

Universiteit Utrecht

Framing the Other

a comparative research of the image of Islam and Muslims in Dutch and Spanish newspapers from 1975-present within the context of the debate on European identity

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Abstract

This study explores how academics and newspapers in the Netherlands and Spain have contributed to the intercultural dialogue within Europe in the past decades by answering the question:

How have newspapers in the Netherlands and Spain portrayed Islam and Muslims since 1975 and how does this relate to the academic debate on European identity?

The answer to this question based on the corpus build around the search terms 'Islam' in Spanish and Dutch press, (moslim or moslims) in the Dutch press and (musulman or musulmanes) in the Spanish press is that it tends to be negative, especially when put in contrast to 'European' values such as democracy, freedom of speech and (religious) tolerance. However, that would be an oversimplified conclusion.

As the images of Islam and Muslims in both the Dutch and Spanish press are in flux, perceptions on them continuously changing throughout time, the events of especially the 2000s accelerating polarization of society as a consequence of amongst others negative news reports and especially columns and opinion pieces. What can be concluded from this verbal resistance is that both the Dutch and Spanish press do not find it easy to deal with religious difference for different reasons. However, as the academic debate on Europe demonstrates, these discussions are inevitable. They are a part of the ambiguous and uncomfortable discourse about the cultural identity of 'project Europe'. One of the biggest challenges of this project is incorporating Islam, which has become increasingly important due to the increased contact and proximity of Europe, Muslims and Islam over the years. The comparison of Dutch and Spanish press who both have very different tactics when it comes to writing on Islam and Muslims, the one coarse the other more carefully expressing its discontents demonstrates the important role of the press to achieve support and acceptance for moderate Islam in Europe. The combined effort of academics and popular media, can lead to a much more versatile debate, successfully showing the different sides to 'the same' story. It would be an important step to Europe fulfilling its utopian ideals which includes a good relationship with its Islamic or Muslim 'Self and Other' rather through dialogue than conflict.

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Introduction

*'...there are as many Islams as there are situations that sustain it'*¹

The above quote by the Syrian scholar Aziz al-Azmeh suggests a diversity of Islam, or as he puts it 'Islams', taking different forms within the personal, national or even supranational context within which it is performed. One could just as easily exchange the word Islam here for Christianity as al-Azmeh applies Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' which considers all types of communities to be social constructions that exist in the imagination of people that are part of said community, on religion.² Arguably as such Islam in al-Azmeh's statement could also be replaced by other communities that have an identity affirming effect, either ethnic, or (supra-)nationalist.

Enclosed in his statement is also an Orwellian notion of unequal treatment.³ Unlike how people view other communities the image of Islam is more often than not perceived as being one-dimensional. According to critics this is particularly true in Europe. There, despite reinforcing it through "stories, images, resonances, collective memories, invented and carefully nurtured traditions" and even officializing its common heritage and identity through several treaties, 'the' European identity is ambiguous at best.⁴ This ambiguity shows in the motto adopted by the Union in 2000, *In Varietate Concordia*, which translates as *United in Diversity* and reflects the juxtaposition of national and supranational interests the Union member states' officials have been trying to balance since its founding on the seventh of February 1992.

While at the time the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht, officially the Treaty on European Union by Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom appeared to be one of the final steps in a process uniting the nations of Europe in the wake of the World Wars of the first half of 20th century, the first decades of the 21st century have proven that Europe has a long way to go before actually being united. For example, most members of the Union accepted a common currency in 2002. However, Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom retained a special status, and their own currency. That the member states of the Union did not see themselves as a single unity became even more evident during the Euro-crisis of 2009 when Greece, via minister of finance Giorgios Papakonstantinou, declared to its co-members of the Union a budget deficit of twelve percent was threatening to bankrupt the country. The announcement drove a wedge into the Union as its members put their national

¹ Aziz al-Azmeh, *Islams and modernities*, (London, 1993) 1.

² Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London, 1991) 6-7.

³ George Orwell: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" in *Animal Farm* (1945) 112.

⁴ Anthony Pagden, 'Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent.', in: Anthony Pagden (ed.) *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Washington D.C., 2006) 33.

interests before that of the European Union as a whole.⁵ Even more so, it raised questions on the compatibility of ‘Europeans’ from a demographic and historical perspective.

These questions became even more relevant in 2014. Tensions rose on Europe’s eastern border due to the Russian annexation of Crimea. Around the same time, its inner territories were threatened with terrorist attacks in various European cities (most notably in Paris, 2015 and Brussels, 2016) by members or adherers of Islamic State/Daesh. Moreover, a large flow of refugees trying to enter Europe as a consequence of the newly found Caliphate at its southeastern border. It brought about debates resonating Samuel Huntington’s 1994 polarizing ‘Clash of Civilization’ theory in the political spectrum and both popular media as well as academic circles. Samuel Huntington famously argued that European civilization, being rooted in Judeo-Christian tradition, is not compatible with Islam. Historically, this divide, according to Huntington, manifested itself at the borders of what in some media is now called the ‘Fortress Europe’ and what he names the ‘Islamic World’. The latter shall be described as the countries of the North Africa-West Asia region (NAWA) in this research.⁶ Widely reported events such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (2001), the murder of Theo van Gogh by radicalized Muslim Mohammed B. (2004) in the Netherlands, the train and metro-bombings in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), as well as several incidents in France (2015-present) have reinforced this image.

The internationally renowned scholar and former Algerian minister Mustapha Cherif and literary critic and philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) in a conversation on *Islam and the West* (2006; 2008) protested against this narrative. They argue that a lot of the friction between Europe and Islam that have led people to believe the narrative of a supposed clash of civilizations is based on “reciprocal ignorance” both north and south of the Mediterranean.⁷ In *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts determine how we see the rest of the world* (1981) Edward Said argues that this ignorance is deliberately maintained by “Media and the Experts”. Other scholars, like Mahmoud Eid and Karim H. Karim, have positioned themselves somewhere between these two points of view, arguing that the identifying of the ‘Self’ in Europe and the NAWA-countries against a Muslim or Western ‘Other’ has led to a distorted historical memory on both sides of the debate. According to them, the longstanding rivalry between the two regions has led to the erasure of the positive influences from the historical relationship between Europe and the Islamic world. This would be reinforced by statements and publications of scholars, politicians, journalists and religious parties that come from fear, hatred or ignorance and are blind to

⁵ Caroline de Gruyter, ‘Ook na Griekse crisis is de Eurozone nog niet af’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 19 August 2018 via <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/08/19/ook-na-griekse-crisis-is-de-eurozone-nog-niet-af-a1613544> (31 October 2018).

⁶ In this paper I will use NAWA over the more commonly used acronym MENA that is used as an abbreviation for the Middle East-North Africa region to avoid ambiguities surrounding the loaded term ‘Middle-East’ that could be interpreted as a sign of Eurocentrism. Exceptions are made when using another author’s specific words, to reproduce his or her original argument in the best possible way.

⁷ Mustapha Cherif, *Islam and the West: A conversation with Jacques Derrida*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago and London, 2008).

the contributions of either civilization to one another's development.⁸ All of these scholars ascribe an important role to the media and academics as vital informants of the public, dealing with and assessing the output from each other as well as the other named elements that are forming public opinion, politics and religion. As such the image many people may have of Islam and Muslims in general is based only for a small part by their own experiences and in large by information obtained via these sources of information. Media and academics, or experts as Said names them, thus have an essential role in the formation of public opinion and the much needed intercultural dialogue within Europe.

The migration across 'natural' borders separating Europe from the Islamic world(s) has led to the spread of Islamic influences into inland Europe over the course of the 20th century. Amongst other things news of Muslim violence, as mentioned above, and political reactions to them have caused for polarization on a socio-political level in various countries in Europe, in some cases ignoring the historical ties these countries have with Islam and Muslim communities. The latest development to fuel the debate on European-Islamic relations is the 2015 refugee crisis as a consequence of ISIL or Daesh's extremist uprising in the area formerly known as the Levant and Iraq. Reactions in the political, academical and public sphere have shown the need for multi-perspectivity on the historiographic debate and media-coverage of European-Islamic relations. This study explores how academics and newspapers in the Netherlands and Spain have contributed to the intercultural dialogue within Europe in the past decades by answering the question:

How have newspapers in the Netherlands and Spain portrayed Islam and Muslims since 1975 and how does this relate to the academic debate on European identity?

As a part of this research I will answer whether or not the comparison of Dutch and Spanish newspapers shows significantly different outcomes; what they are; how they can be explained and what this tells us about 'the' European identity.

Methodology and chapter outline

To answer these questions this study combines empirical research methods and close reading to analyze the Dutch newspapers of *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* and the Spanish newspapers ABC, El País and La Vanguardia published between 1 January 1975 and 1 January 2019. It borrows from Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos and Tony McEney's methodology in 'Sketching Muslims: A Corpus Driven Analysis of Representations Around the Word 'Muslim' in the British Press 1998–2009' a mix of quantitative and qualitative analysis, used to assess the selected newspapers and their publications.⁹ To do so a corpus was created around the search terms 'Islam' in Dutch and Spanish newspapers,

⁸ Mahmoud Eid and Karim H. Karim, 'Imagining the other' *Re-Imagining the Other. Culture, Media and Western-Muslim Intersections* (New York, 2014) 2-21 where 2-10.

⁹ Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos & Tony McEney, 'Sketching Muslims: A Corpus Driven Analysis of Representations Around the Word 'Muslim' in the British Press 1998–2009', *Applied Linguistics* 34 (2013) 3, 255-278.

(moslim or moslims) in the Dutch newspapers and (Musulman and Musulmanes) in the Spanish newspapers. To aid in this endeavor use was made of the Nexis Uni and Delpher databases as well as the individual online *hemerotecas* (digital archives) from ABC, El País and La Vanguardia. Due to the specific settings used to browse these digital sources the individual chapters on Dutch (chapter two) and Spanish (chapter three) newspapers will elaborate on the methodology and peculiarities of researching digital archives.

The historiography of European identity will be discussed in chapter one, which maps out the academic debate on European identity and the role that scholars ascribe to Islam. This analysis will take Anthony Pagden's questioning of what and where Europe is and when the notion of a European identity came up as its starting point. It will assess how various scholars interpret the role of Islam in the construction of 'the' European identity. Consequently the works of scholars such as Maurits Berger, Bernard Lewis, Richard Bulliet and Maria Rosa Menocal, the latter two crediting Islamic influences for a lot of the progress/developments on the European continent in terms of art, architecture and the sciences, will be reviewed in contrast to the theories on *Orientalism* and *Occidentalism* by Said as well as the more polarizing theory of a *Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington. In conclusion the chapter will evaluate the developments of the academic debate in perspective to studies that focus on how (historically) Western media have portrayed the Muslim 'Other' and have contributed to what Jacques Derrida and Mustapha Cheriff describe as 'reciprocal ignorance' but by others such as Said is seen as a deliberate plan to maintain the status quo, with the West as its centerpiece.

In chapter two theory and practice meet in a study on how Dutch media portray Islam in a (supra)national context. The chapter starts off with a short summary of the history of the Netherlands with Islam and Muslims. It starts at its former colony Indonesia, now the largest Muslim country in the world¹⁰, but focusses on the significant number of immigrants from various countries that arrived in the Netherlands during the 70's of the previous century labeled 'gastarbeiders' (tr. guest workers). From there it will advance to the contemporary debate on Muslims in the Netherlands and their representation in the media. Attention for this debate has recently increased when historian Tayfun Balçık, in a collaborative effort by *The Hague Peace Project*, *Nieuw Wij* and *Republiek Allochtonië*, published his inquiry of articles on Muslims and their contents in four leading newspapers in the Netherlands, *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad* and *Algemeen Dagblad* over a period of three months. He concluded that all of them to varying degrees stereotyped Muslims in their publications. Balçık found that the newspapers' articles on Muslims focused in particular on (terrorist) violence, oppression of women and Muslims as unwanted

¹⁰ Jakob Tobing, 'Getting to democracy in the world's largest muslim country: How Indonesia did it', presented at Rotunda Dome Room, University of Virginia, on Friday, December 2, 2016, part of the Nelson Lectures on Southeast Asia, sponsored by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture and co-sponsored by The Family of Bruce and Sally Nelson, Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics, and The Virginia Center for the Study of Religion via <https://religiousfreedom.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Tobing%20-%20GETTING%20TO%20DEMOCRACY%20IN%20THE%20WORLD%20-%20paper.pdf> (28 February 2019).

immigrants.¹¹ The newspaper analysis in this chapter will supersede this scope of analysis as it will investigate how Dutch press have written about Muslims in a (supra)national scope from 1975 up to now. To do so it will combine the output from the datasets in Delpher, covering publications up to 1994 (De Telegraaf & NRC Handelsblad) and 1995 (De Volkskrant), as well as the online archives of *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad*.

To get a broader perspective on the workings of media on how Islam is perceived in Europe, chapter three compares the findings of the previous chapter with the situation in Spain. It contains an analysis of how the editors and journalists at newspapers *ABC*, *El País* and *La Vanguardia* write about Islam and Muslims in a (supra)national context. To some extent it continues and expands on the research by the *Centro de Investigación en Comunicación y Análisis de Medios* (CICAM) and the *Fundación Tres Culturas del Mediterráneo* (FTCM). Their research on the image of the Arabic and Muslim world in the Spanish Press was published in 2010.¹² Spain in particular is interesting to compare in this context due to its history under Moorish rule from 711-1492 A.D. and the supposed *convivencia* during the period, which is still a large factor in the debate on Spanish national identity.¹³ Despite having a majority catholic population Spain has formally recognized its Islamic roots (1992). The country is also unique in Europe for holding footholds on the African continent in the exclaves of Melilla and Ceuta. This has also made it a gateway into Europe, but unlike other European countries Spain, at least for now, seems to have no problem with this role.¹⁴

1. Historiography on Europe and Islam

1.1 Eurocentric visions on 'the' European identity

The debate on European-Islamic relations is interwoven with several other discussions about the European identity. These include debates on European geopolitics ranging from (but not limited to) discussions on its borders, both 'natural' as well as human made (e.g. Casas-Cortes et al., 2013; Davies 1997; Pagden 2006), its historic relations and its civilizational features (e.g. Berger, 2014 ; Delanty 2005; Hobson, 2004), to Europe as a project, an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) 'united in diversity'¹⁵. To determine the role ascribed

¹¹ <https://www.nieuwwij.nl/opinie/nrc-verrassend-genuanceerd-over-moslimberichtgeving/>

¹² Laura Mesa (ed.), *La imagen del mundo Árabe y Musulmán en la prensa Española* (Seville, 2010).

¹³ Opposing arguments were made by two exiles under the Franco administration, Americo Castro in *España en su historia: cristianos, moros y judíos* (Buenos Aires 1948) and Claudio Sanchez Albornoz y Menduñá's *España: Un enigma histórico* (Buenos Aires, 1956), the first claiming Moorish heritage while the latter rejected its influence on Spanish national identity.

¹⁴ Guy Hedgcock, 'Migration surge tests Spain's 'fragile tolerance' ', *Politico*, 31 July 2018

<https://www.politico.eu/article/pedro-sanchez-migration-spain-surge-tests-fragile-tolerance/> (8 March 2019).

¹⁵ Thus the motto of the European Union that tries to express into words the joined European efforts to work for 'peace and prosperity as part of a Union while ...enriched by the continent's various cultures, traditions and

to Islam in relation to the European identity it is first necessary to consider Europe and European identity. As Anthony Pagden has rightly pointed out this is a complex matter 'because continents, far more than nations, tend to be simply geographical expressions.'¹⁶ However, in the case of Europe, even its geographical location is debatable. Similar to most continents, a large part of the European continent has natural borders formed by the waters of the Barents Sea and Arctic Ocean in the North, the North Atlantic Ocean in the West and the Mediterranean Sea in the South. It is its land border with Asia that, as Norman Davies points out in his *Europe: a History* (1997), has been most problematic to define. As Davies' examples demonstrate the core nations would sometimes include Russia, but at other moments discard its membership just as easily to align with its opponents.¹⁷ Given the present tensions with Russia over Crimea and the ongoing discussion between the European Union members and Turkey on its joining of the Union even up to date one could argue the geographical eastern border of Europe is up for debate.

The same goes for the "stories, images, resonances, collective memories, invented and carefully nurtured traditions" or master narratives, that support the sense of a common European identity. The *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory* (2006) with a collection of scholarly work edited by Gerard Delanty provides a great overview of some of the different points of view and the various lengths of the histories that have developed from them. This research presents three of the main visions on the rise of Europe and the European identity which have influenced and flown over into each other in a chronological order. The first point of view is the long history of Europe, which places the Bible and ancient Greek and Roman philosophy and historiography at the roots of its cultural identity. It can be found in the work of various scholars, amongst others that of Anthony Pagden and the Hungarian political philosopher Agnes Heller. The latter argues that Christianity taught Europeans the values of freedom and morality while the legacy of the ancient Greeks and Romans left them with notions on citizenship, law, equality and the political system of republicanism.¹⁸ It is a line of reasoning that contains an irony that is not lost on Anthony Pagden. In his observations of the carefully composed construct that is 'the European identity', he zooms in on some of the main characters that gave form to its narrative: Europe daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor of Tyre, abducted or seduced by Zeus depending on which version of the myth one adheres to; Aeneas of Troy, supposed ancestor of the founders of Rome; and Jesus of Nazareth, the messiah and central figure of the Christian faith. From these origin stories he concludes that "an abducted Asian woman gave Europe her name; a vagrant exile gave Europe its political and finally its cultural identity; and an

languages' see The European Union, 'The EU Motto' https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/motto_en (19 January 2019).

¹⁶ Anthony Pagden, 'Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent.', in: Anthony Pagden (ed.) *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Washington D.C., 2006) 33.

¹⁷ Norman Davies, *Europe: a History* (London, 1997) 7-11.

¹⁸ Agnes Heller, 'European master narratives about freedom', in: Gerard Delanty (ed.) *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory* (Abingdon, 2006) 257-265 where 258-264.

