

**When different interests intersect:
Animal rights as a site to criticize multiculturalism**

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Abstract

My thesis aims to demonstrate how ethical imperialism takes place within Dutch multicultural society, using the recent debate on religious slaughtering as an example. Here we see how different structures of power intersect, specifically that of culture and religion, with the issue of animal rights. To achieve this I step away from the Kantian approach to ethics and argue for different approaches to ethics, to see what ethics *do* instead of *are*. Also, distinctions between race and culture and human and non-human will be taken into account within my analysis.

I argue that it is impossible to understand Dutch history without mentioning its colonial, imperial, and multicultural past. The discourses around multiculturalism in the Netherlands have, however, always been changing. While cultural diversity was once seen as a positive aspect of Dutch identity, nowadays it is the problems between different cultural groups that are emphasized in politics and popular media.

Looking at the recent elections of 2012, it can be noted that the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering was one such issue in which we could see this pattern resurface. Within the debate on animal rights, different ideas of what is "right" and "wrong" or "good" and "bad" emerge. I look at how these ideas feed the notion of migrants as outsiders within the Dutch nation based on constructed hierarchies between cultural practices.

To explain the intersection of the issue of animal rights with that of multiculturalism, I use the concept of biopower to explain the roots of the racist and speciesist structures, and work with the thoughts of various posthumanist scholars to rethink difference in order to change the emphasis of the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering from choosing between *either* animal wellbeing *or* religious tolerance, to a starting point of rethinking difference in an affirmative manner.

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INTRODUCTION

"Als witte mensen zeggen dat ze niet bedoelen racistisch te zijn, doet dat er niet toe. Het gaat erom dat ze de momenten leren te herkennen waarin het toch gebeurt.

[When white people say they do not intend to be racist, that's not the point. What matters is that they learn to recognize the moments in which it happens nonetheless]" -Gloria Wekker (2014)

During the writing of this thesis, I visited the Ketu Ketu festival¹ on the 1st of July of 2014. During the part called "Roet in het eten"², a section dedicated to discussing academic research on racism in the Netherlands, professor Gloria Wekker made the statement written above. To me, it expressed perfectly what this thesis wants to achieve: to show the importance of recognizing how difference is expressed negatively in the Netherlands even though it may happen unintentionally, and the consequences for the parties involved. Within this thesis, I focus on how racist³ patterns are repeated in the recent debates on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Even though I genuinely believe that most parties involved in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering did not intend to repeat a racist narrative in their arguments, it is important to recognize that this happened nonetheless. By recognizing how racist thinking is part of society, and connect it to other forms of difference, in particular speciesist difference, this thesis will offer strategies to work against these narratives.

¹ The Ketu Ketu Festival is an annual festival in the Netherlands that celebrates the abolition of slavery since the first of July 1863 in the Dutch former colonies of Suriname and the Dutch Antilles (ketiketiamsterdam.nl, 2014).

² This expression is impossible to translate to English. "Roet" means soot and "in het eten" means in "in the food". "Roet in het eten" is an expression that means that something fun is disturbed by unexpected circumstances. The collective that spoke at the Ketu Ketu festival that is called "Roet in het eten" focusses on black and migrant communities in the Netherlands and reach out to the public via a radio show, opinion pieces, and analyses (roetinheteten.info, 2014). The discussion at Ketu Ketu was part of their radio show.

³ The term *racist* may come across as very heavy to apply to what happened in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Yet, inspired by the book *Dutch Racism*, edited by Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving (2014), I do want to draw attention to what they describe as, the "important, convoluted characteristic of Dutch racism: the intimate relation between ignorance and denial" (p. 10). Even though I recognize that racism probably does happen unintentionally for a large part in both the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering and in general, I explain this more in detail in all three chapters of this thesis, I also firmly believe that more effort should be put into recognizing racism in order to prevent it, rather than simply denying its existence.

The aim of my thesis is to demonstrate how ethical imperialism, which I define as the using the presumed superiority of certain ethical values over others to construct a superiority of one culture over others, takes place within Dutch multicultural society, using the recent debate on religious slaughtering as a case study. My focus lies on the political discourse surrounding religious slaughtering between 2008 and 2012. I chose this time-frame because the law-change by Marianne Thieme to make un-sedated religious slaughtering illegal in the Netherlands was proposed to the House of Representatives in 2008. This proposal led to many reactions and the start of a debate on whether un-sedated religious slaughtering should or should not be allowed in the Netherlands. Within the House of Representatives, an overwhelming majority of the ruling politicians supported the law proposal. Yet, the Senate refused the law with a significant majority as well because they felt it was a violation of the right to freedom of religious practices. In the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, I argue, different structures of power intersect, specifically those of culture and religion, with the issue of animal rights. Also, distinctions between race and culture and the human and non-human are taken into account within my analysis. By using Michel Foucault's concept of biopower (Foucault, 1978), suppression of cultural and non-human others are not the same, but their positions in society can be traced back to a long process of creating power difference that formed in a postcolonial biopolitical world. It is for this reason that I believe this research to be important. The debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering opens up the possibility to re-think the conceptual foundations on which hierarchal difference is based and thus re-work both racial and speciesist difference.

There are several reasons for why I chose this topic of research and why I looked at the debate of un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands specifically. Recently, animal rights are becoming increasingly discussed both in the political and academic arenas. In the Netherlands for example, there is a political party that focuses solely on animal rights and a police force whose main task is to protect animals from what is legally considered as harm. In academia, posthumanist philosophy, which aims to deconstruct the opposition between the human and non-human, is gaining a lot of ground as well. The aim of posthumanist studies is to rethink the concept and position of the human in relation to non-human organisms and factors such as non-human animals, nature, the environment, and technology, to create new forms of relating and living together⁴. At the same time, cultural (and racial) difference has re-emerged as a central political and theoretical topic for a while now. The emergence of populist political parties in the Netherlands both reflects and enforces this.

⁴ See chapter 3 for an elaboration in what posthumanism is and why these theories are of relevance to the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering.

This thesis focuses on the intersection of these two topics, looking at how the idea of cultural difference is reflected within discussions on animal rights. An intersection of these topics does not necessarily mean a disagreement. Yet, when the problems related to either the growing problems within a multicultural society and animal and environmental issues are only seen in relationship to each other, urgent matters outside of this intersection, such as animal harm that is caused by hegemonic groups, could be overshadowed. Even though animal studies may seem to focus on local and specific practices, this research will show that it is impossible to give a thorough analysis without being aware of one's position within global power structures. The aim of this research is to outline these structures within the Dutch debate on ritual slaughtering and determine how they take part in the formation of discourses of multicultural society. Being aware of this can help to develop different ways of practicing animal and environmental studies in a way that does not repeat and strengthen the hegemonic power structures in Europe. Thus, this research will explore possibilities to practice animal and environmental studies without taking part in structures of ethical imperialism. Such a method could offer a more fruitful base for future academic, activist, and political discussions.

I want to emphasize that this thesis focuses on the *discourse* on un-sedated religious slaughtering rather than on the practice as such. Yet, the factor of this practice that is important for this research is that un-sedated religious slaughtering differs from the regular practice of slaughtering in that the animals are purposely conscious during the time of their death and that this is because of religious motives. In the Netherlands, only Muslim and Jewish communities practice un-sedated religious slaughtering, although not all Muslims and Jews eat meat produced by this practice, since some do not follow the guidelines of the Koran or Torah when it comes to their eating habits and others do not eat meat at all. In the second chapter, religious slaughtering will be explained in more detail. Also, not all Muslims and Jews believe that the animal has to be conscious during the slaughtering process for the meat to still be Halal or Kosher.

Just like the connections between animal rights and racialized "Othering" work on various levels in very intricate ways, my interest in these two topics cannot be reduced to one single motive. For another project I am working on⁵, alongside the writing of this thesis, I was asked to think about my first memory related to peace in my life. My first memory was sitting in the car with my parents, I think I was around seven years old, and telling them about how I

⁵ Next to writing my thesis, I am working as an intern at the *Kant for Kids*-project in collaboration with the *Perpetual Peace*-project and the *Centre for the Humanities*. Together with three other interns I work on a translation of Immanuel Kant's book "Perpetual Peace" to a fictive children's book. Our goal is to bring philosophy outside of the walls of academia and make its relevance understandable for society as a whole.

had changed my mind: to solve world problems, we should not save poor people first but animals: after all, their suffering was the product of human actions and they were completely innocent victims. Now, roughly sixteen years later, I have had much more time to think about this question and learned how to nuance my views. Inspired by many, and especially feminist and postcolonial thinkers, I do not believe in complete victims anymore, nor in the need to *save* people, the categories of "we" and "them", and the approach of either/or. In this sense, feminist posthumanist theory that focuses on the animal question opened a new world for me and offered me the tools to rethink the topics I was so interested in as a child.

The specific topic of multiculturalism was one that I avoided for a long time. Although I generally pass as white, racially I am half-Asian. Even though people from Asian descent, and especially those from Indonesia⁶ are generally tolerated and accepted in Dutch society, from a young age I was aware of this ambiguous position. During my teenage years I very much avoided the topic of race because I did want to pass as white, this was also expected of me by friends and family, and supported the claim that if there are problems in the Netherlands concerning those of a different cultural background, it was exactly because of *culture*. Growing up in two different cultures at the same time has always made me aware of the fluidity of certain values and the fragmentation *between* and *of* subjects of different cultural backgrounds. This is taken into account throughout this entire research.

As I became introduced to postcolonial and ethnicity studies throughout my academic career, I learned to acknowledge that *race* does matter and cultural racism is still *racism* too. Maybe it is all these factors in my life that have led me to choose this topic in which animal studies and (multi)cultural studies have come together.

I do realize that one of the most crucial topics of my thesis, namely Islam, is not a topic I am directly related to by experience. For this reason, my emphasis will not lie on the experience of the Muslim citizens in Dutch society but on the rhetoric that is used to shape the discourse around them.

One could argue that it is impossible to understand Dutch history without mentioning its colonial, imperial, and multicultural past. The discourses around multiculturalism in the Netherlands have, however, always been changing. While cultural diversity was once celebrated and even seen as a positive aspect of Dutch identity, nowadays it is the problems between different cultural groups that are emphasized in politics and popular media. The topic of multiculturalism is currently occupying a central role, and there is a strong tendency for the conservative, nationalist parties to underline how different cultural values seem to be incompatible with each other. This shift in attitude towards multiculturalism will be discussed

⁶ See chapter 1 for an explanation of the different positions of people from different racial backgrounds in Dutch society.

in the first chapter of this thesis in greater detail. Despite multiculturalism being seen as more and more undesirable in general Dutch society, the fact that the Netherlands is a place where people from many different cultural groups live together. Chances of this changing anytime soon are most unlikely. Thus, working towards a peaceful multicultural society is in my view more productive than trying to force everyone to assimilate to a "Dutch" identity, which in itself is already a problematic ideal because "Dutchness" does not exist. Also, as I argue especially in the third chapter of this thesis, problems concerning difference of any kind are not solved by taking away one different group, instead, difference in itself should be reconceptualised. Instead of working towards the assimilation of minority cultures within a hegemonic culture that supposedly shares a value system, I propose that it is more productive to learn from each other. This would change the debate on multiculturalism from because multiculturalism in this sense "of course challenges certain ways of thinking and certain political positions but the challenge is of inclusion and adjustment, not of giving up one comprehensive politics for another" (Moodood in Midden, 2010, p. 236). Thinking multiculturalism in this manner, changes it from a threat to society towards an asset, making the democratic society more inclusionary thanks to cultural diversity (Midden, 2012, p. 236).

There two problems I would like to mention at the beginning of this thesis. The first is relevant to speaking about multicultural societies in general while the second refers to the specific Dutch multicultural society. While writing about multiculturalism and its surrounding discourses, language is a challenge. When talking about terms such as "society", "culture", or "nation", it is easy to fall into the trap of repeating the exclusionary patterns in which these concepts refers to purely the white, hegemonic part of the population of, in this case, the Netherlands. I want to emphasize that this is not my intention and unless I state otherwise, these terms include for me all the citizens⁷ of the Netherlands, regardless of skin colour, religion, cultural background etc.

The second problem when discussing multiculturalism in the Netherlands is the translating of a debate that was held in Dutch to the English language and especially of those terms that are used within political debates and policies. Since Dutch is my native language and I understand what the political terms imply, I decided to use English translations when I felt that they covered the content of what was meant within the discussions. The words that, in my opinion, are not translatable to the English language will be explained and not translated but used in their original form. In this context it is important to note that within the

⁷ I recognize that "citizens" also already implies that many Dutch inhabitants are excluded because they do not have the required papers that would officially define them as citizens. Yet, I think this is an exclusion I have to make, since I focus on the political discourse around multiculturalism and most people without citizenship unfortunately do not have a political voice in the Netherlands.

Netherlands there are two terms that are specific within the discussion on multiculturalism namely *Allochtoon* and *Autochtoon*. Even though these words are very commonly used within debates on multiculturalism, I will not use these terms myself because these words are fraught with negative connotations. Also, the manner in which these terms are applied in discussions about multiculturalism, are, I believe, not consistent⁸ enough to use them in scholarly research. When I quote these words from politician's speeches, I will specify to whom they refer by using these words.

Within the debate on animal rights, different ideas of what is "right" and "wrong" or "good" and "bad" emerge. I will look at how these ideas feed the notion of migrants as outsiders within the Dutch nation and how a hierarchy is constructed between hegemonic practices considered morally superior and those of the different others in Dutch society.

⁸ There is no general agreement on what the words *allochtoon* and *autochtoon* imply. The Dutch dictionary defines *allochtoon* as "van elders afkomstig [from elsewhere]" (Van Dale, 2014a) while *autochtoon* means "oorspronkelijke bewoner [original occupant]" (Van Dale, 2014b). The CBS, an organization that collects, creates, and publishes statistics for Dutch government, science, and companies, defines the term *allochtoon* more specifically as: "Persoon van wie ten minste één ouder in het buitenland is geboren [Person of whom at least one parent is born outside of the Netherlands]" (CBS, 2014a) and specifies "non-Western" as "Allochtoon met als herkomstgroepering een van de landen in Afrika, Latijns-Amerika en Azië (exclusief Indonesië en Japan) of Turkije [Allochtoon with an ethnic background of one of the countries in Africa, Latin-America, or Asia (excluding Indonesia and Japan) or Turkey]" (CBS, 2014b).

Yet, In general, the word "allochtoon" is used to describe people who are visibly non-white and live in the Netherlands. Thus, in daily life "allochtoon" would also refer to second and even third generation migrants.

The term *allochtoon* was introduced during the 1990s in the Netherlands when the *minority policy* was replaced by the *integration policy* (in the first chapter of this thesis this will be discussed to a greater extent) which led to the development described by Halleh Ghorasi (2014) as follows:

"the focus shifted from groups that shared the same cultural backgrounds ('ethnic minorities') to individual representatives of the super category: 'non-native' ('allochthonous'). The contradiction here is that the term allochthonous is not connected to any particular cultural background and hence individualizes, while categorizing at the same time" (p. 105).

It is because of these negative implications of generalizing and categorizing without any coherency and positive connotations of the *allochtonen*-group that I chose to not use the terms of *allochtoon* and *autochtoon* in this research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research is guided by the following question: To what extent does ethical imperialism take place within the Dutch debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering and what strategies can be used to work against this? In order to answer this question, this research will first look into the general developments within Dutch society concerning multiculturalism. Using a postcolonial framework and connecting this to the question of ethics, I will look into how cultural difference became a marker that would define whether a migrant was constructed as desired and tolerated or undesired and thus criticized. Especially the growing emphasis on culture and cultural difference in relation to ethics will be discussed. Following these conclusions, this thesis will offer a study of the debate on religious slaughtering in relationship to other discussions concerning animal rights within the last elections and how these can be related to discourses on Dutch multicultural society in general. Finally, bringing in the question of the non-human animal, I problematize the question of ethics and politics in order to open up a space to rethink difference and ethics from a new perspective.

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Within my research, I combine different methods that eventually led to the writing of this thesis. Within the first chapter I conduct a critical analysis of previous literature on multiculturalism in the Netherlands. Using the works of Judith Butler, Donna Haraway, Saba Mahmood, and Etienne Balibar, I look at how ethics play a role in the formation of cultural difference. Then, I draw upon previous research of scholars such as Elie Vasta, Hans Entzinger, Ian Buruma, Hallah Ghorasi, and Evelien Gans to explain the discourses on multiculturalism in the Netherlands. In the conclusion of the chapter I applied my conceptual framework to my literary research to see how ethics came to play a role in the discourse on Dutch multicultural society.

In the second chapter I offer a critical discourse analysis of the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. I use critical discourse analysis as "a method for researching written and oral language as it is used. CDA is centrally concerned with analysing patterns in language use in order to uncover the workings of ideology or investment within/through it, and thus be able to resist it" (Griffin, 2011, p. 98). I use the concept of *animal-linked racialization*, which is proposed by Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel, to see how ethics concerning animals were appropriated to create a discourse of cultural hierarchy in the Netherlands.

In my final chapter, I explain philosophical texts of Jaques Derrida, Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway and Cary Wolfe to offer a new understanding of animal rights and its relation to difference in a biopolitical framework. Then, I apply these ideas to the debate on un-

sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands to open up new possibilities of thinking about this question.

This thesis strives to approach the emphasized problems of the Dutch multicultural society from a new angle by analysing how the political discussions on multiculturalism and environmental and animal issues intersect within the political debate on ritual slaughtering. In particular the Halal guidelines for slaughtering, according to Islamic standards, were addressed several times during the political debates. This thesis aims to uncover the ethical imperialist structures that are at the heart of this debate. I argue that imposing hegemonic ethical values on all cultural groups without recognizing the origins of the values is a form of ethical imperialism that is used to sustain power relations to the benefit of the hegemonic group. To uncover these structures, this research starts from the hypothesis that the popularity of topics such as the environment and in particular animal rights are appropriated for other goals in the Netherlands, namely as a sight to criticize the Muslim Dutch citizens. Not only will this lead to less attention for other urgent animal and environmental issues but also to the increase of the "we" versus "them" feelings within Dutch society instead of a more solidary society.

To see how discussions on multiculturalism and animal rights meet, this research will use the concept of intersectionality to approach these topics. The intersectional approach will “function as a meeting point for many different discursive endeavours to achieve sensitivity in relationship to complexity” (Stains & Søndergaard, 2011, p. 47). If the political issues of animal rights and multiculturalism intersect, this could have negative consequences for both parties of interest since the appropriation of the points of intersection may overshadow other issues at stake within the debates. In other words, both matters could be reduced to their relationship to each other. This could lead to other concerns related to these issues not, or barely, being addressed at all.

This research will adapt feminist research methodologies to approach this intersectional question to investigate the developments within the Netherlands thoroughly. It will combine both an analysis of the political debates concerning ritual slaughtering in the Netherlands and look at feminist and postcolonial philosophical ideas on difference to see how this is embedded in global flows of knowledge and power and place the debates in a broader frame of Western thinking.

To see the role of ethical imperialism within the debate on ritual slaughtering, this research will aim to identify the Western humanist ideas on which the discussion is based. By looking at feminist philosophical views, this research will try to develop a deeper understanding of the power structures that are present within Western thinking. Both the role of the cultural "Other" and the position of the non-human animal within Western thought will be considered and placed within a theoretical framework. This will show the

anthropocentrism (Haraway, 2003; Haraway, 2008; Derrida, 2001) within Western thought in general which offers a space to appropriate non-human issues to human concerns. Also the critiques on this from different philosophers and the alternatives they offer will be given a place within this research. Thus, the methodology by which the research is performed is based on critical thinking that is central within feminist studies.

This project will especially look at the works of postcolonial thinkers to see the role of imperialism within the current developments in the Netherlands and Dutch politics. Within the field of postcolonial studies, previous research has been done towards ethical imperialism. Environmental and animal welfare discourses have gained ground in these researches as well. Investigating the results of these earlier studies will be helpful to see how different strategies for emphasizing difference instead of agreements, that have been used in different parts of the world and acknowledged by post colonialist studies before, can be recognized in the Netherlands as well.

I want to emphasize that my goal is not to see both speciesist and post-colonial struggles as equal and the same. Some earlier studies that attempted to combine both these approaches ended up "perversely suggesting that because race and post-colonial critics possess special insight to the unique violence of humanism, they have a unique responsibility to speak for animals" (Ahuja, 2009, p. 558). Instead, I want to use the potential of combining both struggles to "trac[e] the circulation of non-human species as both figures and materialized bodies within the circuits of imperial biopower, (...) [to] reevaluate 'minority' discourses and enrich histories of imperial encounter" (Ahuja, 2009, p. 556-557). Thus, I am not approaching the struggles of animal welfare groups and post-colonial scholars and activists as aiming to see one as equal to the other but rather, to see how both forms of "difference" are part of the same power structures and also enforce these structures for the other party.

CHAPTER STRUCTURE

During the researching for, and writing of, my thesis, ethics kept playing a central role. Therefore, I have connected the different aspects surrounding the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering to the question of ethics. As I will argue especially in the second chapter of this thesis, the role of religion and culture was not recognized enough by Marianne Thieme, who proposed the law change that would prohibit the practice of un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, and many other politicians who took part in the debate. Therefore, I decided to start with an analysis of culture difference in the Netherlands. In the second chapter, I connect cultural difference to the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering and thus, also bring in the question of the animal. The third and final chapter of this thesis focuses on the different forms of difference that were both constructed and

maintained during the debate.

The first chapter of this thesis, "The Netherlands, A Country Within A Globalizing World", starts with an explanation of concepts that are central for my understanding of, and approach towards, multiculturalism and ethics. By combining postcolonial theory with theories on ethics, I introduce the concept of ethical imperialism, which I define as the imposing of hegemonic ethical values on all cultural groups without recognizing the origins of the values as a tool to sustain power relations that benefit the hegemonic group, in this case in the multicultural Dutch society. Also, I offer an explanation as to how ethics have to come to play a role in the discourse on Dutch multicultural society to lay the foundation on which the rest of my research on un-sedated religious slaughtering is based.

In "Religious Slaughtering In The Netherlands", the second chapter of this thesis, I apply the concept of ethical imperialism to the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands during the period between 2006 and 2012. I use the concept of *animal-linked racialization* to show how the position of animals in society can be used to emphasize cultural difference and hierarchy. I argue that because the debate started from an assumption of ethical superiority of the hegemonic, "traditional" Dutch culture, without looking critically at how the treatment of animals within the meat-industry is problematic in itself, the question of religious slaughtering was reduced to having to choose between what was valued more: animals rights or freedom of religious practice? Because religion, specifically Islam and Judaism, and animal wellbeing were constructed as incompatible with each other, the option of expressing to support both was eliminated. This is why, I argue, the debate eventually took up such a sensitive role within both the political and public realm in general.

The final chapter, "Rethinking Ethics and Difference with the Non-Human Animal" uses critical theory to look at how difference emerges on a conceptual level. I use the concept of *biopower* to explain the roots of the racist and speciesist structures, and work with the thoughts of various posthumanist scholars to rethink difference in order to change the emphasis of the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering from choosing between *either* animal wellbeing *or* religious tolerance, to a starting point of rethinking difference in an affirmative manner. I propose to rethink difference in order to bring together different parties involved in the practice of un-sedated religious slaughtering and the meat-industry in general to produce new knowledges that will benefit future practices.

