Homonationalism in Sexuality Education?

A research on the relation between homonationalism in the Netherlands and the attainment goals sexuality and sexual diversity.

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Abstract

An adjustment in the attainment goals (education goals set up by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) in 2012 made it compulsory for all primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands to teach their students about sexuality and sexual diversity. In this thesis I will research to what extent the new attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity fits in the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands. I aim to answer the question: *"To what extent can the attainment goal sexual diversity be connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands?"*. I will show how homonationalism is a problematic discourse in the contemporary Dutch multicultural discussion and how in the national minorities debate gender and sexuality are used to argue that Islamic and Dutch values are irreconcilable. This thesis will use a discourse analysis and several documents, including two teaching methods, to study to what extent the attainment goal can be connected to the discourse of homonationalism. The aim for this research is to be a manner to point out in what ways the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity could be improved and be more inclusive. My research shows that predominantly the implementation of the attainment goal, the teaching materials, is connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands. With this study I will inform schools and publishers of teaching methods in what way their materials fit into the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands and how this can be, partly, avoided.

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Introduction

In this thesis I want to investigate to which extent there are aspects of homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. This new attainment goal emerged after a reformulation of multiple attainment goals in 2012. Homonationalism is a concept that was first established by Jasbir Puar, who described homonationalism as an analytic tool to understand the historical shift that has been marked by the beginning of accepting certain homosexual bodies as being worthy of protection by the state (Puar, 2013). It argues that in this historical shift institutions, such as marriage, have become more inclusive to certain queer bodies; those who confirm to certain norms for ethnicity, religion, class, age and/or bodily ability (Puar, 2007: 10). Homonationalism can thus be problematic as it erases the experiences of the queer bodies that do not conform to these norms. Additionally, homonationalism is a tool to understand the national tolerance of homosexuality that has become a measure for the modernity of a country (Idem: 336). In the Netherlands, for example, homonationalism is visible in the integration course and examination (Flores, 2014). One of those, the *basisexamen inburgering* (basic exam integration) isn't mandatory if you have a Western nationality, such as Canadian or Australian citizens; only non-Western migrants have to take this particular test. The basic exam integration deals with 'Knowledge of the Dutch society', which includes the tolerance of homosexuality; by including this in the integration course it shows that respecting and tolerating homosexuality is perceived as one of the key aspects of Dutch society.

Schools in the Netherlands are required to educate their students on sexuality and sexual diversity since 2012, when the attainment goal sexual diversity was implemented. Although the attainment goal makes it compulsory to teach a certain topic or subject, the school is still free to choose how the subject is taught.[1] This results in schools giving very different interpretations of teaching sexual diversity: a reformed Christian school, for example,s is allowed to teach that sexual diversity exists, but should not be practised. During my internship at non-profit organisation EduDivers, I had meetings with the principals of four primary schools in Leiden about the policy on sexual diversity in their schools. Out of the four schools that I visited, two of them had a student population that was 80-95% Islamic. These principals explained that they did not have a policy on sexual diversity yet, but did want to implement

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[1] "The law sets primary education attainment targets for each compulsory subject. They indicate what children should know and what they should be able to to by the end of primary school. The attainment targets only apply to compulsory subjects. These must be taught to all children. Schools decide how the subjects are taught, and choose their own teaching materials." (Goverment of the Netherlands)

one. They both stated that it was necessary, not only considering it is compulsory because of the attainment goal, but also since "we live in the Netherlands and it is a part of our society" (Holman, 2016). This particular statement implied that there is thought to be a correlation between sexual diversity, religion and the Dutch identity.

As I previously stated, in my research I want to focus on the extent of aspects of homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. In this thesis I aim to answer the research question: *To what extent can the attainment goal sexual diversity be connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands?"*.

To answer this research question, I in the first chapter will discuss the context that is paramount for this research: the Dutch multicultural society. I will go into the discourse of multiculturalism in the Netherlands and its relation to sexuality and gender, as there seems to be a connection between schools with a large percentage of Islamic students and those having difficulty experience educating students about sexuality and sexual diversity (Bron, 2014). Multiple scholars argue that the discussion on multiculturalism in the Netherlands ties in closely with the discussion on gender and sexuality, as the perspectives of different cultures on these subjects collides (Carle, 2006; Prins, 2002; Mepschen, 2009, 2010). Since the 2000s, terrorist attacks such as 9/11 and the murders of prominent anti-Islamic Politician Pim Fortuyn and filmmaker Theo van Gogh, exposed those differences to a greater extent. Scholars, such as Gloria Wekker, argue that the position of women and the LGBT+ community in society has become a Litmus Test for being a part of the Dutch society: in other words, in the contemporary Dutch multicultural society there is a divide between those with the Dutch nationality who accept sexual diversity and those without the Dutch nationality who do not accept sexual diversity (Wekker, 2008).

In the second chapter I will discuss theory on homonationalism. One of the key authors regarding the concept of homonationalism is Jasbir K. Puar. In this thesis I will be using Puar's essential works on homonationalism to discuss and define the concept of homonationalism. She argues that the heteronormative nation-state no longer excludes the homosexual citizen from the status of the "good citizen", however it now has a representational consolidation of a normative homosexuality which depends on multiple factors such as race and class (Puar, 2007). Additionally, Puar argues that homonationalism can be used by a nation-state to serve their own political agenda. Puar uses three terms to understand the national self: sexual exceptionalism, queer as regulatory and the ascendency of

whiteness. In my analysis of the research data I will focus on the first two concepts. Additionally, I will discuss scholarship on homonationalism by Gloria Wekker, Sarah Bracke and Judith Butler, whose theories all focus more on homonationalism in the Netherlands, to create the theoretical framework of my research.

In order to analyse the construction of homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity in the Netherlands, I will use a discourse analysis. The theory of discourse analysis that I will use is the critical discourse analysis based on the work of Norman Fairclough. To help analyse the research data I have formulated two questions, inspired by critical discourse analysis and facets of homonationalism, which will help to focus the analysis and which will function as guidelines in the analysis of the attainment goal. The first question is: *how is the perception of the Dutch identity in relation to the acceptance of sexual diversity defined in the research data?*. The second question is: *how is the perception of religion in relation to the acceptance of sexual diversity defined in the research data?* The research data are two publicly available teaching methods and one teacher's and publisher's handbook. Additionally I will use the official announcement of the attainment goal from the ministry of Education, Culture and Science and a publication which is a collaborative publication of the education institute SLO and the ministry of Education, Culture and Science which explains the attainment goal further.

In my analysis I will show whether there are aspects of homonationalism that are visible in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity; either in the documents of the ministry of Education, Culture and Science, in the teaching methods or in both. The answer to my research question *To what extent can the attainment goal sexual diversity be connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands?* can be found in the conclusion and I will finish my thesis with a critical reflection on my findings. Lastly, I want to state here that I do not argue that the attainment goal sexuality and sexuality is inherently problematic, since I do consider educating students about sexuality and sexual diversity to be necessary. My aim for this research is to point out where the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity could be improved and be more inclusive.

Chapter one: Gender, Sexuality and Dutch Multiculturalism

In this chapter I will describe the context in which this thesis is written. I will discuss scholarship on multiculturalism in the Netherlands and its connection to the notion of gender and sexuality. First, I will discuss the start of the Dutch multicultural society beginning after the second World War with the arrival of labour immigrants in the 1960s, which is arguably the start of the national minorities debate. Then I will discuss the national minorities debate and several important historical occurrences from 2001 onwards in the Netherlands onwards, which will focus on gender and sexuality, as those two concepts began to be an important tool to measure a cultures modernity.

1.1 The start of the modern Dutch multicultural society

Before I go into the relation between multiculturalism in the Netherlands and the perception of gender and sexuality, I will give a brief explanation of the emergence of the current Dutch multicultural society. The discourse of contemporary multiculturalism in the Netherlands started after World War II; in the 1950s and 1960s there were major increases in immigration. These immigrants were mostly labour immigrants as there was a high demand for a labour-intensive labour force. These 'guest workers' were supposed to be in the Netherlands temporarily (Vink, 2007: 339). Although there was an increase in labour immigration, there was a negative labour immigration until 1961 as many Dutch citizens moved abroad (Guiraudon et al, 2005: 76). As a result, until the 1970s the Netherlands was a reluctant country of immigration and it was assumed that the guest labourers would eventually return to their country of origin. It was not until the late 1970s that the government realised the labour immigrants were in the Netherlands to stay (Idem).

Motivated by the understanding that the 'guest workers' would eventually go back to their country of origin, there was a focus on "integration with maintenance of identity" (Prins, 2002: 366) This seemed to fit well within the institutionalized structure of 'pillarisation' which is an influential concept in the discourse and the history of the multicultural society in the Netherlands and has been discussed by multiple scholars (Carle, 2006; Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Guiraudon et al, 2005; Prins, 2002; Vink, 2007). Pillarisation was an institutionalized structure where "despite social segregation between mainly Protestants, Catholics and to a lesser extent socialists, all segments of society peacefully coexisted due to a pacification strategy of group-based autonomy combined with consultation and compromise at the elite level." (Vink 2007: 342). Pillarisation should make it theoretically possible for a

minority to experience the process of "collective emancipation" (Carle, 2006: 71). Although this tradition is often seen as the reason the Netherlands has had an early adoption of a multiculturalism policy, Maarten Vink argues that even though this is a compelling 'story', pillarisation is not as accommodating to Muslims as to the classic pillars. He argues that although pillarisation provides a comfortable picture of Dutch integration policy, 'pillars' have been declining since the 1960s and thus a new 'pillar' could not be built in a system that did not exist anymore (Vink, 2007: 343). Additionally , the 'Islamic pillar' does not comply with the immigration policies that have become more demanding and less accommodating, to Muslim communities especially (Idem: 344).

During the 1980s multiculturalism was adopted as a national policy: laws were passed against racism and discrimination in public spaces and at work (Guiraudon et al, 2005: 76). One of them was the 1983 Minorities Memorandum; this policy declared 'the need for social policies to integrate minorities as groups and to maintain their cultural identities' (Vasta, 2007). The basic assumption was that the Netherlands had become a multiethnic nation where the majority and minority had to live together in mutual respect (Carle, 2006). A couple of years later, in 1989, the *Allochtenbeleid* was published. This immigration policy report caused a shift in terminology and approach towards immigration. For example, this report introduced the term '*allochtoon'* to refer to all people of non-Dutch origin. However, statistic bureaus continued to make a difference between Western and non-Western *allochtonen* based on socio-economic difficulties (Guiraudon et al, 2005: 77-78).

