

Populism in the Netherlands: Framing a Crisis

Why people support right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands

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Abstract

In this thesis, a bottom-up approach is taken to investigate why and how people support right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands. Qualitative research methods are used to research the frames used by PVV-supporters. This is in contrast to the main debates in the scientific literature on populism, which is mainly based on a top-down, macro-level approach. The overview of framing processes by Benford and Snow (2002) is used to bring the literature on populism and ethnicity into one cohesive analytical tool. Furthermore, the notion of the crisis frame by Oberschall (2000) shows how the different frames of PVV-supporters constitute to a meaningful narrative that makes sense of the world by using the emotion of fear. PVV-supporters use 5 frames and multiple subframes within the crisis frame to identify societal and personal problems. These bring about feelings of distrust towards politicians and ascribe negative characteristics to foreign migrants, seeing them as dangerous, rude and a strain on welfare. The Dutch culture is seen as in danger and socio-economic change in the last decades has caused these frames to flourish. These people turn to the PVV because they offer the only solutions to these problems.

Key words: right-wing populism, ethnicity, crisis frame, framing processes, instrumentalism, constructivism, ethnic boundary making, collective action frames, the Netherlands, PVV

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1. Introduction

The economic and financial crisis, the refugee crisis, an increase in racist political rhetoric, Brexit, and the election of Donald Trump have caused anxieties among the political elite, stunned the European Union's initial response to refugees, and gave rise to a crisis frame in which right-wing populist parties gain a lot of support in the West. This also led to a surge of research done on populism leading to dramatic headlines such as: "Europe on the Precipice: The Crisis of the Neoliberal Order" (Baier 2016), and "Populism on the March: Why the West is in Trouble" (Zakaraia 2016). The so-called 'angry white man' is in the spotlight, changing the political landscape in Europe. In 2015, 11 percent of the votes in elections in the EU and Switzerland went to the left-wing social democrats and greens, whereas the share of votes that went to radical right parties reached 22 percent (Baier 2016, 49). As far-right rhetoric is becoming more mainstream, right-wing extremist groups such as PEGIDA and the English Defence League are also using the same arguments to attract more people. At the same time, there are also progressive, anti-racist countermovements that have gained electoral victory, but these movements also show the growing polarisation in Western societies.

In the Netherlands, the right-wing populist party PVV became the second biggest party in parliament after the elections in March 2017. What makes people vote for these right-wing populist parties? How are feelings of fear and distrust framed? What personal experiences do these people have? For this master thesis I have used a bottom-up approach to study what makes people turn to right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands. Unlike many researchers who study populism with a top-down approach, I interviewed the people who support PVV themselves, which brought several frames to light which drives people to turn to right-wing populist parties. These frames are analysed with help of the literature on populism, ethnicity and framing processes. This introduction consists of several sections. Firstly, the scientific and societal relevance of this research is explained, which includes the gaps in the literature and the societal problems that this research addresses. Secondly, the research objective that follows out of these gaps and problems is portrayed which results in the main research questions. The main research question is: Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands?

1.1. Scientific & Societal relevance

1.1.1. Scientific Relevance

Although populism as a research topic has been well established, and even popularised with the recent rise of populist support in the West, many authors focus solely on the macro level causes of populism such as an economic crisis, or take a political scientific approach by looking at voting behaviour in parliament or electoral plans (Baier 2016; De Lange & Mügge 2015; Otjes & Louwerse 2015; Zakaria 2016; Voerman & Lucardie 1992). To add to these debates and help understand how and why populism has become a mainstream political ideology, a bottom-up approach is taken by using ethnographic methodology and qualitative research methods.

The use of ethnographic methods shifts the analytical focus from populism as a political discourse to debates on agency, conviction and how populist constructs are infused with meaning as ways of seeing the world (Mepschen 2012, 66-67). This is relevant because it shows how populism changes the daily lives of people and how they perceive the world around them. They have the agency to decide which political ideology to support and are not mere puppets of political rhetoric. This thesis adds to the debates on the motivations, manifestations and individual consequences of right-wing populism by taking a bottom-up approach. This is relevant because it gives a voice to marginalised people themselves and results in new empirical data that can both support and reject the current macro-level reasoning that external factors such as an economic crisis give rise to populism. This thesis therefore follows Mepschen's (2012) reasoning in shifting the analytical focus towards debates on how populism changes the daily lives of people.

Brubaker (2002, 170) shows that by using a top-down approach, one can investigate which categories are proposed, propagated, imposed, institutionalised, discursively articulated, organisationally entrenched, and embedded in forms of governmentality. However, as mentioned before, this has been done extensively in the field of populism studies. The bottom-up approach this research uses focuses on the micropolitics of categories, such as how the categorised appropriate, internalise, subvert, evade or transform the categories imposed on them or others. Categories are used by individuals to make sense of the world through socio-cognitive and interactional processes, and are linked to stereotypical beliefs and expectations about category members invested with emotional associations and evaluative judgments. These processes come into being in specific interactional contexts and are activated by situational triggers or cues (ibid.). By categorising others, one also categorises oneself; self-

identification is therefore part of the same process as categorisation. Ethnic boundary making is also a part of the processes of categorisation that people use, but has mostly been studied in the context of ethnic minorities and nation-building, and not in the context of right-wing populist voters. By using the case of the Netherlands, where ethnopolitics has not led to an extensive ethnic mobilisation, successful ethnic restructuring of society, or violent clashes and conflict, this research corrects the bias in the literature on ethnicity towards the study of striking instances of high groupness and successful ethnic mobilisation.

Alongside taking relevant approaches to add to the literature on populism and ethnicity, this thesis also delves into the discussion of framing processes. Frames are schemes of interpretation that locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences (Benford and Snow 2002, 613). The focus lies on the use of a crisis frame, which is a mental structure that situates events, people and groups in a meaningful narrative by focussing on the emotion of fear that poisons ethnic relations (Oberschall 2000, 989-990). Framing is used by both populists political leaders and populist supporters, making it an ideal framework to connect the literature on populism and ethnicity. Through frames, the populist discourse resonates among its followers, and a crisis frame is used to reinforce ideas of ethnic categorisations. This thesis adds to the literature by using framing processes in a bottom-up approach to look at what crisis frame populist supporters use, instead of looking at the often used top-down approach.

1.1.2. Societal Relevance

The underlying societal problem of the rise of right-wing populism in the West is that it accommodates the polarisation of society. As De Lange & Mügge (2015) show, millions of people agree with populist notions that place ‘we’ the pure people against ‘them’, the corrupt elite, and use an enemy figure such as the Other, the Muslim or the Jew on which insecurities are projected (Vieten & Poynting 2016, 537). Groups of people are put against each other, especially now these notions have become mainstream in Western political campaigns. This research gives a better understanding why these notions are so popular and what the underlying problems are. Van Genugten (2013, 79) points at a tension in the Netherlands between state institutions which encouraged the view of immigration as cultural enrichment, and the level of society, people-to-people contacts which questioned the rising number of immigrants in daily life. An increased awareness of certain group’s views on gender equality, homosexuality, sex in general, abortion and euthanasia led to a perceived clash of Muslim beliefs with dominant Dutch views on these topics. Muslim immigrants are seen as lagging behind. Some believe they will adapt, while others stress that Islam is static and unchangeable,

and therefore erode social values and tolerance in the Netherlands (ibid.). These people do not feel heard by the political elite, and see the make-over of *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete), a character in the traditional St. Nicholas festivities, as another erosion of Dutch culture and identity caused by a minority group. As De Lange & Mügge (2015, 220) showed, these tensions are very real and manifest itself on social media as well, where millions of people support populist views. Both the migrant minority groups as the white Dutchmen feel that they are suffering.

Moreover, support for the PVV from right-wing extremist groups is growing, and the PVV itself has grown more radical over the years. Further radicalisation of the party itself or individuals might cause polarisation between groups of people, lowering social cohesion. Dutch identity, but also diversity and anti-racism were both main topics in the Dutch parliamentary elections of March 2017, stressing how important and widespread these notions and tensions are for many people in the Netherlands. It is therefore highly relevant to study these societal problems and giving the people a voice in how they feel, what they think and how they came to their opinion. Especially now that people feel they are not heard enough by the political elite.

1.2. Research Objective and Research Questions

The aforementioned scientific and societal relevance, as well as the underlying societal problems lead to the main objective of this research: to create a better understanding of why people turn to right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands. As the PVV mainly campaigns on the protection of the Dutch culture and identity against Muslim influences, this research goes one step further by studying the processes of classification, self-identification, and ethnic boundary-making among PVV-voters that might influence their voting behaviour. This includes investigating whether the crisis frame propagated by the PVV is appropriated and internalised by the voters themselves. The purpose is to add to the scientific debate on populism by adding a bottom-up approach. By letting perceived marginalised voters speak about their experiences, a better understanding of their motivations comes to light. By taking the Netherlands as a case study, this research taps into the societal tensions and polarisation in this specific region to study the effects of the trend of rising populism on a local level. This leads to the following research questions:

Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist political parties in the Netherlands?

- How does the right-wing populist narrative contribute to a crisis frame on a personal level?
- How are strategies of ethnic boundary-making used to create an idea of ‘the Dutch people’

by PVV-voters?

-What life events contribute to the following of right-wing populist ideology?

To answer these research questions, this introduction is followed by a literature review which dissects the key concepts, causes and classifications of the populism discourse, and examines the debates on ethnicity and framing processes. In the methodology chapter the methods and techniques that are used in this research are thoroughly explained to show how the data was gathered and analysed. The outcome of this data-gathering is portrayed in the Results chapter, which is then analysed in the following Discussion chapter. In the Conclusion a short review of the research is provided and the research questions are answered.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter contains a theoretical framework with the relevant literature used in this thesis. As the main theme of this research, the literature review begins with dissecting the literature on populism. Firstly, populism is explained, which includes the differences between left-wing and right-wing populism, the causes of populism and how to combat populism. Secondly, right-wing populism is compared with right-wing extremism, because populist leader often use extreme phrases to activate a crisis frame which is not unfamiliar to extremist groups. Thirdly, the gender aspect of the right-wing populist discourse is discussed. The Dutch PVV differs from the usual conservative right-wing populist parties with its progressive arguments on gender issues, which leads to fourthly, an elaboration on populism in the Netherlands.

The second theme in the literature that is used for this research is ethnicity and identity. The bottom-up approach used in this thesis allows for an in-depth view on how individuals ascribe characteristics on others and themselves. Identifying different groups in society is a key characteristic of right-wing populism and identity politics is used by politicians to bring certain problems to light. Therefore, national identity and ethnicity are the first aspects of this theme to be discussed. Secondly, ethnicity and groupness are taken into account because an imagined community is often used in right-wing populist discourse, indicating a high groupness. Thirdly, this chapter delves into the literature on ethnic boundaries to get a better understanding on how boundaries between imagined communities and identities work.

This is followed by literature on framing processes, as the interviews indicated that PVV-voters use different frames to make sense of the world around them. These frames are also used to link all of these topics in the literature together to create a cohesive conceptual framework which is used to further analyse the data in the following chapters. The literature on populism, national and ethnic identities, and frames together with the information PVV-supporters give about themselves leads to better insights on how these different processes of populist discourses, identity making and framing steer the decision-making of people.

2.2. Populism explained

Academics seem to be interested in the recent rise of populism in the West, as there are many recent publications to be found dealing with this issue. Although left-wing populism such as the Greek Syriza party and the Spanish Podemos is also mentioned, most attention is given to far-right populism that uses an Islamophobic rhetoric. Populists have two particular claims. Firstly, the actions of the government should reflect the general will of the people who are

considered to be pure and uncorrupted citizens of an imagined 'heartland' of a virtuous and unified population. Otjes & Louwerse (2015, 60) and Vieten & Poynting (2016, 537) argue that all populist rhetoric makes a distinction between 'we', the pure people, and 'them', the corrupt elite. Secondly, populists claim that the political establishment does not represent the people, but is corrupted and distorts politics to gain power for itself (Otjes & Louwerse 2015, 61). It is questioned whether democracy still speaks to the needs and interests of 'ordinary people', leading to the image of corrupt, political elites of the country or multinational organisations such as the European Union. Far-right populists add a third claim that there is a group of 'others' that do not belong to 'the people', and who's interests are defended by the elite. Furthermore, ethnicity, race and religion are used as social divisions in identity to ascribe others as culturally different. This is the main reason why culturally diverse societies seem less prone to the uniting far-right rhetoric (ibid.). Moreover, populism has a 'chameleonic quality', because it can be aligned to different political views and used by different ideologies. Populism itself is therefore a thin ideology that is used by both left- and right-wing politicians (ibid.).

Left-wing populists claim that the political elite is looking after the interests of business elites and therefore neglects the hard-working man. In contrast, right-wing populist parties commit to authoritarianism and nativism, the idea that a nation should only be inhabited by its own people (Otjes & Louwerse 2015, 61-62). Although these are considered far-right populist parties, on socio-economic level these parties have varying positions, ranging from neo-liberal economic agendas to more socially inclined views. The result is that left-wing populists are labelled on their socio-economic issues, whereas right-wing populism only relates to their stances on authoritarianism and migration (ibid.). The common ground between these two types of populists is firstly, the aim to return decision-making power to the people by supporting referenda, citizens' initiatives and the recall of elected representatives. Secondly, their support for direct election and increased power for political executives and thirdly, the desire to limit legal institutions that constrict the will of the people such as supranational organisations as the European Union (Otjes & Louwerse 2015, 63). These are also the only issues the left-wing populist party SP and right-wing populist party PVV agree on in the Netherlands.

According to the literature, the causes of populism are: economic crises, the casualties of attendant restructurings, the insecurities and displacement of neoliberalism in the context of a global financial crisis, the fears of the middle strata of downward social mobility, the failure of the left to offer a credible radical alternative, and the sense that this crisis does not affect all

classes, ethnicities and genders evenly (Baier 2016, 49). This follows the decline of the political centre made up of social democrats, Christian democrats and liberals who governed since the Second World War (Vieten & Poynting 2016, 534; Baier 2016, 49). Populism therefore exploits the anxieties and insecurities caused by socio-economic turmoil and ruptures that exist due to globalisation and neoliberalist policies, combined with the resentments of the socio-cultural transformation of Western European societies caused by the influx of a growing culturally different population (Betz 2009, 205).

Populism can polarise society with its divisive arguments (Zakaria 2016, 15). To counter this, Western societies need to focus on the danger of rapid cultural changes. This should involve limiting the rate of immigration and certain kinds of immigrants, more attention to integration and assimilation, and better safety nets. Furthermore, Zakaria (ibid.) claims that young people are less anxious about foreigners and feel enriched by living in diverse countries. Therefore, feelings of exclusive nationalism are not likely to grow among younger generations. This seems to be true in the Netherlands where in the parliamentary elections in March 2017 only 8% of the people age 18-24 voted for the PVV. (IPSOS 2017). Baier (2016, 52) calls the growth of nationalism in Europe an indicator of dramatic deterioration of national relations in Europe that cannot be pushed back without ending austerity or without initiating a broad pan-European movement against austerity. It cannot be stopped without a struggle against unemployment, and for the defence, expansion and reconstruction of the welfare state, for adequate professional training and legally regulated work conditions. In addition, some point to the current political climate in the EU countries, which promotes increasing security and surveillance measures under the veil of fighting terrorism, the anti-Muslim racism that is amplified in the media and the borders that are closed off for immigrants represent limitations on and threats to democracy and freedom. This is a climate in which right-wing radicalism thrives (Baier 2016, 53).

2.3. Right-wing Populism and Right-wing Extremism

Baier (2016, 51) shows that there is a distinction between *right-wing extremism* and *right-wing radicalism*. Right-wing extremist parties use violence, are on the margins of the political spectrum and relate to Nazi ideology. These include Greece's Golden Dawn and the British National Party. Radical right-wing parties claim to work within the rules of a parliamentary democracy and use the theory of cultural difference to present their ideas of separating people of different cultural backgrounds. Although these parties are not the same throughout the Western world, there are some common characteristics: "a populist political style, an

authoritarian conception of society, ethnic nationalism (xenophobia, racism, and anti-Europeanism), and social chauvinism (the social state seen as exclusively for nationals)” (ibid.). This includes the Dutch PVV, German AfD and French Front National. Although these parties stress their differences from extremist groups, their ideas can reinforce each other.

The boundaries between right-wing extremism and right-wing populism are not as clear cut as they might seem. Blee (2007, 120-121) argues that many studies on right-wing extremist movements focus on external data such as propaganda, internet sites and speeches. However, this does not show the internal ideology of members, the goals of groups or the divergence between the statements of leaders and the beliefs of activists that qualitative research could show. This is also the case in research done on populism, which often take a top-down approach. When using qualitative methods, researchers need to balance issues of ethics, fairness and political interests in exposing the movements they are studying. Furthermore, Blee (2007, 123) argues that far-right extremist groups teach supporters to embody emotional styles of extremist politics, as marching in formations and wielding weapons are meant to absorb the affective nature and intensity of extremist movements into the bodies of their members. Some right-wing populist parties use these kinds of embodied politics and use nationalist symbols to convey their message. For example, in 2011 two PVV members of the Dutch national parliament used the *prinsenvlag* in their office. This is a Dutch flag reminiscent of both the Dutch golden age and the fascist collaborators during the Second World War, and is often used by right-wing extremist groups. Ethnographic work can convey these feelings expressed during political rituals, as well as the cultural practices of these groups that are needed to convince recruits of their extremist ideologies. These practices help participants to remain committed in the wake of stigma, marginalisation, legal consequences and assault (Blee 2007, 124). To a lesser extent, this also applies to voters of right-wing populist parties, as their nativist ideas are also marginalised. This shows that the boundaries between right-wing populism and right-wing extremism can sometimes not be as clear-cut as definitions may portray.

