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### 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 3

### Which Kind of Parties Demonize, and When?

## Introduction

Chapter 2 shows that between 1995 and 2011 anti-immigration parties were demonized most. Anti-immigration party politician Wilders (PVV) maintains that it is the political establishment that repeatedly demonizes his party. The political establishment has also been accused of demonizing the CD in the early eighties/nineties (Fennema, 2003). The late anti-immigration party politician Fortuyn claimed that the political establishment feared the loss of its authority and therefore tried to eliminate him from the political scene. Dutch anti-immigration parties are not the only ones to blame the political establishment, Austrian, Belgian, French and Danish anti-immigration parties also complain about how they have been treated (Golsan, 2003; Happold, 2000; Tributsch, 1994; Verbeeck, 2003). In defense, the political establishment argues that they do not abuse demonization to consolidate their power, but that they merely try to warn the public (Riemen, 2010; also see Zwagerman, 2009).

Chapter 1 makes a distinction between ‘demonization as a warning’ and ‘demonization as a strategy’. Demonization as a warning entails that demonization is motivated by a concern for certain political intentions. In the context of this study, it implies that the demonizer believes that a politician or party poses a political threat that is equal to the Nazi-regime. Demonization as a warning is meant to point to this imminent danger. One can, however, also consider demonization as another form of negative campaigning: a strategy parties employ to become or remain the voter’s preferred party. Jamieson (1992) and Mayer (1996) define negative campaigning as lying about undesirable characteristics of your political opponent. Walter (2012: 23) defines negative campaigning as “a strategy by which political parties distinguish themselves from other political parties, by attacking or criticizing their opponents”. Demonization is then used as a political tool to harm the electoral opponent, employed only at strategic points in time, for instance when a competing party starts posing a threat. In contrast to demonization as a warning, the demonized party is considered a ‘normal’ political competitor, e.g. democratic and nonviolent (see Van der Brug et al., 2000).

The distinction between the two types of demonization is more blurred in practice than in theory, because reasons for demonization can be mixed since warnings can also be voiced strategically. However, when political actors predominantly use demonization strategically, different patterns in the circumstances under which parties resort to demonization are expected than when the sole intention is to warn the public. Studying negative campaigning in the Netherlands between 1981 and 2006, Walter (2012) shows that factors, such as government status and electoral standing, influence strategic attack behavior. Thus, when demonization is seen as another form of negative campaigning, similar factors are expected to explain why some parties are more likely to demonize than others.

Anti-immigration parties were demonized most, and their demonization has sparked a public debate in the Netherlands. Although anti-immigration parties were demonized most, Chapter 2 showed that, between 1995 and 2010, 38.6 per cent of all demonization was directed against members of other party families. When only demonization voiced by political actors is taken into account, 49 per cent was directed against members of other party families. Thus, a better understanding of the use of demonization in the political debate can only be reached by explaining which kinds of parties demonize anti-immigration parties, and also which kinds of parties demonize members of other party families.

Theories explaining the circumstances under which demonization of anti-immigration parties takes place have never been empirically tested, nor has the extent to which demonization of anti-immigration parties can be explained by factors other than demonization of other parties. This chapter seeks to increase academic knowledge about which kind of parties demonize, and when.

## Theory

This section is divided in three parts. First relevant theories about negative campaigning are discussed, and, based on this, hypotheses are developed about ‘demonization as a strategy’. In this section, demonization is considered

a specific form of negative campaigning whereby parties employ strategies to become or remain the voters preferred party. The second section develops a theory about ‘demonization as a warning’. At this point, all formulated hypotheses explain both the demonization of anti-immigration parties *and* other parties. The third theoretical section discusses the relationship between the political establishment and anti-immigration parties, introduces the idea of ‘demonization as a reaction’, and formulates a hypothesis specifically about the demonization of anti-immigration parties.

#### *Demonization as a strategy*

Müller and Strøm (1999) argue that parties are rational actors who seek three political objectives: votes, governmental status, and policy influence. One possible way of achieving these goals is engaging in negative campaigning. The art of negative campaigning, however, needs a thorough cost benefit analysis. Although negative campaigning appears effective (see Lau and Pomper, 2004; Swint, 1998), parties must take into account the possibility of a backlash or boomerang effect, in which an attack proves counterproductive (Johnson-Cartee et al., 1991; Walter, 2012) so rational actors are expected to carefully evaluate the risks before they attack (Walter, 2012).