The early 1990s were the start of a new discourse in the Netherlands, Boukje Prins defines this discourse as new realism. In this narrative there is a person who presents themselves as someone who speaks to 'truth', which is also perceived as a part of the Dutch identity. This person is recognised as the spokesperson of the ordinary people and is often resistant to the political left (Prins, 2002: 368-369). In the debate about multiculturalism in the Netherlands during the 1990s one of those spokespersons in agreement with the discourse of new realism was Frits Bolkenstein, the leader of the Conservative Liberal party at the time. He proclaimed in 1991 that "the integration of minorities should be handled with guts" (Idem). According to Prins, this is the start of what came to be known as the national minorities debate. His statement that Islamic and Western values are irreconcilable have been repeated for years, for instance by current politician Geert Wilders.

1.2 After 2001: negative perception of the multicultural society

In the discussion about multiculturalism two issues are oft-recurring: the emancipation of women and sexual diversity. The start of the national minorities debate in the 1990s marks a shift in the multicultural policy in the Netherlands, before the Dutch approach to multiculturalism was considered the ideal case of multicultural policy (Duyvendak and Scholten, 2012). Since the statement of Bolkenstein, the shift has become more evident after terrorist attacks such as 9/11, the shooting of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh and the current popularity of right-wing politician Geert Wilders.

However, the terrorist attacks of September 11th were in no account the start of the discussion on the place of the Islam within the Dutch society. There was already a discourse in which Western values and Islamic values were portrayed as being irreconcilable, argued by Frits Bolkenstein among others in 1991. These debates on multiculturalism in the Netherlands often discuss emancipation, the position of the LGBT+ community and the position of women, and the differences of those values between the majority ('autochtone' Dutch people) and the minority ('allochtone', Muslim Dutch people) (Mepschen, 2010).

An early example of this discourse in which the values of gender and sexual equality are discussed is the El Moumni case in 2001. On May 4th news show *Nova* broadcasted an item on Dutch Muslims and their attitude towards homosexuality. Khalil el Moumni – Imam of the An- Nasr mosque in Rotterdam – was interviewed as a prominent Islamic spokesman. El Moumni stated that homosexuality was a contagious disease that was spreading among Dutch youth which would eventually mean the end of the Netherlands (Prins, 2002: 373). The broadcast started a public debate in which many politicians stated how shocked they were by the statement of the Imam. The affair became known as the El Moumni case. Paul Mepschen notes that just three years before, during the Gay Games in Amsterdam, public homosexuality was debated and conservative politicians argued that homosexuality was shameful, making these shocked reactions hypocritical (Mepschen, 2009). Additionally, the response from the LGBT+ community to the El Moumni case was also fierce: a poll from the Gay Newspaper (Gaykrant) revealed that 91% agreed that "Muslims should tolerate our tolerance, otherwise they do not belong here" (Trouw, 2001a). Mepschen argues that the El Moumni case is an example of how tolerance can be accompanied in present day society by intolerance and exclusion; the Dutch tolerance of homosexuality is accompanied by intolerance and exclusion of Muslims (Mepschen, 2009).

The position of LGBT+ people and the position of women in a society can be perceived as an indicator to measure the level of tolerance and progressiveness in a culture (Saharso, 2004: 27-28). The Islam, in this process is perceived as particularly 'backwards' as it is seen as a culture (or religion, the boundary between them is not evident, as is argued by Sawitiri Saharso) where the position of the man and the woman is not equal and where heterosexuality is the only acceptable sexuality.

Pim Fortuyn, killed in 2002 by an animal rights activist, tried for many years to get an "Islamophobic, xenophobic and nationalist view" across in his politics and writings (Mepschen, 2009). In 2001, his right-wing political party Liveable Netherlands started Fortuyn's political career. In his policies he clearly positioned himself as a gay man and took advantage of the trope of sexual freedom as being inherently Dutch; Fortuyn embodied the sexual liberation that the Dutch were afraid of losing by the immigration of Muslims (Mepschen, 2010: 968). In this narrative he portrayed Muslims as being the exact opposite of the free, liberal, modern Dutch person, using them as the embodiment of the threat to the Dutch society. Sexual diversity was thus used by Fortuyn in his politics to portray Muslims as the antagonist who threatened the modern Dutch state.

Another outspoken Dutch person who argued that the Islam is a backwards culture, especially in regard to its position of women, was film director Theo van Gogh. He was vocal about his perception of (radical) Islam in the Netherlands, carelessly talking about Muslims as "goatfuckers" and imams as "pygmies" (Prins, 2002: 374). His murder, in 2004 by Mohammed Bouyeri, a young Dutch-Moroccan Islamist, added more fuel to the already existing debate on multiculturalism in the Netherlands. Van Gogh directed the film *Submission* together with Politian Ayaan Hirsi Ali. This film critiqued the submissive position of the woman in the culture and religion of the Islam. The assassin left a note on the body of Van Gogh addressed to Hirsi Ali, implying that the murder was a direct response to the production of the film (Carle, 2006: 68). Judith Butler noted that Van Gogh became a symbol of the 'principles of political and artistic freedom' after his death, which was also perceived as being inherently Dutch and in contrast to the Islam (Butler, 2008: 4). Both Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh were explicit in their opinion that the Islam was a threat to modern and liberal discourse in the Netherlands and could result in a step backwards in the already 'accomplished' emancipation of Dutch women and LGBT+ people (Prins, 2002; Mepschen, 2009, 2010).

More currently, an example that illustrates the negative perception that might be a result of the changing perception of the discussion in the Netherlands with regard to the Islam and gender and sexuality, is Politian Geert Wilders and statements he has made. One of those is the '*kopvoddentax*'.[2] Wilders suggested a tax on wearing headscarves, or hijabs, as he wanted to discourage people from wearing hijabs, as he perceives the hijab as a symbol of the oppression of Muslim women (Trouw, 16 September 2009). The popularity of Geert Wilders after these statements, 10,08% of the votes in the election of 2012 (Kiesraad), could indicate that his Islamophobia is shared by his voters, which is a rather large percentage of the Dutch population. This perception of hijabs as oppressive is also reflected in the feminist discourse, as remarked by Saharso, although she does comment that this kind of feminism is an exception. An example of this exception is Ciska Dresselhuys, Chief Editor of feminist monthly journal *Opzij* from 1981 until 2008, who argued that a woman wearing a hijab could never represent the feminist character of the feminist magazine *Opzij* (Saharso, 2004: 28). Both Wilders and Dresselhuys thus argue that the Islam is oppressive towards its women by 'making them' wear hijabs and are of the opinion that in the modern and liberal Dutch society women should be discouraged to wear such symbols of oppression.

In conclusion, the Dutch approach toward a multicultural model has been through many changes over the years, from the moment the Dutch government realised that the labour immigrants were in the Netherlands to stay. Although theoretically Muslims were able to build their own 'pillar' by opening Islamic schools, this did not help their integration as it did with for example the Catholics decades earlier. Multiple laws were passed and reports were published to help the integration. However, since the 'new realism' in the 1990s and the murder of 'hyperrealists' Van Gogh and Fortuyn, the multicultural society was perceived as having failed. In the last decade, there has been an Islamophic trend largely due to the events from 9/11 and the assassinations of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh. Issues of gender and sexuality are often discussed in the debates on multiculturalism. The position of the women and LGBT+ people in the national minorities debate are used as a tool to measure the tolerance of a society; the Dutch values of equality are opposite to the Islam which is perceived as submissive and oppressive.

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[2] Kopvoddentax translates to Head rag tax.

Chapter two: Homonationalism: a Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will discuss the term homonationalism and look into the scholarship that has already been done on the subject. Scholarship on homonationalism is a quite recent phenomenon. However, there have been a great deal of publications on the subject in the last few years. The term homonationalism was first introduced by Jasbir K. Puar as she coined the term in her book *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* in 2007. Puar situates her book in the United States, but remarks several times the phenomenon that she describes is transnational and also applicable to other 'Western' nations, particularly Great-Britain and the Netherlands. Homonationalism has ties with the perception of the Islam and the current Islamophobia that followed 9/11, which is why we can speak of homonationalism as a post-9/11 politics.

2.1 Homonormativity

The term homonationalism is an aggregation by Jasbir Puar of the words *homonormativity* and *nationalism.* Therefore I will first discuss the term homonormativity, as it is a paramount part of the concept of homonationalism. Homonormativity was prominently used by Lisa Duggan, who described it as:

"a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions — such as marriage, and its call for monogamy and reproduction — but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption" (Duggan, 2002: 179).

Homonormativity is the willingness of the minority (LGBT+, but mostly gay people) to go into the 'main stage' of society and to accept the norms of the majority (the straight people) in order to live a 'normal' life. This normal life for queer people includes, among other things, same sex marriage. It is a new neoliberal sexual politics which upholds heteronormative institutions, such as marriage, which is now accessible to both straight and same sex couples, and promises a privatized depoliticized gay culture. It assumes that all gay or LGBT+ people wish to live these 'normal lives' similar to their straight counterparts; that they want to assimilate and be a part of the heterosexual society (Duggan, 2002: 180). Duggan argues that in this new homonormativity, gay politics is not just an issue for the radical left anymore, but is also able to find a place with the right wing conservatives. Because of this, new

homonormativity is accompanied by the redefining of key terms in gay politics, as equality now equals access to institutions that queer bodies didn't have access to before, such as marriage, (ibid: 190). Homonormativity intersects with white privilege, sexism, racism, classism and capitalism. While the minority is now included in heteronormative institutions such as marriage, it nonetheless excludes large numbers of the minority in this fight for 'equality' by focussing on the most approachable part of the minority that conforms the most to the heteronormative standard.