Linden and Klandermans (2007, 199-200) made life histories of extreme right activists in the Netherlands in the late 1990s and distinguish three fundamental motives to participate in social movements: firstly instrumentality describes someone who wants to change a state of affairs. The second motive is identity, members want to engage with like-minded others. Thirdly, ideology is important for someone who wants to express their views. These types can be seen in the four different motives. Firstly, revolutionaries use movements as an instrument

to change the world and meet other combatants. Secondly, wanderers are looking for others who share their ideology and disengage when a movement fails to offer political shelter. Thirdly, converts suffer wrongs and are angry. Ideologies do not drive them, but the will to express their anger does. Fourthly, compliants identify with others in the movements and are participating because of circumstances they had no control over. Moreover, Voerman and Lucardie (1992, 35) show that the extreme right in the Netherlands has always been relatively weak. It is fragmented and divided into theocratic Protestantism (very old right), neo-fascism or national socialism (old right) and ethnocentric nationalism (new right). The last group was represented by the Centre Democrats in the 1980s and 1990s. However, right-wing populism has grown, and these different motives have not been studied among voters on populist parties.

2.4. Right-wing Populism and Gender

Although there have been a lot of studies on right-wing populist parties, De Lange & Mügge (2015, 61) show that, few people have studied their ideas about gender. Nevertheless, right-wing populist parties do pay attention to gender themselves, especially by focussing on harmful cultural practices of ‘Others’, such as female genital mutilation, honour killings, wearing headscarves, forced marriages and polygamy. This focus has led to a new nationalism in which women’s rights and LGBTQ rights have become core civilised values of the West whereas migrant, predominantly Muslim, communities are seen as menacing these values. However, feminist arguments have assumed that right-wing populist parties form an ideologically homogeneous bloc (ibid.). For this research it is important to take gender into account, as it shapes the core arguments used by right-wing populist parties. Muslim men are portrayed as dangerous, whereas Muslim women are victims. These ideas on gender aid ethnic categorisations that are made by populist supporters.

De Lange & Mügge (2015, 62-65) show that there are two main different approaches to the right-wing populist use of gender: the national populist and neoliberal populist approach. National populist parties focus on cultural, ethnic and religious inequalities with nationalist and xenophobic attitudes. This includes the nativist argument that nation states should be inhabited by its natives, non-native elements, including people, objects and ideas, should be removed as they are serious threats to the state. In contrast, neoliberal populist parties are less radical and are only sceptical of multiculturalism, they advocate anti-egalitarian measures such as reducing government and state intervention and defend ordinary people against a corrupt elite. In the Netherlands the PVV falls into the nationalist populist category whereas the LPF fell into the neoliberal populist category. Neoliberal populist parties

usually have modern views on classical gender issues, whereas some national populist parties have either orthodox views on these issues such as Vlaams Blok in Flanders or have modern ideas such as the PVV. In contrast to Flanders, progressive ideas about gender prevail in the Netherlands because it allows for the argument that Muslim women need to be emancipated (De Lange & Mügge 2015, 80).

2.5. Populism in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, islamophobic ideology uses politics of gender and sexuality to appear progressive. In this way, nationalism is normalised by the far right as it portrays other cultures as endemically misogynist and homophobic (Vieten & Poynting 2016, 538-539). In Mepschen's (2012, 66-67) ethnography in Amsterdam, he shows that the major demolition and restructuring of neighbourhoods created a symbolic space for a discourse of displacement in which local people developed an antagonistic relationship towards 'others': elites and sometimes (post-)migrants. Moreover, Mepschen (2012, 68) argues that populist notions are political and symbolic constructions; the people and the other are not entities in the world, but perspectives on the world. These notions offer populism the categories, classifications, words and frames it needs to understand the local and everyday realities of people. Mepschen (2012, 81) emphasises that the current rise of populism needs to be understood in the context of the transition of a pillarised (*verzuilde*), fordist welfare state to a globalising, post-fordist society. In this light, populism is a political reaction on the structural transformation of Dutch society in a neoliberal direction.

Fear of Islamic immigrations in the Netherlands is not based in fears of ethnic or religious competition, but is rather veiled in the defence of secularist and liberal values (Van Genugten 2013, 72). To stop Islamic practices here is seen as protecting the self-promoted image of the Netherlands as a tolerant, non-judgmental society. This creates a paradox in which the self-image was actually meant to include minorities in tolerance, not to exclude them. This focus on tolerance, progress and secular liberal values makes the debate surrounding immigration and integration in the Netherlands different from the debates in Italy, where the focus lies in the interaction between Islam and Christianity, and France, where the consequences for state secularism is a central issue (Van Genugten 2013, 73). The Dutch debate is therefore not only about Islam, but more about questions of national identity in which a conflict has emerged between those that see Dutch society as tolerant and inclusive for minorities, and those that defend progressive and secularist values against attacks from outside. Factors that played a role in the increased popularity of populist parties in the

Netherlands were the loss of policy control through deregulation and Europeanisation, the loss of faith in politics, rising individualism and the crumbling of pillarised communities, the murder of controversial filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, and increased secularisation (Van Genugten 2013, 75-76).

A recent controversy that illustrates support for right-wing, anti-Islam and anti-immigration views is the debate on changing the appearance of *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete), the helper of Saint Nicholas who annually gives presents to children and others in December. People who wanted *Zwarte Piet* to remain black, known as pro-Pieten, mobilised on social media. Hillhorst & Hermes (2016, 221) studied statements posted on one of these Facebook pages called the '*Pietitie*' (Piet-ition) which had over two million likes, meaning the sentiments posted here are widely known and accepted in the Netherlands. The spread of jokes, images and views are an everyday act of curation and appraised by 'likes', which underlines the sentiments expressed. The narratives used by pro-Pieten focus on innocence and loss, real or anticipated. Hillhorst & Hermes (2016, 227) argue that, despite their huge number, the commenters feel they have been passed over and ignored, and that the country has given more to foreigners than it can afford. The social space is dichotomised in an 'us' versus 'them'. *Zwarte Piet* became a symbol of all that is White, stereotypical Dutch have had to swallow. Protesters against *Zwarte Piet* are seen as morally at fault because they are not concerned with 'real problems'. The sense of shared suffering creates a 'we' that leverages against 'others' who are not allowed to suffer. Hillhorst & Hermes (2016, 228) argue that here is where the racism lies: in disallowing Dutch people of colour to suffer, pro-Pieten deny them from an independent and full emotional life, thereby denying their full humanity. The outrage over a make-over of *Zwarte Piet* is disenchantment and shared grief in which the unacceptable truth of globalisation is not allowed into the national consciousness, which requires an absolute refusal to admit historical realities such as colonialism and slavery. These ideas have much more support than the PVV has voters, but, as Hilhorst & Hermes (2016, 229) put it: "the fantasy of an enclosed the Netherlands, dearly held by current Dutch anti-European populism, at the very least temporarily splinters in the conflict over *Zwarte Piet*."

In contrast to the aforementioned Dutch nationalism in the context of xenophobic populism, more nuanced versions of Dutch nationalism are also present. Kesic & Duyvendak (2016, 582) argue that there is a paradoxical national self-image of anti-nationalist nationalism in which the 'bad' nativist nationalism is dismissed, but a banal form of Dutchness persists. This anti-nationalist nationalism is formed by: firstly, constructivism, in which the Dutch identity is publicly constructed and debated, secondly, lightness, in which

expressions of nationalism are taken very lightly by the performers themselves, such as dressing in orange on King's day, and thirdly, essentialism, which implies the notion that a Dutch essence does exist, albeit small and subject to change. These dimensions entail an active, performative rejection of fixed notions of nationhood, emotionally deep and chauvinistic involvements with the nation (Kesic & Duyvendak 2016, 594). It is precisely this anti-nationalist nationalism of the progressive high-educated elite that is in conflict with the nativist nationalism that right-wing populist propagate. The populist argument thrives in this context, because it portrays the elite as weak and not taking their own country seriously on the one hand, and providing a way of expressing national pride on the other hand.

2.6. National Identity and Ethnicity

Right-wing populists do not equate their nationalism with racism. Rather, nationalism means preferring one's own people to others, which is argued to be as natural as preferring one's own family over outsiders, in contrast to the racist belief that one group of people is superior (Betz 2009, 193). However, the main characteristic of right-wing populism is its restrictive notion of citizenship, which holds that democracy is based on a culturally or ethnically homogeneous society. In this society, only long-standing citizens count as full members who can apply to the society's benefits. This can also be described as 'reactionary tribalism', 'ethnocratic liberalism', 'holistic nationalism', 'exclusionary welfarism', or 'exclusionary populism' (Betz 2009, 194). Following Wimmer (2008, 973), ethnicity is defined as a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in a common culture and ancestry. This means that ethnicity and the national identity of 'the people' is central to the right-wing populists' argument.

There are four views on ethnicity (Oberschall 2000, 982-984). Firstly, the primordial view states that ethnicity and cultural identities are a given and natural affinity. Secondly, the instrumentalist view argues that ethnic sentiments and loyalties are manipulated by the political and intellectual elite for political ends such as state creation. Thirdly, the constructionist view sees religion and ethnicity as social facts, which only become important aspects of one's identity in specific situations (see also Sen 2006, 2). Fourthly, the security dilemma engages ethnic groups in a defensive arming to protect themselves in an arms race. The right-wing populist nativist argument uses a primordial view, because it sees the 'people' as a static group with given, natural characteristics that needs to be protected from others. Moreover, right-wing populist parties are often led by charismatic leaders, often in an authoritarian way as is the case with the PVV and Front National. The instrumentalist view

therefore sees these leaders as actively manipulating nationalist sentiments and loyalties for their own political goals.

Oberschall (2000, 989-990) describes that this can be done by activating a crisis frame. A cognitive frame is a mental structure which situates events, people, and groups in a meaningful narrative to make sense of the world. A normal frame could be cooperative and neighbourly, whereas a crisis frame focuses on the emotion of fear that poisons ethnic relations and turns to hate, demonization and, in the extreme case, dehumanisation. Political leaders make use of fear arousing appeals, originating in a threat of others and the promotion of a sense of victimhood, which is effective in changing opinions and evoking feelings of nationalism. Although not as extreme as in, for example, the case of the Yugoslavian wars, a crisis frame is also used in Western Europe and the Netherlands by right-wing populists. In this case, they posit that Dutch culture is under threat of outside migrants and refugees. Terms such as a 'tsunami of migrants', 'Moroccan terror-youth', and 'Islamisation of Europe' are all appeals originating in outside threats and promoting fear, and therefore activating a cognitive crisis frame which puts nationality and ethnicity to the forefront.

The crisis frame fits the instrumentalist notion of *ethnopolitics*, which, according to Baumann (1999, 60-61), is a process of mobilising ethnicity from a cultural, social and psychological focus into a political leverage. Ethnopolitics ideologises, reifies, stresses, modifies and re-creates distinctive cultural heritages of ethnic groups to reinforce systems of structured inequality between ethnicities. Ethnicity is therefore transformed by ethnopolitics from a classificatory boundary into a substantive and unified group heritage. Once in place, it is hard to overcome ethnic discrimination because of the error of reification, which means that products of human nature are seen as something other than human-made (Baumann 1999, 63). In this case, the primordial view on ethnicity prevails in the arguments of ethnopoliticians. Ethnopolitics therefore relies on purifying the cultural essences that have been reified, but needs political and economic interests to turn ethnicity into functional markers of identity in daily life. Baumann's (1999) argument on ethnopolitics therefore fits the instrumentalist view on ethnicity as described by Oberschall (2000, 983), because political elites play a key role in influencing views on ethnicity. Brubaker (2002, 166) adds that an ethnic entrepreneur is a performative character that evokes groups, summoning them into being. Their categories are used to justify, stir, mobilise and energise. By reifying groups, ethnopolitical entrepreneurs contribute to producing what they are describing. It is a social process central to the practice of politicised ethnicity.

Fearon and Laitin (2000, 846) argue that the constructivist explanation of identities

being constructed by individuals is not enough when studying ethnic conflict. In agreement with the aforementioned argument of Baumann (1999), they emphasise the instrumentalist view in which elite manipulation of mass publics for strategically political purposes is central to the rise of nationalism. Social categories are set up in which people are given a label that is distinguished by the rules of membership which decides who is and who is not a member of a category. The content of these rules are the characteristics thought to be typical for members of the category and identity politics (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 848). These social categories use a primordialist narrative of religion or ethnicity to include and exclude people and to indicate that people have naturally always been that way. Constructing an ethnic or national identity entails three approaches. Firstly, national identities arise as structures that people use to increase their life chances, as belonging to a dominant group gives one the benefits of inclusion. The fear mongering of right-wing populists is an example of this approach, as people who feel threatened will seek inclusion in the dominant group as a means of increasing one's life chances. Secondly, the discursive formation of symbolic or cultural systems are set up to differentiate one from the 'Other', which can potentially result in a violent relationship. The emphasis on Dutch values, Dutch culture and Dutch symbols and rejecting public expressions of Muslim culture is an example of this approach used by right-wing populists. Thirdly, individuals may construct ethnic identities to strengthen the hold on power. Biases, fear of the other, and discourses of ethnicity and cultural differences make people want to follow these leaders (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 853-857).

Sen (2006, 1-3) takes a constructionist point of view and argues that identity can be a source of joy, pride and strength, but it can also be dangerous as the gifts of inclusion go hand in hand with the adversity of exclusion. Furthermore, Sen (2006, 11, 13) criticises the reductionist view popularised by Huntington (1996), that overlooks the diversity within civilisations, but instead sees the world as a federation of religions and civilisations that clash. This view is also prevalent in the right-wing populist view that the Western, modern world clashes with the Muslim world. According to Sen (2006, 19) a choiceless singularity of human identity diminishes us and makes the world more conflict-prone. Instead, people have multiple identities that depend on the social situation one is in. These multiple, and even contrasting identities do not only belong to a collectivity. Cultural attitudes may influence the nature of our thinking, but they cannot determine it fully (Sen 2006, 34-35). This stands in contrast to right-wing populist narratives that emphasise only one aspect of one's identity. However, according to Sen's (2006) argument, a migrant in the Netherlands is not just a Muslim, or a Moroccan, they can also be a wife, a nurse, or someone who loves literature.

Which aspect of one's identity comes to the forefront depends on the specific social situation. However, there are constraints to this, as others might not be convinced of your own avowed identity. How others identify us may differ from our self-perception (Sen 2006, 6). A person can try to resist the ascription of characteristics and emphasise the other identities someone has, or point to the human commonality to oppose degrading attributions. Sen (2006, 8) argues that the foundations of degradation lies in the illusion of singular identity that others must attribute to a person. Following the aforementioned instrumentalist view on ethnicity, politicians can use this argument of a singular identity to discriminate and degrade groups of people by emphasising a characteristic. Right-wing populist politicians use this by pointing to cultural differences, emphasising that someone is a foreigner above everything else. In this thesis, the instrumentalist and constructionist view are used to analyse the frames right-wing populist supporters use. The primordial view that is prevalent in the populist discourse does not have significant scientific support, whereas frames of danger and fear are top-down articulated by the PVV. Because this research takes a bottom-up approach, the constructionist view aids in identifying how the people themselves categorise the world around them. An important note is that individuals are described by the instrumentalist view as easily manipulated by political elites, and by the constructionist view as influenced mainly by their socio-economic context. By focussing on these individuals themselves, this thesis adds agency to the populist supporters by giving them a voice.

2.7. Ethnicity and Groupness

Brubaker (2002, 165) critiques the view on ethnicity that he calls *groupism*: the tendency to see differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups as basic constituents of social life, conflicts and units of analysis. Instead, Brubaker (2002, 166) suggests that ethnic conflict should not be seen as a conflict between ethnic groups, but rather as an ethnicised or ethnically framed conflict. This means taking a constructionist view on ethnicity by thinking of ethnicity, race and nation not in terms of substantial groups, but in terms of ethnicisation, racialisation and nationalisation as political, social, cultural and psychological processes. Brubaker (2002, 168) argues for using groupness as something that varies in different situations, rather than something fixed and given, just like identities vary in different contexts as Sen (2006) argues. Extraordinary cohesion and moments of collective solidarity are not a constant and enduring phenomena, groupness is an event that can be witnessed. An example of groupness is the increased cohesion among Dutch football supporters when the national team plays an important game, and the decline of groupness

when the competition is over. Furthermore, Brubaker (ibid.) shows that, despite the efforts of ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, ethnic groupness did not increase or was not mobilised in extreme ways. This corrects the bias towards the study of striking instances of high groupness, successful mobilisation and violence, which gives an overethnicised view of the social world, with an overestimation of the incidence of ethnic violence. It also shows the limitation of the instrumentalist view, which can portray a picture of elites influencing the masses like puppets without them having any agency themselves.

What all these authors suggest, then, is that ethnicity, race and nationhood are not observable objects in the world, but perspectives on the world, and therefore only exist in our perceptions, interpretations, representations, categorisations and identifications (Brubaker 2002, 174). This perspective on the world can be researched through qualitative methods, by using a bottom-up approach. To investigate ethnic groupness, one needs to be sensitive to framing dynamics in favour of ethnicity, and the strategic use of ethnic framing to mask other categories such as class. One should also not mistake ethnopolitical rhetoric, which often speaks in name of an ethnic group, for real groupness as people might disagree and are not constituents in a homogeneous group. Higher groupness might be a result, not a cause of ethnic tensions and conflict (Brubaker 2002, 174-177). Ethnic categories shape institutions as well; official classifications of ethnicities are used to allocate rights, regulate actions, cultivate populations, construct category-specific institutions, distribute benefits and burdens or eradicate unwanted elements.

