What did you just call me? A study on the demonization of political parties in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2011

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Chapter 2

Demonization in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2011:

A Descriptive Overview

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of demonization in the Dutch political domain between 1995 and 2011, showing which Dutch parties are demonized, when demonization took place, which actors demonized most, and what arguments were used to do so. The data are derived from five Dutch national newspapers and three Dutch national opinion weeklies. Before the method of data collection and the results are presented, the Dutch political system between 1995 and 2011 is discussed.

The Dutch political system

The Dutch electoral system is characterized by proportional representation and a multi-party system with a low electoral threshold. Compared to countries with a high electoral threshold like Germany, or countries where two major parties dominate the elections like Britain, the Dutch system allows political newcomers a good chance of entering the Dutch House of Representatives.[13] Between 1995 and 2011 numerous parties were seated in the House of Representatives or gained enough in the polls to be likely to obtain seats. Together these parties can be classified as members of 8 different party families (see table 2.1).

The *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA), *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* (CDA) and *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD) are considered 'the big three' mainstream parties. At least two of 'the big three' parties participated in every government coalition after the Second World War. In 2002 and 2006 respectively, the anti-immigration parties *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF) and *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) proved successful newcomers. The LPF won 26 seats (out of 150) in 2002, but only 8 in 2003. The party was dissolved in 2008. The PVV won 9 seats in 2006 and 24 in 2010. In 2010, it became the support partner of the Dutch coalition government formed by the VVD and CDA. This government fell in 2012.

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13 The Dutch political system has a bicameral Parliament. The House of Representatives (Second Chamber) is the lower house, the other one being the Senate (First Chamber). The House of Representatives has 150 seats and is the main chamber.

Since the anti-immigration party *CentrumDemocraten* (CD) was perceived as a dangerous racist party by the Dutch political establishment, it faced an informal 'cordon sanitaire'. The electoral accomplishments of the CD were modest: they won 3 parliamentary seats between 1994 and 1998, and none thereafter. The party was disbanded in 2002. In 2007, the new anti-immigration party *EénNL* was disbanded almost within a year after facing poor electoral results in 2006. Another anti-immigration party *Trots op Nederland* (TON), established in 2007, also failed to gain electoral ground. In 2012 this party merged with the political newcomer *Onafhankelijke Burger Partij* (OBP, now DPK).

Table 2.1 The Dutch political system between 1995 and 2011.

Party name	Party Family	Average seats*
AOV	Elderly welfare	3.5
CD	Anti-immigration	1.5
CDA	Christian-democratic	35.3
CU	Christian -democratic	4.5
D66	Social-liberal	10.7
EénNL	Anti-immigration	0.0
Groenlinks	Ecologic (green)	8.5
GPV	Christian-democratic	2.0
LN	-	1.0
LPF	Anti-immigration	17.0
PvdA	Social-democratic	35.0
PvdD	Ecologic (green)	2.0
PVV	Anti-immigration	17.0
RPF	Christian-democratic	3.0
SGP	Christian-orthodox	2.2
SP	Socialist	10.8
TON	Anti-immigration	0.0
Unie55+	Elderly Welfare	1.0
VVD	Liberal-conservative	29.0

Note: Christian-orthodox and Christian-democratic parties are considered one party family.
* Seat average in the Dutch House of Representatives (150 seats) during the elections between 1994-2011.

The *Algemeen Ouderen Verbond* (AOV) and *Unie55+*, which both claim to represent the interests of senior citizens, did not participate in national elections after 1998. The *Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond* (GPV) and *Reformatorische Politieke Federatie* (RPF) merged into the *ChristenUnie* (CU)

in 2002. The *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij* (SGP) is a Christian-orthodox party with very stable electoral results. From 1945 onwards it has never won less than 2, or more than 3 seats. The social-liberal party *Democraten '66* (D66), founded as a protest party to 'blow up the existing political order', has had varied electoral successes. At its peak in 1994, it won 24 seats, but in 2006 the party won just 3 seats. The animal welfare party *Partij voor de Dieren* (PvdD) was established in 2002 and has managed to retain 2 seats.

Leefbaar Nederland (LN) is not grouped within a party family because the party does not fit in any of the categories. It is best described as an anti-establishment and/or populist party. The party has several regional spin-offs (*Leefbaar Amsterdam*, *Leefbaar Utrecht*, *Leefbaar Rotterdam*) and can therefore also be described as a national platform for regional powers that aim to confront the (regional) political establishment.

Method

All Dutch parties that won seats in the House of Representatives at any time between 1995 and 2011 are the objects of analysis. TON and *EénNL* are included for two reasons. First, these parties were, at certain moments, high enough in the polls to gain parliamentary seats. Second, they are anti-immigration parties, and as such they are particularly likely to be demonized.

For the period 1995-2011, five national newspapers and three national opinion weeklies were scrutinized for articles that included political demonization. The fact that data were obtained solely through printed national news media limits the scope of the analysis and introduces a possible bias. Walter and Vliegenthart (2010) have demonstrated that negative campaigning in newspapers focuses more on personal traits than other communication channels, potentially implying that demonization occurs more often in written media than for example, televised debate. Although such a possible bias may exist, newspapers alone reach about one-third of the Dutch public,[14] and they still represent mainstream politics in the Netherlands (Van der Eijk, 2000;

also see Vliegenthart, 2007). Besides, although only written media sources are analyzed, the data show that written media also report demonization from television, radio, social media or the Internet in general, so it is argued that the public largely experience demonization the way it has been covered in the written media.

Articles were initially selected based on the following requirement: the name of a party or politician was used in combination with a term that is strongly associated with Nazism/fascism. In order to find these articles, two tailor made dictionaries were developed: one including search words that refer to Nazism/fascism[15] (see Appendix I), and one including all the names of the parties under analysis and the names of their leaders between 1995 and 2011.[16] After automatic selection of the articles, they were coded manually to determine whether this combination actually indicated political demonization as defined in Chapter 1.

