

**The Making, Killing and Consuming of Food Animals: An
Analysis of Practices of Eating Animals and Cultural Difference**

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to understand how discussions regarding the animals we eat not only affect the position and value of animals in different societies but also shape larger debates about cultural difference. To this end, the research question was: How are different cultural identities of Western and non-Western subjects shaped in the discourses surrounding eating animals and what are the consequences for our views on diverse cultures? This thesis reveals that when controversies surrounding meat practices arise, competing parties often focus on certain aspects and ignore the complex relationship between different ethical values, which is problematic because it leads to limited change and leaves multiple parties unsatisfied. Practices and debates regarding meat consumption play an essential part in cultural identity building.

The first chapter examines what animals are deemed to be edible, which depends on more than a pragmatic approach towards food. Considering the push in Australia to position the kangaroo as a food animal, the language used in debates surrounding the kangaroo industry is examined to demonstrate that the edibility of animals depends on more than practical reasons. Diverse sentiments connected to ideas of nationalism and identity have played key roles in the debate regarding the role of the kangaroo as a food animal. The second chapter examines the morality of animal slaughtering practices using the debate regarding political slaughtering in the Netherlands as a case study. The analysis reveals that opponents and proponents share several concerns regarding the meat industry and demonstrates possibilities for shifts from cultural differences towards commonalities are present within the debate. The third chapter considers the consequences and cultural economic value of meat production and consumption. Meat consumption is increasing globally, which has multiple effects, especially on an environmental level. Perceptions of China's meat consumption in Australia and the Netherlands are influenced by national identity and values. Narratives related to China's increasing meat consumption are influenced by global changes, national and cultural values and economic drivers. The final chapter of the thesis applies posthuman theory to argue for new approaches towards ethical concerns regarding meat-eating practices.

This thesis argues that how we think about food animals goes beyond their nutritional value. Values regarding food animals are embedded in complex social structures. Therefore, concerns regarding food animals should not be approached as objective questions requiring set answers, but instead as debates that are contingent on broader changes in cultural values and identity.

Thesis Statement

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

I give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

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Signed:

Date:

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Introduction

Eating animals is a complex matter. Even though people have diverse ideas regarding which animals can be eaten and under what conditions, eating animals is a global practice. Global human consumption of animal bodies demonstrates a widely shared cultural assumption that there are fundamental differences between human and non-human animals which enable this custom. At the same time, different cultural groups have diverse eating habits and perspectives. Differences also exist between people of the same cultural background. For example, there are vegetarians and vegans in most societies even where omnivorism is dominant. Eating animals is not an isolated act and neither is talking about eating animals. They are acts embedded in complicated cultural systems, which are the product of complex historical and societal discourses. This project analyses how discussions surrounding the animals that we eat not only affect the position and value of animals in different societies but also contribute to and help to shape larger debates about globalisation and cultural difference. Our cultural backgrounds affect how we think about food animals, while thinking about food animals simultaneously shapes our broader notions regarding cultural values and ethics.

This thesis explores three key issues regarding the consumption of animal meat: which animals are considered to be food, how they can be killed in ways that are deemed to be ethical and humane, and how to navigate the precarious tensions between environmental consequences and the economic and cultural benefits of the meat industry. Through exploration of these issues, this thesis aims to contribute to the literature on understanding the complex relationship between animals that are eaten by humans and ideas about the Self and Other.

Research Questions

This research explores discourses regarding food animals to analyse who says what about food animals and how these discourses influence moral and governmental guidelines associated with animal-eating practices. To answer these questions, this research examines three case studies to explore how ideals of Western values and identity become constructed and reinforced through animal consumption. The first case study is presented in Chapter 1, which examines kangaroo hunting in Australia to demonstrate how different types of animals are perceived to be valid or permissible food sources. The second case study is presented in Chapter 2, which focuses on the debate about how animals should be slaughtered through an analysis of popular

discourses on un-sedated religious slaughtering in the Netherlands. Finally, a third case study explores the tension between increasing awareness about the environmental impacts of the meat industry and the industry's economic *and* cultural value, which is presented in Chapter 3. The three case studies address the following research questions:

- 1) How do views about eating animals become appropriated in either positive or negative manners in societal discourses in the context of how views on particular cultures are shaped and expressed?
- 2) How are different cultural identities of Western and non-Western subjects shaped in the discourses surrounding eating animals and what are the consequences for our views on diverse cultures?
- 3) How can we integrate posthuman strategies into public debates about eating animals to create more nuanced and productive understandings about the moral and other complexities related to eating animals?

Aims and Objectives

To answer the above research questions, this thesis aims to achieve the following:

- to trace the conceptual roots that lead to 'difference thinking' associated with eating animals, with a focus on species and racial/cultural difference;
- to present discourse analyses of three case studies examining to what extent cultural difference is part of discussions about eating animals, with particular attention to recognition (and lack thereof) of the relevance of cultural difference in the three debates;
- to evaluate the roles that different types of actors and ideas have played and continue to play in constructing customs associated with eating animals; and
- to offer alternative strategies and theoretical approaches for discussing non-human animals eaten by human animals, which minimise a repetition of speciesist, classist and imperialist assumptions, to constructively transform how practices associated with eating animals are viewed, understood and evaluated in an increasingly globalising world.

Literature Review

This literature review demonstrates that although considerable research has been undertaken on species difference, cultural difference and relations between these topics, there is a clear gap in how species and cultural difference are mutually constituted in discourses regarding food

animals. The theories and frameworks applied in this study have been relatively neglected in food studies, including in the vast literature exploring various aspects of food consumption and food habits. Considering that food animal consumption is an increasingly present topic in global(ising) discourses regarding animal welfare and environmental concerns, it is critical to engage with animal welfare from a multicultural angle. The literature review will start by exploring the field of food studies. Food studies is a broad field that to date has explored many aspects of food production and consumption from various disciplinary angles. I will focus on food consumption literature, with a focus on food and cultural identity. The next section will offer an overview on feminist intersectional approaches. The literature review section on intersectionality will offer an overview on previous intersectional approaches to explore how feminist scholars have used intersectionality to examine and expose various competing power structures. I will outline my own use of intersectionality in the methodology section of this introduction. After I outline the various ways in which feminist scholars use intersectionality, I will engage with the works of intersectional feminist scholars who have looked at the role of the animal in society from a feminist perspective. I will then look at other forms of scholarship on the topic of animals. Finally, I will present an argument for why I believe a posthuman approach is useful for the research presented in this thesis. My own use of posthumanism as an analytical framework will be explained in the methodology section which follows this literature review. However, I will engage with previous posthuman scholarship that explores human-nonhuman relations, with a focus on cultural difference.

Food consumption and identities

There is a long history of research on food and identity. As early as the 1960s, Roland Barthes (2012[1961]) wrote on the relationship between identity and food consumption. Using sugar as a case study, Barthes (2012[1961]) explained that food consumption is not merely of economic and political concern but analyses food consumption psychoanalytically. The area of food studies gained much traction during the 1990s. While a large part of this body of work does not focus on the consumption of meat specifically, important work has been done on the role of food from a cultural studies angle which is relevant for this thesis.

Cultural approaches towards food have argued that food consumption is not merely a ‘practical’ phenomenon but also involves “‘sociological’ phenomena of subjectivity, emotion, memory and acculturation” (Lupton, 1996, pp. 8-9) that constructs assumptions about the morality of food stuffs and practices (Barthes, 2012; Lupton, 1996).

This research contributes to the corpus on food studies, but with a specific focus on practices of eating animals and how these discourses relate to discourses on cultural difference. The next paragraphs explore how cultural difference has been examined within the field of food studies as well as in scholarship from other fields, with a focus on food as a lens to examine cultural relations.

Author, professor, feminist and social activist bell hooks (1992)¹ takes a critical race studies approach towards food consumption. She argues that the commodification of cultural signifiers of Otherness—be it food, music, or even the desire for sex with cultural/racial Others by White people—does not bridge the gap between cultural and racial difference, but instead perpetuates it. These practices commodify Otherness, repeating the imperialist structure of White people claiming access to non-White cultures and peoples, thus “not only displac[ing] the Other but den[y]ing the significance of that Other’s history through a process of decontextualization” (hooks, 1992, p. 31). While hooks (1992) understands that attention for Otherness in pop and consumer culture can promote valuable conversations about racial and cultural differences, she warns that this should be done in a critical manner.

Similarly, the philosopher Lisa Heldke (2003) connects food values to our position in a globalising world and described how food adventuring, the Euro–American attitude of taking pride in consuming as many foreign dishes as possible, repeats multiple imperialist narratives. First, ‘food adventuring’ can be associated with obsessive interest in the new and exotic, such as foreign dishes. However, such interests are often not pointed towards genuinely getting to know the Other’s culture as much as about enriching oneself. Paradoxically, this self-enrichment goes hand-in-hand with an intense desire to have an ‘authentic’ experience of an ‘authentic’ culture that is not one’s own. The power to define what is authentic lies with the Western, predominantly White, consumer. Barthes (1979) examines how food choices constitute the individual’s identity, whereas Heldke (2003) demonstrates how food choices are part of complex systems, which bring cultural identities and power structures into being and maintain them.

Humanities and social sciences scholars Rick Flowers and Elaine Swan (2012) complicate the above arguments by demonstrating negative and positive effects of ethnic foods in Western

¹ bell hooks is the pseudonym of scholar Gloria Jean Watkins. hooks’ chosen name was derived from the names of her mother and grandmother—two strong Black women—and aimed to “‘challenge and subdue’ the urge to remain silent out of fear of saying the wrong thing” (Henderson, 2010, p. xx).

spaces. They agree that uncritically consuming ethnic foods may be problematic and argue that consumption also enables the performance of the multicultural self. Educating people about the foods they eat, in terms of the histories and the current political and economic circumstances that produced the food, could be a means of promoting social change towards more acceptance of cultural Others. Sociologist Amanda Wise (2011) makes a similar argument regarding the potential of food to bring people of different cultures together and emphasises that “it matters who is doing the consuming, where and among whom” (p. 107). On a more critical note, Spanish and Latin American studies scholar Lara Anderson and German studies scholar Heather Merle Benbow (2015) demonstrate how food multiculturalism, despite being celebrated, might also be a means to express racism, at least in the Australian context. Through an examination of Australian media images, they explore how food is connected to nationalist discourses and fear of cultural Others. Siri Damman, Wenche Barth Eiden, and Harriet Kuhnlein (2008) argue a similar case and explore how non-native foods often are deemed more developed and modern while traditional or Indigenous foods are seen as more lower class. Stigmas surrounding native foods contribute to health issues of Indigenous peoples due to their rapidly changing diets *and* often higher levels of poverty, which makes them particularly vulnerable to health issues that arise with changing food consumption patterns.

Food choices constitute our identities and constitute and maintain cultural identities and power relations within societies. However, it should be underscored that the effects of our food consumption are more than symbolic. Food studies scholar Ann Hill (2015) examines the global banana trade to analyse how food affects the environment, economic structures and class structures. She shows how bananas could negatively affect the biosecurity of countries to which they are transported, but claims that these discourses of fear also continue unfair global economic structures. Due to the lack of free trade, farmers in developing countries lose out on potential business opportunities. Simultaneously, globalisation allows farmers more opportunities, while increasing their vulnerability of exploitation. What we choose to eat has direct global consequences, even if we are not aware of those consequences.

While not directly focusing on cultural difference, Matthew Cole and Kate Steward’s (2014) work explores which cultural processes shape the acceptance of the consumption of animal products. In *Our Children and Other Animals: The Cultural Construction of Human-Animal Relations in Childhood* they examine how instrumental relations between human and non-human animals becomes normalised during childhoods. They argue that “deformation of childhood affectivity that anthroparchal relations depend on can and must be reworked in order

to set our children free from dependency on the exploitation and suffering of others” (Cole & Stewart, 2014, p. 170). While this thesis does not seek to endorse this kind of stance against consumption of animals and animal products, Cole and Stewart’s work does show us that practices of eating animals are constructed and culturally situated.

Intersections in Feminist Studies

There are multiple ways in which human-animal relations can be approached from theoretical, conceptual, political and pragmatic perspectives. This thesis utilises a combined conceptual and ethical approach. There are also multiple methods for thinking about animals and ethics. My aim is *not* to approach the animal question from a moralist perspective. Instead, I aim to determine what happens when we think about animals beyond this direct relation. More specifically, when we talk about ‘just’ animals, who and what else become involved? To answer this question, I use a feminist intersectional approach, which is discussed in detail in the methodology section of this thesis.

Within academia, the concept of ‘intersectionality’ was introduced in response to the lack of language to discuss the position of Black women in antisexist and antiracist policies in American law. American lawyer, civil rights advocate, and philosopher Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) developed the theory of ‘intersectionality’ because “the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated” (p. 140). She provides this conclusion after arguing that “Black women are sometimes excluded from feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse because both are predicated on a discrete set of experiences that often does not accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender” (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 140). Now, nearly 30 years after Crenshaw’s paper was published, most feminist scholarship does take into account the differences between women. Due to her background as a professor of law, Crenshaw’s work is politically grounded and her focus is on the lived experiences of Black women in discriminatory situations.

However, while the term ‘intersectionality’ was coined by Crenshaw, various feminist streams and scholars had been using similar frameworks prior to her paper. As feminist philosophers Evelien Geerts and Iris van der Tuin (2013) argue, Black and lesbian women have attempted to open up the category of ‘women’ for a much longer time. In addition, feminist theorists had been working on deconstructing the idea of objectivity in general. Feminist philosopher Sandra

Harding's (1986) work on feminist empiricism is one example, in which she argues that one's position in society will always influence how one does research and how research results will be understood. Even though Harding's projects focus on epistemology rather than on the everyday lives of people, her work shares a focus on the centrality of the subject along with Crenshaw's. Early intersectionality examines how the subject was constituted by different identity positions that people hold and how different subject positions relate to knowledge production.

Intersectional approaches can also be recognised within ecofeminism prior to 1989 (Kings, 2017, p. 70). Françoise d'Eaubonne introduced the term ecofeminism in 1974 to describe how both overpopulation and 'the male System' both are "the logical outcome of one of the two parallel discoveries which gave men their power over fifty centuries ago: their ability to plant the seed in the earth as in women, and their participation in the act of reproduction" (d'Eaubonne in Gates, 1996, p. 8). Like Crenshaw, d'Eaubonne sees masculinity and the ecosystems not as two separate systems of oppression, but as interacting.

Within this thesis, ethics is viewed as a means of exercising power. Feminist theory is thus helpful, because women have often been used as tools to legitimise imperialism. Feminist scholar Anne McClintock (1994) argues that there are complex relationships between the imaginary of the colonised land and that of women. The colonised land was viewed as virgin land, waiting to be discovered. Non-Europeans were seen as non-subjects and non-political agents, which resembled the lack of political power of European women. The growing political power of European women developed simultaneously with the overtaking of colonial land.² Additionally, the position of European woman was used as an excuse for colonialism. Feminist literary theorist Gayatri Spivak's (1988) simple description of "White men saving brown women from brown men" (p. 296) captures this sentiment.

Political activism and theoretical research have made strong cases against the legitimacy of direct Western colonialism³ and patriarchy, although these critiques become more complex

² The novel *Jane Eyre* is one literary example. Eyre only reaches financial independence from her employer/love interest Mister Rochester thanks to the inheritance of her aunt's capital. Her aunt accumulated this wealth in the colonies. Colonialism opened up both personal and economic opportunities for European women that were unimaginable before (Bronte, 2008; Buikema, 2009; Spivak, 1985).

³ I do not believe that imperialism has ended. Within neoliberal, advanced capitalist discourse, imperialism is as strong as ever. Mutua (2009) offers an in-depth critical analysis of the imperialist consequences of development programs and NGOs. However, I argue that imperialist motives are currently more subtle than during early colonial projects, although perhaps no less insidious.

when it comes to other forms of imperialism. In Australia, the welfare of women and children is still used as an argument by the government to regulate Indigenous peoples' lives (Atkinson, 2007; Watson, 2011). Indigenous law scholar Irene Watson (2011) argues that "historically, state interventions that were in the name of protecting Aboriginal women invariably ... rendered their rights invisible while subjecting them to excessive regulation" (p. 148). She continues her argument by explaining that there is limited evidence that these state regulations offered improvement to the safety and wellbeing of the women subjected to the regulations (Watson, 2011). In this way, 'protecting' Aboriginal women in practice has tended to lead to an increase in governing Aboriginal peoples' lives and continuing colonial ideals and practices.

Other minorities have been used as tools to legitimise imperialist endeavours. Queer theorist Jasbir Puar (2007) describes how queer bodies, particularly those of homosexual men, have been used to emphasise national identity. Within this process, a specific ideal of the homosexual body is produced, which fits within a heteronormative framework to express how tolerance of these homosexual bodies signifies Western cultural superiority over Oriental and especially Muslim, cultures. Puar (2007) aptly uses the term *homonationalism* to describe this intersection of feelings of cultural superiority and treatments of queer bodies. Similar patterns have been recognised in countries such as the Netherlands where homonationalist discourses are used to emphasise differences between 'native' Dutch people and Dutch people with a Moroccan background, especially young men. According to literary and cultural analysis scholar Murat Aydemir (2012), this is problematic because the rights of LGBT+ people are only valued as tools to strengthen the antagonistic relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim people in the Netherlands. This approach does not offer them any moral value, meaning that once LGBT+ subjects lose this utility, their rights might also come to be viewed as unimportant (Aydemir, 2012). At the same time, there is an implication that homosexuality and Islam are two mutually exclusive categories, which erases space for the experiences of Muslim homosexual subjects in discourses regarding rights for homosexuals in Western societies. Similar rhetoric has been used for women's rights in the Netherlands, in which it has been argued that Islam is a threat to female liberation and independence (Bracke, 2012).

Intersections of difference have become a central topic in feminist research. A large proportion of current research is focused on epistemology and questions of who can produce knowledge on what topics (e.g., Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1986). However, when it comes to knowledge about animals, the democratisation of knowledge production becomes more challenging. While marginalised people in principle can share their onto-epistemological interpretations of life and

ethics and thus vocalise how they want to shape their subjectivity, no such communication is possible between human and non-human animals. Because of this, negotiations on animal 'rights' and welfare add an extra level of risk of being appropriated for new imperialist discourses and critiques on multiculturalism. At the same time, existing scholarship on intersecting ontologies and epistemologies can offer starting points for how to navigate these questions.

Animals in Feminist Studies

Although animal studies is a relatively new field, extensive research has focused on human–animal relations, including how the binary of human and non-human constitutes our lived experiences and identity categories. For example, feminist and animal studies scholar Carol Adams (2010) used feminist theory to explain how patriarchy allows for oppression of women, but that these power structures are repeated in speciesist discourses. Focusing on the parallels between patriarchy and anthropocentrism, Adams (2010) argues that men's assumptions of being entitled to meat are directly linked to their assumed entitlement to women's bodies, which is connected to the abuse of women. Adams (2003) describes how images related to the commercial meat industry and images that lead to the sexualisation of women's bodies share many commonalities. The main message of her work is that if we want to be critical about sexist acts and power structures, it is inconsistent to not also critique the abuse of animals, and particularly the eating of meat.

The argument that meat, or the general exploitation of animals, is morally wrong because of power difference has been extensively explored within the humanities and social sciences. Previous scholarly research on eating animals has focused mainly on the permissibility of consuming non-human animals and the moral relationships between human and non-human animals (e.g., Coetzee, 2003; Derrida, 2002; Foer, 2009; Singer, 1975). However, several practices related to the eating of animals and its morality have been overlooked. Philosopher Cora Diamond (1978) argues:

This is a totally wrong way of beginning the discussion, because it ignores certain quite central facts-facts which, if attended to, would make it clear that rights are not what is crucial. We do not eat our dead, even when they have died in automobile accidents or been struck by lightning and their flesh might be first class. ... Now the fact that we do

not eat our dead is not a consequence—not a direct one in any event—of our unwillingness to kill people for food or other purposes. (p. 467)

The ways in which we think about what is edible is not based merely on rationalising the willingness to kill for food. Instead, it is connected to broader relations of values. These are not rational but part of who we are on deeper, less clear and more influential levels. What we eat is not just a consequence of rational and moral arguments (e.g., Regan & Singer, 1976; Singer, 1975) but the product of complex social structures, which allow certain things (or animals) to be understood as either edible or not. Diamond (1978) does not specifically define who ‘we’ are, but since she connects her argument to discussions on the relationship between racism and speciesism, it implies that she considered these connections from a hegemonic Western perspective.

Other scholarship has examined the complexity of human–animal relationships in broader power structures. For example, Australian philosopher and ecofeminist Val Plumwood (1993) places speciesism and sexism in a network of oppressive (Western) dualisms. To her, sexism and speciesism are not similar because there are fundamental differences between women and animals and how they are positioned in society. Nonetheless, their foundations are rooted in a dualistic, hierarchal way of thinking in which categories are always understood in oppositional relationships. Plumwood (1993) uses feminist theories of difference to create a greater understanding of sexual and species differences and concluded that to overcome oppression—whether this oppression is based on sex or species—there needs to be a radical shift regarding how subjects relate to each other. In contrast to Adams, Plumwood focuses less on arguing *against* the exploitation of animals, but places emphasis in her critique on the underlying philosophical dualisms (Arcari, 2020, p. 59). In other words, Plumwood uses philosophical approaches to examine *why* and *how* sexual and species systems of oppression exist, whereas Adams offers a more universal, moralistic critique.⁴

Donna Haraway’s (2008) work is another valuable example of research on the power structures that are associated with human-animal relationships. Her chapter on the chicken industry offers an intersectional account of how chickens are connected to many axes of difference.⁵ Chickens

⁴ Plumwood has accused Adams of being too universal in her argument for vegetarianism. Other scholars have spoken out against Plumwood’s supposedly too simplistic readings of Adams’ work. See for example Eaton (2002).

⁵ Haraway explicitly identifies as a feminist and animal studies scholar; she teaches in both disciplines and notes these affiliations explicitly in many of her works (e.g., Haraway, 2008). However, there are some

in the meat industry are part of global trade. The people that handle them are usually lower class, often of migrant status. The chickens and the people that directly work with them share feelings of displacement and exploitation. At the same time, the chickens in the food industry share medical and other types of modifications with their peers in the animal experimentation sector. While food chickens have been extensively bred to contribute more and cheaper flesh and eggs, chickens in the medical industry undergo treatments to produce and test medicines for non-chickens or other chickens in the food industry. Haraway (2008) offers a detailed narrative of the complex web of human and non-human relations in which chickens find themselves, without simply judging the industries. Instead of asking for industries to be abolished, Haraway (2008) argues for more symbolic and material recognition of the importance of the chickens. Her approach contributes to this study because its focus is on transforming them in ways that benefit and acknowledge all parties involved, rather than aiming to eliminate particular industries or practices.

The scholarship described above has explored the complexities between human and non-human animal relationships. These scholars have offered important insights into how differences between humans and non-humans are constituted and how this creates a greater moral value for human life over non-human life. However, what has been missing are explorations of how considerations about the ethical issues associated with eating animals not only influence the relationship between humans and non-human animals but also affect the relationships between different human cultural groups. It is precisely this point that my study addresses for two reasons. First, it provides insight into *why* people do things the way they do instead of offering alternative ways of doing them without first developing this deeper understanding. Second, understanding the *why* enables strategies to be devised for constructing new ways of thinking about animal welfare, which account for diverse and ever-changing worldviews instead of static ideas regarding morality and human–animal relationships.

debates among animal studies scholars regarding whether they find Haraway's approaches to be acceptable. Haraway has refused to fully adopt Levinas' ethical approach, which rejects killing on any ground. Instead, Haraway (2008) argue that we should learn how to kill responsibly. Animal studies scholars such as Weisberg (2009) argued that animal studies scholars should commit fully to "a wholesale rejection—a total refusal—of domination" (p. 60). Therefore, scholars such as Weisberg see no space in the field of animal studies for arguments such as Haraway's. This project disagrees with universal approaches such as Weisberg's.

Animal Studies

The main aim of this section is to show that while analytical approaches towards human–animal relationships and morals are valuable, they are less relevant to the aims of this thesis. While it is important to consider animal welfare, this study investigates the *implications* of moral approaches towards animal rights and welfare instead of how animal welfare should be defined. I argue that rather than thinking in binary terms of *right* and *wrong*, it is more beneficial to construct alternative strategies of thinking about practices of eating animals, which take complex human cultural and identity values into account. This project utilises an analysis of human–animal relations to explore the relations between different human cultural groups. While animal studies is a relatively new discipline—especially in Western academia—several approaches have been developed to address the ‘animal question’.

In the introduction of *The Rise of Critical Animal Studies*, sociologists Nik Taylor and Richard Twine (2014) aim to set out different approaches in studies about animals. They explicitly differentiate *critical* animal studies from ‘regular’ animal studies. They do not offer clear definitions for the field, but from their descriptions it is evident that animal studies are studies about animals, whereas critical animal studies are politically motivated. Animal studies are studies that involve animals but do not necessarily benefit animals, which is not to say that all animal studies necessarily disadvantage animals. Instead, their wellbeing is not always the first priority in these studies. Conversely, critical animal studies “takes a normative stance against animal exploitation and so ‘critical’ also denotes a stance against an anthropocentric status quo in human–animal relations, as demonstrated in current mainstream practices and social norms” (Taylor & Twine, 2014, p. 2). Critical animal studies scholars are politically and morally motivated to take a stance *against* animal harm and exploitation (Taylor & Twine, 2014).

This thesis is also motivated by a critical stance towards animal exploitation, although my definition of *critical* differs from Taylor and Twine’s. Inspired by feminist critical studies, I approach critical theory as “cognizant of the role that power plays in hegemonic knowledge” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p. 11). Opening spaces for oppressed groups is central to critical theory, so to a certain extent, this approach agrees with Taylor and Twine’s. However, I take it further and aim to offer a critical approach to the knowledges surrounding animal welfare.

As explained further in the methodology section of this thesis, it is the idea of one view of *right* and *wrong* when it comes to eating animals that this research takes issue with. Therefore, this

thesis disagrees with normative underlying assumptions of work by classical critical animal studies scholars and other philosophers writing on animal ethics (e.g., Regan, 1983, 2004; Singer, 1975). For instance, Peter Singer (1975) argues that it is impossible to morally legitimise the systematic breeding and killing of sentient animals for the purpose of human food consumption. Although I agree with this claim to a certain extent, the central message of the current project is that eating animals is not only about animals but also is a deeply embedded part of cultural values and economic systems that cannot be deemed to be unimportant or simply immoral. What we eat is the product of complex social relations that position certain things (e.g., animals) as being edible. Eating animals, or eating certain animals, is not just a consequence of rational and moral arguments, which animal studies scholars such as Regan and Singer (1976) appear to argue.

Poststructuralist, deconstructive approaches have been used in other ways to think about animals. For example, critical and cultural theorist Cary Wolfe (2013) argues that thinking in terms of law as we know it now will never enable a complete undoing of anthropocentrism because the concept of law is inherently an exclusionary concept. Speech and political subjectivity are central to the framework of laws. Therefore, to create a change in human–animal relationships, we need to change our general ethical system. Similar to Plumwood, Wolfe (2013) criticises the Western neo-Platonic way of thinking in hierarchal dualisms and argued that a completely new system of relating between and among species was the solution.

Using French poststructuralist theories on power to think about animals from a more applied perspective, social and political theorist Dinesh Wadiwel (2016) examines animals in capitalist, neoliberal society and argues that animals' value for humans is material and symbolic. The material value of animals is in their commodity value for human consumption. Humans use animal bodies as food resources, for experimentation and other means. Their value is increased as their individuality decreases. Wadiwel (2016) describes this as the “process of the fabrication of differentiated life into an inanimate commodity that is seemingly homogenous and exchangeable” (p. 73). At the same time, non-human animals hold a symbolic value for human animals. The non-human animal offers a mirror to the human animal to show not what the human animal *is* but what the non-human animal *lacks*. In this symbolic exchange, the non-human animal's lack of human animalness constitutes the human.

Posthumanism as a tool to explore species and cultural difference

While the body of research based on how discourses regarding practices of eating meat affect cultural differences and relationships is relatively small, the relationship between speciesism and racism or cultural diversity has been researched more extensively, especially in posthuman theory.⁶ The term ‘posthumanism’ has been used in many different contexts, such as in relation to post-apocalyptic ideas or the trans-human—a human that is enhanced by technology (Callus, Herbrechter & Rossini, 2014). The posthuman approach in this research is part of the heritage of poststructuralist posthumanism.

Differences *between animals* and *between humans* have been acknowledged within critical theory for a few decades. Jacques Derrida’s work has been of great significance for animal scholars within continental philosophy and critical studies situated in this field. Contemporary scholars have drawn upon his work. This section will explore Derrida’s contribution to the critical animal studies field, as well as that of philosopher and feminist theorist Rosi Braidotti and Wolfe, who are key scholars within the field of posthumanism, the key theoretical framework in this thesis. Other scholars are discussed to position their contributions within broader animals and interspecies studies.

In 1997, French critical theorist Derrida (2002) gave a ten-hour address to the Cerisy-la-Salle conference that was devoted to his work. Referring to an encounter between himself in the shower and his cat, Derrida (2002) establishes that difference is essential for maintaining our identity. He uses the example of nudity to illustrate this. While it can be uncomfortable or shameful for humans to be naked, for cats this is not the case:

What is shame if one can be modest only by remaining immodest and vice versa. Man could never become naked again because he has the sense of nakedness, that is to say of modesty or shame. The animal would be in nonnudity because it is nude and man in nudity to the extent that he is no longer nude. There we encounter a difference, a time or contretemps between two nudities without nudity. This contretemps has only just begun doing us harm [mal], in the area of the science of good and evil. (Derrida, 2002, p. 374)

⁶ e.g., Cordeiro-Rodrigues and Mitchell (2017). This section focuses on cultural difference in animal studies in posthuman studies because this is the framework that informs this research project.

Because humans place symbolic value on nudity, we can be nude. Cats are not aware of their nudity and are never nude even though they are not dressed. Humans place moral judgement on our nakedness, while this moral judgement is not placed on the nakedness of cats. Of course, these differences between humans and animals and between beings of the same species go beyond just being naked. Our lives and societies are shaped by the social rules we follow. This is not necessarily a problem, but can be when these conceptual relations are given as absolutes in a world that is embedded in complex and contradictory relationships. Differences that occur on a symbolic or conceptual level affect our daily lives and interactions. Derrida (2002) argues that differences are established by *real* interactions between humans and animals, whereas most philosophers and artists have previously tended to think about animals in abstract terms.

However, to understand the reasons why humans treat animals in certain ways, Derrida (2002) argues in his 1997 lectures that the differences between animals is crucial. He deconstructs the types of onto-epistemological distinctions between humans and animals. First, he argues that the category of ‘the animal’ does not hold. While Derrida (2002) agrees that there are differences between humans and non-human animals, he argues that there also are major differences between animals that do not allow them to be generalised into one category. He does this from a descriptive angle, critiquing as follows:

The animal, in this general singular [concept], within the strict enclosure of this definite article (‘the Animal’ and not ‘animals’), as in a virgin forest, a zoo, a hunting or fishing ground, a paddock or an abattoir, a space of domestication, are all the living things that man does not recognize as his fellows, his neighbors, or his brothers. And that is so in spite of the infinite space that separates the lizard from the dog, the protozoon from the dolphin, the shark from the lamb, the parrot from the chimpanzee, the camel from the eagle, the squirrel from the tiger or the elephant from the cat, the ant from the silkworm or the hedgehog from the echidna. (Derrida, 2002, p. 402)

Animals in different places and from different species, as Derrida (2002) argues, are not singular or homogenous and cannot be reduced to the term ‘animal’ as if they form a coherent, homogenous group. Next to empirical differences between animals, Derrida (2002) explains the conceptual value of what he called *animal figures*. He refers to the different mythological attributions and roles that have been described to animals such as the plurality of different animal (and female) qualities embodied by the figure of the chimera, the brother-like capacities of Pegasus and the sacrificial role of the goat offered by Abel and not Cain (Derrida, 2002, pp.

409–410). For Derrida, the more empirical distinctions between the animals described in the previous paragraph were also already fraught with deeper meanings and the mythological examples that he gives serve to clarify this further. Derrida (2002) concludes that the ontological distinction between humans and “what we call animals” (p. 398) is based on false premises. Therefore, the consequences of this distinction—namely the instrumentalisation of animals to benefit human lives—also cannot be valid.

While Derrida did not identify as a posthuman scholar himself, his work on animals has influenced various scholars within this field. Derrida’s influence can be recognised, for example, in the work of Wolfe (2013) who expands on Derrida’s arguments and claims that animals’ suffering by human hands can be traced back to understanding human–animal relations in terms of dichotomy and hierarchy. Second, Wolfe (2013) discusses the impossibility of governing our world in such a way that protects the interests of all living beings in it. As Wolfe (2013) explains, “we *must* choose and by definition we *cannot* choose everyone and everything all at once. But this is precisely what ensures that, *in* the future, we *will have been wrong*” (p. 103, emphasis in original). Therefore, thinking about the relationship between non-human and human animals forces us to rethink fundamental distinctions between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’.

Derrida (2002) builds a strong argument against the idea of animals as a homogenous group but does not offer many tools to reflect on these differences. Braidotti (2013)’s work on three different relations that Western human subjects engage in with non-human animals fills this gap. Her proposed approaches towards human-nonhuman animal relations are loosely based on Borges’ fictional works and she proposes “an Oedipalized relationship (you and me together on the same sofa); an instrumental (thou shalt be consumed eventually) and a fantasmatic one (exotic, extinct infotainment objects of titillation)” (p. 68).⁷ These categories allow for diverse understandings of human interactions and relations with non-human animals. Rather than reducing these diverse relations to the umbrella of speciesism, they offer tools to understand how different non-human animals are treated in different ways by humans. While power

⁷ With the term ‘Oedipal relationship’, Braidotti (2013) did not seek to refer to psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud’s ideas about Oedipal relationships, in which sexual attraction between sons and mothers is central. Instead, she is referring to the myth—Oedipus was unaware of the parental relationship between him and his mother at the time of sexual activities—in which “the dominant human and structurally masculine habit of taking for granted free access to and the consumption of the bodies of others, animals included” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 68) was central. Oedipus killed his biological father over a dispute regarding who had a right to cross the road first and ‘gained’ his queen Jocasta as his wife, who later turned out to be his mother, as a trophy for solving the riddle of the Sphinx.

structures are constantly at play, they manifest differently, such as between humans and their pet animals compared to between humans and the animals that they eat.

There is limited scholarship on the differences between animals, which has either focused on differences between animals *or* differences between animals and humans, in which ‘animals’ and ‘humans’ are treated as singular, homogenous groups. This thesis contributes to existing scholarship by complicating these debates and demonstrating how species difference and human cultural differences are mutually constituted. Posthumanism is a useful tool in this endeavour, because it allows for an approach that acknowledges and embraces difference.

Research Methodology

The key frameworks in which this research is situated are animal and postcolonial studies. In addition, this project is strongly influenced by feminist studies. While a feminist framework may seem out of place for a research project on intersections of species and cultural difference, this is not necessarily the case. Within the current academic climate, the development of the concept of *studies* is an ongoing trend. Animal studies, postcolonial studies and feminist studies share considerable commonalities. They are relatively new fields that do not fit into one discipline but use multi-, inter-, trans- or post-disciplinary approaches, depending on which label one prefers,⁸ and find their roots in political ideals. Their commitment to political action and cross-disciplinary nature make these ‘studies’ particularly suitable for the aims of this research project; they allow flexible research methods to explore multifaceted practices.

Animal, postcolonial and feminist ‘study’ fields have a lot of overlap on a theoretical level. Several scholars can be positioned in multiple studies disciplines at the same time. For example, the research by Plumwood, Adams and Haraway fit in feminist and animal studies because these fields use similar theoretical tools in their research and generally recognise the importance of each other. For example, Adams (2003, 2010) reveals the importance of gender in

⁸ This thesis recognises the value of the debate regarding whether current trends in academia should be defined as multi-, inter-, trans- or post-disciplinary. However, the aim of this study is to contribute to existing theories to enable them to expand their value for questions on intersectionality on multiple levels, rather than how existing theories fit into academic disciplines. This study focuses on the use of theory *for* academia rather than the position of theory *in* academia. For this reason, it does not engage in the debate over whether scholarship is moving towards a multi-, inter-, trans- or post-disciplinary approach. For analyses on gender studies as a multi-, inter-, trans- or post-discipline, see Hornscheidt and Baer (2011), Liinason (2011) and Lykke (2011).

understanding meat's cultural significance. They recognise how power structures work simultaneously to create difference and aim to deconstruct or re-imagine difference.⁹

On a methodological level, the goal of this research is to demonstrate that cultural phenomena should not be studied solely as topics in themselves but also in relation to other issues. This study recognises the importance of separate disciplines such as food studies, postcolonial studies, philosophy and animal studies because these fields address important societal issues. By offering a posthuman analysis of the ethics of eating animals, this research takes a more holistic approach to show that species and cultural differences are closely intra-related. So far, this type of approach has been overlooked in the literature because separate disciplines have tended to focus on *one* category of identity. Acknowledging the relationality between different forms of identities can allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of the questions that the above-mentioned disciplines address.

In addition to using posthumanism to contribute to fields such as food studies, animal studies and postcolonial studies, this research also contributes to posthuman studies. The main aim of posthuman thinkers is to deconstruct and rethink binary categories. This study aims to complicate the deconstruction argument by re-emphasising how the construction of the nature-culture binary and species difference is closely related to cultural difference by using postcolonial theory. In this way, the research questions that this project aims to answer by using posthuman theory are also used reflectively to investigate the limits and prospects of posthuman theory. These questions include how different cultural identities are discussed when the nature-culture binary is deconstructed and how can we talk about categories such as 'nature' and 'culture' without losing sight of the heterogeneity of these categories.

Feminist Epistemologies

This project is inspired by feminist epistemological critiques. As a researcher, I am guided by the epistemological contributions of feminist science and technology scholars such as Harding (1986) and Haraway (1988). Although they draw different conclusions on objectivity, their arguments both endorse the claim that one's position in society determines the knowledges that

⁹ For me, the specific value of feminist studies lies in its focus on knowledge production. Spivak (1978) explains that "part of the feminist enterprise might very well be to provide adequate evidence so that the great male texts that produce these thoughts do not become great adversaries, or models from whom we take our ideas and then revise them or reassess them" (p. 245).

we produce.¹⁰ Harding's and Haraway's scholarship contributes to feminist understandings of knowledge and the position of the researcher in the production of new knowledges. They inform the conceptual frameworks in which the topic of practices surrounding food animals are approached. I also recognise how my personal background is reflected in my choice of case studies. My case studies do not only provide examples of practices related to eating animals but also provide an account of my own experiences regarding this topic. The following paragraphs explore how and why I came to select this thesis topic and these specific case studies to situate myself in my research and the knowledges it produced, as well as to methodologically justify why these can serve as appropriate case studies to support my arguments in response to my research questions.

Firstly, my own relationship with meat and cultural difference is one I would like to disclose in order to position myself within this project. Positionality is often identified as having three components, namely the researcher's relation with the subjects, the participants and the research context and processes (Holmes, 2020, p. 2). Aspects of positionality can either 'fixed' or 'fluid' (Holmes, 2020, p. 2). To define my relationship with the subjects of this project, I will first discuss my own practices of (not) eating meat and then my relation with regard to experiences of cultural differences. I have not eaten meat since I was 17 years old and while I have not completely eliminated eggs and dairy from my diet, my consumption of these goods is much lower than in the average diets of many people. I follow this vegetarian diet by my own choice. My reasons for this choice are based on the belief that it is unethical to harm the environment and kill animals for food when there are many alternatives available. At the same time, I am appreciative of the important role that meat can play for other people. Having one first-generation Indonesian migrant parent, food played a central role during family gatherings. Food, including meat dishes, offered a way to stay connected to a place that for many family members was still more 'home' than the country in which they lived. I believe my family is one main reason for my interest in cultural difference. My project does not have 'participants' as such, but uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine how practices of eating animals are situated in broader cultural value systems.

¹⁰ The difference between Harding (1986) and Haraway (1988) relates to the value of a multiplicity of knowledges. Broadly speaking, Harding (1986) argues this multiple knowledges lead to greater objectivity, whereas Haraway (1988) contends that the idea of objectivity follows what she refers to as the 'God-trick' and the notion of objectivity should necessarily be rejected. For a more elaborate account about the value of this argument, see van der Tuin (2009).

