

From commitment to practice: towards a more inclusive and anti-racist FNV

A research project on how anti-racism has been done, is being done and could be done in the future within the Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV)

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Summary

This thesis explores the ways anti-racism in the largest trade union federation of the Netherlands Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV) has been done historically, is currently being done and what we can learn from the knowledge and experiences of twelve members and employees of the FNV who do anti-racism. Anti-racism is defined in this thesis in the broadest sense, referring to beliefs, commitments, policy and activities that explicitly oppose racism and/or contribute to racial equality. The thesis is built on a “scavenger methodology” (Halberstam, 1998, p.13; Wekker, 2016, p.32), using insights from Critical Race Theory, Feminist Theory and participatory action research. Bringing together material from archives, interviews and my own experience as an FNV employee firstly I develop a historical overview of anti-racism within the FNV from the 1980s until now and secondly, I discuss the participants’ motivations for and views on doing anti-racism within the FNV; their experiences of anti-racism within the FNV; and their recommendations to the FNV so as to become a more diverse, inclusive and explicitly anti-racist union movement. The thesis first of all shows that it seems the FNV has not been able to implement anti-racist practice despite its expressed commitment to anti-racism and despite the efforts of members and employees since the 1980s. Secondly, the knowledge and experiences of the participants point to a deeply embedded racial structure of privilege, prioritization and oppression within the FNV: whiteness. This means there are significant barriers for people of colour to join and organise within the FNV, as well as for anyone who engages in anti-racism. The participants recommend the FNV to recognise and acknowledge institutional racism; to create awareness amongst white members and employees of the FNV; to create, facilitate and respect space for and autonomy of people of colour; and to actively support the anti-racist struggle of people of colour. Bringing the historical overview and the knowledge of the participants together in the final chapter, I am able to look towards further recommendations for an anti-racist FNV. Most notably, I call on the FNV to: (1) make use of existing knowledge and material on anti-racism; (2) rethink policy implementation and evaluation processes; (3) critically examine processes and procedures within the FNV that may be privileging and disadvantaging some over others; (4) actively prioritise and reach out to people of colour and their issues; and (5) Implement top-down measures and open up financial resources to advance anti-racist practice and develop them in collaboration with people of colour within the FNV. I argue that not only is an anti-racist union movement imperative, but now is the time for the FNV to prove that it is truly committed to its core principles: social justice, freedom, equality and solidarity.

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold,
Greater than the might of armies, multiplied a thousand-fold.
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old,
For the union makes us strong.

Solidarity forever,
Solidarity forever.
Solidarity forever,
For the union makes us strong.

– *Ralph Chaplin (1915)*

Introduction

The Statutes of the ‘Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging’ (FNV) explicitly define the fundamental values of equality, freedom, justice and solidarity as its leading principles (FNV, 2017). Despite this, it is safe to say that the FNV is an overwhelmingly white organisation that has remained noticeably silent in the wake of growing racist, xenophobic and Islamophobic public discourse since the turn of the century and growing discussion about racism in the Netherlands since the early 2010s. With over 1,1 million members, the FNV is not only the largest trade union federation in the Netherlands but it has over three times more members than all political parties in this country combined. Despite significantly declining membership and union participation in the last twenty years, being the largest trade union federation means the FNV continues to play an important role in the Dutch social-dialogue structures, in negotiations with the Government about socio-economic policy and in negotiations with employers in the majority of sectors and workplaces¹. Given its ‘commitment’ to equality, freedom, justice and solidarity, and given its remaining important role in social dialogue and the Dutch political landscape, by the mid-2010s several of my colleagues – most of them people of colour – had started wondering out loud about why the FNV would not speak out more publically and firmly against racism and xenophobia. These same colleagues took the initiative to raise concern about the use of racist stereotypical images of black people within the FNV itself, such as *Zwarte Piet*². In December 2015 and March 2016, some of them were involved in organising discussion events about racism in the workplace, which resulted in a list of recommendations to the FNV for combating racism in the workplace and amongst its membership and staff. But to this day, for a number of reasons the recommendations still have not been taken up. This awareness, combined with my personal experiences of the de-prioritisation of anti-racism and anti-discrimination as an employee for the FNV myself, led me to take up finishing the Master’s in Gender Studies that I had abandoned when I started working for the FNV in 2012.

I embarked on a quest for the experiences, motivations and successes of 12 members and employees of the FNV who engage(d) in anti-racism within and from within the union. From the outset, the project’s aim has been to foreground the voices of the participants, and to bring them together both physically and in this thesis to investigate whether there is or could be a shared discourse of anti-racism within the FNV. From literature research I identified a number of elements that such a discourse could entail: the participants’ definitions of racism; their views on the role of the union in general and in fighting racism; their experiences of doing anti-racism within the union; their

¹ For more information about the democratic structure, professional organisation and Dutch social-dialogue structures in which the FNV operates, see Appendix B.

² For a discussion about this controversial figure see Gloria Wekker’s book *White Innocence* from 2016.

motivations for doing this; their strategies, actions, effects and obstacles in doing anti-racism; and the role of white people in fighting racism. In most interviews these elements were touched upon, but other important things also came up, including significant obstacles and barriers to anti-racist organising within the FNV. Moreover, throughout the interviews I observed what seemed to be a lack of historical knowledge of anti-racist initiatives of and from within the FNV both amongst the participants and in published institutional histories of the FNV, which was dubbed the “lack of a collective memory of anti-racism” by one of the participants during the focus group. This is perhaps not surprising considering that the word ‘racism’ is not used once in Menno Tamminga’s 2017 book on the recent history of the FNV. Importantly, however, the participants expressed the need for such a collective memory for effective anti-racist practices within the FNV. This led me to alter the aim of this research from merely documenting and analysing the ways people do and are able to do anti-racism within the FNV to contributing to such a collective memory of anti-racism within the FNV.

In this thesis, I ended up using a “scavenger methodology” (Halberstam, 1998, p.13; Wekker, 2016, p.32), that combines “information culled from people with information culled from texts” (Halberstam, 1998, p.12). Using material from archives, interviews and my own experience as an FNV employee I create an analysis of the ways anti-racism in the FNV has been done historically, is currently being done and what we can learn from the knowledge of those who do anti-racism. Throughout this thesis I define anti-racism in the broadest sense, referring to beliefs, commitments, policy and activities that explicitly oppose racism and/or contribute to racial equality. In chapter 1, I explain my research design, introduce the group of participants, and expand on some of the methodological aims, choices and concerns of this project. In chapter 2, I construct a historical overview of anti-racism within the FNV based on archival material from the FNV and the International Institute for Social History (IISH), informal conversations with FNV employees, and historical accounts from the participants. Taking a closer look at the anti-racist activities, policies and stances of the FNV throughout the years combined with aspects of the socio-political context in which they were developed, leads me to conclude that the FNV has not been able to implement anti-racist practice despite its expressed commitment to anti-racism and despite the efforts of members and employees since the 1980s. In chapter 3, I discuss three aspects of the accounts of anti-racism of the 12 interview participants, namely: (1) the participants’ motivations for and views on doing anti-racism within the FNV; (2) the participants’ experiences of anti-racism within the FNV, and; (3) the participants’ recommendations to the FNV so as to become a more diverse, inclusive and explicitly anti-racist union movement. The participants point to a deeply embedded racial structure of privilege, prioritisation and oppression: whiteness. This means there are significant barriers for people of colour to join and organise, as well as for anyone who engages in anti-racism. In the last chapter, I bring together the conclusions from the historical overview and the knowledge and recommendations of the participants to look towards further recommendations for an anti-racist FNV. I argue that not only is an anti-racist union movement imperative, but now is the time for the FNV to prove that it is truly committed to social justice, equality and solidarity. The recommendations of the participants and the final recommendations of this thesis indicate ways for the FNV to translate its anti-racist commitment into anti-racist practice.

Chapter 1: This project

In this chapter I discuss the research questions that are central to this thesis, the “scavenger methodology” I used and the implications of that for my research design and used methods. I will also introduce the group of participants and briefly reflect on my own positionality as a white researcher and some dilemmas of this project.

Developing research questions and methodology

In this thesis I answer the following research questions, which were developed during the course of this project:

- In what ways have members and employees of the FNV engaged with anti-racism since the 1980s?
- What are the experiences of members and employees who have been involved in anti-racism within the FNV in the last 20 years?
- What do they think needs to happen for the FNV to become more anti-racist?
- What can we learn from the experiences and recommendations of the participants combined with a historical perspective of anti-racism within the FNV to further anti-racism within the FNV in the future?

The methodology I use to answer these questions, as mentioned in the introduction, is a “scavenger methodology” (Halberstam, 1998, p.13; Wekker, 2016, p.32). I combine archival material, informal conversations, semi-structured/unstructured interviews, a focus group meeting and my own experience to create an overview of the different ways in which people within the FNV have engaged with anti-racism since the 1980s. I discuss aspects of the context in which anti-racism has taken place, and the experiences of those who were involved. According to Halberstam (1998, p.13) a scavenger methodology “uses different methods to collect and produce information on subjects who have been deliberately or accidentally excluded from traditional studies of human behaviour”. Focusing on both a topic and a group of people that have been largely overlooked in research on the Dutch union movement (for example in Coenen, 1995; Akkermans and Kool, 1999; Van der Velden, 2005; Tamminga, 2017), I draw upon methodological insights from participatory action research, Critical Race Theory and Feminist Theory to create a research design that aims to foreground the participants as co-producers of knowledge and theory; making visible issues of power, representation and structures of oppression as well as (potential for) subversion and opposition; and to critically reflect on and be accountable for my own position and role as a white researcher in this particular project.

Considering the respondents as co-producers of knowledge in this thesis means that I take their narratives, histories and experiences as the starting point of knowledge production. Interviews are a common way for feminist researchers to “gain insight into the world of their respondents” (Hesse-Biber, p.114). Resembling aspects of participatory action research the project also aims at enhancing change and social justice in collaboration *with* stakeholders (in this case the participants) rather than merely *for* them (Phillips et al, 2013, p.1). It is also in line with what Parker and Lynn (2002, p.10) define as the three main goals of Critical Race Theory, namely “(a) to present storytelling and narratives as valid approaches through which to examine race and racism in the law and in society; (b) to argue for the eradication of racial subjugation while simultaneously recognizing that race is a

social construct; and (c) to draw important relationships between race and other axes of domination". Several scholars have argued that a central task in achieving this is to "reveal, unpick and challenge racial structures [...] by rendering (unequal) power relations visible" (Parker and Lynn, 2002 in Chadderton, 2012, p.367). In this thesis the knowledge and experiences of those who fight against racism highlight certain power relations and structures at play within the union movement, which in itself exposes and challenges those structures. This project's focus on *anti-racism*, therefore aims to highlight the *racism* at the root of anti-racism, where often it is overlooked in projects that aim to dismantle or challenge whiteness (Ahmed, 2007a, p.164).

The methodology used in this project is explicitly feminist in that its aim is to "to produce knowledge that will be useful for effective transformation of [...] injustice and subordination" (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002, p.147). As such, this thesis generates a picture of the ways people do anti-racism within the FNV, and of the existing and institutional challenges and barriers to this. In addition, this project aims to come to recommendations so as to positively affect contemporary and future anti-racist strategies and initiatives.

Research design and used methods

Between October 2016 and February 2017, I conducted a total of twelve face-to-face interviews in Dutch with FNV employees and (ex-)members of other (formerly) FNV-affiliated unions. I undertook literature research before the interviews took place, which led me to conclude. On February 28th, 2017 eight interview participants, two additional participants and the partner of one of the participants joined in a focus group meeting at my house. Following this process I conducted archival research and further literature research related to the participants' views, experiences and theories, and to my historical findings.

Participant selection and recruitment

The participants were mostly recruited through snow-balling, by initially approaching employees and members that I knew are or had been involved in anti-racism within the FNV and following-up on their suggestions for other participants. The selection of the participants was aimed primarily at tapping into a range of perspectives from within different parts of the FNV, whilst enabling the potential for destabilising whiteness and power hierarchies based on paid/unpaid labour for the union within the group of participants. These aims stem from Critical Race Theory methodologies that lay emphasis "on the voices and experiences of people from minority ethnic groups" and that contain the "explicitly political goal to challenge the experience of the white majority as the normative standard" (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002 in Chadderton, 2012, p.367). This form of purposive sampling (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p.119) meant that I included participants from different sectors, departments and unions affiliated with the FNV and that I consciously chose to include participants of colour³ over white participants to make sure that people of colour would form the majority. I also made sure that within the group the employee/member ratio was in favour of members.

³ A brief note on terminology: throughout this thesis I use words like 'ethnic minorities', 'migrants' and 'allochtonen' in inverted commas to highlight that they are terms that have been problematized by the same people that they are meant to categorise. I thus only refer to them when they are used in the specific document or time period I am discussing. When referring to non-white (Dutch) people in general I use the term people of colour or when applicable I use specific community names.

Interviews and participant checks

Whilst interviewing I combined elements of semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p.115). The topics addressed (albeit with varying means) related to the participants' definitions of racism, their motivations for fighting racism, their perceptions of the role of unions in general and in addressing racism, their anti-racist activities within the union and their experiences of this, and the role of white people in fighting racism. In most interviews I explicitly mentioned my intention to reflect on my role as a white researcher and that I invited the participants to give feedback relating to this. This served the purpose of enabling the (racial) power relations within the interviews to be challenged and made explicit both during and after the interviews, which is not uncommon in feminist interviewing practices (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p.128). The interviews, which took between 50 and 110 minutes, were recorded and later transcribed by two people not affiliated with the FNV using a combination of naturalised and denaturalised transcription (Mero-Jaffe, 2011, p.232). Silences, laughter and tone variations were also incorporated in the transcripts. Quotes from the interviews used throughout this thesis were translated by myself from Dutch to English.

The research was designed to create possibilities for feedback and input from the participants on a number of occasions. First, a two and a half hour focus group meeting took place on February 28th, 2017 in which the participants and I discussed the preliminary findings of my research, based on my initial analyses. The meeting was recorded with permission of the participants and they were sent the preliminary findings that were discussed afterwards. An additional and un-facilitated outcome of the focus group was an agreement amongst participants that a small group would start a 'think tank' to discuss further possibilities for anti-racism within the FNV. Second, each interview participant was sent their own interview transcript and audio-recording for feedback, alterations or deletions. This practice of getting transcript approval can be considered a way of transferring power from the interviewer-researcher to the interviewee and of enhancing the validity of the transcripts (Mero-Jaffe, 2011, p.239). One interviewee significantly edited the transcript, to make it more readable and after checking some historical claims he made. Some participants reiterated that certain names should not be mentioned but did not alter anything in the transcript and some did not respond to the transcript.

