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Protecting 'our' values

A study of the construction of a Muslim 'other' and the European 'self' in the
European Parliament

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Abstract

While the EU stipulates their motto to be 'Unity in diversity' claiming itself to be enriched by cultural and linguistic diversity, the discourse on Muslims is, however, more often than not, one of Muslims *and* Europe rather than European Muslims. The aim of this study was therefore to investigate if and how this discourse is constructed and maintained by the Members of the European Parliament while simultaneously investigating how ideological affiliation matters in identity construction.

Applying the theory of social constructionism, five debates on the topic of security in the European Parliament were studied using the method of thematic analysis in order to find themes that unites and distinguish the political groups in their construction. Three strategies of othering of Muslims was found to be used by the MEPs: Muslims were constructed as violating universal principles, as inferior and as a threat. Although all three strategies were applied by all groups, there were some significant differences in how they were applied illustrating how ideology matters in the identity construction of a European 'we' and a Muslim 'other'.

Abbreviations

ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats of Europe
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
EFDD	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy
ENF	Europe of Nations and Freedom
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European Peoples' Party
EU	European Union
GUE/NGL	European United Left/Nordic Green Left
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MEP	Member of European Parliament
NI	Non Inscrits
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Verts/ALE	The Greens/European Free Alliance

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1. Introduction

The coexistence of Muslims and Christians around the Mediterranean have always been fraught with conflicts. The presence of Muslim communities in Europe dates back to the seventh century when the Umayyad Caliphate conquered parts of Spain. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire left large Muslim communities in the Balkan region and during the twentieth century Europe's Muslim population increased because of the need for labour in Europe and as a result of the conflicts in countries with large Muslim populations.¹ Today, Muslims are the second largest non-Christian community in Europe, yet the prevalent narrative is still one of *Muslims in Europe* or *Muslims and Europe* not *European Muslims*.

Throughout this history, Muslims haven been viewed with suspicion, a view that has been further entrenched after multiple terrorist attacks committed by *ihadists* in recent times. Something the political far-right feeds on and has adopted as its core issue, with the following result of growing support for far-right parties all over Europe. The Muslim question and hostility towards Muslims is not only prevalent in the rhetoric's of politics and in media. This affects the view of Muslims amongst the general population in Europe today where Islamophobia has become the predominant form of racism². Unfavourable views of Muslims exist all over Europe with the highest rating of 72 percent in Hungary and the lowest being 28 percent in the UK³.

This scepticism and fear of Muslims is not reduced despite statistics from Europol showing other groups of people as the main terrorist perpetrators. Out of the 211 terrorist attacks in Europe 2015, seventeen were committed by jihadists compared to sixty-five by separatists, nine by the right wing, thirteen by the left wing, and 107 by not specified. Although attacks committed by separatists amount to four times that of attacks committed by jihadist terrorists, more than four times as many suspects were arrested in relation to jihadist terrorist attacks than separatist attacks.⁴ Even still, Islam and Muslims are defined as the main source of terrorism⁵. This is only one aspect of a multifaceted construction based on several identity markers.

¹ Esposito, 2011: 70, 90, 102f

² Mahamdallie, 2015

³ Hacket, 2016

⁴ Europol, TE-SAT Report 2016: 10ff

⁵ Hacket, 2016

Academics like Hassan Mahamdallie, Sami Zemni, Jennifer Fredette and Bowen et.al. discuss the process of ‘othering’, where Muslims are constructed as the counterpart to Europe. Their studies exhibit the use of Muslims as an external actor against which Europe can define itself and their studies have demonstrated this construction taking place in various institutions and areas of society⁶. Furthermore, much has been written about the different discourses on a Muslim ‘other’ on national and the more diffuse ‘European level’. However, there is a gap in the research on the construction within the specific EU institutions.

Amongst the institutions, the European Parliament (EP) is particularly interesting for several reasons, firstly because it is the only democratically elected EU institution. Considering how the MEPs are both a supranational representation of the Member States’ citizens’ and therefore functions as a two-way connection between the local politics and EU, they not only bring national and local ideas to the EP but also transfer EU ideas to their countries. Secondly due to its role in the legislative procedure where MEPs have several methods of exerting power and therefore influencing the outcome of policies. A third reason is because debates in the EP are regarded as a type of genre that carries high formal authority and articulates not only policies but also identities.⁷ The debates therefore serve as barometers for measuring ideas about a European ‘we’ and a Muslim ‘other’ within Europe as they represent a cross section of the EU population and the MEPs consciously and unconsciously participate in identity construction on a daily basis.

1.1. Purpose

So, how is the prevalent narrative still that of Muslims *and* Europe and not European Muslims? How do MEPs formulate identities, more precisely a European ‘we’ and a Muslim ‘other’. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to analyse how Muslim and European identities are constructed through debates on security in the European Parliament. With a social constructionist view, the focus is how similarities and differences between these two identities are constructed. Since political ideologies are different constructions of realities, the thesis also looks at how political ideology influence construction of the two identities.

⁶ Checkel and Katzenstein, 2009:

⁷ Aydın-Düzgit, 2012: 18f

1.2. Aim and research question

In order to fulfil the purpose of the thesis the following research questions will be answered/analysed:

1. How is Muslim and European identity constructed in the EP debates on security?
 - 1.1. What is emphasised as the main differences?
2. How does political ideology matter for what is emphasised as the main differences?
 - 2.1. What unites and separates the ideological sides in the construction?

1.3. Context

The European Parliament consists of 751 members elected in their respective Member States. The members are divided into groups according to political affiliation and not by nationality, which are placed in the Chamber by ideology. The terms of political affiliation, group membership and ideology is used synonymously where a political group equals an ideology.⁸ Although, the groups placement on the ideological scale from left to right varies in relation to subject, this thesis places GUE/NGL, S&D and Verts/ALE as the left, ALDE as centre and EPP, ECR and EFDD as right. Furthermore, considering how 93 percent of the population in the Middle East and North Africa (the MENA) is Muslim, the MENA is used interchangeably with Muslims as a group identity⁹

1.4. Limitations

Besides focusing on the Parliament, several other limitations were made regarding type of material, amount of material and what parts of the material that were relevant.

There are several different types of material produced by, and through the workings of the EP, the political groups and the MEPs. These include transcripts from plenary sittings, questions to the Commission and the Parliaments position on legislation. With regards to the research questions, the debates held in plenary sittings were chosen as most of the MEPs are present. Not only did this give the widest coverage of the different ideologies, but the speeches are where one finds the perspectives of the individual MEPs. Furthermore, this is the reason why official texts produced by the political groups were excluded.

⁸ EP, "Organisation", <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/20150201PVL00010/Organisation>

⁹ Pew Research Center, 2 April 2015, <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/middle-east-north-africa/>

The material was limited to debates between January and August 2015 on the topic of security. These limitations were made on the basis of the Charlie Hebdo attack in January that year, which consequently would have made it more likely for Muslims to have been discussed. Another topic considered was migration, but the amount of debates about migration was not sufficient. The same is true for other topics such as employment and other social issues. It has been noted that the choice of topic did impact the results as security would have evoked a certain frame of mind focusing on threats.

Furthermore, certain parts of the debates were excluded from the analysis besides contributions from the President, the Commission and the Council of Europe. Amongst these were the Europe of Nations and Freedom group (ENF), with its forty MEPs. Although MEPs belonging to ENF speak on several occasions, it is only represented as a political group on one occasion. This was not enough material and made it impossible to carry out comparisons with other political groups. Non Inscrits (NI) were also excluded from the study as they do not belong to one political ideology. Besides anti-European sentiments and racism, there is not enough uniting the eighteen MEPs in order to be able to establish an ideological group and other political groups in the EP are cautious about being associated with such individuals. Since there is not one ideology uniting the NIs, it was not possible to compare them.

2. Literature review

The literature about identity construction can be divided into two categories based on what strategy is used for constructing the ‘self’ and the ‘other’. Firstly, there is the use of the EU as a normative power in which the subject constructs a representation of the ‘other’ as violating universal principles. Here the ‘self’ is seen as of universal validity against which the ‘other’ is compared.¹⁰ Literature discussing this form of construction is plentiful, including Fredette (2014) and Hellyer (2009). The milder form of this is the representation of the ‘other’ as inferior. The ‘other’, who might be seen as exotic, although not necessarily in a negative way, is still constructed in the relation to the superior ‘self’. The discussions of Bowen et.al. (2009) touches upon this theme. Secondly, there is the strategy of constructing the other as an existential threat, and the self as the threatened ‘referent object’. Cesari and Edmunds have written about the securitisation in relation to constructing ‘the other’.

2.1. EU as a normative power

In line with social constructionism, Ian Manners describes normative power as the ability to shape conceptions about ‘normal’. Normative power works neither through military nor economic means of force but through what is considered as appropriate behaviour by other actors. Diez argues that, as a normative power, the EU places ‘universal’ norms and values at the centre in its relations with both Member States and third parties and that EU, in the search for its own identity, will construct itself as the positive force in contrast to a ‘other’.¹¹ A large portion of the literature supports this claim. Academics like Nancy Foner, Sami Zemni, Christopher Parker and Hassan Mahamdallie all argue that the process of ‘Othering’ of Muslims is a product of Europe’s historical relationship with Islam where Europe, to create common identity and cohesion within the continent, has cast Islam, because of its proximity to Europe, as the ‘other’ against which everything ‘European’ is defined.¹²

Similar is the argument of Fredette who draws on Steven Luke (2004) and Micheal McCann’s (2007) understanding of power as a social construct that affects how we think and act, and

¹⁰ Diez, 2005: 628

¹¹ Ibid. 615

¹² Foner, 2015 Mahamdallie, 2015 Zemni and Parker, 2002: 232f

power is embedded in social constructions that shape hierarchies. Her study of the French elite's power to create a French citizenship and formulate who is deserving of this membership, show normative power at work at national level. Simultaneously as the French elite articulates certain standards for French citizenship where religion is strictly forbidden in the public sphere, Muslims are being constructed as religious and therefore marginalised as 'un-French'.¹³ Through his discussion on multiculturalism, Hellyer's argues that although the Member States in the EU have, on theoretical level, accepted multiculturalism, the secular states still have not come to terms with the presence of a religiously defined minority population that both insists on being European and at its adherence to religiously defined norms.¹⁴ As with the EU, the European states, discussed by Fredette and Hellyer, acts as a normative power when they construct the secular state as the 'universal' principle. Defining Muslims as a group that places religion at its core of its identity will therefore automatically construct them as a group who violates the 'universal' principle of secularism.

Bowen et.al. have studied othering at institutional level. They explain how different institutions form different knowledge structures, that provide default assumptions about objects or events that help actors orient themselves in social life. Through their assembly of studies of public schools, hospitals and the military, Bowen et.al. illustrate how actors employ these schemas to construct moral and practical boundaries between themselves and others. The knowledge structures of an institution can be equated with normative power as it has the power to shape what is normal or not and thereby also who the 'we' and the 'others' are. What is particularly of interest in relation to the research questions of this thesis is the attempt by Bowen et.al. to move the discussion beyond the concept of ethnic community by focusing on the institutional processes that constructs identities.¹⁵ It is the same form of discourse Fredette has described about the construction of the ideal French citizen, only in a hospital it would be the ideal patient. Bowen et.al. concludes that institutions produced in particular two practical schemas, anxiety over gender and sexuality and worries about Islam as culturally backward. Muslims, in the terms of multiple schemas of immigrants, racial minorities, were increasingly being framed in terms of Islam.¹⁶

In addition, and along the lines of constructing normative power, both Fredette and Bowen et.al. views national ideology as having strong effects on shaping reasons for boundaries between

¹³ Fredette, 2014:12

¹⁴ Hellyer, 2009: 127

¹⁵ Bowen et.al., 2014: 2ff 14, 19,

¹⁶ Ibid. 258f

‘we’ and ‘them’ based on the normality and the correctness of the ‘we’. The connection between national ideology and institutional social life is made by Bowen et.al. is made in an effort to see how institutions might shape a sense of cultural citizenship.¹⁷ Though, their arguments are disorientating as they at the same time claim the similarities between categories of institutions across national boundaries. The focus on a certain form of national ideology, as republicanism in Fredette’s study, also leaves the question of the relevance of political ideology since ‘othering’ of Muslims not only happens in republican France. This thesis has attempted to answer this question by incorporating political groups in the EP as a variable.

2.2. Securitisation

The other part of the literature relates to the second strategy of constructing the ‘other’. Several academics have written about constructing the ‘self’ through constructing the ‘other’ as an external, existential threat. Securitisation refers to an extreme version of politicisation where subjects are transformed into matters of security.¹⁸ Edmunds and Cesari argues that the discourse on Islam and Muslims have been constructed in opposition to European values and been linked to discourses on terrorism and immigration which has resulted in Muslims as the dangerous ‘other’ and Europe as the threatened ‘we’. Edmunds argues that the threat of jihadist terrorism have turned from the need for Western countries to curtail this threat within Muslim countries, to a focus on the homegrown ‘threat’ of the second and third generation Muslim immigrants. Cultural racism has further problematised this threat as it is not only national security that is at stake but also national cohesion. Edmunds, like the above-mentioned academics makes a connection between ideas resurfacing after 9/11 of an impending ‘clash of civilisations’ and security implications of cultural differences. This idea stems from Samuel Huntington’s theory about the unbridgeable schism between Western civilisation and Islamic civilisation, which have an essentialist view of identity.¹⁹ Although such ideas are social constructions, they are non-the less perceived as being real.

Cesari agrees with Edmunds in that, coupled with the construction as a threat, the tendency to see Muslims as a homogenous group and over-emphasising the influence that culture and religion have on the behaviour and identity of Muslims, has resulted in restrictions of religious practices and activities that are seen as ‘un-European’. She concludes that European

¹⁷ Bowen et.al., 2014: 2f, 7

¹⁸ Edmunds, 2012: 68, 71ff Diez, 2005: 628 Cesari, 2012: 432f

¹⁹ Edmunds, 2012: 69, 71ff

governments have made significant efforts to integrate Muslims in socio-economic terms, but because of the securitisation of Muslims, symbolic integration has been ignored.²⁰ While Edmunds discusses the securitisation in relation to the colonial history, where old ideas about Muslims as inferior to European culture has resurfaced in recent times resulting in restrictions on religious practices. Cesari, makes a more in depth analysis of the causes based on anti-Islamic discourse in politics and media. The reasoning of Edmunds is interesting, but lacks an explanation of the exact process of how such colonial ideas were reevoked. Both Edmunds and Cesari argue that, combined with Europe's recent experience with Islamist terrorist attacks, cultural racism has resulted in the othering of all European Muslims.²¹

The literature on othering of Muslims in Europe is plentiful, with different approaches varying from how social schemas are constructed in institutional settings to how threat perception on an international level affects group identity. The choices of what to include here have been made based on what literature is of most relevance to this thesis and have hence been narrowed down to discussions about normative power and securitisation. Except for when the actors are pointed out as specific institutions and governments, the discussions definition of the 'self' against which the 'other' is defined is often vague, something that happens when the discussion is moved to the supranational level in Europe. Both EU and Europe are mentioned, but there are no further attempts made at defining exactly who the actor is or where exactly the identity construction takes place. The problem with these studies is that it is not possible to trace out what the construction process actually looks like. There can therefore be said to be a gap in the research which this thesis attempts to study by locating debates in the EP as a site for construction and the MEPs as actors. Further research on other EU institutions is needed in order to make comparisons and get a more nuanced picture of how the construction of a Muslim 'other' within EU and Europe is achieved.

²⁰ Cesari, 2012: 433,437, 449

²¹ Edmunds, 2012: 71 Cesari, 2012: 434

3. Theory

Collective identity is a concept with sociological roots such as Durkheim's "collective conscience", Marx's "class consciousness" and Weber's "Verstehen". The concept comprises the notion of belonging to a group with shared attributes. In early sociology, these shared attributes were seen as "essential" or "core" characteristics given by nature.²² The discursive turn during the twentieth century questioned this essentialism and instead emphasised language as an answer to how these characteristics came to be²³. Belonging to this anti-essentialist approach, social constructionism is useful when studying the processes of how collective identities are produced, re-affirmed and changed²⁴. This chapter will provide an overview of the social constructionist approach and its implications on the concept of collective identity.