Asian prophet gave Europe its religion.”¹⁹ In doing so Pagden locates the foundation on which the European identity is built outside of its geographical location.

It is perhaps for this reason that William Outhwaite has taken another approach to identifying Europe. He does so without discrediting the influence of Greek polyarchy and consequently the Macedonian and Roman empires as an example of intra- and interstate organization. Nor does he deny the even more defining rise of Christianity in the lands that would eventually become Europe during the epochs of Roman and Carolingian rule. Outhwaite makes the case for defining Europe by studying when Europe was first defined by itself or by its external, its ‘Other’, as European. According to him the distinctive notion of ‘Europeanness’ did not come into existence until what they themselves (Europeans), call the 15th and 16th century. This emerging identity was then shaped and developed through the transformations brought about by the Renaissance and Enlightenment, Reformation, the formation of states and finally imperialism and the beginning of world-system, Outhwaite argues. Especially the overseas ‘discoveries’ are considered as critical, by him, for the emergence of a European consciousness as “the culture shock of Europeans confronted by alterity, otherness, and perceiving themselves in its mirror” enabled such a development.²⁰ Such an alterity or ‘Other’ also presented itself closer at home in the form of the Ottoman expansion into Hungarian territory in the first half of the 16th century, according to historian Stuart Woolf the threat that united European humanists in defense of Christian Europe.²¹ Outhwaite acknowledges this Ottoman ‘Other’, but overlooks the fact that such an alterity already presented itself several centuries before in current day Spain. He also foregoes such an encounter with a different culture during the crusades of the 13th century. He only blames these events for causing resentment against ‘Europe’ for dominating the ‘Middle East’, the terminology in itself an example of such an attempt.²²

Such “non-random memory holes”, argues Manfred Sing, are caused by the suspicious attitude towards the Muslim presence in contemporary Europe. They are justified by “references to history, in which Islam plays the role of the “Other,” the negative counterpart to everything European.”²³ According to Sing this is reinforced by the centuries long conceptual approach of Europe in contrast to its non-European “Other” as a homogeneous unchanging cultural, religious and political entity, despite its often changing borders [ed. and members]. As such the myth of a Europe that was saved from Islam in the form of Arab and Ottoman invasions could be created through the examples of historical dates, of which Sing names the battles at Tours and Poitiers; the fall of Constantinople; and the sieges of Vienna. It also helped establish the notion of “Europe-as-Christendom” in the

¹⁹ Pagden, ‘Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent’, 35.

²⁰ William Outhwaite, ‘European transformations’, in: Gerard Delanty (ed.) *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory* (Abingdon, 2006) 279-288 where 279-282.

²¹ Stuart Woolf, ‘Europe and its Historians’, *Contemporary History of Europe* 12 (2003) 3, 323-337 where 323.

²² Outhwaite, ‘European transformations’ (2006) 280.

²³ Manfred Sing, ‘Against All Odds: How to Re-Inscribe Islam into European History’, in: Simone Derix & Margareth Lanzinger (Eds.) *Housing Capital: Resource and Representation* (Berlin; Boston, 2017) 129-162 where 132 <https://doi.org.10.1515/9783110532241-008> (1 March 2019).

collective memory.²⁴

It is in this perspective that the similar omissions that can be found in the works of Anthony Pagden and Norman Davies should be viewed. They also ignore and neglect the historical exchanges between 'Christian' Europe and Muslim Africa and Asia at its southern borders despite the plethora of historical evidence (see Chapter 3). In the case of the latter, who, like Outhwaite, argues that the idea of Europe is a relatively modern phenomenon that gradually formed over the period between the 14th and 18th century, some mitigating is necessary.²⁵ The Moorish Caliphate's influence was already waning at the beginning of this period and nullified with the fall of Granada in 1492. The same excuse can not be used for Anthony Pagden's work, in which he claims the idea of Europe goes back all the way to the Ancient Greeks. Despite this claim he overlooks the vibrant cultural exchange taking place in Spain under Moorish rule during the 8th to 15th century as described by amongst others Maria Rosa Menocal. In *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (2002) she elaborates on the importance of the Muslim influence in current day Spain. Menocal explains that it was during their seven century rule that some of the Greek texts Pagden now addresses as foundational for the identity of Europe were reintroduced to 'Europeans'.²⁶

A more contemporary alternative to these views on Europe is that which views Europe as a project. It covers the 'Passage to Europe' as political philosopher and historian Luuk van Middelaar has aptly named the political process to form a European Union after the World Wars of the first half of the twentieth century. A process that Van Middelaar tells us, is not yet finished, the relation between European Union, its member states, the outside world and the people not yet crystalized into its definitive form.²⁷ It shows resemblances with the idea of the ongoing search for identity, or the struggle to become the ideal civilization that Europe is going through according to Zygmunt Baumann. A process of eternal scrutiny, critique and adjustments continuously 'remaking the World'.²⁸ Van Middelaar divides the concept of Europe into two parts observing an inner and outer sphere. The outer sphere he notes is defined by the geography and histories of the sovereign states that formed the 'Concert of Europe' from the 16th century onward. Characteristic are the individualistic attitude of the states, pursuing their own (conflicting) interests. These led to various wars on the continent as well as shifted alliances that continuously reshuffled the balance of power on the European continent. These new power relations would be ratified during conventions among heads of states, which in turn was a development from the preceding Papal councils rule over the continent. Van Middelaar considers this process to be the birth of modern European diplomacy. As such the outer sphere encompasses and connects the visions on European history as described through the examples of Heller and

²⁴ Sing, 'Against all odds' (2017) 132-133.

²⁵ Norman Davies, *Europe: a History* (London, 1997) 7.

²⁶ Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (Boston, 2002) 54.

²⁷ Luuk van Middelaar, *De passage naar Europa* (2009; 2015) 16.

²⁸ Zygmunt Bauman, *Europe an unfinished adventure* (New York, 2004) 8.

Outhwaite.

The inner sphere, and one can argue from his words the history of a 'new' more united/connected Europe, Van Middelaar argues, starts with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. It is oriented rather on a future promise or the ideal of Europe. Because of that, according to Van Middelaar, this concept unintentionally created a third layer in between the inner and outer layer within which the Member States currently find themselves. By this he means they now and again tend to their individual (read nationalistic) interests, but are more and more realizing their common interests.²⁹ As such he sketches an image of Europe in transition, caught within three discourses, that of a 'Europe of States' (confederalist), a 'Europe of Citizens' (federalist) and a 'Europe of Offices' (functionalist), each with their own interests and institutions trying to fulfill them.³⁰ The result of its efforts so far a European Union 'united in diversity', still attempting to fulfill its promise. However, the present is showing us that while the history of this new Europe might be viewed in light of its future promise, it cannot escape its past. This is also one of the main criticisms of Cris Shore who compares the concept of Europe as an unfinished project "united in diversity" to the project of communism and its 'classless society at the end of history': "obscuring the reality of what the EU is with teleological notions of what it is ought to be." Shore notes that the Unions construction of Europe as such possibly has become the last and greatest grand narrative of Enlightenment, also sharing the positivistic, rationalist and Eurocentric assumptions about civilization, progress and destiny of the preceding narratives. The European Union, according to Shore, has tried to spread the myth of being the supranational medium for a "transnational whole greater than the sum of its parts" with "a frontier-free 'people of the book' " to symbolize and embody its ideals.³¹ To this controversy Monica Sassatelli adds that the notion of Europe and the EU as being the same thing both adds to its legitimacy as well as becomes a criticism of it due to its appropriation and adaptation to the discourse that is most likely to succeed in creating a credible story of a common European identity.³² Or, as Alan J.P. Taylor once boldly stated:

"European history is whatever the historian wants it to be. It is a summary of the events and ideas political, religious, military, pacific, serious, romantic, prosaic, near at hand, far away, tragic, comic, significant, meaningless, anything else you would like it to be."³³

²⁹ Van Middelaar, *De Passage naar Europa* (2009) 32-59.

³⁰ Ibidem, 16.

³¹ Cris Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (London, 2000) 206-207.

³² Monica Sassatelli, 'Imagined Europe: The Shaping of a European Cultural Identity Through EU Cultural Policy', *European Journal of Social Theory* 5 (1 November 2002) 4, 435-51 where 445.

³³ Alan J.P. Taylor, 'What is European history...?', in: Juliet Gardiner (Ed.) *What is History Today?* (London, 1988) 143-154 where 143.

1.2 The role of academics and the media: Eurocentrism, imagining the 'Other', and Orientalist critiques

As Edward Said's post-colonial critique *Orientalism, Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) shows, the European interest for the Orient and Islam goes back a long way. Yet as many scholars observe, the historical debate on Islam in Europe took flight from the late 1960's and early 1970's when (Western) Europe in large became more acquainted with Muslims and Islam, mainly due to migration. The study of the subject accelerated in the 2000's in the wake of various terrorist attacks in Europe.³⁴ In the *Brief History of Islam in Europe* (2013) the lawyer and Arabist Maurits Berger observes that historical facts and the terminology used are not necessarily the result of academic research when it comes to discussions on, or events concerning Islam. They are at times determined in public discourse and even abused as a demagogic tool against Europe's Muslim population on some occasions. Nonetheless, he argues that the leading assumptions – Berger uses the example of 'Europe as part of a Judeo-Christian and/or humanist civilization' – are derived from opposing views on Western/European-Islamic relations in academics.

Berger recognizes two theses that dominate the contemporary views on this subject. The first is that of Bernard Lewis, on which he states it "has gained popularity since the attacks of 9/11 in 2001 and the subsequent terrorist attacks in Europe, and seems to be corroborated by the mounting reports on the apparent lack of integration of Muslim migrants in Western European societies."³⁵ It is, according to Berger, a view that reinforces the story of a historically inevitable 'Clash of Civilizations', a term associated with Samuel Huntington's polarizing article and book but already coined by Lewis in 'The Roots of Muslim Rage' (1990), between a Judeo-Christian West and Muslim East.³⁶ Thus emphasizing the role of religion in explaining the differences between a 'Western' Europe and Muslim 'Other'.

It is such a 'Western' notion of the 'Oriental East' that Edward Said rejects in *Orientalism, Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978). Said defines Orientalism as a hegemonic Western concept, or system, that determines its own 'superior' (cultural) identity in contrast to the image of an 'Oriental Other'. He argues it is an ideological construct, "a political doctrine willed over the Orient" designed to make the Orient inferior to the West, especially so in the case of Islam.³⁷ As:

"...Islam remained forever the Orientalist's idea (or type) of *original* cultural effrontery,

³⁴ See amongst others the various works by authors cited in this essay such as Richard W. Bulliet, Maurits Berger, Maria Rosa Menocal, Manfred Sing and Thijl Sunier. Just some of the other authors and publications that come to mind are Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), Pamela Kilpadi ed., *Islam and Tolerance in Wider Europe* (Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2007) and Jørgen S. Nielsen & Jonas Otterbeck, *Muslims in Western Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 4th ed., 2016).

³⁵ Maurits S. Berger, *Brief History of Islam in Europe : Thirteen Centuries of Creed, Conflict and Coexistence* (Leiden, 2013) 14.

³⁶ Bernard Lewis, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage', *The Atlantic Monthly* (September 1990) 56.

³⁷ Edward Said, *Orientalism, Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) 201-210.

aggravated naturally by the fear that Islamic civilization originally (as well as contemporaneously) continued to stand somehow opposed to the Christian West.”³⁸

This ever present binary opposition that can be found in Lewis’ work, that both the Christian and Muslim faith are universal in their approach claiming to have received the final words from God to mankind and consequently are bound to clash³⁹, is why Berger observes Lewis’ as Orientalist. However, in *The Jews of Islam* (2014; 1984) Lewis hints at more nuance in his work. Arguing the two images on (in-)tolerance in the Islamic world of on one hand the fanatical warrior leaving his opponents the opportunity to convert or die, and on the other hand the image of an interreligious paradise during a ‘Golden Age’ of *Convivencia* are both exaggerations. Lewis argues the truth is to be found somewhere in the middle of these extremes.⁴⁰ Despite this hint of nuance, there is plenty to remark on the way Lewis describes Euro-Islamic history as a Christian defense against Muslim aggressions in Europe as Berger demonstrates.⁴¹ Nonetheless, it seems Samuel Huntington’s polarizing essay and book *A Clash of Civilizations?* (1993) and *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996), partially build on Lewis’ theory, has had its influence on how he is reviewed by other historians. However, it should be noted that Huntington’s theory and interpretations in the wake of the failed terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York by the *Islamic Group* were a lot more outspoken on the “irreconcilable” differences between ‘the’ Judeo-Christian West and Islamic ‘East’.

One of the side effects of this more outspoken view of a ‘Clash of Civilizations’ is that it has elicited a counter movement examining Euro-Islamic relations with an emphasis on its positive aspects. This is the second contemporary view that Berger discerns in the debate on Euro-Islamic relations and is linked by him to the work of emeritus professor in Middle Eastern history at Columbia University, Richard Bulliet. He views Islam and Christianity as “sibling” civilizations developing in different directions but finding their roots in one common civilization. Berger notes that in contrast to Lewis, Bulliet emphasizes the shared heritage, parallel developments and the cultural exchanges that took place between ‘Christian’ Europe and Islamic civilization(s).⁴² What is more notable is that Bulliet does not only look at religion to determine the Muslim identity but also looks beyond it, considering other factors such as language, culture, science, technology, history and geography.⁴³ A similar variety of factors as encountered in the works of Maria Rosa Menocal and Mark M. Hobson, who have questioned the stagnant borders in Europe’s South and the extent to which European culture is indebted to Islamic sciences and arts.⁴⁴

³⁸ Said, *Orientalism, Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) 261.

³⁹ See amongst others *Islam and the West* (1993) and *Europe and Islam* (2007).

⁴⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton 2014; 1984) 2-3.

⁴¹ Berger, *Brief History of Islam in Europe* (Leiden, 2013) 241.

⁴² *Ibidem*, 14.

⁴³ See Richard W. Bulliet’s *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (2004).

⁴⁴ See Menocal, *The Ornament of the World* (Boston, 2002) and John M. Hobson, ‘The Clash of Civilizations 2.0’, in: Mahmoud Eid and Karim H. Karim (Eds.) *Re-Imagining the Other. Culture, Media and Western-Muslim Intersections* (New York, 2014) 75-97 where 90-93.

Yet, as Berger observes, only one of these two points of view on Euro-Islamic relations has made it into the collective memory, the other has not. Or perhaps only fragments of it, as it are always the same regions and moments in history that seem to come to the fore in such inter-relational discussions on Europe and Islam and its positive influences (the cases of Spain and the Ottoman empire). As Berger puts it, only the “interesting compilations and analyses of the European medieval image of Islam as a threat, whether as a religion, a belligerent ideology or a dominating culture” that also argue “how this imagery has continued into the present age” have made it into the collective memory. An important aspect, he states, for history to make it into the collective memory is the distortion of its narrative into mythology or imagery:

“The argument these historians by implication make is that present-day Western (and in particular West European) anxieties about Islam are related not only to the recent phenomenon of Muslim immigration and Islamic terrorism, but also to a perpetuating image that is centuries old, an image that often has little to do with reality but all the more with the perception of the Muslim as the embodiment of everything that the Westerner is not.”⁴⁵

Berger, reviewing the different points of view on Euro-Islamic relations however would argue not to see current events in line with the past. As an example he names the wars and insurgencies on ‘European soil’ against the Umayyad [in current day Spain] and Ottoman. According to him they should be viewed as part of another, more important, development in Europe, that of the rise of the nation state. Berger argues that these cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious unities within a distinct territory under majority rule, were (in principle) often achieved through, and enforced by violence. History has provided many examples of such events, from the expulsion and forced conversions of Moors and Jews in fifteenth century Spain up to the world wars of the twentieth century. It was only after this moment he argues that the new, liberal, political system replaced religion as the main social and legal structure in Europe. However, this system already came to be under pressure in Western Europe from the 1970s and onwards Berger argues due to the increasingly numerous presence of Muslims due to migration, revealing “that the underlying infrastructure of national, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious unity was still in place, either in practice or as an assumed quality of society”.⁴⁶

A similar notion can be found in Effie Fokas’ introduction to *Islam in Europe* (2005). She too argues that the sheer size of the Muslim presence due to immigration, and as she adds “relatively high birth rates”, have led to “both real and perceived transformations in the social fabric of European societies”. Especially so when considered against the declining (visible) popularity of Christianity in Europe. Yet, like Berger, Fokas argues that Christianity despite being less visible in everyday life still remains an important presence through what

⁴⁵ Berger, *Brief History of Islam in Europe* (Leiden, 2013) 15-17.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, 241-242.

she calls a 'chain of memory'. This 'chain of memory', she states, is what gives the individuals of an increasingly secular society a sense of community through the memory of a shared past with shared traditions and maintains the privilege of churches throughout Europe. According to Fokas these are some of the main factors for the right-wing anti-immigration rhetoric that have regained their popularity since the early 2000s in various European countries. Exemplary are the demonstrations in Greece and Spain against the increasing visibility of Islam through the building of Mosques. In dealing with the tensions between the ambiguous European secular-yet-not-so-secular and this more visible than ever Islam the 'diversity' approach is not helpful as it leaves room for interpretation of 'us' and 'them'.⁴⁷ This is concerning as, determined by Canadian scholars Mahmoud Eid and Karim H. Karim, the 'Other', or 'they' in this case, is often imagined as alien to the 'us' or 'Self'. In spite of efforts of scholars such as Bulliett and Menocal, who have provided us with an overwhelming amount of historical evidence of the century old ties between the European countries and Islamic NAWA-countries, this is overshadowed by the more negative public discourse on Euro-Islamic relations. Karim and Eid argue that this public discourse is above all enforced by the media. However, they also attribute the enforcement of this negative public discourse to politics, art and, even though at first glance seemingly innocent, children's toys and bedtime stories that create a singular vision on Islam.⁴⁸ It is expressly this singular vision on Islam or 'label' that concerned Said in his critique of orientalism by journalists, media and the 'experts':

"the mere use of the label "Islam," either to explain or indiscriminately condemn "Islam," actually ends up becoming a form of attack, which in turn provokes more hostility between self-appointed Muslim and Western spokespersons."

