Pim Fortuyn's Nationalism and the Transformation of the Political Discourse in the Netherlands

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Abstract

The aim of this master thesis is to illuminate how Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism was an integral part of his charismatic leadership through which he was able to change the Dutch political discourse unlike his nationalist predecessors in the Netherlands. Charismatic leadership, according to Max Weber, is comprised of the attribution of extraordinary qualities to an individual by a so-called charismatic community. While Dutch political scholars have described Fortuyn as a charismatic leader in the Weberian sense, there are few have looked at the mission for which this charismatic leader has been striving. This thesis aims to fill this gap in academic literature by examining both the ethnic and civic elements of Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism.

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Introduction

On May 6th 2002, the Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn was assassinated by Volkert van der Graaf in what was the first political assassination in the Netherlands since 1672. Fortuyn had been campaigning for the 2002 parliamentary elections and appeared to have been the frontrunner in becoming the next Prime-Minister of the Netherlands before his life was cut short.[1]

Fortuyn was regarded as an unprecedented force in Dutch politics by his contemporaries as well as subsequent political scholars. He openly criticized the established political parties and accused them of disregarding the cultural tensions within the Netherlands. At the time Fortuyn's open denunciation of the Islamic minority, his open affinity for nationalism and his defiant personality were both shocking and intriguing for Dutch voters.[2] He was portrayed as a political outsider and a renegade by the media during his political campaign in 2002, yet Fortuyn had been part of the public arena for decades. He was a well-known professor in sociology, a columnist, public speaker and writer, who was frequently present in political interviews. Furthermore, Fortuyn had been affiliated with all sides of the political spectrum, having been a member of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), Liveable Rotterdam and Liveable Netherlands before he finally campaigned for the List Pim Fortuyn in 2002.

Before Fortuyn, nationalist political parties had been unable to attract many voters in the Netherlands, which resulted in these parties gaining only a handful of seats in Parliament during the second half of the twentieth century. The most remarkable of these early nationalist parties were the Dutch People's-Union (NVU), the Centre Party (CP) and the Centre-Democrats (CD), which were all plagued by internal frictions and controversies.[3] Furthermore, the recent

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[1] Clemens van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider: het charismatisch leiderschap van Pim Fortuyn,* (Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2016, http://hdl.handle.net/1765/93850), 11.
[2] Joop van Holsteyn and Galen Irwin, "Never a Dull Moment: Pim Fortuyn and the Dutch Parliamentary Election of 2002," *West European Politics*, 26:2 (2003, DOI: 10.1080/01402380512331341101), 41-66.
[3] *Pim Fortuyn and Hans Janmaat*. YouTube Video. 12:05. Avarice Untied, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFElUpICPtc.

memories of the Second World War had made Dutch voters apprehensive of nationalist far-right political parties.[4] Yet, roughly one decade later, Pim Fortuyn was able to vocalize issues of immigration, national identity and the shortcomings of established political parties to very different results, pushing the boundaries of the political debate. Although Fortuyn was assassinated before the 2002 Parliamentary elections, his List Pim Fortuyn gained 26 seats in the Dutch National Parliament, with half a million votes being cast in Fortuyn's name posthumously.[5] Fortuyn himself was voted 'greatest Dutchman of all time' by Dutch television viewers in 2004 and his political beliefs were given their own semi-academic definition: 'Fortuynism'.[6] Fortuyn's political legacy appears to persist, as political parties with anti-immigrant, populist and nationalist party programmes have remained popular amongst a significant part of Dutch voters since 2002. Due to Fortuyn being a central figure at the dawn of this nationalist resurgence, he became a key figure for academics who tried to explain the emerging tensions in national identity politics in the Netherlands post-World War Two. Fortuyn's success as a political figure and 'Fortuynism' as a political phenomenon has been discussed by a multitude of scholars, with the discussion mainly focussed on Fortuyn's charismatic leadership and populist rhetoric as key variables that led to his political success.[7] Whereas this approach has undeniably led to insights into what made Fortuyn such a compelling politician, the nuance in the content of Fortuyn's beliefs have mostly remained in the academic limelight.

The aim of this master thesis is to contribute to the existing academic debate on Pim Fortuyn by analysing the nuances and contradictions of one of the major themes in Fortuyn's political beliefs: Fortuyn's nationalism. Nationalism as a phenomenon has attained both positive and negative connotations in the scholarly discourse since the Second World War.

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[4] Maurits ter Kuile, "Nationalisme of Neofascisme? Een vergelijkende studie over het succes van Forza Italia, Vlaams Blok en Lijst Pim Fortuyn," (Master's Thesis in History of Politics and Culture, Utrecht University, 2012), 38.
[5] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider,* 594.
[6] Dick Pels, *De geest van Pim; het gedachtegoed van een politieke dandy* (Amsterdam: Anthos, 2004), 9.
[7] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 45.

According to Christian Wicke, nationalism can be defined very broadly as a collection of all individual ideas and actions that contribute to the existence of a nation. He argued that the concept of nationalism has allowed for such a great malleability that it could merge with almost any political ideology and religion, and it has been so flexible that very personal beliefs and imaginations have found their places within this super-ideology. Influenced by the theories of Anthony Cohen, he therefore suggested that nationalism should be regarded as a link between both individual and collective identities. Further, Wicke showed that ideal types of nationalism that often are thought of being antagonistic to each other can practically merge in the personal ideology of politicians. Yet, in nationalism studies, the individual dimension of nationalism has usually either been overlooked or taken for granted. By looking at individual case studies and analysing these biographies, one can come to a better understanding of how events and experiences have led people to express different types of nationalism throughout their life, and how these personal nationalisms are intertwined with collective ones.[8] That is one of the aims of this thesis.

By taking this biographical approach I will add to the existing literature on Fortuyn not only by including an extensive analysis of the dual-faced content of Fortuyn's nationalism, I will also touch upon influences in Fortuyn's formative years to be able to establish the historical context through which his type of nationalism was able attain many supporters. I will explain how Fortuyn exemplified cultural and ethnic, but also civic types of nationalism throughout his works and interviews and explain how this personal nationalism played an important role in Fortuyn's charismatic leadership and political legacy. The research question therefore is: in which way has Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism contributed to establishing a contemporarily accepted political movement within Dutch parliament?

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[8] Christian Wicke, "The Personal Nationalism of Helmut Kohl: A Paragon of Germany's New Normality?" *Humanities Research*, 19.1 (2013), 61-80; Anthony Cohen, "Personal Nationalism: a Scottish View of Some Rites, Rights, and Wrongs," *American Ethnologist,* 23.4 (1996), 802-815.

This thesis will be structured in the following manner: Firstly, there is a chapter which revolves around the theoretical framework of this thesis. Here I will clarify the key terms of nationalism, personal nationalism, the biographical approach in Nationalism Studies, populism, charismatic leadership according to Max Weber, political discourse and explain my methodology. Secondly, there is a chapter on the historical background of Nationalist parties in the Netherlands since the Second World War. Here I will discuss the Dutch People's-Union (NVU), the Centre Party (CP) and the Centre-Democrats (CD), which were able to attain some political influence but proved unable to push the boundaries in the way Fortuyn ultimately did. The third chapter will focus on Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism and charismatic mission and argue that these variables were vital in what made Fortuyn such a compelling political figure to relatively wide sections of Dutch society. Here, I will argue that Fortuyn's personal nationalism entailed both ethnic and civic elements and show how these elements were both conflicting and complimentary to one another. The fourth chapter will discuss the legacy of Fortuyn and the political legacy of Fortuyn's nationalism and the transformation of the political discourse in the Netherlands. This will discuss the mythification of Fortuyn himself and explain how his nationalist ideas have been incorporated by political parties in the Netherlands after Fortuyn's death. Finally, a conclusion is provided which will summarize the main argument and answer the research question.

<u>Chapter 1: The Theoretical Framework</u>

In this chapter the key concepts and theories that will be extensively used in the third and fourth chapter of this thesis will be clarified, in order to provide the reader with the needed theoretical context.