3.1. Social constructionism

Theorists of this school often describe social constructionism as a position rather than a grand theory, grouping together approaches containing key features and following a certain set of cardinal principles. Firstly, social constructionism presupposes a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge about the social world. The categories humans use to make sense of the world around them are constructed and therefore is not determined or pre-given by nature. There is no 'essence' inside things, people or categories that constitutes them as such.²⁵ Nationalism is a well-known example of this, often argued by essentialists as being categories referring to real differences given by nature and genetics. Through the constructionist's lens we might as well have divided population by hair colour or height. Hence, social constructionism urges us to question common assumptions about how we see the world by looking at the processes through which these categories were constructed.²⁶

The second key assumption imperative to social constructionism is that of historical and cultural specificity. The way we understand the world, the concepts and categories we use, are products of historical and cultural processes and therefore specific for particular cultures and periods in time. Vivien Burr uses children as an example of a concept with different connotations attached

²² Cerulo, 1997: 386

²³ Burr, 1996: 2

²⁴ Cerulo, 1997: 387 Walker, 2015: 37

²⁵ Burr, 1996: 3 Galbin, 2014: 83

²⁶ Burr, 1996: 3 Galbin, 2014: 83

to it throughout time and among cultures. A child in the nineteenth century was seen as a small adult and to be treated as no different from other adults. Today, children are a category of humans which have special needs and there are to be treated accordingly.²⁷ This understanding of knowledge as relative to time and place also ties in with the principle of anti-realism where social constructionism argues against knowledge as a direct perception of reality. With this, the concept of ‘truth’ or ‘reality’ becomes problematic.²⁸

The third key assumption states that knowledge is sustained by social processes. It is through the social processes and interactions between people that our understanding of the world is created. For social constructionists, this means that the main focus is on social interactions, and particularly language, when studying concepts or social phenomena. The focus on language stems from the belief that language is to be seen as more than a way of expressing oneself, it is through language that our world gets constructed. In other words, knowledge both emerges from, and is formed through language.²⁹

Fourthly, social constructionists go on to say that the constructed knowledges have implications for our social actions. “[...] *the way people think, the very categories and concepts that provide a framework of meaning for them, are provided by the language that they use*³⁰.” It follows that these frameworks set the conditions for social actions. This in turn has implications for the limits of our social actions. “*There are no ‘real’ external entities that can be accurately mapped or apprehended. However, knowledge and systems are inherently dependent upon communities of shared intelligibility and vice versa. They are therefore, governed to a large degree by normative rules that are historically and culturally situated.*”³¹

3.2. Social constructionism and collective identity

Continuing on the above discussion about the key principles of social constructionism, that social life is constructed through interaction, it follows that identity, both individual and collective, is constructed through language. Social constructionism argues against the essentialist view that individuals and groups possess characteristics that are natural or essential, an essence that can be accurately mapped and apprehended³². This is not to say that social

²⁷ Burr, 1996: 3 Galbin, 2014: 83

²⁸ Burr, 1996: 6 Galbin, 2014: 85

²⁹ Burr, 1996: 7

³⁰ Ibid. 7

³¹ Ibid. 84

³² Cerulo, 1997: 386

constructionism denies inherited and developmental aspects of identity, but as much as geneticists focus on the physiological influences on individual and communal characteristics, social constructionism concentrate their research on the influences of social interactions and processes³³.

For social constructionism, language is the main arena where identity construction takes place. Language is not just a way of expressing oneself, language is where we come to exist³⁴. It is through social interactions that concepts and categories are constructed and these in turn, provide people with a way of structuring and understanding the world around them. The implication for this being that the way language is structured determines the way experience and consciousness are structured, as people cannot express a concept if that concept does not exist in their language.³⁵ The concept of nationalities, according to social constructionism, is created and brings with it the idea of belonging to a group of people with the right to a certain territory. If not constructed as a concept it would not have been possible to see it as a fundamental part of one's identity and as a source of strong emotions. We have constructed the concept of nationalism which in turn provides us with a certain understanding of the world. Therefore, it is impossible to separate people and language as they equally construct each other and make each other's existence possible. If meanings are socially constructed through language, it follows that it is not fixed, but constantly being contested and remodelled within and by social interactions.³⁶ *"We live with each other in a conversational narrative, and we understand ourselves and each other through changing stories of self-description."*³⁷ This opens up the possibilities for a multitude of descriptions or constructions and also makes changes to identities possible.

*"If it is the way language is structured that provides us with the basis for our notions of selfhood and personal identity, we need to look at these structures and see how this is accomplished."*³⁸

Social constructionism, according to Burr, sees language as structured into different discourses where a discourse is defined as a particular picture or representation of a phenomena, concept or event. Although each discourse claims to hold the 'true' definition, language is never fixed and therefore makes the co-existence of multiple representations possible at any one time. The meaning of a concept therefore varies depending on what context it is used in. Simultaneously,

³³ Galbin, 2014: 82, 85

³⁴ Ibid. 84

³⁵ Burr, 1996: 34

³⁶ Ibid 41,

³⁷ Galbin, 2014: 85

³⁸ Burr, 1996: 46

a person's identity is multifaceted, consisting of the many different discourses that exists within one society. An identity might consist of discourses of age, gender, ethnicity, religion and nationality etc. although, some discourses might be difficult to combine. As it is repeatedly pointed out within academia, with evidence from the media and politics, discourses on Muslim identity and European identity is not easily combined.³⁹

Even though social constructionism argues for the plasticity of identity through an ever-ongoing construction, the approach does not claim that identities appear at random or by accident. These discourses are intrinsically linked with the structures of society and it therefore becomes imperative to include political, economic and social aspects of the society in the point of time. Discourses therefore provides us with a way of interpreting the world around us, where some ways of interpretation are seen as more 'legit' or 'truthful', or in other words knowledge.⁴⁰ For Foucault, knowledge is intrinsically linked with power, "*...knowledge is a power over others, the power to define others*"⁴¹. Prevailing knowledges in a society provides certain people or groups with the power to act in a particular way. For instance, the discourse on human rights and democracy provides legitimate reasons for some states to intervene in other sovereign states' internal affairs. Furthermore, if power/knowledge is something that is achieved through discourses, then power is not something you can possess, but rather an effect of discourse and therefore something that is to be exercised. It follows that discourses then have great political effects as it is imperative for some groups that certain knowledge is considered as 'truth' as this provides them with the power to act in their own interest. As with other aspects of social life, discourses are malleable, always being contested and resisted. Power, according to Foucault, only becomes evident when resisted, if it were not for the resistance, it would not be necessary to assert the 'truthfulness' of the discourses.⁴²

3.2.1 The EU and identity construction

Thomas Diez has discussed the use of normative power in relation to the EU's identity construction. He builds his argument on Ian Manners definition of normative power as a power that is able to shape conceptions about what is "normal", not through military or purely economic means, but through ideas and opinions. Thus, normative power is both a specific form of actor and a characteristic of a relationship as it is defined by the impact it has on the behaviour

³⁹ Burr, 1996: 46, 48-54

⁴⁰ Ibid. 54, 63

⁴¹ Ibid. 64

⁴² Ibid. 64, 70

of another actor. Diez argues that the EU is well-known as a special and novel kind of actor in international politics as it relies on civilian power rather than military. He furthermore argues that the policies the EU pursue, are evidence of its normative power. Here Diez mentions the EU's fight to abolish the death penalty and its commitment to promoting human rights both with its Member States and in its external relations. At the same time, he underlines the that the goal is not to examine whether the EU has normative power or not, but rather if it acts as a normative power.⁴³ From this perspective, it is therefore not interesting whether or not the EU is a normative power, but rather, how it is constructed as one through discursive representation.

Diez couples the concept of a “normative power Europe” with the construction of “self and “other” within international politics where the peaceful domestic sphere is presented in contrast and in existing prior to, the anarchic and dangerous world outside.⁴⁴ According to Diez the two are being constructed simultaneously within such statements. [...] *There is no homogenous and clearly delineated ‘inside to be defended against the ‘outside’ apart from historically contextual representations of social relations infused with power and distinctions between ‘self’ and ‘other’.*”⁴⁵ Diez presents different forms of othering within international politics in which the argument of “normative power Europe” can be traced.

1. Representation of the other as an existential threat

This strategy is also known as securitisation and departs from the Copenhagen School of security studies where security is seen as a speech act in which certain issues can be constructed as a threat regardless of if they are real or not. Here the security threat is constructed in relation to a particular subject as the threatened ‘referent object’. Hellberg argues that the security notion is often used without explaining how an issue is defined as a threat. Because of this, security becomes ‘universalised’ and obtains the same meaning in relation to all issues where they all are seen as a threat to the ‘self’, whether migration or terrorism. Any group of people associated with such issues therefore becomes de facto a threat to the ‘self’ and attributed to insecurity on the same level as any issue they are associated with. This produces an image of the ‘alien’ or the ‘other’ against which the ‘self’ struggles in terms of security.⁴⁶

⁴³ Diez, 2005: 613, 615f, 618f

⁴⁴ Ibid. 627

⁴⁵ Ibid. 627

⁴⁶ Hellberg, 2011: 1 Conference paper

2. Representation of the other inferior

According to Diez, this is a weaker form of othering where the ‘self’ presented as superior in relation to the inferior ‘other’. Diez points to Orientalism as an example where the ‘other’ might be celebrated for its exoticness and its culture regarded as interesting, but it never reaches the same level of the ‘self’ because its exoticness is regarded as undermining the standards of the ‘self’.⁴⁷

3. Representation of the other as violating universal principles

A stronger version of the second strategy, the ‘self’ is not only presented as superior but of universal validity. The ‘self’ is presented as having the ‘right’ values and acting accordingly to them. What the universal principles are, is of course described by the ‘self’. Breaching of these values are not acceptable as they are seen as universal is hence done by the ‘other’ and when doing so should be brought to accept the principles of the ‘self’.⁴⁸

4. Representation of the other as different

Here the ‘other’ is presented as different without making any value-judgements. The ‘other’ is presented as neither inferior or as a threat, just different. Diez argues that this strategy is preferable to the three others as it doesn’t legitimise interference with the ‘other’.⁴⁹ That being said, it can be argued that it is difficult, if not impossible, to impose values when constructing the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ within international politics as the motivations behind the construction is imbued with strategic motivations and the motivation to keep the ‘self’ intact by not risking the positive ‘self’ image. Furthermore, this strategy does not comprehend the theory of a ‘normative power Europe’ as this necessarily presupposes a value imbued construction.

The choice was therefore made to leave out the fourth strategy and use only the first three strategies as outlined by Diez. These strategies were useful when studying the ways in which differences between the Europe and Muslims are constructed by the MEPs and would therefore come to serve as a way of structuring the analysis. The first strategy was especially useful when explaining the link made between Muslims and the region MENA.

⁴⁷ Diez, 2005: 628

⁴⁸ Ibid. 628

⁴⁹ Ibid. 628f

3.3 Criticism

Social constructionism in its most radical form states that everything is constructed through language, manufactured through discourse. Nothing exists outside our language, nothing has any essential properties outside the discourses that construct them.⁵⁰ The argument that discourse is all there is, is one of the main areas social constructionism is criticised for. In their article "Death and Furniture: the rhetoric, politics and theology of bottom-line arguments against relativism", Edwards et.al. discuss both the problems and the benefits of using a relativist perspective, arguing that this discussion has as a backdrop of two dilemmas - the realist dilemma and the relativist dilemma.

3.3.1 The problem of relativism

The realist dilemma is the state in which the realist 'proves' the physical existence of 'objects', but does so by constructing its meaning through words and actions.⁵¹ "*The very act of producing a non-represented, unconstructed external world is inevitably representational, threatening as soon as it is produced, to turn around upon and counter the very position it is meant to demonstrate*"⁵². The relativist dilemma, on the other hand, makes it impossible for anything moral, political or factual to exist. As soon as relativists argue, they position themselves which is essentially an anti-relativist stance. Both the realist and relativist's views can therefore be said to be restrained in their own fashion. In order to escape this situation, relativism is given the role of an epistemological meta-level in form of a non-positioning that can criticise both relativism and realism alike. By doing so, Edwards et.al. refute the argument of relativism as inadequate and give it a slightly stronger position than realism.⁵³ Burr describes the problem of relativism as not being able to escape the 'self-referent' system of language where all language can do is refer to itself. Words or concepts can only be defined and understood in relation to other words and concepts which in turn, only can be understood in reference to other words or concepts. Since there is nothing that exists outside of discourses and there are numerous discourses surrounding any word or concept at any time, it follows that there can be no sense of 'truth'. This becomes problematic when discussing for instance embodiment.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Burr, 1996: 57

⁵¹ Edwards et.al., 1995: 27

⁵² Ibid. 27

⁵³ Cromby et.al., 1999: 8

⁵⁴ Burr, 1996: 60f

Cromby et.al. address the same problems with relativism, brought on by the discursive turn. By focusing all attention on language as the constituter of ‘reality’, social constructionism fails to adequately explain other significant elements, such as the influences of embodied factors, how the material world already shapes social constructions, and the power of institutions, governments as well as the inequalities they invite.⁵⁵ Walker on the other hand, argues that social constructionists never claim to deny the existence of reality, but that the approach only make epistemological claims for a socially constructed reality. According to him, the idea of an independent reality is not incompatible with constructionism. To socially construct the concept of ‘disease’ by naming and defining it does not equal claiming the ‘disease’ does not exist independently beyond language.⁵⁶

3.3.2 The problem of agency

Another criticism of this approach, put forward by Epstein, is that social constructionism has trapped itself in dualism of liberal discourse where the individual is either seen as free to create themselves and their environment; or as a mere product of their environment without agency⁵⁷. Burr continues along the same line, asking; “If people are products of discourse, and the things that they say have status only as manifestations of these discourse, in what sense can we be said to have agency?”. This problem is not neglected within social constructionism, but neither has it been solved.⁵⁸

3.3.3 The problem of identity politics

The issue of politics in the identity construction is often cited as an important aspect ignored by social constructionism. While social constructionism focuses on how identities are constructed through a mutual interplay between the construction of our world through language and how these constructions inform our social actions, identity politics suggests a new form of agency. According to Cerulo, identities may emerge because of a “collective agency” where groups consciously coordinate action in order to define and differentiate their group. Therefore, contrary to the limited role afforded to human agency by social constructionism, identity

⁵⁵ Cromby et.al. 1999: 3

⁵⁶ Walker, 2015: 37f

⁵⁷ Epstein, 1998: 141

⁵⁸ Burr, 1996: 60

politics claims identity construction through the new social movements, is a self-reflexive initiative driven by the actions of group members.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Cerulo, 2014: 393

4. Method

The goal of this analysis is to understand how European identity and the concept of Muslims are constructed as different and thereby to understand why Islam and Muslims are viewed as external elements to and in opposition to Europe. The method of thematic analysis was chosen as it allows for identification and description of implicit and explicit ideas expressed in the speeches⁶⁰. This chapter explains the method of thematic analysis in relation to the research question and gives a review of the material used.

4.1. Thematic analysis

Although the data used in this thesis consists of speeches held in the European Parliament, they are transcribed, which makes a method for text analysis highly appropriate. According to Guest et.al., thematic analysis is not as much a multi-step process as a multi-part description in which the researcher discerns what meanings are conveyed and what elements these meanings are constructed of. The meanings represented as themes and the elements as codes. It is an empirical investigation of the way in which meaningful elements and codes are combined to generate thematic or explanatory models⁶¹.

Guest et.al. describes thematic analysis as using a set process consisting of text segmentation and coding in order to identify themes. Accordingly, the text was divided into segments that mostly corresponded with how each speech was divided into parts, except for in cases where the parts were long enough for a subject to be mentioned on two separate occasions. Thematic analysis is a method built on a cyclical process where the researcher constantly develops codes, themes and then refine these as additional information and insight is gained. These codes were defined in a codebook and sorted into categories, types and relationships which was essential in order to analyse the texts via the developed categories, types, and relationships. By doing so the codebook assisted the research in moving beyond a descriptive to an explanatory analysis.⁶²

The themes identified were used as the basis for the analysis using a constructivist perspective on identity. In this study, thematic analysis was applied on five debates held in the European

⁶⁰ Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012: 10

⁶¹ Ibid, 52

⁶² Ibid, 52, 53

Parliament between 14 January and 08 July 2015. The method allowed for an identification and description of implicit and explicit ideas, themes, in the speeches in order to understand how European identity and the concept of the “other” is constructed and confirmed daily at a European level.

Initial themes emerged from combining codes sorted into categories, types, and relationships. The term theme is quite abstract, though Guest et.al. suggest “*A unit of meaning that is observed (noticed) in the data [...]*”⁶³ and can be considered the answer to the question “*What is this expression an example of?*”⁶⁴. The cyclical process of thematic analysis appears again as the emerging themes was constantly compared to the research questions and the overarching theoretical perspective. This was an effective way of noticing incoherencies among codes, themes and the texts, in which case the codes had to be reviewed. The themes were then defined, named and elaborated on in order to give an understanding of how they related to the research questions.⁶⁵ In the final analysis, the themes were the basis for answering the research question by discerning explicit and implicit ideas of identities in the speeches.

The analysis diverged from some of the aspects of thematic analysis concerning quantitative methods suggested by Guest et.al for data reduction and comparison of thematic data. Although word counting and checks for code frequencies were used to some extent, this analysis relied mostly on qualitative methods when reducing data, codes and identifying themes. As often in qualitative research method, this analysis depended heavily on the researcher’s own interpretations when identifying codes as well as applying the codes to the texts⁶⁶. This is a well-known and recognised problem in thematic analysis that makes it difficult to measure consistently across individuals and time as well as being able to reproduce the measurements⁶⁷. On the other hand, Guest et.al argue, reliability is less important in qualitative than quantitative research as replication is typically not the aim, and the process of collecting data is quite unstructured which in turn makes it difficult to obtain similar results across individuals or time⁶⁸.