CHAPTER 1:

THE NETHERLANDS, A COUNTRY WITHIN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

INTRODUCTION

Within my thesis, I aim to combine a postcolonial with an ethical approach, by looking at the intersections of multiculturalism with animal rights. Multiculturalism can be defined in different ways. Bhikhu Parekh makes a distinction between multicultural societies, a descriptive term to describe a society in which people with multiple cultural backgrounds live together within the same borders, and multiculturalism, a more normative term (Parekh, 2006, p 6). The word *multiculturalism* is often used to refer to an ideology that "refers to the acceptance of different cultures in a society and also to the active support for these cultural differences by both the majority members and the minority group members" (Schalk-Soekar, Vijver & Hoogsteder, 2004, p. 534). But ideology hardly ever reflects reality and it is this relationship that I explore within this thesis.

This first part of my thesis explains the foundations of my research. First, I will look at the different concepts that are central within research concerning multiculturalism. Earlier works of scholars such as Edward Said, Stuart Hall, and Ania Loomba on colonialism, postcolonialism, and imperialism are addressed. I work with their thoughts in two manners. First, I use their works to explore the different directions in which power structures are formed and maintained between different groups of people in the age of colonialism. Second, I will draw upon their theories to examine the effects of power in order to connect them to the contemporary multicultural societies that are the product of decolonialisation, global capitalism, and imperialism. After looking at how power works within the contemporary Western multicultural society, I explain my use of the concept of ethics, inspired by the works of Judith Butler, Donna Haraway and Saba Mahmood. Rather than trying to unravel what *is* ethical or not, my goal within this thesis is to see how ethics are constituted and what they *do*. I will show that ethics are interrelated with power differences and hierarchal relationships between people.

The second part of this first chapter looks at how ethics and imperialist power structures come together within Dutch multicultural society. I examine how the political policies concerning immigrants are in a reciprocal relationship with the discourses around immigrants in the Netherlands. The analysed time frame will start from the second half of the twentieth century until the present day because it was after the Netherlands started to give up

its colonies that immigrants moved to the Netherlands to such an extent that they were considered a political concern by the political parties and institutions. The reason for going back this far in history rather than twenty-five years -the negative turn towards multiculturalism started in the 1990s in the Netherlands- is that the different approaches towards different groups of migrants is still reflected in the different positions of different groups of migrants in the Netherlands today. The main goal of the second part of this chapter is to show how the idea of "the good immigrant" was never static but always changing in the Netherlands, and to demonstrate how ethics came to play a central role within Dutch politics towards immigrants.

EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS

POSTCOLONIALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND NEO-RACISM

The Western conceptions of the Orient cannot be understood without realizing the connection between knowledge production and power. This approach towards colonialism, also referred to as "colonial discourse"

"indicates a new way of conceptualising the interaction of cultural, intellectual, economic or political processes in the formation, perpetuation and dismantling of colonialism. It seeks to widen the scope of studies of colonialism by examining the intersection of ideas and institutions, knowledge and power. Consequently, colonial violence is understood as including an 'epistemic' aspect, i.e. an attack on the culture, ideas and value systems of the colonised peoples" (Loomba, 2005, p. 51).

Colonialism was as much, if not more, about epistemological power as it was about the physical occupation of a territory. The renowned postcolonial scholar Edward Said defines Orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said, [1978]2003, p. 2) next to "Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (p. 3).

Currently, the emphasis has become even more on power which is based on epistemology and economical structures rather than owning land and the peoples who inhabit it. The current state of global power structures is part of the postcolonial era. Within the field of postcolonial studies, much attention has been paid to the question of what the postcolonial actually entails. In his article "When was 'the post-colonial'? Thinking at the limit" Stuart Hall asks himself the question of what should, or should not, be included in the frame of the postcolonial and what its relationship is to, amongst others, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and

imperialism (Hall, 1996, p. 242). In thinking about the postcolonial, the prefix of the "post" is crucial. Hall explains that there are two different meanings that could be ascribed to it. The first way to interpret "post" is as the closure of a historical era or period. The second manner in which "post" can be understood is as a "going beyond" which should be connected to an intellectual or theoretical framework (Hall, 1996, p. 253). Yet, Hall critically asks "whether in fact these two could ever be separated, and what such a separation would imply about the way 'colonialisation' itself is being conceptualized" (Hall, 1996, p. 253). Since colonialism was not only historical, but "also a way of staging or narrating a history, and its descriptive value was always framed within a distinctive definitional and theoretical paradigm" (Hall, 1996, p. 253) we need to realize how colonialism as a system of power and rule cannot be seen unconnected from the system of representation and knowledge in order to be able to critique and deconstruct the colonial structures (Hall, 1996, p. 253-254). Only by recognizing how colonialism existed because of the complex interrelation of both power and knowledge, we understand how powerful the colonial, and now the postcolonial, structures actually are. Thus, this chapter does not aim to show whether something *is* or *is not* postcolonial but rather to what extent colonial and postcolonial power structures are repeated in certain phenomena. While doing this, the interdependency of both meanings of "post" in postcolonial will be recognized.

Imperialism is part of the postcolonial era in which imperialism is the global system and the highest stage of colonialism in which power "flows" from the country or culture with most control to countries which are less influential on a political and economical level (Loomba, 2005, p. 11-12). Ania Loomba explains the difference between imperialism and colonialism not only in temporal but also spatial terms and proposes "to think of imperialism or neo-imperialism as the phenomenon that originates in the metropolis, the process which leads to domination and control" (p. 11-12). Yet, I would like to propose a broader vision of imperialism in which power does not only "flow" from one space to another, but also within spaces in which different cultures meet, namely multicultural societies.

As explained before, multiculturalism is both a normative and descriptive term of people of different cultures living together within the same nation. People of different cultures have been living within the same borders for many years already and discrimination against minorities has always been part of this. Yet, in the last fifty years or so a change has taken place. In *Race, Nation, Class. Ambiguous Identities*, co-authored by Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein ([1988]1991), Balibar ([1988]1991a) elaborates on the shift he saw taking place within the attitude of the French society towards its "immigrants". I will come back to the term "immigrants" later but first I want to explain why, even though Balibar addresses the specific French situation, I think his analysis is also relevant for most Western-European society and specifically the Netherlands.

Every European country has had its own history within the colonial era but comparable experiences since the Second World War concerning decolonization can be traced amongst several European countries. For the purpose of this thesis, I will only connect Balibar's study of France to the Netherlands. According to Balibar, the Second World War changed France's relationship with "the other":

"due, on the one hand, to the institutional and ideological break which then existed between the perception of immigration (essentially European) and colonial experience (on the one side, France 'was being invaded', on the other it 'was dominant') and, on the other hand, because of the absence of a new model of articulation between states, peoples and cultures on a world scale" (p. 21).

The Netherlands shared a comparable experience since they too were both invaded by the Hitlerian enterprise while at the same time doing everything in their power to keep their colonies (Buruma, 2006, p. 12-13).

The shift this led to within French society is not that xenophobia and discrimination against foreigners increased or decreased but that the language in which this enunciated within society changed. Balibar calls this new form of racism *neo-racism* or *differential racism*. Balibar explains that this new form of racism is so distinct from previous forms of racism because it "is a racism of the era of 'decolonization', of the reversal of population movements between the old colonies and the old metropolises, and the division of humanity within a single political space" (Balibar, [1988]1991a, p. 21). Again, even though Balibar specifically speaks about the French case, this "reversal of population movements" happened within the Netherlands as well, as will be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

What Balibar means with the term neo-racism is not, as explained before, the overcoming and absence of racism. Instead, it is a new form of expressing xenophobic and discriminatory feelings and attitudes towards those who may be deemed as outsiders of the nation. Before I look deeper into how these feelings are expressed within a neo-racist society, I want to emphasize that who are considered insiders or outsiders of a society is already a problematic distinction. As Balibar ([1988]1991b) explains:

"No nation, that is, no national state, has an ethnic basis, which means that nationalism cannot be defined as an ethnocentrism except precisely in the sense of the product of a fictive ethnicity. (...) [T]hey do have to institute in real (and therefore in historical) time their imaginary unity against other possible unities" (p. 49).

Following Balibar's thought, the idea of race or nation is always already a construct in itself. The shift that took place within the last half century in the discourse on the multicultural society is that rather than focussing on *race* as a determinant for an outsider within a nation, the focus now lays on *immigration*. This does not mean that there is no overlap between the "old" forms of racism and the contemporary one. Neo-racism is a racism that denies race as a marker for difference but emphasizes the clash between different cultures, and especially the clash between the national culture and the culture of immigrants ([1988]1991a). Yet, as I will elaborate on later in this chapter, culture now becomes *naturalized* and racism does not disappear but only the form in which it is expressed changes.

What is important to note, looking at the prefix "neo" in neo-racism, is that it carries two potential meanings namely "new or recent" and "in a modern form" (Cambridge Dictionary). Within the context of neo-racism, the second meaning would be most appropriate, especially following Balibar's argument. Where race could not be seen outside of culture in the "old" racism (Balibar, [1988]1991b, p. 58), cultural difference is becoming more and more naturalized within the new neo-racism (Balibar, [1988]1991a). The naturalization of culture happens when "individuals and groups [are locked] a priori into a genealogy, into a determination that is immutable and intangible in origin" (Balibar, [1988]1991a, p. 22). When different cultures are seen as fixed and the people are seen as a homogenous group rather than diverse individuals, the emphasis on *culture* instead of *nature* does not change the result of looking upon difference in a negative manner. The change Balibar refers to when he speaks about *new* or *neo* racism is that now *race* as a reason for racism is denied and pointing to *culture* as a means of difference is used to at the same time *deny* and *legitimize* discriminatory practices.

The idea that the hegemonic norms and values of a society are seen as better, instead of just different from those of the immigrants in west-European countries becomes clear from the attitude towards assimilation and integration. The assimilation that is demanded from the immigrant to "become 'integrated' into the society in which they already live (and which will always be suspected of being superficial, imperfect or simulated) is presented as progress, as an emancipation, a conceding of rights" (Balibar, [1988]1991a, p. 25). The idea of progressive versus conservative and unchangeable in the Western conception of non-Western cultures is a repetition of the old colonial ideas on which the legitimization of colonialism was based on in the first place.

In fact, the idea of the "*interiorization of the exterior*" (Balibar, [1988]1991b, p. 43, italics in original), is a direct after-effect of the construct of the "white man's burden" in which "White superiority" was constructed by different colonial nations. White civilisation within this discourse was not only superior but also had to be protected from the non-whites or savages. Within the multicultural society the pattern of the superior white civilization that

has to be protected from the groups of people who emigrated from those lesser-civilized countries is repeated.

In the Netherlands, "interiorization of the exterior" is clearly recognizable because of the many different cultures living here now, and this indeed goes paired in general discourse with the idea of cultural others being a threat to the supposedly shared culture between the, mainly white, people who have lived in the Netherlands for multiple generations. Both academic and political discourses express the fear that democracy, which is naturally taken to be superior and the anti-thesis of cultural systems of those "foreigners" whose "values are thought to threaten national identity and to have a damaging effect on social cohesion, leading potentially to violence and to a loss of freedom" (Vasta, 2014, p. 390), is under threat because of the presence of "too many" migrants.

Neo-racism can be recognized in the Netherlands. Halleh Ghorashi (2014) touches upon this in her article "Racism and 'the Ungrateful Other' in the Netherlands". She explains first that the idea of superiority of Dutch culture over that of other cultures, and especially of Islam, has been gaining ground, especially since 2004. Tolerance of other cultures has turned from a desired approach in Dutch multicultural society to something to be criticized since it would reflect cultural relativism⁹ (p. 102-103). The events that led to the increased articulation of Dutch values as superior will be discussed in a later part of this chapter.

Second, racism has always been a sensitive topic in the Netherlands that is rather denied than acknowledged, as I already touched upon in the introduction of this thesis. One reason might be that the, especially white, Dutch citizens tend to see themselves as very tolerant and take great pride in this (Ghorasi, 2014). Admitting racism would go against this self-image. Therefore, one of the most-used arguments against racism is that most critique is on Islam, and Islam is a religion rather than an ethnicity. Critiquing religion is thus constructed as non-racist since it is supposedly "merely" an expression of freedom of speech (Aouragh, 2014, p. 359). Yet, as explained before, it repeats racist structures nonetheless, even if this is not acknowledged within the general discourse.

My thesis will connect the shift in emphasis from nature or race to culture, to ethics. But before I do this in the second part of this chapter, I will first explain my use of the concept of ethics.

⁹ I myself do not think that cultural relativism is necessarily undesirable. Yet, the reason why cultural relativism was criticized was that many "native" Dutch people felt as if they were being taken advantage of by migrant Dutch people, Ghorasi explains.

ETHICS

Ethics can be approached from different angles. Within the Western philosophical tradition, emphasis has been on an abstract, transcendent system of ethical values from which we can determine which actions are morally "good" and which are morally "bad". Yet, in this thesis I want to argue for different approaches to ethics, to see what ethics actually *do* instead of *are*. I will draw upon the works of Judith Butler, Donna Haraway, and Saba Mahmood to see how they approach the effects of normative ethical systems.

Even though I may not necessarily agree with Haraway's ethical guidelines related to interspecies relating¹⁰, I do appreciate her insights in how ethical values come into existence. In Haraway's work on companion species, she explores, amongst others, how ethical relating comes into being. Instead of seeing ethics as something that *is* or *is not* she explains how feminism has "refused both relativism and universalism. Subjects, objects, kinds, races, species, genres, and genders are the products of their relating" (Haraway, 2003, p. 7). In her works, Haraway emphasizes how the idea of *innocence* should be deconstructed. She claims that "[i]nnocence, and the corollary insistence on victimhood as the only ground for insight, has done enough damage" (Haraway, 2006, p. 109). Rather than being the innocent bystanders of what happens with us and around us, Haraway proposes a new form of relating to each other and the world. She writes:

"I believe that all ethical relating, within or between species, is knit from the silk-strong thread of ongoing alertness to otherness-in-relation. We are not one, and being depends on getting on together. The obligation is to ask who are present and who are emergent" (2003, p. 50).

This excerpt shows Haraway's stress on the importance of responsibility in our being with others. Haraway underlines the importance of recognizing how the *I* is never in itself and separate from the world but rather that "[t]o be one is always to *become with* many" (Haraway, 2008, p. 4, emphasis in original). This applies to both human subjects in relation to other human subjects but also to humans in relation to non-humans. Her works offer a

¹⁰ An elaborate explanation of my disagreements with Haraway's thoughts would take a thesis in itself. In short, I question Haraway's instrumental approach to animals and her tendency to think *for* rather than *with* animals, even though she states the opposite. I find this disturbing and would argue for a more modest approach in which we acknowledge our lack of interspecies communication and knowledge. Also, rather than emphasizing the non-existence of inherent value as a reason for choosing instrumental value as the motive for taking animals serious, I would prefer to start from Butler's and Braidotti's (2014) idea of shared precariousness as a reason for taking animal well-being serious and see Haraway's ideas as complementary to this. In the third chapter of this thesis I elaborate more on this.

reaction to "the culturally normal fantasy of human exceptionalism. This is the premise that humanity alone is not a spatial and temporal web of interspecies dependencies" (Haraway, 2008, p. 11). As explained in the introduction of this thesis, these relations are connected on different levels and animal-linked racialization is one of the forms in which this correlation becomes materialized.

Within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, this becomes explicitly clear. The perception and symbolic role of animals differs between cultures. Also, it should be noted that within cultures views on how animals should be seen and treated differ. Think for example of vegetarians, vegans, and people who do eat meat in all parts of society. When the hegemonic group takes their approach towards animals and their treatment for granted without recognizing how this came into being, a possibility arises that certain groups, and especially minorities are at risk for this, are reduced to homogenous groups that are constructed as fundamentally different from hegemonic groups in their treatment of animals. I will elaborate much further on how this happened in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands in the next chapter of this thesis. In this chapter, I will use the concept of *animal-linked racialization* to look at the debate of un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. The normative manner of slaughtering animals, which means sedating them before they are killed, was constructed during the political debates as inherently better than un-sedated slaughtering, without taking into regard the reasons for certain customs or taking a critical look into ones' own actions. Within this discourse, I argue, the question of un-sedated religious slaughtering was reduced to the question of valuing *either* the freedom of religious practices *or* animal rights and wellbeing. Thus, religion and animal rights were constructed as necessarily antagonistic to each other, and thus religious others as necessarily worse towards animals than the white, assimilated part of Dutch society.

Within Haraway's work, we see how she urges subjects to recognize their own position within the world and take responsibility for this, which is also applicable to ethics. According to Haraway, ethical relating is formed within a process of relating to others. There is no ethics "out there", as is believed in the tradition of Kantian ethics for example¹¹, but ethics are a product of people's interactions within this world.

In her work on precarious lives, Butler does not look into how ethics come into being, but at how ethics cannot be seen separate from ontology and epistemology. As she explains:

¹¹ See Stanford, *Kritiek van de praktische rede*, etc. "Since the Kantian tradition conceives of ethics as an abstract system of regulatory norms, values, and principles" (Mahmood, 2005, p. 119) I still have to work on this footnote.

"The epistemological capacity to apprehend a life is partially dependent on that life being produced according to norms that qualify it as a life or, indeed, as part of life. In this way, the normative production of ontology thus produces the epistemological problem of apprehending a life, and this in turn gives rise to the ethical problem of what it is to acknowledge or, indeed, to guard against injury and violence" (2010, p. 3).

Butler explains how we can never know a life outside of the social and political power structures that produce meaning and knowledge of which we ourselves and life itself are part. Within this argument, Butler does not ask which ethical guidelines we should follow but how ethical subjects emerge and who or what is excluded from this category. Butler's line of thinking inspired me to approach ethics as *processes with effects* instead of given values. This realization will remain central within this research throughout and will be used as a lens to look at the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the second chapter of this thesis.

Butler sees that every life is always *precarious* since "[b]odies come into being and cease to be" (Butler, 2010, p. 30). Without precarity, our lives would be meaningless. Butler explains that "[t]o say that a life is precarious requires not only that a life be apprehended as a life, but also that precariousness be an aspect of what is apprehended in what is living" (p. 13). Even though every life is precarious, not every life is valued because of its precariousness. We cannot fully *recognize* precariousness in itself. We can apprehend it as a condition but this does not mean that we recognize it in every life. Therefore, life is not a given but a social condition. A subject can be understood as "living, but this does not necessarily imply that it is recognized as a life" (p. 8). *Life* is always "defined and regenerated (...) within new modes of knowledge/power" (p. 17).

It is this line of thinking that, in my opinion, makes research towards both postcolonial and interspecies relations and power difference so important. In putting an emphasis on difference rather than a shared state of vulnerability, certain groups' positions could become even more precarious if a hegemonic group positions them as such. Difference in itself is not inherently problematic, actually, a very good argument can be made for the importance of recognizing difference, but becomes problematic when it becomes constructed as hierarchal. In the third chapter of this thesis, I argue that in the current biopolitical state of governmentality, differences such as sex, gender, race, and species, are used to determine the value of one's life and thus having great consequences for the lived experiences and lives in general of all living organisms on this world.

Butler's and Haraway's thoughts both step away from ethics as such but instead look at how ethics both form and are formed by social and cultural relations between human and even non-human subjects. Another scholar who looks at what ethical values *do* and how they

come into being rather than what makes values ethical is Saba Mahmood. In her research on Islamic politics in Egypt she aims to

"explode the category of norms into its constituent elements-to examine the immanent form that norms take, and to inquire into the attachments their particular morphology generates within the topography of the self. My reason for urging this move has to do with my interest in understanding how different modalities of moral-ethical action contribute to the construction of particular kinds of subjects, subjects whose political anatomy cannot be grasped without applying critical scrutiny to the precise form their embodied actions take" (Mahmood, 2005, p. 24).

What makes Mahmood's work different from the works of Butler and Haraway that have been addressed so far, is that she specifically focuses on how ethics are expressed by individuals who are part of groups that share the same values. Mahmood goes a step further than Haraway and Butler by not only seeing how different ethical ideas shape the different positions of people in society and the world at large, but also recognizes that the relationship between ethical *ideas* and their expression is culturally determined instead of universal. This applies very much to the debate of religious slaughtering because religious slaughtering is the expression and materialization of a religious belief, and the debate around religious slaughtering partakes in the construction of the Muslim Other in the Netherlands.

This turn to *actions* rather than *values* is especially relevant for the second chapter of my thesis, in which the topic of religious slaughtering will be discussed. Even though Mahmood does not discuss the topic of religious slaughtering, she does explain the importance of bodily religious practices within Islamic thought¹².

Mahmood uses the concept of "positive ethics" to offer an alternative to the hegemonic Kantian perception of the relationship between actions and ethics. Positive ethics is an approach "in which the particular form that ethics takes is not a contingent but a necessary aspect of understanding its substantive content" (Mahmood, 2005, p. 120). Rather than seeing actions as a contingent of ethics, they are

"a necessary means to understanding the kind of relationship that is established between the self and structures of social authority, and between what one is, what one

¹² Even though Mahmood does not focus on the traditions and customs around meat within the Islam, her research is relevant to mine because she too looks at culture and identity within a nation. Also, in topics such as the role of women within Islam, their position too has often been criticized by the West and appropriated to construct Islam as a backwards religion in relationship to the secular West, are mentioned and served as an inspiration for this research.

wants, and what kind of work one performs on oneself in order to realize a particular modality of being and personhood" (p. 120).

Where Butler and Haraway see how ethics are in a reciprocal relationship with societal and cultural structures -both constitute, and are constituted by, each other- Mahmood also takes actions into account on both a group and individual level. Even though she looks at individuals within a religious group, her research shows how "ritualized behavior is one among a continuum of practices that serve as the necessary means to the realization of a pious self, and that are regarded as the critical instruments in a teleological program of self-formation" (p. 128). Thus, she problematizes the distinctions between actions and ethics, and between the individual self and the collective. I will look deeper into Mahmood's concept of "positive ethics" in the next chapter and relate it to the debate of religious slaughtering in the Netherlands.

This thesis will be based on Butler's and Haraway's perception of ethics to argue that there are most likely no transcendent, abstract, fixed ethical values as such "out there" but that our perceptions of morally right and wrong are products of the manner in which we as people relate to each other. Also, ideas of ethics are not seen as an innocent product of our time and culture but as ideas that have powerful consequences within the material world. Following this line of argument, culture and ethics are inseparable since are inextricably linked to each other in their formation and effects.

ETHICAL IMPERIALISM

Within my thesis, I want to explore where postcolonialism and ethics meet. This will be done by the use of the concept *ethical imperialism*. With ethical imperialism I refer to the process in which imperialism represents a "flow" of power where different cultures meet and in which ethics is used to regulate this power, while at the same time being formed by these power structures.

As much as colonialism was about expanding land and capital, there has always been an ideological incentive as well. Of course one can ask whether the ideological reasons were really a fundamental reason for colonizing or rather an excuse to legitimize colonization. It cannot be denied, however, that it was a large part of the colonial enterprise (Loomba, 2005). This is also true for the Dutch colonization (Locher-Scholten, 1981).

Even though the colonial era has, for a large part, ended, the idea of cultural and thus ethical superiority has not. Therefore, I apply the concept of ethical imperialism to the multicultural society in my thesis because it is in the multicultural society that ethical

imperialism can be recognized on a smaller scale. This makes it more comprehensible while at the same time representing global relations too.

MULTICULTURALISM IN THE NETHERLANDS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

THE COMING INTO BEING OF THE CURRENT DUTCH MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

In the previous section, I explained how my thesis combines ethics and imperial power structures in the concept of ethical imperialism. In this part of my thesis I will look at how ethical imperialism developed in the Netherland over the last sixty years. I discuss the emergence of cultural difference as a central topic within the Dutch political climate and how this development reflects in the different policies towards migrants. Also, this part of the thesis investigates the implications this had for different cultural groups that arrived at different times and under different circumstances, to explain the different positions they inhabit now within Dutch society. This will underline the transition to neo-racism within the Netherlands.

