Critical Heritages (CoHERE): performing and representing identities in Europe

Work Package 2: Work in Progress

Critical Analysis Tool (CAT) 3: Islam versus Europe: Populist discourse and the construction of a civilizational identity

Authors: **Ayhan Kaya, Istanbul Bilgi University**
                   Ayşe Tecmen, Istanbul Bilgi University

CoHERE explores the ways in which identities in Europe are constructed through heritage *representations* and *performances* that connect to ideas of place, history, tradition and belonging. The research identifies existing heritage practices and discourses in Europe. It also identifies means to sustain and transmit European heritages that are likely to contribute to the evolution of inclusive, communitarian identities and counteract disaffection with, and division within, the EU. A number of modes of representation and performance are explored in the project, from cultural policy, museum display, heritage interpretation, school curricula and political discourse to music and dance performances, food and cuisine, rituals and protest.

WP2 investigates public/popular discourses and dominant understandings of a homogeneous 'European heritage' and the ways in which they are mobilized by specific political actors to advance their agendas and to exclude groups such as minorities from a stronger inclusion into European society. What notions of European heritage circulate broadly in the public sphere and in political discourse? How do the 'politics of fear' relate to such notions of European heritage and identity across and beyond Europe and the EU? How is the notion of a European heritage and memory used not only to include and connect Europeans but also to exclude some of them? We are interested in looking into the relationship between a European memory and heritage-making and circulating notions of 'race', ethnicity, religion and civilization as well as contemporary forms of discrimination grounded in the idea of incommensurable cultural and memory differences.

This essay reveals the ways in which five populist parties in Europe (AfD in Germany, FN in France, PVV in the Netherlands, M5S in Italy, and Golden Dawn in Greece, employ the fear of Islam as a political instrument to mobilize their supporters and to mainstream themselves. The study is conducted through a discourse analysis of the speeches and manifestos of the aforementioned parties. Following the depiction of each political party, the paper displays some of their electoral posters to be able to explicate their common tropes with regards to their Islamophobic, migrant-phobic, and diversity-phobic discourses. The main premise of the paper is to claim that these parties have recently generated a civilizational discourse in order to expand their electorate.

Keywords: society, identities, belonging, democratic practices and institutions, uses of the past

Europe versus Islam: Populist discourse and the construction of a civilizational identity

Ayhan Kaya, Istanbul Bilgi University
Ayşe Tecmen, Istanbul Bilgi University

Situating culture and heritage within the populist discourse is a seemingly simple task as both terms are used abundantly by political leaders to denote a specific period or to connote certain national traditions, values, and characteristics. However, a discourse analytic approach to the deconstruction of populist parties' culture policy reveals that there are various articulations of culture in different political and societal contexts. For instance, these references can be explicit or implicit, stated or implied, embedded in action or revealed as a reaction. In this context, implicit statements and uses of culture as a reaction to the 'other' are most visible.

In this paper, we look at the manifestos of the populist parties as well as their highly mediatized statements on culture, heritage and national identity. In doing so, we have faced several difficulties embedded in the centrality of language to populist movements. To reiterate, preservation of native language is vital to the populist agenda. This also 'prevents' the 'others' who are traditionally ethnically or religiously different immigrants from accessing information in a way that further isolates them and perpetuates the idea of the 'other' being on the 'outside'. As such, both in theory and in practice, language is a key concept that we encountered in our desk research as well as field research. To that end, it was difficult, and in some cases impossible to access the manifestos in English for which we consulted native speakers. This difficulty with primary sources was also present when accessing the statements of the populist leaders. Often there were highly circulated statements, which were confirmed through a review of several online news sites. However, there were also cases, particularly in the case studies on France, Italy and Greece where confirming the credibility of the online sources was both problematic and challenging.

This essay reveals the ways in which five populist parties in Europe (AfD in Germany, FN in France, PVV in the Netherlands, M5S in Italy, and Golden Dawn in Greece, employ the fear of Islam as a political instrument to mobilize their supporters and to mainstream themselves. The study is conducted through a discourse analysis of the speeches and manifestos of the aforementioned parties. Following the depiction of each political party, the paper displays some of their electoral posters to be able to explicate their common tropes about their Islamophobic, migrant-phobic, and diversity-phobic discourses. The main premise of the paper is to claim that these parties have recently generated a civilizational discourse in order to expand their electorate.

Instrumentalizing the Fear of Islam

There is a growing fear in the European space alleviated by the extreme right-wing populist parties such as PVV in the Netherlands, FN in France, Golden Dawn in Greece and AfD in Germany. This fear is based on the jihadist attacks in different European cities such as Paris (7 January and 13 November 2015), Nice (14 July 2016), Istanbul (1 January 2017), Berlin (28 February 2017), and London (2017) as well as on the atrocities of the Al Qaida, the Islamic State (ISIS), and Boko

Haram in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere. This fear against Islam, which has material sources, is also mitigated by far-right political parties. One of the interlocutors we interviewed in Rome among the supporters of the 5 Star Movement very explicitly vocalize such fears:

> "In a few years European culture will cease to exist, once the Caliph will have taken control of Europe. Then we will build a long memory of what we lost, something that was perhaps too weak. The takeover of the Caliphate was previewed by a clairvoyant, who said the Caliph will control even the Vatican. Beyond the clairvoyant, there are signs that our culture is changing with every little cross being taken away from the schools" (interview with a 39-year-old doorman in Rome, 16 May 2017)

Such fears were also reiterated by many other interlocutors in Germany, France, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands. A 70-year-old former saleswoman in Dresden expressed her feelings in a similar way when she was asked about the European heritage:

> "When we have an Islamic caliphate in Germany one day, the European heritage will be gone. Maybe it sounds exaggerating, but I think we should be very careful. Many of the Muslim refugees have dangerous thoughts in their minds. Otherwise you would not think of driving a bus into a crowd [referring to the attack on the Breitscheid-Platz in Berlin in December 2016]" (interview with 70-year-old-female, pensioner in Dresden, 18 April 2017).

The construction of a contemporary European identity is built in part on anti-Muslim racism, just as other forms of racist ideology played a role in constructing European identity during the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Use of the term 'Islamophobia' assumes that fear of Islam is natural and can be taken for granted, whereas use of the term 'Islamophobism' presumes that this fear has been fabricated by those with a vested interest in producing and reproducing such a state of fear, or phobia. By describing Islamophobia as a form of *ideology*, I argue that Islamophobia operates as a form of *cultural racism* in Europe, which has become apparent along with the process of *securitizing* and *stigmatizing* migration and migrants in the age of neoliberalism (Kaya, 2015). One could thus argue that Islamophobism as an ideology is being constructed by ruling political groups to foster a kind of false consciousness, or delusion, within the majority society as a way of covering up their own failure to manage social, political, economic, and legal forces and consequently the rise of inequality, injustice, poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and alienation. In other words, Islamophobism turns out to be a practical instrument of social control used by the conservative political elite to ensure compliance and subordination in this age of neoliberalism, essentializing ethnocultural and religious boundaries. Muslims have become global 'scapegoats', blamed for all negative social phenomena such as illegality, crime, violence, drug abuse, radicalism, fundamentalism, conflict, and financial burdens. One could also argue that some individuals and communities in the West presume that Muslims have grater social power. There is a growing fear in the United States, Europe, and even in Russia and the post-Soviet countries that Muslims will demographically take over eventually.

Germany, Alternative für Deutschland

In 2013, neoliberal economists and conservatives from the CSU and the FDP (Free Democratic Party) formed the party '*Alternative für Deutschland'*. The AfD is also renowned for its major

reservations towards migration. In its initial phase, the AfD was dominated by neoliberal economics professors, who favoured tax reductions for the wealthy and cutbacks in the social budget. They did not shy away from demanding that the opportunities for democratic participation of the poor be limited for the benefit of the wealthy. After the federal elections in the summer of 2013, the first disagreements between the neoliberal and the nationalist-conservative wing came to light. While the neoliberal wing wanted an alliance with the British Tories, the nationalist-conservative faction favoured a cooperation with the British United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). And while the neo-liberals could assert themselves on this issue, and joined the ECR in the European Parliament, they were defeated on another issue. The neo-liberals were in favour of transatlantic cooperation and supported the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and sanctions against Russia during the Ukrainian crisis; the nationalistic-conservative majority on the other hand, were against a free trade agreement with the USA and rejected sanctions against Russia (Hale, 2016).

