CIVILIZATIONIISM AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY:

TWO ARGUMENTS FOR ANTI-IMMIGRANT MOBILIZATION

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Abstract

The focus of the thesis is reaffirmation of European identity conceptualized on civilizational terms within the anti-immigrant discourse. I will analyze two different civilizational arguments that were used for securitization of migrant crisis in 2015 and have framed mass migration as the threat to European identity. Based on the analysis, I formulate my main hypothesis that the anti-immigrant discourse is the expression of certain form of Pan-European nationalism. In the first chapter of the thesis I will set up the theoretical background and explain the methodology that I will be using, while the second chapter will start with a historical overview of how Europe was conceptualized in the civilizational terms based on its unique culture and tradition. In the second part of this chapter I will make my remarks on different conceptions of European identity from the contemporary perspective. The third chapter consists of brief introduction to transnational populism and civilizationism as the main elements of the anti-immigrant mobilization. The main analysis is conducted in chapter four, were I will deconstruct two different types of arguments for anti-immigrant mobilization. The first one that I refer to as the *Christian argument* is found in the discourse of Viktor Orban who opposes Islam based on its supposed incompatibility with traditional Christian values. On the other hand, *secular argument* that Wilders uses is based on the commitment to secular ideas and perception that Islam is incompatible with Western liberal values. In conclusion, I will try to answer the more ambitious question: how the anti-immigrant mobilization affects European solidarity and identification with Europe as the common culture? The aim to show that advocates of civilizationist arguments are interpreting those threats as the potential danger primarily to European collective identity, which is contained within their separate national identities. Even when populist anti-immigrant parties

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claim that they are protecting their own national identities, they are putting it in the context of

broader civilizational discourse in which the Muslim Other is a threat to Europe as a whole.

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Introduction

Since the outbreak of the European migrant crisis in 2015, the increased salience of right-wing populism based anti-immigration attitude has been often described as the revival of nationalism. Although there are still debates among the scholars on whether the anti-immigrant discourse is predominantly triggered by cultural or economic factors, we are witnessing the undoubtable popularity of identity politics in the political agenda of the parties such as *Fidesz* in Hungary, *National Rally* in France, *Alternative for Germany* in Germany, *Party for Freedom* in Netherlands etc. Their identitarian tendencies are expressed through anti-immigrant mobilization: they are advocating for stronger border control and opposing the migration with the explanations that they aim to protect, not just their national identity, but European identity as well.

Talal Asad reflects the same notion that is constantly repeated in the anti-immigrant discourse: "Europe is not merely a continent but a civilization." [1] Europe has often been conceptualized as a "meta-culture" or civilization from different political positions varying from fascism to liberalism.[2] Authors such as Ruth Wodak and Rogers Brubaker have already argued that the contemporary populist discourse in Europe is to a large extent civilizational.[3] Civilizationism, as Brubaker describes it, means that there is a perception of insuperable civilizational differences between the cultures, which is expressed in the distinction of European Self from the Muslim Other, and it is predominantly based on the religious differences that are in the core of Othering.[4] The conceptualization of Europe in civilizational

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[1] Asad, Talal, "Formation of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity" (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 221.
[2] Mudde, Cas, "Europe for Europeans" in *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 169.
[3] Brubaker, Roger, "Between nationalism and civilizationism: the European populist moment in comparative perspective", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40:8, 2-3.
[4] Ibid.

terms is central element of anti-immigrant discourse ever since mass migration has been securitized as the threat to the existence and survival of European civilization, and is often referred to as a "Muslim invasion" by politicians such as Viktor Orban or Geert Wilders. Brubaker points out that those civilizational differences are not essential and have only instrumental value for the purposes of creating a collective identity: in that sense, being Christian means not being Muslim, it does not mean being Christian in any substantive sense.[5] Moreover, he claims that it is liberal and secular values that are being represented as the "Judeo-Christian civilization", which needs to be protected from supposedly hostile Islam. But even behind the secular and liberal arguments in the anti-immigrant discourse, which are most notably presented by Geert Wilders, there is a specific Christian civilizational context which defines liberalism and secularism are the products of post-Christianity.

In my research, I will try to show how populist parties are using civilizationist discourse to utilize the anti-immigrant sentiment for the purpose of re-affirming European collective identity and promoting alternative concept of Europe. My main hypothesis is that anti-immigrant discourse is the expression of certain type of Pan-European nationalism, rather than the usual type of nationalism which is defined by the borders of nation states. A more ambitious question that my research raises is whether this kind of anti-immigrant discourse is in fact enhancing European sense of solidarity and collective consciousness, or is it just being used as a political tool, devoid of any real pan-European intentions.

When it comes to different political positions within the European Union, there is no doubt that political parties which use populist rhetoric are mostly Eurosceptic and advocates for stronger national sovereignty, as they claim that the institutions of the European Union are corrupted and alienated from the needs of the population. However, since the migrant crisis

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[5] Green Emma, "The Specter of Catholic Identity in Secular France". *The Atlantic,* May 6, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/05/christian-identity-france/525558/

that started in 2015, these political parties have made a significant shift from their nation-based discourse, expanding the reach of their rhetoric to more transnational European level. Benjamin Moffitt describes current anti-EU populism as *transnational*, claiming that the concept of "the people" exceeds national borders since the common enemy of the people is an elite impersonated by, so-called, "Brussels bureaucracy" and the EU institutions.[6] Furthermore, Brubaker claims that even when Eurosceptic populists are criticizing the institutions of EU, they still consider themselves Europeanists and what they criticize about European Union is that it needs to be "more European."[7] What it means is that both European Union and Islam are presented in their discourse as the common enemy of all Europeans since they are a threat not only to particular national identities, but to Europe as a whole. In that sense,"the people" that politicians such as Viktor Orban and Geert Wilders are addressing to are their political supporters and sympathizers all around Europe. The reason European Union has also been Othered in the anti-immigrant discourse is because the multicultural and pro-immigration policies of EU are also perceived a threat to what those populists believe that Europe stands for.

What Viktor Orban sees as the alternative to the European Union policies is establishment of "illiberal democracy" or "Christian Democracy," based on primordial European traditions.[8] *New Statesman* journalist John Lloyd has come up with the term "the new illiberal International" which describes potential coalition of the populist leaders such as Viktor Orban, Matteo Salvini or Sebastian Kurtz, based on the opposition to official immigration politics of EU.[9] The significant success of populist parties in the 2017 election in

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[6] Moffitt, Benjamin. "Transnational Populism? Representative Claims, Media and the Difficulty of Constructing a Transnational "People" in *Javnost - The Public*. 24 (2017), 1-17.
[7] Brubaker, Roger, "Between nationalism and civilizationism: the European populist moment in comparative perspective", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40:8, 17.
[8] John Lloyd "The new illiberal International", *NewStatesman*, July 18, 2018, http://www.newstatesman.com/world/2018/07/new-illiberal-international
[9] Ibid.

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different European countries was presented as be the biggest challenge to European unity and integrity, especially at the time of the Brexit. On the other hand, new populists alliance gathered around Trump's former advisor Steve Bannon did not live to the popular expectation on the European Parliamentary elections.[10] At the same time, the proposal for European Army made by French president Emmanuel Macron and the new agreement between Germany and France also show the tendencies of two biggest European countries (not including UK due to Brexit-related issues) to strengthen the already shaken foundations of European Union.[11] Just as Euroscepticism and right-wing populism emerged as the political anti-thesis to official immigration policies of EU, the new Merkel-Macron axis could also be understood as political answer to the existing anti-EU and anti-immigrant tendencies.

Although the political consequences of the migrant crisis might give the impression that the anti-immigrant mobilization has the capacity to undermine the European unity, what I will argue in my thesis is that the anti-immigrant mobilization could also strengthen the European collective identity. I will reflect on different historical concepts of unified Europe and combine it with contemporary secondary empirical data from Eurobarometer surveys on public opinion and election results in EU countries in order to argue that European citizens would identify with certain cultural and social concepts of Europe, even if there were no institutions of political unification such as the European Union. Iver Neumann explains how Europe has been historically constructed through distinction from the Eastern Other.[12] The perceived threat from Ottoman or Soviet invasion has in different periods enhanced a European sense of solidarity

[10] Maia De la Baume, Silvia Sciorilli Borrelli, "Steve Bannon's stuttering European adventure", March 6, 2019, https://www.politico.eu/article/steve-bannon-european-parliament-the-movement-stuttering-european-adventure/
Results of the elections are available on this website: https://election-results.eu/
[11] Maia De la Baume, David. M Herszehorn, "Merkel joins Macron in calling for EU army to complement NATO", POLITICO, November 13, 2018, https://www.politico.eu/article/angela-merkel-emmanuel-macron-eu-army-to-complement-nato/
[12] Neumann, Iver. B., "Uses of the Other: The East in European Identity Formation" (University of Minnesota Press, 1999)

and raised the awareness on a common culture that ought to be defended from supposed "barbarians at the gates." Relying on Neumann's argumentation and his historical overview of how Europe was conceptualized by Europeans, I will analyze how the perception of immigrants is simplified and reduced to that of a Muslim Other. The fact that migrants that coming from Middle Eastern countries are not necessarily Muslims is intentionally disregarded because it does not fit in civilizationist discourse. The perceived threat from a "Muslim Other" can be considered both old and new at the same time. It is old in the sense that it invokes the historical memory of Crusades and Ottoman invasions of Europe, yet it is also new because the "invasion" is described by populists as being more sophisticated and disguised as the migration.

Analysis of the anti-immigrant discourse is important because it gives us an insight into the fact the Eurosceptics are using civilizational discourse to invoke the idea of Europe, regardless of their discontent with the political project of European Union. In that sense, the concept of Europe that they referring to and the European Union are different things, so their skepticism about political and institutional unity within the EU does not entail their skepticism about the existence of common cultural identity of Europe.

Chapter 1 – Theoretical Background and Methodology

1.1 Constructivism and identity formation

The main theoretical framework that I will use for studying collective identities is combination of different theoretical postulates of social constructivism, poststructuralism, critical theory and discourse analysis in a broader conceptual sense. The aim is to understand the importance of the values and ideas that political actors embrace and how those ideas influence their interpretations of reality and self-conceptualization. When it comes to the ontology, I will treat the concept of identity as socially constructed and therefore changeable and fluid. On the other hand, postpositivist epistemology makes it impossible for any empirical value to be taken from the study of identity since it treats reality as unknowable outside of the subjective perception and sees every form of knowledge as mere interpretation.[13]

Instead of more radical constructivist approach that presupposes postpositivist epistemology, I will take a more moderate approach that Alexander Wendt defines as *structural idealism.*[14][15] Wendt's thin constructivism is *idealistic* rather than *material* and *holistic* rather than *individual*, which is expressed in its two main tenets:

(1) that the social reality is predominantly determined by shared ideas rather than material factors and

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[13] Dunn, Kevin C, and Neumann, Iver B, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), 28

[14] Wendt, Alexander, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-2

[15] Dunn, Kevin C, and Neumann, Iver B, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), 28.

(2) that the identities and interests of actors are constructed by those ideas rather than given by nature.

Nevertheless, this approach does not neglect the importance of certain materialistic and individualistic perspectives, and it does not reject positivist empirical methods.[16] Brubaker and Cooper have also suggested that the analysis of identity politics requires unambiguous analytical categories, so the complete de-essentialization of identity would leave us without any methodical possibility to study identities empirically at all.[17]

In that sense, identity could be used in empirical research as both category of practice and category of analysis.[18] Identity as category of practice is present in everyday life and used by ordinary social actors, as well as in the political discourse of politicians who use identity talk and identity politics to justify certain collective actions or impose their concept of identity.[19] Identity as a practice is used in the anti-immigrant discourse when the populists are referring to either European identity or some national identity as being threatened by Other. Construction of European identity on the civilizational terms is also another way in which identity as a practice is used in the anti-immigrant discourse.

 On the other hand, identity as category of analysis is usually connected to a more "scientific" approach used by analysts and empirical researchers.[20] To avoid the essentialist conception of identity it should be treated as processual and interactive as it is a product of political and social actions.[21] It should also be understood as the collective expression of *sameness*, in the

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[16] Wendt, Alexander, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1
[17] Rogers Brubaker and Frederic Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'" in Theory and Society, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Feb., 2000), 1,2
[18] Brubaker, Cooper, *Beyond "Identity",*4
[19] Ibid., 6
[20] Ibid, 4.
[21] Ibid.

distinction from Other, while at the same time situational or contextual and conditioned by many overlapping or contesting discourses.[22]

In the following chapter I will argue, in more details, about the contesting concepts of European identity which may be the product of different narratives that political actors embrace as the part of their self-conceptualization. Those identities are considered "real" and understood as practices of analysis in the given discursive or political context, which is necessary for any empirical research.