The articles covering political demonization were coded for basic characteristics, such as who is demonized (the party, the party leader, another party politician?), who demonizes (e.g. a politician, an ordinary citizen, an organization?), what arguments are used (e.g. views on immigration policies, use of populist rhetoric, organizational features of the party?), when did demonization take place (what day, which month, what year?), and in which media source (e.g. *De Volkskrant*, *Trouw*, *De Telegraaf*?).[17]

The 'sentiment' of the article was also coded, with the coder identifying the primary attitude towards demonization expressed in the article. The coding options were: article agrees with/argues for demonization, article is neutral towards demonization, article shows ambivalence towards demonization, and article argues against demonization. Following Koopmans and Muis (2009) in their assumption that articles that express a neutral or ambivalent position also enhance the legitimacy of a message, only the latter category has been excluded from the final dataset.

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14 Nommedia (2013), *Nom Print Monitor 2012 II- 2013 I*, http://www.nommedia.nl/upload/documenten/gemiddeld-bereik-npm-2012-ii-2013-i-obv-h1-tbv-website-nom-uitsplitsing-allen_geslacht_leeftijd.pdf (visited on November 5th, 2013)

15 This dictionary was developed based on an extensive study of terms and phrases are associated with the Second World War. In the end, the dictionary included more than 84 potential referrals.

16 It is possible that a politician other than the party leader is demonized, while the name of this politician is not included in the dictionary. But, when a politician other than the party leader is mentioned in an article, his or her name is almost always accompanied by the name of the party that he or she belongs to. Thus, such instances of demonization largely showed up in the search results.

17 Note that demonization of parties that were no longer in Dutch Parliament (or did no longer exist) at time of the reported demonization, was excluded from the analysis.

Comparing the results of two coders (researcher excluded) showed that coders fully agreed about whether or not an article contained an instance of demonization (from a sample of 25 articles). After establishing that the article contained an instance of demonization, the general intercoder-reliability of this content analysis is 93 per cent agreement, a high reliability score, indicating that the articles are coded highly comparably (Lombard et al., 2002). The comparison indicated that greatest discrepancy among the coders concerned the arguments that accompany demonization (89 per cent agreement). Coders were provided with a set of arguments to choose from, as well as with the option 'other argument'. It appeared that sometimes one coder categorized an argument as, for example, 'view on immigrants', while the other coder categorized the same argument as 'other argument'.

Results

Figure 2.1 shows the frequency of demonization for all Dutch parties being analyzed between 1995 and 2011. In total, 2521 instances of demonization were found. Figure 2.1 shows that, between 1995 and 2011, Dutch political parties were increasingly demonized. In this respect, the election years 2002 and 2010 stand out. The 2002 election was characterized by the tremendous electoral success of the newly established anti-immigration party LPF, as well as by the large electoral losses of the mainstream party PvdA. The 2010 election was characterized by the huge electoral success of another anti-immigration party, the PVV, with the mainstream party CDA losing nearly half its seats. Another smaller peak in demonization is visible for 2004, the year in which the anti-Islam film *Submission: Part I* was broadcast and its director Theo van Gogh was murdered.

Between 1995 and 2000, the level of demonization largely remains the same, also between 2005 and 2008. In 2011, the political demonization of Dutch political parties is back at almost the same level as in 2002. In both years, parties were demonized around 340 times (333 versus 350). Spread out over the entire year, this implies that, in 2002, parties were demonized on almost a daily basis. Dutch parties were demonized approximately every

other 19 days in 2000, the year in which the frequency in demonization was the lowest of all years under analysis. In contrast, in 2010, Dutch political parties were demonized around 500 times, almost 1.4 times a day.
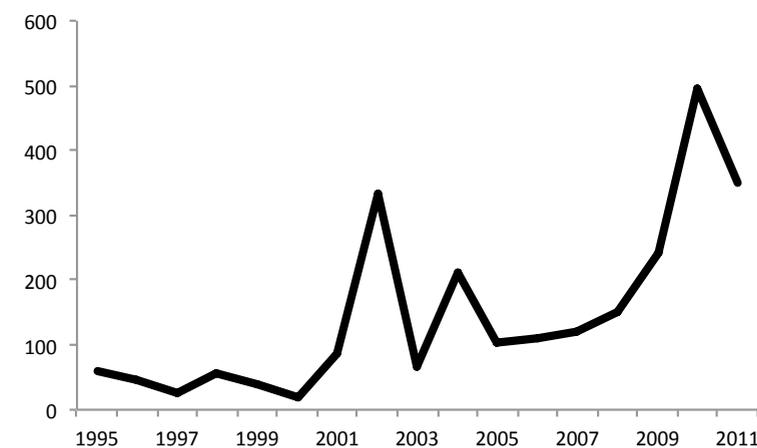

Figure 2.1 Frequency of demonization per year for all parties in Dutch written media (newspaper and opinion weeklies) between 1995 and 2011.

It should be noted that these data also include resonance. For instance, when Wilders (PVV) is demonized during a live debate on television, more than one media source reports this demonization. It is also likely, that this demonization is mentioned in letters to the editor, columns or other types of articles in the following weeks (also see Koopmans, 2004). However, even though single instances of demonization are sometimes repeatedly discussed in the media, many instances are also unique, as in letters to the editor, columns, and opinion articles. Furthermore, not all newspapers and national weeklies pick up the same news, and not all news is presented and/or interpreted in the same way. Some newspapers (intentionally or not) omit the demonizing aspect when reporting an event, while others do not.

Speaking of Demonization

Figure 2.2 shows how often the term demonization was used in Dutch written media between 1995 and 2011.[18] There is a strikingly sharp increase in its use in 2002, corresponding with when the successful anti-immigration politician

18 The search engine was set to search for the Dutch phrases 'gedemoniseerd', 'demoniseren', 'demoniseert' and 'demonisering'.