In addition to my broader connection to this thesis topic, I also position myself within the case studies I have selected. Chapter 1 presents an examination of historical and contemporary cultural values that have informed the Australian debate regarding the changing position of the kangaroo as a food animal. During the first few months following my move to Australia to commence this postgraduate research, food was one way to begin a conversation with people who began as strangers. ‘Have you tried it?’ and ‘Did you love/hate it?’ were questions often asked about iconic Australian foods such as Vegemite, Tim Tams, fairy bread and kangaroo meat.¹¹ It was easy to answer these questions about Tim Tams and fairy bread—“Yes, I have tried them and I do love them”—and it was slightly more difficult but still relatively easy to form an opinion on vegemite—“I have tried it and enjoy it in limited amounts”. These replies were always met with approval from my new potential friends. However, the kangaroo question was always more challenging. When I explained that I had not tried kangaroo meat because I was a vegetarian, I received various reactions and many anecdotes. Of course, my vegetarianism led to discussions about how my conversational partners approved or disapproved of my life choices. Others told me about how they or their partners/friends/family members eat meat but refuse to eat kangaroos because they are so cute. The most surprising reaction for me was the argument that it was acceptable to eat kangaroo because the usual reasons for not eating meat do not apply to these animals; kangaroos are hunted because they are overabundant, do not suffer while being killed and are a healthy meat option. The discrepancy between emotional reasons for not eating kangaroos and rational approaches for promoting human consumption of kangaroo meat led me to choose the kangaroo as a case study to investigate how an animal becomes edible from a cultural perspective. The debate is both current and relatively contained to one country, which enables discrete data collection. At the same time, the case study represents larger questions; I examine how humans negotiate different sets of values to determine how animals become food animals. The kangaroo in Australia was

¹¹ While kangaroo meat might speak for itself as a food stuff, Vegemite, Tim tams and fairy bread may be less commonly known outside of Australia. Vegemite is a savory spread made from leftover brewer’s yeast, usually spread on buttered bread. Tim tams are chocolate biscuits which come in many flavours, milk chocolate being the most common. Fairy bread is the name for white bread with butter and sprinkles. It is commonly served at children’s parties but also enjoyed outside of festive activities.

an excellent case study because it provides a specific instance of more general conflicts such as cuteness¹² and disgust.¹³

My second case study is based in my home country of the Netherlands. The topic of un-sedated religious slaughter became prominent when I commenced my undergraduate studies and resurged just as I began my postgraduate studies. Most of my friends had just finished their undergraduate degrees in Arts-related fields and we were all very proud of our recently acquired critical thinking skills. Protest voting was an emerging development at the time, because the Netherlands was in the middle of a financial crisis and many attributed the surprising popularity of the populist Party for Freedom¹⁴ to this phenomenon. I distinctly remember a conversation with my good friend, a fellow vegetarian, on ‘responsible’ protest voting, because we were discontent with the political parties that were campaigning for the 2012 election. I jokingly mentioned voting for the Party for Animals as an example of protest voting that would be much more productive than voting for the Party for Freedom. She responded harshly, outlining how their determination to ban un-sedated slaughter was comparable to the populist strategies of the Party for Freedom and that their collaboration with these efforts was inexcusable because she saw them as being racist and morally unacceptable. This led me to have many more conversations with my friends and I was surprised not just by the diversity of opinions but by the strength of people’s convictions about their stances regarding this specific topic. My interest eventually inspired me to write my master’s thesis on how the political debates and developments on this topic follow imperialist narratives within a multicultural society. Therefore, the second case study in this thesis draws on this research with a new focus, via

¹² Animal science scholars Donna-Mareè Cawthorn and Louwrens Hoffman (2016) discuss people’s reasons for refusing to eat certain animals. They use multiple examples such as dogs and dolphins to create an understanding of why they argue that Western cultures strongly object to these food practices. This resistance is generally explained by either a ‘functionalist’ or a ‘symbolic’ framework. Cawthorn and Hoffman (2016) argue that functionalist arguments do not always hold up under close investigation and that symbolic frameworks often provide better insights into people’s acceptance or refusal for treating specific animals as food. This research continues their argument by examining reasons for eating or not eating certain animals by discussing reactions to kangaroo consumption.

¹³ Insects are a typical example of foodstuffs that evoke feelings of disgust in Western countries. Due to the environmental benefits of replacing normative animal protein such as beef, pork and chicken with insect proteins, extensive research has been undertaken regarding how to motivate consumers to accept this ‘culturally inappropriate’ food (Tan, 2017). Research on strategies have been employed to encourage insect consumption in Western countries, which underlines the importance of cultural and individual expectations (Tan, 2017; Tan et al., 2015). This project contributes to this argument by unravelling how these expectations are part of broader value systems in cultures and societies.

¹⁴ The Party for Freedom (PVV) is a Dutch political party, which was established in 2006. They are a populist party that predominantly aims to stop the Islamisation of Dutch society and culture (parlement.com, n.d.).

investigation of how meat consumers negotiate when and how killing food animals becomes ethically justifiable within various existing value frameworks. While the case study focuses on the Netherlands, it represents broader questions of negotiating suffering in the meat industry and negotiating cultural differences in multicultural societies.

The final case study of this thesis was inspired by another defining moment in my life of which I think fondly. As part of my master's degree, I was given the opportunity to take part in a university exchange program. Being interested in postcolonial studies, but also never having previously left Europe, I wanted to challenge myself and chose Singapore as my destination. In Singapore, one recurring topic of conversation was cultural prejudice and the racism experienced by my non-European friends. While there are cultural differences between the 'East' and the 'West' and things about which to be critical, the amount of criticism received by Asian economies seemed disproportionate to the critiques expressed towards European, North American and Oceanian countries. When it came to the topic of eating meat, these conversations further inspired me to investigate how narratives of non-Western countries were developed regarding the globalising meat industry. Therefore, the third case study of this thesis examines how exporting countries perceive the consequences of increasing meat demand, production and export. It demonstrates how changing attitudes towards meat production and farming are not solely influenced by financial drivers but follow existing value structures based on ideas of national identities and progress.

My personal history associated with my choice of case studies and my opinions of them have provided valuable insights as well as limitations, many of which I am well aware. However, since knowledge is arguably always inherently partial and situated, I do not necessarily consider this to be a problem.¹⁵ Instead, I view my experiences and research results as being in conversation, confirming and challenging each other. In addition, these case studies stand on their own separate from my point of view and history, because each represents broader questions regarding production and consumption of food animals and their intersections with cultural identities and difference. Overall, the three case studies were chosen because they represent diverse insights into questions surrounding practices of eating meat *and* my familiarity with the context in which these practices take place as represented in the case studies. The case study of the kangaroo's role as a food animal examines how animals become deemed (in)edible within a settler society in which nature and the national landscape are part of national

¹⁵ On this point, see e.g. Haraway (1988).

narratives; the case study on the acceptability of religious slaughter navigates questions of animal suffering in the meat industry and multiculturalism; and the final case study explores two national narratives of the consequences and futures of meat production and consumption in a globalised world. The focus on the Netherlands and Australia was chosen not only because of my personal experiences with the countries, but also because both countries are both key players in the global meat industry with comparable representation and influence in global relations. For example, neither country is part of the G8 but both are part of the G20. Both countries are also both predominantly white. Australia is a settler country in which most people have an Anglo-Saxon background. The Netherlands is a European country with a long history of being a colonial power. Despite both countries currently being predominantly white, their cultural and racial diversity has been increasing markedly over the last decades diverse. Yet there are also differences between the two countries. The Netherlands is situated in the European Union, and exports most of its produce to countries within Europe. Australia's market is predominantly situated in Asia. The second difference between Australia and the Netherlands is their size. Australia has a large land surface that leads to large producing differences within the country. The Netherlands as a small surface area, and while this means there can be a coherent approach towards meat production nationwide, there is a need to ensure efficiency of resources and space. These differences between both countries offer diverse insights into the production, trade and consumption of animals and into multicultural societies in which one is a settler society and the other one is not. Therefore, my personal position should not be seen as limiting but rather as enabling the choices for these case studies.

Intersectionality

When considering how identity and experience inform one's research, it is important to think about how to approach identity and experience. The intersectional approach "function[s] as a meeting point for many different discursive endeavours to achieve sensitivity in relationship to complexity" (Staunæs & Søndergaard, 2011, p. 47). If the political issues of animal rights and multiculturalism intersect, this could have negative consequences for both parties of interest since the appropriation of the points of intersection may overshadow other issues at stake within the debates. Both matters could be reduced to their relationship with each other, which could lead to other concerns related to these issues not being adequately addressed. Within feminist theory, it is widely acknowledged that identity and experience are never singular. While differences between men and women cannot be denied, regardless of one's explanation for why

these differences exist, the differences between men or between women make it impossible to speak of either category as a homogenous, coherent whole.

While intersectionality is widely recognised and its importance is well-understood, the understanding of intersectionality has also diversified, with it changing from being a theory about the place of black women in feminism and postcolonial endeavours to a concept that addresses social inequalities in various ways. In her article “Intersectionality as a buzzword”, Kathy Davis (2008) discusses how the meaning of “intersectionality” has gotten more complicated. Whereas many would view Crenshaw’s use of intersectionality as the development of a theory, others later classify it as a concept, heuristic device or reading strategy for feminist research. Also there is debate on whether intersectionality should be seen to referring to a crossroad, to ‘axes’ of difference or as a dynamic process. Finally, there is debate about what the concept of intersectionality helps to clarify regarding social inequalities: individual experiences, theorising identity or whether it is “taken as a property of social structures and cultural discourses” (Davis, 2008, p. 68). For this project, I use an intersectional lens to examine how practices of eating animals and cultural values correlate. I use the concept of intersectionality as a theoretical tool to understand how discourses surrounding food animals affect animal rights and cultural relations. Intersectionality as a concept thus is used as a reading strategy for analysis, understood as a dynamic process and seen as a property of social structures and cultural discourses.

I recognise that this approach is different from Crenshaw’s original use of intersectionality and am aware of the debates in feminist academia regarding why such an approach could be problematic.¹⁶ However, I argue that it is more productive to determine strategies to use *intersectionality* in such a way that does justice to its original intent than to simply reject its use in any context whatsoever outside of Black feminism. By using the term to rethink racial and cultural relations in relation to other forms of oppression, I hope to do justice to the concept’s political goals as well as its theoretical value.

¹⁶ Multiple critiques have been voiced on contemporary uses of the concept ‘intersectionality’. Vivian May (2014) warns about the risk of delimiting the theory “when its different norms of knowledge, identity and politics are approached mainly as problems to overcome... Such containment practices stem from a longer history of minoritized groups being characterized as problem” (p. 100). Further, Sirma Bilge (2013) addresses the danger that the concept can become depoliticised within feminist academia. She warns about the meta-theorisation of the concept and the exclusion of racial concerns in feminist applications of the concept.

Ethics

The focus of this study is on practices associated with eating animals and their ethical implications. Whereas traditional, Kantian moral philosophy considers ethics to be guidelines that lead to a moral life, this project utilises and defends an approach that examines what ethics *do*, in which ethical ideas are understood as non-neutral instruments of power. This project explores how ethics form and are formed by social and cultural relations between human and non-human subjects (e.g., Braidotti, 2011, 2013; Butler, 2009; Haraway, 2003, 2008). Therefore, the aim of this research is not to say whether humans should eat animals or not, or under which conditions, but to examine current dialogues surrounding these questions and analyse the implications of what was being expressed surrounding practices relating to eating animals. By using this approach towards ethics, I illustrate how ideas about the ethical treatment of animals affect how different cultural groups are positioned in relationship to each other.

As Haraway and Harding have argued, knowledge production is influenced by our position in society. Haraway (2003) takes this argument further and applies it to ethical relating. She argues that feminism has “refused both relativism and universalism. Subjects, objects, kinds, races, species, genres and genders are the products of their relating” (Haraway, 2003, p. 7). Similar to knowledge, ethics and moral values are situated. Within her argument that ethics is part of processes of relating, Haraway explains that this means that no one is exempt from partaking in these structures. Therefore, Haraway emphasises that the idea of *innocence* should be deconstructed. She claims that “innocence and the corollary insistence on victimhood as the only ground for insight, has done enough damage” (Haraway, 2006, p. 109). Rather than being the innocent bystanders of what happens with us and around us, Haraway (2003) proposes a new form of relating to each other and the world:

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

Even though we might think of moral values as being set and unchanging, they are constantly being negotiated in social and material situations. That is, moral values are dependent on circumstances. Haraway (2008) underlines the importance of recognising how the *I* is never in itself and separate from the world but rather that “to be one is always to *become with many*” (p.

4, emphasis in original). The ‘becoming with’ applies to human subjects in relation to other human subjects and to humans in relation to non-humans. These relations are connected on different levels and animal-linked racialisation is one of the forms in which these relations and identity categories become materialised.

Another crucial feminist thinker and queer theorist who has worked on the deconstruction of the separation of ontology, epistemology and ethics is Judith Butler. In their work on precarious lives, Butler (2009) does not consider how ethics come into being, but how ethics cannot be understood as being separate from ontology and epistemology:

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

Through analysing the concept of *life*, Butler (2009) explains that ontology, epistemology and ethics are inherently intra-related.¹⁷ The ways in which we understand a life is influenced by our lives. With the term ‘our lives’, I refer to the social-political position one is in based on identity. However, our lives are influenced by how other lives are understood. Ontology (what we are) and epistemology (how we know) cannot be understood separately from each other. How things are (ontology) affects how they are understood or known (epistemology). At the same time, the way in which things or beings are understood (epistemology) will have material effects (ontology). Butler positions ethics at the juncture of ontology and epistemology. How our life is understood necessarily affects the moral value which our life is prescribed within societal discourses, which is always plural because different people will value our lives differently. However, there are social structures that position certain lives as being more valuable than others. Thus for Butler, and for me in this thesis, ethics should not be approached as transcendental moral guidelines. Instead, ethics are constantly negotiated in broader structures of knowledge and society.

¹⁷ I explicitly use the term ‘intra-related’ in this thesis rather than ‘interrelated’ or ‘connected’ to emphasise my holistic approach. I believe that subjects, identities and categories of difference can only be understood in their relationship to each other rather than considering them to be separable issues (e.g., Barad, 2003; Lykke, 2011; Geerts & Van der Tuin, 2013).

Butler (2009) explains how we can never know a life outside of the social and political power structures that produce meaning and knowledge of which we and life are part. Within this argument, Butler does not ask which ethical guidelines we should follow but how ethical subjects emerge and who or what is excluded from this category. Butler's line of thought inspires me to approach ethics as *processes with effects* instead of given values, which remain central throughout this research.

Posthumanism

Posthumanism acknowledges that ethics are the products of systems of thought, rather than truths that can be reached via cognition. The posthuman framework adopted in this project fits within the critical posthuman framework. Posthumanism as used in this thesis “addresses the human as a species” (Ferrando, 2020, p. 4) and denies humans' separation from ecology and technology. This approach is in contrast to other posthuman streams, such as transhumanism and antihumanism, which explore ideas of ‘after humanity’ and emphasise the end of humanity, thus continuing a narrative of human exceptionalism. In transhumanism, the main thesis is to explore how humans will either outperformed by artificial intelligence or will be forced to collaborate with artificial intelligence to transcend the limits and possibilities of their biological bodies (Callus et al., 2014, p. 107). Antihumanism follows a similar narrative where humans as we know them now will cease to exist (Callus et al., 2014). Both antihumanism and transhumanism are teleological in that they predict a future without humans, whereas my understanding of posthumanism argues that humans are, and have always been, posthuman.

Critical posthumanism can best be defined as a response to the humanist ideology that constructs the human “by transcending the bonds of materiality and embodiment” (Wolfe, 2010, p. xv). Posthuman critical theory rejects transcendental and hierarchal thinking and human exceptionalism by focusing on immanence, embodiment and materiality. This project utilises this approach by analysing how discussions about food animals and practices of eating animals simultaneously influence the ways in which we think about species differences in relation to food animals *as well as* the ways in which we think about people of different cultures.

In this study, Braidotti's (2013) work on posthumanism plays an essential role and informs the analysis presented in this thesis. According to Braidotti (2013), it is crucial to recognise difference *and* connectedness between human and non-human animals. There is a radical difference between humans and the non-human world, in which the human is positioned as

superior to the non-human in anthropocentric frameworks of thinking. There are differences between humans and non-humans, and Braidotti recognises how humans, and specifically capitalism, have exploited “the generative powers of women, animals, plants, genes and cells” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 95). The *fear* of extinction unites humans. At the same time, there is a growing realisation of connectedness. Due to increasing fears relating to climate change and its consequences, there is an increasing recognition of intra-dependency between the non-human Other, nature and all of its inhabitants.

Following the growing awareness of the shared precariousness between humans and non-humans on this changing planet, human and non-human organisms are coming closer together because awareness is growing on political and social levels that nature is vulnerable and threatened, which also puts humans in a threatened position. However, this connectedness is expressed “in the form of compensatory extensions of humanist values and rights to the non-human others” and “the same system perpetuates familiar patterns of exclusion, exploitation and oppression” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 96).

Braidotti’s poststructural posthumanism is informed by a Deleuzian framework. She understands posthumanism as a condition and a

Generative tool to help us re-think the basic unit of reference for the human in the biogenetic age known as ‘Anthropocene’, the historical moment when the Human has become a geological force capable of affecting all life on this planet. (Braidotti, 2013, p. 5)

For Braidotti (2013), posthumanism offers a way of understanding the role of humans in the current state of the Earth. Humans are credited with enormous power, being framed as the cause and solution of global problems regarding the environment, economy and politics. Conversely, little agreement exists regarding the best way forward. Refusing to take a defeatist approach, Braidotti’s (2013) posthuman approach advocates affirmative approaches to the present to “devise new social, ethical and discursive schemes of subject formation” (p. 12). Braidotti’s commitment to critical, yet *affirmative*, engagement with current engagement with the current condition of the posthuman is seen as particularly valuable to this project because it allows for a way to engage with discourses on practices of eating animals that goes beyond the question of whether it is morally acceptable or not. I aim not only to identify cultural conflicts that arise within practices of eating animals but also new ways of understanding these issues. Thus this

project takes an affirmative ethical approach which aims to identify unfair power structures, to understand *where* they are coming from and *why*, and offer new ways of *becoming* rather than answers (Braidotti, 2018). An affirmative approach can be critical of power structures at play while understanding the nuances and complexities that are part of practices and phenomena. This thesis applies and transforms Braidotti's ideas to new understandings of the relations between human and non-human animals, with a focus on food animals.

Posthumanism has been chosen as the primary theoretical framework with which to uncover the construction of dualisms in the discourses surrounding practices of eating animals. In other words, the posthuman framework is used to uncover how human and non-human relations intersect and to argue that 'difference' should be understood on multiple levels, including between *different* humans and animals. This project has built on existing literature in order to make a distinct contribution to posthuman scholarship. First, this research pays specific attention to differences between types of food animals, such as those that are farmed and those that are hunted and how animals that fall into similar categories are perceived differently. For example, the hunting of kangaroos is managed differently from the hunting of rabbits in Australia, while both are considered to be 'pests', 'nuisances' or 'problems' in certain contexts (Thomsen & Davies, 2006). Additionally, Wolfe's conclusion that there are no right or wrong ways of eating animals is maintained in this project, without adopting a relativist standpoint towards practices related to eating animals. Instead, this project explores the ideas on which the current perceptions of 'right' ways of eating animals are grounded, including the consequences of these assumptions.

I acknowledge that there are different posthuman approaches that take a more political stance regarding interspecies relations and exploitation, most notably Erika Cudworth's (2011) work on critical posthumanism and Paula Arcari's (2020) work that expands this framework. Cudworth (2011) highlights that posthumanism should be situated in sciences of the *social*. Posthumanism, Cudworth argues, should not merely deconstruct identity categories but emancipate those who are oppressed, both human and non-human. Arcari adopts Cudworth's posthuman framework to argue against the eating of animals. I have a great appreciation for these approaches, and agree that these approaches offer useful, concrete ways of engaging with the exploitation of animals. However I contend that advocating these politics on a macro-level leads to an universal approach which has the risk of repeating histories of moral imperialism in which moral values are seen as transcending culture, rather than being part of it. The project presented in this thesis does not reject movements against meat consumption

but it does center cultural complexities and nuances that are part of practices of eating animals. I am interested in the beliefs and values that people *do* exhibit, rather than what they *should* exhibit. It is for this reason that I do not argue that animals should not be eaten at all.

Posthuman theory enables an understanding of the intersections of multiple categories of difference, with a focus on species and cultural differences. In addition, a posthuman framework enables a more multifaceted approach, which aims to understand *why* things are done to transform practices, instead of merely arguing about how something *should be done*. I want to emphasise that my goal is not to consider speciesist and postcolonial struggles as equal or similar in urgency and severity. Some earlier studies that attempted to combine these approaches ended up “perversely suggesting that because race and postcolonial critics possess special insight to the unique violence of humanism, they have a unique responsibility to speak for animals” (Ahuja, 2009, p. 558). Instead, I consider discourses of practices of eating animals as a place from which to “trac[e] the circulation of non-human species as both figures and materialised bodies within the circuits of imperial biopower [to] reevaluate ‘minority’ discourses and enrich histories of imperial encounter” (Ahuja, 2009, pp. 556–557). This research offers new insights into how human–animal relations and human cultural relations affect each other and reinforce and restructure differences.

Research Methods

This project is situated between different disciplines and fields with a main focus on posthuman theory. I have articulated my theoretical framework in the previous sections and will elaborate on my research methods in this section. I will also explain how posthuman frameworks are adopted and employed in the individual chapters exploring the three case studies. Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), this project examines three case studies to explore how different practices of eating animals contribute to the shaping and maintaining of cultural values and identities. CDA can be understood as simultaneously referring to two practices: a theory of language and a research method. Within CDA as a theory of language, ‘discourse’ refers to French critical thinker Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse “as a form of discipline that produces subjects” (Griffin, 2011, p. 98). In other words, the languages which humans use to describe the world simultaneously inform and shape the world. CDA as a research method draws upon this to critically engage with how discourses affect social phenomena and inequalities.

Data Collection

The data for the CDA were based on public debates inspired by governmental or political discussions and news reports related to the issues under debate in each case study as follows:

- Chapter 1 presents an examination of public discourse about kangaroo hunting in Australia. This chapter uses the 2008 Garnaut review as a starting point for the debate. Opponents of kangaroo hunting often disagree with the results in this review, while the kangaroo industry uses it to promote their businesses. Therefore, this case study considers discourses surrounding kangaroo hunting in Australia from 2008 to 2018 (when the analysis commenced). Extensive research has been done on media representations of kangaroo culling and consumption.¹⁸ For this reason, the research material used here is limited to public discourse by the industry and its opponents. Data were collected via the websites of the kangaroo industry and animal rights groups that focused on kangaroo hunting, consumption and conservation. In addition, both parties relied on conflicting bodies of academic research on the impacts of the commercial kangaroo industry. Therefore, these are also included in the analysis of this case study.
- Chapter 2 presents an examination of the debate on religious slaughtering in the Netherlands following a law change proposal in 2008. In 2012, a covenant was put into place that replaced the proposed complete ban on un-stunned religious slaughter. Data is based on the parliamentary records of political discussions that were held in the House of Representatives and the Senate, discussions about religious slaughtering in the election campaigns of the Dutch political parties and representation of the debate in newspaper articles published between 2012–2018. The reason for choosing this timeframe for the media analysis is because this period offers valuable insight in the ‘aftermath’ of events. During 2012 to 2018, the covenant was put into practice. While the debate was less heated at this point, it illustrates how tensions between religious freedom and animal welfare continued to be negotiated when there was less direct political pressure. Data were obtained through LexisNexis, which is a search engine that provides access to Dutch news media.
- Chapter 3 presents a comparison of discourses regarding the increasing quantity of meat consumption in China in Australia and the Netherlands between 2013–2017. 2013 was chosen as a starting point as the report *Tackling climate change through livestock: A global assessment of emissions and mitigation opportunities* (Gerber et al., 2013) was published,

¹⁸ e.g., McKinnon (2008).

following the UN's report on *Livestock's long shadow* (Steinfeld et al., 2006). To obtain relevant discourse for analysis, I used digital and printed newspaper articles. *Factiva* was the main database used to find related news articles, using systematic and structured searches by keywords. My main focus is on articles that reported on the environmental effects of the meat industry.

- Data are varied but are predominantly made up of political records, existing research material, reports and news articles. The reasons for using print media as an entry point for further analysis are multiple. Media is both an instigator and mirror of contemporary issues. While the presence and power of social media is increasing rapidly, print media is still “one of the ‘social forces that produce popular common sense, the general social beliefs and feelings of a society’ which in turn influence the construction and production of media” (O’Shaughnessy and Stadler in Buddle & Bray, 2019, p. 358). I acknowledge the growing role of social media as a news information provider, but on these platforms, it is also often major news organisations that provide these news items and link to their full articles (Sveningsson, 2015). It would be interesting to examine how ‘fake news’ surrounding animal welfare and practices of eating animals has been present on social media. However, this topic is not within the scope of this project.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

This research uses CDA as a research method to contribute to existing knowledges about eating animals. Specifically, this project examines how societal debates related to practices of eating animals have implications for cultural identity. In summary, this thesis draws upon CDA as a tool to examine how language used in popular debates surrounding food animals and examines how language—spoken, textual or visual—not only represents but also shapes the ways in which we think about the subjects and topics that are involved in these discussions. This section will first explain why CDA was chosen as the methodology for this research project. I will then explain how I undertook the analysis following Norman Fairclough’s five steps to guide CDA. In these steps, I address how I analysed the data quantitatively and how I then used critical theory to offer in-depth qualitative analysis. Finally, I discuss the limitations of CDA.

CDA’s value for the research presented in this thesis lies in its political underpinnings and its flexible approaches to data collection and analysis. This thesis is political in that it examines how various power structures, specifically those related to species and cultural difference,

intersect. This project requires a flexible approach towards data collection and analysis because it uses three different case studies that each need their own analytical frameworks to examine discourses on practices of eating animals. While the three case studies could be analysed using the same theoretical frameworks, having the flexibility to adjust frameworks allows for more a more diverse, tailored approaches towards these case studies. Social systems and organisational theory scholar Michael Meyer (2001) summarizes CDA as a method with three facets: it works with various theoretical backgrounds, the methods of data collection are varied and the analysis is problem-oriented (p. 30). Ultimately, Meyer summarises the similarity between the various CDA approaches that researchers have adopted as “a shared interest in social processes of power, hierarchy building, exclusion and subordination. In the tradition of critical theory, CDA aims to make transparent the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities” (ibid.). The political aspect of CDA is repeated by Gabriele Griffin who defines CDA as a method of research aims to uncover such power structures, which are utilised in language “to uncover the workings of ideology or investment within/through it ... to [thus] be able to resist it” (Griffin, 2011, p. 98). The diversity of approaches to CDA do not imply that no rules are followed by scholars who use it. Rather, there are various ‘streams’ of CDA with which scholars align their research projects. In summary, CDA as a research method is both flexible and politically motivated. It is for these two reasons that it was deemed the most appropriate method for this project. Most importantly, using a CDA framework provides the flexibility to explore three different case studies that look at the subject of eating animals to explore three different societal contexts in which these practices take place.

Fairclough (2001) outlines five stages that guide CDA and I will address each step below in explaining how this thesis uses CDA:

1. Focus upon a social problem which has a semiotic aspect.
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
 - a. the network of practices it is located within
 - b. the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
 - c. the discourse (the semiosis itself)
 - structural analysis: the order of discourse
 - interactional analysis
 - interdiscursive analysis
 - linguistic and semiotic analysis.

3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense ‘needs’ the problem.
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4). (p. 125)

Stage 1 reflects DCA’s commitment to sociopolitical problems. Within this thesis, the focus is on animals and cultural minorities. To be more specific, this thesis examines practices of eating animals as a network of practices in which the interspecies and intercultural relations are formed (stage 2a). By using three case studies, “the way social practices are networked together” can be understood for these three specific practices of eating animals. In other words, the three case studies allow for understanding of the three specific examples themselves on a local level but within broader socio-political environments (stage 2b). For example, the first case study explores the reactions to the push for a greater role of kangaroos as food animals *and* the broader historical and cultural frameworks that affect these reactions.

Stage 2, the analysis of the chosen discourse(s), is the most technical in Fairclough’s guide. I first structured and organised the chosen and collected data by sorting it in terms of publication years and themes. I identified themes by engaging with the data, summarising data using keywords and then identifying the main themes from my datasets:

- Because the dataset of the first case study was the smallest, the analysis had a strong quantitative focus. Through engaging with data, I identified several key themes and explored how they are part of both historical and current contexts.
- The data for the second case study was first organised in Excel based on whether the articles discussed Halal slaughter, Kosher slaughter or both. Data was also organised by year of publication. I then identified and made notes of themes in the articles, and this allowed me to identify trends and compare which topics were discussed in relation to the type of slaughter which the articles discussed.
- The third case study explores how Dutch and Australian media engaged with Chinese changes in meat consumption. Data was analysed for each country. I detected several themes in the texts by summarising the articles using keywords; after identifying eight main themes, I coded the articles based on these themes in Excel. The themes were food security, food safety and hygiene, animal welfare, environment, business and trade

opportunities, health, quality, taste and effect on local economies. The coded datasets then allowed me to compare Australian and Dutch discourses on Chinese meat consumption.

The aim of the analysis is to explore how notions of cultural difference are present and presented within discourses on practices of eating animals. Specific attention is paid not only to what the text and images show, but also what is not said or shown.

Stage 3, the consideration and critique of the power structures that the discourses represent, follows directly from stage 2, and is explored in more detail within the chapters focused on the case studies. The research presented in this thesis is politically motivated in that it aims to address contemporary political debates about the meat industry while acknowledging that these practices are situated in larger political and cultural structures. Therefore, I use separate theoretical frameworks which allow me to position the presented case studies within the broader power structures of which they are a part. However, all three case studies' frameworks are underscored by the posthuman premise that human animals do not exist radically separate from non-human animals, but instead that understandings of what is it to be human or non-human are formed in relation to each other. The three case studies are critical in that they aim to expose and critique the underlying power structures that are present in the discourses presented, specifically regarding cultural difference: the frameworks utilised are summarised as follows

- To explore why certain animals are more easily accepted as foods than others, the first case study uses Butler's work on *grievability* and applies it to the Australian debate on the role of the kangaroo as a food animal. While Butler's use of *grievability* has been read as anthropocentric in the past, this chapter argues and illustrates that is a useful tool to explore human-animal relations. The concept of *grievability* was chosen because *grievability* because it does not look at whether a life is grievable or not, but tries to explain under what circumstances lives become more or less grievable.
- The second case study engages with cultural difference and the values surrounding the slaughtering of food animals. Because the focus is less on the relations between human and non-human animals, and more on how different cultures have to re-negotiate the ethics within multicultural societies, I have adopted a different analytical framework. I use the

concept of *animal-linked racialisation* (Elder, Wolch & Emel, 1998) to what role the consumption of animals plays in the establishment of cultural values.

- The final case study offers a comparative analysis of discourses on the global effects of the meat industry. There has been an increasing realisation of the environmental effects of the meat industry by consumers, industries, governments and environmental organisations during the last decades. The concept of the Anthropocene is environmentally and culturally motivated with a focus on both global and local practices and beliefs. Therefore, it was deemed the most useful for the purpose of examining this case study.

The questions of what makes an animal edible, how food animals should be killed and who is responsible for the global effects of meat consumption each touch upon different axes of meat consumption and cultural values. Therefore, I have chosen to use different theoretical frameworks for each case study, as described above. While this diversified approach may come across as disjointed, I believe it offers a comprehensive approach to the topic of human and non-human animal relations and the cultural values and ethical norms that are constructed within these connections. In addition, these different approaches will be reconciled in the final chapter of this thesis to explore different way of approaching practices of eating animals.

This thesis does *not* aim use culture as an ‘excuse’ for animal suffering. Instead, approaching debates on animal welfare from a both animal welfare and postcolonial perspectives allows for critical and affirmative engagement with these questions to minimise replacing one form of oppressive behaviour with another, that is, replacing poor treatment of animals with regulations that limit the freedoms of marginalised peoples.

Stages 4 and 5 are discussed in chapter 4 and the conclusion. Chapter 4 of the thesis engages closely with the theories that were used to analyse the case studies and aims to find alternative ways of imagining practices of eating meat, inspired by Braidotti’s affirmative approach. The conclusion offers a critical reflection of the research presented in this thesis and how to further engage with the questions which this thesis aims to address.

I acknowledge that what I see as the strengths of using CDA for this project can also been seen by others as weaknesses. Specifically, the political underpinnings and flexible research methods make the analysis seem subjective and difficult to validate, and the conclusions may not be as easily replicable as more rigid empirical approaches. However, while these limits to CDA mean that the analysis presented in this thesis may not be deemed wholly ‘objective’ or final, nor is

it replicable in any strict sense, these are not the purposes of this project. Rather than attempting to have the last word on practices of eating meat, this thesis aims to reveal culturally embedded beliefs and contribute new insights to discourses on practices of eating animals and encourage further engagement with these issues.

Contributions to Scholarship

This research is situated within various fields such as animal studies, postcolonial studies and food studies, and draws upon posthuman critical theory to make a novel contribution to these fields. The uniqueness of food as a research topic is that it literally becomes part of us: we are what we eat. However, as gender and cultural studies scholar Elspeth Probyn (2000) argues, how and with whom we eat equally affects our embodied identities:

Eating ... makes [sex, ethnicity, wealth, poverty, geopolitical location, class and gender] matter again: it roots actual bodies within these relations. Eating then becomes a visceral reminder of how we variously inhabit the axes of economics, intimate relations, gender, sexuality, history, ethnicity and class. (p. 9)

Not only what but also how we eat determines our position as subjects in this world. By eating certain foods in certain ways, we enact our identities. This type of enactment is particularly illustrated by vegetarianism and veganism, which are considered to be ideologies and lifestyles in addition to diets (Mathijs, 2015; Ruby, 2011). This research seeks to expand these ideas beyond *what* and *how* we eat to *how we talk and think* about food, particularly food animals.

This thesis makes a contribution to scholarship in three ways. This thesis offers a novel approach to animal and postcolonial studies by contributing evidence that human and non-human identities are constructed simultaneously and in relation to each other. Existing literature in postcolonial studies has predominantly examined how racial and cultural differences between humans becomes constructed and the associated consequences. Animal studies research has placed the emphasis on constructions of human–animal relations. This thesis complicates categories of ‘humans’ and ‘non-human animals’ to unravel how these differences *within* categories are shaped by difference *between* categories.

This project is interdisciplinary in nature and does not aim to contribute to one discipline in particular. Instead, I aim to unite different fields of study to underline how disciplines can complement each other. This thesis demonstrates how human *and non*-human identities are

constructed through practices of eating animals. This thesis complicates understandings of the cultural significance of food in our societies. Human and non-human animals are considered as part of the cultural significance of food production and consumption. Posthuman theory is utilised in this thesis to offer a framework that provides new insights in existing debates. Additionally, the case studies contribute to posthuman theory by offering empirical examples of its value and applicability. This thesis offers alternatives to the problematic aspects of the eating of animals by humans particularly in association with views of non-Western cultures and the 'Other'. Therefore, this thesis identifies how difference, on a species and cultural level, comes into being in societal discourses to transform difference to a place of collaborations rather than disagreement.

Thesis Structure

The main body of this thesis consists of three case studies, each of which discusses a different aspect of eating animals. These case studies are connected through the main research question which they address: How do ideas on food animals influence conceptions about cultural values and identities? At the same time, the case studies are devoted to different aspects of ethical considerations regarding food animals. In the first case study, the question of what makes an animal edible is examined. The second case study investigates killing practices. In the final case study, the economic and cultural value of the meat industry is positioned against its environmental impact. For this reason, while a general literature review has been provided in this introduction, each chapter also details the research methods, provides a literature review and discusses the theoretical framework most relevant to the specific questions addressed by that chapter and case study.

Chapter 1 focuses on considerations regarding which types of non-human animals are permissible to eat and what values underlie these decisions, using the case study of the kangaroo in contemporary Australia. This chapter argues that the turn towards conservationism in debates regarding the role of the kangaroo as a food animal was grounded in ideas of nationalism and belonging. In Australia, when it comes to which animals are hunted, there is a frequent distinction between native and feral animals and between the types of people who hunt. Kangaroos are native animals to Australia and are considered pests in multiple states due to their abundance. However, they cannot be hunted without licences and following other strict guidelines, although exceptions exist for Aboriginal peoples. In comparison, some people view the eating of kangaroo meat as morally wrong, although scientific evidence indicates that

kangaroo hunting could be more humane and environmentally friendly than most other forms of meat consumption in Australia. In this chapter, I explain the controversy surrounding the kangaroo as a food animal using Herzog's and Braidotti's categorisations of human–non-human relationships. In addition, I deploy Butler's concept of grievable lives to explain how kangaroos have been included in narratives of national and cultural identities, rendering them inappropriate as food animals. Therefore, this chapter argues that questions about the edibility of animals are informed by more than pragmatic and ethical considerations and demonstrates how supporters and opponents of meat production and consumption could engage more with these narratives to guide more productive debates on these matters.

Chapter 2 focuses on the conditions under which the killing of non-human animals is deemed acceptable within the food industry. I explore this question through an exploration of contemporary debates in the Netherlands, which have been particularly vexed given underlying cultural conflict between recent migrants and minority populations and Dutch supporters of right-winged political parties and ideas. In 2012, Dutch politician Marianne Thieme proposed a law change that would delete the current legal exception requiring that all animals should be sedated before being slaughtered, which allowed Halal and Kosher butchers to slaughter un-sedated animals. This exception in the law ensured that people of all religions could eat according to the guidelines prescribed by their religions. Despite support from the House of Representatives, the Senate rejected Thieme's law change. This decision led to a national debate regarding whether un-sedated slaughtering should remain legal. Many questions were raised in this discussion, demonstrating that multiple societal matters intersect in the topic of un-sedated religious slaughtering, such as cultural difference, the treatment of food animals and the value placed on life or death. This chapter illustrates how Jewish and Islamic people were positioned differently in the discourses surrounding the issue of un-sedated religious slaughtering that followed after Thieme's law change proposal and the extent to which normative, sedated, forms of slaughtering were debated. This chapter adopts the framework of *animal-linked racialisation* (Elder, Wolch & Emel, 1998) to argue that while the supporters of the ban of un-sedated religious slaughter may have had good intentions, the discrepancy in the treatment of Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens displayed multiple motivations for the positions people took up in the debate.

Chapter 3 focuses on contemporary debates over the amount of meat that should be consumed globally given environmental, economic and other implications. Currently, more than a quarter of meat produced worldwide is eaten in China. This increase is unremarkable in the sense that

the amount of meat consumed in a country tends to grow as national and personal wealth increases. However, because the Chinese population is so large, this increase in their meat consumption has global consequences. Chinese land and water resources are impacted, affecting its own ecosystem as well as influencing global climate change and even deforestation in Brazil and Argentina to grow crops to feed cattle. However, the increased consumption of meat offers economic benefits to other nations, such as animal exports from Australia to China. Against this background, this case study investigates how the growing consumption of meat in China is changing global perspectives of the practices of eating and producing meat. The chapter uses the notion of the Anthropocene as a starting point to determine how it is manifested in conceptions about Chinese meat consumption. Following from this, this case study explores how the meat industry is part of cultural economies in Australia and the Netherlands. This exploration demonstrates that the complex and multifaceted value of the meat industries in both countries are possibly part of the reasons why meat consumption and production continue to grow, despite multiple critiques. In summary, this chapter demonstrates how approaches towards meat production, consumption and its effects on the Earth, are informed by broader national narratives of culture, identity and progress.

Chapter 4 analyses the three case studies using posthuman theory, connecting critical themes within them. It argues for new approaches toward ethical questions regarding the practices of eating animals. In the chapter, I draw upon the theoretical frameworks used to analyse the case studies and illustrate how they could have been used to examine other practices of eating animals too. I aim to demonstrate the complexity of the practices of eating animals and how they cannot be seen separate from broader societal contexts in which these practices are situated. Following this, I argue for the value of an affirmative approach when discussing practices of eating animals. While the case studies stem from different cultural values regarding the treatment of animals, the oppositional parties in these debates share similar concerns, which were documented in the case studies. Therefore, the chapter ends with a recommendation that we need to approach debates over food animal ethics differently. Rather than trying to establish what the *correct* and *incorrect* ways of treating food animals are, I argue that ethics—similar to relations and identities—should be seen as constantly producing and being produced.

This thesis concludes by proposing that questions of food animal ethics and welfare should not be attempted to be answered once and for all. Ethics should not be understood as values that exist in and of themselves, but instead as being produced by broader cultural frameworks.

Therefore, this thesis argues that food animal ethics and welfare should be approached as ongoing processes and encourages discussions that allow for flexibility and change.

Chapter 1: What Animals Can We Eat? The Role of Kangaroos as a Food Animal

Introduction

In most societies, the consumption of meat is hardly questioned. However, there is no universal consensus on conventions regarding eating animals. There is global agreement that animals can be eaten but the values of the *practices* of eating animals are more diverse. These norms differ not only between countries but also within nations. This chapter focuses on questions regarding which animals are considered to be potential food and how this relates to multicultural relations. To answer these questions, I examine the debate surrounding kangaroos as food animals in Australia.

In 2008, Professor in Economics Ross Garnaut proposed to greatly expand the kangaroo market and reduce the sheep and cattle industry as part of long-term goals to reduce Australia's carbon emissions (Peace, 2011). This proposal was part of a bigger project called the Garnaut Climate Change Review. Although the media attention for Garnaut's proposal to reduce carbon emissions disappeared almost as fast as it arose, several parties took up Garnaut's arguments about the kangaroo industry. The first was the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australian (KIAA), which supported Garnaut's claims about the environmental benefits of kangaroo meat to promote their industry (Peace, 2011). However, not everyone agreed with Garnaut. For example, animal rights organisations fiercely objected to increasing the kangaroo industry. In addition, Australian human consumers were hesitant to increase their kangaroo intake.

Garnaut's proposal—with help from the meat industry and animal protection groups—centred the debate on matters of conservation. While kangaroos were already national symbols, this became emphasised by connecting them to ideas of landscapes and conservation. Therefore, consuming them was about more than food; eating kangaroo meat meant affecting the land on which you live. In this chapter, KIAA and Macro Group are identified as the main proponents of promoting kangaroos as food animals. Both are key players in the kangaroo meat trade. KIAA is an association that speaks on behalf of the commercial kangaroo industry in Australia.

The Macro Group is the largest company in Australia responsible for managing the sale of kangaroo meat.¹⁹

Outspoken against KIAA and Macro Groups' efforts to increase the commercial kangaroo industry were animal rights groups Voiceless and Animals Australia. This chapter draws on their campaigns to show how kangaroos are positioned as inedible animals. Within their campaigns, emotions and symbolism played a central role. Being food *and* being a national symbol were positioned as two incompatible roles. Moreover, they argued that the cruelty of eating kangaroos would not be compensated by the benefits for the Australian landscape. Discrediting the conservation argument was key in this argument.

The kangaroo industry and its opposition engaged with Garnaut's emphasis on conservation, albeit in different manners. The industry followed Garnaut's argument. Voiceless participated in funding THINKK—the Think Tank for Kangaroos. THINKK's research argued against the idea that eating kangaroos would contribute to the conservation of the kangaroo population and the Australian landscape. Part of this chapter's analysis discusses the scientific discourses that followed from Garnaut's proposal.