⁶³ Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012: .50

⁶⁴ Ibid. 65

⁶⁵ Ibid. 65

⁶⁶ Ibid. 11

⁶⁷ Ibid. 81

⁶⁸ Ibid. 84

4.1.1. Validity and reliability

What is of most importance when using thematic analysis, according to Guest et.al., is to ensure *face* and *external* validity. The former referring to census among researchers of how well an indicator measures a concept and the latter referring to the generalisability of the results of the study⁶⁹. Negative and deviant case analysis was also performed to counter the risk of cherry-picking in order to create cohesive results. Throughout the analysis, it was important to actively look for and present data that contradicted the common themes presented.⁷⁰ A third way of ensuring validity, and counter the effects of subjectivity in coding, was to clearly define the codes, when they were to be used and when not to be used. By doing so the interpretations and analysis based on the codes was well grounded in the raw data.⁷¹ There are some ways of checking both the validity and the reliability which was not possible to conduct because of lack of resources and time. Using Inter-coder Agreement (ICA) and external review requires external researchers examining the data and result. Another method is to present a transcription protocol of the speeches which would require an immense amount of work to collect the protocols, if they even exist, from all the EU translators.⁷²

4.2. Material

The material consisted of five speeches between 14 January 08 and July on the topic of security. They were chosen on the basis of a search in the European Parliament's verbatim reports using the 'security' as the subject of searching. There were six debates in total, five of which was chosen, the fifth and last debate was included as it specifically concerned security in relation to the region of MENA. The time period was chosen because of the recent event in Paris and because of the current work on a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Furthermore, parts of the debates were excluded from the analysis because the translation was incomprehensible, this amounts to no more than 2-3 percent of the material. Parts where non MEPs spoke were also disregarded and, as explained in the introduction, parts contributed by NIs or MEPs belonging to ENF.

⁶⁹ Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012: 80, 84

⁷⁰ Ibid. 2012: 94

⁷¹ Ibid. 2012: 97f

⁷² Ibid. 2012: 89, 92f, 96

4.2.1. Translations

Another aspect affecting both reliability and validity in this study is the use of translation of speeches. Each MEP, when speaking in plenary sitting, can choose to do so in their native language which results in speeches being transcribed in different European languages. Because of time restraints Google Translate was used as a translation tool which in turn added further complexity. According to Bellos, Google Translate is a well-developed translation tool that frequently produces acceptable data⁷³. Empirical studies have recorded acceptable results in 80 percent of translations between Romance and Germanic languages, but there are major concerns to be noted when translating lesser used languages. This translation tool works by cross-referencing between previous translations of the target languages and utilises recurring linguistic bundles in both. The result being a higher accuracy in languages that are more frequently translated such as French and Spanish, inaccuracies were therefore more likely to occur when translating languages like Greek and Slovakian. Another issue is that translations most often use English as a way of translating between language A and language B, although this was not an issue in this study as English was target language.⁷⁴ The direct translations of texts where metaphors and other culturally grounded ways of speaking also made for some unintelligible reading. Although there were many issues, Google Translate is a useful tool in producing translations and gives a good comprehension of the texts' arguments and nuances.

⁷³ Bellos, 2011: 263

⁷⁴ Groves and Mundt, 2015: 114

5. Results

Through the process of coding, three themes of codes emerged, values and religiousness, roles and negative activities. Depending on which strategy of othering was being studied, the themes could be moulded to include different codes. The roles meaningful to studying how Muslims were being othered as the violators of principles, were the ones of victim and perpetrator, while looking at how Muslims were represented as inferior, the roles of helper and student would be meaningful. This chapter therefore gives an overview over the results found according to theme.

Strategies of othering					
1. Constructed as violating universal principles		2. Constructed as inferior		3. Constructed as a threat	
Values	Positive values	Values	Positive values	Activities	Terrorism
	Negative values		Negative values		Extremism
	Religious		Religious		Migration
Activities	Terrorism	Roles	Role model		Organised crime
	Extremism		Helper	Threat	
	Organised crime		Student	Threatened	
Roles	Victim		Partner	Victim	
	Perpetrator		Perpetrator		
				Roles	Illegal immigrant

Threats (types of)
Terrorism
Extremism
Organised crime
Cybercrime
Migration
Conflict
Climate change
Russia
Israel

Figure 1.

The amount of speaking time is determined according to the political groups’ sizes, which affected the amount of material to code pertaining to each group and therefore the amount of codes that could be applied. GUE/NGL 54 codes, S&D 307 codes, Verts/ALE 35 codes, ALDE 74 codes, EPP 273 codes, ECR 133 codes, and EFDD 57 codes. In order to make these numbers comparable, they were converted into percentage.

5.1. Values and religiousness

The codes positive and negative values were used in order to determine if Muslims were being constructed as violating universal principles and if they were being constructed as inferior. Values can be considered representing an actor’s willingness to do the right thing, or an actor’s willingness to go against values and principles that are labelled “correct”. The “correct” values are here defined by the MEPs and pertains to what are considered as European values. What is labelled as negative values is the lack of positive values, when an actor acts against positive

values or when an actor acts according to negative values. Furthermore, values represent an actor’s moral superiority and inferiority. Values such as democracy and freedom are defined as positive and good by all political groups and MEPs, they are in relation to negative values, such as authoritarianism, regarded as morally superior

Although MEPs from the other groups at times spoke about the MENA in relation to positive values and the EU in relation to negative values, the results show that MEPs from all groups, except for GUE/NGL, clearly link the EU as representing, and acting by, positive values and the MENA as representing, and acting by, negative values. MEPs from ECR, EFDD and surprisingly Verts/ALE were the ones where the difference was most distinct, where the MENA was spoken about only in relation to negative values and the EU in relation to positive values. Another interesting finding was that the EU was linked with positive values twice as many times as the MENA was linked with negative values, which indicates that the overall link between the EU and positive values are stronger than that of the MENA and negative values

The odd ones out were MEPs from GUE/NGL who did not refer to the MENA in terms of values, values were only used in order to construct the EU equally as pertaining to both negative and positive values. It is problematic that the MEPs does not mention the MENA in such terms at all as this makes the comparison between the two actors difficult.

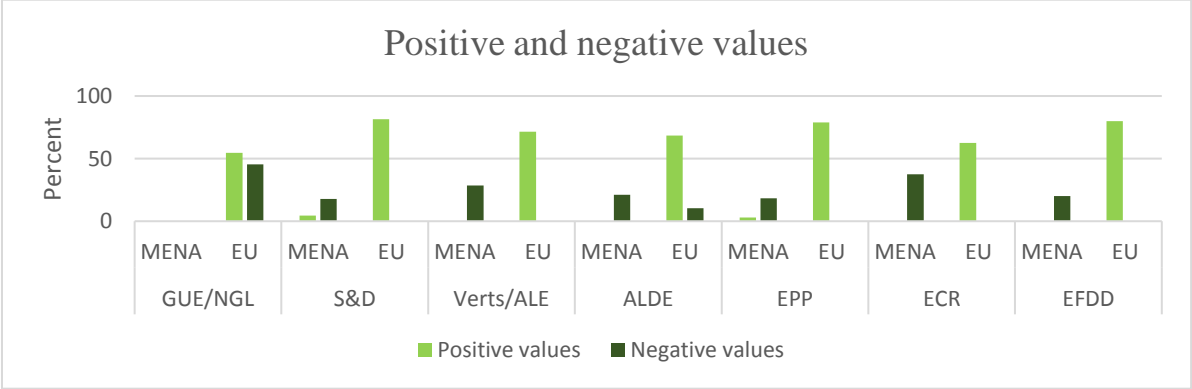


Figure 2.

Religiousness was another factor studied as it is thought to say something about whether or not an actor is considered violating any principles as well as the inferiority or superiority of an actor. An actor labelled as religious by a MEP pertaining to secular values would be seen as inferior and violating the principle where religion belongs to the private sphere. However, as the results show, the use of religion to construct identity were not a matter of distinction between

secular or religious but how religiousness was given different meanings in relation to the two actors which could explain why MEPs from S&D also spoke about religion.

Not surprisingly it was the right side, with the EPP in the front that most actively brought religion into the debate. However, religiousness was not directly linked to the EU but spoken about in relation to solidarity with Christians in the Middle East. In this context, Christians were only portrayed in positive terms or as victims of persecution by Islamist terror groups or as the ones that contributed in a positive way to society. The difference became apparent when considering how MEPs spoke about religiousness in relation to Islam and Muslims. Religion is here spoken about as the main cause of conflict and the main hinder for democracy in, or as a threat to others, especially to Christians. Although, as Figure 2 shows, the MEPs speaking about religion viewed both actors as almost equally religious, the numbers therefore needed contextualisation in order to decipher their usage. However, religiousness was not found to be used in order to construct the MENA as inferior.

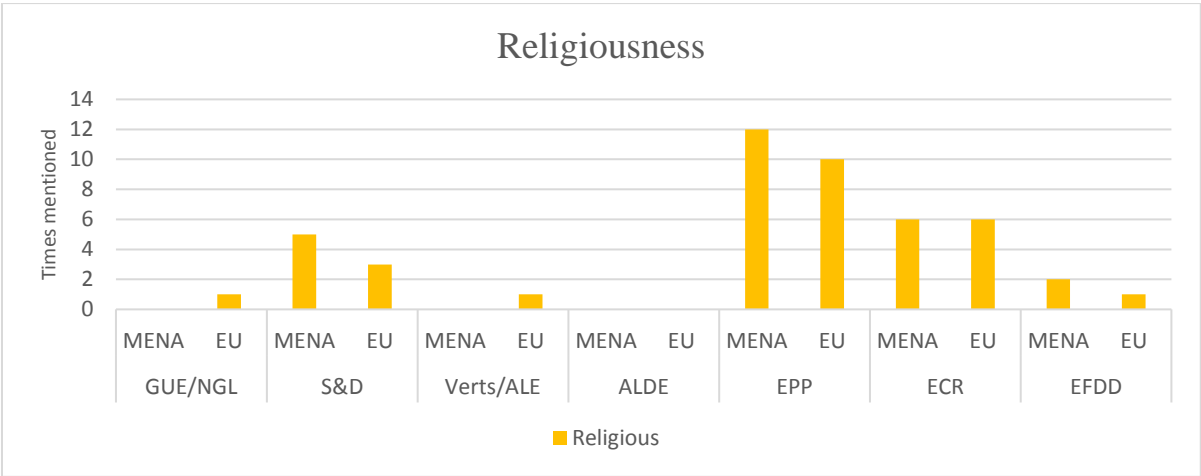


Figure 3.

5.2. Roles

There were several roles that could be distinguished within the debates, which could be used in order to determine if and how Muslims were constructed in relation to the three strategies.

5.2.1. Victim and perpetrator

The binary roles of victim and perpetrator are used as labels in order to determine both the construction of Muslims as violators of principles and as a threat. A perpetrator does not necessarily have the intent to go against positive values, but its actions or ideas is considered directly harmful to those values. It can also be that the actions have or will cause physical harm to another actor and as result, the actor is considered having acted against universal principles and simultaneously become a threat. The victim is, in this relationship, considered innocent and the target, purposefully or not, of the negative actions of the perpetrator. Whether or not the victim pertains to positive values is not relevant, but here the actor is seen as the one that has not broken any universal principles or values.

The results show the use of the victim-perpetrator roles by MEPs from all ideologies, though how the roles were applied differed. Viewing the results regarding the MENA, it is clear that it is the groups to the right that label the MENA as mainly a perpetrator and MEPs from the left mainly as a victim. When looking at the results regarding the EU, the picture is more complicated, though a tendency of the left to view the EU as a perpetrator and the right as victim can be indicated. The clearest difference in the construction of the EU as a victim and MENA as the perpetrator were made by EPP and ECR while MEPs from GUE/NGL clearly constructed the MENA as the victim and the EU as the perpetrator. The odd ones out being MEPs from EFDD who saw both actors as perpetrators.

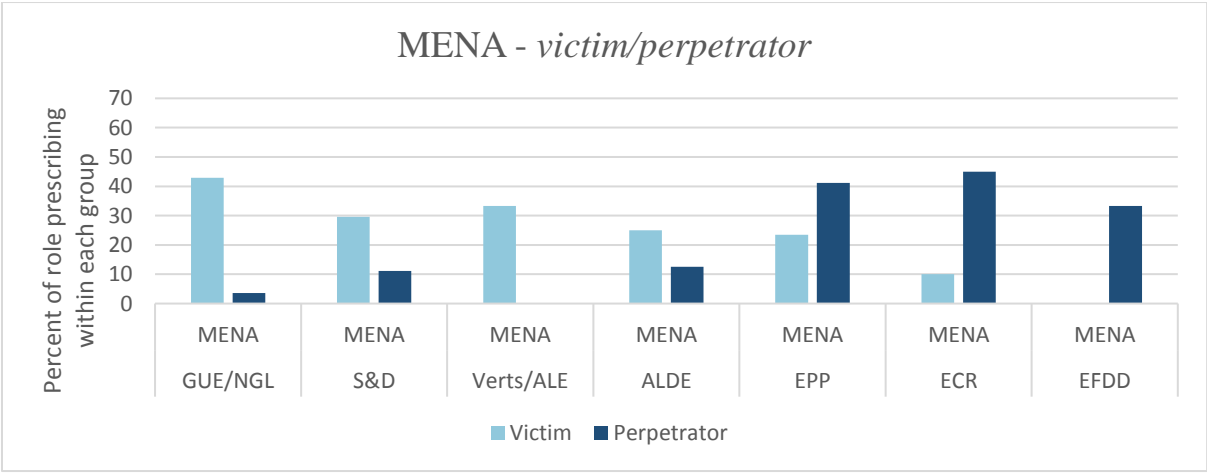


Figure 4.

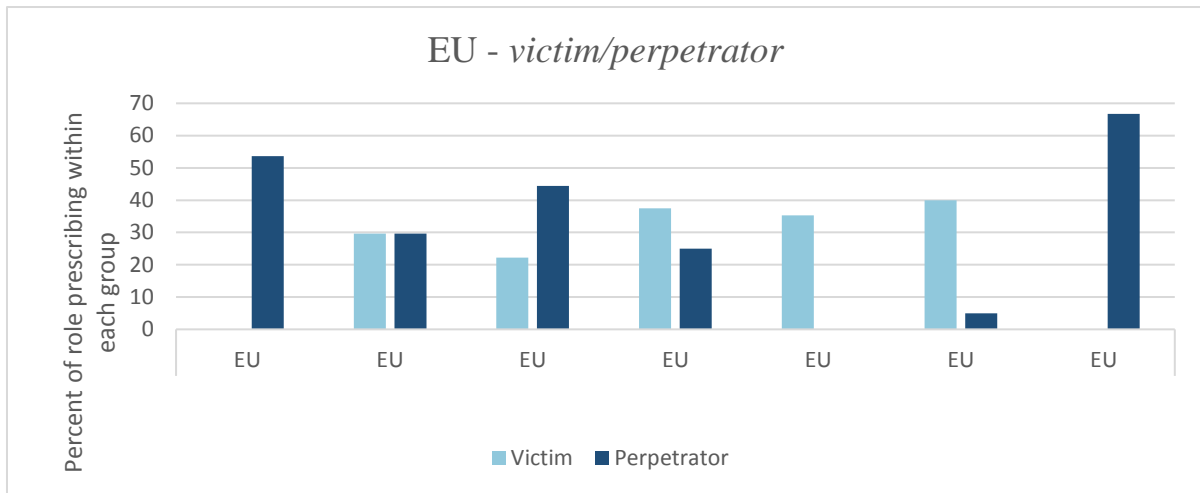


Figure 5.

5.2.2. Threat and threatened

Threat and threatened are two codes that are used in order to confirm the construction of the MENA as a threat and the EU as threatened. It would confirm the general picture given by the results pertaining to, for example, the MENA as the committer of negative activities or as linked with terrorism. If the MENA was linked to terrorism and this was to be regarded as the main threat. These roles were also used in order to give a more complex picture of the construction as the labelling of an actor as a threat, but not a perpetrator would indicate the lack or lessening of negative intent.

The results show that MEPs from all political groups, except for GUE/NGL, clearly expressed the EU as being threatened, and the MENA as the threat. The right side, including EPP, ECR and EFDD clearly linked the actors to these roles, whereas the ECR were the one that spoke the most about MENA in terms of being a threat. There is a steady decrease in the use of these roles in relation to both actors, the further left you get on the ideological scale, with the exception of S&D that spoke about the MENA in terms of being a threat as much as the EPP.