2.2 Jasbir K. Puar: Introducing homonationalism

Puar endorses the argument of Lisa Duggan, as she argues that only certain bodies signify homonormative nationalism or homonationalism; they are included in the heteronormativity because they have the right race, ethnicity, religion, class, national origin, age or bodily ability (Puar, 2007: 10). Hence, there is an inclusiveness for homosexual couples who confirm to certain requirements, who confirm to the norms of the heterosexual society. Puar explains that she developed the conceptual frame for homonormative nationalism, or homonationalism, to understand the complexities of a national tolerance of homosexuality that has become a measure for the right of a nation to be sovereign (Puar, 2013: 336). In other words, the extent to which a nation is perceived as being modern or worthy is based on the basis of the acceptance or tolerance of a nation towards homosexuality. In her work Puar mostly situates homonationalism in the United States, although with a transnationalistic perspective, she uses three terms to understand the national self: sexual exceptionalism, queer as regulatory and the ascendency of whiteness. I will elaborate on the first two terms, as these will eventually be used in the analysis of the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. The ascendency of whiteness will not be used in my analysis as a separate category, because the intersection that Puar discusses of white privilege and sexuality can also be discussed in the two previous key aspects.

Puar perceives homonationalism as a form of sexual exceptionalism, which she sees especially as an American phenomenon. She says: "the exceptional position of a nation in how it deals with sexuality and gender, a nation constructs itself as exceptional because it simultaneously brands other nations as barbaric and homophobic." (Puar, 2007: 2). U.S. exceptionalism entails that the U.S. is produced as simultaneously unique and universal; as superior singular and an outstanding example for appropriateness. U.S. exceptionalism is not only visible in sexuality as sexual exceptionalism, but also in gender as gender

exceptionalism. An example is the perception of western feminism, the progressive Western woman, as the saviour of the 'oppressed, third world women' (Puar, 2007: 5). In Western feminism there is a history of gender exceptionalism in the construction of the 'other' women and especially 'third world women' (ibid). In the previous chapter we saw this with the example of the discussion on the headscarf or hijab in the Netherlands; the Western, white man (Geert Wilders) and woman (Ciska Dresselhuys) see the hijab as a symbol of the oppressed Muslim woman and wish to free them of this oppression, whilst not listening to the oppressed women themselves.

Thus, sexual exceptionalism, like gender exceptionalism, places the U.S. as the 'above nation'; it is dependent on a perception of the nation as morally upright, even though they have shortcomings. U.S. sexual exceptionalism projects homophobia on other spaces which enacts a denial of homophobia at home (Puar, 2007: 128). Puar illustrates this in her book with the event of the Abu Graib photographs, which revealed Iraqi prisoners being sexually tortured. Puar argues that understanding the torture of Iraqi prisoners as exclusively sexual displaces the racial and gendered dynamics of torture at the same time that it reinforces fantasies of repressed "Muslim sexuality." Normative knowledges of modernity mark the prisoners and Muslims in general as sexually conservative, modest and fearful of nudity, as well as queer, animalistic, barbarian and unable to control their urges (ibid: 121).

Puar perceives sexual exceptionalism as primarily an American phenomenon, but argues that Europe has its own counterpart: queer as regulatory/queer secularity. In this discourse the queer subject is often perceived as secular and can only be imagined outside the constricting norms of religion. In other words, queer and religion are irreconcilable, religion and especially the Islam has become the other side of the binary between queer and something else (ibid: 13). Queer secularity can only exist because of the conviction that "religious and racial communities are more homophobic than white mainstream communities are racist" (ibid: 15). This implies that white, secular queerness is imagined as multicultural inclusive, but at the same time it perceives the racialized other as too intolerant to be included. Puar argues that the Islam is perceived by the 'Western world' as more hostile towards homosexuality than its monotheistic counterparts Christianity and Judaism, while these religions in their fundamentalistic form are also disapproving towards homosexuality. This binary is problematic, as it sees the Islam as opposite of queer individuals, while there are of course also queer individuals who are Muslim as well, however they are seen as queer anomalies (ibid). Queer as regulatory "is the modality through which 'freedom from norms'

becomes a regulatory queer ideal that demarcates the ideal queer," then "individual freedom becomes the barometer of choice in the valuation, and ultimately, regulation, of queerness." (ibid: 22).

2.3 Scholarship response: continuing homonationalism

After Puar's work there has been a great deal of scholarship on the subject of homonationalism in quite a small amount of time. This indicates that it stroke a chord within feminist, gender and queer studies. An example of this is the controversial conference on sexual nationalisms that was held at the University of Amsterdam in January 2011. This conference aimed to discuss the current structure of LGBT+ politics in relation to interconnecting realities of globalization, neo-colonialism and increasing nationalisms. Speakers included established scholars such as Jasbir Puar, Judith Butler, Lisa Duggan and Rosi Braidotti (Stelder, 2011). In several reports of the conference (Costache, 2011; Stelders, 2011; Valenta, 2011) it can be read how it was exclusive from the dawn of the conference. There was already a call for a boycott of the conference, as it was not inclusive enough in its speakers: there were not enough scholars of colour and queer activists of colour present (Valenta, 2011) However, the final straw was the closing panel where Geert Hekma, sociologist at the University of Amsterdam and established gay-rights activist, shocked the audience with his comments on Muslims from the perspective of 'sexual patriotism'. He stated that he preferred a defence of white secular ideas above a muslim ideology that has no good record when it comes to these (sexual) rights, before stating that "as we all know, all Muslims are pedophiles" (Valenta, 2011). In this closing panel Jasbir Puar stated that "This is the most fucked up conference I have ever been to" (Stelder, 2011). As can be concluded from the reports of the conference, there were many emotional reactions to the controversial statements that were made. This suggests how homonationalism together with Islamophobia is a prominent and controversial topic in the current political discourse: there has been and is a change in how the relation between the Islam and Islamphobia and sexuality is perceived. As can be recognised from the statement of Geert Hekma, a number of queer subjects turned to the political right to blame Muslims for homophobia that they have experienced. This conference and the reactions that it has triggered, indicates how delicate the subject of homonationalism is and how present it is in current society.

As seen from the title of the conference; sexual nationalisms, the term homonationalism can be phrased slightly differently, while indicating the same as homonationalism. In 2009, Gloria

Wekker spoke of homonostalgia in the Netherlands in her reading *Van Homo Nostalgie en Betere Tijden. Multiculturaliteit en Postkolonialiteit* (Wekker, 2009). She speaks of a national longing to a time when gay liberation could be taken for granted, before it was threatened by the Islam. She gives the example of Pim Fortuyn who argued in an interview in the Volkskrant that he "did not want to repeat the emancipation of women and homosexuals", indicating that this emancipation was already accomplished in the Netherlands and that the Islam would undo this (Wekker, 2009: 1). Wekker argues that this is nostalgia to a time that has never existed in the first place. She affirms Puar's argument that in the last few years there have been a significant amount of gays and lesbians who are now on the right end of the political spectrum and joined the dominant Islamophobic discourse in exchange for a 'homorespectability' (ibid: 5). In the Netherlands, she argues, there is not a representation of sexual diversity of people of colour or religion. Islam and the emancipation of homosexuality have become each other's opposites and the dominant representatives of queer people are white gay people (ibid: 9). This entails that the experiences of Muslim queer bodies and queer bodies of colour are erased and that Muslim queers bodies are ignored entirely, resulting in, for example, policy making based solely on the experiences of white, secular, queer bodies.

The Netherlands is often used as a 'perfect' example of homonationalism, where this binary of on the one side emancipation of homosexuality and on the other side Islam is very apparent. Sarah Bracke argues that in the Netherlands the narrative 'saving women' from brown men has shifted to 'saving gays' from brown men. In this narrative, which includes Fortuyn's statement cited by Wekker, women and gay rights are an intrinsic part of Dutch culture and should be defended (Bracke, 2012: 239). These ideas, this nostalgia as Wekker names it, are a part of the Dutch 'sexual exceptionalism' that leads to the rescue narrative, where both white queer bodies and to a lesser extent brown queer bodies (immigrants) have to be saved from brown straight bodies (ibid: 247). Thus, both Wekker and Bracke argue that the Netherlands has aspects of homonationalism; it is a country where the idea of gay (and women) emancipation is the marker of civilization and perceived as a core part of Dutch identity that has to be saved from the Islam. However, in this narrative, as Puar also argued in her ideas about queer secularity, it is 'forgotten' that the Islam and acceptance of homosexuality does not always have to be dualistic. In this homonationalistic narrative it is often ignored that there is a group who are both: Muslim queer bodies.

In scholarship about homonationalism it is often argued that the acceptance of homosexuality is a tool to measure whether a nation is modern or 'backwards' and barbaric (Puar, 2007;

Butler, 2008; Wekker, 2009). Butler argues that Europe is often understood is being equal to modernity where there is space for sexual radicalism and sexual freedom. However, she is persistent in a certain remark towards this understanding: we should have a "critical notion of what is the time of the now (...) our understanding of what is now is bound up with a certain geo-political restriction on imaging the relevant border of the world and even a refusal to understand what happens to our notion of time" (ibid: 2). Thus, Butler argues that we should be aware of how we perceive the time and location in which we live and its corresponding sexual and cultural politics in relation to other times and geo-political politics. In other words; how we perceive sexuality is dependent on time and place. Bracke also argues that this idea of what is modern can shift and has shifted. She discusses the perception of homosexuality in the high days of 19th century colonialism and the perception of homosexuality today: in the 19th century homosexuality was understood as a part of a fantasy of 'the Orient'. The perception of homosexuality has shifted from it being a marker of the East where it was an indication of the colonies being perverted and barbaric to a marker of the West where it is associated with being modern and an indicator for being a great civilization (Bracke, 2012: 249).

This notion of which state, or culture, is modern and which one is not based on the acceptance or tolerance of sexual diversity became also apparent in the El Moumni case, as explained in the previous chapter; it was argued that Muslims who did not accept homosexuality were a part of a backwards culture because of this indicator for civilization. In this narrative, the perception of one hegemonic culture, the West, as 'modernity' which is marked by their current recognition of homosexuality, at the same time perceives the other culture of the East as 'barbaric' and backwards by its contemporary rejection of homosexuality. Thus, in addition to the dichotomy between being Muslim, and religion in general, and being queer there is a dichotomy in the perception of a culture as modern or a culture as backwards. Sexuality is again perceived as a marker of civilization. It does not only mark a difference between countries, but also marks one as more exceptional, more modern, than the other. We should thus be aware that sexuality as a marker of a culture being civilized is dependent on geo-politics and time.

