's Freedom Party grew from 5 percent in the early 1990s to 27 percent of the vote in the 1999 elections. Geert Wilder's Freedom Party has been winning more and more seats in the Netherlands. Still, far-right discourse is not yet very common among electorate, intellectuals, and policy makers.

On the other hand, there are American neo-conservatives and their supporters in Europe advocating the "clash of civilizations" and "the West versus the Rest" approach fed by "moral monism". They do not say much about this complicated and

confusing situation, where “the Rest” has started to reside in the West, other than complaining about the illiberal nature of Islam, how Islam and democracy cannot co-exist, how Muslims treat women badly, and how intolerant and violent Muslims can be against non-Muslims and homosexuals. “New liberals”, however, direct their anger not to Islam but to Islamists (the bad Muslims) and to naïve multiculturalists, liberals and cosmopolitans. They invest in the “good Muslims” and ex-Muslims to show the way to the wider Muslim community: cultural integration. New liberals blame multiculturalism for creating safe heavens for Islamists and their illiberal practices.

Especially after the July 7, 2005 bombings in London, two possible (and opposite) roads were identified for Europe to follow (Hayes, 2005; Kepel, 2005; Roy, 2007). On the one extreme, there was radical multiculturalism which would end in the creation of an autonomous “Muslim parliament”, elected by its community, responsible for governing the internal affairs of Muslims – a framework that resembles the Ottoman Empire’s *millat* system in relation to its Jewish and Christian minorities. And on the other extreme, there was the “assimilationist model”, as Roy (2007) calls it, which is associated with the radical secularism of France. Although the French model was previously criticized in terms of not being sensitive to minorities, or even being destructive to individual freedom, lately, as Roy points out, there is a renewed interest in the French *laicite*. A sizeable number of countries that have embraced multiculturalism so far are about to restrict the wearing of the Islamic veil (e.g. the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany). According to Roy, this interest in *laicite* is primarily negative: it stems from the crisis (or even from the death) of multiculturalism.

However, as argued above, it is not the crisis of multiculturalism, but of liberal democracy. The errors of multiculturalism, if there are any, are the consequences of liberalism's narrow horizons where multiculturalism has been spread out. As argued above, liberal democracy has some problems with diversity as it has developed together with nationalism and "moral monism"; it has problems with non-Western immigrants as it has colonial inheritance and universalistic presumptions, and it has problems with Muslims as it has been born into the "Plato-to-NATO sequence" that has had a confrontational relationship with Islam and that sees Islam in Europe as a challenge to Western historiographical hegemony. In other words, multiculturalism itself is not the cause of the present crisis, but with a few modifications, it can be part of the solution. For that, multiculturalism has to try the limits drawn by liberalism and overcome its anti-immigrant and anti-religion prejudices.

The first and biggest challenge is to lose the Eurocentric state of mind. It is the most challenging because European historiographical development is the womb from which multicultural theories were born and the atmosphere where multiculturalists breathe. Most multiculturalists deny that they are Eurocentric, but in fact they call on "non-European" immigrants to internalize "universal" norms and values that are actually outcomes of the European historiographical sequence. Indeed, as Sardar (2004) argues, multicultural policies developed in countries like Britain are narrow and Eurocentric. Multiculturalism needs a global postcolonial formation that would take into account not only Western domination of the world, but also the existence of immigrants and global solidarities such as Muslim *ummah* (Sayyid, 2000, 2007). Here, it is not suggested a *thick* dialogue between European or

Western civilization on the one hand and other civilizations such as Islam on the other hand.

Some proponents of philosophical multiculturalism (e.g. Taylor, 1992; Parekh, 2000) suggest that accepting a common “human civilization” and valuing different cultures for their contribution to that civilization within a *thick* dialogue of mutual evaluation and understanding might be the cure to liberal democracy’s crisis with diversity. For Tariq Modood (2007: 66), multiculturalism is not located in such big concepts as human civilization, perhaps except in democratic citizenship and belonging. For him, cultures are important only because they are important to the bearers of those identities, to some equally respected fellow citizens. Importance of cultural membership to individual autonomy has some normative significance for liberal multiculturalists since it combines the community and the individual. However, as argued earlier, it has some practical problems. First of all, the question of which cultural groups are entitled to multicultural citizenship is not really answered or the answers are not satisfactory. For example, Kymlicka’s answer that only “societal groups” deserve to acquire multicultural citizenship excludes many citizens such as those belonging to immigrant groups or religious groups. Secondly, it is concerned with giving the least trouble to the state and providing the highest degree of consensus. This is perhaps desirable but many identities that are meaningful for citizens are disregarded in the name of civic citizenship identity or integration. Finally, it overlooks discriminations and exclusions based on group identities. There are some groups, such as immigrants or gays, who are disadvantaged or marginalized in position not only because of their characteristics (e.g. low socio-economic status of immigrant groups), but also because of the majority’s negative perceptions of them. To solve this problem, a distinction should