According to the leading figures of the party, the AfD has the 'historical mission' to achieve cultural hegemony. Therefore, it is important to break the 'terminological dominance' of the left and to stop the 'social experiments' in terms of educational, gender and migration policy. Germany is currently in a phase of 'pre-civil war'. The present refugee situation is seen as an 'invasion' meant to destroy Germany. According to this view, the German government is betraying the German nation thus it has to be brought down in a major, illegal operation. To that end, the German army was asked by the AfD to act 'independently' and occupy the train stations along the German border in order to put a stop to the "onslaught" of asylum seekers (Kemper, 2016). AfD made a historic breakthrough in the 2017 General Elections, winning 13.5 percent of the vote and a projected 87 seats and becoming the first overtly nationalist party to sit in the Bundestag in 60 years. The party's performance marks a major shift in Germany's post-war politics that is likely to produce a very different tone and dynamic inside the Bundestag.

Compared to the populist parties and movements we investigated for this research, AfD is slightly different because while it is a national-populist party situated within the right-wing political ideology, it has institutional issues. To clarify, the leadership of AfD, as we will also discuss in relation to the fieldwork, is problematic. This internal conflict leads to diverse views on the use of culture in their discourse. Nonetheless, AfD is an illustrative example of right-wing populism built on the discursive construction and promotion of cultural homogeneity to ensure the integrity of national identity. In doing so, *anti-Islamic sentiments are essential to this party.*

Similar to the other European populist parties, AfD began as an anti-establishment, anti-EU party. Over time, it has become more and more vocal and reactive to immigration. Importantly, the AfD has been *responding* to and mainly countering Angela Merkel's stance on migration and refugees to legitimize their stance, which combined their anti-establishment views with contemporary political and social issues.[1] Therefore, though very different, AfD's discourse on immigration and refugees exists in the same discursive field as that of Merkel's. This stems partly from the fact that AfD is a relatively new party, established in 2013, which develops its political agenda and stance

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[1] See http://www.dw.com/en/germanys-populist-afd-party-seeks-to-reboot-migrant-fears/a-40176414 accessed on 1 February 2018.

through time. As a populist party, its responses to the "mainstream" political views are used to ground their stances on current issues.

AfD manifesto revolves around anti-Muslim sentiments as it declares "Islam is not part of Germany", which was a stronger stance than the previous view to "stop Islamism but seek dialogue with Islam".[2] During the discussion of the principles of the manifesto, AfD leadership has also constructed anti-Islamism as a "political ideology" which contradicted the German Constitution. As Jörg Meuthen reasoned, "although religious freedom was an essential part of German culture, the Western, Christian world view was the guiding principle, and not Islam".[3] This emphasis on Christianity as the cornerstone of Western culture and civilisation has been used to construct Islam as the foundation of Eastern/Middle Eastern culture, which then allowed for the articulation of a civilizational antagonism. This logic was also used in AfD's propositions to ban the Muslim calls to prayer, religious attire, mainly the *burka*, while reinforcing representations of Christianity in the public sphere. These points of conflict are predominantly rooted in the historical antagonistic relations between the West and the East because there has been an everlasting struggle for cultural dominance. One example is the struggles of Muslim migrants to attain social and political recognition in Germany without being subjected to the process of "othering". Moreover, under the "Islam is not a part of Germany" subheading of the manifesto, AfD declares as follows:

> "Islam does not belong to Germany. Its expansion and the ever-increasing number of Muslims in the country are viewed by the AfD as a danger to our state, our society, and our values."[4]

As noted above, this statement articulates Islam and the culture of Muslim-origin communities as the "other" of the German culture. This exemplifies not only the process of "othering" utilized by AfD but also implies that German institutions should not attempt to accommodate Muslims. The use of "danger" is also significant as it does not only use politics of fear but also perpetuates the idea that differences are a threat to national unity. Complementing this view are the party's views on immigration and asylum-seekers. The manifesto continues to denounce the growing visibility of asylum-seekers, as well as the management of migration and integration is managed by the German government and the EU:

> "We want to change this: We demand a paradigm shift regarding 1) the influx of asylum seekers, 2) the way how the free movement of people is handled inside the EU, 3) the immigration of skilled labour from third countries, and 4) the integration of immigrants belonging to these three categories."[5]

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[2] Full text of the AfD Manifesto is available in German at: https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/111/2017/09/AfD_kurzprogramm_a5-hoch_210717.pdf accessed on 15 January 2018. Also see http://m.dw.com/en/german-populists-afd-adopt-anti-islam-manifesto/a-19228284 accessed on 15 January 2018.
[3] http://m.dw.com/en/germanys-populist-afd-party-debates-islam-as-congress-continues/a-19227807   accessed on 15 January 2018.
[4] http://www.hitc.com/en-gb/2017/09/25/what-do-germanys-afd-want-heres-summary-from-their-manifesto/ accessed on 17 January 2018.
[5] http://www.hitc.com/en-gb/2017/09/25/what-do-germanys-afd-want-heres-summary-from-their-manifesto/ accessed on 17 January 2018.

The third statement in this excerpt is indicative of the socio-economic motivations behind the call for stricter border controls and the free movement of persons within the EU. This is the culturalisation of socio-economic issues, or in other words the association of the competition for economic resources with a specific culture drawing on a supposedly inherent cultural clash. By the same token, the manifesto highlights that "moderate" Muslims who are willing to integrate as "valued members of society".[6] As the AfD manifesto states:

> "An Islam that does not respect our legal system and even fights against it and claims to be the only valid religion is incompatible with our legal system and culture. Many Muslims live according to our laws and are integrated and are accepted as valued members of our society. However, the AfD wants to prevent the emergence of Islamic parallel societies with Sharia judges."[7]

This is an important point in understanding that AfD identifies various types of migrants. Those who are willing to surrender their culture are received well while those who are not willing to do so are considered "threats" to German culture. In effect, there exists the "welcome" Muslims who are willing to step outside their community and come into the German public space where a homogeneous German identity is dominant, as well as "unwelcomed" Muslims who seek economic gains while refusing to forego their cultural traditions in favour of German culture. Moreover, as Alicia Weidel, the current co-leader of the Party, stated:

> "From our perspective, the government's policies offer no long-term, sustainable solutions and ideas for these problems at all…There's a lot of talk, particularly in election periods. But absolutely nothing gets done."[8]

As indicated in this statement, AfD exploits the Europe-wide concerns towards mass migration, by criticizing the political culture in Germany, which legitimizes their anti-establishment views. In turn, party members have been promoting stricter border promotion as well as deportation of Muslims. As Alexander Gauland, co-founder of AfD, who was also their lead candidate in the 2017 national elections, noted "German interests must be guiding principle…" in deciding the approach to the refugee crisis.[9]

The AfD's stance on culture can be understood through an exploration of their Islamophobic and Turkophobic statements. For instance, Alexander Gauland is an outspoken advocate of a homogeneous national culture and identity. In doing so, in response to integration commissioner Aydan Özoguz's observation that "a specifically German culture is, beyond the language, simply not identifiable." Gauland, responded as follows:

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[6] See http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37274201 accessed on 19 January 2018.
[7] http://www.hitc.com/en-gb/2017/09/25/what-do-germanys-afd-want-heres-summary-from-their-manifesto/ accessed on 17 January 2018.
[8] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/amp.dw.com/en/afd-what-you-need-to-know-about-germanys-far-right-party/a-37208199 accessed on 17 January 2018.
[9] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/amp.dw.com/en/afd-what-you-need-to-know-about-germanys-far-right-party/a-37208199 accessed on 17 January 2018.

