

Orientalist Discourses in Dutch Politics: The Refugee Crisis

Thesis

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Abstract

In June 2017, the United Nations released a report stating that more people are fleeing their homes than ever before in recorded history. The number of people displaced by conflict is estimated to exceed 65 million and at the end of 2016 the global refugee population hit its highest level ever recorded at 22.5 million (UNHCR, 2017). Despite the fact that only a small number of refugees reach Europe, much attention has focused on Europe's struggle to absorb refugees. After Europe experienced a series of terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels in 2015 and 2016 the so-called refugee crisis has, furthermore, increasingly been linked to this crisis of terrorism.

In this thesis, I aim to find out what explains European reluctance to accept refugees. Based on a critical discourse analysis of Dutch parliamentary debates responding to three terrorist attacks that took place in Europe, I argue that, amongst other already acknowledged factors, the continued presence and influence of Orientalism in European politics is significant yet undertheorized in explaining European reluctance to accept refugees. Through a focus on the supposedly violent nature of Islam, Islam's connection to both refugees and terrorism, and the creation of an ideological conflict between 'us' and 'them', the presence of Orientalism has contributed to the securitization of the 'refugee crisis'. This securitization has helped to legitimize extreme security measures against both terrorism and migration, which have become increasingly intertwined. I, therefore, argue that a shift away from the political discourses used to discuss refugees is necessary.

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Introduction

In June 2017, the United Nations released a report stating that more people are fleeing their homes than ever before in recorded history. The number of people displaced by conflict is estimated to exceed 65 million (UNHCR, 2017). Moreover, at the end of 2016 the global refugee population hit its highest level ever recorded at 22.5 million (UNHCR, 2017). Of the people who have fled their country, many refugees are living in countries neighboring conflict areas, such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Lebanon (UNHCR, 2017). However, despite the fact that only a small number of refugees reach Europe, much attention focuses on Europe's struggle to absorb refugees.

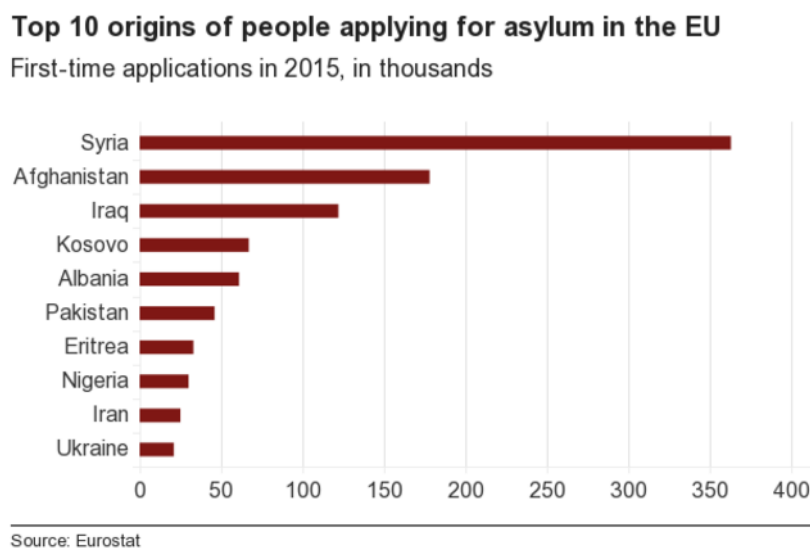


Figure 1: Top 10 origins of people applying for asylum in the EU in 2015 (Source: Eurostat)

A Pew Research Center analysis of data from Eurostat, the European Union's statistical agency, reports that the number of refugees seeking asylum in Europe hit a record of 1.3 million in 2015 (Connor, 2016). In fact, 'the 2015 surge marked the largest annual flow of asylum seekers to Europe since 1985' (Connor, 2016, para. 5). Figure 1 indicates that a majority of these refugees arrived from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, where violent conflicts have led to the displacement of large parts of the population. Many of these refugees applied for asylum in Germany in 2015 (BBC, 2016a). However, the disproportionate burden faced by smaller countries along the migrant route such as Hungary, but also Italy and Greece, has increased tensions in the European Union (BBC, 2016a) and has resulted in the blocking of migrant routes in Southern Europe. Hungary, for example, has tried to block refugees by building a razor-wire fence along its border with Serbia, and countries such as Slovenia and Bulgaria have built similar obstacles (BBC, 2016b).

The sharp increase in the influx of refugees in the European Union is the result of turmoil in several – predominantly Muslim – countries, such as Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq (Connor, 2016). In public opinion attitudes toward Muslims and refugees are, therefore, closely linked (Wike, Stokes, & Simmons, 2016). Poushter (2016, para. 8), for example, argues that ‘people who have a more negative view of Muslims are also much more concerned about the threat of refugees coming to their country’. Europeans are divided on whether refugees pose a threat to their country, but given the dramatic increase of refugees arriving in Europe, attitudes towards refugees and Muslims are a hot topic in European political debates, as well as in public opinion (Wike et al., 2016). A Pew Research Center analysis indicates that citizens of some European countries, such as Italy, Greece, and Hungary, express a negative attitude toward refugees and Muslims (Wike et al., 2016). In some cases, negative attitudes toward Muslims are linked to the belief that Muslims want to be distinct from wider society (Wike et al., 2016). However, many Europeans also link the recent influx of refugees to an increase in terrorism in Europe and believe that ‘refugees will increase domestic terrorism’ (Poushter, 2016, para. 3), as can be seen in figure 2. Nail (2016, p. 158) also argues that ‘the refugee crisis in Europe can no longer be understood as separate from the crisis of terrorism’.

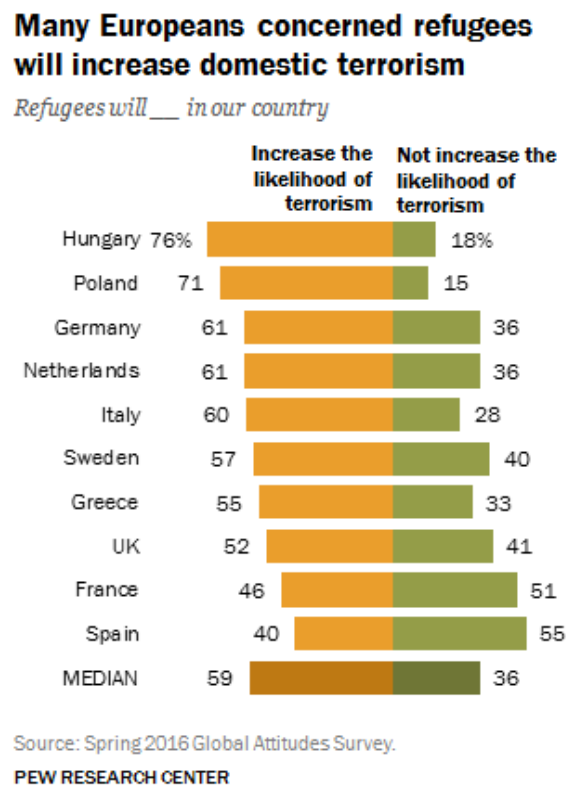


Figure 2: Many Europeans concerned refugees will increase domestic terrorism (Source: PewResearchCenter)

It seems that many people in Europe are frightened by the arrival of (Muslim) refugees, for they believe that these refugees will increase the possibility of terrorism or increase the level of crime (Wike et al., 2016). However, this fear of the non-European other is not new. Already having its roots in antiquity, and being clearly visible during the imperial era, Europeans have long focused on the perceived differences between cultures of the West and of the East (Said, 1978), from which many refugees are currently originating. During the imperial era, for example, it was believed to be the duty of the West to civilize savages of the East, who were portrayed as both dangerous and inferior (Kipling, 1899). Kipling, for example, argued that civilized Europeans should take up this so-called ‘White Man’s burden’.

The essence of this relationship between the East and the West was first described by Edward Said in his acclaimed work *Orientalism* (1978). In this book, the Palestinian American scholar argues that the Western representation of the East is characterized by Orientalism, ‘(...) a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’ (Said, 1978, p. 2). This distinction between the Orient and the Occident is based on the imperialistic aspect of their relationship throughout history:

[many European countries] have had a long tradition of what I shall be calling Orientalism, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient’s special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. (Said, 1978, p. 1)

Although Said’s *Orientalism* mainly focuses on colonial times and the ways in which depictions of the East could be used to legitimize colonial actions of the West, the theory can also be applied beyond the imperial era, and to larger parts of society. As Varisco (2015, para. 2) argues, ‘the Orientalist bias that Said railed against may be less entrenched in the halls of Academe today, but it is all the rage in the public media’. Since colonial times, Orientalism has continued to shape the relationship between the Orient and the Occident, i.e. the East and the West, and the discourses about this relationship (Said, 1978). The current ‘refugee crisis’, for example, has led to an increased focus on the relationship between Europe and countries from which many refugees are fleeing. According to Varisco (2015, para. 5) ‘this refugee crisis on Eurozone soil has brought old-style Orientalism once again to the surface, beyond the controversies over cartoons about the Prophet Muhammed and wearing the burqa’.

The anxiety about refugees coming to Europe can be noticed in the media throughout Europe as well as in the Netherlands. The refugee and migrant flows have fostered discussions about solidarity and humanitarianism, but have also stimulated the rise of right-wing populism and a focus on securitization, in which migration is portrayed as a security threat. It appears that in the current debate on the so-called refugee crisis, refugees have increasingly been securitized by linking them to terrorism. Especially since 9/11, migration has been portrayed as ‘an issue directly linked to terrorism’ (Karyotis, 2007, p. 6). A pervasive aspect of this discourse, moreover, has been the problematic notion of ‘Islamic terrorism’, which forms an unconscious relationship between Islam and terrorism (Jackson, 2007) and is based on the Orientalist assumption that Islam is inherently violent (Kumar, 2010).

However, although previous research has examined the securitization of migration in Europe, it remains to be analyzed why Europe is currently so reluctant to accept refugees and migrants, even though it has the capacity to do so (OECD, 2015). In this thesis I aim to identify whether Orientalism plays a role in explaining the reluctance of Europe to accept refugees and migrants. Because refugees have increasingly been linked to terrorism in Europe, especially since the Paris attacks of November 2015 (Richards, 2015), I will focus on the presence of Orientalist discourses in political debates following three terrorist attacks in Europe. I will perform a critical discourse analysis of parliamentary debates in the Dutch House of Representatives about the ‘refugee crisis’ that took place after the Ile-de-France attacks of January 7, 2015; the Paris attacks of November 13, 2015; and the Brussels suicide bombings of March 22, 2016. I have chosen the debates following these attacks because the attacks were all perpetrated by a terrorist that was identified as a Muslim, thereby potentially increasing the public hostility against refugees arriving in Europe because many Europeans assume that refugees are mainly Muslims (although this is not always the case). In analyzing political debates about the ‘refugee crisis’ that have taken place after these attacks, this thesis will try and answer the following question:

What explains European reluctance to accept migrants and refugees despite having the recognized capacity to do so?

In response to this question, I will argue that, amongst other already acknowledged factors, the continued presence and influence of Orientalism in European politics is significant yet undertheorized in explaining European reluctance to accept refugees.

In the first chapter of the thesis, I will introduce the current ‘refugee crisis’ and the securitization of this crisis throughout Europe. Firstly, the chapter briefly introduces the ‘refugee crisis’ and the terminology that is used to discuss the crisis. Secondly, the chapter focuses on responses to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe by discussing some of the policies of European member states before arguing that the supposed challenges that European countries face have led to the securitization of the ‘refugee crisis’, which means the crisis has come to be portrayed as a security threat. After discussing securitization theory and the securitization of migration, I argue that through the securitization of the refugee influx, and by labeling the current situation as a ‘crisis’, focus has shifted away from humanitarian narratives to security issues and the displacement of solidarity and responsibility. It is, moreover, important to note that this securitization of refugees is often based on Orientalist assumptions about Islam.

In the second chapter of the thesis, I will give a theoretical introduction to Edward Said’s Orientalism, which focuses on Western representations of the East. Firstly, I introduce the most important aspects of Said’s theory of Orientalism, such as the position of the East and the West, Orientalist discourses, characteristics of Orientalism, and the role of Islam in Orientalism. Secondly, the first chapter links Said’s Orientalism to Stuart Hall’s notion of discourse and power by focusing on the relationship between Said’s Orientalism and Hall’s theory of ‘The West and the Rest’ (Hall, 1992). In doing so, the chapter will demonstrate that the discourse of Orientalism has placed the West in a position of domination over the East. Finally, the chapter finishes with a discussion of some of the critiques of Said’s Orientalism.

Finally, the third chapter of the thesis will discuss the critical discourse analysis of Dutch parliamentary debates responding to three terrorist attacks that took place in Europe, and whether Orientalist assumptions are present in these debates. After briefly introducing the history of Dutch migration policies and discourses, I perform a critical discourse analysis which highlights three key themes discussed throughout the debates: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration. Although the so-called refugee crisis is not explicitly mentioned in the debates, implicit references to the issue of migration can be noticed, already since the November Paris attacks but especially in the debate following the attacks in Brussels. An increased focus on border security and the possibility to build fences and introduce administrative attention show that the ‘refugee crisis’ is implicitly discussed in the debates. In the conclusion of this thesis I, therefore, argue that Orientalist assumptions are present in Dutch parliamentary debates about the ‘refugee crisis’. This presence of Orientalism, moreover, helps to explain the reluctance to accept migrants and refugees.

Chapter 1: The refugee crisis

The continent is under "siege," the papers report, facing an "invasion" from a "horde." Parts of Europe have become like a "war zone," they say, as "marauding" foreigners "swarm" the borders. The reality, of course, is that there is no army at the gates. The migrants that cause Europe such angst aren't arriving in warships. Instead, most arrive in a human trafficker's dinghy, if they arrive at all. (Taylor, 2015a, para. 1)

In June 2017, the United Nations released a report stating that more people are fleeing their homes than ever before in recorded history. In fact, the number of people registered as refugees exceeded 22 million by the end of 2016, and more than half of these refugees originated from just three countries: Syria (5.5 million), Afghanistan (2.5 million), and South Sudan (1.4 million) (UNHCR, 2017). Large numbers of refugees were hosted in Sub-Saharan Africa, and many refugees also resided in Turkey. According to the UNHCR, Turkey hosted more than 2.5 million refugees by the end of 2015 (UNHCR, 2016), and continued to host large groups of Syrian refugees in 2016 (UNHCR, 2017).