Pim Fortuyn (LPF) repeatedly claimed that his political opponents were demonizing him. His statements clearly sparked a discussion about political demonization, while his political murder (May 2002) probably intensified and prolonged the discussion.
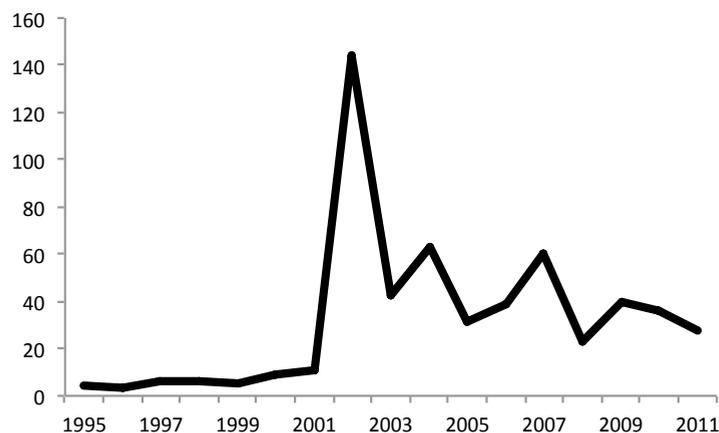

Figure 2.2 Frequency in the use of the terms demonization and demonize(d) in Dutch written media (newspaper and opinion weeklies) between 1995 and 2011.

In 2002, terms related to demonization are mentioned 144 times. In contrast, between 1995 and 2001 the term demonization is used between 3 (1995, 1996) and 9 (2001) times a year. Thus, before 2002 demonization was hardly discussed and after 2002 the use of the term decreased quickly, with two small peaks around 2004 and 2007. In 2011, the frequency in the use of the term demonization is as about the same as it was in 2005.

Figure 2.1 and figure 2.2 show remarkable congruency until 2006. After 2006, actual demonization increased quite rapidly, and even surpassed its peak in 2002 in contrast to the use of the term. The peak in actual demonization in 2010 is evidently not reflected in figure 2.2. Thus, the discussion of demonization peaked in 2002, while actual demonization peaked in 2010. In other words, after 2002 the Dutch written media started to discuss demonization less, and Dutch political parties were demonized more.

The demonized

Table 2.2 shows that anti-immigration party PVV was demonized most throughout the entire period. Of all instances of demonization between 1995-2011, 38 per cent was directed at the PVV. The PVV is followed by anti-immigration party LPF (19.5 per cent), and the liberal-conservative party VVD (16.2 per cent). Parties that were never demonized are the anti-immigration party *EénNL* and Christian-democratic party GPV. Parties rarely demonized were Christian-orthodox party SGP (0.0 per cent due to round off), Christian-democratic party RPF (0.1 per cent), Christian-democratic party CU (0.4 per cent), the elderly welfare parties *Unie55+* (0.1 per cent) and AOV (0.4 per cent).[19]

Table 2.2 Demonization of parties between 1995 and 2011.

Party name	% demonization between 1995-2011	% demonization during party existence between 1995 - 2011
AOV	0.4	3.7
CD	3.0	8.9
CDA	6.3	6.3
CU	0.4	0.4
D66	1.9	1.9
EénNL	0.0	0.0
Groenlinks	2.2	2.2
GPV	0.0	0.0
LN	3.2	7.3
LPF	19.5	39.1
PvdA	4.8	4.8
PvdD	0.6	0.7
PVV	38.0	57.8
RPF	0.1	0.6
SGP	0.4	0.4
SP	1.9	1.9
TON	0.9	1.6
UNie55+	0.1	0.5
VVD	16.2	16.2
Total	**≈ 100**	**n /a**

19 The number of media sources used for this longitudinal analysis increased over time, because for some media sources the digital archives are not available from January 1995. The digital archive of *Elsevier* is available from January 1999 onwards, the archive of the *De Telegraaf* from January 2002 onwards, and the archive of *Vrij Nederland* from January 2004 onwards. Thus, only from January 2004 onwards have all media sources been taken into account. However, this should have much effect on the data. The opinion weeklies appear to include much less demonization than newspapers such as *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad*, and more importantly, demonization clearly took off from 2001/2002 onwards. Nevertheless, it is likely that the demonization of parties that only existed before 2004 (AOV, CD, GPV, RPF, Unie55+) would have increased somewhat if all media sources had been included.

Clearly, every year of party existence, increases the chance of demonization since not all parties were in existence throughout the entire period under analysis. The second column of table 2.2 shows the percentage of demonization in relation to the total amount of demonization during the years the party existed.[20] The second column of table 2.2 shows that the PVV was also demonized most when the years the party existed are taken into account.

The second column of table 2.2 shows that during the existence of the LPF (2002-2008) 39.1 per cent of all demonization that took place during those years was directed at this party. The second column of table 2.2 also shows that the CD is demonized more intensely than might be expected from the first column (3.0 per cent versus 8.9 per cent). For the VVD, on the other hand, the intensity of demonization weakens compared to other parties when the years of existence are taken into account. The results for the AOV and LN are remarkable: for both parties it shows that when their years of existence are taken into account, their demonization increases to a great extent.[21]

While table 2.2 does not take into consideration how often a party was covered in the Dutch written media overall, taking the overall news coverage into account is important. For example, if a party was demonized five times a year, it seems obvious to conclude that the party is hardly demonized. However, if the same party was only discussed in the media ten times that same year, the picture changes and it becomes clear that the party was demonized half the time it was mentioned. Table 2.3 shows the degree to which each party is demonized during its years of existence between 1995 and 2011 in relation to the percentage of overall coverage of the party in the media that same period of time. This percentage is called relative demonization.