Haynes and Rhine (1998) maintain that when parties decide to engage in negative campaigning, ideological proximity influences party competition. The authors build on Downs’ (1957) spatial theory: parties ideologically close are each other’s main competitors because they compete for the same group of voters. Walter (2012; also see Walter et al., 2014) confirms that ideological proximity explains the most likely targets of negative campaigning in Dutch parliamentary elections. Being rational actors parties attack ideologically close opponents, because that provides the best chance of winning votes. On the basis that ideological proximity provides a tactical advantage, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: Parties are more likely to demonize each other when they are ideologically close.

However, for tactical reasons, parties may attack competitors that are ideologically distant. For instance, anti-immigration party PVV has considerable electoral support, but at the same time the party faces a great deal of public animus. Many ideologically distant parties (strongly) oppose the policy views of the PVV, and we can assume that many voters feel the same. In this context, demonization is used as a strategy to stand out among all parties that abhor the PVV. Or, similarly, the right-wing party VVD may attack the left-wing SP to show right-wing voters that, of all right-wing parties, they are the best antidote to socialism. Thus, in order to attract voters from parties that are ideologically close, parties attack a party that is ideologically distant. The logic is as follows: a vote for party X is the best vote against party Y (also see Kleinnijenhuis, 1998; Meguid, 2005; Walter, 2012). The following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Parties are more likely to demonize each other when they are ideologically distant.

Irrespective of their ideological positioning, research shows that opposition parties are more likely to ‘be negative’ than government parties (Hansen and Pedersen, 2008; Lau and Pomper, 2004; Swint, 1998). Three reasons are proposed. First, opposition parties have to make clear why they should replace the parties in government. Second, opposition parties need to overcome the natural advantage that government parties have. Their status allows government parties to more easily promote themselves and receive more media coverage. Third, opposition parties worry less about a possible backlash or boomerang effect because they have less to lose than government parties and more to gain from being negative (Walter, 2012; Walter et al., 2014). Government parties are expected to be most afraid of a possible backlash effect and thus more prudent, while opposition parties are willing to take more risk. In addition, government parties are expected to be less eager in their search for media attention because their position already puts them in the spotlight. On the assumption that parties make a thorough cost benefit analysis before they demonize, the following hypothesis is derived:

H3: Parties in opposition are more likely to demonize than parties in government.

Damore (2002) maintains that parties employ negative campaign tactics as a function of their poll standing (also see Skaperdas and Grofman, 1995; Walter, 2012; Walter et al., 2014). The author argues that parties that are trailing in the polls are more likely to attack. By going negative, these parties attempt to change how the electorate sees them. Parties that are behind in the polls have to provide voters with reasons to withdraw their support from their competitors. Parties that are winning in the polls, on the other hand, have less of an incentive to go negative, because voters already accept their message. Furthermore, parties that are behind in the polls are more willing to accept the risk of a backlash effect because they are losing anyway (Damore, 2002; Walter, 2012; Walter et al., 2014). The following hypothesis is formulated:

H4: Parties that are losing in the polls are more likely to demonize than parties that are gaining in the polls.

#### *Demonization as a warning*

Dominant social and political mores and values in the Netherlands are largely established by post-war generation intellectuals, who were all brought up with the notion that Nazism is the purest form of evil. Guided by the slogan ‘never again’ non-repetition of this absolute evil became the societal norm. After the Second World War it became an intellectual task, or to put it better, a civil task, to spot this evil when it is still in its infancy, in order to eliminate it (see Zwagerman, 2009; Vuijsje, 2008). Art (2006) concludes that many German politicians also feel compelled to “react to the slightest sign of right-wing resurgence” (p, 161). Art calls this a culture of contrition. The fact that the anti-immigration parties received more attention in scientific work suggests that academics feel a similar duty (Art, 2006).