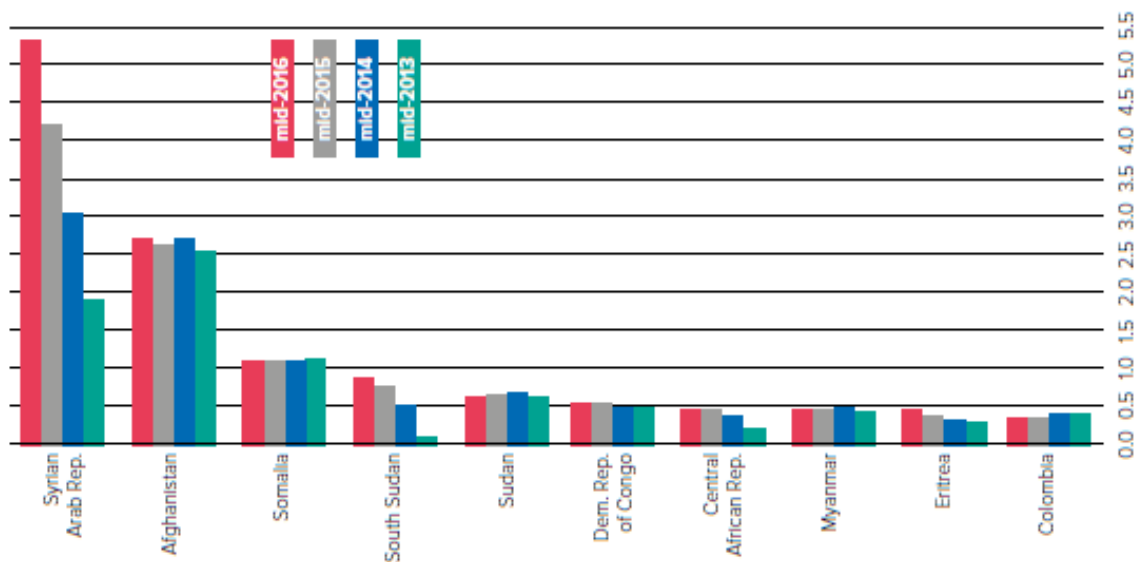


Figure 3: Major source countries of refugees (mid-2013 – mid-2016) (Source: UNHCR)

Despite the fact that large numbers of refugees flee to countries neighboring conflict, such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, much attention focuses on Europe's struggle to absorb refugees. In 2015, more than 1.25 million refugees arrived in the European Union, seeking international protection and asylum in one of its member states. Throughout the 'refugee crisis', Syrians have been the largest group of asylum seekers, often lodging for asylum in Germany (UNHCR, 2017). Other large groups of asylum seekers were represented by citizens from Afghanistan and Iraq (UNHCR, 2017).

Refugees and migrants mainly arrived in Europe through three primary routes: the Central Mediterranean Route (to Italy and to Malta), the Eastern Mediterranean Route (through the Aegean Sea and to Greece), and the Western Balkans Route (through Hungary) (Banulescu-Bogdan & Fratzke, 2015). A large-scale tragedy occurred in April 2015, when five boats that carried almost 2000 people sank in the Mediterranean Sea, thereby killing over 1200 people (Banulescu-Bogdan & Fratzke, 2015). According to the International Organization for Migration, a total of 3,771 migrants died while crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe in 2015. Most of these deaths occurred along the Central Mediterranean Route (Hume, 2016). In 2016, the dangerous journeys have resulted in the death of over 5000 people, thereby setting a new record (Quinn, 2016). According to UNHCR, this means that on average, 14 people have died every day in the Mediterranean in 2016 (Al Jazeera, 2016a).

Although migration to Europe already increased since 2013, the term ‘crisis’ was first employed in April 2015 after the death of more than 1200 people in the Mediterranean Sea (Banulescu-Bogdan & Fratzke, 2015). However, instead of speaking of a ‘humanitarian crisis’ labels such as ‘refugee crisis’ and ‘migrant crisis’ were repeatedly used by the media and government officials throughout Europe, thereby implying that migrants should be blamed for the current ‘crisis’ (Devereux, 2017). Moreover, by employing a crisis discourse, the situation has become a ‘politically charged discursive construction of events that functions as a technique for affirming or altering our understanding of how government can and should operate’ (Lawrence, 2014, p. 192). Labeling the current situation a ‘crisis’ has had a severe impact on government policies and the restriction of migration policies throughout Europe. Illustrative is Hungary’s border fence that was built in June 2015 (Kosmina, 2016).

Despite the fact that ‘Europe has the proven capacity and the experience to find means to deal efficiently and appropriately with large migration movements’ (OECD, 2015, p. 11), the so-called refugee crisis has been a dominant issue on political agendas in many European countries (Peters & Besley, 2015). The influx of refugees has led to a spread of xenophobia and a focus on the security of European countries (Euractiv, 2016). Many rightwing nationalist parties claim that immigration is threatening Europe’s national and cultural identity, thereby ignoring the fact that the large numbers of refugees that are trying to reach Europe are mainly the result of a lack of security in countries in the Middle East and Africa. Indeed, ‘the populations that *are* at risk are the migrants who move across borders to escape war, persecution and hunger. However, due to this new “human-centered” approach it is the migrants themselves who are seen as threatening to the receiving country’s population’ (Ibrahim, 2005, p. 169, emphasis in original).

In order to better understand the framing of migration as a security threat, this chapter will focus on responses to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe. It will discuss policies of European member states, such as the EU Common Asylum System and the Dublin regulation, and will explore links between these policies and the increased framing of migration and refugees as a national security threat by discussing securitization theory. In doing so, this chapter argues that the current ‘refugee crisis’ has been securitized in the European Union as a way of legitimizing extraordinary measures, such as the closing of borders, against the influx of refugees into Europe. However, such measures are limited by the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The chapter will, therefore, start with a quick overview of the legal definition of refugees according to this Geneva Convention, and an explanation of the terms asylum seeker and migrant.

1. Refugee, asylum seeker, or migrant?

Currently, the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol are the cornerstone of refugee protection. In Article 1 of the Convention, as amended by the 1967 Protocol, the legal definition of the term refugee is defined as:

A person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UNHCR, 1967)

In order to be recognized as a refugee and receive the legal protection and assistance that was agreed upon during the 1951 Convention, a person has to apply for asylum in another country. An asylum seeker is, thus, someone who has fled his or her country of origin and has sought sanctuary in another country. However, not every asylum seeker will be recognized as a refugee, for a person has to demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution in their home country. Moreover, the terms ‘refugee’ and ‘asylum seeker’ are often used in ways that are inconsistent with their legal definitions. People, for example, might be accused of being migrants instead of refugees. However, unlike refugees, migrants can safely return to their home country without losing the protection of their government. In contrast to refugees, they often move to improve their living conditions, seek education or work opportunities, or to reunite their families (Edwards, 2015).

The distinction between migrants and refugees is important. Whereas the protection of refugees is defined in international law in the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, countries have their own immigration laws and processes to deal with migrants. When the terms migrant and refugee get conflated or confused, the consequences for the lives and safety of refugees might be serious because this conflation takes away from the specific legal protection that refugees require. Confusing the terms migrant and refugee might, furthermore, also decrease public support for refugees, who on occasion are accused of being ‘fortune-hunters’ (Edwards, 2015). Malone (2015) also argues that:

There is no "migrant" crisis in the Mediterranean. There is a very large number of refugees fleeing unimaginable misery and danger and a smaller number of people trying to escape the sort of poverty that drives some to desperation. (Malone, 2015, para. 15)

He, moreover, argues that the umbrella term ‘migrant’ is no longer appropriate when it comes to describing the situation unfolding in the Mediterranean (Malone, 2015). Although the term migrant should be a neutral term describing someone who is outside his or her country of birth or nationality and thus lives abroad, the term has recently gained negative connotations (Taylor, 2015a). ‘It has evolved from its dictionary definition into a tool that dehumanizes and distances, a blunt pejorative’ (Malone, 2015, para. 6). Betts also argues that the neutral connotation of the term migrant has started to disappear, and that it is instead used to describe someone who is ‘not a refugee’. He states that ‘words that convey an exaggerated sense of threat can fuel anti-immigration sentiment and a climate of intolerance and xenophobia’ (Taylor, 2015a, para. 2), arguing that ‘it is very important to recognize that current challenges in Europe and globally are predominantly the result of refugee movements and not simply a ‘migrant crisis’ as implied by most politicians and the media’ (Taylor, 2015a, para. 12). Such descriptions of people might, in turn, have important consequences:

Whether people should be called economic migrants or asylum seekers matters a great deal in the country they arrive in, where it could affect their legal status as they try to stay in the country. (Taylor, 2015b, para. 7)

With regard to these consequences, Lendaro (2016), for example, argues that some countries in the EU have not abided by European and international laws on migration, asylum seekers and human rights. She argues that, despite the EU’s aim to create a society in which people can freely move, a set of methods for controlling and closing borders has been reintroduced,

especially in countries close to the external borders of the EU. Moreover, due to the portrayal of migration as a security threat to Europe, internal borders within the (visa-free) Schengen Zone also seem to reappear and close if this is deemed necessary. Countries are able to do so under the Schengen Agreement because special circumstances, such as an endangerment of national security, allow for the implementation of border control measures. These decisions are in spite of the EU Common Asylum System (CEAS), which serves to protect the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in the EU. The following section will briefly discuss the CEAS and some attempts of EU member states to undermine its laws in order to illustrate the reluctance of Europe to take in refugees.

2. European Union's asylum policy

In the EU, the rights of asylum seekers and refugees are protected by the EU Common Asylum System (CEAS), a set of European laws that was created in 1999 and completed in 2005. The Dublin Regulation is an important, but controversial, aspect of the CEAS, which states that refugees have to seek asylum in the first country they arrive in (Rankin & Kingsley, 2016). However, many member states and human rights organizations have expressed the failure of the CEAS in responding to the influx of refugees arriving in Europe (Bouckaert, 2015). Because the Dublin system has placed a disproportionate responsibility on countries in southern Europe since the beginning of the so-called refugee crisis, some countries along the migrant route have decided to close their borders (Chick, 2016).

Responding to this strain on the system, in August 2015, German chancellor Angela Merkel decided that all Syrian refugees were allowed to claim asylum in Germany, thereby bypassing the Dublin regulation (Rankin & Kingsley, 2016). In response, EU authorities have proposed to overhaul the asylum rules and the European Commission has proposed two alternatives (Rankin & Kingsley, 2016). Firstly, the Dublin rules might be scrapped. Instead of having refugees apply for asylum in the first country they arrive in, the EU would have to set up a redistribution system for asylum seekers that takes a country's wealth and ability to absorb refugees into account. Secondly, a 'corrective fairness mechanism' would be added to the existing Dublin rules. This mechanism would redistribute refugees during times of crisis, thereby taking the pressure off frontline arrival states. The mechanism would be based on the 2015-scheme in which member states agreed to resettle 160,000 refugees from camps in Italy and Greece by September 2017. However, in March 2016 the European Commission warned the EU member states that less than 10% of these people had been relocated (Mackintosh, 2017), thereby undermining the viability of the second option (Rankin & Kingsley, 2016).

In July 2016, European officials presented their response to the failing Dublin Regulation by introducing a common EU asylum system and refugee resettlement scheme. Under this system, asylum seekers are expected to receive similar treatment in whichever country they resettle, thereby discouraging the country-hopping of refugees throughout Europe. They, furthermore, also want to establish a common European policy on refugee resettlement (Kingsley, 2016). However, the proposals have been criticized by some European officials and by rights campaigners, who argue that the proposals will lead to a decrease in the number of refugees being given asylum in Europe, for example because the new plans make it easier for refugees to be expelled from Europe (Kingsley, 2016). This critique, in turn, is illustrative of the reluctance of Europe to accept refugees and migrants.

The EU, furthermore, negotiated a deal with Turkey in March 2016, in which Turkey would try to stop people from moving onward into Europe in return for financial assistance and negotiations for Turkey's EU accession (Open Society Foundations, 2016). The 28 European member states unanimously approved the agreement with Turkey. The EU-Turkey deal is based on a 1-for-1 principle, which means that for every refugee that gets resettled in Turkey, one refugee will go from Turkey to Europe (Botelho, 2016). As a result of this deal, it has become increasingly difficult to travel from Turkey to Greece, resulting in many people who are now undertaking a more dangerous journey to cross the Mediterranean Sea (Quinn, 2016). In October 2015, at the height of the 'refugee crisis', 10,000 refugees crossed from Turkey to the Greek Islands daily. In 2016, this number reduced to 1,740 refugees per day. One year after the deal was signed, the number of daily arrivals from this route has dropped to 43 refugees per day (Mackintosh, 2017). Currently, the EU is working out a similar deal with Libya to prevent refugees and migrants from travelling to Italy from the Libyan shores.

Finally, the EU signed an agreement with Afghanistan in October 2016 in which the country allowed European member states to deport Afghan asylum seekers who have not been granted asylum in Europe back to Afghanistan (Rasmussen, 2016). Based on a leaked memo, the Guardian argues that if the Afghan government did not sign the agreement, the EU would strip Afghanistan's financial aid. Some Afghan officials, therefore, seem to have been strong-armed into signing the agreement (Rasmussen, 2016). As a result, the deal has received critique from various organizations, such as Amnesty International and Afghan rights groups (Al Jazeera, 2016b). These examples illustrate that European countries have taken many actions to try and control the influx of refugees into their states. From agreeing to redistribute refugees across Europe, to closing borders and signing deals with non-EU member states, the migration of refugees into Europe is portrayed as a serious threat that requires action.

The massive influx of refugees and migrants into the European Union is portrayed as a remarkable challenge for EU member states, even though, according to the OECD (2015, p. 15), ‘Europe has both the obligation and the capacity to deal with this (...) crisis’. The refugee and migrant flows have fostered discussions about solidarity and humanitarianism, but have also stimulated the rise of right-wing populism and a focus on securitization throughout Europe (Kosmina, 2016). The following section will, therefore, introduce the concept of securitization and the securitization of migration in Europe.