1.1 Nationalism

In modern Western democracies, nationalism has become a 'normal' part of our day to day lives. With his theory of 'banal nationalism', Michael Billig argued that people in modern western countries are mass-consuming nationalism without always being aware of it.[9]

Gellner argued that nationalism is not the awakening of self-consciousness of a nation, but instead that it has invented nations where they previously did not exist.[10] He argues that the multicultural society of the past was more regular than a united nationalized present. He claimed that nationalism was constructed during the industrialization of the agrarian society and has become the new normal paradigm. Hobsbawm added to Gellner by stressing the importance of invented traditions[11]. As nationalism cannot exist without historical narratives, the construction of new traditions and symbols were essential to its existence. As one historical narrative of a people does not exist, this would not be suitable for a new social and political phenomenon that intends to strengthen the bonds of a previously multifaceted community. These invented traditions and symbols can be seen through for instance national anthems, flags, coats of arms, holidays and festivals. Another important theory taking a constructivist approach towards nationalism was developed by Benedict Anderson. Unlike Hobsbawm, who added to Gellner's definition, Anderson critiques the standpoint that there were authentic communities which could be contrasted to the 'artificial' nations. Anderson's claim is more universal, as all

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[9] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism,* (London: Sage Publications Ltd,1995), 6.
[10] Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly, *Nations and nationalism,* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), 6.
[11] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The invention of tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.

communities that move beyond face-to-face contact are imagined.[12] Therefore, whereas Gellner and Hobsbawm were highly critical of nationalism, Anderson argues that nationalism is not necessarily a negative development.

1.2 The Problems of Normative Typologies of Nationalism

Scholars have traditionally distinguished liberal from illiberal forms of nationalism.[13] According to David Brown however, critical evaluations of this distinction have been sporadic. Civic nationalism entails that one's sense of community can be derived from the shared state and civil society institutions of people inhabiting a territory. Civic nationalism presupposes that the people in a community have a common destiny, providing the people with a sense of immortality, and it justifies hardships encountered to achieve this future destiny. Due to civic nationalism's forward-looking vision it is sometimes described as an essentially 'progressive' type of nationalism. However, a chronological focus on the future does not entail that the ideas promoted by the state and civil institutions are progressive in a moral sense. Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, refers to one's sense of community being derived from myths of common ancestry, the myth of the homeland and contemporary evidence in shared language, similar physical appearances and religion.[14] Whereas civic nationalism has been regarded as being forward-looking, ethnic nationalism has been regarded as backward-looking. In practice however, the distinction between civic and cultural nationalism is problematic as both types of nationalism use similar mythologies and symbolism.

This binary conception of nationalism can be found throughout history. For instance, Friedrich Meinecke already foreshadowed this binary conception by making the distinction between the *Staatsnation* and the *Kulturnation* in the 1920s.[15] Meinecke claimed

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[12] Benedict Anderson, "Imagined communities,*" Journalism in American Modernist Prose*, 49 (2006), 6-7.
[13] David Brown, "Are there Good and Bad Nationalisms?," *Nations and Nationalism*, 5.2 (1999), 281-302.
[14] Ibid, 282.
[15] Peter Alter, *Nationalism*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1985), 14.

that the *Staatsnation* is focussed on the idea of individual and collective self-determination and is derived from the subjective commitment to the nation. The *Kulturnation* on the other hand shares aspects of the concept of cultural nationalism as it is based upon criteria such as a common heritage, territory, language, religion, custom or history. but develops independently from the state. Therefore, it leaves little room for individual self-determination regarding their national identity. Meinecke's distinction was redeveloped by Hans Kohn, who in the 1940s made the distinction between Western and East-Central European nationalism.[16] Kohn argued that Western nationalism presupposes individual liberty and rationality, derived from the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the rise of a bourgeois middle class, who were able to articulate a positive form of nationalism. Eastern nationalism on the other hand, in this view, is more cultural than political in nature and is based upon irrational and ethnographic demands. Kohn argued that eastern nationalism was prevalent in countries which had socially and politically modernised later than their Western counterparts.

Brown rightly pointed out that such typologies of nationalism are not as clear-cut as they may seem.[17] Case studies of nationalism suggest that there have been illiberal characteristics to civic nationalisms and liberal characteristics to cultural nationalisms. The liberal or illiberal character of nationalism is therefore dependent on who is mobilizing it, how threats are narrated, and which national symbols are used. Furthermore, a society's collective nationalism is not static and it can change over time. I shall therefore employ a more nuanced approach in my study of nationalism.

When these ideal types are used for analytical purposes in historical research, it is necessary to keep the normative meanings that are usually attributed to them in mind. The distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism is problematic for the following reasons.[18] As

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[16] Hans Kohn, *The idea of nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1967), 329.
[17] Brown, "Good and Bad Nationalisms," 299-300.
[18] Umut Ozkirimli, *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement*, (New York and Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 24.

all nations claim to have a valid place within history, all national identities have an exclusionary character. In that way, all nationalisms could be regarded as ethnic in some form or another. A further issue with the ethnic-civic definition depends on the narrow or broad interpretation of the two ideal types. If ethnic nationalism is interpreted narrowly, and thus only consists of someone's descent, there are few real-life cases of ethnic nationalism, as an emphasis on common culture would place it firmly in the civic conception. If ethnic nationalism is interpreted broadly and also entails common culture, civic nationalism would not be identifiable in real life, as a noncultural conception of nationalism does not translate to real life case studies either.

Some scholars argue that the analytical use of the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism can be used if one recognizes that these are ideal types.[19] Others argue that the issues with the distinction create more problems than solutions. Most of the existing typologies on nationalism serve normative goals. This means that these distinctions try to identify 'good' and 'bad' types of nationalism. Yet, this type of moral distinction has led to a self-congratulatory inclination by western liberal democracies, who argue that their civic, good form of nationalism is consistent with their sentiments of individualism and diversity. There are two main problems with this normative approach towards nationalism. The first problem once again concerns itself with the definitional aspect of civic nationalism, in as far as it is simply not true that nationalisms in Western democracies are a purely political process without any cultural baggage. Whereas political values may be embedded in the culture of a country, this does not mean that people feel a strong sense of identity and belonging with countries even if they share the same political values. This is illustrated by the fact that a Dutchman will still consider themselves different from a Frenchman, even though their political values are similar. The second problem with the normative aspect of the ethnic-civic dichotomy is the fact that

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[19] Ibid, 28.

nations with civic nationalism are not automatically exempt from intolerance of cruelties. The conception of these modern 'civic' nations was often accompanied by acts of severe brutalities to minorities in order to create the original sense of unity. A very poignant example from history where civic nationalism led to state violence is the reign of terror by the radical Jacobins during the French revolution, where people were persecuted based upon their lack of commitment to the political values of the revolution.[20]

A final critique to the distinction between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalisms is that, within these 'civic' states there is the tendency that the dominant culture also controls the political institutions within the country. As Will Kymlicka states on his work on multiculturalism, the liberal conception of nationhood has led to the victimization of several minority groups whose distinct national identities have been suppressed by the liberal nation state throughout the twentieth century.[21] He argues that even in modern nations, there is always a cultural component to the civic nationalism that is implemented.[22] Due to the multicultural character of the modern liberal democracies, there will be minorities who do not share the same culture of the majority. Therefore, he argues that nations should adopt a more multicultural conception of nationhood, in order to overcome the tensions within the multicultural societies. These tensions which emerged as a consequence of the discrepancy between minority groups and the majority are usually overlooked by defenders of civic nationalism as they argue that there is no cultural aspect to the civic conception.[23] Arguably, these tensions within liberal democracies have given the way for charismatic leaders such as Fortuyn, who are able to voice a clear solution to these national identity issues.

Due to the aforementioned drawbacks, the distinction between ethnic and civic, or liberal and illiberal forms of nationalism should be made with great care. As case studies do not

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[20] Ibid, 27.
[21] Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003, DOI: 10.1093/0199240981.001.0001), 244.
[22] Ibid, 244.
[23] Ozkirimli, *Contemporary Debates, 27.*

exemplify these ideal types of nationalism, a mixture of different aspects from both types can be identified. Therefore, if one closely wants to examine a case study and illuminate the apparent paradoxes it is important to recognize the nuances exempt from the existing binary typology. This needed nuance is what will be exemplified when discussing the personal nationalism of Pim Fortuyn, where types of nationalism that are usually thought of being opposed to each other actually merged together. As the following section will clarify, some scholars have argued that nationalism should not only be regarded as an overarching ideology that ties all individuals together within a country. Instead, nationalism should also be regarded as also an individual phenomenon just as much as a collective one, as the following section will establish.

1.3 Personal Nationalism and the Biographical Method

Generally, nationalism is considered to be a collective phenomenon. However, it has been argued by Anthony Cohen that nationalism should not be regarded as a collective overarching ideology, but instead as an ultimately personal phenomenon.[24] Whereas people may exist next to one another, each individual has their own personal connection to their nation and identity. This individual paradigm to someone's personal nationalism is possible through the aforementioned flexible nature of nationalism, as it can coexist with other ideologies and personal and political values. Whereas people may coexist within a shared nation, their personal connection to this nation is based upon each person's individual context. However, as these variables differ for each individual, the only way to assess how a person's own connection to the nation is formed is by examining the biographical features of the individual to indicate how their environment shapes their own beliefs and values, and how this is exemplified in their nationalism. This is why a biographical approach can add to the academic discussion on

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[24] Cohen, "Personal Nationalism: a Scottish View," 802-815.

nationalism as Wicke points out.[25] The biographical approach can show how the historical national context shaped an individual's personal views and how this led to the individual seeking to influence collective nationalism.