The roots of the Self-Other dichotomy, which is the basis for collective identity formation, are both philosophical and psychological. Iver B. Neumann attaches the first mention of identity formation on such dichotomy to Hegel and his dialectical method.[23] Hegel argues that "I" becomes self-consciousness only when it is faced with Other's self-consciousness. In that sense, identity is formed as the synthesis of the antithetical relation between the Self and the Other in which "they recognize themselves in mutually recognizing one another."[24]

When it comes to the psychological perspective, social identity theory offers a theoretical basis for group identification. Henry Tajfel defines social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership."[25] As Thomas Risse explains, social identities are not based merely on Self-Other relations, but on the part of the Self that belongs to the larger social group, which is crucial for understanding the formation of collective identities. [26] However, we cannot talk about Self-conceptualization without

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[22] Ibid. 7-8.
[23] Neumann, Iver B, "Self and Other in International Relations" in *European Journal of International Relations,* Vol 2 (2), (1996), 141
[24] Hegel, Georg Friedrich von. Phenomenology of Spirit (Oxford University Press, 1977), 112
[25] Tajfel, Henri *Human groups, and social categories.* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), 255
[26] Risse, Thomas. *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres.* (Cornell University Press, 2010), 22.

introducing "generalized Other" that George Hebert Mead defines as "any and all others that stand or could stand as particulars over against the attitude of role-taking in the co-operative process at hand."[27] Neumann stressed how *the strangers* play an important role in collective identity formations since they are defined as the members of the "out-group"[28] and "their very presence brings the question who is self and who is other to the fore."[29] The notion of strangers has the similar role as Carl Schmitt's *enemy* whom he defines as "the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that, in extreme case, conflicts with him are possible."[30]

Using this dichotomy, Neumann analyzes how the perceived threats from different strangers embodied in a Russian or Turkish "Other" have enhanced solidarity among Europeans and shaped the boundaries and definitions of what Europe stands for.[31] The same could be applied to the contemporary example of Muslim Other which is being presented as the main cultural threat and has become the main target of xenophobic anti-immigrant discourse in both first name Orban's and first name Wilder's political speeches and agendas.

2.2 Securitization as the speech act

Based on a constructivist and post-structuralist understanding of the relation between power and language, the Copenhagen School of Security Studies has contributed to a non-material and non-objective understanding of security concept. It means that the notion of threat is inseparable from the discourse and understood as social construction that is introduced by

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[27] Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self and Society. From the Standpoint of Social Behaviorist.* (The University of Chicago Press, 1934), 28.
[28] Tajfel, *Human groups and social categories,* 255
[29] Neuman, *Self and Other,* 147
[30] Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political.* (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 27.
[31] Neumann, Iver B. *The Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation*. (University of Minnesota Press, 1999)

securitizing actors who present certain matter as a threat to some referent object.[32] Threat exists only in the intersubjective relation between actors that introduce the threat and audience which may choose to accept it and thus legitimize exceptional procedures against the threat.[33] At the same time, instead of a traditional understanding of security threat as objective and reduced strictly to military terms formulated by the state actors exclusively, Copenhagen School has extended the security concepts to the non-state actors, as well as the other sectors such as political, societal, economic and environmental.[34] What it means is that different security threats could be identified and perceived differently by different actors, and in different sectors.[35] In that sense, the distinction between "real" and "perceived" threat becomes irrelevant from the constructivist standpoint, since whatever is perceived to be a threat becomes a threat. To put it in the words of Ole Weaver, "by saying the word, something is done."[36] Using constructivist epistemology, Weaver defines the security threat in terms of *speech act* and *political choice*.[37] It consists of four elements: securitizing actors, existential threat, a referent object that is threatened and the audience.[38] A certain issue is first formulated as a security threat in the discourse of actors who put it on their political agenda, and it is a matter of choice for their audience whether they will accept this agenda and make the threat "real."[39] The fact that securitization cannot be imposed by one actor without this kind of acceptance is the reason why Buzan, Weaver and de Wilde describe the securitization process as "essentially-intersubjective."[40] Based on those elements, I will show how the migrant crisis was securitized by populists such as Orban or Gilders and their supporters, who presented it as an essential

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[32] Buzan, B., Weaver, O. and de Wilde, J..*Security – A New Framework for Analysis* (Colorado: Lynne Rinner Publishers, Inc, 1998), 36
[33] Ibid., 41
[34] Ibid., 30.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Wæver, Ole, "Securitization and Desecuritization" in Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (ed.), *On Security.* (Columbia University Press, 1995), 55
[37] Weaver, *Securitization and Desecuritizaiton,* 251
[38] Buzan, Weaver and de Wilde, *Security,* 36
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid, 3.0

threat to the survival of European identity, which is conceptualized in civilizational terms. Anti-immigrant discourse contains all the four elements of the securitization process:

1. Securitizing actors: populist leaders that use anti-immigrant discourse – Viktor Orban, Hungarian Prime Minister and Geert Wilders, leader of Dutch *Party for Freedom.*

2. Existential threat: the influx of the Muslim population in Europe caused by the migrant crisis, which is described as "Muslim invasion".

3. A referent object: European identity which is expressed through different concepts such as "common European culture", "European civilization", "Judeo-Christian civilization", "European values", "Christian values", "Western values", "liberalism", "secularism" etc.

4. An audience: EU citizens, supporters and sympathizers in different European countries.

2.3 Methodology: critical discourse analysis (CDA), discourse-historical approach (DHA)

The main methodology I will use in my thesis is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with special emphasis on Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA).[41] Discourse-Historical Approach offers an interdisciplinary approach to studying the anti-immigrant discourse and it allows appropriate historical context to be taken into consideration when it comes to the interpretation of texts and discourses.[42] My primary analysis is focused on the speeches and interviews given by Orban an Wilders after the migrant crisis has started in 2015, which I will compare to their previous xenophobic statements concerning Islam and immigrants. I will also conduct

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[41] Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 50
[42] Wodak, Ruth, "Critical Discourse Analysis, Discourse-Historical Approach" in The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction (2010), 2

qualitative content analysis of the proposal for legislative bill on banning certain manifestations of Islam, which Wilders has submitted to Dutch parliament.

My aim is to identify how politics of fear are constructed in anti-immigrant discourse and used for the purposes of exclusion of Muslims. *Four-level model* that Wodak suggests puts the discourse in specific *sociopolitical* and *historical context*, making it easier to deconstruct the meanings behind exclusionist rhetoric.[43] It also identifies the location of such discourse in *the current context* stressing out its manipulative power to affect the debates and shape the public on opinion on dominant issues.

The analysis shows that Orban and Wilders are using almost all the typical strategies of exclusionary politics which are stressed by Wodak and Billig.[44] For example, they produce simplistic dichotomies that constructs "Us" in terms of positive self-presentation, while presenting "Them" as essentially evil or intolerant. They also use one of the typical populist strategy: shifting the blame by creating scapegoats and presenting the Other as being inherently intolerant, and thus make the distraction from their own intolerance.

Wodak describes interdiscursive relation as possibilities of different speeches or texts to influence one another by making same references or "borrowing" different elements from similar discourses for the purposes of re-contextualization certain issues.[45] Interdiscursive relation between Orban's and Wilders' rhetoric is crucial for successful securitization of migrant crisis, but also important for the construction of European self. The fact that they use same references to either European common culture or Christian civilization, which are presented as being under immediate threat, shapes the public sphere towards normalization of discriminatory discourse based on civilizational terms. Those references are expressed in the

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[43] Ibid, 51.
[44] Ibid, 66.
[45] Ibid.

different forms of *topoi*, which can be defined as strategies of argumentation that would make speech more successful.[46] One of most common topoi used in right-wing rhetoric that I identify in anti-immigrant discourse based on Christian and secular arguments are *topos of threat*, *topos of history* and *topos of saviour.*[47]

  Topos of threat is based on syllogism that if there is a threat then something needs to be done about it.[48] In anti-immigrant discourse, Islamiztion is presented as a threat that should be stopped in order prevent the destruction of the Western civilization. *Topos of history* compares some contemporary issue with similar historical example and proposes similar solutions that have worked in the past.[49] Invocation of Muslim invasion in anti-immigrant discourse suggests that migrants should be treated as invaders and dealt with by using violence, just as it was done in the past. *Topos of saviour* is present in discourse of both Wilders and Orban, as they are presenting themselves as protectors of European civilization, while Orban even compares himself with heroic figures from Hungarian history.[50]

In the analysis, I am focusing on specific *topoi of threat* related to the civilizationist discourse which were used to justify xenophobic and exclusionist attitude towards Muslims, which is supported by certain dehumanizing metaphors, and is evident in the references to migrants in terms of the "flood" or "parazites". Other than demystification and deconstruction of exclusivist narratives, one of the purposes of the discourse analysis is to show how referent object of the securitization is European identity conceptualized on civilizational bases. Their

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[46] Ibid,51.
[47] Ibid, 53.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] "Orbán Viktor a Kossuth Rádió „180 perc" című műsorában", Website of Hungarian Government, September 18, 2015: https://www.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/beszedek-publikaciok-interjuk/orban-viktor-a-kossuth-radio-180-perc-cimu-musoraban20150918

exclusionist rhetoric is here used only as another way of reaffirming civilizational superiority, which is the basis of their "nationalistic" identification with Europe.

Chapter 2 – Defining European identity

In the previous chapter I have stressed out that essentialist ontology is not compatible with researching the European identity since there is no single concept of what Europe stands for, and even if there were, the understanding of the idea would have changed over time. Instead, it is much more appropriate to follow Neumann's proposal that there should always be competing "as if" stories that define the content of the identity for those who embrace such narratives and particular understanding of European identity.[51] Those narratives need to be studied as the "representations of self that hold human collective together" without questioning whether those identities "really" exist.[52] However, we should not strip European identity of all its essence since it would be impossible to conduct any empirical research. It is vital to analyze different competing "essences" of Europe to answer to the question: is there any relevant conception of European identity, based on a common cultural heritage, regardless of any political projects such as European Union or any other potential alternative to it?

What kind of "imagined community" is Europe, and does it exist outside the partially artificial political attempts to bring the European nations closer together into a single political entity? There are different conceptual understandings of what European identity should stand for, but also different opinions on whether common European identity exists at all. Opinions about the possibility of European identity vary from the pessimistic Euroscepticism based on empiricism to the more hypothetic and normative ones, but for the sake of this paper, I will make a specific generalization and outline the two dominant positions: skeptic and more optimistic one. The main characteristic of both positions is the fact that the European identity

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[51] Neuman, *Uses of Other*, 214
[52] Ibid. 213.

is debated only within the European Union context and thus reduced to a purely political concept of Europe.

3.1 Contesting concepts of European identity

The skepticism about European identity is mostly based on the essentialist ontology and primordial understanding of identity. The main arguments against the existence of collective European identity are best expressed in the remarks of Anthony Smith. What he sees as one of the main obstacles to the construction of European identity is the existence of stable and deep-rooted national identities as well as the lack of a central authority that would homogenize Europe.[53] He explains how circularity is inevitable when it comes to arguments about European identity because cultural differences between the European nations persist.[54] According to him, the reason for that is the lack of a persuasive central authority that could unify Europeans under a single political framework, while the absence of such power is, to a large extent the consequence of those cultural and historical differences.[55] Smith's primary concern is how a potential European identity would compete with national identities and whether it would be able to induce a "sense of commitment and passion" among the majority of the European population.[56] His prognosis is also pessimistic when it comes to the successful creation of supranational facts on the social and cultural levels. Even with the existence of supranational political institutions, Europe is still divided into different linguistic and ethnic groups, which can be a significant obstacle for identifying with abstract Europe more than particular nations.[57]

[53] Smith, Anthony D., "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?" In *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, (May 1993), 133.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid. 134.

However, the example of civilizationism in the anti-immigrant discourse provides an evidence that social and cultural differences between European nations become irrelevant when there is a perceived threat to the common European culture. The anti-immigrant mobilization is based on the construction of fear that Europe will be Islamized which would destroy European way of life based on the values of Christianity or secularism. Framing the migrations as "Muslim invasion" invokes European collective memory of historical events such as Crusades or Ottoman Invasion, which might provide certain exclusionist framework for enhancing the sense of community.[58] In that sense, Self is constructed above the national level by identifying with Europe as civilization in the distinction from Muslim Other. European nations are understood as the different branches of the same European civilization, which is constructed on the basis of common cultural and historical heritage rooted in Christianity and Enlightenment as opposites to Islam. Smith's main critic is that not all of Europeans shared these traditions in the same way.[59] He points out that not everyone had the same experience of the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, liberalism, democracy and many other cultural traditions that are considered to be shared European legacy.[60] That is why he sees Europe as a "family of cultures" instead of a single cultural entity and believes that the creation of any supra-national facts is unlikely to be successful.[61]

On the other hand, most of the European federalists and Europhiles believe either that the supranational facts already exist or could be created in the political process of European integration. While arguing in favor of the European constitution, Habermas mentions that there are many historical examples of European collective spirit that may still be relevant as a "formative background for social solidarity[62] He mentions the importance of political

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[58] Smith, Anthony "National Identity and the Idea of European Unity" *in International Affairs* 68 (1) (1996), 56
[59] Smith, *National Identity*, 70
[60] Smith, *National Identity*, 71
[61] Smith, *A Europe of Nations,* 134
[62].Habermas, Jurgen, "Why Europe Needs a Constitution" in *New Left Review*, 11,(2001), 16

organizations such as transnational workers' movements, and ideological foundations such as Christian social doctrines or norms of social liberalism, that are part of the same European tradition.[63] Habermas answers to pessimist critics that claim that "there is yet no European people" by drawing historical parallels with how slow and artificial the formation of national identities was. Just as national consciousness was created by enhancing civil solidarity among the strangers, the same process could take place at the supranational level, creating European consciousness among members of different nations.[64] However, he still believes that certain "empirical circumstances" are necessary for the process of identity formation to be extended beyond national borders. He provides some examples of what those empirical circumstances might be: "the construction of a European public sphere; and the shaping of a political culture that can be shared by all European citizens."[65]

Although Habermas has a more positive take on the existence of empirical circumstances that may provide a framework for European identity, his notion of European identity is limited to the context of European federalization, as he does not take into consideration the alternative concepts of European identity that are not connected with European Union. Smith's claim that not all traditions are shared by everyone equally could be an argument in favor of different competing concepts of European identity, the ones that are based on the different values and different ontological understanding of collective identity. There is variety of contesting cultural heritages that one could claim to be the common denominator for European traditions and could be used as the foundation for identity creation. Advocates of secular argument, such as Geert Wilders, would rather conceptualize European identity as rooted in liberal values and secularism, while more conservative traditionalist may

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[63] Iibd.