2.8. Ethnic Boundaries

Ethnic identities are not only based in cultural differences because neighbouring groups might have overlapping cultures. Ethnicity should therefore be researched as a social process of maintaining boundaries that people see as ethnic differences (Baumann 1999, 59). As a result, ethnicity can be seen as an aspect of a relationship which is constituted through social contact, which is in line with the constructionist view and the aforementioned arguments of Sen (2006) and Brubaker (2002). In the West ethnicity has an apartheid logic in which every nation has its own culture and colour, but boundaries between these ethnicities are not explored (Baumann 1999, 60). In this logic, Dutchmen behave differently from Frenchmen and live in the Netherlands. This also explains the use of the populist argument for perceived outsiders to 'go back to their own country'.

Wimmer (2008, 970) introduces a multilevel process theory that assumes that ethnic boundaries are an outcome of a struggle between actors in a social field. The institutional

order, distribution of power and political networks are the key characteristics in this social field that influence the choices an actor will make in ethnic boundary making. Unlike what the right-wing populist narrative sometimes portrays, the dynamic of ethnic boundary formation thus uses a political logic, and is not derived from economic incentives. Economic competition is therefore not seen as a key factor in ethnic boundary making (Wimmer 2008, 977-978). Although Fearon and Laitin (2000) also focus on the political gains elites, I disagree with this argument because economic competition is inherently part of the social field. A political struggle for the distribution of power and institutional order would not exist without economic incentives. This is especially the case in the context of the rise of populism in Western Europe. As Baier (2016, 49), Vieten & Poynting (2016), Mepschen (2012) and Zakaria (2016, 15) argue that structural and economic changes in society led to populist parties gaining popularity, and therefore the dynamic of ethnic boundary formation is also caused by economic incentives.

Within this social field, cultural differences and ethnic boundaries can reinforce each other, because cultural differentiation makes a boundary look natural and self-evident, while social closure along ethnic lines can reinforce difference between groups of people by the invention of new cultural diacritics. This process is evident when the principle of *ethnonational representativity* is used, which entails that a legitimate state consists of its own ethnonational group that rules over itself and is often propagated by primordial right-wing populists (Wimmer 2008, 991). This principle incentivises state elites to homogenise their population in cultural and ethnic terms, often by expanding boundaries of their own group and defining cultural characteristics, and thus also gives rise to right-wing populism. This can result in majority members discriminating against minorities in daily life, because they have been dignified to represent ‘the people’ of a particular nation-state and therefore are privileged in the social theatre. This enforces ethnic boundaries towards minorities and encourages them to assimilate into the national majority, and pursue strategies to overcome structures of exclusion and discrimination by boundary blurring (ibid.). Despite disagreements between majorities and minorities on who belongs to the morally, socially and culturally accepted group, there are often agreements on who do definitely not belong, such as newly arrived migrants. The boundaries between established majorities and minorities might therefore blur due to exogenous shifts such as immigration. The narrative of right-wing populists thus makes use of strategies of ethnic boundary-making to retain power, and reinforce a homogeneous idea of ethnicity that legitimises their aspiration to rule.

Wimmer (2008, 1025) argues that there are five strategies people can use when

dealing with ethnic boundaries. These strategies are mostly used by ethnopolitical entrepreneurs as described by Brubaker (2002), and is a key way to perform ethnopolitics (Baumann 1999). Firstly, redrawing the boundary by expanding the domain of included people in one's ethnic category. Secondly, changing the boundary by limiting this domain of one's ethnic category. Thirdly, modifying the boundary by challenging hierarchical ordering of ethnic categories. Fourthly, changing one's position within the boundary system, and lastly, emphasising non-ethnic forms of belonging. The first two strategies change the topography by shifting the boundaries, the other three strategies focus on meaning or membership by modifying the boundaries. These five strategies can be further divided into more specific actions.

A boundary can be expanded or contracted in two ways. By fusion, which reduces the number of categories and expands existing boundaries, and by fission, which adds a new one and therefore contracts previous boundaries (Wimmer 2008, 1031). Expansion of an ethnic boundary can be part of nation-building, as state elites can redefine an existing ethnic group as the nation into which everyone should fuse, or they can create a new national category through the amalgamation of numerous ethnic groups. The emphasis can also be shifted to something other than ethnicity, such as religion. According to Wimmer (2008, 1033-1034) creating a national majority does shift the ethnic boundary to become more inclusive, but is never all-encompassing. Even expanded boundaries set off an imagined community off from others elsewhere, but also from domestic groups who are perceived as alien or politically unreliable. Majority formation and minority making are therefore two aspects of the same process. In the Netherlands, the PVV considers non-western migrants to not be part of the imagined Dutch community, and wants to 'return the Netherlands to the Dutch people', therefore contracting the ethnic boundary to exclude people that are officially considered Dutch citizens.

Aside from shifting, the ethnic boundary itself can also be modified. Transvaluation strategies re-interpret the principles of ethnic systems and try to either reverse the existing rank order by normative inversion, or establish an equality in status and political power (Wimmer 2008, 1037). One can also change one's own position within a hierarchical system by either changing the individual ethnic membership, or re-positioning an entire ethnic category. Individuals can either assimilate into another category or reclassify themselves (Wimmer 2008, 1039). The last strategy of boundary blurring attempts to lower the importance of ethnicity as a principle of categorisation. This can be done through localism, by

creating sub-ethnic divisions, civilisationalism, by creating supra-ethnic divisions or universalism, by emphasising the global humanity of people (Wimmer 2008, 1041-1042).

2.9. Framing Processes

To bring these different themes in the literature together, the overview of framing processes by Benford and Snow (2002) is used. Frames are schemes of interpretation that locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within the world. Frames are active phenomena that imply agency and contention at the level of reality construction. Framing is a dynamic process that continually evolves by creating interpretive frames that challenge existing ones. Benford and Snow (2002, 613-614) refer to these frames as collective action frames. These function as ways to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, garner bystander support and demobilise antagonists. Collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings which legitimatise activities of movements and ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, and are used in ethnopolitics (Benford and Snow 2002, 614, Brubaker 2002, Baumann 1999).

Benford and Snow (2002, 615) distinguish three core framing tasks. The first of these is diagnostic framing, which entails problem identification and attributions. An example of this are injustice frames, in which movements identify victims of a given injustice and amplify their victimisation (ibid.) Diagnostic framing therefore tends to focus on blame or responsibility. Victims and those responsible are delineated by boundary framing and adversarial framing which constructs protagonists and antagonists. This is also a key instrument of the political elite to influence their followers. The second core framing task is prognostic framing. This involves the articulation of a solution, a plan of attack and strategies for carrying out a plan to counter the problem diagnosed in the first core framing task. Prognostic framing typically includes counterframing, in which the logic or efficiency of solutions proposed by opponents are refuted (Benford and Snow 2002, 617). The third and final core framing task is motivational framing which provides a rationale to enforce collective action. The agency component of framing is developed in motivational framing by using vocabularies of severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety. These call for collective action and sustain participation. (ibid.) This vocabulary corresponds well with the use of a crisis frame as discussed by Oberschall (2000).

Two factors influence the resonance of a frame: the credibility of the proffered frame and its relative salience. The credibility consists of three factors: frame consistency, empirical credibility and credibility of the frame articulators (Benford and Snow 2002, 617). A frame's consistency refers to a movement's beliefs, claims and actions. A frame is inconsistent when

there are contradictions in beliefs or claims, or when contradictions are perceived in what a movement says and does. The more inconsistent a frame is, the less resonant it is. The second factor affecting frame resonance is the empirical credibility of the frame. This consists of the empirical referents that have to be read as real indicators of diagnostic claims. The more believable the evidence is, the more credible the frame is and the broader its appeal (Benford and Snow 2002, 620). The last factor is perceived credibility of frame articulators. Status and knowledge are known to be persuasive variables that articulators can use to enhance credibility of a frame. The greater the status or perceived expertise, the more resonant the framing. Frame amplification is the idealisation, clarification or invigoration of existing values or beliefs. These frames resonate because they tap into existing cultural values and attempt to amplify them.

The development and elaboration of collective action frames is a contested process. According to the literature, there are three forms of challenges framing activities encounter: counterframing by movement opponents, bystanders and the media; frame disputes within movements; and the dialectic between frames and events (Benford and Snow 2002, 625). Attempts to undermine or neutralise a movement's version of reality is referred to as counterframing, of which the most well-known is media framing when this happens in the media. Frame disputes are disagreements about diagnoses and prognoses within a movement, whereas frame resonance disputes are disagreements about how reality should be presented to enhance mobilisation and thus focuses on the dialectic between frames and events.

Benford and Snow (2002, 630-631) also point to three sets of implications and consequences of framing processes. The first is framing and political opportunity. This entails how political opportunity structures can constrain or facilitate collective action framing processes. To invest in a collective action frame is to suggest an opportunity to create social change exists, and that people can be mobilised to change history. Emphasising opportunity instead of constraints stimulate actions and mobilisation. Secondly, framing and individual and collective identity deals with the understanding of identity processes, especially collective identity, as inherent to social movements. Participation in movements involves enlargement of personal identity and correspondence with a collective identity. This is because identity constructions are an inherent part of framing processes. This is exemplified by Blee (2007) who argues that the embodied practices used by right-wing extremist groups intensify the relations between the group and its members, thereby creating a collective identity. At a general level, these processes place sets of actors in time and space by ascribing characteristics to them, whereas at a more concrete level, identity is talked about during press

releases and public announcements. This is in line with the instrumentalist view as pointed out by Oberschall (2000). Thirdly, specific-movement outcomes suggests that movements emerge in order to advance their own interests by securing objectives conceptualised as outcomes. Framing processes that take place within these movements tend to serve a specific goal to these movements.

2.10. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework identifies key concepts out of the literature that are used in this research. These key concepts focus on right-wing populism, identity and frames as these are the main themes of this research. The methodology that is used is further explained under the methodology section and provides a unique bottom-up approach. Key concepts such as *ethnic boundary making* and the *crisis frame* are used in this research to develop an understanding of how identity politics are active on a personal level through processes of self-identification and categorisation of a Dutch ethnicity.

Populism: political doctrine which puts ‘we, the people’ versus ‘them, the corrupt elite’.

Right-wing populism: political doctrine which further adds a scapegoat of ‘the Other’ to project insecurities on, often in a racist manner.

Ethnicity: a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in a common culture and ancestry.

Crisis frame: A mental structure which situates events, people, and groups in a meaningful narrative to make sense of the world. A crisis frame focuses on the emotion of fear that poisons ethnic relations and turns to hate, demonization and, in the extreme case, dehumanisation.

Instrumentalism: The view that argues that political leaders actively manipulate nationalist sentiments and loyalties for their own political goals.

Ethnonational representativity: The principle that holds that a legitimate state consists of their own ethnonational group that rules over itself. This incentives state elites to homogenise their population in cultural and ethnic terms, often by defining cultural characteristics, and thus also gives rise to right-wing populism.

Ethnic boundary making: An outcome of a struggle between actors in a social field, in which different strategies are taken to expand, contract, transvalue, move or blur an ethnic boundary.

Collective action frames: Frames are active phenomena that imply agency and contention at

the level or reality construction. Framing is a dynamic process that evolves the work of movement activists to create interpretive frames that challenge existing ones. Collective action frames function as ways to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, garner bystander support and demobilise antagonists. Collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings which legitimatise activities of movements.

The framing processes as described by Benford and Snow (2002) are used as a lens to interpret the data and bring together the different themes discussed in this literature overview. Although Benford and Snow (2002) speak of social movements in their articles, the right-wing populist PVV can also be considered as a movement which uses frames to establish a discourse and attract adherents. What defines right-wing populism are the problems that this discourse identifies, namely: the people versus the elite and the foreign outsiders which are favoured by the elite. This problem-identification, which is at the heart of every right-wing populist party, is an example of diagnostic framing as identified by Benford and Snow (2002, 615). This imagined 'people' also aligns to the literature on national identity, ethnicity and groupness. By identifying foreign others as the main cause of societal problems, ethnic boundaries are made. Prognostic framing is also used by right-wing populist groups, as they see themselves as the defenders of 'the people', fighting against injustice. Counterframing is used to refute the solutions of other parties, dismissing them as not acknowledging the 'real' problems. Moreover, motivational framing aligns with the idea of the crisis frame used by right-wing populists, in which vocabularies of severity and urgency are used to create the sense of a crisis. This shows how the framing processes of collective action frames can be identified in right-wing populist movements.

The other themes of the literature are also used to analyse the data. Literature on right-wing populism, gender and extremism show how populist discourses resonate in frames used by PVV-supporters. Furthermore, it shows where these frames come from, and how right-wing populist parties pose a solution to societal problems identified by diagnostic framing. Literature on ethnicity, national identity and groupness helps understand how the identity politics used by right-wing populist parties is used by PVV-supporters to understand the world around them. Social categorisation is an important part of the populist discourse and helps identifying culprits of societal problems, which lead to solutions such as closing the borders. The literature overwhelmingly takes a top-down approach with an instrumentalist view on how politicians influence their followers. These structuralist theories make it seem as if individuals have no agency and are either influenced by elites, or the socio-cultural context

in which they live. This research adds to this by taking a bottom-up approach and discussing how people themselves come to their decision to turn to right-wing populist parties by using frames they describe. In this way, a voice is given to those that are often described in the literature as easily manipulated.

3. Methodology, Methods and Techniques

In this chapter, the methodology used in this research is discussed. Firstly, the epistemological approach is discussed. Linking back to the literature chapter, different views are compared, and it is explained why some are included and others are excluded. This includes mentioning the societal and scientific relevance of the approach used in this research. Secondly, a discussion on the methodology that naturally flows from this approach is provided. Why certain choices of methodology were made is thoroughly examined, as well as why some approaches were dropped or impossible to include. This will mainly focus on qualitative methodology. Thirdly, the specific methods used in the data-gathering phase of this research are deliberated. It is explained why semi-structured interviews are taken as the main method of data-gathering, and why other methods are not used. How these interviews took place and which tools were used is also elaborated upon. Fourthly, the sampling and characteristics of the interviewees themselves are discussed. Limitations and setbacks encountered during the data-gathering are also included here, as well as the pros and cons of the sampling methods. Lastly, other ethical dilemmas and limitations of this research are considered, as well as how these were dealt with.

In order to fully understand what makes people turn to politics of racism, exclusion and nationalism that far-right populist parties advocate, it is necessary to see their decisions and identity politics in a socio-cultural context. People do not make decisions in isolation from the world around them. The socio-economic position and cultural context influence the way populist frames resonate. This research takes a constructionist point of view and sees religion, ethnicity and national identity as social facts, which only become important aspects of one's identity in specific situations (Oberschall 2000, 982-984). This aligns with Sen's (2006, 1-3) view that people have multiple identities that depend on the social situation one is in. This contrasts with the reductionist view of a choiceless singularity of human identity, which right-wing populists emphasise in their quest to protect 'the people'. Moreover, this research takes the instrumentalist view into account, which argues that elite manipulation of mass publics for strategically political purposes is central to the rise of nationalism and right-wing populism (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 846). The literature on right-wing populism shows that social categories are set up with distinguished rules of membership to include and exclude certain groups of people. As Oberschall (2000, 989-990) has argued, a crisis frame can be activated by the politicians or leaders to evoke feelings of nationalism.

This epistemological view serves the bottom-up approach of this research well because

the focus is on individual populist supporters. The constructionist and instrumentalist views have the most convincing argument on how identity is shaped by individuals, and groups. Therefore, the best way to answer the research question: Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands? is to look at identity-making and framing, and aim for theory development. The mainly top-down theories on populism need more elaboration from a bottom-up approach. To develop the theories on populism, ethnic divisions and the use of frames further, the subjects of these theories need a voice themselves. A positivist or primordial approach does not fit this research because there is too much evidence and scientific critique on the notion that cultural identities are a natural affinity (Oberschall 2000, 982). People are not born with a cultural identity with specific characteristics, in contrast, identity is fluid, dynamic and changes in each situation. This view serves the focus on individual people well. Furthermore, the bottom-up approach is scientifically relevant because many authors have focused solely on the macro level causes of populism. In line with Mepschen's (2002) argument, shifting the analytical focus from populism as a political discourse to processes of agency, conviction and social constructs that frame the world in a certain way is the main objective of this methodology. Support from right-wing extremist groups and the nation-wide discussions on themes like Zwarte Piet, make this approach also relevant to society, as it is important to voice the concerns of those who do not feel heard by politicians. Other mainstream political parties can now be seen taking over right-wing populist ideas, which indicates that this discourse is becoming more mainstream. This is all the more reason to investigate these phenomena.

During the early stages of this research, a life history approach was taken. This involves a case study of an individual's story, which focuses on individuality, subjectivity and experiences by using narratives where the interviewee narrates their own life history, sometimes with the use of visual aids such as a drawing of a lifeline or a calendar (Witter et. al. 2017, 2). Witter et. al. (2017, 5) show that making the participants draw a lifeline with key events can serve as a visual record that can be analysed afterwards. Unfortunately, only one respondent was willing to draw a lifeline. Interviewees were hard to find and convince to participate in an interview. Because of initial distrust, drawing out personal experiences on paper proved to be too much of an intrusion. When people were not willing to draw their lifelines, I instead asked about their experiences, their triggers and when they started to notice change in their lives and society. In this way, I countered the lack of visual aid by still asking about life events and when they happened.