> "That's what a German-Turk says. Invite her to Eichsfeld and tell her then what specifically German culture is. Afterwards, she'll never come back here, and we will be able to dispose of her in Anatolia, thank God."[10]

Gauland then stated that this was the party rhetoric, implying the AfD racial animosity towards the "other". Similarly, speaking in Berlin the morning after the election results, he claimed that there is "an invasion of foreigners", more precisely the invasion of Europe by Muslim which began with the influx of refugees.[11] During the press conference, he elaborated that
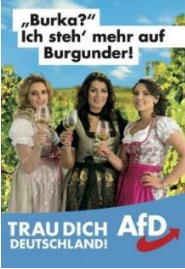
> "One million people – foreigners – being brought into this country are taking away a piece of this country, and we as AfD don't want that ... We say we don't want to lose Germany to an invasion of foreigners from a different culture. Very simple."[12]

As indicated in this statement, AfD has been constructing a discourse centred on exploiting the so-called "Islamisation of the West", which is predicated on deploying the fears about the domination of Western culture(s) by Islam. Thereby, disrupting the hierarchical relationship between cultures and more importantly "civilisations". In this context, Gauland has also remarked that

> "Islam is not a religion like Catholicism or Protestantism. Intellectually, Islam is always linked to the overthrow of the state. Therefore, the Islamization of Germany poses a threat."[13]

In combination with the AfD manifesto and the much-publicized statements of AfD leaders, this indicates that Islam is perceived as a threat and Muslims as dangerous because Islam is perceived to be defying the separation of religion and state. This also implies that AfD considers religion as the cornerstone of German and European culture.

AfD's 2017 Election Posters

"Burka?" I'm much more into Burgunder! Explanation: "Burgunder" is a wine from the eastern region of France; "Burgunden" were an old Germanic tribe...	"New Germans?" We make them ourselves.

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[10] http://www.dw.com/en/afds-alexander-gauland-slammed-over-racist-remark-aimed-at-minister/a-40277497 accessed on 18 January 2018.
[11] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41384550 accessed on 18 January 2018.
[12] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/german-election-results-afd-far-right-merkel-alexander-gauland-2017-coalition-invasion-of-foreigners-a7965886.html accessed on 18 January 2018.
[13] https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/8392/islam-belongs-to-germany accessed on 18 January 2018.

Tourists welcome!
Deport asylum deceivers and Islamists!

"Islam?"
Does not fit into our cuisine.

"Burkas?"
We are into bikinis.

"And what is your reason to fight for Germany?"

Stop Islamization.

Köln – Stuttgart – Hamburg...
More security for our wives (or women) and daughters!

The trace of the world (global) Chancellor throughout Europe.
Tote: dead; *Verletzte*: injured

Traditional family at the beach:
"Traditional?"
We like it.

France, Front Nationale

France's Front Nationale (FN) is a right-wing French political party founded in 1972 by François Duprat and François Brigneau. It is commonly associated with Jean-Marie Le Pen, and his daughter Marine Le Pen who have both promoted French nationalism, while supporting anti-immigrant sentiments. Despite the fact that current financial crisis and refugee crisis triggered the public support for the FN, its origins date back to the colonial times of France with regards to North Africa in general, and to the Algerian Question in particular. Postcolonial issues have always been of vital concern to the extreme right in France (Veugelers, 2012; Flood and Frey, 2002). Relatively strong support for the FN is in the southern coastal cities such as Toulon, Nice, Marseilles, Perpignan, Orange, Marignane, Vitrolles and Aix-en-Provence. In the early 1960s, around 600,000 *Pieds-Noirs* (Black Feet) of French descent colonialists left Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and were settled mostly in the Mediterranean cities. Veugelers (2012) points out that majority of the *Pieds-Noirs* had a far-right affinity born out of their experience of imperialism and de-colonialization. After their return to the mainland, it is reported that they were not welcomed by the Metropolitan French, but well received by the coastal populations. *Pieds-Noirs* appealed to the idea of *l'Algerie française*, which was supported and strengthened by the newly established organization of Jean-Marie Le Pen, who had previously served in Algeria as an intelligence officer. Le Pen always sympathized with the soldiers and French settlers who opposed to the idea of De Gaulle in his withdrawal from North Africa. When the FN was established in 1972, activists who fought for *l'Algerie française* provided a core of cadres for the new party (Birenbaum, 1992). FN regularly recited the memories, heroes, and the grievances of the *Pieds-Noirs* during the 1954-1962 war against Algerian independence. In explaining the discursive foundations of the FN, Flood and Frey (2002) very well display the legacy of the historical myths and the selective interpretation of facts in a way that removes them from critical scrutiny by rendering them either transcendent and sublime or subhuman and grotesque.

The discourse of cultural antagonism in France's Front Nationale is similar to that of Germany's AfD. As AfD's regional head from the state of Thuringia, Björn Höcke claimed: "Like the AfD, the National Front works to oppose further *foreign infiltration* and *to maintain the identity of European nations*" (emphasis added).[14] However, as opposed to the AfD, FN has a clearer and more tangible approach to culture and heritage. The agenda of the FN is clarified in the official website of the party, which is available in French only.[15]

Unlike the manifestos in other cases, FN has detailed subheadings titled "culture" and "heritage".[16] These subheadings promote the preservation of the French language and the French culture in the context of the party's anti-EU views. This is an interesting departure from other countries we explored because FN prioritizes anti-EU sentiments over anti-immigrant sentiments. Similarly, language as one of the primary components of a homogeneously defined French nation is at the

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[14] http://m.dw.com/en/a-comparison-of-germanys-afd-and-frances-national-front/a-19249980 accessed on 21 January 2018.

[15] See http://www.frontnational.com accessed on 21 January 2018.

[16] http://www.frontnational.com/terme/culture/
http://www.frontnational.com/terme/patrimoine/ accessed on 21 January 2018.

heart of cultural preservation. Under the heritage section, while preservation of French culture is reiterated throughout, the protection of national brands, such as French glass arts, embodied by the Baccarat brand, are promoted. Furthermore, Marine Le Pen

> "wants to instil this in every French child through arts education at all levels in school, including music and song to transmit French traditions to a new generation. She would pursue a protectionist approach, seeking to prevent the sale of historic buildings and major works of art to foreigners, and using state funding to increase the profile of 'popular' art produced in France as an alternative to what she calls 'official art' in public galleries."[17]

While protection of "traditional arts" is often referenced by populist leaders in other European countries, these references usually remain vague, and without substance. This is because the FN has a long history in French politics and unlike the newer populist movements, FN has had the time and experience to modernise and professionalise its culture and heritage agenda. Nonetheless, the nationalist and heavily xenophobic tone of the earlier part manifestos continue in the present-day agenda. To illustrate, Jean-Marie Le Pen had also emphasised that

> "State action in the field of culture should be limited to the preservation of national heritage and to supporting artistic creations that privilege 'tradition over rupture' and 'the rediscovery of national historical roots over tabula rasa'" (Le Pen, 1986: 171).

Moreover, Marine Le Pen systematically emphasizes the national-protectionist agenda, which she constructs in opposition to "others" signified by immigrants and minorities. As she stated in the Grand Assembly of FN in Bordeaux on 12 January 2012:

> "Nothing is changing in our country, where nothing seems to be able to stop the great scourges that have plagued it for decades: indebtedness, rising unemployment, poverty, the weakening of our national identity."[18]

Although Le Pen's main target of criticism was the EU, and the mainstream political parties, she also constructed "immigration" as a threat to national identity. She asserted that massive immigration "no longer allows assimilation, which is an aggression against our culture, our values and our traditions…" claiming that mass migration was "the beginning of destructive multiculturalism and systematic communitarianism."[19] Le Pen's statement is within the broader FN discourse of anti-immigration, which like AfD, welcomed assimilated immigrants, while those who remained within their own community's cultural parameters, were unwelcomed. As we discuss in relation to the Netherlands' and Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (PVV), FN's objection is not only immigrants of a certain ethnic or racial background, but also the sheer number of immigrants, which enables them to deploy politics of fear and anti-establishment/anti-mainstream views simultaneously. In this context, nationalist sentiments, anti-EU views, and anti-immigrant

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[17] https://www.apollo-magazine.com/french-culture-a-presidential-battleground/ accessed on 23 January 2018.
[18] http://www.frontnational.com/videos/grand-meeting-de-marine-le-pen-a-bordeaux-le-22-janvier/ accessed on 28 January 2018.
[19] http://www.frontnational.com/videos/grand-meeting-de-marine-le-pen-a-bordeaux-le-22-janvier/ accessed on 28 January 2018

views are formulated in clusters to give credibility to FN discourse that articulates the "other" as a threat.