What the term Islam is used for in the public discourse is only a small part of whom and what it actually represents according to Said. He argues that while Europe has embraced its own unity in diversity it seems incapable of recognizing Islam for its diversity, the various countries, traditions, languages and the individual experiences it represents. Even more so, 'experts' and media contribute actively to maintaining this attitude towards Islam. Their output the "result of a complex process of usually deliberate selection and expression."⁴⁹ For some time Said's thoughts on the role of the media in the shaping of orientalist mentalities in 'the West' seemed to be overshadowed by his more general theory of orientalism that focused on academics or 'the experts'. However, in the 2000's when current events caught up with theory and the discussion entered the public domain, Said's theory on media and Orientalism finally started to reflect in academic efforts. An example is the

⁴⁷ Effie Fokas, 'Introduction', in: Aziz al-Azmeh & Effie Fokas (eds.) *Islam in Europe* (Cambridge, 2007) 1-15 where 3-7.

⁴⁸ Karim H. Karim and Mahmoud Eid, 'Re-Imagining the other' *Re-Imagining the Other. Culture, Media and Western-Muslim Intersections* (New York, 2014) 217-232 where 217.

⁴⁹ Edward W. Said, *Covering Islam: How the media and the experts determine how we see the world* (Vintage E-books: ISBN 9781101971598, 1981;1997), 20-22 & 215-226.

philosophical discussion on the relation between Islam and the West between Jacques Derrida and Mustapha Cheriff. Like Said they argue that information plays a key factor in overcoming the hostile image of Islam in the West and vice versa. Unlike Said, they argue this not the effect of a willing effort by media and experts or their desire to maintain the status quo, serving personal interests of the media and powers that drive them. According to Cheriff and Derrida the images created of Islam in the West and of the West in (some) Islamic countries derives from the loss of knowledge of a shared past, a 'reciprocal ignorance' about the 'Other'. Their joint paths separated by different forms of colonialism, domination and depersonalization contributing to this loss. The solution thus in education and discussion.⁵⁰

These two slightly different points of view have been put to the test in more applied efforts influenced by their respective theories, most of them taking Said's view as their point of departure. Most complete among them is the sociolinguistic discourse analysis of the representation of Islam in the British press by Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos and Tony McEnery. The linguists have skillfully made use of the ever increasing possibilities offered by the digital archives of various British media on the internet. It allowed them to mix two methods that both support and reinforce each other's outcomes. The first is that of corpus linguistics, using large collections of digitally encoded data to assist in analyzing and focusing data sets by examining returning phrases and constituents. The Nexis tool contains such data sets and the option to explore constituents. The use of this analytical tool can thus help discover generalizations and lend credibility to them. Main reason for Baker, Gabrielatos and McEnery to use corpus linguistics was to counteract possible accusations of 'cherry-picking' the data that supports their theory within critical discourse analysis, the second method of choice. This method is a combination of, in this case linguistic, description of the texts, their interpretation on both the sending (productive) and receiving (interpretative) ends of the process and the social implications that result from them.⁵¹ This gives a more complete image than solely focusing on either qualitative or quantitative research. As can be established when compared to the content driven postcolonial critique on the profiling of Muslims in four leading newspapers in the Netherlands over a period of three months by historian Tayfun Balçık (see chapter 2) and similar efforts in Spain. There CICAM and the FTCM researched the portrayed image of the Arab world and Muslims in Spanish media over the course of 2008 (chapter 3). However, while Baker decided to review a period of thirty years he did not add any historical context to his findings, which from a historians perspective would seem negligent, but from a linguistic point of view is not.

⁵⁰ Mustapha Cherif, *Islam and the West: A conversation with Jacques Derrida*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago and London, 2008) 19-26 & 87-91.

⁵¹ Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos & Tony McEnery, 'Sketching Muslims: A Corpus Driven Analysis of Representations Around the Word 'Muslim' in the British Press 1998-2009', *Applied Linguistics* 34 (2013) 3, 255-278 where 258-260.

Ch. 2 Perceptions of Islam in Dutch Media

2.1 A short history of Islam in the Netherlands

In the last couple of decennia the sensitivity about foreign elements in Dutch society has increased significantly, especially when it comes to Islam and Muslim practices.

The history of the Netherlands with Islam goes back to at least the late 16th century and can still be noticed today. It can be established through, among other things, stories travelling back from its former colonies in the Dutch East Indies such as the frequently referenced 'Cort Verhael' (tr. short story) of Cornelis and Frederick de Houtman. The latter's reports on one of the first endeavors of the Dutch East India Company in current day Indonesia were published posthumously. They tell of daily events, including encounters with Sultans, exotic 'damsels' dancing while 'ornamented with gold and jewelry' and the 'faith of Mahomet'.⁵² This research does not delve into this debatable chapter of Dutch (colonial) history. However, it is necessary to remark that its outcome, among other things, led to the migration of Indonesians and Moluccans to the Netherlands, Muslim and non-Muslim. This history is visible even today in the form of the Moluccan mosques found in Waalwijk (An Nur) and Ridderkerk (Bait al-Rahmaan).

Nonetheless, the focus of the attention on Islam and Muslims in the Netherlands in academic studies, politics and the media is more frequently aimed at its recent history. It concerns itself mostly with the part of the population with an Islamic background that came to the Netherlands as temporary migrants or 'guest workers' during the 1960s and 1970s, the majority of them Turks and Moroccans.⁵³ By the 1980s, as Thijl Sunier suggests, both the migrants and the Dutch government came to the realization that their 'myth of return was unrealistic' and a new policy for (im)migration and integration was required.⁵⁴ Sunier argues that it was as a part of this policy that different groups of Muslim minorities, who in the 'migrant phase' were still addressed by their ethnicity/national origin (thus as Turks, Moroccans etcetera), were transformed into a more or less homogenous pillar of Islam. He points out two reasons for this. The first being Muslim organizations emphasis on Islam as the 'natural form of self-organization amongst Muslim migrants'. The second is the Dutch history of pillarization of its society which, according to Sunier, Muslim organizations used as a strategy to set up their own institutions.⁵⁵ The latter argument seems rather paradoxical, as in general it is assumed that Dutch society was going through a process of de-pillarization from 1960-1980.⁵⁶

⁵² Frederick de Houtman, *Cort verhael vant gene wedervaren is Frederick de Houtman tot Atchein* (Gouda, 1880) 8-9 and 34.

⁵³ Peter Schumacher, *De Minderheden* (Amsterdam, 1980) 217.

⁵⁴ Thijl Sunier, 'Interests, Identities, and the Public Sphere: Representing Islam in the Netherlands since the 1980s', in: Jocelyne Cesari & Seán McLoughlin (eds.) *European Muslims and the Secular State* (2016) 80-91 where 81.

⁵⁵ Sunier, 'Interests, Identities, and the Public Sphere' (2016) 81-82.

⁵⁶ For a more extensive critique of the concept on a 5th pillar of Islam in Dutch society see Peter van Dam, 'Een wankel vertoog. Over ontzuiling als karikatuur', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 126 (2011) 3, 52 – 77.

By themselves these processes were not problematic, but in combination with international events of the 1980s and 1990s, as Sunier notes, they became so. Events such as the emergence of radical political Islam, the Rushdie affair, the (first) Gulf War and especially the attacks of 11 September 2001, changed public opinion and attitudes towards Muslims. Differences that first seemed surmountable no longer did as this new image of Islam 'linking Muslims in the Netherlands directly to conflict and violence in the Middle East' became part of public discourse.⁵⁷ As Sunier shows, public figures such as Pim Fortuyn, Hirsi Ali and Theo van Gogh have played important roles in establishing this image. Yet, the role of the Dutch press was perhaps of even greater importance. Sunier explains how media at times have made connections between negative elements within the Muslim community in the Netherlands and events such as violence based on speculation rather than factual information.⁵⁸ He also addresses newspapers influence by giving voice to unscrupulous/unnuanced opinions of 'experts' that consciously further the negative image of Islam and Muslims.⁵⁹ The latter is a long dormant issue according to *Nieuw Wij*, *The Hague Peace Projects* and *Republiek Allochtonië*. On their behalf the historian Tayfun Balçık published his three month inquiry of articles on Muslims and their contents in the Netherlands' four leading newspapers: *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad* and *Algemeen Dagblad*. In 'Moslims in Nederlandse kranten' Balçık in a predominantly quantitative effort came to a similar conclusion as Sunier. Via several tables containing the calculative efforts and percentages on reports concerning Islam Balçık argues that these newspapers to varying degrees have been stereotyping Muslims. He concludes that the overall image that is created is negative, overly focused on (terrorist) violence, oppression of women and Muslims as unwanted immigrants.⁶⁰ While this may be true for the articles written in the three month period Balçık reviews, for historical research purposes his sample is too small.

2.2 Methodology examining Dutch newspapers

This chapter broadens the scope of research, examining trends in the way Islam and Muslims have been portrayed in Dutch newspapers and whether or not they change over the years. It examines the perceptions of Islam in Dutch media, analyzing the editions from the leading newspapers of *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* published between 1 January 1975 and 1 January 2019 available in the Nexis Uni and Delpher tools. This choice stems from the same motives as those for Tuyfan Balçık's research with these newspapers representing the largest readerships among newspapers in the Netherlands. Notable is the absence of the *Algemeen Dagblad* in comparison to Balçık's study. Despite the fact that the *Algemeen Dagblad* has the second largest readership in the Netherlands and claims to be a

⁵⁷ Sunier, 84-85.

⁵⁸ See his example on Imams and the attack on homosexuals by two young Moroccans in 'Interests, Identities, and the Public Sphere' 85.

⁵⁹ Sunier, 87-88.

⁶⁰ Tayfun Balçık, *Moslims in Nederlandse kranten: Een onderzoek naar stereotype beeldvorming in de vier grootste kranten van Nederland* (Den Haag, 2019).

newspaper without political or religious bias it could not be included in this report. Its history of mergers and takeovers complicated comparing it with the other newspapers as it did not have a consistent timeline to be investigated.

Borrowing from Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos and Tony McEneaney's methodology in 'Sketching Muslims: A Corpus Driven Analysis of Representations Around the Word 'Muslim' in the British Press 1998–2009' a mix of quantitative and qualitative analysis is used to assess the selected newspapers and their publications. The datasets used in Nexis Uni and Delpher, have come about through trial and error. Unlike Baker, Gabrielatos and McEneaney, who based their research on one large collection of simultaneously entered search terms, to create a baseline the search terms 'Islam' and '(Muslim or Muslims)' were first entered into Nexis Uni and Delpher individually. It allowed to determine a timeline showing which newspaper is publishing on Islam and Muslims and when (see figure 1 & 2). Consequently a link could be made between these publications, their increase and decrease in numbers throughout time and occurring events, both in and outside the Netherlands, that have influenced them. As was to be expected, and became clear from the results, an example of such an event are the attacks of 11 September 2001.

In addition the initial search results were then narrowed down further to the purpose of gaining insight in the negative and positive connotations with these search terms. To do so an extra set of search rules/terms will be applied to the initial search. Its results support the research by indicating where generalizations have been made. Reflecting on these generalizations throughout time, the vocabularies in which they are expressed and correlating them to occurring events during this period will aid in determining whether or not the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Dutch press are part of a modern crusade. Are they part of a conscious effort of narratization or do they, as the editor-in-chief of *De Volkskrant* Philippe Remarque stated after being confronted with the correlation in Tuyfan Balçik's research between 'Muslims' and 'terrorism' simply 'make sense...as they report on occurring events'?

2.3 Research and results

Figures 1 and 2⁶¹ (below) show the results of the initial search of the individual search words 'Islam' and '(Muslim or Muslims)' in the online archives of Delpher and Nexis Uni within the selected newspapers.

⁶¹ Both graphs miss the outcomes of *De Telegraaf* from 1995-1998 as these four years are not yet available in Delpher, Nexis Uni, nor the digital archive of *De Telegraaf* which only goes back 10 years. However, it is highly likely to follow a similar trend as those of *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* with more moderate numbers as is the case throughout the other years where these statistics are available.