When politicians demonize with the intention of warning the public, policy proposals or public statements of the demonized party are arguably the main reason for demonization and other party features (status, ideological

positioning) are of secondary importance. In other words, when a political party appears as threatening as Nazism, the rules of party competition are expected to be subordinate. In principle, the chance that parties/politicians react to this threat is equal for all parties. If the threat is perceived as monstrous as demonization theoretically implies, most, if not all, parties recognize this, and take measures accordingly. Arguably however, the degree to which vigilance is present not only differs between countries, but also within countries. Art (2006) specifically speaks of elite norms against right-wing resurgence. Zwagerman (2009) and Vuijsje (2008) also emphasize that it is the intellectual elite that sets the dominant mores and values. The term establishment refers to the dominant group or elite that holds the power or authority in a nation. Thus, the political establishment is considered part of the elite. As a result, the political establishment is most inclined to respond to any potential revival of Nazism, either detected within anti-immigration parties, or other parties. This leads to the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H5: Established parties are more likely to demonize than other parties

All hypotheses formulated at this point (H1-5) explain which kinds of parties are most likely to demonize anti-immigration parties *and* other parties. However, when it comes to the demonization of the anti-immigration party family, the relationship between anti-immigration parties and the political establishment deserves particular attention. The following section hypothesizes that established parties are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties in response to how anti-immigration parties treat them. Based on this theory, ‘demonization as a reaction’ is introduced. Although H6 predicts similar empirical results as H5, ‘demonization as a reaction’ does not follow from the idea of a moral obligation to warn the public.

#### *Demonization as a reaction*

Several academics argue that anti-immigration parties are characterized by an explicit populist rhetoric or anti-political-establishment attitude (see

Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2007; Mudde, 2007; Taggart, 1996).<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, Schedler (1996) states that examples of anti-political-establishment parties exist in abundance in Western Europe because the whole family of contemporary anti-immigration parties thrives on attacks against the political establishment. Not all anti-immigration parties are, however, by definition anti-political-establishment parties. Golder (2003) makes a distinction between older neo-fascist parties, and more recent populist parties on the far right. The author concludes that electoral support for the older neo-fascist parties has remained stable or declined over the decades, while electoral support for contemporary populist anti-immigration parties has increased. Thus, although most current anti-immigration parties subscribe to an anti-political-establishment attitude, some exceptions exist. In addition, the degree to which an anti-political-establishment attitude is present also differs between parties. For example, Rooduijn et al. (*forthcoming*) argue that the Dutch PVV is more populist than the anti-immigration parties CD, and LPF. Even so, in general, contemporary anti-immigration parties in Western Europe are considered anti-political-establishment parties.

Anti-political-establishment parties perceive one specific conflict as society's fundamental cleavage: they make a firm distinction between the 'ruler(s)' and the 'ruled'. The ruler is the political establishment, and the people are the ruled. Anti-political-establishment parties have no regard for any inter- or intraparty differences; the entire political establishment is seen as a homogeneous class of corrupt or incompetent people. They believe that the political establishment forms an exclusionary cartel composed of self-enriching and power-driven villains. Anti-political-establishment parties consider it their task to liberate both themselves and the people from the elite (Schedler, 1996).

Anti-political establishment parties further argue that the political establishment conspires to destroy them. For example, Jörg Haider, late party leader of the Austrian anti-immigration party *Freiheitliche Partei Österreich* (FPÖ) announced that the political establishment had declared political war on him (Tributsch, 1994). Schedler (1996) points out that these feelings may

<sup>30</sup> An anti-political-establishment or anti-elitist attitude is considered a core component of populism (Rooduijn, 2013).

reflect real situations since the political elite often responds to anti-political-establishment attacks with hostility. However, by choosing the role of the victim anti-immigration parties conceal the "self-chosen nature of their political isolation" (Schedler, 1996: 300). That is, to incriminate the political establishment is part of their repertoire.

The political establishment is thus a primary target for anti-immigration parties.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, members of the political establishment regard anti-immigration parties as dangerous political competitors that need to be contained. The established parties, the argument goes, have shared political power that they do not want to lose. Accordingly, demonization is an effort by established parties to protect and defend themselves against attacks made by anti-immigration parties. The political establishment uses demonization to delegitimize anti-immigration parties, while anti-immigration parties embrace and exploit the role of political underdog. In short, in response to the particular attack behavior of anti-immigration parties, the political establishment is more likely to demonize these parties. This generates the following hypothesis:

H6: Established parties are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties than other parties.