3. *Securitization theory*

The concept of securitization was first introduced in the mid-1990s in an attempt to broaden the agenda of security studies beyond its narrow focus on the nation state and military security. The concept was originally developed by Wæver, who, in *Securitization and de-securitization* (1995), argues that:

Securitization occurs when a political actor pushes an area of ‘normal politics’ into the security realm by using the rhetoric of existential threat, in order to justify the adoption of ‘emergency’ measures outside the formal and established procedures of politics. In other words, securitization is the process through which an issue becomes a security one, not necessarily because of the nature or the objective importance of a threat, but because the issue is presented as such. (Karyotis, 2007, p. 3)

Discourse and rhetoric play a crucial role in the process of securitization. According to the theory of securitization, the articulation of security issues creates a threatening state of affairs. By using ‘appropriate’ words and labeling certain issues as security threats, discourses can increase the perception of a security threat (Kosmina, 2016). In securitization theory, security is thus not seen as an objective condition. In contrast, security is the result of a special social process, namely the social construction of certain issues as security threats (Williams, 2003). These security threats are articulated by securitizing actors, who declare that a certain referent object is under threat. The role of securitizing actor is often fulfilled by government representatives, but can also refer to other actors such as the media. In securitization theory, the entity that is threatening is referred to as the referent subject. The securitizing actor, thus, articulates that a referent object is being threatened by a referent subject, thereby seeking justification of an audience for certain (often extreme) measures against this referent subject. It is crucial, however, that the relevant audience accepts these measures (Buzan, Wæver, & De Wilde, 1998).

Securitization, thus, depends on the articulation of security threats, which in turn legitimizes the employment of measures of action against the issues that are posing a threat. In fact, by uttering security, the audience of the state-representative is more likely to tolerate the violation of certain rules (Buzan et al., 1998). Because the construction of security issues is the most important aspect of securitization, Waever (1995) argues that security should be viewed as a speech act, a public announcement that starts the process by creating a sense of urgency:

With the help of language theory, we can regard “security” as a *speech act*. In this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance *itself* is the act. By saying it, something is done (as in betting, giving a promise, naming a ship). By uttering “security” a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it. (Waever, 1995, p. 55, emphasis in original)

However, the securitization of certain issues is not achieved through any kind of speech act or discourse. In contrast, for the process of securitization to occur, a certain issue has to be framed as an ‘existential threat’ because this justifies the use of extraordinary measures (Williams, 2003):

That quality is the staging of existential issues in politics to lift them above politics. In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus by labeling it as *security* an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means. (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 26, emphasis in original)

In fact, the designation of this existential threat is more essential than the actual utterance of the word security. Although the word security can play a vital role in the securitization of certain issues, it is the broader rhetorical performance that has the biggest influence on the securitization of these issues (Williams, 2003). ‘It is important to note that the security speech-act is not defined by uttering the word *security*. What is essential is the designation of an existential threat requiring emergency action or special measures and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience’ (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 27, emphasis in original). Still, language is not the only means through which security can be communicated. Williams (2003), for example, argues that television images of 9/11 have strongly influenced perceptions of security and threat in the US. In Europe, an example of a securitizing image is the Danish cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed portrayed as a terrorist (Hansen, 2006).

Thus, by analyzing security through the discourses used to describe security threats, the security agenda gets expanded beyond the military security of the nation state into other concepts of security. In securitization theory, one important concept of security is the concept of ‘societal’ security, ‘in which the identity of a group is presented as threatened by dynamics as diverse as cultural flows, economic integration, or population movements’ (Williams, 2003, p. 513). Waever (1993, p. 25-26) also argues that ‘survival for a society is a question of identity, because this is the way a society talks about existential threats: if this happens, we will no longer be able to live as ‘us’’. In securitization theory, migration might be a potential referent subject that threatens ‘societal’ security (Waever, Buzan, Kelstrup, & Lemaitre, 1993).

The development of security discourses and policies in response to migration are often presented as a solution triggered by a problem. Huysmans (1995), however, argues that an issue such as migration can also be turned into a security problem by mobilizing certain institutions and expectations that identify migration as an existential threat. He explains how ‘migration is identified as being one of the main factors weakening national tradition and societal homogeneity. It is reified as an internal and external danger for the survival of the national community or western civilization’ (Huysmans, 2000, p. 758). In framing migration as a security risk, migration becomes a political priority that requires extraordinary legal, policing and policy measures to control it (Leonard, 2007). However, it could be argued that making a connection between migration and security is a self-fulfilling prophecy, because ‘once turned into a security problem, the migrant appears as the other who has entered (or who desires to enter) a harmonious world and just by having entered it, has disturbed the harmony’ (Huysmans, 1995, p. 59).

According to Karyotis (2007), anti-immigration discourses focus on four themes: society, criminality, economy and politics. Firstly, the securitization of migration often occurs when migration is perceived as a threat to the (cultural) identity of a host country (Waever et al., 1993). Migrants are accused of threatening the communal harmony and cultural homogeneity of this country (Karyotis, 2007) and a distinction is made between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Ceyhan & Tsoukala, 2002). This distinction is also used to demonize migrants and associate them with criminal activities and terrorism, especially since 9/11 (Karyotis, 2007). Migrants can, furthermore, also be portrayed as an economic threat, especially in times of economic crisis and high unemployment (Karyotis, 2007). Finally, immigrants can also be perceived as a political threat (Karyotis, 2007), especially through political relationships with their country of origin and the ability to use immigrants as a political force (Weiner, 1992).

Security language is an apparent aspect of the European Union's discourse on migration (Collyer, 2006). Although associations between migration and security were already made by the end of the Cold War, when focus shifted away from security issues associated with inter-state relations (Collyer, 2006), the significance of the migration-security nexus was reinforced by 9/11 (Faist, 2002) and currently plays an important role in the portrayal of and responses to the 'refugee crisis'. The remainder of this chapter will, therefore, briefly describe the history of migration in Europe and will then discuss the securitization of migration in Europe in general, and of the 'refugee crisis' in particular, by focusing on the impact of discourses around September 11 2001, the War on Terror, and Islam.

4. Securitization of migration in Europe

During the 1950s and 1960s there was a lack of cheap and flexible workers in Western Europe. Western European countries, therefore, started to promote migration into Europe to attract cheap and flexible workers (Huysmans, 2000). Countries such as the Netherlands and Germany, for example, promoted a migration policy that was motivated by their need of extra labor. As a result, immigrants were mainly seen as an extra workforce in Europe and their situation was not yet politically sensitive (Huysman, 2000). Public concern increased toward the end of the 1960s and during the 1970s, when migration was increasingly linked to the destabilization of public order and immigration policies started to become more control-oriented and restrictive (Fielding, 1993; Benam, 2011). Still, despite the fact that the temporary guest workers slowly turned into permanent settlers (Sayad, 1999), not much emphasis was placed on migration policy in European countries (Kosłowski, 1998).

In mid-1980s, immigration became politicized through the (con)fusion of immigration and asylum (den Boer, 1995). Benam (2011), furthermore, argues that the focus on migration and border control increased in the late 1990s and early 2000s and links this to the enlargement of the EU. Hayes and Bunyan (2003, p. 72) also state that 'a central tenet of EU immigration policy through the 1990s was the creation of a 'buffer zone' in the accession countries of central and eastern Europe', which in turn could protect the 'core' of Europe. During this period, migration policies also underwent a significant Europeanization (Huysmans, 2000, p. 755). Policy debates about migration focused on the protection of public order and the preservation of domestic stability and started to portray migration as a challenge to the welfare state and the cultural homogeneity of a country, thus portraying migration as a danger to domestic society (Bigo, 1994).

The decision in 1992 to complete the internal market and realize the free movement of people within the European Union can be seen as a key event in the securitization of migration, as this decision placed emphasis on the importance of securing the external borders of the EU (Karyotis, 2007). Indeed, borders and entry have become first and foremost an issue of security. ‘At national borders, immigration services no longer merely scrutinize the validity of documents and grant permission to enter but provide ‘border protection’ by assessing the risks of passengers as potential criminals, terrorists or visa over-stayers based on their documents, security profiling, biometrics and matrix of databanks’ (Humphrey, 2013, p. 179).

However, besides the completion of the free market and the growing importance of protecting (external) borders, another key event in the reinforcement of the security logic of migration was September 11, for ‘the measures adopted by the EU after September 11 and the rhetoric used in reference to immigrants and asylum seekers touched on migration as an issue directly linked to terrorism’ (Karyotis, 2007, p. 6). After 9/11, the securitization of migration no longer focused on the threat that migrants might pose to the national cohesion of societies. Instead, migration became increasingly linked to the threat of terrorism, and especially terrorist acts perpetrated by Muslims. Indeed, the framing of immigrants as a potential security threat and the association of immigrants with criminal acts and terrorism increased following the September 11 attacks, which dramatized ‘a publicly convenient link between international migration and security’ (Faist, 2002, p. 7-8). Since 9/11 ‘migrants continue to be seen as a potential danger, (...) and this danger is sufficient to justify general exclusions of all migrants, or at least migrants defined by characteristics considered as most threatening’ (Collyer, 2006, p. 261).

5. *Securitization, terrorism, and Islam*

After 9/11 the security priorities of Western states rapidly transformed, with terrorism emerging as one of the most important security issues. New anti-terrorism laws, strategies, and programs were developed, and the terrorism discourse became an important political discourse, also influenced by events such as 7/7 and the Madrid bombings. However, a pervasive aspect of this terrorism discourse has been the problematic notion of ‘Islamic terrorism’, which forms an unconscious relationship between Islam and terrorism (Jackson, 2007). As a result, Islam has increasingly become related to terrorism, thereby creating an affiliation ‘as if most Muslims are terrorists or most terrorists are Muslims’ (Halliday, 1999, p. 892).

The ‘Islamic terrorism’ discourse is founded upon a series of core labels, such as ‘the Islamic world’, ‘political Islam’, ‘extremism’, and ‘radicalism’ (Jackson, 2007). However, Jackson (2007, p. 401) argues that it is crucial to recognize that ‘in their textual usage these terms are often vaguely defined (if at all), yet culturally loaded and highly flexible in the way they are deployed’. Moreover, the terms are used to create oppositional binaries that relate to ‘the Other’ versus ‘the Self’ discourse that characterizes Orientalism. Examples of such binaries are the West versus the Islamic world and peaceful against violent (Jackson, 2007).

The ‘Islamic terrorism’ discourse contains certain primary narratives. A central underlying assumption of the ‘Islamic terrorism’ discourse is that violence is an essential aspect of Islam (Jackson, 2007; Kumar, 2010). Laqueur (2000, p. 129, emphasis added), for example, argues that although there is ‘no *Muslim* or *Arab* monopoly in the field of religious fanaticism (...) the frequency of *Muslim- and Arab-inspired terrorism* is still striking’. Moreover, while ‘a discussion of religion-inspired terrorism cannot possibly confine itself to radical *Islam* (...) it has to take into account the *Muslim countries*’ pre-eminent position in this field’ (Laqueur, 2000, p. 129, emphasis added). Mendolsohn (2005, p. 57) agrees with Laqueur (2000) by stating that ‘religious terrorism looms larger in Muslim societies’.

There are many other narratives of ‘Islamic terrorism’, for example those that focus on the religious causes of terrorism, thereby ignoring political and ideological concerns that might motivate terrorism (Jackson, 2007). However, the most important narrative of ‘Islamic terrorism’ is arguably ‘that it poses a massive threat to the security of the West’ (Jackson, 2007, p. 407), and government officials in particular are likely to articulate this threat of ‘Islamic terrorism’ (Jackson, 2007). Dutch politician Geert Wilders, for example, has argued that ‘not every Muslim is a terrorist, but nowadays almost every terrorist is a Muslim’ (Rueb, 2015, my translation). He, moreover, argued that ‘Islam is a threat to European values and is incompatible with freedom’ (Osborne, 2017). In response to the current so-called refugee crisis, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban made a similar argument by stating that ‘migration turned out to be the Trojan horse of terrorism’, warning for ‘a dominant Muslim presence in Western Europe in even the lifetime of our generation’ (Brunsden, 2017). He has argued that his country will not accept large numbers of Muslim refugees (Al Jazeera, 2015), questioning the ability of Muslims to integrate in Western society and arguing that Europe’s open door policy on migration is destroying the continent (Kegl, 2016). He also stated that:

Those arriving have been raised in another religion, and represent a radically different culture. Most of them are not Christians, but Muslims. This is an important question, because Europe and European identity is rooted in Christianity. (Viktor Orban, Hungary's PM)

By linking Islam both to refugees and to terrorism, and by framing Islam as an existential threat to (Christian) Europe, Viktor Orban securitizes refugees and targets Muslims (Arosoaie, 2015). In line with Viktor Orban's statement, Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico has also said: 'I'm sorry, Islam has no place in Slovakia. It is the duty of politicians to talk about these things very clearly and openly. I do not wish there were tens of thousands of Muslims' (Matharu, 2016, para. 1). Such securitizing discourses have resulted in two dominant shifts in migration and refugee discourses throughout Europe (Kosmina, 2016). First of all, focus has shifted away from humanitarian narratives. Instead, security issues such as the controlling of borders and the management of migration get emphasized (Kosmina, 2016), while humanitarian and social components of migration run the risk of being neglected (Jakesvic & Tatalovic, 2016). Furthermore, as a result of the securitization of migration, solidarity has been displaced and responsibility relocated. Solutions no longer rely on the solidarity of EU member states, but instead have become the responsibility of non-EU actors neighboring the European Union, such as Turkey in the EU-Turkey deal of March 2016 (Kosmina, 2016).

Moreover, the quotes illustrate that in the securitization of current 'refugee crisis', much attention is paid to the race and religion of refugees. Pickering (2004, p. 213) also argues that the framing of refugees as a criminal and security threat is often based on 'biologically generated and socially constructed understandings of race', and especially on assumptions about people from the Middle East and Muslims (Pickering, 2004). Border control measures, for example, often aim at controlling people who appear to be a migrant, which often results in racial profiling (Gauthier, 2015). 'In the border protection moment, race (Arab), religion (Muslim) and exaggerated numbers (invasion) are the established discourses of fear (Pickering, 2004, p. 223). Humphrey (2013) agrees that racism towards Muslims is an important aspect of risk management processes. This racialization also occurs in the current 'refugee crisis', where particular attention is paid to the race (Arab) and religion (Islam) of refugees. This, in turn, has contributed to a rise of xenophobia and Islamophobia throughout Europe (Zunes, 2017). The focus on the otherness and religion of refugees, moreover, illustrates the presence of Orientalist assumptions in discussions about and responses to the 'refugee crisis'.