Dutch immigration can be roughly divided into three waves. After the Second World War, the Netherlands slowly gave up their colonies leading to the first streams of migrants. From the mid 1950s until the 1960s people from the former Dutch Indies, Indonesians and Moluccas moved to the Netherlands. They were mainly the local inhabitants who fought on the Dutch side and against the Japanese army during decolonisation. Halfway during the 1960s, immigrants from the former colonies in the Antilles and Suriname started to migrate to the Netherlands too. At the same time, the Netherlands attracted guest workers from Southern Europe, Turkey, and Morocco. The last big wave of migrants arrived during the 1980s. These were mainly asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia and from African countries (Vasta, 2007, p. 715-716; Schalk-Soekar, Vijver & Hoogsteder, 2005, p. 535).

As the migrants changed, so changed the policies and attitudes towards the migrants. This is closely connected to the circumstances under which they arrived and which migrants were deemed to be welcome and which were not. I will first look at the first wave of migrants, not only because chronologically they were the first significant group of migrants to arrive in the Netherlands but also because their position in the Dutch society was very complex and changed a lot within the first decade of their arrival.

Two factors played a crucial role in the policies that were directed to the migrants from the former Dutch colonies. First is the pillar system on which Dutch politics were based at that time and which still has effects on current-day politics. Second, and this applies mainly to the migrants from Indonesia and the guest-workers, the idea that most of these migrants would eventually leave again was key.

THE PILLAR-SYSTEM

The pillar system in the Netherlands is grounded on the principle of different cultures living together in the Netherlands. The different cultures on which the pillar system is founded, have mainly been connected to Christianity. Different forms of Christianity have always been represented in the Dutch society; Roman Catholicism in the South, Protestantism in the North (which can also be divided in Lutheritarian, Reformed, and Dutch Reformed). These, and other communities such as the Jews, liberals, socialists, and humanists, were institutionalized in separate state structures, known as pillars. Schools, health care, and such instances were all regulated within their own pillars. In this way, the state could remain neutral and was obliged to treat all the communities in the same manner (Entzinger, 2006, p. 3). Pillars allowed the Dutch citizens to be both divided and united by religion (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2009, p. 13). In this sense, the political parties were part of something bigger than just politics. "From the cabinet minister down to the lowest manual worker, everyone was part of one of the pillars that held up the edifice of Dutch society, and all the real or potential conflicts between the pillars were negotiated by the gentlemen who stood at their pinnacles" (Buruma, 2006, p. 48).

At first, the migrants got their own place within this system. They could rely on their own community for arrangements amongst each other and preserve their own group identity and culture. Also, they could send their own representatives to the government (Vasta, 2007, p. 716). On the one hand, this approach appears to be fairly tolerant because it allowed the migrants to maintain their own cultures. Yet, the risk of *ethnization* or *minorization* was already a proposed critique at that time because of the emphasis on difference. Some politicians expressed the concern that by approaching migrant groups differently from the hegemonic group, difference would only increase between the majority of citizens and the newcomers. It has been argued that "[d]uring pillarization, respect for the 'walls' between the pillars had become more important than the respect for the content of the pillars" (Ghorasi, 2014, p. 110).

Also, the objective was that most migrant groups would leave the Netherlands again, which, for example, applied to the Moluccan society in the Netherlands. The Moluccans always supported the Dutch troops when it came to maintaining Indonesia a Dutch colony even if the citizens of other islands resisted. In Java especially there was a lot of resistance. After Indonesian independence, the Indonesians did not let the Moluccans return to the Moluccas, their native islands. So, the Moluccans moved to the Netherlands hoping to be able to return soon to their place of origin once the political situation had diffused (Buruma, 2006, p. 12-13). The same was expected of the migrant workers, as explained in the previous section of this chapter.

In this sense, Ghorashi explains, the pillar-system also appears to advocate "indifference and passivity". This has had several consequences. She argues that:

"This type of multiculturalism (...) defines otherness as essential and something interesting and exotic. In this sense, this approach is an essentialist one as well, and can be defined as categorical thinking. As a result, 'allochthonous' people are often extolled in practice, mainly because they are allochthonous. If migrants are largely seen as completely different, this does not result in an increasing trans-ethnic involvement and interaction, but rather in a blind spot toward the manifold possibilities and talents of migrants" (2014, p. 110).

So, even though the pillar system may seem to be the embodiment of tolerance at first sight, it already laid the foundations for antagonist feelings from the hegemonic white part of Dutch society towards racial and cultural others.

RESISTING RACISM

On the one hand there was emphasis on difference because the migrants were strongly encouraged to maintain their cultural practices in the early approaches of the streams of migrants after the 1950s. On the other hand, difference was always central within the way the Netherlands dealt with the migrants.¹³ This was most likely related to the recent history of the Second World War during the first migrant waves. This was perceived as a very dark page in Dutch history, especially because the Netherlands had a reputation of being tolerant towards Jews compared to other European countries (Gans, 2014). Although most people probably did not want nor supported what happened to the Jewish Dutch citizens under the Nazi occupation, there was neither much active resistance. This was one of the reasons that "[a]ltogether 71 percent of all Jews in the Netherlands ended up in death camps, the highest percentage in Europe outside Poland" (Buruma, 2006, p. 19). This affected the attitude to the immigrants in the early sixties in the following manner:

"The Holocaust had taken place in the lifetime of many who now had responsibility for the political and economic institutions of liberal democracy. Against this background, to oppose multiculturalism was to demonstrate a lack of humanity. It was not merely a moral duty to combat prejudice against disadvantaged minorities; it was a badge of honor" (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2009, p. 2).

¹³ For an interesting perspective from the (Indonesian) migrant's side on moving to the Netherlands and building a life there, see Willems (2003).

The treatment of the migrants reflected the fear of repetition of practices similar to the Jewish Holocaust. Therefore, expressing any forms of criticism on those of a different race was socially unacceptable, especially in public.

Around the 1970s and 1980s the government and the migrants came to realize that the migrants from the former colonies would not be returning to their home countries. In response the *ethnic minority policy* was introduced in 1983 (Vasta, 2007, p. 716; Entzinger, 2006, p. 4). This policy was a continuation of the old pillar system but now it had become more institutionalized to suit the specificity of the migrants.

During the 1980s the Netherlands suffered from an economic recession and it became more and more difficult for the once so welcomed guest workers to find jobs. In reaction to this, a new policy was created: the *integration policy*. The aim of this policy was to "encourage" immigrants to participate in the social and especially economical spheres of the Dutch society by force. Especially language played a big role within the new regulations.

It was during this period that cultural difference between immigrants came to play a role within the perception of migrants. Buruma describes that both the migrants from the former colony of Suriname and the migrants from Morocco and Turkey suffered from the declining economy and the unemployment rates were high amongst both groups. Yet, there was a different discourse about the two groups within Dutch politics and society:

"They [the Surinamers] always speak Dutch, excel at soccer, and by and large have been moving steadily into the middle class. Like the West Indians in Britain, they are not universally welcomed, but are still recognized as an exotic yet integral part of the national culture.

The same is not true of the guest workers and their off-spring. Like the Moluccans, these men were not regarded as immigrants. Their stay was supposed to have been temporary, to clean out oil tankers, work in steel factories, sweep the streets" (2006, p. 20-21).

This quote addresses multiple issues concerning Dutch multiculturalism¹⁴. Yet, the message that is most relevant for this research is that already during the 70s we see that the Arabic immigrants, those who come from places that were not once colonies of the Netherlands, were given a different position within the Dutch society.

¹⁴ Think for example of the position of sports in the Netherlands, the perception of migrants as "exotic", or about why the Netherlands needed guest-workers in the first place

At first the main goal was to separate the private from the public within the policies that were developed around integration. Culture was supposed to be part of private life but in order to fully participate in public, capitalist life, immigrants should be able to speak Dutch and know about Dutch culture. In the 1990s, *Inburgeringscursussen* [integration courses] were introduced to teach immigrants Dutch language and culture and were made obligatory, even if they were not necessarily that successful. It must be said though that unemployment did decrease among the immigrants in the Netherlands although it is not certain whether that was thanks to new measures or because of the booming economic situation in general (Entzinger, 2007, p. 5-6).

What is very striking about this new approach towards immigrants is that the responsibility of integration was fully put on them. If they did not live up the new standards, they were denied citizenship and/or had to pay large fines (Vasta, 2007, p. 718). Yet, the courses that were supposed to "help" the migrants integrate were very disorganized and not aimed at the personal needs of the migrants (Vasta, 2007). Also, there was hardly any space for the voices of the migrants themselves. Instead, most conversations took place without them (Entzinger, 2007, p. 7).

Within the integration policy, there was already a shift to be detected from acceptance and even encouragement of cultural difference towards an attempt to regulate the lives of the immigrants. Even though cultural difference was still looked upon as something that was accepted in the private sphere, feelings of dissatisfaction already became expressed towards the position of the migrant within public civil life. Also, migrants were approached as depending on the Dutch government and the welfare state. At the same time, structural and institutional racism that contributed greatly to higher unemployment rates and lower education for the second and third generations of migrants was denied by the government and in the larger part of the public discourse. These factors led to migrants never being perceived as fully functioning citizens, from the start (Ghorashi, 2014, p. 113).

A NEW MILLENIUM: A GLOBAL AND NATIONAL TURNING POINT

During the 1990s and 2000s the emphasis shifted even more towards cultural difference as a negative factor within the Dutch society. The motivations for this shift can be traced back to both a national and an international level. On a global level, 9/11 played an important role as well in the construction of the Islam as a backwards and dangerous religion. Huntington's (1996) *Clash of Civilisations* became immanent. Within the Netherlands, new figures, such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Pim Fortuyn¹⁵, and Theo van Gogh¹⁶, became prominent in the media in

¹⁵ For more information about Pim Fortuyn and his death, see: Buruma (2007); Eyerman (2001, p. 111-144); Entzinger (2007, p. 8-9)

owing to their opinions and critiques of the Dutch immigrants and the previous and current policies towards the multicultural society.

I argue that Hirsi Ali, Fortuyn, and Van Gogh, all three in their own way attributed to the construct of religious others, and Muslims in particular, as fundamentally different and less progressive, as "traditional" Dutch society. This emphasis on cultural difference as incompatible is also repeated in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. All three emphasized the importance of the Dutch value of liberty. Both Hirsi Ali and Fortuyn expressed their voices within politics. Fortuyn even started his own political party. Where Hirsi Ali mainly criticized the Islam for degrading women (Buruma, 2006, p. 4; Ghorasi, 2014, p. 109), Fortuyn's rhetoric mainly focussed on the Islam as a threat to the Dutch tolerance of homosexuality (Buruma, 2006). In contrast to Hirsi Ali and Fortuyn, Van Gogh was not a politician but a filmmaker and columnist. Van Gogh became both popular and controversial when he started to criticize the Jewish Dutch population in a very politically incorrect way¹⁷. After having been charged and found guilty of anti-Semitism, Van Gogh changed focus to criticizing Muslim Dutch citizens and Islam in general in a similar manner (Gans, 2014, p. 85-86). Yet, what all three shared was that they reduced the Islam to "backwards and religious cultural practices" (Vasta, 2007, p. 726) to explain inequalities that are present within and between all members of the Dutch society. The deaths of Fortuyn and especially Van Gogh were interpreted as a confirmation by many of their followers that the Dutch values of tolerance were indeed threatened by Islam¹⁸.

The critiques of Fortuyn, Van Gogh, and Hirsi Ali were portrayed in the general media as saying what everyone had been thinking but was afraid to say out loud. After racism had been seen as something that should be avoided at all costs, now people like Fortuyn, Van Gogh, and Hirsi Ali expressed the idea that everyone has the right to criticize ethnic

¹⁶ For more information on Theo van Gogh and his death, see Buruma (2007); Eyerman (2001, p. 111-144)

¹⁷ For example, Van Gogh accused his Jewish colleague Lean de Winter, and Jews in general, of marketing Jewish suffering during the Shoah. Next to this he publicly talked about thinking of writing cartoons about the gas chambers, and made offensive jokes about the gas chambers during the Shoah as well. Most of his "critiques" used a rhetoric of provocation, sick jokes, and pornofication. For more information see: Gans (2014, p. 85-86).

¹⁸ Both were murdered within two years of each other. Fortuyn's murder was a white Dutch man who saw Fortuyn as a threat to society because of his radical views towards Islam, and as a threat to the well-being of animals, since Fortuyn wore a lot of fur clothes and wanted to make the laws for the fur industry less strict. The media later depicted Fortuyn's murderer as a radical left-winged animal activist although the murderer's connection to left-winged organizations concerning the murder are most likely non-existent. Van Gogh was murdered by a Muslim man which was especially interpreted by the media and anti-Muslim movements as a confirmation that Islam was a threat to the freedom of speech in the Netherlands. See Buruma (2006) and Eyerman (2001, p. 111-144).

minorities, even if it might offend them. Philomena Essed called this phenomenon "entitlement racism" (Essed & Hoving, 2014, p. 14). Entitlement racism fits in the neo-liberal ideology that individual expression is more valuable than collectivity and solidarity.

Within the embracing of critiques of minorities, culture became a central topic. Entzinger (2006) explains that this led again to a shift in the perception of what a "good migrant" was. Now, institutional participation was not enough anymore. Migrants were supposed to fully adapt to the Dutch language and culture, which stood in contrast to the aims of the early multicultural goals set by the government:

"The cultural dimension had gained renewed significance as a factor in the incorporation process, but the policy objectives had become diametrically opposed to those of the days of Minorities' Policy: assimilation to Dutch mainstream culture, rather than preservation of the communities' cultural identities" (Entzinger, 2006, p. 14).

After the murder on Pim Fortuyn, Dutch politics towards multiculturalism had changed completely. Of course, not all political parties supported this, but it did signify a new position towards immigrants that is still present within perception of migrants by several parties and a large part of the Dutch population. Also, the un-integrated migrant became even more constructed as the Muslim migrant.

The most influential populist party today in the Netherlands continues this ideology. The PVV, Partij van de Vrijheid [Freedom Party], and its leader Geert Wilders, strongly focus on national identity. With "national" they refer to the white, Judeo-Christian part of the population. In the next section of this thesis, the PVV and its position in Dutch politics are discussed to a greater length.

Within Dutch politics and new policies aimed at multiculturalism and integration the neo-liberalist ideology also became more prominent. Nowadays, immigrants are not only denied citizenship when they fail the integration exams but they are responsible for paying the courses and exams themselves. Since the tests are outsourced to private companies, the costs of 420 euros are not subsidized and thus have to be paid by the migrants themselves (Leeuw & Wichelen, 2014, p. 351). Before this *inburgeringstest* aspiring migrants have to watch the film *Coming to the Netherlands* in which the equality of men and women, toleration of LGBTs and their right to marry, and secularism are very much emphasized¹⁹. Next to this, "honor killings, possession of arms, female circumcision, and domestic violence" (Leeuw &

¹⁹ These "rights" are not approached critically in the film but simply assume that these equalities and rights are facts, rather than looking at how sexism, LGBT-discrimination, and neo-Christian values are still present in Dutch society.

Wichelen, 2014, p. 339) are condemned. Not only is this problematic because it implies that *all* aspiring migrants have to be taught these values this explicitly, it also suggests that by becoming Dutch citizens, these migrants are given the gift of freedom. It follows the idea that migrants are stuck in a collective culture that imposes (wrong) values upon them while choosing for Dutch values would naturally be an act of free choice (p. 340). What makes *inburgering* even more racist is that not all foreigners are obliged to take the test. Migrants from "the EU, the European Economic Community, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, South-Korea, and the US" (p. 344) are excused. The reason for this, as the Secretary of Justice argues, is that these "concerned people from countries that are socially, economically, and politically comparable to European nations" thus repeating the idea that especially migrants of colour²⁰ are fundamentally different from Dutch people. All in all, the current "policy discourse reflects a 'neo-conservative ideology' (...), and a public discourse that has become more inflammatory. Integration is presented as a one-way process-immigrants should integrate into Dutch language, culture and history" (Vasta, 2007, p. 725).

What is interesting to note, is that during these developments racism in the Netherlands is still generally denied or seen as something that individuals *do* rather than something that is institutionalized. In her article "From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands", Vasta (2007) explains that the lack of recognition for everyday practices of racism is closely related to institutionalized racism. She refers to this as "cooperative systems forming part of the ruling apparatus' (Essed, 2002b, 205). Thus, the power of the dominant group is sustained through its structures and institutions (...), indicating marginalization of ethnic minority groups" (p. 728). Negative experiences in education or the labour market for example, are also included under this.

Vasta explains that institutional racism is currently expressed in the Netherlands in two different forms. The first is "the routine discrimination in terms of policies and programmes that do not achieve their goals" (p. 719). Because the integration programs are thought of in a uniform manner, the needs of the different groups of migrants are not taken into account, leading to the programs being very ineffective. Vasta argues that

"If language courses and vocational programmes to help migrants find jobs are still failing after so many years then we would have to look at how racist practices and attitudes, usually not perceived as racist, are embedded in a society's institutions and practices, hidden in everyday common-sense structures" (p. 729-130).

²⁰ The integration test is designed to specifically target migrants from countries of people of colour (Leeuw & Wichelen, 2014, p. 340).

I would like to argue that having uniform programs is already a sign that the immigrants who have to follow the programs are reduced to a homogenous group from the start. There is no room for recognition for the specificity of different groups but the differences of members within the same cultural groups also go unrecognized.

The second form of institutional racism discussed by Vasta is "linked to the systematic negative outcomes in the labour market and education" (p. 30). Even though "[l]ack of individual qualifications may be a reason for the first generation and older migrants who consistently experience high unemployment rates" (p. 730, emphasis in original) it are "structural factors" (p. 730, emphasis in original) that allow higher rates of unemployment and lower education to influence the second and third generation migrants chances during their lives.

The construct of "the immigrant" to one specific type of person allows a construct of non-responsibility of the Dutch State and society towards the migrants. The ignorance of other structural factors such as class and education in the debates on the high unemployment rates of immigrants again feeds the idea of full responsibility on the migrant's side whereas the rest of Dutch society can claim innocence. These complex relations do not only allow for the reduction of "the migrant" to one specific type of migrant, leaving no room for the heterogeneity amongst migrants, but also allows blaming migrants without critically looking at the responsibility of the rest of the nation.

JEWS IN CONTEMPORARY DUTCH SOCIETY

So far, this chapter has discussed to a great length how Muslim Dutch citizens in particular were constructed as fundamentally different from the white "native" part of Dutch society. Yet, Muslims are not the only ones affected by the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Un-sedated slaughtering is also allowed for Jewish communities in the Netherlands, and thus, they were also invested in the debate.

Even though anti-Semitism might seem less present in the Netherlands than anti-Islamic feelings, it is still present nonetheless, Evelien Gans (2014) argues in her article "'They Have Forgotten to Gas You!'; Post-1945 Antisemitism in the Netherlands". I would like to use Helen Fein's definition of anti-Semitism here, and seeing it as:

"a persisting, latent structure of hostile beliefs toward *Jews as a collectivity* manifested in *individuals* as attitudes, and in *culture* as myth, ideology, folklore, and imaginary, and in *actions*- social or legal discrimination, political mobilization

against the Jews, and collective or state violence- which results in and/or is designed to distance, displace or destroy Jews as Jews" (Fein in Gans, 2014, p. 73).

Anti-Semitism has been present in the world for a very long time but I want to focus here on anti-Semitism after the Holocaust, since this would be most relevant in relationship to the contemporary debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. As explained earlier in this chapter, since the Second World War and the Shoah, the Dutch were very invested in avoiding something similar ever happening again in the public discourse. Yet, the lived reality was often very different for the Dutch Jewish citizens. This was expressed both explicitly, for example during football matches and the remark "Ze zijn vergeten je te vergassen [They have forgotten to gas you]" (Gans, 2014, p. 72) that was regularly expressed during brawls, and implicitly, via secondary anti-Semitism. Because simply by existing, the Jews were the embodiment of "the awkward, inconvenient memory of Auschwitz and of the national and European crime committed against the Jews" (Gans, 2014, p. 84). At first, this did lead to a taboo on anti-Semitism but the feelings of guilt towards the Shoah later led to accusations of Jews for capitalizing on their grief. Later, the public figure Theo van Gogh, who has been discussed earlier in this chapter, repeated the entitlement-racism discourse and expressed the desire and right to be able to criticize the Jewish Dutch population. After being found guilty of anti-Semitism he later started to focus on Muslim Dutch citizens as opposed to Dutch liberalist values (Gans, 2014, 84-86).

During the last twelve years or so, a lot of attention has been drawn in the media of Muslim antagonist expressions towards Dutch Jews. Gans thinks that this could be partially connected to the current Israel/Palestine debate, but even more so:

"Engaging in antisemitism, paradoxally, actually points to their integration in Dutch society. Youngsters, many of whom feel connected and disconnected from two cultures [family country of origin and country of birth] and who experience anti-Muslim discrimination, may want to hit the West in its weakest and most vulnerable spot: its ingrained ideas of what is 'good' and what is 'bad'" (p. 93).

In this sense, anti-Semitism becomes a manner to express what especially Muslim youngsters experience themselves. Also, it could be seen as an act of resistance; if the Islamic religion is befouled, one of the current core values in the Netherlands, a presumed cautiousness of anti-Semitism, will be befouled as a reaction.

Anti-Semitism has never really disappeared in the Netherlands; at most, it was put in the background after the Shoah due to feelings of shame and guilt (Gans, 2014). The reason I wanted to draw attention to this, is because it is relevant for the analysis of the debate on un-

sedated religious slaughtering in the next chapter of this thesis. The idea that Jews do not experience racism in the Netherlands, be it from Muslim or non-Muslim citizens, is wrong. Thus, the position of Jewish people in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering is worth taking into account as well when discussing imperialist and racist structures.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has set the foundations for the research on un-sedated religious slaughtering. First, my approach towards ethics, based on the works of Haraway, Butler, and Mahmood, has been explained. The second part of this thesis looked at the position of ethics in the discourse on Dutch multiculturalism. Within the Netherlands we see a development towards the naturalization of culture within the different political approaches towards immigrants in the last sixty years. The emphasis has been put more and more on the responsibility of the migrants to take part in Dutch society and also on their failure of doing this. It is because *they* hold on to different cultural and ethical values, *our* multicultural society does not live up to the ideals *we* set. The construction of the innocence of one group and the guilt of the other, has been one of the concerns in Haraway's works, as I outlined in the previous part of this chapter. It is in this way that migrants are constructed as the *Other* while the standards they need to reach to be included in, or at least accepted by, the hegemonic group are unattainable because they keep changing. The focus on the difference between norms and values that are emphasized in current populist politics reinforces the power differences and hierarchies between the hegemonic and minority groups. Cultural difference is used as a reason to legitimize racist practices, and the hegemonic cultural values are constructed as superior to those of the migrants in the Netherlands.

In the next chapter, I connect these developments to the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. I argue that the debate started from the assumption that "traditional" Dutch culture, meaning the idea of a shared value system by mainly white people who have lived for multiple generations in the Netherlands, is better than of other cultures, in this case of Muslim and Jewish Dutch citizens. This attitude was also adopted towards the treatment of animals. Whereas the wrongness of the meat industry in general was acknowledged, a superiority of treatment of animals in the regular slaughtering process over that in un-sedated religious slaughtering was taken for granted.