Methodology-wise, qualitative research methods are the best way to delve into

individual processes of framing, decision-making and experiences. How people perceive and frame the world could be asked with quantitative methods such as large scale questionnaires, and statistical data could form an overall picture of why people vote PVV. However, it would lack the depth qualitative methodology provides. Moreover, qualitative methodology allows the researcher to dig deeper into paradoxes of thoughts, how events shape personal experiences and why people perceive things the way they do. This makes it the ideal methodology to answer the research questions of this thesis. Because the PVV does not have formal membership, nor many open events, it was impossible to conduct ethnographic field research. Participant observation and focus group discussions were therefore excluded from this research. Forming groups of PVV-supporters would already be difficult because of the aforementioned initial distrust the respondents had. The focus of this research is to comprehend the motives of people to support right-wing populist parties, and how they come to that decision. Personal experiences and grievances might influence their decisions, which is why this was a topic in the interviews. However, the media and internet also play a big role in influencing someone's opinion. This research has not included media analyses of Geert Wilders' speeches, online PVV community pages on social media or media reports on the PVV because this research focuses primarily on the individual's framing and opinions. Studying the influence of media consumption on right-wing populist supports would bring in a new and different approach which was practically not possible to include. In the interviews, I asked about when the respondents felt society had changed and if or when they felt a turning point. This resulted in some events covered by the media, such as terrorist attacks or foreign protests that influenced their decision-making. In this way, the media has been a topic in this research but not much data on it was collected because the focus lies elsewhere.

This leads to the main method of data-gathering used in this research: semi-structured interviews. Interviews fit the bottom-up approach of this research which is needed to study the opinions, decisions and frames of individuals. Interviews also fit the constructionist and instrumentalist epistemological views of the literature that supports this thesis because it can provide insight into the constructions of identities. I interviewed PVV-supporters individually, so that other people could not influence what they said, and they could speak freely. Even when the respondents themselves expressed it was fine when someone else was in the room, I still asked if we could speak in private to make sure they felt secure expressing their opinions, feelings and views. Especially because the interview topics could be considered politically sensitive issues, I did not use any names or give too much information about them in this thesis which could link their interviews or quotes to them. Each interview was recorded, and

an interview guide was used to increase the internal validity of this research. The interview guide (see appendix) focuses on three main themes which correspond to the research questions: questions on political views, questions on views on identity, and questions on life events and personal experiences. Although I talked about these topics in all interviews, the questions were not necessarily in order. Instead, I adapted to what the interviewees were saying and responded to their stories with more questions to create depth. I was trained to do this during interview training at the Radboud University Nijmegen. All interviews were in Dutch, therefore, all data, transcriptions and codes are also in Dutch. The quotes of interviewees in the Results chapter are translated from Dutch to English by me.

I have interviewed 12 PVV-supporters in a timeframe of May 2017 until August 2017. The initial goal was 20 interviews, but it proved to be very difficult to convince people to participate in an interview. This is also the main reason why the data collection period was delayed by more than two months. At first, I only selected people who voted PVV in 2017. However, because of the lack of response, I also included people who support the PVV or have voted PVV in the past. Sampling-wise, I contacted the respondents in a variety of ways. By use of social media and personal contacts I used my own network to attract 5 respondents. Through snowball sampling another 4 people were interviewed. The other 3 interviewees were found on Facebook PVV community-pages. It proved to be difficult to find people to interview for a number of reasons. Firstly, the PVV does not have any members and hardly organises meetings. Secondly, some PVV-supporters feel a stigma on voting for right-wing populist parties because people brand them as racist and xenophobic. It is therefore hard to find them because they are not as visible as supports of other political parties. Thirdly, PVV-supporters are distrustful of the government, the media and foreigners, but also towards me. Most of the people I contacted did not want to be interviewed, and many respondents asked a lot about my research. This means that those PVV-supporters that are visible, were often not willing to participate in my research. As a result, I did not adhere to strict requirements regarding gender and age. 7 of the respondents are women, 5 are men. The ages range from 23 to 80 years old of which 5 are below 30 and 5 above 50 years old. 4 Interviewees were students, of which 3 were receiving higher education. It was not always clear what level of education the respondents had, but at least 8 were not high educated, meaning below the level of HBO/University of applied sciences. Moreover, the respondents worked in a variety of fields such as creative design, tech support, carpentry, supermarket management and three women worked in healthcare. Most respondents came from the south of the Netherlands, where also most of the PVV-voters live (IPSOS 2017). All respondents except 2 came from

the province of Noord-Brabant, the other two came from Gelderland and Zuid-Holland. 8 Respondents came from rural villages, 2 respondents lived in a medium-sized city below 100,000 inhabitants, 1 lived in a big city above 500,000 inhabitants and 1 respondent lived in a city as a student but expressed repeatedly she originally came from a rural village.

The sample of 12 people is too small to take major conclusions out of these characteristics. A limitation of this research is therefore the external validity and proportionality of the interviewees, as I did not interview a fully representative group. The biggest group of PVV-voters are low educated, middle-aged men, but these were hard to find and convince for an interview (IPSOS 2017). The sampling method using my own network in combination with snowball sampling might have provided likeminded people. However, this is countered by the diversity within the group and the sampling through social media. The sample is also not representative of PVV-voters because young students and women are overrepresented. This could have influenced the results by adding different fears and subjects to the forefront than what is to be expected from middle-aged men. Although the small sample makes it difficult to generally describe what frames PVV-supporters as a whole use, the results of this research are still valuable. The diverse characteristics of the respondents make it possible to detect commonalities that cross divisions such as age, gender and socio-economic status. Furthermore, it shows that the bottom-up approach used in this thesis provides insight into the agency of people themselves, instead of them being influenced mainly by elites or contexts. Interviews took between 30 and 120 minutes. For the analysis, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. These transcriptions were coded with the use of Atlas-TI software. Out of the analysis of these codes, 5 frames were repeatedly expressed by multiple PVV-supporters. These will be discussed in the Results chapter.

There were some ethical dilemmas I foresaw when I started collecting data because of the sensitive nature of the research topics. As expected, people were distrustful in the beginning, and some people asked for complete anonymity. However, assuring complete anonymity of the interviewees was difficult, because the data transcriptions and codes have to be handed in to the university. Moreover, this thesis is published publicly on the university's website. To counter this dilemma, I informed my respondents openly about my research and provided them with information about what happens to the data. I will therefore not use any names to keep it as anonymous as possible. Other difficulties and limitations I expected were my position and bias as a highly educated student. I tackled this problem by being open and honest about my background and my research, as well as showing empathy to build up trust. I used similarities in our backgrounds, such as coming from a rural southern village and having

PVV-voters in the family to establish trust. This often resulted in chit-chat which made them feel more comfortable. This background also helped in empathising with the interviewees, even when my personal views were not the same as theirs. I did not engage in political discussions or tell my own views as to not influence the data and the feeling they could not express their feelings without being judged.

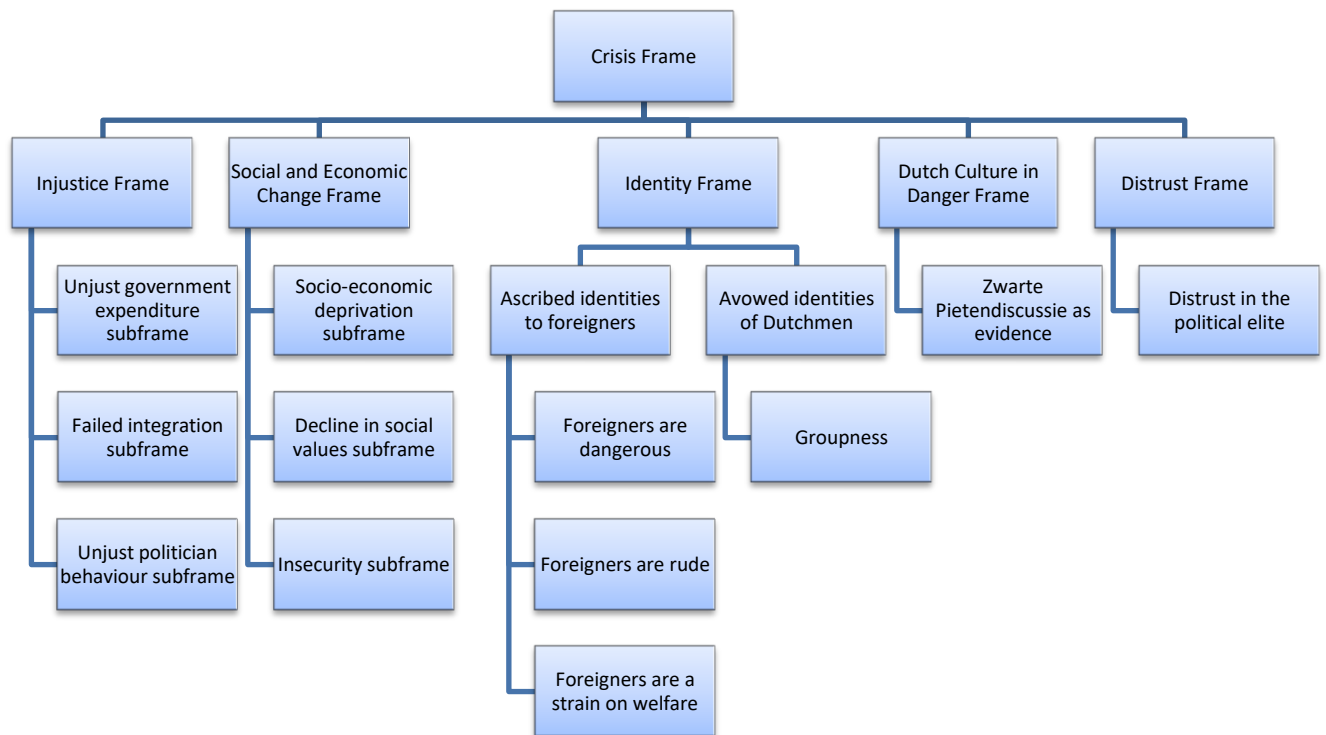
In conclusion, although there were some initial setbacks during the data-gathering phase of this research, the chosen methods have corresponded well with the initial approach and provided some interesting insights in the motives of right-wing populist supporters. The main challenges to this research have been the difficulties during sampling, the representativeness of the sample, finding respondents and the unwillingness to participate in the life history interviews. However, semi-structured interviews turned out to be ideal to go in-depth behind initial issues of distrust to get to the core of people's views and frames. Despite limitations and ethical dilemmas, the epistemological and bottom-up approach, chosen qualitative methodology and research methods have formed a coherent methodological approach that shaped the entirety of this thesis.

4. Results

4.1. Introduction

One of the main findings that the interviews provided is that right-wing populist supporters in the Netherlands use a crisis frame to identify problems in their lives and society. These problems are framed as an on-going crisis in the Netherlands and Europe. Within this crisis frame, the PVV offers the best solutions to these problems. The crisis frame can be described as a meaningful narrative that people use to situate events and groups, and focuses on the emotion of fear to poison relations. Furthermore, the instrumentalist view identifies political or influential leaders as actively manipulating nationalist sentiments and loyalties for their own political goals. Political leaders make use of fear arousing appeals, originating in a threat of others and the promotion of a sense of victimhood, which is effective in changing opinions and evoke feelings of nationalism. 12 PVV-supporters were interviewed in order to answer the main research question: Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist parties?

The Dutch crisis frame among PVV-supporters can be divided into 5 interconnected frames. These are all part of the crisis frame because they each highlight an aspect of the crisis. The first is the *injustice frame*, which is the shared feeling that they, ‘the ordinary Dutchmen’, are treated unfairly by the government. While foreigners and refugees receive money and housing for free, Dutchmen have to work hard and get no support from the government. The second frame is the *social and economic change frame*. This frame deals with the perceived degradation of Dutch healthcare, education and personal socio-economic position. The third frame is the *identity frame* which ascribes identities to ‘foreigners’ with negative characteristics in contrast to the hard-working Dutchmen. The fourth frame warns that the *Dutch culture and identity is in danger* and deals with Islamisation and the disappearance of traditions. Lastly, the fifth frame is the *distrust frame*. PVV-voters have lost trust in politics, and see politicians, with the exception of Geert Wilders, as untrustworthy. These five frames have been the most recurring themes in the interviews and form the main problems for these people to turn to the PVV for solutions. The results of these interviews will be discussed within the context of these five frames. The 5 frames and the variety of subframes are depicted in Graph 1.



Graph 1: Characteristics of the crisis frame

4.2. Injustice frame

Feelings of injustice are prevalent among PVV-voters. There is a sense of victimhood of being treated unfairly by the government, whereas foreign migrants are treated with great care. Out of 12 respondents, 10 explicitly mentioned feelings of injustice, which included both men and women and ages ranging from 23 to 80 years old. The strong feelings of injustice are associated with the core Dutch value of equality, as mentioned by 6 of the respondents. The injustice frame used can be divided into three subframes: unjust government expenditure subframe, failed integration subframe and the unjust politician behaviour subframe.

“Nothing as easy as asking for more. Let’s be honest, there are a lot of people from Eritrea here. They have nothing. They come here, they receive money every month, they get child benefits, housing benefits, their house is furnished, and their phone is being paid for. (...) It is paid by us, I don’t think that’s right. We have to pay our own phone bills! This is exactly what I mean by the polarisation of society.”

This quote by a 52-year-old health care professional exemplifies the first, and most prevalent subframe used in the injustice frame: the government spends too much money on

foreigners, migrants, refugees and foreign countries at the expense of the average Dutchman. All the 10 respondents that explicitly used the injustice frame, have argued this. This frame also focuses on the government budget cuts as a result of the economic crisis in the last decade. PVV-voters perceive it as unjust that ordinary Dutch citizens are unable to get a house due to long waiting lists, unable to see a medical professional fast enough due to rising costs in healthcare and have to work hard to pay their bills while others, mostly foreigners, are profiting of welfare benefits. This links to the socio-economic deprivation frame which will be discussed later. The following quote by a 40-year-old volunteer of the PVV illustrates the strong feeling of injustice regarding him not receiving any benefits.

“We all have to work hard for our money, but it is just unfairly distributed. Nowadays, someone who does not work is rewarded, and the mass immigration just keeps pouring in which costs more and more. (...) We have to pay for their health issues! I do not receive any benefits even though I have a family of 5 people. There are no child benefits, no payments for laundry detergents, no childcare allowances or computer reimbursements, I don’t receive those. And I don’t need it. But it is unfairly distributed because those people come here and the government is like: here you go. And I’m not making this up, you can look it all up! It is not right, it is not right!”

A second injustice subframe deals with the perceived failed integration of foreigners in the Dutch society, which a 25-year-old man illustrates in the following quote:

“All Muslims have to get out of this country, yes I agree with that. If you just adjust to the Dutch culture, then it’s fine. But there are those people that think that they can do anything they want. A simple example: if we go abroad, and we visit a mosque, then we have to take off our shoes, put on a headscarf and cover ourselves. So there we have to adjust to them, but here they don’t adapt to us. I don’t think that’s right.”

Although a lot is made available for immigrants to integrate, learn the language and work, they are seen by PVV-voters as lazy, and not willing to put any effort in assimilating. In contrast, 6 respondents argued that Dutchmen do adjust to foreign cultures when they go abroad or visit religious places like mosques. This touches the core value of respect for each other as mentioned by 8 interviewees. It is therefore unjust that Dutchmen adapt when going abroad, and work hard to behave well and respect immigrants, whereas foreign migrants in the Netherlands completely fail to adapt to Dutch society.

“I have never trusted politicians. It’s really just nepotism right? They decide for themselves with who they rule the country. That was already a crisis back when Balkenende formed a government. It’s sorted out in such a way that, well, that’s a nice government but the parties with the most votes are [adding water to the wine] compromising so much they change their own ideals and promises just to be able to rule. That’s been the case as long as I remember.”

This quote is an example of the third injustice subframe, which is also connected to the Distrust Frame, discussed below, because it deals with the feelings of injustice associated with the politicians in The Hague not listening to the problems of the ordinary Dutchmen, and excluding the PVV out of the formation of the government. One person blames the media for creating negative stories about the PVV while reporting about the other, more leftist political parties more positively. This feeling of being left out is expressed by 5 respondents.

4.3. Social and economic change frame

9 out of 12 respondents felt that the Netherlands has changed in a negative way. The opinions about when this change was first noticed ranges from 40 to 2 years ago. However, 4 interviewees report that this negative change started in the last two decades. This social and economic change frame is split up into multiple facets in which change has taken place. These are the socio-economic deprivation subframe, the decline in social values subframe, and the insecurity subframe.

“[Caregivers in care homes] reject things, snap at you, do not allow people to go to the toilet. ‘Yes, I’ll get you later, first I’ll do something else.’ And then it’s one and a half hour later. If you’re in a diaper, and you want it to be clean because you don’t get a new one, you can ask for some help to go to the toilet right? I think so. And what are they doing in that one and a half hour? Chatting, sitting in the office. People receive food that’s still raw! (...) Healthcare here is awful, it’s not about care but about money.”