be made between the public recognition and respect for identities and beliefs, on the one hand, and the moral evaluation of them, on the other. For Modood (2007: 66-67) the former is possible without the latter. However, recognition still works within some moral limits, namely fundamental rights of individuals and not harming others. Within these limits, as Modood argues, there is nothing illiberal or inegalitarian or anti-citizenship about recognition.

Here therefore, a *thin* dialogue is necessary that limits itself with the above-mentioned thin issues about Muslims such as Islamic schools or headscarf rather than life-styles. This dialogue must not aim at *understanding* “why” others do some certain things, but only *respecting* “what” others do as soon as they are not violating basic human rights and law, and making new regulations that imply what is valuable for minorities is being considered and welcomed. It is, in other words, a political response that takes differences into account and makes appropriate regulations accordingly. The concept of “difference”, therefore, is a better starting point rather than deciding which culture is appropriate for multicultural citizenship (Modood, 2007; Parekh, 1991, 2000; Taylor, 1992; Young, 1990). However, a new kind of multiculturalism is not about making a choice between cultural rights and political equality or economic opportunities. By recognizing that the difference is constituted both from the inside, from the side of a minority culture, and from the outside, from the representations and treatment of the minorities in question, and by accepting that group-differentiating dimensions are central to the social construction of minorities, multicultural policies should focus on the specific claims of minorities. This is especially the case when considering immigrants who have not been simply perceived as individuals, fellow-workers, citizens, or even recognized minorities, but as “different.” A labeling goes on about them based on their collectivity, and

therefore a collective response is required (Modood, 2007: 40). This collective response is what Modood calls a “political multiculturalism” which “suggests neither separatism nor assimilation but an accommodative form of integration which would allow group-based racialized, ethnic, cultural and religious identities and practices to be recognized and supported in the public space, rather than require them to be privatized” (Modood, 2007: 61).

Assimilation, integration and multiculturalism are vague concepts especially in the everyday political discourse. It is common that some politicians use multiculturalism and integration interchangeably. Or when some talk of integration, they actually have assimilation in mind. In this study, assimilation is used as a process where the relationship between the minorities or newcomers and the majority is seen as one-way. Assimilation involves the least change in the side of the long-established groups in the society while the newly-settled groups are expected not to disturb them, and furthermore, become like them in the ways of doing things. On the other hand, I define integration as an interaction between the established *groups* and *newcomers* as a two-way process where both the latter and former are responsible for a successful integration which means knowing what to do and how to do in a society, and participate in its political, economic and cultural life.²⁹⁵ I stressed the groups and newcomers in plural form to emphasize that both the majority and minority have a great deal of diversity within. In other words, integration is not a linear relationship between two homogeneous groups. There are multiple forms of integration as the mainstream society has diversity too. Different minorities or groups and individuals within a minority may connect with or be inclined towards different aspects or parts of mainstream society. Finally, multiculturalism carries out integration not at the

²⁹⁵ Still, integration is the vaguest concept which I would rather not to use.

individual level but at a group-specific level, and welcomes new forms of citizenship with hyphenated identities such as British-Muslim or Moroccan-Dutch. In other words, multiculturalism recognizes social realities of each group, and produces policies accordingly. Each group may have a different pattern of integration as their socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics are different from each other. The outcome is not becoming like the majority, but finding a way to live and participate in a society that is shaped by the majority. And this new way ends up with hyphenated identities, which should not be a question of disloyalty.