The last concept that I want to discuss is the concept of pinkwashing. Jasbir Puar writes about this phenomenon in her article *Rethinking Homonationalism* where she looks back at her own work about homonationalism and how the language of homonationalism has been used in academia since. Puar points out that homonationalism and pinkwashing are not parallel phenomena, but pinkwashing is possible because of homonationalism; it is a specific use of

homonationalism in one specific country. Pinkwashing is used for the "cynical promotion of LGBT+ bodies as representative of Israeli democracy" (Puar, 2013: 338). In this situation it is the state of Palestine that is perceived as the barbaric 'other' against the modern 'Israel' and is another example of imperial/racial/national violence justified by the rhetoric of the victim population (ibid). Activists that use the term pinkwashing see the Israeli marketing strategy of profiling their country as a gay vacation destiny as propaganda that tries to cover up the human right crimes of Israel (No Pinkwashing). In this discourse of pinkwashing, it is again 'ignored' that there are religious and particularly Muslim Palestinian queer bodies. Being gay is restricted to secular bodies and to a lesser extent to bodies of a Christian/Judean tradition. Additionally, we see that Israel is perceived as the 'modern' nation against the 'barbaric' nation Palestine. Pinkwashing is an example of how divers the concept of homonationalism is and how it can be applied to a wide scale, in this case the marketing of the state Israel.

In conclusion, Jasbir Puar introduced the term homonationalism. She argued that homonationalism has three key aspects: sexual exceptionalism, queer as regulatory and the ascendancy of whiteness. In my analysis of the attainment goal I will use sexual exceptionalism, the exceptional position of a nation in how it deals with sexuality and gender while ignoring the homophobia at home, and queer as regulatory/queer secularity, the assumption that queer subjects are almost always secular and where religion, but mostly Islam, are on the opposite sides of the binary. Simultaneously forgetting that there are also queer Muslims. After Puar's initial work there has been a great deal of scholarship on homonationalism. Both Wekker and Bracke argue that homonationalism is evidently a part of the contemporary Dutch society, as well as in the political discourse. Queer religious, Muslim, experiences are ignored and the acceptance of sexual diversity is perceived as a part of the Dutch identity. This results in dividing the queer subject and the Islamic subject. Additionally, Butler and Bracke argue that accepting sexual diversity as marker of a modern civilization is dependent on time and geo-politics; it does not only mark a difference between countries, but also marks one as superior, more modern, to the other.

Chapter three: Methodology

In this chapter I will explain the methodology for the analysis. In order to analyse the construction of homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity in the Netherlands, I will use a discourse analysis. The theory of discourse analysis that I will use is the critical discourse analysis based on the work of Norman Fairclough.

In the first part of the chapter I will discuss the research data that I have selected for this thesis. First I will briefly discuss the content of all the materials that the data consists of, then I will discuss the selection procedure. Why did I chose these documents instead of others that are related to the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity and why are these documents relevant to my study? In the second part of this chapter I will discuss how I am going to analyse the research data by discussing what critical discourse analysis entails and why I chose this particular kind of discourse analysis for this thesis.

3.1 The attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity: the research data

In this thesis I want to examine to what extent the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity can be connected to homonationalism. In order to come to an answer to this question, I will analyse a selection of publications that are related to the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. The materials that I have chosen represent multiple aspects of the attainment goal: from the official announcement and motivation of the attainment goal to teaching materials on sexual diversity.

The first document that I have selected is: *Besluit vernieuwde kerndoelen in verband met aanpassing van de kerndoelen op het gebied van seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit*[3] (Resolution renewed attainment goals in relation to the adjustment of the attainment goals on the subject of sexuality and sexual diversity) which is the official announcement of the ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the adjustment of the attainment goal, making education on sexual diversity compulsory. This document opens with defining and formulating the adjustment in the attainment goals for primary and secondary education and for special needs education. Following, there is an explanatory note which includes the necessity for the adjustment in the attainment goal, the content of the decision, the support base and practicability and the advice of the Board of Education. This document provides

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[3] Full title: Besluit van 21 september 2012 tot wijziging van het Besluit vernieuwde kerndoelen WPO, het Besluit kerndoelen onderbouw VO, het Besluit kerndoelen WEC, het Besluit kerndoelen WPO BES en het Besluit kerndoelen onderbouw VO BES in verband met aanpassing van de kerndoelen op het gebied van seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit.

insight into what is exactly made compulsory by the ministry of Education, Culture and Science to teach students, why it was decided to adjust the attainment goals to include sexual diversity and what the original goal of the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity is. The document is publicly available on the website overheid.nl and it covers eight pages. It is also published in the government gazette, which is a periodical publication that records new laws.

The publication *Seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* (sexuality and sexual diversity in the attainment goals) is an explanation of the new attainment goal. The goal of the publication is to provide insight for the teachers into how to fulfill all the aspects that were added to the attainment goals (Bron, 2015). The publication is 67 pages long, however, without annexes it is just 35 pages. It can be found on the website of the SLO. The document starts off with an introduction and an explanation of the adjustment of the attainment goals. This entails an answer to a general inquiry why education on sexuality and sexual diversity has become compulsory and has become a focus point in the education about diversity in our society that also entails cultural and religious diversity. The third chapter is an elaboration on the general aspects or goals that should be dealt with to achieve the attainment goals for primary and secondary education and education for students with special needs. These goals or aspects are divided in three categories; attitude, skills and knowledge, and are specific goals that should be achieved. The last chapter gives specific examples of lessons on sexual diversity that can be used immediately in classrooms. This publication goes more deeply into the attainment goal and the goals that should be achieved with the attainment goal and explains the views on the need for education on sexuality and sexual diversity. This way, the second chapter, together with the document *Besluit vernieuwde kerndoelen in verband met aanpassing van de kerndoelen op het gebied van seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit,* can give an insight into the political side of the attainment goal: the formulation of the attainment goal and the perception on sexuality in Dutch education.

Additionally, I will use the handbook for teachers and publishers *Gewoon DOEN (*Simply DOING) which includes examples of teaching materials and anecdotes from teachers and students about sexual diversity lessons. *Gewoon DOEN* is a collaboration of EduDivers and SLO and its goal is to support schools and publishers of teaching materials in finding the right interpretation of the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. The handbook *Gewoon DOEN* includes practical tips and points of consideration for teachers and publishers of teaching materials. The publication makes it insightful for this thesis what criteria teaching

materials should have to abide by in secondary education. The handbook itself is 26 pages long and is publicly available on the website of the VO-raad (secondary education council) and EduDivers.

Lastly, I will use two publications of teaching materials on the subject of sexuality and sexual diversity that will provide me with examples to use in my analysis. The first method I will be using is *Hand in Hand (*Hand in Hand) by COC Haaglanden, a non-profit organisation focused on LGBT+ rights in the Netherlands. This method is provided free of charge and can be found on the website of the COC. It includes lessons on sexual diversity for primary school students aged four to twelve. The goal of this particular method is to give children a more complete picture of our society. COC argues that the structure of families have changed to such an extent over the last years that education should be adapted to this change. Lessons and supplementing materials of the method *Hand in Hand* will be used in this thesis to illustrate arguments that are made about homonationalism in the attainment sexuality and sexual diversity. The second teaching material that I will use is *Respect 2 Get = 2 Give*, a teachers manual developed for students who "demand respect but not always give respect" and focuses on VMBO students, especially those with an orthodox Islamic or Christian background (Koppers, 2009: 1). It includes several lessons which are split into two categories; those for students who are comfortable with mentioning homosexuality and those for students who are not. The teaching manual is twelve pages long and is available on the website of EduDivers free of charge.

The teaching materials were chosen from a list of teaching materials on sexual diversity composed by the SLO.[4] The majority of the materials were only available through a purchase that has to be done by a school itself, however, a few materials were freely available on the website of the publisher. Whether these materials are used by a majority of schools in the Netherlands is not known, there is no data available about which schools use which teaching methods. As the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity applies to both primary and secondary education, I have chosen one method that focuses on primary education, *Hand in Hand,* and one method that focuses on secondary education, *Respect 2 Get=2 Give. Hand in Hand* is the only method for primary education that is publicly available, for secondary education there were multiple methods publically available. However, I chose this one as it focuses on students with an orthodox Islamic or Christian background, which makes it useful

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[4] *Seksuele Diversiteit. Leermiddelen analyse* (Sexual Diversity. Teaching materials analysis). SLO in collaboration with EduDivers and the Board of Education

for this study which focuses on homonationalism, including queer secularity, in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity.

3.2 What is a (critical) discourse analysis?

In *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Philips argue that discourse analysis focuses on the manner of speaking about certain subjects, concepts and ideas to better understand the world around us. A discourse includes everything that has been said and written about a certain subject (Jørgensen and Philips, 2002). There are several forms of discourse analysis; this research focuses on critical discourse analysis and particularly on the theory by Norman Fairclough. Critical discourse analysis views language as a form of social practice. Since I will be analysing textual materials, it is essential to use a form of discourse analysis that puts language at the focus of its methodology. Additionally, critical discourse analysis deals with the relationship between discourse and power, focussing on issues such as class domination, sexism and racism, as it studies how social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted by language in the social and political context (Van Dijk, 2001).

These issues of power relations in any form whatsoever are certainly applicable to this thesis which focuses on homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. Power relations of the dominant groups based on race, religion and ethnicity are core foundations of homonationalism; in the narrative of homonationalism the Western culture is perceived as the superior one as opposed to the barbaric other cultures. This includes, for example, the perception of the brown woman and the (white and brown) queer body who need to be saved from their own culture. In critical discourse analysis there is an emphasis on inequality and unequal relations of power (Van Dijk: 352). In this methodology that focuses on power structures, issues such as sexism, racism and nationalism are inevitably addressed. Van Dijk argues that critical discourse analysis focuses on the role of discourse in the enactment and reproduction of ethnic and racial inequality. An example is the representation of the other in discourses of European writings, where the other is perceived as intellectual, moral and biological inferior to the majority.