In the 2017 Presidential campaign, Marine Le Pen emphasized the "Christian roots" of France, so have François Fillon and (before his defeat), Nicolas Sarkozy (Brubaker, 2017: 1198). In doing so, secularism or rather *laicité* has become central to FN's articulation of Muslims as the "other". This is a conventional view, which exploits the connotations of Islam and Christianity, constructed within the clash of civilisations approach. As evidenced in Brubaker's analysis, Le Pen's main asset has been the principle of laicité:

> "Given the distinctive French tradition of laicité (or secularity), this might seem unsurprising. But the embrace of laicité by the Front National under Marline Le Pen is new. This shift was driven by the preoccupation with Islam. Le Pen infamously compared Friday prayers by Muslims in the streets of certain parts of Paris to the German occupation, and she made the spread of Halal food a central campaign theme in the last presidential election. In the current campaign, she has called for banning the headscarf – along with the kippa and, for an appearance of equality, "large crosses"– in all public settings, including stores, streets, workplaces, and public transportation. Parts of the mainstream right have adopted a similarly assertive secularist posture. In the name of laicité, for example, the mayors of several towns controlled by Sarkozy's party announced last year that pork-free menu options – previously made available to accommodate Muslim and Jewish students – would no longer be offered in public schools (Brubaker 2017: 1201)."

As argued in this statement, unlike the other cases that we analyse in this paper, FN has not singled out Islam and Muslims but rather exploited the principle of *laicite* to legitimise their isolation from the public sphere as an impartial consequence of it. Nonetheless, she has targeted Islam and the "culture of Muslims", which were attempting to "invade" Europe and France. In 2015, Le Pen has also used terrorist attacks to single out Muslims, particularly Syrians, stating "France and the French are no longer safe" due to the influx of refugees, and the terrorists who entered into France holding Syrian passports.[20]

To illustrate, on 5 February 2017 in Lyon, during her campaign speech, Le Pen used a more security-based approach in deploying a politics of fear. She stated that "We do not want to live under the yoke of the threat of Islamic fundamentalism… Islamic fundamentalism is attacking us at home". Complementing this idea of "invasion" and "attack", formulating the antagonism is military terms which connote a hypothetical "war", Le Pen claimed that mass migration and the rise of "Islamic fundamentalism, [was] an ideological "enemy of France" to settle on its territory."[21] Moreover, as it is the case for AfD and PVV, as Le Pen argued, FN is against the idea that France/French nationals should "adapt [to Islam], which cannot be reasonable or conceivable" as France was built on its Christian heritage which was being hijacked by Islam. Therefore, the antagonism is not just a result of a failure of multiculturalism but rather a struggle for dominance

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[20] https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/18/world/europe/marine-le-pens-anti-islam-message-gains-influence-in-france.html accessed on 30 January 2018.
[21] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/marine-le-pen-front-national-speech-campaign-launch-islamic-fundamentalism-french-elections-a7564051.html accessed on 30 January 2018.

between Christian and Islamic civilizational identities. In this context, the former represents the secular ideal where Muslims who refuse to assimilate, particularly in terms of accepting and adhering to gender-equality, are considered fundamentalists.

Front Nationale's 2017 Presidential Election Posters

Choose France

Mother of the Nation

No to Brussels
Yes to France

Battle for France: President Marine
(Marine Le Pen is presented as Jeanne d'Arc)

Netherlands, Party for Freedom (PVV)

The Dutch politics changed rather dramatically since the turn of the century. Once upon a time, the Netherlands was a haven for political stability and societal harmony in which foreign media showed little interest even by Western European standards. It has now made headlines abroad with political assassinations of Pim Fortuyn (2002) and controversial film-maker Theo van Gogh (2004), highly volatile national elections in 2002, 2003 and 2006, and a vote against a new constitution for the European Union in 2005. Since Pim Fortuyn's tragic death and the disintegration of his party in the following months, various new parties have attempted to step into what was often perceived as a political vacuum. This vacuum would consist of a combination of democratic renewal, a militant civic nationalism, economic liberalism and a preference for restrictive laws on immigration, integration and criminality (Vossen, 2010, 2011; Akkermans, 2005; Lucardie, 2008). By 2007, Rita Verdonk and Geert Wilders, two former members of the conservative liberal '*Volkspartij voor*

Vrijheid en Democratie' (VVD, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy), proved the most promising candidates for filling this 'vacuum'. Polling around 20 percent of the votes in the spring and summer of 2008, the political movement '*Trots op Nederland*' (ToN, Proud of the Netherlands), founded by former minister of integration affairs Rita Verdonk in April 2008, initially appeared to pose the main challenge to the vested parties. In autumn 2008, however, the '*Partij voor de Vrijheid*' (PVV, Party for Freedom), founded in 2006 by Geert Wilders, took over the leading position, as Verdonk's movement was afflicted by internal quarrels and disappointing polling results. The PVV received 5.9 percent of the votes during the 2006 elections and was represented in parliament with nine seats as a result. Although he is merely the leader of a medium-sized parliamentary party, Wilders succeeded in attracting an enormous amount of national and international media attention by offering a range of spectacular storylines and events. These included the release of his anti-Islam movie, *Fitna* (March 2008), and his detainment at Heathrow Airport, as a consequence of the UK Home Secretary's ban on him entering the country in February 2009.

The particular hallmark of PVV is its warnings about the "Islamisation" of the Netherlands and immigration from Eastern Europe. Resentment towards Muslim citizens is articulated in particularly strong terms. The party thus addresses the 50 percent of the Dutch who are against increased immigration from non-EU states. Dutch journalists, scientists and fellow politicians agree that Geert Wilders and his PVV are best qualified as populists. The denunciation of elites, and his strong affinity for conspiracy theories are Wilders' two basic tenets. These tenets are formulated and linked within an apocalyptic theory of an ongoing Islamisation of Europe, which allegedly will lead to the subjection and transformation of Europe into *Eurabia*. Initially Wilders took a hard-line position as a liberal MP against radical Islam. However, from 2003-2004 onwards he began to criticise Islam as a totalitarian ideology (instead of a religion), which should be placed on the same level as communism and fascism, and which poses a comparable threat to the West, hence his usage of the term Islamofascism (Vossen, 2010, 2011). This ongoing radicalisation can be attributed to the assassination of anti-Islamic filmmaker Theo van Gogh (November 2004), and the ongoing threats on Wilders' life, due to which he has been under permanent security protection, and living at different addresses, ever since 2004 (Vossen, 2010).

Unlike the other populist parties' manifestos, Wilders' PVV has a very short, one page, manifesto titled "The Netherlands is ours again". The Manifesto consists of 11 one-sentence long pledges. It is centred on anti-immigration, anti-Islam, Euroscepticism. The first pledge of the manifesto, also the lengthiest, promises to "de-Islamise" the country, under eight short sub-headings stating their strategy (http://uk.businessinsider.com/geert-wilders-pvv-manifesto-2017-2). This, in and of itself, reveals the centrality of an anti-Islamic stance to PVV.

The manifesto calls "for the closure of all mosques and Islamic schools, a ban on the Koran, and "no more immigrants from Islamic countries." It also proposes a ban on "Islamic headscarves" in public, as well as the prohibition of all "Islamic expressions which violate public order."[22] The manifesto does not make any explicit reference to culture but rather it articulates Islam as a threat to the Dutch culture thereby using a logic that equates them. As Brubaker (2017: 1194) argues that

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[22] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/s/www.rt.com/document/57c08bfec361882e298b456f/amp/357340-geert-wilders-manifesto-islam accessed on 28 January 2018.

this stems from the idea that most populist parties construct Christianity "not as a religion but as a civilizational identity understood in antithetical opposition to Islam. Secularism is embraced as a way of minimizing the visibility of Islam in the public sphere." This argument is supported by Wilders' formulation of Islam as the anti-thesis of Judeo-Christian values where the former is superior to the latter. Wilders' way of portraying Islam as an anti-thesis of Judeo-Christian European culture also helps the PVV generate a societal and political alliance among some segments of the secular, Christian and Jewish segments of the Dutch nation.