6. Conclusion

In June 2017, the United Nations released a report stating that more people are fleeing their homes than ever before in recorded history. Despite the fact that large numbers of refugees flee to countries neighboring conflict, such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Lebanon, much attention focuses on Europe's struggle to absorb refugees (UNHCR, 2017). As a result of the upsurge of immigration into Europe, the 'refugee crisis' has been a dominant issue on political agendas and in the media in many European countries (Peters & Besley, 2015). Xenophobia has spread throughout Europe and many rightwing nationalist parties claim that immigration is threatening Europe's national and cultural identity. Indeed, the refugee and migrant flows have led to a focus on securitization, in which migration is portrayed as a security threat. By framing the migration of refugees as a security risk, migration has become a political priority that requires extraordinary legal and policy measures to control it (Leonard, 2007). The refugee flows have, furthermore, fostered discussions about solidarity and humanitarianism (Kosmina, 2016). It is, moreover, important to note that the securitization of the so-called refugee crisis is often based on Orientalist assumptions and prejudices about Islam, for many people in Europe believe all refugees are Muslim. This focus on the otherness and religion of refugees, moreover, illustrates the presence of Orientalist assumptions in discussions about and responses to the 'refugee crisis'. The following chapter will, therefore, introduce Said's *Orientalism* (1978).

Chapter 2: Orientalism

This chapter will explore Orientalism, a theory first introduced by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1978). The chapter will form the theoretical framework which will be applied to discussions of the ‘refugee crisis’ in the House of Representatives in order to determine whether Orientalist assumptions are present in debates about the ‘refugee crisis’ and help explain Europe’s reluctance to accept refugees and migrants. Firstly, the chapter will focus on Said’s theory of Orientalism by focusing on the relationship between the West and the East, the location of the West and the East, the discourses that describe their relationship, the characteristics and stereotypes of Orientalism, and the notion of neo-Orientalism. Secondly, the chapter will discuss Hall’s discourse of ‘the West’ and ‘the Rest’ and Foucault’s notion of discourse and power. Finally, the chapter will discuss some critiques of Said’s Orientalism.

The chapter discusses Said’s argument that the Western representation of the East is characterized by Orientalism, ‘(...) a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (Said, 1978, p. 2). As a result of this Western representation of the East, the West not only gains knowledge about the Orient, but also creates its own understanding and interpretation of the Orient, thereby limiting the space for alternative discourses (Hall, 1992). The discourse, furthermore, places the West in a position of domination over the East (Foucault, 1980). The implications of these discourses are challenged by several critics, of whom the most controversial is Bernard Lewis. However, Lewis’ work clearly indicates his Orientalist views of the Middle East, and his critique will thus be dismissed in the remainder of this thesis.

1. *Orientalism*

In the 1960s a debate developed on writing about the Middle East (and more generally writing about the Third World) from a broadly left and ‘anti-imperialist’ perspective, which focused on the relationship of these writings to power and subjugation (Halliday, 1993). Although critique of writing on the Middle East pre-dates Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, his book is arguably the most influential critique of the Western representation of the Orient. In *Orientalism*, Said critiques Western writing on the Middle East, which, among others, he labels as Eurocentric, imperialist, and racist. In his critique of the West, Said aims to relate his theory of Orientalism to theories of discourse and power, for ‘Orientalism is a discourse of domination, both a product of European subjugation of the Middle East, and an instrument in this process’ (Halliday, 1993, p. 149). The following section will elaborate on these ideas and Said’s critique of the West by discussing *Orientalism*.

a. The East and the West

In *Orientalism* (1978), Said focuses on the relationship between the East and the West during colonial times. This focus on the relationship between East and West makes him one of the founders of post-colonial theory (Young, 1990). However, although many writers in this tradition try to break the silence of colonized people by giving them a voice, Said instead focuses on the Eurocentric representation and interpretation of former colonies in the East. In the introduction of his book, he states that:

(...) Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (Said, 1978, p. 3)

Orientalism focuses on an imaginative geography which divides the world into two parts, ‘the larger and ‘different’ one called the Orient, the other, also known as *our* world, called the Occident or the West’ (Said, 1980, para. 5, emphasis in original). One could, therefore, argue that the terms West and East in Orientalism refer to matters of geography and location. The term Orient was used to describe the direction of the rising sun and pointed to the region east of Europe. In the 19th century European usage of the term Orientalism, the Orient was equated with the Arab world or the Middle East, and thus did not include India, China or the Far East (Samiei, 2010). However, throughout *Orientalism*, the location of the Orient remains rather unclear (Halliday, 1993). Still, this vagueness could also be one of the strengths of the term Orient, for as a result the term could be used in different manners and to describe different countries and people. In contrast, the term Occident relates to the west, although in Said’s usage it refers to the Western world (mostly Western Europe and the United States).

However, the terms West and East represent complex ideas because they are also used to refer to particular types of societies and levels of development. According to Hall (1992), ‘the West’ refers not so much to geography as to a historical construct. In this sense, ‘the West’ is characterized by development, industrialization, urbanization, capitalism, secularism, and modernity. In contrast, ‘the East’ is characterized as lacking all these qualities. Importantly, this conception of ‘the West’ not only allows the characterizing and classification of societies, it also provides a model for comparison and a criteria of evaluation, by which ‘the West’ sets the standard as developed, good, and desirable, whereas ‘the East’ is considered underdeveloped, bad, and undesirable (Hall, 1992).

b. Orientalist discourses

According to Said, Orientalism is not an academic milieu that aims to understand and analyze Middle Eastern affairs. In contrast, Orientalism is the construction of a hostile ideology in Western scholarship (Samiei, 2010). As a result of Orientalism, the Orient (i.e. the East, but especially the Middle East) is constantly represented from a Western perspective (Said, 1978). Instead of letting the Orient define itself, the West establishes and defines the East, and at the same time emphasizes all that is non-Western about it. One of these non-Western ideas of Orientalism is that of the Oriental as a barbaric savage, making the Oriental inherently different from ‘civilized’ Western people. This notion of the barbaric savage is often combined with a sense of exotic desire and sexuality, with women being represented as sexual and mysterious beings and men as vulgar and immoral beings (Said, 1978). Said illustrates these inherent differences by describing how:

On the one hand there are Westerners, and on the other there are Arab-Orientals; the former are (in no particular order) rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion; the latter are none of these things. (Said, 1978, p. 49)

This differentiation between the rational and moral Western ‘Self’ and the sexual and mysterious ‘Other’ is part of a long-existing discourse of ‘the Other’ versus ‘the Self’. The differentiation, in turn, illustrates the subtle but persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabic culture and Islamic people, which resulted from false and romanticized images of the Orient in the West (Said, 1978). Furthermore, by creating a duality between ‘the Self’ and ‘the Other’, or the West and the East, structured patterns of domination and exploitation were justified. Instead of merely pointing to the difference between ‘the Self’ and ‘the Other’, emphasis was placed on their dramatic difference, thereby imposing a sense of essential otherness on ‘the Others’ of the East (Samiei, 2010). These representations were used to justify the colonial and imperial actions of both European powers and the United States, making Orientalism not only an academic discipline but also a political tool: ‘The closeness between politics and Orientalism, or to put it more circumspectly, the great likelihood that ideas about the Orient drawn for Orientalism can be put to political use, is an important yet extremely sensitive truth.’ (Said, 1978, p. 96). Throughout his book, Said clearly illustrates that Orientalism is an inescapable mindset, for already in the introduction of *Orientalism* (1978) he notes how Westerners travelling to the East were always influenced by Orientalism.

An Englishman in India or Egypt, for example, almost always viewed these countries primarily as British colonies and was mostly interested in them for that particular reason:

I doubt if it is controversial, for example, to say that an Englishman in India, or Egypt, in the later nineteenth century, took an interest in those countries, which was never far from their status, in his mind, as British colonies. To say this may seem quite different from saying that all academic knowledge about India and Egypt is somehow tinged and impressed with, violated by, the gross political fact—and yet that is what I am saying in this study of *Orientalism*. (Said, 1978, p. 11, emphasis in original)

c. Characteristics of Orientalism

Orientalism has several characteristics. One of the main characteristics of Orientalism is the belief that the study of the Orient can be achieved through the study of its languages and writings, for these are seen as tools to study political and social ideas (Halliday, 1993). In Orientalism, not empirical data about the Orient, but the Orientalist vision matters. This gives it ‘the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system, in which objects are what they are *because* they are what they are, for once, for all time, for ontological reasons that no empirical material can either displace or alter’ (Said, 1978, p. 70, emphasis in original).

There is an ultra-reductionist vision prevalent in Orientalism, because every discrete study of one small part of the Orient confirms the situation in the rest of the Orient. All writing on Islam and the Orient is based on some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which the Orientalist writer refers and on which he relies, making Orientalism merely a system of citing works and authors (Samiei, 2010). Indeed, Said (1980) argues that Orientalism is characterized by familiarity, accessibility, representability. ‘The Orient could be seen, it could be studied, it could be managed. It need not remain a distant, marvelous, incomprehensible and yet very rich place. It could be brought home—or, more simply, Europe could make itself at home there, as it subsequently did’ (Said, 1980, para. 9). As Said illustrates:

In the system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone’s work on the Orient, or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these. Direct observation or circumstantial description of the Orient are the fictions presented by writing on the Orient, yet invariably these are totally secondary to systematic tasks of another sort. (Said, 1978, p. 177, emphasis in original)

A second characteristic of Orientalism is its particular focus on Islamic religion (Halliday, 1993). In developing a collective identity, defining a negative reference group is often a crucial step in building solidarity among one's own group, and throughout human history, 'religion has proven an especially powerful marker for distinguishing ourselves from others and for separating us from them' (Little, 2016a, p. 5). In *Islam through Western eyes* (1980), Said explains that:

Insofar as Islam has always been seen as belonging to the Orient, its particular fate within the general structure of Orientalism has been to be looked at with a very special hostility and fear. There are, of course, many obvious religious, psychological and political reasons for this, but all of these reasons derive from a sense that as so far as the West is concerned, Islam represents not only a formidable competitor but also a late-coming challenge to Christianity. (Said, 1980, para. 5)

Islam is not only seen as a phenomenon pervading the Middle East, it is perceived as a factor that can explain many issues in 'Islamic societies'. Lewis (1990), for example, argues that an ongoing struggle has been taking place between the 'rival systems' of the Judeo-Christian and Muslim 'blocks' for nearly 14 centuries. A similar argument is made by Huntington (1996), who labelled this long-standing conflict a 'clash of civilizations', in which it is no longer ideologies, but instead cultures and religions that conflict (Abu El-Haj, 2005). In his *Clash of Civilizations* (1996), Huntington argues that Islam poses the most serious threat to Western civilization because Islam has an innate predisposition to violence. As Said (1980, para. 12) puts it: 'From Zbigniew Brzezinski's vision of the 'crescent of crisis' to Bernard Lewis's 'return of Islam', the picture drawn is a unanimous one. 'Islam' means the end of civilization as 'we' know it. Islam is anti-human, antidemocratic, anti-Semitic, antirational.'

This picture drawn about Islam also resonates in the argument of Kumar (2010), who states that Islam and Muslims have been portrayed according to five taken-for-granted frames since 9/11. These discursive frames are as follows: Firstly, Islam is portrayed as a monolithic, singular religion. Secondly, Islam is seen as a uniquely sexist religion. Thirdly, the 'Muslim mind' is viewed as being incapable of rationality and science. Pope Benedict XVI, for example, on September 12, 2006 equated Catholicism with 'reason' and Islam with violence and a lack of reason when he was speaking at the University of Regensburg. Fourthly, Islam is viewed as inherently violent. This view was clearly depicted in a Danish newspaper when it published a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed with a bomb in his turban. Finally, the West is portrayed as spreading democracy, whereas Islam can only spawn terrorism (Kumar, 2010).

This focus on Islam results in the third important characteristic of Orientalism, the impossibility of change, especially when these changes result in more liberal, secular and rational democracies that mirror the West (Halliday, 1993). This was already illustrated by Kumar's (2010) argument that one of the main taken-for-granted frames about Islam is that, in contrast to the West, it is incapable of spreading democracy, for it can only spawn terrorism. Hence, as Halliday (1993) argues, Orientalism is thus characterized by a focus on the study of language, a focus on Islamic religion, and a focus on (a lack of) historical change (Halliday, 1993, p. 152).

d. Neo-Orientalism?

However, since the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978, Islam's position in the world has changed dramatically, with its position moving closer to the center of world politics. Examples of this shifting position of Islam can be found in the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and the following hostage crisis, the unresolved Israel-Palestine question, and the apparent increase of acts of terror in the name of Islam (Samiei, 2010). In *Neo-Orientalism? The relationship between the West and Islam in our globalized world*, Samiei (2010) argues that globalization has also greatly influenced the relationship between the West and Islam. On page 1148, he describes how:

Thanks to modern technologies, distance or space undergoes compression or 'annihilation'. Distant events and decisions affect local life to a growing degree and any crisis anywhere can virtually affect human beings everywhere. Hence, what happens to 'others' nowadays matters to us to an unprecedented extent. (Samiei, 2010, p. 1148)

The current civil war in Syria painfully illustrates this, for the effects of the war are not only felt in Syria, but also in neighboring countries and countries in Europe, who are trying to absorb the many refugees that try to enter these countries in order to flee the violent conflict. In response to growing interconnectedness, some scholars argue that Orientalism as an ideology is no longer relevant (Samiei, 2010). Through the emergence of a global communication system, the sharp contrast between the Occident and the Orient is, for example, rendered out of date (Turner, 1994). However, other scholars argue that it is naïve to think that the patterns of human history that shaped Orientalism have been removed. Instead they argue that Orientalism has adapted to a globalized framework, being shaped in a new paradigm that they call 'neo-Orientalism' (Samiei, 2010).