FIG. 1 - USE OF THE TERM 'ISLAM' FROM 1975-2018

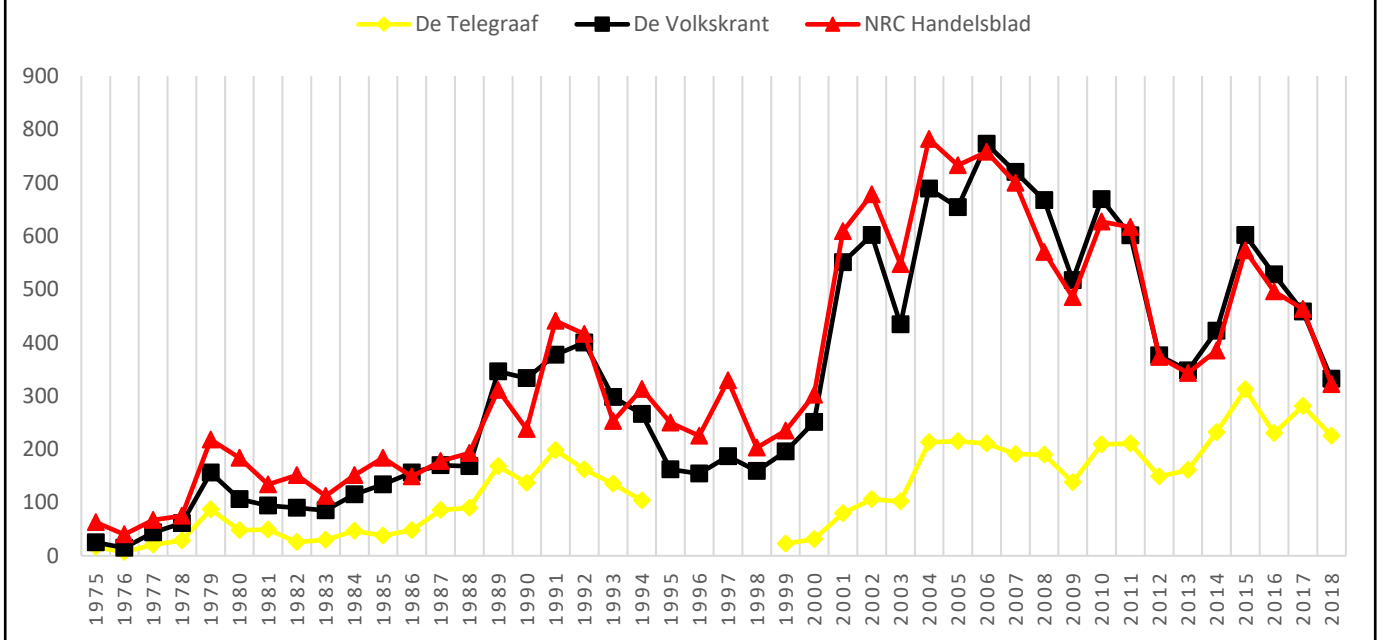
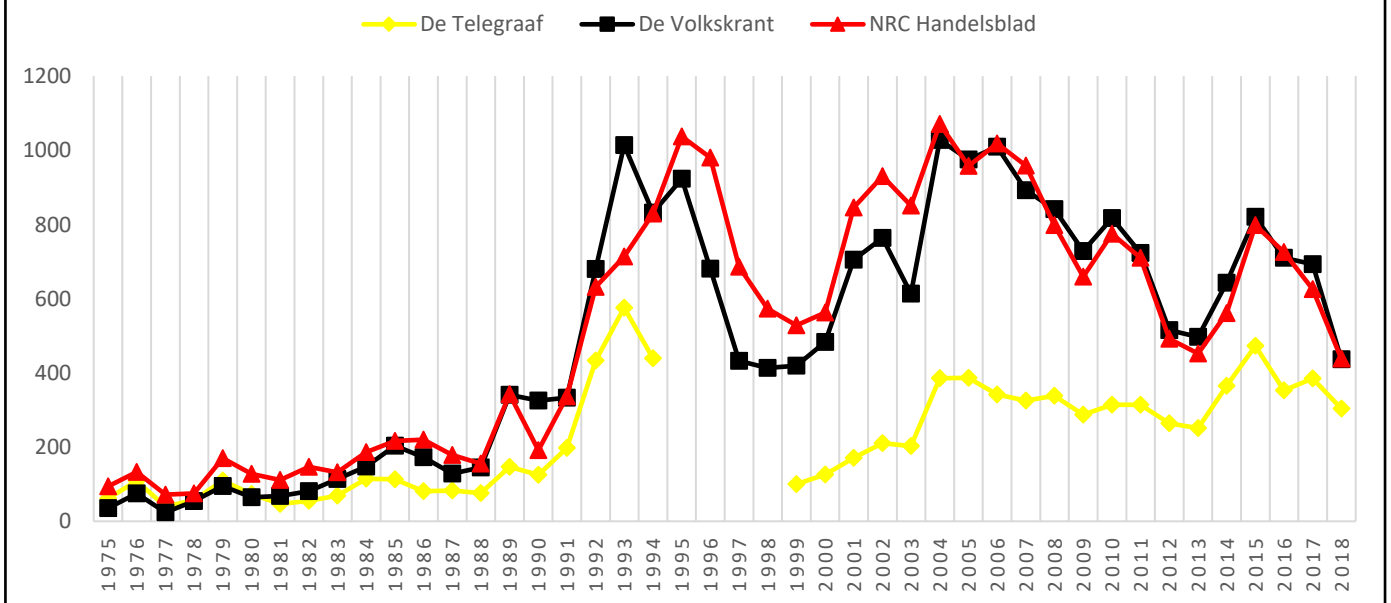
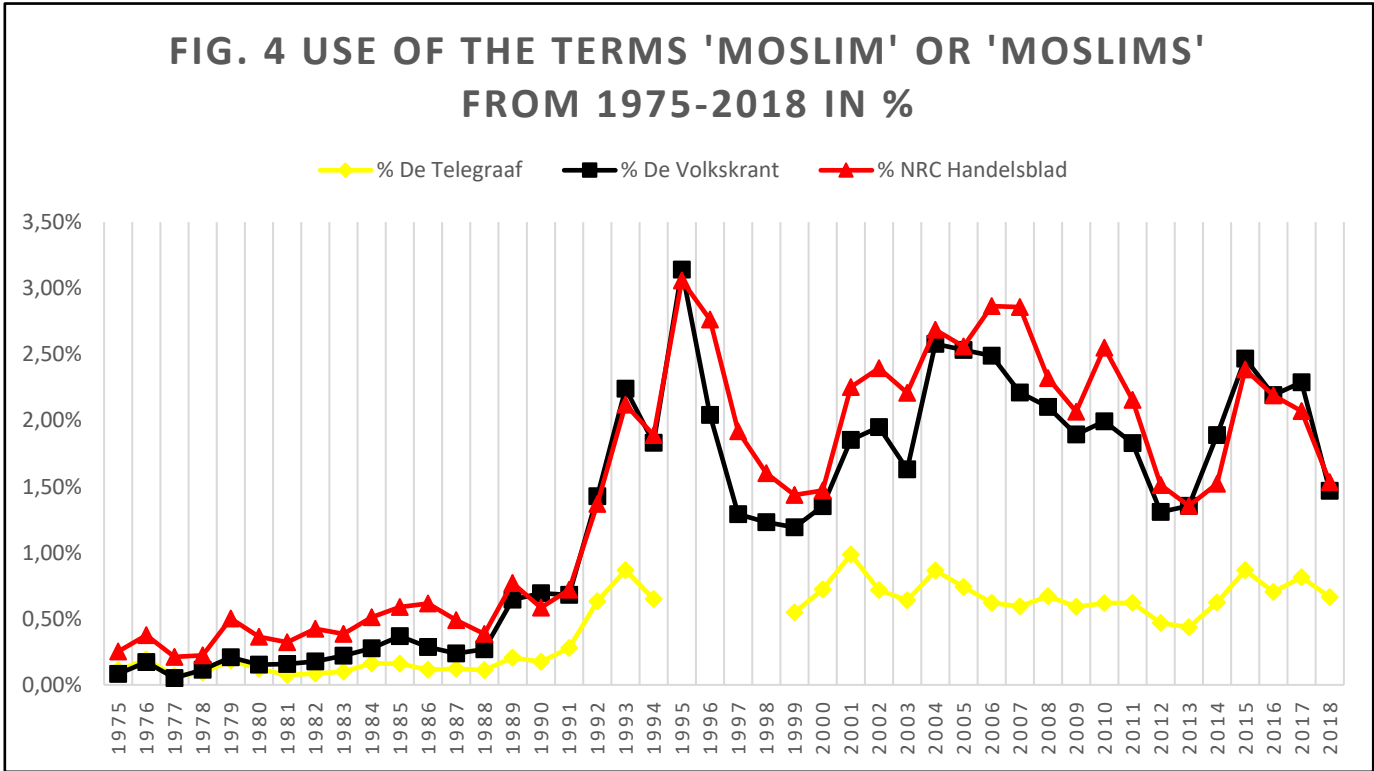
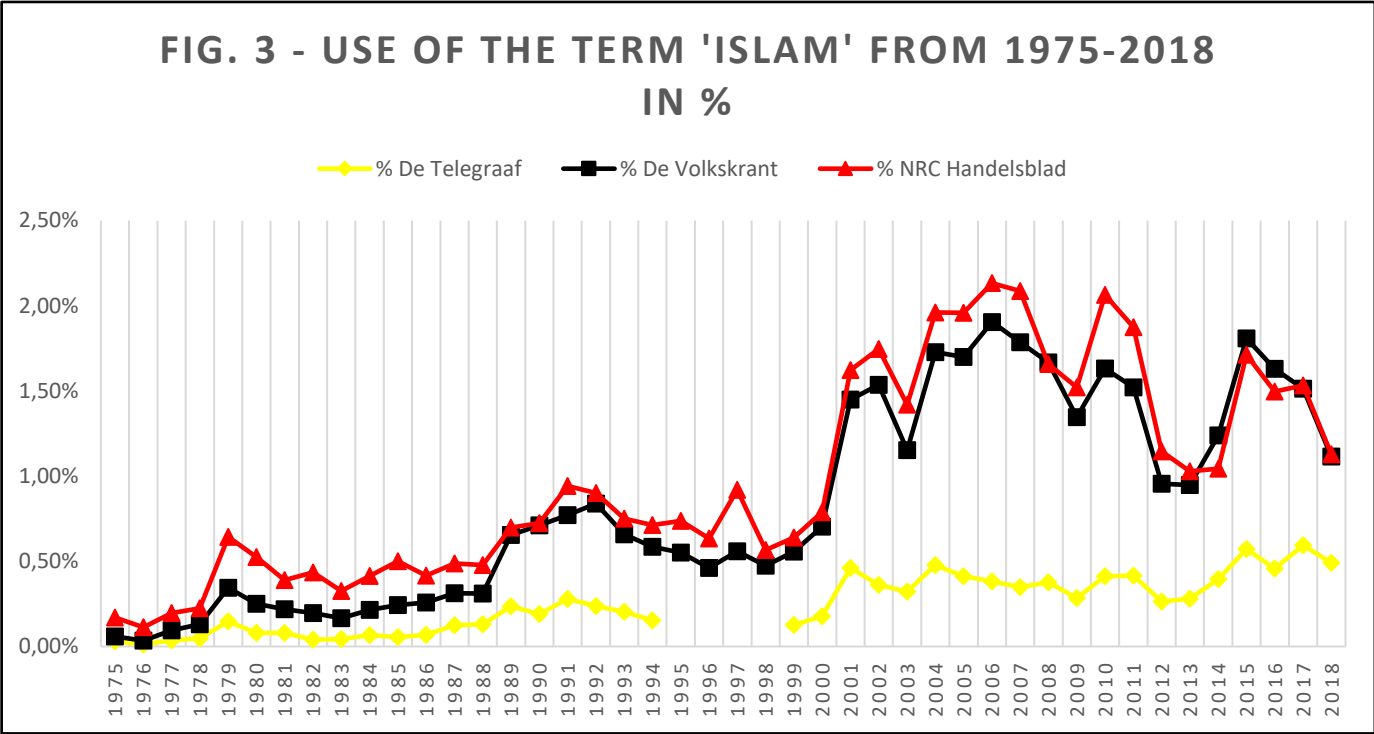


FIG. 2 USE OF THE TERMS 'MOSLIM' OR 'MOSLIMS' FROM 1975-2018



To see how these numbers relate to the total number of publications Figures 3 and 4 show what their percentage is in relation to the total number of publications per newspaper. The totals are a rough estimate as they were established by searching the term 'de' (tr. 'the'), a search term that can be expected to be used in virtually every article.



One of the things that immediately stands out is that *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* have published more articles on Islam and Muslims than *De Telegraaf*, both in absolute numbers as well as in terms of percentage. This is perhaps best explained through their (initial) target groups and political orientations. *De Telegraaf* aiming at a more general audience while the (traditional) orientation of *De Volkskrant* is just left of the political spectrum and that of the liberal *NRC Handelsblad* just on the right.

However, summarizing the results in line graphs it becomes clear that all three newspapers follow a more or less similar trend throughout time when it comes to the amount and ratio of articles published on these topics each year. It can also be established that all three newspapers have shown increasing interest in Islam and Muslim(s) around several events that have made an impact around the globe.

The first of such an event was the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. While seemingly a small increase on the graphs, it was cause for almost tripling the number of publications on Islam and doubling those containing the search words '(Moslim or Moslims)' in comparison to 1978. The initial reporting on this event focused in large on the development and possible outcomes of the revolution, such as a balanced report by *De Volkskrant* on February 13th, 1979. It sketched a nuanced image of the Revolution, its leading figures and implications that reads as if it were a postcolonial effort with Iran a frontrunner in the NAWA region, becoming independent from the influences of the cold war powers in the West and the East (or North when perceived from an Iranian perspective).⁶² Similar though more skeptical or suspicious articles can be found around the same time in the *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Telegraaf*. However, as demonstrated by an article by Joost C. de Ruyter in the latter, (some) of these articles already made use of loaded terms, contrasting West and East in orientalist fashion. De Ruyter, comparing ayatollah Khomeini with the last Shah, Reza Pahlavi, writes amongst others:

“Het gevolg is dat velen in het vrije Westen de ayatollah beschouwen als de enige die in Iran de duchtig gehavende rechten van de mens kan verdedigen”.⁶³

In this quote, describing how a “Free West considers the ayatollah the only person capable of defending human rights in Iran” several implications are made. First, it attributes to the West, and implicitly the Netherlands a part of it, almost naturally true freedom. Second, this statement also automatically implies Iran was not free at the time. But more importantly, it does not relate this to its Islamic influences, which are as a matter of fact considered as the only solution for one of its main problems (human rights violations).

As the revolutionary process would draw to an end however, the attitude towards and attention of the Dutch press moved more and more in a direction contrasting the new

⁶² Redactie Buitenland 'NIET-GEBONDENHEID TEGENOVER OOST EN WEST - Islam als uitgangspunt voor republiek Iran Van onze redactie buitenland', *De Volkskrant*, 13 February 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD:010882097:mpeg21:a0104> (5 June 2019).

⁶³ Joost C. de Ruyter 'Vader Sjah en ayatollah waren al doodsvijanden', *De Telegraaf*, 27 January 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011200502:mpeg21:a0667> (4 June 2019).

regime with Dutch (Western) values. The *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Volkskrant* started emphasizing some of its negative aspects, in particular the violation of human rights, serving of justice without (public) trials, the limitations for women under the new Islamic regime and the consequences of the Revolution for the region.⁶⁴ With the research of Tayfun Balçık in mind it could be called surprising that the tone of voice in some of *De Telegraaf* articles was quite optimistic in comparison, at least up to the end of 1979. This can in part be explained by the fact that it were not only their own publications that made it into the newspaper, which, of course, is an editorial choice. For example, *De Telegraaf* on December 24th, 1979 published a translation of the interview by Egyptian journalist Mohammed Hassanein Heikal with ayatollah Khomeini.⁶⁵ The editorial board of *De Telegraaf* thus chose to give a stage in their newspaper to someone considered an insider and expert on the NAWA region. Probably because ‘they’ would not get the opportunity to interview the Ayatollah, yet it should also be considered that it was to circumvent possible problems of ‘Western’ bias. The fact that *De Telegraaf* also surveyed Muslims from different backgrounds on the subject: Sunni and Shi’ite; Iranian, Turkic and Moroccan or even Dutch converts such as the spokesperson of the ‘Federatie Moslim Organisaties’ Abdulwahid van Bommel, indicate such a strategy.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, for a large part the news of the Iranian revolution, especially developments after the initial phase and return of Khomeini to Iran, were dominated by the news coverage on the increasing tension between the cold war powers over Afghanistan in the same year.⁶⁷ But what is important to take from this is that Islam and Muslims at the time were not automatically labeled as restrictive or negative by the press.

The event ten years later that caused the second significant shift in attention for Islam, as established by Sunier, was the Rushdie-affair.⁶⁸ Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses* (1988) caused turmoil worldwide as it was considered blasphemous by several groups of Muslims around the globe. It led to manifestations, public book burnings from England to

⁶⁴ Zie o.a. Claude Servan-Schreiber, ‘DE NATUUR HEEFT NOOIT GEWILD DAT DE SEKSEN GELIJK ZOULDEN ZIJN’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 07 April 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027109:mpeg21:a0182> ; Reuter, UPI, ‘Khomeiny wil wereld onder islamwetten’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 15 May 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027090:mpeg21:a0049> ; UPI, Reuter, AP, NYT, ‘„Processen Iran even humaan als Neurenberg”’, *De Volkskrant*, 14 May 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010882054:mpeg21:a0002> ; UPI, Reuter, AP, ‘Basis Islamitische Republiek – Iran publiceert ontwerp grondwet’, *De Volkskrant*, 19 June 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881999:mpeg21:a0120> (all articles counseled on 7 June 2019).

⁶⁵ Mohammed Heikal, ‘Exclusief interview bij Khomeini thuis’, *De Telegraaf*, 24 December 1979 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011200657:mpeg21:a0204> (7 June 2019).

⁶⁶ See for example Henk de Mari, ‘Khomeini heeft niet veel aanhang in Nederland’, *De Telegraaf*, 08 December 1979 in via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011200644:mpeg21:a0504> (8 June 2019).

⁶⁷ For this statement I have based myself on the numbers stemming from a search term in the same period of time (1 January 1979 to 31 December 1980) containing “Afghanistan and (Verenigde Staten or Sovjet-Unie)”, considering both the amount of results (1.424 articles combined in *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad*) as well as their placement in the newspaper, outranging the results on the Iranian Revolution (208 articles combined in *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad*) almost by a 7:1 ratio.

⁶⁸ Sunier, 84-85.

Pakistan and bomb threats against the books publisher in the United States.⁶⁹ The book even provided reason enough for the Islamic regime in Iran to recall its ambassadors from EEG-countries as they did not renounce it. Consequently the ayatollah announced a fatwa calling for the death of its author Salman Rushdie on 14 February 1989.⁷⁰ It not only was cause for an increase of the number of publications on Islam and Muslims, but also changed and problematized the perception of them. The articles questioned the differences between Christian-secular 'Western' views and those of Muslims both in and outside the West. For example, *De Volkskrant* wrote how the affaire put *tolerance* under pressure after about 5.000 Dutch Muslims protested the book in The Hague. Reasons for their statement were the threats aimed at bookstore owners and signs amongst some of the protesters saying "Dood aan Rushdie" (tr. "Death to Rushdie"). *De Volkskrant*, while acknowledging their right to protest, describes these actions as inappropriate, borderline lawful and directly in conflict with the values of the Dutch constitutional state. By itself a reasonable commentary, criticizing the threatening of others, were it not that in the rest of the article, implicitly, the newspaper itself does the same:

"De hier verblijvende Islamiëten doen er goed aan te beseffen dat dreigementen zoals gisteren, volstrekt uit den bozen zijn. Nederland is een samenleving met een historisch gegroeid respect voor andere culturen en religies; discriminatie is strafbaar... Maar ook die vrijheden kennen hun grenzen. Verdraagzaamheid tegenover andersdenkenden is een groot goed, ook voor Islamiëten. Zij brengen die tolerantie in gevaar door leven en goed van derden te bedreigen."⁷¹

The message warned Muslims in the Netherlands that Dutch society does not welcome the death threats such as expressed against Rushdie and book owners. In addition, though not literally expressed as such, it contains a message that testing societies tolerance further may lead to that same society to no longer tolerate, nor welcome them.

Michael Stein in the *NRC Handelsblad* wrote a more nuanced criticism titled *Allahs strijd met Satans dichters* in which he also contrasted the 'World of Islam' with that of 'the West'. Stein compares the freedom to doubt one's faith, god or religion in general in the West with the strict and unforgiving rules of Islam. He parallels its (in his words) 'outdated points of view' with the barbarity of the Middle Ages and the days of the Reformation and rise of the nation states in 16th and 17th century Europe. Yet, he also explains why from a Muslim point of view Rushdie's book with many characters that resemble figures from the holy scriptures of Islam,

⁶⁹ Inleiding Marijke Emeis bij Salman Rushdie (vert. door Marijke Emeis) 'Hoe grif, hoe dartzel brandt een boek!', *NRC Handelsblad*, 15 February 1989 via Delpher:

<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030519:mpeg21:a0093> (9 June 2019).

⁷⁰ Frits Schaling, 'Iran roept ambassadeurs terug uit alle EG landen', 21-02-1989 in *NRC Handelsblad* via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030524:mpeg21:a0012> (9 June 2019).

⁷¹ Redactie, 'TEN GELEIDE: Tolerantie onder druk', 04-03-1989 in *De Volkskrant* via Delpher <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856357:mpeg21:a0651> (10 June 2019).

the Qur'an, and Islamic histories is offensive.⁷² From the selected newspapers the one writing the least on the subject is *De Telegraaf*. In comparison it remains quite restrained in its reports on the Rushdie affair. The exception is a column by Rob Hoogland, who in his daily section *Kringen* strongly expresses his discontent with demonstrators and the way police and politics have dealt with them:

“Uit duizenden schuimbekken wordt de dood op een mens gepropageerd, maar de demonstratie is ordelijk verlopen...Duizenden fanatici lappen onze grondbeginselen aan hun laars, maar daar tegen optreden: nee, dat was niet zo verstandig. Wij moeten de islamitische medelander immers met respect blijven behandelen. Verdraagzaamheid tegenover andere culturen en geloofsovertuigingen heeft altijd hoog in ons vaandel gestaan, dus daar zal zo'n incident geen verandering in brengen...Allah is groot, maar er zijn grenzen”⁷³

What is interesting is not only the clear disdain he showed for religious fanaticism, but also the returning theme of Dutch tolerance we also came across in the example of *De Volkskrant*. It indicates a widespread narrative of 'Dutch tolerance' that has become generally accepted in the Netherlands. However, as argued by Peter van Rooden in 'Dutch way of dealing with religious difference' (2010), the case of Muslims in the Netherlands makes clear that such a master narrative does not apply to all groups within the Netherlands.⁷⁴ The general tone of voice in columns was much more outspoken and harsher in judging Islam and Muslims in relation to the Rushdie-affaire than regular news articles. This is nowhere more evident than in the three columns Jan Blokker of *De Volkskrant* wrote on the Rushdie-affaire. In the first one 'Begrip' (tr. Compassion / Understanding) he openly questions why he should "understand or sympathize with retarded cultures and views" and pleads for a "vaccine against any kind of faith, good or bad".⁷⁵ In the second column, titled 'Lelijk' (tr. Ugly), he mocks Arabists because they can not teach him anything he did not know already and Islam and Muslims, 'the pajama-men', for losing its glory of the past and being overtaken by a West it now envies.⁷⁶ In his third and last column in relation to the Rushdie affair Blokker answers a question by a reporter of magazine *De Tijd* who asks him whether he had thought it possible that a year ago someone would ask a Muslim in the Netherlands, (term used in Dutch: 'Mohammedaan') why he would not return [ed. to his country of origing]? Blokker's answer that he 'admittedly so would not have, but with the sidenote that at the time most Muslims had not yet turned into intentional murderers'

⁷² Michael Stein, 'Allahs strijd met Satans dichters', *NRC Handelsblad*, 24 February 1989 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030527:mpeg21:a0184> (11 June 2019).