The encouragement to expand the kangaroo industry and increase kangaroo consumption caused much disturbance in Australia for several reasons. This chapter discusses how debates surrounding whether an animal should or should not be a food simultaneously shapes our identities not just as consumers but also as national citizens. In this research, the construction of categories and relations is central. There is a difference between humans and animals but there also are differences between humans and between animals. Kangaroos and the broader Australian landscape are key to Australian ideas of the national self, so they hold a special status that makes them difficult to accept as food. At the same time, narratives that reiterate kangaroos as a sustainable, responsible choice of meat repeat similar nationalist discourses, which position the Australian landscape and its conservation as key to identity. Therefore, food choices reach beyond nutrition and involve and reflect values of citizenship, belonging and identity.

¹⁹ At the onset of the research for this thesis, the Macro Group was named Macro Meats. In this chapter, I use the name Macro Group to refer to the enterprise because this was the most current name of the enterprise during the submission of this thesis.

Histories of Hunting Kangaroos

While Garnaut's proposal that Australians should increase their kangaroo consumption led to controversy, there has been a long history of hunting and consuming kangaroos in Australia. Kangaroos have been hunted for thousands of years by Aboriginal peoples for their meat, skins and symbolic value (Thomson et al., 2006). Most Aboriginal kangaroo hunting has been for private use; kangaroos were consumed by the hunters, their families and tribes. Since the early 2000s, the South Australian government has attempted to involve Aboriginal peoples in the commercial kangaroo industry as well (Thomson et al., 2006).²⁰ However, Aboriginal peoples are not the only Australians who hunt kangaroos.

In the nineteenth century, settler Australians started with the export of kangaroo products to Europe and the US (Hercock & Tonts, 2004). The main product exported was skins, an industry that grew from 320 skins exported in 1843 to 135,000 skins in 1892 and 1,614,705 skins in 1992 (Hercock & Tonts, 2004). The export of kangaroo as game meat started in 1955, but ended in 1969 due to poor standards of hygiene.

However export recommenced in the 1990s and between 1999 and 2009, Russia was a major customer of kangaroo meat but placed a ban on import of kangaroo meat for food safety reasons in 2009. Between December 2012 and May 2014, Russia shortly opened up the market but finally banned it again (Australian Society for Kangaroos, n.d.). Up until recently, the most stable importers of kangaroo meat were France, Belgium and the Netherlands. However, the European Union is increasingly rejecting kangaroo meats and skins too. GAIA, a Belgian animal rights group, launched a campaign against the sale of kangaroo derived products in Belgian supermarkets early in 2019. Approximately a year later, all supermarket chains ended their sale of kangaroo meat (AWCP, 2020; GAIA, 2020).

Kangaroo export to the US has been a particularly difficult issue for the commercial kangaroo industry. In the 1970s, New York and California banned the import of kangaroo products to their states as a result of lobbying by animal activists, which had significant effects on the industry because California had the largest industry in the US for high-quality sporting shoes and New York offered a market for kangaroo meat and high fashion. In 2010, both states opened

²⁰ Since this research focused on contemporary discourses on food animals, I will not address the Aboriginal history of kangaroo hunting any further in this part of the chapter. Later in this chapter, the role of Aboriginal peoples, as well as perceptions of non-Aboriginal Australians of Aboriginal food habits, will be discussed.

the market again for kangaroo products following the efforts of the kangaroo industry to demonstrate its sustainability (Kelly, 2011). However, from 2016 onwards, California once again decided to end the kangaroo trade (Milman, 2015).

In Australia, kangaroo has mainly been used for pet food since the 1940s. Recent data are absent, although in 2002, 75 per cent of kangaroo meat was sold as pet food. Considering around 20,000–30,000 tonnes of kangaroo meat were sold as fresh pet food, compared to 4,000 tonnes of meat from culled dairy animals sold as fresh pet food, kangaroo was a staple pet food and most likely still is. Although a significant number of pet owners buy their pet food in supermarkets or directly at meat or pet meat retailers, this trend may have increased even more in recent years. Nonetheless, these numbers demonstrate that kangaroo meat is closely associated with pet food in Australian society.

The commercial kangaroo industry has grown to become the biggest commercial wildlife industry in the world (Boom et al., 2012), although there are debates about how large the industry is. In 2005, the industry was estimated to bring in over AUD 230 million per year and provide jobs for about 4,000 people (Kelly, 2005). However, in their report of the kangaroo industry, THINKK argued that this was an extremely generous estimation and the true income from the industry would be much closer to AUD 50–60 million per year (Ben-Ami et al., 2011).

Recently, the debate on kangaroo welfare became increasingly global. The movie *Kangaroo: A Love Hate Story* (McIntyre, 2017) was both an illustration and driver of this. The movie was released in 2017 and inspired, amongst others, Belgian activism successfully campaigning against supermarket sales of kangaroo products, Italian fashion brands such as Versace and Gucci stopping the use of kangaroo leather, and German and French activism against the sale and use of kangaroo products (AWCP, 2020). Although this thesis is concerned with the debates occurring within Australia, these developments showed that the consumption of kangaroo meat is of global interest and are currently still relevant.

Histories of Eating Kangaroos

Since the 1990s, consumption of kangaroo meat as human food has slowly gained ground in Australia, which has a reputation for loving meat. In 2015, Australians ate the most meat per person on average than in any other country in the world (Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development, 2021; Ting, 2015).²¹ However, the kangaroo still holds an ambiguous position in Australian cuisine. There are several possible reasons for this.

However, the kangaroo still holds an ambiguous position in Australian cuisine. There are several possible reasons for this. The first reason is that non-Aboriginal Australians have typically considered kangaroo meat—alongside other Indigenous food sources—to be inferior to European foods such as beef, chicken, pork and sheep meat (Hercock & Tonts, 2004, p. 222). The common conception is that non-Aboriginal Australians have rejected native Australian foods since the first settlement (Probyn, 2000). This is partially true, since Indigenous Australian foods were first described as too “contemptible to deserve notice” (Tench, 1793, as cited in Santich, 2012, p. 30). However, more recent literature has argued that while neophobia was present among early settlers, they did try native foods for multiple reasons. Partially out of necessity, most early settlers accepted kangaroos and other native food sources as food, and kangaroos were generally preferred over other types of native meats (Cushing, 2016, p. 289; Newling, 2011). Recipes containing kangaroo tails appeared in Australian cookbooks until the 1930s. However, with urbanisation, Australian became estranged from bush foods during the twentieth century and the popularity of native foods rapidly declined (Santich, 2012).

Nowadays, kangaroo is readily available in supermarkets for human food consumption. However, this is a relatively recent phenomenon and kangaroo meat still has negative connotations for many Australian consumers. By interviewing residents of Wollongong (a large city in New South Wales), Gordon Waitt (2014) aimed to expand understanding of how and why White Australians considered kangaroo to be edible or inedible. His research finds that people who did not want to eat kangaroo meat gave several reasons for this, one of which was that they perceived kangaroos as pests. Because kangaroos are culled for being pests, its meat is related to being pet food rather than human food for some of Waitt’s (2014, p. 420) interviewees. Since a large portion of kangaroo meat has always been destined for the pet food industry rather than for human consumption, this was not a surprising association.

The second reason why kangaroo meat may be unpopular among Australians as a food is because they are one of Australia's most central national symbols (Hercock & Tonts, 2004). Together with the emu, the kangaroo appears on the Australian coat of arms. In addition, kangaroos have a large media presence. The television show *Skippy* from the 1960s—in which

²¹ The statistics represented pork, beef, lamb, veal and chicken.

a boy and his kangaroo Skippy go on many adventures—remains hugely popular in and outside of Australia (Burnstock, n.d.; Simons, 2013). Again, Waitt's (2014) interviewees confirmed that Skippy contributed to hesitance in seeing kangaroos as food animals. Some of Waitt's (2014) interviewees kept referring to kangaroos as 'Skippy' rather than simply referring to them as 'kangaroos'. This made the kangaroo an undesirable food source since it was too closely connected to happy childhood memories (Waitt, 2014, p. 420). In addition to popular TV characters, kangaroos have frequently been sports mascots in Australia since 1983. During the 2010 Winter Olympics, Australia's mascot even led to a small controversy, in which it was unclear whether the boxing kangaroo could be shown due to trademark rights and regulations (Kerin, 2010). Kangaroos are also part of many stories which children grew up with (Morton, 1990; Simons, 2013). The kangaroo's importance as a symbol of national identity has contributed to people's reluctance to readily see them as food animals.

Finally, there are pragmatic reasons for why kangaroo has failed to become an Australian staple source of protein. Availability is an important factor. In New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, state legislation did not allow selling kangaroo meat for human consumption until 1993, while the South Australian government was an early exception by never placing a ban on the sale of kangaroo meat for human consumption (Waitt, 2014). Only since the year 2000 has kangaroo meat been widely commercially available in supermarkets and butcher stores (Waitt, 2014; Waitt & Appleby, 2014). In addition, kangaroo flesh is very lean, making it difficult to prepare. Low levels of fat mean kangaroo meat is easily overcooked and becomes tough to chew and swallow (Hercock & Tonts, 2004). This does not necessarily mean that people refuse to eat kangaroo meat but rather that eating kangaroo meat is seen by many as an experience refined to restaurants or tourist practices (Waitt, 2014).

Despite these three reasons why kangaroo meat is not a very popular dish in Australia, recently a shift has started to take place in the perception of kangaroo as a food product. After kangaroo meat became commercially available, KIAA launched a marketing campaign to promote the meat to 'rich White bodies being sensitive to cholesterol, soil degradation and climate change' (Waitt, 2014, p. 409). While kangaroo still is not the preferred meat choice for most Australians, slow shifts are occurring. One of the more notable developments is the emergence of so-called 'kangatarianism'. A kangatarian can be defined as 'someone who chooses not to eat fish or meat except the meat from a kangaroo' (Maxwell, 2011). There remains a lack of academic research towards kangatarians but typing the term in Google offers many results. In general, kangatarians identify with ethical vegetarians, believing that eating kangaroo meat is an

environmentally friendly way of consuming meat, in which animal harm is reduced to a minimum.²² Kangatarians follow the general argument that kangaroo meat offers a healthy *and* ethical contribution to their otherwise vegetarian diets.

Due to the lack of previous research, there is no scientific data on when kangatarianism arose and how many people identify with this lifestyle. According to Factiva, the term ‘kangatarianism’ was first used on 12 February 2010 in the *Centralian Advocate*, the oldest newspaper in the Northern Territory. In 2010, the term appeared in 18 newspaper articles in total and has been used in 38 newspaper articles, 5 webpages and 1 blog in total until the 4 August 2016.²³ In 2011, the term was included in the MacMillan online dictionary. From this, it appears that kangatarianism began to gain ground around 2010 in Australia.

Laws and Regulations

Within Australia, rules and regulations concerning hunting²⁴ differ based on different animal species, in particular between feral and native species. Feral animals are animals that have escaped captivity and/or domestication to survive in the wild (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 224). In general, feral animals are perceived as a threat to the native flora and fauna in Australia.

Australia is a federation of six states and two territories, in which each state and territory is partially self-governed. Therefore, there are different laws and regulations for the hunting of feral and native species, including kangaroos. Most states in Australia either partially regulate or have no regulations for hunting introduced species. For example, in South Australia a basic hunting permit allows the owner to hunt all types of feral animals so long as one hunts on private property with written permission of the owner (Department for Environment and Water, n.d.-a). In contrast, all hunting of native species is illegal or at least heavily controlled in every state of Australia (Finch, Murray, Hoy & Baxter, 2014, p. 77).

²² Anthropologist and sociologist Catie Gressier (2016) mentions the increase in kangaroo and wallaby consumption and parallels it to the increase in the consumption of meat from feral animals in Australia driven by an increase of ‘food choices [made] on the basis of perceived environmental impact’ (p. 59).

²³ This information was found using the database Factiva, searching for the use of the term ‘Kangatar*’ to include the uses of ‘kangatarianism’ and ‘kangatarian’.

²⁴ With hunting, I refer to the killing of animals living on the land. Fishing is not included in this thesis unless specifically stated.

It is generally illegal in Australia to kill native animals without possession of a hunting permit. Exceptions exist for unprotected native animals, which include several bird species and dingoes. Unprotected native animals can be ‘destroyed’ if ‘they are causing or [are] likely to cause damage to crops, stock or other property and you are the landowner, a member of their household, or an employee or agent of the landowner’ (Department for Environment and Water, n.d.-c). Other feral animals can only be killed legally for ‘causing or likely to cause damage on private land’ (Department for Environment and Water, n.d.-c) with permits. However, exceptions apply for Aboriginal peoples. Under the *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975*, it is provided that Aboriginal peoples in Australia can ‘continu[e] in accordance with law, the traditional use of any area of land or water for hunting for food-gathering (otherwise than for purposes of sale) and for ceremonial and religious purposes’ (Australian Law Reform Commission, 2010). The rest of this chapter focuses on kangaroo hunting by non-Aboriginal Australians unless specifically stated.

Within the categories of feral, native and protected animals, the kangaroo holds an ambiguous position. Kangaroos are native to Australia and listed as a protected species, which means kangaroos are protected by law from multiple human actions. If they cause damage to property, kangaroos cannot be killed legally by landowners and basic hunting permits do not allow them to be killed. However, different wildlife management programs allow the hunting of kangaroos given that the hunters follow strict guidelines.

Hunting kangaroos for commercial purposes is legal in five states in Australia—New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia as well as in the Northern Territory—which means that commercial kangaroo hunting is allowed on over 75 per cent of Australian surface.²⁵ In general, six species of kangaroo can be hunted for commercial purposes. Four of these can be found all over the Australian continent: the red kangaroo, eastern grey kangaroo, western grey kangaroo and wallaroo. The euro, a subspecies of the wallaroo,

²⁵ The Australian Capital Territory has culling seasons, but the kangaroo carcasses are not processed for commercial purposes (environment.act.gov.au, 2019). McKinnon et al. (2018) examine media reporting on kangaroo culling in the Australian Capital Territory and recognised the positive trend that reporting was seemingly impartial. Both sides of the debate on whether to cull kangaroos or not were represented fairly equally. Both sides were also represented by equally qualified, credible researchers. This equal representation was linked back to Australia’s media ownership and that “the balance and impartially observed may be different if the ACT had newspapers owned by more than one company” (McKinnon et al., 2018, p. 97). Overall, McKinnon et al. (2018) argue that if the government wants to increase support for management of kangaroo numbers, is more important to focus on messenger as well as the message, which will allow the audience to form more informed opinions on disagreements within the political and scientific communities.

cannot be hunted for commercial purposes in Western Australia although it can be hunted in certain circumstances for private reasons (Government of Western Australia, n.d.). In Queensland, the western grey kangaroos cannot be hunted (Queensland Government, 2021). Bennet's wallaby and the Tasmanian pademelon (a species of wallaby) can only be found in Tasmania (Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, 2008, p. 11).

The five states clearly state that wildlife management is central in the regulations concerning commercial kangaroo killing (Department for Environment and Water, n.d.-b; Government of Western Australia, n.d.; NSW Department of Planning, 2021; Queensland Government, 2021). Additionally, in the five states and the Northern Territory, commercial kangaroo hunters must follow the *National Codes of Practice (Commercial and Non-commercial) for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies* (Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, 2008). The code is ministered by the NRMMC and reviewed by multiple parties involved in the commercial kangaroo hunt such as representatives from Australian state and territory government authorities responsible for kangaroo management and welfare, the kangaroo industry, RSPCA and Animals Australia (Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, 2008, p. 5). The code offers explicit guidelines regarding how the specific killing part of kangaroo hunting should occur to secure minimum suffering for the animals and their young.

Previous Research

Previous research has been conducted on the relationship between food and national identity in Australia. Since the Second World War, food has become a celebrated aspect of Australian identity (Anderson & Benbow, 2015, p. 34). Australian cuisine has been influenced by migrants from different parts of the world such as Asia and the Middle East, and good quality food is affordable for middle-class families (Probyn, 2000, p. 102). Therefore, food is generally one of the favourite topics of Australian conversations (Probyn, 2000), with Western and non-Western cuisine a passion for many Australians (Anderson & Benbow, 2015, pp. 34-35; Probyn, 2000).

The Australian embrace of diverse foods is perceived to be a reflection of the general mindset regarding multiculturalism. Australians generally do not see themselves as racists (Vasta & Castles, 1996, p. 1) and racism is seen as “a violation of norms of civility and natural justice” (Smith & Phillips, 2001, p. 335). However, embracing the foods and cooking styles of cultural Others does not inherently imply full acceptance of these members of society. More recent, critical scholarship about Australian multicultural food has shown that discourses surrounding

ethnic foods often have underlying racist implications. While cultural/racial Others are viewed as being welcomed in Australia, there remains a narrative of the Other as a threat, society and food-wise (Anderson & Benbow, 2015; Edwards et al., 2000; Wise, 2011).

A canon of scholarly literature has focused on how discourses regarding ethnic foods in Australia are related to cultural relations. My research addresses an existing gap in this literature by examining how food and particularly animals, become understood as being edible in the first place, using the kangaroo as a case study. Therefore, questions such as what makes particular foods or dishes ‘Australian’ are recognised to be interesting but not central to my research.²⁶

Previous scholars have examined the role of the kangaroo as food, including how Indigenous food has been accepted or rejected by settler Australians. For example, feminist scholar Elspeth Probyn (2000) argues that settler Australians generally rejected native Australian food sources. However, more recent historical research contrasts with Probyn’s argument. A multiplicity of reasons led to early settlers trying and embracing some native Australian flora and fauna as foods. Food studies scholar Jacqui Newling (2011) argue that available foods from native plants and animals were readily consumed by early settlers, although cultural values regarding commercialisation and capitalism led to a replacement of native foods for European-based foods. The seasonality and wildness of native foods did not allow for the desired forms of food management that introduced foods did. Therefore, the decline of consumption of native food was for pragmatic, rather than taste-related reasons. Food studies scholar Barbara Santich’s (2012) research underline Newling’s conclusions, arguing that the rejection of native Australian foods had only occurred since the 1930s.

Another important factor in the presumed edibility of kangaroos is the affective relationship between humans and animals. The Skippy factor arguably still contributes to people’s conceptions of the kangaroo, be it as a food or in general. Despite international stereotypes, it is unlikely to find kangaroos in Australian homes as pets, the main reason being that it is illegal. However, it was through the television screen that Skippy the kangaroo ‘lived’ in close relationship to human Australians of all ages (Craw, 2008, p. 89).

Research among potential Australian consumers has demonstrated that the kangaroo meat industry has not gained as much traction as it hoped for due to another reason. While public

²⁶ For possible answers to this question, see Santich (2012), Ripe (1993) and Downes (2002).

discourses mainly discuss the morality of eating kangaroo, empirical research using focus groups has shown that a primary reason for not buying much kangaroo meat is that people find it difficult to prepare and do not like the taste (Hercock & Tonts, 2004; Waitt, 2014). These are important research results, especially for those in the kangaroo industry, but are considered to be less relevant for this project for two reasons. First, the taste of the animal is in general not part of the public discourse. Second, taste is acquired and discourse plays a large part in this. Therefore, I argue that taste is a by-product of moral discourses, rather than a cause. Previous research mainly took a historical approach. In this chapter, I examine the philosophical underpinnings of how the kangaroo is considered to be food. Is there something intrinsically different about food animals than about other animals? How and why do kangaroos fit into this exceptional category? Who gets to decide this? What happens to those excluded from these debates?

The kangaroo industry and its opponents frame arguments for or against the role of the kangaroo as a food animal predominantly around questions of conservationism, which is presented in the analysis section of this chapter. However, the protection of Australia's native animals has not always been a top priority. During early settlement, native Australian animals were considered to be inferior to European animals, which had multiple negative consequences, such as the active eradication of native species and the lack of active preservation when their survival was under threat as a consequence of new, introduced European species. The initial aversion of British settlers to the Australian landscape had pragmatic and sentimental roots. Anthropologist Nicholas Smith (2011) claims that settlers felt little affinity with Australian nature. Certain plants and animals were introduced to create a sense of belonging for the colonisers, such as foxes and blackberries (Smith, 2011, p. 10). Smith's (2011) findings are supported by Franklin (2011), who used the term *Britainization* to describe settlers' efforts 'to acclimatise a preferred and useful (British and/or Imperial) nature into the Australian landscape and to therefore displace less useful native species' (p. 201). Extensive effort and resources were utilised to establish multiple European species into Australian nature, from songbirds to trout.

Ideologies concerned with the replacement of Australian nature with mainly British flora and fauna, were closely connected to ideas about human belonging. Smith (2011) quoted from the South Australian Branch of the Royal Geographic Society of Australasia:

[Colonialism] meant more than the introduction of a new race and its attendant animals. It meant the introduction of a vast new flora destined in the first century of

its progress to displace the original flora, just as human beings and their domestic animals displaced the aboriginals [sic] and the marsupials. (p. 10)

At the same time, Smith argues, improving the land by replacing Indigenous peoples and nature was understood as improving oneself due to the Protestant background of many settlers (ibid.). Britainisation was portrayed to be inevitable progress. These days, the opposite feelings towards Australian native flora and fauna have become hegemonic in Australian society. The shift started to take shape around the last quarter of the nineteenth century. During this period, Australian settlers had been at the Australian continent for multiple generations, which led to people feeling at home in Australia rather than feeling estranged. Australian nature, including kangaroos, became a source of national symbolism and conservation ideals came to be inextricably linked to ideas of good Australian citizenship (Franklin, 2011). The iconic symbolic value of kangaroos as part of Australia helped to shape answers to questions regarding who and what belongs on the Australian land. Nostalgic feelings for a motherland other than Australia became associated with migrants, which whom settlers did not identify (Franklin, 2011, p. 202). Contemporary migrants, especially refugees, are seen as threats to Australian identity, just as feral animals are positioned as threats to the unique and arguably vulnerable native Australian nature (Gressier, 2016, p. 53). The responsibility taken up by the predominately White Australian settlers to preserve the native Australian landscape and its relation to the construction of Australian identity and belonging based on this, has been extensively analysed (e.g., Franklin, 2011; Smith, 1999).²⁷

Smith (2011) argues that re-appreciation for native nature was reflected in literary and scientific discourses. During the 1890s, romantic appreciation for Australian native nature became present in Australian literature and during the early twentieth century. This new appreciation became evident in different ways. At the start of the twentieth century, schools in the state of Victoria dedicated days to celebrate native birds (Bird day) and the wattle (Wattle day), educating new generations of Australians about native Australian species (Smith, 2011, p. 11). In these different ways, native Australian nature became inextricably linked to ideas of national identity (Franklin, 2011).

²⁷ Finch, Murray, Hoy & Baxter (2014) examine motivations of recreational hunters in their hobby. Conservation is often seen as part of the practice. While conservation and pest control may not be the main motivator for most Australian recreational hunters, many value this part of hunting practices.

Within academic circles, anti-invasive sentiment can be found. For example, Biologist Tim Low (1999) examines how introduced species were exterminating Australia's native flora and fauna. Like American culture spreading across the globe, Low argues that nature was also losing its individuality, a process he referenced as 'McDonaldisation'.²⁸

Despite strong advocacy against feral animals, a slow turn away from conservatism has grown and alternative viewpoints have gained more ground. Scholars such as Franklin (2011) and Smith (2011) have adopted new approaches towards feral animals in Australia. They recognise the nationalistic discourses underpinning the anti-feral movement and underlined the many difficulties in attempting to restore Australia to pre-settlement nature. Instead, they argue for new conceptualisations of what it means to be Australian and to embrace an eclectic mix of flora and fauna in the country.

The turn towards embracing feral animals has not been confined purely to academia (Trigger, 2008). Anthropologist David Trigger (2008) uses the case study of the cane toad in northern Australia, in which the toads were introduced to biologically control two species of native beetles that were disrupting the growth of sugar canes. However, due to the lack of natural enemies, they grew rapidly in number and preyed on other native wildlife. There is much resentment towards the toad, which has led to multiple initiatives to reduce their numbers, although signs of sympathy for the toad are also present in North Australia. Trigger (2008) describes how some people provide the toads with food and water, similar to keeping them as pets in an informal way. There is also a slowly growing critique of the enjoyment people feel over killing the toads and there is even a children's book series that presents a sympathetic view of cane toads (Trigger et al., 2010).

When it comes to Aboriginal peoples' position of introduced flora and fauna, responses are generally more positive (Trigger, 2008), although there are some feelings of resentment towards feral animals because these animals and plants symbolise colonisation. However, many animals have been taken up in Aboriginal peoples' diets and in their Dreaming (Trigger, 2008).²⁹

²⁸ Low cited biologist Gábor Lövei (Low, 1999, p. 238) although the term was originally introduced by sociologist George Ritzer (1993).

²⁹ Dreaming or Dreamtime is a complex spiritual Aboriginal concept. For the sake of brevity, it roughly translates to an ancestral power that connects Aboriginal peoples to the lands (Hume, 2002).

The critique of the absence of Aboriginal voices has been given before to the conservation narrative surrounding the commercial kangaroo industry (Craw, 2008). Debates surrounding kangaroos are closely related to conservation. Supporters of the kangaroo industry, like its opponents, use this argument to strengthen their case. Both believe that their approach is necessary for the survival of the species and the Australian landscape. However, within this conservation narrative, it is the predominantly White, Anglo-Australians who are positioned as capable of and entitled to the management of how the Australian landscape should look like and how to achieve these goals. The absence of non-Anglo-Australians should also be noted as Australia's population is extremely diverse and encompasses many more cultural groups. In summary, the role of the kangaroo is complex. This scholarship illustrates how human perceptions of kangaroos do not only reflect the position of the kangaroo in Australian society, but also broader Australian values regarding the role of the Australian landscape in national values, human/animal relationships and food.

Theoretical Framework

Eating kangaroos is arguably better for the environment than eating farmed meat. Kangaroo welfare is also strongly regulated. However, while kangaroo consumption has increased, Australians still seem hesitant to embrace them as food animals, which suggests that more is at stake than merely availability, environmental impact and nutrition. When deciding which animals are foods and which animals are not, bigger questions about human–animal relations are at stake.

Differences influence our relationships with animals and each other. They shape our identities as subjects. Hal Herzog (2011) and Rosi Braidotti (2013) identify similar human–animal relationships, albeit from different angles. As the title of Herzog's (2011) book *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat* suggests, he identifies three main relationships in which humans engage with animals. People keep certain animals as companions, other animals are feared and kept at a distance or killed, while other animals are used for food consumption. Herzog (2011) recognises these three approaches towards animals globally although differences exist as to which animals are approached in what way. Braidotti (2013) identifies three different relations (Western) people can enter with animals, which reflected Herzog's findings: the Oedipalised relationship, the instrumental relationship and the phantasmatic one (p. 68). Herzog (2011) and Braidotti's (2013) frameworks on human–animal relationships are used to explain why

Garnaut's (2008) proposal to increase the commercial kangaroo industry was not accepted at face value but led to emotional responses.

Herzog and Braidotti's work on human–animal relations is quite recent. However, different relationships between humans and different animals have been acknowledged within critical theory for a few decades now. For example, Jaques Derrida (2002) argues the importance of the relation between humans and animals when considering philosophical questions about humankind. After deliberating about the relationships between humans and animals and how this affects our identities as human and non-human-animals, Derrida proposes two hypotheses. The first is related to the suffering of animals and the second to the idea of what an animal and therefore, a human animal, is. In relation to the kangaroo industry and the question of whether kangaroos are intrinsically different from other animals, the second question is most relevant for this part of the analysis. To emphasise the difference between animals, Derrida (2002) introduces the concept of *animot*. He explains:

There is no animal in the general singular, separated from man by a single indivisible limit. We have to envisage the existence of 'living creatures' whose plurality cannot be assembled within the single figure of an animality that is simply opposed to humanity. (Derrida, 2002, p. 415)

Derrida (2002) emphasises that the difference between human and non-human animals are not as absolute as was thought for a long time within philosophy and uses literature as a strategy to deconstruct the hierarchal human–animal binary. The only place in which the division between humans and animals is absolute is in our ignorant conception of them (Derrida, 2002). Not all animals are the same and neither are the ways in which we relate to them. Derrida (2002) argues that the generalisation of *animot* into 'animals' is a violent act because it allows us to make an absolute distinction between humans and animals, which leads us to make animals suffer. During the rest of the article, Derrida does not go deeper into the different relations humans can have with animals but continued his critique of humans' conceptual and real-life treatment of animals.

Herzog (2011) and Braidotti (2013) offer frameworks from which to understand the difference between animals in human understanding. Within different relationships between human and non-human animals, certain animal lives matter more than others. To explain these—at first glance rather arbitrary—divisions between animals, this chapter employs Judith Butler's (2009) concept of *grievable lives*. In Butler's work, grieving is constitutive. Who we grieve affects the

biopolitical position of both the griever and the grieved. Butler has been critiqued for being too anthropocentric in their understanding of the concept.³⁰ While this chapter acknowledges that Butler's language is anthropocentric, it does not agree with critics that their theory is inherently anthropocentric. What makes Butler's (2009) work on grievability valuable for the critical analysis of our perceptions of animals is that it enables us to observe differences on different levels, or, in Butler's words, within different frameworks. All lives will end but only some are seen to be worthy of protection from premature death. Who is included and excluded in these frameworks is dependent on wider cultural norms that have material effects on humans' and non-humans' ability to live. At the same time, these frameworks are arbitrary inasmuch as norms of inclusion and exclusion could change since values are always changing.

In applying the concept of *grievability*, it is necessary to disentangle two requirements that must be met for something to be considered grievable. First, the importance of kangaroos as lives that should be led and should not be made to end, is central. Butler (2009) explains that while grief is about a life that has ended, *grievability* places the future anterior of a life at the centre of our considerations (p. 16). While a life is still being lived, it is seen as valuable and should not end prematurely, which distinguishes a *life* from mere *living*. Butler (2009) relates this distinction to Foucault's *biopolitics* of 'apprehending, controlling and administering life' (p. 16). Following this biopolitical approach, kangaroo lives are framed as lives that should actively be 'made to live' within Australian society. This distinguishes their lives from other non-human lives that are not actively governed, which could be considered to be 'left to die'.³¹ Second, to be seen as grievable, a life has to be *recognised* as part of an (imaginary) shared identity of precarity. This shared identity is always imaginary because all lives are precarious. After all, all life will end at some point. The finiteness of our lives means that our lives always lie in the hands of others. Precarity and grievability, according to Butler (2009), distinguish those we see as possible threats to our lives and those who we recognise to be in the same situation as us. We have obligations towards those with whom we share precarity (Butler, 2009, pp. 13-15). At the same time, we see Others as threats to our lives, which is part of living finite lives.

³⁰ See for example Wolfe's (2013) argument that "Butler's effort ... runs aground on the question of nonhuman animals" (p. 18).

³¹ Biopolitics is Michel Foucault's third form of power. Within biopolitics, the emphasis is not on governing individuals who step out of normative frameworks. Instead, biopolitics, according to Foucault (1998), focusses on masses. It is about the institutionalising of keeping certain groups alive, as they supposedly have more value than those who are left to tend to themselves. This where the famous explanation of 'make live' and 'let die' comes from (Foucault, 1998).

Nationalist discourses contribute to these constructions of who we see ourselves as obliged to and those we see as threats. Who is included in ‘we’ is highly contextual and determined by frames of grievability.³² Whether and to what extent a life is grievable varies between peoples and, as I argue, species. It should be underlined that grievability is not inherent to a person or species. Instead, it is a tool to understand why and how a life is understood. Butler does *not* argue that the lives of Palestinians are not grievable, nor do I want to argue that the lives of certain animals should be less grievable than others. Instead, grievability is a framework and tool to understand why certain lives are deemed to be more important than others as well as a critique on the treatment of those who are deemed to be less grievable than others. Within these frameworks, boundaries between nation, culture, ethnicity, and even species are blurred,³³ which is especially true in Australia, where the large majority of citizens and residents are settlers and immigrants.

I recognise that there are different approaches to Butler’s concept of grievability. For example, David Redmalm (2015) identifies three key factors that determine grievability of a life. The grieved life has to be irreplaceable, the grief has to be “transformative and [take] unpredictable expressions” (Redmalm, 2015, p. 20) and since the death is of an *embodied* person, the grief also has to be physical. Redmalm’s (2015) approach to grievability is useful for his research topic, which is pets with whom people form individual connections. However, in this research, the emphasis lays more on kangaroos as a species rather than individuals. Therefore, I picked the requirements from Butler’s (2009) work on grievability of populations. I acknowledge that a species-level approach may distract from the lived realities of individual kangaroos. However, I also believe that in practices of eating kangaroos, and in the discourses surrounding this, arguments for and against are based around kangaroos as a species, rather than narratives of individual kangaroos.

In addition, cultural anthropologist Margo DeMello (2016) discusses the grievability of animals and connected grievability to animals “who die in numbers that defy the imagination” (DeMello, 2016, p. xxiii), but does not draw the connection to food animals. I agree that

³² Butler generally identifies “a community of belonging on the basis of nation, territory, language, or culture” (2009, p. 36) for the purpose of her own argument.

³³ See e.g., Balibar (1991): “No nation, that is, no national state, has an ethnic basis, which means that nationalism cannot be defined as an ethnocentrism except precisely in the sense of the product of a fictive ethnicity. ... They do have to institute in real (and therefore in historical) time their imaginary unity against other possible unities” (p. 49).

numbers do play a role in grievability. I find value in the concept of grievability to distinguish between animal species *because* Butler's approach (2009) is focused on collectives of peoples rather than individuals.

While only referencing Butler's work on grievability briefly, the environmental historian Thom van Dooren also explores phenomena such as grief, death, and mourning in non-human animals (van Dooren, 2014, p. 142). Using the case study of the extinct in the wild Hawaiian crow, he illustrates how humans are not the only species that mourn and uses examples of grieving animals to debunk the history in Western thought of understanding death as something that sets humans apart from all other animals. More so, van Dooren argues that grief and mourning help (certain) animals, human but also non-human, to adapt to the changed realities of the world as it changes with the loss of others. Grief and mourning allow for the acknowledgement that the world is a shared space.

Australian writer and Associate Professor in English David Brooks (2020) explores the possibility of kangaroos' grief of their death in "The grieving kangaroo photograph revised". Discussing grief outside of Butler's framework, but with a focus on the experience of kangaroos themselves, he discusses a 2016 photograph that received media attention. The photo was initially understood to portray a dying female kangaroo surrounded by a grieving male kangaroo and her joey. However, shortly after its original publication, the photograph drew attention again, this time because the motivations of the male kangaroo were centered around territorial and reproductive urges of the male kangaroo rather than grief, according to various experts. Brooks argues that these experts may have been wrong and that, more importantly, denying non-human animals grief and non-normative expressions of grief ('normative' meaning 'accepted by humans') "the experts [are] providing us, ironically (and yet again), with an example of the self-same anthropomorphism of which they accuse others" (2020, p. 207). Brooks' argument shows that relationships and understanding between humans and kangaroos are not only complex but also multi-directional.

In 1997, Derrida expresses how thinking in terms of 'the animal' limits understandings of human-animal relations.³⁴ This chapter builds on Derrida's claim by drawing on Butler's work on grievable lives to explore how differences between animals originate and continue.

³⁴ While "The Animal That Therefore I Am" was published in 2002, he introduced the concept of *animot* in 1997 at a conference in Cerisy, France (Derrida, 2002, p. 369).

Braidotti's and Herzog's proposed categories of animals we love, animals we hate, and animals we eat, are valuable in this exploration as these categories offer a roadmap to how kangaroos' role in Australian society changed and continues to change. It is in the transition from being animals that were loved and hated to animals 'we eat' that the grievability of kangaroos became relevant in popular discourse.

Data

This chapter focuses on responses to the push to increase the commercial kangaroo industry. It argues that debates on kangaroos as food have positioned kangaroos within national narratives and discourses. Garnaut's (2008) review was a major driver in this. Kangaroo hunting became closely associated with ideas and ideals surrounding conservation. Therefore, data are comprised of political/commercial movements *and* scientific reports that position the kangaroo industry within the context of conservation.

To collect data, I first examined the commercial kangaroo industry, represented by KIAA, because they became one of Garnaut's biggest supporters as they took up his review to promote their industry. Related to this, I also examined Macro Group—the world's largest retail distributor of kangaroo meat—to observe how they discuss kangaroo as a food product. Additionally, I analysed the two most outspoken opponents of commercial kangaroo slaughtering, which were Australia's two main animal rights groups: Animals Australia and Voiceless. The reason for focusing on Voiceless and Animals Australia is that they are both animal welfare organizations that are based in Australia and include kangaroos as one of their issues of concern within a broader, general focus. Voiceless is particularly interesting for its connections to THINKK.³⁵ Animals Australia is one of Australia's largest animal protection organizations.³⁶ The data I drew upon were the webpages and their online, written campaigns against kangaroo slaughtering. In summary, I accessed and examined the following websites:

- www.kangarooindustry.com

³⁵ THINKK is the think tank for kangaroos that is part of the University of Technology Sydney and collaborates with the Institute for Sustainable Futures. Voiceless is one of its key supporters (The Think Tank for Kangaroos, n.d.).

³⁶ According to Animals Australia, they are "Australia's leading animal protection organisation" (Animals Australia, n.d.-a). While no sources beyond Animals Australia themselves support or refuse this claim, Animals Australia is a not-for-profit body that represents a has more than 2 million individual supporters and represents approximately forty member groups (Mummery & Rodan 2019, p. 59).

- www.macrogrouppaustralia.com
- www.animalsaustralia.org
- www.voiceless.org.au

To discuss the scientific discourses, I refer to the debate between the researchers of THINKK and their critics. In 2011, THINKK published *The Ends and Means of the Commercial Kangaroo Industry: An Ecological, Legal and Comparative Analysis* (Ben-Ami et al., 2011), in which they critiqued the arguments deployed in encouraging kangaroo consumption. The authors argued that while kangaroo consumption had increased, this did not lead to a decrease in sheep grazing. The main aim of encouraging increased kangaroo meat consumption in the Garnaut report was to decrease lamb and beef production to minimise grazing and CO₂ emissions, so kangaroo harvesting was a not a solution to these problems.

In response to the THINKK article, Cooney et al. (2012) published the chapter, *THINKK Again: Getting the Facts Straight on Kangaroo Harvesting and Conservation*. The authors have diverse backgrounds; most were researchers in the environmental sciences, while two authors also specialise in wildlife management (Cooney et al., 2012). This chapter argues that the THINKK report is not only flawed but poses a danger to the credibility of scientific research. They discuss academic independence and credibility in relation to funded research, and explain that two authors of THINKK were directors of Voiceless, which is an organisation that had previously publicly opposed kangaroo hunting.

In response to Cooney et al. (2012), the THINKK researchers published *Thought Again: Fair Criticism or a Muddle-Headed Grandstanding?* (Ben-Ami et al., n.d.). In the *Thought Again* report, the authors acknowledge partiality but underline their commitment to contributing to objective knowledge. They strongly reject the accusation that their argument was founded on false claims but acknowledge that their reports were by no means complete. Instead, the authors want their publications to serve as discussion starters that illustrate different sides to the debate on the value of the kangaroo as a food animal. This chapter examines how kangaroos are presented and discussed within political, commercial and scientific discourses. CDA is key in the analysis, from which broader ideas regarding conservation, science, industries, animal rights and ideas of national identities are discussed.

Analysis

Kangaroos as Food

In general, representations of kangaroo meat differ from other representations of meat. In the English language, commonly consumed meats generally differ in name from the animals they come from. Think of ‘pork’, ‘beef’, ‘veal’ and ‘mutton’. Chicken is an exception, which comes from a bird, while other meats come from mammal bodies. Within the kangaroo industry, the distance between the meat and the animal it comes from is not increased through language.

Kangaroo meat features prominently as a food option on the Macro Group website. The homepage of the website displays a salad with a rare cooked kangaroo steak on top and browsing the website, it is easy to find recipes and photos of prepared and packaged kangaroo meat. Above the photo of the kangaroo steak salad, the visitor of the webpage reads “Kangaroo meat is the most sustainable, lean and delicious meat that Australia produces” (Macro Group, n.d.). Eating kangaroo meat is portrayed as similar to eating any other normative (red) meat, with the exception that it is more sustainable, which is discussed later in this chapter. While photos of live kangaroos are not present on the homepage of the website, they are visible on other pages. The meat is consistently referred to as ‘kangaroo meat’.

The images on Macro Group’s website are reflective of Australian society to a certain extent. Kangaroo meat is still a niche or novelty market. There is much emphasis on the benefits of kangaroo meat, in terms of health, animal welfare and conservation. In addition, one page is dedicated to recipes and instructions on how to prepare kangaroo meat. Kangaroo meat is on the menu in certain restaurants and on the shelves in most supermarkets. While kangaroo meat is controversial to a part of Australian society, Macro Group does not actively engage with critiques. Instead, it takes a generally positive approach towards its products. Language remains formal. Purchasing kangaroo meat is framed as a rational consumer choice, based on nutritional and moral values.

KIAA’s website (KIAA, n.d.), while organised differently, mirrors much of the Macro Group’s qualities. Sustainability and animal welfare in the commercial kangaroo industry are extensively explained. There are recipe ideas that inspire the visitor to try kangaroo meat. In addition, the sources of the meat—kangaroos—are not hidden. Pictures of kangaroo are present throughout the website.

Kangaroos are never described as being anything else but food on the Macro Group and KIAA's websites. The animal is treated respectfully but is never described as a generally loved animal or a national symbol. In addition, while some Australians see kangaroos as pests or nuisances, this is not reflected on the Macro Group's website. They are represented as a responsible food choice and nothing more.