Wilders' statements during media interviews, and his speeches to the PVV supporters are essential to deconstructing this formulation. For instance, in 2008, he told the Guardian "Islam is not a religion, it's an ideology, the ideology of a retarded culture."[23] As such, he articulates Islam as a product of a culture that has failed to progress as other cultures. This understanding of cultural progress is linked to the idea of a classical model of modernity, which is under Euro-American hegemony. Wilders goes on to say "I have a problem with Islamic tradition, culture, ideology. Not with Muslim people."[24] This statement is very problematic as it declares Islam a 'tradition, culture and ideology' simultaneously. This statement can be better deconstructed in the light of Wilders' likening of the 'fascist Quran' to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. To that end, he said the following words:

> "The Koran is a fascist book which incites violence. That is why this book, just like Mein Kampf, must be banned. The book incites hatred and killing and therefore has no place in our [Dutch] legal order."[25]

Geert Wilders and PVV intermittently refer to the past explicitly in their discourse but there is a consistent implicit exploitation of Islam by formulating it as a threatening ideology. The above-mentioned statement is one of the extreme statements on Islam. It is also very informative on the populist stance on ideologies that threaten their survival. In fact, likening the Quran to *Mein Kampf* is a way of using the past to legitimise PVV's anti-Muslim sentiments through establishing a framework of reference.

Wilders' main theme in communicating with his electorate is the anti-Muslim prejudice. In this sense, his articulation of Islam as an ideology rather than a religion has given credibility to his plans to shut down mosques and Islamic schools, to ban the Koran and to refuse refugees from Muslim countries, to deport Muslims, and to take away the citizenship rights of Muslims with a criminal record. Wilders has formulated an antagonism between Islam and Dutch culture in order to persuade his audience on the validity of his extreme strategies.

Furthermore, Wilders has been using historical clashes between Islam/Muslims and Dutch/Europeans to legitimise his stance. In this regard, one could recite his following statement:

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[23] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/world/2008/feb/17/netherlands.islam accessed on 28 January 2018.
[24] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/world/2008/feb/17/netherlands.islam accessed on 28 January 2018.
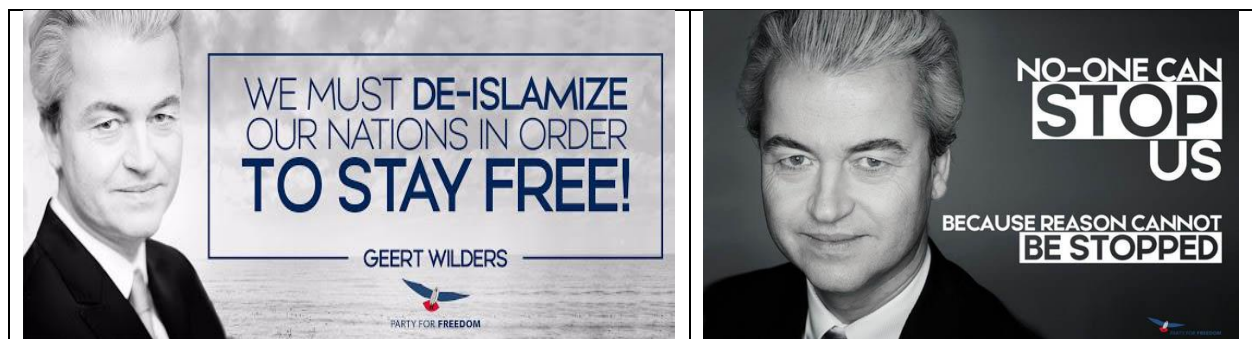[25] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-11469579 accessed on 2 February 2018.

"Madam Speaker, there is no such thing as "moderate Islam". As Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said the other day, and I quote, "There is no moderate or immoderate Islam. Islam is Islam and that's it". Islam is in pursuit of dominance. It wishes to exact its imperialist agenda by force on a worldwide scale (8:39). This is clear from European history. Fortunately, the first Islamic invasion of Europe was stopped at Poitiers in 732; the second in Vienna in 1683. Madam Speaker, let us ensure that the third Islamic invasion, which is currently in full spate, will be stopped too in spite of its insidious nature and notwithstanding the fact that, in contrast to the 8th and 17th centuries, it has no need for an Islamic army because the scared "dhimmis" in the West, also those in Dutch politics, have left their doors wide open to Islam and Muslims...
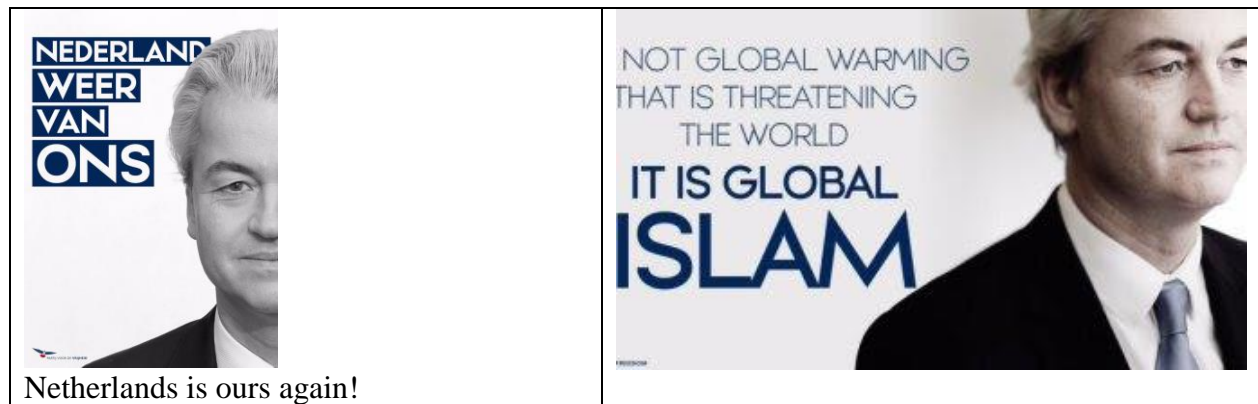
...

Madam Speaker, the Islamic incursion must be stopped. Islam is the Trojan horse in Europe. If we do not stop Islamification now, Eurabia and Netherabia will just be a matter of time. One century ago, there were approximately 50 Muslims in the Netherlands. Today, there are about 1 million Muslims in this country. Where will it end? We are heading for the end of European and Dutch civilisation as we know it."[26]

Wilders', and by extension PVV's discourse is centred on a supposed 'pursuit of (Islamic) dominance in the West as 'evidenced' by Ottoman Empire's attempts to 'invade' Europe physically and culturally. This idea of 'dominance' is another example of the antagonism in the populist discourse in which past conflicts are expressed and remembered to perpetuate and legitimise current conflicts. In many ways, this is a trope of communication with the populist discourse. It breathes life into hypothetical situations, which have not any discernible basis in the present day. Wilders' reference to Islam as the 'Trojan horse', as stated above, is a similar use of the past, in which fear of Islam is legitimised by alluding to a well-known 'story', which has been popularised as a phrase implying infiltration of an 'enemy'. Similarly, Wilders perceives Islamic incursion as leading to the "end of European and Dutch civilisation as we know it". This bold statement, is very problematic. It implies that there are two civilisations; European and Dutch without explaining the relations between the two. It also states that Islam, as an ideology, will cause the end of both.

PVV's 2017 Election Posters

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[26] https://www.geertwilders.nl/77-in-the-press/in-the-press/1214-mr-wilderss-contribution-to-the-parliamentary-debate-on-islamic-activism accessed on 2 February 2018.

Netherlands is ours again!

Italy, Five Star Movement (M5S)

Italy is known to be the land of populist political formations, which later turn into mainstream political parties. In the 2013 parliamentary elections, 50 percent of the Italian electorate voted for parties that could be labelled populist: this includes Silvio Berlusconi's *Popolo della Liberta`* (PdL), the Lega Nord (Northern League, LN) and the new kid on the block, Beppe Grillo's *Movimento Cinque Stelle* (Five Star Movement, M5S). Unique for Europe, Italy witnessed four coalition governments dominated by populists (the LN and PdL, and its predecessor Forza Italia, or FI) during the 1994-2011 period. In line with the framework guiding this special issue, Italy thus offers a unique opportunity to trace the reactions of political and societal actors, both domestically and internationally, to populists in government. This occurred in conjunction with the end of the Cold War, corruption scandals, and pressure from deepening European integration. Populism may actually thus have contributed to Italy's second democratic transition to the so-called Second Republic in the early 1990s. Indeed, initial reactions to the LN's populism were not completely negative. However, since the early-1990s, populist parties have begun to consolidate their positions, and their opponents have had to adjust their positions, some reacting strongly against populists and their themes, others accommodating them. After the Berlusconi IV government, some populist forces became part of the traditional political class, producing, in part, another populist reaction: the rise of Grillo's Five Star Movement (Bordignon and Ceccarini, 2013).