⁷³ Rob Hoogland, 'Verdraagzaamheid', *De Telegraaf*, 6 March 1989 via Delpher, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010645567:mpeg21:a0340> (05 June 2019).

⁷⁴ Peter van Rooden, 'Dutch way of dealing with religious difference', in: Erik Sengers and Thijl Sunier (ed.) *Religious newcomers and the nation state* (Delft, 2010), 59-75, where 71-72.

⁷⁵ Jan Blokker, 'Begrip', *De Volkskrant*, 18 February 1989 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856395:mpeg21:a0812> (12 June 2019).

⁷⁶ Jan Blokker 'Lelijk', *De Volkskrant*, 28 February 1989 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856402:mpeg21:a0363> (12 June 2019).

pretty much sums up the quick development that the views of a part of Dutch population on Islam and Muslims went through during the late eighties of the last century. It shows how events related to Islam and Muslims outside of the Netherlands now came to reflect Islam and Muslims within the Netherlands for that part of society. The rest of his answer reflects on the doubts he had about the way that the press had dealt with Muslims in the roughly 5-10 years they had been writing about them as he states it might have been wise if *De Volkskrant* had been more critical in the past as well instead of pretending we ‘were lions between lambs on the road to polycultural paradise’. Ending with a similar message as his editorial colleagues, though much more explicit:

‘Maar zolang de gevreesde ziekte onder ons is doen Moslims in Nederland er goed aan tot in de hoogste instantie hun recht te zoeken. Als ze dat tenslotte...niet krijgen, en ze willen desondanks nog altijd schrijvers vermoorden – dan mogen ze van mij in luxe slaapwagens met de Oriënt-express terug: dan hebben we voor ze gedaan wat we konden, maar het is niet gelukt.’⁷⁷

Colleague columnist Gerrit Komrij, also named in Blokker’s columns, is even harsher in *NRC Handelsblad* and it is in his column that the making of a homogenous pillar of Islam as discussed through Sunier can be found. Komrij writes ‘niet één spat van redelijkheid of tolerantie is aan die groep, die zo lang in een maatschappij heeft geleefd die haar waarachtig ook wel wat had te bieden, blijven kleven.’. Which translates as ‘Not one spat of decency or tolerance can be found in that group, that lived in a society for so long, that truly had something to offer to them, but it didn’t stick’. His words certainly don’t leave any room for interpretation nor is any trace of the prudence used to describe Islam and Muslims in the seventies to be discovered in them. The change in tone of voice these columns display might be explained through the lens of the writers seeing the threats against Rushdie as an attack on their own. However, it is questionable whether their respective audiences also interpreted their columns as such.

At the start of the 1990’s a trend break can be observed. Where up to that point the publications on Islam and Muslim(s) seemingly went hand in hand, from 1992-1995 the amount of publications on Muslims soars with a \pm 50% increase in 1992, while the amount of publications on Islam slightly decrease. The increasing number of publications on Muslims can for a large part be attributed to the Bosnian War as a result of the collapse of Yugoslavia. The fighting parties were mainly Bosnian-Serbs, Bosnian-Croats and *Bosniaks*, a minority most often referred to in Dutch press as ‘Bosnische moslims’ (tr. Bosnian Muslims). Newsreports on this event made up almost 50% of the total of articles on Muslim(s) in *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* between 1992 and 1995. What is noteworthy here is that the violence, in this case against a Muslim minority, is not so poignantly linked to

⁷⁷ Jan Blokker, ‘Terug’, *De Volkskrant*, 11 March 1989 via Delpher: <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856363:mpeg21:a0617> (12 June 2019).

religion by Dutch press (roughly 2,5% of the publications mention Islam as part of their story). Moreover, it should be questioned to what extent this decision to not link these Muslims to Islam is due to the fact that these articles concern ethnic European Muslims instead of Muslims with a (link to a) non-European background. Do the journalists of *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* not relate this group of Muslims to Islam because they are European, or because they are not the aggressors, read 'bad guys', in this war? Regardless of the answer to such a question the way the newspapers have reported on Muslims in relation to the Bosnian War comes off as paradoxical. In the case of other comparable events where the roles were reversed journalists have consistently linked Muslims and Islam to one another in their publications, consistently linking violence to Islam.

One would expect this to become clear in particular in the aftermath of 9/11 when news on Islam and Muslim(s) appears to have been exclusively reduced to news of religious extremism, violence and terror. Nexis Uni holds a combined total of 10.547 publications by *De Telegraaf* (1.363), *De Volkskrant* (4.602) and *NRC Handelsblad* (4.582) on Islam and/or Muslim(s) between the events of 9/11 and 1 January 2019. While in 'only' 13,75% (1.451) of the articles 9/11 or "11 september" is mentioned, a cocktail of search words: *geweld* or *terreur* or *terrorisme* or *terrorist* or *extremist* or *extremisme* or *islamist* or *islamisme* or *fundamentalist* or *fundamentalisme*, linked to these sentiments can be found in 46,05% (4.857) of them.⁷⁸ When compared to the situation pre 11 September 2001 and post Bosnian War, so roughly 1 January 1996 to 10 September 2001 this shows that the focus on extremism, violence and terror has 'only' increased with 10% (462 out of 1306 publications). It is mainly the number of articles mentioning Islam and Muslims that has increased significantly. The number of publications in *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* increased from 1.154 publications in the 5 years before 9/11 to 3.414 publications in the 5 years after the attacks.⁷⁹

This is not in the least due to the numerous articles that were written around the time of the murder of filmmaker turned critic and author, Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004 and the years to come. A search in Nexis Uni on "Theo van Gogh" in *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* in 2004 results in 1.263 articles, of which 343 articles contain the word "islam" and 599 articles are encountered when using the filter "moslim*". The central themes in these articles vary from freedom of speech to the public debate on national identity and the multicultural society that Van Gogh was so critical about in his work. *De Telegraaf* was most conflicted in the writing after his death. This shows in their articles which on the hand demonstrated the success stories of both prominent and unknown Muslims in the Netherlands.⁸⁰ On the other hand the heavy emphasis on subjects

⁷⁸ Filter settings: Dutch, *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, 11/9/2001-31/01/2018, (Islam and (Moslim or Moslims)) > geweld or terreur or terrorisme or terrorist or extremist or extremism or islamist or islamisme or fundamentalist or fundamentalisme.

⁷⁹ Please note that this comparison has left out *De Telegraaf* only due to not yet having made available their archives from 1994-1998.

⁸⁰ See "Marokkaanse moeders willen wel!", *De Telegraaf*, 27 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DWK-WTV0-00J5-K22B-00000->

such as integration and prominent politicians who had to go into hiding because of their opinion, such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Geert Wilders and Ahmed Aboutaleb, contrasted these reports.⁸¹ Especially as the latter allowed for openly spreading an ‘adapt or go home’ message. Where Hirsi Ali and Wilders have been known for their shocking manners of expressing their discontent with (radical) Islam and Muslims, Aboutaleb, himself a son of an imam, was more polished in expressing the expectations of Muslims in the Netherlands if they wanted a place in it:

“De vrijheid van religie, de vrijheid van meningsuiting en het antidiscriminatiebeginsel zijn de belangrijkste kernwaarden van de Nederlandse samenleving. Een ieder die deze waarden niet deelt, doet er verstandig aan zijn conclusies te trekken en te vertrekken.”⁸²

In this passage of a speech just after the murder on Van Gogh he also described, what he saw as, the core values of the Dutch identity they should conform to: freedom of religion; freedom of speech and the principle not to discriminate others. In short, tolerance against others. One could argue *De Telegraaf* did not keep to these principles and incited action amongst its readership through its articles. For example on November 3 when ‘onze verslaggevers’ (tr. ‘our reporters’), wrote an article with the header “civilians demand strict measures” [ed. against radical Muslims]. However, in the article none of the persons cited actually gave voice to such demands. Even more dangerous was the mentioning of imam Mahmoud el-Shershaby’s street address on November 5th, knowingly endangering him due to his function at the mosque blamed for Mohamed B.’s radicalization.⁸³ *De Volkskrant*’s editors and columnists took a different approach, using Van Gogh’s death to thoroughly debate the right to freedom of expression and the extent people should be allowed to practice this right. Remco Campert was particularly quick in making a painful assessment only a day after the murder:

[00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DSM-9880-00J5-K4MW-00000-00&context=1516831); ‘BEWONDERD’, *De Telegraaf*, 13 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DSM-9880-00J5-K4MW-00000-00&context=1516831> & ‘WEL SAMEN GELUKKIG’, *De Telegraaf*, 13 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DSM-9880-00J5-K4N9-00000-00&context=1516831> (all articles counseled on 23 July 2019).

⁸¹ See ‘Wilders en de ophief over zijn veiligheid’, *De Telegraaf*, 14 December 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4F17-JM00-00J5-K0DT-00000-00&context=1516831>; ‘Ahmed Aboutaleb’, *De Telegraaf*, 13 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DSM-9880-00J5-K4N8-00000-00&context=1516831> and ‘HELDIN’, *De Telegraaf*, 30 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DX8-F1H0-00J5-K2V1-00000-00&context=1516831> (all articles counseled on 23 July 2019).

⁸² ‘BEWONDERD’, *De Telegraaf*, 13 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DSM-9880-00J5-K4MW-00000-00&context=1516831> (23 July 2019).

⁸³ Onze verslaggevers, ‘DODENLIJST’, *De Telegraaf*, 5 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DPX-J100-00J5-K363-00000-00&context=1516831> (23 July 2019).

“De ene na de andere politicus stond pal voor de vrijheid van meningsuiting, maar dat is toch iets anders dan de vrijheid om mensen tot in hun ziel pijn te doen.”⁸⁴

In doing so he was implicitly asking how far one can go hurting people verbally before there should be legal consequences and if Van Gogh had some blame in his own death. His colleagues at *NRC Handelsblad* swiftly caught on to the discussion, pointing out that the European Court decided the limit is incitement to hatred and violence, something that never stopped Van Gogh.⁸⁵ This is noteworthy as he was soon after his death lauded in the same press as a champion of the free word.⁸⁶

His death has since then come up on several occasions (4627 times since 1 January 2005 in *De Telegraaf*, *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* combined) in relation to the discussions on Muslims, Islam and immigration that have unrelentingly hardened ever since. Proof of this can be found in the political sphere as well as in society. Exemplary are Geert Wilders' statements during the results of the 2014 municipal elections in The Hague: ‘*Willen jullie meer, of minder Marokkanen? ... Dat gaan we dan regelen.*’ (tr. ‘Do you want more or less Moroccans?...Then we are going to arrange that.’)⁸⁷; the protests against asylum centers in Steenbergen⁸⁸; from prime minister Mark Rutte speaking out on the Dutch Jewish-Christian values and tradition our society is built on, to that same prime minister saying on national television “Lazer zelf op. Ga zelf terug naar Turkije. Pleur op.” (tr. “Get lost. Go back to Turkey yourselves. Go away.”).⁸⁹

The Dutch press overeagerly write about such events, as this research shows especially in times of crisis when confrontations between Europe or the Netherlands (‘Us’ or ‘the West’) and countries or people with an Islamic background (‘Them’ or ‘the East’) seem unavoidable. In this way they promote the increasing polarization of the debate on (trans-

⁸⁴ Remco Campert, ‘Gemengde gevoelens’, *De Volkskrant*, 3 November 2004

<https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/gemengde-gevoelens~b6eb340a/> (24 July 2019).

⁸⁵ Wubby Luyendijk and Margriet Oostveen, ‘De tragedie van het vrije woord’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 3 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DPJ-3J60-0150-W0SR-00000-00&context=1516831> (24 July 2019).

⁸⁶ Jannetje Koelewijn, ‘Ik ben niet begonnen!’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 6 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DR5-DDX0-0150-W1FG-00000-00&context=1516831> (27 July 2008).

⁸⁷ Geert Wilders notorious ‘Willen jullie meer of minder Marokkanen’ statement during the 2014 municipal elections in The Hague, 19 March 2014 <http://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/video/2009576-wilders-meer-of-minder-marokkanen.html> (28 July 2019).

⁸⁸ Arjen Schreuder, ‘In roerig ‘Steenbergistan’ is de rust weergekeerd’, *NRC Next*, 7 October 2017 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5PN6-XD41-JC5G-12FP-00000-00&context=1516831> (28 July 2019).

⁸⁹ See amongst others Annemarie Kas, ‘Nieuw? Mark Rutte en zijn VVD spraken al langer over waarden’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 8 September 2016, <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5KN8-6GK1-DYMH-R04N-00000-00&context=1516831>; Martin Sommer, ‘Ongemanierd normeren’, *De Volkskrant*, 1 October 2016 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5KV1-KK21-DYRY-X31R-00000-00&context=1516831> and Frank Hendrickx & Ariejan Korteweg, ‘Normaal betekent niet gewoon. Ik wil geen gewoon land’, *De Volkskrant*, 14 March 2017 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5N33-0Y61-DYRY-X09B-00000-00&context=1516831> (28 July 2019).

)national identity. As Figures 1 to 4 show these media-storms have never lasted but do have a negative effect as they rarely address 'normal' Islam or 'normal' Muslims but zoom in on the extremes. As such, the media contribute to creating an overly negative image of Muslims, Islam and immigrants in general. This has contributed to the current (hardened) attitude in the Netherlands towards immigrants and European decision-making. While maintaining the narrative of Dutch tolerance, articles about Muslims and Islam on several occasions have shown otherwise. They do not simply illustrate there are different ways of writing about the religious and the irreligious, one more tolerant than the other. Looking at the articles written on Muslims and Islam and the language used to express both news as well as opinion, it has to be established that at times unaware, but also often knowingly, the differences between a Dutch 'us' and Muslim 'they' are expressed and build up throughout time. As such, the media have played a role in the way (a part of) the Dutch population perceive Muslims, Islam and immigrants with such a background. Columns in particular have actively contributed to creating this suspicious, at times downright intolerant attitude. What is interesting to determine is that in a depillarized, supposedly secular, society columnists and politicians alike on several occasions emphasize the (protestant) Christian values that, according to them, have shaped Dutch identity, falling back on the old narrative of Europe. As shown in chapter one in this narrative Muslims and Islam are absent, or foreign elements beyond the borders of the continent, ignoring the past and present reality of Muslims and Islam in Europe. This is especially true for Islam as shown by the writing on the Bosnian War. Where on almost all other occasions writing on Muslims and Islam go hand in hand, Islam was strikingly absent from the writing on ethnic European Muslims. Van Rooden concluded about the dechristianized Dutch nation, that it does not find it easy to deal with religious difference, the same can be concluded for the Dutch press that is supposed to inform the public.⁹⁰

Ch. 3 Perceptions of Europe and Islam in Spanish Media

This chapter compares the situation of the Netherlands with that of Spain in order to create an overview of some of the different points of view on Muslims and Islam in Europe. It evaluates the role of the press in creating such views in a transnational European context. In Spain, much more so than in the Netherlands, the role of Islam is an important factor in discussions on its history and (national) identity. This is especially true in the southern region of Andalusia, where cities such as Cordoba, Seville and Granada once flourished as a part of the Islamic Emirate of Al Andalus and consequently the Caliphate of Cordoba. Spain still benefits from this history up to today with millions of tourists visiting the remaining heritage sites each year.

⁹⁰ Van Rooden, 'Dutch way of dealing with religious difference', (Delft 2010), 59-75, where 73-74.

3.1 A short history of Islam in Spain

The history of Islam in Spain started with Tariq ibn-Ziyad's decision to cross what we now know as the strait of Gibraltar with his following of 7000 Moors on April 30th, 711 A.D. and their rapid conquest of the Southern Iberian peninsula.⁹¹ What ensued was the development of a thriving Islamic empire that, as Richard Bulliet argues, through:

“a cornucopia of stimuli from Muslim lands transformed many aspects of European life: philosophy (commentaries on Aristotle), theology (Averroism), mathematics (Arabic numerals), chemistry (gunpowder), medicine (surgical technique), music (lute-playing, troubadour songs), literature (tales that show up in Italian works), manufacturing (glass, paper, woodblock printing), cuisine (pasta, sugar), and the enjoyment of everyday life.”⁹²

This version of Spanish-Islamic history is endorsed by Maria Rosa Menocal. One of the late Sterling professor of Humanities at Yale University's main arguments in *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (2002) is that Europe is indebted to Islam's influence under the rule of the Umayyads. Especially under their rule Moorish Spain thrived. However, the decline of this period of economic, cultural and spiritual blossoming slowly declined around the turn of the millennium, she states, when the Caliphate of Cordoba slowly succumbed to both internal struggles as well as the expanding Christian kingdoms of the North.⁹³ Other historians such as David Nirenberg and Darió Fernández-Morera have more critical views on *convivencia*, which they see as a period of forced coexistence. Especially the latter is very convinced it was a segregated society that was reinforced through the dhimmi system, inter- and intrareligious violence and the oppression of minorities under Muslim rule.⁹⁴ While it could be argued this intercultural and interreligious relation ended with the fall of Granada in 1492 I propose it lingers on until the present. After all, Spanish-Islamic relations continued with the conquest of Melilla in 1497 and the spread of Spanish influence into other regions of current day Morocco via the remigration of expelled Moors and Sephardic Jews from the Spanish kingdoms during the 16th century. Spain expanded its influence during the 17th century when it acquired Ceuta as a part of the Lisbon peace treaty (1668) and (forcefully) reaffirmed it when the Northern part of Morocco became a Spanish protectorate in 1912 as a consequence of the tensions between Morocco and several European powers over the course of the 19th and early 20th century.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Pierre Cachia, *A History of Islamic Spain* (Routledge New York, 2017) 8-9.