As can be seen in this quote, some respondents had a strong opinion about healthcare. The socio-economic deprivation subframe entails the relative decline in quality of healthcare as stated by 7 respondents, and the quality of education as reported by 3 respondents. Among these people, there is a general consensus that the government has cut too much on health care and education. In the last decade, it has become more expensive to go to a health care professional and pay for medicine. However, all of these respondents have specifically talked

about how people are treated, especially when talking about elderly care. 7 Interviewees claim migrants are to blame for the rising costs in healthcare. Migrants are seen as being more prone to making use of welfare and healthcare systems while not actively contributing to society by working. The socio-economic deprivation frame is therefore used to scapegoat migrants as the main culprit of these problems.

“The Dutch too, it’s all me, myself and I. Ask for help! A few years ago I fell down at the park, I couldn’t get back up. (...) I don’t know how many people just walked by, but no one asked Miss? No way! People just walk on! (...) Being there for someone, people don’t know how to do that anymore. (...) Back in the day there was more peace, you were safe. What happened back then? Sometimes a fight, but big things and murder? No way! If there was sadness or sickness in a family, everyone ran over with some eggs or soup. That was just normal!”

This is an example of someone expressing how they perceive the decline in social values in the Netherlands. The second social and economic change subframe is therefore the decline in social values frame. According to 6 respondents, Dutch society has become more individualistic, harsher and egoistic. People do not have the same manners and social values of mutual respect like it used to be. Greeting, helping each other and being polite is a thing of the past. Children are not taken care of because both parents are working, and money seems to be the more important than social values. Unlike the identity frame, where this negative behaviour is ascribed to foreigners, the decline in social values is also prevalent among Dutchmen. The influx of migrants is seen as a leading cause, as they bring in feelings of insecurity and migrants demand money. 2 Interviewees said the internet, smartphones and social media are also to blame.

“When I buy a ticket for a concert, the first thing that goes through my mind is: should I do this because what if there’s a bomb explosion? And places where you’re together with many people... at first it was bad luck that you’re there at such a moment. That’s of course still the case, bad place, bad timing. But now, it [the terrorist attacks] are coming back at so many different ways. At football, sidewalk cafes, you name it. That it’s just, I think it can just happen anywhere! And now when I’m on the train, I’m really observing people because God what are they up to? And what if this happens? You can almost get a panic attack on the train.”

This quote by a 23-year-old student exemplifies the insecurity subframe, which is the last subframe of the social and economic change frame. 7 out of 12 respondents claimed to have a feeling of insecurity. Especially in the last few years, people felt increasingly unsafe. This is mostly due to the fact that foreigners are seen as dangerous. The rise of migrants is seen as going hand in hand with rising criminality, especially serious offenses such as murder and rape, and terrorist attacks. 5 interviewees have expressed that they look around them suspiciously when in public. They especially see people with a different skin colour as suspicious. Events that attracts lots of people and big transport hubs are avoided in fear of terrorist attacks. Certain neighbourhoods, streets and groups of foreigners are also avoided. Although the opinions vary, most respondents claim they have noticed the change in security in the last 5 years. The terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels are key events that people name to trigger their sense of alertness and fear. This frame is also used as cause of the decline of social values frame, as people become more on their own and defensive when they feel insecure.

4.4. Identity frame

All 12 respondents have used the identity frame during the interviews. People are grouped together and ascribed characteristics of an identity. The vast majority of interviewees, 10 out of 12, had initial difficulty to describe the Dutch identity, even when talking about the existence of a Dutch identity with core values themselves. In contrast, the interviewees were quick to ascribe negative characteristics to the group named ‘the foreigners’. When specified further, these were mostly seen as Muslims living in the Netherlands, including refugees and people of Middle-Eastern or North-African descent. 5 Respondents described an ethnic hierarchy, in which Muslims, especially Turks and Moroccans, were ascribed the most negative characteristics whereas foreign Westerners or East-Asians were seen more positively. Only when respondents had friends who had foreign ancestry, they were seen as a friend, a mother, or a student. The identity frame can be split into two subframes: the ascribed identities to foreigners, and the avowed identities of the Dutch themselves.

All respondents argued that foreigners who come to the Netherlands must adapt and assimilate into Dutch society. 9 Respondents put extra emphasis on the Dutch language and argued that when people are in public they should speak Dutch. Moreover, 6 interviewees state that the unwillingness of these ‘foreigners’ to adapt is the main reason for most of the problems mentioned in the other frames. Foreigners must adapt because they are different, and these differences are ascribed characteristics in the identity frame. The interviewees

mentioned a staggering number of 109 ascribed, often negative, characteristics of what foreigners are, how they do or do not act, and what they should do. The most common ascriptions, followed by the number of people who used them, are: foreigners act as if they're in charge (8), foreigners are dangerous (7), foreigners are misogynist (7), foreigners are criminals (6), foreigners are aggressive (6), foreigners do not work hard (5), foreigners are untrustworthy (5), and foreigners are *uitkeringtrekkers*, a term with a negative connotation describing benefit-dependent welfare recipients (5).

"They [the foreigners] are just crazy! They immediately grab a knife! Yea, you always have to be careful I think."

These ascriptions can be divided into three different aspects of the foreigner identity. Firstly, foreigners are dangerous. They murder, rape, harass women, fight, have weapons, are aggressive, criminals, terrorists and act as if they are in charge. They, and areas where they are prevalent such as certain neighbourhoods are best to be avoided.

"I used to walk with an old lady to the park, because she was too scared of the foreigners. She said: I would like to see the trains going east again. I said I agreed."

This quote refers to the trains used by the Nazis during the Holocaust, and shows how foreigners can be perceived as inferior, unwanted, and dangerous. Three PVV-supporters predicted a violent clash to happen in the Netherlands between the native Dutch population and foreign migrants. An outright civil war within 5 years was among the possibilities that were mentioned. One respondent participated in protests against the arrival of an asylum shelter, which turned violent with vandalism and the use of dead pigs to symbolise anti-Islamic sentiments.

"And they always use discrimination as an excuse! That's wrong, it's just a matter of adapting. They want to have all the pleasures of Western society, but are they assimilating? No! They just call us bad names and look down on us."

Secondly, as this quote describes, the foreigner identity consists of them being rude. Their unwillingness to adapt irks the respondents, especially when they do not speak Dutch in public, wear different or inappropriate clothing such as headscarves, do not greet each other, show no respect to authorities, behave untrustworthy, cut in line and use discrimination or racism as an excuse to better themselves.

“All those people clump together, but it has to come together because they all have a low income, they’re all on social welfare. Every time, they don’t work so they can only live in social rental housing, so all those social housing neighbourhoods turn to absolute scum.”

Thirdly, this quote illustrates the ascribed identity of foreigners that contain characteristics that ensure they are a strain on the Dutch healthcare and welfare system. Foreigners do not work hard, are dependent on benefits, and are the leading cause of the increasingly high costs of healthcare.

The second identity subframe is the avowed identity of the Dutch PVV-voters themselves. The respondents use the ascribed identity of foreigners to create an avowed identity of opposite characteristics. 4 Respondents claimed Dutchmen work hard, 6 respondents said Dutchmen adapt to other cultures when going abroad, and 3 people said Dutchmen value traditions a lot. Moreover, 6 people claimed that being Dutch is not something one can lose. Even when emigrating and fully assimilating into a different society, these respondents would still see them as Dutchmen. In addition, 8 interviewees argue that foreigners are able to become Dutch if they fully assimilate. Being Dutch is described by the respondents as doing as the Dutch do. Official papers, passports and recognition do not contribute to the feeling or ascription of people being really Dutch. 3 Respondents even want to abolish dual citizenship. For 5 PVV-voters, religion does not play an important role in the Dutch identity, therefore foreigners can practice whatever religion they like at home. In contrast, 4 people believe Christianity plays an important role in the Dutch identity, shaping its core values, traditions and mannerisms. 3 Interviewees think it is fine if people practice different religions, as long as they are not confronted by it. They argue that people can do whatever they like, as long as it is behind closed doors. PVV-voters also describe the Dutchmen as down-to-earth, active participants of society, straight to the point, modest, proud, can handle a joke, neat, entrepreneurial, liberal, hard-working, sober, business-like, sympathetic and traditional, but they are also seen by some respondents as a people without fighting spirit. The Dutch identity encompasses togetherness, cosiness, down-to-earth, act normal, that’s crazy enough, a life without aggression, a free trading spirit, liberal ideas, freedom of speech and entrepreneurship.

Negative characteristics are also mentioned, mostly in the context of people who do not respond to the problems foreign migrants bring to the Netherlands. These characteristics are: cowardice, egocentric, and rude. In contrast to the described tolerant nature of Dutchmen, PVV-supporters have also named examples of their experiences where they participate in

daily discrimination of minorities. These include things like: spitting on the ground near foreign migrants, making noises of disapproval, looking at them resentfully, confronting them to speak Dutch, keeping a close eye on them or avoiding them altogether.

The initial hesitation when asked about the Dutch identity can be seen in the following quote:

“Uh, Dutchmen are down-to-earth, straight to the point, uh... yes just the solidarity of the Dutch, you can see that when the national football team is playing or... uh... yes. The Dutch culture... just the, everywhere you go the Dutch culture is known. It’s just the uh, down-to-earth boys and, yes...”

3 Respondents mentioned the *oranjegevoel*, translated as orange feeling, the feeling of solidarity among Dutchmen, which indicates high groupness when the national football team is playing a match. 2 People feel proud of their Dutch heritage when they come across Dutch cities, events and nature. One person argued an external threat would increase groupness in Dutch society. Another felt nostalgic when talking about the Dutch identity and sees it as a thing in the past.

4.5. Dutch culture in danger frame

“And indeed it’s just that our culture is beginning to resemble theirs, and the more followers of those cultures that come here, the more influence that culture has. At a certain point there are literally more of those cultures in the Netherlands than the Dutch culture. You can see that with that whole Saint Nicholas situation, and eh you name it. That you’re thinking yeah. It’s not the Muslims in this case but it’s about the Dutch norms and values. I honestly think that the Netherlands is fed up with it.”

This quote illustrates a view that 8 out of 12 respondents mentioned, which is that the aforementioned Dutch culture is threatened by the influx of foreign migrants into the country. 7 interviewees agree with Wilders that the Netherlands is ‘islamising’, which means that a Muslim identity and culture is becoming dominant in the Netherlands, replacing Dutch values. 7 PVV-voters believe the threat foreigners pose can only be stopped by closing the national borders and investigating everyone who comes into the country. This frame thrives on fear and uses crisis frame phrases such as ‘The Netherlands is Islamising’ and ‘a tsunami of refugees’ in conjunction with experiences such as the Black Pete discussion to create the

perception that the Dutch culture is threatened. Although the general consensus was that the Dutch culture has been damaged too much to recover, 7 interviewees described doom scenarios of how bad it is going to get if nothing changes. Out of these 7, 3 people thought not just Zwarte Piet was going to be changed, but a snowball effect threatened the other traditions and festivals such as Christmas as well. 3 People were afraid the Islam would get a dominant position in society, and 2 PVV-voters expressed their fears of becoming a minority in their own country. 2 Others were afraid foreign migrants will keep pouring in, and were afraid that the Netherlands would become an Islamic society resembling Turkey.

To counter these threats, 3 respondents argued the government is responsible for protecting the Dutch culture and heritage. 3 respondents, including 2 that hold the government responsible, use the phrase *‘Eigen volk eerst!’* which translates to ‘our own people first’, meaning that Dutchmen should be the first priority of the government, leaving foreign migrants in second place. This includes giving priority to Dutchmen over foreign migrants in waiting lists for housing and health care. 2 PVV-voters said they consciously put, or will put their children in ‘white schools’, arguing that the quality of education goes down when there are foreign children there who do not speak the language and show no respect to teachers. Moreover, the Dutch identity is in this context specifically connected to skin colour, as schools with a high number of foreigners and low quality of education is described as ‘black’.

“Yes in the old days you could leave the door open, even the front door. That has all changed. People are all a bit more reserved now, the good morning, good afternoon, good evening, that’s also all gone. How that came to be? If you have 30 Ali’s living in your street, then it’s a bit difficult isn’t it? Even if there’s only 10 of them, if you say good morning, and you say that for half a year, and that entire time you get no reaction except for ‘pfoe pfoe’, or spitting on the ground they also like that, then at a certain point you stop greeting them. And this slowly continues until there’s a point that this cannot go on anymore. And every time I’m surprised to see that it can degrade even further. It is such a shame.”

This quote is given by 1 of the 6 interviewees that felt that the Dutch core values were in danger. These values include: mutual respect, respect for the authorities and the elderly, equality and freedom of speech. 2 respondents could not name any Dutch values, although they were convinced of the foreign threat on the Dutch identity. Not only do foreign migrants not adhere to these values, they also change how Dutch people uphold these values.

“I think it’s outrageous that Zwarte Piet is not allowed. I think it does not make any sense. You can happily introduce a Stroopwafel Piet, but it’s a Dutch tradition, you keep your hands off those. If you don’t like it, then don’t look at it. I think this is completely unacceptable. And last Christmas it said in the newspaper that you cannot say Merry Christmas anymore, but instead you should say ‘Happy Holidays’, that got me like, that’s just impossible!”

Evidence of these threats are based on personal experiences, media reports and the *Zwarte Pietendiscussie*, or Black Pete discussion, which has had a polarising effect on Dutch society between people in favour of changing the black appearance of Zwarte Piet, and those who are against change. All 12 respondents did not see the need for change, while 9 respondents felt strongly about the fact that this discussion was corroding Dutch culture and traditions. One person argued it was not important and that people should focus on different things, another claimed the discussion was amusing but was against change. It was striking that all the other interviewees felt very strongly on this topic. Voices were raised, strong words were used and emotions of utter disbelief, feeling appalled and offended. These PVV-voters are offended by being called racist, as in their eyes Zwarte Piet is not racist at all. They describe the changing appearance of Zwarte Piet as very sudden and fast, which makes them very defensive. They also argue that this discussion is ruining the celebrations for the children, and that the anti Zwarte Piet movement is using historical inaccuracies. The discussion and subsequent change of the appearance of Zwarte Piet hits a sensitive spot and is used as evidence in the frame that the Dutch culture and other traditions are being threatened.

4.6. Distrust frame

The last frame comprises the feelings of distrust. This is mainly directed towards the political elite, which is a typical characteristic of right-wing populism. However, as described in the aforementioned social and economic change frame, and the identity frame, feelings of distrust also exist between Dutchmen and between the respondents and foreign migrants. 10 out of 12 respondents have expressed their distrust explicitly, of which 8 directed it towards politicians in The Hague. 5 towards foreign migrants and 3 towards people in general.

Distrust in the political elite can be so high, that some people wonder why they are still voting. 5 People said politicians ruined their trust by cutting in the healthcare budget, making healthcare much more expensive for people. 2 Others said the same about the cuts in the education budget. 3 Respondents claimed the politicians spent too much money on foreign

countries such as development aid and Greece during the European monetary crisis. Two people claimed politicians cannot be trusted because they do not keep their promises, two others stated they do not take responsibility for their actions. All of the above reasons are used by 5 people to explain how untrustworthy Prime Minister Rutte is. He is seen as the face of the political elite and subsequent self-enriching, untrustworthy characteristics it brings with it. He is also seen as the cause of the aforementioned social and economic deprivation of the last few decades. Other political parties than the PVV are not to be trusted because they do not see and talk about the real issues of mass immigration and foreign threats. Two people claim political correctness is the main cause of this. This is especially true for left-wing parties, of which Jesse Klaver of the GroenLinks party is especially untrustworthy due to his Moroccan roots according to two respondents. Furthermore, the EU is seen by most as economically necessary, but also untrustworthy in its power structure. Two interviewees argued the individual countries should have more autonomy within the EU.

10 PVV-supporters expressed their anger towards the other political parties because they excluded the PVV in the formation talks in 2017. This left a dent in their trust, with some people claiming that democracy is failing and their vote does not count. 6 interviewees felt that they were not heard by the political elite because of this. Excluding the PVV, which became the second biggest party after the most recent election with more than a million votes, is difficult to fathom for these respondents. One person said that this is also the main reason she did not vote for the PVV in 2017, because they were excluded beforehand. The following quote is an example of the distrust this has caused:

“I’m like, why do I even go to vote? It’s the same as that referendum, everyone takes an effort to go and vote, but eventually nothing is done with your vote. (...) Well, I don’t think this is really a democracy. I’m also like, I can vote for PVV the next elections, but that vote is cast aside anyway. So I think, if the PVV becomes the biggest party then they cannot exclude him, but as far as he is second or third nothing really happens.”

In addition, 4 interviewees stated that the recent conviction of Geert Wilders is a sham. They felt it was unfair, and evidence that the political elite was trying to work against him together with the foreign migrants who reported him. Furthermore, two people argue that the media are untrustworthy because they only report negative news about Wilders.

5. Discussion

The results show that the crisis frame of Dutch PVV supporters can be divided into 5 frames and several subframes. In this chapter these results will be analysed by use of the literature discussed in the theoretical framework. Firstly, it will be discussed how the results fit into the main populism discourse, and how populists claim resonate within the frames of PVV-supporters. Secondly, it will be analysed how extremist ideas seep into the populist discourse and frames used by the respondents. Thirdly, the gender aspect of this discourse is examined and compared to the literature. Fourthly, the results are analysed by use of the literature that focuses on populism in the Netherlands, including more specific Dutch themes such as the discussion on the appearance of Zwarte Piet. Fifthly, the different views on ethnicity and national identity are used to analyse the results. Sixthly, the effect of groupness in PVV-supporters is discussed. This is followed by a discussion on ethnic boundaries of the Dutch identity. Lastly, the processes of framing used by PVV-supporters is examined.