The Italian *Movimento 5 Stelle* (M5S) is one of the most interesting political phenomena in contemporary Europe. This populist anti-establishment party was founded in 2009 by a famous comedian, activist and blogger, Beppe Grillo. The Movement grew fast and in the 2013 general elections the party received the most votes, with 25.6 percent in the *Camera dei Deputati* (Italy's Lower Chamber) (Franzosi, Marone and Salvoti, 2015). M5S was formed as a reaction to the continued presence of populism in power, that is, the centre-right coalition consisting of Berlusconi and Bossi (2001–2006 and 2008–2011), as well as, to the fall of the 2011 Berlusconi government and the formation of the Mario Monti technocratic government. The arrival of M5S resembled the success of the Northern League in the 1980s. M5S succeeded in working around the mainstream media owned by the state and Berlusconi alike by making use of new social media (Biorcio, 2014; Natale, 2014). M5S offers a third type of populism with a left-libertarian flavour. Although the leader of the movement, Beppe Grillo, a former comedian, often takes positions that could be classified as right-wing, he could be classified as a populist left-libertarian combining a populist,

anti-elitist discourse and environmentalism with left-wing economics in opposition to the "multinationals" (Verbeek and Sazlove, 2016).

In 2009, Beppe Grillo, a popular comedian, and blogger, and Gianroberto Casaleggio, a web strategist who died in 2016, founded the M5S. While the Movement is grounded on anti-establishment and anti-EU stance, compared to the cases we discuss in this paper it has limited references to culture and heritage. This stems from the fact that M5S does not offer an unyielding political programme but rather a developing political agenda built on addressing the discontents of the Italian public to protect national interests.[27] In turn, declining economic conditions, decreasing income and rising unemployment have been the main topics of M5S, which called for a re-distribution of wealth. Beppe Grillo is not a politician in conventional terms and he deploys political satire and controversial remarks to communicate with his supporters. The lack of a clearly defined party programme also accommodates his approach to politics and political communications. M5S's anti-establishment, Eurosceptic, anti-immigration and pro-environment stance can be summarised under M5S's five agendas: "publicly owned water, sustainable (eco-friendly) transport, sustainable development, right to internet access, and environmentalism."[28]

The Movement's anti-immigration views have become clearer following the entry of migrants in the recent years and resulting widespread concerns of the Italian public on this issue. This is a common theme in all populist parties/movements because while preservation of culture and heritage is an issue for all, the recent crisis have fuelled the discussions regarding both the cultural and the structural issues brought on by the influx of migrants. The preservation of cultural heritage is often an implicit part of preserving and protecting national culture, but the crisis has provided a legitimate "other" against which this protection is needed. As such, the Movement's officials have called for limitations to the number of migrants coming in to Italy, a modification to the Dublin Regulation and the rules on asylum, and providing more assistance to the local authorities to accommodate the growing number of migrants.[29]

Resentment against the growing social, economic, political and cultural impact of immigration on the Italian society is one of the most outstanding sources of contemporary populist rhetoric in Italy. It is not only the *M5S*, but also the *Casa Pound* initiative, established in Rome in 2003, which has capitalized on policies and discourses revolving around anti-immigration, racist, anti-globalist, and anti-multiracial projections of the contemporary Italian nation. For both organizations, *M5S* and *Casa Pound*, globalization is considered the source of all kinds of evil such as multicultural, and multiracial neighbourhoods disrupting the homogenous unity of the Italian nation (Toscano, 2015). Growing number of Romanians, Albanians, Moroccans, Chinese, Ukrainians and Sab-Saharan Africans is often exploited by the populist organizations, especially by Casa Pound, which tries to portray the immigrants as the biggest challenge embodied against national, societal, cultural and human security of the Italian majority.

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[27] M5S's manifesto is available in Italian only. See
http://www.beppegrillo.it/iniziative/movimentocinquestelle/Programma-Movimento-5-Stelle.pdf .
[28] http://uk.businessinsider.com/what-is-italy-five-star-movement-beppe-grillo-trump-farage-2016-12 accessed on 3 February 2018.
[29] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/s/www.cnbc.com/amp/2017/09/24/italys-five-star-movement-welcomes-support-from-rivals-but-says-it-wont-give-up-cabinet-seats-in-any-coalition-deal.html accessed on 4 February 2018.

In this framework, M5S has been critical of Federica Mogherini as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs. Most importantly, Beppe Grillo stated said the following words to draw attention to the fact that Dublin Regulations, which require that each asylum seeker should apply for asylum in the country where the applicant first entered into the EU borders, simply overload Italy with a great deal of responsibility as far as the asylum seekers are concerned:

> "What's been happening in the last few days in relation to the Dublin Regulation should have happened earlier and this is the demonstration of the weakness of this government, left isolated by the EU as long as the immigration problem was simply an Italian problem, a problem of a government that was not capable of getting other member states to listen to it, a government without authority, a government that cannot make its voice heard. Only now that the refugees fleeing war are knocking on Germany's door, is everyone noticing that there's a need to change the rules and that the burden of this mass exodus cannot be carried by a single country. If Italy had had a different government, and a decent prime minister, today we would not be in this situation and Italy could claim to be the one that found an effective and just solution to the tragic problem of immigration."[30]

As we discussed in relation to France, Germany and the Netherlands, the main issue about immigration is the high number of refugees and asylum-seekers entering into Italy. As it was the case in France and Germany, what we observe is the construction of an anti-immigration discourse formulated because of the mainstream parties' failure to protect national interests. Anti-EU sentiments also take the lead in M5S as party officials argue that the EU's negligent policies have forced the Italian government to fend for itself in terms of the refugee crisis. This formulation also legitimises the argument that Italy has lost its say in the institutional structure of the EU. Nonetheless, as indicated in the statement above, M5S has a more humanitarian approach to the crisis.

As noted above, M5S is not explicitly identity or culture-oriented but rather driven by socio-economic issues. The official M5S's discourse does not draw on the antagonisms we observe in other cases. In this case, discourses are 'informally' constructed by the members of the party, particularly Beppe Grillo, who has expressed his support for populist leaders such Marine Le Pen, Nigel Farage, and, Donald Trump. Grillo is not a conventional politician, and he is well-known for his controversial remarks. For instance, in 2016 in Padua he joked about London's first Muslim mayor Sadiq Khan saying, "I can't wait to see when the new Muslim mayor of London blows himself up at Westminster."[31] Grillo also tweeted on the subject of immigration stating that new elections should be held before "Rome is swamped by rats, rubbish and illegal immigrants."[32] While this is not unequivocally M5S's official discourse, it illustrates the anti-immigrant sentiments of the leadership under the guise of fear of terrorism.

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[30] http://www.beppegrillo.it/en/2015/09/the_dublin_regulation_has_to_b.html accessed on 4 February 2018.
[31] https://www.google.com.tr/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/15/beppe-grillo-sparks-explosion-of-outrage-with-sadiq-khan-joke accessed on 5 February 2018.
[32] http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-33167343 accessed on 5 February 2018.

Statements of Virginia Raggi, Mayor of Rome, are also illustrative of M5S's unstable stance on migration. Two days after M5S suffered a series of setbacks in municipal elections, Virginia Raggi called for a "moratorium on migration" to Rome stating that,

> "Rome is exposed to strong migratory pressure - we can't go on like this… We cannot allow the creation of further social tension. This is why, I believe it is impossible as well as risky to think of creating other reception centres."[33]

Until then the Movement was less driven then its right-wing counterparts on this issue. This then marked the party's veer towards the right, which was partly an attempt to align the Movement with mainstream political issues.

Luigi Di Maio, the M5S's candidate for Italian prime minister at the general election has also expressed his support for Raggi's statement. He has also been a proponent of anti-establishment and anti-corruption in Italy. His anti-immigrant stance thus indicates that the Movement will continue to develop its agenda in reference to politicised issues, which cause discontent among the Italian public.

Although Beppe Grillo did not really speak out so much about migration related issues after his entry into the Italian Parliament, he had dealt with issues regarding immigration, work, employment, especially workplace fatalities and temporary employment, about which he even wrote a book, *Schiavi Moderni* (2014, Modern Slaves), based on accounts and experiences gathered on his personal blog (beppegrillo.it). His stand on sensitive issues such as public security or immigration, have aroused controversy. In particular, Grillo has declared his opposition to the granting of citizenship to the children of immigrants born in Italy, according to the principle of *ius soli,* citizenship based on place of birth. Previously, he had strongly criticised the enlargement of the EU to include Romania, and the presence of Roma in Italy, evoking the sacredness of the borders of the fatherland. Such views are probably designed to tune in to the wavelength of the *Lega Nord* (Northern League, LN) and other right-wing parties (Bordignon and Ceccarini, 2013).