Yahya Sadowski (1993), for example, claims that Western analyses of the Orient have witnessed a dramatic change since the 1980s. Although traditional Orientalists usually argued that the state was stronger than society in the Middle East, and despotism was thus the norm in the Muslim context, traditional Orientalists have changed their argument and started assuming that society is stronger than the state after the Islamic Revolution in Iran. However, the Orientalist arguments still resemble classical Orientalism, for they argue that, for both the state and society, Islam is incompatible with democracy. Christina Hellmich (2008), furthermore, finds that the most important characteristic of neo-Orientalism is that it neglects local and specific aspects of regional Islamic movements. Instead, it attempts to portray these movements as homogeneous Islamic terrorist enemies that are, ‘first and foremost, enemies of the civilized world’ (Samiei, 2010, p. 1149). This homogenizing perspective is, moreover, illustrated by the efforts to ascribe Islamic terrorism to mental disorders, thereby denying the social and political conditions that could have motivated such terrorist acts (Hellmich, 2008). However, Mechanic (2017, para. 5 and 6) disagrees, arguing that ‘if the attack is perpetrated by someone of the Islamic faith, the president immediately labels it terrorism’, whereas ‘when the mass murderer is a white person (...) it’s nearly always framed as a mental health issue’.

e. Cultural stereotypes

Stereotypes about Orientals, such as that they are aberrant, undeveloped, and inferior; unable to defend and represent themselves; and in essence either to be feared or controlled, are more than ever reinforced in our electronic world. On television, in films, and in other media sources, information about the Orient is more and more molded into standard models representing cultural stereotypes. Little (2016b) argues that in pulp fiction, on cable television, and in video games, radical Islam is presented as an existential threat unparalleled since the height of the Cold War. Hollywood has responded to this hostility toward Muslims by bringing the threat of Islam into living rooms. The television show *24*, for example, which featured CIA counterterrorist superhero Jack Bauer fighting against (mostly Muslim) terrorists, was one of the most watched shows on American television in the years following 9/11. Similarly, the show *Homeland*, in which Carrie Mathison portrays a female Jack Bauer in her fight against Muslim terrorism, premiered almost ten years after 9/11 (Little, 2016b). First-person shooter video games, furthermore, also focus on the threat of Islam, releasing games such as *Muslim Massacre: The Game of Modern Religious Genocide*, in which players are encouraged to ‘take control of the American hero and wipe out the Muslim race with an arsenal of the world’s most destructive weapons’ (Rafei, 2008, para. 3).

To conclude, Said's *Orientalism* (1978) thus illustrates that the knowledge the Western world has about the Orient depicts Oriental cultures as irrational, weak and, feminine. Orientalism thereby represents the Orient as a non-European Other, being opposite to the West's rationality, strength and masculinity. This artificial binary-relation already originates from antiquity and can be clearly noticed during the imperial era, but Orientalist discourses persist until this day. The West has long been the dominant partner in the relationship between the East and the West, giving it the power to also dominate the discourse about their relationship. But what is the role of discourse in Orientalism?

2. *Discourse and power*

Discourse forms an important element of Said's theory of Orientalism. He argues that Orientalism should be studied as a discourse, for one is otherwise unable to understand the massive discipline by which Europe managed the Orient (Said, 1978). He states that no person involved in the Orient was able to escape the discourse that was Orientalism:

My contention is that without studying Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. Moreover, so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism. In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. (Said, 1978, p. 3)

During colonial times Orientalism provided a discourse that was based on certain dichotomies to justify Western colonialism. Many colonial writings, for example, illustrated the perceived differences between the civilized West and savage East, with the colonizers having a duty to civilize the colonized people. Various other dichotomies between the West and the East, such as rational versus irrational; peaceful versus violent; developed versus undeveloped, furthermore, all created a framework in which the West was superior to the East. Ultimately, this Western dominance molded into a discourse of 'the Other' versus 'the Self' (Said, 1978).

The discourse of 'the Other' versus 'the Self' relates to Stuart Hall's discourse of 'the West and the Rest'. In his chapter 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power' of the edited book *Formations of Modernity* (1992), Hall, like Said, focuses on discourses in colonial time.

He argues that in common-sense language a discourse is ‘a coherent or rational body of speech or writing; a speech, or a sermon’ (Hall, 1992, p. 201). A discourse, thus, refers to a written or spoken communication. He continues, however, by arguing that the use of a particular discourse does not only represent our knowledge about a subject, but that it also shapes our understanding and interpretation of this subject. The subject under discussion is constructed in a certain way, limiting other ways to discuss the subject. As Hall describes:

By “discourse”, we mean a particular way of representing “the West,” “the Rest”, and the relations between them. A discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – i.e. a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. When statements about a topic are made within a particular discourse, the discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way. It also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed. (Hall, 1992, p. 201)

Said’s theory of Orientalism is a clear example of this discourse of ‘the West and the Rest’, where the West is perceived as rational, developed, and moral, and the Rest (i.e. the East/Orient) is characterized as irrational, undeveloped and immoral. As Hall has illustrated, the discourses of ‘the Other’ versus ‘the Self’ and ‘the West and the Rest’ have shaped not only the knowledge about, but also the understanding and interpretations of the Orient, limiting space for alternative discourses to challenge this dominant framework. This limiting effect of Orientalism as a discourse also demonstrates the connection between discourse and power, for the discourse of Orientalism becomes a tool to dominate ‘the Others’ of the Orient.

The connection between discourse and power, furthermore, illustrates the lack of neutrality of discourses. Foucault (1980) argues that, although discourses should not be reduced to statements that mirror the interests of one particular group, discourses are not ideologically neutral or innocent either. In the case of ‘the West and the Rest’, their encounter could not be labeled innocent, and neither could the discourse that emerged after this encounter. Most importantly, the discourse of ‘the West and the Rest’ is not innocent because the West and the Rest are not equals, with the West being dominant over the Rest (Foucault, 1980). As Hall (1992, p. 204) summarizes Foucault: ‘Not only is discourse always implicated in *power*; discourse is one of the ‘systems’ through which power circulates. The knowledge which a discourse produces constitutes a kind of power, exercised over those who are ‘known’. This power is, again, clearly present in Orientalism. When applying the discourse of ‘the West and the Rest’ to the differentiation between the East and the West, Hall concludes his chapter by stating that:

A discourse is a way of talking about or representing something. It produces knowledge that shapes perceptions and practice. It is part of the way in which power operates. Therefore, it has consequences for both those who employ it and those who are “subjected” to it. The West produced many different ways of talking about itself and “the Others”. But what we have called the discourse of “the West and the Rest” became one of the most powerful and formative of these discourses. It became the dominant way in which, for many decades, the West represented itself and its relation to “the Other”. (Hall, 1992, p. 225)

It is significant, however, that the discourses of ‘the West and the Rest’ and ‘the Other’ versus ‘the Self’ in Orientalism are based on several premises, assumptions, and prejudices, many of which are inaccurate. The discourse, therefore, does not give a true depiction of the East and its inhabitants. Instead, it demonstrates the Western framing of the Orient, for the West tried to adapt the Orient to its already familiar Western frameworks: ‘(...) Europe brought its own culture categories, languages, images, and ideas to the New World in order to describe and represent it. It tried to fit the new World into existing conceptual frameworks, classifying it according to its own norms, and absorbing it into western traditions of representation’ (Hall, 1992, p. 204).

3. *Critiques of Orientalism*

However, despite Said’s convincing critique on Western representations of the Orient, his theory of Orientalism does have some flaws. In *Orientalism’ and its critics*, Halliday (1993) mentions three: first of all, the term Orientalism can be questioned. Said’s wide usage of the term in various contexts means that the term might lose its analytical and explanatory purpose. In the second place, the definition of the ‘Orient’ remains rather vague, for it implies a sense of specialness to the Middle East which is historically inaccurate. As Halliday (1993, p. 158) argues: ‘Many people in the Middle East believe that in some way they have been singled out by the West – but in its historic and contemporary forms, this is an unsustainable idea.’ He, for example, argues that ‘the fate of the native people of the Americas (...) was far worse’ (Halliday, 1993, p. 158). However, the vagueness of the term ‘Orient’ might also be one of its strengths, for as a result it can be used in to describe different countries and people. Thirdly, Said fails to convince its reader of the relation between the origin of ideas and their validity. Even if certain ideas were produced in order to subjugate a country in the Orient, the subjugation would still require a somewhat accurate picture of this country to reach this goal.

Halliday is not Said's only critic. In *European Others. Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (2011), Fatima El-Tayeb disagrees with Said's argument that Western hegemony should be viewed as a dominant discourse that the West has imposed on others. In contrast, she argues that Europe has been defending, instead of imposing, its values:

This tone and this image of Europe as threatened by, on the one hand, cultural and intellectual 'Americanization' and political correctness, on the other by anti-Enlightenment migrant fundamentalism, places the continent in the position of victim, occupied with defending its values rather than imposing them on others. (El-Tayeb, 2011, xvi)

In *Orientalism*, Said (1978) argues that the West has long been the dominant partner in its relationship with the East. The West gained a certain legitimacy to control and dominate the East, thereby making the West victorious in its relationship with the East. El-Tayeb (2011), in contrast, argues that the West is not a victor but a victim and that the West is being threatened both from the outside and from within. She argues that many Europeans are convinced that the Arabic (or Muslim) world is trying to conquer the West by imposing 'their' ideas on Western society. The most obvious example of this conquest is Islamic State (IS), who aims not only to create a Muslim caliphate in the Middle East, but also to kill everyone who disagrees with their ideology, especially Western 'savages'. El-Tayeb, furthermore, argues that as a result of multiculturalism, Western societies might also be challenged from within. This resonates with Halliday's (1999) finding that the 'Islamic' threat has taken an 'inward' direction, focusing on the lives of Muslims in the West. El-Tayeb's understanding might demonstrate the evolution of Orientalism, within which the West no longer portrays itself as a victor, but as a victim that has to defend its values against the 'frightening people of the East'.

However, Said's greatest opposition comes from Bernard Lewis, who specializes in oriental studies. His expertise lies with the history of Islam and the interaction between Islam and the West. Lewis frequently advised neoconservative policy makers, such as the Bush administration, but his support of the Iraq War has recently come under scrutiny. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said critiques Lewis' representation of Islam, which according to Said serves the purpose of imperialist domination (Said, 1997). He argues that Lewis does not recognize the plurality of Islam, with its internal dynamics and historical complexities, but instead views it as a monolithic entity (Said, 2001). His neutrality being questioned, Lewis responded by arguing that the development of Orientalism did not depend on the history of European imperial expansion (Kramer, 1999).

Although Lewis, among others, argues that Orientalism is a controversial fiction invented by Said, his work does give evidence that Said's ideas of Orientalism occur and recur in Lewis' work. His *The Political Language of Islam* (1988), for example, is based on the premise that in Islamic countries, which he calls 'the lands of Islam', the religious origins of words determine political thinking. In doing so, Islam is regarded as a single and all-encompassing totality. In the book, Lewis, furthermore, implies that the inhabitants of all Islamic countries should be treated as one. The presence of these Orientalist assumptions in his works subvert Lewis' critique, thereby justifying the use of Said's theory of Orientalism to apply to political discussions about the 'refugee crisis'. As Halliday (1993) also argues:

There are reasons – several, indeed – for questioning Said's analysis, but I would argue that a reading of much of the literature on history, society and politics of the region will give evidence that these ideas do occur and recur in the analysis and the language. (Halliday, p. 152)

4. Conclusion

This chapter has introduced Said's critique on Western representations of the East. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said argues that the Western representation of the East is characterized by Orientalism and that this representation of the East is Eurocentric, imperialist, and racist, because the West is represented as 'rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion' (Said, 1978, p. 49), whereas the East is none of these things. In contrast, the inhabitants of the East are portrayed as dishonest, overly sexual, sadistic and lacking individual or personal characteristics. The chapter linked this Western representation of the East to Stuart Hall's discourse of 'the West and the Rest', which resulted in the West not only gaining knowledge over the Rest, but also understanding and interpreting the Rest, thereby limiting the space for alternative discourses. The discourse of 'the West and the Rest', of which Orientalism is an apparent example, was furthermore linked to Foucault's notion of knowledge and power, thereby arguing that the discourses of 'the West and the Rest' and Orientalism placed the West in a position of domination over the East. The implications of these discourses were challenged by critics, of whom the most controversial is Bernard Lewis. However, Lewis' own work clearly indicates his Orientalist view of the Middle East, thereby rendering his critique negligible. In order to determine whether the Orientalist assumptions discussed here are still present in political debates about the 'refugee crisis', the next chapter will discuss the critical discourse analysis of parliamentary debates in the House of Representatives following three terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015 and 2016.

Chapter 3: Refugees and Orientalism in Dutch politics

In 2015 and 2016, Europe experienced a series of terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. First, from Wednesday 7 to Friday 9 January 2015, multiple assassinations took place at Charlie Hebdo and several people were held hostage at a Jewish supermarket, leading to the death of 17 people and the injury of 22. Brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi shot 12 people at Charlie Hebdo offices on 7 January and shot a police officer before fleeing from the scene of their crime. Another police officer was shot on 8 January by Amedy Coulibaly. The attacks ended on 9 January with raids in two locations. The brothers Kouachi were shot at a plant in the northeast of Paris, while Coulibaly was killed in a Paris supermarket where he had already killed four hostages and threatened to hurt more. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula claimed responsibility for the attacks (Hinnant & Ganley, 2015). Second, on Friday 13 November 2015, Paris was again the scene of multisite terrorist attacks, with suicide bombings and mass shootings causing the death of 100 people and the injury of 368. Two explosions took place near the Stade de France and in central Paris attackers shot people at bars and restaurants. Most people lost their lives at the Bataclan concert venue, where 89 people were shot. Finally, a third explosive went off near the Stade de France (Steafal et al., 2015). A day after the attacks, IS claimed responsibility for the attacks (BBC, 2015). Third, on Tuesday 22 March 2016 three explosions went off in Brussels at Zaventem airport and Maalbeek metro station. This attack killed 32 people and wounded 300. IS claimed responsibility for the attacks and warned Europe that ‘what is coming is worse and more bitter’ (Chad et al., 2016, para. 4).

Especially since the Paris attacks of November 2015, this crisis of terrorism has increasingly been linked to the so-called refugee crisis. Despite warnings that ‘refugees should not be turned into scapegoats and must not become the secondary victims of these most tragic events’ (Richards, 2015, para. 16), refugees and migrants are increasingly seen as potential terrorists (Nail, 2016). This chapter analyzes whether three terrorist attacks that took place in Europe in 2015 and 2016 are linked to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Dutch parliamentary debates responding to these attacks and whether Orientalist assumptions are present in these debates. First, the chapter introduces the history of Dutch migration policies and the Dutch migration debate. It argues that over time Dutch migration policies have become stricter, for example through the introduction of asylum seeker centers. The Dutch migration debate, furthermore, has shifted toward binary discourses, in which the focus is on the ‘otherness’ of ‘allochtonen’ and on distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Second, the chapter also discusses the increased linking of these migrant ‘others’ to the recent attacks that took place in Europe.