Therefore, multiculturalism passes beyond the toleration and state neutrality that are proposed by liberalism to deal with diversity. This has four implications for liberal citizenship (Modood, 2007: 68-70). First, it concerns not only individuals but collectivities. Second, it is not color-, gender-, or sexual orientation-blind. It recognizes particular group identities in the public sphere, and does not privatize them. These two implications are clear. Third, different than liberalism which takes race, sex and sexuality as merely ascriptive sources of identity and argues against discrimination based on something over which one has no control, multiculturalism goes beyond considering all those categories political. A fourth implication concerns religious groups in general and Muslims in particular. Progressive politicians and intellectuals, who are traditionally for the rights of repressed groups, hesitate when it comes to religion, and especially Islam. The claim that religious identity, just like other identities, e.g. gay, Indian, black, Quebecer, should not be privatized, but be part of the public space is perceived by progressive and center-left as an unacceptable demand. It is seen as an attack on one of the most prominent principles of liberal democracy, namely secularism.

At the very heart of the issue, there is the question of secularism because it is mostly about the articulation of religious identity in the public sphere (e.g. headscarf ban in France or *burqa* discussions in Britain and the Netherlands (Roy, 2007). Modood (2009) argues that a reasonable secularism would accommodate Muslims and other religious groups into a multiculturalist framework. A radical public-private separation in the name of secularism not only intensifies the marginalization of Muslims in a public sphere where their values are not represented, but it also opens the way for considering any Islamic appearance in the public sphere as harmful. Amy Gutmann (2003: 154) offers, what she calls, a “moderate version of two way protection” where church is protected from state and state from church, and neither protection is absolute. She argues that either church-state separation or religious freedom to the extreme would undermine the other. Indeed, according to Bader (1999, 2009), a loose separation of public-private/state-church is actually the case for most west European states. Starting from that point, Modood (2009: 180) offers a pluralistic institutional integration model that consists of “(1) a reconceptualization of equality from sameness to an incorporation of respect for difference; (2) A reconceptualization of secularism from concepts of neutrality and the strict public-private divide to a moderate and evolutionary secularism based on institutional adjustments; (3) A pragmatic, case-by-case, negotiated approach to dealing with controversy and conflict: not an ideological, ‘drawing a line in the sand’ mentality.” Yet he adds the limits: normative limits, which are named as “society’s operative public values” by Parekh (2000: 267). At this point, Modood (2007) argues that the inclusion of Islam as an organized religion and of Muslim identity as a public identity is not inconsistent with what secularism means in practice in Europe.

Another requirement for a more inclusive multiculturalism is to break the hierarchy established between differential minority rights. The shortcuts of such a hierarchy are already discussed. Usually, the immigrants are placed at the bottom of that hierarchy because they come voluntarily. However, as Parekh (1997: 62) argues, the receiving country also admits them voluntarily. Therefore, if the consent is essential, then the receiving country also has the obligation to accommodate immigrant minorities, respect their cultures and recognize their identities. Immigrants, if they ask so, can have the right to have multicultural rights such as intra-group autonomy or language rights. Such rights come with costs (Joppke and Lukes, 1999: 15). There are opportunity costs such as learning a language that is not useful for educational or occupational advancement. Secondly, extensive group rights may provoke the majority against the minority, and backlash may occur. Finally, group rights may entail curtailments of individual rights, and certain minority individuals can be against having such rights. Because of these reasons, immigrant minorities do not usually go further than asking for laws and regulations to be reorganized by taking their cultures and religions into account. However, this does not mean that their cultures are any less valuable than the majority culture and other cultural groups that are placed higher in the hierarchy. Nor does this mean that the majority can impose any cultural values to the minority. Imposing some values to a minority group seems very much culture free, innocent and necessary especially when the majority culture is defined around liberal values and the minority as having illiberal culture. First of all, every society, including West European societies, has liberals, non-liberals, racists, corporatists, leftists, feminists, fundamentalists, and so on. When considering the universal democratic values, we are never sure that citizens of a western democracy deeply believe in sexual and racial equality, in

freedom of expression, or in the rule of law. Majorities may have learned to give the politically correct answers when asked by opinion pollsters. Many, or even most, citizens of democratic societies hold profoundly illiberal beliefs (Bauböck, 2002: 7). Secondly, so-called liberal values usually come with cultural flavors, national histories and languages or with some codes such as “this is how we liberals do things here”. For example, while handshaking is a very common topic to discuss about the situation of Muslims in Western societies, it actually is not a part of any liberal value. Accepting diversity rather than pushing for similarity or establishing hierarchy, as Parekh (2000b) argues, can be the only way to build social cohesion in the societies of immigration. What makes multiculturalism a cure for the liberal democracy’s crisis is not only because it welcomes the coexistence of diverse cultural practices and ways of life, but more specifically because it also expands the affirmation of such diversity into the realms of morality and politics.