⁹² Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (2004) 31.

⁹³ Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World* (Boston, 2002).

⁹⁴ For their full arguments see David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: persecution of minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1996) and Darió Fernández-Morera, *The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise: Muslims, Christians and Jews under Islamic Rule in Medieval Spain* (Wilmington, 2016) 35-48; 118-138 and 210-214.

⁹⁵ For a fuller understanding of the continuing Spanish-Islamic relations see Terhi Lehtinen ' "At the Gates of El Dorado": Micro-dynamics in the Transnational Border Area between Northern Morocco and Europe' in Fredrik Söderbaum & Ian Taylor (red.) *Afro-regions. The Dynamics of Cross-border Regionalism in Africa* (2008) 121-135 alwaar 126-132.

That the Moorish/Islamic influence on Spain after the fall of Granada not only lingered on a geo-political level but on a scholarly level as well became clear in the aftermath of the Spanish civil war. The event caused for reflections on the Spanish identity amongst Spain's scholarly elite, most notable among them Américo Castro and Claudio Sanchez-Albornoz y Menduïña. The two historians clashed over the subject during their exile from Spain under the Franco regime, making Spain's transnational history with Islam the focal point of discussions on Spanish national identity. The former arguing that the Spanish identity was shaped under Moorish rule over the Iberian peninsula from 711-1492 A.D., a concept that build a bridge between Spain and North-Africa, legitimizing Spanish presence in Morocco, as its narrative granted Spain and its population a transnational (multicultural) identity. Castro did so by emphasizing its Mediterranean character rather than its European character, absorbing Spain's Moorish history and influences and as such affirming both its European as well as its North-African relations. In stark contrast stands the view of Claudio Sanchez-Albornoz y Menduïña on Spanish identity, denying Moorish influence, claiming that the 'homo hispanicus' stems from the Castilian province in the North of Spain which remained free from Islamic rule. Sanchez argued that it was from there that during the *Reconquista* true Spanish values spread across the Iberian peninsula, fulfilling its destiny with the reunification of the [ed. Christian] Iberian kingdoms.⁹⁶ By firmly linking Spanish identity to its Christian characteristics his narrative also emphasized Spain's Europeanness.

Nonetheless, even when Morocco regained its independence on March 2nd, 1956 Spain held on to the exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla with the claim that they were in their possession long before the founding of the protectorate.⁹⁷ In doing so discussions on Spanish identity have continued ever since, even though they would soon be dominated by a discourse on tolerance rather than identity.⁹⁸ Spain's history has thus led to an enormous paradox. On one hand it celebrates Christian holidays excessively in comparison to much of its European neighbors and commemorates the Christian victory over the Moors of the Taifa kingdoms. Think for example of the yearly festivities surrounding Semana Santa, the week before Easter or, especially interesting in this context, the celebration of Santiago 'Matamoros', St. James the 'Moor-slayer'. On the other hand, especially in the utmost southern autonomous community of Andalusia, Islam's influence and its reputation for '*Convivencia*' are cherished and remain visible up to today in both its material as well as its immaterial heritage. Additionally, by holding on to the exclaves of Melilla and Ceuta Spain has also become the main point of entry for many (illegal) migrants, the majority of them

⁹⁶ Zie Americo Castro, *España en su historia: cristianos, moros y judios* (Buenos Aires, 1948) 202 and Claudio Sanchez Albornoz y Menduïña, *España: un enigma histórico* (Buenos Aires, 1956) 121.

⁹⁷ Terhi Lehtinen ' "At the Gates of El Dorado": Micro-dynamics in the Transnational Border Area between Northern Morocco and Europe' in Fredrik Söderbaum & Ian Taylor (red.) *Afro-regions. The Dynamics of Cross-border Regionalism in Africa* (2008) 121-135 alwaar 126-132.

⁹⁸ As a by-product of the debate between Americo Castro and Claudio Sanchez Albornoz y Menduïña and the formers use of the term *Convivencia*, the (relatively) peaceful coexistence of of the three Abrahamic religions in the period of 711-1492 AD in present-day Spain, a large and ongoing debate on the extent of the actual tolerance ensued.

from the NAWA-countries, via the “Western Mediterranean Route”. According to Frontex, the European border and coast guard agency, Spain accounted for 60% of the detections on the three main routes for migrants into Europe in 2018.⁹⁹

3.2 Methodology

Where in the Dutch case the search terms could be conveniently used within two digital archives that covered the period of investigation, with more or less similar tools, the research of Spanish newspapers required a more creative approach. *El País* (1996-present) and *ABC* (2007-2016) have parts of their collections present in the system of Nexis Uni but *La Vanguardia* is completely absent from it. For the other years that are part of the span of this research each newspaper has their own *Hemeroteca*, which literally translates as ‘newspaper library’ but is used in reference to their digital archives. Each of these archives has its own way of browsing through them, making it a considerably more laborious task than the research on Dutch press. Nonetheless, representative results could be extracted and recorded in a similar graph as used for the chapter on Dutch press for the Spanish newspapers as well, with the exception of *El País*. Spain’s largest newspapers does not offer a tool to search and filter the contents of its digitally available newspapers pre-1996 within a predetermined frame of time, not even for its paid-subscribers. For this reason they have been omitted from the absolute results, but not from close reading as some of its articles can be accessed via the online services of *Kiosk y Mas*.

3.3 Research and results

The results, which have come about by using the search terms “islam” and “(musulman or musulmanes)”¹⁰⁰ in *Nexis Uni* and the respective *Hemerotecas* have been summarized in figures 5,6, 7 and 8, allow for a comparison of the two countries’ newspapers statistically. To compare its contents close reading was applied to a selection of articles informed by apparently similar results to those found in the examined Dutch newspapers as well as the anomalies that showed in the graphs.

⁹⁹ FRONTEX, ‘Migratory flows in October: Down by a third, Spain accounts for 60% of detections’ 13 November 2018 <https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/migratory-flows-in-october-down-by-a-third-spain-accounts-for-60-of-detections-ppaQPH> (16 January 2019).

¹⁰⁰ The results from the *Hemeroteca* of *La Vanguardia* have been additionally filtered by hand as the algorithm used to filter results did not automatically exclude the search terms appearing as part of the newspapers “TV guide and puzzle” section working on photo recognition of the words. The same method could not be applied on the pre-1996 archive of *El País* as its filter does not work based on the individually selected words but on themes.

FIG. 5 - USE OF THE TERM 'ISLAM' FROM 1975-2018

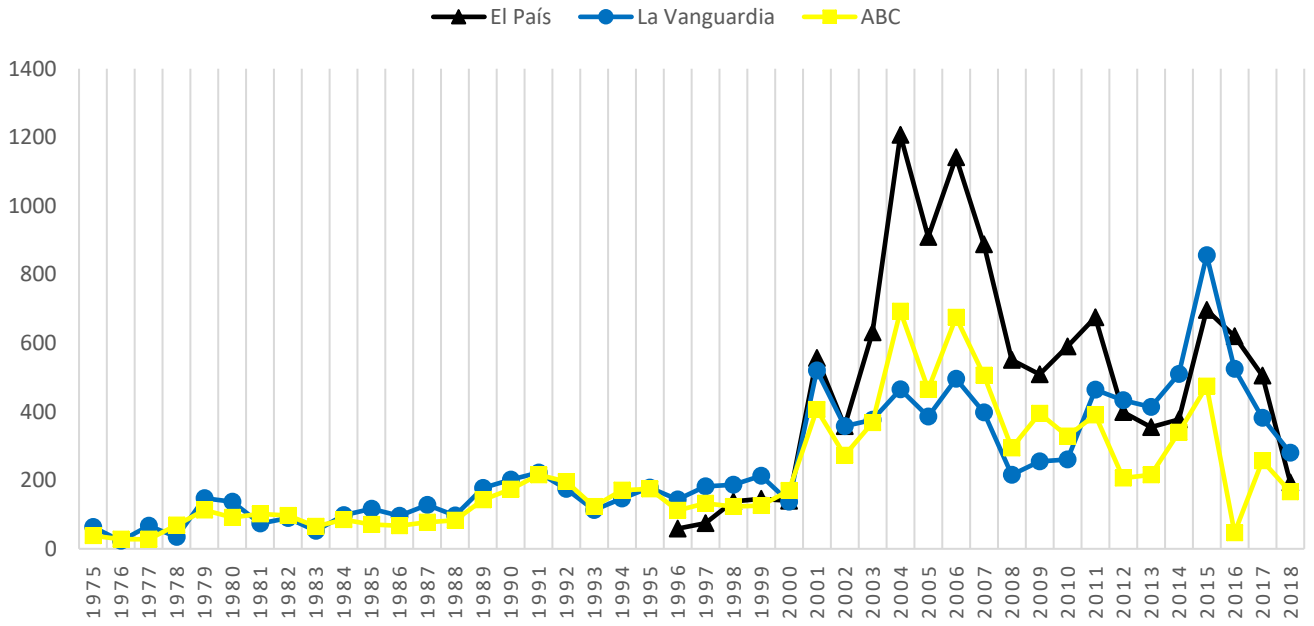
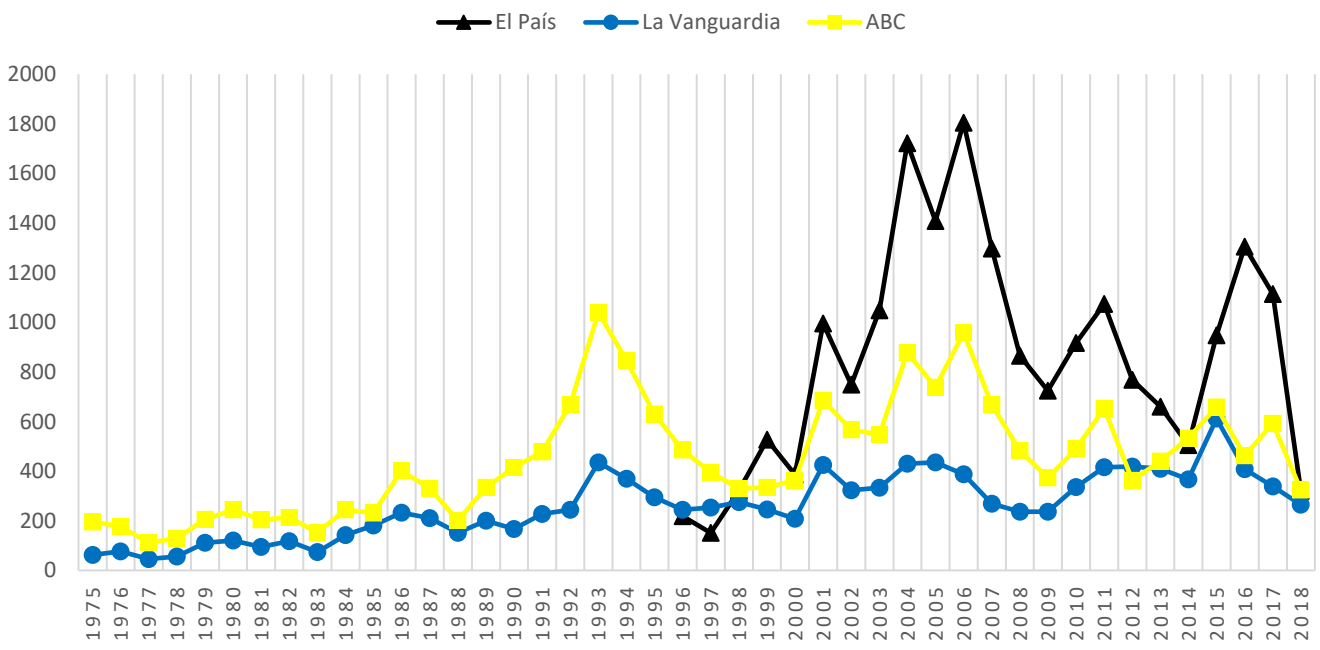
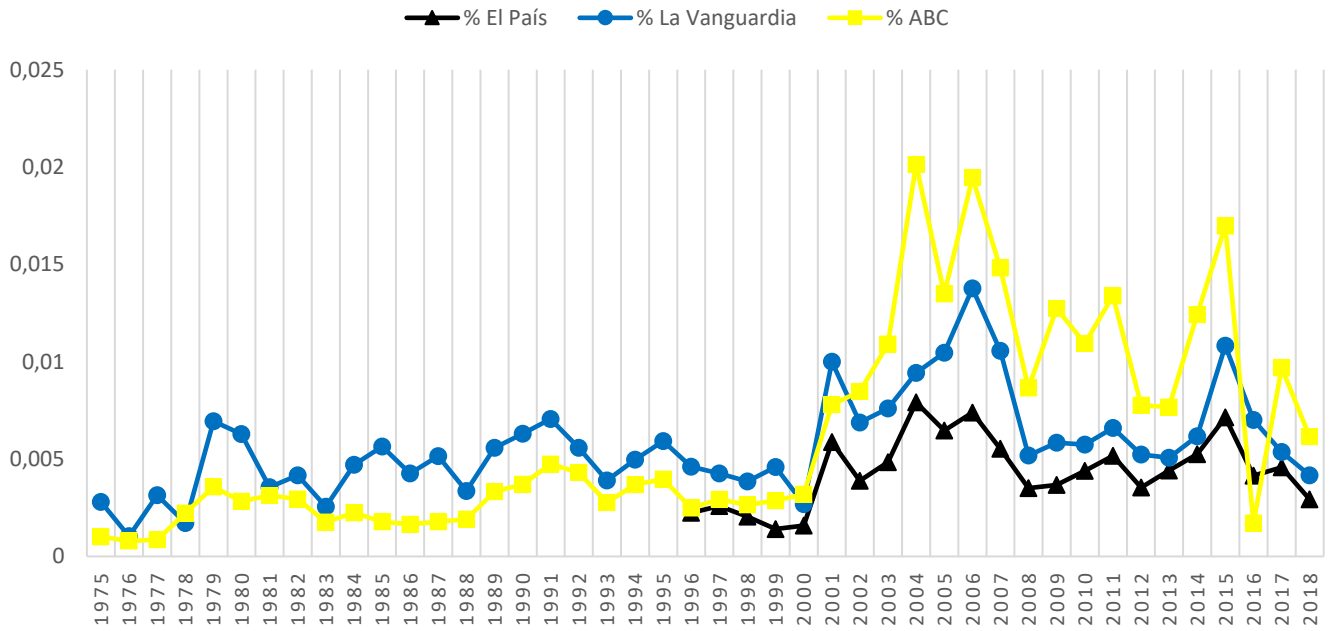


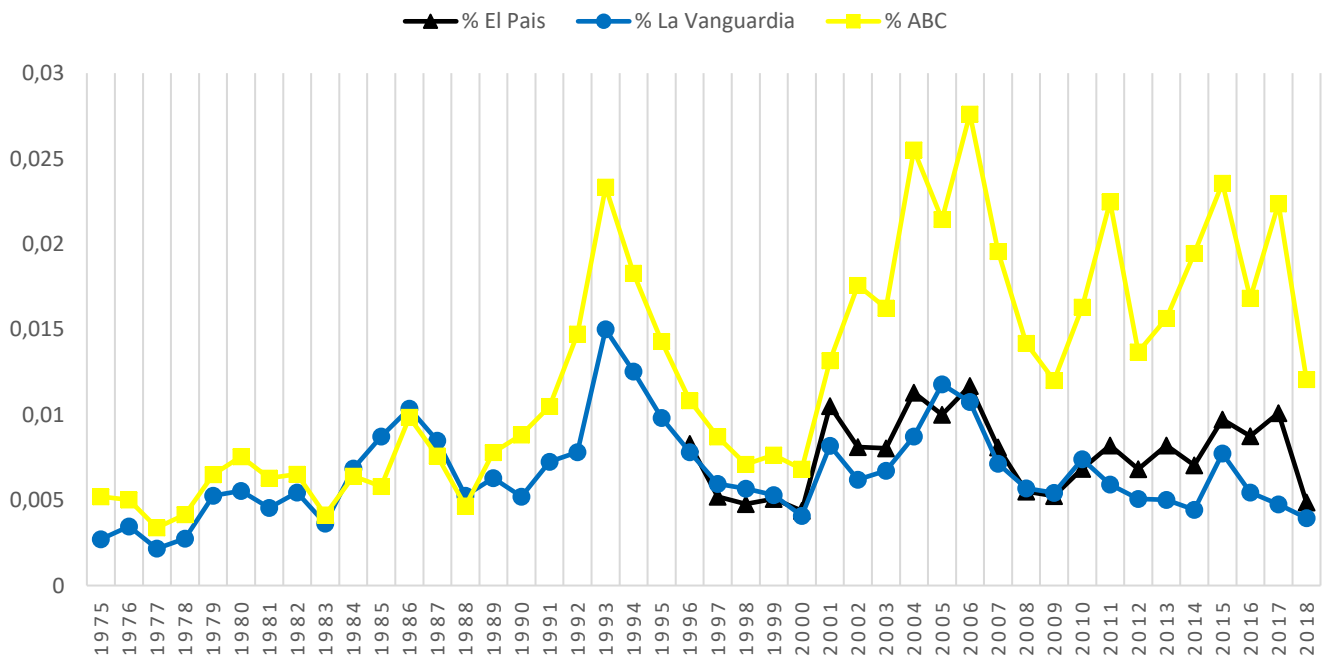
FIG. 6 USE OF THE TERMS 'MUSULMAN' OR 'MUSULMANES' FROM 1975-2018



**FIG. 7 - USE OF THE TERM 'ISLAM' FROM 1975-2018
IN %**



**FIG. 8 USE OF THE TERMS 'MUSULMAN' OR
'MUSULMANES' FROM 1975-2018 IN %**



To see how the absolute numbers of Figures 5 and 6 relate to the total number of publications, Figures 7 and 8 show what their percentage is in relation to the total number of publications per newspaper. These totals are a rough estimate as they were established by searching the term 'el' (tr. 'the'), a search term that can be expected to be used in virtually every article.