Framing Suffering

According to companies such as KIAA and Macro Group, kangaroo is a valuable source of protein for potential consumers for several reasons. However, animal rights organisations in Australia strongly oppose the commercial kangaroo industry. Voiceless and Animals Australia are particularly outspoken against kangaroo meat. The kangaroo industry is a central topic for Voiceless (n.d.). On their website, the kangaroo industry is positioned as one of the organisation's top priorities, with factory farming being the other. The way they are positioned on the website changes; sometimes the kangaroos are mentioned first, other times factory farming. The sub-issues that are mentioned are mainly related to factory farming, although the topic of animal sentience could apply to animals outside of the farming industry. On the website of Animals Australia (Animals Australia, n.d.-b), kangaroo hunting is nowhere mentioned as a top priority but the page pops up as one of the first options when one searches for 'kangaroo hunting Australia' (Animals Australia, n.d.-c) in a search engine. Both organisations offer several reasons for their opposition to kangaroo hunting based on the 2011 THINKK report, which is further discussed in this chapter.

Animals Australia claim that they oppose the commercial kangaroo industry because over 100,000 kangaroos are not killed directly with a single shot, which is required by the industry's code of practice. Second, they claim that kangaroos are killed for commercial purposes rather than for competing with other grazing animals. They are not killed because there are too many of them but because their bodies have commercial value. Third, their young—the joeys—suffer from being either being killed by the hunters or from being left to die. Animals Australia also critique that some states offer non-commercial permits to kill kangaroos, which leads to even less-regulated kangaroo deaths.

On the webpage related to kangaroo hunting, Voiceless offers similar reasons but in a different order. First, they claim that kangaroos do not cause as much financial harm to farmers as is generally thought. Second, the commercial kangaroo industry may threaten the survival of the

species. Third, the animals suffer from being hunted because many are not killed with a single shot. Finally, their joeys are collateral damage. On the website, Voiceless represents kangaroos as innocent animals who are victimised by the industry. The page shows kangaroos in the wild. Some, including a mother kangaroo with her joey, are looking straight at the viewer, invoking feelings of affection and creating a bond between the viewer and the viewed.

The first sentence presented to visitors of the website of Voiceless is: “Australia's iconic kangaroos are hunted in the largest commercial slaughter of land-based wildlife on the planet.¹ Almost 90 million kangaroos and wallabies have been lawfully killed for commercial purposes in the last 20 years.²” (Voiceless, n.d., footnote numbers in original).³⁷ Word choices strongly influence the tone of the message. The relationship between language and human power over non-human animals has been examined previously by linguistic scholars. English scholar Arran Stibbe (2001) for example illustrates how language at all levels contributes to masking the harm humans cause non-human animals. Individual words play an important role here – for example, terms such as ‘meat’ and ‘product’ are used instead of ‘bodies’ when talking about animal flesh that is sold for commercial purposes – but also grammar. Language thus contributes to producing and maintaining oppression. Adding to Stibbe’s argument, English scholar Jill Jepson (2008) illustrates how the connotations of certain words related to death carry heavier weight when used in regards to human death than when used to describe non-human deaths at the hands of humans. Words like ‘slaughter’ and ‘killed’ are used on the Voiceless website, which have different connotations to the word ‘harvesting’, which is used on the kangaroo meat industry websites. ‘Harvesting’ implies a management of land, whereas ‘slaughtering’ and ‘killing’ have significantly more violent connotations.³⁸ Emphasising that kangaroos are iconic to Australia makes the reader feel that kangaroos are a special type of animal. Language plays a role here. Quoting a statement of a former kangaroo hunter, the page reads: “The mouth of a kangaroo can be blown off and the kangaroo can escape to die of shock and starvation. Forearms can be blown off, as can ears, eyes and noses” (Voiceless, n.d.). Notice how the body parts of the kangaroo here are described with the names we give human body

³⁷ During the research process, the text on the website has slightly changed. The word ‘iconic’ was not used any longer on the website when this thesis was being edited in 2020.

³⁸ The remainder of this thesis will reflect the terms used by the referenced authors and organisations to accurately reflect their argument.

parts: ‘forearms’ instead of ‘front leg’, ‘paws’ or ‘claws’ and ‘nose’ and ‘mouth’ instead of ‘muzzle or snout’. Empathy is evoked through anthropomorphism.

Similar patterns can be found on the Animals Australia website. The website sets the scene for the visitor: “Each night in remote areas of the Australian outback, thousands of kangaroos graze peacefully, stand up on hearing an approaching vehicle, stare into a blinding spotlight and are shot for their flesh and skins” (Animals Australia, n.d.b). The story continues: “Tonight, while you are sleeping peacefully, out in the Australian bush the peaceful existence of thousands of gentle animals who have harmed no one will end violently—for the sake of the mighty dollar” (Animals Australia, n.d.b). Similar to the Voiceless website, Animals Australia wants us to care for kangaroos in a way that not all animals are cared for. While most human Australians sleep peacefully, these animals suffer greatly under the profit-driven actions of others. While what is stated is not necessarily untrue, the focus is as much on emotion as it is on facts.

Both pages oppose different practices related to the meat industry in Australia, focusing on industrial farming and live export. However, especially on the Voiceless website, hunting feral animals is not addressed, which indicates that there is something particular about the kangaroo compared to other animals that can be hunted in Australia. Nowhere is it mentioned that hunting should be banned in general, only in relation to commercial kangaroo hunting. However, the website of Animals Australia opposes other practices of hunting both domestically and internationally.

Kangaroos as Animals We Love and Animals We Hate

Kangaroos hold multiple roles in Australia. Partially thanks to Skippy and the image of the boxing kangaroo, the kangaroo is a beloved animal in Australia and on an international level. At the same time, kangaroos are wild and intimidating animals. Their numbers have arguably grown since European settlement. Most Australians have been, or at least know someone who has been, in a car accident involving kangaroos during or just after sunrise or sunset. Additionally, kangaroos are often blamed for competing over food with livestock (O’Grady, 2018).

The commercial kangaroo industry positions kangaroos as food and does not engage with pre-existing notions of kangaroos in Australian societies as animals that are already loved and hated. While they argue that there many of them and thus hunting them is desirable from a

conservation perspective, they are not portrayed as ‘pests’. Instead, the focus is on kangaroos’ qualities on food sources, such as sustainability and nutrition.

The websites of animal protection groups Voiceless and Animals Australia use more affective approaches towards kangaroos. They argue that kangaroos should not be food because hunting them is *not* animal-friendly nor sustainable. Animal protection groups strongly argue that kangaroos should *not* be *food* and do not shy away from drawing upon their audiences’ feelings and emotions to convince them. The Voiceless website mentions the idea of kangaroos as ‘pests’ but only to refute this assumption. There is little to no connection drawn to kangaroos as national symbols or their supposed cuteness in general. The focus is purely on the ethics behind the killing of kangaroos.

The lack of references towards kangaroos as animals that are loved is striking whether or not Voiceless’ allegations of kangaroo hunting are true and whether or not one condemns hunting them because the critiques of kangaroo hunting they bring forward largely apply to other hunted species in Australia. However, much less outrage exists over the killing of non-native animals. For example, pigs—which are feral animals and are killed, sometimes for food—cause less financial damage than kangaroos, according to the Pest Animal Cooperative Research Centre (Gong, Sinden, Braysher & Jones, n.d.). Within Australian law, the hunting of kangaroos is already highly regulated, while all feral animals can be hunted with easily accessible basic hunting permits. This is because the eradication, or at least the reduction of, of feral species is the goal of these policies. Therefore, if kangaroos suffer from physical harm due to hunting, this must certainly be true for hunted feral animals because there are less strict codes for these hunting practices than for the hunting of kangaroos. Finally, while other animals may take care of their young differently than kangaroos, killing mother animals will likely lead to suffering for their young.

However, as the Voiceless campaign shows, it is only kangaroos whose wellbeing they prioritise. Most wild native animals in Australia are already protected by Australian law in contrast to feral species. Further, even though Voiceless is against factory farming, they are not opposed to eating animals in general—at least not openly on their website. This shows that the campaign against commercial kangaroo hunting is about something more than their arguments. Even if everyone agreed with the arguments made by Voiceless against kangaroo hunting, it cannot be denied that other hunted food animals in Australia, such as deer, suffer the same fate, except maybe the argument about financial harm, although it would be most unlikely. There is

no reason given from a moral or empirical perspective regarding why *only kangaroos* should not be hunted.

Most animal rights organisations would argue for complete vegetarianism even if they do not state it directly. However, it is currently highly unlikely that the majority of Australian society will turn towards vegetarianism for cultural and economic reasons. Australians are some of the largest meat consumers in the world per capita and value the agricultural industry highly (Whitnall & Pitts, 2019; Lockie & Bourke, 2001). The focus on kangaroos, especially in the campaign of Voiceless, shows how the kangaroo as a species is seen as different from animals that are perceived as food animals (e.g., cows, chicken, sheep, pigs and fish). Therefore, it is about more than harm, it is about *the kangaroo* as a food animal.

Conservation

Several key values are at stake in the debates over whether kangaroos should be food for human consumption, including the welfare of kangaroos. Conservationism is another key topic in discussions surrounding the kangaroo trade. Institutions such as Animals Australia, Voiceless, Macro Group and KIAA all claimed to act from conservationist motives. This section examines how these parties have argued that they act from conservation concerns despite holding opposite conservation strategies. In addition, this section considers the scientific debates on which these parties have drawn on to discuss how knowledge production produces and is produced by more than rational knowledge alone. Instead, it is critical to take into account the role of cultural and ideological frameworks in understanding peoples' positions regarding food animals.

Industries and animal activists

When it comes to the commercial kangaroo industry, conservationism is central in almost all political and commercial narratives concerning the industry. Within the commercial kangaroo industry, there is a focus on sustainability and conservationism, possibly more so than for recreational hunting. Rather than approaching conservation from an affective standpoint, such as the opponents of the industry do, the focus of the industry is on 'science'.

The KIAA reaches out to different sources of scientific authority to use conservationism as a validation for their existence. On the website, conservational aspects such as environmental impact and sustainability are discussed next to topics such as quality, health benefits and recipes. The first paragraph on the KIAA website starts with the statement that 'the kangaroo

industry is widely regarded as an intelligent use [sic] of a sustainable resource and is supported by scientists, conservation groups and academics as being a benchmark for a natural resource use model' (KIAA, n.d.a). When clicking for more information on environmentalism on the website of the KIAA, the first noticeable option is the button towards the page that says 'see info'. The links to information about nutrition, quality and harvesting say 'find out more'. This demonstrates the focus on information and 'facts'. The way this page is presented offers little space to disagree since it is *factual information* that is offered rather than a story or a suggestion.

The pages about the food qualities of kangaroo and the quality of kangaroo leather are informal, using dot points and pictures to convince the possible consumer to purchase the products. The main difference between the information on 'environmental impact' and 'sustainable harvesting' is that the sustainable harvesting page focuses on how kangaroos as a species are not harmed by the harvesting process, while the environmental impact page discusses the harm kangaroos do to the Australian landscape. The page about harvesting methods is more formal than the pages about meat and leather, using a graph and full paragraphs to explain the process. The page on 'environment' lives up the most to academic standards. The language is formal and includes an in-text scholarly reference.

The environmental argument in support of the industry begins with an explanation that the kangaroo population has grown significantly because settlement led to more water access for kangaroos, making it easier for them to survive droughts. Next to this, the populations of their natural predator, the dingo, are kept low to protect livestock from attacks. This has led to an overabundance of kangaroos. The KIAA argues that there is a correlation between 'reptile abundance, species richness and diversity' (KIAA, n.d.) and low intensity of kangaroo grazing. For these reasons, it is necessary to control kangaroo populations via culling. If not, there would be negative consequences for other Australian native species. In a sense, the industry part is presented as secondary to the controlling of the kangaroo population in general. Culling/controlling the population comes first and the industry is there to support these goals.

The final argument for why the kangaroo industry is beneficial for the environment is that kangaroo consumption could replace the sheep industry. This would be better for the Australian environment for two reasons in particular. Firstly, sheep put higher pressure on the ground during grazing, causing more damage than kangaroos do while moving across the landscape. In addition, sheep emit methane. Therefore, kangaroo meat has a low carbon footprint compared to beef and sheep. The focus on the KIAA site is mainly on kangaroo as a species

rather than the individual kangaroos, especially compared to the arguments of the opponents of the commercial kangaroo industry.

The website of Macro Group (n.d.) demonstrates how sustainability is positioned as a central issue in their company. While the website also addresses multiple issues such as cooking, nutrition, quality and products, sustainability in relation to animal welfare is one of the central issues addressed. However, compared to the KIAA website, the Macro Group webpage focuses more on sustainability rather than actively improving the environment as the KIAA argues. Although science is drawn upon to convince people to purchase the KIAA's products, there is also an emotional/affective approach. The science supports that the kangaroo consumption industry is good for the environment, which assumes affective feelings towards Australian nature and environment and also underscores the belief that Australian nature is valuable and should be protected.

The websites of Animals Australia and Voiceless disagree with the industry arguments that kangaroo hunting is beneficial for the Australian landscape. The Voiceless website has one page devoted to kangaroos. The main paragraph on the top of the page immediately draws attention to the question of population numbers:

Almost 90 million kangaroos and wallabies have been killed for meat and skins in the last 30 years.² The question as to whether kangaroos are a 'pest' or 'overpopulated' has been hotly debated' (Voiceless, n.d., footnotes in original).

The page continues to make a distinction between 'pest' in an economic understanding and 'pest' in terms of population. The page argues "research suggests kangaroos do not exist in abundance or pest proportions and that the cost to farmers should be revised down from \$200 million to \$44 million, or \$1.67 per kangaroo per year" (Voiceless, n.d.). Because there is no overpopulation of kangaroos and the economic damage they cause to farmers is lower than the industry argues, they should not be hunted.

Overall, the main arguments made by Voiceless against the kangaroo industry relate to the kangaroo population and kangaroo suffering. Like the industry, science is extensively drawn upon to strengthen the conservation arguments. THINKK is referred to as well as the academic backgrounds of Voiceless' members. While the general language is more emotional and less formal than that of the industries, their arguments are framed as scientific. Both organisations refer to kangaroos being native animals. The Voiceless website specifies that "despite being a

native animal, many farmers consider kangaroos to be 'economic' pests because of competition with cattle and sheep” (Voiceless, n.d.). It is because kangaroos are natives that they should not be seen as pests. Animals Australia writes that “we may face a future where this iconic native animal is nothing but a memory” (Animals Australia, n.d.b.). Again, because kangaroos are native to Australia, their loss would be undesirable.

Animals Australia and Voiceless focus on the suffering of kangaroos and conservation. Animals Australia places the focus more on animal welfare, aiming to make the reader feel bad about the suffering of kangaroos to undertake actions. However, conservation is also mentioned. During mentions of the health of kangaroo populations and their numbers, research references are used in the form of footnotes. In addition, Animal Australia draw on documentaries. While Voiceless appears to create a balance between emotion and reason, Animals Australia emphasises emotion more.

Somewhat ironically, the supposed importance of kangaroo management for the purpose of conservationism has increasingly turned into a reason for consumers to buy and eat kangaroo meat, think for example of the emergence of ‘kangatarianism’. While the environmental impact of eating meat is increasingly acknowledged and problematized on a global scale, kangaroo meat is a little more complicated. Whether the consumption of kangaroo meat is less damaging to the Australian landscape than the consumption of other animal bodies or not, the kangaroo is inherently part of the Australian landscape that is deemed to be in ‘need’ of governance and protection.

Science

Garnaut’s (2008) proposal to eat more kangaroos hinged on the claim that kangaroo meat produces less methane than meat from sheep and cattle. The report noted the potential for consumer resistance but argued that “for most of Australia’s human history—around 60 000 years—kangaroo was the main source of meat. It could again become important” (Garnaut, 2011, p. 547). While mentions of kangaroo consumption were brief—they are mentioned in about 10 out of the almost 600 pages of the report—we can begin to observe reasonable and affective/nationalist discourses.

THINKK released multiple reports in response to Garnaut’s proposal. For example, Ben-Ami et al. (2011a) critiques the arguments used in encouraging kangaroo consumption. In this report, THINKK argues that the suffering of kangaroos was not reasonable considering the legitimacy

of purpose for the management of kangaroos and the legitimacy of means. They gave five reasons: many joeys would be collateral kill of kangaroo hunting; miss-shot kangaroos would suffer from injuries; the genetic diversity of the kangaroos will decline long-term; the code for commercial kangaroo shooting (NRMMC, 2008)³⁹ is not always followed; and public attitudes towards hunting are driven by three key factors—commercial value, ‘pest’ status and ecological concerns. However, as was argued in the THINKK report, there has been no significant reduction in the Australian sheep industry due to the growth of the kangaroo industry. Animals Australia and Voiceless drew predominantly from this report published by THINKK to support their cause against the kangaroo industry.

Another article by THINKK (i.e., Ben-Ami et al., 2010) drew disagreement from scholars. In this article, the authors argue that increased kangaroo consumption will not lead to a decrease in sheep grazing. Therefore, kangaroo harvesting is not a solution to the problems presented in the Garnaut report. Instead, the authors argue for a more holistic approach in which not only the industry is re-thought but “underpinning this is the need to accept that market forces are not always compatible with conservation values ... and the maintenance of the environment is the responsibility of all (not just graziers in this case)” (Ben-Ami et al., 2010, p. 17).

Analysis of this text shows that the report displays a clear concern for the Australian landscape and the broader global environment. This concern is informed by a scientific approach towards these issues and builds an arguably strong argument against increasing the commercial kangaroo industry. While these reasons and concern may be valid, other factors are not given a place in this report, including the affective reasons for opposition to the kangaroo industry. This is not an uncommon practice in science and knowledge production within academia. However, as this chapter argues, motivations for defending kangaroos’ lives are informed by motivations that go beyond the scientific.

In response, Cooney et al. (2011) critique the research methods and interpretations of results presented in the THINKK article. Science and knowledge production are also evaluated. In the conclusion of their critique, Cooney et al. (2011) refer to a broader trend than simply ‘bad research’, namely industry-funded research. While THINKK was not funded by industry, the funding by animal rights organisations mirrors this trend, according to Cooney et al. (2011).

³⁹ Every commercial kangaroo hunter is obliged to follow the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes (NRMMC, 2008).

Within this development, they explored the fine line between research being objective and interpretable:

Taking these points together, the publication does not, in our opinion, meet even a reasonable standard for being considered an objective, scientific, evaluation of kangaroo harvesting issues. ... This does not mean that other scientists could not draw different conclusions from the evidence so presented. Scientists often disagree over the interpretation of evidence derived by the scientific method and pose different hypotheses to attempt to explain assembled results—this is the very stuff of science (Cooney et al., 2011, p. 157)

The tension between science as infallible and fallible is one that has been debated within academia and the broader science community. Cooney et al. (2011) refers to this debate and argues that THINKK does not offer ‘sound science’ because it lacks “an objective and robust process of proposing, testing and accepting or rejecting logically drawn hypotheses, with the chain of evidence open, transparent, accurate and referenced” (p. 157). Examining ideas regarding objectivity, the argument makes sense. Researchers should strive towards objectivity while also acknowledging that there is no such thing. However, how do researchers and the general public determine whether research is valid or not? Data can be difficult to interpret and research about topics such as kangaroo conservation draws upon many different datasets, which do not lead to easy answers. This is also true for research on other topics, such as climate change.

Poor quality research can be blamed on many factors. Cooney et al. (2011) blame THINKK’s poor quality research not necessarily on the researchers but on the *funding* of their research. Cooney et al. (2011) claims that THINKK’s research was funded by Voiceless:

While it goes without saying that Voiceless is entitled both to express its views and to fund university research, including by its Directors, it is inevitable that such research will raise concern about academic independence and will be subject to close scrutiny. We have applied such scrutiny ... and find that it is seriously compromised. (p. 158)

Cooney et al.’s (2011) concerns are understandable because industry-funded research is growing rapidly in academia.⁴⁰ Knowledge production is a tricky endeavour. Developments such as increasing funding from non-governmental sources further complicate these matters.

⁴⁰ While there are limited data available on the effectiveness and frequency of collaborations between industries and universities in Australia, the Australian government has sought to increase these numbers through several initiatives launched in 2017 and 2018 (Department of Education and Training, n.d.).

Research context will influence the way data are interpreted. Bringing in extra parties, such as parties with clear ideologically and industry-driven goals, will undoubtedly contribute to these concerns.

In their response, Ben-Ami et al. (2011b) address the critiques on their research and the industry-funding argument. While they acknowledge that their reports were meant as conversation starters and were by no means complete, they strongly disagreed that their argument is founded on false claims. While the *Thought Again* report acknowledged partiality, they held the idea of objectivity in high value. In addition, Ben-Ami et al. (2011b) emphasise that Cooney et al.'s past research was funded by the government. The authors argue that this linked them closely to the agricultural industry because the Australian government strongly supports the agricultural industry.⁴¹

Discussions between industry and animal rights groups turned the debate on the commercial kangaroo industry into one about consumer values, human–animal relations, national symbolism and conservationism. The scientific debate on conservationism regarding the kangaroo industry not only discussed the science that supported conservation claims, but also claims about environmental science and knowledge production.

How Kangaroos Became Grievable

Derrida (2002) makes the argument that when thinking about ‘the animal’, it is crucial to recognise the plurality of this category. *The* animal does not exist, just as *the* human does not exist; material and conceptual differences lead to radically different experiences. A significant part of critical animal research has focused on the morality of meat consumption and concluded that there are many good reasons to oppose to the food animal industry. Mourning animals is an understandable strategy of getting this message across, which is aimed at publicly opposing practices of eating meat. However, some animals are already framed as being inedible for multiple reasons. This section uses the case study of the kangaroo in Australia to determine why kangaroo lives are more grievable than certain other animals’ lives, which makes them less edible than animals from the livestock industry or feral pigs. Rather than looking at animals that *are* food, this chapter discusses animals that *might become* food to see what arguments are used to prevent this transition from happening. Again, the aim of this chapter is not to argue

⁴¹ For a more detailed insight into the complex relations between the Australian government, the Australian agricultural industry and natural resource management, see Tennent & Lockie (2015).

that campaigning against kangaroo hunting is or is not beneficial but rather to examine why and how campaigns against their hunt take place and how these discourses, albeit unintentionally, feed into the grievability of these animals. Butler's (2009) concept of grievable lives offers a useful framework to increase understanding about the processes behind this, even if it is unclear whether kangaroos grieve themselves. They argue that for a life to be grievable it must adhere to two principles: the lives must be lives that should be led, which implies that ending these lives would be unjust, and grievable lives are lives that are part of a greater (imaginary) shared identity of precarity (Butler, 2009).

Despite growing awareness of the consequences of the meat industries, laws and critiques related to the kangaroo industry demonstrate that there is more sentiment for the lost kangaroo lives than for the lost lives of other animals that are part of the food industry. Humans and non-humans have been engaged in instrumental relations since the beginning of mankind (Braidotti, 2013). When it comes to food animals, the scale on which this now occurs is unprecedented. While animals are farmed, killed and eaten on an enormous scale, there is a growing awareness of animal sentience (Evans & Miele, 2012) or, as Derrida (2002) argues, a recognition of their suffering. Part of what makes kangaroos different from hegemonic food animals is related to the kangaroo as a wild animal. One of the requirements for a life to be viewed as grievable is that the life is seen to have a future anterior. We do not only grieve the life that has been led; we grieve for the life that could have been. When applied to food animals, this distinction creates a radical difference between farmed animals and game animals. The sole purpose of farmed animals in the food industry is to become food. Therefore, in a sense, their lives are secondary to their deaths. However, for wild animals, the possible futurity of the animals' lives can be considered and emphasised.

The campaigns against commercial kangaroo hunting have reflected this distinction in several ways. For example, kangaroos are 'killed' rather than 'slaughtered' or 'culled' (Animals Australia, n.d.b). This word choice implies that their deaths are unfair, rather than necessary or pragmatic. In addition, considerable emphasis has been placed on the fate of young kangaroos or joeys (Animals Australia, n.d.b). They will be killed too, most likely in a cruel manner or left to starve. The life of the mother of the joey is constructed as having ended too soon; she should have been allowed to live to raise her young.

Being wild animals, rather than food animals, plays a large role in the construction of kangaroos as grievable. However, not all hunting in Australia is as controversial as that of kangaroos. This

difference can be explained by the second requirement that must be fulfilled for something to be seen as *grievable* in Butler's terms. To be seen as grievable, a life is required to be recognised as part of an imaginary community that shares precariousness. In the case of kangaroos, nationalism plays a significant role in shaping perceptions. In Australia, native flora and fauna have come to play a central part in nationalist discourses, although this was not always the case. During early settlement, native Australian animals were seen as inferior to European animals, which created numerous negative consequences for them, including the active eradication of native species as well neglect of active preservation when their survival was under threat as a consequence of newly introduced European species.

Kangaroos are animals whose lives are grieved more than other animals' lives. Science is providing further proof that animals feel emotions, of which grief might be one, but is not specific or advanced enough yet to determine whether these emotions are similar to human emotions.⁴² However, is grief necessary to be grievable in a Butlerian understanding of the concept? Butler's analysis of guilt helps to answer this question. They argue that:

Only as an animal who can live or die do any of us feel guilt; only for one whose life is bound up with other lives and who must negotiate the power to injure, to kill and to sustain life, does guilt become an issue. (Butler, 2009, p. 46)

In Butler's (2009) view, guilt is necessary for social relationships because it guides us through our power to end or sustain life. Therefore, guilt is not inherently anthropocentric for two reasons. First, guilt is not rational; instead, it is a means of survival. Social relations are crucial for our existence because other beings can be threats to our existence but also allies in our survival. Guilt plays a part in establishing the distinction between those who support or threaten our survival. To claim that guilt is part of our survival instincts is not to reject the idea that guilt has a sociocultural and political component. *Who* we feel guilty towards is the product of our social relationships, but *the emotion* is pre-social. As Butler (2009) explains, guilt "is driven less by rational reflection than by the fear of death and the will to live" (p. 46).

The second reason why guilt connects us to non-human animals, rather than distinguishing us from them, is more complex. Butler (2009) describes "the *anthropos* as an animal seeking survival, but one whose survivability is a function of a frail and brokered sociality" (p. 46). Our social relations are problematic (e.g., systematic human oppression and exclusion), but they are

⁴² e.g., De Waal (2009).

necessary for our survival. It does not matter whether sociality is reciprocated; it is relations that are essential for our existence, not the objects and subjects with whom we engage in relationships. Therefore, it is irrelevant whether animals use other means for survival rather than sociability because human relationships with animals enable human existence.

Like guilt, grieving may be an anthropic act but this does not mean that one has to be human to be understood as grievable. The concept of grievability positions humans in certain cultural/ethnic/nationalist groups. Therefore, a deeper investigation of frameworks of grievability for non-human animals could offer insights into the construction of our identity as humans, as opposed to non-human animals. The idea of a shared ‘Australian’ identity is what enables kangaroos to be considered grievable. Kangaroos are seen as a crucial aspect of what makes Australia unique. Because ‘being Australian’ is a value Australians generally share, kangaroos fit into this values framework. By grieving some animals and not others, such as feral animals, an ‘Australian’ identity is formed. These values are at the same time essential—without them, ‘we’ in the sense of an Australian identity could not be—and arbitrary because kangaroo suffering is not inherently worse nor different than the suffering of other animals.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the proposal of turning kangaroos into a more significant food animal in Australia to demonstrate that animals are not seen as food animals for reasons that go beyond practical considerations. After all, the reasons for eating more kangaroos appear to be more reasonable than eating livestock animals. Rather, arguments against eating kangaroos are informed by diverse sentiments, including ideas of nationalism and identity, which is reflected in the literature and case studies presented in this chapter. Kangaroo lives are lives that should be led, as they have always been in the Australian landscape. In addition, the ‘Australianness’ of kangaroos has led to a recognition of shared identities of precarity with predominantly Anglo-Australians. To retain ‘Australian culture’, native animals need to be kept safe from outside threats, just like human Australian culture needs to be protected. However, the idea of ‘Australian culture’ is inherently problematic because Australia’s Indigenous peoples and non-White migrants have often been excluded from hegemonic narratives. The key figures in the commercial kangaroo industry *and* in the animal protection groups are predominantly settler Australians.

While kangaroos were culled long before Garnaut's proposal in 2008, it was Garnaut's proposal for kangaroos to play a more prominent role as food animals specifically that led to a national debate on the welfare of these animals. Implicitly, it is evident that hesitance to eat kangaroos depends on more than scientific reasoning alone. It is in the shift from animals that were both loved and hated to animals that 'we eat' that kangaroo lives are positioned as grievable lives and embody core values regarding what it means to be Australian. This is not to say that kangaroo lives became grievable lives *only* in the transitioning of their role to food animals. Instead, the shift in the role of the kangaroo in Australian society allows human Australians to (re-)consider their relationship with the kangaroo.

There has been a discrepancy between the campaigns for and against the commercial kangaroo industry and the affective value of kangaroos. The industry web pages and animal rights protection groups focus predominantly on offering scientific and supposedly objective reasons to strengthen their arguments. Pre-existing cultural values influence the public's stance on conservation issues more than the facts presented to the public (Jacobs, Vaske & Sijtsma, 2014). Engaging with the multiplicity of roles performed by kangaroos in Australian society could offer new ways of negotiating public positions on the kangaroo industry.

Food symbolises core values of cultural groups. While there are multiple rational reasons for not eating animals from moral, environmental and health perspectives, meat consumption has hardly decreased in more developed countries and is on the rise in most developing countries. At the same time, we do not eat *all* animals. This chapter has not considered *why we should not eat animals* but *why we do not eat certain animals* and more specifically, why there has been a hesitance to eat kangaroos. Rather than attempting to change the general acceptance of the eating certain animals to a refusal of eating all animals, more research regarding why certain animals are *not* eaten could offer possibilities of reframing the position of food animals in our moral frameworks. The controversy surrounding the commercial kangaroo industry proves that when it comes to animals, different values are at play. This case study demonstrates not only how nutritional edibility plays a role when it comes to the question of whether we can eat animals, but also ethics, cultural values and nationalist discourses. Thus, this chapter follows and contributes to a long tradition of scholarship on human-animal relations that argues that how humans view non-human animals reveals more about the construction of our own human identities and values than about the supposed nature and edibility of non-human animals. Keeping this in mind can help us to shape conversations

about animal lives. We could propose other ways of viewing animals that make us identify with them rather than merely classifying them as food objects.

Chapter 2: How to Kill Animals for Food? Religious Slaughtering in the Netherlands

Introduction

While it is not necessarily pleasant to think about, slaughtering is an essential step in turning animal bodies into meat. Because slaughtering is a key part of the meat industry *and* generally the most sensitive aspect of it, it is a frequently discussed topic. Most countries have strict laws concerning animal slaughtering to ensure both good animal welfare and food safety. The situation is no different for the Netherlands, the main country on which this chapter focuses.

Drivers of animal welfare are best understood within societal and cultural contexts and values. Culture, religion and animal welfare are not inherently exclusive. However, ensuring good animal welfare through regulation in multicultural societies is challenging when values related to certain practices differ. In addition, underlying tensions between different cultures, can—purposefully or unconsciously—derail discussions on animal welfare by placing cultural differences at the centre of these debates.

The question of how to kill food animals has drawn a lot of attention over the past decade in the Netherlands. Prior to 2008, animals had to be stunned before being slaughtered according to Dutch law. An exception existed for Kosher and Halal slaughtering, allowing Jewish and Muslim meat consumers to eat meat that was slaughtered according to their religious instructions. In 2008, Marianne Thieme, the founder and leader of the Party for the Animals [Partij voor de Dieren], filed a law change proposal to make all forms of un-stunned slaughtering illegal; Thieme's proposed law change would have effectively meant that Kosher and Halal slaughtering would not be possible anymore in the Netherlands. The Second Chamber (lower house) of the Dutch parliament voted in favour of Thieme's proposal but the First Chamber (upper house) refused to administer the law change, arguing that it would interfere with the constitutional right to the practice of religion. Subsequently, a covenant was put into place in 2012 to improve animal welfare in religious slaughtering while still allowing Dutch Jews and Muslims to follow their religious practices and requirements.

During the past decade, the ways in which religious slaughtering were described changed slowly but significantly in the Netherlands. At the start of this chapter, there is a need for a

clarification of multiple terms. This is partially due to the strict rules associated with religious slaughtering. These also vary in different countries due to different laws in place.

Because this chapter mainly focuses on religious slaughtering in the Netherlands, there are some translation choices, which require explanation. Thieme's law change concerned the stunning of animals before being killed. The word 'stunning' describes the process of ensuring the animal is not conscious while dying. For cows, this process is commonly done with a captive bolt to apply a blow to the head of the animal. This method ensures that the animal loses consciousness because the impact of the blow leads to brain trauma. Sheep and goats are stunned either by a blow to the head or an electric shock. Chickens are stunned through an electric shock, the use of carbon dioxide gas, or the use of an electrical water bath (Wakker Dier, n.d.). While 'stunning' describes these processes, in the Dutch language, this term does not directly translate. The terms that dominated during the first years were 'onverdoofd slachten', which translates to 'un-sedated slaughtering', and 'verdoofd slachten', which translates to 'sedated slaughtering'. While this translation may come across as peculiar because 'sedated' implies a sophisticated, friendly and possibly misleading approach towards the animals that are being slaughtered, this is the most accurate translation. The idea of 'sedation', rather than 'stunning', was presented as what happened to animals prior to being slaughtered for the non-religious consumer market. With time, the term 'bedwelmd' became more present in public dialogue, which translates to 'dazed'. For clarity, I will use the more common English term 'stunning' throughout this chapter.

This chapter explores how the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter illustrates how the killing of food animals becomes constructed as permissible, and what happens when norms of killing food animals are called into question. Arguing that the ethics of killing animals is rooted within broader cultural norms and values, this case study explores how Judaism, Islam and animals were approached in differently although intertwined ways in Dutch debates on un-stunned religious slaughtering *after* the covenant was put in place in 2012. While Thieme's proposal to ban all un-stunned religious slaughtering was drafted out of concern for animal welfare, it led to national debates on whether religious freedom or animal welfare should be prioritised in a secular and multicultural country. Identity and identity differences were at the core of these conversations. There was attention to the harm done during religious slaughter, and the broader meat industry and their slaughtering practices were also questioned. The role and place of religion in Dutch society became another topic of discussion. While Kosher and Halal slaughter regulations only differ slightly from each other, the position of Muslims and

Jews in the Netherlands are shaped by disparate histories, global and local politics and various factors. These differences were reflected in the discourses surrounding Kosher and Halal slaughter. In other words, human and non-human identities and ethics were constructed in relation to each other.

This chapter investigates the difference in perceptions of Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens held by non-Jewish and non-Muslims citizens and examines how it affected how Kosher and Halal slaughtering were treated in the debate that sparked from Thieme's proposed law change and the covenant that followed Thieme's proposal. These differing discourses demonstrate that while animal welfare is an important and current topic of concern, understandings of animal welfare are shaped by much more than animals alone. There was a parallel development of the articulation of pre-existing ideas on cultures which fuelled the debate and the debate fuelled stereotypes. The debate revealed several common interests between shared between secular and religious Dutch groups, although these were overshadowed by narratives of 'Othering'.

Contextualisation of Debate

The following section will first outline religious slaughtering guidelines. The following sections will position practices of religious slaughter against the background of broader beliefs and practices in societies, with specific attention to the European debate on religious slaughter. I will then outline the Dutch law changes that have fuelled the Dutch debate on religious slaughter and provide some context about Dutch multicultural developments in the period in which this debate took place.

Religious slaughtering guidelines

For the meat to be Halal or Kosher, there are several requirements in the process of meat production. The species of animal matters. For example, pork is by definition not Halal (Chandia & Soon, 2018, p. 715). Halal and Kosher meat production both require the animals to be killed humanely and deliberately. In Islam, this requirement means that the animals should have "full access to feed and water before slaughter" (Farouk et al., 2014, pp. 506–507). Animals must be alive during the slaughtering process and killed by a stroke across the neck by a sharp knife. For Kosher meat, this needs to be a single stroke performed by a Jewish

Chalaf.⁴³ Halal meat requires the butcher to be Muslim, a practicing Jew, or a Christian. The name of God needs to be mentioned during the slaughtering because:

It is a declaration on the part of the slaughterer that his act is not an act of aggression against the universe nor of oppression of the creature about to be slaughtered, but simply an act necessitated by a need fulfilled in the name of God. (Farouk et al., 2014, p. 506)

There is a significant overlap between Kosher and Halal requirements. Generally Kosher meat demands slightly stricter procedures than Halal meat. Because of this, Kosher meat is generally accepted as Halal, while Halal meat does not qualify as Kosher meat.

The state of consciousness during the slaughter process is generally the most contested part of Kosher and Halal slaughtering. Kosher guidelines are stricter than Halal guidelines. While Halal slaughtering requirements prefer animals to be conscious during the slaughtering process, reversible forms of stunning before slaughtering are accepted and practiced in certain countries and among certain groups of Muslims (Farouk et al., 2014, p. 507; Lerner, 2006; Silver, 2011). Islam is practiced in many countries, and there are diverse approaches towards stunning animals prior to slaughtering. One of the reasons that religious authorities have become more lenient about slaughtering guidelines is that in multiple countries it is impossible to follow traditional rules that forbid all forms of stunning while abiding by national laws and legislation, particularly in multicultural countries. However, necessity is not always the reason that stunning is accepted. For example, Malaysia—a predominantly Muslim country—stuns animals before slaughtering them (Jalil et al., 2018).⁴⁴ Other Islamic countries, such as Pakistan, do not stun (Chandia & Soon, 2018). Generally, slaughtering animals while they are conscious is preferred in Islam (Farouk et al., 2014, p. 507). Instructions for Kosher slaughtering are less diverse. If the animal was stunned prior or post cutting, the majority of Kosher authorities will reject the meat as Kosher (Farouk et al., 2014, p. 507), because, for meat to be Kosher, the animals must die from *bleeding* to death after being cut. Stunning does not guarantee this and could lead to interference in the bleeding out of the animal. The animal must also be uninjured

⁴³ A *Chalaf* is a Jewish man who trained and studied to slaughter animals according to Kosher guidelines. (Silver, 2011).

⁴⁴ Malaysia permits stunning of food animals before slaughtering but some rules must be followed to ensure that it can still be considered Halal. Examples of rules are that the equipment must be handled by trained or certified Muslim slaughtermen and/or supervisors, the stunning has to be temporary and should not kill or cause permanent damage to the animal and the stunning material cannot have ever been used on pigs (Jalil et al., 2018).

before it is slaughtered. Because penetrative captive bolts (which are the most commonly used tool for stunning animals prior to slaughtering) shatter the skull, the animal would by definition not be Kosher following this act. Under certain conditions, post-slaughter stunning is allowed (Silver, 2011).

While Islam is generally a little more flexible than Judaism when it comes to permitting stunning of animals before slaughter, it should be recognised that both religions are ubiquitous and followed by large numbers of people. Islam has roughly 1.5 billion followers worldwide and Judaism has approximately 14 million (worldometers.info, n.d.). With these many followers and both religions having followers spread all over the world, diversity between followers of both religions is extensive. Therefore, approaches and preferences regarding slaughter methods are not cohesive among followers of Islam and Judaism because some will follow rules stricter than others. However, this diversity does not make the debate less relevant or important. The debate on un-stunned religious slaughter may affect only a small group of people directly, but it touches issues and topics that go beyond merely animal welfare, such as questions of multiculturalism and tolerance. This chapter looks at the affective and political responses that the debate produced. It asks the question: what values and understandings are implied in discussions surrounding religious slaughtering about the people that partake in the debate?

Religious slaughtering within the Europe

Within the European Union, both Kosher and Halal slaughter have been common practices for centuries, and un-stunned religious slaughtering is permitted. During various points in the 19th and 20th centuries, several developments led to bans in some countries on religious slaughter in Europe. These bans intersect with increasing interest in animal welfare as well as increasing anti-Semitic sentiments in Europe (Mittendorf, 2017, p. 288). In the 1960s the majority of European countries mandated that animals should be stunned prior to slaughter. While Muslims resided in Europe in the 1960s and prior, it was not until the 1970s that Muslim migration to Europe increased significantly and countries started to allow exceptions for un-stunned religious slaughter in the 1970s and 1980s. The intensifications and increase of the global food exchange in the 1990s, led to further legislation allowing religious slaughtering practices, including slaughter without stunning the animal (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2007).

Currently, there are two pieces of legislation in the European Union related to practices of religious slaughtering. Article 9 of the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* states the Freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Article 9 protects Freedom of religion but also notes that

Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. ("European Convention on Human Rights," 2021, p. 4)

In other words, freedom of religion is protected under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms, but this right does not transcend other rights that protect democracy and the rights and freedoms of others.

The *Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing* is the second piece of legislation that covers the practices of religious slaughter in Europe. The regulation forbids slaughter without pre-stunning but includes a clause which acknowledges:

... it is important that derogation from stunning animals prior to slaughter should be maintained, leaving, however, a certain level of subsidiarity to each Member State. As a consequence, this Regulation respects the freedom of religion and the right to manifest religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance (Council of the European Union, 2009).

While the general legislation does not allow for slaughter without pre-stunning in the European Union, individual states have the freedom to allow slaughter without stunning if this is done for religious reasons.

Differences exist within Europe regarding their take up on the possibility to allow un-stunned religious slaughter. Some European countries have chosen to forbid un-stunned religious slaughter by law on a national level (Chandia & Soon, 2018, p. 719). Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Slovenia and Iceland are examples of European countries that do not make any exceptions in their laws regarding slaughtering animals by religious groups (Lerner & Rabello, 2006, p. 14; The Law Library of Congress, 2018; Mittendorf, 2017, Zoethout, 2013). In Liechtenstein and Switzerland, poultry can be slaughtered without stunning for religious

reasons but this exception is not allowed for other animals (The Law Library of Congress, 2018, p. 20). Germany does not allow un-stunned slaughtering for Halal meat but does make an exception for Kosher slaughter practices (Lerner & Rabello, 2006, p. 37). Poland currently allows un-stunned religious slaughter, as it deemed to be an important part of religious freedom, but briefly banned it from 2013 until 2014 due to animal welfare concerns (Mittendorf, 2017, p. 288). Countries such as France, Spain, and Italy do allow non-stunning slaughter practices.