All interview participants were also sent a short description of themselves based on what they told me, and were asked whether this accurately portrays them and whether they wanted to be included anonymously in this thesis or not. The two participants that joined during the focus group were asked for input for their description, which they provided. Finally, all participants were sent a first draft of this thesis for feedback and approval of the way I represented their voices. All feedback was incorporated in this final thesis.

Archival research to create a timeline of anti-racism

Drawing upon Judith Roosblad's (2000; 2002) research on immigrants within Dutch unions I identified a number of key reports, brochures and activities regarding anti-racism and anti-discrimination in the 1980s and 1990s. Some of these documents I located in the FNV's own library and archive, others I found in the archives of the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam. In both archives I further searched for any brochures, reports, newsletters, or memoranda relating to (anti-)racism, (anti-)discrimination, 'ethnic minorities', and 'allochtonen'. I also used material provided to me by EARN members and material that was archived on EARN's website, as well as documents provided to me by Desiree van Lent on more recent anti-racist activities of/within the FNV. From this archival material I created a timeline of anti-racism from the 1980s until now, which was shared for feedback with some of the respondents and discussed informally with FNV employee Henny Siwabessy who

was involved in a number of activities in the 1990s and 2010s. The timeline provided most of the input for the historical overview in chapter 2.

Data analysis

The interview transcripts were coded in a program called 'QDA Miner' using both prior determined and newly emerging codes, grouped together in the following categories: definitions of racism, motivations, anti-racist activities, experiences/obstacles, role of the union in general, role of the union in fighting racism, reasons for lack of anti-racism within the FNV, role of white people, and recommendations. Differences and similarities were identified between interviewees, also taking into account observations I made before, during and after the interview of which I took notes. Due to time constraints, the focus group transcript was not finished and could therefore not be coded and analysed.

Introducing the group of participants

Out of twelve interview participants, seven are members of the FNV and (formerly) FNV-affiliated unions: Kenneth Cuvalay (AbvaKabo FNV⁴); Rita Mungra (AbvaKabo FNV); Farouq Tareen (AbvaKabo FNV); Participant 10 (AbvaKabo FNV); Jerry Chintoe (Nederlandse Politiebond, NPB⁵); and Arzu Aslan (Algemene Onderwijsbond, AOb⁶). The four other interview participants are employees of the FNV: Cihan Ugural, Jamila Abdelghani, Desiree van Lent and Soheilah Rodjan. Jan Cartier was the only interview participant that is a member of the FNV, but engaged in anti-racism in his professional capacity as project officer for Transnationals Information Exchange Netherlands, an organisation that organised solidarity events. When necessary to group participants into FNV members or employees in this thesis, I group Jan together with the FNV employees. The two participants who were not interviewed but were present at the focus group meeting were FNV employee Duygu Akcay and EARN member Petra Ploeg (AbvaKabo FNV). Background stories of each participant can be found in Appendix C.

Reflections: researcher positionality, anonymity and archiving

Undertaking this research project as a white person working for the FNV came with significant privileges, which are important to be mindful of. Both as a feminist activist and in preparation for this research project, I researched what it means to be white, what it means to be an ally to people of colour as a white person, and particularly what it means to be a white person doing research on race and (anti-)racism. One of the things I read repeatedly was that, as a white person, it is imperative to be aware of one's own privilege, position and prejudices and to actively work towards disrupting the system of white supremacy that advantages some and disadvantages others. At some times, however, this project felt more like an exercise rather than a disruption of white privilege when I was for example allowed to be flexible with my time by my manager, could drive to interviews in my FNV lease car, and knowing that doing this project would leave me with an MA degree and as Arzu pointed out, quite possibly without challenges to my objectivity or motives for doing this project. Sometimes I felt it was not my place to do this project. But as this thesis attests to, I decided contrary to that feeling. That is mostly because of the incredible people I interviewed who told me it was an important project, regardless of who was doing it, and that they were glad their voices would be

⁴ In 2015 the public sector union AbvaKabo FNV merged into what is currently simply the FNV, but because at the time these members were actively doing anti-racism it did I will refer to AbvaKabo throughout this thesis.

⁵ The police union NPB and education union AOb are still existing FNV-affiliated unions.

⁶ See footnote 4.

recorded somewhere. In many ways I attempted to disrupt the unequal power dynamics that are inherent to any research project (Mero-Jaffe, 2011, p.239), by building in participant checks and creating moments for feedback, and by learning to let go of definitions and theoretical concepts so as to let the participants speak for themselves. But ultimately I am the one who chose what questions to ask, what to use from their words and what not to. In further research I would like to reflect more on what this has meant in this particular project.

One dilemma I posed to the participants was that of their anonymity. Early on in the project I discussed with most of the participants whether they wanted to be anonymous or not, and they said they did not. After writing chapter 3, I felt hesitation towards using their names because of the nature of what is discussed there. Namely, in the chapter itself it becomes evident that the participants have experienced certain levels of repercussions for their anti-racism within the FNV. It therefore cannot be ruled out that there will be negative reactions to the fact that all of this has been written down and that the participants shared their experiences. For this reason, whilst receiving the first draft of this thesis the participants were once again asked if they wished to remain acknowledged by name or whether they would rather become anonymous. All but one of them explicitly chose to remain named. The participant that wanted to remain anonymous is referred to as participant 10 throughout this thesis. A further dilemma which will need to be discussed with the participants is if and if so, in what way we can best archive the audio-recordings and transcripts of the interviews and the focus group. This will be done at a later stage, in consultation with and with permission of the participants. I have digitalised most of the historical material I have found in the FNV's and the IISH's archives, which I hope to make accessible. This project is in part a start of a historiography of anti-racism within the FNV. I hope there will be others, with different backgrounds and perspectives, both within and outside of the FNV, who will take up the further development of it and the recording of the important work the participants and others are doing against racism.

Chapter 2: A historiography of anti-racism within the FNV – 1980s until now

In this chapter I provide a chronological overview in which I contextualise and describe the anti-racist activities of the participants and others before them. The timeline however starts roughly fifteen years before some of the participants started doing anti-racism in the FNV, to be able to create a bigger picture of the kind of anti-racism that has been prevalent within the FNV throughout the years. The aim of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive institutional history of the FNV or of anti-racism within the FNV, but to contribute to the start of what participant Arzu called a “collective memory” of anti-racism within the FNV. It is not exhaustive, nor does it aim to be. I am aware that the timeline in its current form suggests that there were no grassroots anti-racist activities or initiatives within or in collaboration with the FNV and/or affiliated unions before the late 1990s, which is most likely not the case. In the FNV’s own archival material I had access to, however, I have not been able to find many records of grassroots anti-racist organising during that time. The anti-racism within the FNV from before the mid-1990s that I describe in this chapter is based on what I could find in the FNV’s archives and existing historical research on the FNV, particularly making use of Judith Roosblad’s (2000; 2002) work on immigrants and unions in the Netherlands. Roosblad researched the way the Dutch union movement dealt with (labour)migration and the presence of immigrants between 1960 and 1997, also compared to other European countries (Roosblad, 2002, p.11). In this chapter I draw heavily on her description of the stances of the FNV regarding immigrants within the mentioned time period. Her thesis also provided an important starting point for my own archival research, pointing me to certain reports, policy papers and activities in which the FNV engaged with racism and discrimination in the 1980s and 1990s. To further develop this timeline into a more comprehensive account of anti-racism within the FNV requires further empirical research, possibly through interviews and deeper archival research. The timeline as is, however, does provide an interesting perspective on particular trends in the way the FNV and people within the FNV have engaged with anti-racism.

1980s: developing ‘ethnic minority’ policy

This timeline starts in the 1980s, when a noticeable shift took place in the way the Dutch Government and unions understood immigration and the position of immigrants in Dutch society. Up until then, the Dutch Government had considered the Netherlands to be an emigration country rather than an immigration country, although the number of immigrants to the Netherlands had already exceeded the number of emigrants from the 1960s onwards (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000, p.5 in Roosblad, 2002, p.29). From the late 40s and early 50s until the 1980s, there were immigration waves from former Dutch colonies, of ‘guest workers’ from Southern Europe, and of refugees from Eastern Europe (Roosblad, 2002, p.30-31). The first group, mostly from the former Dutch-Indies, Surinam and the former Dutch-Antilles usually were Dutch citizens, which meant they held a relatively strong legal status (Roosblad, 2000, p.92). When it came to defending the interests of immigrants in the Netherlands, Roosblad (2002, p.31) points out Dutch unions concerned themselves with ‘guest workers’ particularly because they were in a more vulnerable position than immigrants who possessed Dutch nationality. Up until 1979, both the Dutch Government and the union federations had assumed that these ‘guest workers’ mainly from Italy, Spain, Morocco and Turkey that had been drafted to work in the Netherlands since the 1960s would return to their countries of origin (Tinnemans, 1994, p.204; Roosblad, 2002, p.31; Ghorashi, 2014, p.104).

However, a report from the ‘Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid’⁷ (WRR) in 1979 advised the Government that immigrants would reside in the Netherlands permanently (WRR, 1979, p.53) which led both the Government and union federations to develop (integration) policy aimed at ‘ethnic minorities’ (Roosblad, 2000, p.100; Roosblad, 2002, p.53). The FNV Vakcentrale changed the name of what had been called its ‘Secretariaat Buitenlandse Werknemers’ (Secretariat of Foreign Workers) to ‘Secretariaat Werknemersbelangen Etnische Minderheden’ (Secretariat of Ethnic Minority Workers’ Interests⁸), which became responsible for developing the FNV’s ‘ethnic minority’ policy and agenda. Roosblad (2000, p.101; 2002, p.54) describes how the FNV laid the groundwork for such policy in a 1982 discussion paper called ‘Samen beter dan apart’ (‘Together rather than separate’). In it, the FNV defined its role as incorporating ethnic minorities in its education programs, reaching out to ethnic minorities in workplaces and in creating contact networks (FNV, 1982, p.13-14; Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden, 1992, p.7). Roosblad (2000, p.101; 2002, p.55) argues that whilst the paper recognised the need for improvement of the labour market position of ethnic minorities and addressed the role of employers and Government in this, it lacked perspective on what the FNV itself could do. This focus on the ‘outside’ is also apparent in the FNV publicly taking a stance against discrimination, racism and right-wing extremism of the political party ‘Centrum Democraten’ in 1982 and its collaboration with other organisations to fight the Government’s proposal to lower child benefits for immigrants with children in their country of origin (Roosblad, 2000, p.101; Roosblad, 2002, p.56). In the first half of the 1980s, the FNV’s approach to the issues facing ethnic minorities – such as unequal employment opportunities, discrimination and racism – thus seem ‘externally’ focused (Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden, 1992, p.7) in the sense that racism was considered something that was done by extreme-right parties and the responsibility for improving the labour market opportunities for ethnic minorities was placed with employers and the Government.

By the mid-1980s, the FNV broadened its anti-racist focus to include its own members. Coalitions were formed with organisations of and for migrants, and in 1985 the FNV’s Federation Council adopted a resolution that would deprive FNV members of their union membership for openly sympathising with organisations that incited discrimination based on race (FNV, 1986, p.35; Roosblad, 2000, p.101; Roosblad, 2002, p.56). In 1986 the FNV also initiated educational efforts to prevent and counter racism and discrimination amongst its own membership, saying in the course material that was developed:

“The FNV sees it as an essential task of union work to combat forms of direct discrimination. An active stance against racism and fear or hate of foreigners is inextricably linked with the advocacy of FNV-members from foreign or ethnic (minority) groups” (FNV, 1986, p.2).

The FNV also developed highly successful ‘Nederlands op de werkvloer’ (‘Dutch in the workplace’) courses to increase the opportunities for migrants in getting and keeping work (FNV, 1988, p.10-11; FNV, 1992, p.8). These course were offered well into the 1990s, with around 350 students each year (StvdA, 1994, p.56). In 1987, the ‘Sociaal Economische Raad’⁹ (the SER) developed recommendations

⁷ Translates to ‘The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy’.

⁸ Interestingly, an initial proposal to rename the secretariat merely ‘Secretariat Ethnic Minorities’ was rejected by a majority of the Federation Board, because that name was considered to be “too broad and politically dangerous” (Commandeur, 1986, p.122 in Roosblad, 2002, p.54).

⁹ SER stands for ‘Socio-Economic Council’. The institution is part of the Dutch socio-economic dialogue model, also known as the Dutch ‘polder’ structure or social dialogue structure and is characterized by a commitment to cooperation, consensus and wage negotiations (Delsen, 2001). The two institutions that make up the Dutch ‘polder’ are the Stichting van de Arbeid (StvdA: the ‘Labour Foundation’) and the Sociaal Economische Raad (SER). In the SER, the FNV discusses socio-economic developments with employers organisations, other union federations and independent public stakeholders and experts. For more information on the Dutch social-dialogue structure and the SER and the StvdA I refer to Appendix B.

to the Government aimed at creating education and employment plans for ‘ethnic minorities’ through employment policy and provisions (FNV Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden, 1992, p.8). As part of the SER’s recommendations, unions were assigned a responsibility to work towards agreements with employers in collective contracts about the hiring practices of ‘ethnic minorities’ (SER, 1987, p.13). This led the FNV to write its own ‘Actieplan minderheden’ (‘Minorities actionplan’) in which it expressed its intent to come to such agreements and strive towards the creation of a labour market anti-discrimination code (FNV, 1992, p.8). By the end of the 1980s, however, it became clear that ‘ethnic minorities’ in the Netherlands were disproportionately affected by the economic crisis of the decade, causing a decline in their socio-economic situations (Entzinger, 2014, p.10). At the request of the Government, the WRR wrote another report in 1989 titled ‘Allochtonenbeleid’¹⁰, which advised the Government to focus on improving education and labour-market opportunities for individual members of specific ethnic minorities, so-called ‘allochtonen’¹¹ (WRR, 1989) and “to put more emphasis on integration” (Ghorashi, 2014, p.105).