Much like their Dutch colleagues the journalists at *El País*, *ABC* and *La Vanguardia* have written mostly about Islam and Muslims in relation to events taking place outside of their national or even supranational (European) borders. It is thus not surprising to observe several similar peak years when comparing the number of publications on Islam and Muslims in the Spanish press with the previously determined results in the Dutch press. The first year that shows such a corresponding peak in the graphs is 1979 and is a consequence of the Iranian Revolution. It caused the number of publications on Islam to almost double in *ABC* and to quadruple in *La Vanguardia*. The rise in number of publications on *musulman* or *musulmanes* (tr. Muslim or Muslims) was a little less drastic with a 60% increase in *ABC* and a 100% increase in *La Vanguardia*. However, when delving deeper into the publications at the time of the Iranian Revolution, besides the human rights issues and the position of women as encountered in the Dutch newspapers, Spanish newspapers put much more emphasis on Khomeini's expressions of expanding Islam around the world. In the writing on the Irani desire to restore Islam to its former glory days, including its reach into Europe, there is real concern to be detected in the Spanish newspapers. In the wake of the Iranian Revolution and Khomeini's statements, articles such as Sanchez-Albornoz's '*¿Alá contra Cristo?*' give voice to this concern of Europe once again coming under Islamic influence:

"¿Alá contra Cristo? Sí, al cabo 'de los siglos' la Europa antaño fervorosa adoradora 'del Crucificado y aún parcialmente cristiana, deben inclinarse ante los islamitas dueños de los pozos de petróleo...sin Mahoma, Carlomagno sería inconcebible; Al convertirse el Mediterráneo en foso que separó dos mundos hasta allí complementarios la civilización cristiana se territorializó y se constituyó en eje del mundo nuevo una zona que iba de sur a norte desde la Lombardía a Flandes. Mientras España, la España crística, resistía al Islam y servía de rodela a ese nuevo Occidente nacía la Europa abuela de la nuestra. 'La victoria de Alá sobre Cristo en los decenios 'próximos puede poner fin a esa maravillosa Europa a la 'que el mundo 'debe' la civilización occidental.'"¹⁰¹

Sanchez-Albornoz foresees not a conquest in the literal sense but a future increase of Islamic influence because of the European dependency on the NAWA-countries (read Islamic-countries) and their oil. This dependency and the wealth these countries would gain from it would become Europe's downfall eventually according to Sanchez-Albornoz. However, of more importance for this research is his ironic comparison with history. Sanchez-Albornoz

¹⁰¹ Claudio Sanchez-Albornoz, '*¿Alá contra Cristo?*', *La Vanguardia*, 16 August 1979 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/1980/05/25/pagina-5/33436938/pdf.html?search=sanchez-albornoz> (21 July 2019).

stated that “without Mohamed there would be no Charles Martel”. He explained this by (implicitly) marking the clash between the Moors of the caliphate and the Christian armies led by Martel as a turning point in the relations in the Mediterranean. It would be this clash that transformed the Mediterranean Sea into a border, separating two civilizations that up until that moment had been complementary, at least according to Sanchez-Albornoz his view on history. This situation combined with Spanish resistance against Islam allowed for the development of and delimitation of a Christian civilization stretching out from Lombardy to Flandres from which “Europe was born”. He ended his argument by mentioning that “Allah’s victory on Christ in the upcoming decennia could bring an end to that beautiful Europe that gave the world Western civilization.”¹⁰² The article is an example of Spanish post-Franco attempts to attribute to itself an important position in the narrative of Europe, in this case with Spain as a gatekeeper against ‘foreign’ threats. At the same time it summarizes in one article the orientalist attitudes described by Said, Karim, Eid and others who in a postcolonial world have stepped up against the self-congratulatory narrative of that same Europe as a significant part of ‘the’ West.

The articles in the traditionally conservative *ABC*, much like those of *La Vanguardia* expressed their authors reservations about the Revolution and its consequences. It expressed its concern on the effect of the revolution on its neighboring countries, threatening Western interests (Dorrego); on the distribution of oil amidst a second energy crisis (Antonio Alferiz); and the rapprochement of Iran and the Soviet Union.¹⁰³

El País’ authors were more conflicted over the events in Iran in 1979. For example an article by Emilio Menéndez del Valle, in contrast to the reports and argumentative articles in *La Vanguardia* and *ABC*, showed a level of sympathy and expressed shame over the Occidental ties with the last Sha, who lived in abundance while the people suffered.¹⁰⁴ Others, such as Rosa Montero, showed a mocking contempt for the new Islamic regime comparing the rise of the Islamic regime as a political force in Iran with the long-gone times of the Crusades.¹⁰⁵ Yet another editorial piece expressed its concerns more carefully and from a whole other perspective, that of the cold war:

“Todas estas circunstancias no deben ocultar el verdadero fondo del problema, ya expuesto aquí en otro momento: la efervescencia del complejo mundo musulmán, árabe y asiático la

¹⁰² Claudio Sanchez-Albornoz, ‘¿Alá contra Cristo?’ (21 July 2019).

¹⁰³ See amongst others Juan Fernando Dorrego, ‘Alarma en el Golfo Arabigo por la politica radical de Jomeini’, *ABC*, 11 November 1979

<http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1979/11/11/028.html>; Efe., ‘Acercamiento Iran – Union Sovietica’, *ABC*, 15 July 1979

<http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1979/07/15/030.html> and Antonio Alferiz, ‘Mañana decide la OPEP la subida del petroleo’, *ABC*, 25 March 1979

<http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1979/03/25/017.html> (all articles accessed on 21 July 2019).

¹⁰⁴ Emilio Menéndez del Valle, ‘Irán, vergüenza de Occidente’, *El País*, 16 March 1979

https://elpais.com/diario/1979/03/16/internacional/290386803_850215.html (21 July 2019).

¹⁰⁵ Rosa Montero, ‘Guerra Santa’, *El País*, 14 February 1979

https://elpais.com/diario/1979/02/14/ultima/287794801_850215.html (21 July 2019).

permanencia de una crisis que va desde la zona de Israel -y se extiende por el norte de Africa hasta la misma China. Hay una guerra de Asia en ciernes. Podría estallar en un conflicto local entre Afganistán apoyado por la URSS, Pakistán sostenido por Estados Unidos y China, o en cualquier otro lugar; puede no tener límites. La aparición del ayatollah ha dado rostro y refuerzo religioso a un complejo movimiento en el que se mezclan la miseria con el irredentismo y los agravios seculares con la sensación de una agresión económica.”¹⁰⁶

It observed in the Islamic Revolution of 1979 a reinforcement of the religious character of ,what the author(s) believed to be, a war in the making in a “complex Muslim, Arab and Asian world”. Reasons would be tempers running high over (postcolonial) irredentism, secular grievances and the experiencing of economic aggressions in a zone stretching from the NAWA-countries all the way into China.

However, the events that began a second peak in publishing on Muslims between 1985-1986 took place a lot closer to home. It found its roots in Spain’s introduction of a new, ‘Alien’ law in 1985 ahead of entering the European Community (EC) in 1986.¹⁰⁷ It was cause for mass demonstrations in its exclaves of Melilla and Ceuta where its Muslim population would be most affected by the new law. The articles in *El País* in particular show how the Muslim community of these exclaves are seen as second rang citizens, if as citizens at all. It is a great example of the costs of becoming or being part of a united Europe can have on a national level, as by meeting the European requirements Spain had to set much stricter borders than before. It is therefore interesting that the Spanish press embraced justice for the Muslims when they got the opportunity to apply for the Spanish nationality or get prolonged 10-year work visas to maintain their jobs in the exclaves without facing deportation.¹⁰⁸ At the same time *El País* journalist Manuel Leria y Ortiz de Saracho hurried to emphasize that while they may have lived ‘together’ for a long time they never formed a unity, each religious community having its own separate space within the whole:

“Posiblemente no haya nación que haya tenido más contactos a lo largo de su historia con el pueblo musulmán que el español y que, posiblemente, lo entienda menos. Y con ello no queremos cargar tintas negativas sobre el pueblo árabe, admirable por muchas razones. Pero hemos convivido con ellos más de 1.000 años y jamás nos hemos llegado a integrar, en el sentido de fusión, salvo casos muy aislados. Secularmente, hemos vivido juntos, pero no amontonados. En la España musulmana, los cristianos (mozárabes), vivían en sus arrabales y

¹⁰⁶ Editorial, ‘Irán: un cambio historico’, *El País*, 15 February 1979

https://elpais.com/diario/1979/02/15/opinion/287881202_850215.html (21 July 2019).

¹⁰⁷ The full contents of the *Ley Orgánica 7/1985, de 1 de julio, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España*. can be found here: <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/1985/07/01/7>. For the full argument on how Spains alien law of 1985 should be interpreted as a part of it joining the Schengen zone see Margit Fauser, ‘Selective Europeanization: Europe’s impact on Spanish migration control’ in Thomas Faist & Andreas Ette (eds.) *The Europeanization of national policies and politics of migration* (Basingstoke, 2007) 136-156 where 140.

¹⁰⁸ Editorial, ‘Más vale tarde...’, *El País*, 20 November 1986

https://elpais.com/diario/1986/11/20/opinion/532825208_850215.html (24 July 2019).

los judíos en sus aljamas. En terreno reconquistado, los árabes (mudéjares) y los judíos vivían también en sus aljamas.”¹⁰⁹

It is a striking example of the paradoxical relation Spain has with Islam both in the past and present. Spain is balancing its European identity with its Mediterranean history. It is working together with its Islamic neighbors while at the same time maintaining a ‘fear’ for Islamic expansion towards mainland Spain as previously observed in relation to Khomeiny and the Iranian Revolution. Similar sentiments can also be observed in articles examining Islam’s influence on the political stage as an instrument of governance, promoting authoritarianism in Algeria and Morocco.¹¹⁰ It seems in this case the financial and geo-political interests beat the fear for Islam. What is also interesting to note is that the opening of the Spanish borders to such influences also concerned other EC members. Nonetheless it did not get any attention in the Dutch press.

The rise in numbers just before 1989 also explains why the Rushdie affair did not have such a big impact in the numbers of articles published on Muslims and Islam despite that the topic featured prominently in the newspapers. Where there was still some sympathy for the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 amongst the journalists of *El País*, much like in the Netherlands it vanished within the next decade. In Spanish newspapers the news reports and columns concerning the Rushdie affair contained a largely similar message as encountered in the Netherlands and was heavily featured. *ABC*’s authors wrote more articles on Salman Rushdie in 1989 than they did on Islam, 177 versus 143, but remained very factual in reporting news on the way the situation developed itself on a global scale. Only in columns and interviews the journalists give voice to personal opinions. Augusto Roa Bastos, stands up for freedom of speech and democracy¹¹¹, in an interview with *ABC*’s Tullo H. Demicheli, the Spanish novelist, poet and essayist Juan Goytisolo argues to not let Iran’s politics determine the way people look at Islam, nor let religion affect international relations between nations.¹¹² The journalists at *La Vanguardia* with 128 publications mentioning Rushdie in 1989, only just trailed behind their colleagues at *ABC*, but were more outspoken

¹⁰⁹ Manuel Leria y Ortiz de Saracho, ‘Errores amontonados sobre Ceuta y Melilla’, *El País*, 16 February 1987 https://elpais.com/diario/1987/02/16/espana/540428405_850215.html (15 July 2019).

¹¹⁰ See for example Gemma Aubarell, ‘El islam que nos viene’, *La Vanguardia*, 9 September 1994 [http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2008/06/11/pagina-32/34410797/pdf.html?search=argelia](http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2008/06/11/pagina-32/34410797/pdf.html?search=argelia;); Baltasar Porcel, ‘Campo de Batalla’, *ABC*, 21 March 1985 <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1985/03/21/036.html> or more recently Sami Naïr, ‘¿Puede estallar el Magreb?’, *El País*, 4 November 2016 https://elpais.com/internacional/2016/11/04/actualidad/1478279374_450427.html (26 July 2019).

¹¹¹ Augusto Roa Bastos, ‘Democracia y libertad de expresión (II)’, *ABC*, 17 April 1989 <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1989/04/17/003.html> (22 July 2019).

¹¹² Tullo H. Demicheli, ‘<< Goytisolo: No se puede recurrir a la religión para violar la Convivencia entre las naciones >>’, *ABC*, 4 March 1989 <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1989/03/04/047.html> (22 July 2019).

on the matter. Exemplary are the cover of the 26 February 1989 edition¹¹³ and Maria Dolores Masana's article 'Las "palomas" de Tehéran, en el blanco de Jomeiny', describing how Jomeiny's "Islam medieval" is winning the internal powerstruggle from moderate (read reasonable) influences such as its prime minister Hachefi Rafsanjani.¹¹⁴ In *El País* there is also no escaping the subject, as concluded by Roger Garaudy, 'Parece ser que no hay más que un crimen en el mundo: el de Jomeini' (tr. "It would appear there is no other crime in the world: than Khomeini's"). He explains the mass attention for the Rushdie affair from a historical and political context, arguing there are two reasons it receives much more attention than other news. The first being Khomeiny needing to maintain Iran's status of defender of Islam, the second that of "la santa alianza" (tr. "the holy alliance") of Western countries trying to bring down the regime that robbed it of access to a large part of the world's oil reserves. Garaudy writes that in failing to do so:

"Los nuevos cruzados sueñan con un desquite en la opinión pública: todo este estrépito permite hacer olvidar todas las otras violaciones de los derechos humanos; por ejemplo, la matanza masiva de kurdos por las armas químicas de Sadam Husein que han ayudado incondicionalmente durante siete años; matanza diaria de jóvenes palestinos tirando con piedras por un ejército tirando con balas, y que dejan continuar; el asesinato programado de Gaddafi por la CIA norteamericana, y el asesinato real de su chiquilla de dos años; a todo esto no se le da en la Prensa occidental más importancia que a un hecho diario." ¹¹⁵

His article contains an interesting paradox. On the one hand it tries to close a knowledge gap on Western/Euro-Islamic relations, an issue also addressed by Derrida and Cheriff, and points out some of the scandals the Western press is not writing about. On the other hand, Garaudy increases the psychological distance between the two through his language. An example of is his reference to "new crusaders", reminding the reader of the clashes between Christianity and Islam during Medieval times.

Moving forward to 1993 another peak can be observed in the writing on Muslims. As was the case in the Netherlands this peak was as a consequence of the Bosnian War. Figures 6 and 8 show that publications on Muslims initially followed the same pattern as in the Dutch case, with a sharp increase in 1993. As it did in the Netherlands, the writing on Islam in Spain also decreased at the same time. It is the second time that a break can be observed from the pattern that publications on Islam and Muslims more or less go hand in hand. Once again this breaking with the regular pattern can be observed in the writing on an event that considers problems with 'European' Muslims instead of non-European Muslims. Unlike in

¹¹³ 'Rushdie, el condenado por la intolerancia del ayatollah Jomeiny', *La Vanguardia*, 26 February 1989 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/1989/02/26/pagina-1/33055129/pdf.html?search=%22Salman%20Rushdie%22> (22 July 2019).

¹¹⁴ Maria Dolores Masana, 'Las "palomas" de Tehéran, en el blanco de Jomeiny', *La Vanguardia*, 5 March 1989 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/1989/02/16/pagina-18/33057610/pdf.html> (22 July 2019).

¹¹⁵ Roger Garaudy, 'La defensa del Profeta', *El País*, 10 March 1989 https://elpais.com/diario/1989/03/10/opinion/605487608_850215.html (22 July 2019).

the Dutch press, who wrote extensively on Dutch military involvement, or rather the lack there of, in the massacre at Srebrenica, in the Spanish press the rise of attention for Muslims and increase in publications was short-lived. In 1994 decline slowly set in and continued until the early 2000s. From 1993-2000 the percentage of articles on Muslim(s) in *ABC* dropped from 2,33% to 0,68% of the total number of articles published, the articles on Islam increased from 0,28% to 0,32% of the total number of articles published during the same period. For *La Vanguardia* these numbers were 1,5% to 0,42% when it comes to the percentage of articles on Muslim(s) compared to the total of articles published while publications on Islam decreased from 0,39% to 0,27% of the total.

After 1993 no significant peaks in publications on Muslims and Islam in the examined Spanish newspapers can be established until early 2000s. The first of these peaks was in 2001 when the attacks of 9/11 kicked off a wave of global terrorism as the French sociologist Michel Wieviorka noted in a publication *La Vanguardia*.¹¹⁶ His article shows the importance of bridging the gap between academics and popular media. Where many articles in the wake of the events of 9/11 and following terrorist attacks have echoed Samuel Huntington's theory of a clash of civilizations, Wieviorka chose not to only focus on Western targets of Muslim extremist violence such as in Madrid in 2004, or Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands that same year. He deliberately referred to the attacks in Indonesia on the island of Bali, Kenya, Morocco, Tuniz, Turkey, Spain and others that have taken place since 9/11.¹¹⁷ This is significant as in doing so he took a step to breaking with the narrative of East vs. West, making extremist violence a problem of humanity as a whole, rather than just a problem of the 'civilized' West. Wieviorka argues the narrative of Islam as a civilization different to that of the Occident is a consequence of the perception of Islam through the eyes of the United States, most emphatically expressed by Samuel Huntington, the situation of Muslims in Europe very different.¹¹⁸ It is a much more moderate stance in the debate on Islam and Muslims position in Spain and Europe then previously noticed in the publications in *La Vanguardia* by amongst others Sanchez-Albornoz. By offering a podium to academics to share their (often translated) views on important matters such as the supposed divide between West and East, Occident and Orient, the newspaper thus increases its multiperspectivity on these topics and the way they are explained. Wieviorka and Sanchez-Albornoz who had recurring spots in the newspaper, are just two out of many examples.