[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

use Christianity as demarcation for what Europe stands for. Just as European identity can be conceptualized in supranational terms as the identification with European Union, it could be also constructed upon different values and ideas, such as Eurosceptic commitment to European common culture without political unity, or Pan-European "fascism without borders."[66]

At the same time, Thomas Risse's criticism towards the essentialist conception of identity could be applied to Smith's argumentation as well. He claims that supranational concepts of European identity cannot be sustained since no single European identity would compete with the national identities.[67] What Risse suggests is that, instead of searching for a unique European identity on the supranational level, we should understand it as complementary and intertwined with national identities and focus on the analysis of how the national identities are Europeanized.[68] Both Smith and Risse embrace the idea of having multiple identities that do not exclude each other but can be established on different levels of identification or even totally unrelated to one another.[69] Risse proposes different models of how European identity can be compatible with national. National identity could be sustained within the European identity as the *onion model* suggests, or it could be that the two are intertwined and blended into each other if we accept the *marble cake model*.[70] The first one suggests that there is hierarchy between people's senses of belonging to different identities, in which they would identify with their nation state primarily but also embrace secondary European identity.[71] On the other hand, in marble cake model, both national and supranational identity are cross-cutting and one might be understood as integral part of the other.[72] To illustrate this model, Risse

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[66] Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes" in *Europe from 1918 to 1945* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2017), 1-38
[67] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 38
[68] Ibid.
[69] Smith, *National Identity*, 58
[70] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 45
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

explains how the emergence of separate European identity is not necessary since Europe is integrated into "core understanding of one's nationalism."[73] Therefore, to be German or French is to be European as well, which means that national identities are Europeanized.[74] In that sense, Risse also criticizes the fact that the European Union has a monopoly on what is considered as Europe, claiming it to be "identity hegemony."[75] That hegemony is perfectly illustrated in the example of how the integration of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union was presented as their "return to Europe."[76] What is also important to stress here is the fact that *Europe* and *Europeanization* are still contested concepts, so it is almost inevitable that there will always be different narratives and "as if" stories that explain what European identity stands for, as I already mentioned previously.[77] While emphasizing the importance of centralized authority, what both Smith and Habermas fail to conceive is the fact that supranational facts do not need to exist objectively. For example, Neumann sees different conceptions of identity as "essential representations" that made it possible for political actors to make sense of their world and that should not be considered any less real just for being imagined.[78] If certain populist leaders embrace one conception of European identity and believe it to be real, it needs to be treated as real, for the purposes the empirical analysis of their discourse.

Risse has already pointed out that there are two competing conceptions of European identity: political Europe and cultural Europe.[79] If Europe is constructed as the political identity, it reflects the identification with European Union, understood as post-national identity

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[73] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 45
[74] Ibid, 37-63.
[75] .Risse, Thomas, "European Institutions and Identity Change: What Have We Learned" in *Identities in Europe and the Institutions of the European Union,* edited by Risse, Thomas, (ed), Hermann, Richard (ed), Brewer, Marilynn (ed), 2004, 9
[76] .Ibid.
[77] Neuman, Uses of Other, 227
[78] Ibid., 212
[79] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 51

in Habermasian sense, which embraces the values and ideas of democracy, liberalism, cosmopolitanism multiculturalism, human rights, social welfare, and unified financial market.[80] This concept of Europe is very much inclusive and considers a member of "European people" anyone who is the citizen of the EU and accepts the European values.[81] On the other hand, the primordial concept of Europe is based on the exclusion and Othering, as it understands Europe as the specific social space based on shared historical and religious heritage.[82] However, it is based on the very selective and exclusive interpretation of the shared common history and cultural heritage with elements of xenophobia and racism.[83] Risse believes it to be a "counterimage to the cosmopolitan and modern idea of Europe" and sees it as "noteworthy kind of 'nationalism' beyond the nation state[84] To clarify why he is using the term "nationalism," Risse explains that, although European nationalist identity pertains to the supranational entity, it also reconstructs all the elements of typical 19th-century nationalism on the European level.[85] What it means is that subject of their national feelings and loyalty exceeds the borders of nation-state, but attaches all the attributes of the nation to more broader cultural space of Europe.

2.2. Pan-European nationalism

The term "Pan-European nationalism" was first coined by Hannah Arendt in 1954 and was referring to European anti-American attitude at that time, which she thought might be a fertile ground for enhancing the unique Pan-European identity.[86] Although the context in which she used this term was conditioned by specific Cold-War relations which are no longer relevant,

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 52
[84]." Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Arendt, Hannah. *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954: Formation, Exile, and Totalitarianism.* (New York: Schocken Books, 1994) 416

the term could also be used in the context of the usual foreign threat that was coming from the Eastern Other, which helped Europe define its cultural and physical borders in the distinction from it. Pan-European nationalism was also used to describe the ideologies of radical far right and neo-fascist movements such as *European New Right* or Oswald Mosley's *British Union of Fascists*.[87] Elements of Pan-European nationalism are present in various far right parties and movements such as French *Nouvelle Droite* or *National Rally*, Hungarian *Fidesz,* Italian *Northern League,* Greek *Golden Dawn,* Dutch *Party for Freedom* and many others. The fact that most of the European nationalists are Eurosceptics could be proof that European identity does not need existing supranational facts or institutions for the people to identify with Europe as the cultural sphere.[88]

The exclusion and Othering in the nationalist concept of European identity are based on strictly religious terms, and Christianity is seen as the core of the common cultural heritage. The intra-religious differences between Catholics, Protestants or Orthodox, that Smith sees as the obstacle for the creation of European collective consciousness, become irrelevant once there is foreign threat from the Muslim Other.[89] The notion of the threat coming from the Other can easily be suppressed with the emergence of another threat that is perceived to be more urgent and immediate. One example that perfectly illustrates this shift is the how the Islamophobia has substituted anti-Semitism in Europe, as Jews are more often mention in the anti-immigrant discourse as the part of European civilization, in opposition to Islam. Regardless of the rich history of anti-Semitism, reflected in the centuries persecutions and recent legacy of Holocaust, Europe is now defined in terms of "Judeo-Christian civilization."[90]

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[87] Bar-On, Tamir. *Where Have All the Fascists Gone?* (Routledge, 2016)
[88] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 52
[89] Smith, *National Identity*, 70
[90] Geert Wilders, "A warning to America", *Geert Wilders Weblog*, May 12, 2011. https://www.geertwilders.nl/index.php/in-english-mainmenu-98/in-the-press-mainmenu-101/77-in-the-press/1750-a-warning-to-america-speech-geert-wilders-cornerstone-church-nashville-12-may-2011

The elements of anti-Semitism denial in the anti-immigrant discourse are there for the purposes of creating positive self-image and stressing the alleged tolerance in opposition to supposedly intolerant Muslims.[91] When it comes to the Muslim population, they are still considered the most important "Other" and quintessence of anti-Christianity. Both Neumann and Risse are stressing the examples of how the Turkish path towards European integration is unsuccessful mainly because its predominantly Muslim population, which makes it incapable of being perceived as "true" part of neither European Union or European civilization in broader sense.[92] Talal Asad also makes similar point claiming that "Muslims are present in Europe and yet absent from it" because they are not considered to be *essentially* part of Europe as Europeans conceptualized it.[93] Muslims have been reduced to what Asad calls *carrier civilization*, which imported certain elements into European civilization, only to be given the essence of inherent hostility towards all non-Muslims[94] Thus, hostility of European populists towards Islam has been projected onto Muslim Other, presenting a certain form of victim-victimizer reversal, and providing the justification for exclusionist self-explanatory narrative about Europe. Risse points out that religion has been used as the demarcation line of who belongs to Europe just so that the boundaries between Self and Other could seem insurmountable.[95] Brubaker makes the same point when writing about civilizationism in the anti-immigrant discourse: to identify ourselves as Christians, we need to construct the Other as being a Muslim.[96]

Having that in mind, it is important to focus on the analysis of narratives that are offered by the European populists, in which European identity is conceptualized on the

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[91] Wodak, Politics of Fear, 58
[92] Risse, A Community of Europeans, 52
Neumann, Uses of Other, 60-63
[93] Ibid., 217
[94] Ibid. 217-218
[95] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 52
[96] Brubaker, Roger, "Between nationalism and civilizationism: the European populist moment in comparative perspective," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40:8, 1212

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"primordial constructions" of the Christianity and the Enlightenment.[97] The anti-immigrant populists that embrace Christianity as the foundation of European identity are more prone to using the Christian argument, while the secular argument focuses more on the ideas of the Enlightenment, which I will analyze in more details in following chapters. However, I would claim that both Christianity and Enlightenment are the product of the same historical heritage of European civilization.[98] The references to Christianity in the anti-immigrant discourse are there for defining European Self in religious terms since the Other was defined in religious terms. On the other hand, references to ideals of the Enlightenment, such as secularism and liberal values, are used in the secular argument for the purposes of reaffirming civilizational superiority of Europe over allegedly intolerant and non-secular character of Islamic civilization.

2.3 Christian roots of European identity

The far-right parties are offering an alternative narrative to the one that considers European identity only in the context of the European Union and it is based on the identification with Christianity as the foundation of European civilization. That narrative suggests that the European cultural sphere exists as the concept regardless of any specific forms of political organization and that identification with the concept of Europe is also an essential part of national identity. Thus, European identity could be understood in two ways: as intertwined with national identity or hierarchically above the national one. Regardless of which conception of identity we decide to apply in the analysis, the nested one or the intertwined one, religion is the core of collective identification

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[97] Risse, *A Community of Europeans,* 52
[98] Brubaker, *Between nationalism and civilizationism*, 1212

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To clarify the role of Christianity in the formation of the European "as if" narratives we need to take into consideration Brubaker's four approaches to studying the relations between nationalism and religion:[99]

1. Understanding religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena.

2. Understanding religion as cause or explanation of nationalism.

3. Understanding religion as imbricated or intertwined with nationalism.

4. Understanding religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism.

Brubaker tends to show how religion can also provide the framework for imagining a community, and there are some aspects in all the approaches that could be applied to the religious character of European nationalism.[100] However, the first and the fourth do not seem to be fully compatible with European nationalism since it is not *essentially* religious, although Christianity has played a crucial role in the creation of European collective consciousness. The second approach – claiming that religion is the cause or explanation of nationalism – could be the most appropriate for understanding how civilizationism lies in the core of collective identity.

Bo Strath makes is that Christianity has been the substitute for political unification.[101] He explains how the concept of Europe was synonymous with Christianity in the Medieval times, while the boundaries of the community were territorially defined as *Res Publica Christiana*.[102] Although he claims that the connection between Christianity and unity have dissolved in periods of interconfessional struggles between Catholics and Protestants, it is not

[99] Brubaker, Rogers, "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches" in *Nations and Nationalism.* 18. 2-20 (2012), 4
[100] Ibid.
[101] Strath, Bo, "A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of the Concept" in the *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(4), 392
[102] Ibid.

unimaginable that the sense of shared solidarity in the collective memory could be drawn from such historical concepts.[103] While the Protestant Reformation is known to be a significant factor in forming collective consciousness and national identity since it promoted mass literacy and print capitalism, the universal character of Catholicism and Latin as *lingua franca* could be understood as supranational elements for European identity long before the existence of nation states. Even before the process of confessionalization, which has institutionalized religion within the Westphalia system, medieval Christendom was the subject of collective identification. Moreover, Brubaker's third approach, in which he treats nationalism and religion as intertwined, is based on the fact that religion can provide certain myths, symbols, and metaphors that are crucial for collective identification.[104]

There are important arguments against Smith's claims that the potential European mythology based on the primordial historical facts is inappropriate for the modern European project.[105] Just like the collective memory of Crusades and Ottoman invasion is still reflected in the contemporary Othering of Muslim migrants, modern European conservatives and far-right traditionalist tap into the idea of *Res publica christiana* or Holy Roman Empire in their narratives. Smith himself mentions that even the more liberal founding fathers of European unity, such as Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, have been exploiting the imperial myth of Carolingian and Ottonian Holy Roman Empire as the reference to the golden age of European Christendom.[106] A similar reference to "Ghibelline ideal of Holy Roman Empire"[107] is one of the central elements in Julius Evola's *"Revolt Against the Modern World"*, and it is described as something qualitatively superior to any kingdom or nation, stressing out the Empire's

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[103] Ibid.
[104] Brubaker, *Four Approaches*, 9
[105] Smith, *National Identity*, 74.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ghibellines were the supporters of Holy Roman Emperor during the struggle for power between Papacy and Holy Roman Empire in 12th and 13th century.

supranational, metapolitical and universal nature.[108] The fact that both Kalergi as aristocratic liberal and Evola as fascist-conservative embrace similar ideals of Christendom only shows how deeply embedded the Christianity is in the European collective consciousness and that it is the foundation of many different competing traditions. Different ideas about modern unified Europe that emerged in the first half of the 20th century have also been conceptualized on the Christian foundations. Kalergi believed that the establishment of the United States of Europe would be possible because the European nations were "communities of mind,"[109] connected by Christianity, European science, art, and culture.[110] The same understanding of Europe is still written in the official program of Pan-European movement: "Christianity is the soul of Europe. Our mission is characterized by the Christian image of the man and the rule of law."[111] The references to the Holy Roman Empire and Christianity are also incorporated into the vision of Europe by many other interwar thinkers. Carl Schmitt writes nostalgically about 13[th-]century European unity in *Res Publica Christiana*, while he was suggesting the replacement of nation states with new political forms which he called "greater spaces" and was using the Holy Roman Empire as a paradigm for the new European unity.[112] His overall understanding of the concept of *political* is based on the claims that concepts from modern political theory are secularized theological concepts, so the omnipotence of the Emperor resembles the omnipotence of God.[113]

The third approach explains how religion defines the boundaries of collective identity. Even though not all the members of the religion belong to the in-group, all the members of the

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[108] Evola, Julius, *Revolt Against the Modern World.* (Rochester: Inner Traditions International), 73

[109] Prettenthaler-Ziegerhofe, Anita. "Richard Nicolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi, founder of the Pan-European Union, and the birth of a "new" Europe" in Europe in crisis: intellectuals and the European idea, 1917-1957 edited by Hewitson, Mark and D'Auria, Matthew (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 9

[110] Ibid.