Table 2.3 shows that when overall media attention is taken into account, the anti-immigration party CD was demonized most, about once every 10 times it was discussed in the Dutch written media during its time of existence. The CD is followed by *Unie55+*, which was demonized at least once

20 The second column is calculated as follows: for example a party is demonized 500 times in six years of existence. In these years the total number of demonization for all parties is 1500. Then, from all demonization that took place during these years, 33.3 per cent (500/1500 x 100 %) was directed at this party.
21 It should be noted that Pim Fortuyn was briefly party leader of LN. However, after Fortuyn made provocative remarks in one of the Dutch newspapers, he was expelled from LN. Subsequently Fortuyn founded this own party LPF.

every 50 articles. The other elderly welfare party AOV also scores relatively high: out of every 100 articles, the party was demonized once. Table 2.3 also shows that although, according to both columns in table 2.2, the PVV was demonized most, 97.4 per cent of the time the party was not demonized. Still, the PVV ranks second in the first column. In roughly every 40 articles, the PVV was demonized once. Other parties with relative high scores are LN (0.8 per cent) and the anti-immigration party LPF (1.5 per cent). Remarkably, the VVD and TON have similar scores in table 2.3, but in table 2.2 the difference between them is fairly large (respectively 16.2 per cent versus 1.6 per cent). Despite the difference in absolute numbers of demonization, both parties have the same demonized/not demonized (0.3/99.7) ratio in Dutch written media. Finally, both table 2.2 and table 2.3 show that, of 'the big three' mainstream parties the VVD, the PvdA and the CDA, the VVD was demonized most.

Table 2.3 Relative demonization of parties.

Party name	% demonization	% other news	% total
AOV	1.0	99.0	100
CD	10.3	89.7	100
CDA	0.1	99.9	100
CU	0.0	100	100
D66	0.1	99.9	100
EénNL	0.0	100.0	100
Groenlinks	0.1	99.9	100
GPV	0.0	100.0	100
LN	1.1	98.9	100
LPF	1.5	98.5	100
PvdA	0.1	99.9	100
PvdD	0.2	99.8	100
PVV	2.6	97.4	100
RPF	0.1	99.9	100
SGP	0.1	99.9	100
SP	0.1	99.9	100
TON	0.3	99.7	100
UNie55+	2.3	97.7	100
VVD	0.3	99.7	100

Table 2.4 shows political demonization per party family. The anti-immigration party family consists of five parties: the CD, *EénNL*, LPF, PVV

and TON. Between 1995 and 2011, 61.4 per cent of all demonization was directed at members of this party family. The Christian-democratic/orthodox party family also consists of five parties: the CDA, CU, GPV, RPF and SGP. In contrast to the anti-immigration parties, only 7.2 per cent of all demonization between 1995 and 2011 was directed at members of this party family. Other parties that are grouped together are the elderly welfare parties AOV and *Unie55+*, as well as the ecological parties *Groenlinks* and PvdD. Both these party families were rarely demonized between 1995 and 2011. The other families all consist of a single party. The liberal-conservative party family is prominent with 16.2 per cent, followed by the social-democratic party family with 4.8 per cent. The social-liberal and socialist party families were equally demonized (1.9 per cent). Note that years of party existence are not taken into account in table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Demonization per party family.

Party family	% demonization between 1995-2011	% compared to all news between 1995-2011
Anti-immigration	61.4	2.0
Liberal-conservative	16.2	0.3
Christian-democratic/orthodox	7.2	0.1
Social-democratic	4.8	0.1
Ecologic	2.8	0.1
Social-liberal	1.9	0.1
Socialist	1.9	0.1
Elderly welfare	0.5	1.3
Other*	3.2	0.8
Total	**≈ 100**	**n /a**

* LN is not considered a member of any of these party families and is therefore grouped as 'other'.

The second column of table 2.4 indicates the percentage of demonization per party family in relation to the overall news coverage of that party family. Again the anti-immigration party family scores highest: out of approximately every 50 times a family member was mentioned in the news, it was demonized once. The elderly welfare party family (two parties) scores second highest, with 1.3 percent, followed by the liberal conservative party family (one party) with 0.3 per cent. All other party families score 0.1 per cent and these families all consist of one party, except for the ecological party

family (2 parties). A score of 0.1 per cent indicates that out of approximately every 1000 articles, the party family was demonized once. This appears most surprising for the Christian-democratic/orthodox party family, which was demonized 7.2 per cent of the time between 1995 and 2011, but clearly when it comes to their party family's overall news coverage they were rarely demonized.

The demonizers

In response to the question 'Who is demonized?', only parties and politicians are objects of analysis. In contrast, in answer to the question 'Who demonizes?', the range of actors becomes much wider. Besides politicians demonizing a party, public figures, journalists, and/or (other) ordinary citizens have also demonized. Sometimes the demonizer remained anonymous because not all articles had a known author: articles were occasionally written under the name of the newspaper or opinion weekly. In these cases, the demonizer is categorized as 'unknown'. The demonizer is also categorized 'unknown' when the demonizer was described as 'they' or 'the people' or 'many' or 'the left'. For example, when it was written: 'Many people feel that the PVV is the equivalent of a Nazi party", the demonizer is coded as 'unknown'. Table 2.5 shows the main types of demonizers in Dutch written media between 1995 and 2011.

Table 2.5 Demonizers in Dutch written media between 1995 and 2011.

Demonizer	% of total demonization
Politician	26.9
Public figure	22.9
Unknown	21.3
Ordinary citizen	12.8
Institution/organization	8.9
Expert	3.1
Religious leader	1.9
Other	2.2
Total	**≈ 100.0**

Table 2.5 shows that 'politician' is the largest category (26.9 per cent). This category includes members of parliament, regional politicians, foreign

politicians and ex-politicians. The second largest category is 'public figure'. Public figures include well-known persons (in the Dutch national context).[22] Most national (and/or foreign) politicians are also public figures, but they are coded as politicians and excluded from the category 'public figure'. For example, the category public figures includes well-known journalists, writers, pundits, film directors, singers, and comedians. The category 'unknown' is almost as large as 'public figure' (respectively 21.3 per cent and 22.9 per cent). In 12.8 per cent of the cases someone from the category 'ordinary citizen' demonizes parties. Ordinary citizens often demonized Dutch parties through a letter to the editor or a 'vox pop'. In 8.9 per cent of the cases, an institution or organization demonized parties. Examples of such institutions or organizations are cultural foundations, (public) broadcasting companies, political movements or other media sources. In 3.1 per cent of the cases, experts demonized parties. This category consists primarily of scholars like historians, sociologists, anthropologist, and political scientists. Demonizers were assigned to this category when their demonization was backed by their expertise. The smallest category consists of religious leaders (1.9 per cent), which includes Rabbis and Imams. Demonizers who do not fit in any of the given categories were grouped together in the category 'other' (2.2 per cent).