Religious slaughtering in the Netherlands

Prior to the covenant enacted in 2012, Article 44 of Dutch law (put in place in 1992) prescribed that animals had to be ‘dazed’ or ‘stunned’ before the act of slaughter took place. Slaughter without dazing or sedating was allowed from 1996 if the slaughter process follows Jewish or Islamic slaughtering rites, after Article 44 was amended.

The debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering restarted in the Netherlands in 2008. It was in this year that Dutch politician Marianne Thieme, the leader of the Dutch Party for the Animals, filed a law change proposal. The law change aimed to “add to the third section [of Article 44] a mandatory pre-slaughter stunning to the provision that allows the slaughtering of animals according to Israelite or Islamic rite” (Thieme, 2008, p. 11)⁴⁵ and remove from the eight sections of Article 44 the phrase that specified that stunning was not mandatory for religious slaughtering.

To pass a law or law change in the Netherlands, it first has to be accepted by the First and Second Chamber. If a majority of the Second Chamber votes in favour of the law, the First Chamber will then review the law change and vote. Thieme’s proposal passed the Second Chamber in 2011 with 116 out of 150 votes supporting it. While a large majority of the Second Chamber voted in favour of Thieme’s law change, it was rejected in the First Chamber with 51 votes against and 21 votes supporting it (eerstekamer.nl, n.d.).

The discrepancy between the results in the Second Chamber and the First Chamber can be explained by several developments in the period between when the votes occurred. When Thieme’s proposal was submitted to the Second Chamber, she positioned it as a law change that focused on matters of animal welfare, in line with her party’s general objectives. Its aim

⁴⁵ Original: “derde lid wordt een verplichte voorafgaande bedwelming toegevoegd aan de bepaling die toestaat om dieren te slachten volgens Israëlitische of islamitische ritus” (Thieme, 2008, p. 11).

and result were said to be reducing animal suffering during the final moments of their lives. Soon, however, concerns concerning the freedom to practice religion arose. Concerns for freedom of religion were part of the debate which Thieme sparked from the start; the Second Chamber pressured Thieme to adjust the law change to specify that the stunning could be temporary to still respect Halal and Kosher guidelines. After the amendment, the Second Chamber accepted Thieme's proposal and the First Chamber voted on it approximately one year later (van der Schyff, 2013).

In the year after the Second Chamber accepted the law change, there was an increase in public attention about the implications on Muslim and Jewish meat-eaters in the Netherlands. Secretary of State Henk Bleker, who was part of the Christian Democratic Party, aimed to find a solution that was a compromise between both the freedom to practice religion and an increase in animal welfare during the slaughtering process. To achieve this, between the year after the Second Chamber voted for Thieme's law change and the First Chamber's vote, he began to work on a covenant. Bleker's strategy to overcome the division between animal welfare and religious freedom was to sit down with several parties involved to reach an agreement that allowed for both an increase in animal welfare without taking away the freedom to practice religion (Bleker, Westgeest, Bal, Hartog & Vis, 2012, p. 1). Bleker presented the covenant before the First Chamber voted on Thieme's law change proposal.

Because the covenant offered a conciliatory alternative to Thieme's supposedly divisive proposal, the First Chamber voted against the law change and instead supported Bleker's covenant. Bleker's covenant still permitted un-stunned religious slaughtering, but brought in several changes to existing practices such as requiring the presence of a veterinarian during the slaughtering process, ensuring that the animal dies within 40 seconds or else the veterinarian must kill the animal, and stipulating that animals have to be selected based on overall weight and size of their necks. In addition, the covenant was supposed to be a work-in-progress. Its agreements were assessed by all of the involved parties, including independent animal welfare researchers, to ensure a continuation of improvement of the welfare of animals being slaughtered over time (Bleker et al., 2012).

While the covenant attempted to bring all of the involved parties together, it received considerable criticism. Thieme thought it was not radical enough because the animals that are killed according religious guidelines still suffer more than they would during regular slaughter practices. The Royal Dutch Veterinary society [Koninklijke Nederlandse Maatschappij voor

Diergeneeskunde (KNMvD)] expressed their wish that the religious groups be more open towards different forms of stunning such as reversible stunning or stunning immediately after the cut. The Jewish community also grew increasingly more dissatisfied with the new arrangements. When the chair of the KNMvD, Ludo Hellebrekers, was appointed, the Jewish community pointed towards his past statements in which he displayed preference for prioritising animal welfare over religious freedom in the debate on religious slaughtering. Further, within the Jewish community, there was a debate over who should represent Dutch Jewish citizens. Bleker worked together with the Dutch Israeli Denomination [Nederlands Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap (NIK)] when drafting the covenant. Rabbi Lody Van De Kamp critiqued Bleker's choice, arguing he should have consulted the Council for Kosher Slaughter [Raad voor de Koosjere Slacht (RKS)] (Janssen, 2014) instead. Despite the various critiques, the covenant was put in place and remains in force.

This chapter examines what happened after Bleker's covenant was enacted. It considers how Dutch religious groups that were affected by the changes—Muslim and Jewish Dutch citizens—were portrayed in national media. Both groups were affected in a similar manner; the changes applied to both groups equally. However, both groups experienced the consequences differently. In addition, the representation of the groups with regard to the practice of religious slaughtering differed in media discourses. By examining the differences in the portrayal of Dutch Jewish and Muslim people, this chapter exposes how debates on animal welfare simultaneously affect intra-human relations.

Multiculturalism in the Netherlands

The Netherlands has long histories of multiculturalism that cannot be summarised in a few paragraphs. The next section focuses on recent developments in the Netherlands to contextualise the Dutch debate on un-stunned religious slaughter. While the Netherlands was a “relatively content and secure welfare state in the 1990s, in which the Dutch consensus-model embraced cultural diversity” (de Leeuw & van Wichelen, 2014, p. 349), the country has slowly transformed to one in which cultural Others are increasingly perceived as a threat to national values. These developments were complex and created considerable polarisation. On the one hand, growing intolerance can be interpreted as a reaction to insecurities caused by various societal and political changes that followed from globalisation, financial crises, and events such as terrorist attacks. On the other hand, the emergence of political parties that express populist ideals offered a space in which already existing discontent could be expressed more freely

(Maris, 2018, pp. 398-400). Within these populist narratives, Islam has been particularly perceived to be incompatible with the Enlightenment values that are considered to be at the core of Dutch society (de Leeuw & van Wichelen, 2014, pp. 343–344).⁴⁶ Several populist political parties made these sorts of claims and hence fed into these feelings of discontent (Aouragh, 2014; de Leeuw & van Wichelen, 2014), while activists have fought to counter these negative narratives (Aouragh, 2014).

The position of Jewish Dutch people in the Netherlands is complex. There is a history of tension between the Netherlands' reputation of being tolerant and the treatment of Dutch Jewish people.⁴⁷ After the Shoah, traces of antisemitism persisted in the Netherlands. During the 1980s, antisemitic remarks found their way into public discourse through rivalry between professional football clubs.⁴⁸ In 2000, antisemitic slogans were adopted by Moroccan youth in reaction to the Palestinians' resistance to Israel (Gans, 2014). The relationship between antisemitism and Islam is multifaceted and arguably involves more than expressions of hate. It demonstrates the complicated relationships between new immigrants and identification with broader cultural values that are both historical *and* global (Gans, 2014).

Overall while Islamophobia has been more apparent in Dutch society than antisemitism, members of both communities have experienced discrimination. Further, tensions between both groups can be contextualised both locally and globally. Competing narratives of integration led to local tensions between both communities. The Gaza conflict also contributed to frictions between both groups. However, the relationship between Dutch Muslim and Jewish citizens cannot be merely defined in terms of conflict and incompatibility. As this chapter shows,

⁴⁶ These types of claims are reflected, for example, in the Dutch integration exams for immigrating imams and their partners. Part of this exam is a film entitled *Coming to the Netherlands*, in which Dutch values such as female emancipation, acceptance of same sex relationships, separation of church and state and freedom to practice *all* religions are presented in contrast to honour killings, female circumcision and domestic violence. The exemption for migrants from the EU, EEC, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, South Korea and the US from the integration exams underscores that the 'lessons' from these exams are predominantly focused on Muslim migrants (de Leeuw & van Wichelen, 2014).

⁴⁷ This trend can be traced back to the Second World War. Dutch historian Evelien Gans (2014) explained that "the contrast between the image of Dutch tolerance and the high number of Jewish deportees has created the notion of the 'Dutch paradox' ... the Jews in Holland might have been more integrated than elsewhere, but still less than they (or others) thought" (p. 77).

⁴⁸ Due to its many Jewish supporters, the Amsterdam football club Ajax had a Jewish image. During competitions, slogans such as "They have forgotten to gas you" were not uncommon (Gans, 2014, p. 72).

cultural groups cannot be understood in homogenous terms. In addition, relationships between different cultural groups in the Netherlands are complex and dynamic.

Previous Research

Due to recent growing attention to religious slaughter, these practices have received considerable attention in media, politics, and academic scholarship. This section discusses previous research and academic literature on religious slaughtering, and how this literature relates to the changing status of food animals in human societies.

Human geographer Mara Miele has undertaken extensive research on Halal slaughter in Europe, and positions the debate within broader developments within the relationships between humans and animals. While humans and animals used to live closely together, animals used for their products have been physically and psychologically distanced from humans in Europe for at least the past five decades. Simultaneously, new relationships have formed between humans and their pet companions, as they are living closer together than ever before (Miele, 2016, p. 57). As different types of relationships between human and non-human animals formed, human–animal relationships have arguably become more complicated. People form extremely close relationships with certain animals but are at the same time far removed from the suffering of animal labour for human profit and consumption.⁴⁹

Extensive scholarship explores the development of changing human-animal relations, and specifically relations between humans and food animals. Adrian Franklin (1999) offers a comprehensive exploration of changing human-animal relations, and argues that the turn of the twentieth century is especially relevant for slaughter practices. Franklin identifies several key developments that contributed to a transformation of the role of food animals in human societies. The rise of “a more progressive, corporate and powerful capitalism” (Franklin, 1999, p. 42) is what distinguishes the twentieth century from the previous one. Developments within capitalism also affected human-animal relations. The role of food animals became increasingly paradoxical; humans were becoming more aware of the sentience of animals, but products derived from food animals were increasingly seen as “the result of considerable human effort” (Franklin, 1999, p. 44). In other words, while concern for animal welfare grew during the

⁴⁹ e.g., Wolfe (2013), Herzog (2011), Braidotti (2013), Miele (2016, p. 58) and Kymlicka and Donaldson (2014).

twentieth century, these levels of care did not necessarily extend to food animals. The spatial separation between humans and food animals contributed to this tendency.

Harriet Ritvo's (2004) work on human-animal histories identifies similar patterns. She recognizes that while food animals were part of city life until the late nineteenth century, farming had become a rural practice by the start of the twentieth century in most of Europe. In addition, Franklin identifies an extra step in the food production chain: the slaughterhouse became separated from the farm. Farms became constructed as places of care and nurture that reminded people of a simpler, honest life, associated with pre-modern times. Slaughterhouses represented the opposite. Slaughterhouses became symbols for modern rationalism in which production was central. It was in these slaughterhouses that stunning became a central part of the killing process (Franklin, 1999; Miele, 2013). Miele (2016) details how these changes led to new standards within the European meat production industry. Nowadays, several conditions have to be fulfilled before an animal is deemed killable. One of these conditions is that the animal will not feel pain and is unconscious during the killing process for the act of slaughter to be deemed acceptable rather than cruel (Miele, 2016, pp. 55–56).

Miele (2013) explores how these changes in Western food production have led to conflicts in religious and secular values regarding animal slaughter. Prior to the twentieth century, differences between religious slaughter and 'regular' slaughter existed predominantly in acts of prayer and the religion of the slaughterer. During this time, all animals were slaughtered without stunning as the techniques for stunning had not yet been developed (Miele, 2013). When stunning techniques were introduced in the twentieth century, the secular goals of the meat industry such as "producing optimum amount of meat of the best quality in the shortest time" (Burt, as cited in Miele, 2013, p. 421) started to contribute to a different understanding of desirable meat production than religious meat production and consumption did. Stunning techniques were framed as "the higher standard of modern civilization" (Muller, as cited in Miele, 2013, p. 421), and in contrast, not stunning, as Kosher and Halal guidelines prescribe, were seen to imply archaic and backward values.

While animal welfare is now a key value for meat consumers, how animal welfare is understood is highly dependent on historical, cultural and technological developments. Through an examination of slaughter practices, Miele (2016) elaborates on differences in what methods are deemed to be acceptable. Visiting a Halal slaughterhouse in Egypt, Miele found that within Egyptian Muslim culture, three key points determine whether killing is acceptable. The species

of the animal matters because Islam only allows certain animals to be food but not others. Respect needs to be paid to the animal. The ritual aspects and prayer are key. Finally, human contact in the form of the slaughter man provides responsibility and care towards the animal. In short, slaughtering becomes acceptable by showing care for the animal in the form of human contact and respect. In England, Miele observed three other values regarding slaughter. Suffering is addressed through science. Suffering is reduced with the help of technologies, especially in the form of stunning. Finally, slaughter has been mechanised to increase efficiency and standardisation. Hence minimising animal suffering through science and technology makes the killing of animals for food acceptable. While Miele's examples discuss Egyptian and British slaughter practices and not Dutch practices, they clearly explain what motivations drive certain practices. In addition, Miele's research is valuable in that it demonstrates that both approaches have aspects of care involved, even if care is practiced in different manners. Miele's work gives a good example of how different approaches are legitimised through divergent explanations that are contextualised within cultural, societal, industrial and technological values. Similar to Miele's and Ritvo's research, this chapter does not aim to determine which approach is more (or less) animal-friendly when it comes to slaughtering animals. Instead, it explores what values underlie currently accepted procedures of killing food animals, and what happens when these are called into question.

Much research has been undertaken on animal welfare in the context of practices of stunned and un-stunned slaughtering, mainly within the veterinary sciences. Different researchers have come to different conclusions. Some scholars have concluded that slaughter without stunning by definition poses the largest risk of animal suffering during the slaughtering process (e.g., Kijlstra & Lambooj, 2008; Von Holleben et al., 2010). Others have argued for the development of new techniques that will enable stunning without going against religious prescriptions (e.g., Cenci-Goga et al., 2013). Other scholars have argued that un-stunned slaughter is not by definition negative for animal welfare. Strict guidelines during the slaughter process can ensure the least amount of stress possible on animals when they are slaughtered without stunning (e.g., Grandin & Regenstein, 1994; Rosen, 2004). While this type of research makes a valuable contribution to debates on religious slaughter, this project is not motivated by a desire to determine whether un-stunned religious slaughter is acceptable or not. Instead, this project aims to explore why this relatively short moment in food animals' lives has become the focus of such widespread discussions, and how these discussions fit within the broader Dutch societal context.

Several scholars have examined the question of religious slaughtering from a legal angle. For example, social scientists Mahmood Chandia and Jan Mei Soon (2018) offer an overview of legal and religious understandings of Halal guidelines. They argue that due to the diversity of Islamic groups, there are internal differences regarding whether to consider meat from animals to be Halal if the animal is stunned prior to, or after, being killed. They conclude that these differences will have effects on the global meat trade and have to be considered carefully to meet consumer demands. Chandia and Soon's work is valuable for this project because it offers an important reminder that within debates on religious slaughter, the difference within religious groups should be acknowledged.

Gerhard van der Schyff (2013) and Anna Joseph (2016) focus on the Dutch debate on religious slaughter and see the covenant as a useful step towards enabling a reduction in animal suffering without infringing on religious minorities' rights. While van der Schyff (2013) and Joseph (2016) place the emphasis on to what extent freedom of religious practices need to be protected, Paul Lerner and Alfredo Rabello (2006) broaden the argument by investigating how animals fit into frames of legal rights. They argue that in multicultural societies, 'the religious slaughter ban does nothing by way of separating church and state, but rather has the sole effect of restricting the basic freedoms of minorities' (Lerner & Rabello, 2006, p. 21) and that it would be more productive to think of obligations of humans towards animals, rather than in terms of rights⁵⁰ that prevent animals from harm being done to them. Lerner and Rabello (2006) conclude that while reducing animal suffering is a noble and worthwhile goal, nation-states should make efforts to ensure an increase in animal welfare that is compatible with religious groups' rights to practice their faiths.

As demonstrated, considerable conversation has occurred within academia regarding whether exceptions should be made in legislation of animal welfare to accommodate the freedom to practice religion. This chapter argues that there is more at stake than merely the legality of slaughtering animals without being stunned before, during or after the act of killing. Broader issues such as cultural differences, multiculturalism and animal welfare are intertwined within these narratives. Sustainability scholars Laura Kurth and Pieter Glasbergen (2017) discuss how

⁵⁰ Lerner and Rabello (2006) make the distinction between 'natural rights' and 'positive rights' (p.25), but for further discussion on the complexity of the concept of 'rights', see Dembour (2010). Wolfe's (2013) and Derrida's (2002) work on the exclusion of non-human animals in frameworks of 'rights' as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis are also worth considering, although their approaches differ from Lerner's and Rabello's (2006).

a small law change by a party with only two seats in parliament could lead to extensive nationwide discussion. While food consumption is usually a private matter, Thieme's bill forced these decisions into the public sphere, which enabled broader questions to become part of the discussion, especially regarding multiculturalism in secular society.

In addition, my previous research (Wijnandts, 2014) discussed how the question of un-stunned religious slaughtering evolved from being about animal welfare to about ethics and culture. I argue that in the course of both the political and public debate, animal rights and non-hegemonic Dutch cultures became positioned as antagonistic and incompatible. Therefore, the debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering uncovered a neo-imperial way of thinking about non-Western cultures. Janine Janssen (2014) draws a similar conclusion, but from a criminology perspective, arguing about the importance of taking groups on both sides seriously in order to facilitate constructive debate about the matter.

This chapter contributes to existing research by discussing the implications of the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter on human and non-human identities. When norms of killing animals were questioned, cultural difference became highlighted. While certain parties who were involved pushed towards emphasising cultural differences in an antagonistic manner, this chapter reveals how commonalities also arose in the debate. In addition, it allows for new ways of thinking about non-human animals. Where food animals were often positioned as being 'outside' of human society, the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter offered new ways of relating between human and non-human animals. First, rather than determining the 'best' way to kill animals, this chapter argues that assuming a 'best' way, repeats narratives of hierarchies in civilisation. Following from this, this chapter illustrates how the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter highlights underlying tensions of xenophobia within a supposedly multicultural and tolerant society.

Theoretical Framework

Within the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, the main focus was on the welfare of animals during the last moments of their lives. The question that was posed within these debates was not *whether* animals should be killed for human consumption, but *how* this should happen. Generally, humans harming non-human animals is tolerated in most societies, but under varying conditions. Sociologists Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel (1998) argue that animal harm is normalised by contextualising it in a certain manner. Species, the reason for doing harm,

the social location of the human actor, the method used to cause the suffering of the animal, and the location in which the practice takes place help determine what behaviours of humans towards animals are accepted (Elder et al., 1998, pp. 84–85).

Different approaches towards the treatment of animals do not mean that one party is by definition better than others, although these narratives had formed within the debate on unstunned religious slaughter. The introduction of this thesis proposed the concept of *animal-linked racialisation* to explain how animal bodies can be used as instruments in larger conflicts regarding cultural conflict and critiques (e.g., Elder et al., 1998; Huggan & Tiffin, 2010). In the case of religious slaughter, the ways in which cultural minorities slaughter animals differently from the hegemonic industries is used to underline radical differences between cultures to the extent that the hegemonic culture is not only different but *better* than religious minorities. It is by emphasising the importance of the animals' lives that the lives of those who differ from the norm are being degraded.

The link between animal welfare and human cultures has also been explored from feminist and posthuman perspectives. Various scholars have identified long histories of discourses in which a separation of the human and natural world is connected to standards of civilisation. Being human was equated to being not only separated from nature, but also in control of it. Within these narratives, white men were designated as the superior species, while women and non-European people were deemed to be more on par with non-human animals. These hierarchies were used to enforce and legitimise the oppression of certain groups of people—women and non-Europeans—by others, predominantly white, heterosexual men of high social standing (Cudworth & Hobden, 2014; Lloyd, 1984; Plumwood, 1993). In their paper entitled “Civilisation and the Domination of the Animal”, Erika Cudworth and Stephen Hobden (2014) explore the work of Norbert Elias, who identifies historical narratives in which European civilisation and industrialisation were linked to growth of animal welfare concerns and decrease in violence in animal welfare. Elias, however, rejects these claims, and argues instead that violence against animals did not decrease but was merely “hidden out of sight” (Cudworth & Hobden, 2014, p. 756). This analysis is particularly relevant for the case study of religious slaughter. As this chapter will show, narratives of civilisation, cultural difference, animal welfare, and the separation of (certain) animal suffering from consumers are present within Dutch discourses on religious slaughter.

This chapter examines how animal-linked racialisation is present within narratives regarding un-stunned religious slaughter. Specifically, it considers how Muslim and Jewish Dutch citizens were portrayed differently within the debate and how both were portrayed differently with regards to their places within Dutch society. While this chapter focuses on showing that animal-linked racialisation occurred, I do not mean to imply that debates on animal welfare should be ignored within multicultural societies. Animal welfare philosophers Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson (2014) argue that excluding animals from left-winged politics out of fear of animal-linked racialisation can actually do more harm than good in multicultural societies. They claim that debates about animal rights have come to a standstill because of this kind of exclusion (Kymlicka & Donaldson, 2014). Rather than minorities defending their practices in terms of animal welfare, they compare them to practices of the majority, which prevent critical engagement with animal welfare practices. However, it is important that the left is willing to take an intersectional approach towards animal welfare. While an intersectional approach towards animal welfare and cultural context includes challenges, it certainly is not impossible. Kymlicka and Donaldson (2014) argue that “mainstream feminist, gay, disability, or anti-poverty groups have faced their own accusations of performing whiteness and have undergone wrenching internal debates to include racial minorities in their work” (p. 123). While inclusion of and alliance with racial minorities in these political groups are often a work-in-progress, important steps forward have been taken. The same can be done for animal welfare activism and politics.

In this chapter, the aim is not to say that debates on un-stunned religious slaughter should not occur. Putting animal welfare on the political agenda is important for various reasons. Animals play an important role in our societies, economies and industries. Public interest in animal welfare is increasing and there appears to be general recognition that animals are deemed worthy of decent living conditions.⁵¹ In addition, avoiding the issue of animal welfare to avoid

⁵¹ While most people would agree that animals deserve fair living conditions, the terms on which their welfare should be managed and ensured vary significantly. Franklin (1999) sees the 20th century as a key period in which animal rights were included in mainstream debate and discourse as illustrated in the inclusion of welfare within legal and institutional frameworks. Yet the way in which animal welfare is understood is not uniform. Think of scholars such as Herzog (2011) and Braidotti (2013) who distinguish how people differentiate between different animals. They identify three groups of animals: animals people love, animals people eat and animals people hate. Each category of animals is generally assigned different levels of human care and standards of welfare. ‘Welfare’ also is not an uncontested standard. As this chapter shows regarding slaughter, welfare can be understood in very different ways by different groups of people.

stigmatisation of minorities does more than simply imply that minorities are less concerned about animal rights than dominant cultures. Not discussing animal welfare from a multicultural angle will also limit progress in animal welfare understandings. Only when hegemonic norms are challenged, which often happens in debates between different groups, can practices that are taken for granted be challenged.

While Elder, Wolch and Emel, (1998) and Huggan, and Tiffin (2010) did not frame the concept of animal-linked racialisation in posthuman terms, animal-linked racialisation reflects many posthuman values. First, it critically examines ethics, and underlines that ethics are not given but partake in broader discourses. Second, the framework of animal-linked racialisation is a valuable tool to examine how human and non-human identities, and the values that are central to this, are mutually constructed. Throughout the analysis, a posthuman lens will be applied alongside the framework of animal-linked racialisation.

Research Methods

The main body of this chapter focuses on empirical research data and analysis informed by theory. Thieme's law change proposal from 2008 is taken as the starting point of this research. To determine how this proposal was taken up in public discourse, I critically analyse newspaper reports based on the proposed legal change, along with developments, responses and sentiments about the change.⁵²

I collected newspaper data with the use of the LexisNexis Uni database, which offers access to a large international news archive and Dutch newspaper sources. Because of Dutch grammar, the spelling of words can change slightly depending on the position of the words in a sentence, whether the terms were used in plural or singular form and the verb conjugation. Using exclamation marks—as a truncation to replace more than one letter at the end of a search term—

⁵² In addition to newspaper articles, government documents were also analysed. To obtain the relevant legal documents, I accessed the Dutch Law Bank. This is an online database that is freely accessible through <https://wetten.overheid.nl/>. The government documents regarding the political debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering were found through the Dutch government website www.rijksoverheid.nl. By looking for 'ritueel slachten' in the search option of the website, I found 20 documents such as proposed covenants, written responses and reviews of research on animal welfare. I searched for documents that were published since 2012 because this was the scope of the research in this chapter. Between 2012 and 2018, 20 government documents related to religious slaughtering in the Netherlands were published. Transcripts of meetings on these documents, such as the First Chamber vote on Thieme's law change and Bleker's covenant, were not considered. However, while these documents help to inform a timeline of events, their content did not lead to any new insights which contributed to the analysis offered in this chapter.

ensured that no results were missed. The word for slaughtering according to Jewish principles can be spelled in three different manners—‘Kosher’, ‘Kosjer’ and ‘Koosjer’. The asterisk, which can replace a single letter, allowed for the inclusion of different types of spelling of the word Kosher. Therefore, the search terms included all three forms. Multiple terms for religious slaughtering were also included in the searches. Paralleling the government documents, I searched for articles published between 2012 and 2018, which aligned with the start and aftermath of Bleker’s covenant. The following search terms were used to ensure that no articles were missed:

Ritue! Slacht! [Ritual Slaughter]

Religieu! Slacht! [Religious Slaughter]

Onverdo! Slacht! [Un-stunned Slaughter]

Halal slacht! [Halal Slaughter]

Kos*er slacht! [Kos*er Slaughter]

Koosjer slacht! [Kosher Slaughter]

Because various search terms were used, articles appeared multiple times in my data results because they came up in different searches. I ordered the search result in a document to ensure that sources were not counted multiple times. I did not include articles from Flemish news sources or Dutch articles about religious slaughtering in other countries in the final results. Articles that focused on foreign developments regarding religious slaughter, but discussed it in relation to Dutch circumstances, were included in my data.

Content Analysis

The data collection of news articles led to the identification of 425 separate articles. Almost half discussed religious slaughtering in general (201 articles) without focusing specifically on Kosher or Halal slaughter (see Figure 1). The remaining articles led to an almost even divide on articles focusing on either Halal (116 articles) or Kosher slaughter (108 articles).

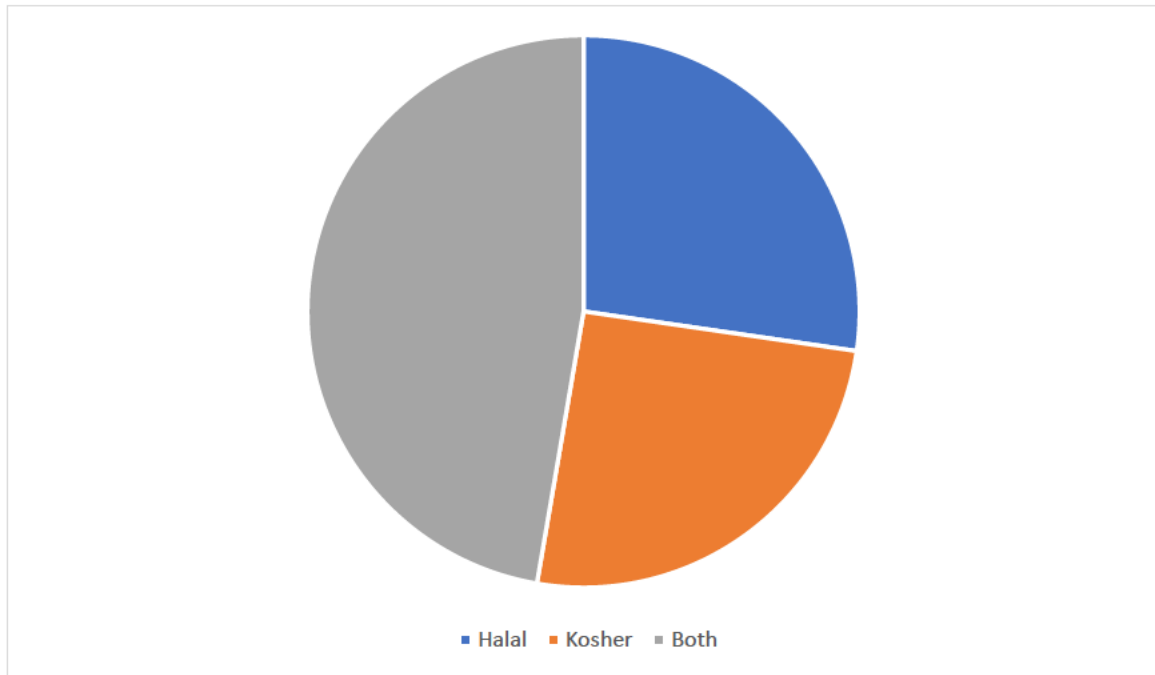


Figure 1: Proportion of News Articles that Mentioned Religious Slaughter

Note: Halal (116/425; 27.3%), Kosher slaughter (108/425; 25.4%), Both (201/425;47.3%).

An examination of mentions of religious slaughter during 2012–2018 revealed clear differences in the number of articles per annum (see Figure 2). Most mentions of religious slaughtering in the news occurred in 2012. In 2018, there was a rise in reports on religious slaughter.

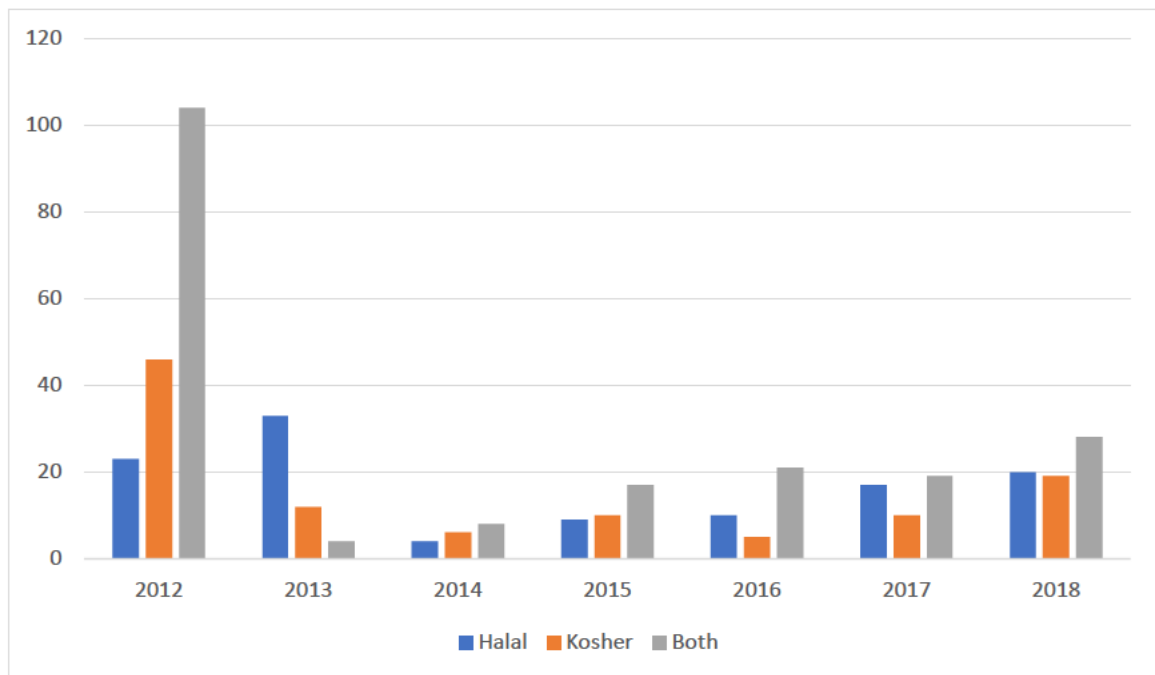


Figure 2: Overview of Yearly Mentions of Kosher and Halal Slaughter 2012–2018

Note: 2012: Halal n = 23, Kosher n = 46, both n = 104. 2013: Halal n = 33, Kosher n = 12, both n = 4. 2014: Halal n = 4, Kosher n = 6, both n = 8. 2015: Halal n = 9, Kosher n = 10, both n = 17. 2016: Halal n = 10, Kosher n = 5, both n = 21. 2017: Halal n = 17, Kosher n = 10, both n = 19. 2018: Halal n = 20, Kosher n = 19, both n = 28.

The significant number of articles in 2012 can be related to the First Chamber's voting on Thieme's law proposal in that year. In 2017 and 2018, the covenant that was put into place in 2012 was revisited, which led to an increase in media attention.

I identified several general trends in the material. These trends were identified from reading the news articles and ordering them in an Excel file. Each article was tagged as addressing Halal, Kosher or both forms of religious slaughter. I also added 1-2 sentence summaries to each article, which allowed for an overview of the themes in the articles and if relevant, extracted quotes from the articles to complement the summaries. Because the research is predominantly quantitative, I then went back to the articles that addressed certain themes for the analysis. Animal welfare was one of the regularly addressed topics. Several articles framed this in terms of pain and suffering during the slaughter process. Other articles connected animal welfare in religious slaughter practices to the general meat industry. Further, religious slaughtering was often discussed in the context of broader food issues such as transparency of meat production and sale.

Tensions resulting from cultural differences were another key reoccurring theme. While Kosher and Halal slaughter received almost equal media attention (see Figure 1), the focus of attention was slightly different for each. While a relatively large portion of the articles discussed anti-Islam and antisemitic sentiments, articles that only discussed Kosher slaughter tended to focus more on whether Thieme's law change would affect the quality of life of Jewish people. Articles targeted at Halal slaughter practices addressed growing anti-Islam sentiments, but also tended to focus on other related topics such as what Halal actually means, how to make Halal transparent and questions of multiculturalism and globalisation in general. The content of the news articles is explored more thoroughly in the analysis section of this chapter.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Discussing religious slaughtering eventually led to a debate on multiculturalism. While it may seem obvious that a divide would occur between supporters of secularism and those who prioritise religion, multiple forms of 'Othering' took place. A clear debate between freedom of religion or animal welfare was present. In addition, while Dutch Muslim and Jewish citizens

were strongly affected by the proposed law change and the debate that followed, the social, cultural and historical contexts of both groups differed.

The analysis will examine how narratives of animal-linked racialisation can be found in the presented discourses on un-stunned slaughter. The first section outlines that while this debate underlined differences between those who consume meat that is slaughtered according to religious guidelines and those who do not, it also exposed similarities between Jewish and Muslim consumers of religiously slaughtered meat. The second section illustrates that while Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens showed many commonalities in their position towards un-stunned slaughter, attitudes by other Dutch citizens showed different levels of acceptance towards Muslim people and Jewish people. The final section of the discourse analysis shows how the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter touches upon broader issues regarding the meat industry.

While the analysis predominantly focuses on animal-linked racialisation, it will apply other principles of posthuman theory too. As with the other case studies, this case study too examines how knowledge and different identities are constructed with each other, both human and non-human.

Alliances in Divisions: How the Debate Bridged Differences in Religions

The debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering in the Netherlands had a substantial impact on Islamic and Jewish Dutch citizens, which led to ‘unexpected alliances’ between the two religious groups. This section explores how Islam and Judaism were framed in Dutch media, including how the relationship between the two Dutch groups was conceptualised. Several articles adopted a critical, even negative, approach towards the two religious groups in the Netherlands. Religion was positioned as being ‘un-Dutch’ by describing Jewish and Muslim values as oppositional to ‘Dutch’ culture. The idea of secularism as connected to progress through increased attention to animal welfare was present in several articles. Opinion pieces that were sent in by readers vocalised this explicitly (‘Barbaars’, 2018; *Religies stellen vrouwen achter*, 2013).

In May 2018, an opinion piece was published by national newspaper *Trouw*. It was submitted by a veterinary group and discussed their perspectives on un-stunned slaughtering. They noted that the significant animal suffering involved led to the Royal Dutch Society of Veterinary Science [Koninklijke Nederlandse Maatschappij voor Diergeneeskunde] to oppose un-stunned

slaughtering practices. They argued that certain other European countries and Australia and New Zealand had already imposed a ban on this. They continued by expressing concern about a new regulation that was supposed to lessen suffering but could lead to the opposite; animals slaughtered without stunning that displayed signs of consciousness 40 seconds after being cut would have to be stunned from 1 January 2018. However, if the animal was conscious and then later stunned, the meat would not qualify as Kosher anymore, which would lead to:

A new animal having to endure this suffering [to create Kosher meat]. The [now non-Kosher meat] would be sold as regular meat. This would mean that the average Dutch person, who supports animal welfare, would unknowingly purchase meat derived from animals who died after a painful slaughter process without being stunned. (Caring Vets, 2018)⁵³

These veterinarians differentiated between “the average Dutch person, who supports animal welfare” (Caring Vets, 2018) and those who do not. In this instance, those who do not are consumers of meat from un-stunned animals; those who purposefully choose to purchase Kosher or Halal meat. While the opinion piece does not explicitly name these consumers, they of course are predominantly Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens.

Explicit critiques of religion were evident in the inclusion of other topics. For example, women’s rights and male circumcision were discussed, in which it was implied that secular approaches were, by definition, the *better* option for women and boys respectively. In 2013, an opinion piece mainly focused on women’s rights in the regional newspaper *Brabants Dagblad* mentioned religious slaughtering and male circumcision to build an argument that religious freedom should not interfere with other values in the Netherlands. Arguing that “every known religion [in the Netherlands] fundamentally and structurally disadvantages women”, the author claimed that “it should not be possible to have a constitution that protects a right in which women have been subordinated for centuries long” (Religies stellen vrouwen achter, 2013).⁵⁴ The next paragraph raised male circumcision: “I am appalled that children can be abused in the form of circumcision disguised as a matter of hygiene. If both parents agree, it’s not abuse; if one parent disagrees, it is abuse and female circumcision is always illegal” (Religies stellen

⁵³ Original: moet een nieuw dier dit lijden ondergaan. Het vlees wordt verkocht als regulier vlees. Dit betekent dat de gemiddelde Nederlandse consument die voorstander is van bescherming van dierenwelzijn, zonder dit te weten vlees koopt afkomstig van dieren die gestorven zijn na een pijnlijke onverdoofde slacht.

⁵⁴ Original: Het kan niet bestaan dat de grondwet een recht beschermd waarbij de vrouw een eeuwenoud achtergestelde positie heeft.

vrouwen achter, 2013).⁵⁵ Finally, reference was made to “the lunatic discussion on un-stunned slaughter”, questioning:

Am I allowed to do that too then as long as my knife is sharp enough? If the law forbids animal abuse through un-stunned slaughter among others, this does not change when it's done based on religious grounds. In other words, religious people claim priority positions regular citizens do not get. (Religies stellen vrouwen achter, 2013)⁵⁶

The author of the piece distinguished between ‘regular’ citizens and those who practice religions, implying that religious people were not ‘regular’. Further, freedom of religion was presented as a privilege in this piece. According to the author, because freedom of religion clashes with the well-being of women, children and animals, this privilege should be taken away.

The articles discussed above are examples of how Kosher and Halal consumers were framed as radically different from consumers of meat produced by the mainstream industries. Religious slaughter was positioned as extremely harmful to the animals and not in line with broader value frameworks. Therefore, consumers of religiously slaughtered meat actively chose to partake in the rejection of Dutch values. Both articles took negative approaches towards Muslim and Jewish practices, even if religion was not specifically mentioned.

However, other articles took more positive approaches towards religious slaughter. In November 2018, national newspaper *Trouw* published an interview with Rabbi van de Kamp, who had taken a public stance against Thieme’s attempts to ban un-stunned slaughter and expressed his thoughts in multiple media outlets and in his book *Journal of a stunned Rabbi. Personal notes during a political landslide [Dagboek van een verdoofd Rabbijn. Persoonlijke notities bij een politieke Aardverschuiving]*. In the 2018 *Trouw* article ‘Why is there antisemitism’, he discussed contemporary acts against Jewish people. At the end of the interview, he connected growing antisemitism with growing Islamophobia and acknowledged

⁵⁵ Original: Het roept bij mij grote weerzin op dat kinderen door besnijdenis mishandeld mogen worden anders dan als hygiënemaatregel. Als beide ouders instemmen, is er geen mishandeling; als een ouder tegen is, dan is er wel mishandeling en besnijdenis van meisjes is altijd verboden.

⁵⁶ Original: Mag ik dat dan ook als mijn mes maar scherp genoeg is? Als de wet dierenmishandeling verbiedt onder meer door onverdoofd te slachten, dan wordt dat niet anders als dit op religieuze gronden gebeurt. Met andere woorden, religieuzen claimen een prioriteitspositie ten aanzien van de wet die een gewoon burger niet heeft.

that the growing hatred towards Muslims was possibly even more terrifying to think about. He mused about a trip he took with Islamic youth to Auschwitz:

Last year I visited Auschwitz with a group of Islamic youth. During a visit to a synagogue, we discussed our rituals. ‘How often do you pray?’ ‘Oh, us, we pray so often.’ ‘Kosher food? Hey, we eat Halal.’ One of them noticed: ‘Our religions are actually pretty similar.’ Recognition and appreciation grew. (Kamp, as cited in Huttinga, 2018)⁵⁷

Rabbi van de Kamp emphasised commonalities over difference, but also acknowledged differences between the struggles that followers of Islam and Judaism face. Food practices were a key element in bringing followers from both religions together.

The debate over un-stunned religious slaughter created divisions and alliances, whether intentionally or not. Islam and Judaism were forced into ‘one’ category, by opponents of un-stunned religious slaughter and most defenders of the exception in the law. A reoccurring topic in the news was the fear of unknowingly purchasing and eating meat of animals that were slaughtered without being stunned. This fear increased in 2016, when additions to the 2012 covenant were proposed. The 40-second rule was especially relevant because it prescribed that the animal has to be stunned if it still displays signs of consciousness 40 seconds after its throat has been cut.