[111] Pan European Union, Program (accessed December 22, 2018) http://www.international-paneuropeanunion.eu/content/downloads/PEU_program.pdf

[112] Untea, Ionut. "New middle ages or new modernity? Carl Schmitt's interwar perspective on political unity" in. *Europe in crisis: intellectuals and the European idea, 1917-1957* edited by Hewitson, Mark and D'Auria, Matthew. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 156

[113] Schmitt, Carl. *Political Theology, Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 36

in-group are bounded by the same religion.[114] Drawing boundaries on a religious basis is not only a feature of the discourse of the far-right parties, but also amongst scholars. A most relevant example is Huntington's demarcation of European civilization on a purely religious basis, claiming that Europe ends where Orthodox Christianity and Islam begin.[115] There are certain historical connotations in his demarcation, such as division between Western and Eastern Roman Empire. Huntington directly quotes William Wallace who suggests that the most significant line in Europe is the eastern boundary of Western Christianity in 1500.[116] Moreover, he mentions the importance of the dividing line between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empire, claiming that people who lived in the Habsburg Empire shared the collective experience of European history. Although he fails to mention the Orthodox population, he stressed the predominance of Protestantism and Catholicism as well as the legacy of feudalism, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, French Revolution, and the Industrial Age.[117] On the other hand, he claims that Orthodox and Muslim people living in the Ottoman Empire were only "lightly touched by shaping events in the rest of Europe."[118] Huntington's argumentation is a perfect example of how a simplified vision of what Europe stands for easily leads to exclusion on the religious and cultural basis. That vision is to a large extent identical to how contemporary radical right-wing parties understand the essence of Europe.

The third approach that treats religion and nationalism as intertwined also explains the notion of "chosen people" and the Manichean distinction between the "righteous" Christian Self and "evil" Muslim Other.[119] The belief in the "redemptive role" is consistent in the anti-immigrant discourse and is a crucial part of exclusionist rhetoric of Viktor Orban and Geert

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[114] Brubaker, *Four Approaches*, 12.
[115] Huntington, Samuel P. "Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of the World Order" (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 29-30.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Brubaker, *Four Approaches*, 9.

Wilders who present themselves as the defenders of Christian Europe and its culture, which is perceived to be threatened by the Muslim Other disguised as the migrant. Brubaker's third approach could explain complete civilizationist discourse since Christianity defines boundaries of who belongs to Europe, but also provides myths and symbols that are central for the discursive representation of Europe.

The fourth approach, which deals with religious nationalism as distinctive kind of nationalism, cannot be applied in this case. The reason for that is the fact European nationalism is not essentially religious, although some fundamentalist Christians might conceptualize it as such. However, religion still provides the basic framework for defining the boundaries of Europe, and Christianity provides the collective consciousness with certain Biblical symbols, and metaphors that are drawn from religious heritage and are crucial for the self-understanding of European nationalists.

The combination of the second and third approach is most appropriate to be applied for studying religious foundations of European identity. The second approach analyzes how religion provides and explanation for nationalistic feelings. In the case of Europe, explains how Christianity was understood as the foundation of European civilization because of historical overlapping of the two concepts. Also, civilizational differences between Europe and Muslim Other are expressed in terms of the religious differences between Christianity and Islam, which explains why Europe was identified with "Christian civilization" or "Judeo-Christian civilization" in the anti-immigrant discourse. As for the third approaches, it analyses the way in which Christianity defines boundaries of Europe, providing it with the myths about its superiority against "barbarians at the gates" and the notions of redemptive role and chosen people, which explains the discriminatory and exclusionist rhetor towards Muslim Other.

Chapter 3: Transnational populism and civilizationism as the basis of anti-immigrant discourse

In this chapter, I will support my claim that anti-immigrant discourse is an expression of European nationalism by analyzing its two main features: civilizationism and transnational populism. Both of those features suggest that populist parties are addressing the people beyond their national borders and that the referring object, which is perceived to be threatened by migrants, is, in fact, European identity rather than many different national identities separately.

3.1 Transnational populism

Benjamin Moffitt has intended the term transnational populism for the type of populism in which "the people" is constructed beyond the national borders.[120] Transnational populism does not presuppose any direct connection or co-operation of different political movements outside the national boundaries; it only means that the populists are addressing to the broader transnational public. Froio and Ganesh also stress out that even when there is transnational cooperation between far-right movements, it is usually not the result of formal agreements between organizations, and it is rather based on personal connections or interaction on social media.[121] In that sense, informal connections and the internet provide the framework for a distinctive *transnational public sphere* that both Risse and Habermas believe to be the crucial factor for establishing European identity. For Habermas, only the democratic public sphere has the capacity to turn significant social problems into topics of concern that should be debated upon.[122] Risse sees the public sphere as the place where communities and their identities are

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[120] Moffitt, *Transnational populism*, 410
[121] Caterina Froio and Bharath Ganesh, "The transnationalisation of far-right discourse on Twitter" in *European Societies* (2018), 4.
[122] Habermas, Jurgen, "Why Europe Needs a Constitution" in New Left Review, 11,(2001)

constructed in a way that the process of collective identification is emerging from the debates on issues of common concern.[123] He identifies the transnational European public sphere on the basis of two empirical facts:

> 1) The same European themes are discussed on a similar level of attention across national public spheres and media.[124]

> 2) The same frames of reference and interpretations are present across national public spheres and media.[125]

Based on those empirical facts, Risse also defines transnational European populism. It was primarily formulated within the borders of European countries and has transcended national borders to become recognized as a common European issue by different speakers and listeners that recognize each other as legitimate participants in the discourse.[126] Even though anti-immigrant discourse might have been formulated and used for different purposes by different national political figures, the identical framing and interpretation were adopted by various populists on the right-wing populist spectrum.

3.2 Civilizationism

While anti-immigrant discourse is being defined as transnational populism in terms of form, the content of such discourse can be described as "civilizationism" – a term I borrow from Brubaker. What he means by civilizationism is the construction of a Self-Other distinction in broader civilizational terms, rather than more narrow national terms.[127] The notion of civilizational threat from Islam has provoked the populist cry to protect the Christian roots of Europe, together with liberal values such as gender equality, human rights, and freedom of

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[123] Risse, A Community of Europeans, 121
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid. 125.
[126] Ibid, 126.
[127] Brubaker, *Between nationalism and civilizationism*, 1193

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speech. [128] Brubaker highlights that "identitarian Christianism" is, in fact, the secularist position, while the defense of liberalism is substantially illiberal. [129] He claims that Christianity is embraced only as civilizational identity in opposition to Islam, while liberalism is interpreted selectively as a distinct way of life, different from the one dictated by supposedly intolerant Islam. [130] Brubaker's main claim concerning "identitarian Christianity" is indisputable: that civilizationist discourse is essentially secular, and that Christianity is used merely as the foundation of civilizational distinction devoid of any religious content. However, what Brubaker fails to mention is that Christian identity is used only as the synonym for European identity. The fact that references to Christianity do not suppose commitment to any substantially Christian values would not sound as paradoxical if it was put in the purely European context, in which Christianity, together with secularism and liberalism was embraced only as the foundation of the common European tradition. In that sense, Brubaker's claim on secular character of "identitarian Christianity" would not be paradoxical at all, because the Christianity would be embraced as the cultural heritage in the secular manner.

We cannot analyze civilizationism for itself, without putting it into particular social or political context in which it fulfills a specified function and has distinctive meaning and purpose given by those who use it. For example, in the European context, civilizationism has reached its peak in the outbreak of the migrant crisis, and it is being used to present Muslim Other as the threat to European cultural identity. In the case of Donald Trump, it has been used to promote more nationalistic, isolationistic, and exclusive politics, and it has more economical connotations than cultural. That is why we can say that, in Europe, civilizationist discourse is being used in the service of European nationalism, just as Trump's civilizationism is just another way of expressing his American nationalism. Although Trump and European populists

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[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.

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are exploiting the fear of Muslim Other and migrants identically, and the distinction between Christianity and Islam is the core of Othering in both cases, they are using it as a reference to different identities, European and American. In that sense, there is no global civilizationalist political alliance, it is just rhetorical tool for reaffirming particular identities.

Moreover, it is not so rare that the European populists also perceive the United States as the Other, which is very explicit in the case of Geert Wilders and many far-right or neo-fascist figures also. For example, Alain de Benoist, the founder of Nouvelle Droite, has made a significant shift from defending the "Western world" or "white man" to declaring himself as European rather than Occidental.[131] In 2001 he proposed the creation of pan-European military force as the counterpart to American unilateralism, which was the consequence of growing concern about increasing competition and the potential geopolitical struggle between the United States of America and Europe in the post-9/11 world.[132] Even if the American and European far-right populists considered each other allies in the joint fight against Islam and protection of "Christianity" or "the West," all those values have been used only in the service of different contexts.

In that sense, the term "civilizationism" must be put in the European context in order to understand the purposes of civilizationist discourse, just as the analysis of nationalistic discourse must have defined object of national identification. Civilizationist discourse can be explained only as the part of specific political context, meaning that European and American populists are not referring to same notion of Western civilization, based on secularism or Christianity, but only their own European or American identity. Therefore, civilizationism needs to be dealt with merely as the tool for protecting particular identity since it does not provide any substantial content on its own unless it is put into the European or American

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[131] Bar-On, *Fascism*, 339
[132] Ibid.

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context. When Brubaker explains the civilizationist rationale by illustrating that "we are Christians only because *they* are Muslims," what he forgets to mention is that "we" are Christians because we are Europeans, and Europe was historically conceptualized as Christian by "us.| Although I agree with his standpoint that European populism is not substantively nationalistic, my foremost critics are pointed to vagueness of term civilizationism and indeterminacy of its contextual value. I would claim that European populism is neither that narrow to be only nationalistic nor broad enough to be referred to as "civilizational" without any given context. Therefore, the analysis of civilizationist discourse needs to be strictly reduced to its function in the process of construction and re-affirmation of European collective identity in the context of the migrant crisis.

Chapter 5 - Case study: securitization of migrant crisis in the discourse of Viktor Orban and Geert Wilders

5.1 Essentialization fallacy

Since I have defined transnational populism and civilizationism as two main characteristics of anti-immigrant discourse, and European public sphere as the main field of actions in which it has been formulated, I will move further by presenting two most notable ways in which it has been expressed: *Christian argument* and *Secular argument*. Both arguments are based on the certain type of *argumentum ad baculum* fallacy, which I name *essentialization fallacy* and it can be illustrated by the following syllogism:

1.   Migrants who come to Europe are all Muslims.

2.   Islam is hostile and intolerant towards non-Muslims cultures.

3.   Therefore, migrants are threat to Europe since it is essentially Christian/secular.

These generalizations are based on the same xenophobic stereotypes and *topoi* that are common for the far-right rhetoric.[133] Bearing in mind the fact that purpose of anti-immigrant mobilization is reaffirmation of primordial concept of European identity, we can say that both arguments are two sides of the same coin. They are differently formulated, depending on the whether their advocates promote conservative or more liberal values, but they reflect the same notion of civilizationism related to the European context. In both cases, Christianity and secularism are understood as substantial part of European identity and rhetorical style is identical since they both use similar *rhetoric of exclusion*, reinforced with different fallacies and topois. The only difference is that advocates of Christian argument use Christian values as

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[133] Wodak, *Politics of Fear,* 54

the reference object and foundation for European identity, while the secular argument is framed as concern for preservation of Europe's liberal and secular values.

5.2 Christian Argument

In this chapter I will analyze the anti-immigrant discourse of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, focusing on his State of Nation Address speeches and interviews given to various Hungarian and international newspapers. What I refer to as Christian argument is the expression of civilizationism based on the perception that Islam is threat for European identity because it is supposedly incompatible with Christian heritage of Europe and Christian values. First, I will focus on Orban's self-given role of defender of Christian Europe, and then I will analyze his construction of fear in references to European collective memory of Muslim invasion and conspiracy theories about decline of the West.