Which parties demonize most?

About one third of all demonization between 1995 and 2011 could be ascribed to a political party (N=844). A demonizer was tied to a political party either as a party politician or as a party affiliate. Ex-politicians fall into this latter category, as do prominent people who lent their fame to a party by becoming an official party candidate at the bottom of the party list (so-called 'lijstduwers'). These people are purposely put in a position from which chances are slim they will ever be elected. Party affiliation is also derived from

22 In order to determine who should count as a public figure, two steps were undertaken. First, all demonizers were googled for their (professional) role in society and whether or not they publicly affiliated themselves with a political party. At the same time, whether this person should be perceived as a public figure, was determined depending on the sort of hits that would come up (e.g. Wikipedia information, news stories, number of hits etc.). Second, a limited test was developed to check whether the decision to categorize a person as public figure ('yes' or 'no'). Through convenience sampling twenty-five people were asked to state which names they recognized as the names of public figures and which names they did not. The list included fifty names of demonizers from this study (public figures and not). This test showed that all demonizers initially categorized as 'public figure' in this study had a recognition score of 90 per cent or higher.

widespread knowledge like public endorsements or pubic party membership.

Table 2.6 shows that, of all individual parties, PvdA politicians/affiliates account for most demonization: almost 39 per cent of all demonization by political parties stems from this party. In at least every 3 articles that involved demonization by party politicians/affiliates, someone from the PvdA demonized. After the PvdA, politicians/affiliates from the liberal-conservative party VVD accounted for most demonization (about 16 per cent). In third place is the social-liberal party D66 (almost 13 per cent). Of 'the big three' mainstream parties, the CDA demonized the least (5.9 per cent). 5.1 per cent of the total demonization by party politicians/affiliates came from 'other parties'. This category primarily involves foreign parties but also some small/regional parties who never entered Dutch Parliament. Parties that accounted for little of the total demonization by party politicians/affiliates are the PVV, LN, LPF and SGP. The parties *Unie55+*, PvdD, GPV, *EénNL*, RPF and CD never demonized any of the Dutch parties under analysis and are excluded from the table.

Table 2.6 Demonization by party politicians/affiliates.

Party name	% demonization between 1995-2011	% demonization during years of existence between 1995 -2011
PvdA	38.9	38.9
VVD	16.1	16.1
D66	12.8	12.8
SP	6.0	6.0
CDA	5.9	5.9
Other party	5.1	-
Groenlinks	4.2	4.2
CU	3.6	4.0
PVV	2.1	3.2
LN	2.0	3.0
LPF	1.4	2.8
SGP	1.1	1.1
AOV	0.5	7.0
Total	**≈ 100.0**	**≈ 100.0**

Again, every extra year that a party existed in the period under analysis increased the likelihood a party demonized another party. The

second column of table 2.6 shows the percentage of demonization by party politicians/affiliates in relation to the total amount of demonization by party politicians/affiliates in the years the party existed. However, since the seven most demonizing parties all existed throughout the entire period under analysis, these percentages remain the same. The most remarkable outcome is that the AOV demonized a lot during its four years of existence between 1995 and 2011.

Table 2.7 Relative demonization by party politicians/affiliates.

Party name	% demonization	% other news	Total
PvdA	0.2	99.8	100
VVD	0.1	99.9	100
D66	0.1	99.9	100
SP	0.1	99.9	100
CDA	0.0	100.0	100
Groenlinks	0.1	99.9	100
CU	0.1	99.9	100
PVV	0.1	99.9	100
LN	0.2	99.8	100
LPF	0.0	100.0	100
SGP	0.5	99.5	100
AOV	0.5	99.5	100

Table 2.7 presents the relative demonization by party politicians/affiliates between 1995 and 2011. The first column of table 2.7 shows the percentage the party demonized as a fraction of the overall news coverage on the party during its years of existence. The second column indicates how often the party was mentioned in a news article without a party politician/affiliate demonizing another party/politician. The parties that demonized most when their overall news coverage is taken into account are the AOV and the SGP (both 0.5 per cent). The anti-establishment party LN scores 0.2 per cent. Of 'the big three' mainstream parties the PvdA demonized the most: it demonized twice as much as the VVD. The percentage of demonization as a fraction of all news coverage of the CDA appears negligible (0.0 per cent due to round off).

Table 2.8 shows political demonization by party family. Although several parties merged into one party family (e.g. anti-immigration, Christian-

democratic/orthodox), the picture largely remains the same: the social democrats were by far the party family that demonizes most, followed by the liberal-conservatives and the social-liberals. Despite the fact that five parties represent the Christian-democratic/orthodox family, this family accounted for little demonization. The same is true for the anti-immigration party family. Five parties also represent this family, but this family does not score very high on demonizing other parties. Note that years of party existence are not taken into account in table 2.8.

Table 2.8 Demonization by party families.

Family	% demonization
Social-democratic	38.9
Liberal-conservative	16.1
Social-liberal	12.8
Christian-democratic/orthodox	11.6
Socialist	6.0
Anti-immigration	3.5
Ecologic	4.2
Elderly welfare	0.5

Note: the percentages don't add up to 100% because the category 'other party' cannot be ascribed to a single party family.