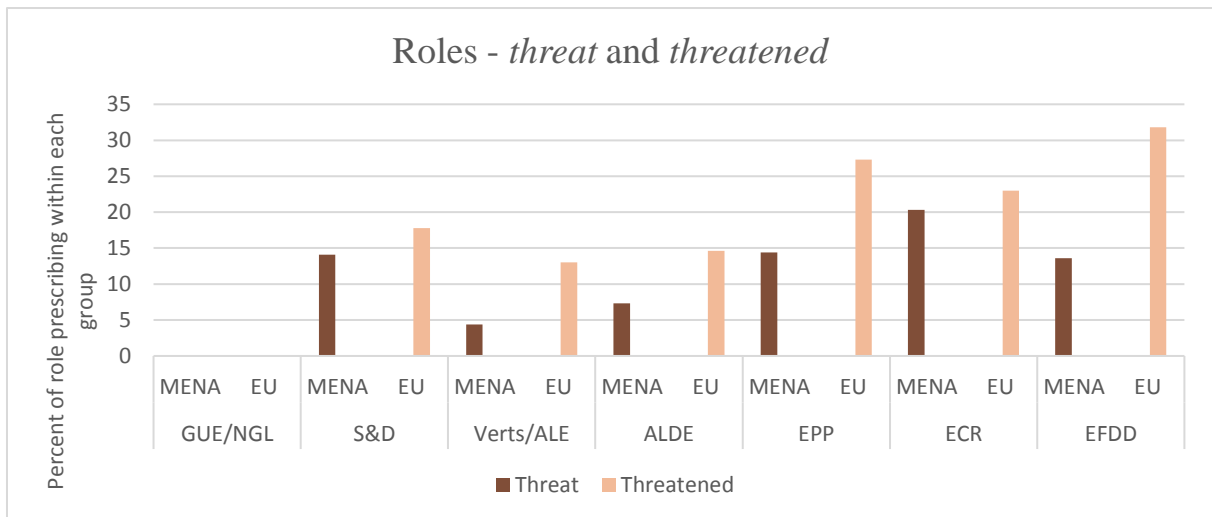


Figure 6.

5.2.3. Helper and role model

A helper is an actor that has the capability and willingness to assist other actors external of itself. A role model is an actor who inhabits positive values and are seen as a success to such a degree that it regards itself or is regarded as an example for others to follow. Being labelled as a helper or a role model therefore also implies a high status compared to actors who are considered not capable of handling internal affairs, or actors who speakers considers would benefit of following the role model's example.

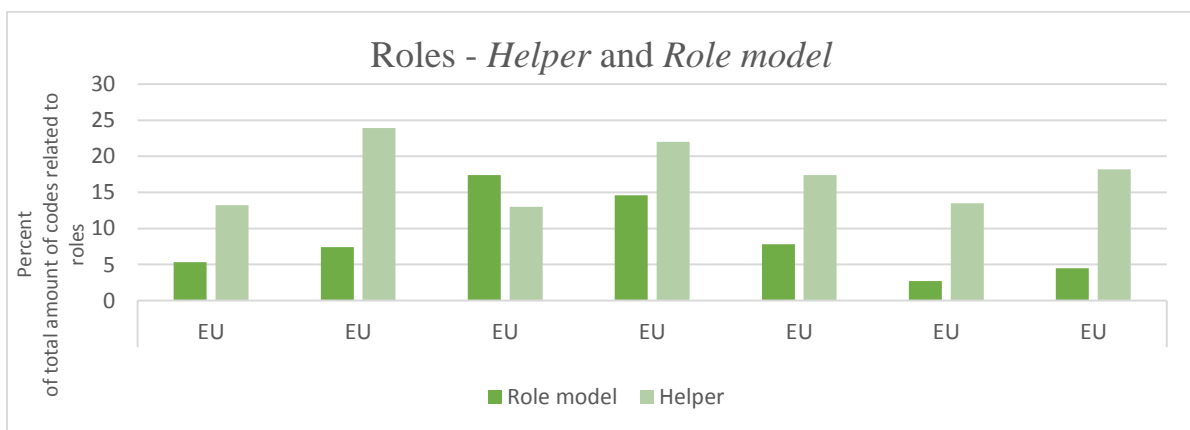


Figure 7.

The results show that only the EU is seen as a helper and a role model, regardless of political ideology. It was mostly a helper in relation to the MENA, but it could also be, on some occasions, in relation to international politics or Ukraine. As for being a role model, the EU was regarded as such mostly in international politics in general without defining exactly who the

‘other’ is. Although the results regarding role model varied to a greater degree than that of helper, MEPs from all ideologies considered the EU to be a role model, most of all MEPs from the ideological middle. Both Verts/ALE and ALDE spoke about the EU almost equally in terms of being a role model and a helper.

5.2.4. Student and partner

A student is here defined as an actor that is considered not to have the resources or capability to handle its internal affairs and therefore in need of assistance from the helper. A student is also an actor who is considered as not inhabiting values defined as ‘correct’. Partner is the role of an actor who is seen as more equal to the ‘self’. A partner does not necessarily endorse the same positive values as the EU but will, through cooperation with the EU, work towards goals that endorse positive values. These roles were therefore applied in order to decipher if the MEPs constructed Muslims as inferior or an equal.

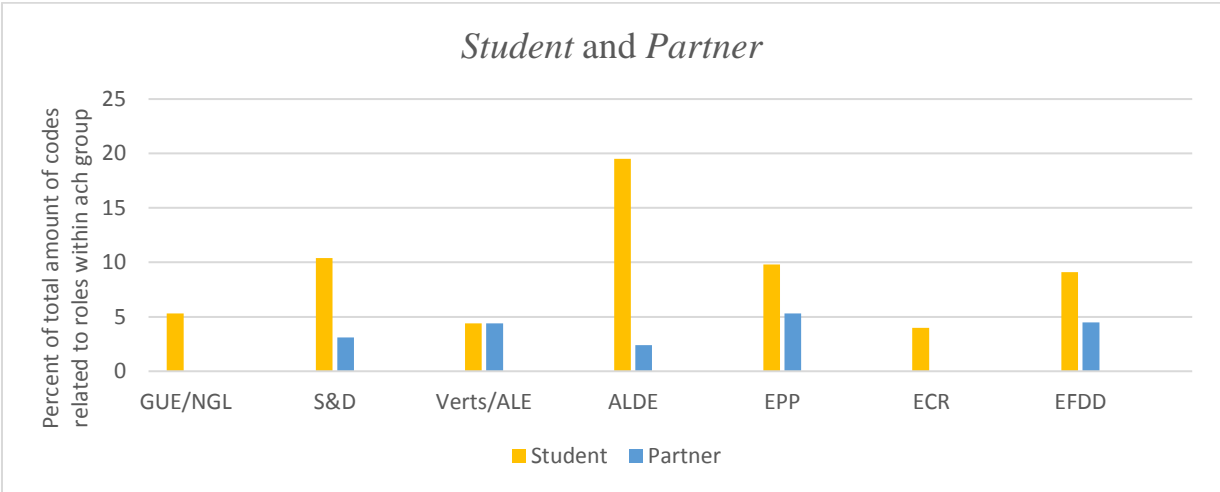


Figure 8.

The results clearly show that all MEPs, regardless of ideological belonging, spoke of the MENA as in need of help from the EU or as the one who has something to learn and gain from its relationship with the EU, with not much difference between MEPs from the left and the right side. As figure 6 shows, MEPs from ALDE were the ones who spoke the most about the MENA in terms of needing help from or as the one that should strive to become more like the EU. Regarding how the MENA was viewed as a partner, MEPs from all ideologies, except GUE/NGL and ECR, mentioned it in terms of a partner at least once each. There was no correlation found between how MEPs viewed the MENA as a student versus a partner, besides

most MEPs speaking about the MENA much less in terms of partner. Here Verts/ALE stood out as the ones viewing the MENA in most equal terms.

5.2.5. Immigrant and illegal immigrant

It was useful to look at what role the MEPs assigned migrants from the MENA in order to determine if these migrants were seen as a threat or not. Here, illegal immigrants are seen as a threat because they are defined as entering or residing in Europe in a way that breaches immigration laws or as constituting a significant problem for the EU Member States and its populations.

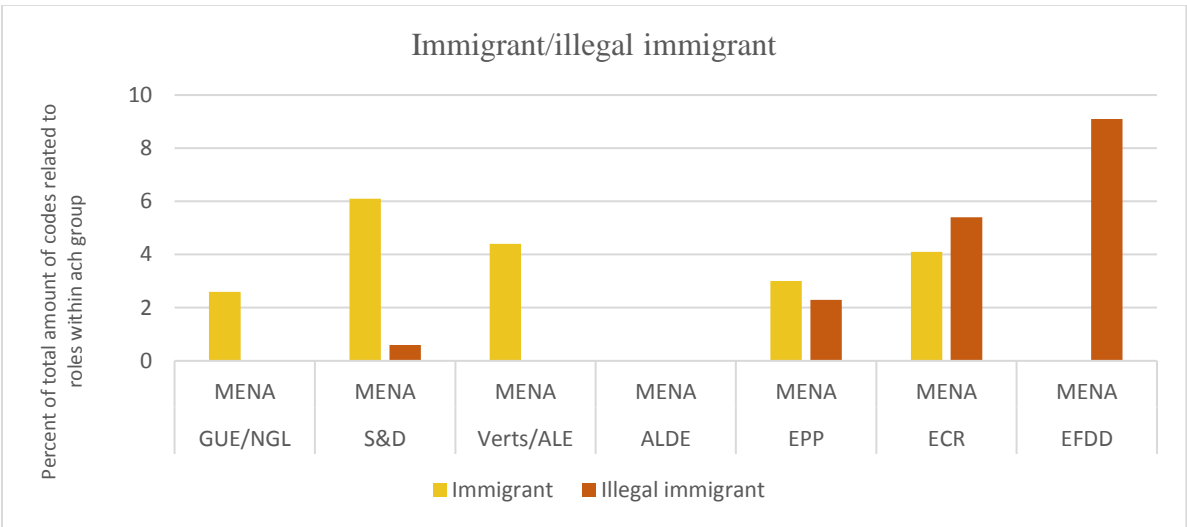


Figure 9.

The results show a clear division between the left and the right side where MEPs from the left almost exclusively spoke of them as immigrants or refugees while the right side tended to speak of them as a problem or a direct threat. EPP being the exception, speaking about migrants as almost equally a threat and as immigrants or refugees. The ECR as mostly illegal immigrants, but still a number of times as immigrants. The EFDD did only speak about migrants and immigration in a negative way. Interestingly, ALDE did not speak about migration at all.

These findings are supported by the results pertaining to what type of threat (Figure 11) MEPs from the different ideologies considered most prominent where these results correlate with which groups characterised migrants in a negative way.

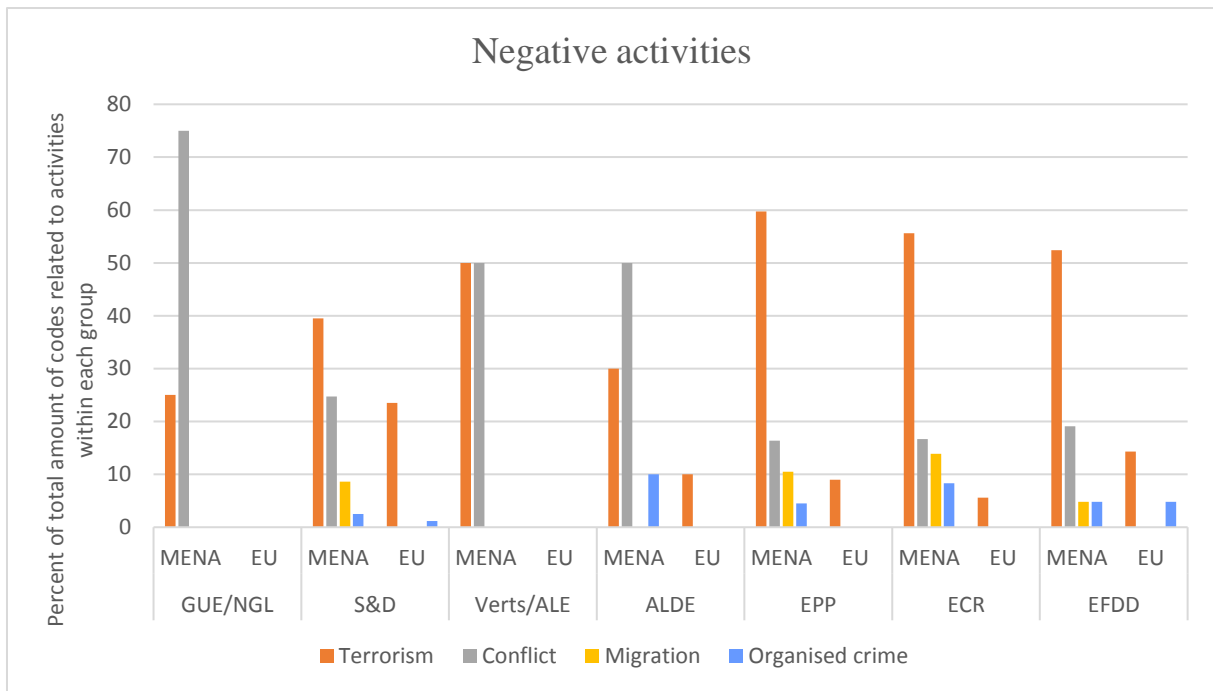


Figure 10.

5.3. Negative activities

‘Negative activities’ is the third theme consisting of codes that signifies activities and actions that have negative consequences for one or both of the actors. Linking negative activities to an actor have implications for the perception of that actor as either violating universal principles or as being regarded as a threat.

5.3.1. Terrorism and extremism

Terrorism and extremism are two ideas but also activities that are defined as negative. As ideologies, they violate principles and values as they are seen to be opposed to and directly targeting values labelled as European. These codes therefore signify the violation of universal principles and as a threat to Europe, both in its forms of ideology and as physical acts.

MEPs from all political groups made a connection between the MENA and terrorism. Although, it was MEPs from right-wing groups that tended to link terrorism and extremism with the MENA, it was surprising to find that MEPs from S&D spoke about such negative activities in relation to both the MENA and the EU more than ECR and EFDD did. EFDD did not speak about either the MENA or the EU in terms of these activities to the extent that it was presupposed to do. MEPs from the centre to left did mention terrorism and extremism as well,

although much less. Furthermore, both terrorism and extremism were solely applied in relation to the phenomenon of radical Islamic ideas and terroristic attacks carried out by Muslims and never in the sense of extremist right-wing, separatists or left-wing extremists committing such acts. Hence, even in cases where terrorism and extremism was linked with Europe, it was done so in the form of a problem caused by Muslims.

5.3.2. Organised crime

Organised crime is defined as activities that violate universal principles, drug smuggling being a clear example as well as an activity that is defined as a threat. Considering how organised crime is defined as one of the three major threats in the security strategy, it was mentioned very few times, overall, by the MEPs regardless of ideology.

However, when speaking about organised crime the results show a tendency of MEPs to frame it as a problem caused by Muslims or originating from the MENA often linked to terrorism. In contrast, when speaking about organised crime as a problem within Europe, the perpetrator of such actions, if not connected to terrorism, was not mentioned. Only EFDD and S&D speakers make a clear connection between Europe and organised crime, mostly it is mentioned as a form of activity perpetrated by not defined actor(s).

5.3.3. Conflict and migration

Conflict is another code that was used in order to decipher if MEPs constructed the MENA as a threat. Although conflict is not an activity that one performs in the same way as terrorism, it is regarded as a situation that is threatening as it could produce negative consequences for the EU both in the form of indirect consequences of a conflict and as the risk of the spreading of conflicts. Migration is another activity that, although not deliberately performed, if talked about will portray the actor in question in a negative way. Migration is here defined as movement of people that affects the EU negatively such as human trafficking, immigrants 'storming' the coasts of EU or as terrorists hiding as refugees. The results regarding how MEPs spoke about the MENA in terms of an area of conflict and migration divides the ideologies. For the left side, except for S&D, MEPs tended to speak as much or more about conflict and not about migration. Whereas the right side tended to also speak about migration and organised crime. Although S&D spoke less about terrorism and more about crime than the right side, MEPs from this group were more similar to the ones from EPP in how they linked negative activities to the MENA.

5.4. Threats

The debates were furthermore, coded for threats in order to see if ideology carried any significance for which type of threat they regarded as most prominent. Although similar to the theme of negative activities, these threats were coded separately. Considering how the EU’s security strategy defined the threats of organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism as the three most prominent threats to be focused on, it was not surprising to find that organised crime and terrorism were the two most spoken about threats. However, MEPs from all ideologies placed a lot of focus on terrorism, with it being mentioned by some groups almost five times more than cybercrime.

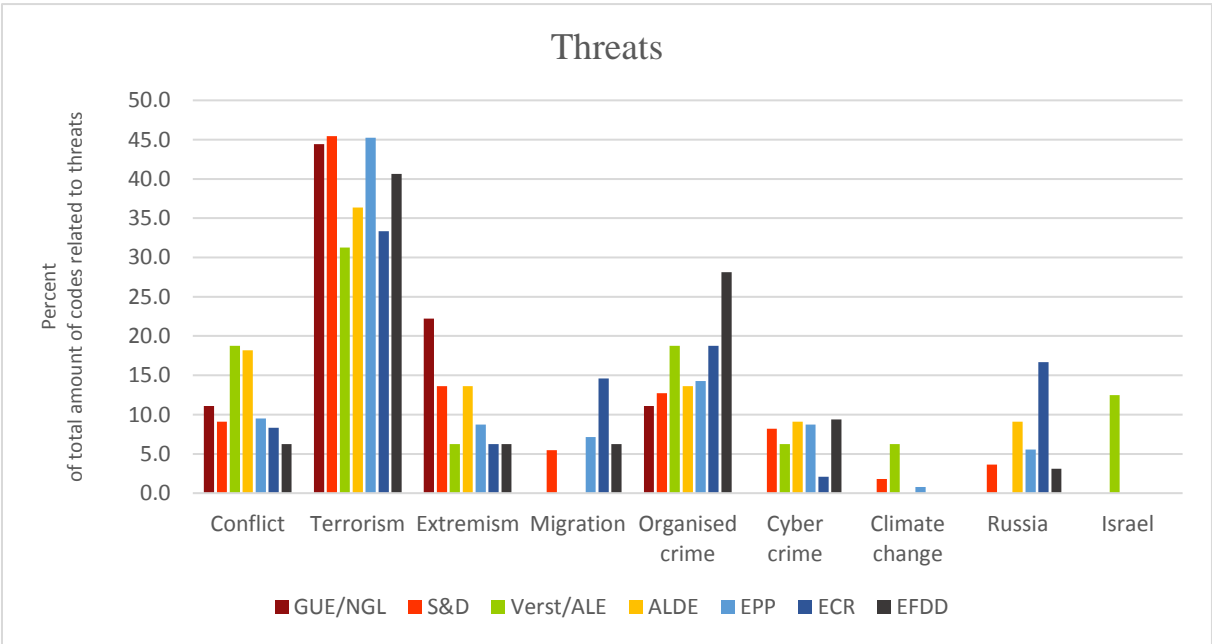


Figure 11.