5.2.1 Orban as the defender of Christian Europe

While discussing the Hungarian immigration policies on the plenary session of the European Parliament in May 2015, Orban tried to legitimize his anti-immigrant attitude by claiming that he wanted to ensure that Europe would continue to belong to Europeans and prevent further Islamization of Europe.[134] In 2015, Hungary was the first country of the European Union to oppose the official immigration policies of the European Union, violating the principles of both EU and international law.[135] New immigration laws, the fence on the borders with Serbia and Croatia and open violence of Hungarian border patrol and police, were

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[134] Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Speech in the European Parliament, *Website of Hungarian Government*, May 20 201, https://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-speech-in-the-european-parliament

[135] "Migrant crisis: Hungary's closed border leaves many stranded", *BBC News,* September 15, 2015: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34260071

framed as "the defense of Christian Europe."[136] Siding with leaders of other Visegrad group countries, such as Slovakia and the Czech Republic, Orban has become the informal leader of the anti-immigrant block within European Union that opposed the official proposals of European Commission for mandatory redistribution quotas.[137] In his State of Nation Address in February 2016, Orban proclaimed the beginning of a "new era" for both Hungary and Europe, proclaiming the 21st century as the century of mass migration in an apocalyptic manner.[138] Orban gives himself the historical role of the savior of Europe by presenting mass migration as an historical challenge requiring immediate reaction. His anti-immigrant mobilization combines a *topos of threat* with a *topos of history,* claiming that history "has laid siege to the borders of Europe and the security of European cultures and European citizens."[139] The reference object that needs to be defended is Europe, defined in the following terms:

> We really do have something to defend: the co-existence of Europe's free, Christian and independent nations; shared roots, shared values, shared history, geographical and geopolitical interdependence; equality between the sexes; freedom and responsibility; fair competition and solidarity; pride and humility; justice and mercy. We are these things: this is Europe. Europe is Hellas, not Persia; it is Rome, not Carthage; it is Christianity, not a caliphate.[140]

In this excerpt, Orban adopts the primordial understanding of European identity referring to diverse traditions from common European culture as if they were fixed and unchangeable. His understanding of European identity is based on the *fallacy of sameness*, an illusion that

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[136] Matthew Karnitschnig, "Orban says migrant threaten 'Christian Europe'", Politico, Stepember 3, 2015, https://www.politico.eu/article/orban-migrants-threaten-christian-europe-identity-refugees-asylum-crisis/
[137] "Migrant crisis: Hungary challenges EU quota plan in court", *BBC News*, December 3, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34998615
[138] Prime Minister Viktor Orban's State of Nation Address, *Website of Hungarian Government*, March 1, 2016: https://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-state-of-the-nation-address
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

Europe's values and roots are homogenous, and that European nations are essentially Christian.[141] At the same time, he promotes an alternative to the federalist concept of the European Union, by stressing that member states should be "independent" and "free," suggesting that national sovereignty suffers under European Union regulations. Even though he cites some of the liberal values when defining what Europe stands for, he embraces Christianity as the foundation of his concept of Europe, in opposition to Islam. References to caliphate invoke both historical memories of Christian-Muslim conflicts and contemporary civilizational differences. When he's referring to historical centers of European civilization such as Rome and Ancient Greece, Orban uses what Wodak calls *topos of common European culture*, to distinguish European cultural heritage from other non-European cultures such as Persian or Carthaginian.[142] He alludes to the fact that Hellenic and Roman culture have provided primordial concept of European identity with the specific content in the past, but he also embraces Christianity as actual and contemporary foundation of European identity, rather than historical. In his concluding remarks of 2016 State of the Nation address, Orban also stresses out the civilizationist understanding of Europe:

> We are the citizens of the same historical and spiritual Europe as Charlemagne, Leonardo, Beethoven, Saint Ladislaus, Imre Madách or Béla Bartók. Our Europe is built on Christian foundations, and we are proud that it has accomplished the fulfillment of human and spiritual freedom. There are many of us in Europe, with many different ways of thinking. There are those who believe in the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and there are those who believe in the trinity of God, homeland and family, and the kingdom to come of faith, hope and love. But whatever our personal beliefs, none of us can want our Europe to submit when faced with a torrent of people deliberately channeled towards us, and when faced with aggressive demands for the assertion of different morals and different customs.[143]

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[141] Wodak, *Politics of Fear,* 54
[142] Wodak, Politics of Fear, 57
[143] Ibid.

Orban tends to position both himself and the Hungarian nation as genuinely committed to European collective identity, by placing figures from different periods of Hungarian national history in the same sentence with some of the most prominent men from diverse European cultural and historical heritage. When it comes to European diversity, Orban creates an illusion that "there are many ways of thinking", while making a clear distinction between secular conceptualization of Europe based on the ideas of French Revolution, and more conservative one, which is based on the Christian values. He implicitly rejects the secular ideals, stressing the irreligious character of the Western European countries such as France, while embracing Hungarian alleged commitment to Christian ideals. Thus, Orban implies that his concept of European identity is superior from the one embraced by secularists, suggesting that Western Europe has lost its Christian roots and therefore not wordy of being "true" European.

Then again, by proclaiming his commitment to the defense of "Christian Europe" and the establishment of "illiberal democracy," Orban has defined his rhetoric in more narrow terms that coincide with what I call the *Christian argument*.[144] Although the argument is in its essence secular it is the way of framing the migration as a threat and the metaphors that Orban uses that make his argument "Christian." His rejection of liberalism as nihilism and "enemy of freedom" and calling on Christianity is what differentiates his discourse from the one offered by Geert Wilders, whose exclusionism is based upon the alleged commitment to liberal values.[145] Even before the migrant crisis, Orban had been promoting his vision of European identity and advocating for a "more Christian Europe." In the speech that he gave at the European Forum Conference in Berlin on May 8, 2014, he explicitly demonstrated a civilizationist understanding of Europe:

[144] Honor Mahony, "Orban wants to build illiberal state", EuObserver, July 28, 2014: https://euobserver.com/political/125128
[145] Matthew Kaminski, "All the terrorists are migrants" *Politico,* December 2, 2015 https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-interview-terrorists-migrants-eu-russia-putin-borders-schengen/

The way in which Christian origins, traditions, and outlook upon life are not sufficiently acknowledged in the institutions of the European Union still hurts millions of European people to this day. Christianity is not only a religion but is also a culture on which we have built a whole civilization. This is not a choice, but a fact. If people feel that European politics are fighting against their own origins and are ashamed to admit that we are really a Christian continent, this will only alienate more people from the European Union.

When the first immigrants came to the Hungarian border in 2015, the Hungarian Prime Minister instrumentalized the issue to promote his vision of Europe based on Christianity, adopting the elements of far-right discourse and basing his politics on Christian identitarianism. Appealing to European security has undoubtedly shaped the European public sphere and established Orban and similar populist leaders, such as Matteo Salvini, Miloš Zeman or Sebastian Kurtz before his resignation, as potential leaders of "new Europe."[146] Wodak argues that invoking European identity is a strategy to legitimize exclusion and politics of fear, but also to create a positive self-image of Robin Hood-like protector of ordinary people's interests.[147] On the other hand, the content of his discourse suggests that the migrant crisis has provoked stronger identification with Europe in populist discourse, thus enhancing his Euroscepticism with alleged awareness for European identity. When it comes to the question of whether the migrant crisis was successfully securitized, results of 2017 elections in different European countries indicate that anti-immigrant populist parties have made significant success in comparison to previous years.[148] At the same time, results from European Parliament elections in May 2019 show that all populist parties with salient anti-immigrant discourse have still received less votes together than most successful, and far less votes than it was excepted.[149]

[146] John Lloyd "The new illiberal International", *NewStatesman*, July 18, 2018, http://www.newstatesman.com/world/2018/07/new-illiberal-international
[147] Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 54
[148] https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006
[149] European Parliament 2019 Elections results: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/elections-press-kit/8/european-elections-results

5.2.2 The collective memory of Muslim invasion

Using the popular *topos of history*, Orban frames migration in such a manner that it resembles historical threat from Muslim invasion, thus appealing to European collective memory, and placing *topos of threat* into a very specific historical context. In an interview he gave for the German magazine *BILD,* Orban has made a strong xenophobic statement by saying: "We do not regard these people as Muslim refugees. We regard them as Muslim invaders."[150] He makes a distinction between the refugees that "knock on your door" and ask for help and migrants that cross the border illegally, which he presents as the legitimate reason for the perception/description of the latter as invaders. In the same interview, he refers to multiculturalism as the danger of creating "parallel societies" that are not compatible with each other, essentializing Muslim migrants as inherently incompatible to European Christian values.[151] In the State of Nation Address from 2016, Orban also uses dehumanizing and disaster metaphors to legitimize the anti-immigrant discourse and reaffirm his role of the defender of Europe, appealing to always popular *topoi of the savior.*

> This danger is not now threatening us as wars and natural disasters do, which take the ground from under our feet in an instant. Mass migration is like a slow and steady current of water which washes away the shore. It appears in the guise of humanitarian action, but its true nature is the occupation of territory, and their gain in territory is our loss of territory. Hordes of implacable human rights warriors feel an unquenchable desire to lecture and accuse us. It is claimed that we are xenophobic and hostile, but the truth is that the history of our nation is also one of inclusion and the intertwining of cultures.[152]

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[150] Viktor Orban, „Ihr wolltet die Migranten, wir nicht!", *Bild*, January 7, 2018, https://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/viktor-orban/orban-interview-54403736.bild.html

[151] Ibid.

[152] Prime Minister Viktor Orban's State of Nation Address, *Website of Hungarian Government*, March 1, 2016: https://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-state-of-the-nation-address

Instead of a usual metaphorical description of the migration as the "wave of refugees" or "flood," he first makes a direct comparison with natural disasters and wars, thus presenting migration as more dreadful and dangerous. The "steady water" metaphor is then used to illustrate how the danger is subtler and more sophisticated, as it is the part of the well-planned and organized conspiracy to gradually replace the European population. Unlike a direct military invasion, the consequences of this kind of "hidden" threat could sometimes go unnoticed until it is too late. Thus, the border control and anti-immigrant policies are legitimized again as the only means for preventing the anticipated invasion and destruction of Europe. Dehumanizing metaphors are also used in the portrayal of liberal NGOs, and pro-immigrant politicians as "hordes" that are unjustifiably accusing Orban's government of being xenophobic and racist. The *victim-victimizer reversal*[153] is also obvious from the fact that threat of destruction is also illustrated with clear connotations of military-like invasion, barbarians plundering the villages and portrayal of Muslim immigrants as gang rapists:

> We do not want to – and we shall not – import crime, terrorism, homophobia, and anti-Semitism to Hungary. In Hungary there shall be no lawless urban neighborhoods, there shall be no street violence or immigrant riots, there shall be no arson attacks on refugee camps, and gangs shall not hunt our wives and daughters. In Hungary, we shall nip any such attempts in the bud, and we shall be consistent in punishing them.[154]

Thus, he makes another *false dilemma fallacy* presenting the terror and violence as the immediate consequence of immigration, and the only alternative to stronger border control, which would prevent migrants from coming to Hungary. Combating homophobia is here used only strategically, not for the sake of defending the human rights of LGBT people, but for protecting another European custom that is perceived to be essentially European and not compatible with Islam. His condemnation of anti-Semitism is also part of defining Europe in

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[153] Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 52
[154] State of Nation Address 2015

terms of Judeo-Christian civilization, as an opposition to Islam. What proves that his concern for human rights and liberal values of Europe is ingenuine and strategical is the fact that he believes multiculturalism to be an illusion and liberalism an enemy of freedom.[155] Moreover, Orban presents the liberal elite as the same threat to Europe, since it supports pro-immigration policies and promotes equality and tolerance towards immigrants. He also presents himself as a victim by claiming that he is left alone to protect the borders of Europe, without any help from either western European nor southern (European) neighbors such as Serbia and Croatia.

To promote himself as the last defender of Christian Europe and Hungary as the only country that stands as an obstacle for the Muslim invasion, he compares himself with Hungarian national hero Janos Hunyadi.[156] Hunyadi was famous for defending the southern border of Hungary from the Ottoman invasion in the 15th century. When Ottoman troops reached the Hungarian border after capturing Serbian city Smederevo, Hunyadi launched a military campaign to regain the Christian lands and drive the Ottomans out of Europe. Together with Polish king Wladyslaw III, he was one of the leading army generals during the Crusade of Varna, which ended up with Ottoman victory and demise of Christian feudal lords in 1444. Hunyadi died of illness during the siege of Belgrade in 1456, thus becoming one of the most important national heroes for Hungarians, but also Serbs and Romanians who celebrated him as the last true protector of Christianity. What Orban intends by making this comparison is to reinforce the already mentioned *topoi of the savior* with the notion of a sacred goal, which has priority over all the other profane matters, and thus would justify his anti-immigrant policies

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[155] Viktor Orban, „Ihr wolltet die Migranten,
wir nicht!", *Bild*, January 7, 2018, https://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/viktor-orban/orban-interview-54403736.bild.html

[156] "Orbán Viktor a Kossuth Rádió „180 perc" című műsorában", Website of Hungarian Government,

September 18, 2015: https://www.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/beszedek-publikaciok-

interjuk/orban-viktor-a-kossuth-radio-180-perc-cimu-musoraban20150918

and establish himself as the leader that would prevent Christian Europe from being subjected to Muslim invader.