Fairclough puts social relations and power structures at the centre of his work. He argues that the analysis of the general-social context and the social-political functionality of the discourse take a central part in critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1999: 9). This complements the aim of my thesis, as mentioned before; since the concept of homonationalism in itself

centralizes social relations and power structures. For example, the relations between values in the idea of Dutchness and the idea of multiculturalism, or a government using the acceptance of homosexuality in their society to cultivate support for their 'latest imperial project'(Puar, 2007). This emphasis on social relations is also evident in Fairclough's argument, which Jorgensen and Philips quote. When we analyse a text, we can never analyse it in isolation; "they [texts] can only be understood in relation to webs of other texts and in relation to the social context." (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002: 70). Hence, an intertextual perspective is needed in which textual and social analysis are combined; only textual analysis is not sufficient. In this thesis, for example, as I analyse the SLO publication for the attainment goal sexual diversity and sexuality, I can not only make a textual analysis of what is written but should also take into account the links between the text and the cultural and societal processes. This could be done by acknowledging the influence of 'history' that the text draws on. When a publication mentions orthodox religion as a cause for homophobic behaviour of a student, it is paramount to acknowledge on which 'history' this is based. In this case that could be an earlier research that has been done or a published article. Another social aspect that I will bring into my analysis, is the construct of the acceptance of sexual diversity as an integral part of the Dutch identity, argued by scholars such as Gloria Wekker and Sarah Bracke. How do the teaching materials and the documents produced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science reflect this discourse?

To help analyse the research data I have formulated two questions, inspired by critical discourse analysis and facets of homonationalism, that will help to focus the analysis and which will function as guidelines in the analysis of the attainment goal. The first question applies to the integration of the acceptance of sexual diversity in the Dutch identity. As described in the previous two chapters, accepting homosexuality is perceived as an integral part of being Dutch, in the form of sexual exceptionalism it is also an integral part of Puar's concept of homonationalism. How is this perception of the Dutch identity retrievable in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity? Thus, the first question is *what is the relation between the Dutch identity and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data?*. The second question regards the perception of religion and sexual diversity in the materials. As explained in the previous chapter, the religious and the queer subject are often seen as two ends of a binary. Queer secularity, according to Jasbir Puar, is common in multiple European countries including the Netherlands. Queer secularity is also connected to Islamophobia which is a dominant aspect of homonationalism; primarily the Islam is seen as the opposition

of being queer. Hence, the second question is '*what is the relation between religion and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data?*'. These questions will be the focus of my analysis. In order to find the appropriate content to analyse from the research data, I will first scan the documents for quotes that are relevant to this study. This entails looking for quotes from the materials that are linked to those two main subjects: the connection between religion and sexual diversity and the connection between the Dutch identity and the acceptance of sexual diversity. Afterwards, I will analyse these quotes with the theories described in the previous chapter, focussing on the concepts of sexual exceptionalism in the first question and queer secularity in the second question.

In conclusion, in the next chapter of this thesis I will use critical discourse analysis in order to analyse the five previously mentioned publications that broadly represent the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity, considering it focuses on power relations. This focus is reflected in an intertextual perspective that acknowledges the influence of 'history', earlier texts, that the text draws on. This entails that when analysing the research data for homonationalism in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity, the influence of homonationalism in the Netherlands, including the discussion of multiculturalism, sexual nationalism and the Dutch identity in the Netherlands as described in chapter one and two, will be taken into consideration. The two questions that I formulated, *'what is the relation between the Dutch identity and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data?'* and '*what is the relation between religion and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data?*', will be guidelines and help to analyse the materials.

Chapter four: Homonationalism and Sexual Diversity Education

In this chapter I will analyse the five materials described in the previous chapter that all represent the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. The adjustment of the previous attainment goal to include sexual diversity was motivated by a report of the Inspectorate of Education which argued that a large percentage of the primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands paid insufficient attention to sexuality and sexual diversity. In this chapter I will analyse documents that assess how and why this attainment goal was established (the resolution renewed attainment goals and *Seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen*) and how these attainment goals are carried out in schools and which issues arise in carrying out the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity (*Gewoon DOEN, Seksuele Diversiteit. Leermiddelen analyse* and *Hand in Hand).* All the publications on the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity are in Dutch, so I will translate quotes that I use directly into English, the original texts can be found in the footnotes.

Before analysing the materials, I will first give a brief introduction to the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity, focusing on how it is constructed and phrased. The analysis itself will focus on two main aspects: the relation between the Dutch identity and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data as well as the relation between religion and the acceptance of sexual diversity in the research data.

4.1 The attainment goal: compulsory sexuality education

The attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity is part of the attainment goal category Orientation on Yourself and the World: Man and Society, focussing on various aspects of society. It is an adjustment to the attainment goal 38 which was previously formulated for primary education as: "The student learns the main principles that play an important role in the Dutch multicultural society, and they learn to be respectful towards different beliefs of people".[5] This goal focused mostly on the Netherlands as a multicultural society and accepting diversity in general. As this formulation of the attainment goal did not specify sexuality and sexual diversity, the Inspectorate of Education came to the conclusion that a large percentage of the primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands paid insufficient attention to sexuality and sexual diversity. Further, several studies have concluded that young people who identify as LGB or T experience an inadequate amount of safety, tolerance and

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[5] De leerlingen leren hoofdzaken over geestelijke stromingen die in de Nederlandse multiculturele samenleving een belangrijke rol spelen, en ze leren respectvol om te gaan met verschillen in opvattingen van mensen.

acceptance in their school environment. (Keuzenkamp, 2012; De Graaf *et al*, 2014; Kuyper, 2015). After motions of D66 MP's Pechtold (17 November 2009) and Van der Ham (23 June 2011) and several published reports, the attainment goal was adjusted to specifically include sexuality and sexual diversity. This resulted in formulating attainment goal 43, part of Man and Society, for secondary education as: "Students learn about similarities, differences and changes in culture and philosophy in the Netherlands, they learn to relate this to their own and someone else's lifestyle, they learn to see the meaning for society to respect each other's views and lifestyle's and they learn to respectfully deal with sexuality and with diversity within society, including sexual diversity."(Staatsblad 2012, 470: 2).[6] Both the attainment goal for primary and secondary education mostly remained the same, except for adding the element of sexuality and sexual diversity, making education on sexual diversity compulsory. The attainment goal should improve a safe school climate, tolerance and respect for homosexuality, bisexuality and gender identity as LGBT+ youth experience this insufficiently. Additionally, it has the intention to empower students in making their own choices and understanding their own sexuality (Bron, 2015).

Although the attainment goal makes education on sexuality and sexual diversity compulsory, schools are free to choose which method they use and thus how they teach their students about sexuality and sexual diversity. The attainment goals give guidelines and minimum requirements to the curriculums and the level of knowledge and skills that the students have to acquire (SLO). This results in a development of methods that meet the professional and ideological choices of a school and the school specific vision and context; a reformed Christian school, for example, is able to teach sexual diversity exists, but shouldn´t be practised (Staatsblad 2012, 470: 6). An example is the organization *Hart voor Homo's* (Heart for Gays). They train reformed Christian schools to discuss homosexuality with their students. Their message is 'you can be openly gay, but cannot have a sexual relationship' and is quite controversial (Trouw, 20 June 2016). In this case, a school that uses this teaching method does deal with diversity and sexuality within society, including sexual diversity, furthermore the manner in which they do according to their ideology and does not contradict the attainment goal.

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[6] De leerling leert over overeenkomsten, verschillen en veranderingen in cultuur en levensbeschouwing in Nederland, leert eigen en andermans leefwijze daarmee in verband te brengen, leert de betekenis voor de samenleving te zien van respect voor elkaars opvattingen en leefwijzen, en leert respectvol om te gaan met seksualiteit en met diversiteit binnen de samenleving, waaronder seksuele diversiteit.

4.2 Sexual exceptionalism: a part of the Dutch identity

As discussed in the second chapter, one of the three terms that Puar uses to understand the national self in relation to homonormative nationalism is sexual exceptionalism: "the exceptional position of a nation in how it deals with sexuality and gender, a nation constructs itself as exceptional because it simultaneously brands other nations as barbaric and homophobic." (Puar, 2007: 2). The sexual exceptional nation is dependent on a perception of the nation as morally upright in relation to the other nations, even though they have shortcomings in this (sexual and gender) moral. In this part of the analysis I will focus on sexual exceptionalism in the research data.

The Renewed Attainment Goal: the Ministery of Education, Culture and Science

In the introduction of *Seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* Bron et al discuss the reason for the adjustment in the attainment goal. The main reason this is discussed is that schools don´t pay sufficient attention in their education policies to sexuality and sexual diversity, while the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is convinced that this is necessary for students to develop sexual assertiveness, sexual health and acceptance and respect for homosexuality, bisexuality and genderidentity.

"Furthermore, the position of LGBT+ youth is vulnerable: the majority has dealt with negative responses such as scolding and bullying, lack of acceptance and losing friends. In secondary schools lack of safety of LGBT+ youth is connected to violent experiences." (Bron, 2015: 5).[7]

Likewise, in the resolution renewed attainment goals the negative attitude towards LGBT+ youth is described. Although the acceptance of sexual diversity is perceived as a part of the Dutch identity as argued by Bracke and Wekker, according to several studies relatively a large amount of young people, students in secondary schools, are dismissive towards homosexuality. LGBT+ youth experience that their classmates do not accept their homosexuality or them being transgender, which in some cases is expressed in verbal abuse and bullying (Staatsblad 2012, 470: 4).

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[7] Bovendien is de positie van LHBT-jongeren kwetsbaar: een meerderheid heeft ooit te maken gehad met negatieve reacties zoals schelden en pesten, gebrek aan acceptatie en het kwijtraken van vrienden. Op scholen voor voortgezet onderwijs hangen onveiligheidsgevoelens van LHBT-jongeren ook samen met geweldervaringen.