6. Analysis

By explaining the results in relation to each political group and giving them a qualitative interpretation, this chapter provides an analysis of how each group constructs a Muslim ‘other’ and a European ‘we’. Furthermore, this discussion will attempt to highlight how the political groups differ in their construction as well as what unites them.

6.1. GUE/NGL

Being the political group placed at the left end of the ideological scale, the GUE/NGL stipulates that values of democracy and human rights are at its heart, and that the EU must live up to these commitments and responsibilities.⁷⁵ Besides describing what values GUE/NGL places at its heart, this statement indicates that the EU is still not fulfilling its obligations to the full. This is confirmed by the MEPs through the debates.

MEPs from this political group differentiated the most from MEPs from the other groups in that they were the only ones who did not assign any values to Muslims, rather, it was the EU that was portrayed as pertaining to both negative and positive values, equally. Moreover, and in contrast to the other political groups, the role of victim was solely applied to Muslims and the role of perpetrator to the EU, as seen in Figure 5 and 6. Consisting of members belonging to socialist and communist parties, the EU was often described as adhering to negative values because of capitalism. As one MEP expressed it by quoting Pope Francis: *“We're in the middle of the Third World War. However, in a war on the instalment plan. There are economic systems that in order to survive, have to go to war. So, they produce and sell weapons.”*⁷⁶ This finding is supported by how MEPs from GUE/NGL assign the role of perpetrator to the EU and speak about the MENA mostly in terms of being not just a victim, but a victim because of the EU’s actions and policies. GUE/NGL can therefore not be said to make use of the first strategy in which Muslims are represented as violating universal principles. Rather, it is the ‘self’, the EU, that is constructed as the violator and perpetrator. *“But what is ultimately our goal? To continue the same policy and even to make it more effective? To continue the same policies that brought*

⁷⁵ GUE/NGL, “Who we are and what we stand for”, GUE/NGL Communications Unit, 2015

⁷⁶ EP Deb. 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

Libya to the brink of disaster? Consenting to the acts or omissions of the chaos that engulfs the Middle East? ”⁷⁷

In their information brochure, the GUE/NGL furthermore explain how they see the EU as less of a global player, more of a global partner⁷⁸. This statement indicates that GUE/NGL should see Muslims as partners and not as student. To confirm this view, it should also be preferable that these MEPs did not discuss the EU in terms of having the superior position of role model or helper. However, the results show that they did indeed assign the actors these roles, although, not in the same way as MEPs from the other groups. MEPs from GUE/NGL spoke about the EU's role as a helper in terms of restoring the chaos it has created in the region. The same was true for the MENA's role as a student, where it was defined as suffering structural inequalities created by Europe and the EU.

“It also has a lot to do the repressive treatment of all people who want to escape the chaos that precisely our unilateral interventions or even using such euphemisms, "responsibility to protect" - have caused. Therefore, [...] a change in the asymmetry between unequal relations between the centre of the European Union and our countries in the neighbourhood is needed. Only then will we have true security: not ingesting, not destabilised and, above all, not having an uneven economy and trade.”⁷⁹

The roles of student and helper were therefore used in a more complex and nuanced way than how it was used by MEPs from other groups did. Therefore, the use of these roles in constructing Muslims as inferior, is debatable. Regarding the third strategy of othering through constructing Muslims as a threat, MEPs from this group did so in an indirect way. Meaning that they did not speak about Muslims in terms of being illegal immigrants or as perpetrators. Muslims were linked to the negative activity of *Terrorism* once, though it was spoken about as the result of Western policies in the MENA⁸⁰.

As seen in Figure 10, the only other negative activities mentioned were that of terrorism and conflict. Conflict is defined more as a negative situation than an intended activity. A state or a region experiencing conflict is regarded as first and foremost being a threat to itself, and could, by the spill over effect, impact neighbouring states or regions such as the EU. It is therefore defined as an indirect threat compared to terrorism that is regarded as, except for its affect in the MENA, also intently targeting the EU and its values. Terrorism was linked with the MENA

⁷⁷ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁷⁸ GUE/NGL, “Who we are and what we stand for”, GUE/NGL Communications Unit, 2015

⁷⁹ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

⁸⁰ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

on one occasion where it was spoken about as a problem caused by Western policies in the region. *“The eye of the abyss that opens over Europe, has its roots in Western policies in Iraq, Syria and Libya.”*⁸¹

However, comparing this result with the results regarding what type of threat were mentioned the most, disclosed inconsistencies in the MEPs construction of Muslims. These results clearly show that terrorism was considered the largest threat and that MEPs from GUE/NGL spoke about terrorism on an equal level to EPP and S&D. This can be explained with the way terrorism was discussed. While MEPs from GUE/NGL did speak about terrorism it was made clear that it included other forms of terrorism than Jihadi and that these MEPs attempted to de-link the terms terrorism and Muslims. *“The fight against terrorism is an absolute necessity, but this notion remains to be defined, not only in its form called jihadi, that stigmatizes the Muslim community as a whole.”*⁸² This is also confirmed by the fact that these MEPs did not speak of the MENA as a threat and the EU as threatened, as seen in Figure 6.

By speaking of Muslims as students and associating the MENA with the threat of conflict, MEPs construct Muslims as both inferior and as a threat. However, the constructions of differences were milder than that of S&D and certainly milder than that of the right-wing groups. They were also constructed as the mild form of threat, conflict. The results also show that the first strategy was not used where it was the EU who was seen as the violator of universal principles and Muslims as the victim.

6.2. S&D

Aiming at providing equality for all groups in society, the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats also states their ideology as opposite to that of the right-wing’s xenophobic rhetoric⁸³. It was therefore surprising to see how similar S&D were to the groups placed on the right side of the ideological spectra. Although these MEPs’ construction of a European ‘we’ and a Muslim ‘other’ mostly resembled that of MEPs from the left.

The S&D clearly distinguished themselves from GUE/NGL in the way they assigned values to the actors speaking repeatedly of positive values in relation to the EU and Europe along the same lines as EPP. However, in contrast to MEPs from EPP that outright stated positive values

⁸¹ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁸² EP Deb, 7 July 2015, CRE 07/07/2015 - 14

⁸³ S&D, “Migration”, <http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/policies/migration>

as inherently European values, the MEPs from S&D also spoke of these values as something the EU constantly had to perform and maintain through their actions and policies. “[...] we need a united Europe to share information, coordinate policies and resources, while respecting the fundamental principles and values.”⁸⁴ Hence, constructing the possibility of an EU that does not adhere to such values. This is confirmed by the results pertaining to the use of the roles victim and perpetrator. As seen in Figure 5, the EU is spoken about equally in terms of a perpetrator and a victim. Like GUE/NGL, S&D speaks about how the EU’s actions and policies have contributed to the negative situation in the MENA. Unlike their ideological neighbour, MEPs from S&D spoke about the EU and European citizens as victims, referring repeatedly to the Charlie Hebdo attack, but also to other incidences. *“The new phenomenon of ISIS-Daesh is a huge and terrible concern. I add my own personal condolences for the deaths of tourists in Tunisia who came from my own country, Great Britain, but also from fellow European nations Belgium, Germany, and Ireland too.”*⁸⁵ The EU and Europeans are not only being constructed as victims, but mainly victims of terrorism.

This marks a second significant difference between GUE/NGL and S&D where GUE/NGL mainly linked the MENA with conflict, S&D clearly constructed the MENA as the performers of terrorism and extremism, as Figure 11 depicts. Considering how the population of the MENA is mainly Muslims, one can draw the conclusion that, even when speaking of terrorism as originating from the MENA, it is Muslims that are regarded as the actors of such negative activities. The link between Muslims and terrorism was also made in the case of European Muslims. MEPs from S&D spoke on several occasions about the problem of radicalisation in Europe. *“Open, violent conflicts are raging near our borders, and one consequence is ‘commuting terrorism’: European citizens travelling to conflict areas and coming back to commit terrorist attacks.”*⁸⁶ Furthermore, these MEPs spoke about terrorism and extremism more than any of the other types of threats combined, terrorism was not only a threat but *the* threat. *“Mr President, the security challenges we face are probability greater than at any point in the EU’s history. The gravest is the threat of radical Islamic terrorism.”*⁸⁷ This is confirmed by how MEPs from S&D actively spoke of the region as a threat. *“Conflict in Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq has allowed the threat to grow, and it will be reduced only if we work to end*

⁸⁴ EP Deb, 28 April 2015, CRE-REV 28/4/2015 - 11

⁸⁵ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

⁸⁶ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁸⁷ Ibid.

those conflicts.”⁸⁸ Hence, while not constructing Muslims as perpetrators they were however, othered by constructing them as a threat on the same level as MEPs from the right

Religion was to some extent used in the same way as within the EPP, to present Muslims as not adhering to the ‘correct’ values. Islam was also defined as the major cause of conflict in the MENA and a hinder for democracy. “[...] *those who in these countries struggle to build a rule of law, and separate the public sphere from the private sphere in religious matters, the consecration of freedoms, the building of a true democracy.*”⁸⁹

An interesting finding amongst the MEPs from S&D, that differentiate them from MEPs from the right, was how they spoke about terrorism and extremism within Europe. When doing so, these MEPs problematised the situation highlighting the causes of radicalisation within Europe. The EU was assigned some of the responsibility for causes of domestic terrorism because of “[...] *lack of integrated policies to prevent radicalisation of young people, not to mention the austerity policies which fuel unemployment, social marginalisation and alienation – fields where terrorist organisations recruit.*”⁹⁰ Although linking Muslims, inside and outside of Europe with extremism and terrorism, the MEPs from S&D softened the construction of Muslims as a threat by imbuing them with a sense of rationality and providing an explanation for this phenomenon. “*On the question of radicalisation, it must be stressed that there is a greater need to tackle the underlying causes and the complex nature of radicalisation.*”⁹¹ Explaining extremism and terrorism as resulting from unfair treatment and not as inherent traits of Islam, the S&D open up for the possibility of change. Islam and Muslims are thereby not constructed as inherently opposed to Europe, and as will be discussed further down, therefore constructing both a European and a Muslim identity in less essential terms compared to the right. These results also correspond well with the ideology of the S&D, where emphasis is placed on providing equal opportunity for all citizens of the EU.

As depicted in Figure 8, like their ideological neighbours, these MEPs did not assign Muslims the negative role of illegal immigrants. Except for on one occasion. “[...] *there is also a reform of migration policy, so that as much as possible prevent tragedies of illegal immigrants trying to enter the territory of the Union.*”⁹² In contrast to the right side’s use of the role of illegal

⁸⁸ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁸⁹ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

⁹⁰ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁹¹ EP Deb, 28 April 2015, CRE-REV 28/4/2015 - 11

⁹² EP Deb, 11 March 2015, CRE-REV 11/03/2015 – 14

immigrant, the S&D did not speak about it in terms of being a threat or a problem to Europe. Instead this MEP spoke about illegal immigrants as victims to be helped.

The results show that MEPs from S&D utilised all three strategies in ‘othering’ Muslims. By speaking about them as not adhering to the ‘correct’ set of values, they were constructed as both violating principles and inferior. Muslims were also assigned the inferior role of student that needs assistance from the EU. Although these MEPs did not speak about Muslims in terms of being perpetrators or illegal immigrants, they were constructed as a threat by linking both the MENA, and thereby also Muslims, with terrorism. In some regards these MEPs were similar to the MEPs from EPP in their construction of a Muslims ‘other’ which was surprising. However, a contextualisation of the results show a more nuanced construction by MEPs from the S&D.

6.3. Verts/ALE

In addition to focusing on the subjects, environment, clean energy and climate change, Verts/ALE places social justice high on the agenda emphasising democracy, human rights and transparency as important for the EU.⁹³

The results pertaining to Verts/ALE confirms this picture as these MEPs clearly linked positive values to the EU. “[...] *we should also try to make sure that the response to that heinous attack should not jeopardise but strengthen the core values that the European Union is based on – human rights, human security and an open society.*”⁹⁴ Like MEPs from all other political groups, except GUE/NGL, these MEPS also assigned the MENA and Muslims negative values, while at the same time comparing the two actors in terms of values. “*This includes that we use the instruments that we have in order to support, for example, liberal voices in the Arab world, the same values as we enter. I call as an example Raif Badawi in Saudi Arabia, gets 59 lashes each week for 20 weeks because he advocates liberal values as we do.*”⁹⁵ Clearly constructing a difference between the two actors in terms of values.

Except for how values were used, there were differences between Verts/ALE and the right side where this group was similar to both S&D and GUE/NGL in how they spoke about the EU and Europe as well as MENA and Muslims. As Figures 4 and 5 show, Verts/ALE did not assign Muslims the role of perpetrator. Like its ideological neighbours, the EU was regarded as the

⁹³ Verts/ALE, “Our group history”, <https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/our-group/history/>

⁹⁴ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁹⁵ Ibid.

sole perpetrator in this relationship. Furthermore, MEPs from Verts/ALE differed from GUE/NGL in how they used roles to construct the actors within a hierarchical relationship. These MEPs were the only ones that spoke about the MENA equally in terms of being a partner and as a student, as depicted in Figure 8. However, still clearly constructing the MENA as the inferior student and never as a role model. Interestingly, Verts/ALE was also the group that saw the EU more as a role model than a helper, not only the one that helps the MENA but also the one leading with example, something the results pertaining to values confirm. *“On the contrary! Europe can only secure cohesion and peace inside if we take responsibility for peace, justice and cohesion in our neighbourhood and globally.”*⁹⁶ MEPs from this group were similar to the other left MEPs in their refusal of defining migrant from this region as illegal immigrants, as well as not mentioning migration as a negative activity linked with the MENA and neither as a threat, as seen in Figures 10 and 11.

Although, as Figure 11 also show, the Verts/ALE were the ones that spoke the least of terrorism as a threat to the EU, they still defined terrorism as a major threat. A press release from 2015 states that violent extremism is not confined to just Islam and that the threat of terrorism is not to be linked with the refugee crisis⁹⁷. However, the results show that terrorism and extremism was linked with Muslims, constructing them as a threat and violators of universal principles as seen in Figure 10. This is supported by the findings pertaining to the roles of threat and threatened where Figure 6 show that these MEPs spoke of the MENA as a threat. Though, the numbers also show that, except from GUE/NGL, Verts/ALE constructed MENA the least in these terms.

A caution should here be noted as, with only fifty-one MEPs representing Verts/ALE in the EP, the size of this political group can be argued to affect the reliability of the results because the material to code, and hence also the amount of codes, were limited and each code therefore carries a much higher significance. Such was the case with coding for terrorism and extremism where each were mentioned in relation to Muslims only once. However, compared to EFDD, a similar sized group, it becomes clear that ideology matters as MEPs from this right-wing group strongly linked Muslims with both terrorism and extremism. In light of this, the link made by Verts/ALE between extremism, terrorism and the MENA, is considered weak.

⁹⁶ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

⁹⁷ Verts/ALE, “Radicalisation”, 25 November 2015 <https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/press/radicalisation/>

To sum up, MEPs from Verts/ALE were similar to the ones from GUE/NGL. In contrast to GUE/NGL, this group used all three strategies in the othering, constructing Europe as adhering to the correct principles and Muslims as needing help from the EU to do so. Prescribing negative values to Muslims also constructed them as inferior, a construction which the use of inferior roles confirmed. The third strategy of representing the ‘other’ as a threat was used, although, compared to the S&D, MEPs did not use the roles of victim and perpetrator, nor the role of illegal immigrant. Hence, the construction of the European ‘self’ was similar to that of S&D while the construction of the Muslim ‘other’, as a threat, was milder.

6.4. ALDE

Although consisting of MEPs from centrist parties, ALDE show more similarities with the left than the right side in their construction of a European ‘we’ and a Muslims ‘other’. Outright stating on their web site the existence of a European identity with shared values such as liberal democracy and fundamental right⁹⁸, it is no surprise that MEPs from this group used values in order to construct a difference between the two actors, especially in assigning positive values to the EU. As with the other groups, ALDE also assigned the MENA the negative values. But the MEPs from ALDE make themselves distinct from the right side, including EPP, ECR and EFDD in a more prominent way than the S&D.