5.2.3 Internal liberal Other and external Muslim Other

While claiming that the decline of Christian Europe can be prevented only by stopping the further migration and closing the borders to supposed invaders, Orban also constructs the very institutions of European Union as an enemy, because of their alleged support for immigration. For him, the federalist tendencies and supranational structures of EU stand in the way of an alternative vision of Europe based on "illiberal democracy" and "Christian democracy." In the State of Nation Address in 2016, he had made the securitization move by presenting the migrant crisis as an existential threat, not only to the national security of Hungary but to Europe as a whole. At the same time, he constructs the internal Other as the part of the same threat since it has allied with the Muslim Other. This internal Other, in Orban's view would be a European liberal elite that embraces multicultural, cosmopolitan and federalist vision of Europe, which is inherently incompatible with Orban's vision of Europe defined in civilizational terms. Not only does he blame this elite for not realizing that Europe is occupied, but he also accuses them of being anti-Christian and anti-European because they support what he believes to be Islamization of Europe:

> Europe is not free, because freedom begins with speaking the truth. In Europe today, it is forbidden to speak the truth. A muzzle is a muzzle – even if it is made of silk. It is forbidden to say that today we are not witnessing the arrival of refugees, but a Europe being threatened by mass migration. It is forbidden to say that tens of millions are ready to set out in our direction. It is forbidden to say that immigration brings crime and terrorism to our countries. It is forbidden to say that the masses of people coming from different civilizations pose a threat to our way of life, our culture, our customs, and our Christian traditions. It is forbidden to say that, instead of integrating, those who arrived here earlier have built a world of their own, with their own laws and ideals, which is forcing apart the thousand-year-old structure of Europe .[157]

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[157] State of Nation Address 2016

By claiming that Europe is not free, he suggests that it was occupied by some non-European hegemon, which defines leaders of European Union as not essentially European. His discourse reflects the perception of identity hegemony that Risse mentions, meaning that the European Union has established a monopoly over what European identity stands for. [158] However, Orban's notion of not being free is also a reference to the existence of supranational laws that forbid him to introduce anti-immigrant policies. Using the metaphor of silk muzzle, he refers to the allegedly sophisticated character of the European Union's oppressiveness concerning immigration policy. In that sense, he alludes to the historical notion of supranational or imperial elites mistreating European nations. This metaphor of enslavement is also followed by *topos of savior* when he proclaims himself as the speaker of truth in opposition to the European elite, which is typical for the populist discourse. He denounces the dishonesty and hypocrisy of so-called "Brussels elite" using popular synecdoche in references to imperial centers such as "Moscow" or "Vienna", alluding to historical connotations of European nations were subject to different imperial powers such as the Soviet Union or Austria.

Using the scapegoat strategy, he blames "global cosmopolitan elite" for supporting migrations for the sake of their international interests to reduce the power of national states and rob them of their sovereignty by creating multiethnic and multiconfessional United States of Europe. Orban thus tends to create positive self-presentation by parading himself as the "good guy" who is protecting independence of European nations and its freedom of European citizens from the "evil" plots of European elites. [159] He also provides a false historical facts and distorts

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[158] Risse, A Community of Europeans,
[159] Wodak, *Politics of Fear,* 58

the view on the past in claiming that Europe has been religiously homogenous for the past two hundred years, giving no rights to any other religions than Christianity.

5.2.4 "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory

It is crucial to emphasize that Orban's discourse is very much based on the conspiracy theory about "Great Replacement," which is popular amongst the far-right and neo-Nazi movements and political parties all around Europe. The main narrative of the conspiracy is that there is an orchestrated plan to replace the white European Christian population with the migrants coming from the Third World countries, especially the Middle East and North Africa. The roots of this conspiracy go back to Jean Raspail's dystopian novel "The Camp of Saints" from 1973, which could be described as utterly racist and xenophobic because of its anti-immigrant elements and almost apocalyptic predictions about the demise of the Western world. The main plotline of the novel is entirely identical to popular white supremacist conspiracy theories about "white genocide" that predict the destruction of Western civilization as the result of the mass immigration of people from Third World countries.[160]. The epilogue is that number of immigrants coming from all around the world rapidly rises, and they refuse to assimilate into Western culture, but also start murdering French civilians and anyone who does not welcome them, before they eventually outnumber the white European population. Just as Orban opposes the liberal European elite and blames them for causing the decline of the West by supporting immigration, the immigrants in this novel are supported by the left wing and anarchist movements as well.[161]

However ridiculous and insulting, this book was praised as the great piece of literary art by some conservative literary critics and has also inspired the future generations of white

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[160] Raspail, Jean. *The Camp of Saints.* (New York: Ace Books, 1977)
[161] Ibid.

supremacists and far-right supporters. In 2012, French writer Renaud Camus has issued a book under the name "Le Grand Replacement" introducing the same theory on how white Europeans are being "reverse-colonized" by black Africans and Arabs from the Middle East.[162] In an interview that he gave for *Vox*, Camus said that replacement is "general phenomena" and "the very essence of modernity," as it happens all around the world that populations are being replaced, comparing the human beings to objects.[163] Even though he does not claim that the concept of replacement is applicable only to Europe's migrant crisis, the very context in which he writes about it is still specifically European. Crucial elements of Orban's anti-immigrant discourse are almost identical to the theory of "Great Replacement".

Right-wing propagandist have been using similar constructions and scapegoat strategies for over a century. Supporters of the Old Regime in France used the notion of "Judeo-Masonic conspiracy" to discredit the French Revolution.[164] Not to mention that Nazi regime has also used scapegoating as a primary political tool of its propaganda, by discrediting both capitalism and communism as products of the Jewish conspiracy. In contemporary far-right discourse, there is a widespread theory about so-called "Kalergi Plan," which was published on the official website of Greek far-right party Golden Dawn.[165] According to the theory, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi was the mastermind and ideological father of the Great Replacement, which he supposedly wrote in the book called "Praktischer Idealismus" in 1925,

[162] https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/12/04/the-french-origins-of-you-will-not-replace-us

[163] Sarah Wildman, "You will not replace us": a French philosopher explains the Charlottesville chant", *Vox,* August 15, 2017, https://www.vox.com/world/2017/8/15/16141456/renaud-camus-the-great-replacement-you-will-not-replace-us-charlottesville-white

[164] Cohn, Norman.*A warrant for Genocide: the myth of Jewish world-conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (London: Serif, 1996), 35

[165] The Coudenhove-Kalergi plan – The genocide of the Peoples of Europe", Golden Dawn – International Newsroom, accessed May 30, 2019, http://golden-dawn-international-newsroom.blogspot.com/2013/01/the-coudenhove-kalergi-plan-genocide-of.html

while the European Union realizes his ideas through the immigration policies.[166] Identical to the case of the most famous historical fabrication "Protocols of Elders of Zions", which does not have identified author or primary source, the theory about "Kalergi plan" circulates across the internet in textual and video forms on the far-right forums, blogs, and websites with no primary source identified. The anonymous author bases the conspiracy only on one paragraph from Kalergi's book, in which he predicts that citizens of the United States of Europe would be of mixed race of Europeans and non-Europeans. This reference to potential mixture of different races was interpreted as the proof of orchestrated plan that current European elite is conducting and the consequence of it would be the disappearance of the white race.[167] Although Kalergi's book could be considered the utopian vision of Pan-European future produced from the particular historical perspective, it was nevertheless persuasive enough for the far-right populists to believe in it.

5.2.5 "Soros Plan"

Just as left-liberals and anarchist were marked as the enemies of white Europe for supporting the establishment of pro-immigrant governments in Raspail's book, Camus blames cosmopolitan and globalist elite for conspiring to replace European population by supporting mass migrations.[168] Since the peak of the migrant crisis was over, in 2018 State of Nation Address, Orban has rephrased his fundamental notion of threat by announcing that the real

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[166] Book was never translated in English, but the unofficial version circulates around internet on many different right-wing websites and blogs. Even the version in German language that is available on internet does not seem genuine.

[167] "The Coudenhove-Kalergi plan – The genocide of the Peoples of Europe", *Western Spring,* September 7, 2013, http://www.westernspring.co.uk/the-coudenhove-kalergi-plan-the-genocide-of-the-peoples-of-europe/

[168] Shane Croucher*, "Founder of racist 'Great Replacement' theory that inspires white supremacist withdraws from E.U elections after fellow candidate prays to swastika"*, Newsweek, May 23, 2019:

https://www.newsweek.com/great-replacement-theory-camus-eu-elections-swastika-praying-1433591

danger comes from the West and politicians from Brussels.[169] Having no more "barbarians at the gates", he turned to what he believes to be Europe's internal Other, determined to continue opposing the official policies of the European Union. In 2018 State of Nation Address he said: "We shall never express solidarity with those European leaders who want to take Europe into a post-Christian and post-national era."[170] He makes a clear distinction between the leaders of Central Europe that are opposing official policies of the European Union and the Western European leaders for which he claims that want to create the United States of Europe. The earlier support immigration and embrace the cosmopolitan and multicultural vision of Europe, while the latter are committed to an alternative vision of Europe: Europe of nations based on traditional Christian values. He proclaims his commitment to re-shaping current Europe by saying: "Twenty-five years ago, here in Central Europe we believed that Europe is our future. Now we feel that we are the future of Europe."[171] The future of Europe that he talks about is already explained in his earlier interviews: "old school Christian democracy rooted in European tradition."[172] Referring to tradition of European Christian democrats, he politically sides with Italian *Northern League* led by Matteo Salvini or Heinz-Christian Strache's *Freedom Party of Austria*, making a framework for potential Eurosceptic and anti-immigrant block. On the other hand, Steve Bannon's effort to bring those parties together in the single political block for the

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[169]"The West will fall, as Europe is occupied without realizing it," said Viktor Orbán. Christianity is the last hope", Visegrad Post, February 20, 2018
https://visegradpost.com/en/2018/02/20/the-west-will-fall-as-europe-is-occupied-without-realising-it-said-viktor-orban-christianity-is-the-last-hope-full-speech/
[170] Ibid.
[171] Viktor Orbán's answers to questions from audience members after his speech at the Bálványos Summer Open University and Student Camp", *Website of the Hungarian Government*, July 25, 2017,
https://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/viktor-orban-s-answers-to-questions-from-audience-members-after-his-speech-at-the-balvanyos-summer-open-university-and-student-camp
[172] John Lloyd "The new illiberal International", *NewStatesman*, July 18, 2018,
http://www.newstatesman.com/world/2018/07/new-illiberal-international

European Parliament elections in 2019 has shown unsuccessful since Orban's party decided to participate in the elections on its own**.**[173]

However, it is not just the federalist and multicultural vision of Europe that presents the danger to Orban's vision of Europe, but he also includes the notion of a broader international conspiracy of globalist elites that are promoting migrations for the sake of their own economic and political interests**.** In Orban's version of conspiracy, the main protagonist and personification of the so called "globalist elite" is the Hungarian billionaire of Jewish origin, George Soros. He claims that the "money-hungry, subversive actions of George Soros empire" are one of the primary causes of gradual Islamization of Europe. Orban's whole discourse is full of references so-called "Soros Plan" which he outlines as follows: **"**several hundred thousand, if possible, a million, migrants must be brought to the territory of the European Union from the Muslim world every year."[174] He presents "Brussels bureaucrats" as puppets of George Soros and the quota system proposed by European Commission in 2016, as part of the "Soros Plan" to mix and replace white European population with immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa. During the speech he gave at the Tusványos Summer University Student Camp in Romania, he explicitly proclaimed Soros the most significant threat for both European Union and European identity: "In order for Europe to live and for

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[173]"Steve Bannon plans Brussels-based foundation 'The Movement' for EU far-right", *Deutsche Welle,* July 21 2018:
https://www.dw.com/en/steve-bannon-plans-brussels-based-foundation-the-movement-for-eu-far-right/a-44774972
[174] Viktor Orbán's answers to questions from audience members after his speech at the Bálványos Summer Open University and Student Camp", *Website of the Hungarian Government*, July 25, 2017, https://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/viktor-orban-s-answers-to-questions-from-audience-members-after-his-speech-at-the-balvanyos-summer-open-university-and-student-camp

Europe to remain that of the Europeans, the European Union must, first of all, regain its sovereignty vis-à-vis the Soros empire."[175]

The "Soros plan" is very similar to the "Kalergi plan" and both theories contain elements of anti-Semitism because of the Jewish origins of their main protagonists. Even though Kalergi was of mixed Austrian and Japanese roots, it was his sympathy towards Jews whom he considered to be "Europe's spiritual nobility," that made him become the target of anti-Semitic conspiracies.[176] On the other hand George Soros perfectly fits into a stereotypical image of a wealthy cosmopolitan Jew that is typical for the Judeo-Masonic conspiracies. However, Orban's relation with anti-Semitism is ambiguous. He embraces Jewish tradition as an essential part of Judeo-Christian civilization and European identity, while reaffirming anti-Semitic stereotypes in his anti-Soros campaign at the same time. According to Orban's media consultant and campaigner, George Eli Birnbaum, Soros was the perfect enemy because he was already unpopular amongst the anti-globalist circles and there was existing criticism connected to his market speculations.[177] Orban has used Soros's proposal for a common plan of European countries in dealing with the migrant crisis to create the scapegoat and accuse European elite of being the puppet of global conspirators that want to destroy white Christian Europe.[178] Using the same strategy as far-right and neo-Nazi movements that claim that there is an orchestrated conspiracy behind "Great Replacement" or "Kalergi plan", Orban strives to discredit his opponents and present himself as the protector of traditional values of Europe.

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[175] Ibid.

[176] Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, *Botschafter Europas: Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004)

[177] Hanness Grasseger,"The Unbelievable Story Of The Plot Against George Soros" , *BuzzFeed,* January 20, 2019, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/hnsgrassegger/george-soros-conspiracy-finkelstein-birnbaum-orban-netanyahu

[178] Ibid.