5.1. Populism Explained

The literature shows that populists claim that the actions of the government should reflect the general will of ‘the people’, which is a unified population considered to comprise of pure and uncorrupted citizens of an imagined heartland. Furthermore, a distinction is made between ‘we’ the pure people, and ‘them’ the corrupt elite, in which the political establishment does not represent the people but distorts politics to gain power for itself (Otjes & Louwerse 2015, 60; Vieten & Poynting 2016, 537). Right-wing populists in particular add a group of ‘others’ whose interests are defended by the elite, and use ethnicity, race and religion as social divisions in identity to ascribe others as culturally different. The PVV is considered a right-wing populist party because it follows these claims.

The results of this thesis show that these populist claims are also widely accepted by the PVV-supporters who are interviewed in this thesis. The injustice frame and distrust frame in particular show how people feel neglected by the government and political elite. 10 out of 12 respondents expressed feelings of injustice. Unjust government expenditure especially shows how budget cuts and the allocation of funds towards development aid and migrants creates a feeling of not being represented, heard and helped. In contrast, the political elite is seen as the root cause of the social and economic deprivation people experience personally by rising health costs. The unjust politician behaviour subframe is exemplary of the feelings of PVV-supporters that politicians in The Hague are not listening to the problems of ‘the ordinary people’ and excluding the PVV in the government formations. The distrust frame

shows that 8 out of 12 respondents explicitly directed their distrust towards politicians, of which 5 targeted Prime Minister Rutte. People feel that it's undemocratic that the PVV is excluded beforehand by the other political parties and question the need to vote. These feelings of neglect, injustice and distrust towards the political elite is a typical breeding ground for right-wing populism to thrive in. The PVV offers a solution to these emotions by trying to represent 'the people', the unified, pure and ordinary Dutchmen, and is therefore one of the main reasons why PVV-supporters turn to right-wing populist parties. There is some resemblance with left-wing populism too, as the ordinary Dutchman is perceived as a hard-working individual who is cut short by international organisations such as the EU.

The third claim, that points to a group of 'others' by using social divisions such as ethnicity and religion, is one of the key arguments that came back in every interview. It is also exactly the argument that distinguishes right-wing populist parties from other populist parties. The aforementioned injustice frame also contains the failed integration subframe which expresses the feelings of injustice regarding the unwillingness of immigrants to integrate, learn the language and work. This is because of ascribed characteristics in the identity frame. Foreigners, mostly Muslim immigrants such as Moroccans, Turks and Syrians are ascribed a great number of negative characteristics. The populist argument that the government is helping them instead of 'the people' is evident in the interviewees claims that refugees are given housing, clothing, telephones, benefits and money whereas they receive nothing at all. Even worse, they are paying for it through taxation. The frames used by PVV-supporters are therefore characteristic of the right-wing populist discourse. The bottom-up approach of this thesis confirms that the claims right-wing populist parties have also resonate among their supporters.

According to the literature, populism is caused by economic crises, casualties of restructurings, insecurities and displacement because of societal changes caused by neoliberalism, the fears of the middle strata of downward mobility, the failure of the left to offer a credible radical alternative and the sense that this crisis does not affect all classes, ethnicities and genders evenly (Vieten & Poynting 201, 534; Baier 2016, 49). Some of these causes are reflected in the results. The economic crisis and the following restructuring, budget cuts and insecurities marks a key subject in the social and economic change frame. This has led to socio-economic deprivation and unjust government expenditure. As a result, people became more selfish as part of the decline in social values. Displacement and insecurities of neoliberalism in a context of conflicts and rising inequalities have in part caused the influx of migrants towards Europe. This also affected feelings of social change and financial

insecurities. Fears of the middle strata of downward mobility have also been expressed in the interviews, as they see themselves as paying too much for immigrants who therefore rise in socio-economic position. These causes of populism have indeed motivated people to vote for right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands. Economic incentives and societal change are major topics in the frames used by PVV-supporters. Zakaria's (2016, 15) claim that young people feel less anxious about foreigners cannot be seen in the interviews, as there were 5 respondents in their twenties who were worried about the foreign influences in the Netherlands. The bottom-up approach shows that populist supporters are not one big homogeneous entity of low-educated middle-aged men fearing change, in contrast, the populist discourse also resonates among young, highly educated people who also use the social and economic change frame despite growing up in an already neoliberal society. Drastic changes and budget costs caused by the economic crisis, the influx of refugees and terrorist attacks are among the major events from the last 5 to 10 years that are mentioned by these respondents. This makes it evident that economic insecurities as well as feelings of safety are among the biggest drivers for young people to turn to right-wing populist parties.

5.2. Right-wing Populism and Right-wing Extremism

Right-wing extremist groups only have a weak presence in the Netherlands. None of the respondents were part of a right-wing extremist group, and most wanted to use the democratic system to bring about change. However, some of the respondents did have more extremist views which fall into the category of ethnocentric nationalism, also known as *new right* (Voerman & Lucardie 1992, 35). At least three PVV-supporters predicted a violent clash to happen in the Netherlands between the native Dutch population and foreign migrants. An outright civil war within 5 years was among the possibilities that were mentioned. The idea that it takes a violent conflict to bring about change is in line with right-wing extremism ideas about using violence as a means to reach certain goals. One respondent participated in protests against the arrival of an asylum shelter, which turned violent with vandalism and the use of dead pigs to symbolise anti-Islamic sentiments. This is an emotional style of extremist politics that Blee (2007, 123) argues intensify the message they want to convey. The same respondent also repeatedly mentioned that he "would like to see the trains going east again", referring to the trains used by the Nazis during the holocaust. The acute sense of urgency that is conveyed in right-wing populist discourse helps PVV-supporters remain committed in the wake of stigma and marginalisation.

The types Linden and Klandermans (2007, 199-200) identified within right-wing

extremist groups do not all apply to PVV-supporters. The PVV does not have any members, and rarely has meetings. Therefore, it does not serve as a meeting place. However, it is used as an instrument to change the world, and PVV-supporters do feel that they have suffered wrongs and are angry. This means that the PVV has some resemblances to right-wing extremist groups, and extremist ideas can be reinforced by populist ideas. Ethnic nationalism, which includes xenophobia, racism and anti-Europeanism, an authoritarian conception of society, social chauvinism are all shared notions that right-wing extremist parties also have. However, it remains important to note that the majority of the respondents in this research, as well as the PVV itself, do not endorse violence and are not to be considered extremist. The top-down approach of creating clear-cut divisions and definitions separating right-wing populism and right-wing extremism is useful to research these separate groups and ideas. However, the bottom-up approach shows that boundaries between these groups and discourses are not always as clear-cut as they might seem. Some nuance is necessary to take notice of the commonalities between members of right-wing extremist groups and supporters of right-wing populist groups.

5.3. Right-wing Populism and Gender

As De Lange & Mügge (2015, 62-65) discussed, the PVV falls under the nationalist populist category, which has progressive ideas about gender. This allows for the argument that Muslim women need to be emancipated and rescued from their restrictive, misogynist Islamic culture. All but one respondents mentioned Islam is misogynist, meaning they saw Muslim women as repressed by men. Furthermore, headscarves were seen as a means of Muslim men to control women and a sign of refusal to integrate into Dutch society. PVV-supporters had progressive ideas about gender, supporting women and LGBTQ rights. The more conservative ideologies of foreign migrants were seen as a threat to the progressive, and more civilised values of the Netherlands. Therefore, PVV-supporters have aligned themselves with women, and LGBTQ right advocates. This is also based on personal experiences, as some female respondents have experienced harassment by migrant men, or had neighbouring migrant women being assaulted by men. The identity frame used by the respondents therefore has an intrinsic gender-aspect to it, in which mainly the foreign men are considered dangerous predators whereas the women are repressed. Violence against LGBTQ people that was covered in the media was also used as evidence, because these crimes were allegedly committed by foreign migrant men. Dutch women who had relationships with Muslim men were also not accepted by at least 3 respondents, because of fears the Dutch women would be repressed and lose control of their

own will and freedom of speech. No such things were mentioned about men having a relationship with Muslim women. This shows that the progressive ideas about gender that the PVV uses also resonate within frames used by PVV-supporters.

5.4. Populism in the Netherlands

The aforementioned progressive values on gender of the PVV and only a small, and weak presence of right-extremist groups make the Netherlands an interesting case to study why people turn to right-wing populist parties. Nationalism is normalised by the far right because it portrays other cultures as endemically misogynist and homophobic (Vieten & Poynting 2016, 538-539). Mepschen (2012, 66-67) shows that restructuring of neighbourhoods can create a discourse of displacement in which local people develop an antagonistic relationship towards ‘others’, mainly identified as political elites and migrants. In this context, the current rise of populism needs to be understood in the context of the transition of a pillarised (*verzuilde*), fordist welfare state to a globalising postfordist society. This fits into the social and economic change frame PVV-supporters use to see the world. Two respondents have seen their neighbourhood or town turn from quiet, well-kept places to live, to dirty, loud, criminal places full of immigrants. This has created a sense of displacement which caused one of the interviewees to move away to another city. Moreover, the socio-economic deprivation subframe shows that the respondents feel that there is a decline in their financial position and social wellbeing. They point at the government expenditures and increasing health costs as the culprit of this. This fits within Mepschen’s (2012, 81) explanation that populism is a reaction on the structural transformation of Dutch society in a neoliberal direction.

Compared to a few decades ago, there has been more privatisation and a neoliberal mindset. The current Prime Minister Mark Rutte has advocated a *participatiemaatschappij*, or participation society, in which people are responsible to participate, help each other and take care of themselves more. However, as mentioned before, a significant portion of the respondents were young people in their twenties who grew up in a globalising postfordist society. Some nuance therefore has to be added; other factors such as economic and demographical changes also play a role in the growing popularity of the populist discourse. Van Genugten (2013, 75-7) argues that the increased popularity of populist parties in the Netherlands are caused by the loss of policy control through deregulation and Europeanisation, the loss of faith in politics, rising individualism and the crumbling of pillarised societies. This structural change of Dutch society has therefore had negative impacts among the PVV-supporters, causing them to feel resentment towards the government because they see this as

unjust. The results of this thesis therefore fit within Mepschen's (2012) argument who has also used a bottom-up approach, but adds some nuances with a perspective from young right-wing populist supporters.

Because of the progressive values in the Netherlands, Van Genugten (2013, 72) argues that the fear of Islamic immigration is not based on fears of ethnic or religious competition, but veiled in defence of secularist and liberal values. The Dutch debate is therefore not only about Islam, but more about questions of national identity in which a conflict emerged between the ones that see Dutch society as tolerant and inclusive for minorities, and those that defend progressive and secularist values against attacks from the outside (Van Genugten 2013, 75-76). This debate has been described by the respondents as well. The Dutch culture in danger frame describes how Dutch values and traditions are under attack by outsiders. People are afraid of losing their identity, doom scenarios include that women have to wear headscarves and churches are replaced by mosques. Those that vote PVV and defend these values are seen as 'real' Dutchmen. The political elite who protects the attacking foreigners are seen as traitors, untrustworthy and selfish. Those who do not support PVV are mentioned by some respondents as being ignorant and looking away from the problems that exist in Dutch society. They argue that eventually the problems become so big, that people cannot look away anymore. At the same time, the PVV is excluded by other political parties and some PVV-supporters have experienced stigma for their political choices, which means this ideological clash comes from both sides.

As discussed in the results section, the discussion about the appearance of Zwarte Piet is part of the Dutch culture in danger frame, as it is used as evidence that others want to change Dutch traditions. All 12 respondents did not see any reason to change the appearance of Zwarte Piet, two of them were not bothered by the discussion at all while the other 10 were outraged. Hillhorst & Hermes (2016, 228) argue that people against changing Zwarte Piet feel passed over, ignored and that the country has given more than it can afford. This allows for a dichotomised 'us' versus 'them'. The outrage over a make-over of Zwarte Piet is a disenchantment and shared grief in which the unacceptable truth of globalisation is not allowed into the national consciousness. This requires an absolute refusal to admit historical realities such as colonialism and slavery, which has much more support than the PVV has voters. This bottom-up approach of Hillhorst & Hermes (2016) is in line with the aforementioned argument of Mepschen (2012) that the structural societal change of Dutch society towards a globalising neoliberal society has caused resentment and the rise of populism. Moreover, this links the Dutch culture in danger frame to the social and economic

change frame, as the change in Dutch values and traditions evoke the same range of emotions of anger, fear and resentment. The Zwarte Piet discussion has been discussed in every interview, and overwhelmingly caused emotional reactions of anger and disbelief. Some believe it is only a stepping stone to change the rest of Dutch traditions and values. It is the most tangible example and evidence of the Dutch culture in danger frame. Just as the social and economic change frame, PVV-supporters reject and resist change in culture and anchor their primordial identity in fixed characteristics of Dutch identity, which will be discussed further below.

The more banal Dutch nationalism discussed by Kesic & Duyvendak (2016, 582), in which nationalism is dismissed as a bad, nativist discourse, is associated with the progressive, high-educated elite. This conflicts with the nativist nationalism that right-wing populist parties propagate. This conflict between the elite and the ordinary Dutchmen is also described in the distrust frame. The political elite is seen as not being proud of their Dutch heritage which is worthy of protection. Instead, they are seen as looking away from the problems that are there and supporting minorities and foreign migrants who attack Dutch culture and society. The anti-nationalist nationalism discussed by Kesic & Duyvendak (2016) is therefore seen as weak, problematic and a big reason why the Netherlands is decaying so fast.

5.5. National Identity and Ethnicity

Out of 12 respondents, 2 acknowledged they were racist. The other 10 considered themselves, Wilders and Zwarte Piet to not be racist at all. This corresponds with Betz' (2009, 193) explanation that right-wing populists do not equate their nationalism with racism, but rather as a preference to one's own people, just as people prefer family over outsiders. This populist nationalism is based on the restrictive notion of citizenship, in which a democracy is based on a culturally or ethnically homogeneous society, in which only long-standing citizens count as full members who can apply to society's benefits. This means that ethnicity is defined as a subjectively felt sense of belonging, based on the belief in a common culture and ancestry (Wimmer 2008, 973). This is in agreement with the identity frame in which foreigners are ascribed negative characteristics that differ from the avowed identity of Dutchmen. This Dutch identity in turn is also threatened by these outsiders. However, when asked directly, 8 respondents argue that foreign migrants can become full Dutch citizens as long as they adapt and assimilate into Dutch society, meaning that the Dutch identity is especially based on behaviour.

This has led to a distinction between 'good' and 'bad' foreigners. Those who behave

like the autochthonous Dutchmen and do not cause any problems are considered as full citizens. At least 5 respondents argued there was an ethnic or cultural hierarchy between groups who either cause problems or adapt. The lowest position is held by Muslims, especially Turks and Moroccans, who are seen as not willing to adapt to Dutch society, engage in criminal activities and are dangerous and rude. People from eastern Europe are seen as criminal and untrustworthy, but less threatening because they do not meddle into Dutch cultural affairs. Lastly, Hindustanis and Chinese people are seen as meek, orderly and cute. They are considered hard-working and do not cause any problems. Most respondents making this cultural hierarchy believe it is fine that there are hard-working, adapting migrants here. They are considered as Dutch citizens, participating in society. The bottom-up approach shows that the emphasis of PVV-supporters is on the negative characteristics of mostly Muslim immigrants who cause problems. The top-down approach of authors like Baier (2016), Vieten & Poynting (2016) and Zakaria (2016) clump ‘others’ on which populists blame their problems all together under one category, whereas the results of this thesis show that a cultural hierarchy is made which makes the view on others much more diverse than top-down approaches show. A more open view on the Dutch identity is also portrayed, as hard-working citizens are seen as Dutch, making behaviour one of the most important aspects of the Dutch identity. Solutions that the PVV offers such as closing borders and sending (post-)migrants to their country of origin may also hit these other groups that do not cause problems, but this is of a lesser concern to PVV-supporters and not discussed.

The cultural hierarchy made by PVV-supporters depicts a primordial view on ethnicity as discussed by Oberschall (2000, 982-984). As evidenced by the identity frame, ethnicity and cultural identities are a given and natural affinity to most respondents. One respondent voted PVV as a protest-vote, because Wilders is able to stir up the debates and keep politicians sharp about issues on immigration and European integration, as well as the ability to mobilise people with terms that create a sense of urgency. The same respondent also argued that cultures and traditions change all the time, and are only important in certain situations. This is the only interviewee who used an instrumentalist view on ethnicity, in which the political and intellectual elite manipulate ethnic sentiments and loyalties for political ends, and a constructionist view in which religion and ethnicity are seen as social facts, which only become important aspects of one’s identity in specific situations. This outlier shows that there are diverse standpoints among PVV-supporters. However, the majority adhered to a primordial view on ethnicity, in agreement with the PVV itself.

Oberschall (2000, 989-990) argues the political elite can manipulate nationalist

sentiments and loyalties by activating a crisis frame. This is a cognitive frame that focuses on the emotion of fear and has been one of the main concepts of this thesis. Fear arousing appeals originating in a threat of others, such as a ‘tsunami of immigrants’, and the promotion of a sense of victimhood, such as ‘the ordinary Dutchman is forgotten’, are key aspects of the crisis frame that also exists among PVV-voters. The crisis frame that is activated by the PVV taps into existing cultural values such as equality and problems such as the refugee crisis to mobilise people and rally behind the proposed solutions of political change. More of these framing processes will be discussed further down below.