1990s: anti-racist commitments and recommendations

The 1989 WRR report and threat of legislation from the Government (Roosblad, 2000, p.106) led the main workers and employer’s organisations – including the FNV – to reach an accord in the ‘Stichting van de Arbeid’¹² (StvdA) in 1990. It was aimed at reducing unemployment rates amongst ‘ethnic minorities’ to the same level as the ‘autochtone’¹³ population within five years, like in the 1987 SER recommendations through agreements in collective labour contracts (StvdA, 1990, p.7; Roosblad, 2000, p.103). In a political and public climate in which ‘allochtonen’ and particularly ‘Muslims’ were increasingly spoken about by politicians in a negative fashion (Tinnemans, 1994, p.362-367; Tinnemans, 2009, p.18) and with extreme-right political parties such as the Centrum Democraten and Centrumpartij ’86 on the rise (Tinnemans, 1994, p.354-355; Gowricharn, 2001, p.22), it is not surprising that evaluations of the accord showed that there were hardly any actual agreements made in collective contracts (FNV, 1991, p.1; Roosblad, 2000, p.103). Roosblad (2000, p.103; 2002, p.58) explains this by a lacking sense of binding responsibility amongst both employers and unions. Moreover, she argues, the agreements that *were* reached were often too vague to warrant adequate implementation. What the FNV and its unions did do in those years was set up national, regional or local ‘ethnic minority’, ‘migrant’ or ‘allochtonen’ advisories, working groups or commissions to represent the interests of union members of migrant backgrounds. They would bring issues affecting people of colour in their workplaces to the attention of their union’s board or council, at some times more successfully than others. Importantly, only the public sector union AbvaKabo FNV granted its ‘Hoofdgroep Migranten’ a decision-making status regarding issues affecting members of migrant

¹⁰ ‘Allochtonen’ policy. The WRR’s use of the word ‘Allochtonen’ marks the establishment of the term as an acceptable and seemingly neutral way of referring to guest workers, immigrants (including from former Dutch colonies) and foreigners. Since the late 1980s, the term ‘allochtonen’ is often used in public, political and academic discourse to refer to specific groups of non-white ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. As professor Gloria Wekker points out in her recent book *White Innocence: paradoxes of colonialism and race*, although “allochtonen” literally means “those who came from elsewhere” as opposed to “autochtonen” which means “those who are from here” (Wekker, 2016, p.15), the term ‘allochtonen’ encompasses those ethnic groups that through their skin colour or their “deviant religion or culture” are not able “to make a successful claim to Dutchness” (Wekker, 2016, p.23). In the allochtoon – autochtoon terminology, Dutchness and the category of ‘autochtoon’ thus are reserved for those who are white and white-passing. Moreover, who exactly is considered ‘allochtoon’ at a given time, is “not set in stone” (Wekker, 2016, p.23). Over time, according to Wekker, different ethnic minority groups have “moved out” of “the construction allochtoon”, such as Indos and Surinamese people (Wekker, 2016, p.23).

¹¹ See footnote 10.

¹² See footnote 9.

¹³ See footnote 10.

backgrounds (FNV, 1995, p.31). None of the other groups, including the Contact Commissie Etnische Minderheden of de Vakcentrale FNV, had any decision-making power within their union or the federation.

The FNV also developed a non-discrimination code, which was adopted in 1993 after the FNV's Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden had pointed out that its previously formulated 'ethnic minority' policy had not become commonplace amongst the FNV unions' membership nor an integral part of the unions' practices and activities (FNV, 1992, p.9; Roosblad, 2002, p.59). The non-discrimination code was aimed at both the democratic structures and professional organisations of the FNV, and prescribed the FNV and its unions to "not only counteract discrimination on an individual level, but also to create a policy that combats institutional forms of discrimination (rules, procedures and institutional practices" (FNV, 1993, p.4). The code committed the FNV and affiliated unions to certain standards of conduct for the prevention of discrimination, as well as measures such as positive action to decrease the qualitatively and quantitatively disadvantaged position of 'ethnic minorities' (Roosblad, 2002, p.60). Roosblad (2002, p.60) importantly notes that, despite the fact that all FNV-affiliated unions had signed the code, the Vakcentrale FNV had no power to impose the proposed measures within that code on the unions. This meant that the unions themselves were responsible for developing 'ethnic minority' and anti-discrimination policy. The yearly evaluations of the implementation of the code showed a large disparity in the efforts and results of the different unions (FNV, 1994; FNV, 1995; FNV, 1996a; Stokman, 1995 in Roosblad, 2002, p.60). It can be assumed this was related to the responsibility each union felt regarding the development and implementation of such policies, in similar fashion to the responsibility they felt regarding agreements with employers per the 1990 StvdA accord.

Whereas in the first half of the 1990s the FNV and affiliated unions seemed to be primarily focused on developing (rather ineffective and unenforceable) policy and forming groups and projects to increase the union participation of 'allochtonen' or 'migrant' members, the second half of the 1990s was characterized by a number of activities specifically around the issue of discrimination and racism in the workplace. The first of those activities was a seminar on racism in the workplace organised by participant Jan from Transnationals Information Exchange (TIE) Netherlands¹⁴ and the FNV in March 1996. Participant Kenneth was one of several participating union members of colour from the Netherlands, Belgium, France and the UK. In continuation of the seminar, a delegation of members of colour of different FNV unions, again including Kenneth, visited England in September, supported by FNV and TIE employees, to become acquainted with the work of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Equal Opportunities Department, the TUC Black Workers' Conference, the Commission for Racial Equality, the National Assembly Against Racism and a number of NGO's (TIE, 1995, n.p.). The same year, the FNV's Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden announced it would start supporting the unions to come to better agreements in collective labour contracts (FNV, 1996b, p.4-5) and the StvdA came to a new accord¹⁵ regarding the improvement of labour-market opportunities for 'ethnic minorities', because the Government's 1994 'Wet BEAA'¹⁶, which had been implemented because of the failure of the 1990 StvdA accord, proved unsuccessful (StvdA, 1998, p.69-70; Roosblad, 2002, p.59). The

¹⁴ TIE Netherlands was a non-profit organisation that organised international exchange projects and solidarity events amongst union activists. Jan Cartier, one of the participants, worked for TIE.

¹⁵ The accord is named '*Met minderheden meer mogelijkheden*', which translates to 'More possibilities with minorities' (StvdA, 1996).

¹⁶ The 'Wet BEAA' ('*Wet Bevordering Evenredige Arbeidsdeelname Allochtonen*'), in line with the WRR advice of 1989, required organisations with more than 35 employees to register and report the number and percentage of 'allochtonen'¹⁶ working for their organisation as well as their efforts to increase this number (Tinnemans, 1994, p.364; Verbeek, 2013, p.121).

union federations promised to strengthen the support for 'ethnic minority' policy in organisations by training, educating and advising work councils and active union members (StvdA, 1998, p.22). Following the example of the TUC, the FNV opened a 'racism in the workplace hotline' for a week in June 1997. The results were shocking, including the fact that victims of discrimination that came to the FNV for legal support were being sent "from pillar to post" (Hupkes, 2006, p.7). The results led the FNV to state it would focus on agreements for anti-discrimination codes and encourage behavioural change in its collective contract negotiations (StvdA, 1998, p.31). However, the commitments and recommendations that followed from the results were not put into practice (EARN, 2002a, p.10). As far as I have been able to find, the same goes for the rest of the FNV's commitments regarding anti-racism and anti-discrimination during the 1990s.

2000s: anti-racist self-organisation of FNV members

By the late 1990s, a number of union members of colour, including Kenneth, Rita, Farouq and Jerry, that were active in their unions' migrant advisories or local groups had met at a number of FNV-wide events. By 2000 they experienced a shared disillusionment with the FNV's lack of action on and commitment to the issue of racism and discrimination in the workplace. In February 2000 some of them participated in an exchange visit of two TUC Race Relations Committee representatives from the United Kingdom, organised by TIE Netherlands and later in March participated in a TIE conference on racism in Cologne, Germany. Here the idea for a Europe-wide anti-racism network was born, as well as the idea for a European anti-racism conference. The ideas were developed further at the TUC Black Workers' Conference in April 2000, and at an organising meeting in Paris in October that year. In both meetings the Dutch delegation was financially and logistically supported to participate by TIE. After the Paris meeting, the Dutch union members involved tried to get financial assistance from their respective unions, without success. Nevertheless, the organising continued in January 2001. Every country formed a 'reference group', which in the Netherlands resulted in the creation of EARN (Europees Anti-Racisme Netwerk). Research participants Kenneth, Rita, Jerry, Farouq, participant 10, Lot, Petra and Jan were all involved in EARN, be it to more or lesser extent, in different roles, and not all from the beginning until now. EARN united union members from five different FNV-affiliated unions, but self-organised outside of those respective unions mostly with support from TIE.

In the meantime, in 2001, the FNV's Congress acknowledged that the representation of ethnic minorities, women, and young people in the FNV was still far from ideal. Because of this, the congress decided the FNV would develop diversity policy and the FNV unions' chair people formed a Diversity Taskforce to develop it. Union negotiators also started exploring how collective contract negotiations could better represent the demands of all workers in given organisations or sectors (Maassen, 2003, p.9). This discursive move within the FNV from anti-discrimination and anti-racism to diversity in general had already started in 2000, when the FNV published a brochure on how to deal with 'undesirable behaviour in the workplace' (FNV, 2000). The brochure was based on research into bullying, sexual intimidation and racism, and argued that all three could be tackled by the same approach (FNV, 2000, p.21). In 2003, the FNV conducted research into 'good practices' of anti-racism and anti-discrimination in three organisations (FNV, 2003) and organised a study day about 'workplaces without racism' in 2004, which was later cancelled due to lack of interest (EARN, 2004, p.1). The following year, the FNV hired E-Quality to produce an updated version of the 2000 brochure (E-Quality, 2005) and announced it was collaborating with 'Landelijk Bureau ter Bestrijding van

Rassendiscriminatie¹⁷ (LBR) on a research project about what happens to victims of discrimination in the workplace (FNV, 2004, p. 6). In 2005, EARN collaborated with LBR on this research project, which the FNV withdrew its affiliation with towards the end. In 2006 the results of this project were published in the report '*Gediscrimineerd op de werkvloer, en dan...?*'¹⁸ in which a number of recommendations are made to victims, employers, unions and the Government (Bochhah, 2006). In 2006, the FNV stopped publishing its newsletter "Kleurrijk"¹⁹ aimed at ethnic minorities, in an effort "to distribute resources and manpower differently" (FNV, 2006, p.3). In 2007, the FNV and FNV Jong (the FNV-affiliated union for young people) participated in the development of the SER recommendations on improving the labour market opportunities and participation for young people from migrant backgrounds (SER, 2007). For the rest of the 2000s, I have so far been unable to find any archival material of the FNV's activities or policy regarding racism, discrimination or even diversity.

EARN's public activities, however, took shape from 2002 onwards. In light of the national elections EARN wrote to all the FNV unions' chair people, calling them out for not taking a stance against the rise in racism and xenophobia. EARN also organised a workshop around institutional and everyday racism for AbvaKabo FNV, supported a demonstration against racism that was cancelled due to the murder of Pim Fortuijn, and successfully pleaded for more union members rather than employees in the Contact Commissie Etnische Minderheden (EARN, 2002b, n.p.). In November 2002 the earlier mentioned European Anti-Racism conference took place in the Netherlands, with union delegates from the UK, the US, France and Poland. Throughout the rest of the 2000s, EARN members participated in several conferences in Europe and the United States, organised multiple workshops and seminars both within and outside of their respective unions, wrote a number of press releases and participated in TV and magazine interviews, worked together with other Black and migrant organisations on petitions, and wrote statements to politicians. They also provided individual support to members of colour who became victims of racism and discrimination in their workplaces, although they had to stop doing that at a certain point because they did not have enough people. Outside of EARN's activities, around the mid-2000s Lot also contributed to efforts within AbvaKabo FNV towards enabling undocumented migrant domestic workers to unionise. Rita and Lot were both active in AbvaKabo's general board, where they kept trying to put anti-racism on the agenda. By 2011, EARN's coordinator Kenneth left the Netherlands for a job in Sint Eustatius. Although EARN still exists today, Kenneth's departure marked an end to EARN's visible activities.

2010 – now: the re-emergence of anti-racism in the FNV

Already since the 1990s, but particularly since 9/11 we have been able to witness the significant rise of visible xenophobia, Islamophobia and racism in the Netherlands (Braun, 2011, p.753; Essed and Hoving, 2014, p.9) and the growing political power of xenophobic politicians such as Geert Wilders and his 'Partij voor de Vrijheid' (PVV, 'Freedom Party'). Ghorashi (2014, p.108) observes that since the murder of Pim Fortuijn in 2002 "[t]he Dutch public sphere is filled with a wide range of utterances from politicians and public figures showing their disgust or discomfort with Islam and Islamic migrants". But we have also seen the rise of anti-racist and anti-Islamophobic movements (Aouragh, 2014, p. 356). Particularly since 2011, the anti-Zwarte Piet movement has gained momentum and a growing number of activists and academics of colour have given a new impulse to public discussions of racism in the Netherlands. As Professor Gloria Wekker says, "Zwarte Piet has

¹⁷ The 'national bureau for the elimination of racial discrimination'.

¹⁸ This translates as 'Discriminated against in the workplace, and then...?'.

¹⁹ Kleurrijk means 'Colourful'.

become the focal point, the symbolic spearhead of a now year-round debate on fundamental racial inequalities in Dutch society” (Wekker, 2016, p.143). However, it was not until 2015 that the FNV openly engaged with anti-racism again, apart from the occasional participation in and support of the yearly anti-discrimination demonstration organised by the ‘21 Maart Comité²⁰’. From the early 2010s until 2015 the FNV was wrapped up in institutional restructuring, following an ideological rift within the federation regarding the increase of the retirement age. This resulted in the FNV’s current democratic structure (see Appendix B), and meant that several FNV unions’ professional organisations merged and reorganisation processes were set in motion, causing inevitable ‘internal’ turbulence. Nevertheless, in 2014 the FNV contributed in the SER to the development of the ‘Discriminatie werkt niet’ (‘Discrimination doesn’t work’) advice to the Government, which resulted in the development of the ‘Diversity Charter’ for employers to actively commit to advancing diversity and inclusivity in their organisations. The FNV itself also signed the charter.