Demonization in the media
Five national newspapers and three national opinion weeklies weve searched for instances of demonization. Figure 2.3 shows that, of all media sources, demonization was most covered by *De Volkskrant* (23.6 per cent), followed by *Trouw* (20.6 per cent) and *NRC Handelsblad* (18.3 per cent). The newspaper that covered demonization the least is *De Telegraaf* (9.4 per cent), followed by *Algemeen Dagblad* (13.1 per cent). Among the opinion weeklies, demonization was covered most by *Elsevier* (6.9 per cent), followed by *Vrij Nederland* (4.7 per cent) and *De Groene Amsterdammer* (3.3 per cent).[23]

23 As noted earlier, *De Telegraaf* has only been included in the analysis from January 2002 onwards, *Elsevier* from January 1999 onwards and *Vrij Nederland* from January 2004 onwards. However, when all newspapers are included for the same period of time, the general pattern as displayed in figure 2.3 does not change. *De Volkskrant* is still the newspaper that most covers demonization (23.8 per cent), and *De Telegraaf* is still the newspaper that least covers demonization (12.3 per cent). Nonetheless, the difference between the two is thus somewhat smaller. In addition, when all opinion weeklies are included for an equal period in time, again demonization is covered most by *Elsevier* (41.3 per cent) and least by *De Groene Amsterdammer* (22.6 per cent).
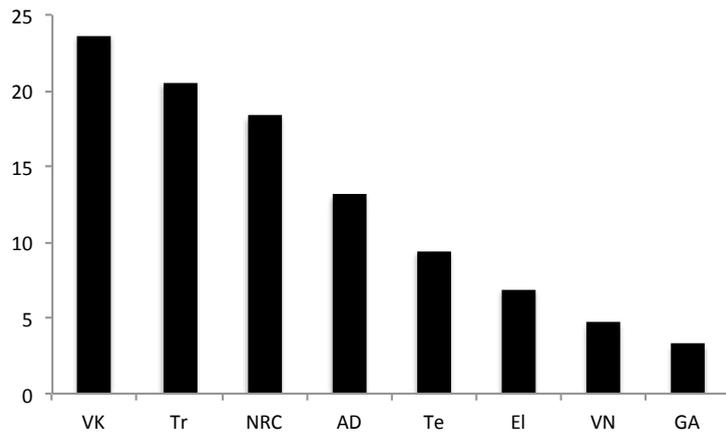
Figure 2.3 Percentage of demonization covered per media source.

Occasionally anti-immigration parties have declared that the Dutch established media are predominantly left-wing orientated and therefore negatively biased towards anti-immigration parties. In other words, journalists are suspected of promoting their political preferences. For example, party members of the LPF accused the established media of contributing to Fortuyn's death by providing a platform to demonize him. Later that year, the media were accused of favoring the social-democratic PvdA party leader Wouter Bos over LPF party leader Mat Herben (Brants and Van Praag, 2005). PVV politicians also repeatedly declared that the left-wing media are negatively biased towards their party.[24]

However, not all written media are suspected of a bias to the left. Some newspapers, as well as opinion weeklies, are considered as leaning to the right. For example, *De Telegraaf*, *Elsevier* and, to a lesser degree, *NRC Handelsblad* and *Algemeen Dagblad* are allegedly right-leaning. *Trouw* is most associated with Christian-democratic politics, and therefore believed to be most aligned to the Christian parties (CDA, CU and SGP). *De Volkskrant*, *Vrij Nederland* and *De Groene Amsterdammer* are considered left-leaning.[25]

Figure 2.4 provides the percentage of the total demonization of anti-immigration parties covered by each media source (see AIP), and the percentage of the total demonization of other parties covered by each media

24 See 'Het kwaad dat zijn de anderen' *De Volkskrant*, 24-03-2012.
25 Also see http://www.offerman.com/mediatraining/AOmediatraining4.pdf (visited 12-03-2012) and http://mens-en-samenleving.infonu.nl/communicatie/25509-journalistiek-de-krant-het-dagblad.html (visited 12-03-2012).

source (see Other). This shows that the allegedly left-leaning media sources such as *De Volkskrant* and *De Groene Amsterdammer* indeed covered more demonization of anti-immigration parties compared to their share of coverage of demonization of other parties. *Vrij Nederland*, on the other hand, covered demonization of other parties more. Furthermore, most right-leaning media covered demonization of anti-immigration relatively less than demonization of other parties. *NRC Handelsblad* is the only newspaper that covered the demonization of anti-immigration parties and other parties relatively to the same degree. Thus, demonization of anti-immigration parties was somewhat more covered in some written news media, and somewhat less in others. But the differences appear limited, and do not suggest severe bias. Above all, figure 2.4 shows that the distribution of demonization of anti-immigration parties and/or other parties between different media sources is largely similar to the distribution of all demonization (see figure 2.3).
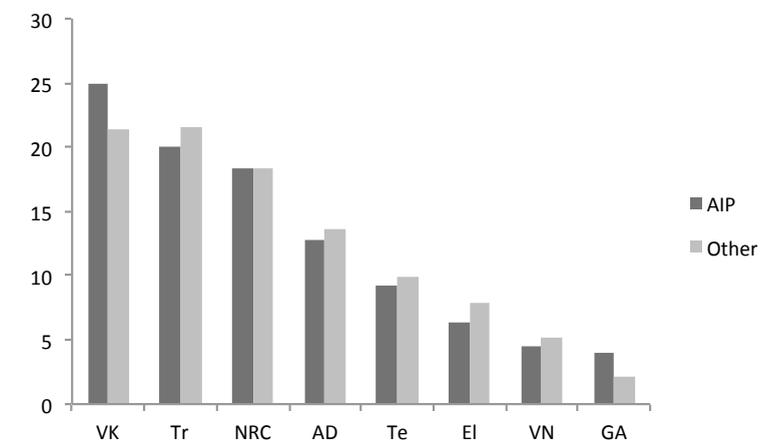

Figure 2.4 Percentage of total demonization of anti-immigration parties (AIP) and Other parties per media source.

Arguments that go with demonization

Coders were also instructed to code the arguments that were made by the 'demonizers' using a set of arguments to choose from, as well as the options 'no argument' and 'other argument'. The set of arguments included ideological arguments (e.g. populism, nativism, (neo) Nazism/fascism), specific policy arguments (e.g. immigration, integration, animal welfare, abortion,

euthanasia, taxes), arguments that address organizational aspects of a party (e.g. structure, membership options or facilitations), and also arguments that concerned visual aspects of parties/politicians (e.g. facial similarities, use of party symbols). Coders were asked to describe what the 'other argument' entailed when they encountered one. Sometimes this resulted in the creation of a new category.