5.2 Secular argument

In this chapter, I will analyze the discourse of Geert Wilders, leader of the Dutch "Party for Freedom" to illustrate what I call secular argument in the anti-immigrant discourse. First, I will introduce the general elements of the argument before engaging in a discourse analysis of Geert Wilder's speeches and interviews. In the primary analysis, I will focus on the speech transcripts from his website, interviews he gave for different newspaper magazine, as well as the parliamentary bill that he submitted to the Dutch parliament, in which he proposes banning of certain manifestations of Islam.

5.2.1 Islam and Secularism

As already mentioned, this argument is based on the civilizationist perception that there are insuperable differences between European culture and Islam. What makes secular argument different from the previously discussed Christian argument is the fact that, instead of focusing on Christianity as the foundation of European identity, it deals with Islam's supposed incompatibility with European secular society and liberal values on which it was built. Although its advocates sometimes also refer to Christianity as "secularized culture" when stressing its civilizational distinction from Islam, they choose to focus their discourse on protection of liberalism rather than conservative religious values. [179] Wilders is a perfect example since he does not identify as Christian, but still uses references to Christianity as a cultural heritage that defines European civilization.[180]

Authors like Talal Asad and Charles Taylor are very critical towards the Western concept of "secularism," claiming it to be the product of the particular European historical context.[181]

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[179] Brubaker, *Civilizationism*, 1199
[180] "Moslims, bevrijd uzelf en u kunt alles", July 19, 2010:
 https://web.archive.org/web/20100722101836/http://www.nrc.nl/opinie/article2584468.ece
[181] Asad, Talal, Formation of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 2

Asad argues that "the emergence of secularism is closely connected to the rise of the modern nation-state," suggesting that it has purely European character.[182] From his post-colonialist point of view, the establishment of the nation-state in the West has been followed by conceptualizing majority and minority which makes it possible for Muslims in Europe to be represented only as a minority in opposition to Christian majority or merely as an individual without recognition of the "collective life that extends beyond the national borders."[183] His main argument is that nation-states have been constructed in such a manner that so-called "quantitative minority" is always reduced to be in an inferior position and Muslims would have to be satisfied only with individual or collective minority religious rights guaranteed by the European laws, which is not enough to be adequately represented as Muslim. What needs to be done, according to Asad, is the creation of complex space which would enable and ensure the existence of what he refers to as "multiple modernities" or "multiple lifestyles" in the complex space.[184]

Similar claims are made by Will Kymlicka, who also stressed out that Western liberal democracy would always seek to deal with internal restrictions of members of the group and thus force them to adopt a Western conception of liberties and group-differential rights.[185]

Although both Asad and Kymlicka criticize European conceptualization of Muslims, their positions might be misused in favor of the secular argument as the support to shallow and one-sided interpretations about Islam's incompatibility with liberal values. Geert Wilders is a perfect example of how arguments about secularism being primarily European concept are manipulated for promoting supremacist concept of European identity and intolerance towards

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[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid., 224
[185] Kymlicka, Will. Multicultural Citizenship. Oxford University Press, 1995, 154

Muslims. He legitimizes his Islamophobic attitude based on supposed Muslim intolerance towards secular values, which are the foundation of European identity.

5.2.2 Geert Wilders' anti-Muslim attitude

Even before the migrant crisis in 2015, Geert Wilders was already known for his Islamophobic attitude. He has been usually described as the political heir of controversial Pim Fortuyn who was assassinated in 2002 by environmental and animal activist Volkert van der Graaf.[186] Referring to unassimilated Moroccans in the Netherlands in 2001, Fortuyn has characterized Islam as hostile, fundamentally intolerant and incompatible with Western liberal values.[187] Describing himself as a fighter for freedom of speech and human rights, while openly identifying as homosexual and refusing to accept far-right populist etiquette, Fortuyn has made a significant ideological impact on the Dutch political scene. His political legacy was embraced as an ideology of *Fortuynism,* and it combines a commitment to civil liberties and secularism with the critic of multiculturalism, Euroscepticism and Islamophobia. He supported progressive liberal policies in the Netherlands, such as drug-policy, same-sex marriages, euthanasia, while denouncing Islam as "backward" or "retarded", thus opposing multiculturalism and European immigration policies. Graaf claimed that he killed Fortuyn to defend the Muslims and prevent him from using them as a scapegoat.[188]

Wilders has adopted Fortuynism as the central ideology and political style of his rhetoric, continually referring to Islam as "backward culture". In an open letter that he wrote for Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* in August 2007, he proposed that Koran should be outlawed in the

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[186] Ambrose Evans-Pritchard and Joan Clements, "Fortuyn killed to 'protect the Muslims', *The Telegraph,* March 28, 2003, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/netherlands/1425944/Fortuyn-killed-to-protect-Muslims.html
[187]
[188]   https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/netherlands/1425944/Fortuyn-killed-to-protect-Muslims.html

Netherlands, calling it a "fascist book" and comparing it to Hitler's Mein Kampf.[189] He argued that the book "incites hatred and killing" and therefore is not compatible with the Dutch legal system. He even went that far by comparing Prophet Mohammad to the devil and claiming that he would be hunted down as terrorist if he was alive today.[190]

The main subject of his hatred were Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands from whom he said that should be deported from Europe, together with imams who preach a radical version of Islam.[191] As the consequence of such discourse, Wilders is doomed to a life with constant political protection after receiving death threats by Al-Qaeda and similar radical Islamist groups.[192]

Even though his pre-2015 discourse is mostly nationalistic, as he speaks in the context of Dutch society, he uses the reference to Europe to highlight civilizational differences between Islam and the common European heritage of liberalism and secularism. His speech from Los Angeles in 2009 contains civilizational arguments for essentialization of Islam as intolerant and hostile to Western values:

> Islam wants to dictate every aspect of life and society and prohibits individual, political, and religious rights and freedoms. Islam is not compatible with our Western civilization or democracy, nor will it ever be, because Islam doesn't want to coexist; it intends to submit and set the entire agenda. Islam means submission from Muslims over non-Muslims - kafirs - like you and me, so there cannot be any mistake about its goal. Islam's end goal, for all time, is to dominate, to dominate and once again dominate and establish a world ruled by Islam.[193]

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[189] "Dutch politician on trial for comparing Koran to Mein Kampf", *National Publics Radio,* October 4, 2010: https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2010/10/04/130321356/dutch-politician-on-trial-for-comparing-koran-to-mein-kampf
[190] Ibid.
[191] "Dutch politician calls for halt for migration", *Associated Press,* November 19, 2004 http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6531846/ns/world_news/t/dutch-politician-calls-halt-immigration/
[192] Gerald Traufetter, "A missionary with Dark Visions", *Spiegel Online*, March 27, 2008: https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/islam-critic-wilders-a-missionary-with-dark-visions-a-543627.html
[193] Speech held by Geert Wilders in Los Angeles, *Geert Wilders Weblog,* April 2009https://www.geertwilders.nl/87-english/news/1565-speech-held-by-geert-wilders-in-los-angeles-april-2009

Wilders strategically manipulates European collective memory of totalitarian ideologies such as fascism, Nazism or Stalinism to reaffirm his commitment to liberal values and thus avoid being labeled far-right populist. His argument could be described in pejorative language as "playing the Nazi card", which is a specific kind of a *strawman* intended to discredit opponent by attaching to him either values or methods of Nazism. In a way, it is also a disclaimer, which Teun van Dijk calls the *denial of racism*, which means that speakers are justifying discrimination by stressing their moderate standpoints in comparison to the more radical position of Other, and also presenting stereotypes and prejudice as "reasonable" or "objective".[194] Wilders projects its hostility and intolerance unto the Other, essentializing Islam as inherently intolerant, usually based on the weak and limited evidence and argumentation. For example, he intentionally reflects the most radical interpretations of *Jihad* and refers to fundamentalist fantasies of world Caliphate establishment, and then attaches them to Muslims in general, thus creating a generalized image of intolerant Muslim Other.[195] Another form of denial of racism is also evident in his claim that he does not hate Muslims but only hates Islam as a totalitarian religion or ideology.[196]

5.2.3 The migrant crisis and post-2015 discourse

At the outbreak of migrant crisis in 2015, he addressed the European Parliament and called for stopping "Muslim invasion", using identical rhetoric as Viktor Orban, but with significant difference: instead of claiming that it is Christianity that we need to defend in Europe, he presents himself as the defender of democracy and liberal values.[197]

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[194]." Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 59
[195]Geert Wilders, "Legislative bill from members Wilder and De Graaf pertaining to the ban on certain Islamic manifestations", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30, 2019: https://geertwilders.nl/images/Anti_islam_Law.pdf
[196] Ibid.
[197] Yoruk Bahceli, "Wilders tells Dutch parliament refugee crisis is 'Islamic invasion', *Reuters,* September 10, 2015: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-netherlands/wilders-tells-dutch-parliament-refugee-crisis-is-islamic-invasion-idUSKCN0RA0WY20150910

Just like Orban, he advocated for strict border protection and stronger national sovereignty, blaming the European Union's official immigration policies, and thus presenting it as the greatest threat to national identities.[198] In an interview that he gave in 2014, he already criticized European multiculturalism and pro-immigration leaders:

> In Europe, we have made a terrible mistake. During the past decades, our politicians foolishly allowed millions of Islamic immigrants to settle within our borders. Everywhere the Islamic culture was welcomed as an enrichment. Nowhere was the demand made that the immigrants assimilate. Not a single European leader had the guts to state the obvious and tell the truth: Our Western culture based on Christianity, Judaism and Humanism, is far superior to the Islamic culture and immigrants have to adopt our values.

He makes an apocalyptic prophecy that the price which Europe will have to pay for not embracing its superiority is the destruction of "Judeo-Christian and humanist civilization" that is going to be replaced by allegedly intolerant Islam.[199] Ruth Wodak has already analyzed civilizationism in Wilder's discourse, pointing out to his commitment to Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe and references to Jerusalem, Ancient Greece or the Roman Empire.[200] His claim that Rome has fallen because he gave equal rights to non-Roman citizens reflects the identical threat from "barbarians at the gates", which is used by Orban in the same manner. Wilders also accuses other European leaders of being cowards since they are unwilling to speak the truth, while he differentiates from the elite with his alleged honesty and willingness to defend Western culture and prevent its destruction.

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[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 56

He believes that European civilization is "the best civilization on earth" because it has produced ideas and values of democracy, freedom, and secularism. [201] It is important to notice that Wilders does not even bother trying to hide his supremacist arrogance, unlike Orban who makes a disclaimer that he uses Christian-Muslim distinction only to highlight their differences, but does not think that either civilization is superior.[202] However, what seems to be more or less obvious is that, in both cases, Self-Other relations are based on the sense of superiority since Other is essentialized as hostile and intolerant and thus stigmatized as being less civilized. This kind of discourse is identical to what Asad describes as essentialization of Islam as "carrier-civilization", meaning that it has not even reached a full cultural potential to be regarded as a civilization on its own.[203] It only serves as the Other in distinction from whom Europe defines its borders, and sometimes provides European civilization with some of the material and intellectual elements from the outside.[204]

Moreover, Wilders discourse could be also described in terms of imperialistic missionary, as he proposes that Muslims should be converted and assimilated into the secular Western society. Speaking on Ambrosetti conference in 2017, he said that it is "interest of our own Western civilization, but also in the interest of the Muslims themselves, that we encourage as many Muslims as possible to turn their backs on Islam and become Christians or atheists or whatever." [205]

Furthermore, he presents Islamization as the biggest existential threat to the future of Europe, together with terrorism and mass-immigration. He uses war and military metaphors to enhance

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[201] Ibid.
[202] State of Nation Address 2016
[203] Asad, *Formations of Secular*, 217
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.

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the notion of danger, thus legitimizing his exclusionary rhetoric and justifying his anti-immigrant policy proposals.[206]

> Parts of Europe even resemble war zones. The EU did not prevent war. There have been horrible murderous attacks in Barcelona, London, Manchester, Berlin, Brussels, Nice, Paris, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Madrid, Amsterdam. Terrorists have entered Europe among the flow of immigrants which the EU and the national governments allowed in. Meanwhile, home-grown terrorists are already one of the biggest problems our nations are currently facing. There are thousands of them, all over Europe, able to travel around unhindered and strike wherever they want.[207]

Using terms such as "war zones" and "preventing the war" is another strategy for the construction of fear to make the notion of threat appear more urgent and dangerous. If there was *casus belli* and the actual "Muslim invasion" is taking place, then any reaction for the sake of self-defense is justifiable, which is precisely kind of alarm that Wilders tends to provoke.

He is making the references to terrorist attacks that occurred in different European cities in the period from 2014 to 2017, for which have ISIS, Al Qaeda or anonymous Islamist radicals taken responsibility. Identifying migrants with terrorists, Wilder creates a scapegoat to support his anti-immigrant and anti-Islam agenda, exploiting the widespread concern and fear of terrorism.[208] At the same time, he refers to previously constructed internal Other by referring to "sleepers" who have been present in Europe even before the migrant crisis, and are waiting for their time to strike. Those "sleepers" are the reference to the Muslim immigrants from Morocco, Turkey, or other Muslim countries who have come to live in Europe long before the

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[206] Wodak, *Politics of Fear,* 56
[207] Geert Wilders, "The Europe we want", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30 , 2019, https://www.geertwilders.nl/in-de-media-mainmenu-74/nieuws-mainmenu-114/94-english/2066-speech-geert-wilders-the-europe-we-want
[208] Standard Eurobarometer 89 2018
https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/83548

migrant crisis. He also uses dehumanizing metaphors in the description of terrorists as "home-grown," which is obvious reference weed or plants that need to be cut down, or even domestic animals that are breeding for slaughter.[209] Blaming European Union and national governments for allowing such scenario, he creates a positive self-image of his party and presents himself as the only defender of European values, as it was the case with Viktor Orban as well.