These sections acknowledge the homophobia that the LGBT+ individuals, especially LGBT+ youth, experience and what the possible consequences of homophobia are: feeling depressed, having suicidal thoughts and attempting suicide. Puar argues that one of the aspects of sexual exceptionalism is the state projecting homophobia on other nations and cultures and denying homophobia at home. This is a result of the nation being perceived and perceiving itself as having an 'exceptional position' compared to other 'barbaric' nations and cultures (Puar, 2007: 5). Puar makes this argument with the case of the Abu Ghraib torture and argues that those who are freed with knowledge not only reproduce the hegemonic ideals of U.S. exceptionalism through a geopolitical mapping of homophobia and where it is most destructive, they also project homophobia onto other spaces and enact a denial of homophobia at home (ibid: 128). This seems to be the opposite of the goal that is discussed in the resolution renewed attainment goals and *Seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen*. The state, the ministry of Education, Culture and Science, does not deny but acknowledge that there is homophobia at home, namely among students mostly in secondary schools. In this case, it could be argued that the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity inherently is not homonationalistic, or at least does not have one of the main aspects that is described by Jasbir Puar as being a part of sexual exceptionalism in a nation. Since the reason for the attainment goal is to acknowledge the homophobia at home and to combat the homophobia at home, the nation doesn´t perceive itself as an outstanding example for appropriateness while denying the homophobia at home. On the other hand, in this publication it isn´t mentioned who the homophobic students are; are all students of every school homophobic, or is it just a select group?

In the resolution renewed attainment goals it is argued that: "Not all schools pay attention to sexuality and sexual diversity while it appears those students who feel most vulnerable attend school types with the least policy and the least supplies for sexuality education." (Staatsblad 2012, 470: 5).[8] It is argued that without the adjustment in the attainment goal, there are too many schools that do not have adequate sexuality education, including education on sexual diversity, which results in LGBT+ students feeling unsafe. By using the term 'school types' it is implied that there is a certain type of school that faces this issue of LGBT+ students feeling unsafe more than other types of schools. The resolution refers to a publication of the

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[8] Ook blijkt dat leerlingen die zich het minst weerbaar voelen, op schoolsoorten met het minste beleid en minste aanbod op dit terrein zitten.

Inspectorate of Education,[9] which argues that these 'school types' are VMBO schools and practical education. These are also the types of schools that the publication by EduDivers and the SLO *Gewoon DOEN* mentions as being the most challenging to educate on sexual diversity. In the next part of the analysis I will analyse the handbook *Gewoon DOEN*. Additionally, I will use the publication *Respect 2 Get = 2 Give* which is specifically intended for students of VMBO schools.

Dutch identity and accepting sexual diversity in the teaching materials

Gewoon DOEN is a handbook for teachers and publishers, which includes several examples of teaching materials and anecdotes from teachers and goals that should be strived for by both the teachers and the students. One of the goals that EduDivers and the SLO have drafted is that students have to have some specific knowledge in order to be accepting of sexual diversity:

"Thus, the knowledge that homosexuality does not emerge from temptation is necessary, as is the knowledge that in the Netherlands homo discrimination and homo bullying is forbidden." (Bron and Dankmeijer, 2014: 5)[10] and "Get students to realize that in the Netherlands sexual diversity is accepted and everyone has to be treated equally in principle." (Idem: 10).[11]

The handbook included several anecdotes, one of them is from a teacher who teaches a multicultural VMBO class and who thinks it is important to teach that in the Netherlands homosexuality is generally accepted and that society and the school do not discriminate (Idem: 12).[12] In the method *Respect 2 Get = 2 Give* it is also mentioned that in the Netherlands homosexuality is accepted, although less often (Koppers, 2009: 21,22). This goal emphasizes the general accepted and desired attitude towards sexual diversity, and specifically homosexuality, as it is perceived to be a part of the Dutch identity.

This manner of educating on sexual diversity and to increase the acceptance of sexual diversity within the student population by arguing that the acceptance of sexual diversity is a

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[9] Weerbaar en divers; Een onderzoek naar seksuele diversiteit en seksuele weerbaarheid in het onderwijs. Translation: Empowerment and Divers; a research to sexual diversity and sexual empowerment in education.
[10] Zo is kennis nodig dat homoseksualiteit niet door verleiding ontstaat en dat in Nederland homodiscriminatie en homopesten verboden zijn.
[11] Laat leerlingen inzien dat in Nederland seksuele diversiteit geaccepteerd is en iedereen in principe gelijk behandeld wordt.
[12] Dat homoseksualiteit in Nederland algemeen is geaccepteerd en dat de samenleving en ook de school geen onderscheid maakt.

part of the Dutch identity complies with the theories of Gloria Wekker on homonostalgia and Sarah Bracke on homonationalism in the Netherlands. Both Wekker and Bracke argue that there is a discourse in the Netherlands where being accepting of sexual diversity, or homosexuality, is perceived as crucial component in the Dutch identity. In this narrative there are several mechanisms at work. One of them is that "the acceptance of homosexuality has become a Litmus Test for entering modernity, for belonging to the 'us'" (Wekker, 2009: 11). Bracke also describes this pattern in her work. Bracke notes that feminism, and with that women and gay rights, in the Netherlands gets framed as having already been accomplished. We, those with the Dutch identity, do not have to work on that anymore, it is an achieved matter (Bracke, 2012: 238). She argues that as a result of this logic, women's and gay emancipation has become "central to the definition of *who belongs to the Dutch nation and who does not."* (Idem: 244). As both these theories of Wekker and Bracke argue, accepting sexual diversity has become an integral part of having the Dutch identity. Accepting sexual diversity has become a Litmus Test for belonging to the Dutch society. This discourse is reinforced in the teaching materials such as *Gewoon DOEN* where there is an emphasis on the argument that educating students to accept sexual diversity is important, mainly because it is widely accepted in the Netherlands.

While accepting homosexuality is perceived as a part of the Dutch identity, who is it the attainment goal mostly tries to educate on sexual diversity? In *Gewoon DOEN* it is discussed that there is a realistic fear that teachers have of the reactions of VMBO students when discussing sexual diversity, particularly students from an ethnic minority (Bron and Dankmeijer, 2014: 13). There is a teacher's anecdote from a multicultural VMBO class who thinks it's important to teach his students that homosexuality is not an illness which is later emphasised as a tip for teachers:

"explain to Islamic students and immigrants that homosexuality is not an illness, but a congenital characteristic and that there is actually love in play"(ibid: 20).[13]

It seems that, although the handbook is not specifically targeted towards certain types of schools, there is an emphasis on VMBO schools and especially towards the group of so called 'intolerant', Islamic students. The emphasis on VMBO schools is noticeable in the anecdotes throughout the handbook: from the anecdotes that mention a school type, there are five that

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[13] Leg islamitische leerlingen en immigranten uit dat homoseksualiteit geen ziekte is, maar een aangeboren persoonlijkheidskenmerk en dat er echte liefde in het spel is.

concern a VMBO school and two that concern a HAVO and/or VWO school (Bron and Dankmeijer, 2014). In contrast to *Gewoon DOEN, Respect 2 Get = 2 Give* does explicitly focus on VMBO schools and often mentions possible reactions of Islamic students. In the introduction the author points out that specific parts meant for:

"students who are of the opinion that homosexuality is too scandalous to discuss in a group setting. We anticipate these students to be first generation migrants or young people who have an Orthodox Islamic or Christian background, for whom those topic are often taboo" (Koppers, 2009: 3).[14]

In these publications accepting sexual diversity is constructed as part of the 'exceptional' Dutch identity. Simultaneously it brands another culture as being homophobic; (orthodox) Islamic and immigrant students are emphasized as being more homophobic than their 'autochthonous' counterparts. An example is one of the anecdotes in *Gewoon DOEN*; a teacher uses newspaper reports about incidents in other countries where the lives of gay people are made unmanageable (Bron and Dankmeijer, 2014: 15). By arguing how other countries are homophobic, it portrays the Dutch society as the more modern and liberal country. Simultaneously, it could be argued by focusing on teaching that accepting sexual diversity is a part of the Dutch identity. The (orthodox) Islamic student is to a lesser extent a part of the Dutch society, as both Bracke and Wekker argued that being accepting of sexual diversity has become a Litmus Test of 'Dutchness'.

In conclusion, in the resolution renewed attainment goals there is not a mention of a specific group of students that are targeted with the adjustment in the attainment goal. On the contrary, both the resolution as well as the publication *Seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* discuss students having negative opinions of sexual diversity in general and the effects that this has on LGBT+ youth, without mentioning a specific religion or ethnicity. I made the argument that by acknowledging the homophobia at home, the nation doesn´t display a paramount aspect of sexual exceptionalism. However, by having compulsory education on sexual diversity, the nation can be perceived as being an outstanding example of appropriateness, only without denying the homophobia at home. Although the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science does not mention a specific group of religious or ethnic students in their resolution for the renewed attainment goal, the SLO and EduDivers do so in the publication *Gewoon DOEN*.

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[14] Deze is geschikt voor jongeren die homoseksualiteit te schandelijk vinden om in een groep te bespreken. We denken dan bijvoorbeeld aan eerste generatie migranten of jongeren die zich plaatsen in een orthodox islamitische of christelijke achtergrond, voor wie dit soort thema's taboe is.

Here there is an emphasis on particular groups that express homophobic behaviour and mostly mentions orthodox religious groups and VMBO students, focusing on Islamic and immigrant students. By focusing on these groups as opposite of the desired Dutch 'exceptional' identity of accepting sexual diversity, the other culture is branded as being homophobic and less modern while the nation is constructed as having an exceptional position.

4.3 Queer secularity: dividing the religious and queer bodies

Another paramount aspect of homonationalism, and particularly homonationalism in the Netherlands, is queer secularity. This entails the queer subject consistently being perceived as being exclusively secular and only being able to exist outside of the constrictive norms of religion; queer religiosity is subjugated to queer secularity (Puar, 2007: 13). This notion of queer secularity can only exist because religion, particularly the Islam, is perceived as "more homophobic than white (secular) mainstream communities are racist" (ibid: 15). This implies that white, secular queerness is imagined as multicultural inclusive. However, it also perceives the racialised other as too intolerant to be included. Thus, in this line of thinking there is a problematic and strict division between the queer body that is always secular and the religious, Muslim, body which can never be queer. The queer, religious body is left out of the discourse of 'accepting' and 'tolerating' queer subjects. In this part of the analysis I will focus on queer secularism in the research data.