## Method and data

Five Dutch national newspapers and three national opinion weeklies, published between 1995 and 2011, were searched for articles on demonization of political parties by political parties (see Chapter 2 for a detailed description of the data collection). Since the aim of this chapter is to analyze the attack behavior of political actors, and not the degree to which the media report this, repeated coverage of the same instance of demonization is, to the extent

<sup>31</sup> The data show that anti-immigration parties seldom demonize political parties (and never a member of their own party family). Instead, when anti-immigration parties in The Netherlands make use of a reference to Nazism, they often attack the Islam. This is especially true for the most successful and most recent Dutch anti-immigration party, the PVV. Its party leader, Wilders, repeatedly stated that the Koran was comparable to *Mein Kampf*, and that Islam is a fascist ideology. According to most anti-immigration parties, the political establishment fails to defend the rights of the national in-group. This, arguably, makes the political establishment, the largest intra-parliament enemy of anti-immigration parties, while foreign culture/religion is their largest enemy outside parliament.

possible, excluded from the analysis.<sup>32</sup> In total 421 instances of demonization were selected.

In order to test the hypotheses, a dataset was constructed in which each instance of demonization was complemented by a number of observations of non-demonization. These grouped observations result in 421 clusters that each contain one observation of demonization, and a varying number of observations of non-demonization. For instance, when the VVD demonized the PVV in April 2010, 10 non-demonizations were inserted as a score for the remaining parliamentary parties, because, at that point in time, these 10 parties did *not* demonize the PVV (while the VVD did). Thus, the number of potential political opponents a demonized party had, determined the number of observations of non-demonization. Between 1995 and 2011 several parties disappeared, and others emerged, so the number of potential demonizers changed over time. For instance, when the PvdA demonized the LPF in February 2002, 11 non-demonizations were inserted, because in February 2002 12 parties were seated in Dutch Parliament (for similar data analysis see Ridout and Holland, 2010; Walter, 2012; Walter et al., 2014).

Since by definition each cluster contains a single 1 (for the party that demonizes), and several other values that are 0 (for the parties that do *not* demonize), a conditional logistic regression model was estimated with the dichotomous variable '*party demonized other party yes/no*' as the dependent variable.

A conditional logistic regression, however, requires in-group variation for each variable, making it impossible to include a dummy variable '*demonized party is anti-immigration party yes/no*'. Consequently, in order to still be able to analyze which kinds of parties are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties, the dataset was split into two. The first dataset consists of 216 clusters of demonization of anti-immigration parties and the second dataset consists of 205 clusters of demonization of other parties. This latter group includes the members of all party families, except members of the anti-immigration party family.

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<sup>32</sup> When a single instance of demonization was covered by several media outlets on the same day, or in the following days, this instance of demonization has been excluded.

### *Independent variables*

The variable *distance on the left-right dimension* indicates, for each party, the distance on the left/right dimension between the party itself and the demonized party at the time of demonization. At this point it should be noted that H1 is tested with the help of two ideological dimensions: the left-right dimension and the authoritarian-libertarian dimension.<sup>33</sup> In order to determine parties' positions on the left-right dimension, data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) were used. This survey estimates party positioning on several topics in a variety of countries, including the Netherlands. The survey was first conducted in 1999, and again in 2002, 2006 and 2010. To estimate a party's general left-right position, experts were asked to rank each party's overall ideology on a scale ranging from 0 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right). The party's final score is the average of these scores (Bakker et al., *forthcoming*; Hooghe et al., 2010; Steenbergen and Marks, 2007). All parties in this study were assigned a left-right score that varied over time, based on the scores given to them in the 1999, 2002, 2006 and 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (see Appendix II).