This is what this thesis will do when examining Pim Fortuyn's nationalism. This thesis will use a biographical approach towards nationalism to explain why Fortuyn's mission and nationalist views were so attractive to Dutch voters. This thesis will point out that different types of nationalism are able to coexist within one's personal nationalism and actually form a complementary whole, which fuelled Fortuyn's charismatic appeal. Therefore, this thesis uses a biographical approach to identify Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism and argue how this was a vital part in his mission as a charismatic leader.

Fortuyn was able to voice several tensions regarding national identity that became increasingly prevalent since the Second World War. Fortuyn's political mission could be summarized in four main political themes during the 2002 campaign: the increasing gap between the citizens and the political elite, the tensions between the modern Western society and the Islamic minorities, more security and less criminality and solving the problems in the collective sector. Fortuyn's response to these problems were based upon three main political phenomena: liberalism, nationalism and populism.[26] During the third chapter of this thesis I will clarify how Fortuyn's political ideas were composed of an apparent paradoxical combination of ethnic, civic and liberal forms of nationalism and that this specific personal nationalism lay at the foundation of Fortuyn's mission as a charismatic leader.

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[25] Wicke, "Personal Nationalism of Helmut Kohl," 63.
[26] Paul Lucardie and Gerrit Voerman, "Liberaal patriot of nationaal populist? Het gedachtegoed van Pim Fortuyn," *Socialisme en democratie*, 59 (2002): 4, 32-42.

1.4 Populism

Populism has been used to describe different political parties from all sides of the political spectrum. In the 21st century it is evident that populism is used extensively as a label in political discourse rather than as an academic concept. For the purposes of this thesis I will use Cas Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser's approach towards populism as they are able to provide a comprehensible framework of populism which is broadly acknowledged yet far from hegemonic.

Mudde and Kaltwasser's approach towards populism revolves around its place within liberal democratic systems that we see in Western European countries, such as the Netherlands. They define populism as an ill-defined thin ideology as it can coexist with other political ideologies such as nationalism, conservatism and socialism.[27] Yet, Mudde and Kaltwasser identify three main concepts within all populist rhetoric: the people, the elite and the general will.

The people are those who populist parties claim to represent. However, unlike other political parties, this notion of the people in populism is constructed and can best be regarded to be a specific interpretation of reality, or vision. The concept of the people remains intentionally vague and can therefore incorporate different meanings of the word. Populists use the term in different ways: the people as a sovereign entity, which views the people as the ultimate source of political power, the common people, which ties the concept into a certain cultural and economic paradigm, and the national community, defined either through civic or ethnic terms.[28]

The elite on the other hand are the populists' political antagonists. Populists create a moral juxtaposition between the 'pure' people and the 'corrupt' elite, who intend to undermine

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[27] Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, *Populism: A very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1.
[28] Ibid, 11.

the interests of the people. Populists usually apply the concept of the elite to refer to actors or groups who have political, economic or cultural power. Similarly, to the term of the people, the elite remains intentionally vague so that many different actors can be placed in this category. What is important to note here is that when populists parties are overtly xenophobic, they do not view the elite as part of an entity alien to the people, but instead argue that the elite are actors who favor the interests of immigrants over the interests of the native people.[29]

The concept of the general will in populism entails that the people should have the capability to form a community and create legislation to serve their common interests.[30] Populists critique the representative governments found in Western liberal democracies, as the people are only able to voice their political opinion through elections and therefore assume a passive role. Instead populists argue that the people should both create and enforce legislation. Therefore, populist parties are normally in favor of a more direct democracy. The idea of the general will is based upon a notion of common sense instead of a rational deduction of facts. Therefore, when framed in a specific way, this notion can lead to authoritarian tendencies as it directly opposes some of the institutions and protocols that make up the modern liberal democracies.

In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, populist parties have gained significant political influence, attaining varying amounts of voters throughout European countries and the world.[31] These populist parties have adopted a far-right nationalist rhetoric. Within the Netherlands, this shift where far-right populist parties gained significant amounts of voters originated with the political success of Pim Fortuyn and the LPF. Fortuyn's populism was apparent in his rhetorical, confrontational style, as well as the open denunciation of the established political parties. However, it was Fortuyn's nationalism which for a large part

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[29] Ibid, 14.
[30] Ibid, 16.
[31] Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have- Nots and Cultural Backlash", (HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series Paper RWP16-026, August 2016), 1-4.

constituted his political mission. Within populist parties, and Fortuyn's LPF was no exception in this regard, the party hierarchy is usually constructed through the principles of charismatic leadership.[32] The next section will clarify Max Weber's theory of charismatic leadership, so that it is clear as to how examining Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism can point out overlooked nuances in his charismatic mission.

1.5 Charismatic Leadership

In his theory on political leadership, Max Weber distinguishes three types of authority: legal, traditional and charismatic leadership.[33] Legal authority means that a leader maintains their legitimacy through generally accepted bodies of laws or norms. However, that leader is equally subjected to laws or checks and balances. This first type of authority applies to bureaucratic organizations, for instance governmental organizations. Weber's second type of authority is traditional authority, which holds that a leader attains their authority through traditions, for instance heredity. This type of leadership explains for instance the authority held by monarchies. The last type of authority Max Weber discusses is charismatic leadership.[34] This is the leadership style that is generally used to discuss the case study of Pim Fortuyn and other populist politicians by existing scholars.

According to Weber, the term 'charisma' is derived from an individual's perceived extraordinary quality, through which virtue they are treated as if they have exceptional powers or qualities. The messianic quality the individual exemplifies is only accessible to them, which results in the individual being treated as a leader by others. Charismatic leadership is thus depended on the recognition of a certain leader by his or her subjects.[35] Psychologically, this recognition usually comes in the form of personal devotion to the leader. The devotion ensures

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[32] Koen Vossen, "Populism in the Netherlands after Fortuyn: Rita Verdonk and Geert Wilders compared," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 11:1 (2010, DOI:10.1080/15705850903553521), 22-38.
[33] Michael Hechter and Christine Horne, *Theories of Social Order: a Reader*, (Stanford University Press, 2003), 104.
[34] Max Weber, "The Three Types of Legitimate Rule," *Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions*, 4.1 (1958), 1-11.
[35] Ibid, 1-11.

the continuous relationship between the leader and his subjects and can be likened to the relationship between a prophet and his disciples.

If a subject does not comply with the charismatic leader, this is generally met with contempt by other followers within the charismatic community. This charismatic community is comprised of the closest set of followers surrounding the charismatic leader.[36] Within the charismatic community the officials are usually not trained professionals in their retrospective fields, but instead elected based upon the charismatic qualities of the different members individually. The charismatic leader can assert their authority over the charismatic community by intervening if he or she feels that certain followers lack the needed charismatic qualification for a given task. However, if the leader is unable to maintain the proof of his own required charismatic qualification, the charismatic appeal will disappear, and the leader will lose his or her authority.

Charismatic authority is an irrational process and therefore different from the other two types of authority. While legal authority is comprised of the domination of a body of laws over all subjects, the charismatic authority has a more revolutionary character, as there are no clearly defined guidelines aside from the recognition of the charismatic leader. Instead, the charismatic community works towards a collective 'mission' or 'duty'. This goal is determined by the charismatic leader. Due to the lack of any overarching authority or rules, charismatic authority can lead to a reorientation of a system born out of suffering, conflicts or enthusiasm, making it possible to create great change within a political system as the charismatic leader's authority is neither derived from nor restricted by any legal terms.

Weber points out that the main weakness of charismatic leadership is the problem of succession. As the social hierarchy is depended on the recognition of one individual by his or her subjects, finding a suitable alternative once the charismatic leader retires can lead to internal

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[36] Hechter and Horne, *Theories of Social Order,* 116-117.

dissent and tensions.[37] This problem can be overcome either by finding a new leader, by legislating the leader's main beliefs, by appointment by the charismatic leader or through heredity. This does not mean that the charismatic community will accept the new charismatic leader automatically as this individual must still be able to exert an extraordinary personal quality of themselves in order to maintain their charismatic appeal.[38]

This chapter has clarified the key concepts that will be used during the subsequent analytical chapter in which the terms of populism, nationalism, charismatic leadership will be used. Throughout this analytical chapter I will clarify how Fortuyn used ethnic and civic nationalism as a key part of his charismatic mission, and thus a vital part in what made Fortuyn such a charismatic leader and provided him with the agency to ignite a shift in the Dutch political discourse on nationalism.

1.6 Political discourse

One of the main themes of this thesis is politics and political discourse, yet these terms are topics for entire studies in themselves. Therefore, this section will establish how the term political discourse is used throughout this thesis.