A critical discourse analysis of the Dutch parliamentary debates responding to the attacks in Paris and Brussels illustrates that the dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’, an evident aspect of Orientalist discourses, is present in the debates that took place in response to terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels through an emphasis on ‘our’ values. A continued focus on Islam, another aspect of Orientalist discourses, could also be recognized in all three debates. Securitizing discourses, moreover, increased throughout the debates. Overall, the critical discourse analysis highlighted three key themes that recurred in all debates. These three themes were: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration. In this chapter, I will discuss each of these themes and the ways in which they were utilized during the debates.

1. Dutch politics

Since the end of the 1950s, large groups of migrants have settled in the Netherlands (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012). However, since the presence of these migrants was perceived as temporary, the Dutch government did not develop a policy for the integration of these migrants until the 1970s (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012). These policies, moreover, only focused on the economic participation of migrants. Policies shifted toward the social-cultural emancipation of migrants in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012). In that same period, however, the number of people seeking asylum in the Netherlands also started to increase (Ghorashi, 2005). As a result, Dutch asylum policies became stricter (Ghorashi, 2005). As Ghorashi (2005, p. 187) explains: ‘Increasing public dissatisfaction about the growing number of asylum seekers, with the assumption that most of them are not ‘real refugees’, created the setting for the introduction of restricted reception policies’.

Illustrative of this restriction is the introduction of asylum seeker centers in 1987, which placed refugees outside of Dutch society, emphasizing a dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This process of exclusion, moreover, emphasized differences in physical appearance, and shaped the perception of migrants as ‘others’. Another factor contributing to this dichotomization was the introduction of the term ‘allochtoon’ in the 1970s (no longer used since 2016), which described individuals of whom at least one parent is born outside the Netherlands. Essed (1995) argues that the term *allochtoon* led to the manifestation of ethnicity, for ‘the notion of *allochtoon* is not used for just any ‘non-native’, such as US, British, or German immigrants, but explicitly ‘non-natives of colour’ and for immigrants with real or attributed Muslim identity’ (Essed, 1995, p. 53). Over time, the Dutch migration debate has thus become characterized by binary discourses.

Even though the Netherlands has long had a reputation of being one of the most tolerant multicultural societies in the world (De Zwart, 2012), its migration policies have thus become stricter over the last couple of decades. A renewed focus on migration to the Netherlands and the restriction of this migration can also be noticed in response of the so-called refugee crisis. In 2016, for example, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research found that immigration and integration were mentioned as the main issues troubling Dutch citizens (COB, 2016). 55% of those questioned, moreover, believed that too many refugees were arriving in the Netherlands, and 56% of those questioned argued that the Netherlands should not accept any more refugees (COB, 2016). However, another 63% felt that it was a moral obligation to accept those people fleeing war and prosecution (COB, 2016).

But migration was not the only issue worrying Dutch citizens in 2016. A second concern to them was the possibility of a terrorist attack taking place in the Netherlands, most likely because of recent attacks in other European countries such as France and Belgium (RTL Nieuws, 2016). Statistics Netherlands (CBS), for example, published a report in mid-2017 in which it stated that almost 70% of those questioned at times worried about a possible terrorist attack taking place in the Netherlands (Kloosterman and Moonen, 2017). Another consequence of these attacks, however, has been the linking between terrorism and refugees, especially after the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015, for example because:

Claims that a surge in the number of refugees entering Europe from Syria has allowed jihadists to sneak into France, Germany and Belgium unchecked and unnoticed have propagated in the days since Friday's Paris terror attacks, in which 129 people were killed and hundreds more were wounded. (Richards, 2015, para. 1)

Nail (2016, p. 158) agrees, arguing that 'the refugee crisis in Europe can no longer be understood as separate from the crisis of terrorism after the Paris attacks on 13 November 2015'. He argues that since the attacks, refugees and migrants have explicitly become potential terrorists, arguing that the migrant is seen as 'a potential terrorist hiding among the crowd of migrants', while each 'terrorist is a potential migrant ready to move into Europe at any moment' (Nail, 2016, p. 158). Acknowledging the danger of this development, Melissa Fleming, a spokesperson of the UNHCR, warned that 'refugees should not be turned into scapegoats and must not become the secondary victims of these most tragic events' (Richards, 2015, para. 16). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, moreover, argued that 'the growing and misguided focus on the threat from refugees and asylum-seekers has enormous and damaging repercussions' (Yeung, 2016, para. 8).

However, despite these warnings, securitizing headlines such as ‘Paris attacks terrorist suspect rescued near Greece after his refugee boat sunk’ (Halkon, 2015) and ‘Jihadis sneaked into Europe as fake Syrian refugees’ (Gallagher & Beckford, 2015) did surge after the discovery of a (fake) Syrian passport near one of the attackers (Richards, 2015). Nevertheless, it is unclear whether links between refugees and the attacks were only made in the media or whether these links were also part of political discourses, for example in the Netherlands. Moreover, although migration discourses in the Netherlands in the past have been characterized by binary distinctions and other forms of ‘othering’, it is unknown whether such Orientalist assumptions are also present in current debates on the so-called refugee crisis.

This chapter will, therefore, analyze whether recent attacks have been linked to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Dutch parliamentary debates responding to the attacks and whether Orientalist assumptions were present in these debates. I will perform a critical discourse analysis of parliamentary debates in the House of Representatives that took place after three terrorist attacks in Europe between January 2015 and March 2016, which are the Ile-de-France attacks of January 7, 2015; the Paris attacks of November 13, 2015; and the Brussels suicide bombings of March 22, 2016. I have chosen these terrorist attacks because they were all perpetrated by a terrorist that was identified as a Muslim. This identification, in turn, might have increased public hostility against refugees arriving in Europe, because many Europeans assume that refugees are mainly Muslims. However, before I discuss the analysis of the political debates in the House of Representatives, which highlighted the key themes: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration, I will first briefly discuss the method used for this analysis, which is critical discourse analysis.

2. *Critical discourse analysis*

Scholars argue that discourse is far more than just a conversation or discussion, for discourse encompasses all forms of communication. They, moreover, argue that discourses can create truths, which are not simply ‘out there’ but can change over time (Schneider, 2013). Most theorizing about discourses goes back to Foucault, who was convinced that ‘certain people and social groups create and formulate ideas about our world, which under certain conditions turn into unquestioned truths and start to seem normal’ (Schneider, 2013, para. 9). The definition of truths, in turn, is established by certain persons who have a strong position to do so and is thus related to power. As Schneider (2013, para. 8), for example, explains:

(...) think about the different status that health advice might have when it comes from an experienced, male medical doctor compared to when it comes from your grandmother. Even though you may not know the doctor very well, your view of his social status, of his training, and of his gender all shape how you make sense of his advice.

Power thus plays an important role in discourse, and one form of discourse analysis that particularly focuses on the relation between discourse and power is critical discourse analysis, which studies relations of power and inequality in language (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In the late 1980s, this school of discourse analysis emerged in Europe under scholars such as Fairclough, Wodak, and van Dijk (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). According to van Dijk (2015), critical discourse analysis is ‘discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context’ (p. 466). Wodak (1995, p. 204), moreover, argues that the aim of critical discourse analysis is to analyze ‘opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language’. Thus, the aim of critical discourse analysis is to understand, expose, and challenge social inequality through the analysis and understanding of language (Van Dijk, 2015).

However, critical discourse analysis is not a particular method of discourse analysis, but a critical perspective that can be used in various areas of discourse studies (Van Dijk, 2015). Kress (1990, p. 84) also emphasizes this critical perspective, arguing that the difference between critical discourse analysis and other forms of discourse analysis is that critical discourse analysis ‘aims to provide a critical dimension in its theoretical and descriptive accounts of texts’. This critical perspective has several characteristics, such as a focus on social problems and political issues; on explaining instead of just describing discourse structures; and on the ways in which discourse structures can ‘enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of *power abuse (dominance)* in society’ (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 467, emphasis in original). Thus, most critical discourse analyses will focus on how ‘specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance, whether they are part of a conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts’ (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 468). In this chapter, I will critically analyze the debates following three terrorist attacks taking place in Europe in 2015 and 2016 to see whether Orientalist assumptions have been used to link these attacks to the so-called refugee crisis. This, in turn, might help to explain the reluctance of Europe to accept refugees and migrants.

As discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, Orientalism revolves around Western representations of the East, which Halliday (1993, p. 149) calls ‘a discourse of domination, both a product of European subjugation of the Middle East, and an instrument in this process’. One of the characteristics of this discourse is the differentiation between ‘the self’ and ‘the other’, or the West and the East, with the West being the dominant partner in their relation (Said, 1978). Another characteristic of the discourse of Orientalism is its particular focus on Islamic religion (Halliday, 1993), which is portrayed as a monolithic, sexist, violent, and irrational religion (Kumar, 2010). This depiction of Islam as a violent religion is further reaffirmed by books such as that of Huntington, who in his *Clash of Civilizations* (1996) argues that Islam poses the most serious threat to Western civilization because Islam as an innate predisposition to violence. In this chapter, I try to analyze whether such aspects of Orientalism are present in parliamentary debates following the attacks in Paris and Brussels. In doing so, I aim to find out whether the presence of Orientalism might help explain the reluctance of Europe to accept refugees and migrants, even though it has the capacity to do so.

I analyzed the debates that took place after the Ile-de-France attacks of January 7, 2015, the Paris attacks of November 13, 2015, and the Brussels suicide bombings of March 22, 2016. The debate following the Ile-de-France attacks took place on 14 January 2015, one week after the attack in Paris. The debate following the second attack in Paris took place on 19 November 2016, six days after the attacks. The debate following the attack in Brussels took place on 7 April 2016, a little over two weeks after the attack in Brussels. All debates were obtained through the website of the House of Representatives and consist of plenary reports of these debates written in Dutch. I mainly focused on opening statements given by all party members participating in these debate and, therefore, only focused on the first debate that took place after all attacks (even though the debate after the attacks in Brussels took place in three sessions). I aimed to recognize patterns and discourses that occurred in one or more of the debates and, therefore, read all the debates several times. I created a coding system, by which I marked interesting statements (see Appendix for Dutch translations) according to four categories which signaled the discussions of issues related to: western civilization, Islam, migration, and securitization. While reading the debates, I also recognized some commonalities, such as the naming of both Paris and Brussels as the ‘heart of Europe’ and ‘our neighbors’. Overall, the critical discourse analysis highlighted three themes: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration. In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss each of these themes in turn and the ways in which they were utilized during the debates.

a. The ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ and ‘Islamic them’

After the Ile-de-France attacks of January 2015, many people identified themselves with the Charlie Hebdo-office by spreading the message ‘Je suis Charlie’ and marching against the assault on freedom of speech which the attacks symbolized. This focus on the freedom of speech and other so-called European values could also be noticed in the parliamentary debate that took place on 14 January 2015. In their opening statement, almost all members of parliament described the attacks in Paris as an attack on ‘our way of life and our freedom’.

In his opening statement Van Klaveren, for example, argues that the attacks in France are an attack on our way of life, an attack on our freedom (p. 1)¹. Samsom agrees with him that the attacks were aimed at the fundamentals of ‘our freedom’, stating that ‘through attacking those expressing their opinion and Jewish citizens the attackers have tried to hit our society in its heart and crush its foundation’ (p. 1)². Roemer, moreover, also mentions that the attacks against satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo have hit our society in its core (p. 11)³ and Zijlstra argues that the attacks were aimed at our freedom (p. 20)⁴. These quotes illustrate that much emphasis is placed on ‘our’ society, which is characterized by values such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. Implicitly, a contrast is thus made between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This contrast is, moreover, underlined by emphasizing another aspect that characterizes ‘our’ society, which is its Judeo-Christian and humanist heritage. Van Haersma Buma, for example, argues that Europe is shaped by a Judeo-Christian and humanist tradition, whose values are not negotiable (p. 9)⁵. This Judeo-Christian heritage is placed as being the opposite of Islam.

In comparison to responses to the attacks in January 2015, responses to the Paris attacks of November 2015 had a different focus. Although European leaders still spoke about feelings of sympathy and outrage, and European citizens still showed solidarity, in an article in the Economist (2015) it is argued that the response differs, for focus shifted from the issue of freedom of speech to the issue of migration:

(...) where the “Je suis Charlie” demonstrations resisted linking terrorism to immigration or Islam, the mood this time has been more ambivalent. By targeting a well-known press outlet and a Jewish supermarket, the Charlie Hebdo killers allowed Europeans to frame their outrage around positive ideals: freedom of speech and of religion. But the latest attacks seemed to hit public spaces at random – (...). And some Europeans inevitably began linking the violence to the issue which has dominated their politics for the past six months: the wave of refugees streaming into their continent from the Middle East. (The Economist, 2015, para. 3)

In response to the Paris attacks of November 2015, the Dutch House of Representatives organized a parliamentary debate on 19 November 2015. What is striking in this debate is that hardly any attention is paid to the attack targeting ‘our way of life’, a theme that was often discussed in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks of January 2015. In the debate following the Brussels attacks on March 2016, in contrast, this theme was again a hot topic. Throughout the debate that took place on 29 March 2016, it was addressed several times. Van Haersma Buma, for example, believes that the attacks in Brussels have hit Europe in its heart (p. 12)⁶. He argues that the attacks are targeting our way of life, and the Jewish-Christian values that are part of our society (p. 12)⁶. Pechtold agrees that the attacks in Brussels have hit Europe in its heart (p. 17)⁷ and Bontes also argues that the attacks were an attack to our way of life (p. 22)⁸. In both the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks and the Brussels attacks, the distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and a focus on ‘our’ values thus plays an important role. The emphasis on these values and this supposed distinction is, moreover, emphasized by discussing the ‘otherness’ of Islam, which is, by some members of parliament, seen as a threat to Europe and a cause behind the attacks. This theme will, therefore, be discussed next.

b. Islam and violence

In the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks, Wilders states that he is furious that Islam has again made innocent victims (p. 3)⁹. Van Haersma Buma also discusses Islam, recognizing its supposed danger when he states that radical Islam is currently the biggest threat to our security. He believes it is naïve to think Islam has nothing to do with the attacks in Paris (p. 9)¹⁰. However, an important distinction is that Van Haersma Buma refers to radical Islam, whereas Wilders sees Islam in total as dangerous. Moreover, most members of parliament do not agree with this reasoning, and instead try to undermine their arguments.