CHES data were also used to operationalize the variable *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension*. In the CHES dataset this dimension is labeled GAL-TAN (Green, Alternative, Libertarian – Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist). Hooghe et al. (2010) argue that parties' positioning on the GAL-TAN dimension also provides a valid measurement of the positioning on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension. The positions are estimated in the same way as the left-right dimension (see Bakker et al., *forthcoming*; Hooghe et al., 2010; Steenbergen and Marks, 2007), (see

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<sup>33</sup> Kriesi et al. (2008) dismiss the notion of a single dimension that structures the party system. Instead, they argue that two important dimensions can be distinguished: a socio-economic and a socio-cultural one, also referred to as the left-right dimension and the authoritarian-libertarian dimension (Kitschelt and McGann, 1995). The authoritarian-libertarian dimension largely classifies parties based on their views on democratic freedom and rights. Authoritarian parties advocate order, tradition and stability and are cautious about change. They prefer a society that puts emphasis on respect for authority, hierarchical arrangements, collective norm compliance, and fighting crime. Libertarian parties value freedom of speech highly, as well as individual freedom in politics and the cultural sphere (Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995). According to Kriesi et al. (2008) what they call the libertarian-authoritarian or the socio-cultural dimension absorbs the issues of immigration and integration. Despite the fact that a growing number of scholars believe that the relevance of the left-right dimension has declined, it is still prevalent (see Cochrane, 2010). Van Spanje and Van der Brug (2007) indicate that party positions on immigration and integration issues are still structured by the left-right dimension (also see Van der Brug et al., 2009; Van Heerden et al., 2014).

Appendix II). The CHES data were cross validated with data from the Comparative Manifesto project, the 2003 Benoit-Laver expert survey and the 2002 Rohrschneider-Whitefield survey. Based on this analysis, Hooghe et al. (2010) conclude that the CHES data are reasonable valid and a reliable source of information on ideological positioning (Hooghe et al., 2007).

The variable *opposition party* is a dichotomous variable, indicating whether a party is in government or opposition at time of the demonization (1=opposition, 0= government).

The variable *relative size in polls* indicates for each party the difference (loss/gain) between electoral seats obtained in the most recent election and the predicted electoral seats estimated in the last polls before an instance of demonization took place. Subsequently, the variable is made positive by adding the maximum seats lost to all values. To control for losses or gains being different in magnitude for large and small parties, the changes are divided by the number of electoral seats obtained in the most recent election. Since some new parties won seats in the polls, without winning any seats in the previous election, they were attributed a one percent vote share. This results in the variable being positively skewed. To adjust for that, the log was taken (also see Walter, 2012).

The variable *established* is a continuous variable, indicating how many (rounded off) years a party was in government between 1945 and the year in which a particular instance of demonization took place. For instance, if an instance of demonization was coded in 2008, the PvdA scores 41, since it was in government for 41 years between 1945 and 2008. At the same time, the LPF scores 1, since it was in government for one year between 1945 and 2008.

Some parties have more access to the media than others, which is expected to influence the opportunity to publicly demonize other parties. Therefore a control variable is added. This control variable *media coverage* indicates, for each year between 1995 and 2011, how many articles mention the name of the party or party leader. The same newspapers and opinion weeklies searched for instances of demonization, were used to obtain these data.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> The variable *media coverage* highly correlates (0.8) with party size, measured as seats obtained in Parliament. However, it is most accurate to control for the actual exposure each party had between 1995 and 2011.

## Results

Table 3.1 presents the results of four conditional logit models. To facilitate interpretation, models were estimated separately for the variables *distance left-right dimension* and *distance authoritarian-libertarian dimension*. In addition, models were estimated based on the two different datasets, one containing the demonization of anti-immigration parties, the other containing the demonization of other parties.

Table 3.1 Clogit predictors of parties demonizing 'anti-immigration parties' and 'other parties.'

	Model 1:		Model 2:		Model 3:		Model 4:	
	AIP	SE	OP	SE	AIP	SE	OP	SE
Media	8.50	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***	0.00
Distance l/r (H1/H2)	0.50***	0.06	0.25***	0.06	-	-	-	-
Distance a/l (H1/H2)	-	-	-	-	0.41***	0.06	0.42***	0.07
Opposition (H3)	-0.12	-0.12	1.55***	0.26	-1.08***	0.22	1.71***	0.25
Relative size (H4)	-1.03***	0.23	0.14	-0.16	-1.26***	0.23	0.30	0.21
Established (H5/H6)	0.05***	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.03***	0.01	-0.01	0.01
LR X <sup>2</sup> (df=5)	214.8***		117.8***		179.0***		144.5***	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.25		0.18		0.22		0.22	
N	216		205		216		205	

Note: AIP = Anti-Immigration Parties, OP = Other Parties, SE = Standard Error. \* p ≤ 0.05 \*\* p ≤ 0.005 \*\*\* p ≤ 0.001 (two-tailed); - variable is not included in the model.