The Renewed Attainment Goal: the Ministery of Education, Culture and Science

In *Seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* the focus point of the attainment goal is to teach students that "we (individuals, students) live together in the Dutch society which is multicultural and pluralistic. Diversity in society is thus a paramount basis principal in the realisation of the attainment goal in education" (Bron, 2015: 7).[15] This is also visible in the perspective that the ministry of Education, Culture and Science has formulated about sexuality education:

"It's about respecting differences in a context that is characterized by diversity. Consideration should be given to ideas about gender roles, sexual relations and behaviour, relationships, marriage and virginity, assertiveness, autonomy and control about one's own body, including abortion and circumcision. There are certainly different views in society on

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[15] het samenleven van mensen (individuen, zich ontwikkelende leerlingen) in de Nederlandse maatschappij die multicultureel en pluriform is. De diversiteit in de samenleving is daarmee een belangrijk uitgangspunt bij de realisatie van het kerndoel in het onderwijs.

sexual education and the role of education in this. Views of people on sexuality and relationships can be connected to, for example, religious movements, ideological and cultural diversity, which are also included in the first part of the attainment goal." (Bron, 2015: 8).[16]

This quote discusses what is included in and meant by the term sexuality and education about sexuality. It becomes clear from the quote that a part of education on sexuality is focussing on different perspectives on sexuality and sexual diversity from several major ethnical and religious groups in the Netherlands. Education on sexuality and sexual diversity focuses on the socio-political aspect of sexuality and sexual diversity education in addition to exclusively the biological aspect of sexual education. To achieve this, the authors of the publication have formulated several goals that should ensure that the students learn about those socio-political aspects of sexuality and sexual diversity. In secondary education students are among other things expected to:

"To have insight in diversity in their own community and diversity as an aspect of the Dutch multiform society and to have insight in the relation between conceptions of sexual moral and the group, community, ideological movement and/or culture that one belongs to." (Bron, 2015: 13).[17]

Students are thus expected to study which conceptions of sexuality and sexual diversity are complicit with which group, community, ideological movement and/or culture. The two goals thus argue that a particular group, community or ideological movement and/or culture has a hegemonic perception of sexual moral, including sexual diversity. This implies that a particular group, for example a religious movement such as the Islam, has one hegemonic perception of sexual moral instead of multiple perceptions from individual Muslims. It reinforces the idea of the binary between the religious subject on the one hand and the queer subject on the other.

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[16] Het respecteren van verschillen in een context die zich kenmerkt door diversiteit. Daarbij moet gedacht worden aan opvattingen over sekserollen, verschillen in opvattingen over seksuele omgang en gedrag, relaties, huwelijk en maagdelijkheid, over weerbaarheid, autonomie en zeggenschap over het eigen lichaam waaronder ook abortus en besnijdenis. Er bestaan zeker ook verschillende opvattingen in de samenleving over seksuele voorlichting en de rol van het onderwijs daarbij. Opvattingen van mensen over seksualiteit en relaties kunnen verband houden met bijvoorbeeld geestelijke stromingen, levensbeschouwing en culturele diversiteit die ook in het eerste deel van het kerndoel zijn opgenomen.

[17] Inzicht hebben in diversiteit in de eigen omgeving en diversiteit als kenmerk van de Nederlandse samenleving en inzicht hebben in de relatie tussen opvattingen over seksuele moraal en de groep, gemeenschap, levensbeschouwelijke stroming en/of cultuur waartoe men behoort.

Learning about other cultures and different perspectives on sexuality and sexual diversity is a paramount part of the attainment goal, as it exists in a larger context which has as its goal to educate students on diversity in a broader sense than just sexual diversity. This idea of a hegemonic set of ideals that is shared by the entirety of a certain group conserves the problematic dualistic perception of religion, and particularly Islam, and queer or LGBT+ individuals. Jasbir Puar argues that the perception of the queer subject as being secular and only able to exist outside of the constrictive norms of religion results in the construction of a binary that sees the Muslim subject as opposite of the queer subject (Puar, 2007: 13). In the documents *Seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* and the resolution renewed attainment goals this binary is only present in the earlier mentioned hegemonic perception of cultures and religions in the formulation of the goal for secondary education. Thus, in the documents produced by and in association with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture this binary that exists in the concept of queer secularity is present, but not very visible.

The Division between the Queer and Muslim subject in the teaching materials

In contrast to the documents produced by and in association with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, in the teaching materials the dualism between religion, particularly the Islam, and the queer subject is more visible. One example of those teaching materials is *Hand in Hand,* a method developed by non-profit organisation COC, which solely uses examples of white homosexual and lesbian couples in its lessons. The first three pages visualise the diversity in families with images of one lesbian, one gay and one straight couple with their child, all of these portrayed families are white (COC Haaglanden, 2009: 11-13). Additionally this, teaching method uses three stories that include two gay and one lesbian couples. One the stories is *Koning en Koning* which is about a prince that has to get married, but instead of falling for one of the many princesses, he chooses to marry one of their brothers. However, none of these stories specifies a cultural or religious background, in these stories the names that are used are typically of a Western background. For example, the other story about the gay couple features a couple named Vincent and Ricardo. Although *Hand in Hand* never explicitly mentions the queer subject being from a Western background and secular, it also does not imply the subject not being white.

Another teaching material that has more explicit examples is the teaching manual *Respect 2 Get = 2 Give,* developed by Empowerment Lifestyle Services. This manual has a focus on VMBO students and especially those with an orthodox Islamic or Christian background

(Koppers, 2009: 1). This focus is, for example, reflected in the introduction where it is explained that there are two versions of the method; one of them is targeted towards students who might have difficulties talking explicitly about homosexuality: "first generation migrants, orthodox Islamic and Christian students". In this sentence it becomes obvious that there is a distinct position of religious and racial communities that are expected to be homophobic (Puar, 2007: 15). Further into the teaching manual there are some questions proposed to discuss with the students. Two of those focus on the percentage of homo- and bisexual people in the Netherlands (according to the manual eight percent) and the percentage of people in the Netherland who 'originate from a non-Western country' (roughly ten percent) (Koppers, 2009: 16). Subsequently, it is argued that those two groups are almost the same size, only one is more visible than the other. Striking is that those two groups are set up as two strictly divided, non-overlapping groups, reinforcing the idea of queer secularity.

Besides this remarkable example in the manual, there is another aspect of *Respect 2 Give = 2 Get* which reinforces the binary between the queer and the Muslim body. Although it is a teaching method that is focused on VMBO schools and especially schools with a large percentage of Islamic students, not once does it mention the possibility of a student of colour also being a student who identies as being LGB or T. In the introduction it is once more emphasized that:

"Identity is an important concept in this method. This is the case for students with homosexual feelings. This is a resemblance with students who are in a minority position themselves, for example because they have (partially) the identity of their country of origin en (partially) the Dutch identity, the country that they live in." (Koppers, 2009: 3)

In this teaching method students of colour, or students who immigrated to the Netherlands, are not expected to identity as LGB or T. On the contrary, it is argued that they could potentially empathize with students who are homosexual, bisexual or transgender as they too are a minority in society. As this is the emphasis of the teaching method, getting students to respect queer bodies, the possibility that one of the allochthonous students is queer is overlooked.

This emphasis on Islamic and non-Western students and the division of 'them' as a group on the one hand and queer subjects on the other, reinforces the narrative of Muslim homophobia and queer secularity in the Netherlands that has already been described by Bracke and Wekker. This division that we see is the same as described in the works mentioned before. As

Gloria Wekker argues, "the dominant portrayal after 60 years of migration is still that gays and lesbians belong to the dominant ethnical group, they are white" (Wekker, 2009: 9). This portrayal is continued in the teaching material, for example in *Hand in Hand*, while not once mentioning any ethnicity, there is no mention of any queers of colour, resulting in representing the dominant ethnical group, namely white queer couples. With the portrayal of sexual diversity as only belonging to 'autochthonous' Dutch citizens, it silences groups of non-Western cultures and queer subjects that might have another way of expressing sexual diversity than, for example, the very Western practice of 'coming out'(Jivraj and De Jong, 2011: 149; Bracke, 2012: 247). Both Wekker and Bracke plea for a more intersectional approach to gay emancipation in the Netherlands by including the voices of non-Western and Muslim queer subjects. While in the current homonormative discourse in the Netherlands it is considered a contradiction to be both religious, especially Muslim, and queer. This is also apparent in the teaching material *Respect 2 get = 2 give* where subtly a strict division is made between the group of homo- and bisexuals in the Netherlands and non-Western people in the Netherlands.

Looking at the resolution attainment goal sexual diversity and *Seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen,* the attainment goal in itself does not explicitly portray an element of queer secularity, although it does reinforce the idea that a certain group, religious, cultural or ethnical, has a hegemonic perception of sexual morality including sexual diversity. Generalising one particular group, in this case Muslims, as having one particular perception of sexual diversity. Namely a negative one, is an underlying problematic idea of queer secularity; by generalising all Muslims as being not accepting of sexual diversity there is no room for Muslims who are not heterosexual themselves, creating the dichotomy between religion and queerness. This idea is reinforced in the teaching materials where there are almost no examples of queer non-Western subject (including queer Muslim subjects) and in the case of *Respect 2 get = 2 give* the idea of the certain groups being especially opposed to sexual diversity is the main focus of the material.

4.4 Conclusion: can we speak of homonationalism in sexuality education?

The attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity was implemented in order to improve a safe school climate, especially for LGBT+ students, and to make students empowered in their own choices regarding their sexuality. However, schools are able to decide how they teach their students about sexuality and sexual diversity.

At first glance the policy of the renewed attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity does not seem to be homonationalistic in itself. The reason for adjusting the attainment goal even seems to be the opposite: by acknowledging that there is a problem with the acceptance of LGBT+ youth in Dutch schools, it undermines the characteristics of homonationalism; that the nation is to be perceived as morally upright. However, in the teaching materials the acceptance of sexual diversity is specifically described as a part of the Dutch society, as if the perception of the Netherlands as being morally uprights is part of the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. It is a Litmus Test of belonging to the Dutch nation and having the Dutch identity. In the teaching materials *Gewoon Doen* and *Respect 2 Get =2 Give* there is a focus on a particular group, namely non-Western students with an emphasis on Muslims, that do not conform to this Litmus Test. Thus, this attainment goal seems to be focused on religious and non-Western students that miss an integral part of Dutchness.