By mid-2015 the FNV’s internal restructuring had calmed down somewhat, and it is thus not surprising that this is the point at which the first explicitly anti-racist initiative in several years was organised by Cihan, Lot, Desiree and Jamila in December 2015 and March 2016 in the form of two ‘Racisme Werkt Niet’ (‘Racism Doesn’t Work’) meetings for members and employees. Arzu was one of the speakers at the first meeting. She had become active in the education union AOb’s ‘Groep Kleurrijk Onderwijs’ (‘Group Colourful Education’), which under a different name had existed within the AOb (and its predecessor) since 1983 to represent the interests of teachers who were teaching children of migrant workers in their native language. Since 2015, a number of the participants started organising events within the AOb and the FNV that addressed and opened up dialogue about racism and discrimination in the workplace and in education. The FNV’s ‘diversity’ policy advisors organised a few trainings on diversity and inclusion between 2015 and 2017, and in 2016 trained the committee members that would assess prospective board and members’ parliament members in awareness of their own prejudice and stereotyping. An initiative towards anonymous selection processes during application procedures within the FNV was discussed with the Human Resources department of the FNV in 2016. Several participants also discuss racism with their colleagues and with members, and consciously reach out to workers of colour to involve them in both union work and anti-racism within the union. Some efforts are focused on influencing policy and putting anti-racism on the agenda, and others at creating anti-racist awareness through education and specific trainings on racism, for example such as the trainings that were given in March 2016 as part of the national action month against racism and discrimination of the ‘21 Maart Comité’. Unfortunately, these trainings did not attract a lot of participants (Weingart, 2016, p.41), indicating that something more may be necessary before FNV members and employees are willing or able to recognise the importance of education on racism and discrimination.

In 2016, the FNV also joined the ‘Actieplan Jeugdwerkloosheid’ (‘Action plan Youth unemployment’) and organised an event about solidarity with refugees. Some of the participants took the initiative to challenge the prevalence of Zwarte Piet within the FNV with the FNV’s director, who said efforts would be made in 2016 to create a more inclusive Sinterklaas party within the FNV. Despite having promised to do so, the initiators were not consulted regarding the form in which this would happen resulting in the prevalence of some racialised aspects of Zwarte Piet’s appearance in December 2016. In 2017, since this project started, the FNV contributed to the national conference against racism and discrimination in January; two of the participants organised a training dedicated to racism for the FNV’s organising department; as a member of the ‘21 Maart Comité’ the FNV was co-organiser of the

²⁰ The ‘21 Maart Comité’ or ‘March 21st Committee’ is a collaboration between a number of organisations that traditionally organise an annual demonstration on March 21st, on International Day Against Racism and Discrimination.

annual demonstration against racism and discrimination in Amsterdam in March; in May a first meeting for FNV employees of colour took place on the initiative of several of the participants; and one of the participants gave a well-received 'TED-talk' about the need for more diversity within the FNV to the FNV's Board members.

Conclusion

To summarise, the approaches to anti-racism within the FNV have changed significantly over the decades in terms of where the FNV placed the responsibility for anti-racism, whether it recognised racism amongst its own membership and staff, and which members and employees engaged with anti-racism within the FNV and how. However, a few trends can be discerned. The first is that a lack of commitment and prioritisation within the union movement as a whole has meant that the anti-racist efforts of the FNV were hardly or at best moderately successful. From the late 1990s until now this has led both members and employees to take matters into their own hands, mostly out of disappointment. Whereas the members that organised around anti-racism in the 2000s had to do so outside of the (official) structures of the FNV, the employees and members who are doing so now are doing it (from) within the FNV's structures. A second trend is that it seems the FNV's engagement with anti-racism has been prompted and limited by different political and historical trends over time, rather than by advancing a progressive agenda of its own. This despite several documented expressions of commitment to anti-racism since the 1980s. Importantly, these political and historical trends the FNV followed were the ones that were prevalent within the dominant white Dutch population, not amongst Dutch people of colour. This manifests itself mostly in the way the recognition of the need for specific attention to such groups was awarded decreasing levels of resources and priority in the context of the increasingly xenophobic and racist public discourse since the turn of the century. Roosblad (2002, p.5) defines this dilemma of whether to engage in specific advocacy for members of migrant backgrounds or to include them in 'general' advocacy as the "interest dilemma" of unions regarding immigrants. The FNV's answer to it seems to have changed with the previously mentioned political and historical trends. The FNV's move from talking about racism and discrimination to 'diversity' can be seen as a symptom of this. In recent years, however, the rise of anti-racist movements outside of the union movement has led members and employees to engage more openly with anti-racism *within* the FNV's structures in a way that was not possible in the 2000s. However, in the next chapter we will see that this does not come easy and that such anti-racist efforts, like their predecessors, remain in the margins of the FNV. This chapter demonstrates that despite the fact that a number of FNV members and employees have actively engaged with and organised around anti-racism and despite the FNV having already defined anti-racism as an "essential task" of the union movement in 1986 (FNV, 1986, p.2), these efforts have not yet resulted in anti-racism becoming an integral part of the FNV's practice.

Chapter 3: “What is going on here?”

Participants’ views on and experiences of doing anti-racism in the FNV

In this chapter I discuss what knowledge the participants shared during the interviews, regarding their motivations, observations, obstacles and barriers, and responses to their anti-racism within the FNV. The chapter ends with a collection of the recommendations the participants themselves have for white people and the FNV that in their views will enable the FNV to become a more anti-racist, inclusive and diverse union movement and a good ally in the anti-racist struggle of people of colour. This chapter thus answers the second and third research questions of this project, namely: What are the experiences of members and employees who have been involved in anti-racism within the FNV in the last 20 years? And what do they think needs to happen for the FNV to become more anti-racist?

Motivations for and views on doing anti-racism within the FNV

First, I will present the expressed motivations of participants to engage in anti-racism themselves and second, why they think it is important the FNV does so.

Why do the participants fight against racism?

Personal motivations reflected most often a combination of a commitment to the values of equality, solidarity and social justice; personal experiences and/or observations of everyday and institutional racism and in some cases the need to prevent others, including their own children, from the experience of pain, injustice and unequal treatment that result from racism. Regarding commitment to values, Desiree said: “I just think that everyone has a right to equal treatment. That is in fact what it is about” (Van Lent, 2016, p.3). Like Farouq, who appealed to the intrinsic value and worth of each human being regardless of their skin colour or background and Jamila, who said “[w]ell I think it is important because I have a fervent belief in the fact that we are all equal and that everyone wants to have a normal life in which they are equal” (Abdelghani, 2017, p.4). Kenneth expresses that in his view anti-racist policy entails combatting racism and discrimination, but is also about “how we look at human beings” in all their differences (Cuvalay, 2016, p.19).

Regarding personal experiences and observations of racism it seems the participants of colour often refer to their own personal experiences and observations, whereas the white participants mostly referred to personal observations of inequality in their school, workplace or neighbourhood. Cihan for example mentions how his cousins received a lower school advice than they are capable of, which routinely happens to children of colour, and how he was a victim of exclusionary practices whilst going out as a teenager. He says, “you just want to do what you can and just want to move like everyone else. And that is why you see and notice and taste that inequality and why you want to do something against it” (Ugural, 2016, p.3). Farouq, participant 10, Arzu and Soheilah also express how such personal experiences and observations led them to engage in anti-racism, even though it sometimes took a certain level of personal awareness development to recognise those experiences for what they were. Like Arzu said, “you know it’s there, you know there is a power structure” but only when it manifests itself very explicitly can you recognise it as racism (Aslan, 2017, p.10). For Arzu the explicitly racist experience that opened her eyes happened when she was refused a job at a Catholic elementary school because of her Muslim background. “[T]hen it hit me”, she says, “I have

just been rejected somewhere for a part of my identity that I cannot nor want to get rid of or just for who I am” (p.10). Similar experiences motivated other participants of colour to fight against racism as well. Jerry says that having experienced such pain himself has given him “the drive to prevent or prevent [racism] as much as possible. So people do not have to experience this” (Chintoe, 2017, p.9). Jamila and Rita expressed that they find it important to fight against racism because they have (grand)children of colour.

Why do the participants find it important the FNV engages in anti-racism?

The participants expressed both practical and ideological considerations for why their union should engage in anti-racism. Farouq defines the role of unions in anti-racism in a practical sense and focuses on the individual legal support they can provide to victims of discrimination. Farouq himself became active in the union because he wanted “to mean something more for our community”, of which many people were scared and unaware of their rights (Tareen, 2016, p.5). Participant 10 makes a similar statement, saying that she joined the union as a way to defend the rights of people who are discriminated against. For Rita “the union should stand up for people of colour, they should listen to their story [...] and ideas they put forward” (Mungra, 2017, p.4). Which is also the way Jan defines the role of the union movement in anti-racism: “On the one hand to support people to stand up for their interests, and at the same time to do that in a way that everyone can participate in it” (Cartier, 2016, p.9).

Cihan addresses the way racism affects our core business as FNV when he says: “[as FNV] we [should] stand next to [anti-racist groups and anti-racist (potential) members] because we see that this topic pits our members against each other” (Ugural, 2016, p.5). As a union, he continues, it is in our own interest to fight racism because “the less racism, the more unity amongst our membership and that is our only strength” (p.5). On top of that, Cihan says, we cannot deny the fact that in large cities the majority of the working class are not white anymore. Apart from the fact that she considers it in any case important to fight racism, Jamila also recognises that racism is “a problem that creates a lot of problems in the workplace. So it is up to us to discuss that with our members” (Abdelghani, 2017, p.9). Jan argues that “a broad organisation such as the union movement should precisely unite people against another enemy – the employer, perhaps the government” because the political right and other groups are trying to create a dichotomy between “us Dutch people” versus everyone else (Cartier, 2016, p.9). In Jan’s opinion it is the union’s job to educate people, most importantly white people, about why this divide is a bad thing. During our interview, Arzu criticised a similar what she calls “white perspective” of anti-racism that argues “we should not let ourselves be divided”, arguing that it is often used to advance an anti-capitalist rather than an anti-racist agenda and true solidarity because it does not challenge the fact that white people “still benefit” from racism (Aslan, 2017, p.9).

On top of practical considerations, some of the respondents refer to ideological reasons for why the FNV should engage with anti-racism. Arzu and Kenneth both refer to the “societal role” of unions to speak out against racism and create opportunities for people of colour to organise within them, which in their opinion unions are not doing (enough) at the moment (Aslan, 2017, p.4). Jamila for example says she does “because the FNV is for everyone and everyone should feel at home here, or at least feel like this club is my club” (Abdelghani, 2017, p.2). Soheilah holds a more explicitly ideological view regarding the role of unions in fighting racism, saying that “fundamentally a union stands for norms and values, for solidarity and collectively combating injustice, not just in the workplace but in everything. Human rights, not just labour rights” (Rodjan, 2017, p.4).

Connections between racism and other forms of oppression

Soheilah's last statement points to an important aspect of the way several participants' talk about anti-racism, namely about inextricable links between forms of oppression, or "intersectionality" as Arzu says (Aslan, 2017, p.16). Early on in the interview, Kenneth points out that Black women structurally earn less than men in general and white women, because they are both Black and women (Cuvalay, 2016, p.4). Rita also mentioned that the people that came to the 'migrantenkader' were often women who were being discriminated based on their gender and their background (Mungra, 2017, p.2; p.7). Furthermore, within AbvaKabo's groups and meetings specifically meant for women Rita says that "what I experienced with the women mostly is that eh a number of those women did not take seriously what a Black woman experienced" (p.11). When I told her about the concept of intersectionality, the idea that the specific experience of discrimination of Black women is formed by the fact that they are both woman and Black, Rita says "yes, yes, yes, yes, so exactly what I am talking about" (p.11). For Arzu awareness of the fact that there for example "lesbian women of colour who and because of their being a woman and because of being a lesbian and because of their being not white are victim of all kinds of oppressive mechanisms on top of each other" mean that she fights both racism and sexism, and shows solidarity with other struggles (Aslan, 2017, p.12). In fact, she says "I just don't believe that there is a class struggle possible without the anti-racism struggle" (p.12). And the same goes for anti-racism without anti-sexism. Also for Jan, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression have to be on the union's agenda to build a strong union movement (Cartier, 2016, p.9). In fact, some participants observe discrimination based on colour, age and gender *within* the FNV itself, which particularly affects young women of colour.

Participants' experiences with anti-racism within the FNV

In this part of this chapter, I discuss the participants' experiences with the anti-racist activities they have engaged with and initiated. Most of the respondents mention significant obstacles and barriers in this, which for Rita, participant 10 and Petra resulted in feelings of disappointment and scepticism. Jerry also describes feeling cynical sometimes, having been active against racism in the police and the union since 1983 and seeing only small changes. The lack of support from the FNV for participant 10 when she became a victim of discrimination in her workplace even led her to terminate her membership in 2007. Before going into more detail about the obstacles experienced by the participants, I will discuss what the participants perceive as the main cause for why most of these obstacles arise: the whiteness of the FNV's membership, professional organisation and leadership.

Views on and experienced obstacles related to the whiteness of the FNV

Observations of the whiteness of the FNV are mentioned by the majority of the participants, both members of different unions and FNV employees. This whiteness manifests itself in who has decision-making power, what issues are considered priorities and put on the agenda, what resources are available for people of colour to organise within their union, and what the FNV's leadership considers itself to be accountable for. As becomes evident from the participants' experiences, the FNV's whiteness continuously reproduces or maintains itself, causing a number of tangible obstacles both for people of colour themselves and for their ability to do anti-racism within the structures of the FNV. According to the participants, this is mostly the result of a lack of awareness. Like Cihan says, the majority of the FNV's active members are white even in sectors where a lot of people of colour are employed, because "we do not see it", "we do not make a deliberate effort" to organise people of colour (Ugural, 2016, p.5). This whiteness also means that the FNV does not take a stand against racism, "because we do not know what it does to people who are not white. [...] So we don't do anything with it" (Ugural, 2016, p.10). Similarly, talking about the AOb, Arzu also says that the

AOb does not speak out against racism nor tries to affect policy makers and teachers to become more anti-racist because “it is not their problem”, “it is just not in their experience” (Aslan, 2017, p.5). Several more participants experience this lack of awareness or vision amongst white unionists regarding racism as an obstacle. Back in the days, Rita experienced a lot of incomprehension for example regarding simple practical things like lunch for Muslims and vegetarians, which was because “they had never heard about it, they didn’t know and didn’t understand it” (Mungra, 2017, p.2). Lot also experienced a lack of awareness whilst being a board member of the FNV in recent years. She says she could not get the board members “to be aware of the fact that it is necessary now [to invest extra time and energy into anti-racism]” especially now with the rise of the PVV (Van Baaren, 2016, p.10). Regarding the relation between white people’s awareness of racism and feeling the responsibility or impetus to do something about it, Soheilah says:

“they don’t experience it themselves, so why would they [take a stance or enforce zero tolerance for racism]? Often I think and these are all presumptions, you don’t know, but often I feel like the people who have to do that (.) that they like how many, what would they know about people who feel like that? Would they have people like this in their friend group? Would they have these conversations? [...] No. If you are not in such an environment, or are, then you don’t know. Then you look at everything from a very different perspective and then that is your life” (Rodjan, 2017, p.2).