The easiest way to identify political discourse is by looking at its actors or authors, for instance politicians.[39] This approach has been taken by the vast amount of studies on political discourse by politicians and political institutions. However, politicians are not the only political actors that have a role in the process of political discourse, as one needs to take the reciprocal element of politics into account. Here I mean the public, or the citizens of a country, towards whom the politicians aim their message. This reciprocal element of politics makes it difficult to assess political discourse, as this number of recipients is far from static.

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[37] Weber, "Three Types," 1-11.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Teun van Dijk, "What is Political Discourse Analysis," *Belgian journal of linguistics*, 11.1 (1997), 11-52.

Instead, one could identify political discourse by focussing on the nature of the activities or practices involved in the political process[40]. This means that political discourse could be defined through actions such as, governing, ruling, legislating, protesting, dissenting and voting. In other words, political discourse could be identified as any action which has a political function and implication. However, in order to define something as 'political' based upon certain actions, it is evident that the context plays a major role in defining something as political or not. By examining the context, the relationship between the political actor and the recipient is vital, however this also means that political discourse can differ based upon the type of event or text in which it is perpetuated. This context sheds light on the political aims and goals, whether it is to take a joint action, to re-establish or change norms and values or regulations and laws. It has to be emphasized that political discourse remains a fuzzy concept, however, by examining Pim Fortuyn as a political actor this paper argues that through his personal nationalism, he was able to change the political discussion both amongst his fellow politicians but also to an extent in the public discourse. In the next chapter I will illuminate the historical context in which Pim Fortuyn was able to ignite such a radical political campaign and consequently shift the status quo regarding nationalism in the political discourse in the Netherlands.

1.7 Methodological approach and sources

As discussion in the abovementioned section on the biographical approach, this will be the main method used throughout this thesis to answer the research question. The biographical approach is a within-case method as it revolves around one political actor.[41] The second chapter will include a brief historical comparison between the most significant nationalist parties in the

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[40] Ibid.
[41] Matthew Lange. *Comparative-Historical Methods* (London, SAGE Publications, 2013), 92.

Netherlands before Fortuyn and Fortuyn's LPF. This chapter will provide the historical context of far-right nationalist parties in the Netherlands and discuss the existing literature which establishes Fortuyn as a charismatic leader. In the third chapter I will use the biographical approach to Nationalism Studies to add to the existing literature on Fortuyn's charismatic leadership by examining the civic and ethnic nationalism apparent in Fortuyn's mission as derived from primary sources by Fortuyn's hand, as well as from secondary literature on his political mission. By using this biographical approach, I provide a detailed account of the role that Fortuyn's nationalism played in his charismatic mission. I will show that Fortuyn's nationalism contained more nuances than is usually attributed to his views. In the final chapter I will provide an explanation how Fortuyn continues to have great agency over the Dutch political debate even two decades after his death. By using this mixed method, I intend to add to the existing academic discussion on Fortuyn as a political figure and on the evolution of nationalism in the contemporary Dutch political history.

For this thesis I decide to analyse the main themes in Pim Fortuyn's political mission to point out how this demonstrated different types of nationalism. Therefore, for the purpose of answering this research question, instead of analysing Fortuyn's extensive bibliography as a whole, it was sufficient in my opinion to provide the reader with a general understanding of Fortuyn's political mission. Consequently, I am limiting myself to explain the four main themes in Fortuyn's views, as I deduced from secondary literature. The main secondary sources I used were Clemens van Herwaarden's *Liefde voor een leider: het charismatisch leiderschap van Pim Fortuyn*[42] and Dick Pels's *De Geest van Pim.*[43] The former of the two provides a detailed account of Fortuyn's charisma and uses many personal anecdotes to create a general idea of how Fortuyn was able to attain such support. The second main source focusses more on Fortuyn's views and takes a more biographical approach to show how these views evolved over

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[42] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*.
[43] Pels, *De geest van Pim*.

time. Because the emphasis of the analysis lies on the different types of nationalism apparent in Fortuyn's mission and not primarily on his biography, the primary sources that I did use were therefore less vital to explaining the general themes of this thesis. Aside from the aforementioned secondary sources, a primary source that proved vital to the analysis was Pim Fortuyn's *de puinhopen van acht jaar Paars*[44], which exemplifies Fortuyn's ideas at the time of the 2002 elections and which I used to describe Fortuyn's denunciation of the established political parties and how this was also tied to his nationalism.

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[44] Pim Fortuyn, *De puinhopen van acht jaar Paars*, (Uithoorn: Karakter, 2012).

Chapter 2: The Political Right and Fortuyn's Emergence as a Charismatic Leader

2.1 Extreme Nationalist Parties in the Netherlands before Fortuyn

Let me first outline the post-war history of the Dutch political right, before I situate my protagonist, Fortuyn, in this context. The academic research on far-right nationalist political parties throughout Western-Europe since the 1970s has been vast. Well-known parties during the post-war period of this type are for example the National Front in France and the Freedom Party in Austria. Yet, within the Netherlands, the popularity of far-right nationalist parties remained limited until Pim Fortuyn entered to the Dutch political realm in 2002. In the first two decades since the second world war, the Dutch political realm was dominated by the pillarization between the Socialists, Liberals, Protestants and Catholics. Yet throughout the mid to late 60s the process of depillarisation had paved the way for new, smaller political parties to emerge and attain political success. The three main nationalist parties that emerged the Dutch People's Union (NVU), the Centre Party (CP) and its successors, the CP'86 and the Centre Democrats (CD).[45]

The Dutch People's Union (NVU) was a fascist party of which most members were former members of the Dutch Fascist Party during the second world war (NSB). Therefore, the NVU held very controversial viewpoints. The party wanted to unite Flanders and the Netherlands and established a firm anti-immigrant viewpoint with regards to the migrant workers that immigrated to the Netherlands. However, during the national elections throughout the 1970s the party was continuously unable to attract voters. Furthermore, the party began to openly associate itself with national socialist figures such as Anton Mussert and openly condoned violence.[46] Due to the extreme-right beliefs some NVU members were persecuted,

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[45] Han Dorussen, "Pim Fortuyn and the 'New' Far Right in the Netherlands," Representation, 40.2 (2004, DOI: 10.1080/00344890408523255), 131-145.

[46] Gerrit Voerman and Paul Lucardie, "The Extreme Right in the Netherlands: The Centrists and their Radical Rivals," *European Journal of Political Research*, 22.1 (1992), 35-54.

however repeated attempts by the Ministry of Justice to persecute the party as a whole were not successful. The NVU faced further problems due to the founding of the Centre Party as they now had to face a political competitor. The party would never recover from these two major setbacks.

The Centre Party (CP) was founded in 1980 by Henry Brookman and Hans Janmaat.[47] The latter of the two would become the face of nationalist Dutch politics for the next decade. Unlike the NVU, the CP initially tried to distance itself from the glorification of fascism. Yet, similarly to the NVU the CP was initially unable to attract Dutch voters. This would change during the elections of 1982, when the party attained one seat in Parliament. Their campaign consisted of anti-immigrant slogans, such as 'Eigen volk eerst' (Our own People First) and the promotion of one Dutch national identity. Thus, for the first time since the second world war, a nationalist party attained a seat within the Dutch Parliament. However, internal struggles regarding the future of the party between the main party members and their youth organisation destabilized the CP. Furthermore, in 1984 Hans Janmaat left the CP, which increased the internal disagreements and ultimately led to the party's abolishment in 1986. Whereas the CP remerged under a new name as CP'86, it would never attain enough votes for another seat in Dutch Parliament.[48] Overtime, the party had radicalized and started to incorporate more fascist points of view. Therefore, throughout the 1990s the CP'86 was continuously persecuted due to its racist points of view. This is why in 1998, the party was disbanded.[49]

When Janmaat left the CP in 1984, he founded a new nationalist party, the Centre Democrats (CD).[50] Compared to the CP, the CD was more moderate albeit it still incorporated an anti-immigrant, xenophobic and racist viewpoint in its party programme. From the period 1989 to 1998 the CD attained 1 to 3 seats in parliament and can thus be considered the most

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[47] PDC, Centrumpartij (CP), Parlament.com. https://www.parlement.com/id/vh8lnhrpfxtp/centrumpartij_cp.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] PDC, Centrumdemocraten (CD), Parlament.com. https://www.parlement.com/id/vh8lnhrpfxtq/centrumdemocraten_cd.

successful nationalist party before Fortuyn. In 1986 the CD and the CP'86 tried to reconcile and form one nationalist coalition within the Netherlands. However, their meeting was raided by radical anti-fascist activists, who used smoke bombs and set fire to the hotel where the meeting was to take place. Within the party, Janmaat ruled with an iron fist. Anyone who spoke against him would be removed from the party. Therefore, some dissidents would form smaller nationalist parties, but these would never become as significant. Since 1998, the CD lost all seats in Dutch Parliament and would be abolished before the elections in 2002, which paved the way for a new nationalist party.[51]