While stricter guidelines regarding un-stunned slaughter might seem like a positive development from an animal welfare perspective, opinions were divided. For example, it would limit the suffering of the animals to 40 seconds. While this reduced the amount of animal suffering, some contended that it was still undesirable to consume meat from animals that were slaughtered without prior stunning in general. People expressed concern regarding whether the animals that got stunned *after* being slaughtered would still end up in the regular meat production chain. The writer of a 2018 opinion piece in *Trouw* described his uncertainties:

Dazing or sedating animals before slaughter was once, long ago, introduced by law for animal welfare reasons. An exception was then made for certain religious groups, who are not allowed to eat meat from animals who were stunned before or during

⁵⁷ Original: Afgelopen voorjaar bezocht ik Auschwitz met een groep moslimjongeren. Tijdens een bezoek aan een synagoge kregen we het over onze rituelen. ‘Hoe vaak bidden jullie?’ ‘O, wij zo vaak.’ ‘Kosjer eten? Hè, wij eten halal.’ Een van hen merkte op: ‘Wat lijkt ons geloof eigenlijk veel op elkaar.’ Er ontstond herkenning en waardering.

slaughter. Will I now, ignorantly, have to eat meat from animals that have been slaughtered according to religious rituals? ('Krijg ik, onwetend', 2018)⁵⁸

While there was a concern for the well-being of the slaughter animals, there was also a concern for the consumer. While animal suffering should be avoided, so should consuming meat that was intended, but nonetheless rejected, as such. In this example of discourse, meat was more than a nutritional foodstuff; it was symbolic and the original purpose of the meat was key. In response to non-religious consumers' fears, the NIK, CMO (Contact Orgaan Moslims en Overheid [Contact Organ Muslims and Government]) and VSV (Vereniging van Slachterijen en Vleesverwerkende Bedrijven [Association of Slaughterhouses and Meat Processing Companies]) agreed that meat from animals that were stunned 40 seconds after their throats are cut would be sold as Halal-certified meat. *Boerderij Vandaag [Farm Today]*, a Dutch agricultural newspaper reported:

Research shows that practically all sheep and goats lose consciousness within 40 seconds under these conditions, for cows it is about 80–85%. Sedating them after this is for the covenant partners not an objection to sell the meat as Halal or Kosher for most of the religious community. For the Jewish religious slaughter (shechita) the meat of stunned animals will be rejected as Kosher. 'The VSV assured me all the animals will be designated as un-stunned Halal (Islamic ritual slaughter) meat', writes Van Dam. (Vermaas, 2017)⁵⁹

Halal guidelines are less strict and specific than Kosher guidelines. Additionally, various differences in what counts as Halal existed prior to these discussions in the Netherlands. Therefore, this offer was not an unsurprising one on the part of the CMO. Nonetheless, it signified collaboration between the Islamic and Jewish Dutch communities. The collaborative relations between Kosher slaughterers and Halal consumers was further drawn out in other articles. For example, a 2017 article in *Trouw* described a Kosher slaughterhouse. The article discussed the positive relationship of the slaughterhouse with secular and Muslim customers,

⁵⁸ Original: Het bedwelmen, dan wel verdooven van slachtdieren, voorafgaande aan het doden, is ooit, lang geleden, ingevoerd, bij wet, uit overwegingen van dierwelzijn. Er is toen een uitzondering gemaakt voor bepaalde religies, die geen vlees van verdoofd geslachte dieren mogen eten. Moet ik nu, onwetend, vlees gaan eten van slachtdieren die ritueel geslacht zijn?

⁵⁹ Original: Uit onderzoek blijkt dat vrijwel alle schapen en geiten onder deze voorwaarden binnen 40 seconden het bewustzijn hebben verloren, bij runderen gaat het om 80 tot 85%. Alsnog een verdoving geven is voor de convenantpartners geen bezwaar om het vlees in aanmerking te laten komen om halal of koosjer te verkopen voor het overgrote deel van de geloofsgemeenschap. Voor de joods-rituele slacht (shechita) zal het vlees van dieren die alsnog verdoofd worden wel afgekeurd worden als koosjer product. 'De VSV heeft mij echter laten weten dat deze dieren allemaal als onbedwelmd aangesneden halal (islamitisch-rituele slacht) een bestemming kunnen krijgen', schrijft Van Dam.

which was why, they claimed, at least 10 per cent of their customers were from non-Jewish backgrounds. The company director was quoted in the article:

Christians have known since before the war that Kosher meat is of high quality. But we are also in close contact with a group of Moroccan Muslims from the Hague. Muslim butchers increasingly use stunned slaughter, so if they want to know for sure that something is slaughtered properly according to ritual rites, they'll come to us. Kosher is by definition Halal. (van Beek, 2017)⁶⁰

This quote demonstrates that the Kosher slaughterhouse took great pride in the quality of meat that they offered. It was the quality of their meats that they wanted to share with their consumers, be they Jewish or not. Within the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, Kosher and Halal slaughter have been approached as similar and interchangeable in a large number of news outlets. Generally, Kosher and Halal meat representatives embraced being seen as equivalent, forming collaborations on commercial and legislative levels. The next sections consider differences between approaches to Halal and Kosher slaughter practices to illustrate that the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter engendered not only dichotomies between values such as animal welfare and religious freedom, but also shed light and contributed to, on the different positions of different cultural groups—in this case, Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens—held in the Netherlands.

Dividing Differences: Portrayals of Dutch Muslim and Jewish Citizens

While Islam and Judaism were often mentioned together in discussions regarding un-stunned religious slaughter in the Netherlands, not all articles focused on both. The data show that approximately a quarter of the articles only discuss Halal slaughter and another quarter of all articles centre specifically on Kosher slaughter. The following sections explore the similarities and differences in which Kosher and Halal slaughter were discussed in news media.

Kosher slaughter

Kosher slaughter was consistently in the news, with a significant number of articles in 2012 focusing on this topic. Reoccurring themes were the possibilities of producing Kosher meat as

⁶⁰ Original: Christenen wisten voor de oorlog al dat koosjer vlees van hoge kwaliteit is. Maar we hebben ook nauw contact met een groep Marokkaanse moslims uit Den Haag. Islamitische slagers passen steeds vaker verdoofde slacht toe, dus als ze zeker willen weten dat iets echt goed ritueel geslacht is, kloppen ze bij ons aan. Koosjer is ook per definitie halal.

regulations were changing, who could define what makes meat ‘Kosher’ and the broader position of Jewish people in Dutch society.

- *Kosher slaughter in 2012*

In 2012, a large portion of articles focused predominantly on Kosher slaughter which can be explained by various reasons. Kosher guidelines are significantly stricter than Halal guidelines and, while there is some pliability, restrictions on freedom of stunning would by definition render the meat non-Kosher. As Halal guidelines are slightly more flexible, the Muslim community would be less affected by legal changes, thus their community engaged in less public protest. In addition to the challenges that Jewish people would face under stricter regulations regarding slaughter, two other main themes reoccurred. Bleker’s choice of organisation to represent the Jewish Dutch community was one that caused controversy. In addition, another reoccurring theme was Dutch populist politician Geert Wilder’s role in the political debate as discussed in more detail below.

- *Questions of representation*

The 2012 covenant fostered an agreement between multiple parties that were involved in the meat industry as consumers or producers. Dutch Muslim and Jewish people were represented by religious organisations: the CMO represented Dutch Muslims and the NIK represented the Dutch Jewish community. While the representation of the affected religious minorities was generally seen as a progressive step forward into the debate on un-stunned slaughtering,⁶¹ questions regarding who could represent a group complicated the matter.

The RKS (Council for Kosher Slaughter [Raad voor de Koosjere Slacht]) is a Dutch organisation that represents Dutch Jewish people who are committed to follow Kosher guidelines as strictly as possible. During the negotiation process of composing the covenant, the RKS expressed discontent with not being included in the process, as reported in the *Reformatorsch Dagblad* [Reformational Daily Newspaper].⁶² Rabbi van de Kamp was often quoted in these articles, and multiple issues concerning representation were brought up by him.

⁶¹ e.g., Van der Schyff (2013).

⁶² The *Reformatorsch Dagblad* is a newspaper that seeks to offer an alternative “against a press that was hostile towards people who wanted to live by the old reformational principles” (Belt, 2018). Because they have a strong focus on religion and religious values, they generally reported significant amounts on the debate on un-stunned slaughter.

At the start of the negotiations, both NIK and RKS were part of drafting the covenant. However, when the first draft was almost finished, Bleker chose to discontinue his collaboration with the RKS and appointed the NIK as the main party to sign off the covenant. For a short period, this put Bleker and the covenant in a precarious position, which the first article on this matter explained:

The official Jewish interlocutor of the government, the Dutch Israelite Congregation (NIK), has threatened not to sign the agreement because the chairman of the working group, Hellebrekers, would be biased. Van de Kamp sees that differently. ‘We have told State Secretary Bleker and various MPs that we have ample confidence in him.’ The problem, according to the rabbi, is that the government does not recognize the Council for the Kosher Slaughter as a party to this issue. ‘The State Secretary has indicated that he wants to talk to NIK only. So, if they do not sign the covenant, it will be over—no matter the consequences’. (Dorst, 2012)⁶³

The problem that Rabbi van de Kamp addresses in this quotation is pragmatic. By only working with *one* representative group, everything depended on their cooperation, which meant that the covenant was at a greater risk to fail. However, larger questions were at stake, which he mentioned later in this article as well as in an interview two weeks later.

On 5 June 2012, the covenant was signed. A day later, the *Reformatorisch Dagblad* published an interview with Rabbi van de Kamp, in which he explained:

There are great doubts in the Jewish community about whether the covenant is valid, because it has been an agreement with a party—NIK—that is not actually authorized to sign. This is about religious matters and rabbis are the correct authorities in these. The people in NIK have walked out of line. (Kamp, as cited in de Groot, 2012)⁶⁴

Further, NIK did not represent the interests of people who wanted Kosher meat, which Rabbi van de Kamp emphasised in the Dorst (2012) article. Not only Rabbi van de Kamp turned against the covenant. National newspaper *de Volkskrant* reported on the Rabbinical Court. Despite the covenant having been signed by the parties involved, they rejected it on grounds of

⁶³ Original: De officiële Joodse gesprekspartner van de overheid, het Nederlands Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap (NIK), heeft namelijk gedreigd de overeenkomst niet te ondertekenen omdat de voorzitter van de werkgroep, Hellebrekers, partijdig zou zijn. Van de Kamp ziet dat heel anders. ‘Wij hebben staatssecretaris Bleker en verschillende Kamerleden laten weten voldoende vertrouwen in hem te hebben’. Probleem, aldus de rabbijn, is echter dat de overheid de Raad voor de Koosjere Slacht niet als partij in deze kwestie erkent. ‘De staatssecretaris heeft aangegeven alleen met het NIK te willen praten. Als dié dus het convenant niet tekent, is het afgelopen—met alle gevolgen van dien’.

⁶⁴ Original: In de joodse gemeenschap leven juist grote twijfels of het convenant wel geldig is, omdat het is gesloten met een partij—het NIK—die feitelijk niet gemachtigd is om te tekenen. Het gaat hier om religieuze zaken en daar gaan de rabbijnen over. De NIK-mensen zijn hun boekje te buiten gegaan.

not having participated in deliberations leading up to its composition (Hoedeman, 2012). *NRC Handelsblad* also addressed the exclusion of the Rabbinical Court. The criticisms of the Rabbinical Court were related to the objection of the only Halal butcher in the Netherlands to the covenant, who argued that the covenant was impossible to follow (Pinedo, 2012).

While Kosher guidelines are generally strict and rather straightforward, there was still room for negotiations. Rabbi van de Kamp's contributions to the debate offered new angles for approaching religious guidelines in a secular society. Rather than merely looking at the question of *how* to interpret Kosher guidelines, Van de Kamp extended the debate to *who* could interpret them. Representation works on multiple levels. The *who* in the case of religious slaughter includes government, stakeholders in the meat industry and consumers of meat that is created through slaughter according to religious guidelines. While the covenant aimed to do this, these questions remained because full representation was not achieved, at least according to its critics.

- *Populism and difference*

The Party for Animals introduced the legislative proposal to eliminate the exception clause for religious slaughter in the rules and regulations concerning animal welfare in slaughter practices. While most political parties took quite outspoken stances in the debate, the PVV (Partij Voor de Vrijheid [Party for Freedom]) especially received a lot of attention in this debate. The PVV was especially known for its anti-Islam stance. For example, its first party program from 2006 stated that Dutch borders should be closed to non-Western immigrants, that no new Mosques and Islamic schools should be built for at least five years, that places of prayer should only allow Dutch language, that a ban should be placed on headscarves at public functions and that the burqa should be completely banned in all public places (PVV, 2006). Geert Wilders, the party leader of the PVV, had been an outspoken supporter of Israel. He argued that “in a time when Israel is the only democracy in that region and the stronghold of the free West, we should stand behind Israel” (PVV, 2014).⁶⁵ His stance on Hamas was as unambiguous: “Talking to, or negotiating with, Isis or Hamas is senseless. They are barbarians. Only a total destruction of terror organisations like these will suffice” (PVV, 2014).⁶⁶ Finally, the PVV has been a strong support of stronger, more regulated, laws to protect animal welfare (PVV, 2006). Their section

⁶⁵ Original: In zo'n tijd waar Israël de enige democratie in die regio en het bastion van het vrije westen is, zouden wij als een blok achter Israël moeten staan.

⁶⁶ Original: Praten of onderhandelen met Isis of Hamas is zinloos. Het zijn barbaren. Alleen de totale vernietiging van dit soort terreurorganisaties zet zoden aan de dijk.

on animal welfare in the election program of 2006 only considered companion animals and religious slaughter. In the party program for 2010–2015, the party supported a slow reduction of the intensive livestock farming industry in ways that did not negatively affect farmers and also supported the fish industry (PVV, 2010).

Because Wilders' party was anti-Islam, pro-Israel and pro-animal welfare, this debate put the party and especially Wilders himself in a tight spot. Wilders' situation became increasingly precarious when one of his party members, Dion Graus, became increasingly more outspoken on the matter. Graus identified himself as a fighter for animal rights (tweedekamer.nl, n.d.). During the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, he expressed concerns about animals that would be slaughtered without being stunned beforehand.

When Graus's language became increasingly graphic and the PVV in general became more outspoken in its support for the ban on un-stunned religious slaughtering, Israeli rabbis publicly spoke out against these developments. The local newspaper of the province Graus and Wilder were originally from reported on this:

Chief Rabbi Metzger was also hit hard by Graus' repeated accusations in the Second Chamber that Jews 'ritually torture animals.' ... Metzger writes that he realizes Wilders is known as a patron of Israel. 'But you can't be a friend of Israel and Jewish people while at the same time supporting an anti-Jewish law and be a friend of Dion Graus'. ('Aanval opperrabijn op Graus', 2012)⁶⁷

In its decision to support the ban on un-stunned religious slaughter in line with its party promises to increase animal welfare and limit the freedom to practice Islam, the PVV went against one of their other main party goals, which was the support of Israel and the Jewish community. This paradox did not go unnoticed. An opinion piece claimed that "of course, the PVV targeted Islamic Halal, Kosher slaughter was, to them, just collateral damage. The law change was rejected, despite the support of the PVV. And the PVV lost part of its supporters" (Leydesdorff, 2012).⁶⁸ The author of this passage recognised that, while not necessarily intended as such, the political debate on un-stunned religious slaughter offered opportunities to

⁶⁷ Original: Dat Graus in de Tweede Kamer joden herhaaldelijk van het 'ritueel martelen van dieren' zou hebben beschuldigd, raakt Metzger ook hard. Metzger schrijft dat hij beseft dat Wilders als een steunpilaar van Israël te boek staat. 'Maar je kunt niet vriend zijn van Israël en het Joodse volk en tegelijkertijd een anti-joodse maatregel steunen en vriend zijn van Dion Graus'.

⁶⁸ Original: Natuurlijk had de PVV de islamitische halal in het vizier, koosjer slachten was voor hen helaas collateral damage. Het wetsvoorstel is verworpen, ondanks de steun van de PVV. En de PVV is een deel van haar joodse aanhang kwijt.

criticise the religious groups involved. Dutch Muslims would be the main targets in animal-linked racialisation, but Jewish people were not excluded from the narrative, which Graus's comments illustrated.

○ *Kosher slaughter continued*

Kosher slaughter received considerable media attention, particularly in 2012, due to fears of Kosher slaughter becoming impossible with new regulations, questions of who could represent the Dutch Jewish community and Wilders' precarious position in the debate. During the following years, media attention lessened but remained present. One repeated theme in these articles were connections drawn to the Jewish Holocaust during the Second World War. Rabbi van de Kamp expressed that "the reality is that the Thieme bill inevitably evokes associations with the anti-Jewish measures of the Nazis, certainly among the older Jews. And the first was a ban on the Kosher slaughter in 1934" (Verboom, 2012).⁶⁹ Rabbi van de Kamp was not the only one to associate contemporary events with past events. As the author of one opinion piece expressed:

As a historian, I agree with those who argue that similar constraints have been indicators of more far-reaching matters in the past. In the debate about Kosher slaughter, Jews have been portrayed as animal executioners. They are declared to belong to what is 'different'. (Leydesdorff, 2012)⁷⁰

These connections did not go unnoticed by Thieme. In a published interview, she stated that: "[the upheaval surrounding the debate] made the debate more comprehensive, but I generally feel good about this. The only thing is that sometimes connections were drawn to the Second World War. That has made it foul" (Kooper, 2012).⁷¹

References to antisemitism were not all linked to historical instances of attacks on Jewish people. Often connections were drawn to recent attacks on Jewish people, including multiple attacks on a Kosher restaurant between December 2017 and March 2018. A man with a

⁶⁹ Original: de werkelijkheid is dat het wetsvoorstel van Thieme zeker bij de oudere Joden onvermijdelijk associaties oproept met de anti-Joodse maatregelen van de nazi s. En de eerste, in 1934, was een verbod op de koosjere slacht.

⁷⁰ Original: ik ben het als historica met diegenen eens die stellen dat een dergelijk verbod in het verleden de voorbode is geweest van verdergaande zaken. In het debat rond koosjer slachten zijn Joden zwart gemaakt als dierenbeulen. Ze zijn verklaard te behoren tot wat 'anders' is.

⁷¹ Original: Het debat werd daardoor veelomvattender, maar daar heb ik over het algemeen een goed gevoel over. Alleen werden er soms verbanden gelegd met de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Dat heeft het onzuiver gemaakt.

Palestinian background has been held responsible for at least two of the attacks. Several reports linked this attack to growing antisemitism in general (e.g., Carlak, 2018; Fresco, 2018; van Unen, 2018a, 2018b; ‘Verdachte vernielen Israëlich’, 2018).

While the question of whether stricter laws led to doubt regarding whether Kosher meat would still be available in the Netherlands, reports on Kosher meat ended up drawing multiple, complex connections to other concerns regarding the position of the Jewish community in the Netherlands. The historical *and* contemporary precarious position of Jewish people was frequently noted. Agency and representation were proposed as key considerations within the debate on Kosher slaughter. Questions of representation focused on internal considerations—for instance, who can speak for the community?—and external concerns. The focus of external representation was predominantly on growing antisemitism but also collaborations with political parties, even if these collaborations did not lead to desired results.

Halal slaughter

Halal slaughter was, similar to Kosher slaughter, a regular news topic between 2012 and 2018. Common themes in articles focusing on Halal meat were explanations of what Halal food actually was, why it mattered to Muslims, and how it could be a confusing term because the meaning of ‘Halal’ changed as regulations were changing too. As Islamophobia was rising, this topic did not remain unaddressed in these articles. Controversies surrounding Halal slaughter were often linked to broader questions surrounding the food industry, such as the importance of the meat industry being transparent and the need for reliable food label regulations.

- *‘Irritating Muslims’: Animal welfare rhetoric to attack the Muslim community*

As briefly touched upon in previous sections on Kosher slaughter, especially in relation to the Dutch political party PVV, some of pro-stunning rhetoric was understood to predominantly reflect anti-Islam discourse. News articles reflected this, voicing both Muslim and non-Muslim voices. For example, *NRC Dagblad* interviewed butcher Musa Kolukisa, who discussed the new law that butchers have to hire veterinarians to be present during the slaughter process to ensure that the animal loses consciousness within 40 seconds:

He complains about the costs of hiring a vet. Costs amount to 33.81 euros for 15 minutes with a starting rate of 164.43 euros. ‘Unaffordable,’ says Kolukisa. ‘This is

harassment from the government. Irritating Muslims, that's what the government is about'. (Schreuder, 2018)⁷²

Kolukisa experienced the new regulations that the covenant introduced as being specifically targeted at making it *more difficult and expensive* to produce and obtain Halal meat, but he did not connect these changes to an increase in animal welfare. It was not just Muslim people who recognised the debate about stunning to be specifically about Halal food. A column in *de Volkskrant* stated:

In recent years, debates about animal suffering were primarily focused on Halal meat. Prohibiting ritual slaughter often seemed to me like means to an end, an inseparable part of the eternal debate on Islam. Muslims are barbaric animal torturers, in strong contrast to the love of animals our intensive livestock farming industry holds, of course, see above. And the Kosher slaughter was collateral damage. (Duurvoort, 2018)⁷³

The author voiced that she strongly believes that the meat industry was a controversial place. For this reason, she had turned to vegetarianism again. In the excerpt above, she hints towards hypocrisy in the debate on religious slaughter. She considers the debate specifically to be a tool to target the Dutch Muslim population because Halal meat had been the focus of much of the debate while the meat industry in general was problematic but hardly discussed. The next sections examine how discourses surrounding religious slaughter reflected fears of Islam and Dutch Muslims' feelings that new regulations made it much harder for them to obtain Halal meat.

○ *Fears of Halal becoming hegemonic*

Islamic and non-Islamic Dutch people expressed that discussions on religious slaughter practices were being diverted to feed into pre-existing racist and discriminatory discourses. Multiple news articles and opinion pieces voiced concerns regarding Halal food becoming increasingly customary, replacing typical foods that do not follow dietary standards, be it religious or otherwise. While observations of Halal meat becoming increasingly standard were

⁷² Original: Hij klaagt over de kosten voor het inhuren van een dierenarts. Die bedragen 33,81 Euro per kwartier met een starttarief van 164,43 Euro. 'Onbetaalbaar', zegt Kolukisa. 'Dit zijn pesterijen van de overheid. Moslims irriteren, daar gaat het de overheid om'.

⁷³ Original: Debat over dierenleed was de afgelopen jaren vooral voorbehouden aan het halal vlees. Het verbieden van de rituele slacht kwam mij vaak voor als een stok om de hond te slaan, onlosmakelijk onderdeel van het eeuwige islamdebat. Moslims zijn barbaarse beestenmartelaars, waar in onze bio-industrie de dierenliefde er uiteraard vanaf spat, zie hierboven. En de koosjere slacht was collateral damage.

not *inherently* racist, *these* articles often voiced fears and concerns for Islam becoming hegemonic and indicated that these developments were highly undesirable.

An example of a media report on standardisation of Halal meat over non-religious meat is found in an article on Wilders' visit to Australia in 2013. One of Wilders' critiques on the Dutch multicultural society was that "in the Netherlands we have prisons that only serve Halal" (Wilders, as cited in Schraevesande & Winsman, 2013).⁷⁴ In another article, a submitted opinion piece voiced the discontent of its author that fast-food giant *Subway* decided to only sell Halal meat. The lack of pork was of concern:

Meeting the desires of demanding customers is one thing, but now they are also hindering other customers. ... If this promotion is successful, other companies cannot stay behind. ... That is not multicultural tolerance, that is bowing to religious censorship. ('Broodje sharia', 2014)⁷⁵

When several newspapers reported on a Dutch zoo serving Halal food without explicitly mentioning this in their menus, the reporting articles quoted a visitor who expressed: "It bothers me that we are subjected to the rules and customs of a religion that is not ours without being asked about our input" (van Vliet, 2015).⁷⁶ Similar sentiments were expressed when a school with a large proportion of Islamic students considered serving Halal meat during the annual school camp (Kraaijeveld, 2014).

Particularly interesting was a conversation between two readers in the opinion section about Islamic refugees. *Reformatorsch Dagblad* and *Nederlands Dagblad* published similar opinion pieces from the same co-authors just one day apart. The authors discussed how Muslim refugees should not be served Halal meat because this would be caving into the requirements of Islamic law. The authors described Islamic law as laws everyone must submit to "either voluntarily or by force" ('halal voedsel in', 2015).⁷⁷ They suggested serving Kosher meat as an alternative to meet the refugees halfway. *Nederlands Dagblad* later published another reader's response, arguing for a more sympathetic approach towards those in need. What makes this discussion

⁷⁴ Original: In Nederland hebben we gevangenis waar uitsluitend halal op het menu staat.

⁷⁵ Original: Veeleisende klanten tegemoetkomen is één ding, maar het is iets anders om op hun verzoek andere klanten iets te ontzeggen. ... Als deze actie gunstig uitpakt, kunnen andere bedrijven niet achterblijven. ... Dat is geen multiculturele tolerantie, dat is buigen voor religieuze censuur.

⁷⁶ Original: Het stoort mij dat wij ongevraagd worden onderworpen aan regels en gebruiken van een godsdienst die niet de onze is.

⁷⁷ Original: goedschiks dan wel kwaadschiks.

particularly interesting that there was not just a fear of non-Muslims accidentally consuming Halal meat. Instead, consumption of Halal meat should be limited or avoided at all costs, according to these authors, although the reasoning behind this argument is questionable as Kosher slaughter was not only seen as acceptable but even as a desirable alternative. Considering Kosher slaughter follows stricter rules than Halal, it appears the suggestion to replace Halal meat with Kosher meat was driven by anti-Islamic sentiments rather than concerns for animal welfare.

Overall, the articles touching upon standardisation of Halal food in the Netherlands, be it in schools, zoos or prisons, expressed clear discontent surrounding these developments, even if the writers of the articles themselves did not share these concerns. Fear and rejection of Islamic culture were at the core of published rejections of Halal foods being presented to non-Muslim people. These effects were not only in response to the foodstuffs but towards the religion attached to it.

○ *Discussion of Halal being more difficult to purchase/consume under new rules*

While there was concern from non-Muslims about Halal food becoming the default, Dutch Muslim citizens expressed fears of not being able to purchase proper Halal foods. Both current offers of 'Halal' food and future possibilities of obtaining Halal meat under new rules and regulations were seen as making it difficult to follow religious dietary guidelines. The question of whether food counted as Halal if the animal was stunned before or after slaughter was important. For some Muslims, it was key that the animal was conscious during the slaughter process. Others were more lenient.

Two key events led to questions about what constituted Halal in particular. When the 40-second rule officially came into effect in 2018, most doubt was expressed about whether meat could still be considered to be Halal. Especially during Eid celebrations, Dutch Muslims preferred to celebrate abroad to ensure meat practices fulfilled religious demands (e.g., Elshout, 2018; 'Moslims herdenken het', 2018; Rosman, 2018). The second upheaval happened regarding chicken meat. Stricter EU rules regarding the voltage of electric stunning and the turn towards stunning with gas led to questions regarding whether any chicken meat would still qualify as Halal meat. Both methods were seen as controversial because uncertainties arose whether this meant the chickens died before or after their throats were cut. Depending on one's stance, this implied either almost all, or hardly any, chickens in the Netherlands could qualify as Halal (e.g.,

Bakkali, 2013; de Cort, 2013a, 2013b; ‘Kip levend langs’, 2013). Dietitian and consultant for Halal consumers Miriam Aaras was quoted in national newspaper *Het Parool* during the events: ‘Muslims’ trust has disappeared ... Many Muslims have stopped buying chicken as they do not know where they stand’ (Bakkali, 2013).⁷⁸

However, the availability of Halal meat was not just questioned in terms of stunning. Dutch Muslims’ concerns regarding meat consumption connected to broader, general concerns regarding the food industry. Transparency through labelling and fraud within the industry were two topics that re-emerged in multiple articles that discussed Halal meat.

- *Meat scandals*

Distrust in Halal meat cannot only be blamed on political policies. Some Dutch meat companies were involved in a large European scandal in which horse meat was sold as beef. To make matters worse, some of the horsemeat was sold as Halal-certified beef. Butcher Kolukisa was quoted in *NRC Dagblad*, critiquing stricter rules on Halal slaughter, and connected his critiques to the horse meat scandal: “Moreover, there is legal inequality, because in other slaughterhouses things go wrong much more often. How often does it go wrong with pig slaughter? And why am I not protected against sick horse meat?” (Schreuder, 2018).⁷⁹ Kolukisa placed Halal regulations in the broader context of the meat industry. Halal meat is strictly controlled and regulated, to the extent that butchers’ work becomes almost impossible due to the demands that are made on them. However, the regular meat industry makes frequent mistakes, which lead to animal suffering. He implied that the pork industry did not follow animal welfare standards, yet was criticised less than the Halal industry. Not only animal welfare was at stake; horse meat was used as an example to show that the regular meat industry can sell Halal meat without being regulated to the extent that horse meat is sold as Halal.

- *Labelling controversies*

One strategy to make it easier for Halal consumers to follow their religious diets would be to label meats as such. While this would be a sensible step to take by industries to meet the

⁷⁸ Original: Het vertrouwen van moslims is weg ... Veel moslims kopen geen kip meer, omdat ze niet weten waar ze aan toe zijn.

⁷⁹ Original: Er is bovendien sprake van rechtsongelijkheid, want in andere slachthuizen gaat nog veel vaker iets verkeerd. Hoe vaak gaat het niet mis met varkens? En waarom word ik niet beschermd tegen ziek paardenvlees?

demands of their consumers, this process turned out to lead to misleading claims. The ambiguity of the labelling process had less to do with the religious aspect of Halal food as it had to do with the commercial aspect. Multiple newspapers published articles on this issue. For example, the 2017 article ‘How Kosher is Halal’ in *Reformatorsch Dagblad* discussed this problem:

There are more than forty institutions in the Netherlands now that issue Halal certificates. There is hardly any overview, which means that Muslims have to figure it out for themselves. The result: more and more consumers are wondering what a Halal certificate is actually worth. (Hoekman, 2017)⁸⁰

Questions concerning the legitimacy of Halal labels are not recent. In 2013, several regional newspapers published the same article with the title, ‘Halal, it’s a matter of Faith’. In this piece, the spokesperson of CMO, Yassin Elforkani, emphasised the importance of a national quality mark or certification as the stakes are high: “The revenue of Halal products in Europe amounts to 600 billion euros per year and the Netherlands is a major player in this” (Elforkani, as cited in de Cort, 2013c).⁸¹

The lack of reliability in Halal certification in combination with political tensions concerning Halal slaughter left many Dutch Muslims sceptical about the possibilities of ensuring their meat was Halal. Rather than relying on organisations, certificates or government decisions, a turn towards local knowledge was often mentioned as the most trustworthy way of ensuring meat lives up to the consumers’ standards. The ‘Halal, it’s a matter of Faith’ article discussed this in relation to Elforkani’s statements. Butcher Bert van den Heuy was quoted after Elforkani’s call for a national quality mark. Van den Huey claimed his business did not need a certificate to attract customers. He explained that he employed a Moroccan butcher, Hamza. The Muslim community trusted Hamza and thus Van den Huey’s products. Familiarity and personal contact were much more valuable than official papers (de Cort, 2013c). Butchers Tonnie and Frieda Vugts’ similar approach was reported in several local newspapers. They allowed Muslims to be present during the slaughter of chickens so they could be certain that all required guidelines were followed (de Cort, 2013b).

⁸⁰ Original: Er zijn intussen meer dan veertig instellingen in Nederland die halalcertificaten verstrekken. Overzicht is er nauwelijks, waardoor moslims het in feite zelf moeten uitzoeken. Het gevolg: steeds meer consumenten vragen zich af wat een halalcertificaat eigenlijk waard is.

⁸¹ Original: De omzet van halalproducten in Europa bedraagt 600 miljard Euro per jaar en Nederland is hierin een grote speler.

The desire for transparency in the meat industry was reflected in anti- and pro-stunning discourses. A proportion of non-religious Dutch people expressed fears of ‘contamination’ of regular meat by religiously-approved meat. At the same time, consumers of Halal meat feared contamination of meats that were supposed to be Halal with non-Halal meats.

Differences Between Animals Through Differences Between Humans: Slaughtering as a Means to Open up Broader Debates

This section argues that the debate on religious slaughter in the Netherlands created a level of difference between *food* animals. Critical animal studies scholars have offered extensive analyses of unfair speciesism to deconstruct the supposed radical difference between human and non-human animals to argue against the exploitation of animals in the food industry. In line with this research, a growing body of research has been undertaken on differences *between* animals. Differences between animals already existed in Dutch law and society; for example, one is generally not allowed to kill companion animals such as dogs and cats, but one can kill vertebrates such as mice and rats if they are pests. Veterinarians are allowed to kill companion animals but only under certain circumstances. People without veterinarian degrees can kill food animals, but only certain types of animals, in certain places, with explicit permission from the government.

The starting point for Thieme to submit the law change was to improve the welfare of certain food animals. So far, this chapter has examined how Islam and Judaism were portrayed in Dutch debates on religious slaughter. While changes affected both religious communities almost similarly on a regulatory level, differences in experiences on a broader level existed prior to, and were influenced by, the changes in laws and regulations. The next section examines how the law change proposal not only affected the different positions of Muslim and Jewish people in the Netherlands, but also created new differences between animals.

Food animals as undesirably un-different: Arguments against the intensive livestock farming industry

Multiple news articles included perspectives from people who were against Thieme’s law change. Often they argued that while un-stunned slaughter might be worse for the animal, the extra suffering was insignificant when considered in the context of the general suffering that occurs in the intensive livestock farming industry. *NRC Handelsblad* asked Dutch Muslim

woman Hanina Ajarai to reply to a request to not eat meat during the Islamic holiday Eid al-Adha. Ajarai was critical of this request:

Dear animal protectors, from your limited knowledge of Islam, I am going to assume that what I am going to say now will be taken as more bad news by you: Muslims have slaughtered animals ritually the whole year round to consume the meat. Quite like Dutch non-Muslims do with roughly 550 million animals a year. Well, of course, I don't have to tell you anything about the size of the intensive livestock farming industry. Or do they all get a trial before they die? ... Don't think that Islam does not promote consideration when dealing with animals. If you had made a call for Muslims to request a bit more biologically responsible (Halal) meat, I would have heartily supported you. (Ajarai, 2015)⁸²

Ajarai pointed out the hypocrisy of trying to stop religious slaughter without acknowledging the problems associated with the intensive livestock farming industry in general. Rather than being anti-religious slaughter, she suggested improving the standards of animal *lives* rather than their deaths. Theologist Stefan Paas, cited in an e-mail interview with *NRC Dagblad*, also referred to the numbers of animals killed in the meat industry:

Whether un-stunned ritual slaughter in the Netherlands really causes much more animal suffering than anesthetized slaughter depends on many things, including the training of the slaughterer, the material used and the supervision in the slaughterhouse. Moreover, it is an extremely marginal phenomenon. Around 650 million animals are slaughtered every year in the Netherlands, often after a miserable life. Estimates of the number of ritually slaughtered animals range from 350,000 to 1.2 million. Thus, we are talking about a maximum of 0.18 percent of all slaughtered animals. (van Dijke, 2018)⁸³

Like Ajarai, Paas understood the animals' well-being in numbers *and* quality of *life*. Both argued that the lives of food animals were not to be understood solely in their final moments but within their lives in the industry in general.

⁸² Original: Beste dierenbeschermers, uit uw beperkte kennis van de islam maak ik uit dat wat ik nu ga zeggen nog meer slecht nieuws voor u inhoudt: moslims laten het hele jaar door dieren ritueel slachten om het vlees vervolgens te consumeren. Een beetje zoals Nederlandse niet-moslims ook doen met pakweg 550 miljoen dieren per jaar. Afijn, ik hoef u natuurlijk niets te vertellen over de omvang van de bio-industrie. Of krijgen die wel allemaal eerst een proces voor hun dood? ... Denk niet dat de islam geen verstandige omgang met dieren propageert. Had u een oproep gedaan om moslims wat meer aan het biologisch-verantwoorde (halal)vlees te krijgen, dan had ik u van harte gesteund.

⁸³ Original: Of onverdoofd ritueel slachten in Nederland echt veel meer dierenleed veroorzaakt dan verdoofd slachten, hangt van veel dingen af, waaronder de opleiding van de slachter, het gebruikte materiaal en het toezicht in het slachthuis. Het gaat bovendien om een uiterst marginaal verschijnsel. In Nederland worden jaarlijks circa 650 miljoen dieren geslacht, vaak ook nog na een ellendig leven. Schattingen van het aantal ritueel geslachte dieren lopen uiteen van 350.000 tot 1,2 miljoen. We hebben het dus over maximaal 0,18 procent van alle geslachte dieren.

Differences in suffering: Religious food animals unfairly disadvantaged

Supporters of Thieme's proposed ban on un-stunned slaughter wanted to eliminate differences between animals in the food industry. Marianne Thieme submitted an opinion piece published in *Nederlands Dagblad*. In this piece, she argued:

The argument that religious slaughter is a small group in a large intensive livestock farming industry of animal suffering does not hold: When wanting to prevent animal suffering, it is not about numbers or suffering of others. For example, anyone who mistreats a dog or a horse cannot appeal based on the massive suffering caused by intensive livestock farming. (Thieme, 2018)⁸⁴

Thieme recognised differences between animals and was willing to accept *some* forms of animal suffering based on these differences (i.e., the general meat industry) but not others (i.e., abuse of companion species or un-stunned religious slaughter). She acknowledged certain dichotomies—the one between food animals and non-food animals—and the treatments of animals that fit within these frameworks. Un-stunned religious slaughter was argued to be unacceptable because the treatment of food animals was done *wrongly* because it led to extra suffering that could be avoided if slaughterers would stick to 'regular' forms of slaughter.

Turning meat into animals, turning animals into meat

While discussing animal welfare as a key issue in the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, it is essential to investigate the relationship between the animal and the meat that it produces. This section discusses how the process of killing animals is understood differently between consumers of meat that is slaughtered according to religious guidelines and consumers of meat slaughtered according to mainstream Dutch guidelines. Following from the analyses presented in the previous sections, this section argues that while stunned slaughter processes position slaughter as a means to kill food animals, un-stunned religious slaughter sees slaughter as a central process in turning animal bodies into meat. Different stances can be taken towards religious slaughter within a general intensive livestock farming industry framework. At all times, the question focused on the last moments of the animals' lives. However, the question

⁸⁴ Original: Het argument dat religieus slachten kleine groep is in groot dierenleed bio-industrie gaat niet op: Bij het willen voorkomen van dierenleed gaat het niet om aantallen of leed bij anderen. Wie bijvoorbeeld een hond of een paard mishandelt, kan zich ook niet beroepen op het elders veroorzaakte massale leed in de intensieve veehouderij.

of what makes meat remained largely unaddressed from a secular perspective, which can be explained due to different approaches to what constitutes meat.

As Miele (2016) explains, there are different requirements for what makes an animal killable. Within secular society, the focus is on supposed lack of pain and lack of consciousness of the animal, which is achieved with interference of technology, science and mechanisation in the killing process (Miele, 2016, pp. 55–56). However, the edibility of food animals is hardly questioned. This means that while killing the animal is necessary to transform the animal into meat, the *way* in which this happens is less important. Therefore, during the slaughter process, there is ‘room for mistakes’ and the flesh of the animal is still deemed edible if the stunning process fails, so long as it meets hygiene requirements. For most non-religious meat consumers in the Netherlands, certain animals are *inherently* edible and the slaughter process is a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

Considering meat from a religious perspective, differences are added to animals on another level. It is *through the religious acts during the slaughter process* that the animal body *transforms* into an edible body. While regular slaughter frameworks focus on death and how quickly it is brought about, religious slaughter places central importance on how death is brought about, which is key to the outcome of whether edibility is produced. Therefore, for consumers of Halal and Kosher meat, differences between animal bodies are formed during the slaughter process by following rites. Only when the killing process is done correctly—that is by following religious rites—can the animal flesh be deemed as meat. Therefore, while regular slaughter is framed mainly in an ethical framework, religious slaughter understands the production of meat as an ontological one. This is not to say that religious slaughter is by definition unethical. Rather, it is a different approach towards the process of ‘making meat’.

The transformation from animal to meat differs between cultures. Within the regular meat industry, the edibility of the animal is hardly questioned. While this allows for a multitude of approaches towards animal welfare, such as technological interference and standardisation, it also allows for a distancing from the food animal industry. As Miele (2016) explains, the distance between meat consumers and their products has increased drastically in Europe. Due to this, consumers have little awareness of how their animal products are produced (Miele, 2016). Not only do consumers not know the details of how their animal products are produced, this distance between the consumers and their products allows the consumer to ‘not want to know’ about the workings of the meat production (Wolfe, 2013). From a cognitive perspective,

this type of ‘dissociation’ can lead to a dissonance to the extent that meat-eaters can completely ignore or suppress that “meat is the flesh and body parts of a previously living being, that has been killed” (Dowsett et al., 2018, p. 280). It is exactly because slaughter is a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, that it enables meat consumers to physically and emotionally distance themselves from food animals.

Within the debate about un-stunned religious slaughter, space is opened up to care about the animals behind the meat. The slaughter process became a central fact of meat production because of different approaches towards this in one society. The re-emergence of slaughter in discourses surrounding meat production led to a new awareness of the animals behind the meat. While such levels of care appeared to be admirable from an animal welfare perspective, this care generally remained reserved *only* for religiously slaughtered animals.⁸⁵ It is because these animals become—unknowingly and outside of their control—part of religious practices in a secular society, that they come to differ from animals in the regular industry *in the last moments of their lives*.