The fact that the majority of people is white within a democratic organisation such as the FNV means that the participants observe that the majority of decision-making bodies and leadership positions are taken up by white people. In Kenneth’s experience this meant that, for example, white people in FNV congresses determined “what non-white people would be called” and would not listen to black members who said they did not want to be called ‘allochtonen’ (Cuvalay, 2016, p.5). Rita remembers that AbvaKabo’s highest democratic body made a decision about the Hoofdgroep Migranten’s budget without members of the group even being there. Kenneth also observes that currently “in the whole development process of the unions, the contribution of non-white people is hardly present” (Cuvalay, 2016, p.8). In line with this, as a member of the FNV’s board Lot has observed that racism is not automatically an issue on the agenda and that it continuously needs to be (re-)addressed. In the first drafts of the FNV’s 2017-2021 policy plan that was discussed in the board, for example, she says initially “it was not in there, not at all” (Van Baaren, 2016, p.11). In terms of the role of FNV leadership, Jan remembers how in the 1990s and early 2000s the FNV’s leadership would organise a “day for ethnic minorities” each year where they would discuss their priorities and policy plans for the next year, but were not accountable for what they had done the year before (Cartier, 2016, p.5). However, even being in a position of power, such as Rita and Lot who were part of AbvaKabo’s general board, did not mean that you were taken seriously. Rita describes feeling “like she was just there to make up the numbers [...] because everything had already been decided and if you tried to object you would be attacked” (Mungra, 2017, p.7). Not being in positions of power results in a number of further obstacles, such as anti-racism not being considered a priority nor even an issue on the agenda of the FNV, which means that no or relatively little financial resources are made available and it is not translated into structural policy let alone into practice.

Lastly, the whiteness of the FNV also means that there are implicit racist structures and norms within the FNV, that become apparent from Jamila and Soheilah’s expressions of their personal experiences and observations. Jamila describes that she sometimes will not voice her opinion because she feels “hello, these are all white Dutch people, who are you to have an opinion about that? When they think that you just have to comply” (Abdelghani, 2017, p.6). She says these are not very clear or conscious dynamics, but in groups in which the majority of people is white “you sometimes just feel like ‘know your place’ or something” or “that certain things will be accepted sooner from a white Dutch person sort of and that this means that you are more careful about contributing your ideas or

maybe don't at all [...] even though in hindsight your idea would have worked" (Abdelghani, 2017, p.6). Soheilah also says that she feels the FNV's professional organisation "is not aware that they operate in a way that impacts [...] people of 'allochtone' background, people who are assumed to know less than others" (Rodjan, 2017, p.1). Having worked for the FNV for eight years, she says she increasingly starts to notice that her colleagues are predominantly white and "that non-white people are looked at in a way that I don't feel comfortable with" (Rodjan, 2017, p.1) and which results in a large group of "allochtone people having trouble advancing in their career, having to prove themselves three times as hard and run" compared to white people (p.3). She says that this makes her think: "what is going on here?" (p.3).

Experiences of (lack of) support

An experience that all members who participated describe is that of lack of support in the broadest sense of the word, but mostly financial, practical, administrative and legal. Referring to the beginning of the century, Kenneth remembers the lack of financial support for EARN from AbvaKabo as an attempt at wielding financial power to "bleed-out" initiatives of active members who wanted to take matters into their own hands, for example by refusing to finance the EARN conference in 2003 (Cuvalay, 2016, p.9) and refusing to pay for travel expenses for AbvaKabo members to visit the TUC Black Workers Conference (Cartier, 2016, p.5; Tareen, 2016, p.7). As shown in the previous chapter, in the case of EARN this had the opposite effect: EARN members fully took matters into their own hands financially to organise what they wanted to. According to Farouq "that really was a protest [by EARN] against the existing system that told us 'just wait' and eh 'just don't ask too much, it may happen someday'" (Tareen, 2016, p.8).

Talking about AbvaKabo's Hoofdgroep Migranten, which in her own words had become "an extension of EARN" (Mungra, 2017, p.3), Rita also describes that at a certain point the practical support that *had* been there before was withdrawn by AbvaKabo: "First, a meeting room was made available and then they moved to the FNV building and no more room was made available. Eh, lunch was abolished, all sorts of little things that made you feel like, yeah, you could sense that they really didn't want this group" (p.1). Participant 10 experienced this withdrawal of support as one of the reasons the group fell apart. She says this was because "at a certain point we felt like, yeah, we want to contribute something but we are being inhibited" (Participant 10, 2017, p.6). Combined with the lack of legal support that AbvaKabo provided to victims of racism and discrimination in the workplace, which participant 10 experienced herself and also saw happen to other people, these experiences led her to cancel her membership.

Jumping forwards in time, Arzu describes experiencing the exact same practical obstacles within the AOb: being thwarted in terms of locations, claiming expenses and getting an e-mail address of their own. FNV employee Desiree also touches on the topic of lack of support for anti-racism within the FNV currently, when talking about how it is impossible for the three FNV 'diversity' policy advisors to do everything that needs to be done regarding racism. Despite expressing cynicism with regards to the progress the police force itself has made, Jerry is the only participant that says that he currently "feels supported" by the NPB: "it has been a process", he says, "but they have come around a little. For sure. And when it comes to ethnic profiling you see that you find support, but also recognition. That it is there, they don't deny it you know" (Chintoe, 2017, p.14). Tellingly, recognition here is defined as 'not denying it'.

Experienced responses to anti-racism

In this paragraph, I consider the participants' experiences of different types of responses to them and their anti-racist activities. These responses span from not being taken seriously or listened to, to the

withdrawal of support that I have discussed in the previous paragraph, to even having official complaints filed against them.

A number of members talked about experiences of not being taken seriously both within the organisations they worked for and within the union, in the latter case often relating to the whiteness of the FNV and FNV-unions. Rita, Kenneth and Farouq describe such experiences of not being taken seriously as being part of the reason they organised in EARN in the first place. About this, Rita says “I was chairperson of the migrantgroup [of AbvaKabo] at a certain point. And I sort of rolled into [EARN] a bit out of discontent with the way things were going”, because: “you could not exactly tell things the way they were. And ehm, some things were just wiped off the table. You basically had no say in it” (Mungra, 2017, p.1). Participant 10 also remembers not being heard, although she also said: “Even if you sometimes hit a wall, the cooperation was there and at a certain point you would work things out” (Participant 10, 2017, p.2). But she also experienced not being taken seriously when she came to AbvaKabo for legal support, “despite the fact that I had evidence, they did not believe that I was being discriminated against in the workplace” (p.3). Farouq describes how they would clash regularly with AbvaKabo’s board members, such as Xander den Uyl, who would say “that we ask too much, that we want too much and too fast, that we have to be patient and that the process or the structure does not change as fast” (Tareen, 2016, p.7). Jan has a slightly different memory of Den Uyl’s stance, namely that he just said “no, we are not going to do it” (Cartier, 2016, p.8).

When talking about the responses to addressing anti-racism or organising anti-racist activities nowadays, a number of participants talk about experiences of attempts at controlling how and in what circumstances to discuss racism. For example, there were efforts to prevent ‘controversial’ speakers Quinsy Gario and Abulkasim Al-Jaberi to attend the FNV’s ‘Racisme werkt niet’ meetings organised in 2015 and 2016. The organisers, however, pushed through and the meetings took place with the two speakers. But also the harsh language used by other members of the ‘21 Maart Comité’ for example regarding Zwarte Piet provided a problem for the FNV’s participation in it (Van Lent, 2016, p.7). Arzu has similar experiences within the AOb, for example being asked why a meeting about racism in education “really had to be organised at [the AOb’s] office” (Aslan, 2017, p. 3) and being invited by the AOb’s chairperson to discuss her personal tweets that are considered “against the AOb” (p.4). A number of EARN members also expressed during the focus group that there were official complaints made against them by the FNV’s vice-president after they had invited delegates from the TUC Black Workers Conference to one of the FNV’s yearly ‘migrant days’ that openly expressed their concern with the state of affairs at the meeting.

What needs to happen according to the participants?

In this last part, I discuss what needs to happen according to the participants in order for them to be able to do anti-racism within the union, and to make the FNV more inclusive and anti-racist. I divide the participants’ recommendations into two types, based both on the knowledge, political ideals, and experiences of the participants as discussed throughout this chapter as well as on their expressed views on other topics such as definitions of racism, the role of white people in fighting racism, and the way racism manifests itself in the participants’ (non-FNV) workplaces and more broadly in society.

Recommendations to white people within the FNV

During the interviews I asked about the role they see for white people in fighting racism. In response the participants gave a number of similar and complementary recommendations for white people within the FNV, which are also applicable to white people in general. The first recommendation to

white people that almost all of the participants touch on is firstly to recognise that institutionalised racism exists, which like Arzu says means taking it out of the “interpersonal atmosphere” but understanding that “[racism] is about which systems are built in so you and me do not have the same position” (Aslan, 2017, p.16). Secondly, most participants think it is important that white people become aware of their own position and privilege and in effect, of their complicity in racist structures. Among others, Lot touches on this when she says “that [white people] are a part of the inequality” and that “if we preserve it, we are guilty of [maintaining the system] every day” (Van Baaren, 2016, p.16). According to Cihan, such awareness should result in what could be called the third recommendation to white people: make space for people of colour. He says, “when you are aware of that [privileged] position, you will automatically make sure that you must leave space for non-white people in your organisation” (Ugural, 2016, p.10). For Farouq this means “giving people a chance” and “telling people: ‘well, you are welcome, you are valuable’” (Tareen, 2016, p.12). Arzu, who recognises the importance of white people becoming aware of their own position, from her own experience of trying to make white people aware however also questions whether white people will be willing to actively give up that position to create more equality. “You fight against your own superiority”, she says, “you just won’t enthuse a lot of people for that” (Aslan, 2017, p.6). This leads her to conclude, “ehm so yeah, I wouldn’t know what the role of white people [in fighting racism is]. Not thwart and support, that’s it I think” (Aslan, 2017, p.6). The fourth recommendation is thus to simply support anti-racist struggles of people of colour. Desiree, Lot and Jan think white people like them should do so from the sidelines.

Recommendations to the FNV

In a way, the participants’ recommendations to white people are directly translatable to the FNV as an organisation. On an organisational level, however, the recommendations take a more practical form. Recognition of the existence of racism by the FNV for example means for all participants that the FNV should do so publically and also publically speak out against racism. It also requires recognising that racism is a problem within the FNV’s organisation itself, and that whiteness is at the heart of that.

Regarding the second recommendation, the FNV can contribute to white people becoming aware of their own position and privilege and of institutional racism by educating members and employees and creating opportunities for dialogue. As Cihan says, “I don’t think we have ever talked about this topic. We have trainings, we provide training to active members, but I don’t think there has ever been a training about racism. Maybe here and there about diversity, but never about what is structural racism and what does that mean for you as a brown person, for you as a white person, for you as a black person” (Ugural, 2016, p.9). And Jamila suggests: “I think we should talk about it with each other, and that we should not be afraid to have that discussion internally and it may become very heated at times. But we really have to, if we really want to tackle this, that has to happen” (Abdelghani, 2017, p.3).

Making space for people of colour, the third recommendation, means making conscious efforts to increase diversity amongst employees and members, but also creating, stimulating and facilitating space for people of colour to organise around anti-racism in the way that they want and to formulate their own agenda. Like Arzu says, this requires “accepting autonomy of people of colour. Which means that you do not thwart such a working group. And that you allow that what they want instead of trying to manage and oversee and control” (Aslan, 2017, p.7). This requires being aware of “emancipatory groups within groups, because it is a workers’ union right? A union is an emancipatory group in principle. But within it you should just let those groups free and respect their autonomy and show solidarity with everyone’s struggle” (Aslan, 2017, p.7). On top of that, making space for people

of colour and respecting their autonomy also means that white people within the FNV, not even the chairperson, should speak for people of colour within the FNV (Van Baaren, 2016, p.11).

Lastly, to support the anti-racist struggle of people of colour means standing up for the individual and collective interests of people of colour. In particular this means that if the FNV takes advocacy for its members' rights seriously, it should stand up collectively (for example by incorporating it in collective contracts) and individually (by providing individual legal support) for members who become victims of racism and discrimination in their workplaces or who speak out against racism. Incorporating anti-racism and increasing diversity in collective contracts requires discussing *how* this should be done and making it something that union representatives have to be accountable for (Ugural, 2016, p.8). Regarding the latter, Jamila points to the importance of people in leadership positions conveying the importance of anti-racism (Abdelghani, 2017, p.9). One of the things some participants suggest is that the FNV adopts a zero tolerance policy for members and employees who are openly racist, including PVV supporters. Most of the participants think the reason the FNV does not do this currently, is out of fear of losing PVV supporters as members.

Conclusion

Looking at the participants' observations, views and experiences of anti-racism and lack thereof within the FNV shows striking similarities between members and employees, between different FNV-affiliated unions, and throughout different decades. Ideologically the participants' motivations are very similar, in which for participants of colour their personal *experiences* and for white participants their *observations* of everyday and institutionalised racism play an important role. The experienced responses and obstacles to their anti-racism, and their observations of the whiteness of the FNV point to deeply rooted mechanisms within the FNV that make it difficult for people to engage in anti-racism and to be taken seriously. In the next chapter I come back to how these experiences are intricately linked to the observed whiteness of the organisation and are manifestations of whiteness as an institutional structure of white supremacy. In their recommendations for white people within the FNV and the FNV as an organisation the participants give the FNV a starting point from which it can become better at supporting and enabling the anti-racist struggles of people of colour, which is ultimately what all participants want to and think should happen.

Chapter 4: Conclusion – What now?