Although these parties should not be considered as one cohesive block, they all share the fact that their popularity remained relatively small, not only compared to other Western-European countries at the time, but also compared to Pim Fortuyn's political success in the future. Their disappointing electoral results are not easily explainable. There is little evidence that the Dutch electorate was specifically less xenophobic or anti-immigrant than other European voters.[52] Furthermore, due to the fact that the Netherlands has a highly proportional electoral system, the emergence of these fringe nationalist parties is not too surprising. Instead Cas Mudde and Joop van Holsteyn argue that there are three more likely explanations.[53] Firstly, they claim that within the Netherlands there was a repressive social and legal climate for nationalist parties as the Dutch media and legal authorities kept a close eye on the activities of far-right political parties. Arguably, this means that these parties have been able to endure some form of state harassment, a point that is still debatable. Secondly, Mudde and Van Holsteyn argue that there was a lack of an organised far-right nationalist subculture in the Netherlands. This nationalist subculture could explain the success of far-right nationalist parties in Belgium, Austria and Italy, however the Scandinavian Progress parties on the other hand prove that far-

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[51] Ibid.
[52] Dorussen, "Pim Fortuyn and the 'New' Far Right," 131-145.
[53] Cas Mudde and Joop van Holsteyn. "The Netherlands: Explaining the Limited Success of the Extreme Right," in *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*, ed. Paul Hainsworth (Bloomsbury, 2000), 162-163.

right parties show that the existence of a nationalist subculture is not necessary for a nationalist party to succeed.[54] The third reason Mudde and Van Holsteyn provide is poor political entrepreneurship on the far-right, and this point of view is the one that is most supported by secondary literature. Specifically, Hans Janmaat appears to have been a weak political leader, who was unable to organise the Dutch far-right into a cohesive political force. Mudde and Van Holsteyn argue that were Janmaat replaced by another, more capable leader, far-right nationalist parties may have enjoyed more political success.[55]

Yet, was a change in the way ethnic minority issues were perceived by the Dutch public.[56] Until the early 1980s, policy towards ethnic minorities was guided by the principles of the pillarization: integration with preservation of one's own identity.[57] This could in par explain the disappointing electoral results of the far-right nationalist parties. Yet, there appears to have been a shift in the public perception of the multicultural society. People started to regard the multicultural society as just another divisive instrument, which led to more restrictions for the everyday man and planted the seed of doubt as to whether a successful multicultural society was actually feasible. Throughout the 1990s, these tensions were discussed by VVD politician Frits Bolkestein.[58] International accounts of the persecution of homosexuals in the Islamic world had led to an increasing amount of concerns about possible tensions within the liberal character of the Dutch society. This led to a discussion within numerous magazines and columns, who did not shy away from comparing Bolkestein to figures such as Adolf Eichmann. Yet, Bolkestein would continue to promote a new asylum policy. This proved to be popular as according to polls at the time, before Bolkestein's plans in 1994, 17% percent of the population regarded minorities to be the most important national problem, a number that would increase

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[54] Dorussen, "Pim Fortuyn and the 'New' Far Right," 131-145.
[55] Mudde and van Holsteyn, "Explaining the Limited Success", 163.
[56] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 154.
[57] Baukje Prins, *Voorbij de onschuld: het debat over de multiculturele samenleving*, (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 2000), 25.
[58] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 157.

to 28%. Furthermore, Bolkestein's party, the VVD would gain 9 more seats in parliament, which was an additional blow to the Centre Party and Hans Janmaat.[59] The next year the VVD would become the biggest party during the provincial elections, and although it is impossible to prove that Bolkenstein's work was the concluding reason for the electoral success of the party, there was apparently no aversion amongst Dutch voters as there had been towards the NVU, the CD or the CP.

This new approach towards asylum seekers, with an emphasis on monoculturalism filled the void that had emerged around the topic by the established political parties' refusal to address the issues in their party programmes.[60] These nationalist tendencies were instead tackled by avoiding the topic entirely due to its sensitive nature, or by claiming that the issues of criminality, integration and European globalisation were easily solvable. By leaving these issues out of the political debate, the general public felt that the political parties were avoiding their responsibilities, contributing to an underlying dissatisfaction with the established political order. Therefore, support for a strict immigration policy became a central point in the general dissatisfaction with the established order. In 1999, Bolkenstein left the Hague which ended the brief existence of a monocultural component within the established parties.[61] This shift away from a conservative agenda paved the way for a new far-right populist party to fill this void. In 1996, the sociologist and philosopher Gabriël van den Brink formulated the possible consequences in the following manner. He claimed that democratisation, globalisation and mediatisation could significantly lessen the political efficiency, decisiveness and usefulness. Van der Brink argues that consequently a shift towards communalism, nationalism and conservatism could take place if the established political parties proved unable to respond to these tendencies.[62] Uncoincidentally, exactly these three themes became the main

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Fortuyn, *De puinhopen*, 9.
[61] Meindert Fennema, *Geert Wilder Tovenaarsleerling*, (Prometheus, 2011).
[62] G. van den Brink, *Onbehagen in de politiek: Een verkenning van de tijdgeest tegen het einde van de eeuw*, (Amsterdam: Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek/De Balie, 1996), 87 en Bijlage citaat: 36-38 en 108-109.

characteristics of Fortuyn's political campaign in 2002. The potential for this shift in Dutch politics increased even further after the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, when the issues regarding Islamic minorities reached a boiling point.[63] According to historian Piet de Rooy, the Dutch political situation was like a kitchen filled with the suspicious scent of gas, and that it was Pim Fortuyn who set out to find the leak armed with a set of matches. It would take until 2002 before Fortuyn would light his match and show that far-right nationalist parties could gain significant political influence.[64]

2.2 Pim Fortuyn's Charismatic leadership

Pim Fortuyn was different and more successful than previous right-wing leaders in the Netherlands, possessing a greater agency, which led him to change the political discourse towards incorporating national identity politics. The aim of this master thesis is to examine the role of Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism in relation to his charismatic appeal, which ignited this shift. Fortuyn's charismatic appeal has been used extensively by scholars to explain his political success.[65] Three themes from Weber's theory will be used to clarify why Fortuyn constitutes as a charismatic leader and set up the role of his personal nationalism in his general appeal. The first theme that will be discussed is Fortuyn's perception as a charismatic leader and his relationship to his audience. The second theme is the charismatic community that formed around Fortuyn. The final theme is Fortuyn's charismatic mission and the role of his personal nationalism in this charismatic mission.

According to former prime minister Wim Kok, it appeared as if everything that Fortuyn said came from a higher authority.[66] Having received a doctorate in sociology, Fortuyn was

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[63] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 167.
[64] Piet de Rooy and Henk te Velde, *Met Kok*, (Wereldbibliotheek, 2018), 215.
[65] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 11.

acquainted with Weber's theory on charismatic leadership and understood that a politician's charismatic appeal was derived from the relationship between the leader and his audience. In this relationship, a political leader is attributed with a special quality by his followers. With regards to Fortuyn, this quality was his capability to write and speak in such an eloquent manner that he was able to convince voters that he was the man who voiced the people's concerns, who could fix the broken political system and become the new prime minister of the Netherlands. Fortuyn had been a credited writer for years and continued to write an average of three columns a week. This meant that when he would develop his political aspirations throughout the 1990s, Fortuyn was able to credit himself for his vast bibliography and use his writing skills to eloquently explain how the Dutch political system had to be reformed.[67] Due to his critical columns and interviews, Fortuyn already had gained a reputation of being a troublemaker and an entertainer amongst the Dutch public long before he entered politics. Already in the early 1990s, Fortuyn describes the effect that his reputation had on his relationship to his audience in the following manner:

> "When I enter a room, and I have learned how to do that by now, this will charge it with some form of electricity. This is not only due to my personality. Also that, but one would have to notice that. It is the entire myth surrounding that man 'Fortuyn'. When I enter a room, this one has been charged by this myth. Usually a long time before I even arrive. People have the sense that something is going to happen."[68]

Weber argues that charismatic leadership has more of a revolutionary quality as it was not bound by legal restrictions or traditions.[69] This is also what Fortuyn recognized as he said that he would not need the office of prime minister for people to regard him as one as he had so adequately profiled himself for the function. Fortuyn argued that according to his viewpoint,

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[67] Ibid, 245.
[68] Ibid, 244.
[69] Hechter and Horne, *Theories of Social Order,* 117.

the prime minister should function as an embodiment of the people and not of an overarching political system.[70] In order to ensure that the myth of the man Fortuyn would remain intact, he would rarely mingle after interviews or presentations. Compared to Fortuyn and his flamboyant lifestyle, his political opponents almost appeared to physically embody the outdated political elite, which was reinforced even further by the fact that Fortuyn was a very talented speaker, who often incited fierce debates in a way that his political opponents were unprepared to formulate an adequate rebuttal. Due to the subsequent media-frenzy, Fortuyn's critique on the established political parties was repeatedly shown, which profiled him as a force to be reckoned with for any political opponent.