CHAPTER 2:

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE NETHERLANDS

INTRODUCTION

So far, this thesis has offered a political and cultural background of multiculturalism in the Netherlands since the 1950s. I have argued that there has been a shift in the discourse around cultural difference and the position of cultural values within Dutch society. Whereas cultural difference was once seen as desirable, or at least tolerated in the Netherlands, now the hegemonic ideal is that all Dutch citizens should assimilate to the hegemonic culture. In this process, two things happened. First, different cultural groups, be they "Dutch", "Muslim", or "Jew", were reduced to homogenous groups and both the differences and overlaps -for example the combination of being a Dutch Muslim citizen- between people within these groups were hardly acknowledged. Secondly, the supposed superiority of Dutch culture was expressed within the political debates. Because of the supposed superiority of Dutch values over those of others, a space was created for ethical imperialism. By enforcing the values of the hegemonic part of society onto minority groups, hierarchy between groups was maintained because certain values are constructed as superior to others, leading to the constant reaffirming of the hegemonic group being superior to the minority groups.

This research looks at how these ideas were manifested within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Within this debate, the idea of freedom of religion and religious practices intersects with the moral standards concerning animals. This thesis uses the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering to see how this happens and what the role of animals is within ethical imperialism. This chapter looks into how religious slaughtering was represented in Dutch political discussion between 2006 and 2012²¹. Even though religious slaughtering was one of the many topics addressed during this period and treated as less urgent than, for example, the question of benefits and disadvantages of the European Union, the financial crisis, or immigration policies in general, there is still considerable material to be discussed. I would like to argue that exactly because there were so many other issues that needed to be discussed, and un-sedated religious slaughtering seems to be such a minor topic next to these larger issues, it is a worthy topic of investigation. What is it about this topic that made it gain such a relatively big role in the last eight years in Dutch politics?

Multiculturalism is not only a central topic in Dutch politics and society, but is

²¹ Due to limits of time and words and the richness of the material I found related to this topic I had to make some limitations in the material I work with based on what I found most relevant within this proposed time frame.

influential on a global scale. Within political debates, multiculturalism usually refers to both the normative meaning of the term and multiculturalism as an ideology, and the gap between these two meanings is then the topic of discussion. Also, even though religious slaughtering is not discussed on a global political level to a great extent as such, environmental and animal well-being has been at the heart of some debates. By looking at how these topics intersect, I hope to open up a space for more productive debates in which the topics of cultural difference and animal rights will not be overshadowed by each other and certain (post)colonial power structures can be recognized so that alternative modes of thinking can be created.

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the most prominent manners in which the topic of religious slaughtering has been discussed and situate it within the political situation of this time and country. In the next chapters, the position of religious slaughtering is placed within a broader framework in which I look at more global structures of power that, as I argue later, both shape and are shaped the discourse on different cultures and the position they give to animals in their frame of thinking.

Different views towards the position of animals, and thus towards the ethical guidelines in which they should or should not be treated, are also reflected in the perception of animals in the meat-industry. In general, un-sedated slaughtering is illegal in the Netherlands but in order to guarantee freedom of (practice of) religion, the law makes an exception for kosher and halal meat.

As explained in the first chapter of this thesis, animals hold different positions in different cultures and societies. Because of this, the difference in treatment of animals can be appropriated to emphasize a hierarchical difference between cultures themselves. Dutch culture has Judeo-Christian roots. Christianity does not offer any guidelines when it comes to the consuming of meat. Since the Bible has been interpreted in such a way that animals were perceived to be subordinate to humans, slaughtering was simply seen as a necessary means to obtain meat. This does not mean that Dutch culture follows no guidelines as to which animals can or cannot be eaten²² or that Christianity did not offer any guidelines as to how to treat animals; after all, they were still creatures of God. Yet, when it comes to the slaughtering of animals the Bible gives no guidelines as to how to approach this except for allowing the practice in the first place. The lack of a religious heritage of slaughter practices is one of the reasons that led to the sedation of animals during their slaughtering in European countries with neo-Christian roots (Animal Sciences Group [ASG], 2008, p. 1-2).

²² Even though they do not write about the specifically Dutch situation, for more examples on the different positions of animals in Western society see Elder, Wolch, and Emel (1998) since their examples to illustrate the complexities concerning consumption of animals that are also recognizable in the Dutch society.

My thesis focuses on how the practice of un-sedated religious slaughtering²³ was portrayed in Dutch politics. Since I want to look at how the discussion represented both the religious groups and the animals, and how these two groups were related to each other and to "Dutch" culture, I want to emphasize that I do not want to portray Muslims and Jews as homogenous communities and acknowledge that some do support or tolerate the sedation of the animals for meat consumption while others do not even eat meat at all. Yet, I do think it is important to realize as well that for some, eating meat from animals that are slaughtered un-sedated does matter and their freedom of practice of religion could be at stake in the debates on the freedom of un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Also, the extent to which Muslims and Jews are portrayed as either a homogenous or heterogeneous group within the recent debates on religious slaughtering is taken into account later in this chapter and this thesis in general.

The framework I use to see how un-sedated religious slaughtering intersects with the position of animals in Dutch society is inspired by Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel (1998). In their article "*La Pratique Sauvage: Race, Place, and the Human-Animal Divide*" they explain the different ties to both human- and animal-linked racialization. They explain that "[a]nimal bodies can be used to racialize, dehumanize, and maintain power relations in three key ways" (p. 82). With power relations, Elder, Wolch, and Emel mainly refer to racial, postcolonial relations that maintain white supremacy²⁴.

²³ Islam and Judaism do follow guidelines as to how to slaughter the animals that are meant for consumption that are written in either the Koran or Torah. In general, both require the animal die from bleeding to death from a cut through their throats. The cut is supposed to be executed with a sharp knife that cuts the carotid in order for the animal to die quickly and then lose consciousness. There are some difference between the guidelines prescribed by the Koran and Torah. In general, interpretations of the Koran have led to several guidelines; amongst which that the animals who are to be slaughtered should face Mecca, the butcher should be Muslim, and should say the words "bismillah Allahu akbar [In the name of Allah, the greatest]" (ASG, 2008, p. 2). Also, pigs are not allowed to be eaten or to be in contact with the animals that are allowed for meat-consumption. Yet, it should be noted that the Koran gives no direct rules when it comes to the slaughtering of animals and that there are many different adaptations of how the Koran is interpreted in relationship to slaughtering.

The Torah is stricter than the Koran in the rules concerning the slaughtering of animals for consumption than the Koran. A special knife is needed and the person using the knife to slit the throat of the animal should have had special training (ASG, 2008).

Another form of religious guidelines concerning eating that requires religious slaughtering next to Kosher and Halal eating, is *Jhatka*. This religious diet has to be followed by Sikhs but this form of slaughtering is not practiced in the Netherlands (ASG, 2008) and will thus not be discussed any further in this thesis.

²⁴ It should be noted that the scholars I address in this thesis, unless explicitly stated otherwise, and myself are very aware of the constructedness and changeability of "race" and the associated terms such as "whiteness". Yet, for the purpose of actually writing this thesis,

The first of the three most significant manners in which animal bodies are used to maintain the above-mentioned power structures is that "animals serve as absent referents or models for human behavior" (p. 82). In other words, placing certain humans at the same level of animals by treating them in a *dehumanizing manner* is a powerful tool to subjugate others and maintain one's position of power. Secondly, "people are dehumanized by virtue of imputed similarities in behavior or bodily features and/or associations with the animal world in general or certain animals in particular" (p. 82). This way of using the concept of the animal to maintain hierarchical differences between different groups of people²⁵ works on a more conceptual level.

It is the third manner of using animal bodies that Elder, Wolch, and Emel describe to maintain postcolonial power relations that is most central in this chapter and the rest of this thesis. These are the "sorts of practices on animal bodies (...) that can constitute powerful weapons for the devaluation and dehumanization of people of color" (p. 83). Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin (2010) call this "animal-linked racialization" (p. 137) and I will use this term too to describe the practice of condemning certain behaviours by humans towards animals that lead to the devaluation of these human lives.

The reason that animal practices serve as such a powerful tool to create difference and racialization is that "they serve as defining moments in the social construction of the human-animal divide" (Elder, Wolch & Emels, 1998, p. 73). The context in which the animal-related practices take place, determine whether certain human behaviour towards animals would be deemed acceptable or not. There are five factors that define this normalization of practices, namely species, the reason for doing harm, the social location of the human actor, the method used to cause the suffering of the animal, and the location in which the practice takes place (p. 84-85). These factors are part of the construction of accepted and unaccepted behaviour of humans towards animals²⁶.

Within contemporary, Western, multicultural society the above-mentioned construction of difference based on what *is* or what *is not* considered as an acceptable treatment of animals becomes even more complicated. As Elder, Wolch, and Emel explain:

this terminology has to be used, because even though racial difference may be a construct, the material consequences are real.

²⁵ Elder, Wolch, and Emel do not only talk about human racialization based on skin colour here but also about female and queer bodies.

²⁶ For example, in the Netherlands, cows can be butchered for the purpose of gaining meat in a slaughterhouse by a butcher, and this is generally accepted. Yet, if I, a gender studies major, would slaughter a dog in my garden, to sell its meat, this would be disapproved of by the larger part of society and by law.

"During much of (pre)history, the pace of such culture contact was relatively slow, allowing both host and newcomer groups to adjust. (...) With the economic globalization, escalating geopolitical instabilities and conflicts, and vast international population flows that characterize the postmodern condition, the "empire" has come home. Newcomers from a wide variety of radically different environments and cultural landscapes are suddenly living cheek by jowl. Typically, immigrants must move into the territories of a more powerful host community. Adjustment possibilities are foreshortened" (p. 86).

Within my thesis, it is this process I want to investigate. Elder, Wolch, and Emel also discuss two more forms of "Othering" within the multicultural society based on animal-linked racialization, namely the exotification of the imaginary places of origin of the migrants and holding migrants responsible for action in their supposed "countries of origins". In this sense, animal-linked racialization and human-racialization works in both ways. The practices of humans towards animals are seen as backwards because they differ from the norm. It is because people of colour are already associated with being backwards, be it consciously or unconsciously, due to a long colonial history, this leads to their differing from norm as being perceived as "bad" and "backwards" rather than neutrally different.

The first part of this chapter gives a brief overview of the Dutch political system. It explains different Dutch parties as well as the election and governmental system will be explained. The basic premises of the parties are addressed, as well as a recent shift that took place in Dutch politics that changed the traditional division between the Left and Right.

The second part of this chapter will look at how religious slaughtering was addressed in Dutch politics between 2006 and 2012. Because there is so much material to work with, this part of the chapter is divided into several subsections. Also, the general media analysis will only focus on the elections of 2012, after the topic of religious slaughtering became a political issue due to a proposed law that would ban un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. First, the origins of the debate on religious slaughtering are explained. After this, the debates within the House of Representatives are analysed to see how political parties and politicians dealt with this topic outside of the pressure of elections. The voting for and against Marianne Thieme's proposed law in the House of Representatives is also addressed here. Subsequently, this chapter looks at the covenant that was put together by several parties, not only governmental but also representatives of for example religious groups and labourers in the meat industry in general. The fourth topic is the manner in which the debate was presented in the written programs of several Dutch political parties. Finally, I will look at how religious slaughtering was presented in the television debates prior to the elections of 2012.

Since this debate took place after the Senate refused the law change, Thieme's new stance towards the law is especially of interest.

DUTCH POLITICS

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy and laws are constituted and maintained by a democratically chosen government. In principle, every four years, citizens over the age of eighteen can vote for representatives in parliament (tweedekamer, 2013a). Even though the parliament consists of two branches, namely the Eerste Kamer [First Chamber or Senate] and the Tweede Kamer [Second Chamber or House of Representatives], most attention is generally paid to the elections for the House of Representatives²⁷. The members of the House of Representatives hold the power to write law proposals and debate related topics, while the Senate can actually accept or reject law proposals and thus holds a more controlling position. The Senate cannot propose laws itself.

During the elections for the House of Representatives, 150 seats are divided between several parties depending on the percentage of the votes they receive nationally. Even though over twenty parties are electable, in practice only about ten parties will actually get one or more seats in the House of Representatives. Since the remaining parties have no political power, I will only discuss parties with seats in parliament between 2006 and 2012 in this thesis²⁸.

²⁷In the Netherlands, there are no direct elections for the Senate. Instead, citizens with voting rights can elect representatives for the Provinciale Staten [States Provincial]. These representatives then decide who will be part of the Senate (Tweedekamer, 2013b).

²⁸ During 2006 and 2010 there were ten parties with seats in the Parliament. The Socialistische Partij [Socialist Party, referred to from now on as SP] is the most socialist party with seats in the parliament. GroenLinks [GreenLeft] is also known as a left-winged party that prioritizes environmental issues. The Partij van de Arbeid [Party of Labour, referred to from now on as PvdA] is the largest left-winged party and is less radically left than the previous ones. The largest right-wing party is the Partij voor Vrijheid en Democratie [Party for Freedom and Democracy, referred to from now on as VVD]. Democraten '66 [Democrats '66, referred to from now on as D66] are in between these parties in the middle of the spectrum. Another large party is Christen Democratisch Appel [Christian Democratic Appeal, referred to from now on as CDA], which represents the many Christian strands that are present in Dutch society (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2009, p. 14). Next to these parties, there were four more parties in parliament during 2006 and 2012, even though four of them held only up to five seats each. During the last nine years, the Partij Van de Vrijheid [Party of Freedom, from now on referred to as PVV] gained a lot of popularity. It is a populist party that holds strong anti-Islam views. It aims to represent the ordinary citizen that, as party politicians argue, has been neglected by elitist politics. Christen Unie [Christian Union, from now on referred to as CU] follows the Bible stricter than CDA. The Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij [Politically Reformed Party, from now on referred to as SGP] follows the Protestant tradition very closely and is known for their very culturally conservative

Because so many parties compete during the elections, and the seats are divided according to the number of votes that the parties receive, chances of one party obtaining a majority of seats are slim. Therefore, parties must form coalitions and the remaining parties will be in the opposition. Of course, parties in the opposition do not necessarily have to oppose the law proposals of the coalition, and this can vary per party per proposal.

I want to note that during the last years, a shift has taken place in the categorization of Left and Right in the Netherlands. Even though a trend in the success of new-rightist political parties in Europe can be detected, this does not mean that these parties are right winged in the traditional sense of being liberalist on economical matters. It could be argued that in Western countries postmaterialist and neoliberal values such as self-attainment and individual liberty are beginning to occupy the centre stage where previously the focus was mainly on resources and social classes (Koster, Achterberg & Waal, 2012, p. 4). The New Right parties are "driven not only by xenophobia and skepticism about immigration, but also by feelings of political discontent" (Koster, Achterberg & Waal, 2012, p. 4) and thus also develop economical agendas that can reflect socialist ideals at the same time. Thus, the New Right can hold socialist economical views while also holding authoritarian views on cultural issues such as migration and multiculturalism.

The discourse surrounding migrants has seen significant change during the last century; while migrants were first encouraged to preserve their own cultural identity, this is now something that is held very much against them by some political parties and parts of Dutch sentiment in general. Successful integration is increasingly seen as "loyalty and identification with 'Dutch values and norms'" (Entzinger, 2006, p. 10). Since the early 2000s, several populist parties and public figures have expressed specific discontent towards Muslim citizens in the Netherlands who were thought to be the least integrated. It was not until the rise of populist parties such as the LPF, of Pim Fortuyn, and PVV, that cultural assimilation was seen as a deterrent for integration.

Parties such as the PVV and the VVD emphasize the responsibility that migrants, be it first, second, or even third generation, should take to properly integrate and contribute to society. This shift in what it means to be integrated can be considered quite problematic because migrants who used to live up to the requirements that were asked of them, now no longer do so. However, since the rhetoric that is used by many critics in the discourse on multiculturalism does not acknowledge that the meaning of "integration" changes constantly, migrants are put in a rather precarious position in which they can be constructed as radically different from the hegemonic white, integrated part of Dutch society.

approach. Finally, Partij voor de Dieren [Party for the Animals, from now on referred to as PvdD] focuses mainly on animal issues, as the name implies.

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN DUTCH POLITICS

Religious slaughtering was part of both the election campaigns of three political parties as well as of debates that took place in the House of Representatives concerning law proposals and their implementation in between the elections. In this part of my thesis, I will look into the position of religious slaughtering in these three party programs and, using a postcolonial approach, will position them in the broader debate on multiculturalism.

As said before, I interpret postcolonialism not just as the era after colonization but also as a process of maintaining and shifting power relations. There are many forms in which these power relations are controlled, and I will now look at how ethics related to animals are used to emphasize differences between different cultures in the Netherlands.

The aim of this chapter is to show *how* religious slaughtering is represented and placed in the election campaign instead of how it *should* be addressed. Examining how ethical views of religious slaughtering are positioned within discourses on animal rights and multiculturalism will thus be my main aim in this analysis.

ORIGINS OF THE DEBATE: PROPOSED LAW CHANGE IN 2008

On September 2, 2008, Marianne Thieme presented a law change²⁹ to the House of Representatives that would make it obligatory to sedate animals before they are slaughtered, including when they are slaughtered according to Kosher and Halal guidelines. The proposed change was that:

"1. The third section shall read:

3. the slaughtering of animals according to the Israelite or the Islamic rite is allowed only if the slaughter animals are sedated prior.

2. In the eighth paragraph, the phrase "without prior stunning" is replaced by, referred to in the third paragraph,." (Thieme, 2008, own translation³⁰).

²⁹ This change would affect law 44 from the "Gezondheids- en welzijnswet voor dieren [Law of health and wellbeing for animals]".

³⁰ Original: "1. Het derde lid komt te luiden:

3. Het slachten van dieren volgens de israëlitische of de islamitische ritus is slechts toegestaan, indien de slachtdieren voorafgaand zijn bedwelmd.

2. In het achtste lid wordt de zinsnede "zonder voorafgaande bedwelming" vervangen door: , bedoeld in het derde lid,." (Thieme, 2008)

From this moment onwards, all translations in this thesis are done by myself unless stated otherwise.

Within the House of Representatives, this change was accepted with 116 votes against 30 on June 28, 2011. Yet, the Senate refused the change with 21 votes for, and 51 against the change (eerstekamer.nl, n.d.). The main reason mentioned by the representatives of the members of GroenLinks in the Senate to vote against the proposal-Thieme was that "een algeheel verbod op onbedwelmde rituele slacht [betekent] een vergaande inperking van de vrijheid van godsdienst [a complete prohibition of the un-sedated religious slaughtering means a severe curtailment of the freedom to practice religion]" (eerstekamer.nl, 2012). GroenLinks pointed to the possibilities of a less severe change of law and therefore refused to vote for Thieme's proposal.

The representatives of D66 in the Senate gave the following reason for voting against Thieme's proposal:

"The fraction of D66 does not mainly, and especially not only, care about the possibility of being in conflict with the freedom of religion but about the wider principle of not wanting to support a law that could be in conflict with treaty and fundamental values. But the purpose of the motion in general does improve animal wellbeing. This is something we can only endorse" (eerstekamer.nl, 2012³¹).

Here, even though D66 does not necessarily claim to hold freedom of religion as their main priority, they do express that Thieme's proposed change of the law relating to un-sedated slaughtering would go against the laws that are there to protect this freedom.

On June 5, 2012, a new covenant was proposed by several parties, namely the Secretary of economics, agriculture, and innovation Hans Bleker³²; the "Vereniging van Slachterijen en Vleesverwerkende bedrijven [Union of Butchers and Meat-processing companies]", represented by A. G. M. Wetgeest; the "Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid [contact organ of Muslims and Government]", represented by ir. R. Bal; and the "Permanente Commissie tot Algemene Zaken van het Nederlands-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap [Permanent commission of General Business of the Dutch-Israeli church community]", represented by J. M. Hartog and R. E. Vis. Later in this chapter, this covenant is looked at into greater detail,

³¹ Original: "Het gaat de fractie van D66 niet vooral en niet uitsluitend om de mogelijkheid van strijdigheid met de godsdienstvrijheid maar om het bredere beginsel van het niet willen steunen van wetgeving die mogelijk in strijd is met verdragsrechtelijke en fundamentele waarden. Maar de strekking van de motie in het algemeen verbetert het dierenwelzijn. Dat kunnen wij alleen maar onderschrijven" (eerstekamer.nl, 2012).

³² Referred to in the covenant as "De staatssecretaris van Economische Zaken, Landbouw en Innovatie, dr. H. Bleker, handelend als bestuursorgaan en als vertegenwoordiger van de staat der Nederlanden" (Bleker, 2011).

since it is in this proposal that the views of different groups involved in the discussion, come together.

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

On April 13, 2011, the first large debate on Thieme's law proposal to ban un-sedated religious slaughtering was held (Tweede Kamer, 2011a). This debate was continued on June 22, 2011 (Tweede Kamer, 2011b). This subchapter looks at these two debates and the voting results that followed these debates.

In the debates in the House of Representatives a number of topics arose related to Thieme's proposal. The main debate revolved around who could speak for whom, and whether the debate should be approached from an animal rights perspective or a religious tolerance perspective. Most of these topics are related to dichotomies, either the conservation or the deconstruction of them. Also, whether parties were for or against Thieme's proposal, both sides would deconstruct or preserve different dichotomies and use this to argue for their standpoints.

Because the debate of April 13th focussed more on formalities, I would like to start with a topic that was more central in the second debate of June 22nd, but nevertheless also present in the debate of April 13th, because during this debate the ideologies of parties played a bigger role. The main discussion was on what mattered most, freedom of religion or animal wellbeing. Within this topic, different dichotomies were constructed and deconstructed. First, there was the question of whether animal rights and religious freedom are necessarily opposed to each other. Also, some party members emphasized that Muslims, Jews, and those who are consumers of meat from the regular meat industry, should not be seen as three homogenous groups but that there are differences between the members of these groups too. Finally, other politicians also emphasized the difference between animals and their position in the food industry. Within the deconstruction of these categories, other foundations, such as science and ethics, were also addressed. I want to note that these debates are not separated but all related to each other and discussed in an intertwined manner but I had to draw these distinctions for the purpose of making this analysis a bit clearer.

So, to what extent are animal rights and religious practices portrayed as incompatible within the discussion between the political parties in the House of Representatives? Already in the first debate, Thieme made explicitly clear that religious slaughtering did not originate from bad intentions towards animals but the opposite:

"Traditionally, these rituals had the intention of obtaining meat from which the blood had almost completely disappeared and the suffering of the animal had

been minimized. This friendly intent can be attributed to these rites without any doubt" (Thieme in Tweede Kamer 2011b, p. 11³³).

Several parties, and especially D66, PvdD, CU and GroenLinks, try to deconstruct the idea of the incapability of animal rights and religious practices too. During both debates in the House of Representatives on 13 April and 22 June 2011, Stientje van Veldhoven from D66, for example, pointed out that the language used in the discourse on un-sedated religious slaughtering is crucial and words such as "torture" should be avoided (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 15). In the second debate, Tofik Dibi from GroenLinks emphasized that most religious leaders in the Netherlands are more than willing to work towards ways to improve animal wellbeing during the slaughtering process because they point out that the goal of religious slaughtering was to improve animal wellbeing (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 115). Even though both parties in the end voted in favour of Thieme's proposal, both recognize that (Islamic and Jewish) religion do not stand in opposition to animal wellbeing.