M5S's Election Posters

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[33] https://www.ft.com/content/0da3830c-50fe-11e7-bfb8-997009366969 accessed on 5 February 2018.
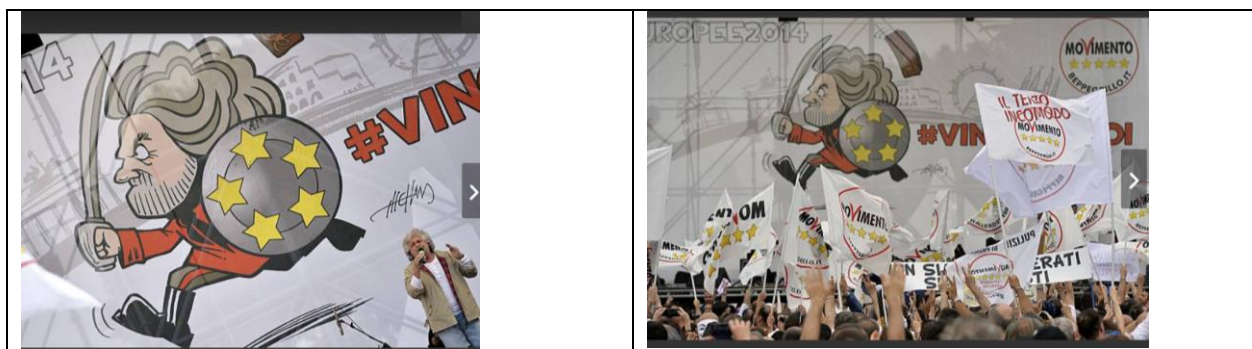
Greece, Golden Dawn

Although Golden Dawn has been around since 1983, it only became politically active in 1993, after the nationalist mobilisation over the Macedonia issue, which springs form the use of the ancient Hellenic word of "Macedonia" by the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia. Golden Dawn was founded on 14 February 1983 by its current leader, Nikos Michaloliakos, under the name 'People's Association – Golden Dawn' (Ellinas, 2013). Throughout its troubled early history, the party was known more for its involvement in violent incidents than for its electoral activity. Its leader served time in prison in the late 1970s for possession of explosives, and its number two was convicted in 2006 for an almost deadly attack in 1998 against leftist students (Ellinas, 2015). In every election until 2010, GD attracted a negligible part of the vote and failed to win representation. In the 2009 national election, the party received 0.29 percent and 19,624 votes. The GD's electoral fortunes started changing in 2010, when in the local elections the party leader Nicos Michaloliakos received 5.29 percent of the vote and won a seat on the Athens municipal council. The party performed rather well in the fourth and sixth districts of Athens, where GD was locally very active, receiving 6.94 percent and 8.38 percent, respectively. This breakthrough in the 2010 local elections became a stepping-stone to the electoral inroads the party made in the May and June 2012 parliamentary elections (Ellinas, 2013, and 2015; Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013). In May, the party received 440,996 votes or 6.97 percent and won 21 seats in the 300-member parliament. Expectations that support for the party would collapse were belied a month later, when the party received 426,025 votes or 6.92 percent and elected 18 members of parliament.

One of the main differences between GD and Western European radical right-wing parties relates to its ideology. Like many radical right parties in Western Europe, GD identifies itself as a nationalist party (Ellinas, 2015) but its ideology is much more radical. The official statutes of GD state that the party 'has faith in the ideology of Nationalism' (GD, 2012c: 2). The party considers nationalism to be 'the third major ideology of History' that opposes 'communism-internationalism' and 'liberalism-universalism'. Based on this nationalist worldview, and like radical right parties, GD advocates the expulsion of illegal immigrants from the country. It associates illegal immigration with high unemployment and warns against Greeks becoming a minority in their own country. Moreover, it demands the separation of Greek from foreign pupils in primary and secondary schools, 'due to the linguistic weaknesses of the foreigners'. Reflecting Greek particularities and in line with traditional programmatic claims of the Greek far right, GD demands a more assertive foreign policy and orientation away from 'American-Zionism' towards Russia.

Furthermore, the party considers Greece's entry into the Eurozone a mistake, as they consider that it undermines national sovereignty. In its ideological statement the party makes no reference to democracy and in its programme it demands 'direct democracy', that is, referenda for all major national issues and direct election of the Greek president by the people (GD, 2012a).

GD adopts a biological conception of nationalism reminiscent of Nazi ideology. The 2012 ideological pamphlet produced by GD provides solid evidence of its extreme ideological views, frequently referring to 'race'. GD wants to preserve not simply the 'nation-state' but the 'nation-race' (GD, 2012b). Commenting on the recruitment of a black Greek basketball player, Yiannis Antetokounmpo, by the National Basketball Association (NBA), GD leader Nicos Michaloliakos refused to accept that he is Greek. When told that Antetokounmpo waved the Greek flag when picked for an NBA team, Michaloliakos responded, "even in the zoo, if you give a chimp a banana and a Greek flag, he will be Greek" (Cited in Ellinas, 2015). Similarly, MP Elias Panagiotaros stated on television that Greek citizen Sophocles Schortsianitis, who is a player on the Greek national basketball team and also black, is not Greek. Panagiotaros said, "We do not consider Schortsianitis, according to the standards of the Greek race, to be Greek. His two parents have to be Greek and belong to the European race" (Cited in Ellinas, 2015). In a debate in the Greek parliament GD MP Eleni Zaroulia, who is also Michaloliakos's wife, accused the government of "equating Greek expatriates with every sort of subhuman that invaded our country carrying various diseases" (Cited in Ellinas, 2015).

The economic crisis exposed the failure of the Greek state to deal with immigration, providing opportunities for political agents to capitalise on pre-existing anti-immigration sentiments (Ellinas, 2015). These sentiments were elevated even more after the Syrian refugee crisis started to hit the country in 2014. In the late 1980s, when migration patterns in Greece had just started to change due to developments in Eastern Europe, Greeks were largely positive about or indifferent to the presence of foreigners (Triandafyllidou and Mikrakis, 1995). However, in the next decade, when large immigration flows started capturing media attention, attitudes turned negative – in fact, they were among the most negative in Europe. It was then only a matter of time before the exposed weaknesses of the Greek state, and the dire condition of the economy became associated with the immigration issue. Politicians were blamed for years of failed immigration and refugee policies, and especially for ineffective border controls that allowed hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants from Asia and Africa to use Greece as a point of permanent entry to the European Union. Immigrants were blamed by the Greek majority society for alarming changes to the demographics of major urban centres as well as for rising crime and unemployment rates. Although Greeks already displayed high levels of xenophobia, after the crisis anti-foreigner attitudes reached new levels.

Golden Dawn's steep rise is less surprising when the deep and protracted Greek recession is taken into account. The economic crisis has challenged the foundations of the Greek political system, giving rise to widespread protest against the political establishment. The crisis has also exposed the immigration challenges facing Greece, in part due to the failure of the state to control Greek borders effectively. GD was best positioned to benefit from the crisis, because its pariah status and violent tactics reinforced its anti-systemic profile at a time when the system had lost its legitimacy. Moreover, GD's nationalist ideology allowed it to establish credibility on the immigration issue and to capitalise on growing public concerns about the effects of immigration in urban areas. The

media seems to have helped amplify its anti-system, anti-immigrant and violent image, allowing the party to gain a much wider audience than its organisational resources would have otherwise allowed. In part due to the way the media have been covering its activities, since the 2012 elections GD has been able to sustain its anti-system profile, despite some evidence of collusion between the police and GD (Ellinas, 2013).