Fortuyn's charismatic community can best be exemplified in Fortuyn's break with the party Livable Netherlands and the formation of his own party the Pim Fortuyn List (LPF). Fortuyn was forced to leave the party as the party leadership dismissed him after he called for the abolishment of Article 1 of the Dutch constitution, which entails the anti-discrimination principle.[71] When Fortuyn left LN, he had to develop a new party from the ground up, with the Dutch elections only three months away. The initial members of the LPF therefore consisted of personal friends of Fortuyn or who had heard Fortuyn speak and had strongly identified with his message and persona.[72] Due to this charismatic hierarchy, it was Fortuyn who was the connective tissue between the recruits and not some party program or shared principles. Most members of the LPF owned their own companies or worked in the private sector, which was very different from the bulk of Dutch politicians and this entire group of highly inexperienced LPF members was only complete less than six weeks before the elections. Although it is difficult to assess Fortuyn's internal leadership skills as he was only in office for a brief tenure, it is evident through the recruitment process that the LPF members were all personally

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[70] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 11.
[71] Sarah L. de Lange & David Art, "Fortuyn versus Wilders: An Agency-Based Approach to Radical Right Party Building, West European Politics," 34:6 (2006, DOI:10.1080/01402382.2011.616662), 1229-1249.
[72] Ibid.

connected to Fortuyn, as is central to charismatic leadership. This point is further enforced when examining the LPF after Fortuyn's assassination. As Weber explained, the greatest problem with charismatic authority is the problem of succession.[73] Due to low levels of institutionalization, conflicts and tensions were widespread within the LPF after Fortuyn died. All members had joined the party due to their personal connection to Fortuyn, but without Fortuyn they were unable to formulate a cohesive vision. Due to the continuous infighting between LPF ministers Eduard Bomhoff and Herman Heinsbroek, the coalition between the VVD, the CDA and the LPF failed and the LPF was unable to secure any real political power again after the new elections.[74]

This brings the argument to the final part of Weber's theory on charismatic leadership: the mission of the leader. This is what the followers and members of the charismatic community are striving towards. As clarified above, this mission was undeniably tied to Fortuyn's charismatic leadership, as without Fortuyn the party was unable to follow a cohesive vision nor attract new voters. This is due to the fact that Fortuyn's vision was based upon his years of work and experience as a sociologist as well as a political scholar, and there were no viable candidates to replace his role.[75] Fortuyn's political mission could be summarized in four main political themes during the 2002 campaign: the increasing gap between the citizens and the political elite, the tensions between the modern Western society and the Islamic minorities, more security and less criminality and solving the problems in the collective sector. Fortuyn's response to these problems were based upon three main political phenomena: liberalism, nationalism and populism.[76] Whereas the former two concepts are formative in any analysis of Fortuyn's political ideology, the latter is indispensable when analyzing Fortuyn's political style. What differentiated Fortuyn from his right-wing predecessors was the way in which he was

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[73] Weber, "Three Types," 1-11.
[74] De Lange and Art, "Fortuyn versus Wilders," 1229-1249.
[75] Paul Pennings and Hans Keman, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2002: Fortuyn versus the Establishment," (Working paper, Department of Political Science, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2002), 2.
[76] Lucardie and Voerman, "Liberaal patriot of nationaal populist?," 32-42.

able to voice for the time radical ideas in an understandable manner and also the paradoxical

relations between Fortuyn's liberal viewpoints and his ethnic nationalism, which the following

chapter will explain.

Chapter 3: Pim Fortuyn's Personal Nationalism

Now I have clarified how Fortuyn's personal nationalism is part of what Weber would call the charismatic leader's vision or mission, I will discuss what Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism actually entails. I will argue that he was able to fuse supposedly good with bad types of nationalism, and that this fusion allowed him to get away with a xenophobic ideology that was supported by wide sections of the electorate. The chapter will be divided in two sections for each type of nationalism respectively and explain how Fortuyn expressed these different types of nationalism in his political mission. Fortuyn's political mission consisted of four main themes: the increasing gap between the citizens and the political elite, the tensions between the modern Western society and the Islamic minorities, increased security and less criminality and solving the problems in the collective sector. Using these four themes as a framework, I will determine how Fortuyn exemplified ethnic and civic forms of nationalism in his political mission.

3.1 Fortuyn as an ethnic nationalist

The first type of Fortuyn's personal nationalism I will discuss is Fortuyn's ethnic nationalism. As aforementioned, ethnic nationalism is usually considered to be a 'bad' type of nationalism. Ethnic nationalism emphasizes common descent and cultural sameness.[77] This means that ethnic nationalism implies that the state has a strong exclusionary character. This nation is united through its citizen's pre-existing characteristics such as language, religion, customs and traditions. According to ethnic nationalists these types of traditions and values are inherited and not chosen, which is why the ethnic conception of nationalism is so exclusive. Due to this excusatory character, ethnic nationalism is usually considered as illiberal and sometimes even racist. These negative denunciations are the same as to what has been ascribed to Fortuyn by

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[77] Ozkirimli, *Contemporary debates,* 23.

his political opponents and also what cemented him as a far-right political figure in the eyes of many. Fortuyn's ethnic nationalism led to numerous parallels between Fortuyn and Hans Janmaat before him, and Geert Wilders and Thierry Baudet after him.

Fortuyn's ethnic nationalism was evident in his most controversial viewpoint, namely the existing tensions with Islamic minorities in the Netherlands. In line with his populist rhetoric, Fortuyn's argued that the established political parties had implemented a flawed integration policy towards immigrants, which would result in cultural clashes if this would not be corrected in the nearby future.[78] Fortuyn was mostly concerned that there was no clear institutionalized secularized state existing in accordance to Islam. He pointed towards the political violence in the Middle East inflicted on those who argued in favor of secularization. Fortuyn stated that: "There was no Islamic country in the world which respects our core norms and values, let alone that they attempt to live in accordance to them in their daily lives or legislations".

Fortuyn juxtaposes 'free' Western democracies, where for centuries political and religious conflicts and reforms have led to the current liberal paradigm to a "ridiculous desert culture", which perpetuates human rights violations and religious oppression.[79] He claimed that from a modern perspective the cultural values that were perpetuated by Islam were objectionable and ridiculous. According to Fortuyn, the Dutch identity on the other hand was enlightened, emancipated, modern, autonomous, liberal, civil, tolerant and rooted in the Judeo-Christian traditions, a viewpoint that conservatives in Europe have expressed time and again. The usage of this juxtaposition had been absent in the Dutch political sphere since Bolkenstein in 1998. By emphasizing these tensions, Fortuyn was able to attract those voters who felt that there was no party that voiced their cultural conservatism. Furthermore, as Fortuyn was very vocal about his homosexuality and described the fear he faced when he saw an increasing

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[78] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 250.
[79] Ibid, 249.

number of immigrants of the second generation openly insulting him, many voters started to regard him as the personification of the liberal Dutch national identity which enhanced his charismatic appeal.[80] Fortuyn claimed that within the Netherlands immigrants with an Islamic background continue to identify with their native countries instead of with the one in which they currently live. This would inevitably lead to a cultural clash, of which the increasing cultural, social and economic tensions between Western and Non-Western countries would only be the initial symptom. Therefore, it was implied that Fortuyn saw two possible futures for the Netherlands: either one in adherence to the Dutch norms and values or an Islamic theocracy.

Therefore, Fortuyn would argue that instead of him advocating in favor of ethnic nationalism he was actually trying to preserve the alternative[81]. This is also where the difficulties emerge when one wants to claim whether Fortuyn was an ethnic nationalist himself. If one takes the narrow definition, which would claim that nationalism is depended purely on someone's heritage and blood, Fortuyn would not qualify as an ethnic nationalist. If one would take the broader ethnocultural approach, Fortuyn would show clear signs of ethnic nationalism. Fortuyn does not argue against Islam as a religion or the people as a race, instead he clearly displays a strong disdain for the Islamic culture. Fortuyn's ethnocultural nationalism is further evident in his recommendations as to how the tensions within the Netherlands should be resolved. He argued for a full stop of immigrants from Middle Eastern countries to avoid a continuation of the dilution of Dutch values within the Netherlands. With regards to the Muslim minority within the Netherlands, Fortuyn called for strict integration and emancipation. Fortuyn also wanted further restrictions on family reunifications from Middle Eastern countries. Regarding a possible deportation of Muslim minorities however, Fortuyn was very resolute. He stated that: "They might be Moroccan brats, but they are our Moroccan brats".[82]

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[80] Ibid, 254.
[81] Daphe Halikiopoulou, Steven Mock, and Sofia Vasilopoulou, "The Civic Zeitgeist: Nationalism and Liberal Values in the European Radical Right," *Nations and Nationalism*, 19.1 (2013), 107-127.
[82] Martijn de Koning, *Nederlandse moslims: van migrant tot burger, (*Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 164.