Model 1 is set up to explain the demonization of anti-immigration parties, including the predictor *distance left-right dimension*, and model 3 explains the demonization of anti-immigration parties, including the predictor *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension*. Likewise, model 2 is set up to explain the demonization of other parties, including the predictor *distance on the left-right dimension*, and model 4 explains the demonization of other parties, including the predictor *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension*. All models explain a statistically significant part of the variance (see the Likelihood Ratio (LR) X<sup>2</sup> statistics at the bottom of table 3.1). There are no multicollinearity problems in the data.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Multicollinearity between all predictors in each model is tested with the help of multiple linear regression

The control variable *media coverage* has a positive (yet not always significant) effect on demonization in all models. Overall, parties that appear more in the media, have more chances to demonize, making it important to control for.

Model 1 shows that the effect of the predictor *distance on the left-right dimension* is significant and positive (0.50 significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). This indicates that the greater the ideological distance between a potential attacker and the anti-immigration party, the higher the chance a party is demonized. Thus, H1 is rejected, while H2 is supported. The effect of *opposition* is not significant, so H3 is rejected. *Relative size in polls* has a significant and negative effect (-1.03, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ) indicating that the more a party gains in the polls (in comparison to its actual parliamentary size), the less likely it is to demonize anti-immigration parties. In other words, parties trailing in the polls are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties than parties that are gaining in the polls. This result supports H4. Finally, the variable *established* has a significant positive effect (0.05, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). The more established a party, the more likely it is to demonize an anti-immigration party. These findings provide support for H6.

Model 2 explains the demonization of other parties (i.e. all parties except anti-immigration parties). The effect of *distance on the left-right dimension* is significant and positive (0.25, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). As in model 1, parties are more likely to demonize parties that are further away on the ideological dimension than parties that are ideologically close. Thus, again H1 is rejected and H2 is supported. The effect of *opposition* is significant and positive (1.55, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). Parties in opposition are more likely to demonize than parties in government. In contrast to model 1, H3 is supported. The effect of *relative size in polls* is no longer significant. Poll standing does not have a significant effect on attack behavior. The effect of predictor *established* is also no longer significant in model 2. The degree to which a party is established has no significant effect on the degree to which it demonizes other parties. Thus, model 2 provides no support for H5.

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models, using a random continuous dependent variable. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores lie between 1.1 and 3.4 with a tolerance between 0.9 and 0.3. (VIF scores higher than 5 or 10 and/or tolerance scores less than 0.2 or 0.1 indicate a problem with multicollinearity)

Model 3 explains the demonization of anti-immigration parties with inclusion of the predictor *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension*. The effect of ideological distance is again significant and positive (0.41, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). The greater the ideological *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension*, the more likely a party is to demonize an anti-immigration party. As in model 1 and 2, H1 is rejected and H2 is supported. The predictor *opposition* has a significant and negative effect (-1.08, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). Parties in government are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties, than parties in opposition. The effect is in opposite direction to what was expected. As in model 1, H3 is rejected. Also in line with model 1, *relative size in polls* has a significant negative effect (-1.26, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). Parties that are trailing in the polls are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties than parties that are winning in the polls. This result supports H4, (as in model 1). The effect of the variable *established* is significant and positive (0.03, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). The more established parties are, the more likely they are to demonize anti-immigration parties. This result is similar to the result in model 1. In both models, H6 is supported.

In model 4, the effect of *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension* is also positive and significant (0.42, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ). The greater the ideological distance between the potential attacker and the target, the more likely parties were to demonize other parties. The effect of the predictor *opposition* is significant and positive (1.71, significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ ) indicating that parties in opposition are more likely to demonize non-anti-immigration parties than parties in government. Thus, H3 is supported. The effects of *relative size in the polls* and *establishment* are not significant and do not explain why parties demonize other parties, so H4 and H5 are rejected.