Especially in the political realm, new cultural diversity requires to avoid simplistic and reductive models of democratic citizenship. Furthermore, as Tariq Modood (2007: 145) argues, overcoming the marginality of a minority and integrating it into the political structure might even require some degree of corporatism. Modood gives different examples of already existing versions of corporatism in various European countries, and suggests that such corporatism is not something alien to European political culture. For example, in Britain, the Anglican Church is represented in the House of Lords; or the Catholic Church is a partner in the state educational system; or the trades unions have substantial representation in the Labor Party. In France, Catholic and Protestant churches and the Jewish Consistory are granted institutional legal status, or a body of Muslims (*Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*) is created to promote official French Islam under the authority of the

state (Modood, 2007: 75). However, the corporatism that is welcomed in multiculturalism should avoid top-down state control of religious organizations. Concerning Muslim minorities, this also requires facilitating lay community, rather than just relying on clerical representation because, as argued earlier, Muslims cannot be regarded as a pure religious community.

A possible objection to the multiculturalism drawn here is the question of what would ensure social cohesion. This would be a legitimate query about keeping “societal cultures” together, and Kymlicka (1997) has given answers to that. However, this dissertation focuses on immigrant or Muslim minorities in Europe. In this case, a counter question is why immigrants would threaten social cohesion. Or further, to what extent the social cohesion existed before immigration? Immigrants are being asked to integrate into a dominant, cohesive national culture. It seems that the integration of immigrants is only another tool of an “imagined community” used to draw the boundaries by defining immigrant minorities as others who do not belong or who must transform themselves in order to fit into the receiving society. The fear is that immigrants have strong loyalties to other political or religious communities whose authorities operate outside the sphere of influence of the receiving state and perhaps against its interests. Therefore, immigrants not only should be a part of the country socioeconomically, but they must also accept the national identity of the host society as overriding all other affiliations, especially in case of conflict. However, in times of peace too, this perspective serves as a mechanism to reproduce national identity and control unwanted identities, and even to seriously constrain its citizens’ freedoms (Bauböck, 2002: 11). This is a paradox liberal democracies are facing today.

All multiculturalists defend the immigrants' right to preserve their differences. But when it comes to defining the limits of group rights, they either set vague limits such as "liberal values", or give priority (if not superiority) to the majority culture. For example, if the immigrant way of life offends the "operative public values" of a society, Parekh (1994) envisions a court-like procedure, in which a "spokesman" of both the majority society and of the immigrant group enter into "dialogue" about the legitimacy of the disputed practice. If the practice is central to the minority's way of life, it should be allowed; if it violates a core value of the majority society, and it is not important to the minority, it is to be abandoned; and if a practice is dear to the minority but also violates a core value of society, it should be abandoned as well. Modood (2007) also argues that immigrants and religious groups should be entitled to the multicultural rights. However, Modood also stresses the importance of commonality as well, and states that "difference has to be related to things we have in common," that is citizenship. But he goes further and suggests a back up force to that multicultural citizenship, namely a national identity (Modood, 2007: 146-151). This is an important point when considering that many scholars argue that the national and multicultural are two incompatible concepts (Gilroy, 2004, 2005; Joppke, 2004). For Modood, on the other hand, multiculturalism can be a reformer of national identity. Looking at recent and contemporary history, especially in Western Europe and countries like Canada, suggests that it is possible to disconnect national identities from strong forms of nationalism. Perhaps it is also possible to disconnect citizenship from national identities by investing the civic loyalties and sense of belonging into some principles of a human-rights-based political order, a kind of "constitutional patriotism", as Habermas (1992) hopes. However, such cosmopolitan identities are not effective enough for most people,

especially for those relatively non-political and uneducated, and especially during times of crisis.