MEPs from ALDE speak about the EU mostly as a victim like EPP and ECR does, while still to some degree also constructing it as a perpetrator like the left side. They are also similar to the left side in how they define the MENA as a victim. As Figure 4 and 5 show, they are the group that takes the middle ground by constructing the two actors as most equal with regards to the roles of victim and perpetrator, where both actors were assigned both roles. However, looking at how they speak about the EU as threatened, this picture is not confirmed. Although they also construct the MENA as a threat, ALDE differs more from EPP than Verts/ALE. The EU was described, by ALDE, not as only being threatened by external factors, but by lack of unity and the EU’s problem with unity regarding amongst others the foreign and security policy. Hence, it was the ‘self’ that often were constructed as a threatening itself rather than the MENA and Muslims. *“The most important problems that are mentioned in this report, which I repeat here, and I welcome, that said it is important to face the problem that could be solved, the lack*

⁹⁸ ALDE, “About us”, <http://alde.eu/en/about-us/>

of unity and coordination of individual EU policies, especially internal and external policies of the EU and policy of the European Union and its member states.”⁹⁹

Not using the roles of victim perpetrator did not mean, however, that ALDE did not use the strategies in constructing a Muslim other. These MEPs were the ones that made a strong construction of the EU as a helper and a role model (Figure 7). Simultaneously, ALDE was the one that made, by far, the strongest construction of the MENA as a student in comparison to the other groups (Figure 8). This might be a result of their Euro-positive attitude influencing their view of the EU as representor of good values and a positive force in international politics. Furthermore, in addition to assigning negative values to the MENA, this actor was repeatedly described as a region riddled with conflict in need of help from the EU. Conclusively constructing the MENA as inferior to Europe in regard to values and roles.

“Europe with its policy of building bridges of such alliances can remain a leader in creating a democratic atmosphere in our near countries, can help these countries, the closest of which are in large catastrophic conditions and therefore I support policies that lead because I am convinced that only such an open policy of building bridges, but also warning of the problems that exist in some countries, can be successful.”¹⁰⁰

MEPs from ALDE, similar to the groups to the left and in contrast to EPP, spoke about the MENA as riddled with conflicts, making it the performer of an indirect threat. *“The areas of crisis, destabilization and conflict are perilously close to Europe. They feed the fanaticism outside and inside of Europe and that is why we need a global response.”*¹⁰¹ As the quote also illustrates, MEPs from ALDE, although doing so less than most other groups, spoke about terrorism as the main threat. Terrorism was sometimes spoken about as originating from the MENA, and sometimes spoken about as originating from just outside of Europe. Not mentioning the actor of the negative activity of terrorism does not exclude ALDE from linking terrorism with Muslims. Arguably this is an indirect way of doing so as these MEPs made use of the existing discourse on terrorism where Muslims are seen as the perpetrators. This was done even when these MEPs did not directly mention terrorism. *“Madam President, thank you Mrs. Mogherini for the right words that you had about Paris. This is an important moment for France and it is obviously an important moment for Europe. We must be aware of the dangers that threaten us, because the internal and external threats are there.”*¹⁰² As the attack in Paris

⁹⁹ EP Deb, 11 March 2015, CRE-REV 11/03/2015 – 14

¹⁰⁰ EP Deb, 11 March 2015, CRE-REV 11/03/2015 – 14

¹⁰¹ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

¹⁰² Ibid.

was already defined as a terrorist attack committed by Muslims, mentioning Paris and threats invokes and confirms the already existing link between Muslims and terrorism.

MEPs from ALDE did use all three strategies of othering Muslims. They represented Muslims as violators of universal principles by prescribing them negative values and linking them with terrorism. ALDE stood out in their use of the second strategy of representing Muslims as inferior by firmly constructing them as in need of help, simultaneously actively constructing the EU as the role model that not only must help the MENA, but also lead them on the path toward building a society built on correct values and principles. Furthermore, MEPs from ALDE used the third strategy of othering by representing Muslims as threat. This construction was however, much milder than that of the EPP, ECR and EFDD, as ALDE mostly linked Muslims with terrorism implicitly, as well as speaking about the MENA as first and foremost and area of conflict.

6.5. EPP

The political family of EPP recognises, Judeo and Christian values as well as values stemming from the Enlightenment as being the basis for the European civilisation.¹⁰³ Therefore, it is not surprising that MEPs from this political group actively used both values and religion in its construction of differences between the Europe and Muslims. In their 2012 Manifesto, the EPP stated that whether or not you believe in God as the source of truth, the important matter is that you respect the same values defined as universal. However, this becomes problematic if other religions are constructed as inherently opposed to such values.

Alongside the other groups on the right, MEPs from EPP spoke about the EU as unambiguously representing positive values and Muslims to negative values. There was, however a difference in how they constructed the two identities. The EU directly assigned with positive values by claiming such values as inherently European without necessarily doing it in contrast to some 'other'. MEPs from the EPP also tended to speak about EU's actions as not only based on these values, but necessary in order to defend them. *"We have to agree, following our values and principles, on what we want to negotiate and what we do not sell. We can do that only by respecting our own identity. To defend our values and principles means to defend our identity and its future."*¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ EPP, 2012 Manifesto.

¹⁰⁴ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

In contrast to a European identity, the construction of a Muslim group identity was achieved by comparing them to the standards of the ‘self’ while the MENA was constantly compared to the EU. However, constructing Muslims in terms of negative values was not done by directly describing Muslims as pertaining to such values. Rather, Muslims were constructed as the other by speaking about them as lacking positive values claimed as European. *“Egypt will not become overnight Sweden. Therefore, we must also, again, not abdicate our values, absolutely not, nor our standards, [...]”*¹⁰⁵ Thereby utilising the second strategy of representing Muslims as inferior to Europe with regards to values. MEPs from the EPP also used values in order to construct Muslims as diametrically opposed to the ‘correct’ values. *“We are facing a war and growing violence within Europe and conflicts in our vicinity which are close to Fukuyama’s forecast on the clash of civilisations.”*¹⁰⁶ Referring to Huntington’s theory about a Muslim civilisation in competition with a European or Western civilisation, is not only a way of constructing Muslims and European as two groups, but also constructs Muslims as inherently different from and a threat to Europeans. This view is further supported by how EPP in their 2012 Manifesto, states the need for immigrants to respect rule of law, human rights and the core European values, confirming the view of Muslims as inherently not doing so.¹⁰⁷ These MEPs therefore use values in order to construct Muslims as both violating universal principles and as the inferior one.

This is supported by number of times and how these MEPs spoke about religion as a significant aspect of society. The EPP did not at any point refer to themselves, the EU or Europe as Christian, although, as mentioned above, they do place Christianity as its core identity. The subject of religion was instead lifted in their speeches by expressing solidarity with Christian minorities in the MENA. As Archakis and Tzanne argues, expressing solidarity is a method of cultivating an in-group identity¹⁰⁸. Furthermore, it is significant that the main threat to these Christians were defined as terrorism and terrorist groups and not merely as conflicts. *“Among the different minorities, Christians have suffered most widely. Violence against them presents existential danger for the future. As a result, this ancient community will disappear from the region where Christianity was born, mainly as a result of the determined efforts of Muslim extremists to cleanse this area of all other religions.”*¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹⁰⁶ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

¹⁰⁷ EPP, 2012 Manifesto

¹⁰⁸ Archakis and Tzanne, 2009: 354ff

¹⁰⁹ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

Christians were also constructed, by these MEPs as the ones that acted and contributed in a positive way in the MENA, where their contribution were highlighted and simultaneously contrasted with the acts of Muslims.

“It is critical that we increase the assistance to local churches that work for Christians and other indigenous minorities displaced by Daesh. Without them it would have been an even worse disaster, it could have escalated the rise of Islamic extremism in the Middle East. Specific examples refer to: several hundred thousand refugees in northern Iraq are in the daily care of the Chaldean Catholic Church, the Jesuit Refugee Service or Syria. All this is done based mostly on own resources and international church donations.”¹¹⁰

Through expressing solidarity with Christians outside of Europe, the EPP is here constructing religion as an important part of their own identity. As Christians are spoken about exclusively in positive terms, both Christians in the MENA and in Europe are linked with positive values. Furthermore, by contrasting Islam to Christianity as well as repeatedly linking it to terrorism, they are prescribing negative values to Muslims and constructing them as the violators of universal principles as well as inferior. Repeatedly linking Islam with terrorism and constructing Islam as opposed to Christianity also constructs Muslims as a threat. Several MEPs speak about a determination of Muslim extremists to eradicate Christians in the MENA. By doing so, these MEPs construct and confirm an un-bridgeable cleavage between the two religions where Christians are constructed as the Muslims’ main target. Invoking a Muslim threat to the Christian ‘self’, the EPP also constructs Muslims as a threat extending beyond the region of the MENA to the Christian region of Europe.

The results pertaining to religion, and negative activities, as seen in Figure 10, combines well as they both mark an ideological difference in the construction of a Muslim ‘other’, where MEPs from EPP speak about the MENA and Muslims noticeably more harshly than their left neighbour ALDE. Although the ECR and EFDD exhibit the same tendencies as EPP, they are still less inclined to use religion and negative activities in their construction of a Muslim ‘other’. MEPs from the EPP almost exclusively linked all forms of negative activities coded for to the MENA and not the EU. In contrast to most groups left of EPP, they spoke about migration as negative activity and as a threat. This was not surprising considering how they spoke about religious differences as a threat and the way EPP marks a change in how migrants were spoken

¹¹⁰ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

about. Although speaking about migrants mostly as immigrants, they also tended to define them as illegal immigrants, supporting the view of Muslims and the MENA as a threat.

In contrast, the EU was not linked with negative activities, except for terrorism and extremism. Similar to MEPs from other ideologies that also spoke about terrorism in Europe, terrorism was here spoken about solely as Islamic terrorism, linking even negative activities within Europe to Muslims. Although, statistics show a higher representation of other form of terrorism, consisting of separatists, right and left-wing extremists, their actions were never mentioned. *“Faced with this serious threat, the necessary tightening of anti-terrorism legislation and the adequacy of the challenges of the New type of Jihad, produced by citizens of European countries, indoctrinated and trained Islamist fronts for attacks across the EU.”¹¹¹*

Considering how negative activities, with focus on terrorism and extremism signifies the opposition to ‘correct’ behaviour and ideas, the EPP was here explicitly using negative activities to construct Muslims as the perpetrators of universal principles. Negative activities are also used in the construction of a Muslim ‘other’ as a threat. The MENA and Muslims are constructed as a physical and an ideological threat to the Christian, democratic and peaceful Europe. Depicted by Figure 6, this is confirmed by how these MEPs actively constructed the EU and Europe as being threatened.

MEPs from EPP also mark the difference to its neighbours on the left in their construction of Europe as a victim without once speaking about the EU as being a perpetrator. There is also a notable change, compared to ALDE, how the MENA is now portrayed as mostly a perpetrator. This construction supports the view of the MENA and Muslims as a threat and also as the one who does not adhere to the proper values.

The results pertaining to MEPs from EPP clearly display how ideology plays a major role in how Muslims are constructed as the other. The EPP especially demonstrates how their ideology made a difference in the use of religion as a way of constructing a difference where religiousness was seen as a major aspect in the construction of both the ‘self’ and the ‘other’.

¹¹¹ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

6.6. ECR

Being anti-federalists, the ECR are against the centralisation of security and defence in the EU, which did affect the results as these MEPs spent more time than the EPP, arguing against the EU and extensions to its power. Their conservatism also has implications for their constructions of the world. As the name suggests, conservatives aspire to preserve their culture's institutions. Conservatives can therefore be regarded having an essentialist view of identity, constructing the idea of cultural, national and religious identity as more ridged. This idea of identities rigidity has further implications for how identities can be viewed as threatened as identities can only exist in its whole or not at all, i.e. being extinct. Because of this, it was no surprise that MEPs from the ECR were similar to its conservative neighbours EPP and EFDD, in most aspects of their construction of the 'self' and the Muslim 'other'.

As seen in figure 2, MEPs from the ECR made the strongest connection between the MENA and negative values, they also made a strong, although not the strongest, connection between the EU and positive values. More interesting, however, are their use of religion. Like EPP the MEPs from ECR articulated religion as an important part of one's identity and used it to construct differences between Europeans and Muslims. This was done by expressing solidarity as well as defining Muslims as the main threat to Christians. In discussing security in Europe, one MEP quoted the exiled bishop of Mosul, invoking ideas about Christians as a species and the threat to their survival¹¹². This conservative perspective on identity was further confirmed by the same speaker in another debate where he stated that: *"Islamic terror rising to the south of us, supported among others by the Government of the Republic of Turkey threatens not just security, threatens the identity, consciousness, culture and security of all European nations."*¹¹³ Again, this is confirmed by themes not only actively labelling the EU as threatened, but also by how these MEPs were the ones that made the firmest construction of the MENA as a threat.

Although the MEPs from ECR spoke about terrorism and extremism in relation to Muslims and the MENA less than the EPP, the way they articulated this connection was in a more direct way. Where MEPs from the left spoke about terrorism as linked to Muslims in an implicit way, the MEPs from ECR both directly spoke about terrorism as an Islamic product as well as outright stating its geographical origin. Whether referring to groups of people or states in the MENA, these MEPs spoke about them as either terrorists or in support of terrorism.

¹¹² EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹¹³ EP Deb, 7 July 2015, CRE 07/07/2015 - 14

“One of the largest of them [challenges], is of course, a full-scale war waged against the European Union by various jihadist Islamist groups, which are located in the countries of the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, in the heart of Europe. [...] these groups with this kind of asymmetric warfare, we should fight where they were born - not in the streets of Paris, and to where it goes. It departs from Nigeria by Boko Haram, it departs from Somalia with Al-Shabab, it starts from the Islamic State, it leaves Hamas in Palestine.”¹¹⁴

To further distinguish Muslims as the group in the MENA adhering to negative values, Israel was pointed out as the only democratic state and the only credible partner of the EU in the region. *I want this place to pay tribute to the medical service of the Israeli army. At night, in order not to run the risk of being shot down snipers, they evacuate the wounded from Syrian villages - now almost two thousand - and provide medical assistance to them in this life-threatening situation.*¹¹⁵ Alongside Christians, Israel was the one spoken about as an innocent victim of terrorist attacks certifying Muslims as the perpetrators.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, as the quote above delineates, Muslims were not only linked with terrorism, but the MEPs also spoke about Europe as one of the main targets of these terrorists. Thereby, as well as constructing Muslims as the perpetrator, Europe was constructed as the victim.

Besides being constructed as different to Europe using values and religion, ECR MEPs used negative activities, in addition to the role of perpetrator, to construct Muslims as a threat to Europe and the EU. As can be seen in Figure 9 ECR were similar to the EPP and EFDD in how they linked negative activities to the MENA. However, these MEPs spoke more about the issues of migration and organised crime than the EPP. Often these two issues were discussed as one in relation to each other where human trafficking and migration were seen as two aspects of the same issue, crime, constructing migration as a negative activity. *“Think about specific things, such as, for example the smugglers’ infrastructure who have built a huge industry of smuggling people into Europe.”*¹¹⁷ This is supported by how these MEPs also spoke about migrants from the MENA mainly in terms of illegal immigrants as seen in Figure 8. These figures supported the results depicted in Figure 10, where MEPs from ECR to a larger extent than most other groups, lifted migration and organised crime as threats to the EU.

Apart from linking the MENA to these negative activities, MEPs from ECR also directly constructed migrants from the MENA as different from Europeans, and because of their

¹¹⁴ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

¹¹⁵ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹¹⁶ EP Deb, 14 January 2015, CRE-REV 14/01/2015 - 4

¹¹⁷ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

conservative perspective, hence also as a threat. “*On the one hand, it's huge migrant wave that is sweeping the European continent, threatening to collapse the economies of European countries and to forever change the demographic and cultural, religious in a direction with which I disagree.*”¹¹⁸ In addition to constructing migrants as illegal, these MEPs did not speak about the MENA in terms of being a partner, prescribing it entirely an inferior role compared to it MEPs from EPP.

Curiously, as Figure 10 depicts, MEPs from this group were the ones that mentioned Russia as a threat significantly more frequently than any other group and thereby constructed Russia as a bigger threat than migration. However, the question might not be why ECR spoke about Russia, the question should rather be why the issue of Russia was not lifted more by the other groups. Russia is defined as a neighbour of the EU equally to the MENA, and considering its aggression and negative acts, it was barely mentioned compared to terrorism and the MENA. Choosing to focus on Muslims and the MENA instead of Russia, supports the findings of how Muslims are considered the ‘other’ to Europe’s ‘self’ by MEPs from all ideologies.

MEPs from ECR used all three strategies as they constructed Muslims as violating the ‘correct values, as inferior in terms of values and as in need of help and as a threat because of religious differences. What distinguished the ECR from the other groups is the way these MEPs were more direct in expressing Muslims as the ‘other’, explicitly prescribing the MENA and Muslims negative qualities and roles.