Conclusion

The slaughter of animals is a process that is accepted as a necessary part of the meat industry by meat consumers but also very debatable at the same time. This chapter has demonstrated that while the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter originated from a concern about animal welfare, it ended up addressing larger societal issues. Questions of identity arose and constituted each other on different levels. On a national level, the importance of animal welfare and freedom to practice religion were weighed in relation to each other, especially by those antagonistic towards un-stunned religious slaughter. For example, the rules for Kosher and Halal slaughter differ slightly. However, this difference does not stop the changing laws on religious slaughter from affecting the Dutch Muslim and Jewish communities in distinct ways. However, the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter not only caused people to rethink the terms of Dutch multiculturalism and values; religious communities in the Netherlands had to redefine who could represent and speak for them. Within Judaic and Islamic communities, these questions were asked internally. Which religious leaders and organisations could represent

⁸⁵ A complete ban on un-stunned slaughter was desired, but eventually measures of governance of animal welfare were instead instituted. For example, the covenant requests a veterinarian to be present at all times during the slaughter of animals without pre-stunning.

them in negotiations with governmental bodies? How does one reconcile with governmental choices of representation with which one is not in agreement?

The law change to ban un-stunned religious slaughter was proposed by Marianne Thieme from the Party for Animals. While the party was often mentioned in news discourses on the debate, another prominent party in the debate was the populist Party for Freedom. The leader, Geert Wilders, was often talked about and Dion Graus, one of the party members, was vocal regarding his negative feelings towards un-stunned religious slaughtering and those who opposed Thieme's law change. Wilders was not often quoted speaking on the matter but the clash between his affiliation with Israel and aversion of Islam was. Within these discussions on Wilder's discordant views, differences between Islam and Judaism became clear in the public debate. Many supporters of Thieme's law change, especially those who also aligned themselves with Wilder's party, predominantly disagreed with Halal slaughter. The effects of new measures for Kosher slaughter were often described as 'collateral damage'.

Not all supporters of Thieme's ban acted solely out of Islamophobic motives; animal welfare was also a major driver in the debate. However, even if the restrictions on Kosher slaughter practices were 'collateral damage', this did not mean that the consequences were not significant for the community. In addition, although Muslims might be targeted as outsiders while Jewish people became 'accidental' outsiders, both were nevertheless constructed as outsiders and 'Other'. Antisemitic feelings are increasing again in the Netherlands which, against a broader history of Jewish persecution in Europe, makes these developments understandably worrisome in the eyes of Jewish people.

Animal-linked racialisation can be recognised in the populist discourses that were present during the Dutch debate on religious slaughter. Narratives of an 'elevated' society that treats animals well, which is 'invaded' by people whose practices are deemed more harmful towards animals, are overtly present. It was expressed by Dutch Muslims that they felt that the attack on un-stunned religious slaughter was driven by anti-Islamic sentiment. They supported their arguments by noting that Halal meat and processes associated with its production were subject to more critique than Kosher meat. Indeed, opinion pieces published by consumers of non-religiously slaughtered meat expressed preference for Kosher meat over Halal meat, without addressing the fact that Kosher meat has to adhere to stricter standards than Halal meat. Fears of Halal meat becoming standard were also expressed, even though un-stunned slaughter is

becoming more, rather than less, regulated. This implies that much of the debate was motivated by ‘Othering’, in addition to concerns of animal welfare and food transparency.

The ‘fears’ of religiously slaughtered meat, and Halal meat specifically, fit within broader historical changes within the meat industry. Developments in the European industrialisation of meat production such as the re-locating of food animals and slaughter practices outside of urban areas, the separation between butchers and farmers and practices of stunning animals contributed to the construction of a dichotomy between ‘civilised’ stunned slaughter and ‘uncivilised’ un-stunned religious slaughter. Religious slaughter requires more human interaction with the slaughter animal than does industrial killing, which is often understood in negative terms by those from outside the religions in question. However, industrialised forms of slaughter are not intrinsically better or substantially animal-friendly than religious forms of slaughter, as the main difference takes place at the moment of killing, which has already been reduced to 40 seconds. In addition, the values that underline religious and non-religious slaughter practices are not fully oppositional either; consumers of meat from both slaughter practices shared common values such as care for animal welfare and desires for industry transparency. However, all of these were narratives that were present in the debate.

Using posthuman and animal-linked racialisation frameworks, the analysis in this chapter has shown how human and non-human identities are intertwined and constantly in negotiation. The position of the food animal in Dutch society changed. Since the turn of the twentieth century, food animals have largely been removed from the societies that consume them. Food animals, nowadays, are raised and slaughtered rurally, rather than in densely populated areas. Whereas food animals are usually not central when thinking about meat, the debate forced consumers to acknowledge the animal behind the meat again. Between humans, important questions such as values regarding animal welfare, cultural difference, freedom to practice religion, and tolerance had to be responded to. When thinking about animal-welfare, underlying values about multiculturalism took a central role. Secular slaughter was positioned as more animal-friendly than un-stunned religious slaughter, and within the debate, religious values were often positioned as threats to existing societal norms and values, especially Islam.

Using an affirmative ethics lens, non-antagonistic approaches could be recognised. Although the debate mainly appeared to focus on incompatible values, the many implicit shared values between consumers and opponents of religiously slaughtered meat were striking. Concern for animal welfare was a central issue for all parties involved. Opponents of Thieme’s ban generally

did not argue that animal welfare was acceptable; rather, they questioned the terms in which animal welfare was negotiated. Proponents of the ban saw the moment of slaughter as a key moment in the food animal's life and stunning as a means to improve this moment. Opponents of the ban often discussed animal welfare in terms of the larger meat industry. In addition, it was argued that Kosher and Halal slaughter guidelines were fundamentally developed with animal welfare in mind. A second interesting dynamic formed: while opponents of religious slaughter were scared that they would be served Halal food without their knowledge, consumers of Halal meat feared that Halal classifications were not reliable and that false levels of trust were being created. Fear of contamination of meat—be it religiously slaughtered meat with meat from the regular meat industry due to faulty or lack of labelling, or meat from animals deemed to be inedible such as horses—was present among multiple parties. However, despite these possibilities for alignment, emphasis on commonalities was hardly explored.

While the potential to focus on shared values, rather than differences, was not the main focus of attention in the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, it was discussed by some commentators. For example, Rabbi van de Kamp was often cited regarding how the debate enabled the Muslim and Jewish community to grow closer in the Netherlands. Although they have not been taken up in any recent developments relating to this debate, future possibilities for shifts from cultural differences towards commonalities are present within the debate, such as shared interest in food transparency and care for animal welfare.

In summary, while Thieme's proposed law change was motivated by concerns for animal welfare, the debate that followed from this proposal was partially motivated by Islamophobic and anti-Semitic sentiments. The analysis presented in this chapter shows overt signs of discrimination towards Muslim and Jewish Dutch residents within the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, with Muslim people receiving the bulk of the hostility. It is critical to recognise discourses that position certain cultures as better or worse than others, as 'Other' and as less civilised, and to reject these discourses. This type of recognition will be of benefit to debates on animal welfare because it allows for collaborative efforts towards shared values, rather than these debates being derailed and appropriated to promote racist and discriminatory agendas.

Chapter 3: Increasing demands and consequences? A Comparative Analysis of Two Countries' Responses to the Global Effects of the Meat Industry

Introduction

Currently more than a quarter of the meat produced worldwide is eaten in China (Shimokawa, 2015, pp. 1023–1024). Therefore, meat consumption in China is of great interest to other nations. China offers considerable opportunities for trade in meat because there is a rapidly growing middle-class. However, despite the trade opportunities and partially driven by stereotypes and a general fear for the future of the planet, increased meat consumption in China is also framed in negative terms, specifically in connection to environmental impacts of meat production. There are clear correlations between increasing wealth and increasing meat consumption (e.g., Herzog, 2011, p. 176; Santini, Ronzon, Perez Dominguez, Enciso & Proietti, 2017). China is no exception to this. Because China has a population of 1.4 billion people (China Population (LIVE), n.d.), any small changes in population-based behaviours will have a wide impact inside the country and on a global level.

This case study investigates intranational perceptions of eating meat. It explores the contemporary debate over the consequences of increasing meat consumption, particularly concerning its environmental and economic impacts. The main focus of this chapter will be on Dutch and Australian discourses in written news media regarding growing levels of meat consumption in China. Meat consumption is an act that has implications beyond simply taking in nutrition from animal flesh. Previous chapters have looked at how ethical considerations regarding animal welfare are negotiated within the borders of Australia (see Chapter 1) and the Netherlands (see Chapter 2). This case study takes a wider approach with a focus on economic and environmental impacts by asking how two different countries have viewed the responsibilities and consequences of the meat industry in the contemporary, changing global climate. Generally, increasing animal protein consumption has a significant impact on local food production systems because meat production is becoming increasingly industrialised and centralised (Cudworth, 2011), which also leads to global changes. Farmed food animals are often fed grain, which means that rapidly increasing meat consumption in China not only affects meat prices but food prices in general (Shimokawa, 2015, p. 1025). A significant part of the

meat industry depends on global trade in animal feed and meat sales and purchases. In addition to these economic consequences, increased Chinese meat consumption is changing the global ecosystem. Chinese land and water resources are being impacted, affecting its own ecosystem as well as influencing global climate change and contributing to deforestation in Brazil and Argentina to grow crops to feed cattle (Shimokawa, 2015, p. 1026).

This chapter explores reactions in the Netherlands and Australia to growing levels of meat consumption in China. The Netherlands and Australia are both major export countries with similar levels of global economic and political influence. Differences lie in their branding; the Netherlands focuses heavily on sustainability and progress in description of its agricultural production, while Australia distinguishes itself through what it advertises as its clean, green brand.⁸⁶ In addition, Australia has longstanding trade relations with China, whereas the Netherlands has only recently begun to explore this market. This chapter aims to determine how two countries with similar influence in terms of global agricultural trade, developed different discourses on their meat production and the global increasing demand for their product. Therefore, the focus in this chapter is on Dutch and Australian discourses *of* Chinese meat consumption, not on Chinese perceptions of their own meat consumption or attitudes of those in other countries. Rather than endorsing both country's discourses and branding, this analysis will shed light on the complexities that are part of the globalisation of industries more generally, in this case, the meat industry. In other words, while Australia sees its meat production practices as clean and green, and the Netherlands frames these practices as sustainable, this chapter aims to examine how these ideas fit within broader cultural frameworks without necessarily agreeing with them.

As meat production has become more industrialised and centralised, there has been increasing attention given to the negative effects of the meat industry on the global environment. At the same time, meat production and consumption continue to increase. This chapter considers this paradox by exploring Dutch and Australian discourses on China's increasing meat production from environmental and cultural economical angles. The concept of the Anthropocene is used

⁸⁶ Australia relies heavily on its reputation as a producer of clean and green food for its national economy, as underlined in the articles cited above and by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO, 2017). However, while Australia may be known for its clean and green brand, this does not mean that food production, and specifically meat production, does not have negative environmental consequences in Australia. For example, cattle grazing causes land to degrade (Garnaut, 2011) and red meat production requires high levels of water use, especially in the north of Australia (Peters et al., 2010).

to investigate how the environment is discussed in relation to meat production in the Netherlands and Australia. While Dutch discourses frames the environment in terms of sustainability, Australian discourses frames the environment as part of their current ‘clean and green’ brand. Investigating discourses surrounding meat production through both an economic and an environmental lens shows how these industries fit within broader societal narratives on national identities, industries and economies. This case study demonstrates that meat production and consumption cannot be understood solely in terms of environmental impact, but that other factors such as cultural and economic value must also be taken into account.

Histories of Meat Consumption, Production and Trade

Knowledge about the negative consequences of the meat industry are widespread. However, the belief that we cannot simply abandon the consumption of meat is probably even more prevalent.⁸⁷ There is a general consensus that hunter-gathering peoples have always included some meat in their diets (Herzog, 2011, p. 279). However, Herzog (2011), who examines the psychology of human-animal relations, argued that there is significant evidence that supports the hypothesis that meat has played an important role in human evolution, in allowing our brains to rapidly develop and in allowing our social intelligence to grow. Social anthropologist Nick Fiddes (1991) and interdisciplinary scholar Vaclav Smil (2013) have also claimed that the consumption of meat has historically been seen as desirable human behaviour and important in terms of social evolution. However, they are more critical of our abilities to determine if and how much meat our ancestors ate from a scientific perspective. Strictly vegan or vegetarian communities were always an exception, but meat consumption most likely reached very low levels for some communities in certain periods for multiple reasons beyond their control (Smil, 2013, pp. 32–33), according to these scholars. However, recent archaeological evidence appears to point in the opposite direction. Professor of Food Science and Human Nutrition Neil Mann (2018) argues that:

At least in the last three to four million years of evolutionary adaptation ... our ancestral hominin line emerged from the receding African wetland forests to become bipedal, open grassland dwellers. In this new dryer environment digestible plant foods were less readily available than in the wetland forests, but grazing animals were abundant. (p. 169)

⁸⁷ This is *not* to argue that humans necessarily need meat for survival as the survival of many vegetarians and vegans disproves this claim, or that *everyone* thinks this, because vegans and vegetarians also dispute the view that meat is required for survival.

The move to open grasslands led to humans ‘scavenging the remains of herbivore carcasses’ and eventually shifting ‘to direct hunting over a time period of approximately 2 million years’ (Mann, 2018, p. 169). While meat may or may not have been important in human evolution, the rapid changes in the past 200 years in terms of its production and consumption have led to it becoming an increasingly contested food stuff.

Long-distance meat trading commenced before the industry was as large as it is now. Initially, only livestock were exported over long distances. Records show that these practices go far back in history. For example, Ancient Rome had geese driven to them from Gaul (Smil, 2013). Of course, livestock export was accompanied with many difficulties. The animals required food, many died on the way and sea travel was generally unpredictable. The invention of refrigeration allowed for meat transport, making the meat industry much more profitable (Smil, 2013). The main driver of higher meat intakes in human diets in Europe was nineteenth-century industrialisation. As industrialisation spread over the world, so did higher meat consumption. Increased meat production matched the growth of capitalism, industrialisation, technological developments and globalisation (Smil, 2013). These developments affected animals beyond their potential as food sources. Capitalism, industrialisation, technological developments and globalisation led to new human–animal relationships. Think, for instance, of animals’ roles in experiments for medical and psychological research and military testing (Wadiwel, 2009). The growing responsibilities *and* sacrifices that animals have made as companion animals or entertainers should also not be underestimated (Haraway, 2003).

Smil (2013) identified three key factors in the history of the increase in meat production. Serial production of tractors in the early twentieth century allowed for land clearance, giving animals more space to graze. The development of more effective fertilisers just before the First World War allowed for “specialized cropping and separate and concentrated meat production” (Smil, 2013, p. 75), improving agricultural productivity. The confinement of animals and the introduction of optimised food to make them grow quickly after the Second World War was the final step towards the meat industry as it is now known. Smil’s (2013) research was predominantly situated in the US. Within Europe, Fiddes (1991) argues that meat consumption was relatively low during the first five years after the Second World War and has fluctuated ever since (1991, p. 26).

In summary, while meat has likely long played a part in human food consumption and even human evolution, there is considerable debate over the exact role meat consumption played in

human food consumption and evolution prior to industrialisation. What is clear is that industrialisation and new technological developments contributed to the increase of animal consumption globally. This section has explored the historical technological developments that have led to current meat consumption patterns. The following section will explore contemporary values on meat consumption and its negative consequences from Australian and Dutch perspectives.

The Values on and of Agriculture in Australia and the Netherlands

Since the nineteenth century, food production has been centralised as a result of industrialisation, technological developments, colonialism, globalisation, neo-liberalisation and many other factors. This section positions Australia and the Netherlands in the global food provision system. The aim of this section is two-fold. It is both descriptive and also makes an argument regarding why these two particular countries offer valuable starting points to analyse discourses surrounding the increasing demand for meat products in China.

Whereas the Netherlands and Australia may not appear to have much in common at first sight, both are heavily dependent on agricultural export as a source of income. The Netherlands is the largest agricultural export country of the EU and the second-largest agricultural exporter in the world, just after the US. In 2019, agricultural export had an estimated value of EUR 94.5 billion. The main export product is horticulture, especially flowers, although meat is the second-largest export product of the country and dairy and eggs are third. In 2019, the Netherlands exported EUR 7.8 billion of meat and EUR 8 billion of eggs and dairy. Most agricultural exports stay within Europe, while the rest is exported on a global level. The value of Dutch agricultural export to China was EUR 3 billion (Centraal Bureau Statistiek [CBS], 2020). While the Netherlands exports more agricultural goods in total, Australia exports more meat annually than the Netherlands, namely AUD 12.85 billion (EUR 8.61 billion) in 2015. China is Australia's main export partner, accounting for 19.9 per cent of the total international trade. Japan followed with 10.0 per cent in 2016 (DFAT, n.d.). Australia and the Netherlands have similar levels of influence. Both are part of the G20, with the Netherlands indirectly represented via the EU, but neither is part of the G8 (G20.org, n.d.; cfr.org, 2014).

There are significant differences between the Netherlands and Australia. Their locations are a key difference. The Netherlands mainly exports to other European countries because it is part of Europe, which makes European export easier geographically and legally due to free trade

agreements in the EU. Having European countries as main export partners means that the growing demand for foodstuffs in China does not have direct economic benefits for the Netherlands. Because Australia is an island, it depends on intercontinental trade. China has long been a major export partner. Therefore, a growing demand for meat in China is a business opportunity for Australia.

A second difference lies in the resources which the land has to offer. Australia's land surface is so large that there are considerable differences between livestock production systems in the dry tropical north and temperate south. For example, in the north, beef production is based on large low-input, pasture grazing or in feedlots. In the south, there are smaller farm holdings with higher stocking and growing rates of cattle. Sometimes supplementary hay and grains are provided. Australia's biggest strength is that it is free of diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Australia draws on its competitive advantages in food safety and quality and about 65 per cent of beef is exported, either processed or as live export. Significant effort is put into maintaining biosecurity. Therefore, maintaining and protecting these traits are some of the industry's main concerns for future directions and challenges (Cottle & Pitchford, 2014, p. 677). Maintaining the land on which cattle graze is one of the industry's other priorities (Cottle & Pitchford, 2014, pp. 640–641).

The Netherlands is geographically smaller than Australia. It is more dependent on innovation to maintain the animal production industry. The seasonal climate and high prices for land forced the agricultural industry to “continuously improve the efficiency of production” (Chivot, Auping, Jong, Roos & Rademaker, 2016, p. 61). For example, rather than grazing cattle like Australia, the Netherlands has to feed cattle mixed rations based on soy. This soy has to be imported, which makes the system more dependent on transnational relationships. It follows that “technological progress [and] the specialization and intensification of agriculture and farming” (Chivot et al., 2016, p. 29) are the main drivers for the five-fold increase of agricultural production since the 1950s rather than purely an increased global demand for quality products. Technological advancements and innovations are crucial to the Dutch agricultural industry. Because it is difficult for the Netherlands to increase export product in the form of meat, the industry has shifted its focus to exporting knowledge and technology. These technologies focus heavily on sustainability (Chivot et al., 2016).

Australia and the Netherlands are both key figures in global agriculture. However, they have different approaches towards agriculture due to location, countries with which they trade and

several other factors outlined above. This case study will unpack how differences in how the agricultural industry is shaped in Australia and the Netherlands affect their positions and views on increasing meat consumption in China.

The Global Meat Industry and the Environment

The meat industry has long been a topic of discussion. Generally, opponents of meat consumption give two types of reasons for this: health and ethics. This thesis focuses on ethical approaches towards the meat industry. Generally, ethical concerns can be divided into care for animal welfare, care for world hunger and environmental concerns (Dietz, Frisch, Kalof, Stern & Guagnano, 1995). The previous two chapters of this thesis examined animal welfare by exploring what factors play a role in determining which animals are considered to be food animals or not, and by looking at discourses surrounding the killing of food animals. This chapter will change the focus to environmental concerns and food security. Like the previous two chapters, this case study will show how reactions towards the meat industry are embedded in, and reflective of, broader cultural values.

Between 1961 and 2010, the average meat consumption per person increased from 23 kg a year to 43 kg a year. This development, in combination with the general increase in global population translates to the slaughter of 64 billion animals a year in 2011 from 8 billion animals a year in 1961 (Patel & Moore, 2017, p. 155). Political scientist and sociologist Raj Patel and historian Jason W Moore explain that the significant increase in meat consumption required “invention of new veterinary practices—from intensive breeding to hormonal supplementation to antibiotic use to concentrated animal feeding operations—which have had globally transformative effects on the quality of food, soil, water, and air” (Patel & Moore, 2017, pp. 155-156) as well as cheap labour.

While there has been significant attention paid to the global meat industry and its effects on the environment, debate exists in the scientific community about the extent to which both are related. One of the most notable examples is a 2006 UN report (Steinfeld, Gerber, Wassenaar, Castel, Rosales & de Haan, 2006) and the reactions to its claims. According to the report, livestock causes more CO₂ emissions, more land and water degradation than non-animal agriculture and is a major driver for deforestation. In 2013, the UN released a second report on the effects of the meat industry on the environment (Gerber et al., 2013). While this report

placed less responsibility on the meat industry for environmental problems than did the earlier one, its main argument remained: less meat production would be better for the environment.

When it comes to the relationship between meat and the environment, the schism between those who believe the meat industry is unsustainable and those who disagree with the arguments of the former is evident. Certain scholars have directly challenged the reports,⁸⁸ while others have made general arguments about the overestimated effects of the meat industry on global food security and land usage.⁸⁹ Other scholars in the sciences have come to similar conclusions as the UN report, arguing that the meat industry has negative global effects that make it unsustainable.⁹⁰ Most recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change* report reiterated that “[d]iets high in plant protein and low in meat and dairy are associated with lower GHG emissions” (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2022, p. 89).

While there is no clear scientific agreement on the effects of the meat industry, the 2006 UN report on Climate Change (Steinfeld et al., 2006) started an international debate on the influence of the meat industry on the environment and global warming, which inspired artists, activists and scholars. Documentaries such as *Cowspiracy* (2014) and *Meat the Truth* (2007) referenced the reports to encourage their viewers to adopt an animal-free diet.

The 2006 UN report on Climate Change fits within a larger environmental turn. While environmentalism is not a new concern, the turn of the 21st century marked a new revival of environmental interest.⁹¹ In addition to scientific research on environmental impact, scholarship in the humanities also took an environmental turn around this time. The start of the environmental humanities can be traced back to the late 1990s to scholars in Australia who continued to pioneer in the field early 2000s (Bergthaller et al., 2014; Emmett & Nye, 2017), although ecocriticism in the humanities and social sciences can be traced to earlier in other

⁸⁸ e.g., Glatzle (2014).

⁸⁹ e.g., Mottet et al. (2017). The EAT Lancet report repeated the argument that very little to no red meat intake is generally beneficial for peoples' health (Willet et al., 2019). At the same time, the report does acknowledge that red meat can have health benefits for “in low-income populations in which the majority of energy comes from starchy carbohydrates” because red meat “is likely to mitigate micronutrient deficiencies and have metabolic benefits by reducing high glycaemic load” (Willet et al, 2019, p. 455).

⁹⁰ e.g., Westhoek, et al. (2014) and Hallström, Carlsson-Kanyama and Börjesson (2015).

⁹¹ The emergence of global environmental awareness can be traced back to as far as the late 1600s, when the capacity to travel and the impact of labor-intensive activities on colonial land both increased (Grove, 2002).

locations. For example, it had been recognised as a field in the US since the 1990s (Emmett & Nye, 2017). Ecofeminists have offered feminist analyses of environmental issues since the 1970s (Gates, 1996), and in India, scholars such as Vandana Shiva (1988) have explored the relationship between environment and global politics since the 1970s.⁹² Several journals,⁹³ research centres⁹⁴ and collaborations between universities⁹⁵ are now dedicated to the environmental humanities.

One of the drivers behind increasing concerns about the effects of the meat industry is the increasing global demand for meat. It is a recurring topic in cultural studies research that engages with the global impacts of meat consumption.⁹⁶ The majority of research in the environmental humanities agree with the UN report's argument that the meat industry has global undesirable consequences. A recurring topic which is relevant for this research is China's growing levels of meat consumption.⁹⁷ All in all, whether one agrees or disagrees with the report, the global impact of the meat industry has been put on the international agenda in academic and popular discourses.⁹⁸ It is within the nexus of environmentalism and the (post-

⁹² For an example of the relationship between ecological and social impact of forestry or *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India* (Shiva, 1988) about the relationship between women, environmental change and social class in India.

⁹³ For example, *Environmental Humanities*, launched in 2012, *The Anthropocenic Review*, launched in 2014 and *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities*, also launched in 2014.

⁹⁴ A quick Google search shows, for example, the Environmental Humanities Centre at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam [Free University of Amsterdam], the Centre for Environmental Humanities in Bristol and the Research Centre for Environmental Humanities in Bath, among many others.

⁹⁵ For example, the European Alliance for Environmental Humanities.

⁹⁶ For example, American novelist Jonathan Safran Foer (2009) notes that “animal products still account for only 16 percent of the Chinese diet, but farmed animals account for more than 50 percent of China’s water consumption—and at a time when Chinese water shortages are already cause for global concern” (Foer, 2009, p. 262) and philosopher Cary Wolfe, in his work on animal rights and biopolitics uses China as an illustration of how “because of the scale of the Chinese population, the extreme inefficiency of meat as a food source (it takes 40 kilograms of feed to produce 1 kilogram of beef), and the scarcity of farmland in China, ‘China’s meat mania is implicated in everything from deforestation in Brazil to food-price inflation in Africa.’” (Wolfe, 2013, p. 101).

⁹⁷ In addition to increased meat consumption in China, critiques on China’s different food consumption practices is another recurring topic in discourses on practices of eating animals, most recently observed in debates over wet markets. Some meat-eating practices in China differ significantly from practices by people who identify with Western values, with roots in a supposed shared history of European Enlightenment beliefs. The consumption of dog meat is one that speaks to many non-Chinese peoples’ imaginations, which is reflected in academic literature (e.g., Foer, 2009; Herzog, 2011). However, this is not relevant to the argument of this chapter, so this chapter focuses predominantly on the increasing meat consumption in China, rather than how practices there differ from those in other cultures with regard to eating meat.

⁹⁸ Bristow and Fitzgerald (2011) outlined that industry stakeholders and governmental agencies did not significantly change their stances and approaches towards the meat industry after the *Livestock’s Long*

humanities, and the scholarship that is produced within the environmental humanities, that I situate this chapter. This project looks at the broader narratives and implications of increased meat consumption from a cultural and societal angle rather than a scientific one.

Theoretical Framework

Previous chapters of this thesis use the concept of grievable lives to examine how animals become deemed as edible or inedible and the concept of animal-linked racialisation to explore how slaughter practices become deemed acceptable. The analysis in this chapter starts with the concept of the Anthropocene to outline how the global environmental consequences of meat production and consumption are understood and responded to by two meat-exporting countries. The concept of the Anthropocene is used as a starting point to explore how media discourses in Australia and the Netherlands position themselves within global debates on the meat industry's effects on the global environment.

Within discourses surrounding global environmental and climate change, the supposed role of humans is usually at the centre. The concept of the Anthropocene is a valuable tool to create understandings of humans' understanding of the meat industry. It encompasses geographical and societal transformations. In so doing, the Anthropocene helps reveal questions about how the human and non-human world are contingent, which is especially important when thinking about the meat industry because it is human-driven but directly includes non-human animals and indirectly affects the world at large. The aim of this project is not to argue whether we are living in an era that should be defined as the Anthropocene, but rather to observe how notions of the Anthropocene reflect in debates surrounding critiques on growing meat consumption.

Formally introduced by Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen and ecologist Eugene Stoermer in 2000, the term 'Anthropocene' was meant "to denote the global environment dominated by humanity" (Schneiderman, 2015, p. 180). According to cultural theorist Claire Colebrook (2017), the "conception of the Anthropocene epoch appears to mark as radical a shift in species awareness as Darwinian evolution effected for the nineteenth century" (p. 1). However, where Darwin's timeline follows the narrative of 'life's grandeur', the Anthropocene redirects us and asks us to consider alternative narratives. Human development is not leading us to become better, but instead is leading us towards environmental destruction, according to this concept. However,

Shadow report was published. The media, however, did include the agricultural industry in its explanation of environmental change.

the idea of direct (negative) human impact on the environment had been well-recognised for several decades prior to the introduction of the term ‘Anthropocene’ (Schneiderman, 2015). Reactions to the concept were mixed. Thinkers of diverse academic disciplines started using it in their works. Three academic journals have been dedicated to thinking about the Anthropocene. However, many scholars, especially those in the sciences, were quick to critique it. Their main claim is that not all humans in the world contribute equally to the changes in our environment. As they note, the Anthropocene is not a geological fact, situated in rocks, but rather culturally mediated, situated in the actions and values of (some) cultural groups (Schneiderman, 2015, pp. 181–182). Crutzen himself later emphasised the political side of the Anthropocene, arguing that “teaching students that we are living in the Anthropocene, the Age of Men, could be of great help. Rather than representing yet another sign of human hubris, this name change would stress the enormity of humanity’s responsibility as stewards of the Earth” (Crutzen & Schwägerl, 2011).

The concept of the Anthropocene quickly became a buzzword but it did not remain without critique. Multiple variations on it were proposed with the aim of finding a more extensive framework to understand the current state of the Earth, and humans’ role in it. Global capitalism was soon proposed as a key development that must be taken into account when aiming to make sense of the last centuries. These considerations led to the introduction of the idea of the Capitalocene⁹⁹. Closely linked to ideas about the Anthropocene, the feminist scholar Donna Haraway (2016) argued that within the Capitalocene:

One has to at least include the great market and commodity reworldings of the long sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the current era, even if we think (wrongly) that we can remain Euro-centered in thinking about ‘globalizing’ transformations shaping the Capitalocene. One must surely tell of the networks of sugar, precious metals, plantations, Indigenous genocides and slavery, with their labor innovations and relocations and recompositions ... The relocation of peoples, plants and animals; the leveling of vast forests; and the violent mining of metal preceded the steam engine; but that is not a warrant for wringing one’s hands about the perfidy of the Anthropos. (p. 48)

The global spread of capital has played a crucial role in transforming the world even before the industrial revolution began. Therefore, industrialisation can be seen as a contributor leading to

⁹⁹ Haraway (2016) traced the introduction of the Capitalocene back to Jason Moore, who first wrote a blog on it in 2013 and later continued to publish on this topic. However, Moore himself first learned about the concept in 2009 from ecologist Andreas Malm (Moore, 2016).

the current state of the Earth but cannot be singled out. It is a broader transformation, led by capitalism, which produced what some now call the Anthropocene.

The developments that the Anthropocene and Capitalocene describe, can be recognised within the meat industry. The production of meat is a global endeavour. Feed for cattle is produced in different parts of the world to where the cattle are raised (Patel & Moore, 2017, p. 156). For example, China imports soy from Brazil and the United States for its own domestic meat production which greatly affects the global soy trade and the Brazilian economy (Schneider, 2019, p. 90). Meat production also has global consequences. In addition to the effects on the environment and climate, the increased accessibility to meat has changed peoples' diets and health and the use of antibiotics in meat production risks an increase in antibiotic-resistant genes (Moore, 2015, p. 32; Schneider, 2019). Class and racial differences among humans have led to great differences between those who profit from the industry and those who slaughter and prepare the animals.¹⁰⁰ It is for these reasons that I chose the frameworks of the Anthropocene and Capitalocene to examine responses to increasing meat consumption.

While the sciences continue to debate the 'to what extent' question and the humanities debate the 'how to understand/go from here' question, the influence of the meat industry on the broader world is a pressing topic in current global politics. The yearly Conference of the Parties (COP) on climate change organized by the United Nations is an example of this (Nations, n.d.). The recent conferences have underlined the environmental effects of large-scale food production and fueled further discussion on this (Schiermeier, 2019; Weston & Watts, 2021). It is important to ask the 'to what extent' and the 'how to understand/go from here' questions. However, the framing of these questions and the answers to them will inform more than just our actions

¹⁰⁰ See for example economic Erik Olsen's (2010) work on how the meat packing industry in postwar America changed the geographical distribution of their production plants from urban to rural to counter the unionization of workers or recent research on the vulnerability of laborers who work in meat processing. Workers in the meat processing industry are often from migratory backgrounds and have been associated with much higher than average chances of being infected with the COVID-19 virus due to the both the nature of meat processing factories and the precarious labor rights of migrant workers which made it hard to take time off work, even when testing positive for the COVID-19 virus (Reid, Ronda-Perez, & Schenker, 2020). The book *Global Meat: Social and Environmental Consequences of the Expanding Meat Industry* (Winders & Ransom, 2019) also offers several case studies on how the global meat industry exacerbates social inequalities, focusing on "indigenous people's vulnerabilities to market fluctuations contribute to environmental degradation" (p 188) in Chapter 5 and how climate change impacts poorer communities in Chapter 6.

towards the industry; they will influence the ways in which we position ourselves towards the earth, environment, and the species—human and non-human—that inhabit it.¹⁰¹

During the research process for this thesis, the role of meat production in the national economies of Australia and the Netherlands kept emerging as a central topic in the data that I collected for this case study. To acknowledge the role of capital and economies within both the global meat industry and the Anthropocene, this chapter draws on the notion of cultural economy, which is a concept introduced by Paul du Gay and Michael Pryke (2002) to bridge the gap between economics and cultural studies (Mackay, 2014). They argue that “the pursuit of prosperity is a hybrid process of aggregation and ordering that cannot be reduced to either of these terms and, as such, requires the use of a unitary term such as cultural economy” (du Gay & Pryke, 2002, p. 1). The notion of cultural economy is useful because it enables an understanding of the importance of economic drivers within the industry, while also understanding the economic within broader cultural and societal frameworks. The Capitalocene is first and foremost *critical* of the spread of global capital and its consequences (Moore, 2016). While this is valuable, using it alone would lead to a narrow investigation of the specific motivations underlying the responses of Netherlands and Australia to increasing global meat consumption. Therefore, I will use the framework of cultural economy in addition to that of the Capitalocene. While the notion of cultural economy is typically used to critique neo-liberalisation and global capitalism,¹⁰² it is not inherently dismissive of capital. Therefore, the notion of cultural economy is a useful tool to investigate ways in which the meat industry is profit-driven and cultural, which allows for understanding the economical as simultaneously cultural.

This chapter draws upon the concept of the Anthropocene both as an approach to guide the data collection and as a tool to analyse the data. The Anthropocene guides the data collection in offering a topic for this case study, namely that of environmental changes linked to global meat production and consumption. At the same time, it is a useful analytical tool that allows new ways of understanding the world. The Anthropocene also fits within a posthuman framework. As a theoretical tool, the Anthropocene represents a rejection of the typical dichotomies

¹⁰¹ For various approaches to this question, see for example Bernice Bovenkerk & Jozef Keulartz (2016) who offer an edited volume which explores how thinking in terms of the Anthropocene has affected human relations with non-human animals.

¹⁰² Postmodern understandings of cultural economy in the legacy of French thinker Jean Baudrillard’s work on sociological understandings of cultural economy following Pierre Bourdieu’s legacy tend to take critical stances towards neoliberal developments (Flew, 2009).

between human/non-human and nature/industry, amongst others. Braidotti places posthuman approaches within the Anthropocene approach, and argues that posthuman theory “is a generative tool to help us re-think the basic unit of reference for the human in the bio-genetic age known as ‘anthropocene’, the historical moment when the Human has become a geological force capable of affecting all life on this planet” (Braidotti 2013, p. 5-6). In the words of Jasmine Ulmer: “posthuman knowledge occurs within the Anthropocene, and the Anthropocene is now” (2017, p. 835).

In this chapter, the Anthropocene is approached as an ethical and political concept rather than a geo-scientific one. For example, earth scientist Jill Schneiderman argues that Europeans and North Americans have much higher environmental obligations and responsibilities than the rest of the world assuming that humanity only began to critically influence the environment since the industrial era (Schneiderman, 2015, p. 197). There are three possible implications that are discussed in more detail below in the analysis of my case study: 1) the centrality of the human animal as the driver of environmental changes, 2) placing the responsibility of causing *and solving* environmental problems with industrialised countries, and 3) the neo-imperial ethics that follow from this which imply the authority of science with positivist implications (Latour, 2014). The last two implications specifically fit within the broader aims of this thesis, namely to explore how different cultural identities of Western and non-Western subjects are shaped in the discourses surrounding eating animals. The frameworks of Capitalocene and cultural economy are used to explore the economic drivers that underline the discourses on increased meat consumption and the global effects of this.

This case study contributes to the existing literature by exploring reactions to ideas of the Anthropocene. The global environmental consequences of the meat industry cannot be denied. However, meat production and consumption keep increasing on a global level. Unpacking these paradoxes will enable critical engagement with these mechanisms to understand our situated positions in a changing Earth and create viable new ways of conceptualising our pasts, presents and futures.

Research Methods

The empirical part of this dataset consisted of written news media analyses, which were used as the starting point to explore the public discourse in both countries surrounding China’s increasing meat consumption. Examining written news reports revealed the different ways in

which China's increasing meat consumption have been presented in the Netherlands and Australia. CDA was employed to explore the underlying drivers present in these narratives with a focus on anthropocentric thought in relation to neoliberalism and postcolonialism. My use of CDA has been outlined in the introduction to this thesis. For the empirical data collection, the search engine *Factiva* was used, which is a database that allows its users access to "an unrivaled selection of global news and data" (factiva.com, n.d.). The research presented in this chapter narrowed the search results down to local and global newspaper results. For Dutch news on Chinese meat consumption, the following search qualifications were used:

Search form: China *and* vlees *and* consumptie¹⁰³

Date: In the last 5 years

Newspapers: Netherlands

Region: Netherlands

Language: English OR Dutch

Search form: China *and* eten *and* vlees¹⁰⁴

Date: In the last 5 years

Newspapers: Netherlands

Region: Netherlands

Language: Dutch

For Australian news on Chinese meat consumption, the following search qualifications were first used:

¹⁰³ 'China' is spelled the same in Dutch and English. The pronunciation differs but that is irrelevant for a search based on written media. 'Vlees' is the Dutch translation for 'meat'. 'Vlees' could also translate to 'flesh', which meant that some search results discussed the flesh of fish as edible parts. These were considered irrelevant as this thesis focuses on meat consumption and not fish consumption to limit the scope of this research. 'Consumptie' is the Dutch word for 'consumption'.

¹⁰⁴ 'Eten' in Dutch translates to both the English noun 'food' as well as the verb 'to eat'. Thus, using this as a search term guarantees that any mention of China in relation to meat consumption would be captured in the search while excluding articles that use 'vlees' ('meat' in English) in proverbs.

Search form: meat consumption *and* China

Date: In the last 5 years

Newspapers: Australia

Region: Australia

Language: English

The second search for ‘China *and* meat *and* eat*’ (the other search conditions remained the same) led to 1,360 articles as a result. Since the focus of this chapter is on perceptions of Chinese meat consumption concerning globalisation and especially environmental impact, I decided to narrow the search down. I narrowed the search qualifications down to:

Search form: ‘China *and* meat *and* eat* *and* (environment* *or* global *or* climate)’

Date: In the last 5 years

Newspapers: Australia

Region: Australia

Language: English

Based on the results from the searches, some articles were discarded because they were not relevant. The relevance of the results was based on whether mentions of China in the news articles related to meat consumption. Some articles from the search for Dutch sources were rejected because they were from Flemish news sources. I started this chapter with quantitative content analysis, which media scholars Daniel Riffe, Stephen Lacy and Frederick Fico (2008) define as:

the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption. (p. 25)

I measured how often certain themes were present in Australian and Dutch news discourses on China’s increasing meat consumption to offer an analysis of how *and* why the topic of Chinese meat consumption were present as such. After an initial reading of the articles to obtain a

general sense of the key themes, I identified the following recurring themes in the articles related to Chinese meat consumption: food security, food safety and hygiene, animal welfare, environment, business and trade opportunities, health, quality and taste. After starting with my analysis of the Australian news sources, I noted that effects on the local market were also regularly mentioned, so I added that as an additional category. Looking at the Dutch newspaper articles, I searched for the same topics and themes. In addition to these topics, Dutch news sources mentioned opportunities for technological advancements in the meat industry in coverage of meat consumption in China. I added this as another topic to measure to what extent this plays a role in Dutch and Australian news discourses on meat consumption in China. Based on these categories, I created an Excel file to track the number of times the topics were present in the news articles. The results are presented in the following section. These data results guided my CDA, which is presented in the analysis section. The analysis was informed by the reoccurring themes in the data and my theoretical framework.