In this last chapter I bring together insights from both the historical overview in chapter 2 and the experiences and views of the participants in chapter 3, to answer the last research question of this thesis: What can we learn from the experiences and recommendations of the participants combined with a historical perspective of anti-racism within the FNV to further anti-racism within the FNV in the future? And by extension: What further recommendations emerge that could point us in the direction of a more anti-racist and inclusive FNV in the future? I will briefly summarise and discuss the conclusions from chapter 2 and 3 before coming to the limitations of this study and the need for further research. I end this chapter with some final recommendations that point towards a more inclusive and anti-racist FNV.

To summarise: what have we learned so far?

A historical look at anti-racism within the FNV in chapter 2 shows that members and employees have engaged in anti-racism in a number of ways since the 1980s, sometimes taking matters into their own hands out of disappointment. This engagement with anti-racism has resulted in an impressive amount of policy documents, papers, educational material and other expressions of anti-racist commitment of the FNV, but when it comes to anti-racist practice these documents have not achieved their intended goals. Furthermore, we can see that the FNV's approaches to anti-racism and the advocacy of non-white and migrant members have changed over the decades and with changing political and historical trends, with a significant decrease in attention and prioritisation since public discourse has turned increasingly openly xenophobic and racist. On the up side, it seems as though the rise of anti-racist movements outside of the union movement in recent years have positively impacted the possibility for employees and members to engage in anti-racism within the FNV.

From chapter 3 we can see how both personal experiences and observations of everyday and institutional racism play an important role in the participants' motivations for fighting racism. Their accounts of doing anti-racism within the FNV point to an entrenched institution structure of whiteness within the FNV that not only makes it difficult for people to engage in anti-racism but systematically prioritises white people and their issues over people of colour and their issues. The participants express a number of recommendations both to white people within the FNV and to the FNV as a whole. The participants recommend the FNV to:

- (1) **Recognise and** (publically) **acknowledge** that institutional racism exists, which means understanding that racism is a *system* of white privilege and oppression of people of colour (whiteness) that is at play within society at large and within the FNV itself.
- (2) **Create awareness** amongst white members and employees within the FNV of their own position and privilege, and the way they are complicit in and benefit from racism as a system. For example through education.
- (3) **Create, facilitate and respect** space for and autonomy of people of colour. This should be done both within the democratic and professional organisations (by increasing the diversity amongst members and staff), but also regarding the right and (financial) resources of people of colour to organise around anti-racism and anti-discrimination within the FNV.
- (4) **Support** the anti-racist struggle of people of colour, firstly by making efforts regarding the first three recommendations and furthermore by standing up for the individual and collective interests of members of colour.

I will now take a look at what more we can learn from these conclusions and recommendations, by combining them with theoretical insights from Critical Race Theory and Feminist Theory.

Discussion of the findings

As mentioned in chapter 1, this thesis builds mainly on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Feminist Theory. Laurence Parker and Marvin Lynn (2002, p.8) explain how CRT was “borne out of a need for people of color to begin to move discussions of race and racism from the realm of the experiential to the realm of the ideological (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tate, 1997)”. They further specify where this need came from when they say:

“Whereas African Americans and other people of color have always thought in theoretical terms about their conditions of social, political, and economic subordination in a White supremacist society, racism has not been given full explanatory power in the academy (Feagin, 2000). In other words, because racism has heretofore been understood as a willful act of aggression against a person based on their skin color and other phenotypic characteristics, discussions of race and racism rarely addressed the ways race and racism are deeply embedded within the framework of American society (Omi & Winant, 1994). Because of that, it was difficult to talk about racism as a system of oppression” (Parker and Lynn, 2002, p.8).

This explains why the first main goal of CRT is “to present storytelling and narratives as valid approaches through which to examine race and racism” (Ibidem, p.10). Although often relegated to the realm of ‘experience’ by those who are in a privileged position, personal narratives actually provide theoretical insight and knowledge into structures of oppression. It is precisely for this reason that this thesis is built on the knowledge that stems from the narratives, histories and experiences of the participants. Combined with the historical overview, this thesis demonstrates that the necessary knowledge for the FNV to do anti-racism has been available within its own organisation for well over thirty years, if not more. The amount of policy papers, educational material, projects, codes of conduct and recommendations to the FNV in which this knowledge is stored is impressive. However, it was all developed from the margins: by employees of the Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden, by members who organised outside of the FNV, by a handful of individual employees and members within the FNV or by the three ‘diversity’ policy advisors the FNV currently has. To demonstrate what I mean by ‘from the margins’: The FNV has nearly 2000 employees and one million members. It becomes apparent that anti-racism was and is not considered a priority of the FNV. Therefore all the knowledge and efforts of anti-racist members and employees are not being put to use in a way that makes the FNV as a whole more anti-racist in practice. Many policies and strategies have been written but were either never implemented or at least not properly evaluated. Even when evaluations did take place, like in the case of the FNV’s non-discrimination code in the 1990s, somewhere along the line the evaluations stopped whilst the original goals had not yet been achieved. What happened to the non-discrimination code after 1996 is still unclear. In fact, most of the participants did not know that it had even existed.

All these policies, intentions and plans on paper have been very patient in the last 35 years, whilst the participants rightfully point out that anti-racism is something that needs to be *done*. The existence of documents about anti-racism does not necessarily make an organisation anti-racist in practice. In fact, Sara Ahmed (2007b, p.597) points out in her article ‘You end up doing the document rather than doing the doing’ that when it comes to race equality policy, the existence of ‘documents’ about anti-racism are often “taken as evidence that the institutional world documented by the document (racism, inequality, injustice) has been overcome”. Furthermore, she argues, whether an institution is perceived to be ‘doing well’ in terms of promoting race equality is often based on whether they have written a good document rather than whether and how they are *doing* actual

race equality work (Ibidem, p.598). The idea behind good documents being a sign of an organisation 'doing well' is that the document itself is some form of 'doing'. Such an understanding, according to Ahmed, allows institutions to "block recognition of the work that there is to do" and effectively means that the document "gets taken up as evidence that we have 'done it'" (Ibid., p.599). Additionally, since such documents often also function as a statement of commitment to opposing racism they can turn into a form of organisational pride constituting the organisation "as opposed to racism, rather than being a place where racism happens" (Ibid., p.600). This is particularly interesting since on May 11th, 2017 an amendment to the FNV's mission statement for the coming four years was accepted at the FNV's congress that states that "the struggle against racism, sexism and any form of discrimination is part of our struggle for a humane society" (Lot van Baaren, personal communication, 22 June 2017). This (and previously) iterated commitment to anti-racism is striking given the fact that the participants in this project have very clearly pointed out that they observe that the FNV is built on a structure of whiteness that inherently and currently inevitably prioritises and privileges white people and their issues over people of colour and their issues. In Ahmed's words, the FNV is thus an organisation "where racism happens" (Ahmed, 2007b, p.600). Nevertheless, Ahmed would argue that such a statement of commitment to anti-racism is in fact useful for anti-racists, because it allows them to demonstrate the disparity between what organisations *really do* and what they *say they do* or how they appear (Ibidem, p.607).

With regards to the actual *doing* of anti-racism we have been able to see in chapter 2 that racism as an issue specifically affecting people of colour was prioritised even *less* by the FNV in the face of increasingly xenophobic and racist public discourse since the late 1990s. This suggests that the FNV chose *not* to defend the specific interests of members of colour when the need to do so actually increased. Roosblad (2002, p.5) has called this dilemma about whether to advocate for such specific interests or to include members of migrant backgrounds in 'general' advocacy the "interest dilemma" of unions. In my experience as an employee of the FNV, regarding our 'general' advocacy we continuously make choices about whose interests and issues we defend and which sectors, organisations or groups of workers deserve our time and resources. In other words: we continuously prioritise some workers' interests over those of others. Given that the participants have indicated that whiteness operates within the FNV as a structure that prioritises and privileges white people and their issues over people of colour and their issues, we can assume that people of colour and the sectors and organisations they work in have lost out in this prioritisation process. The fact that the vast majority of the FNV's members is white can attest to that. Recognising and pointing out such processes, we are able to "reveal, unpick and challenge racial structures [...] by rendering (unequal) power relations visible" (Duncan, 2000; Parker and Lynn, 2002 in Chadderton, 2012, p.367). In fact, I hope this thesis has shown that this is what the participants continuously do in their anti-racist activities. But also that their observations of white privilege and their experienced obstacles, lack of support and often negative responses to their anti-racism are manifestations of *precisely* the racial structure that they are trying to challenge: whiteness. Whiteness, Ahmed (2007a, p.150) argues in her article 'A phenomenology of whiteness', "is an effect of racialization, which in turn shapes what bodies 'can do'" and around which spaces and institutions are orientated. This orientation towards white people seems to be precisely what the participants observe within the union and what we can observe in the historical overview of anti-racism. It is also the reason why the FNV has so far proven unable to implement anti-racism in its practice. In order for the FNV to become more inclusive and anti-racist its whiteness not only has to be challenged but seriously 'disrupted' (Chubbuck, 2004).

For this to be possible, the participants have pointed us to an important point: that the FNV's leadership needs to actively advocate and enforce anti-racist practice that disrupts whiteness (top-down) and that at the same time space should be created for people of colour to self-organise

around anti-racism (bottom-up). Research on the effects of anti-racist strategies by Australian scholars in fact suggests that “a top-down approach is needed (e.g. institutionally/community instigated action) as well as a bottom-up approach (e.g., addressing social- psychological variables)” and that the two approaches are dynamic and affect each other (Pedersen et al, 2007, p.21). Since they affect each other, we can assume that there is no specific order in which the approaches should take place. In other words, the participants’ grassroots anti-racist work will hopefully contribute to the FNV’s leadership implementing top-down measures to advance anti-racist practice within the FNV, which in turn will make it easier for grassroots anti-racism to take place.

Discussion of limitations and further research

Although this thesis discusses crucially important grassroots anti-racism and contributes to the efforts to reveal the FNV’s whiteness and some of the ways it operates, I believe in order to contribute to truly unpicking and challenging whiteness within the FNV there is a need for further research. One limitation of this study is that no participants who were actively doing anti-racism in the 1980s and early 1990s were included. Nor did I interview any employees of the FNV Vakcentrale’s Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden that played an important role in the development of most of the archival material on anti-racism and anti-discrimination I discuss in this thesis. Given the seemingly small amount of people that have actively engaged with anti-racism within the FNV since the 1980s, further historical research could include a ‘witness seminar’²¹, more interviews and further archival research. Furthermore, a discourse analysis of the archival material would deepen our understanding of the way anti-racism has been spoken about within the FNV over the years. The most important place that archival research into the history and development of the union movement takes place is the IISH in Amsterdam. In fact, the FNV is currently subsidising the IISH with two million euros to properly archive, digitalise and research its historical material. The aim of that project is to advance historical research into the development of the Dutch union movement (IISH, n.d.). It is important to note that the way historical research is done affects the ‘making of history’, about which The Black Archives²² organise a talk in Utrecht on the day I hand in this thesis. In their event introduction, they tellingly write:

“Archives have the potential to make or break history. Without critical reflection, certain perspectives can dominate and marginalise or neglect other histories, such as the history of slavery and colonialism. Historical archives symbolise the collective memory of a community and/or nation. But who assesses, selects or recruits these stories that form the archive, and how are they understood? Archives reveal which stories, positions and perspectives we possess, but also which collections we miss. Which histories will we remember as a society, but which ones can we also forget?” (New Urban Collective, 2017, n.p.).

Currently in historiographies of the FNV, anti-racism is the history that is being forgotten. But the FNV’s history *is* in fact a history of whiteness and racism: of the power structures, the mechanisms of in- and exclusion, and the priorities and activities that result from it. This history is also full of challenges and resistance to this whiteness, as this thesis shows, meaning that the anti-racist initiatives of members and employees are as much part of the FNV’s history and development as for

²¹ A witness seminar is a form of historical inquiry, namely “a moderated group conversation on a specific topic” (Svorenčik and Maas, 2016, p.2). It is primarily aimed at recording “memories that otherwise will be irrevocably lost” (Ibidem). Basically, “[a] witness seminar aims to bring together key participants of an important historical event to obtain a mix of different perspectives that may agree or disagree, but preferably lead to an exchange of memories that feed upon one another in interesting and unexpected ways” (Ibid., p.3).

²² The Black Archives are a historical archive “of Black and other perspectives that elsewhere often remain underexposed” (New Urban Collective, n.d., n.p.). The organisation New Urban Collective collects, maintains, and organises activities around the archives.

example important strikes, large demonstrations, influential or controversial accords and organisational restructuring. If this is not already being done, I would recommend that the IISH in its two million euro project actively looks for and incorporates the knowledge and experiences of FNV employees and members of colour and other marginalised groups in the historiographies that follow from the research projects. Furthermore, I think it would be highly beneficial if the IISH incorporated in these historiographies analysis of the way whiteness has operated within the FNV and the way this has contributed to shaping the FNV's policy, agenda, activities, membership, staff, political engagement, democratic practices, solidarity projects and so on. Since some of the participants importantly pointed out that there are "intersectional" connections between racism and other forms of oppression such as sexism (Crenshaw, 1989), more historical research should be done into the way the anti-racist struggle has or has not been combined with anti-sexism and other anti-discrimination struggles within the FNV. This was actually one of the methodological aims of this project, and the third main aim of CRT: "to draw important relationships between race and other axes of domination" (Parker and Lynn, 2002, p.10). In my analysis and therefore in this thesis I have not been able to pay this as much attention as it deserves. Finally, regardless of whether done by the IISH, by the FNV itself or by others, I believe the topic of the FNV's whiteness and the effects on people of colour within and outside of the FNV warrants further research. Ideally, such research would take the form of a participatory action research project that enables the FNV and anti-racist members and employees to more effectively challenge and disrupt racism and whiteness. More than has been the case in this project, such an action research project should be set up and developed in collaboration with different stakeholders. This points to another limitation of this project, namely that although its aims are in line with participatory action research, in hindsight the research design has perhaps taken the form of more traditional historical research rather than actual action research.

Final recommendations: what now?

Regardless of the limitations of this project that point to the necessity for further and actual action research, this project has opened up an as of yet unique historiography or 'collective memory' of anti-racism within the FNV. Furthermore, it brings together important knowledge and recommendations to the FNV of a number of anti-racist members and employees. The discussion of these important findings and the recommendations for further research as provided in this chapter leads me to conclude this thesis with a final list of recommendations, firstly to the participants and secondly to the FNV.