3.2 Fortuyn as a civic nationalist

Civic nationalism is defined by the social commitment of members of a nation to the public institutions of the state and civil society. This therefore entails that in theory, those who share the same political and cultural values can join the community and thus the nation. In this instant Fortuyn was something of a paradox as well. Whereas he was a firm defender of the Dutch norms and values, Fortuyn's populist rhetoric exemplifies that he thoroughly wanted to change aspects of the Dutch political system to improve the relation between the Dutch state and its citizens.[83]

Fortuyn saw an increasing gap between the Dutch people and their representatives and sought to improve this relation by proposing measures for a more direct democracy. Fortuyn argued that the established political parties had monopolized the political power in the Netherlands.[84] This legislative monopoly had resulted in an aged political system, which failed to recognize any implemented mistakes. Fortuyn argued that if one would speak up against this group of established political parties, their response would be: "if you do not like the way things are run, you can better emigrate". He criticized the parties for not having an idea how the Dutch society should evolve and continue to thrive in the age of modernization and globalization.[85] Fortuyn called the members of the established political party's enemies of the Dutch people and referred to them as "Our type of people". The usage of a people versus elite denunciation is one of the main aspects of populism, yet Fortuyn's attempt to reignite ties between the Dutch people and their political representatives exemplify Fortuyn's understanding of the importance in generating unity and solidarity in a nation. Fortuyn argued that he wanted to create a movement which would adequately adapt the Dutch welfare state to the age of modernization and globalization. Fortuyn's solution to this increasing gap would be to implement aspects of a

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[83] Fortuyn, *De puinhopen, 9.*
[84] Pels, *De geest van Pim*, 271.
[85] Fortuyn, *De puinhopen, 136.*

direct democracy, such as elected majors and generate more possibilities for people outside of the political establishment to hold political offices. Fortuyn also argued in favor of an elected prime minister, which ties into his messianic vision where he as the embodiment of the Dutch people would solve the country's biggest problems as he would undoubtedly become their chosen representative.

Fortuyn's critique of the Dutch institutions went beyond the political realm. He argued that public institutions such as the police, public healthcare and education needed strong revisioning. Fortuyn claimed that the Dutch police were performing abysmally, which had skyrocketed the criminality in the streets. He stated that the security risks for police officers were considered to be more important than those of the common civilians. Therefore, Fortuyn wanted to decentralize the police and give more responsibilities to the police on the streets, so that the new policies could be formulated from the ground-up instead of top-down. According to political scholar Henri Beunders, the issue of public safety in the 1990s led to a nostalgic feeling amongst the Dutch population to a time of order and security amidst the quickly modernizing society.[86] This sense of nostalgia made Fortuyn's utopia appealing to many. Also in the medical and educational sector Fortuyn argued in favor of decentralization. He drew on personal anecdotes regarding his parent's experiences to elaborate on the flaws of the medical sector. Fortuyn also drew from his own childhood when it came to education. He wanted teachers to get more direct influence as they would play a larger role to the education of their students than any governmental policy could ever be. In sum, Fortuyn saw the average Dutchman as someone who was quite capable of making their own decisions and claiming their own responsibility, therefore he wanted to return the power to the average worker and in result create a stronger sense of unity within the nation.

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[86] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 250.

Yet, Fortuyn did recognize the Netherlands as one people, whose law's and customs should be upheld. Fortuyn's arguably progressive viewpoints are reflected in his view of these core Dutch values.[87] Exemplified by his personal experiences as a homosexual throughout the second half of the twentieth century, Fortuyn was regarded as the embodiment of progressive Dutch values that were at risk if intolerant beliefs of the Islamic minority were to be perpetuated.[88] In accordance with this belief, Fortuyn defends the liberal values as something inherently Dutch. The Dutch have historically regarded themselves as a tolerant nation, which is why Fortuyn was able to link liberal values to the Dutch national identity in this manner.[89] However, in spite of Fortuyn's defense of the liberal values, his proposed methods to do so contain more elements of illiberal nationalism, as I have discussed during the section on Fortuyn's ethnic nationalism. The most poignant example of this was Fortuyn's claim that he wanted to abolish Article 1 of the Dutch constitution, which holds the anti-discrimination principle.[90] Fortuyn wanted to abolish the principle due to the fact that he felt that this limited his possibility to discuss the national identity issues regarding the Muslim minority. By claiming to be the defender of the liberal Dutch values Fortuyn was able to portray a claim that appeared illiberal at first as a necessity to protect the inherent Dutch liberal values.[91]

However, due to Fortuyn's untimely death in 2002, it would never become clear whether Fortuyn's efforts would have in fact created a structural change in the Dutch civic society. Yet, Fortuyn's political influence and agency appears to have persisted even in the aftermath of his death. The next chapter will discuss the legacy of Fortuyn's nationalism in the Dutch political debate and show how Fortuyn's influence was perpetuated after his death.

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[87] Tjitske Akkerman, "Anti-immigration Parties and the Defence of Liberal Values: The Exceptional Case of the List Pim Fortuyn," *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 10:3 (2005), 337-354.
[88] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 250.
[89] Rogier van Reekum, "Out of Character: debating Dutchness, Narrating Citizenship", (PhD Thesis Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG), Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), 2014, https://hdl.handle.net/11245/1.434301), 104.
[90] Lucardie and Voerman, "Liberaal patriot of nationaal populist?," 32-42.
[91] Pels, *De geest van Pim*, 184.

Chapter 4: The Political legacy of Fortuyn's nationalism and the Transformation of the Political Discourse

On May 6th 2002, Pim Fortuyn was assassinated shortly after conducting a radio interview in Hilversum. The initial reaction to the assassination was one of national shock as it had been the first political murder in the Netherlands since 1672 and had silenced one of the most promising politicians in the country. Fortuyn was assassinated at a point in which his popularity and influence was presumably at its highpoint and it is impossible to know what would have happened if Fortuyn would not have been killed. Yet, Fortuyn was not only able to influence the Dutch political sphere during his lifetime, his influence and agency appears to have propelled even further after his death. The mourning that set in after Fortuyn's death could be compared to the death of Prime Minister Olaf Palme in Sweden or Princes Diana in Great Britain.[92] In the immediate aftermath when Fortuyn was officially pronounced dead, there was the urge to express the collective emotions and shock. People shared their viewpoints on the internet or gathered in small groups outdoors, with shrines emerging at locations of significance to the person of Fortuyn and a vast public attending Fortuyn's funeral procession. Had Fortuyn been considered to be a messiah-like figure during his lifetime, he was now a martyr.

Fortuyn's assassination had also sent shockwaves through the political sphere. There was a significant part of the Dutch population who regarded the Dutch established political parties as those mainly responsible for his death, which for them fermented the juxtaposition between the established political parties and the people, as Fortuyn himself had always criticized[93]. There was no truth to this claim, as Fortuyn's assassin was a lone gunman and climate activist, who regarded Fortuyn as a dangerous individual and acted on his own accord. However, in part due to this public perception, the Pim Fortuyn List won 17% of the votes and

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[92] Peter Jan Margry, "The Murder of Pim Fortuyn and Collective Emotions Hype, Hysteria and Holiness in The Netherlands?,"*Etnofoor*, 16 (2003, DOI:10.2307/25758060): 2, 106-131.
[93] Pennings and Keman, "*The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2002*", p. 4.

gained 26 seats during the parliamentary election. In one stroke the LPF became the second largest political party within the Netherlands.[94] This political support had been unprecedented for far-right nationalist parties in the Netherlands since the second world war. Liberals and Social-Democrats on the other hand experienced significant political losses. Due to this overwhelming electoral success, the LPF joined the coalition with the CDA and the VVD. However, the cabinet was short-lived due to internal struggles within the LPF as without Fortuyn, there was no-one able to lead the party.[95] During the new elections in January 2003, the LPF would lose 18 of their 26 seats in parliament and they would never regain their previous political success.