The founder of the GD, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, is a vocal representative of the party's agenda and principles presented as Hellenism. In November 2016, he gave a speech to criticise the construction of mosques in Athens, which has become a symbolic way of protesting the emergence of Islamic faith in Athens. To illustrate, in 2015 parliamentary candidate Ilias Panagiotaros, stated that "We vote Golden Dawn so that there will be no mosques, not in Athens, not anywhere…"[34]Similarly, in 2016, following the "Fatherland, Honor, Golden Dawn" chants, Michaloliakos stated that "The Janissaries will not pass… Who do they [those who built a Mosque in Athens] work for? For their bosses, for the Islamists, for Turkey who directly threatens Greece." Referencing the Sunni and Shiite conflicts, he claimed that building mosques would bring these animosities between these sects to Greece. He then asserted that mosques foster terrorists who are invading Greece. This follows the sentiments that he expressed in 2015 following the Paris attacks, when he stated, "Golden Dawn expresses her sorrow for the mass murder of innocents in Paris by Islamic terrorists. Europe is under attack. She must finally defend herself." As we argued above, the idea of "defending" Europe within the war analogy is a very common trope deployed by populist parties. In addition to revealing his anti-Islamic and intensely Turkophobic sentiments, he went on to criticise the anti-Hellenistic Greek government. Significantly, Michaloliakos systematically refers to the GD supporters as "nationalists" who stand against multiple adversaries including Greeks.[35] This is also the case for the party's manifesto.

In comparison to the cases discussed above, GD's manifesto was more explicit in constructing a homogenous national cultural heritage through deploying Greece's "glorious" history. In promoting the protection and commemoration of the past, GD labelled those who do not do so as anti-Hellenists. Among others, the English, Turks who have attempted to 'destroy' Greek heritage sites have been included as the "other" in this adversarial construct. The party officials have also labelled left-wing and mainstream parties as anti-Hellenists for not emphasizing and glorifying the past. Thus, GD does not only promote preservation of the past, but also articulates any individual/group who does not do so as the opponent of Greek culture. This antagonistic relationship has been constructed as an "assault on the Sacred Symbols and National Memory". To that end, Nikolaos G. Michaloliakos, Secretary General of People's Association-Golden Dawn wrote;

> "Many years ago, no one would ever imagine the burning of the Greek Flag in the liberated Greece and desecration of Monuments, Tombs and Statues of our National Heroes, of the great men of Hellenism. Nowadays, all these constitute a dreary reality and the assault on

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[34] https://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2015/01/22/greek-far-right-party-golden-dawn-rally-targets-islam accessed on 7 February 2018.
[35] https://xaameriki.wordpress.com/2016/11/03/nikolaos-michaloliakos-speech-at-votanikos-against-the-mosque/ accessed on 7 February 2018.

the Sacred Symbols and National Memory is more than evident. The duty of every Greek Patriot is the resistance at this challenge that threatens the existence of our Nation."[36]

As this statement indicates, GD's discourse also aims to incite a sense of patriotism in its electorate. This antagonism between those who protect the Hellenistic past and those who do not is an interesting formulation. Other European populist parties often identified the "establishment", the EU, national mainstream parties, and immigrants as the "other". GD, on the other hand, has a different fault line centred on the past. As a result, the "other" comprises a large cluster of different groups. These different groups are identified in the manifesto.[37]

In regards to the activation of the individuals to embody and defend the values of the GD, the manifesto states that

> "I embrace the moral imperatives arising from my worldview and aim to a radical renewal of the obsolete and counterfeit social values. My ideology is not looking to salvage anything from the installed economic and social interests that lead nations, peoples and cultures in decline. So I'm an enemy of every power that perpetuates this sepsis that finds foothold in plutocracy. Whether this power is a military-financial dictatorship or a parliamentary dictatorship. Because those are the two sides of the same coin, and their purpose is tearing down national identity."[38]

The key theme in the manifesto is the construction of a national identity, which is believed to be under threat from several different antagonists. Capitalism and globalisation are constructed as being hazardous to Greek culture. As implied in the excerpt above, GD is very critical of the current global order rather than just national politics and the EU. Promoting a "social state" where the nation is constructed upon "organic" connections, the manifesto states:

> "I believe the only state that serves correctly its historical role is the social state, where political power comes from the people, without party promoters. Nationalism sees people not only as a numerical entity of individuals but as a qualitative synthesis of people with the same biological and spiritual heritage, which is the source of all creation and expresses its power in the social state. The only state that can represent the people as an organic and spiritual living whole."[39]

As such, GD formulates the nation in a constricting fashion in which "biological and spiritual heritage" governed by a social state. While "biological heritage" denoting racial and ethnic hierarchy between nations has been implied by many populist party leaders, GD explicitly states and promotes the superiority of the Greek people. Significantly, this biological heritage is combined with a "spiritual heritage", which then constructs the "nation".

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[36] http://www.xryshaygh.com/en/view/the-desecration-of-the-monument-of-alexandros-ypsilantis-and-the-attack-on accessed on 8 February 2018.
[37] https://xaameriki.wordpress.com/the-manifesto-of-golden-dawn/ accessed on 8 February 2018.
[38] https://xaameriki.wordpress.com/the-manifesto-of-golden-dawn/ accessed on 8 February 2018.
[39] https://xaameriki.wordpress.com/the-manifesto-of-golden-dawn/ accessed on 8 February 2018.

Unlike the other manifestos we analysed in this paper, GD's manifesto is written in first person proposing the superiority of the individual over the society, it states that

> "I believe in the importance of society, the whole community of the People, not the individual. The individual acquires a face and forms its shape, its "I" identity through the "We" of the total. *Individuals do not have historical significance as opposed to the people who are condensations spacetime of special qualities of the People and the Nation*. A person can only be one who completes the socialization through capability, as harmonious acquisition of social and individual values. This superior type of person is a new kind of person that nationalism seeks to create (emphasis added)."[40]

The relation between the "I" and the "We" is formulated in reference to the past, which is a significant characteristic of GD. This places society, the "we", over the "I" while embracing the accomplishments of the Greek society throughout history. It defines the relations between the individual and the nation in which the accomplishments of the latter feeds into the heritage of the individual, thereby creating a cyclic relationship. In turn, social values are instilled in the individual who then becomes a representative of these values. According to the manifesto, these values are rooted in the glories of the Greek past, which grounds the new type of nationalism based on a common biological and spiritual heritage.

Golden Dawn's 2015 Election Posters

I believe-vote/ popular association Golden Dawn/ Freedom to the country	"Golden Dawn for Athens/ After the night's most profound darkness/ a Golden Dawn always rises/Ilias Kasidiaris/Candidate for Athens' mayor"

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[40] https://xaameriki.wordpress.com/the-manifesto-of-golden-dawn/ accessed on 8 February 2018

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"Popular Association/ Golden Dawn/Freedom to the country"

"Greeks in power/ thieves in jail"

Not one Greek jobless
Not one illegal migrant in Greece
Popular Association
Golden Dawn

"Cleanse the country of the filth" (2012)

Conclusion

The growing affiliation of the supporters of right-wing populist parties with culture, nativism, authenticity, ethnicity, religiosity, traditions, myths, and civilizational rhetoric provides them with an opportunity to establish solidarity networks against structural problems. The interviews we conducted show that the majority of the supporters of right-wing populist parties are not religious by habitus, they are mostly secular, agnostic, or even atheist. Such individuals who are on the one hand, socially, economically and politically deprived, and on the other hand, are in quest for communities to defend themsevels against the detrimental effects of globalization are more likely to be appealed by right-wing populist discourses that simplify, binarize, culturalize, civilitionalize and religionize what is social, economic and political in origin. Right-wing populist party leaderships accross Europe seem to be strongly capitalizing on civilizational matters by singling out Islam. Our discourse analysis of the speeches and manifestos of the right-wing populist parties in five countries go in parallel with the observations of Rogers Brubaker (2017: 1208):

"The growing civilizational preoccupation with Islam in European populisms has profoundly transformed the political semantics of self and other: the collective self is increasingly defined

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in broadly civilizational, not narrowly national terms. The civilizational-level semantics of self and other have internalized liberalism – along with secularism, philosemitism, gender equality, gay rights, and free speech – as an identity marker of the Christian West vis-a-vis putatively intrinsically illiberal Islam."

In parallel with the Huntingtonian paradigm of "Clash of Civilizations", the term civilization here is reduced to religious differences, and Christianism as a cultural form, but not religious form, to be celebrated by liberals, atheists, agnostics, and others versus the rise of radical Islam challenging the secular forms of life. The feelings of social-economic and political deprivation are not only expressed by means of resentment against multiculturalism, diversity, migration and Islam, but also by means of resentment against the European Union institutions, which are believed to be imposing a unified transnational identity challenging national sovereignty and nativism.

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