Another part of the renewed attainment goal that is homonationalistic, is the division between the queer subject and the religious subject, for example, by including a goal that aims to teach students which hegemonic perspective on sexual diversity certain religious and cultural/ethnical groups have. This division is most often between the Muslim subject and the queer subject. As Puar argues, the Judeo-Christian tradition is perceived to be more accepting, although they are also unyielding towards homosexuality in their fundamentalist form (Puar, 2007: 14). This division is more visible in the teaching materials than in the documents produced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. In these materials the dominant portrayal is that of white lesbian and gay couples, while the Islam is the main example of a group that is not accepting of sexual diversity. This erases the narrative of queer people of colour and religious, Muslim, queer subjects. All things considered, although the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity might not be homonationalistic in itself or in its essence, based on the documents produced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science itself, it does have elements of homonationalism in its implementation. The division of the Dutch identity that includes acceptance of sexual diversity on the one hand and the religious and non-Western subject, with a focus on the Muslim subject, on the other hand, is evidently present in mainly the teaching materials but also, less visibly, in the other documents.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore to what extent homonationalism is visible in the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity. This attainment goal was implemented in 2012 to make education on sexuality and sexual diversity mandatory in Dutch primary and secondary schools, however how they teach their students about sexual diversity is open to interpretation. Within this thesis, I aimed to answer the following question: *To what extent can the attainment goal sexual diversity be connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands?*

I first discussed the Dutch approach towards a multicultural model that started after the second World War with the arrival of guest labourers. Multiple laws were passed and reports were published to help the integration of the new immigrants. However, since the 'new realism' in the 1990s and the murder of both 'hyperrealists' Van Gogh and Fortuyn, the multicultural society was perceived as having failed. In the contemporary multiculturalism debate gender and sexuality are often discussed. The notion of the Islam as a culture that oppresses women and disapproves of sexual diversity is a reason for politicians to argue that Muslims should conform more to 'Dutch values'. The position of women and LGBT+ people are used in the national minorities debate as a tool to measure the tolerance of a society; the Dutch values of equality are put opposite of the Islam which is perceived as submissive and oppressive. This idea that Dutch and Islamic values are irreconcilable are reinforced by terrorist attacks and the murders on Van Gogh and Fortuyn.

   In the second chapter I have explained the concept of homonationalism. First, I discussed homonormativity, which is a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions but upholds them while promising the inclusion of queer people in heteronormative institutions. Jasbir Puar extends this concept to homonationalism, which has been defined as the national tolerance of homosexuality which has become a measure for the right of a nation to be sovereign. To understand the national self, she uses three terms: sexual exceptionalism, queer as regulatory/queer secularity and the ascendancy of whiteness. Both Bracke and Wekker argue that homonationalism is evidently present in the Netherlands. Wekker speaks of a national longing to a non-existing time when gay liberation could be taken for granted and was not threatened by the Islam, while Bracke argues that in the Netherlands there is a rescue narrative in which queer people have to be saved from people of colour and especially Muslims. This homonationalism in the Netherlands results in a divide between the queer subject and the Islamic subject and using emancipation as a marker of

modern civilization and the Dutch identity.

In the third chapter I have explained the focus of my research and the methodology that I used for my analysis. The research data that I have used are both documents produced by and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and teaching materials on sexuality and sexual diversity for primary and secondary education. As a methodology I used a critical discourse analysis, mainly because it deals with the relation between discourse and power as enacted by language in social and political context. The analysis focuses on two main aspects of homonationalism: sexual exceptionalism and queer secularity, the perception of the Dutch identity and religion in relation to the acceptance of sexual diversity.

In the fourth chapter, the analysis, I made clear that the attainment goal was adjusted because schools paid insufficient attention in their curricula to sexuality and sexual diversity. With the newly phrased attainment goal, schools are obligated to teach about sexuality and sexual diversity, however, how they teach their students about sexual diversity is open to interpretation. The first part of the analysis focused on sexual exceptionalism. Initially, it seemed that the renewed attainment goal is the opposite of 'sexual exceptional', as the documents by the ministry of Education, Culture and Science does acknowledge its homophobia at home by addressing the lack of the acceptance of LGBT+ students. However, when analysing the teaching materials specifically, it becomes apparent that Islamic students are often an example of intolerant students who do not accept sexual diversity. Furthermore, because accepting sexual diversity is perceived to be a Litmus Test for being a part of the Dutch society, or having the Dutch identity, those students are declined the Dutch identity. The second part of the analysis focused on queer secularity. I found that there is a distinction made between the queer subject and the religious, primarily Muslim, subject. This queer secularity ignores the existence of queer Muslims entirely, for example, in the teaching method *Hand in Hand* there are only illustrations of white gay and lesbian couples. While it ignores the existence of queer Muslims, it also ignores the experiences of queer Muslims and queer people of colour, resulting in a portrayal of there being only a specific Western way of being queer. Additionally, the idea is reinforced that certain religious or cultural groups, such as the Islam, have one hegemonic perspective on sexual diversity.

Thus, *to what extent can the attainment goal sexual diversity be connected to the discourse of homonationalism in the Netherlands?* There are certainly aspects of the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity that do fit into the discourse of homonationalism in the

Netherlands. However, I will not argue that the attainment goal sexuality and sexual diversity in its essence complies thoroughly with the concept of homonationalism. I argued that the documents produced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science have little to no aspects of homonationalism. As mentioned before, apart from the implication that a culture or religion has one hegemonic perspective on sexuality and sexual diversity, enforcing the binary between the queer and Muslim body, there are no aspects visible of homonationalism in those two documents. Additionally, in *Seksualiteit en seksuele diversiteit in de kerndoelen* homophobia at home is acknowledged in the form of LGBT+ students not feeling as safe as straight students. Nonetheless, the execution of the attainment goal, the teaching materials, has aspects of homonationalism to a greater extent. The first aspect of homonationalism, sexual exceptionalism, is mostly visible in the handbook *Gewoon DOEN,* as it emphasizes the acceptance of sexual diversity as a part of the Dutch identity and the Dutch society. Since it argues that mostly Muslim students are the ones who have problems accepting sexual diversity, it implies that they are to a lesser extent a part of the Dutch society. Queer secularity in the teaching methods and the handbook is reflected by the lack of examples of queer bodies of colour and religious queer bodies. It generates the erasure of queer Muslims and queer Muslim experiences, creating a portrayal of the queer subject as white and secular. Both aspects focus on a binary. The first one being between the Muslim body and the Dutch body and the other between the Muslim body and the queer body, implying that as a Muslim one is less part of the Dutch society and erasing the queer Muslim experiences. In this regard this study partly confirms the idea of homonationalism in the Netherlands, as both these aspects are not only visible in the research data, but are also apparent in the greater context of the contemporary Dutch multicultural society.

How to proceed? Reflection and further research

In the analysis I mentioned that there is an emphasis in the research data on VMBO schools, since these schools are supposed to be the toughest to educate on sexuality and sexual diversity. Although this was not discussed in the analysis, this statement could be an interesting starting point for a discussion about or study on the intersection of ethnicity and class and the acceptance of sexual diversity of students in the Netherlands. Students who attend VMBO schools are, firstly, more likely to be from affluent families; newspaper Trouw published an article which discussed a study from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science showing that only 29% of the children whose parents have a higher income (a minimum of 68000 euros) attend VMBO schools and 44% attend VWO schools. On the other

hand, 70% of the children of lower income families attend VMBO schools (Trouw, 2012). Additionally, a study of the municipality of Amsterdam shows that relatively more allochthonous than autochthonous students attend VMBO schools in Amsterdam. For example, 75% of Moroccan students attend a VMBO school in contrast to 30% of autochthonous students (Cohen, 2010: 2). In my study I showed that VMBO schools are more often portrayed as an example of a school type that struggles with the acceptance of LGBT+ students. This image is, among others, reinforced in the resolution renewed attainment goals which argues that VMBO schools are the ones where LGBT+ students feel the least safe. Additionally, in the teaching handbook and the teaching method *Respect 2 Get=2 Give* VMBO schools are argued to be the hardest to educate on sexuality and sexual diversity, because, among others these have a high percentage of allochthonous students as the study mentioned before also pointed out. Thus, my study shows how a school type, VMBO schools, with a higher percentage of allochthonous students is perceived as naturally being more tough to teach on sexuality and sexual diversity as there are more students with an Islamic background. Since this emphasis on the so-called 'intolerant' Islamic students is often placed in contrast to the Dutch tolerant identity in the teaching methods, it could be argued that and perceived as the Islamic student being less a part of the Dutch identity and society. In later studies not only the relation between the focus on allochthonous students, and especially Islamic students, in VMBO schools and their presumed perspective on sexuality and sexual diversity can be studied, but also the relation between the class background of students and their presumed perspective on sexuality and sexual diversity. As the study from the municipality of Amsterdam showed, children of lower income families attend VMBO schools more often.

Since some of the research data that I analysed, such as *Gewoon DOEN*, focus on VMBO schools, they also focus on the majority of the allochthonous and Islamic students who attend these schools. Just as the schools, which are currently rather segregated, and could be more divers in the ethnicity and class of the students who attend VMBO, HAVO and VWO schools, so could the content of the teaching materials that educate students on sexuality and sexual diversity. They could do so by not only giving examples of white, secular queer people, but also queer people of colour and religious queer people; acknowledging, for example, the experiences of queer Muslim people, instead of ignoring the various experiences of being queer. As Wekker also argued by giving the example of the experiences of the Surinamese mati work, this is just as valid a queer experience only not as recognised as the white, secular

queer experience that is associated with the modern West (Wekker, 2009: 11). This illustrates that there are many ways in which queerness is experiences and that this is for a large part dependent on a person's culture or religion. Even if the experience of queerness is not compatible with the Western experience of queerness, it does not become less valid. Additionally, accepting sexual diversity is perceived as a part of the Dutch identity and is an approachable manner of starting a discussion with students about sexual diversity. However, publishers of teaching materials could portray this part of the Dutch identity as less of a Litmus Test or a binary by not using this as the main argument to persuade students to accept sexual diversity.

Essentially, this study shows how in the Netherlands accepting sexual diversity is a measure for being a part of the Dutch society. Since the Islam is portrayed as not meeting these standards, Muslims are perceived as being less a part of the Dutch identity and society. This study displays how this is also visible in the teaching methods that are used to educate students on the subject of sexuality and sexual diversity. Schools, and writers and publishers of teaching methods should be aware not to reinforce the binary between the Dutch person/the queer body and the Muslim body that is a result of this Litmus Test. Instead of reinforcing the binary with their portrayal of the Islamic student as intolerant, they should break it with, for example, giving illustrations of non-Western and non-secular queer experiences.

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