However, in spite of the fact that the LPF was unable to maintain a continuous political influence, Fortuyn's political success did have two lasting implications for the Dutch political debate. Firstly, Fortuyn's political success appeared to break the political taboo of addressing issues of civil rights, migration and immigration through a nationalist perspective which beforehand had been unthinkable.[96] Before Fortuyn, these issues of a cultural nature had been largely ignored by the mainstream political parties. After Fortuyn, these issues of national identity and migration had become part of the main points of discussion within parliament. Whereas to claim that Fortuyn was the only reason for this shift would be an overly mono-causal explanation, he certainly was a key figure in the emergence of far-right nationalist parties in the Netherlands. Political standpoints by the established political parties on the main issues Fortuyn addressed appear to largely follow along the left-right continuum. This therefore set in motion a reinforcement of the increasing divisions between the left and right political parties in the Netherlands.[97] One example of established Dutch political parties having gradually started

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[94] Huib Pellikaan, Sarah de Lange and Tom Van der Meer, "Fortuyn's Legacy: Party System Change in the Netherlands," *Comparative European Politics*, 5.3 (2007), 282-302.
[95] Simon Otjes, "The Fortuyn Effect revisited: How did the LPF affect the Dutch Parliamentary Party System?," *Acta Polit,* 46 (2011, https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1057/ap.2011.12.):4, 400–424.
[96] Van Herwaarden, *Liefde voor een leider*, 250.
[97] Otjes, "The Fortuyn Effect revisited," 400-424.

to exert more ethnonationalist characteristics was the public letter by VVD Prime Minister Mark Rutte in January 2017 where he argued that people should "Act normal, or leave".[98] This quote was clearly reminiscent of Fortuyn, as Rutte makes a clear point in favor of the intrinsically Dutch norms and values and exerts a strong aversion against those who did not comply with this standard.

Aside from the fact that Fortuyn was able to promote a new nationalist discourse within the established political parties. New far-right political parties have emerged to fill the void that was left by Fortuyn and the LPF. The two most successful of these new far-right populist parties are Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV) and Thierry Baudet and his Forum for Democracy (FVD). Wilders founded the PVV after he left the VVD due to disagreements with the party policy. The PVV would mainly focus on issues of immigration and issues with the Muslim minorities as well as a firm anti-EU standpoint. However, the initial political taboo revolving the nationalist manner in which these far-right parties discussed these issues was indeed broken. The PVV would attain significant political success during the 2010 parliamentary elections by gaining 24 seats in parliament, which rivals the initial success of the LPF.[99] Due to his political standpoint and success, Wilders lives under permanent protection due to the many death threats he has received, a fact which only supports his viewpoints. The second far-right nationalist party is the Forum for Democracy which was founded as a political think tank in 2015 by political scholar Thierry Baudet. In 2017, it morphed into becoming a political party and attained two seats in the house of Parliament during the following elections. Unlike Wilders, who adheres to a folksier style, Baudet assumes the role of a political dandy, which harkens back to Fortuyn stylistically. Also, electorally the FVD has distinguished themselves in recent political history by becoming the biggest party during the Dutch Provincial

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[98] Mark Rutte, "Lees hier de brief van Mark", VVD.nl, 22 januari 2017, https://www.vvd.nl/nieuws/lees-hier-de-brief-van-mark/.
[99] Otjes, "The Fortuyn Effect revisited," 400-424.

Council Elections in 2019.[100] Both Wilders and Baudet share Fortuyn's populist denunciation of the elite, his ethnonationalist viewpoints regarding immigrants, and profile themselves as the champions in defending the liberal Dutch values in opposition to so-called 'backward' cultures. However, unlike Fortuyn, these two far-right political parties have to distinguish themselves in a political discourse that in itself has adapted more ethnonationalist aspects. It is therefore not possible to simply regard Wilders and Baudet as the only successors of Fortuyn's political legacy. Instead I claim that Fortuyn's charisma and political success initiated the political discourse where widespread support for ethnonationalist parties had become a normalized part of the Dutch political sphere.

What is important to note here is the role of post-mortem charisma after the passing of a charismatic leader. Weber's theory on charismatic leadership shows that charisma revolves around the attribution of an extraordinary quality to an individual. After Fortuyn's death this extraordinary quality was repeatedly attached to the fallen leader, either by media coverage on Fortuyn life and works or by the many letters of condolences by Fortuyn's supporters. These factors perpetuated the myth of Fortuyn into something collective, as being critical of Fortuyn's viewpoints was generally met by disdain provided what occurred.[101] As argued before, Fortuyn exemplified the characteristics of a charismatic leader in Weberian terms, however now Fortuyn had allegedly died for his mission, his political message became something of a gospel for his political supporters.[102] This is why there are memorabilia of Fortuyn, why there is spoken of 'Fortuynism' or the 'Fortuyn-Revolt'. Since his death, Fortuyn became the personification of a specific type of ethno-cultural nationalism, through which the connection with Fortuyn's civic nationalism is often more implied than actively repeated. Fortuyn's ongoing agency as a symbol

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[100] *Volledige speech van Thierry Baudet: de Uil van Minerva* [Video File]. Forum voor Democratie, (2019, March, 21): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ABtS0Hd12s.
[101] Pennings and Keman, "*The Dutch parliamentary elections of 2002*", p.4.
[102] Peter Jan Margry, "Political Resentment in Dutch Society," in *Reframing Dutch Culture: Between Otherness and Authenticity*, ed. Peter Jan Margry and Herman Roodenburg, (Ashgate, 2007), 109.

for some type of ethno-cultural nationalism was also evident during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests in the Netherlands, when a statue of Fortuyn in Rotterdam was vandalized and inscribed with the word: "Racist".[103] The same night, Fortuyn's supporters cleaned the statue, which was then guarded by football supporters who were sympathetic to Fortuyn in order to avoid further damage to the statue the following day. This recent example shows how Fortuyn is still held in high regard by his supporters, who appear willing to defend his arguably controversial legacy almost two decades after his death. So, in some ways his charismatic leadership and personal nationalism has been posthumously transcended in Dutch society.

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[103] Eva de Graaff, "Standbeeld Pim Fortuyn beklad: Racist", *AD*, June 4, 2020.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The aim of this master thesis was to illuminate how Pim Fortuyn's personal nationalism was an integral part of his charismatic leadership, though which he was able to change the Dutch political discourse. Charismatic leadership according to Weber consists of the attribution of extraordinary qualities to an individual by a so-called charismatic community. Whereas Fortuyn has been described as a charismatic leader in the Weberian sense according to scholars on Dutch politics, there are few scholars who have discussed the nuances in Fortuyn's charismatic mission.

Pim Fortuyn's political mission was consisted of addressing the following issues: the increasing gap between the citizens and the political elite, the tensions between the modern Western society and the Islamic minorities, more security and less criminality on the streets and solving the problems in the collective sector. Fortuyn's response to these problems were based upon three political phenomena: liberalism, nationalism and populism. The former two concepts are formative in any analysis of Fortuyn's political ideology and the latter is indispensable when analyzing Fortuyn's political style. As this thesis pointed out, what differentiated Fortuyn from his less successful nationalist predecessors was the way in which he was able to voice for the time radical ideas in an understandable manner and also the paradoxical nature of Fortuyn's liberal viewpoints and his ethnic nationalism in his personal nationalism.

Fortuyn's ethnic nationalism was evident in his most controversial viewpoint, namely the existing tensions with Islamic minorities in the Netherlands. Fortuyn juxtaposed western democracies to Islamic theocracies. He argued that there were two possible futures for the Netherlands: one in adherence to the Dutch norms and values on the one hand and an Islamic theocracy on the other. However, this is also where the relation to a civic type of nationalism becomes visible. Fortuyn would argue that instead of him advocating in favor of ethnic

nationalism he was actually trying to preserve the alternative. Furthermore, Fortuyn was adamant on strengthening the civic ties within the Netherlands between the people and their political and social institutions. However, due to Fortuyn's assassination it would never become clear as to what part of his charismatic mission he would be able to actualize.

As described by Weber, the greatest problem of charismatic leadership is the problem of succession, which was prevalent in the LPF after Fortuyn's death, as it was unable to maintain public support. Yet, Fortuyn's agency continued after his death. In the eyes of his supporters, Fortuyn had now attained the status of a martyr. In the political realm, Fortuyn's legacy was also still apparent. In recent years, far-right nationalist parties have become increasingly popular, as these parties appeared to fill the void that was left after Fortuyn. However, Fortuyn's legacy is not only noticeable on the fringes of the political spectrum. Also established political parties have included nationalistic elements during recent campaigns. Therefore, it is impossible to speak of a successor to Fortuyn, as the political discourse appears to have changed. Whereas it is impossible to state that Fortuyn was the sole reason for this change in the political discourse, he was the first Dutch nationalist politician to achieve this level of political success since the Second World War. Fortuyn's political success can partly be attributed to Fortuyn's charismatic leadership, in which his personal nationalism played a vital role.

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