6.7. EFDD

The EFDD has forty-two elected members belonging to such parties as the UK independence Party (UKIP), the Swedish Democrats and Alternative for Germany. Claiming to be united in their Euroscepticism and rejecting xenophobia and anti-Semitism, the group also supports the right of people and nations of Europe to “[...] *protect their borders and strengthen their own historical, traditional, religious and cultural values.*”¹¹⁹

Although this group is in many cases placed right of the ECR ideologically in issues such as immigration and law and order¹²⁰, the results from the debates generally exhibits some difference between these MEPs in their construction of a Muslim ‘other’. Although the MEPs

¹¹⁸ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹¹⁹ EFDD, “Our Charter”, <http://www.efddgroup.eu/about-us/our-charter>

¹²⁰ Le Lain, 2014: pp.23f, 39

from EFDD were similar to the ECR in many aspects such as the use of values. In contrast with ECR, EFDD used religion in identity construction even less than S&D. Furthermore, both EU and Muslims were portrayed as perpetrators, where they spoke more about the EU in terms of being a perpetrator than Muslims and MENA. An explanation for this might be their Euroscepticism where EU and Europe are seen as two separate actors which makes it possible to assign the EU, consisting of Europeans, with positive values while simultaneously regarding the EU as a perpetrator violating the sovereignty of the nation states.

Describing the EU as a perpetrator was done both in relation to its Member States and in relation to the MENA. Though, speaking of the EU as a perpetrator in relation to the MENA was done in order to argue for a limitation of the EU's powers and not in order to describe Europeans in a negative way. *"It is a question where we hear a lot about the problems, but very little in terms of specific solutions. You said yourself that what we are doing now is not enough. So, what do we do? Do we have more military intervention, given the problems that were caused in Iraq and in Afghanistan previously?"*¹²¹ Thereby, even if constructing the EU as violating the principle of sovereignty, the European identity was still constructed as adhering to the right principles. *"Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the vulnerability of advanced democratic societies, based on respect for rights and freedoms, it is clear for all to see."*¹²²

MEPs from the EFDD were also very similar to both ECR and EPP in how they linked negative activities and roles to the MENA and Muslims. As with the other groups in the right corner, EFDD also spoke about migration and organised crime, linking these two activities with terrorism.

*"The dynamics of the Paris events are clear: the threat of this new "domestic terrorism", which is often intertwined with organized crime makes use of facilities, contacts and arms coming from other countries. These terrorists exploit our fundamental freedom to hide, move and hit. This occurs both within Europe and in neighbouring countries, both in the East and in the Middle East."*¹²³

However, as religion was not used as much in identity construction, these MEPs can be considered as constructing Muslims as an 'other' by representing them as a threat more than by representing them as violators of universal principles. Although they were clearly constructed as not adhering to the right values by linking them to terrorism, they were also spoken about in terms of a direct threat through their activities. Furthermore, speaking of the MENA and

¹²¹ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹²² EP Deb, 28 April 2015, CRE-REV 28/4/2015 - 11

¹²³ EP Deb, 28 April 2015, CRE-REV 28/4/2015 - 11

Muslims as the ones producing migration while simultaneously being the MEPs that spoke the most about migration in relation to terrorism and organised crime, it was not a surprise that EFDD were the group that only characterised migrators from the MENA as illegal. Further solidifying their construction of Muslims as a threat.

“But what we should be concentrating on is the threat from ISIS coming across the Mediterranean from North Africa. We should not be encouraging people to come across. We should try to stop that. There are far too many woolly words about people and refugees. This must be stopped for the good and safety of Europe, or we will have even more problems being imported into Europe itself.”¹²⁴

Curiously, the results pertaining to the roles of threat and threatened (Figure 6) show that, although these MEPS were the ones that most actively assigned the role of threatened to the EU, they assigned the role of threat to the MENA less so than the ECR and EPP did. A possible explanation for this might be that the EFDD constructed organised crime, without defining perpetrator, as a major threat besides terrorism. This leading to a shift in focus away from the MENA as a threat.

Similar to MEPs from all other groups, MEPs from EFDD defined the EU as in habiting the role of helper and student, while the MENA was assigned the role of student. However, unlike its ideological neighbour ECR, Muslims were on a couple of occasion spoken about as a partner. *“I wish to emphasize two fundamental concepts that we must always keep in mind if we want a lasting solution. First, it is necessary that political Islam acts as an interlocutor and must be the interlocutor that allows us to decisively isolate extremism.”*¹²⁵ This quote illustrates how the MEP at the same time also expressed a distinction between Islam and extremism, something no other group did, except GUE/NGL.

Although being less extreme than MEPs from ECR, the EFDD can still be placed firmly within the family on the right end of the ideological spectra in its construction of a Muslim ‘other’ as not adhering to the ‘correct’ values, as inferior and as a threat. But differentiating themselves in not using the roles of perpetrator and victim as well as religiousness.

¹²⁴ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

¹²⁵ EP Deb, 8 July 2015, CRE 08/07/2015 - 15

7. Conclusion

This study has attempted to answer how MEPs, through debates in the EP construct a Muslim and European identity by analysing what was emphasised as the main differences. Considering how the MEPs are organised by political affiliation, it became relevant to also study how political ideology matters for identity construction as well as what unites and separates the political groups in their constructions.

In the analysis of what was emphasised as the main differences, Diez theory about strategies of othering was useful in order to decipher main themes of construction, representation of Muslims as violating universal principles, representation of Muslims as inferior and representation of Muslims as a threat.

Regarding the first strategy it was relevant to look at how values and religiousness was assigned to each actor as negative values would indicate a violation of principles. MEPs from all political groups, except for GUE/NGL, clearly constructed Muslims as the ones adhering to the 'incorrect' values. Religion as part of one's identity was pointed out as important mostly by the right groups EPP, ECR and EFDD as well as S&D with the former using religion to construct Muslims as acting against 'correct' values. All groups were also found to use the second strategy of constructing Muslims as inferior not only in regard to values. MEPs from all ideologies applied the superior roles of helper and role model on Europe while applying the inferior role of student on Muslims. In comparison, Muslims were spoken very little about in terms of being equal, as the MEPs did not speak about Muslims as possible partners.

The same was true for the negative activities of terrorism, extremism and organised crime where MEPs from all groups attributed negative activities almost exclusively to Muslims. However, looking at what kind of activity was spoken about the most, highlighted the differences between the ideologies. The left side, including ALDE, tended to construct Muslims more as an indirect threat than the right side who made a strong link between Muslims and terrorism, both inside and outside of Europe. This is supported by how the groups spoke about migration and migrants, where the right constructed Muslims in term of illegal immigrants and defined migration as a threat. The use of this strategy is generally confirmed when looking at the application of the roles of threat and threatened, in which there is a trend of more firmly seeing Europe as threatened by Muslims the more right on the ideological scale you get. The same was found in the groups definition of which actor is the victim and which one is the perpetrator.

In many aspects, the groups were remarkably similar in their constructions of the European 'we' and the Muslim 'other', while in others they were opposites. However, results show that it was not as simple as dividing the MEPs into two groups of left and right ideology. S&D proved to fluctuate in their construction, in which they, most of the time, tended to be similar to other left groups, they sometimes were similar to the right groups, especially in the case of the EPP. Amongst other reasons there were similarities in how they assigned values and negative remarks as well as how high terrorism was ranked as a threat. Most surprisingly they were similar to the EPP in their use of religion to construct Muslims the 'other'.

In most aspects, ALDE acted as the middle-ground or a neutral zone between the right and the left as they did not talk about religion nor defined Muslims as neither immigrant nor illegal immigrants. They were also the ones that firmly defined Muslims as inferior in terms of roles.

The right side was more united than the left in their construction. Their conservative perspective and religiousness clearly affected the construction of two separate identities. As mentioned above, these MEPs were more direct in how they used all three strategies, especially the third clearly constructing Muslims as a threat to the European identity. Surprisingly, EFDD proved to not be as radical in their construction as the EPP and ECR, both with regards to religion and the application of the roles victim and perpetrator.

In conclusion, no political group in the EP is innocent of, through the act of speech, constructing Muslims as the 'other' to the European 'we'.

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Appendix I

Codebook

Code label	Short definition	Full definition	When to use	When not to use
<i>Positive values</i>	Ways of organising a society that are considered universally good for the society and its inhabitants.	Defining the trait of actor in relation to the other actor. Values that serve as a base upon which a society is built. Positive values are qualities of a society that are considered as universally good by the EU. They serve as a positive way of directing a society. They are considered as providing the people of that society with the best opportunity to affect society and their own lives and therefore the universally right organisational system for a society. They are the values that the EU is considered, by itself, to be built upon and may therefore also be referred to as European values. Therefore, 'positive values' is a code used to define the actors' correctness in relation to each other. Positive values include human rights, democracy, freedom, equality and freedom of speech.	Is used when speaker mentions values/qualities of a society that are defined, by the EU, as positive for a society and its inhabitants. The code is used Code used to describe the correctness and the positive characteristic of a society. Code also used when describing the superiority of a society's organisation in relation to another society. <i>"This is a serious challenge for EU foreign policy, since we must respond effectively and strategically without for one second losing sight of our core European values. Everything we do must foster democracy and the rule of law as well as human rights for all"</i>	Positive values is to be distinguished from role model. Although role model adheres to positive values, a role model is also required to actively promote such values. Positive values are sometimes a question of ideology where some might see liberal economy as positive, other speakers might not. Furthermore, positive values might be viewed as a factor making an actor vulnerable to threats, but does not automatically defines an actor as threatened.
<i>Negative values</i>	Ways of organising a society that are considered as unfavourable to a society and its inhabitants.	Defining the trait of actor in relation to the other actor. Values that serve as a base upon which a society is built. Negative values are	The code is used to mark the inferiority of a society or a society that breeches universal positive values and principles. It is therefore used when	Although adhering to negative values is considered violation of principles, it is not a threat. Pertaining to negative values

		<p>qualities of a society that are considered as unfavourable to a society and its inhabitants, by the EU. They are values/qualities that the EU has defined as contradictory to positive values and therefore also contradictory to ‘fundamental’ or ‘European’ values. They serve as a negative way of directing/organising a society. These are values that characterise unjust societies that prohibit its inhabitants of fundamental freedoms (as defined by the EU). The code <i>negative values</i> therefore mark the inferiority of a society or a society that breaches universal positive values and principles.</p>	<p>speaker describes a society as organised according to negative principles.</p> <p>Code used to describe the incorrectness and the negative characteristic of a society.</p> <p>Code also used when describing the inferiority of a society’s organisation in relation to another society.</p> <p><i>“Madam President, the EU’s international environment is volatile, with dire security challenges that range from long-lasting conflicts to the steady rise of authoritarianism and extremism.”</i></p>	<p>does not automatically makes an actor act in a harmful way towards other actors and is therefore to be distinguished from the roles of perpetrator and threat.</p>
<i>Religious</i>	<p>Marks the adherence to religion and religion as an important aspect of identity.</p>	<p>An aspect of identity that defines if an actor adheres to the ‘correct’ values as stipulated by the MEP, might it be secularity or other values defined as European. Furthermore, it is used for determining the inferiority/superiority of an actor. In both cases, it is absolutely necessary to view the code in its context, meaning being labelled religious might be negative if the MEP considers secularity to be correct. While for a religious MEP, labelling an actor religious might be positive if solidarity is expressed, but it can also signify the actor’s violation of values if its religiousness is seen as negative. It can be applied both when the speaker defines an actor as religious or when religion is seen as an important aspect of a society. Furthermore, it is used</p>	<p>The code is used to determine whether or not an actor is seen as violating any principle considered of universal value. It can be applied both when the speaker defines an actor as religious or when religion is seen as an important aspect of a society. Furthermore, it is used when MEPs express solidarity with any particular religion, confirming a feeling of shared identity.</p> <p><i>“Finally, whether in Yemen, which we were discussing earlier, or in Libya, which I have already referred to, and in several other countries, we have to recognise that religious sectarianism is a huge cause of conflict and instability.”</i></p>	<p>Although terrorism and extremism is a form of radical adherence to religion, the code of religious is not to be applied in such cases. While religion, in these cases are central to identity they are regarded as having such an extreme impact on the actor that it can be considered more of an ideology than religion.</p>

		when MEPs express solidarity with any particular religion, confirming a feeling of shared identity.		
<i>Helper</i>	An actor that have or plan to assist another actor in its internal affairs.	A role of an actor defining the relation to the other. Positive, descriptive term of an actor and its role in relation to another actor. An actor is defined as a <i>Helper</i> when it is considered, by the speaker, to have taken on or will take on a role of assisting another actor in its internal affairs. It is a positive role/characteristic. A <i>Helper</i> is defined by whether the speaker thinks an actor offers positive assistance, independent of how the assistance was received or made a positive contribution. <i>Helper</i> is used to determine two actors position toward each other. The code signifies a superiority in relation to the actor being helped, coded as <i>Student</i> , as it entails seeing the helping actor as having superfluous resources and the helped as incapable of managing its own affairs.	Code is used when describing the legitimacy and therefore also the superiority of an actor. The code is used when speaker expresses the intent or the act of assisting another actor. As the code is used in order to determine the relation between two actors, it is sometimes used in combination with <i>Student</i> . It can also signify the positive traits/characteristics of an actor, and can therefore be used to describe an actor on its own terms. “As well as the conflicts in the southern neighbourhood of the European Union require our unity and strength. We must strive to be more courageous to intervene in these conflicts and the search for solutions.”	A role model is to be distinguished from a helper as a helper exhibits the will to assist other actors or is already doing so while the definition of a role model is, but is not limited to its adherence to positive values. While a helper is defined as so because of its superior capacity, a role model is defined more in terms of its values and status in the international community.
<i>Role model</i>	An actor whose behaviour or intentions are classified as good and therefore examples for others to strive for.	A role of an actor defining its position in relation to another actor. The code pertains to societies who is considered by the speaker as a positive force in the international politics. <i>Role model</i> is used to mark the role of an actor whose behaviour and intentions are considered as so positive that the actor set as an example for other actors to strive for. Because of this, <i>Role model</i> defines an actor’s legitimacy and superiority in relation to other actors. The actor is	Code is used when describing the legitimacy and therefore also the superiority of an actor. The code is used when speaker mentions or describes an actor whose behaviour and intentions are positive and therefore (should) serves as a leading example for other actors to emulate. As the code is used in order to determine the relation between two actors, it is sometimes used in	A role model is to be distinguished from a helper as a helper exhibits the will to assist other actors or is already doing so while the definition of a role model is, but is not limited to its adherence to positive values. While a helper is defined as so because of its superior capacity, a role model is defined more in terms of its values and status in the international community.

		defined by whether or not the speaker regards the actor as fulfilling these requirements, regardless of other actors' emulation of that good example.	combination with <i>Student</i> . It can also signify the positive traits/characteristics of an actor, and can therefore be used to describe an actor on its own 2r <i>"Above all, considering the interest in our immediate neighbourhood, and in order to settle down and democratise, the European Union must pursue a clear enlargement and neighbourhood policy. If the European Union is successful in its immediate neighbourhood, you can expect success and beyond."</i>	
<i>Student</i>	An actor whose abilities, socially, politically or economical is considered inadequate and therefore is in need of assistance.	A role of an actor defining the relation to the other. The code pertains to societies who is considered, by the speaker, to be in need of assistance from another actor within international politics. Such an actor has yet to reach the "normal" level of a society in terms of economy and politics, as defined by the speaker. A <i>Student</i> therefore needs help in reaching the "proper" level by the <i>Helper</i> or the <i>Role model</i> , who is seen as carriers of proper values and societal organisation. This puts the <i>Student</i> in a position of dependency to the <i>Helper/Role model</i> and therefore in an inferior position to them.	The code is used in order to mark the inferiority of an actor. It is used when speaker describes an actor's abilities as inadequate to such an extent that it needs help from another actor to be able to reach "proper" standards. <i>"And then, when it actually leads to success and a government is reinstated in Libya, then we should move forward with the offer again, offering the Libyans among others a reform of the security sector, as well as other offers such as assistance with state-building."</i>	Not to be used in cases where the speaker defines an actor as having suffered because of the negative actions of another actor, in which case it would be labelled a victim.
<i>Victim</i>	Actor who has suffered or suffers as a result of another actor's actions or treatment.	A role of an actor defining the relation to another actor. The code pertains to societies who are considered as having suffered or suffers as a result of actions taken by another actor.	The code is used when the speaker describes an actor as having suffered or suffers as a result of another actor's actions or treatment, may them be	The use of the code victim is to be distinguished from the use of the code threatened. A victim is an actor who has already suffered as a consequence of another