The CU voted against Thieme's proposal and used the possible combination of religious freedom and animal wellbeing as a reason for this. Esmé Wiegman-van Meppelen Scheppink for example ended one of her pleas with the following:

"Lastly. It is an oversimplification to say that the right to a freedom to practice religion is subordinate to the suffering of animals. The debate on constitutional rights will be narrowed down to the choice this way: you are in favour of animal wellbeing or in favour of religious freedom. (...) The improvement of animal wellbeing can coexist with freedom of religion, for example, by thinking about forms of humane slaughter along with the religious communities" (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 112³⁴).

Not all parties expressed the possibility of religious freedom going hand-in-hand with animal rights. Dion Graus of the PVV implied in his language that religious slaughtering is equal to purposely choosing to harm animals. He also affirmed his belief when asked to use a different

³³ Original: "Van oudsher hebben deze rituelen de bedoeling gehad om zowel vlees te verkrijgen waaruit het bloed vrijwel geheel was verdwenen, als waarbij het geslachte dier zo min mogelijk lijden had gehad. Deze diervriendelijke intentie kan men zonder enige twijfel toeschrijven aan deze rituelen" (Thieme in Tweede Kamer 2011b, p. 11).

³⁴ Original: "Tot slot. Het is een simplificatie om te stellen dat het recht op een vrije geloofsbeleving ondergeschikt is aan het lijden van dieren. Het debat over grondrechten wordt op deze manier verengd tot de keuze: u bent voor dierenwelzijn of voor godsdienstvrijheid. (...) Het verbeteren van dierenwelzijn kan goed samengaan met godsdienstvrijheid door bijvoorbeeld met de geloofsgemeenschappen mee te denken over vormen van diervriendelijk slachten" (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 112).

language by several members of different parties as an argument for why he did not change his language and kept using words such as "martelen [torture]", (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 15; Tweede Kamer 2011b, p. 132-133), and "dieren mishandeling [animal abuse]" (Tweede Kamer 2011b, p. 132-133). Especially Oswald van Dam and Sientje van Veldhoven, representatives of D66, kept asking Graus to change his language, because it was so important to them to emphasize that Jewish and Muslim butchers and consumers do not have the inherent intention of harming animals.

What is important to note is that PvdD, GroenLinks, and D66 used the argument that religion and animal are not mutually exclusive to show how values progress and therefore banning religious slaughtering would be a logical step in the improvement of animal wellbeing. Yet, the Christian parties, CA, CU, and SGP, used this argument to show that no value is absolute and therefore completely banning un-sedated religious slaughtering would prohibit the freedom of religion. Also, they expressed the concern that the groups who would be influenced by Thieme's law proposal would not have the right to make these decisions themselves when Thieme's law would be accepted. For this reason, especially Henk Jan Ormel, the representative of CDA, does maintain that this debate is on what should be valued more, the right to religious freedom or animal rights (Tweede Kamer, 2011, p. 102) while the other parties mostly maintained that prohibiting un-sedated religious slaughtering did not fundamentally lead to a violation of the freedom of religion.

The dichotomy that was maintained during the discussion is that of animals/humans, in which humans are positioned as non-animals with a significantly higher moral value. I would like to bring in a more conceptual analysis of the supposition of animals as morally less valuable than humans. I believe that this can situate the conceptual position of animals in relation to humans and offer a new perspective of both the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering and the bio industry, as well as propose new questions that are of relevance in relation to these practices.

The question of the human/animal divide has been discussed by different philosophers for a very long time but this thinking took a new turn around the early 2000s. In 2002, French poststructuralist philosopher Jaques Derrida published an article called "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)". In this article he steps away from the Cartesian tradition and argues for a new understanding of animals. The starting point for rethinking human's relationship with animals, for Derrida, was an encountering with his cat. He writes that after stepping out of the shower on day, naked of course, he realized that he was seen by his cat and, more than that, that his cat had a gaze. Starting from this realization, Derrida contemplates the Western philosophical history in which the difference between human and animal has been so central. He criticizes earlier philosophers who both denied and misunderstood the animal, since they reduced the animal to a "*theorem*, something seen and

not seeing” (Derrida, 2001, p. 383).

While not speaking negative about earlier approaches towards rethinking animals on a conceptual level, for example as in Kafka’s zoopoetics, Derrida does argue that philosophers and theorists should go back to the real animals. Derrida (2002) himself does this by writing about “ a real cat, truly, believe me, a little cat. (...) An animal looks at me” (p. 374). Starting to think from his own cat, this real animal, Derrida argues, is the manner to overcome the human centred philosophical thought that has led Western philosophy so far. By looking at real animals, one comes to realize the importance of asking different questions and learn that many of the assumptions that earlier philosophers and their philosophies held, may make sense on a theoretical level but not when applied to the real animals.

By asking ourselves different questions, Derrida argues, we have to acknowledge the rights of animals:

“Thus the question will not be to know whether animals are of the type *zōon logon echon*, whether they *can* speak or reason thanks to that *capacity* or that *attribute* implied in the *logos*, the *can-have [pouvoir-avoir]* of the *logos*, the aptitude for the *logos* (and logocentrism is first of all a thesis regarding the animal, the animal deprived of the *logos*, deprived of the *can-have-the-logos*: this is the thesis, position, or presupposition maintained from Aristotle to Heidegger, from Descartes to Kant, Lévinas and Lacan). The *first* and *decisive* question will rather be to know whether animals *can suffer*” (Derrida, 2001, p. 396).

Derrida wants us to stop thinking *for* animals, and instead look at *how* we see them. This relates back to Butler's ideas of *precarious lives* as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. Rather than trying to *know* the animal, Derrida thinks about how our thinking about the animal determines their position in society. He argues for a reconsideration of how we, as human animals, determine the destinies of non-human animals. Derrida introduces the term *l'animot* to think “neither a species nor a gender nor an individual, it is an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals” (Derrida, 2001, p. 409). By rethinking the animal, not in a sense of anthropomorphism by which we transform the animal into a human being in our thinking, but by rethink ourselves as animals, a possibility is opened for more equal relationships between human and non-human animals (Derrida, 2001, p. 405-409).

Derrida's critique of the hegemonic conceptualization of animals by philosophers, which reflects in the political position of animals in society, is very applicable to the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Derrida's analysis offers tools to recognize what is happening to animals within society. First, he argued that the conceptual position of the animal within Western thought, in which the animal has significantly less moral value

than the human, is not naturally given but the result of a long tradition of thought and practice. Second, to step away from this relation between humans and animals, Derrida changed the question from what animals can or cannot do in order to change how we see them, to "can they suffer"? Since the answer is "yes" to this, a new relating between humans and animals seems appropriate.

Within the House of Representatives, the question on how humans can and should treat animals and whether it is even possible for humans to understand animal suffering was asked as well. The value and ambiguities of scientific evidence for this also came back several times and was the central topic of the first debate (see especially: Tweede Kamer, 2011a; and Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 105). Difference amongst animals and their suffering was acknowledged by the politicians during the debates several times. The different positions of animals that are used for consumption but which were not born as product of the meat-industry as well as the difference between animals from the bio-industry were discussed too during the political debates. Still, within the general argument animals are perceived to be a coherent group and the emphasis was on whether humans can know animals or not, instead of critically looking at the suffering humans put animals in the meat-industry to. In the third chapter of this thesis I will come back to the position of the animal in contemporary Western philosophical thought, and see how Derrida's article opened up a discussion that could offer new insights as to how to approach the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering.

Related to the deconstruction of the opposition between the freedom of religion and animal rights, is the reduction of the Muslim community, the Jewish community, and "the rest" to homogenous groups. The recognition of difference between the members of these groups are also used both as arguments for and against Thieme's law proposal. Thieme herself starts introducing her proposal with an anecdote of Joop Jacobs, a Jewish man who sent her a letter explaining how horrified he himself is by un-sedated kosher slaughtering (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 2). Also, it is mentioned that most Halal meat in the Albert Heijn, a major Dutch supermarket chain, comes from animals that were sedated during their slaughtering. For this reason, most opposing parties argued that a complete ban of un-sedated slaughtering would not be necessary since the groups that value un-sedated religiously slaughtered meat are so small that it does not compare to the general atrocities that take place in the bio-industry. On the other hand, the parties supporting Thieme's proposal argue that completely banning un-sedated slaughtering already fits within the ideals of most Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens. This statement is problematic for two reasons. First, Thieme, who herself is neither Muslim nor Jewish, speaks from her position of power for minorities who hardly have a say in the space where the debate is held. Second, she later contradicts herself by proclaiming that "[v]ertrouwen op zelfregulering middels convenanten is naïef, juist omdat de betrokken religieuze organisaties de vaste overtuiging hebben dat zij niet willen verdoven

[relying on self-regulation by means of covenants is naive, precisely because the religious organizations hold the conviction that they do not want to sedate]" (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 140). Here it shows that despite her acknowledgement of religious people who are against the traditional manner of un-sedated religious slaughtering, she still sees this as exceptions rather than as a norm. Also, she is convinced that sedated slaughtering is always superior to un-sedated slaughtering to the extent that the latter should be completely banned.

No politicians explicitly propose to end the bio industry in general. Graus, of the PVV, even states that "daar [het eindigen van de bio-industrie] gaat de staatssecretaris niet over; daar gaan wij ook niet over. Dat is wereldwijd aankoopgedrag [Ending the bio-industry is beyond the power of the state secretary; that is also beyond our power. That is global consumer behavior]" (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 135). Within this statement, the relationship between citizens and animals is represented in a very ambiguous manner. When it comes to un-sedated religious slaughtering, the government should intervene. Yet, when it comes to the animal-industry in general, the responsibility is placed in the hands of the consumer. This created dichotomy between consumers of religiously slaughtered meat and consumers of regular meat has different implications. Whereas the regular consumer can be trusted with the responsibility of choosing what is right, the religious consumer cannot. This leads to the exclusion of the consumer of un-sedated religiously slaughtered meat from the term "consumer" in general.

The regular meat industry and its consumers were also taken into account in the debate. A lot of critique was expressed to the opaqueness of the meat industry, which affects both religious consumers and non-religious consumers. What is interesting to note is that the opaqueness of the meat-industry is portrayed as something that should only be discussed when it affects all consumers. Yet, when it affects consumers of halal meat, the industry in itself is not approached critically but the questionable labelling of meat as halal is used as an argument against un-sedated slaughtering.

The problem of capitalist structures that affect the wellbeing of the animals in the meat industry very negatively during both their lives and their slaughtering was discussed several times. Again, these arguments were used both for and against the proposed ban on un-sedated religious slaughtering. On the one hand, PvdD argued that this only calls for improvement and banning un-sedated slaughtering completely is a first step towards this. CDA, CU, and SGP on their turn argued that un-sedated religious slaughtering was not the most animal un-friendly manner to end the lives of animals in the meat-industry and thus found the ban not adding to animal wellbeing (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 16; 17-19; Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 129; 130; 135).

Next to this, the changing values of the parties themselves are mentioned, especially the SGP is asked about this. Thieme argued that the SGP was actually the only party to vote

against the current exception that allows un-sedated religious slaughtering while now they make a strong case to maintain this allowance. The SGP sees this as a starting point to discuss the changeability and dynamics of values in general. They argue that the SGP has always been at the forefront of animal wellbeing due to biblical prescriptions but also recognizes that sometimes ideas should change depending on how certain groups of people and animals and the like are treated (Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 118-119).

It should be mentioned that throughout the debate, the Dutch foundation on which the current law system is based, is constantly referred to as a progressive, morally superior system that exceeds the religious moral system. Dutch society and its foundations are regularly referred to as examples in which the government interferes with religious freedom to protect and improve the lives of women, children, animals, and LGBT people. Both during the first and second debate, this argument is repeated, first by Thieme and later by Martijn van Dam from the PvdA (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 12; Tweede Kamer, 2011b, p. 128). Thieme, for example, says:

"I have great appreciation for your passionate plea to see if there is room to spare the cabbage and goat, to improve animal welfare, and at the same time do justice to the traditions of certain groups, small movements within the Jewish or Muslim community. However, I would like to indicate that within the tradition of the Netherlands and the system with regard to human rights, there are always limitations possible due to the fact that there are traditions that must be respected. The Netherlands is known for its emancipation policies, to give rights to women, gays, and children, and for the great importance it attaches to animal welfare; there is an increasing inter-subjective ethical sense of justice in the Netherlands, which implies that we have to treat animals differently. The government should take this social justice into account. It can never be that religious beliefs are absolute and that these must continue to take precedence. Considerations have to be made. The government should take a neutral position in this" (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 11³⁵).

³⁵ Original: "Ik heb grote waardering voor uw hartstochtelijke pleidooi om te kijken of er ruimte is om de kool en de geit te sparen, om dierenwelzijn te verbeteren en tegelijkertijd recht te doen aan tradities van bepaalde groeperingen, kleine stromingen binnen de joodse of islamitische gemeenschap. Toch zou ik hier willen aangeven dat binnen de traditie van Nederland en de systematiek met betrekking tot de rechten van de mens, er altijd beperkingen mogelijk zijn vanwege het feit dat er ook tradities zijn die gerespecteerd moeten worden. Nederland staat bekend om zijn emancipatiebeleid, om het geven van rechten aan vrouwen, homo's en kinderen en om het grote belang dat het hecht aan dierenwelzijn; er is een steeds groter wordend intersubjectief ethisch rechtsgevoel in Nederland dat inhoudt dat wij op een andere manier moeten omgaan met dieren. Dat maatschappelijke belang moet de overheid

It should be noted that even though this is a quote of Thieme, Van Dam made a similar argument. Thus, the next analysis is not aimed at Thieme's ideas directly but as an illustration of the assumptions on which the debate over un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands is based. Thieme's statement implies different things. Thieme takes traditions as natural rather than socially constructed. She does not seem to take into account that equality between men and women or between heterosexual and homosexual people has not always been seen as self-evident. Nor does Thieme seem to take into account that there is still discrimination in the Netherlands based on sex and sexuality and that this is something that does not only happen by religious people towards non-religious people but amongst people from all backgrounds. She reduces discriminatory practices to a religious problem. This has two consequences. First, there is a lack of recognition for structural discriminatory practices by Dutch society in general, which also includes white citizens. Instead of seeing equality between different groups of people as values in progress, Thieme does not recognize this but implies that this is part of Dutch culture. As explained in the first chapter, the idea of transcendental values is problematic because ethics are interrelated with power differences and hierarchy between people³⁶. This brings me to my second point, which is that Thieme denies the diversity between members of religious groups. Here she repeats the neo-racist discourse Balibar ([1988]1991a) describes³⁷. The idea of religion as backwards, whereas secular, and by this current day hegemonic white, Dutch society is seen as superior. Also, Thieme repeats this when she mentions the position of animal wellbeing in the Netherlands and claims that animal rights are seen as important on an "inter-subjective" sense. Leaving aside whether this is actually true or not, Thieme here reduces animal welfare to the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. By this, she excludes the part of Dutch society that argues for un-sedated religious slaughtering.

During the debate, it becomes clear that different parties use similar arguments to make different points. The complexity of the debate becomes clear and different ideas and norms feed this complexity. Yet, the idea that sedated slaughtering is superior, like most traditionally Dutch values and habits, is never denied, although some parties question whether it is actually proven that animals suffer less in the regular slaughter process than in the un-sedated religious one. Also, the complexity of the topic comes to the fore, seeing which

meewegen. Het kan nooit zo zijn dat godsdienstige geloofspunten absoluut zijn en dat die altijd maar moeten blijven prevaleren. Er dient een afweging gemaakt te worden. De overheid dient daarin een neutrale positie in te nemen" (Tweede Kamer, 2011a, p. 11).

³⁶ See chapter one for my interpretation of the use of Butler's and Haraway's ideas about ethics.

³⁷ See chapter one for an elaboration on Balibar's concept of neo-racism.

assumptions are made and undone at the same time. Yet, it is important to note that even though most participants in the debate deconstruct dichotomies in some of their arguments, most arguments in the end come down to choosing either animal rights or freedom of religion as the most important value.

Looking at the actual votes for and against Thieme's proposal to ban un-sedated religious slaughtering in the House of Representatives, the results are quite predictable. Nineteen of the votes against the proposal are from CDA, which means that almost all CDA members voted against the proposal. All ruling members of CDU and SGP, which are five people for CDU and two for SGP in total, voted against the proposal too. Three other votes against the proposal came from PvdA, who had thirty seats in total in the parliament. The last vote against Thieme's proposal came from Wim Kortenoeven, who is a member of the PVV (Eerstekamer.nl, 2011). In later news reports on Kortenoeven's unexpected vote against the proposal, his relationship to Israel and the Jewish Dutch community was given as the reason for this (nu.nl, 2011). Later, PVV's pushing for the prohibition of religious un-sedated slaughtering caused Kortenoeven and another PVV-member Marcial Hernandez to leave PVV (ad.nl, 2012; Hankel, 2012).

Kortenoeven's vote against Thieme's proposal invites further analysis for two reasons. First, Kortenoeven only justifies his vote in relationship to the freedom of the Jewish community that would be endangered by a prohibition on un-sedated religious slaughtering. The limiting consequences this law would have for the Muslim Dutch citizens who consume un-sedated religiously slaughtered meat is not taken into account in Kortenoeven's reasoning.

The second response that Kortenoeven's disagreement with the rest of the PVV evoked was that the PVV does not support Israel and the Jewish diaspora out of solidarity with Judaism but for Israel's anti-Muslim agenda. Kortenoeven was portrayed as someone who voted against the proposal because he supports the Jewish community while the votes in favour of the proposal by the other PVV-members showed the lack of true support for Israel according to certain media-narratives. As Volkskrant journalist Asher Ben Avraham wrote:

"His [Geert Wilders'] unconditional support for Israel is not motivated by a deep interest in Judaism or respect for the Jewish religious tradition. For PVV, Israel and the Jewish people are, above all else, beautiful metaphors for the struggle against Islam." (Avraham, 2011³⁸)

³⁸Original: "Zijn [Geert Wilders'] onvoorwaardelijke steun voor Israël is dan ook niet ingegeven door een diepe interesse in het Jodendom of respect voor de Joodse religieuze traditie. Israël en het Joodse volk zijn voor de PVV vooral mooie metaforen voor de strijd tegen de islam" (Avraham, 2011).

Even though it is impossible to really say whether the majority of PVV voted for Thieme's proposal out of a concern for animal wellbeing or to reject the Muslim values that are maintained by the law that allowed religious slaughtering- this could of course also differ per party member- I would argue that the aftermath of the voting against un-sedated religious slaughtering by PVV does show the assumed opposition of Islam and Judaism, which also reduces them to homogenous groups rather than groups with diversity amongst their members. Also, the reaction of for example Avraham suggests that this opposition could very much both inspire, but also be enforced, in debates on multiculturalism in which certain cultural groups are positioned against others. Finally, Kortenoeven's reaction, and that of other people who disagreed with PVV's stance in the debate because it would discriminate against the rights of Jewish Dutch citizens, implicitly shows that the discrimination against the rights of Muslim Dutch citizens by the PVV is already taken for granted and never given as a reason to turn away from PVV. Thus, discrimination against Muslims is seen as less severe than discrimination against Jews by those who turned away from PVV purely as a consequence of PVV's stance in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering.

A COVENANT AS ALTERNATIVE TO A COMPLETELY BANNING UN-SEDATED RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING

Despite the huge majority of votes of the House of Representatives to support Thieme's proposal, the votes of the Senate complicated the discussion. In the period between 2006 and 2012 it became clear that the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering could not just be discussed on a governmental level because of its complexities. In the summer of 2012, following the Senate's rejection of the proposed law change, different parties involved and affected by the debate came together to work on a covenant to find an alternative manner to improve animal wellbeing within the religious slaughtering industry without completely banning un-sedated slaughtering (Bleker, Wetgeest, Bal, Hartog & Vis, 2012).

As mentioned before, the State Secretary of economics, agriculture, and innovation Bleker, the Union of Butchers and Meat-processing companies, contact organ of Muslims and Government, and Permanent commission of General Business of the Dutch-Israeli church community worked together in the realization of this covenant. The covenant starts with an definition of its goals, namely to optimize the wellbeing of the animal in the process of un-sedated religious slaughtering in such a manner that is compatible with the Israeli and Islamic rites, and presents itself as an alternative to Thieme's proposal.

The covenant offers both clear guidelines and suggestions for further research. Also, the covenant asks for a re-evaluation every three years. This shows recognition of both the

changing values towards animal rights and wellbeing and the fluidity of religion and religious values without using this as a reason to completely ban un-sedated slaughtering. This approach towards animal wellbeing and religion, is, in my opinion, very productive because it not only acknowledges the situatedness of the current ideas it is based on, but also turns this into workable suggestions and guidelines. In the next chapter, I will refer back to this covenant as an example and starting point to approach more and larger similar issues within Dutch politics.

The covenant did not end the discussion on religious slaughtering, as the debate continued again during the 2012 elections and afterwards. In the next part of this chapter, the change in the discussion that took place within the written programmes during the election campaigns of 2006, 2010, and 2012, which happened before Thieme's proposal was discussed in the House of Representatives and refused by the Senate, and in 2012, which took place after this, are analysed to see to what extent the Senate's critique on the restriction of religious freedom was taken into account.

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE PARTY PROGRAMS OF PVV, PVD, AND CDA

Three different parties, namely the PVV, PvdD, and CDA, addressed religious slaughtering in their party programmes during one or more of the election campaigns in 2006, 2010, and 2012. How are cultural values connected to religious slaughtering in the written campaigns? As said before, the PvdD and PVV have had religious slaughtering on their political agendas for at least the last eight years and CDA addressed the topic in their programme of 2012 too. I first look at how the PvdD addressed this topic and how it is situated within their overall ideals.

The 2006 booklet of PvdD starts with a general introduction of their ideals and goals for the upcoming term of rule. They start with the statement that "Dieren zijn evenals mensen wezens met gevoel en bewustzijn en dienen daarom op een respectvolle wijze behandeld te worden [Animals are, like humans, creatures with feelings and consciousness and for this reason should be treated in a respectful manner]" (PvdD, 2006, p. 4). They continue by stating that humans are presenting a threat to the well-being of animals and the eco-system in general and that the party will propose different strategies to overcome this. It then outlines five points in how the PvdD want to see this occur, namely "Rechten voor dieren [rights for animals]" (p. 4), "Verbetering dierenwelzijn [improving animal well-being]" (p. 4), "Vermindering van het gebruik van dieren [Decrease in the use of animals]" (p. 6), "Een duurzame omgang met het eco-systeem [A sustainable handling of the eco-system]" (p. 7), and finally "Een aangename samenleving [A pleasant society]" (p. 8).

Both the name of the party, Partij voor de Dieren [Party for the Animals] and the

order of these five points, starting with animals and ending with society in general, clearly illustrate the main concern of this party: animals. It clearly sees animals as distinct from humans in this manner and do not address the intersections of discrimination against animals with discrimination against human minorities³⁹. In the last point of the introduction, "A pleasant society", the booklet also expresses the party's opinion on migration:

"Immigration should take place in a controlled manner. The population should theoretically not increase because of this. Immigrants are expected to learn the language and social skills to participate in Dutch society themselves. The government will ensure that this is done and offers help in this. If high birth-rates, unemployment, and poverty are the causes for migration, the government should fight these causes on an international level by giving help, spreading information, and work on international treaties" (2006, p. 8-9⁴⁰).

The PvdD does follow the general idea within Dutch politics that integration is mostly the responsibility of the migrant while adding that the Dutch government should offer help, without specifying which kind of help. They do offer possible solutions to decrease the number of migrants by looking at the global level to see the causes that lead to migration and suggest to undo these causes by fighting "high birth-rates, unemployment, and poverty" in the countries from which migrants migrate. PvdD shows an awareness of structural global problems, even if Thieme's proposal might repeat structural racist problems.