Based on the discussion in this final chapter, to the participants I would like to say:

- (1) Make use of the wide range of documents, policy papers, and other material that express the FNV's commitment and plans to further anti-racism, as a "supportive device" to expose "*the gap between words, images and deeds*" that you observe within the union (Ahmed, 2007b, p.607).
- (2) To enable future generations of anti-racist activists within the FNV to build on what you have already done and achieved, document and archive your activities and efforts and make them easily accessible.
- (3) Just continue the invaluable and important anti-racist work you are doing.

To the FNV my final recommendations are:

- (1) Make use of and take seriously the knowledge members and employees have regarding racism and discrimination. This includes the wealth of existing anti-racist material and policy, as well as the recommendations of the participants of this project.

- (2)** To make sure that this knowledge is translated into anti-racist practice, rethink existing policy implementation processes and establish a process for impact evaluation in the long term.
- (3)** Critically examine processes and procedures within the FNV's practice to determine where and how privileging and disadvantaging mechanisms occur. In other words: "reveal" and "unpick" how whiteness/racism operates within the FNV's practice (Parker and Lynn, 2002, p.10), including how dominant societal discourses on race affect the FNV's policies.
- (4)** Actively prioritise the specific interests of people of colour, make efforts to reach out to people of colour in their workplaces and take their issues seriously. This includes the implementation of repercussions for openly racist views and behaviour of members and staff.
- (5)** Implement top-down measures and open up financial resources to advance anti-racist practice and develop them in collaboration with people of colour within the FNV.

To conclude, the time of paper promises is over. Given the openly growing xenophobia, Islamophobia and racism an anti-racist union movement is imperative. If the FNV is truly committed to social justice, equality and solidarity then now is the time to prove it. This requires the FNV and its leadership to critically reflect on itself and to make conscious and visible efforts to translate its anti-racist commitment into anti-racist practice.

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Appendixes

- Appendix A: List of abbreviations
- Appendix B: Institutional structure of the FNV
- Appendix C: List and introduction of the participants

Appendix A: List of abbreviations

AOb	Algemene Onderwijsbond
AbvaKabo	Algemene Bond van Ambtenaren/Katholieke Ambtenarenbond
CCEM	Contact Commissie Etnische Minderheden
CRT	Critical Race Theory
EARN	Europees Anti Racisme Netwerk
FNV	Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging
IISH	International Institute for Social History
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NKV	Nederlands Katholiek Vakverbond
NPB	Nederlandse Politiebond
NVV	Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen
SER	Sociaal Economische Raad
StvdA	Stichting van de Arbeid
TIE	Transnationals Information Exchange
TUC	Trades Union Congress
Wet BEAA	Wet Bevordering Evenredige Arbeidsdeelname Allochtonen
WRR	Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid

Appendix B: Institutional structure of the FNV

Democratic structure of the FNV

The FNV (Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging) is a Dutch trade union federation that came into existence in 1976, when the socialist NVV and catholic NKV union federations merged (Akkermans en Kool, 1999). The FNV's contemporary democratic structure is relatively new. It came about in 2013 after an ideological rift within the FNV's Federation Council about pension reform caused debates about democratic and organisational restructuring of the FNV (Tamminga, 2017, p.196). Up until that point, the FNV was a federation of various affiliated unions that usually represented specific sectors or professions. It had a Federation Board and Chairperson, a Federation Council and a Federation Congress. The Federation Congress was the highest decision-making body of the FNV, consisting of delegates from the different affiliated unions and the Federation Board. The FNV Federation Council consisted of the Chair people from all the different affiliated unions (Akkermans and Kool, 1999). Each affiliated union, furthermore, had a democratic structure of their own, often with a board, council and congress as well. Within the different unions, members often organised in local branches, with elected branch board members, or within their own organisations or sectors, with organisation- or sector-specific union groups. This is still the case today, although the rest of the FNV's democratic structure and decision-making processes about the vision, agenda and strategy of the FNV changed significantly since 2013.

Currently, the FNV consists of 26 sectors, which are represented either directly by the FNV or by one of the 12 affiliated unions (FNV, n.d.,a). The 14 sectors represented by what is called the 'undivided' part of the FNV used to belong to separate unions as well, like the sectors represented by the different affiliated unions. However, in 2015 Vakcentrale FNV, FNV Bondgenoten, AbvaKabo FNV, FNV Bouw and FNV Sport merged into what is now simply called 'FNV'. With over 1 million members, the FNV is the largest of three trade union federations in the Netherlands. The members of the different sectors of the FNV and affiliated unions are represented in the FNV Members Parliament, which consists of 105 elected representatives. Apart from representation by sector, members have the right to organise in networks along lines of issues or identities. Currently the FNV has five official networks: women (Vrouwen), LGBTI people (Roze), migrants (Wereldburgers), working conditions (Arbo) and veterans (Veteranen) (FNV, n.d.,b). The first three networks are commonly referred to as the 'diversity networks'. When a network has 1500 members, it gains a right to advise the FNV Members Parliament. Alongside the Members Parliament, an 17-member General Board is responsible for leading the federation (FNV, n.d.,c). Seven members of the General Board, including the Chairperson of the FNV, form the Executive Board. The Members Parliament is the decision-making body of the FNV and is responsible for monitoring the General Board. The General Board members, with the exception of the Chairperson, are appointed by the Members Parliament. The FNV Chairperson is elected directly by the members of the FNV and the affiliated unions. In March 2017 the second Members Parliament and new Chairperson of the renewed FNV were elected for a four year term. In May 2017, the new Members Parliament appointed a new General Board as well.

The FNV's professional organisation

Alongside the structures within which members of the FNV and affiliated unions are active and involved, the FNV and affiliated unions have professional organisations with paid employees that support members in their collective and individual struggles. Such employees can be policy advisors and researchers, secretaries, lawyers, communication advisors, member service employees, lobbyists, print- and mailroom employees, IT specialists, action support employees, union representatives that negotiate with employers on behalf of members, and more recently union

organisers. The professional organisation of the undivided part of the FNV currently has a director that reports to the General Board of the FNV. Before 2015, the Vakcentrale FNV was the professional organisation that supported the federation. It was structured along the lines of policy on the one hand, and regional work on the other (Akkermans and Kool, 1999). Along the policy line, the Vakcentrale FNV had several departments that provided the Federation Board and Federation Council with advice on specific topics which the Federation Board members took with them in the Dutch social dialogue structures such as the Sociaal Economische Raad and the Stichting van de Arbeid. One of these departments was specifically aimed at the representation of the interests of target groups, with five secretariats that focused on particular groups: women, foreign employees/ethnic minorities, world views and union movement, people on benefits and elderly people, and young people (Roosblad, 2002, p.185). Often, these secretariats would form and support commissions on topics that then members from the different FNV-affiliated unions would participate in. The Secretariat Ethnic Minorities formed what they called the Contact Commissie Etnische Minderheden (CCEM) in which employees from different affiliated unions participated. This CCEM and the employees of the Secretariat Ethnic Minorities played a part in some of the anti-racist activities of several respondents. Currently, the FNV has one department with policy advisors who specialize in different topics and sectors. Three of them are specifically concerned with diversity and are responsible for supporting the FNV's 'diversity networks' mentioned earlier.

The FNV in within the Dutch social dialogue structure

The Dutch socio-economic dialogue model, also known as the Dutch 'polder' structure or social dialogue structure, is characterized by a commitment to cooperation, consensus and wage negotiations (Delsen, 2001, p.11). The two institutions that make up the Dutch 'polder' are the Stichting van de Arbeid (StvdA) and the Sociaal Economische Raad (SER). The Stichting van de Arbeid was founded in 1945 by central employers' and workers' organisations (social partners) to discuss economic developments and initiate a collaborative effort to rebuild the Dutch economy and labour market after World War II (Ibidem, p.14). The workers' organisations were and still are represented by the Dutch union federations. In 1950, the Sociaal Economische Raad was founded alongside the StvdA, where again workers' and employers' organisations as well as other 'independent' public stakeholders such as the Dutch National Bank and the Dutch Central Planning Office (Centraal Planbureau) discussed socio-economic developments (Ibid., p.14). By law, the Government is required to solicit advice from the SER regarding socio-economic policy (Delsen, 2001, p.14; Roosblad, 2000, p.94). In tripartite consultancy, the Government also discusses labour market policy with the StvdA and on top of that, the StvdA can provide the Government with unsolicited and informal advice. Despite continuous discussion regarding the necessity for and successfulness of these social dialogue institutions (van der Meer et al, 2003), they still exist today and as the largest union federation the FNV plays an important role in both of them. Although nowadays the Government is primarily responsible for the development of general economic policy and the social partners for employment benefits policy, the Government and social partners have a shared responsibility in developing employment policy (Delsen, 2001, p.15).

Appendix C: List and introduction of the participants

In this appendix I introduce the fourteen members and employees that I have interviewed for this research project and the ones who participated in the focus group. The short introduction about each interviewee was written based on what they themselves told me, in some cases also on what they told others during the focus group and on my personal relation to some of the interviewees. In some cases I asked them explicitly during the interview or afterwards what is important to them that I or other people know about them. Those interviewees I did not ask that question directly were asked at a later stage when they received the interview transcript. All introductions were sent to the interviewees for feedback and approval. The order of the introductory texts in this chapter is based on the chronological order in which I spoke to the participants and the subheading suggests whether they participated in a personal interview, a phone interview or merely in the focus group. The participants that were present at the focus group were: Cihan, Kenneth, Jan, Lot, Rita, participant 10, Arzu, Jerry, Petra and Duygu.

Cihan Ugural – personal interview on October 6th, 2016

On a Monday afternoon I meet Cihan Ugural on the 5th floor of our FNV office in Utrecht Rijnsweerd. When asked to tell me something about himself that he thinks is important for me and others to know, Cihan tells me that he was born in Deventer, in a leftist Turkish family and in a Turkish neighborhood. His parents have always been politically active, focusing mostly on class struggle. Cihan says he was never aware of embodying the identity ‘migrant’, or ‘child of guest workers’. However, the representation of Turkish, Moroccan and muslims in the media, and the fact that as a teenager he experienced exclusionary practices in Deventer’s nightlife, gave him a feeling of non-belonging. After the rise of the anti-Zwarte Piet movement in 2013, 2014 and people like Quinsy Gario, Arzu Aslan and Gloria Wekker started publically speaking about racism, Cihan was able to ascribe words to what he has experienced growing up. He realized that there are more oppressive structures than class, such as race, gender and sexuality. By then, Cihan was already working for the FNV for several years, initially as an organiser and trainer for Abvakabo FNV, and currently as campaign leader of a large-scale organizing campaign at Schiphol Airport. Cihan and I know each other from the Organizing department, where I used to work as an organiser on the Schiphol campaign. He is one of the only people of colour in leadership positions within the FNV. Cihan took the lead in a number of anti-racist initiatives within the FNV’s professional organisation, including the organisation of the FNV’s ‘Racism Doesn’t Work’ (*Racisme Werkt Niet*) meetings in December 2015 and March 2016.

Kenneth Cuvalay – personal interview on October 26th, 2016

As the coordinator of EARN, Kenneth Cuvalay was the first FNV member I interviewed. Kenneth has a long and diverse professional history, which started at a very young age. For over twenty years now, he has been working as a psychiatric nurse for addiction care institution Novadic-Kentron. For the last 8 years he has been seconded by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport as clinical manager on St. Eustatius and Saba, in the Caribbean Netherlands. He has been responsible for setting up addiction and psychiatric health care facilities. Before his career in mental health care, Kenneth was active in a range of sectors and companies, from oil refineries to hospitals, and newspapers to his own foundation ‘The Quill’. From this foundation in 2008 Kenneth led a study on problematic drug use amongst youngsters on St. Eustatius and St. Maarten together with the Trimbos Institute. Having grown up on St. Eustatius, Kenneth came to the Netherlands in his late teens. Here he finished high school, and later went on to study nursing. Kenneth describes himself as the rebel of his family, learning how to be innovative, independent and creative from his mother. When talking

about everything that he has done in his nearly 65 years of being alive, Kenneth radiates a relentless energy to fight for justice and equality. Kenneth was a founding member, coordinator and continuous initiator of EARN, and was an active union member in AbvaKabo's 'Hoofdgroep Migranten' at the same time. Kenneth describes that within the union he wanted to be present and to provide a counter voice. Such confrontation, substantive and in debate he says, gives him strength. Kenneth is working towards his retirement on St. Eustatius and continues to be a driving force for social justice and equality in all his activities, among others in his role as coordinator of the grassroots St. Eustatius Awareness and Development Network (SEAD).

Desiree van Lent – personal interview on October 27th, 2016

Desiree van Lent is one of three FNV Diversity policy advisors. She is the only Diversity policy advisor with a full-time contract. Six years ago Desiree started in this role within FNV Bondgenoten, and has continued in the new FNV since 2015. Her primary responsibility is to support the FNV's 'diversity networks' Vrouwen and Wereldburgers. Back in the 1990s Desiree was hired as a union representative, at a time when the FNV had a positive action policy in hiring women. She says this resulted in a relatively good representation of women in the FNV and several of its affiliated unions. In our interview Desiree describes herself as a product of her parents, particularly her father. Her father was a 'real FNV-er', who placed a lot of importance in the values of justice and solidarity. Desiree says she remembers inheriting these values from a very young age. She places a lot of importance on equal treatment and inclusivity of all people, regardless of gender, age, sexuality or race. She recognizes that she cannot change the world or even the Netherlands, but on a micro level within the FNV she thinks it is important that everyone has a right to be a member and is able to actively participate. She finds it important that the FNV's membership adequately represents the diversity in Dutch society. As a white woman, she sees her role as facilitating and motivating from the sideline.

Jan Cartier – personal interview on November 7th, 2016

Jan and I met at the office of TIE in Amsterdam, on November 7th, 2016. A colleague who used to work at TIE got me in touch with Jan when I told her about my research project. Jan gave me Kenneth's contact details, and later also agreed to an interview about his role as a white person supporting EARN in the late 90s and 2000s. Jan used to be an active union member whilst working for Ford Nederland, a company where at the time mostly immigrants worked. At the time, Jan participated in the struggle to get representation for immigrant workers in the company's Works Council and in the union. After Ford, Jan started working as a project officer for TIE-Netherlands (Transnationals Information Exchange), an organisation that collaborated with unions and NGO's in several countries to set up projects aimed at building union power in workplaces. A central element of these projects was the exchange of ideas and experiences between union activists. Empowerment of and support for groups faced with subjugation and oppression based on race, gender or sexual orientation was an important aspect of TIE's work. In 1996, Jan wrote a successful grant application to the European Union for an international exchange project for union activists on the topic of racism at the workplace. This project was comprised of three seminars in the Netherlands, Spain and Germany, and an exchange trip from the Netherlands to England. For the meeting in the Netherlands and the exchange trip to England, Jan cooperated with the FNV's Secretariaat Etnische Minderheden. At the first seminar in the Netherlands in March 1996, Jan met Kenneth Cuvalay. Later, in his capacity as project officer at TIE, Jan supported Kenneth and other EARN members in their exchange meetings and activities because they found no support within their respective unions.