Modood argues that, immigrants, who lack an emotional tie with national identity, can be a part of the nation with an inclusive national identity that is respectful of and builds upon the identities valuable for its citizens. Opening the way to re-imagine national identities is an important “emotive resource” of multiculturalism (Modood, 2007: 151). A continuously changing, difference-sensitive and inclusive national identity can be emotionally and politically meaningful for immigrants, and may prevent them from appealing to other loyalties and ideologies. In the case of Muslims, for Modood (2007: 150), such a national identity is critical to isolating and defeating jihadi sentiments and Islamist extremism.

Therefore, multiculturalism, as advocated by Modood, has a task to moderate both national identity and Islamic identity. He also talks of a moderate secularism as discussed above. Adding his fear of ideology, which “if not checked, threatens multicultural citizenship” (Modood, 2007: 128-132), Modood’s multiculturalism appears as a project of moderation. But how about the Amish, Hasidic Jews, Islamists, pacifists, anarchists, feminists, communists, or even racists? A call for moderation is understandable, but it cannot be a condition for multicultural citizenship. Incitement to hatred and using violence are very clear boundaries upon which the limits of multicultural citizenship can be built. Otherwise, this multiculturalist framework does not overcome false neutrality of liberalism because it gives the majority an unclearly defined power to decide what is moderate and what is not; what can be included, and what cannot; which version of Islam is friendly, and which version is an enemy.

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APPENDIX A

THE LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Members of Parliament (Tweede Kamer - The Second Chamber)

- 1- Madeline van Toorenborg (Christian Democrats, Spokesperson on Integration) 2 April 2008
- 2- Wim van de Camp (MP- Christian Democrats) 4 April 2008
- 3- Kathleen Ferrier (MP- Christian Democrats) 22 May 2008
- 4- Jan de Wit (MP- Socialist Party, spokesperson on immigration) 22 May 2008
- 5- Sadet Karabulut (MP- Socialist Party spokesperson on integration) 23 July 2008
- 6- Jeroen Dijsselbloem (MP- Labor Party, Spokesperson on integration) 23 April 2008
- 7- Stef Blok (MP- VVD, right wing liberal party- the chair of parliamentary committee on integration policies known as Blok Committee) 30 May 2008
- 8- Fritz Bolkestein (Former leader of VVD, former minister of defense) 25 April 2008
- 9- Ed Anker (MP- Christian Union, a small conservative party) 29 April 2008
- 10- Kars Veling- Former MP and Leader of Christian Union, Director of Johan de Witt College, a very successful high school with minority children) 5 June 2008

11- Tofik Dibi (MP- Greens, spokesperson on integration) 22 May 2008

12- Boris van der Ham (MP- D66, the liberal left) 18 April 2008

13- Fatma Koser Kaya (MP- D66) 21 June 2008

Members of City Councils

14- Marco Pastors (Member of City Council of Rotterdam- Leader of Leefbaar Rotterdam) 22 July 2008

15- Theo Cornellisen (Member of City Council of Rotterdam- Socialist Party) 12 August 2008

16- Carlien Boelhouwer (Member of City Council of Amsterdam- Socialist Party) 9 July 2008

17- Judith Sargentini (Member of City Council of Amsterdam- Greens) 9 July 2008

18- Wilma van Andel (Member of City Council of Amsterdam- Christian Democrats) 9 July 2008

19- Robert E. Flos (Member of City Council of Amsterdam- VVD) 28 January 2009

20- Hasan Kucuk (Member of City Council of Den Haag- Muslim Democrats) 10 July 2008

21- Marjolein de Jong (Member of City Council of Den Haag- D66) 30 July 2008

22- Ibo Gulsen (Member of City Council of Den Haag- VVD) 23 July 2008

Bureaucrats

23- Professor Paul Schnabel (Director of Social and Cultural Planning Bureau at the Ministry of Welfare) 27 June 2008

- 24- Jurriaan Omlo (Policy Advisor- Council for Social Development) 17 July 2008
- 25- Dr. Wendy Asbeek Brusse (Senior Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration) 4 June 2008
- 26- Paul Tesser (Senior Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration) 13 August 2008
- 27- Channa Samkalden (Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Interior Relations) 9 July 2008
- 28- Paul van Sasse van Ysselt (Senior Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Interior Relations) 14 July 2008
- 29- Bouchra Talidi (Policy Official at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration) 13 May 2008