Moreover, his discourse can be compared with post-9/11 discourse in the United States of America, where all Muslims were generalized and stereotypically stigmatized as terrorists after the White House has proclaimed the War on Terror. Wodak has also compared Wilders with other European populists, identifying similar elements in the post-9/11 discourse of Austrian politician Jorg Haider who has been opposing immigration since the early 1990s.[210] Standard Eurobarometer 89 results have shown that immigration and terrorism are two leading concerns on the EU level, which suggests that securitization was successful to a certain extent.[211] The final aim of Wilder's discriminatory rhetoric is to politically utilize those concerns and gain popular support on the elections for introducing his anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant policies. In 2017 elections in the Netherlands, Wilders' *Party for Freedom* has gained 13,1% of the vote and ended up in the second place with a single-page political platform whose content was focused on "de-Islamization" society and opposition to European Union and its immigration policies.[212]

5.2.4 Legislative bill on banning Islamic manifestations and paradox of tolerance

During the debate on Budget Memorandum in Dutch parliament in 2018, Party for Freedom has submitted a draft of a legislative bill that would ban certain Islamic manifestation in the

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[209] Bauman, *Zygmunt. Modernity and the Holocaust.* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), 72

[210] Wodak, *Politics of Fear.*, 55

[211] Standard Eurobarometer 89 2018
https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/83548

[212] Janene Pieters, "PVV Hammers on 'De-Islamization' in one page election campaign", *New York Times*, August 26, 2016: https://nltimes.nl/2016/08/26/pvv-hammers-de-islamization-one-page-election-campaign

Netherlands.[213] The argument that Wilders has provided in favor of this bill suggests that Islam is not protected by the Dutch constitution, repeating his common *mantra* that Islam is not the religion of philosophy of life, but a violent totalitarian religion which threatens the Judeo-Christian and Humanist values. [214] The content of the bill suggested that following manifestation should be banned: mosques, Islamic schools, printing and selling Koran and wearing of hijab or burka.[215]

Explanatory Memorandum of the bill contains a chapter named *"The nature and aim of Islam"* in which Wilders argues why Islam is different from other religions regarding its lack of tolerance.[216]

Citing the works of human rights activist and former Muslim, Nonie Darwish, he explains that Western civilization was formed on the principles of "golden rule", which means that everybody should treat others in the way he would be like to threated by them.[217] Problem with Islam, according to Darwish and Wilders, is that it does not respect "golden rule" because it aims to replace the secular legal system with Islamic law and convert members of other religions to Islam.[218] Wilders believes that the problem of the European Union lies in the fact that it fails to acknowledge the superiority of tolerant and liberal Western civilization over "backward" Islam. In his words: "Multiculturalism has made so tolerant, that we tolerate the intolerant."[219]

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[213] Geert Wilders, "Legislative bill from members Wilder and De Graaf pertaining to the ban on certain Islamic manifestations", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30, 2019: https://geertwilders.nl/images/Anti_islam_Law.pdf

[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Wodak, *Politics of Fear,* 55

This kind of essentialization is an appeal to Karl Popper's paradox of tolerance and the question of where the line between respecting cultural differences and protecting universal values of human rights should be drawn. The example of Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack in 2016, shows that liberalism and freedom of speech are not very welcomed by more radical worshipers of Islam, which provides conditions for generalization or further discrimination towards all Muslims, which is what Wilders aims to exploit in his political discourse. The notion of threat can be formulated even from the liberal and secularist perspective and thus legitimize their own intolerance and hostility towards the supposedly intolerant and hostile Muslims. In that case, populists like Wilders are using cultural differences in interpretations of concepts of blasphemy and freedom of speech as the proof of civilizational differences that cannot be overcome.

Even in academia, we can find the arguments that could be used to support such claims. Lebanese scholar Nassim Taleb argues that tolerance towards the intolerant ends up in having intolerant minorities imposing its virtues unto the others.[220] He makes his argument on the examples of how Christianity has spread all around the Roman Empire because it was intolerant and Roman officials recognized it as official religion to prevent further violence.[221] Another example that he provides is how American restaurants are serving all the Kosher liquids with the explanation that "a Kosher (or halal) eater will never eat non-kosher (or non-halal) food, but a non-kosher eater isn't banned from eating kosher[222] In the context of the migrant crisis, it would mean that European tolerance towards intolerant Muslim Other would eventually end up in Europe being "Islamized" because the intolerant Muslim minority would impose its culture to more tolerant European majority. It should not be surprising that anti-immigrant arguments can be found even in works of liberal scholars of non-European origins, such as

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[220] Nasim Nicholas Taleb, "The Most Intolerant Wins: The Dictatorship of the Small Minority", Medium.com, accessed December 17, 2018, https://medium.com/incerto/the-most-intolerant-wins-the-dictatorship-of-the-smallminority-3f1f83ce4e15
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.

Taleb. Even though it does not mean that Taleb normatively supports anti-immigrant mobilization, his arguments could be used in the populist discourse to support the argument that the threat of Islamization as factual or real.

Wilders finds the signs of Islamization of Europe in terrorist attacks, Sharia courts, and Islamic "no-go zones" or more banal things such as the public use of head-scarfs or number of mosques in Europe. He also refers to specific quotations from Koran that are taken out of context to support his argument on the intolerant character of Islam, such as ones in which the book prescribes that Muslims should curse and ridicule Jews and Christians.[223] He wants to indicate that Muslims should not be trusted not even in the peace-time, citing the Islamic scholar Ibn Katheer when saying: "we laugh in the face of unbelievers while our hearts curse them."[224] He also refers to a most radical interpretation of the concept "jihad," which represents the struggle for subjecting the unbelievers to Islam.[225] He uses these examples and selective interpretations, to present the migrant crisis as the continuation of the Muslim invasion of Europe and the prelude to the establishment of the world-wide Caliphate:

> Centuries ago, partly on the basis of the Koran, Islamic leaders started a war strategy to gradually Islamize the West. The Islamic presence is being increased in Western European countries in order to increase the influence of Islam. Islamic infrastructure such as mosques, Islamic schools, boarding schools and foundations are being built and set up in our towns and villages and the emigration from Islamic countries to Europe is encouraged. Once Islam has established a firm base, Muslims are ordered to fight and extort the original population of that country, to impose the sharia on the population and to force it to convert to Islam.[226]

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[223]Geert Wilders, "Legislative bill from members Wilder and De Graaf pertaining to the ban on certain Islamic manifestations", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30, 2019:
https://geertwilders.nl/images/Anti_islam_Law.pdf
[224] Ibid.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.

This kind of argumentation offered from liberal and secularist perspective serves the populist purposes to justify the intolerance towards those who are portrayed as the threat to the Western liberal values. What made identification of terrorism with Islam more convincing was the fact that the number of Islamist terrorist attacks, such as ones in Nica, Paris or Berlin, happened in the period from 2015 to 2017, right after the mass migrations started in Europe. Stereotypical generalizations that enhance discrimination and legitimize exclusionist rhetoric are also evident from the fact that Wilders believes that Islamic schools and mosques are central places of extremism and calls them "centers for toppling the West[227] Portraying migrants as Muslims, and Muslims as terrorists creates a distorted image of reality in which opposition to immigration and intolerance towards Islam are presented as justifiable and reasonable solution. In that sense, banning certain manifestations of Islam would be legitimized as the act of self-defense which would prevent the destruction of Western civilization and stop the Islamization of Europe.

5.2.5 European identity and liberal values

The way in which populist are interpreting liberal values is very ambiguous. For example, Wilders is presenting himself as the defender of Western secularism and liberalism, while at the same time he blames immigration policies of European Union and its commitment to multiculturalism, knowing that they were based on the liberal and secular values as well. This ambiguity shows that even in secularist argumentation, liberal values are used selectively and only to define European Self as something opposite of Muslim Other. In that sense, defending Judeo-Christian civilization and Western secularism means protecting what Europe stands for when it is conceptualized in opposition to Islam.

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[227]Geert Wilders, "Legislative bill from members Wilder and De Graaf pertaining to the ban on certain Islamic manifestations", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30, 2019: https://geertwilders.nl/images/Anti_islam_Law.pdf

Multiculturalist approach to immigration made the European Union become treated as internal Other of European Self in the anti-immigrant discourse, only because of its support for the external Muslim Other. Even though multiculturalism and pro-immigration politics are based on essentially Christian and liberal values of tolerance, they are rejected by the advocates of anti-immigrant discourse because they are not compatible with their exclusivist conception of European identity. With this in mind, it becomes evident that secular and Christian arguments are two variations of the same civilizational discourse in which values such as liberalism and Christianity are used only instrumentally to formulate a particular narrative of what European identity should stand for. Although Wilders explicitly rejects the standpoint that there is a single European identity, he still implicitly refers to it by invoking the idea of European civilization, which is the foundation for his understanding of Dutch identity as well.[228] He sees European nations as "branches of the same tree" and belonging to the same Judeo-Christian culture.[229] As Ruth Wodak has pointed out, he constructs European Self on the basis of Judeo-Christian roots in opposition to non-European Muslim Other.[230] The *topos of common European culture* is the basis for identity creation since he excludes members of different cultures from any possibility of being European.[231]

In that sense, he still invokes the primordial concept of European identity, defined in ethno-cultural terms, although less explicitly than Viktor Orban does.[232] Just as Orban's definition of European identity is not defined in terms of European Union as a political project, Wilder defines Europe in the similar terms: "Europe as a community of independent, sovereign and democratic nations – working together without a supranational political union – a Europe

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[228] Geert Wilders, "The Europe we want", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30 , 2019, https://www.geertwilders.nl/in-de-media-mainmenu-74/nieuws-mainmenu-114/94-english/2066-speech-geert-wilders-the-europe-we-want
[229] Wodak, *Politics of Fear*, 57
[230] Ibid.
[231] Ibid.
[232] Ibid.

without the European Union. [233]Even when he speaks about protecting the Dutch identity and national sovereignty, he still presupposes the existence of primordial European identity that is intertwined with the national identity and provides it with specific cultural content. Therefore, Wilders conceptualizes European identity as defined in terms of the cultural heritage of Judeo-Christian civilizations and values of liberalism and secularism, constructs it in the distinction from non-European Muslim who is essentialized as hostile to that heritage and values.

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[233]Geert Wilders, "The Europe we want", Geert Wilders Weblog, accessed May 30 , 2019, https://www.geertwilders.nl/in-de-media-mainmenu-74/nieuws-mainmenu-114/94-english/2066-speech-geert-wilders-the-europe-we-want

Conclusion

The purpose of the thesis was to show how the anti-immigrant discourse is the expression of specific form of Pan-European nationalism. I have outlined two most important characteristics of anti-immigrant discourse: transnational populism and civilizationism. Transnational populism means that it addresses the people beyond the borders of national states and locates the debate about migrant crisis in the specific European public sphere. In that sense, notion of threat has become threat to all European nations and citizens equally. At the same time, civilizationism means that migrant has been perceived as Muslim Other and therefore a threat to Europe because of supposed civilizational differences. In both arguments that I illustrated, Muslim Other has been essentialized as intolerant towards European values. In the Christian argument that was evident from Orban's discourse, he was essentialized as intolerant and therefore incompatible with traditional Christian values of Europe. On the other hand, secular argument constructs Muslim Other as incapable of adopting Western liberal values on which Europe was built, and essentially hostile towards those values. In both arguments, the reference object of securitization was European identity conceptualized in civilizational terms. So called modern concept of European identity, which Risse attaches to those define Europe strictly in terms of European Union and embrace cosmopolitan and liberal valuues, is also incompatible with civilizationist concept of Europe, because it promotes tolerance towards supposedly intolerant Other and therefore presents a threat to Europe. Populists such as Orban and Wilders are offering alternative concept of Europe defined in exclusivist and primordial sense, which embraces Christianity as foundation for European culture and secular values as the proof of its superiority.

The question that I formulated in the introduction can be rephrased as follows: can anti-immigrant discourse enhance European solidarity and promote identification with primordial concept of Europe? After the peak of migrant crisis, during 2017 European elections, far-right populist that formulated their discourse on anti-immigrant sentiment have made a significant success. Orban has secured a third term in his office and Matteo Salvini's North League has come to power in Italy. Freedom Party of Austria has become the first far-right party in the governing coalition of some Western European countries, while Alternative for Germany was the first far-right party to enter the parliament after the Nazis. Geert Wilders and Marine Le Pen were second on presidential elections.[234] However, after the migrant crisis has reaches its peak and immediate threat from Muslim Other has temporally disappeared, we are witnessing the drop of support for far-right populists, regardless of their optimistic prophecies of taking over European Parliament in 2019. Three biggest pro-European parties, EPP, S&D and ALDE have won more votes alone than all the far-right populists together.

However, regardless of their current success and political results, the intention behind analyzing the anti-immigrant discourse was to present an empirical evidence that there are different contesting concepts of European identity. Just as European Self was historically constructed in the distinction from the Other, based on their civilizational differences, the presence of civilizationism in anti-immigrant discourse suggests that same primordial understanding of European identity exist within contemporary political sphere. Even small success of transnational and civilizationist populism presents a challenge for the future of European Union which will have for its opponent not only in Eurosceptic nationalists, but Eurosceptic Pan-European nationalists as well.

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[234]"Europe and right wing nationalism: a country-by country guide", BBC News, May 24, 2019
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