The debate following the Paris attacks of November 2015 was opened by Wilders, who, again, portrayed the attacks in Paris as an attack caused by Islam. He argues that those killed and injured are victims of the Kalashnikovs of Muslim terrorists, who proudly yelled Allah Akbar during their attacks (p. 1)¹¹. Throughout the debate, Wilders keeps referring to the violent nature of Islam, which he sees as the cause of the terror, as this quote illustrates:

But I assure you that all those big attacks here in Europe over the last ten years, ranging from Madrid to Paris, to the Jewish museum in Brussels, to London, to our own Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, have one thing in common and that is that they were all inspired by that violent Islam. (p. 2)¹²

Bontes, moreover, emphasizes the connection between the attacks and their supposed cause, relating them to the death of van Gogh by arguing that anyone wondering whether a jihadist attack could also take place in the Netherlands should realize that it already did more than ten years ago when Theo van Gogh was slaughtered by a jihadist in Amsterdam (p. 16)¹³. Segers, furthermore, discusses the supposed danger that Islam poses through its connection with jihadism by arguing that we are facing a great evil, which is the evil of jihadism (p. 1)¹⁴.

Like the parliamentary debate that took place after the November 2015 Paris attacks, the debate following the Brussels attacks of March 2016 was opened by Wilders, who once more directly linked the attacks to Islam. In his opening statement, he argues that the attacks are a direct cause of the ‘Islamic ideology’ (p. 1)¹⁵. He argues that Islam is killing people and calls Islam an intolerant ideology, which he even links to other ideologies such as communism and fascism (p. 9)¹⁶. He also believes that Islam is inherently different than other religions such as Christianity and Judaism, for Islam is a dangerous ideology (p. 11)¹⁷. He, moreover, believes that Islamization is a result of migration, for which he blames Western governments (p. 1)¹⁸. A few other members of parliament, such as Bontes and Zijlstra, agree with Wilders’ line of reasoning about Islam. Zijlstra, for example, states that radical extremist Islamic groups are a big threat to our free and liberal society. He believes that they are spreading a religious and ideological poison that threatens our way of life (p. 23)¹⁹. In all three debates, Islam is thus mentioned in relation to terror, although only by some members of parliament.

Table 1 also illustrates that Islam is a common theme in all three debates that followed terrorist attacks in Europe. In fact, the word ‘Islam’ is mentioned more often than the word ‘terrorism’ in all these debates. Some members of parliament, such as Wilders and Bontes, throughout all debates link the attacks in Paris and Brussels to Islam and call Islam the cause of the terror taking place in Europe. Other members of parliament, such as Zijlstra, Segers and Van Haersma Buma, at times, also mentions Islam in a negative manner. Segers, for example, talks of the dark forms of Islam in the debate following the November 2015 Paris attacks (p. 4)²⁰, and Zijlstra, following the Brussels attacks, says that a part of Islam is problematic (p. 10)²¹ and that radical extremist Islamic groups are spreading a religious ideological poison (p. 23)¹⁹. It should be noted, however, that many other members of parliament mention the term Islam in response to these members of parliament. Pechtold, in the debate on 14 January 2015, for example, reacts to the claims made by Wilders by stating that individual people, and not an abstract term such as ‘the Islam’, should be blamed for the attacks in Paris (p. 4)²².

	Terrorisme	Islam	Vluchteling	Migratie	Grenzen
Ile-de-France attacks	37	116	0	9	26
November Paris attacks	47	50	22	2	32
Brussels attacks	48	108	4	6	51

Table 1: Word count of keywords in the debates

c. Securitization of migration

Whereas the theme Islam is often mentioned in all three debates, table 1 illustrates that the theme refugees is not discussed as often. In fact, in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks of January 2015, the term ‘refugee’ is not mentioned at all. Moreover, throughout the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks, little reference is made to the relation between the attacks in Paris and immigration. In fact, only two members of parliament do address this issue. The first member of parliament who does so is Van Klaveren, who, in his opening statement, combines all three themes discussed in this chapter by combining both the focus on ‘our’ way of life and the threat of Islam to migration in the following quote:

The terrorist attacks in France are an attack on our way of life, an attack on our freedoms. The world is shocked but cannot be surprised. Due to the large inflow of migrants over the last decennia the West is now experiencing the clash of civilizations that professor Huntington already described twenty years ago. The freedom of speech, the division of church and state, the equality between men and women, straight and gay: these are values that are not or hardly present in Islam. (...) The relation between the slaughters in Paris and the source of these attacks cannot be denied: jihad is a part of Islam. (p. 1)²³

Bontes thus believes that the attacks in Paris were an attack on ‘our’ way of life and ‘our’ freedoms. He speaks of a clash of civilizations, resulting from mass migration of Muslims to the West. He is not the only member of parliament who links migration to Islam. The second member of parliament that addresses the issue of migration is Wilders, who argues that borders should be closed to stop migration of people from ‘Islamic countries’ because Islam is life-threatening to Europe (p. 3)²⁴. In this statement, portraying Islam as life-threatening has implications for the securitization of Islam. Wilders’ and Bontes’ emphasizing the numbers of people arriving also contributes to this securitization of Islam.

However, other members of parliament disagree with the views of Wilders and Bontes. In the debate following the Paris attacks of November 2015, for example, some members believe that the attacks should not influence our refugee policies, even though a fear that terrorists abuse such policies is reasonable. Throughout this debate, more references to the so-called refugee crisis are made, although the contents of these references differ. Zijlstra, for example, recognizes the public fear that terrorists posing as refugees might enter the Netherlands (p. 5)²⁵, while Pechtold disagrees with this view and instead argues that the debate about the Paris attacks should not lose its focus (p. 22)²⁶. However, others, such as Van der Staaij, believe that this focus on refugees in the debate following the Paris attacks of November 2015 is justified, since migration poses a security threat to the Netherlands (p. 23)²⁷. Compared to the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks in January 2015, it should be noted that more attention is thus paid to the so-called refugee crisis in this debate.

This trend could also be noticed in the debate following the Brussels attack of 2016, albeit in a somewhat different way. According to Erlanger (2016, para. 1) not long after the attacks in Brussels ‘the new act of terrorism in the heart of Europe was employed in the bitter debate about the influx of migrants from the Middle East and North Africa’:

Even before the identities and nationalities of the attackers were known, there was an immediate association in popular discourse between the attacks on the airport and subway station in Brussels and the migrant crisis. Right-wing politicians and average citizens alike raised concerns that groups like the Islamic State, which claimed responsibility for the attacks, are slipping radicalized recruits, including European jihadists, through the vast migrant stream and into an unprepared Europe. (Erlanger, 2016, para. 2)

Erlanger argues that attacks such as those in Paris and Brussels made it more likely that European countries shift their focus to stricter passport controls and visa and luggage checks at borders (Erlanger, 2016). This focus on stricter passport controls and greater security at borders could also be noticed in the Dutch parliamentary debate that took place in response to the Brussels attacks on 29 March 2016, especially through the increased securitization of migration. Table 1, for example, shows that the discussion of borders increased throughout all three debates and that the term border was mentioned 51 times in the debate following the Brussels attacks. In general, the critical discourse analysis shows that the focus on borders increased throughout the debates, thereby illustrating an implicit focus on refugees and the securitization of migration.

In the debate following the Brussels attacks, Wilders argues that the Dutch government should put a stop to mass migration because otherwise people from a life-threatening culture, which preaches violence and treats everyone that is not a Muslim as inferior, will make sure that our children and grandchildren will no longer live in a free country (p. 3)²⁸. Other than Wilders, only one other member of parliament, Bontes, addresses the relations between migration and terrorism. However, this does not mean that the issue of migration is not discussed in the debate in other ways. The clearest examples of this discussion relate to the securitizing language that is used throughout the debate, for example when issues such as the closing of borders or the possibility of administrative detention are discussed. Wilders, for example, argues that borders should be closed for asylum seekers and that a fence should be built (p. 8)²⁹. Van Haersma Buma, furthermore, calls for international collaboration between European intelligence agencies, an increase in security budgets, and the ability for the General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) to wiretap (p. 12)³⁰. The possibility of administrative detention is also mentioned several times, for example by Bontes or by Wilders. Wilders states that he has been arguing for administrative detention since 2005 and long before there was a problem with Syrians coming to the Netherlands (p. 4)³¹.

Thus, the securitization of migration is a theme that is present in all debates following the attacks in Paris and Brussels. However, not all members of parliament agree with these securitizing measures. Samsom, for example, does not believe in such panic-inducing measures, for he thinks these will only harm our freedom (p. 20)³². Thieme agrees with Samsom, stating that the limiting of civil freedoms and increasing the power of secret services without democratic control will threaten the freedom and security of all citizens (p. 22)³³. Thus, although the so-called refugee crisis is not explicitly mentioned that often in the debates following the attacks in Paris and Brussels, implicit references to the issue of migration can be noticed, already in the debate following the November Paris attacks but especially in the debate following the attacks in Brussels. By focusing on border security and the possibility to build fences and introduce administrative attention, it could be argued that the ‘refugee crisis’ is implicitly discussed in these debates. This reasoning is plausible given the fact that this so-called crisis hit its peak in mid-2015, thereby occurring in a similar period as the attacks in Paris and just prior to the attacks in Brussels. The fact that the perpetrators involved in the November Paris attacks entered Europe through Hungary by using fake Syrian passports and posing as refugees further underlines this connection, especially because officials believe that some of these perpetrators have also taken part in the Brussels attacks of March 2016 (Rothwell, 2016).

3. *Implications*

Orientalism is a key device in the linking together of the ‘refugee crisis’ and terrorism. Orientalism revolves around Western representations of the East, which are often characterized by differentiations between ‘us’ and ‘them’, or the West and the East, and a focus on Islamic religion, which is seen as monolithic, sexist, violent, and irrational. Although Said’s *Orientalism* mainly focuses on colonial times and the ways in which such depictions of the East were used to legitimize colonial actions of the West, his theory can be applied beyond the imperial era and to the current so-called refugee crisis. According to Varisco (2015, para. 5), for example, ‘this refugee crisis on Eurozone soil has brought old-style Orientalism once again to the surface’. He, furthermore, argues that ‘the Orientalist bias that Said railed against (...) is all the rage in the public media’ (Varisco, 2015, para. 2). This Orientalist bias, moreover, cannot only be recognized in the media, but also in politics. A critical discourse analysis of Dutch parliamentary debates that took place after three terrorists attacks in Europe in 2015 and 2016 highlighted three key themes that recurred in all debates. These three themes were: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration. The first two of these themes, the focus on Islam and violence and the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ and ‘Islamic them’, can be seen as clear characteristics of the Orientalist assumptions that underline the parliamentary debates that took place in the Dutch House of Parliament after the attacks in Paris and Brussels in 2015 and 2016.

In both the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks and the Brussels attacks, much emphasis is placed on the fact that the attacks are targeting ‘our’ way of life and ‘our’ values, such as the freedom of speech and the freedom of religion. During the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks van Ojik, for example, argues that the attack on the lives of these Parisians was also an attack to our freedom, the freedom of speech and the religion (p. 18)³⁴. In that same debate, Samsom, moreover, states that the barbaric attack has hit ‘our’ society in its heart (p. 1)³⁵. However, not only Paris is seen as portraying the heart of Europe. After the attacks in Brussels, for example, Van Haersma Buma claims that ‘our western’ society is hit in its heart (p. 12)³⁶. In these debates, much emphasis is thus placed on framing the attacks as hitting the core or heart of ‘our’ (western) European society, which is portrayed as one homogenous entity that is contrasted against the terrorist ‘others’. This dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’ is a clear characteristic of Orientalism, which also revolves around the distinction between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’, or the West and the East.

However, the mentioning of this dichotomy is not the only Orientalist assumption present in the debates. Another assumption present in all three debates was the continued focus on Islam. It is interesting to see, for example, that the word ‘Islam’ was mentioned more often than the word ‘terrorism’ in all debates. Wilders and Bontes, throughout all debates, link the attacks in Paris and Brussels to Islam and call Islam the cause of the terror taking place in Europe. Other members of parliament, such as Zijlstra, Segers and Van Haersma Buma, at times, also mention Islam in a negative manner. It should be noted, however, that many other members of parliament do not agree with their reasoning and resist linking Islam to the cause of the attacks that took place in Paris and Brussels. Nevertheless, the continued discussion of Islam throughout all three debates does indicate that the focus on Islam, a characteristic of Orientalism, is present in the Dutch parliamentary debates following the terrorist attacks.

Finally, table 1 indicates that throughout all three debates, the focus on the issues of border controls and/or the closing of borders increased. This increased focus, in turn, demonstrates the increase of securitizing discourses that are used in the three debates. This securitizing discourse, as mentioned, is most present in the debate following the Brussels attacks, in which several security measures to decrease terrorism (and migration) are proposed. I, moreover, believe that the presence of the two other themes, the focus on Islam and violence, and the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ and ‘Islamic them’, has contributed to this securitization and helps legitimize extreme security measures against both terrorism and migration, which have become increasingly intertwined. This is because both the focus on Islam and violence and the construction of an ideological conflict between the West and the East are expressed through a threatening discourse, in which ‘our’ society is contrasted against the dangerous ‘them’ from which we need to be protected.

The presence of these Orientalist assumptions in Dutch political discourses and the contributions that such assumptions make to the securitization of migration, in turn, might have serious consequences for the lives of people seeking asylum in the Netherlands. Through the securitization of migration, political actors are able to propose extreme security measures such as border fences to limit the number of refugees arriving in the Netherlands. These political actors, moreover, are also able to set the agenda in the broader public debate on the ‘refugee crisis’, which can turn public opinion against refugees trying to enter the Netherlands or living in, and have a drastic influence on their lives in the Netherlands. Therefore, a shift away from the discourses currently used to discuss refugees is necessary.

4. *Conclusion*

In 2015 and 2016, Europe experienced a series of terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. Especially since the Paris attacks of November 2015, the crisis of terrorism has increasingly been linked to the so-called refugee crisis. This second crisis, moreover, has also brought Orientalism to the surface once again. This chapter has analyzed whether three terrorist attacks that took place in Europe in 2015 and 2016 were linked to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Dutch parliamentary debates responding to these attacks and whether Orientalist assumptions were present in these debates. I performed a critical discourse analysis of parliamentary debates in the House of Representatives that took place after the Ile-de-France attacks of January 7, 2015; the Paris attacks of November 13, 2015; and the Brussels suicide bombings of March 22, 2016. This critical discourse analysis highlighted three key themes, which were discussed throughout the debates: Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ vs an ‘Islamic them’, and the securitization of migration.