Since the interpretation of (conditional) logistic regression coefficients may not appear very intuitive table 3.2 shows the odds ratios of all independent variables.<sup>36</sup> These odds ratios are the probability of an event happening, divided by the probability of an event not happening. Odds ratios equal to 1 indicate that there is a 50/50 chance an event will occur. When the

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<sup>36</sup> Unlike OLS regression the slope coefficients in logistic regression are not the rate of change in Y, as X changes, but they should be interpreted as the rate of change in odds as X changes.

odds ratios of predictor A equal 3, then one unit change in  $X_a$  makes the event three times as likely to occur. Odds ratios smaller than 1 indicate that events are less likely to occur. Table 3.2 thus shows that ideological distance has a significant positive effect in all models. It has the smallest effect in model 2, where, per point greater in distance, the odds of parties demonizing other parties increase by 39 per cent. The largest effect is seen in model 1, where, per point greater in distance, the odds of parties demonizing anti-immigration parties increase by 64 per cent.

Table 3.2 Odds ratios of the independent variables.

	Model 1: AIP	Model 2: OP	Model 3: AIP	Model 4: OP
Media	1.000001	1.000288***	1.000191***	1.000422***
Distance l/r (H1/H2)	1.641754***	1.287873***	-	-
Distance a/l (H1/H2)	-	-	1.50856***	1.51973***
Opposition (H3)	0.8890619	4.713335***	0.3383292***	5.543313***
Relative size (H4)	0.3573067***	1.15501	0.283985***	1.35302
Established (H5/H6)	1.049727***	1.004231	1.026025***	0.9899073

Note: AIP = Anti-Immigration Parties, OP = Other Parties, SE = Standard Error. \*  $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$  (two-tailed); - variable is not included in the model.

The kind of effect that *opposition* has differs between the demonization of anti-immigration parties and the demonization of other parties. In both models that explain the demonization of other parties (model 2 and 4), the effect is significant and positive. Opposition parties are more than 4 and more than 5 times more likely to demonize other parties than parties in government. However, in model 3 the effect is also significant, but negative. For opposition parties the odds of demonizing anti-immigration parties are about 34 per cent as from parties that are in government. Put differently, the odds for opposition parties to demonize anti-immigration parties are about 56 per cent less as from parties that are in government.

In models 1 and 3, the effect of *relative size in the polls* is negative and significant. For every point gained in relative size, the odds of demonizing anti-immigration parties are 36 per cent (model 1) and 28 per cent (model 3) compared to parties that lose a point. The effect of this predictor is insignificant for the demonization of other parties.

Finally, established parties are more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties. When the predictor *distance on the left-right dimension* is included in the model, per year more established, the odds of established parties demonizing anti-immigration parties increase by 5 per cent. When the predictor *distance on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension* is included, the odds of established parties demonizing anti-immigration parties increase by 3 per cent per year the party is more established.

## Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to determine which kind of parties demonize, and when. Two questions are of particular interest. First, are the circumstances under which demonization takes place similar to the circumstances that explain why political actors resort to other forms of negative campaigning? Second, is the pattern behind the demonization of anti-immigration parties similar to the pattern behind the demonization of other parties?

Anti-immigration parties are most likely to be demonized by parties that are ideologically distant, by parties that are losing in the polls, by established parties, and to some extent by parties in government. Other parties are most likely to be demonized by parties that are ideologically distant, and by parties in opposition. Walter (2012; also see Walter et al., 2014) studied negative campaigning in the Netherlands, Germany and Britain over the past decades and found that opposition parties, and parties that are trailing in the polls, are more likely to go negative. She also found that parties are most likely targeted by parties that are ideologically close. Thus, although similarities are found, demonization considerably differs from the circumstances under which parties resort to other forms of negative campaigning. Furthermore, the results indicate that the pattern behind the demonization of anti-immigration parties is distinct from the pattern behind the demonization of other parties.

All four models show that parties are more likely to demonize competitors that are ideologically distant than competitors that are ideologically close. These findings contrast with the classic Downsian (1957)

notion that parties most likely attack competitors that are ideologically close. In fact, these findings support the less-straightforward hypothesis that parties demonize parties that are ideologically distant to distinguish themselves from their ideologically close competitors. However, setting strategy aside, it is possible that parties are more likely to perceive ideologically distant competitors as dangerous. Often, the greater the ideological distance between parties, the more they differ on political issues. Parties that are pitted against each other on most (or even all) political issues are likely to consider each other unqualified parties on the whole. When another party is already regarded as unqualified, it is easier to consider policy positions of such a party as alarmingly dangerous. In that respect, these findings also support the idea of 'demonization as a warning.'