The rest of the booklet looks at specific topics, the first being "Veehouderij [Livestock farming]" (p. 11). The second point under this heading addresses the putting to death of animals in the meat-industry. The booklet explains that sedation before slaughtering is the most secure manner to avoid stress or pain for the dying animal, but that sedation does not normally happen.

First, it explains that chickens are often slaughtered un-sedated in slaughterhouses for economic reasons and because this supposedly improves the quality of the meat. Second, it criticizes the law that allows un-sedated slaughtering for religious reasons. It states:

³⁹ The third chapter of this thesis will explain this intersection to a greater extent.

⁴⁰ Original: "Immigratie dient slechts op een beheerste wijze plaats te vinden. De bevolking mag hierdoor in principe niet verder toenemen. Immigranten worden geacht zichzelf de taal en noodzakelijke sociale vaardigheden eigen te maken om in de Nederlandse samenleving te functioneren. De overheid ziet er op toe dat dit gebeurt en is hierbij behulpzaam. Waar hoge geboortecijfers, werkloosheid en armoede de oorzaken van immigratie zijn, dient de overheid deze oorzaken internationaal te bestrijden via hulp, voorlichting en internationale verdragen" (PvdD 2006, p. 8-9).

"Because other countries are less lenient in providing exceptions on their own laws, no religiously slaughtered meat is produced there. Dutch slaughterhouses are thus economically successful and export a portion of the religiously slaughtered animals to these countries. Already, in 20% of Dutch slaughterhouses they apply religious slaughtering⁴¹. Not all this meat ends up in Dutch stores as halal or kosher meat. The religiously slaughtered meat that cannot be sold as halal meat ends up as 'normal' meat in the stores. The unsuspecting consumer who thinks that he eats meat that is slaughtered sedated according to the general Dutch law is purposely misled" (2006, p. 13⁴²)

From this segment, three main points can be detected. First, because the Dutch law allows an exception on the general law that ensures sedated slaughtering, the Netherlands has become a place that provides religiously slaughtered meat to other countries too. Second, this has led to significant amounts, even though it is not exactly specified how much, un-sedated slaughtering in Dutch slaughterhouses. Finally, the "unsuspecting consumer" is a victim because there is not enough transparency in how and where this meat is sold.

Nowhere in the text is it mentioned that the problem of religious slaughtering lies only with the Dutch consumer of halal or kosher meat, although PvdD does believe that there are too many slaughterhouses who make use of this exceptional law. Furthermore, the party criticizes the meat-industry and its lack of transparency and implies that consumers who do not explicitly choose to buy meat from un-sedated slaughtered animals would inherently be opposed to production and consumption of this meat in the first place.

In the booklet of 2010, the topic of religious slaughtering is addressed in a different manner, even though the message stays the same. The last two points that I mentioned, namely that 20% of slaughterhouses slaughters un-sedated and the third point that the meat-industry is in itself not transparent, are not mentioned anymore. Yet, now it is written in their programme that:

⁴¹ Note on translation: From the manner in which this is written in the original text, it is not clear to me as a reader whether they mean that 20% of all slaughterhouses follow the religious guidelines for slaughtering *for all slaughtered animals* or for only a part of them.

⁴² Original: "Omdat andere landen minder makkelijk zijn met het verschaffen van uitzonderingen op hun eigen wetgeving, wordt daar geen ritueel geslacht vlees geproduceerd. De Nederlandse slachthuizen zijn in dit gat in de markt gesprongen en exporteren een deel van de in Nederland ritueel geslachte dieren naar deze landen. Nu al wordt in 20% van alle Nederlandse slachterijen ritueel geslacht. Niet al dat vlees belandt als halal of kosjer vlees in de Nederlandse of buitenlandse schappen. Het ritueel geslachte vlees dat niet als halal vlees afgezet kan worden, komt als 'gewoon' vlees in de winkels te liggen. De argeloze vleeseter die denkt dat hij op basis van de Nederlandse wetgeving vlees eet van verdoofd geslachte dieren, wordt bewust misleid" (PvdD, 2006, p. 13).

"The freedom of religion and the exercise of rituals stops where the suffering of humans or animals start. Also, there are alternatives available that are already adapted by different religious communities, such as sedation" (p. 8⁴³)

This time, religion is directly addressed. What should be noted is that incorrect compliance with the regular law on sedated slaughtering is again mentioned in combination with the law and religious slaughtering, and extended to also address the fates of cows and pigs in the regular meat-industry. In this sense, religious slaughtering is presented as *a* form, rather than *the only* form, of un-sedated slaughtering.

In the 2012 election booklet, religious slaughtering is addressed twice but briefly. First, it is addressed under the heading "Aanvullende eisen transport en slacht [Additional demands on transport and slaughtering]" (p. 7) that is part of the section "Veehouderij [Livestock farming]". Yet, it is mentioned in the same point that addresses the suffering of animals in general because the party feels that the existing rules are not followed strictly enough. The second time religious slaughtering is mentioned, it is under the heading "Vrijheid van meningsuiting en godsdienst [Freedom of expression and religion]" (p. 31). Before the clear-cut statement that the exception for religious slaughtering should be banned in Dutch law, it is stated that "[d]e Partij voor de Dieren hecht zeer aan de individuele vrijheid van burgers, maar deze mag geen inbreuk maken op de vrijheid en het welzijn van anderen [the party for animals values individual freedom of citizens very much but this should not offend the freedom and well-being of others]" (p. 31). The rest of the programme expresses a concern for refugees in the Netherlands but integration for migrants is not discussed at length. It is only briefly stated that integration policies should be formed to also ensure the equality of women and LGBT people within religious groups. The programme does not speak about non-Western cultures only but also rejects exclusions and inequalities of LGBT people and women in labour, education, and marriage in general. This shows an awareness of still existing structural problems that are not blamed on particular cultural groups in the Netherlands but should be approached in general.

From this analysis it becomes clear that in the last three election programs of the PvdD religious slaughtering was addressed in different manners, with the religious side

⁴³ Original: "De vrijheid van godsdienst en het kunnen uitoefenen van rituelen houdt op waar lijden van mensen of dieren begint. Er zijn bovendien alternatieven voorhanden die in verschillende religieuze gemeenschappen al worden toegepast, zoals bedwelming" (PvdD, 2010, p. 8).

gaining a more central role⁴⁴. In 2006, it is mentioned that un-sedated slaughtering is part of the kosher and halal traditions but the "problem" of religious slaughtering is placed in a broader framework of the Dutch meat industry and other European law systems concerning slaughtering in general. In 2010, religious slaughtering is no longer specifically defined as halal or kosher but does give religion a more central role in the discussion. By 2012, the debate on religious slaughtering is not only found under the topic of the meat industry but is also recognized as part of the debate on religion in Dutch society.

During the election time of 2012, Thieme's proposed law had already been rejected by the Senate due to the conviction of a majority of Senate members that it would go against the law that ensures freedom to practice religion. It is interesting to note that at this point, PvdD also acknowledges the position of religion in the debate.

PVV, like PvdD has addressed religious slaughtering since 2006, before it even had official election programmes⁴⁵. In 2006, under the heading "Dierenrechten/dierenwelzijn [animal rights/ animal wellbeing]" the last point they write is "Strenger naleven verbod op ritueel 'thuis slachten' [Stricter compliance of the prohibition of religious home slaughtering]". Their other points, except for the first one that asks for the incorporation of animal rights into the constitution, only address animals that are kept as domestic animals.

In 2010, the PVV request a complete prohibition of religious slaughtering and also expressed a desire to end the bio-industry in general by slowly reducing it. No concrete plans as to how to achieve this goal are presented. This allows the PVV to make promises to potential voters without potentially losing any support; most people in the Netherlands will be support attempts to increase animal wellbeing but less people will be willing to eat less meat or pay more for it.

The 2012 booklet again addresses religious slaughtering and asks for it to be banned (p. 43). The program also addresses the bio-industry, stating that: "De bio-industrie heeft wat de PVV betreft zijn langste tijd gehad. De consument zal er hopelijk voor zorgen dat deze snel tot het verleden behoort. [The bio-industry, for the PVV, has had its day. The consumer will hopefully make sure that this will soon be in the past]" (p. 43). In the summary of the PVV's goals for animal welfare at the end of the section, the bio-industry is not mentioned but the desire to end religious slaughtering is (p. 45). As discussed in the previous subchapter on the discussion within the House of Representatives on the matter of un-sedated religious

⁴⁴ That religious slaughtering is always in itself religious may seem obvious because it is part of the term to begin with. Yet, in Dutch, "religious slaughtering" translates to "ritueel slachten" which would literally translate to "ritual slaughtering". Thus, in Dutch language, the term implies something slightly different than in the English language.

⁴⁵ In 2006 the PVV did not release an official party program but an election pamphlet in which they summed up a number of bullet points with ideas that the PVV represented.

slaughtering, this vision creates a difference between the religious consumer and the normative consumer. The normative consumer can take her/his own responsibility for their behaviour while the religious consumer's behaviour is such that it needs governmental intervention.

The PVV's attitude towards integration and multiculturalism, and specifically Islam, is more radical than towards bio industry. In the 2012 programme it is stated clearly: "De Islam hoort niet bij Nederland [Islam is no part of the Netherlands]" (p. 35). Under the heading "*Ons* immigratiebeleid [*Our* immigration policy]" (p. 34-37, emphasis in original), more statements on why Islam is bad for the country and what should be done about it are described.

PVV has been mentioning the topic of religious slaughtering in their programs from the start of the party's existence in 2006. In the last two election programs, religious slaughtering was addressed in combination with the bio-industry even though the PVV expresses a greater desire to actively work against religious slaughtering than against politics that work to reduce the meat industry in general. This shows for example in their expression of discontent with both but they place the responsibility for the meat industry in the hands of the consumer while wanting governmental action against religious slaughtering. Religion, and specifically Islam, plays a large role in the campaigns of the PVV. Yet, according to their campaign, religious slaughtering should be placed under the topic of animal welfare rather than under religious freedom. This neglects the problems related to the general meat industry.

Looking at the programmes of the CDA, religious slaughtering is only addressed in 2012. Under the heading of "Religie en levensbeschouwing [Religion and philosophy⁴⁶]" (p. 19), the last ideal that is expressed is that "Ritueel slachten gebeurt met zorg voor dierenwelzijn. [Religious slaughtering happens with care for animal well-being]" (p. 19). Other ideas on the position of animals in the meat industry are addressed under a completely different section, namely "land- en tuinbouw, visserij en dierenwelzijn [agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal welfare]" (p. 38-39), and ask for more effort and support to stimulate better conditions for animals in the meat industry, although no concrete alternatives are proposed.

The CDA has not to any great extent addressed animal well-being within the meat industry in previous programmes either. The most concrete thing written on the topic was in 2010 when the programme stated that livestock farming should have quality rather than profit as its main goal (p. 57-58).

It is clear that for the CDA the topic of religious slaughtering is not so much a matter

⁴⁶ Note on translation: "Levensbeschouwing" cannot be translated directly to the English language. The term comprehends something like the philosophy of life, the way in which one chooses to live their life and the values by which one makes the bigger decisions in life.

of animal well-being as it is a matter of religion. Tolerance for religious slaughtering is found in the same section as the ideas that freedom of religion is a core feature of Dutch society, that religion is important in both private and public domains, and that there is a need for interreligious dialogues. This supports my claim that the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering can be seen as reduced to the question of *either* supporting the freedom to practice religious freedom *or* animal rights, in which CDA places the question of religious slaughtering under the umbrella of religious freedom. This is not to say that CDA does not support animal rights in general or even in relation to the question of religious slaughtering. What CDA does do by placing the topic of religious slaughtering under the section of freedom of religion is taking a stance in the debate and choosing freedom to practice religion over animal rights.

Looking at the election programmes from the last three elections for the House of Representatives in the Netherlands, religious slaughtering played a role in the written election programs of three parties. During the eight years over which these programs were spread, two of the three parties placed religious slaughtering within the debate on religious freedom and diversity. For the PVV, religious slaughtering is part of the debate on animal rights. Within this debate, the party positions religious slaughtering as something that should be made illegal. Yet, other related issues such as the meat industry in general are hardly addressed at all. It is in this form of portraying religious slaughtering, that it is represented as something bad in itself, rather than part of bigger systems of wrongdoing towards animals by humans. In this sense, purposely un-sedated slaughtering becomes something culturally specific, and thus part of the creation of a discourse that positions other religions, namely Muslims and Jews, as cultures with practices that are worse than that of the hegemonic white members of Dutch culture.

The PvdD started with seeing religious slaughtering as something that should not be allowed, and positioned it in broader debates such as that of the livestock industry and even slaughter processes in general. Yet, the growing emphasis on un-sedated slaughtering as something that is specifically part of religious practices and that brings suffering to animals, without actively acknowledging that this already occurs in the regular meat industry, repeats the same patterns as PVV, albeit to a lesser extent. Also, in the 2006 campaign, it was suggested that non-kosher and non-halal eating consumers would be naturally against the practice of un-sedated slaughtering, implying this practice to be bad in itself. Here, the idea of cultural values as something natural is repeated.

CDA only addresses religious slaughtering in relationship to religious diversity. Instead of seeing it as something bad and related to specific cultures, CDA wants to continue to allow this practice for the sake of freedom of religion. Yet, this could be part of a more

relativist approach towards animal well-being in general, since CDA does not go into depth on their position on animal rights and the meat industry.

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE TELEVISION DEBATES OF THE 2012 ELECTIONS

In 2012, Marianne Thieme of the PvdD, Jolande Sap of GroenLinks, and Kees van der Staaij from the SGP discussed the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering on one of the bigger television debates, namely the one of *Nieuwsuur* (*Nieuwsuur.nl*, 2012), a Dutch independent television news program, which was broadcasted on September 3rd. The sentiments of the PvdD already showed from the written election programmes discussed in the previous part of this chapter, but this televised debate helps to clarify the positions of GroenLinks and SGP.

In the debate, Thieme and Sap argue in favour of Thieme's law proposal, which, by the time the debate took place, was already rejected by the Senate. Van der Staaij argues against the law proposal, using the argument that it goes against the constitution that guarantees freedom of practice of religion.

Thieme started by saying how supported she felt by the majority of votes from the House of Representatives and the assurance of knowing that this majority will probably support her again during the next ruling terms, when the membership of the Senate will have changed. Also, she believed that it was only a matter of time before she would gain the support of the Senate too. Her argument for this was that the Senate, and people in general too, still had to get used to the new position of animals in our society in which their rights were seen as important enough to restrict the freedom of religion, giving them the same weight as human rights.

Van der Staaij was, as said before, against the prohibition of un-sedated religious slaughtering but did ask for stricter rules that would benefit the wellbeing of the animals. Also, the change of the position of the SGP- in the 80s they were the only party that was against the exception of the law that they now support- was addressed again. Van der Staaij repeated the argument he also used in the debates in the House of Representatives concerning this topic, by saying that the SGP was always at the forefront when it concerns animal rights due to biblical guidelines that emphasize that animals are God's creatures as well as humans are.

After this, GroenLinks' position was articulated by Sap. She explained how, for GroenLinks, both animal rights and freedom of religious practices are held in high esteem by the party but it also wanted recognition for both the option of sedated religious slaughtering as a good alternative for the current practices, as well as the urgency of improving the *lives* rather than the moment of *death* for animals in the meat-industry.

Subsequently, interviewer brings the rejection of Thieme's law proposal by the Senate forward. GroenLinks was one of the parties in the Senate that voted in favour of the law proposal in the House of Representatives but rejected it in the Senate. Sap responded by saying that Thieme's proposal did match GroenLinks' ideals but also supported her party members in the Senate whose function is not just to represent ideals but to make sure the constitutional rights are represented, whether they support them or not.

The final turn of the debate led to the bio-industry in general where all three parties agreed that there is a lot of room for improvement here. Yet, due to the structure of the interview, this discussion is cut short.

In this television debate, the discussion that took place in the House of Representatives in 2010, before the majority of its members voted in favour of Thieme's law proposal, was repeated and most arguments were very similar to those in the earlier discussion. In addition to the previously mentioned arguments, the constitution and the role of the Senate in relation to this were mentioned as well. Sap, especially, emphasized that as much as the abolition of the allowance of un-sedated religious slaughtering matched the ideals of her party, GroenLinks cherished a greater respect for the constitution and believed that this should be held in the highest regard at all time.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has looked at how religious slaughtering has been addressed in Dutch politics and specifically related to the House of Representatives in the Netherlands. Whereas Thieme initially argued that her law proposal only aimed at improving the wellbeing of the animals that are to be slaughtered according to religious guidelines, the topic of religious slaughtering, I argue, is related to several other current issues such as animal well-being in the meat industry in general and religious diversity in a globalizing world and, in this case, multicultural society. While at first Thieme's intention seemed to be to only focus on the animal rights aspect of her proposal, as the debate progressed the religious and cultural aspect of her proposal took over a large part of the discussion. Both supporters and opponents of Thieme's proposal repeated similar arguments, both in favour of, and against, Thieme's proposal. These arguments related to the (un)know-ability of the forms of suffering of animals by human actions, the importance of not homogenising the Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens, the problem of the bio industry in relation to capitalism in general, and the fluidity of cultural values.

In the discussion, the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering was often presented as an either/or decision in which either animal rights or the right to religious freedom should

be held as more important than the other. At the same time, most politicians acknowledged that religion and animal rights do not exclude each other.

Religious slaughtering is a complex and timely topic because it is related to other debates currently being held in the Dutch political arena. Mainly the politicians opposing to Thieme's law proposal often proposed the question of religion and religious freedom. Power difference was implicitly part of the debate. For example, there were few Jewish parliament representatives and hardly any Muslim MPs.

In the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering within the political realm, what was missing mostly was *why* un-sedated religious slaughtering is important for a part of the Dutch Jewish and Muslim community. What was noticeable during the debate is that un-sedated religious slaughtering kept being portrayed as a small topic because it affects a limited number of people and animals. Both the parties that supported and rejected Thieme's proposal repeated this, by saying that the law change would not change much and that is why it should or should not be accepted. Yet, as explained in the first part of this chapter, using Mahmood's work on *Politics of Piety*, un-sedated religious slaughtering may mean much more for some religious people than just an expression of religion. Due to the lack of representatives in the parliament, there was hardly any room to express this.

Because the intertwinement of animal rights with religious values was not recognized during the start of the debate, Thieme saw religious slaughtering mainly as an animal issue; the cultural constructedness of the position of the animal in society was overlooked. This allowed for animal-linked racialization to take place. Even though the harm against animals in the meat-industry in general was addressed in the debates on a regular basis, it was still mainly portrayed as less bad than the treatment of animals in the process of un-sedated religious slaughtering. The normative practices with animals were portrayed as, so to say, more humane than those of the Jewish and Muslim cultural groups, and these two groups were reduced to homogenous groups at the same time. This implied the general superiority of the hegemonic society over the two religious minorities involved in the debate, and was several times articulated as well.

After the Senate refused the law, the reality of the intertwinement of animal rights with religious freedom in this debate became undeniable. The covenant was a reaction to Thieme's law proposal in which different parties came together to think about the future of un-sedated religious slaughtering. The next chapter of this thesis will look into strategies to rethink un-sedated religious slaughtering taking the intersection of animal wellbeing and freedom of religion and cultural difference into account.

CHAPTER 3:

RETHINKING ETHICS AND DIFFERENCE WITH THE NON-HUMAN ANIMAL

INTRODUCTION

"Let me say it openly: we are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty, and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it, in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry, livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them.

And to split hairs, to claim that there is no comparison, that Treblinka was so to speak a metaphysical enterprise dedicated to nothing but death and annihilation while the meat industry is ultimately devoted to life (once its victims are dead, after all, it does not burn them to ash or bury them but on the contrary cuts them up and refrigerates and packs them so that they can be consumed in the comfort of our homes) is as little consolation to those victims as it would have been — pardon the tastelessness of the following — to ask the dead of Treblinka to excuse their killers because their body-fat was needed to make soap and their hair to stuff mattresses with"
-J.M. Coetzee (2004, p. 65-66).

This quote from John Maxwell Coetzee's novel *Elizabeth Costello* signifies to me personally my turn towards thinking about animal rights. After having studied cultural theory for a number of years, reading this section made me realize the importance of not only looking at human cultures but the position of animals in the world as well. By now, I have gained many new insights in relation to animal rights that do not all accord with Coetzee's thoughts and ideals, and this process, which is both personal and academic, will be explored throughout this chapter. I step away from the idea that human animals are helpless creatures at humans' mercy and should thus be approached from a place of pity. Instead, with a focus on animals in the meat-industry, I argue for a more reciprocal approach between human and non-human animals wherein humans nonetheless should take a critical stance towards the current treatment of animals.

The first chapter of this thesis offered an approach to ethics as *doing* rather than *being* and positioned ethics in this understanding in the changing position of cultural differences in the Netherlands. The second chapter looked into how cultural difference is repeated in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Animal rights are central to this chapter, but at the same time they are examined in relationship to the previously discussed topics. To achieve this, I will use posthumanist theory to offer a new perspective on the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands.

Animal rights are gaining more and more ground on both a national and global scale. In the Netherlands, the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering is one of the many examples of this. Yet, as I argue in this thesis, giving rights to animals does not mean that equality between humans and animals can be assumed. Even assuming equality between humans themselves is already problematic. Also, the inequalities between humans and non-humans can be used to widen the gap between different humans. In the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, this was not acknowledged. Instead of looking at the fundamental assumptions on which the arguments of proponents and opponents of Thieme's law proposal were based, the question of un-sedated religious slaughtering remained unsolved in that it kept being reduced to the question of what mattered most: animal rights or the freedom of religious practices. This chapter wants to intervene in this discussion by offering strategies to rethink the issues involved in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering to not see it as an either/or question but rather as a starting point to rethink the origins of the debate in the first place and offer strategies to work in such a way that might benefit both the animals as well as humans involved.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I discussed the role of ethics in the creation of hierarchal differences between cultures within the Netherlands. I have shown the construct of the so-called traditional, yet at the same time progressive, Dutch values as superior to that of non-assimilated migrant's religious values within the Dutch discourse on migrants during the last fifty years. I argued that this changing discourse allowed for ethical imperialism, in which I defined imperialism as a "flow" of power where different cultures meet and in which ethics is used to both regulate this power while at the same time being formed by these power structures. In other words, ethical imperialism is the conscious or unconscious unawareness of the relational structures that allow the coming into being of ethical values and instead constructing them as given and transcendental, which results in (unconsciously) forming and exercising power by a hegemonic group over minorities, legitimized by an assumed ethical superiority. This final chapter will look closer into how this power difference on a national level reflects and enforces difference on a global scale.

The second chapter looked at how ethical imperialism took form in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Looking at how this topic was discussed

within Dutch politics, think for example of how the discussion being held by mainly non-Muslim and non-Jewish politicians, reducing the Muslim and Jewish communities to homogeneous groups, and referring to topics in which so-called secular values were portrayed as examples in which religious groups had to give in because these ideas were out-dated, the idea of non-religious Dutch values was indeed constructed as superior without much reflection on how these ideals came into being on the first place.