Academics

- 30- Professor Paul Cliteur (Law- University of Leiden- One of the most prominent critiques of multiculturalism in the Netherlands) 4 August 2008
- 31- Professor Jan Willem Duyvendak (Sociology- University of Amsterdam- Former Director of VJI, a very controversial research institution on integration) 19 June 2008
- 32- Professor Rinus Penninx (IMES- University of Amsterdam) 5 August 2008
- 33- Professor Jan Rath (IMES- University of Amsterdam) 12 August 2008
- 34- Professor Veit Bader (Philosophy- UvA) 17 July 2008
- 35- Assistant Professor Willem Schinkel (Sociology- Erasmus University) 2 June 2008

Others

- 36- Rachida Azough (Art Director of Kozmopolis, an institution for multicultural events) 28 April 2008
- 37- Liane van der Linden (Director of Kozmopolis Rotterdam) 16 April 2008
- 38- Ronny Naftaniel (Director of CIDI- Center for Information and Documentation on Israel) 22 April 2008
- 39- Raşit Bal (Director of Imam School at the Hogeschool InHolland, the first and only state-sponsored imam school) 9 April 2008
- 40- Mustafa Hamurcu (Policy Advisor at the Utrecht Municipality- Spokesperson of Milli Gorus) 28 March 2008
- 41- Famile Arslan (Lawyer) 18 April 2008
- 42- Ejder Köse (Lawyer) 6 May 2008
- 43- Professor Ahmet Akgündüz- Rector of the Rotterdam Islamic University) 25 April 2008

APPENDIX B

THE LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1- Dutchness and Integration

- a- Do you think that the Dutch model of integration (if there is such a model) is working well? Do you see any problems?
- b- When we look at the immigration and integration issues, we can see a trend towards more strict policies. The notion of “keeping the cultural identity while integrating” was more dominant until the early 1990s. But after that, some doubts on this policy can be observed. Why this change? Is it the policies that have failed or some of the characteristics of the immigrants groups in question were problematic? To which side you account the problem more?
- c- If you were my integration coach, how could you explain me what Dutchness is? How could I be a good Dutch? What are the norms and values of Dutch society?
- d- There are different answers to the question of what integration is. How do you define integration?
- e- According to your definition, which particular groups have more difficulty to integrate? And why?

2- Muslims

- a- When I visit some mosques, I am surprised that children talk each other in Dutch. It seems they are more comfortable in Dutch rather than their mother tongue. When we also look at the data, it is observed that the second and third generations know the language, they get education, and they are better off than their parents in making career. But still there is this widespread discourse of non-integration of Muslims. Why this discourse is very strong in spite of these positive developments?
- b- Do you think Muslims are different than other ethnic or religious minorities with regard to integration?
- c- Again, if you were my integration coach, and if I were an educated person, but at the same time, a conservative Muslim, what would you tell me to be a good Dutch citizen?

3- Religion in the Public Sphere

- a- While some argue that religious identities should be restricted to the private sphere, some others, on the other hand, argue that you cannot restrict them in the private sphere because they are important components of identity. Lately, this discussion became more interesting with the integration debate about religious minorities. Some people argued that religious minorities such as Muslims should be integrated in their private spheres too. What is your position? Do you use public and private distinction when talking about religion or integration?
- b- How do you feel about conservative Christians and their demands?

4- Islam in the Public Sphere

- a- In the constitution, it is stated that every confessional/religious group can establish its own schools, and those private schools that satisfy the conditions would be partially or fully subsidized by the state. However, establishing Islamic schools is always a big issue. While previously similar schools worked for the emancipation of certain groups, Islamic schools are believed to prevent Muslims from integration. What do you think about this issue? Do you think that Islamic schools can be a tool of emancipation for Muslims?
 - b- Headscarf is one of the most visible symbols of Islamic presence. Do you think that there should be a limit for headscarf?
 - c- Although it is a given right for each religious group to practice its religion in community level and establishing prayer places, mosques always start a discussion, especially if it is big. Why is it such a big issue?
 - d- Besides legally and constitutionally given rights, there are other issues regarding everyday life practices. They are also becoming problem and having attention in the media, such as hand shaking. To what extent these different everyday practices are welcome? Because these differences will always be there as long as there are different cultures.
- 5- Final:** Are you optimistic or pessimistic about different cultures living together in the Netherlands? What would be the most harmful/detrimental development that may ruin your optimism?