By focussing on cultural identity, a form of ethnopoltics, which ideologises, reifies, stresses, modifies and re-creates distinctive cultural heritages of groups to reinforce systems of structured inequality, is used. Ethnic discrimination is hard to overcome once this is in place, and a primordial view on ethnicity prevails in this scenario (Baumann 1999, 60-63). Political and economic interests need to be apparent to use a cultural identity as a categorisation in daily life. The socio-economic deprivation subframe describes these political and economic interests among PVV-supporters. Foreigners are seen as being a strain on welfare by doing nothing and collecting benefits, paid for by taxpayers. Furthermore, it is argued that refugees get priority on housing whereas Dutchmen cannot get a house or proper place to live. Some respondents argue that this is unfair and they should get at the bottom of the waiting list. This is evidence that there are economic incentives to use cultural identity and ethnicity as functional markers in daily life. The feeling of injustice is then used by right-wing populist parties to garner more support and mobilise their supporters.

To make a distinction who fits within the Dutch identity and who does not, the identity frame uses labels to distinguish social categories with characteristics thought to be typical for members of the category. This is in line with Fearon and Laitin’s (2000, 848) argument, who identify three approaches in constructing a national identity. Firstly, right-wing populists use national identities as structures that people use to increase their life chances, as belonging to a dominant group gives the benefits of inclusion. Secondly, the discursive formation of symbolic and cultural systems is set up to differentiate from the ‘other’. This is expressed in the identity frame in which the Dutch identity has avowed characteristics. However, it is striking that PVV-supporters mostly had difficulty in describing the Dutch identity, the focus lied mostly at demonising the other and rejecting public expressions of Muslim culture. Thirdly, creating identities aid the political elite to strengthen their hold on power (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 853-857). Reinforcing ethnic boundaries and focussing on protecting the Dutch identity strengthens the PVV’s hold on power. Their arguments on immigration and

integration are the main reasons for PVV-supporters to vote for them, and made them the second biggest in the Netherlands in 2017. Therefore, Fearon and Laitin's (2000) argument on the distinguished social categories fits well within the frames used by PVV-supporters.

Sen (2006, 1-3) criticises the view popularised by Huntington (1996) that sees the world as a federation of religions and clashing civilisations. Instead, Sen (2006, 34-35) argues people have multiple identities that depend on the social situation one is in, and do not belong to a collectivity. The identity frame used by PVV-supporters shows that the majority of them have a primordial view on ethnicity. The multiplicity and diversity within the Muslim community in the Netherlands is not taken into account, but instead their identity is simplified in ascribed characteristics. Only when respondents had friends who had foreign ancestry, they were seen as a friend, a mother, or a student. Sen's (2006, 8) argument that politicians use the notion of a singular identity to discriminate and degrade groups of people by emphasising negative characteristics therefore fits the right-populist discourse and how people themselves use it with identity frames.

5.6. Ethnicity and Groupness

Within the identity frame, PVV-supporters show a sense of groupness when describing the avowed identities of Dutchmen. Brubaker (2002, 165) describes groupness as moments of extraordinary cohesion and moments of collective solidarity, which are not continuously present but rather an event. Three respondents reported feeling solidarity with fellow Dutchmen especially when there were international sport events. Mainly international football matches evoked feelings of a Dutch identity, and the use of symbols such as dressing up in the national colour orange, using the national heraldic sign of the lion and sing patriotic songs together. Two interviewees linked this feeling to being proud of the Netherlands, especially in international events, but also of Dutch places, history and nature. Only one person imagined feeling more groupness when there is an external threat, as Brubaker (2002, 168) argues can cause successful mobilisation, violence and an overethnicised view of the social world. Furthermore, Brubaker (2002, 174) argues notions as nationhood are perspectives on the world, that only exist in our perceptions, interpretations, representations and categorisations. As mentioned, when asked directly about events that cause high groupness, there are only a few examples of such occasions. But when taken broader, the identity frame shows that groupness also occurs when confronted with an ethnicised view or external threat. The discussion on the appearance of Zwarte Piet is an example of this, as people felt outraged, but also strong together because 'they' are ruining 'our' celebrations. Furthermore, crimes

committed against Dutchmen by foreign migrants, and protests against the arrival of asylum shelters evoke more cohesion among PVV-supporters. This groupness indicates a higher ethnicised view on the social world, where distinctions between social categories are made quickly with the use of the identity frame. PVV-supporters therefore have the tendency to see differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups as basic constituents of social life (Brubaker 2002, 165).

5.7. Ethnic Boundaries

Baumann (1999, 59-60) argues ethnicity can be seen as an aspect of a relationship which is constituted through social contact. Moreover, Wimmer (2008, 970) explores ethnic boundaries in his multilevel process theory that sees ethnic boundaries as an outcome of a struggle between actors in a social field. Furthermore, Wimmer (2008, 977-978) argues that the dynamic of ethnic boundary formation uses a political logic, not derived from economic incentives because the institutional order, distribution of power and political networks are the key characteristics in this social field. This is in contrast to what the results of this thesis point to, namely that economic deprivation is a key characteristic for people to turn to right-wing populist parties. This is also in line with the arguments of Baier (2016, 49), Baumann (1999), Vieten & Poynting (2016), Mepschen (2012) and Zakaria (2016, 15), which indicate that economic crises and structural change give rise to the increased popularity of populism. The social and economic change frame, as well as the injustice frame point to the perceived economic competition between the native Dutch population and the foreign migrant population. The strain on welfare, the rising costs in health care and the unjust government expenditures are parts of the right-wing populist crisis frame that keeps being repeated and reconstructed. Moreover, the identity frame ascribes characteristics to foreign migrants such as lazy to fit this role, effectively creating an ethnic boundary based on economic incentives.

PVV-supporters use the principle of ethnonational representativity, which entails that a legitimate state consists of its own ethnonational group that rules over itself (Wimmer 2008, 991). This is exemplified by phrases such as “Go back to your own country” and “They should adapt to our country.” This principle incentivises state elites to ethnically and culturally homogenise their population by defining cultural characteristics and expanding the national ethnic boundary. As Wimmer (ibid.) states, this can lead to majority members discriminating against minorities in daily life, because they have been dignified to represent ‘the people’ of a particular nation-state, and therefore privileged in the social theatre. This enforces ethnic boundaries towards minorities and encourages them to assimilate in the

national majority. PVV-supporters have also named examples of their experiences where they participate in daily discrimination of minorities. These include things like: spitting on the ground near foreign migrants, making noises of disapproval, looking at them resentfully, confronting them to speak Dutch, keeping a close eye on them or avoiding them altogether. Moreover, people speak of 'our country' and about 'the other' with strong boundaries in between them, it is us versus them. The narrative of right-wing populists therefore makes use of strategies of ethnic boundary-making to reinforce a homogeneous idea of ethnicity that gives the native Dutch population a feeling of entitlement and privilege. When this privilege is not reinforced, feelings of injustice are felt as exemplified by the injustice frame.

Wimmer (2008, 1025) describes five strategies people can use when dealing with ethnic boundaries which are further divided into specific actions. PVV-supporters use boundary expansion by way of fusion. The Dutch identity as a whole becomes important when talking about issues of immigration and politics to include all regional identities people might have. This is also part of nation-building used by state elites. Wimmer (2008, 1033-1034) argues that even expanded boundaries that become more inclusive are never all-encompassing. They too set off an imagined community off from others elsewhere, domestic groups can still be perceived as alien or politically unreliable. "Returning the Netherlands to the Dutch people" is therefore part of this expanding national ethnic boundary to include all white Dutch people, but excluding foreign (post-)migrants.

One can also change one's own position within a hierarchical system by either changing the individual's ethnic membership, or re-position an entire ethnic category. Individuals can therefore either assimilate or reclassify themselves which is called boundary blurring (Wimmer 2008, 1039). 8 respondents claimed foreigners can become Dutchmen when they fully adapt and assimilate. Which shows that PVV-supporters do acknowledge blurred boundaries of the majority category. However, 6 of them state this is just a hypothetical situation, because 'foreigners' are not adapting at all. Furthermore, 5 of them claimed Dutchmen will always remain Dutch, even when they emigrate and assimilate into foreign societies. Dutchmen are seen as always adapting to others, unlike the foreigners in the Netherlands. This is paradoxical with the previous statement, because it means that foreigners can become Dutch, but Dutchmen cannot become foreign. This is primarily because of the primordial view on ethnicity, that sees ethnic characteristics as given by birth and upbringing. In this way, foreigners can be accepted into the Dutch social category, but still be regarded as foreign by nature. Furthermore, 4 respondents said a Dutch passport does not mean that they consider a person Dutch. 3 Interviewees argued foreigners will never be Dutch, as it is a

primordial birthright. This evokes the feeling of ‘being Dutch’, which is something else than being a legal Dutch citizen with a Dutch passport. The majority of respondents was also against double passports. The identity frame shows some characteristics of what it means to ‘be Dutch’, but many people had difficulty in describing what it means to be Dutch. It appeared to be much easier to ascribe characteristics to foreigners. In these descriptions the ethnic boundaries between Dutchmen and foreigners is sharp and defined, which helps the right-wing populist discourse to blame the other for societal problems. However, in practice these boundaries are blurred with people moving from one category to the other, and most PVV-supporters argue that this is fine as long as people adapt to the cultural majority. This is in contrast to the top-down approaches which who describe the populist discourse as sharply defining ethnic boundaries and poisoning ethnic relations.

5.8. Framing Processes

The frames used by the PVV-supporters during the interviews fit in the overview of collective action frames described by Benford and Snow (2002). Right-wing populist parties use these to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, garner bystander support and demobilise antagonists. The beliefs spread by these frames legitimise the activities of the PVV. The three core framing tasks: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing, can also be distinguished in the frames mentioned in the results (Benford and Snow 2002, 615).

Diagnostic framing consists of problem identification and attributions. Benford and Snow (ibid.) name injustice frames as an example of diagnostic frames to identify victims of given injustice and amplify their victimisation. Coincidentally, the injustice frame is the first frame discussed in the results of this thesis. The vast majority of 10 out of 12 respondents felt treated unjustly by the government in their preferential treatment of foreign migrants. The PVV identifies this problem and offers a solution by presenting itself as being close to the people, and different from the political elite who is to blame. The social and economic change frame also identifies a negative change in society, leading to socio-economic deprivation, a decline in social values and more feelings of insecurity compared to decades before. The culprits that are named by both the respondents and the PVV is the government, and the foreign migrants who are welcomed by the authorities. This has led to the distrust frame, in which the government and the foreigners cannot be trusted at all. Furthermore, the Dutch culture in danger frame identifies the problem of eroding Dutch values and traditions, caused by the influx of migrants. In the identity frame, foreigners are diagnosed as dangerous, rude and a strain on welfare. The problem lies within integration, as they are perceived as not

putting an effort in assimilating into Dutch society, but instead trying to mimic the society of the country the migrants come from. As one respondent said: *“We’ll all be living in a country like Turkey in a few years!”* PVV-supporters in the Netherlands use diagnostic framing to identify problems, amplify their victimhood and turn to right-wing populist parties for a solution.

Prognostic framing involves the articulation of a solution, a plan of attack and strategies for carrying out a plan to counter the problem diagnosed in the first core framing task. Benford and Snow (2002, 617) also name counterframing as a part of prognostic framing. As part of the distrust frame, the political elite and other political parties are not trusted and blamed for the problems diagnosed by the right-wing populist discourse. This prognostic frame presents the PVV as a solution to all these problems. Counterframing is used a lot by Wilders; his main arguments often refute the arguments of other political leaders, especially on topics as immigration, integration and refugees. Respondents said the current government policy of welcoming them is not working. Instead, other solutions are presented such as closing the borders, spending more on security and health care, spending less on foreign aid, and government protection of Dutch customs and traditions. Therefore, the PVV is seen as the solution to the problems caused by the political elite and foreign migrants, by using prognostic framing to counter current government policies, redistribute expenditures, focus on security, protect the Dutch heritage and limit immigration.

Motivational framing provides a rationale to enforce collective action. Benford and Snow (ibid.) emphasise the agency component of framing within motivational framing, as vocabularies of urgency, severity, efficacy and propriety are often used here. As part of the crisis frame, this vocabulary is also used by the PVV and PVV-supporters. Wilders is well-known for his phrases and wordplays which often come across as harsh, but also emphasise a sense of danger, severity and urgency. These phrases include: a tsunami of refugees, head rag taxation, and ‘we want less Moroccans’ for which he was prosecuted. Most respondents agreed with these crisis frame vocabulary, but acknowledged that it often comes across as harsh and politically incorrect. Nevertheless, the use of this motivational framing works because these phrases are seen as the truth and are copied by some of the respondents. The sense of urgency is made explicit by the three respondents who believe the Netherlands is on the brink of a civil war, and three others who are convinced Dutch society is heavily polarised between the native Dutchmen and foreign migrants. All respondents also agree with the PVV’s view that the Islam forms a threat to the Netherlands, Europe and the world. Motivational framing therefore taps into feelings of fear and urgency, which makes PVV-

supporters turn to right-wing populist parties.

In order to have success, the frames encountered in the interviews must have resonance among PVV-supporters. The resonance of frames means how effective the mobilising potency is or how it resonates (Benford and Snow (2002, 619). This is influenced by the credibility of the frame, and its relative salience. The credibility of the frames used by the PVV-supporters is based on empirical evidence taken from media reports and personal experiences. However, these are often selective to support their frame. Evidence that refutes or contradicts the crisis frame is not mentioned. The evidence of the ascribed identities of foreigners as discussed in the identity frame is based on people's own experiences and the media. People alluded to seeing people on the streets wearing headscarves or long robes and used it as evidence for the unwillingness to integrate into Dutch society. Some women have been harassed by foreign migrants, which is used as evidence that foreigners are dangerous and disrespectful. The media are also frequently mentioned; news reports about crimes or TV-programmes such as *Opsporing Verzocht* (Detection Requested) 'always' describe foreigners as criminals.

The Dutch culture in danger frame is mainly supported by the empirical evidence of the change of Zwarte Piet. Foreigners and people of a different skin colour are seen as being the main drivers of wanting to change Dutch culture and traditions. Evidence of the injustice frame and distrust frame is seen in personal experiences and the media as well. Personal experiences and stories of bad and expensive health care as well as the arrival of refugee shelters in certain villages are mentioned as evidence of unjust government behaviour and expenditure. The social and economic change frame is mainly based on personal experiences. For older people, nostalgic feelings about the past are compared with the harsh reality of the present. For younger people, the latest wave of terrorist attacks in Europe is seen as evidence that life has become unsafe, risky and unpredictable. Therefore, all frames used by PVV-supporters are based on empirical evidence, and these are consistent throughout multiple topics. This makes the right-wing populist frame resonate well among these supporters. Moreover, Benford and Snow (2002, 620) also mention the perceived credibility of frame articulators. The articulator of the right-wing populist discourse is predominantly Geert Wilders, the leader of the PVV. PVV-supporters see him as a credible articulator, but do not use expertise, experience or knowledge as indicators of credible articulators such as Benford and Snow (2002) suggest. The political elite with its status and knowledge is distrusted, and the media are seen as leftist propaganda. Even scientists are seen as working together with the political elite to support their side of the story without addressing the real problems as

diagnosed by the right-wing populist parties. This makes politicians as Geert Wilders more credible, while denying the credibility of his opponents.

The frames used by PVV-supporters often tap into existing cultural values or beliefs. This is called *frame amplification* and contributes to the resonance of the frames (Benford & Snow 2002, 625). The core Dutch values mentioned by the respondents are often at stake when discussing the current problems which make people turn to right-wing populist parties. The injustice frame shows how the most often mentioned value: equality, is not upheld by politicians who want to stay in power, and foreign migrants who are seen as misogynist, disrespectful, and egoistic.

Benford and Snow (2002, 630-631) identify three sets of implications and consequences of framing processes. The first is political opportunity, right-wing populist parties such as PVV use this opportunity to exert real influence over national policymaking. As the second biggest party in parliament, they do have a substantial vote in parliament. However, the other parties work together to exclude PVV, which leads to more support. Secondly, framing and individual, and collective identity stimulate actions and mobilisation. Participation in movements involves enlargement of personal identity in correspondence with a collective identity. This is true for the PVV-supporters in this research because they all feel strongly that they are part of a collective Dutch identity and mark a boundary between them and others. The Dutchmen who have not voted PVV are seen as people who just take some more time to be convinced, but they too will turn eventually because the problems will only get bigger. Thirdly, movements emerge in order to advance their own interests by securing objectives seen as outcomes. The discourse and frames used by the PVV-supporters indicate the Dutchmen need to protect their heritage, country, traditions and values as they are in danger. Therefore, right-wing populist parties emerged to advance the interests of those who felt betrayed and neglected by the government and are under the negative influences of globalisation and migration.

6. Conclusion

The goal of this thesis is to find out why people support right-wing populism in the Netherlands. In the introduction it is discussed that this is relevant to society because of the polarising effect of the populist discourse. This is especially evident in the highly emotional reactions towards the changing appearance of Zwarte Piet (Black Pete). As the second biggest political party in Dutch parliament, the right-wing populist PVV has grown more radical over the years and gives a voice to a large portion of society that feels distrustful towards politicians in the Hague. By taking a bottom-up approach using qualitative research methods, this thesis adds to the literature by analysing what supporters of the right-wing populist discourse have to say about their motivations, thoughts and categorisations. This is in contrast to the mainly top-down, macro level debates on populism, which see these people as subjects without any agency that are easily influenced by the political elite or their socio-cultural context. It is therefore scientifically relevant to use a bottom-up approach because it adds a view on the micropolitics of categories, framing and how people appropriate, internalise, subvert, evade or transform the categories they use.