Following from the previous two chapters, it might seem as if a cultural relativist approach would be the only the manner to approach society without imposing cultural values from a hegemonic culture to minority cultures. Yet, cultural relativism is quite problematic in itself as well since it does not offer any strategies of working together within a society towards improvement, and thus this is not my aim. Instead, this chapter proposes new strategies to approach the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering in a more constructive way. To achieve this, I draw upon feminist posthumanist theory, as this form of critical theory takes into account the many forms of difference in the world, such as gender, racial, class, and speciesist difference, and its relation to power, while at the same time explicitly working with difference to offer new modes of thinking in which difference is being acknowledged and undone at the same time. Even though the alternative modes of thinking that are offered by posthumanist theory might be hard to apply in the current political realm, I end this chapter with suggestions of how to take the knowledge that is produced by critical theory and apply it to the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands.

This chapter will start with an explanation of what posthumanism is and how it discusses both speciesist and racial/cultural difference. Next, I explain how the concept of power is used in this thesis and what the use of power is. Using Foucault's concept of biopower, and contemporary interpretations of this concept, I will show that power interacts on both a national and a global scale, and what power does to people in a globalizing world. Third, I look at how posthumanist thinking can contribute with new insights on the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. The final part of this chapter will look at posthumanist theory, working with thinkers such as Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, and Cary Wolfe, and use their thoughts to shed new insights on the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in relationship to rights. This chapter ends with a proposal of ways to apply the theoretical insights that are derived from critical posthumanist theory to the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering.

INTRODUCING POSTHUMANIST THEORY AND ITS RELEVANCE

This thesis has already explained the different topics, such as life/death, nature/culture, human/non-human, and religious difference, which are involved in the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering. I would like to start with the human/non-human binary and connect it to the nature/culture binary within the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering, which allows me to slowly bring in post-human theory to the debate and discuss the value hereof. Then, drawing upon the works of Braidotti, Wolfe, Haraway, and others I will bring in related topics to the debate from a posthumanist perspective.

When talking about posthumanism, the first question to ask is what posthumanism exactly is. For Wolfe, posthumanism distances itself from humanist ideology in which "'the human' is achieved by escaping or repressing not just its animal origins in nature, the biological, and the evolutionary, but more generally by transcending the bonds of materiality and embodiment altogether" (2010, p. xv). For Wolfe, the prefix "post" in posthumanism, signifies both a coming *before* and coming *after* humanism. In one sense, post refers to a *going beyond*⁴⁷ humanism because "it names the embodiment and embeddedness of the human being in not just its biological but also its technological world, the prosthetic coevolution of the human animal with the technicity of tools and external archival mechanisms (such as language and culture)" (p. xv). In other words, humans have always been posthuman in the sense that they were always already immanent and embodied, contrary to what traditional humanism argues. Posthumanism also comes *after* humanism in a more linear time frame, since it "names a historical moment in which the decentering of the human by its imbrication in technical, medical, informatic, and economic networks is increasingly impossible to ignore" (p. xv). These developments allowed for recognition of the flaws of humanist thinking.

Posthumanism offers a critique on humanist thinking. This does not mean that posthumanism in itself offers a perfect solution to the problems that are inherent in humanism. In her article "To the Dogs: Companion Speciesism and the New Feminist Materialism" Manuela Rossini (2006) explains posthumanism as "the grand narrative of technological and cultural progress that leads from hierarchical differentiation in traditional humanism, which is strongly associated with the Enlightenment, to at least the possibility and 'active utopia' of non-hierarchical difference in posthumanism". In the next part of this

⁴⁷ My understanding of "going beyond" is inspired by Hall's (1996) use of the prefix "post" as explained in the first chapter of this thesis. Wolfe himself based his understanding of the prefix on previous work by Lyotard (Wolfe, 2010, p. xv). Yet, I chose to use Hall's words here because I think "going beyond" reflects the meaning of the prefix "post" better than Wolfe's "coming before" since this implies a more linear time framework, even though Wolfe himself does not intend to do this.

chapter I will explain into greater detail how the category of the Other, that is an inextricable part of humanism and the idea of the humanist subject, is not a given category which you *are* or *are not* part of, but rather a complex system of power, privilege, and oppression.

The aim of posthumanism to step away from hierarchal thinking and human exceptionalism by turning back to immanence, embodiment, and materiality, sounds very promising and it may not seem like a coincidence that posthumanism gained foot shortly after the Second World War, a period in which modernity and the humanist idea of human nature were in crisis. This was a time in which feelings of anxiety and insecurity were very present. The critiques it offered on traditional humanism and the civilized society that went together with it, made it a worthy alternative of the once so popular humanist approach. Yet, stepping away from humanist thought after it had been so embedded in Western thinking is not without challenges. Rossini is quite critical of certain patterns posthumanist critique seems to unconsciously repeat:

"My discontents with this story rests less on the somewhat banal observation that the androcentric, ethnocentric and anthropocentric premises of traditional humanism are not dead yet, but on the observation that these premises are also haunting narrations that purport to be anti- or post-humanist, be it literature, film or the arts and the sciences more broadly. To put it schematically: posthumanist texts are often all too humanist".

In this sense, especially early posthumanist theory that focussed mainly on undoing the binary of nature/technology did not necessarily live up to its promises⁴⁸.

According to Rossini, the repetition of humanist thinking changed when posthumanist thinkers started addressing the issue of spiecicism. This turn, which Rossini calls "zoontology", offers a strategy to really think beyond anthropocentrism, as she explains:

"On the one hand, the term signifies the recognition that animals (*zoon* is Greek for 'animal') are worthy of ontological investigation or, put differently, that ontology is

⁴⁸ Hayles describes how the ideals of the cybernetic posthuman rest on four premises. The first is that life does not necessarily depend on embodiment, meaning that information transcends materiality. The second assumption is that self-consciousness is not necessary for the existence of human nature and identity. Thirdly, the human body is not set but can be adjusted and transformed infinitely by human hands. Finally, machines are a natural descendant of the human. Looking at these four assumptions, it shows that popular posthumanism still ended up supporting teleological thinking and emphasising Reason while discarding the importance of the material body. It actually continues the existing Cartesian tradition (Rossini, 2006).

not just about the ontology of the human. On the other hand, however, the term makes it clear that taking the question of the animal seriously calls into question the very being (that is, the ontology) of ontology itself; in other words, ontology is itself revealed to be a humanist approach to ethics and politics” (Rossini, 2005).

Zoontology opens up a space of thinking about lives beyond the lives that are considered human. At the same time, it emphasizes the fact that earlier philosophic thinking automatically assumed the human as research subject, excluding all that is not human.

Posthumanist theory that focuses partially on the animal-question thus offers a way to look deeper into humans' treatment of animals in general and see from which fundamental ideas these practices are rooted. In showing this, posthumanist theory recognizes the constructedness of the distinction between human and non-human animals in general, rather than taking the dualism between human and animal for granted, and the differences that follow from this distinction. This also opens up a space to rethink the material consequences of this conceptual distinction.

It is due to the power that de-humanizing has, that the binary of human/non-human is so important. First, as Manuela Rossini (2006) argues:

"If we fight racism and (hetero)sexism because we declare discrimination on the basis of specific and identifiable characteristics – such as 'black', 'woman' or 'lesbian' to be wrong and unjust, then we should also vehemently oppose the exploitation, imprisoning, killing and eating of nonhuman animals on the basis of their species identity" (Rossini, 2006).

The identity politics of speciesism is in no way different than those of other categories of oppression. But, even more, if de-humanizing people who belong to a certain identity group, and thus in a way animalizing them, is what legitimates their oppression, it would only make sense to also rethink the position of the non-human (Rossini, 2006). Again, the struggles of different minority groups are not the same but are connected because their oppression is based on "specific and identifiable characteristics" (Rossini, 2006) of different Others, that are imagined to be threat to those who, within the biopolitical sphere, are seen as (more) worthy of life.

BIOPOWER: POSITIONING THE OTHER

This thesis has shown that within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, ethical values are used as a tool to maintain power differences between the

hegemonic white, secular part of Dutch society and those who differ from this norm. Yet, the concept of "power" is very broad and even though this thesis already connected it to postcolonialism and imperialism in previous chapters, I would like to discuss my understanding of power to a greater extent here.

My understanding of power is very much inspired by Michel Foucault's introduction of the concept of "biopower". Biopower as a concept is used to refer to the third technology of power which Foucault recognized in Western history. In short, the first technology of power Foucault speaks about is sovereign, or juridical, power. Lasting from the Middle Ages until the eighteenth century, or, in other words, the pre-Modern age, power was exercised directly on the body. One could live one's life, unless the ruler actively decided to end your life as punishment. During the Modern age, which lasted from the eighteenth until approximately the twentieth century, the dominant technology of power was disciplinary power, as Foucault named it (Foucault, [1975]1995). Rather than exercising punishment directly on the body, power structures were internalized within citizens or subjects. The goal was to discipline citizens and make them confess if they had not obeyed the rules. Finally, Western society developed to a postmodern age and a society of biopower. Now power is not internalized within individuals but rather on all aspects of and over life. Instead of seeing life as something passive that is actively taken away when a rule is broken, life itself becomes something that should actively be managed. It is important to understand that none of these technologies of power replaced each other. Rather, they evolved out of each other, and in our current society, all three technologies work simultaneously (Foucault, 1978).

The philosopher and political scientist Achille Mbembe (2003), explains that Foucault's concept of biopower appears "to function through dividing people into those who must live and those who must die" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 16-17). Mbembe explains that Foucault links this distinction to the biological field, meaning that biopower does not work on an individual level of making distinctions of which person should live and which one should die, but rather that the biological in itself becomes an object of control in biopolitics. The next part of this chapter will look at how this leads to a conflict between human and animal life but I will first explain how biopower is related to race embedded within the Colonial history of the West.

According to Mbembe, the power that works according to division between life and death starts from "the distribution of human species into groups, the subdivision of the population into subgroups, and the establishment of a biological caesura between the ones and the others. This is what Foucault labels with the (at first sight familiar) term *racism*" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 17). Mbembe observes, working with Foucault's framework, that a division based on race has played an important role within Western history "especially when it comes to imagining the inhumanity of, or rule over, foreign peoples" (p. 17). In the first

chapter of this thesis, the shift from *race* to *culture* as a determining factor of difference in the contemporary globalizing world is discussed, based on Balibar's ([1988]1991a) concept of neo-racism. Later in this chapter, I look deeper into the meaning of cultural difference within a system of biopower.

Within biopower, making live is as important as making die and the making live of those who are considered worthy of this, is, as said before, an active process. Mbembe explains that this led to the construction of the Other within late Modernity:

"The perception of the existence of the Other as an attempt on my life, as a mortal threat or absolute danger whose biophysical elimination would strengthen my potential to life and security—this, I suggest, is one of the many imaginaries of sovereignty characteristic of both early and late modernity itself" (p. 18).

Now, it would be wrong to continue this thesis based on the assumption that within the Netherlands right now, racial differences lead to *actively* eliminating the lives of those who differ from the norm by a majority of society. Yet, the structures that allowed colonialism and the idea of I/We in opposition to the Other are repeated within today's discriminatory discourses, leading to violent and institutional discrimination towards minorities.

Looking at species difference, the position of the non-human animal within general Western thinking is on a fundamentally different level than the human animal. If Modern sovereignty already led to "*the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations*" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 14, italics in original), this position is certainly forced upon non-human existence, and especially those within the meat industry. Where biopower makes the distinction between me and the Other, or, between those who must live, and those who must die, the animal is always already excluded from humanity and thus not even considered as "someone" who has a right to live.

As said before, in Foucault's three stages of power, these powers add up, rather than replace, each other. Wolfe writes that under the stage of bio-power, a new subject has emerged, namely the *homo economicus*, which stands in opposition to the *homo juridicus*; the subject of law rights and sovereignty. It is within the *homo economicus* that the animalistic becomes completely in conflict with the human. The *homo economicus* found, as Wolfe describes "a new domain of 'irrational rationality'" (2013, p. 23) and turns away from sovereign power only to, eventually "give rise the regime of governmentality and its exercise of biopower, which will in turn involve new sciences and discourses (...) in short, sciences of 'populations'" (p. 23). Thus, it may seem as if a complete shift in power occurs but in reality, biopower is a continuation of sovereign power.

Within bio-politics, governmentality does not solely happen on an individual level but on all parts of life. Science is central in this. As Foucault explains, biopolitics is "a power that is not individualizing but, if you like, massifying, that is not directed at man-as-body but man-as-species" (Foucault in Wolfe, 2013, p. 23). This focus on the human as a species allows for anthropocentrism based on "the distinction between *bios* (or political 'form of life') and *zoe* (or 'bare life')" (Wolfe, 2013, p. 24, italics in original).

The distinction between *bios* and *zoe*, in which animal lives are reduced to bare life without political meaning, and thus allowing for the management of life and death (Agamben, 1998), shows nowhere as clear as in the meat-industry. The only reason these animals are produced is for them to die sooner or later. A life without purpose "is the domain of sovereignty. This being the case, death is therefore the point at which destruction, suppression, and sacrifice constitute so irreversible and radical an expenditure (...) that they can no longer be determined as negativity" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 15). It is exactly because animals' lives in the meat industry are meaningless that their deaths are meaningless too.

Yet, not only the lives and deaths of the animals are at stake. Not being perceived as specifically human is what makes a life disposable. Mbembe explains about the colonies:

"In the eyes of the conqueror, *savage life* is just another form of *animal life*, a horrifying experience, something alien beyond imagination or comprehension. (...). The savages are, as it were, "natural" human beings who lack the specifically human character, the specifically human reality, "so that when European men massacred them they somehow were not aware that they had committed murder" (p. 24, italics in original).

From this passage, we see that by being not-human, be it on a conceptual level due to race, or on the material level, by being from a different species, life and death traditionally hold much less value, or even none at all, within Western thinking than when fitting within the conceptual framework of human.

It is important to note that the savage-Other is different from the racial/cultural/speciesist Other within late Modernity. Where in late Modernity both letting live and making die are active processes, during colonization, and in the case of animals and nature, their lives were "beyond imagination or comprehension" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 24) to start with. Thus, there is a fundamental distinction constructed between the categories of "human" and "nature", and these are seen as incompatible. Yet, who or what is considered to fit in the category of human is not equated with whom is actually part of the human species. Instead, the category of "human" is very narrow and all that is placed outside of this category is excluded from the idea of being worthy of living.

The negative position of the racial other has been persistent at least since the first technology of power that Foucault described. As discussed before, the forms of control changed from sovereign power, to disciplinary power, to biopower. Every next form of power is built on the fundamentals laid out by the previous form. During colonialism, power was exercised directly on the bodies of racial others in the colonies and in the homelands, where racial others were used as slaves for example. Next to this, as I explained in the first chapter, colonialism was also an ideological endeavour, aiming to spread Western civilisation over the world. This relates to Foucault's second technology of power in which power structures become internalized in the bodies of subjects. This is how the racial Other remained Other during all three forms of control. The next part of this chapter will look closer to the position of the animal within the biopolitical framework.

THE DEBATE ON UN-SEDATED RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE NETHERLANDS: RECOGNIZING THE INTERSECTIONS OF OTHERNESS

In the previous chapter, I already looked into the intersection of racial and animal difference on a political and societal level using the concept of *animal-linked racialization*. This concept helped to understand how racialization based on different views concerning the relation between animals and humans, and thus the position that is granted to different animals in different societies and the treatment of animals that follows from this, is constructed. Within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, *animal-linked racialization* could be recognized since the act of un-sedated religious slaughtering was used to construct a narrative in which Dutch Muslim and Dutch Jewish communities were, for a large part, homogenized and portrayed to care less about animal-well-being than about their religious rituals. The underlying assumption was that the general Dutch guidelines of slaughtering was animal-friendlier than the traditional Halal and Kosher guidelines of slaughtering, and a decision had to be made on whether religious freedom or animal rights should be considered more important in the law-making concerning animal slaughtering. So, even though animal wellbeing was portrayed as the topic of discussion, cultural difference plays a big part as well in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands.

I would like to take a closer look at the intersection of both racial and speciesist difference on a more conceptual level using a poststructural and posthumanist lens. By doing so, I want to open up a space in which both can be discussed in relation to each other rather than being reduced to each other, as happens in *animal-linked racialization*.

As explained before, the category of Other cannot be reduced to *one* Other. Instead, different Others are positioned as a threat to the life of the subject. The subject here refers to the part of Dutch citizens who are white or heavily assimilated into the hegemonic culture.

Before looking into what constitutes an Other, it would make sense to first explain who or what is actually referred to by the term *subject*. Yet, the paradox here is that the Other is positioned as the non-subject, but the subject is defined by what it is not. As Rosi Braidotti (2013) explains in *The Posthuman*:

"The dialects of otherness is the inner engine of humanist Man's power, who assigns difference on a hierarchal scale as a tool of governance. All other modes of embodiment are cast out of the subject position and they include anthropomorphic others: non-white, non-masculine, non-normal, non-young, non-healthy, disabled, malformed of enhanced peoples. They also cover more ontological categorical divides between Man and zoo-morphic, organic or earth others" (p. 68).

Thus, what constitutes a subject is dependent on different factors and being or not being a subject is not a static position but can change during one's life. Also, the above-mentioned categories do not necessarily mean that all Others are equally Other.

As a woman who is able-bodied and passes as white, one lives more privileges than a black disabled woman for example. This is where intersectionality comes in. In the introduction, I explained how intersectionality as a methodology is used in this thesis. Yet, to explain how intersectionality works in the lived experiences of those who are to a certain extent excluded from the category of *subject* in the bio-political discourse, I would like to go back to Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), who put intersectionality on the feminist agenda.

Coming from a background in law, Crenshaw used the term "intersectionality" to explain "how dominant conceptions of discrimination condition us to think about subordination as disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis" (p. 140). Even though she focussed on the experiences of black women, who were represented by neither the white feminist movement nor the male anti-racist movement, the concept of intersectionality can also be used to look deeper into the idea of the subject. Just like oppression works on intricate and complex levels- as Crenshaw showed using the example of the black woman- so does privilege. Thus, being (perceived as) subject is not a given but also a precarious position that depends on time and place.

Looking at the idea of the Other as a threat to the subject's life is thus also dependent on the position that the subject holds. On a global level, the once enslaved people are now free to circulate globally due the creation of nation states during de-colonialization. The irony, as Braidotti explains, is that this is seen as particularly threatening in Europe because it endangers the welfare state, Europe's main social infrastructure (2013, p. 128).

The idea of cultural difference as a fundamental and incompatible and un-negotiable difference (think of the position of women, LGBT people etc.) reinforces the idea of the

Other as a threat to the lives of Dutch citizens, by which "Dutch" refers to the assimilated or white members of society in the Netherlands (Ghorasi, 2014, p. 102; Leeuw & Wichelen, 2014). Because cultural others are supposed to hold fundamentally different values from hegemonic Dutch citizens, the lives of those who are valued in Dutch hegemonic society, women and LGBT people for example, would be endangered. This also means that Dutch culture in general would be under threat. Yet, the possibility that cultural others may also value these lives is constructed as highly unlikely. This leads to the paradox that those who are supposed to be threatening actually become themselves under threat now in Dutch society.

Representation of racial and cultural others is important to discuss but the lived, embodied experiences that are the consequences of this should not be neglected in this discussion. As explained in the first chapter of this thesis, especially Muslim citizens are constructed as the most threatening Other in Dutch society. Because the Muslim Dutch are mostly part of the working class, they are "a class with limited power or access to social capital and cannot afford the elitist 'just ignore it' whiff" (Aouragh, 2014, p. 361). Also, the majority of Muslim Dutch citizens are people of colour, so Islam is a religion with demarcated visibility. Because of this, Muslims experience quite hostile and violent racism next to institutionalized racism (Aouragh, 2014, p. 361).

Within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, this threat to "my" life is extended to the life of animal-Others. This does not mean that the lives of animals are perceived to be more important than those of Dutch minority groups. Rather, the lives of animals are seen a part of Dutch society that is supposed be under threat by those whose culture differs from the norm.

The difference between the human animal and non-human animal differs, but is at the same connected to and comparable to racial difference. Humanity itself is seen as fundamentally different from the non-human world. After having exploited "the generative powers of women, animals, plants, genes and cells" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 95), this creates a unity between all human subjects, since all are bound by the fear of extinction. The non-human other, nature and all its inhabitants, in which human-animals are seen as both part of and separate from, now also produces fear in the human subject because of the growing realization that humans and nature are more intra-dependent on each other than one would wished for⁴⁹.

The consequence of this may seem that humans and non-humans are actually coming closer together, since the awareness is growing on both a political and social level that nature is precarious and this puts humans in a precarious position too. Yet, this connectedness is

⁴⁹ This realization of intra-connectedness shows for example from the growing feelings of urgency for environmental care and the investments that are made into technologies that contribute to sustainability.

expressed "in the form of compensatory extensions of humanist values and rights to the non-human others" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 96), and thus "the same system perpetuates familiar patterns of exclusion, exploitation and oppression" (p. 96).

The debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands shows the intersection of both the racial and cultural Other with the speciesist Other. I want to argue that the reason this debate came so much to the fore in the Netherlands and did not lead to a conclusion in which all parties involved were satisfied with, is that this intersection was not recognized. Rather than going to the root of the problem, namely the hierarchal division between different living beings based on difference, the problem was reduced to a either/or question. One could either position themselves as supporting animal rights or the freedom to practice religion. Yet, no option was available to support, or oppose, for that matter, both and genuinely recognize both as compatible with each other. Thus, by choosing one value over the other, always applied derogation of the other value without necessarily disagreeing with it. In the next part of this chapter I explain how recognition of the intersection of Otherness on a speciesist and cultural level within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering could open up a space for a whole new debate that would bring into question the current hegemonic Western ideas on rights and difference.

THE DEBATE ON UN-SEDATED RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING IN THE NETHERLANDS: RETHINKING RIGHTS

In the previous chapter of this thesis I already introduced Derrida's work on the animal/human distinction. Similar to Coetzee, Derrida draws analogies between the Holocaust and current meat production industry. Although Derrida disagrees with the term *animal rights*, since he believes that the "fundamental compassion that, were we to take it seriously, would have to change the very basis of the philosophical problematic of the animal" (2002, p. 395), he nevertheless sees "the industrial, mechanical, chemical, hormonal, and genetic violence to which man has been submitting animal life for the past two centuries" (p. 395) as very problematic, since the suffering of these animals cannot be denied.

Even though questions were proposed related to how humans could know whether the regular or un-sedated religious form of slaughtering led to more suffering than other forms, the suffering of animals in the meat-industry was never denied throughout the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Yet, the debate focussed largely on to what extent animal rights should precede the right to religious freedom without questioning rights as such.

Derrida explains that rethinking rights is important when looking at the question of the animal, but does not offer any alternatives to the current system of rights that would fit the

animal better. In his book *Before the Law. Humans and other animals in a biopolitical framework*, Cary Wolfe (2013) looks deeper into the question of the political position of animals. Following his analysis of Hannah Arendt's interpretation of Aristotle's statement that "speech is what makes man a political being" (Wolfe, 2013, p. 8), he asks whether we can reconceptualise non-humans as political beings after all, when they are without a language understandable to human beings. By looking at manners to deconstruct and reconstruct humans' relation and relating to non-human life, the binaries between human/non-human and nature/culture will be troubled.

Wolfe explains that, in relation to the issue of eating meat, many philosophical problems arise. He connects this to different other matters such as religion and secularization, globalization, technological progress, environmental sustainability, and bio-power. Wolfe connects all these matters by discussing secularization and synthetic meat, drawing upon the thoughts of Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, and Roberto Esposito.