Such moderate views were heavily tested on 11 March 2004 when four forensic trains in Madrid were bombed by terrorists linked to Al-Qaeda. These attacks got an extra dimension in Spain, when the ministry of foreign affairs first pointed at the Basque separatist

¹¹⁶ Michel Wieviorka, 'Año cuatro del terrorismo global', *La Vanguardia*, 9 September 2004 in <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2004/04/06/pagina-21/33680358/pdf.html?search=islam> (22 July 2019).

¹¹⁷ Wieviorka, 'Año cuatro del terrorismo global', *La Vanguardia*, 9 September 2004 in <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2004/04/06/pagina-21/33680358/pdf.html?search=islam> (22 July 2019).

¹¹⁸ Michel Wieviorka, 'El islam europeo', *La Vanguardia*, 25 March 2002 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2002/12/03/pagina-17/33972856/pdf.html?search=islam> (22 July 2019).

organization Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) as the main suspect for the bombings.¹¹⁹ After it was established that it was an attack by Islamic terrorists, “11-M” was soon etched into Spanish historical memory and became a returning item in Spanish newspapers on a yearly basis. It led to vary different reactions. *El País* via Emilio Lamo de Espinosa welcomed his readers to a new world of mega terrorism. Interesting enough he did not blame Islam, arguing it might as well have been ETA, extremists are all just out there looking for death and destruction, whatever the reason.¹²⁰ Others such as French political scientist and arabist Gilles Kepel do see it as an Islamic attack, questioningly placing it in the context of a battle for Europe. Kepel was particularly curious about the form it would take, despite el 11-M pointing in the direction of a violent clash he still saw opportunity for it to turn into an intellectual and inter-religious collision leading to an “aggiornamento” of Islam in Europe.¹²¹ *La Vanguardia*’s Josep Playa Maset showed less interest in the form of the conflict and more interest in examining the frictions between Europe and the Muslim or Arab world and how to solve them.¹²² Noteworthy is that this is not only done introspectively but that these articles look at the impact from a transnational perspective, taking into account Europe and/or the West as a whole.

Much like the murder on Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands, later in that same year on 2 November 2004, the event of “El 11-M”, though its impact many times greater, became a symbol in Spain for the polarization of society and the debate on (religious) tolerance. The two events were even linked to each other in the media, his murder receiving considerable attention in the Spanish press. A search on “Theo van Gogh” in 2004 results in 64 unique articles in *El País*, 31 in *ABC* and 25 in *La Vanguardia*. The articles in *El País* and *ABC* were focused on the ethnicity of the perpetrator, using it to emphasize the role of Moroccans in the violent acts of 9/11, the Madrid train bombings and the murder of Van Gogh.¹²³ While the majority of these articles does not verbally attack or condemn Moroccans as a people, nor lie about the events, the emphasis on the role of perpetrators with such a Moroccan

¹¹⁹ Luiz Izquierdo & Santiago Tarin, ‘Interior sospecha the ETA pero cobra fuerza la pista del terrorismo islámico’ *La Vanguardia*, 12 March 2004 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2004/09/15/pagina-18/33654207/pdf.html?search=islam> (22 July 2019).

¹²⁰ Lamo de Espinosa, Emilio, ‘Bajo puertas de fuego’ *El País*, 16 March 2004 from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4BY2-DRX0-00F0-N2WN-0000-00&context=1516831> (15 July 2019).

¹²¹ Gilles Kepel, ‘Islam: la batalla de Europa’, *El País*, 3 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DPG-VBW0-00F0-N1CW-0000-00&context=1516831> (27 July 2019).

¹²² Josep Playa Maset, ‘Desconocido mundo árabe’, *La Vanguardia*, 28 May 2008 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2008/09/17/pagina-28/71095966/pdf.html> (15 July 2019).

¹²³ Exemplary are David Martínez Jorda, ‘La Policía holandesa cree que el jefe de la célula de Lanzarote ordenó matar a Van Gogh’; L. de Vega ‘Marroquíes, marroquíes, marroquíes...’, *ABC*, 19 December 2004 <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/2004/12/19/016.html> (23 July 2019) and Isabel Ferrer, ‘Un joven marroquí asesina a un cineasta holandés crítico con la sociedad islámica’, *El País*, 3 November 2004 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DPG-VBW0-00F0-N1CC-0000-00&context=1516831> (23 July 2019).

background is striking. Both ABC and El País singled out this aspect despite the fact that there were also several culprits with different nationalities. It gives rise to suspicions of intentional ‘othering’ with the goal to influence their respective readership’s opinion on Moroccans. One can not see this separately from the complex relation between the two countries over its borders, which are two-fold. They serve both as the borders between the two nations as well as the border of the EU/Schengen zone with the outside world.¹²⁴

A second hot topic in both newspapers was the outburst of violence in the wake of the Murder of Van Gogh, when within days several mosques, Quranic schools and churches were burned to the ground in the until that moment considered tolerant Netherlands.¹²⁵ La Vanguardia showed more reservations in its comments on the occasion. Exemplary is the article written by their correspondent in Brussels, Fernando Sanchez, during the trial of Mohamed Bouyeri in 2005. He wrote off a ‘cold and cruel murder’ by the ‘alleged Islamic terrorist’, the Amsterdam born Dutch-Moroccan Mohammed Bouyeri.¹²⁶ That same newspaper used journalist and essayist Ian Burumi’s book on the murder on Van Gogh in 2007 to re-evaluate the state of European society and its views on Islam with him, predicting European-Islamic relations would still become worse.¹²⁷ The London metro bombings in 2005 had at that point already passed but made the Spanish press relive the events of 2004 once more.

That the tensions in Spain between its Christian and Muslim population would not soon come to an end became clear once again in 2010, when members of an Austrian tourist group visited the Mezquita Catedral in Cordoba and started to incantate Islamic prayers. It led to a scuffle in the Cathedral and great outrage among Christians and Muslims in Spain alike. Especially the journalists of ABC felt called upon themselves to defend Spain’s Christian values:

No han pasado muchos años, cuarenta o cincuenta, desde aquellos tiempos en que la entrada en la Mezquita-Catedral era tan sencilla como el hecho de convertirse en escenario de juegos, entre columnas, de los niños del barrio. Pero sí han pasado muchas cosas desde

¹²⁴ Xavier Ferrer-Gallardo, ‘The Spanish-Moroccan border complex: Processes of geopolitical, functional and symbolic rebordering’, *Political Geography* 27 (2008) 301-321 where 306.

¹²⁵ See amongst others Amadeu Altafaj, ‘la xenofobia y el islamismo rompen los viejos <<polders>>’, *ABC*, 14 November 2004 in

<http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/2004/11/14/038.html> (23 July 2019)

and Gabriela Canas, ‘Los ataques xenofobos contra las minorias aumentan en la UE.’, *El País*, 14 November 2004 in [https://advance-lexis-](https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DT2-5CP0-00F0-N1X5-00000-00&context=1516831)

[com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DT2-5CP0-00F0-N1X5-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4DT2-5CP0-00F0-N1X5-00000-00&context=1516831) (23 July 2019).

¹²⁶ Fernando García, ‘El asesino de Van Gogh se muestra ufano de un crimen cometido con saña y frialdad’, *La Vanguardia*, 27 January 2005 <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2005/07/14/pagina-13/33696661/pdf.html?search=islam> (24 July 2019).

¹²⁷ Justo Barranco, ‘“El odio a Occidente empeorará”’, *La Vanguardia*, 4 December 2007

<http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2007/05/19/pagina-36/65794855/pdf.html?search=islam> (24 July 2019).

entonces...Las provocaciones y las amenazas del integrista islámico no van a aparecer en forma violenta...la mejor seguridad, la mejor prevención, sería, tanto la asunción por nuestra parte de la amenaza real del integrista islámico, como la reafirmación de que nuestros valores democráticos no están reñidos con una afirmación de esos principios frente a quienes pretenden vivir entre nosotros, o disfrutar de las comodidades occidentales, pero despreciando dichos derechos y deberes y aprovechando lo que ellos entienden como debilidades nuestras para ir imponiéndose.¹²⁸

It is a great example of the paradox that Spanish history has become in the present. A relatively innocent prayer by Muslims in a former mosque turned into a cathedral, with those Muslim prayers still visible in Arabic on some of its walls, becoming the scene for a debate on tolerance. For the editors at *ABC*, reason enough to write of provocations and threats to our democratic values by Islamic fundamentalism. The democratic values of which one writes, tolerance one of its most important, are far to be found in the article itself. Yet, the migration crisis and the events in France in 2015, that of course were met with outrage against its perpetrators and sympathy for the casualties, show that some things have changed in recent years. It has provoked a certain informed fearlessness in the newspapers, a determination to address the situation without stigmatizing the Spanish Muslim communities, yet also demanding they take a more active approach in dealing with religious extremism. The best example of this is an editorial in *ABC* after the attack on the *Charlie Hebdo* headquarters:

“El terrorismo religioso, como el nacionalista -y bien lo sabemos en España-, tiene un caldo de cultivo social en el que se mezclan los que toleran, los que callan, los que comprenden y, por supuesto, los que de manera directa animan, captan y entrenan a los asesinos. Este aspecto sociológico del terrorismo islamista no puede ser despreciado en aras de la corrección política, porque hará mucho menos eficaz la lucha antiterrorista. A las comunidades islámicas no hay que estigmatizarlas, tampoco exonerarlas de sus responsabilidades. La islamofobia es una degradación inaceptable de los valores democráticos de Europa. La ceguera ante la radicalización de muchos jóvenes europeos musulmanes es una temeridad que alimenta la reacción de los islamófobos.”¹²⁹

It shows that in Spain, while there are also considerable similarities, the debate on Islam is moving in a different direction from what we have established in the Netherlands. In the early years, much more so than in the Dutch press, Islam in Spain was discussed in

¹²⁸ Author unknown, ‘Mezquita-Catedral y seguridad’, *ABC*, 11 April 2010 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7Y6V-2PC1-2RN3-838B-0000-00&context=1516831> (25 July 2019).

¹²⁹ ‘Editoriales, ‘NO BASTAN LAS CONDENAS, EL ISLAM DEBE ACTUAR CONTRA EL TERRORNO BASTAN LAS CONDENAS, EL ISLAM DEBE ACTUAR CONTRA EL TERROR’, *ABC*, 9 January 2015 <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5F1K-5V01-JCSV-D464-0000-00&context=1516831> (27 July 2019).

comparison to Christianity and Judaism, a clear reflection of Spanish national history and the discussions on its identity. There is no doubt that these debates have directed the focus of Spanish newspapers to the recurring theme of (religious) tolerance, the central theme in the Convivencia debate. This is not a uniquely Spanish theme as it is not so different from the discussions in the Dutch press, who rather than write about tolerance write about Islam and consequently Muslims compatibility with Western values or their (in-)ability to adapt to them. That the press in the two countries have observed and were inspired by similar events to write about Muslims and Islam is also suggested by the peaks in publications on these themes. However, looking beyond the statistics shows there are also some significant differences in the way the Spanish press have dealt with Islam and Muslims over the years that distinguish them from their Dutch counterparts. The factor that geography and different histories have played in these divergent views cannot be ignored. Not for naught wrote the Dutch press on events in “het Midden Oosten” (tr. the Middle East) while the Spanish attention was directed at “el oriente próximo” (tr. the near east) all the while addressing the same events and regions.

Conclusions

This research set out to answer how newspapers in the Netherlands and Spain have portrayed Islam and Muslims since 1975 and how this relates to the academic debate on European identity. The answer to this question based on the corpus build around the search terms ‘Islam’ in Spanish and Dutch press, (moslim or moslims) in the Dutch press and (musulman or musulmanes) in the Spanish press is that it tends to be negative, especially when contrasted to ‘European’ values such as democracy, freedom of speech and (religious) tolerance. However, that would be an oversimplified conclusion.

As has been established throughout these chapters the images of Islam and Muslims in both the Dutch and Spanish press are in flux, or as Bauman would perhaps argue, they are liquid, perceptions on them continuously changing throughout time. Yet during the 44 year period of time examined in this research it can also be established that these perceptions build off of one another, reinforce each other even over the years. That is because behind the surface they are part of a much larger debate that contrasts a secular or Christian Europe with Islam and the predominantly Muslim countries of the NAWA-region. This debate discusses several central themes, the most visible one of them not the question of reciprocate ignorance as posed by Jacques Derrida and Mustapha Sheriff but that of reciprocate tolerance. Tolerance between a secular or Christian Europe, there does not seem to be a definitive answer on that question, and Islam. The latter from the perspective of both Spanish and Dutch newspapers rather often perceived as a more or less homogenous religious community and its adherents than as a clearly demarcated territory. Nonetheless, it is most often associated with the NAWA-countries under the banner of ‘the Middle-East’.

As chapter two and three have showcased Dutch and Spanish press in general have written on the same events and subjects. Nonetheless, they also have their particular differences to

which their individual historical trajectories have contributed. These are also indicative of the current impasse in Europe where supranational and national interests cross and occasionally collide or seem headed in opposite directions.

It can be concluded that the Dutch newspapers and their publications examined in this research, while often shaping their images of Islam and Muslims based on events taking place abroad, are very introspective in their analysis. They project events and behavior related to Islam and Muslims abroad on their own society and its elements with such a background. These often negative events, more often than not taking place outside of its national or even transnational borders, have become representative for Islam and Muslims within Dutch society during the process. Their influence and attitude towards Islam and Muslims rapidly changing from optimistic or at least neutral (see the initial writing on the Islamic Revolution in 1979) to negative over the course of a decade. Europe in these publications is rarely a concern, national interests often taking prevalence or assumed as naturally serving the same purpose as those of Europe. This becomes clear through journalists interchangeably writing on one is as if writing on the other. This is especially true for the articles that discuss 'universal Western values' such as democracy, freedom of speech, the position of women in society and tolerance. With the increasing proximity of Muslims and Islam over the years, both wanted (laborers during the 1970s) and unwanted (immigration) the subject of Islam and Muslims in the Netherlands became of more importance and the tone of voice of the debate hardened. While maintaining the narrative of Dutch tolerance, in particular columns about Muslims and Islam often cross the line of what they preach. In doing so they often fall back on the Christian narrative of Europe, a narrative that excludes Muslims and Islam, ignoring the past and present reality of Muslims and Islam in Europe and contribute to the suspicious, at times downright intolerant attitude Muslims in the Netherlands face, extremist or not.

In the Spanish press the debate on Islam and Muslims knows much more diversity. Its history, which is of large influence on the debate on Spanish national identity, clearly affects the way newspapers approach to the subject. Its past as a part of an Islamic empire and its proximity to some of the NAWA-countries are elements that are often present in newspapers reflections on events concerning Islam and Muslims. The tensions in its exclaves Melilla and Ceuta in the mid-1980s a clear example of this. The writing on Islam and Muslims in Spain also demonstrates the importance of geography within Europe in relation to this topic as well as that of the European identity. Spain as a country on the border of Europe with the NAWA countries, with its exclaves of Melilla and Ceuta one could argue with one foot in the NAWA countries, is balancing its European identity with its Mediterranean history. This has made the Spanish press more careful in the way it addresses Islam and Muslims in comparison to the quite coarse columns and opinion pieces in the Dutch newspapers. It also explains that where Dutch media have focused on the Islamic aspect of some events, the Spanish press tried to divert from this topic by focusing on the ethnic aspect of such an event. The events of 9/11, Madrid in 2004 and Theo van Gogh are examples of this. However, it almost goes without saying, Islam and Muslims were still the

main subjects when discussing these events.

What knows no doubt when comparing the Spanish and Dutch press is that the former have put much more emphasis on the transnational aspects in their writing on Muslims and Islam. This is especially true in the years directly after the fall of the Franco-regime. It would be an interesting subject for further research to examine how Spain has used the emerging European interest and fear for Islam to attribute to itself an important role in Europe as one of its 'gatekeepers'. Where in chapter two I wrote that that the Dutch press does not find it easy to deal with religious difference, it has to be concluded that the Spanish press does not find discussions on the topic much easier. The evasion of the subject of Islam in relation to the ethnic European Muslims of Bosnia has made that much clear. What does need to be addressed is that the Spanish press takes its role in these discussions more seriously, given the amount of space that is granted to experts from various fields to write about the subject in their newspapers. In that way they build a bridge between academic and popular discussions on Islam and Muslims and their part within Europe. These discussions are inevitable, a part of the ambiguous discourse about cultural identity of 'project Europe' as discussed through Van Middelaar. As has become clear, one of its biggest challenges is incorporating Islam into that project. A realization that the academic field in the wake of several 'turns' have become more and more aware of, showing an increasing interest and modesty in discussing (post-)colonial studies. The role of the media in translating this awareness to the public could be vital in this respect. As has been established in the comparison with Spanish media sources, the combined effort of academics and popular media, can lead to a much more versatile debate, successfully showing the different sides to 'the same' story. It is a step to Europe fulfilling its ideals as discussed by the hand of Van Middelaar and Baumann in chapter one, including its Islamic/Muslim 'Self and Other' rather through dialogue than conflict. The ambiguity of the European discourse about the cultural identity of 'Europe' not *necessarily* a flaw in these discussions. It forces continuous reevaluation of not only the elements of a European identity, but also its narrative and the way it has come about. Much more research however is needed on the subject both in Europe as well as in the NAWA-countries. It would be incredibly valuable to expand this research to other countries in Europe, starting with countries at its Eastern border, but also as contrast to for example Morocco, Turkey and other countries to reflect on what is written on the European project and its individual parts, united in diversity.

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