Farouq Tareen – personal interview on November 11th, 2016

Farouq and Kenneth Cuvalay were both part of EARN, which is how I got in touch with Farouq. We met at a café in Amsterdam Noord. Farouq came to the Netherlands 38 years ago, after having lived in Egypt, India, Bangladesh, Iran and Pakistan. Growing up, he lived in all those places because his father was a diplomat. Back in Pakistan he studied political sciences and history and when he came to the Netherlands he studied Dutch and Psychology. Without a background in statistics, he was unable to finish the latter. Back in the 1980s, he decided to apply for a job with the police that had started a special campaign to recruit people from ethnic minorities. He describes his experiences in applying for the police as what he later learned to be ‘institutional racism’ from the comrades at the TUC Black Workers’ Conference. For 14 years Farouq worked as a project coordinator at Stichting Collusie – Milieuzorg Amsterdam, which went bankrupt in 2012. He was a member of his organisation’s work council, and was active for several years in the Sectorbestuur Migranten and EARN. Farouq describes his and others’ work for EARN as a never ending mission to make people aware, and to spread the word of the struggle against racism and discrimination. For Farouq, racism and discrimination mean that we do not acknowledge that every individual has a positive value, personality and talents to contribute to the world. Precisely because he wanted to contribute something, Farouq became a member of AbvaKabo FNV and specifically AbvaKabo’s Sectorbestuur Migranten. Farouq is currently running a business importing and selling jewelry from Pakistan.

Lot van Baaren – personal interview on November 23rd, 2016

Lot van Baaren has been active within AbvaKabo FNV and now the FNV for 32 years now. She has always worked, in a number of facilitative and managerial roles in the mental health care sector. In 1986, Lot became a member of AbvaKabo’s women’s group, and later of the health care sector sector council and regional boards within AbvaKabo. One of the first things she successfully fought for as a union member was child care facilities at her erstwhile employer. Over the years, Lot has been involved on all kinds of regular union issues such as collective agreements, pay raise, pension or working time reduction. But also on a number of special topics within the union, including solidarity with Palestine, the right for undocumented migrant domestic workers to unionise, the struggle against TTIP, and the fight against the Government imposed cuts to health care in recent years. Racism and diversity, including women’s rights, were always things she felt committed to she says. Lot was an elected board member of AbvaKabo FNV, and later also of the newly merged FNV. In May this year Lot was re-elected as general board member of the FNV by the FNV’s members’ parliament. Lot expresses that she is aware of her privilege as a white person, which she sometimes experiences as a dilemma when it comes to anti-racism. She sees her role in anti-racism more towards creating awareness amongst other white people, but certainly not tell people of colour how to do it. She continues to put racism and discrimination on the agenda within the FNV’s general board. Her motivation for doing this comes from awareness of injustice and inequality, which is the result of personal experiences and observations.

Rita Mungra – personal interview on January 12th, 2017

On January 12th, 2017 I spoke to Rita Mungra in her new home in Haarlem. In 1986 Rita became an active rank and file member of FNV Bondgenoten, when her employer at the time tried to fire her because she was pregnant. After this experience she joined rank and file groups and started following trainings the union offered. In 1995 she got a different job with Alarming Thuiszorg Amsterdam, a care institution that provides safety services for vulnerable people in their homes and later as team-secretary with a housing organisation, Amsterdams Steunpunt Wonen. This change in employer meant that her union membership transferred to Abvakabo FNV, where she continued to

be active in rank and file groups and in her organisation's work council. During the same period Rita was asked to become a member of AbvaKabo FNV's migrant board, the 'Sectorbestuur Migranten', of which she became member, secretary and within a few years chairwoman. Out of discontent with the way AbvaKabo FNV and other FNV affiliated unions dealt with or ignored issues migrant members were experiencing, she became one of the driving forces of EARN in the early 2000s. From 2002 until 2006, Rita was also an elected board member of AbvaKabo FNV, together with Lot and 17 other people. At the same time she was active as vice-chairperson for the Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid) in Amsterdam Slotervaart. She says she quit being active in politics when people started harassing and intimidating her children, after Rita had taken a stance in a debate about whether an employee of the municipality should be obliged to shake someone's hand. Rita is now retired. Rita's experience of anti-racism within the FNV have left her feeling demotivated to a point where she is not active anymore, although she expressed during the focus group that she probably should and would like to keep going.

Jamila Abdelghani – personal interview on January 30th, 2017

Jamila Abdelghani is 36 years old and works for the FNV. She used to work in a care home for elderly people, when she became involved as a union member in an organizing campaign around the cuts in her care institution. She was subsequently asked to come work as an organiser herself for Abvakabo FNV in the health care sector and later for FNV Bondgenoten in the cleaning sector. After 4 years in organizing campaigns, she recently started a new job within the FNV as an organiser/consultant in the disability care sector. Jamila is a Dutch woman of Moroccan heritage and has a 9-year-old son and a husband with whom she lives in Den Haag. She identifies as a muslim and wears a headscarf. Jamila and I knew each other before the interview, both having worked at the organizing department and having had similar experiences working there that we have spoken about on different occasions. Jamila is part of a small group of colleagues who have discussed and organised around racism. As such, she was involved in the organisation of the two FNV's 'Racism Doesn't Work' (*Racisme Werkt Niet*) meetings in December 2015 and March 2016. We held our interview in a quiet room on the 5th floor of our main office in Utrecht Rijnsweerd.

Arzu Aslan – personal interview on February 2nd, 2017

Arzu and I met at her house in Amsterdam. She was in the middle of writing a grant application with a friend for a discussion night about the upcoming national elections in the Netherlands. The same day, they had also just been to a manifestation against Trump's Muslim ban in the Hague. Arzu has been working as an elementary school teacher for nine years, and is an anti-racist and anti-sexist activist both offline and online and a volunteer for a number of causes in her spare time. She cut her hours to work part-time a while ago, to have more time for her activism and volunteering. One of the struggles she actively supports is of the group We Are Here in Amsterdam, a group of undocumented refugees that fight for facilities and support from the municipality. What drives her is a strong sense of solidarity and the belief that education is an important means through which to achieve the awareness that is necessary. She does not believe in politics or institutions, but recognizes that because they exist one has to operate within them somehow. Arzu says she finds it important that people know that although she has a Turkish name, she is Kurdish. Which means that she is a minority within minorities. She also emphasizes that she is a woman, and for this reason she also fights against sexism. Intersectionality, Arzu says, is important in fighting oppression because we have to take all forms of oppression seriously. Other people may for example have an even harder time because of their sexuality, gender identity or ability. Being aware of the intersectional nature of other people's struggle and one's own position and privilege in that is important to Arzu, and necessary if we want to achieve equality.

Participant 10 – personal interview on February 2nd, 2017

I spoke to participant 10 at her house. During the interview, there were construction workers working on her bathroom, which needed to be renovated after a big leak. I got participant 10's contact details through Rita Mungra, with whom she was active in the 'Sectorbestuur Migranten' of AbvaKabo FNV. She was also active in local politics in Amsterdam. In 1997 participant 10 became active for the 'Sectorbestuur Migranten' and later joined EARN for about two years. Initially educated as a fashion designer, participant 10 re-trained as a child minder and subsequently worked in child care for nearly twenty-five years. During that time she experienced two instances of discrimination and bullying because of her background with two separate employers. The first instance in 2003 was taken to court, where the judge ruled in her favour. She left the organisation at that point. The second instance in was settled out of court, but again participant 10 lost her job. In neither cases did participant 10 receive any support of the union. She has not been able to find a new job since, and has been on unemployment benefit since 2012 and recently became a welfare recipient. Participant 10 is looking to move back to Amsterdam, where she would like to become active in local politics again. She came to the Netherlands as a thirteen-year-old girl, when she and her mother and siblings were reunited with their father who had been working in the Netherlands for several years already. Participant 10 married her high-school boyfriend at a young age, and had two children with him. They divorced after ten years and she never re-married.

Jerry Chintoe – personal interview on February 20th, 2017

Jerry and I met each other at the reception of the Police Academy building in Den Haag. Jerry had come to the Netherlands from Surinam in 1973, finished high school in the Netherlands and was conscripted in the army for nearly two years. After leaving the army and six months of unemployment, Jerry successfully applied for a job at the police. Jerry has been in the police since 1982, where he worked as an officer for a little over 11 years. After he studied Administration and Constitutional and Administrative Law in the evenings, Jerry started working for the Police Academy as a teacher. Early on he noticed there were not many people of colour within the police. He encountered a lot of unfamiliarity and ignorance amongst colleagues, as well as conscious and subconscious discrimination. For this reason, Jerry joined a group of colleagues of migrant background who would raise their concerns and complaints about what they experienced within the police force. Jerry also became active as a shop steward for the Nederlandse Politie Bond (NPB, the Dutch Police Union) where in the 1990s him and a group of others submitted a proposal to instate an 'Adviesgroep Allochtonen' (Immigrant Advisory) at the union's congress. The proposal was accepted, and Jerry became chairperson of the Advisory. For years he has also been active in the Police Academy's work council, of which he was also chairperson. In the late 90s, at the congress when the NPB joined the FNV, he met people who he describes "were fighting for the same but in different sectors". Together they ended up becoming the founding members of EARN. Jerry says he has been fighting injustice in any form throughout his entire life, even as a kid. In society, within the police, anywhere. He has now reached a point where he does not want to fight anymore, but wants to directly influence decision making. Jerry is married, and has three grown-up daughters and a 17-year-old granddaughter. In about three years, Jerry is looking to retire.

Soheilah Rodjan – personal interview February 22nd, 2017

For eight years Soheilah has been working for the FNV. She started as an organiser on FNV Bondgenoten's cleaning campaign, quickly became Lead Organiser and since over a year has been working as a trainer and advisor for the Kaderacademie, the FNV's educational department for active members. Soheilah was the Lead Organiser of the other team of organisers on the security campaign

that I worked on. We both applied for the Kaderacademie and left the Organizing department at the same time, although Soheilah started slightly later because she gave birth to her daughter Sofia in December 2015. She describes Sofia's birth as a strengthening experience that made her question who she is and how she is perceived by others. People would for example confront her in the street asking if Sofia was really her daughter, because she has a lighter skin than Soheilah. Experiences such as this made her increasingly aware of the position and identity she and her daughter inhabit in the world, in society. When asked what Soheilah finds important people know about her, she responds by saying that she is a person that thinks equal appreciation is important, and who thinks that people who do not experience that as such or who are not concerned with it should be made aware. She says people do not need to know "how, what, who I am – I am nothing less than anyone else". She says she describes herself in terms of what she feels and which norms and values she finds important, not by her age, gender, sexuality, skin or hair colour. Her heart, she says, adheres to the values of solidarity and equality of everyone in the world. She is human and what she stands for is the most important part of who she is.

Petra Ploeg – phone conversation on February 25th, 2017

On February 24, 2017, I had a phone interview with Petra, born in Rotterdam, living in Tilburg. Kenneth Cuvalay had advised me to talk to her. I met her in person a few days later at the focus group meeting at my house. Petra knows Kenneth since 1989 and together they started a local migrant group of AbvaKabo in the south of the Netherlands (Midden-Brabant) of which Kenneth became chairman. Being a white member in a black working group, she chose a supportive role which she continued in the grassroots group EARN that Kenneth founded in the early 2000s. Activities she undertook were in communication, administration and policy preparation. Being a librarian in an academic library by profession, she also finds it important to document and archive the activities of EARN and make them available for future generations. Petra strongly believes that trade unions have an important role in fighting for basic human values like freedom, equality and justice on the labour market and in the workplace. Over the years however, she observed that FNV unions failed to support their black members fighting institutional racism in a dominant white society. After all, racism and xenophobia are rooted within the unions as well. The unwilling and rigid attitude of the FNV meant that EARN also had to fight within the union structures. Petra is proud to be part of EARN. She is slightly cynical about the likelihood of something ever changing within the FNV, but nevertheless she finds it important that the fight against institutional racism continues.

Duygu Akcay – focus group participant on February 28th, 2017

Duygu has just started a new job within the FNV as union representative, after having been an organiser for 5,5 years in the retail and security sectors. We worked together on the organising campaign at Schiphol, when Soheilah was Duygu's lead organiser. A few days before the focus group meeting, Duygu contacted me after Cihan and Desiree had told her I was doing this research project. She was part of an 'upcoming talent' group that followed the work of the FNV's Executive Board members for 8 months, which required the participants to give a 'TED-talk' about a societal issue concerning the FNV. She chose to talk about combating racism and increasing diversity, because she is aware of the whiteness of the FNV and the rise of a political majority on the right. Moreover, she says, research shows that inequality exists along lines of colour, background and gender, which is something she not only witnesses but also experiences herself. In preparation for her TED-talk I invited Duygu to participate in the focus group. She also personally interviewed a number of both white colleagues and colleagues of colour. Duygu thinks subconscious or invisible forms of racism, for example in the form of micro-aggressions, but also the ethnocentric views that are at the heart of racism should be talked about openly to enable people to understand each other on equal footing. In

her view, this would enable people to recognise racism for what it is. Without that, people of colour will continually be seen as second-class citizens and white people will continue to get defensive. Duygu sees an important role for the FNV in fighting racism, because any form of division comes at the expense of union power and collectivity. Because of this, Duygu, like other participants, regularly addresses blind spots within the FNV: regarding Zwarte Piet, unintentional exclusionary practices at the FNV's employees' party and forms of institutional racism she thinks the FNV should take a stand against. She has also repeatedly pointed to the importance of incorporating racism and discrimination in the FNV's educational programs.

Plagiarism Rules Awareness Statement

PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.

Name: Annemijn van Marlen

Student number: 3432688

Date and signature:

Utrecht, 24 June, 2017

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