The outcome that opposition parties are more likely to demonize other parties than government parties, agrees with literature about party competition and attack behavior (Hansen and Pedersen, 2008; Lau and Pomper, 2004; Swint, 1998). However, anti-immigration parties are more likely to be demonized by parties in government, than by parties in opposition. Although the effect is significant in only one of the two relevant models (1, 3), in both models it has a negative direction. Assuming that government parties are less likely to go negative out of strategic considerations, this suggests that they use demonization as a warning. As rulers, government parties may feel more responsible for pointing out dangers to society. Another explanation is that government parties, like established parties, have a tense relationship with anti-immigration parties. As stated earlier, anti-immigration parties are considered anti-political-establishment parties. According to Schedler (1996), anti-political-establishment parties neglect the basic modern democratic 'binary code' of government and opposition. This makes all governing parties a primary target for anti-immigration parties. Consequently, government parties strike back to defend their position and keep the anti-immigration parties at bay. In this case, as with established parties, demonization reflects the strained relationship between government parties and anti-immigration parties.

The effect of doing badly in the polls is significant for demonizing

anti-immigration parties, but not for other parties. The assumption that parties that are trailing in the polls are more likely to go negative, agrees with the literature on negative campaigning (Damore, 2002; Skaperdas and Grofman, 1995; Walter, 2012; Walter et al., 2014). But why are parties that are trailing in the polls only more likely to demonize anti-immigration parties, and not other parties? Chapter 1 points out that the conceptualization of demonization introduces a bias towards the political right, because far right parties are ideologically closer to the ideology/regime that represents absolute evil. Conceivably, this makes them an easy target, and thus, it is most credible and effective to demonize anti-immigration parties. In addition, the anti-immigration parties under analysis are generally successful in the polls, so there are many votes to reap, or to steal back, from these parties.

The more established a party, the greater the chance of it demonizing anti-immigration parties. This result supports the idea that a culture of vigilance is most deeply entrenched in established parties. This does not mean that other parties do not demonize as a warning, but suggests that the apostles of a culture of vigilance are most likely to alarm the public. However, the fact that other parties are not more likely to be demonized by established parties suggests that demonizing anti-immigration parties is a collective effort by established parties to delegitimize those parties that hold them responsible for all ills in society. This is because if established parties are more likely to react to the slightest revival of Nazi/fascist-ideology, a significant effect in all four models might be expected. Yet, it can also be argued that other parties never really pose a credible threat because they are so distant from Nazi/fascist ideology.

While the results presented in this chapter provide important insights in the processes leading parties to demonize, this study has some limitations. As noted earlier, the theoretical distinction between 'demonization as a warning' and 'demonization as a strategy' is most tenable in theory. Warnings can be voiced strategically, and reasons for demonization can be mixed. In-depth interviews with demonizers in order to examine their reasons in more detail will help clarify this issue. In addition, the data used for these analyses were collected from written media, and although attempts

were made to minimize any distortion caused by the media, add or using data that are directly obtained from parliamentary debates is desirable. Furthermore, this study analyzes data from a split sample (the demonization of anti-immigration parties/ the demonization of other parties) against the background of general attack behavior. However, it would be most desirable to compare demonization of anti-immigration parties with general attack behavior that is also specifically directed against anti-immigration parties. The same is true for the demonization of other parties. Finally, to explore the extent to which the findings from this study are validated in other contexts, it would be desirable to obtain comparative data.

Despite several shortcomings, this study provides a better understanding of the circumstances in which parties are most likely to demonize. Based on these results, for both groups, support for ‘demonization as a strategy’ is moderate. Parties that demonize, sometimes ignore the basic rules of negative campaigning, showing that demonization has its own unique dynamics. Nonetheless, the fact that some predictors related to ‘demonization as a strategy’ have significant effects, implies that demonization is also not always used as a warning, but at times as a political tool to slander the opponent. The differences between the circumstances under which political actors resort to demonization of anti-immigration parties and other parties indicate that attack behavior differs depending on who the target is. In that respect, results in this chapter provide support for ‘demonization as a reaction’ and reflect the strained relationship between the political establishment and anti-immigration parties.