The Literature Review chapter contains a theoretical framework with literature on different topics. These topics are: populism explained, right-wing populism and right-wing extremism, right-wing populism and gender, populism in the Netherlands, national identity and ethnicity, ethnicity and groupness, ethnic boundaries, and framing processes. By using the overview of framing processes by Benford and Snow (2002), the literature on populism and ethnicity is brought together into one cohesive analytical tool to investigate what motivates people to support right-wing populist parties. Furthermore, this thesis uses the notion of the crisis frame of Oberschall (2000) to show how different frames constitute a crisis that only the PVV can solve. A crisis frame is a mental structure which situates events, people and groups in a meaningful narrative to make sense of the world by using the emotion of fear which poisons ethnic relations.

In the Methodology, Methods and Techniques chapter it is explained why qualitative research methods have been used to investigate the frames of the 12 PVV-supporters who have been interviewed. This is because this is the best way to delve into individual processes of framing, decision-making and personal experiences. It proved to be difficult to find PVV-supporters because the PVV does not have any members or meetings, some PVV-supporters feel a stigma on voting for right-wing populist parties and they are distrustful of the government, media, foreigners and also towards me. This resulted in a small sample of 12

people with great diversity in age, concentrated in the south of the Netherlands and sampled through snowball sampling in my own network and contacted through PVV community pages on Facebook. A limitation of this research is therefore the external validity and proportionality of the interviewees, as I did not interview a fully representative group. It is possible the results are influenced by a groups of likeminded people, because of snowball sampling in my own social network. However, this is countered by the diversity within the group and the sampling through social media. Although the small sample makes it difficult to generally describe what frames PVV-supporters use as a whole, the results of this research are still valuable. The diverse characteristics of the respondents make it possible to detect commonalities that cross divisions such as age, gender and socio-economic status. Furthermore, it shows that the bottom-up approach used in this thesis provides insight into the agency of people themselves, instead of them being influenced mainly by elites or contexts as is described in the instrumentalist and constructionist view.

The data provided by the interviews have been categorised into different frames and subframes in the Results chapter. The crisis frame can be divided into 5 interconnected frames. The injustice frame describes a shared feeling of the ordinary Dutchmen that is treated unfairly by the government. The social and economic change frame deals with the perceived deterioration of the health care system, education and personal socio-economic positions. The identity frame consists of ascribed identities of others and avowed identities of Dutchmen. The Dutch culture in danger frame warns for the Islamisation of Dutch society and loss of traditions. Lastly, the distrust frame depicts how people have lost trust in politicians and politics as a whole. These 5 frames are further divided into a variety of subframes, which depict the commonalities in the interviews and the common patterns the data provided.

In the Discussion Chapter, the frames depicted in the Results chapter are analysed in accordance to the themes portrayed in the Literature Review chapter. These frames fit well within the right-wing populist discourse in which societal problems are diagnosed and blamed on the political elite and foreign other. Identity politics is used to ascribe characteristics to foreigners, and in turn create an avowed Dutch identity to create ethnic boundaries. These characteristics further enhance the sense of urgency that comes with the crisis frame and the diagnosed problems. Prognostic framing then poses a solution to these problem by the existence of right-wing populist parties. The PVV is portrayed as being close to ‘the people’, listening to their sorrows and the only party who really wants change. The crisis in which people live, evidenced by feelings of insecurity, social and economic deprivation and injustice as seen on the media and in personal experiences, can be solved by supporting the PVV.

Moreover, by using motivational framing and feelings of fear, people feel personally attacked, creating an even more urgent sense that change needs to happen fast. This drives the respondents to support the PVV, which saw its political opportunity in the wake of an economic crisis, a refugee crisis with the influx of foreigners and the insecurities of the turn to neoliberalism and globalisation. By tapping into the existent cultural values, strong emotional reactions are evoked when these are trespassed or in danger, which is the case with the discussion on the appearance of Zwarte Piet and when refugees receive aid.

This thesis uses one main research question and three sub-questions. The first sub-question is: How does the right-wing populist narrative contribute to a crisis frame on a personal level? To answer this, the crisis frame of PVV-supporters has been dissected into the aforementioned frames and subframes. The crisis frame that the respondents use, is influenced by the right-wing populist narrative through identification of societal and personal problems on a daily basis, as is experienced when confronted with health care costs, the decline in social values and media reports on criminality and terrorist attacks. These problems are seen as empirical evidence for the crisis frame, creating a sense of urgency, resentment and fear. The right-wing populist discourse capitalises on this by providing a frame to categorise the variety of problems into one cohesive crisis frame that puts the blame on power-hungry politicians and dangerous foreigners. On a personal level this can be felt when confronted with perceived unjust decisions such as when refugees are granted money, but also through negative changes over time such as the decline in social values and the rising costs of living and health care.

The second sub-question is: How are strategies of ethnic boundary-making used to create an idea of ‘the Dutch people’ by PVV-voters? One of the unexpected results of this research is that the Dutch identity is mostly based on behaviour by the respondents. Crossing ethnic boundaries, from one ethnic category to the other, is allowed as long as someone assimilates and behaves like the Dutch. Despite this reasoning, a primordial view on ethnicity remains the dominant approach among PVV-supporters because characterisations are ascribed to groups of people as if they are born with them. This creates a tension in which even assimilated migrants are seen as Dutch, but not ‘truly’ Dutch. Someone remains ‘the Surinamese friend who is as Dutch as can be’ for example. Furthermore, the principle of ethnonational representativity, which entails that a legitimate state consists of its own ethnonational group that rules over itself, is used to describe ‘the Dutch people’ as belonging in the Netherlands, and foreigners in foreign lands. This makes the PVV slogan of ‘Returning the Netherlands to the Dutch people’ resonate among PVV-supporters. Moreover, boundary

expansion is used to include all regional identities of Dutchmen within one national identity, which someone cannot lose easily. Moving to another country and assimilating there does not constitute to losing one's membership of 'the Dutch people'. However, it is striking that people have more difficulty in describing an avowed Dutch identity, especially in contrast with the relative ease in which people could ascribe characteristics to the identity of Muslim foreigners. The bottom-up approach therefore shows that the ethnic boundaries between the native Dutchmen and foreign 'others' are not as sharply defined as top-down approaches such as Betz'(2009) argument that only long-standing citizens can apply to society's benefits, and Baumann's (1999) ideology of ethnopolitics might describe. There are nuances where foreigners are allowed to cross ethnic boundaries into the Dutch category, even when a primordial view on ethnicity is used.

The third sub-question is: What life events contribute to the following of right-wing populist ideology? Personal life events are used as empirical evidence to confirm what the crisis frame entails. Harassment by Muslim men, foreign migrants who do not speak Dutch or are rude are all experiences that are used as evidence of the identity frame for example. Personal experiences are not a must to follow right-wing populist parties, as many respondents did not have any experiences with foreign migrants. Only a few respondents could name experiences that became a turning-point in their thinking about foreigners, these events were not personally experience but seen on the news such as a terrorist attack or Turkish protests within the Netherlands. However, these were described as the last straw, as it confirmed what they were already thinking. This research can therefore not indicate that negative personal experiences with foreign migrants cause the following of a right-wing populist ideology. In contrast, the bottom-up approach of this research shows it is the other way around: the crisis frame used in the populist discourse is used as a way to see the world and shapes how people think about their personal experiences. Life events and personal experiences do therefore not necessarily play a big role in why people turn to right-wing populist parties.

The main question of this research is: Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist political parties in the Netherlands? The 'why' part of this question can be answered by the fact that the PVV establishes itself as the only and supreme solution to all the problems the crisis frame highlights. Simple, clear-cut solutions that can be summarised in a few words and can effectively get rid of the problems that plague society are offered such as: reducing health care costs, closing borders, restricting immigration, closing down mosques, protecting Dutch traditions and heritage and encouraging symbols of nationalism. These all counter the

problems diagnosed in the frames used by PVV-supporters. When using the crisis frame in all its facets, there is only one solution: voting for PVV, because it is the only political party that truly listens to these people and does not look away from the problems they face in daily life. The ‘how’ part is answered by the construction of the crisis frame itself. The injustice frame excludes all other political parties because they are partly causing the problems by unjust government expenditure, failed integration policies and unjust behaviour of politicians. The social and economic change frame shows that in the last decades, society has changed in negative ways. The effects of this are felt by the socio-economic deprivation, decline in social values and feelings of insecurity. The identity frame puts the blame on foreigners, as they are ascribed negative characteristics of being dangerous, rude and a strain on welfare, in contrast to the hard-working and superior Dutchmen. They threaten the Dutch culture, evidenced by the discussion on the appearance of Zwarte Piet. The distrust frame shows how this makes PVV-supporters very distrustful towards politicians. Therefore, people turn to right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands by using a crisis frame to see the world around them, which identifies personal and societal problems, a negative change in society, warns that the Dutch culture is in danger, excludes other political parties because of their untrustworthiness, and puts the blame on foreign migrants and power-hungry politicians.

The bottom-up approach resulted in a refreshing set of data with The Netherlands being an interesting case study because of its progressive gender values and national outcry over Zwarte Piet. Top-down notions such as ethnopolitics (Baumann 1999) and ethnonational representativity (Betz 2009) do not show the nuances found when using a bottom-up approach. As can be seen in the results, not only long-standing citizens are eligible for society’s benefits in the opinion of right-wing populist supporters. Moreover, politicians are not just influencing the masses like puppets. People themselves have the agency to support or detest top-down influences on national identity. The ‘other’ is often lumped together into one entity, but the bottom-up approach shows that ethnic hierarchies are present and boundary-crossing into the Dutch identity is possible to some extent. Therefore, the ethnic boundaries as described by Wimmer (2008) are not as clear as they might appear. Furthermore, clear-cut explanations of right-wing populism as described by Baier (2016) and Zakaria (2016) do not show the nuances used by different people who support the populist narrative. Those who support right-wing populism are depicted as afraid of change, but this thesis went a step further and delved into the frames the subjects of these studies on populism used. This gave them a voice, which should be listened to when trying to understand the rise of populism in Europe.

Further research on this topic can dive further into the effects of neoliberalism and

privatisation on the lives of people, the influence of excluding political party on the participation of people in democratic societies, and further question why Dutchmen can easily ascribe characteristics to foreigners, but have difficulty in describing the often discussed Dutch identity. A bottom-up approach to investigate how crises are framed is recommended to complement the abundance of top-down approaches in the literature. Politicians and the media need to understand what frames are used by the right-wing populist supporters. These people do not feel heard by politicians, are disillusioned by the democratic system and feel that the country is negatively influenced from the outside. Trust in the political system is key for democratic processes to occur, and participation of citizens is important for civil society and positive change to happen in society. Instead of lecturing citizens how to think, it would be recommended to be more transparent about government expenditures and choices that are made by politicians. Every negative news article about unjust politician's behaviour is taken as evidence of the crisis frame. Furthermore, concerns of rising costs of health care and socio-economic deprivation deserve a high priority on the political agenda. Making people part of decision-making will make people less distrustful of politicians and therefore relieve a major part of the crisis frame. Positive headlines about foreign migrants will not necessarily help as the media are already distrusted by PVV-supporters. Changing perceptions takes time, but taking a bottom-up approach to truly try to understand how a crisis is framed can help to solve societal problems together.

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Appendix

Master Thesis – Interviewguide

Jasper Vodegel – s4214234

Onderzoeksvragen

Why and how do people turn to right-wing populist political parties in the Netherlands?

Waarom en hoe gaan mensen zich richten op rechts-populistische partijen in Nederland?

Inhoud interview	Interviewtechnische zaken
<p><u>Inleiding interview</u></p> <p>Dit interview gaat over jouw redenen waarom je op de PVV hebt gestemd en hoe je de Nederlandse identiteit ziet. Ik ben benieuwd naar de persoon achter ‘de PVV-stemmer’ en ik zal vragen naar je mening over politiek, over Nederland, over de Nederlandse identiteit en ik zou graag wat meer willen weten over jou als persoon en wat je hebt meegemaakt. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden. Ik wil benadrukken dat alles wat je hier verteld vertrouwelijk wordt behandeld, jouw verhaal zal alleen worden gebruikt voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek en niet worden doorgegeven aan anderen. Jouw naam zal ook niet genoemd worden of gekoppeld worden aan jouw verhaal. Het zou voor mij erg fijn zijn als ik dit gesprek mag opnemen, omdat ik het dan nog kan terugluisteren. Vindt u dat goed?</p> <p>Dan zal ik nu beginnen met een inleidende vraag: Wanneer heeft u voor het eerst op de PVV gestemd en waarom?</p>	<p><u>Inleiding</u></p> <p>Opname interview: wel / niet</p> <p>Vraagstelling leidt naar topic 1, 2 of 3.</p>

Wilt u nog iets kwijt over uw motivaties?	-Aankaarten migrantenproblematiek
<p align="center"><u>Topic 2: Nederlandse Identiteit</u></p> <p>Hoe dragen strategieën van ethnic boundary-making bij aan het creëren van de notie van het Nederlandse volk bij PVV-stemmers?</p> <p><u>Doel</u>: afbakenen Nederlandse etniciteit, identificeren strategieën ethnic boundary-making, processen van zelf-identificatie en classificering.</p>	
<p>Hoe zie jij de Nederlandse identiteit?</p> <p>Wat zijn kernwaarden van de Nederlandse identiteit?</p> <p>Wanneer is iemand een Nederlander?</p> <p>Welke Nederlandse normen en waarden zijn in gevaar?</p>	<p>Inleidende vraag</p> <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gender: rol van vrouwen, homoseksuelen -Wij vs. Zij -Religie: Hoe is de Nederlandse identiteit verbonden aan een religie/Christendom? <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ethnic boundary-making: fusion, positional move. -Expand, contract, transvalue, move or blur -Kun je ook een Nederlander worden? -Wanneer is iemand <u>niet</u> een Nederlander? -Kun je ook stoppen met Nederlander zijn? <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Terugvragen op Nederlandse kernwaarden: wat is het belangrijkste? -Terugvragen op crisis frame.

<p>Zijn andere zaken zoals religie en huidskleur van belang voor het Nederlandschap?</p>	<p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Link gender en religie: rol van vrouwen -Ethnic boundary-making: blurring
<p>Zijn er gebeurtenissen in je leven geweest waarin je jezelf sterk Nederlands voelde?</p>	<p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Groupness, link met levensloop/lifeline -Zijn er gebeurtenissen in je leven geweest waarin je voelde dat je Nederlandse identiteit bedreigd werd?
<p>Zouden staten gebaseerd moeten zijn op het volk wat er leeft?</p>	<p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ethnonational representativity -In hoeverre hebben ‘echte’ Nederlanders meer recht op zaken als huizen en uitkeringen dan anderen? Waar ligt de grens?
<p>Wat vind je van de Zwarte Pieten discussie?</p> <p>Zijn er nog zaken met betrekking tot de Nederlandse identiteit waar je het over wilt hebben?</p>	<p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Terugvragen op crisisframe, motivaties, levensloop/lifeline.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Topic 3: Levensbeloop</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Welke levensgebeurtenissen dragen bij aan het aanhangen van een rechts-populistische ideologie?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Doel:</u> Uitvinden invloed van gebeurtenissen op stemgedrag, verandering percepties</p>	
<p><u>Inleiding Topic 3: Levensloop</u></p> <p>Ik ga nu wat vragen stellen over wat je hebt meegemaakt, omdat ik geïnteresseerd ben naar jou als persoon, want achter elke stem zit ook een persoon. Voor wat overzicht is het fijn om te werken met een levenslijn die loopt van je geboorte tot nu. Zou je een belangrijke gebeurtenis in je leven willen aangeven op de lijn? Wat is nog een belangrijke gebeurtenis? Is er nog een gebeurtenis die je zelf erg belangrijk vindt in je leven?</p> <p>.</p> <p>Heb je wel eens negatieve ervaringen gehad met allochtonen? Zoja, wanneer en hoe ging dat?</p> <p>Hoe heb jij meegemaakt hoe de samenleving de afgelopen 20-30 jaar is veranderd?</p>	<p>Inleidende vragen om 3 belangrijke gebeurtenissen op de lifeline te krijgen.</p> <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wanneer heb je dit nog meer ervaren of gehoord? -Wat voor effect had dit op jou? Gevoel van onveiligheid? -Had je dit vroeger ook? -In hoeverre hebben dit soort gebeurtenissen je stemgedrag beïnvloed?

<p>Heb je vertrouwen in de regering? Waarom wel/niet? Noem voorbeelden.</p> <p>Wat vind je van de multiculturele samenleving? Wat voor ervaringen heb je hiermee?</p> <p>Zijn er nog gebeurtenissen waar je het over wilt hebben?</p>	<p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transitie van neofordist naar neoliberale samenleving -Op wat voor manier ervaar jij deze veranderingen? -Wat vind je positief of negatief veranderd? -Wat is de oorzaak van deze veranderingen? -Moeten deze veranderingen worden tegengegaan? Zoja, hoe? Door wie? <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Waar is de regering verantwoordelijk voor? -Zou de regering meer moeten doen om de Nederlandse identiteit te beschermen? Hoe? <p>Doorvragen op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aangeven op de levenslijn
<p><u>Afsluiting</u></p> <p>Dan zijn we nu aan het einde gekomen van het interview. Zijn er nog zaken waarover je het nog wilt hebben, dingen die ik vergeten ben of iets wat je wilt benadrukken? Kent u nog andere PVV-stemmers die ik zou kunnen interviewen?</p> <p>Ik wil u hartelijk bedanken voor dit gesprek, u heeft mij er erg mee geholpen.</p>	