In both the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks and the Brussels attacks, the distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and a focus on ‘our’ values played an important role. The emphasis on these values and this supposed distinction was, moreover, emphasized by discussing the Judeo-Christian and humanist heritage of Europe and the ‘otherness’ of Islam, which is, by some members of parliament, seen as a threat to Europe and a cause behind the attacks. Islam, moreover, was a common theme throughout all three debates that followed terrorist attacks in Europe. However, whereas the theme Islam was often mentioned in all three debates, refugees were not explicitly discussed that often. Nevertheless, although the so-called refugee crisis was not explicitly mentioned that often in the debates following the attacks in Paris and Brussels, implicit references to the issue of migration could clearly be noticed, already in the debate following the November Paris attacks but especially in the debate following the attacks in Brussels. An increased focus on border security and the possibility to build fences and introduce administrative attention show that the ‘refugee crisis’ is implicitly discussed in the debates. I, furthermore, suggest that the focus on Islam and violence, and the construction of an ideological conflict between the ‘European us’ and ‘Islamic them’, through their threatening discourses, have contributed to this securitization. Because these discourses and the resulting securitization of the so-called refugee crisis, in turn, might have serious negative consequences for the lives of refugees in the Netherlands, a shift away from the political discourses currently used to discuss refugees is necessary.

Conclusion

This thesis has tried to answer the following research question: *What explains European reluctance to accept migrants and refugees despite having the recognized capacity to do so?* In order to answer this question, the first chapter focused on the ‘refugee crisis’ and discussed how this so-called crisis has been a dominant issue on political agendas and in the media in many European countries. As a result of a crisis discourse, which was first employed in April 2015, some countries in the EU have stopped abiding by European and international laws on migration by building border fences and reintroducing border controls to prevent refugees from entering. Europe, moreover, has tried to control the influx of refugees by agreeing to redistribute refugees and sign deals with non-EU member states such as Turkey. These extreme measures, in turn, have been legitimized through the securitization of migration discourses, which ‘occurs when a political actor pushes an area of ‘normal politics’ into the security realm by using a rhetoric of existential threat, in order to justify the adoption of ‘emergency’ measures outside the formal and established procedures of politics’ (Karyotis, 2007, p. 3). This securitization of migration, furthermore, has increasingly been linked to terrorism and Islam since 9/11. This could also be noticed when looking at the securitization of the current ‘refugee crisis’, for much attention is paid to the race and religion of refugees and to the connection between refugees and terrorism. The securitization of the so-called refugee crisis is, moreover, often based on Orientalist assumptions and prejudices about Islam.

The second chapter of this thesis introduced Said’s theory of Orientalism, which revolves around the relationship between the East and the West. According to Said, Western representations of the East are characterized by Orientalism, ‘(...) a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’ (Said, 1978, p. 2). In this distinction, the West is being represented as rational and moral, whereas the East is portrayed as mysterious, dangerous, and barbaric. Western representations of the East, moreover, are often Eurocentric, imperialist, and racist. Another important characteristic of Orientalism is its particular focus on Islamic religion. In general, Said’s *Orientalism* illustrates that the knowledge the West has about the East depicts it as irrational, weak, and feminine. Although Said’s discussion of the binary relation between the East and the West could mainly be noticed during the imperial era, Orientalist discourses persist until this day. The current ‘refugee crisis’ has again led to an increased focus on the relationship between Europe and countries from which many refugees are fleeing.

In the third chapter of this thesis, I analyzed Dutch parliamentary debates that took place after the Ile-de-France attacks of January 7, 2015; the Paris attacks of November 13, 2015; and the Brussels suicide bombings of March 22, 2016. I analyzed these debates because, especially since the Paris attacks of November 2015, the crisis of terrorism that hit Europe in 2015 and 2016 has increasingly been linked to the so-called refugee crisis. These attacks, moreover, were all perpetrated by a terrorist that was identified as a Muslim, which might have increased the public hostility against refugees arriving in Europe. By performing a critical discourse analysis, I found that several key themes occurred in all three debates following the attacks. These key themes were Islam and violence, the construction of an ideological conflict between the 'European us' vs an 'Islamic them', and the securitization of migration. The focus on Islam and violence and the construction of an ideological conflict between the 'European us' and 'Islamic them' illustrate the Orientalist assumptions that underline the parliamentary debates that took place in the Dutch House of Parliament. However, on the surface it does not appear that these Orientalist assumptions are linked to refugees, for the so-called refugee crisis is hardly mentioned throughout the debates. Nevertheless, although refugees were not discussed explicitly in the debates, implicit references to the issue of migration could be noticed through a focus on border security and the possibility to build fences and introduce administrative attention. These security measures, moreover, illustrate the increasingly securitizing discourse that was employed throughout the parliamentary debates that followed the attacks in Paris and Brussels in 2015 and 2016.

Based on the analysis performed in this thesis I argue that Orientalist assumptions were present in Dutch parliamentary discussions about the 'refugee crisis' in the debates following terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, albeit in an implicit manner. This presence of Orientalism in political debates might play a significant role in explaining European reluctance to accept migrants and refugees. Through a focus on the supposedly violent nature of Islam, Islam's connection to both refugees and terrorism, and the creation of an ideological conflict between 'us' and 'them', the presence of Orientalist assumptions has contributed to the securitization of the so-called refugee crisis. This is because both the focus on Islam and violence and the construction of an ideological conflict between the West and the East are expressed through a threatening discourse, in which 'our' society is contrasted against the dangerous 'them' from which we need to be protected. The focus on Islam and violence and the construction of an ideological conflict between the 'European us' and 'Islamic them' have, moreover, helped to legitimize extreme security measures against both terrorism and migration, which have become increasingly intertwined.

As a result, the so-called refugee crisis has increasingly been portrayed as a threat to Europe that requires emergency action. Such discourses might have serious consequences because political actors have the power to set the agenda on the migration debate and influence public opinion about the arrival of refugees. This, in turn, might have a devastating effect on the lives of refugees living in, or attempting to enter, the Netherlands. A shift away from the discourses currently used to describe refugees in Dutch politics is thus necessary.

To increase the understanding and awareness of this problematic portrayal of refugees and the role of Orientalism in the securitization of migration in the Netherlands, further research on a number of different topics is needed. Although the analysis performed in this thesis has illustrated the presence of Orientalist assumptions about the so-called refugee crisis in Dutch parliamentary debates following terrorist attacks in Europe, future research into the role of Orientalist assumptions in Dutch politics is necessary. Such research could, for instance, focus on the role of Orientalist assumptions in debates that solely focus on the ‘refugee crisis’. Moreover, research into the presence of Orientalism in political debates can take place outside the Dutch context by studying political discourses in other European countries to explore differences and similarities in Orientalist discourses. Finally, future research could even shift away from political discourses and instead focus on the extent to which Orientalist assumptions have become commonsense by studying public opinions and expressions in blogs or in comments on websites such as Facebook or Twitter. All in all, the main task that remains is to make people aware of the effects that discourses can have on our perception of reality in general, and in this case the perception of refugees in particular, for these perceptions, in turn, might lead to several decisions that negatively affect the support for refugees in the Netherlands and Europe.

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Appendix

1. De terroristische aanslagen in Frankrijk zijn een aanval op onze manier van leven, een aanval op onze vrijheden (Van Klaveren in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
2. In een even barbaarse als gerichte aanval op de dragers van de vrijheid van meningsuiting en op de joodse medeburgers probeerden ze onze samenleving in het hart te raken en de fundamenten van onze vrijheid weg te slaan (Samsom in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
3. De aanslag op het satirische tijdschrift Charlie Hebdo raakt de kern van onze samenleving, van onze vrijheid en van onze waarden (Roemer in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
4. Het waren nietsontziende aanvallen op onze vrijheid, en dus op ons allemaal (Zijlstra in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
5. In dit deel van de wereld mag je geloven wat je wilt, maar de waarden die uit onze joods-christelijke traditie voortkomen, zijn ononderhandelbaar (Van Haersma Buma in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
6. Onze westerse samenleving is geraakt in het hart. Onze manier van leven is het doelwit. Onze joods-christelijke waarden die onlosmakelijk met dit deel van de wereld verbonden zijn, maar die een universele gelding hebben, worden door die jihadisten niet geaccepteerd (Van Haersma Buma in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
7. Na recentelijk in Beiroet, Ankara, Istanboel en Parijs was die nu in het hart van onze zuiderburen en het kloppend hart van Europe (Pechtold in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
8. De aanslag in Brussel was opnieuw een aanval op onze manier van leven (Bontes in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
9. Ik ben ontzettend kwaad. (...) Woest dat er door de islam weer onschuldige slachtoffers zijn gevallen: joden, islamcritici en onschuldige mensen (Wilders in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
10. De terreur van de radicale islam is de grootste bedreiging voor onze veiligheid op dit moment (Van Haersma Buma in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
11. Ze werden het slachtoffer van de kogels uit de Kalasjnikovs van de moslimterroristen (Wilders in the debate following the Paris attacks).

12. Maar ik verzeker u dat al die grote aanslagen hier in Europa de afgelopen tien jaar, van Madrid tot Parijs, tot het Joods museum in Brussel, tot Londen, tot onze eigen Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, met elkaar gemeen hebben dat ze geïnspireerd zijn op die gewelddadige islam (Wilders in the debate following the Paris attacks).
13. Tegen iedereen die zich afvraagt of zo'n jihadistische aanval ook in Nederland kan plaatsvinden, zeg ik: die heeft al plaatsgevonden, al meer dan tien jaar geleden, toen Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam werd afgeslacht door een jihadist (Bontes in the debate following the Paris attacks).
14. Wij staan hier tegenover een groot kwaad, het kwaad van het jihadisme (Segers in the debate following the Paris attacks).
15. Hoe hard de elite het ook ontkent: deze aanslagen zijn het rechtstreeks gevolg van de islamitische ideologie. (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
16. Dat was bij het communisme zo, dat was bij het nationaalsocialisme zo, dat was bij het fascisme zo en dat is bij de islam opnieuw zo (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
17. De islam is niet te vergelijken met het christendom, het jodendom of het humanisme. De islam is een ideologie, een bloedlinke ideologie (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
18. We hebben de afgelopen decennia in heel Europa miljoenen mensen geïmporteerd uit een cultuur van haat, die niet willen integreren, die niet willen assimileren en dat ook niet hoefden, want de overheden in West-Europa vroegen er niet om (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
19. Radicale extremistische groeperingen zijn een grote bedreiging voor onze vrije, liberale samenleving. Zij verspreiden een religieus ideologisch gif en ze bedreigen onze manier van leven (Zijlstra in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
20. Daar dolen duizenden jongeren rond die vatbaar zijn voor deze duistere vorm van de islam (Segers in the debate following the Paris attacks).
21. Ik deel, eerlijk gezegd, de analyse van de heer Wilders dat er in de islam een probleem zit (Zijlstra in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
22. Het zijn toch individuen die een keuze maken om op basis van een politieke, ideologische of religieuze overtuiging bepaalde daden te verrichten? Dan kun je toch niet het abstracte "de islam is schuldig gebruiken als je daarmee een context schetst dat iedereen die daaruit voortkomt, daar inspiratie uit put of wat dan ook, medeschuldig is? (Pechtold in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).

23. De terroristische aanslagen in Frankrijk zijn een aanval op onze manier van leven, een aanval op onze vrijheid. De wereld is geschokt, maar kan niet verbaasd zijn. Door de enorme immigratiestromen van de afgelopen decennia zien we in het Westen, in onze eigen steden steeds vaker de botsing tussen beschavingen waarover professor Huntington al twintig jaar geleden schreef. De vrijheid van meningsuiting, de scheiding van kerk en staat, de gelijkwaardigheid van man en vrouw, van hetero en homo: het zijn waarden die binnen de islam niet of slechts gemankeerd voorkomen. (...) Het verband tussen de slachtingen in Parijs en de bron waaruit die voortkomen, valt echter niet te ontkennen: de jihad is onderdeel van de islam (Van Klaveren in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
24. De islamisering is een levensgroot gevaar (Wilders in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
25. Ik realiseer mij dat dit angst oproept: (...) angst dat in de grote vluchtelingenstroom die ons land bereikt, ook terroristen kunnen zitten of (Zijlstra in the debate following the Paris attacks).
26. Wij voeren hier een debat naar aanleiding van de aanslagen in Parijs en nu krijg ik het idee dat wij een debat hebben over de vluchtelingenstroom (Pechtold in the debate following the Paris attacks).
27. Voor de SGP is die migrantenstroom eerlijk gezegd wel een belangrijk onderdeel van dit debat en van de maatregelen van het kabinet (Van der Staaij in the debate following the Paris attacks).
28. Als we dat geen halt toeroepen, als we die asielinstream in die masse-immigratie blijven laten komen van mensen uit een cultuur die levensgevaarlijk is voor ons en waarin iedereen die geen moslim is minderwaardig is, een cultuur die geweld predikt, zullen onze kinderen en kleinkinderen niet meer in een vrij land leven (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
29. Dat betekent inderdaad dat de grenzen moeten sluiten voor nog meer islam, dat we de grenzen moeten sluiten voor immigranten uit islamitische landen en dat we geen asielzoekers meer moeten toelaten (in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
30. Dat begint in deze moderne samenleving met internationale samenwerking. (...) als er geld bij moet, moet dat, voor de veiligheid. (...) De AIVD wacht nu al twee jaar op de bevoegdheid om überhaupt te mogen tappen op de kabel (Van Haersma Buma in the debate following the Brussels attacks).

31. Ik zei het net al in antwoord op een collega in een interruptiedebatje dat ik al sinds 2005, na de moord op Theo van Gogh, hier pleit voor administratieve detentie (Wilders in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
32. Evenmin wil ik toegeven aan paniekmaatregelen: een hek om het land of vastzetten zonder processen. Onze vrijheid bescherm je niet door haar in te perken (Samson in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
33. Meer mensen aftappen, meer burgerlijke vrijheden inperken, meer macht geven aan veiligheidsdiensten om te doen wat hun goeddunkt zonder deugdelijke democratische controle, bedreigt de vrijheid en veiligheid van alle burgers (Thieme in the debate following the Brussels attacks).
34. De aanslag op het leven van deze Parijzenaren was ook een aanslag op onze vrijheid, de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van godsdienst (Van Oijk, in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
35. We zijn geraakt, in het hart (Samsom in the debate following the Ile-de-France attacks).
36. Onze westerse samenleving is geraakt in het hart (Buma in the debate following the Brussels attacks).