Table 2.9 presents the five arguments that were made most. In half of the cases, no arguments were given, followed by the container category 'other argument' (8.2 per cent of the cases). The third overall argument is 'views on immigration'. This argument implies that a party/politician strove for immigration policies reminiscent of the policies of the Nazi regime. The fourth overall argument is the 'use of Nazist/fascist discursive terms'. This argument implies that parties/politicians use the same rhetoric as the Nazis, for example, by creating an 'us' versus 'them' distinction and/or by scapegoating a certain out-group for the ills in society. The fifth most given argument was 'worshipping traditional Nazism/fascism', implying that the party or politician was a (secret) adherent of traditional Nazism/fascism.

Table 2.9 Top five arguments for demonization

Argument	% all demonization
1. No argument	50.9
2. Other argument	8.2
3. Views on immigration	6.6
4. Use of Nazist/fascist discursive terms	4.8
5. Worshipping traditional Nazism/fascism	4.0

Table 2.10 shows the main arguments made for demonization of all individual parties. Note that the table excludes the categories 'no argument' and 'other argument'. The anti-immigration parties CD, LPF and the PVV were actually most demonized with 'no argument', and the CDA, *Groenlinks*, and LN were also most demonized without the inclusion of an argument.

The *Socialistische Partij* (SP) was demonized most because of its presumed anti-Semitism. The SP is known for its pro-Palestinian attitude, from which it is often concluded that the party is anti-Israel. One particular incident strengthened this notion, when a prominent party person was filmed in a crowd chanting 'Hamas, Hamas, gas all the Jews' (*Hamas, Hamas, alle Joden aan het gas*) during a political rally in support of Palestine. However, the party politician denied even having heard these words.

Table 2.10 Main arguments for demonization.

Party Name	Main argument
AOV	worshipping traditional Nazism/fascism
CD	striving for neo-Nazist policies
CDA	views on art
CU	views on Europe
D66	views on ethical issues
Groenlinks	views on ethical issues
LN	applying the Führerprinzip
LPF	views on constitution
PvdA	worshipping traditional Nazism
PvdD	views on Europe
PVV	use of Nazist /fascist discursive terms
RPF	views on homosexuality
SGP	use of Nazist /fascist discursive terms
SP	anti-Semitism
TON	nationalism
Unie55+	party structure
VVD	views on immigration

The demonization of the ecological (greens) *Groenlinks* and social-liberal party D66 was most argued for on the basis of their views on abortion and euthanasia. When demonized, their policy proposals were linked to the medical experiments executed by the Nazi physician Josef Mengele.

The argument made most for the demonization of the social-democratic PvdA was 'worshipping traditional Nazism/fascism'. This is remarkable because the PvdA has no explicit ties to Nazism or fascism. In general, neither its politicians nor its supporters are known for sympathizing with Nazi ideology. However, former PvdA Prime Minister Joop den Uyl (Cabinet Den Uyl 1973-1977) has been accused of flirting with fascism in the 1930s, a claim made official by the biography authored by journalist Anet Bleich which caused some controversy around the year 2008 (when the book was published).[26]

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26 See Bleich, A. (2008) *Joop den Uyl 1919-1987 Dromer en doordouwer*, Balans: Amsterdam.

The demonization of the liberal-conservative party VVD was mostly argued for by referring to 'views on immigration'. The party has a reputation for being very strict on immigration. Prominent party personality Frits Bolkestein called for limits on immigration from the 1990s onwards. In late 2000, the VVD Minister for Integration and Immigration Rita Verdonk caused controversy by implementing strict anti-immigration policy measures that earned her the nickname Iron Rita (*IJzeren Rita*). Due to internal struggles in the party Verdonk was expelled from the VVD in 2007, going on to found, in the same year, her own political movement, TON.

The demonization of the Christian-democratic party CDA was mostly based on the party's views on art, referring to their governmental consent (2011) to cut subsidies for cultural institutions while raising taxes. This policy measure was referred to as the social-cultural *Kristallnacht*. The demonization of the Christian-orthodox party SGP was mostly based in its assumed 'worshipping of traditional Nazism/fascism'. Although the SGP is best known for its orthodox Christian beliefs, the party's (co-)founder, Reverend Gerrit Kersten, has been linked to anti-Semitism and Nazism. Kersten is said to believe that God used Hitler as an instrument to punish sinners. He is also assumed to be guilty of collaborating with the Nazis and has been accused of publishing Nazi literature during the war. As a result, Kersten was expelled from parliament after 1945 (see Fieret, 1990). Up until 2012, the SGP never officially distanced itself from Kersten's behavior. The argument most made for the demonization of the Christian-democratic party RPF was the party's 'view on homosexuality'. In 1996, RPF party leader Leen van Dijke was quoted arguing that homosexuals and thieves are similar in their expression of deviant behavior.[27] This caused a public stir, and Van Dijke had to defend himself in court. The fact that Hitler also specifically targeted homosexuals, evoked associations with Nazism.

The demonization of the Christian-democratic CU was mostly based on its views on Europe. Since the economic crisis started around 2008, the European Union (EU) has been increasingly blamed for ills in (national) societies. Some parties argue for a legal drawback or want to leave the EU

all together, arguing that, instead of aiding other EU-countries, governments should take care of their own people first, and that the EU should not have the power to make decisions for the nation state. Many EU-opponents fear that members of poorer EU-countries will invade the richer countries and steal jobs meant for the nations' 'own people'. This nativist discourse (ingroup versus outgroup) arguably recalls the nativist discourse used by the Nazis. The demonization of the ecological party PvdD is also mostly based on the party's views on Europe. Although the PvdD and the CU were not explicitly anti-EU parties like the PVV or the SP, they did 'vote' against the proposed EU-constitution.