Starting from the problem of meat-eating, which does not only affect the animals that are meant for consumption, but also the environment and global power relations, Wolfe brings in technology to see whether synthetic meat could be a possible solution for these problems. Drawing upon Derrida's work *Eating Well*, Wolfe then problematizes meat-eating in general. The critique is twofold. First, opponents of synthetic meat, who nonetheless support its beneficial qualities, since it reduces animal suffering, the risk of spreading of epidemic zoonoses, and environmental damage, ask the question of why we eat meat at all. Their argument is that synthetic meat would only increase the gap between consumers and producers more, and it is this gap that allows the current practices in the meat-industry in the first place.

The second critique relates closely to the first, because it refers to what life is actually seen as valuable. This relates very closely to Butler's ideas on precarious lives as discussed in the first chapter. Using Derrida's writings, Wolfe draws the connection between meat-eating and the Holocaust during the Second World War to explain that secularization draws upon the same logic as religion to create ideological systems of thought in which certain lives are perceived to be more worthy of life than others. Within a globalizing world, eating meat and the thought systems that allow this practice become even more problematic. As explained in the first chapter of this thesis, the fundamental ideology that allowed globalization is such that only a very small part of the world benefits from the exploitation of the rest of the world. Of course, this does not mean that the West is hegemonic in such a way that the rest of the world should be conceptualized as helpless victims. It does mean, however, that the global structures of power decide who are more worthy of life than others, and even though the *who* may change, the existence of difference between value of lives does not. The practice of meat eating is connected to this.

Wolfe explains the impact of meat eating on a global scale by looking at China's rising economy. Since China's economy grew, their consumption of meat has more than tripled since the 1970s (p. 101). Because China is such a big country with a large population and has a scarcity of farmland, this has global impacts from "deforestation in Brazil to food-price inflation in Africa" (p. 101). This led, as Wolfe writes, to a:

"massive 'not wanting to know', but a 'not wanting to know' of a rather specific sort: not just 'not wanting to know' that nonhuman animals are being put to death on a new and unprecedented scale, but also a not wanting to know that the very ecological sustainability of the planet is at stake in the repression of this violence against nonhuman animals" (p. 101).

The global consequences of meat-eating for both nonhuman and human animals has not only, as Wolfe explains quoting Paul Roberts, led to eating meat as "graduat[ing] from the category of lifestyle choice to that of collective responsibility" (p. 101) but also affirms the shared vulnerability of organisms on an interspecies level, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis.

Following Derrida again, Wolfe then concludes that within a bio-political framework the tendency arises to make the following paralyzing choice: "*either* unconditionally embrace all forms of life as subjects of immunitary protection, *or* suffer the autoimmune consequences that follow" (p. 103). Yet, what this choice between protection of all, or shared consequences that are inherent in the protection of just a few, misses is "that the performative structure and logic of immunitary indemnification is precisely the condition of possibility of any affirmation, thus opening the community to its others- potentially, *all* its others, wherein reside the inseparable possibilities of both promise and threat" (p. 103, italics in original). What Wolfe is doing here is deconstructing the dichotomy between *right* and *wrong* and thus also changing the question of choosing between a right state of being and a wrong state of being to a process of negotiation between different imperfect futures. Thus, when speaking about the law, and juridical protection,

"it is always already traced with the automaticity and mechanicity of a reaction. It is a 'line', to use Derrida's formulation, that is always already 'multiple' and nonlinear, always folded and in motion, always under erasure. We *must* choose, and by definition we *cannot* choose everyone and everything all at once. But this is precisely what ensures that, *in the future, we will have been wrong*" (p. 103, italics in original).

In this paragraph, Wolfe undoes two ideas that were at the heart of the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, namely that on un-sedated religious slaughtering is an autonomous topic that can be discussed without taking into account a much larger historical and social framework, and that this decision could be ethically right without harming any of the involved parties.

This may sound like a rather pessimistic conclusion but the opposite is true. The debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering opened the possibility to rethink the fundamental ideas and issues that led to this debate in the first place. So, rather than using animal rights as a site to criticize multiculturalism, or even multiculturalism as a site to criticize animal rights⁵⁰, the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering can be seen as the first step to rework the intersections of otherness within the Netherlands.

RETHINKING ANIMALS IN THE MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: COETZEE

The beginning of this chapter started with an epigraph from John Maxwell Coetzee's (2004) book *Elizabeth Costello* in which the main character gives a lecture on animal rights and the meat industry. Even though some of the posthumanist scholars I work with in this chapter disagree with Coetzee's approach to animal rights, there are a number of interesting insights in Costello's analysis of the meat-industry. First, the very system that led to the crisis of Modernity can be recognized again in the current-day meat-industry. Even though Thieme's (2008) law-proposal does not acknowledge the broader system behind animal slaughtering, it is very relevant for the debate. Second, even though it cannot be read directly from this quote, Costello touches upon how certain acts which may seem tolerable in a particular time and place are seen as so inhumane under different circumstances that those who performed or even knew about the acts without trying to stop them, lose their humanity in the eyes of those looking back on them. In this sense, this quote reflects how the position of animals, just like the position of racial human others, is, as Butler and Haraway already described, not a natural position but constructed in a specific time and place. Finally, those whose lives count as meaningful and those whose lives do not is also dependent on socially constructed ideas.

As inspiring as I find the ideas that Coetzee's character Elizabeth Costello expresses, these ideas do repeat Braidotti's previously mentioned critique of extending humanist values to non-human others. This means Costello's approach of completely banning meat eating would have several consequences that are not taken into account by this tactic. Aside from the symbolic meaning that eating meat can have, ending the meat industry has many other

⁵⁰ I would like to thank Petra de Vries from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam for this perspective on the debate on un-sedated slaughtering in the Netherlands. Also, it is thanks to her that I realized the importance of animals in this debate again, which allowed me to restructure my argument.

consequences. Think for example of the many farmers and factory workers who will be unemployed. Thus, simply not eating animals would not be a perfect solution and would simply relocate, rather than solve, the problems that are fundamental to suffering created by the meat industry. Instead, I want to start from Coetzee's ideas and work with the critiques on them to rethink how animals are positioned in society and how this could change the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering.

RETHINKING ANIMALS IN THE MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: HARAWAY

In her work, Haraway is quite critical of Coetzee's character Costello. In *The Companion Species Manifesto. Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* she writes that

"[t]he outrageous equating of the killing of the Jews in Nazi Germany, the Holocaust, with the butchering of the animal-industrial complex, made famous by the character Elizabeth Costello in J.M. Coetzee's novel *The Lives of Animals*, or the equating of the practices of human slavery with the domestication of animals makes no sense" (2003, p. 51).

Haraway's problem lies not with critiquing what happens to animals by human actions, but rather that "[a]trocities, as well as precious achievements, deserve their own potential languages and ethical responses, including the assignment of priority in practice" (2003, p. 51). In other words, by comparing animals' suffering to human suffering, it does not do justice to animals and their experiences. Instead, being response-able for the suffering of animals by humans' action requests, as Haraway argues, putting effort into understanding the specific needs, but also qualities, of animal lives. In this manner, strategies of living together and benefitting from each other on an interspecies level can be developed.

In *When Species Meet*, Haraway again addresses Costello's speech, but now in relationship to one of Coetzee's other novels, *Disgrace*. Discussing Lurie's final act of euthanizing his favourite dog, Haraway reads this as an act of love. This act, for Haraway, deals with real problems and real animals, rather than the universal claims and ideals that Costello discusses. For Haraway, the conscious decision to kill an animal out of love holds more power than a desperate attempt of saving life. From a feminist perspective she argues to rethink

"embraced historically situated, mindful bodies as the site not just of first (maternal) birth but also of full life and all its projects, failed and achieved, is that human beings must learn to kill responsibly. And to be killed responsibly, yearning for the capacity

to respond and to recognize response, always with reasons but knowing there will never be sufficient reason" (2008, p. 81)

The thought Haraway expresses here fits closely to Wolfe's approach in which he states that there is never a right decision to be made, but instead that by choosing, we will always already be partially wrong. Haraway does not see this as a limitation. Instead, she sees this as a chance to become more response-able for our actions and thus take responsibility. She defines this as "a relationship crafted in intra-action through which entities, subjects and objects, come into being" (2008, p. 71). In other words, acknowledging the non-possibility of doing *right* and growing from our experiences and choices is the core of being.

To change humans' relationship to animals, Haraway proposes a more instrumental approach in which she does not see objectification of human and non-humans as inherent in the process of instrumentalization. Instead, Haraway argues that "work, use, and instrumentality are intrinsic to bodily webbed mortal earthly being and becoming" (2008, p. 71). For Haraway, instrumentalization of organisms should always happen in a reciprocal manner to learn to recognize our connectedness and relatedness to each other, and thus the importance of taking responsibility for each other.

Yet, I do not believe that Costello's expressed ideas offer no space for the approach Haraway suggests. Haraway herself writes that when talking about animals "[n]ot all animals are alike; their specificity- of kind and of individual- matter" (2003, p. 52). Dogs live visibly with people, and even though stray dogs may not share homes with humans, their presence in society cannot be ignored. Animals in the meat industry, on the other hand, are invisible for the larger part of society⁵¹. This is taken into account in Costello's speech: "I saw no horrors, no drug-testing laboratories, no factory farms, no abattoirs. Yet I am sure they are here. They

⁵¹ In her book *The Posthuman*, Braidotti (2013) explains, based on Louis Borges' work, that animals can be classified in three ways based on human's interaction with them and this classification greatly influences the relation between the human and animal. She distinguishes between

"those we watch television with, those we eat, and those we are scared of. These exceptionally high levels of lived familiarity confine the human-animal interaction within classical parameters, namely, an oedipalized relationship (you and me together on the same sofa); and instrumental (thou shalt be consumed eventually) and a fantasmatic one (exotic, extinct objects of titillation)" (p. 68).

Because humans relate so differently to different types of animals, different strategies are needed, in my opinion to change our relationship to them. Also, the instrumental approach Haraway suggest for new forms of relating to dogs and other companion animals, is already in place in human's relating to the animals we eat, albeit not in the reciprocal manner she suggests.

must be. They simply do not advertise themselves. They are all around us as I speak, only we do not, in a certain sense, know about them" (p. 65). From Costello's speech, the immensity of the meat-industry shows, as well as the desire to keep it out of sight so its consumers do not have to be aware of how their meat actually comes into being. Thus, Haraway's strategy of taking responsibility for each other on an interspecies level could only be achieved after humans would actually open up to this. Also, even when people were open to change their relation to animals, this would be a major challenge since the meat industry is so based on undoing the individuality of the animals because of the large scale on which it operates.

To give an idea, in 2008, over 4,5 billion chickens were slaughtered in the Dutch meat industry (CBS, 2014c) to feed 16,5 million Dutch citizens (CBS, 2008). Because of these huge numbers, it would be impossible to recognize each animal's life and death. Also, as explained before, the position of the meat industry can be characterized by a "not wanting to know" of consumers. Because the animals in the meat industry -nor those in other forms of food industry such as the billions of chicken who lay eggs or the cows and goats who give milk- are not seen, neither are their services to us. Therefore, we as humans must first change the position of these animals on a conceptual level, as Costello argues, to make any real material change possible in their lives.

Thus, I believe that to transform human's relationship with animals that are part of the meat industry, a radical change is needed. Because the manner in which the meat industry is a product of Enlightenment and humanist thinking that allowed biopolitics in the first place, Wolfe (2013) cites Agamben's question "Are Nazi death camps (...) not 'a historical fact and an anomaly belonging to the past,' but rather 'the hidden matrix and *nomos* of the political space in which we are still living?" (p. 37). Costello does not draw a comparison between the Second World War Holocaust and the current meat industry to equate the suffering of the victims, but rather to show the ideological processes that allow these practices to happen. Thus, I would like to propose Haraway's instrumental approach as an addition to, rather than a replacement of, Coetzee's ideas expressed in Costello's speech.

CONCLUSION: POSSIBILITIES IN THE DEBATE ON UN-SEDATED RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTERING

So far, this thesis, and particularly this chapter, has argued that animals and humans share a state of precarity in the world. Humanist premises and biopolitics allowed for a negative conception of difference that constructs a hierarchy between and amongst human and non-human animals. Within the political debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, this also came to the surface. The Netherlands, like many other multicultural countries in a postcolonial globalizing world, takes part in this history of differing. Within the

debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, this surfaced in two manners. First, the hegemonic, secular, "traditional" Dutch culture, in which "traditional" refers to those values that are maintained mainly by the white part of society, was constantly presented as superior while other parts of Dutch culture had to adjust to this. Next to this, there was not only an idea of hierarchal difference articulated, but also that cultures that differ from the hegemonic one were a threat to the "better" one. Both Balibar, who I discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, and Mbembe, call this *racism*.

Next to this, the debate started from humans deciding over the lives of animals. The politicians involved in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands who spoke in the House of Representatives on this issues discussed matters such as humans being unable to really know *how* animals suffer, but also acknowledged animal suffering because of humans' actions. The idea of a fundamental difference between human and non-human animals in which humans are perceived as superior and thus take upon them the right to treat animals the way they desire, is, what amongst others Haraway, Wolfe, Derrida, and Braidotti, call *speciesism*.

This thesis argues that even though the suppression of animals and cultural minorities are not the *same*, their positions in society can be traced back to a long process of creating power difference that formed in a postcolonial biopolitical world. Because both matters, namely speciesism and racism, intersect in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, this debate holds much possibility to really re-think the foundations on which hierarchal difference is based.

My personal suggestion for this debate, which I realize to be idealistic but nonetheless believe it to be practically feasible, would be to see this debate as a first step in rethinking the rights of animals in the meat industry from different perspectives. Not only are religious parties involved in the question of un-sedated religious slaughtering but also butchers, farmers, animal right activists, etc. Within the covenant on un-sedated religious slaughtering that was discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, a first step towards collaboration was made. Within the debate in the House of Representatives, the connection to the meat industry in relation to the slaughtering process had been mentioned several times. Thus, using this debate to connect to larger issues, such as the meat industry in general, environmental issues, and multicultural questions, would only seem like a logical step. By bringing together different parties who can analyse the meat-industry from multiple perspectives- think, for example, of people who work closely with animals and are also reliant on them for their income, people with different cultural backgrounds, and researchers from both hard science backgrounds and critical thinkers- a process could begin in which different knowledges come together to keep working towards a better future for all parties involved.

In this manner, both animal rights and multiculturalism could again be ideologies that

are seen as processes rather than goals that are to be achieved. By recognizing that ethical relations are always already products of long processes of relating, and are at the same time in development and never done, new forms of relating could emerge in which humans and non-humans can partake in a response-able role towards each other, and be critical of their own situatedness at the same time.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has discussed the role of ethical imperialism within the Dutch debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. I have focussed on the political debate concerning this topic that was the product of Thieme's proposal to make the practice of un-sedated religious slaughtering illegal in the Netherlands. This debate eventually got reduced to the choice of what political parties and their politicians held in higher regard; animal rights or religious freedom. Within the House of Representatives, a majority voted for Thieme's proposal to ban un-sedated religious slaughtering. Yet, the senate refused the law because they felt it was a violation of the right of freedom of religious practices.

In the Netherlands, similar to other European countries, cultural difference is increasingly seen as unsolvable difference. Within the process of cultural difference, difference becomes naturalized and essentialized. Within this discourse, ethics play a central role. Following the Kantian tradition, ethical values are constructed to be transcendental and unchangeable, and moreover, these supposed set ethical values are thought to be knowable. Next to this, the idea is constructed that Western culture, and in this case especially Dutch culture, is closer to reaching these values than other cultures. Note here that "Dutch" is meant in an exclusionary manner, referring to only a specific, mainly white, part of society who partakes in a secularized, neo-liberal ideology. Thus, Dutch citizens who have different cultural values, due to religion or tradition, are constructed to be non-Dutch and excluded from this Dutch identity.

The concept of *animal-linked racialization* aims to create an understanding of how the treatment of animals is one of the, possibly unconscious, strategies to emphasize cultural difference. By seeing certain treatments of animals as better than others, without critically looking at how the "better" treatments are still possibly wrong in themselves, the construct of certain cultures being better than others is strengthened. This also happened in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Whereas the awareness of the cruelties in the meat industry were expressed and acknowledged, the treatment of certain cultural groups, Muslims and Jews in this case, of animals is still portrayed as *worse* and of in need of intervention. At the same time, hegemonic Dutch culture was thus portrayed as *better*, not only in relation to the topic of slaughtering animals but also as concerning other societal traditions such as the treatment of women, children, and LGBT people. This has two consequences. First, as explained before, it repeats a racist narrative in which groups of people are homogenised based on cultural difference and cultural others are portrayed as less ethical and civilized than those of traditional Dutch culture. Second, because "Dutch" culture supposedly treats women, children, and LGBT people best, there is no motivation for looking critical into discrimination based on age, gender, or sexual preference within the hegemonic discourse. Thus,

discrimination against these groups becomes harder to criticize and change because it is for the most part denied in the general narrative on Dutch culture.

To deconstruct the general narrative of superiority of this limited conceptualization of Dutch culture, I first defined the concept of *ethics* in an alternative manner. Especially inspired by Butler's, Haraway's, and Mahmood's theories, I argued that ethics are not necessarily *set* values but rather products of an onto-epistemological relating in which ethics is both *producing*, and *being produced by*, these connections. Thus, I proposed to research ethics differently, not as values or rules that we can learn to know, but rather as constructs with effects. Also, the different position of ethics in different cultures should be recognized. As Mahmood explains, the relation between ethical ideas and their expression differs amongst cultures. Whereas in Western thinking one can be ethical on a rational level without necessarily acting according to these values, in Islam ethics cannot be seen as separate from actions. Thus, the combination of freedom to *follow* religion and freedom to *practice* religion is essential for certain Muslim citizens who relate to *positive ethics* rather than the Western approach to ethics.

Within Dutch society in general, I argue, the idea of cultural superiority of the hegemonic Dutch culture is one of the effect of ethics. The "need" to construct these hierarchal difference between different cultures, I argue, is part of, what Foucault defined as, biopolitics. Within biopolitics, a dialectics of Otherness is taken up as a tool of governance based on this hierarchal difference.

Otherness, I have explained, can be based on many types of difference such as sex, race, culture/religion, and species. Also, different forms of difference can intersect with each other, which lead to extra precarious positions for subjects. Within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, I argue, there is an intersection of cultural/religious difference with speciesist difference. This thesis has argued that even though the suppression of animals and cultural minorities are not the *same*, their positions in society can be traced back to a long process of producing power difference that was formed in a postcolonial biopolitical world. Within humanist thinking, reason is centralized and used to create hierarchies amongst humans and between human and non-human organisms. The idea of reason as a means to transcend the earthly and material allows for a difference amongst humans in which certain cultural/racial groups, in this case the traditionally white Dutch citizens, are constructed as morally superior to cultural others. At the same time, non-humans are excluded from reason altogether. Within the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering these oppressions intersect because both racism and speciesism remained unacknowledged. Even though other related issues concerning the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering were discussed, think of the problems of the bio-industry in general, the fluidity of ethical and cultural values, and cultural difference, a real critical stance towards the problem of hierarchal

thinking was not taken. Instead, the main narrative was from the start that hegemonic Dutch practises were morally better than those of cultural others, and in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering the regular Dutch meat-industry and slaughtering practices were constructed as fundamentally better than those within Islam and Judaism. This thesis aimed to explain that animal wellbeing and Islam and Judaism ended up being constructed as incompatible with each other because the root of the problem, namely hierarchal thinking in itself, was not acknowledged. Thus, the question of un-sedated religious slaughtering was reduced to the question of what matters most: animal wellbeing or religious freedom? Within this narrative, it became impossible to support both freedom of religious practices and animal wellbeing and genuinely recognize both as compatible with each other. By having to choose one value over the other, one always implicitly had to depreciate the other without necessarily disagreeing with it.

By using posthumanist theory, specifically from thinkers such as Braidotti, Haraway, and Wolfe, and inspired by Coetzee's novel *Elizabeth Costello*, I argued for a new approach towards both cultural and speciesist difference. Working *with*, rather than *against* difference, to see what difference can contribute to a society, would be a more productive manner to look at the problems that are related to the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering. This would also change the way in which we conceptualize multiculturalism. Valuing the diversity of knowledges rather than one type of knowledge over all others, offers a more active form of citizenship to all Dutch citizens. By combining different knowledges, a more nuanced and inclusive approach towards the meat industry in general can be created. This will possibly benefit both non-human animals and different Dutch cultural groups in general.

Even though I argued on a conceptual level for an affirmative approach towards difference, this could be translated to a political approach as well. After the Senate refused Thieme's law, different parties came together to set up a covenant. This covenant was the result of a collaboration of spokespersons for different parties involved, such as the Dutch Muslims community, the Dutch Jewish community, the Dutch association for butchers, and political representatives. This initiative could be extended to discuss more issues related to the meat industry and possibly other topics, and also involve other parties as well, think for example of philosophers, animal rights activists, etc.

I want to end this thesis by saying that I started writing this thesis from a critical postcolonial lens, and thus mainly criticized the manner in which cultural groups were positioned in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering. Especially in the third chapter of this thesis, I brought in the animal question again but almost constantly in relation to cultural difference. When looking at a topic such as un-sedated religious slaughtering, many other angles could have been chosen to research this question. For example, the position of the farmers, butchers, factory workers, and even employers of supermarkets and butcheries, is

important in this discussion. Also, the discourse on human advocates for animal rights is very interesting in regards to the topic on un-sedated religious slaughtering⁵².

After this research, I am convinced more than ever that the discussion on un-sedated religious slaughtering is worthy of more investigation because of the richness of this topic. It touches on many contemporary societal issues and these could be approached from many different angles than just the intersection of speciesist and religious/cultural difference. This research offered insights into the complexity of the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering, as well as strategies to start from this relatively small issue and look into other intersections to rethink other contemporary issues as well. Think for example of the discourse on animal rights' activists and their intersections with gender, sexuality, and culture. Also, this thesis has not taken into account the opinions and experiences of Muslim and Jewish Dutch citizens in this debate. How did they relate to this debate? How much do they value the importance of the animals being slaughtered un-sedated? How do vegetarian and vegan Muslims and Jews position themselves in the debate?

Another topic that could not be addressed in this thesis due to my lack in research skills and inability to communicate with animals in such a way that I can claim with confidence how they feel and what they desire, is the experience of the animal. Agreeing with Derrida that we *know* animals suffer, I am not sure how the suffering of animals in the meat-industry can be minimized. Un-sedated slaughtering is surely hurtful, but the manners in which animals are slaughtered in the regular industry do not come across as animal friendly either. Also, as I argued before, the position of the humans who are involved in the meat industry the farmers, butchers, factory workers, etc., should be taken into account when discussing the meat-industry. Slowly reducing the meat-industry and replacing it by vegetarianism and/or synthetic meat would seem a good solution to me both in favour of the animals as well as to those who would, if the meat industry stopped overnight, lose their jobs, because then there would be time to also create new job opportunities for the humans who would otherwise be involved in the meat-industry. Yet, does suffering from unemployment really live up to the suffering from animals in the meat industry?

Many questions remain that are worthy of further investigation. Still, I hope this analysis has contributed to the discussion and shown not only the complexity of the debate but also the possibilities it opens up for new, affirmative approaches towards difference.

⁵² Again, I would like to thank Petra de Vries for this insight. Discussing my thesis with her allowed me to realize that not only cultural/religious difference was at stake in the debate on un-sedated religious slaughtering but animal rights advocates also have a history as being portrayed in a negative manner in general Dutch discourse. Think for example of the idea that animal and environmental rights activists have been represented as in the form of being too extremist, which showed for example in the case of Pim Fortuyn's death as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, or irrational and too idealistic.

LITERATURE

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