		<p>It is regardless of the intentions of these actions and regardless of what precluded such actions. It is therefore irrelevant whether the <i>Victim</i> have provoked an attack or whether it suffered as a result of unforeseen consequences of the actions. A <i>Victim</i> is defined as such based on the speaker's perception of that actor as an innocent target. The code defines the moral quality of an actor as the target of an unjust attack or treatment. It is therefore used in order to determine the morality of actors. It also defines actors in relation to threat perception as a <i>Victim</i> has to strengthen its capabilities in preparation for a potentially future attack.</p>	<p>regarded as intentionally or unintentionally. It is used only when the speaker does not express any responsibility on the part of the targeted actor. In cases where an actor can be considered both a <i>Perpetrator</i> and a <i>Victim</i>, it is coded as both.</p> <p><i>"But what is ultimately our goal? To continue the same policy and even to make it more effective? To continue the same policies that brought Libya to the brink of disaster? Consenting to the acts or omissions of the chaos that engulfs the Middle East?"</i></p>	<p>actor's harmful acts, while an actor labelled threatened is in a state of insecurity either because it have suffered, but also might suffer in the future.</p>
<i>Perpetrator</i>	An actor who commits what are conceived as unjust and unlawful acts.	<p>A role of an actor defining the relation to another actor with regards to moral standards and threat perception. An actor is labelled <i>Perpetrator</i> if the speaker discusses it in terms of committing unjust acts or having an intention that have harmed or will harm another actor. It defines an actor's role with regards to its moral quality where it exists in relation to an actor who, not necessarily is the victim, but is considered acting according to "universal" principles. Because of this, a <i>Perpetrator</i> is also considered a threat both against these "universal" principles as a moral threat and a physical one for having or willingness to commit physical harm. The label entails a form of consciousness from the side of the <i>Perpetrator</i> about the harmfulness of its actions, though it is</p>	<p>The code is used when speaker mentions an actor who have committed or will commit harmful acts that affects another actor or actors in a negative way. It is also used if speaker defines an actor as having negative intentions. The harmful acts may entail both violation of "universal" principles or physical harm towards one or more actors. An actor is labelled</p> <p><i>"Not a word on the EU's responsibility to rectify its contribution to destabilization of an entire region, with particular emphasis on Iraq, Libya and Syria. Much less about how to pay an unpayable moral debt, because human lives are priceless, that whose burden could and should be mitigated with a consequent policy intervention to help</i></p>	<p>Although a perpetrator might be a threat, it is not necessarily so as the actor might be considered a perpetrator in relation to itself. A perpetrator can also be labelled a threat if its actions are defined as a risk to another actor. The negative role of perpetrator is not to be confused with the negative role of illegal immigrant. Illegal immigrant is a subgroup of perpetrator in which the speaker defines its position in relation to the question of migration.</p>

		always the subjective perspective of each speaker.	<i>restore peace and to finance reconstruction, ending the arms trade.”</i>	
<i>Partner</i>	States, unions or organisations that have more equal and positive relations with the EU.	<p>A role of an actor defining the relation to another in relation to moral standards and threat perception.</p> <p>An actor is labelled <i>Partner</i> if the speaker talks about it as having positive relations with the EU or if it is seen as having a positive role in a collaboration with the EU. Although a <i>Partner</i> does not necessarily endorse what is defined as positive values, it is viewed as a positive force as its acts will be positive as a result of its collaboration with the EU. As collaborations are seen as voluntary, it entails a more equal role to that of EU than a <i>Student</i>. Though, a <i>Partner</i> is still inferior as it is never used in the context of a partnership, but a collaboration where the EU, is always seen as the actor with the normative values and the normative positive force. The role of <i>Partner</i> is therefore only used to define an actor external of the EU or the ‘self’.</p> <p>Furthermore, the code refers to an actor who are defined as more equal to the EU</p>	<p>The code is used when speaker talks about another actor who in equal terms as the EU, is collaborating with the EU towards a common goal. It is used when another actor is expressed as working or willing to work with the EU, in accordance to EU’s positive values.</p> <p><i>“Working with the African Union, the Arab League and the Gulf countries, will give us opportunities to better fight against terrorism, to better cooperate for the benefit of all citizens.”</i></p>	Not to be applied if the actor is characterised as being the only one who benefits from the relationship.

		in terms of morality and therefore also not regarded as a threat.		
<i>Illegal immigrant</i>	People from the MENA region who have entered or have the intent to enter the EU for reasons considered invalid.	<p>A role of an actor defining the relation to another in terms of moral quality and threat perception.</p> <p>The code entails a role of an actor as illegitimate and unlawful, because the actor is not considered having valid reasons for moving to Europe and/or is breaking immigration laws. The actor also constitutes a risk to the security of the EU and its Member Countries as these are not registered. The consequences being both drainage of EU resources as well as risks to its security. The code is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor.</p> <p>The code exists in a relation to actors labelled <i>Victim</i> and <i>Illegal immigrant</i>, where it is subservient to them both.</p>	<p>The code is used when speaker uses the term illegal immigrant or describes actor(s) as coming to the EU without valid reasons and therefore breaching immigrations laws in respective states. The code is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor.</p> <p><i>“Do not forget the role of countries that support terrorism here and important issue that nobody put in the hall, is Turkey's role in supporting Islamic state in the transfer of illegal immigrants and refugees in the European Union.”</i></p>	<p>To be distinguished from the activity of migration. Migration is an activity performed by those who either inhabits the role of illegal or legal immigrants. Not to be used if actor is mentioned in terms of having valid reasons to enter Europe. Not to be used when speaking about foreign fighters as these belong to the category of terrorism.</p>
<i>Immigrant</i>	People from the MENA region who have entered or have the intent of enter the EU for valid reasons and hence legally.	<p>A role of an actor defining the relation to another in terms of moral quality and threat perception.</p> <p>The code entails the validity of a person/people to leave their home country and move to Europe. Encompasses both migrants and refugees. The label entails there is a risk to the actor's safety if they stay in their home country and/or that the actor is considered as an asset to the EU. The code exists both in a relation to actors labelled <i>Helper</i> and <i>Illegal immigrant</i>, where it is subservient to in status to the former and superior to the latter. The code</p>	<p>The code is used when speaker uses the term refugee/immigrant and/or when the speaker talks about an actor as having legitimate reasons to reside in Europe. The code is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor.</p> <p><i>“Yes, the truth is that we must learn to explain to our citizens in the Member States of the European Union, why we are not cybernetically coordinated within the European Union and why we</i></p>	<p>To be distinguished from the activity of migration. Migration is an activity performed by those who either inhabits the role of illegal or legal immigrants. Not to be used if actor is mentioned in negative terms of not having valid reasons to enter Europe.</p>

		is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor.	<i>have to find ways to help these people together with them in their countries, and then to find some solution, say, for a redistribution of these immigrants in all Member States of the European Union, in order not to burden only Italy and other countries."</i>	
<i>Threat</i>	An actor that, deliberate or undeliberate, have caused or may cause harm to the security of the EU or its Member States.	A role of an actor defining the relation to another in terms of threat perception/securitisation. The code signifies the illegitimacy of an actor. It exists in a, implicit or explicit, relationship with actor(s) labelled as <i>Threatened</i> . An actor labelled with the role of <i>Threat</i> is considered posing a risk to the security of another actor. It entails breaches to the physical state of another actor, its societal order or its existence. An actor can be labelled a <i>Threat</i> regardless of it posing a risk is intentionally or not. The role of <i>Threat</i> is negative and therefore places the actor in an inferior position to other actors.	The code is used when speaker speaks about an actor, or the state of an actor as posing a risk, both physical and psychological, to another actor. The code is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor. <i>"[...] the situation in Iran, has been for years a source of the exporting of terrorism and instability."</i>	Although perpetrator is, by nature a threat, and hence a perpetrator may also be labelled a threat. But not all perpetrators are labelled a threat. An actor is not to be labelled a threat if its actions does not pose a risk to other actors. Because it is a role of an actor, it cannot be used when threat is mentioned in generic terms (" <i>...with a constant attention to current threats...</i> ") or where the threat has an unknown origin (" <i>Criminal groups, particularly mafia-type, are the first to take advantage of gaps in law enforcement across borders.</i> ")
<i>Threatened</i>	A role of an actor that signifies it may become, is or have been the target of deliberate or undeliberate harm.	A role of an actor defining the relation to another in terms of threat perception/securitisation. The code signifies the legitimacy and/or innocence of an actor. It exists in a, implicit or explicit, relationship with actor(s) labelled a <i>Threat</i> . An actor labelled with the role of <i>Threatened</i> have a	The code is used when speaker speaks about an actor as having a pronounced risk of its security being harmed both through physical and psychological means. The code is used when defining an actor's relation to another in terms of	As it incorporates both actions that have already happened and actions that may happen it can be applied alongside the code of victim. However, it is not to be used when speaker explicitly speaks about specific cases in which an actor have suffered as a

		<p>pronounced risk of its security being harmed both through physical and psychological means. It entails breaches to its physical state as well as its societal order or existence.</p> <p>Although, an actor can also be labelled <i>Threatened</i> without the existence of another actor labelled <i>Threat</i>, as the risk may be posed by non-actors such as the weather, it defines such an actor as vulnerable. This installs the actor with the legitimacy to act in order to protect itself.</p>	<p>inferiority and/or the risks it poses to the other actor.</p> <p><i>“We can see that this threat is spreading in Europe and we are going to face tremendous situations in the future if we do not increase cooperation to fight terrorism.”</i></p>	<p>consequence of another actors actions, which it will be labelled a victim.</p>
<i>Terrorism</i>	<p>A form of threat where followers of radical Islamist ideas, have caused or may cause physical and/or psychological harm.</p>	<p>A form of threat.</p> <p>An activity that reflects the moral character of an actor or an activity performed by an actor that causes it to be defined as a threat. The code refers to a form of threat where followers of radical Islamist ideas have caused or may cause harm to another actor. It is irrelevant whether it is considered as a threat with internal or external origins as the code is used in order to compare which threat is mention most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs. The code is also used to label a form of activity that reflects on the moral quality of an actor in order to assess if the actor is breaking any “universal” principles. It is furthermore used to label a form of activity that if committed will define an actor as a threat.</p>	<p>In coding for threats the code is used to code for threats when speaker mentions terrorism or activities and actors defined as terrorists/terrorism that the speaker express concerning to the EU’s security.</p> <p>In defining an actor moral quality, the code is used when speaker mentions terrorism, activities that is defined as terrorism and actors belonging to groups defined as terrorists. The difference is here that it is not necessary for the actor to be expressed in terms of posing a risk to the EU’s security.</p> <p><i>“But what we should be concentrating on is the threat from ISIS coming across the Mediterranean from North Africa.”</i></p>	<p>Although not spoken about, it would not be used to code other forms of extremism, for example right-wing.</p> <p>As it is only an ideological threat it is not to be used when speaking of actions committed because of extremist ideas as these are labelled terrorism.</p>
<i>Extremism</i>	<p>A form of threat to the EU and its “European values”, and a definition of an</p>	<p>A form of threat.</p> <p>An activity that reflects the moral character of an actor or an activity</p>	<p>In coding for threats the code is used to code for threats when speaker mentions extremism and the process of Muslims,</p>	<p>Although not spoken about, it would not be used to code other</p>

	<p>activity as illegitimate as it is the belief in a radical, negative interpretation of Islam that may end in terrorism.</p>	<p>performed by an actor that causes it to be defined as a threat. The code refers to radicalisation of Muslims both within and outside of the EU. As the radical Islam is considered opposed to “European values” <i>Extremism</i> can therefore be considered an activity affecting the moral quality of that actor or the perception of that actor as a threat. The code is also used to define threats in order to compare them. It is in this context seen as form of threat. It is irrelevant whether it is considered as a threat with internal or external origins as the code is used in order to compare which threat is mention most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs.</p>	<p>both within and outside of the EU, becoming followers of radical Islamic. The code is also used when speaker talks about the radicalisation of Muslims as challenging “European values” or as leading to the threat of <i>Terrorism</i>. In defining an actor’s moral quality, the code is used when speaker mentions processes of Muslims, both within and outside of the EU, becoming followers of radical Islamist ideas. The difference is here that it is not necessary for the actor to be expressed in terms of posing a risk to the EU’s security.</p> <p><i>“Religious extremism and terror are not only costing thousands of lives in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere but also increasingly pose a threat to our own national security.”</i></p>	<p>forms of extremism, for example right-wing. As it is only an ideological threat it is not to be used when speaking of actions committed because of extremist ideas as these are labelled terrorism.</p>
<i>Conflict</i>	<p>A threat in the form of violent outbreaks, war and political instability outside of the EU.</p>	<p>A form of threat and/or the character of an actor. It is also defined as a negative activity. Refers to a situation in a state or a region that is considered affecting, or possibly affecting the EU and its Member States in a negative way. Such situations include violent outbreaks, war and political instability. <i>Conflict</i> might be a threat because of the consequences it may have for the EU in terms of internal stability and resources spent on solving such situations or that it might result in other threats developing such as <i>Migration</i> or <i>Terrorism</i>. It may also refer to the</p>	<p>The code is used when the speaker talks about conflicts or the situation within a state or a region as being characterised as war, violent outbreaks or political instability. It is irrelevant if it is parts of a state or region or the whole state or region that is the cause of such instability.</p> <p><i>“As well as the conflicts in the southern neighbourhood of the European Union require our unity and strength. We must strive to be more courageous to intervene in these conflicts and the search for solutions.”</i></p>	<p>Not to be used when the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is mentioned as this is irrelevant for the research question. It is not to be used when speaking about terrorist attacks within MENA as these are labelled as terrorism.</p>

		<p>character of an actor as an actor associated with conflict is an actor that does not have the ability handle internal affairs and provide security for its population, and hence in need of assistance. It is therefore used in order to characterise someone as inferior in relation to an actor with a stable situation. The speaker does not have to mention it as a threat, but the fact that the speaker talks about it will classify it as a concern to the EU. This is an external threat. The code is also used in order to compare which threat is mention most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs.</p> <p>Conflict is also a negative activity, although defined more as a situation it is considered less of an activity directed directly at other actors.</p>		
<i>Migration</i>	<p>A threat in the form of people migrating from MENA to the EU for reasons considered valid and/or in masses that is considered creating problems for the EU to handle.</p>	<p>A form of threat and a form of negative activity.</p> <p>Refers to a form of threat to the EU and its Member States caused by mass immigration, both considered legal and illegal, to the Member States. Migration is defined as a threat when the migrants are viewed as posing a threat to the “European value-system” or the political stability of the Member States. It is furthermore defined as a threat if it poses a risk to the EU or its Member States’ capability to maintain its economic stability.</p> <p>The code is used in order to compare which threat is mention most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs.</p>	<p>When the speaker expresses concerns about migration from the MENA region to the EU and its Member States. When the speaker talks about immigration as causing problems, societal/economic/political for the EU and/or its Member States.</p> <p><i>“We must learn to find solutions to better intervene in a case such as the Ukraine, and in a case such as Syria. We need to better manage immigration and asylum policies.”</i></p>	<p>Not to be used when speaking of the act of smuggling people as this is labelled as an organised crime. Trafficking humans is committed by a perpetrator, while migration is the act of people migrating from MENA to the EU.</p>

		It is also a form of negative activity. The code is used in order to get a more nuanced picture of an actor's activities in which migration is a less negative activity than terrorism.		
<i>Organised crime</i>	A threat in the form of different criminal activities.	A form of threat Refers to activities that is a threat to European citizens, businesses, state institutions as well as the economy as a whole. Such activities include, but are not limited to, money laundering, trafficking of humans, drugs and arms, and sexual exploitation of children. It is irrelevant whether it is considered as a threat with internal or external origins as the code is used in order to compare which threat is mentioned most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs.	When the speaker mentions organised crime, activities criminal activities or the necessity to counter such activities. <i>"The Union must at all times be prepared to respond effectively to threats such as terrorism and trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings, and for this it is necessary to improve certain internal structures, but also to create partnerships with the so-called third countries."</i>	To be distinguished from illegal immigration. Although illegal, this is a role and not an action. Organised crime includes trafficking, but is to be distinguished from the activity of migration as organised crime is committed by a perpetrator while migration is not.
<i>Cybercrime</i>	A threat in the form of crimes committed in cyberspace.	A form of threat. Refers to criminal acts that are committed online by using electronic communications networks and information systems. Such acts that are considered harmful to the EU and its Member States and therefore pose a threat. It is irrelevant whether it is considered as a threat with internal or external origins as the code is used in order to compare which threat is mentioned most times and therefore which threat is in greatest focus for the MEPs.	When the speaker talks about cybercrime or acts that are committed online that are deemed unlawful or as posing a risk to the safety of the EU and its Member States. <i>"Fighting against cybercrime is a key challenge; with the loss of more than EUR 300 billion every year, each of us can become a victim of cybercrime. I am pleased to see that cybercrime is one of the top three priorities in the European Agenda on Security."</i>	Not to be used when if speaker does not mention crime explicitly in relation to the internet.
<i>Climate change</i>	A threat in form of changes in the climate that is caused by humans.	A form of threat. Refers to changes in the climate that is considered caused by humans and that	Is used when the speaker mentions climate change as a threat to the EU and its Member States.	

		poses a risk to the EU in form of both natural disasters and EU's ability to function in relation to food productivity, water quality etc.	<i>"The old reserved strategy, among other things, is an important chapter on the resilience of territories and natural disasters."</i>	
<i>Russia</i>	A form of threat caused by the state of Russia.	A form of threat. Refers to Russia when the states intentions or actions are considered a threat to the EU.	Is used when speaker mentions Russia's actions, intentions or abilities as posing a threat to the EU and its Member States. Or when the speaker talks about the necessity of actions against Russia. <i>"The European Union's external security policy, however, the biggest challenge now is how to deal with the situation where the European Union's soft power has run up against Russian arms."</i>	Not to be used when actor speaks about Russia in general without mentioning it as an aggressor.