The argument made most for the demonization of the anti-immigration party CD is the party's alleged attempt to implement neo-Nazist/fascist policies. The CD was a nationalist party standing for policies that specifically benefited Dutch natives and disadvantaged 'foreigners'. The party strongly opposed the idea of a multicultural society. The demonization of the LPF was based mostly on the party's view of the constitution. In 2002 Fortuyn was quoted saying the first article in the Dutch constitution that forbids discrimination should be abandoned. He did this in the context of another controversial statement he made in the same interview; that the Islam is a retarded/backward culture.[28] Fortuyn felt that he should be allowed to make such a comment. His appeal to change Article 1 of the constitution that prohibits discrimination combined with his comments about Islam, was perceived as a prelude to a discriminatory regime similar to Nazism.

The demonization of the PVV was most argued for by its alleged use of Nazist/fascist discursive terms. Party leader Wilders often makes bold provocative political statements directed at Islam. He has proposed a 'headrag tax' (*kopvoddentaks,* a tax on wearing a head scarf), warned for a tsunami of Islam, and spoken of Moroccan street scum (*Marokkaans straattuig*). Wilders further opposes the option of dual nationality, and argues that, in order to show with which country their nationality lies, members of government must choose one nationality. The PVV is also a fierce opponent of the EU. Wilders' polarizing rhetoric can be considered highly nativist as well as discriminatory

27 See *Nieuwe Revu* (nr. 27), 24 juni - 3 juli 1996.

28 See 'Fortuyn: De grens dicht voor islamiet' *De Volkskrant*, 09-02-200

and it often appears to resemble the nativist and discriminative discourse used by the Nazis.

The demonization of TON was mostly based on its presumed nationalism. The nationalist character of TON can be seen in its full party name: *Proud of the Netherlands (Trots op Nederland).* The official campaign poster showed party leader Verdonk behind the steering wheel of a ship, surrounded by the Dutch national colors.

Remarkably, the demonization of both elderly welfare parties AOV and *Unie55+*, was most argued for by pointing out their organizational features such as party structure and the *Führerprinzip*. The same goes for LN. During their periods of existence all three parties were plagued by internal struggles over leadership, and it is alleged that their organizations resemble the organizational features of the Nazi party.

Again, despite the fact that some incidents and/or party features provide a context for understating the reasoning behind demonization, it should be noted that all Dutch parties have always officially distanced themselves from Nazi/fascist ideology.

Conclusion

The demonization of Dutch parties increased between 1995 and 2011. In the first two years of the analysis (1995 and 1996), Dutch political parties were demonized 52 times per year, the last two years (2010 and 2011) Dutch political parties were demonized 423 times per year. These results confirm the assumption that is the basis of this dissertation: demonization occurs quite frequently, and the concept entails more than a false cry for sympathy (while at the same time not ruling out that actors falsely claim to be demonized).

Despite the increase in actual demonization, results show that after 2002 the use of the term demonization gradually decreased. This is remarkable, in that demonization actually increased from 2002 onwards, leading to the conclusion that the political murder of Pim Fortuyn and his claim of demonization beforehand is responsible for the peak in the discussion of demonization in 2002. Clearly, the demonization of other parties sparked

much less discussion. Nevertheless, the results show that, although to a lesser degree, demonization is still a topic of discussion.

The party that was demonized most between 1995 and 2011 in Dutch written media was the anti-immigration party PVV, while the second most demonized party was anti-immigration party LPF. Still, when it taking into consideration how many times a party was mentioned in the Dutch written media in general (as well as the years of existence), the anti-immigration party CD was demonized most. This arguably reflects the strategy Dutch political parties and Dutch media pursued in order to destroy the CD (Fennema, 2003). The political establishment created an informal cordon sanitaire, and politicians ignored party leader Janmaat when he spoke in Dutch Parliament. The media also largely ignored the party, but when they did discuss it, they apparently did so most negatively. In line with these findings, results show that, of all party families the anti-immigration party family was demonized most (in absolute numbers, and in relation to the overall news coverage on this party family).

These results are, in some ways, unsurprising. In Chapter 1, I argued that anti-immigration parties are most prone to demonization, and also that these parties have often complained about being demonized. Fortuyn, for example, declared that he was demonized just like the CD before him.[29] However, it must be noted that two anti-immigration parties, TON and *EénNL,* were rarely demonized. Consequently, being an anti-immigrant party alone does not explain the degree to which a party is demonized. Still, an important and somewhat unexpected finding of these descriptive analyses is that a very substantial part of the demonization was directed against members of other party families (38.6 per cent).

Politicians and party affiliates demonized most, followed by public figures. The party that demonized most is the social-democratic PvdA (38 per cent). This outcome contrasts with the percentage the party was itself demonized (4.8 per cent, taken into account the years of existence). Other left wing parties like D66 and SP also score quite high compared to the degree they were themselves demonized. This confirms the proposition that

29 See 'Niet de beste spreker wint de verkiezingen, maar hij die goed zijn woorden kiest; Framing, een heel andere vorm van welsprekendheid' *NRC Handelsblad*, 15-05-2010.

left-wing parties are largely responsible for demonization. In this respect, the findings contrast with those of Van Praag and Walter (2013) who argue that after 1956 terms such as Goebbels and fascist have disappeared from the campaign vocabulary of the PvdA.

This chapter also shows that coverage of demonization was not evenly distributed over all media. Some anti-immigration parties expressed concern that most media were negatively biased towards them. In general, allegedly left-leaning media covered demonization of anti-immigration parties indeed more than allegedly right-leaning media. At the same time, allegedly right-leaning media covered demonization of other parties more than demonization of anti-immigration parties. However, the differences are limited and do not suggest severe bias. Furthermore, the distribution of demonization of anti-immigration parties and/or other parties between different media sources is largely similar to the distribution of all demonization.

When we look at the arguments given for demonization, Dutch political parties appear to have been often demonized without the inclusion of an argument. Clearly, how demonization is covered by the media may play a role in this. The lack of argumentation might also indicate that demonization is used as a political strategy to smear the reputation of the opponent. In that case, getting the statement heard is more important than explaining the reasoning behind it. This raises the question of whether demonization occurs according to the 'rules' of negative campaigning in general. This issue will be addressed in the following chapter.