Data Results

The two searches for Dutch articles on meat consumption in China led to 159 individual articles in total. However, many were focused on the eating habits of Chinese people in the Netherlands, so they were excluded. Articles were also excluded due to being from Belgian news sources, for discussing the consumption of fish, or focusing on dairy. Eventually, 59 relevant articles remained. Figure 3 shows how often topics were addressed between 2013 and 2017:

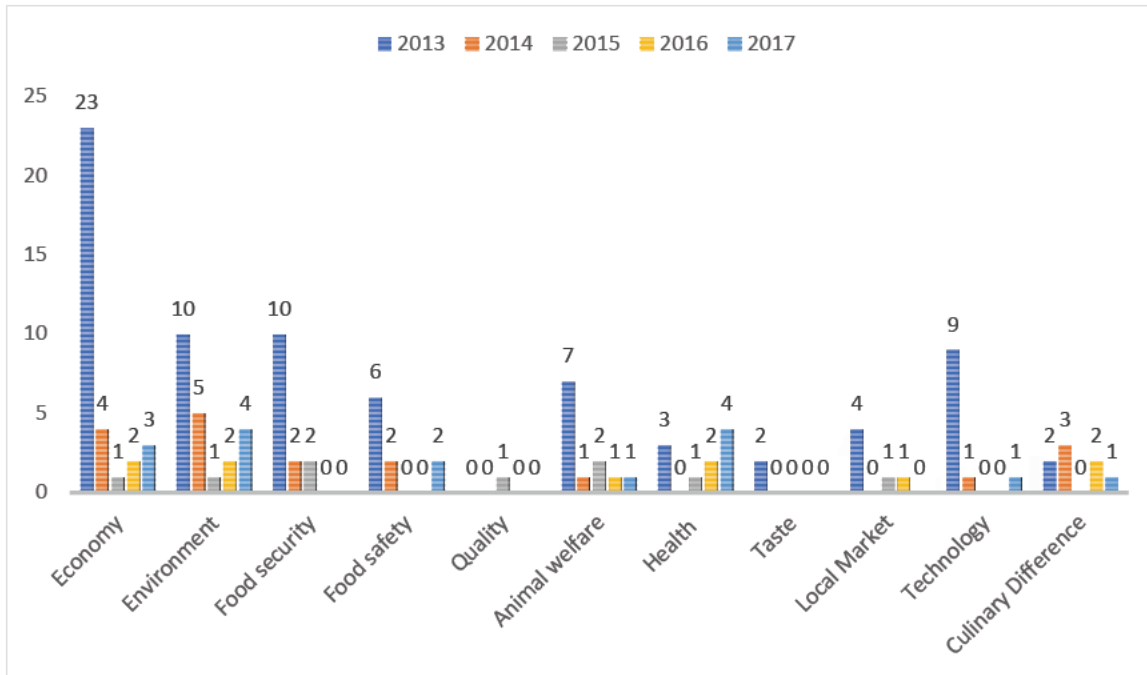


Figure 3: Topics in the Dutch News Media Related to Meat Consumption in China 2013–2017

Note: Economy: 2013 n = 23, 2014 n = 4, 2015 n = 1, 2016 n = 2, 2017 n = 3. Environment: 2013 n = 10, 2014 n = 5, 2015 n = 1, 2016 n = 2, 2017 n = 4, Food security: 2013 n = 10, 2014 n = 2, 2015 n = 2, 2016 n = 0, 2017 n = 0, Food safety: 2013 n = 6, 2014 n = 2, 2015 n = 0, 2016 n = 2, 2017 n = 0, Quality: 2013 n = 0, 2014 n = 0, 2015 n = 1, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 0, Animal welfare: 2013 n = 7, 2014 n = 1, 2015 n = 2, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 1, Health: 2013 n = 3, 2014 n = 0, 2015 n = 1, 2016 n = 2, 2017 n = 4, Taste: 2013 n = 2, 2014 n = 0, 2015 n = 0, 2016 n = 0, 2017 n = 0, Local Market: 2013 n = 4, 2014 n = 0, 2015 n = 1, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 0, Technology: 2013 n = 9, 2014 n = 1, 2015 n = 0, 2016 n = 0, 2017 n = 1, Culinary Difference: 2013 n = 2, 2014 n = 3, 2015 n = 0, 2016 n = 2, 2017 n = 1.

The searches for Australian news articles led to 265 individual articles published between 2013 and 2017. Not all articles were relevant to the research of this chapter. Articles were eliminated when they were not published by an Australian news source, focused on fish instead of meat or when they addressed topics that were not related to meat consumption *in* China. In the end, 117 relevant articles remained and the topics present in these articles are shown in Figure 4.

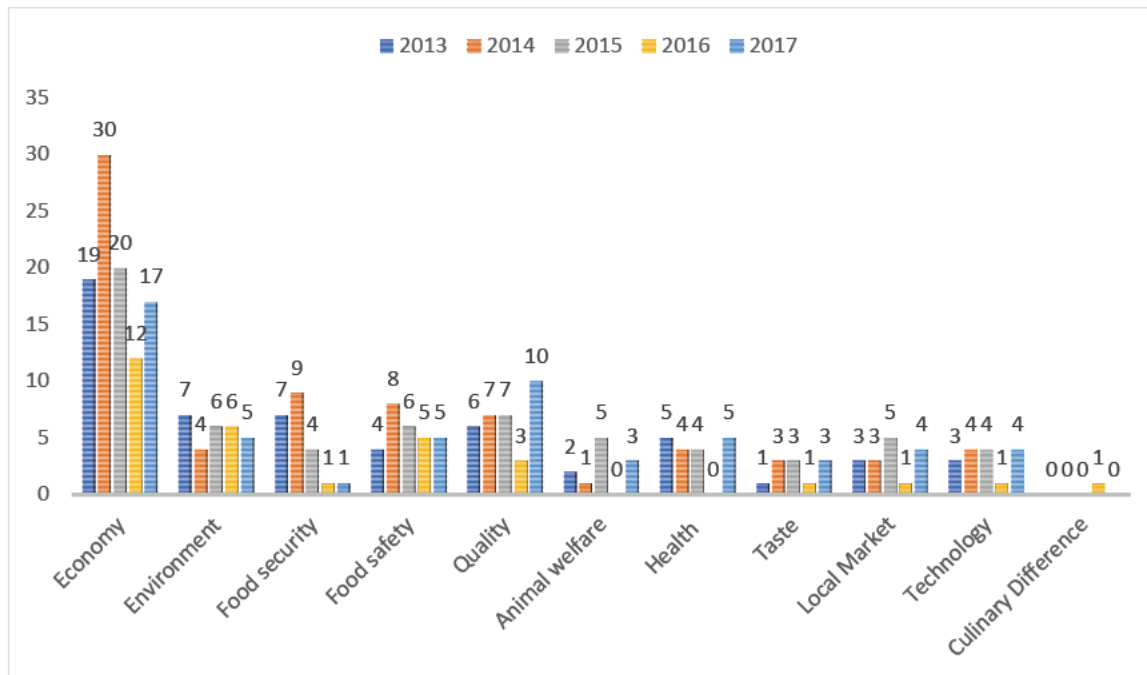


Figure 4. Topics in the Australian News Media Related to Meat Consumption in China 2013–2017

Note: Economy: 2013 n = 19, 2014 n = 10, 2015 n = 20, 2016 n = 12, 2017 n = 17. Environment: 2013 n = 7, 2014 n = 4, 2015 n = 6, 2016 n = 6, 2017 n = 5, Food security: 2013 n = 7, 2014 n = 9, 2015 n = 4, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 1, Food safety: 2013 n = 4, 2014 n = 8, 2015 n = 6, 2016 n = 5, 2017 n = 5, Quality: 2013 n = 6, 2014 n = 7, 2015 n = 7, 2016 n = 3, 2017 n = 10, Animal welfare: 2013 n = 2, 2014 n = 1, 2015 n = 5, 2016 n = 0, 2017 n = 3, Health: 2013 n = 5, 2014 n = 4, 2015 n = 4, 2016 n = 0, 2017 n = 5, Taste: 2013 n = 1, 2014 n = 3, 2015 n = 3, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 3, Local Market: 2013 n = 3, 2014 n = 3, 2015 n = 5, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 4, Technology: 2013 n = 3, 2014 n = 4, 2015 n = 4, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 4, Culinary Difference: 2013 n = 0, 2014 n = 0, 2015 n = 0, 2016 n = 1, 2017 n = 0.

The Australian searches used different search terms than the Dutch searches as explained above. As such, these numbers are not meant as a direct comparison but to give the reader a sense of the corpus. The data are meant as a starting point for the analysis presented in the next section. However, some interesting first impressions can be drawn. At first sight, the data analysis displays few commonalities in terms of frequency of topics when comparing Dutch and Australian reporting on meat consumption in China. While some opinion articles expressed concern about growing meat consumption in China, the general tone regarding Chinese meat consumption was very positive in Australian news media. In contrast, Dutch media coverage that addressed growing meat consumption in China predominantly displayed concern for the global environmental effects of this trend. Economic opportunities were only mentioned sporadically and predominantly in relation to technological developments rather than consumption developments. The Australian search terms specifically looked for news reporting regarding the global environment, while the Dutch search terms were more open-ended. The

reason for a more narrowed search for Australian articles was that Australian reporting on China's increasing meat consumption in general led to an extremely high number of search results. The general results relating to increasing meat consumption were considered to be not directly relevant for this research project because they did not relate closely to the main research themes explored in this chapter. Despite this focused search for Australian news articles, Dutch news reported more environmental concern than the Australian articles. This finding indicates that the environment is proportionally even less on the Australia agenda in relation to Chinese meat consumption than the above search results imply.

Another large difference between Dutch and Australian news articles on increasing meat consumption in China is the number of news articles. The Australian search led to 117 articles, while the Dutch one produced 59 articles. This can be explained by the higher relevance of China's meat consumption for Australia. Because China is an export partner of Australia, any changes in meat demand will be of greater interest there than in the Netherlands. Because the articles are used for a qualitative analysis, the different search terms and the discrepancy in number of articles are not deemed to invalidate the results.

Beyond this media analysis, Australia is predominantly focused on the meat industry in relation to China as a source of national economic growth. Two key topics were the quality of Australian meat and the food safety of Australian meat. Both were related to the economic potential of the Australian meat industry, as quality and food safety are what makes Australian meat popular on the Chinese market. The next section offers a more thorough presentation of the results and draws upon the texts to illustrate these conclusions. The Netherlands also saw economic potential in the growing meat consumption in Chinese society but not regarding 'traditional' meat consumption. It was predominantly in 2013—when the 'in-vitro burger' was developed—that the increasing consumption of meat in China was seen as a promising market for this product and technology. Again, this development was discussed in relation to global environmental concerns. The CDA presented in the next section addresses the underlying cultural values that led to these two different approaches in relation to growing meat consumption in China.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The analysis presented in this section reveals how Australia and the Netherlands have related and reacted to the consequence of the increasing global meat consumption, with a focus on the increased levels of meat consumption in China.

Current Export Relations with China

News discourses in Australia and the Netherlands in this project's dataset focus on what the respective countries have to offer that distinguishes them from the competition. Drawing upon news reporting, I argue that this case study shows that Australia sees itself as an exporter of reliable high-quality meat that comes from a clean environment, whereas the Netherlands predominantly sells ideas and technologies relating to meat production.

The majority of Australian news articles focused on the economic benefits for Australia of the growing meat consumption in China. Following economic benefits, the supreme quality of Australian meat was discussed most frequently. Food safety was mentioned often, which positioned it as one of Australia's strong qualities in the global meat industry. Overall, a large majority of the Australian newspaper articles focused on the meat industry were supportive of the industry. The emphasis on quality of Australia's meat and the land on which the animals graze was reflected in an article published in *The Australian* on 29 May 2017. In 'Darling Downs on the up', several farmers' opinions on the future of Australian farming were presented to the reader. The following excerpt explains how quality differentiates Australian beef from its competitors:

He says that while skewing his meatworks' production towards chilled beef in ready-to-eat packs for China holds the future for business expansion, it also requires a new mindset to sell direct to consumers and a renewed commitment to keeping the supply chain tight, to ensure product integrity is watertight. 'It costs \$US 320 to breed, grow and process a beast (cattle) in Australia and just \$US90 in Brazil. We can't compete on the cheap end so we have to focus on the top end. For us that means a new focus on the potential of China,' says Gleeson. 'When I went to China it really resonated with me how important it is for them to be guaranteed food safety; fortunately, Australia has the best name in the world when it comes to meat hygiene and regulatory standards and the Chinese have so much confidence in Australian branded product.' (Neales, 2017)

China is explicitly recognised as an important trading partner. At the same time, meat producer Gleeson is aware of the competition, especially regarding the costs of producing meat.

However, regarding meat hygiene and regulations, Australia's strong position on the market is assured. The article is one of many. On 25 January 2016, *The Advertiser* published the article 'Why the world can truly love our lamb'. In this article, the reporter argued:

More than 50 per cent of Australian food production is exported. China is (by far) our largest market and Indonesia is important. Both countries suffer limited arable land for domestic production. Australian produce is regarded as green, clean and safe. This is significant in China where one survey showed 80 per cent had concerns about the safety of Chinese-produced food. Laws that ensure the quality of our environment and the integrity of food and livestock handling are essential to international confidence in our food exports (Caruso, 2016).

Again, quality of meat and food safety are portrayed as Australia's strength in the global market, characteristics which need to be preserved to make progress in the international market. Perceptions about Australia's clean and green environment contribute to this reputation. Australia's meat is viewed as being high quality because Australia's environment is thought to be of high quality. As mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, global discourse often positions the relationship between environment and meat production as a concerning one because meat production is argued to have negative environmental effects. However, in Australian discourses on meat production, this conflict is much less present. Instead of conflict being presented between agriculture and the Australian landscape, the environment is part of the meat industry's strengths. Because the environment is of high quality, Australian produce is 'green and clean'.

While Australian news articles emphasise the importance of consistency of quality of meat, media coverage in the Netherlands viewed change and progress as their strengths. The country was often explicitly presented as a forerunner of advancement in agriculture and sustainable food production. Problems were acknowledged but generally positioned as solvable. This attitude was constantly present. *Boerderij* [Farm] magazine, aimed at farmers, published the following in 2013:

The Netherlands [has] extensive experience in dealing with environmental problems in livestock farming and Dutch agriculture has a good international reputation. To give an example: India, the largest dairy producer in the world, wants to develop the dairy industry further and is choosing the Netherlands to collaborate with for this. China is interested in Dutch techniques regarding manure processing and in Tanzania

there is interest for Dutch knowledge regarding poultry farming ... In addition, Dutch agricultural businesses are expanding their international positions. (Vermaas, 2013)¹⁰⁵

The value of progressive farming techniques was explained to Dutch farmers in this article. Several types of farming were addressed and the importance of the Netherlands on the global market was repeatedly emphasised, including in articles that explicitly discussed the direct education of Chinese farmers by Dutch farmers. Popular media outlet *Stentor* wrote about the visit of two Chinese deputies in the Netherlands:

China, taking into account its huge population, does not have a lot of farmland like the Netherlands. 'That's why we have to keep searching for more efficient ways of working,' says Shigeng. In China, the demand for pork exceeds the supply. That is one of the two reasons the two travelled to Eibergen, to learn about efficient meat production. (Reerink, 2013)¹⁰⁶

Again, the coverage in the Netherlands was not solely focused on exporting meat. The Netherlands presented themselves, and specifically their food producers and food scientists, as teachers, selling techniques and ideas in addition to produce. Within these narratives on growing Chinese meat consumption, the similarities between China and the Netherlands were emphasised. While there were acknowledgements of differences in culture, they were generally portrayed as complementary rather than critical.

Overall, the Netherlands and Australia were positive about trading relations with China. For Australia, the focus was on selling meat directly to China, while the Netherlands showed less interest in selling meat directly but was mainly invested in selling technologies and knowledges related to meat production. These different forms of approaching meat trade were the products of long histories of selling meat, while also contributing to existing and future narratives of

¹⁰⁵ Original: Nederland veel ervaring heeft met het omgaan met milieuproblemen in de veehouderij en dat de Nederlandse landbouw internationaal goed staat aangeschreven. 'Om een voorbeeld te geven: India, de grootste zuivelproducent ter wereld, wil de zuivelsector verder ontwikkelen en kiest hierbij voor samenwerking met Nederland. Vanuit China is belangstelling voor de Nederlandse technieken op het gebied van mestverwerking en vanuit Tanzania is belangstelling voor de Nederlandse kennis op het gebied van pluimveehouderij. ... Daarnaast krijgen Nederlandse agribusinessbedrijven internationaal een steeds belangrijkere rol.

¹⁰⁶ Original: China, zeker wanneer het wordt afgezet tegen de enorme bevolkingsomvang, net als Nederland weinig ruimte heeft voor landbouw. 'Daarom moeten we zoeken naar efficiëntere manieren van werken', vertelt Shigeng. In China overstijgt de vraag naar varkensvlees het aanbod dan ook. Dat is dan ook een van de redenen waarom het tweetal is afgereisd naar Eibergen, om te leren hoe het vlees efficiënter geproduceerd kan worden.

national identity in the global market. Their export products reflected their broader cultural histories and identities.

Farming and Histories of National Identities

Australia and the Netherlands view China as a valuable trade partner but approach China's growing demand for meat in different manners. The next sections position the approaches of these countries within broader historical and cultural frameworks. While agriculture has a large part in both countries' economies, it also partakes in performing national identities and values.

The Netherlands

Within Dutch media, change and progress are framed as the main selling points of Dutch food production when it comes to the export of meat products to China. The inclusion of scientific and technological progress in Dutch national narratives around identity is a relatively new development. Historically, the Netherlands prided itself for its art, politics and culture rather than scientific progress. The start of progressiveness as a national value can be traced back as far as the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁷ However, it was only during the second half of the nineteenth century that historians actively began to include *science and scientific progress* in seventeenth century historic scholarship. While this definitely had some nationalist undertones, the aims of writing histories of science were focused on more than national identity building. Instead, including science in narratives of Dutch progress aimed 'to specifically promote the national interests of the scientific profession' (Homburg, 2008, p. 321).

The 'scientific profession', as Ernst Homburg (2008) referred to it, has influenced Dutch agricultural practices significantly in recent times. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, Dutch agriculture had to rapidly adapt to various changes in production and demand. Jan Bieleman (2005) argued that this can be traced back to various developments that were happening in this period. The combination of liberalisation of international trade with developments in transport allowed for a much broader market to which products could be sold. Because of industrialisation, Britain became a profitable export partner. Demand in butter and cheese rose quickly, but the rates of export of livestock increased even faster. Developments

¹⁰⁷ I am aware that the general way to refer to the 17th century in relation to the Netherlands is 'the Golden Century'. However, while practices during this century led to prosperity for some Dutch people, it led to the exploitation and dispossession of many other peoples, Dutch and foreign. Therefore, I will refrain from using this term.

such as standardisation of breeds and the adoption of factory farming, especially within the dairy industry, enabled the Dutch industries to meet growing international demands. From the 1970s onwards, the EU introduced subsidies for agricultural innovation, which motivated the Dutch government to invest “on the assumption that a prosperous agricultural sector was necessary for the well-being of Dutch society as a whole” (Bieleman, 2005, p. 250). While agricultural production became very efficient, Bieleman (2005) argued that it also had a downside:

By the early 1980s, it was clear that things had gone too far, both in terms of production and in its environmental cost ... a situation had arisen in dairy farming in which the cost-effectiveness of the dairy buildings and their equipment had been placed before the well-being of the cows themselves. At a time when farmers were servicing heavy debts, even the stall room given animals, which had been identified as a major cost, was under pressure. (p. 250)

Bieleman (2005) illustrates how efficiency in production did not necessarily lead to progress in terms of the wellbeing of farmers, their animals or the environment, taking a critical stance towards the Dutch emphasis on progress and innovation in agriculture, but showing that these values were part of larger national narratives. The agricultural industry has been important for the Dutch society in general and progress and innovation are still key goals within the industry, albeit with a new focus on sustainability rather than efficiency. Developments with regard to sustainability have been increasingly positioned as enabling the agricultural industry to continue while also “[meeting] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Kemp, Nijhoff-Savvaki, Ruitenburg, Trienekens & Omta, 2014).

Dutch approaches to possible trade relations with China fit into existing narratives of national values. Progressiveness has long been part of Dutch identity. There is a long history and multiple recent developments that have fed into the narrative of the Netherlands as being progressive. Think for example of it being the first country in the world to legalise marriage equality (Merin, 2002; Mohr, 2005) and tolerate soft drug use (Maris, 2018).¹⁰⁸ New developments in meat production contribute to and are the result of, this national narrative.

¹⁰⁸ Toleration is not the same as legalisation. While the Netherlands adopted a toleration policy for soft drugs such as cannabis and hashish (Maris, 1999), use has never been legalised in the Netherlands. By now, several other countries, including the US, have legalised the use of certain drugs, while the Netherlands has not changed the policy. Currently, a proposal to legalise cannabis for a testing period of five years is being explored by the Dutch government but has not yet been put into place (Herderscheê & Thijssen, 2018).

Within the Netherlands, meat production is approached as a changing industry. As the demand for meat export increases, the focus is on *changing* meat production rather than increasing it. This approach has been motivated by multiple factors such as limited agricultural space and traditions of innovation. These narratives are positioned within frameworks of globalisation and sustainability. The Netherlands position themselves as having a long history of thinking globally and progressively as a country and are willing to sell their products and their values to the world. Innovation has economic and cultural value.

Australia

In Australia, high-quality produce is key to the country's selling strategies. While farming is only a small part of the meat industry, it plays a large part in Australians' perceptions of meat production. Australians place a high level of trust in farmers compared to other actors in the food industry (Henderson, Coveney, Ward & Taylor, 2011).

Within Australia, there has been a persistent discourse that rurality is under threat or in crisis. Despite high levels of trust of farmers, the symbolic value of agriculture and farming has decreased. Philip McMichael and Geoffrey Lawrence (2001) positioned this trend in a global context. They defined globalisation as "a deliberate political and economic 'project' involving an ideologically coherent vision of global economic management" (p. 154). Because this leads to new structures of food distribution in which trade shifts from being local to being global, "agriculture becomes less and less an anchor of societies, states and cultures and more and more a tenuous component of corporate global sourcing strategies" (McMichael & Lawrence, 2001, p. 158). McMichaels and Lawrence continue their argument by outlining that financial value has been prioritised over local traditions and societal and cultural values in decision-making in agricultural industries. They contend that the prioritisation of profit will force farmers to adapt and keep up with rapid changes that are part of the diversifying market. These developments will be at the cost of traditional farming practices and knowledge. McMichael and Lawrence (2001) argue that this is a global trend and do not apply their argument specifically to Australia.

Within the research community, there is disagreement with McMichael and Lawrence's (2001) predictions. For example, scholar in rural health Lisa Bourke and environmental studies scholar Stewart Lockie (2001) agree that agricultural production at the turn of the 21st century is threatened by many issues. These threats can partially be attributed to broader, global movements such as a globalising economy, technological changes within the industry and social

and environmental movements. Other changes relate more to domestic developments with land degradation and community decline among the most important factors. Despite these seemingly negative turns for rural Australia, Lockie and Bourke's (2001) main argument is that it is wrong to conclude that "rural Australia [is] dependent on, rather than interdependent with, urban Australia" or that the rural should be seen as "merely secondary to the urban" (p. 3). Therefore, as Lockie and Bourke (2001) concluded, "urban Australians are highly dependent on the primary products, cultural heritage and natural environments rural Australia offers" (p. 3). While agricultural practices are changing with the market, the cultural importance of the farmer is not changing. 'Rurality', farming culture and the 'true blue Aussie' in the outback have been essential aspects of the Australian cultural imaginary since settlement and these narratives continue. Not only is rural Australia crucial for the Australian economy, it feeds into Australia's national and cultural identity. Australian agriculture is part of Australia's cultural economy in addition to being of financial value.

Local practices of consuming meat also are changing in Australia. Australians, together with Americans, consume the most meat per person in the world (Whitnall & Pitts, 2019). At the same time, plant-based diets are trending. Between 2012 and 2016, there has been an increase from 1.7 million people (9.7% total population) to almost 2.1 million (11.2% total population) of Australian adults who identify as vegetarians. These changes have predominantly occurred in urban areas (roymorgan.com, 2016).¹⁰⁹ In addition, over one in three Australian adults have tried a vegetarian diet at least once in their life and almost half of all Australian adults have actively attempted to reduce the intake of meat in their diets (Saunders, 2014). While Australians eat a lot of meat per person, almost half of them have, at least during one point in their lives, attempted to reduce this to the point that one in ten Australians have completely eliminated meat from their diets.

An increasing turn towards less meat consumption does not necessarily correlate with decreasing trust in farmers. Attitudes towards farmers reflect this discord of Australians both loving and rejecting meat. The rejection of eating meat can be traced back to two dominant motivations: vegetarians are generally motivated by ethical and/or health concerns (Hoffman, Stallings, Bessinger & Brooks, 2013). Similar to other developed countries, there are growing

¹⁰⁹ Statistics on vegetarianism and veganism tend to be unreliable. Previous experience by researchers has shown that people identify as vegetarians admit to occasionally eating meat, especially fish and fowl (e.g., Adams, 2010; Fiddes, 1991, Lea & Worsley, 2001).

critiques of the meat industry, in particular regarding animal welfare. Next to this, there are growing concerns for the environmental impact of the meat industry (Bray, Buddle & Ankeny, 2017). It is not unusual for motivations to shift over time (Hoffman et al., 2013). However, not all vegetarians disagree completely with the meat industry. Despite a growing body of critique of the meat industry, farmers generally are excluded from this criticism, as Australian farmers are believed to responsibly look after their animals and the animals' wellbeing (e.g., Buddle, Bray & Ankeny, 2018; Cockfield & Botterill, 2012; Worsley, Wang & Ridley, 2015).

In relation to the growing number of vegetarians in Australia, research has shown that meat-eaters are convinced that "if farmers were more transparent about and explained their methods of production and animal welfare-related practices, activists ... would not be as critical of these practices" (Buddle et al., 2018, p. 9). In addition, meat consumers tend to have more trust in farmers than animal activists, despite the lack of transparency in the meat industry. This situation is not unique to Australia or farmers. Historically, there has been a long tradition of valuing production over consumption (Miller, 2001). However, this reiterates the tension between critiques of the meat industry and the general fondness for farmers in Australia.

Globalisation and the corresponding changes in trade that follow from this have affected Australian agriculture. China's increasing meat demand offers economic opportunities for the country. At the same time, Australians are becoming increasingly aware of the consequences of the meat industry, which has led to national changes in eating patterns. While Australians are slowly decreasing their meat intake, rural Australia still plays a crucial role economically and culturally in Australian society. The global and local are at interplay here; regardless of patterns of reductions in meat consumption by Australians, rurality and the agricultural industry remain key elements in ideas of Australian global trade *and* identity.

Concerns Regarding Increased Meat Demand

Australia and the Netherlands see financial opportunities in the increasing demand for meat in China but have different strategies regarding how to profit from these developments. While the increasing meat demand in China offers economic opportunities, the Netherlands and Australia have some concerns. The next sections explain the different concerns both countries have that follow from their different trade relations with China.

The Netherlands

While Chinese consumption in relation to Dutch business opportunities is approached positively, the growing meat consumption in China is not always approached as being constructive. While most articles included in this analysis discuss trade opportunities, some are more critical about global developments and Chinese practices (Duurzame biefstuk in trek, 2017). Global food security is another frequently discussed topic. One article in *Boerderij Vandaag [Farm Today]*, while not directly blaming China, emphasises the role of China's growing economy in a growing precarity of the global food system:

The first signal was the empty shelves for baby milk powder. ... A second is the sale of American Smithfield Foods to the Chinese meat company Shuanghui. Smithfield, the pearl of America in food and agri: sold to the Chinese! That's a global shift. ... Imagine scarcity happening and with that a growing demand for meat. Do you think China will call America to ask if they have any meat left? I think it is highly likely that the Chinese will say: Smithfield is ours, we have first pick! (Braakman, 2013, abbreviation in original)¹¹⁰

The urgent tone of this article can partially be explained by its means; it argued for more funding for academic research institutions. While not specifically blaming China for possible food shortages, they were positioned as a key factor of growing concerns. In Dutch news media discourse, food security and environmental impact of meat consumption were regularly discussed in relation to growing meat consumption in China. A desire for change in current production methods was usually present and environmental problems were almost always connected to questions of food security. For example, in an article introducing insects as an alternative to regular meat, a seller of insect products was quoted as follows:

The world population will grow in the next decades from 7 to about 10 billion people, according to the US. Simultaneously, the demand for meat will have doubled by 2015 from countries such as China due to a growing living standard. ... Dicke sees problems connected to this. 'Currently, almost 70 percent of the world's land surface is used directly or indirectly for meat production. This area has to grow with two-

¹¹⁰ Original: Het eerst signaal waren de lege schappen voor de babymelkpoeder, begin dit jaar. ... Een tweede signaal is de verkoop van het Amerikaanse Smithfield Foods aan het Chinese vleesbedrijf Shuanghui. Smithfield, de parel van Amerika in food en agri: verkocht aan Chinezen! Dat is een verandering in de wereld. ... Maar stel dat er straks schaarste komt en de vraag naar vlees neemt toe. Denk je dan dat China met Amerika belt of ze nog iets over hebben? Ik denk dat de kans heel groot is dat de Chinezen zeggen: Smithfield is van ons. Wij zijn het eerst aan de beurt.

thirds by 2015 to keep producing meat at this rate, according to world food organisation FAO. That means we need a second world'. (Net als nootjes, 2014)¹¹¹

Connection between growing meat consumption, environment and questions of food consumption also extends to global trade. Effects on soy trade and grain and soy prices were mentioned several times. Because the environment is closely connected to food security in general discourse, growing meat consumption and its consequences is approached from an anthropocentric angle. The Earth is predominantly of instrumental value, rather than being inherently valuable. Although the Earth and our food sources are under threat, this process is predominantly positioned as being reversible. The power to reverse it is positioned with either the Dutch consumer or Dutch technological innovation.

Two articles, both about the Dutch Party for Animals [Partij voor de Dieren], who started the debate on un-sedated religious slaughter in Netherlands (see Chapter 2), were especially pessimistic. In 2013, a statement of Marianne Thieme, the leader of the party, was published in which she argued that “the Netherlands has a large responsibility as exporter of agricultural products. We are not living up to this if we keep aiming at exporting plofkip chickens¹¹² to Africa and veal and dairy to Russia and China” (Thieme, 2013).¹¹³ In 2015, the Party for Animals was still critical of the Dutch government. Christiëne Theunissen, a member of the party and youngest representative in the First Chamber, argued:

I am certain: within 50 years the intensive livestock farming industry will no longer exist. A small group of people already rejects it here. They choose organic. Or do not eat meat at all. Small movements can grow into large ones. What I do worry about are growing economies such as China. Meat and dairy consumption are encouraged there

¹¹¹ Original: De wereldbevolking groeit de komende decennia volgens de VN van 7 naar zo'n 10 miljard mensen. Ondertussen zal vanwege een hogere levensstandaard de vraag naar vlees vanuit landen als China verdubbelen in 2050. ... Dicke ziet de problemen al opdoemen. „Op dit moment wordt bijna 70 procent van het landoppervlak in de wereld direct of indirect gebruikt voor de productie van vlees. Dat areaal moet bij een gelijkblijvende vleesconsumptie tot 2050 met zo'n twee derde groeien, heeft de wereldvoedselorganisatie FAO uitgerekend. Dan heb je dus een tweede wereld nodig.

¹¹² 'Plofkip' is not translatable to English. It is a Dutch term used to refer to chickens bred to grow much faster than regular chickens in order to slaughter them at an earlier age. The term has a negative connotation, implying animal abuse, intervention with nature, lack of nutritional value of the meat and unhygienic conditions.

¹¹³ Original: Nederland heeft als grootexporteur van landbouwproducten een grote verantwoordelijkheid. Die nemen we niet als we blijven inzetten op de export van de resten van plofkippes naar Afrika en kalfsvlees en zuivel naar Rusland en China.

and our government is happy to play a part in it. (Theunissen, as cited in Oomen, 2015)¹¹⁴

Thieme and Theunissen were quite unique in being critical of the Dutch government. At the same time, they expressed faith in Dutch citizens to create positive change. While some other articles repeated pessimism, most articles, while displaying concern about meat consumption, positioned the Dutch population and Dutch public sector as key players in creating a positive turn in current global developments. Overall, Dutch discourses on the increasing meat consumption in China and in general displayed concerns about the sustainability of existing and upcoming consumption patterns. At the same time, faith was expressed that these problems could be overcome. Two main themes can be detected: the Netherlands as a forerunner in meat replacement options in the form of in-vitro meat or insect food products and the Netherlands as a key player in technological developments regarding sustainable agriculture. Sustainability was seen as key in Dutch agriculture and food production and rather than focusing solely on exporting produce, knowledge was increasingly part of Dutch export regarding the food industry. In these narratives, knowledge was seen as a solution to the increasing global demand for meat and the consequences attached to the production of this.

Australia

The news articles analysed for this project demonstrate that Australia embraces Chinese meat consumption much more than the Netherlands. However, there are limits to the extent to which Australia wants to engage in collaborating with China and Chinese market forces. While there has been great enthusiasm for export of meat, concerns can be detected regarding China's involvement in producing the meat which they buy. These concerns are framed in language of ownership of property as well as ownership of quality. Property wise, this means China can be a buyer of Australian meat but being a producer in the form of owning farms, farmland or abattoirs in Australia is not considered to be acceptable. In addition, it is implied that even if China owned these assets, they would be unable or unwilling to produce products of the same quality as Australian farmers because they would not be able to care for the land and animals as Australian farmers do. Appeals for regulation have focused more on who can own Australian farming land than on minimising or reforming meat farming practices. This distinction is

¹¹⁴ Original: Ik weet zeker: binnen 50 jaar bestaat er geen bioindustrie meer. Er is al een kleine groep die zich ervan afkeert. Die voor biologisch kiest. Of geen vlees meer eet. En kleine bewegingen kunnen grote worden. Waarover ik me wel zorgen maak, zijn opkomende economieën als China. Daar wordt de consumptie van vlees en zuivel opgejaagd en onze regering doet er vrolijk aan mee.

reflected in several news articles in the dataset. For example in a 2016 article in *The Australian*, head of Chinese agribusiness and textile manufacturing giant Rifa Australia David Goodfellow was quoted on changing regulations concerning foreign land ownership:

The Chinese have got capital that they want to place outside of China and we tick a lot of boxes—our land is perceived to be cheap, our agricultural industry is grossly undercapitalised and we offer political stability ... But many investors are now very anxious; our experience with the FIRB [Foreign Investment Review Board] has been a really good one until the election was called (and our six farm purchases stalled). (Neales, 2016)

Judging from these news articles, foreign—especially Chinese—investment in Australian agriculture is a good investment opportunity but it is perceived by many as an undesirable development. This conclusion is in line with the 2016 Lowy Institute Poll (Lowy Institute, n.d.). In the survey, 87 per cent of respondents reacted negatively to the idea of foreign investment in the form of allowing foreign land purchases. However, there are complexities in Australian views of foreign investment and land ownership. As Jessica Loyer's (2018) report argued, those living in rural Australia have been more open to the idea of foreign investments, albeit with some hesitance. Strict regulations by the government for foreign investors were mentioned as a way to ensure quality, food safety and environmental control (Loyer, 2018).

While regulation of agricultural practices is not uncommon, the contrast between Australia's strong faith in Australian farmers and calls for regulation of non-Australian farmers is striking. Australian farmers are valued as economic contributors in Australia, and their livelihoods are perceived to be of important cultural and moral value for the Australian nation. China can participate in consumption and, to a certain limited extent, the production of meat in Australia. In addition, Australian agriculture is also reliant on foreign workers to contribute to food production.¹¹⁵ However, China's perceived value to the Australian meat industry is limited to economic benefit. Australian news discourses on foreign, especially Asian, agricultural investors portray distrust in said investors to uphold the assumed quality and values of 'Australian' standards regarding clean, green, high-quality agricultural production. Care for the Australian land and its agricultural industry is—as this section has illustrated—perceived as a national responsibility. Implied in this narrative is that responsibility *and* financial benefits are envisioned to belong to 'Australians'. The term 'Australians', in this context, refers to an

¹¹⁵ Pre-pandemic data shows that approximately 25% of meat processing workers were overseas workers on a working visa (Hutchinson, 2022, p. 4).

inherently exclusionary category of white settler Australians with predominantly European heritage. Economic drivers and ideas and values surrounding cultural identity cannot be understood as separated but are intertwined within Australia's ideas on agriculture, intertwined with the cultural and economic. Agriculture is more than just a profitable industry; it is a responsibility embedded in cultural values.

Futures of Eating Animals

News discourses included in the current dataset illustrate that Australia and the Netherlands see potential in Chinese meat consumption from a trade perspective but differ in general perceptions of what meat production should look like. This section discusses how futures of consumption are framed in each country's national news discourse.

Australia

In narratives on Australian export, the focus is not as much on changing the meat industry as it is on maintaining the quality and existing standards of meat production. Changes occur within the industry but not as much in perceptions and narratives of the industry. In addition to the clear economic value of Chinese meat consumption for Australian society, the results demonstrate that something more complicated is happening. Discourses on meat export reflect changing cultural identities in several different, but connected, ways.

In Australian news discourses, fears for sustainability and food security are less present than in Dutch ones. Fears concerning the natural environment are generally directed inwards. As argued extensively in Chapter 1, the connection to the landscape and its flora and fauna is significant in Australian narratives of national identity.¹¹⁶ Whenever the Australian natural environment was mentioned, little detail was given regarding how it was maintained and what farmers contributed to it. Environmental care by farmers was assumed without much question. An example of this was present in farmers' paper *The Land*. Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Anne Ruston, was quoted with reference to the 'Taste Australia' campaign that "this brand promotes our longstanding reputation for quality produce, the cleanliness of our environment, the desirability of our lifestyle and the trust that can be placed

¹¹⁶ Farming is seen as contributing to, but also endangering, what constitutes 'Australia'. Katarina Saltzman, Lesley Head and Marie Stenseke (2011) explain that "agriculture and pastoralism opened up the continent, fed the nation and was the basis of the export industry on which the Australian economy was built" (p. 57). At the same time, they argued, the last decades have seen a surge of an oppositional narrative, namely that of farming and agriculture damaging the Australian landscape.

in our commercial supply chains” (Walmsley, 2017). The quality of Australian-produced meat and Australia’s clean environment are positioned next to each other as key assets. While care for Australia’s environment is present in discourses on agriculture, this care has been partially motivated by economic interest; the environment contributes to Australia’s clean green brand, which contributes to its export successes. The strong trust in farmers is also reflected in politics. *Queensland Country Life* explained politician Barnaby Joyce’s stance against regulation of the agricultural industry in regard to attempts to increase regulation of farming practices regarding sustainability as follows:

Minister Joyce said he wasn't calling for a new certification program for beef production and nor had he heard any strong objections to current programs. ‘I've noticed that our beef exports for instance to China have gone up 20-fold,’ he said. (Federal Agricultural Minister, 2014)

While most articles are not this outspoken against change, most do not endorse or imply that stronger sustainability regulations should be created. There is no engagement with critiques on farming as being harmful to the land or nature. Again, the focus is predominantly on conserving established values to maximise profit. While the increasing export opportunities with China did not directly lead to new approaches or understandings of meat production in Australia, farming is nonetheless changing. While this is not directly the result of export relations with China, globalisation and the changing demands of the industry have contributed to change. The identity of ‘the farmer’ is becoming increasingly diverse. Additionally, the increasingly multicultural background of those in the agricultural industry illustrate this point.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ In addition to migrant workers being essential to farming, the role of women in the industry should not be underestimated. There has been a reduction from 18 per cent in 1988–1989 to 12 per cent in 1994–1995 in sole male ownership of broadacre properties. This statistic demonstrates that the majority of broadacre industries are legally owned and run in partnership with women or solely by women (Bryant, 2001). A 1993 qualitative study exposed some strategies which female farmers adopted to become more equal to their male counterparts. While the interviewed women were critical of the male culture in farming communities, their farming strategies were not different from traditional male-dominated practices. The main goal was to show women can be equal to men and should thus have access to the industry; no desire to transform the industry was displayed (Bryant, 2001). Of course, women have been part of farming much longer. Davidson (2001) argued that “an ideological separation of household tasks based in hegemonic masculinity ... tends to naturalise the division of labour along a domestic/productive divide. As a consequence, Australian farm women’s work is often not perceived as a productive or economic contribution to the farm” (p. 208). Because domestic labour is separated from ‘farming’ labour, women’s labour has traditionally been excluded from the neoclassical economy, which is not unique to farming. Davidson (2001) concluded by underlining the importance of women’s participation in family farms. Not only are women predominantly responsible for domestic labour and on-farm labour, their off-farm labour offers financial stability in a seasonal, fluctuating, industry. Because they often balance multiple of the previously mentioned responsibilities, their labour is essential to keep the farm households running. These changes supposedly have less to do with globalisation directly as with general changing gender roles in Australian society.

Agriculture is not solely practiced anymore by ‘the true blue Aussie’ (Lockie & Bourke, 2001, p. 3) in the outback. Australian agriculture is becoming increasingly reliant on non-Australian workers. Of all seasonal workers, 50–85 per cent are reported to be travellers on a working holiday visa (Tan & Lester, 2012, pp. 373–374). While the name of the visa—‘working holiday’—implies that those that seek and attain it are interested in tourism as much as they are employment, this is not necessarily the case.¹¹⁸ The Australian government strongly encourages ‘tourists’ on this visa to participate in seasonal labour.¹¹⁹ Therefore, while farming is seen as a practice that is very Australian, the labour is predominantly executed by visitors to the country. While a large portion of agricultural labour is performed by migrant workers, farming is still very Australian in the sense that agricultural land is predominantly owned by Australian incorporated entities (i.e., 98%). In addition, “80 per cent of foreign-held agricultural land is held on a leasehold basis” (Australian Taxation Office, 2017, p. 4). Foreign-held agricultural land is predominantly used for livestock purposes and the UK is the largest foreign agricultural landholder, followed by China and the US.

This thesis has argued that changes have taken place in the food industry due to globalisation, which has complex consequences for the position of food producers in a societal context. Globalisation of the food industry strongly influences industries. Global capitalism frames values such as community, identity and relationality—whether it is between human or non-human entities such as animals and landscape—in terms of profit. An increasing global market fundamentally changes the agricultural industry. In Australia, seemingly contradictory developments are occurring. Within the country, shifts towards less meat consumption are taking place. However, the increasing meat consumption in China is predominantly seen as a positive development in terms of trade opportunities. Concerns arise when China wants to

¹¹⁸ People on this visa hold a wide variety of reasons for coming to Australia. Reilly (2015) argued that for some travellers, making money is their first priority because it funds their stay in Australia. Others see it as an addition to their travel experience. In addition, Reilly (2015) cited Tan et al. (2009) to explain that in 2009 ‘about half of Working Holiday Makers listed work as a ‘principal reason for coming to Australia’ (p 479).

¹¹⁹ The visa was first introduced in 1975 for British, Irish and Canadian tourists. Soon, it became available for people from multiple citizen backgrounds. As Reilly (2015) explained, since ‘June 2014, Australia had agreements with 31 countries, from all continents except Africa’ (p. 477). The government also changed the conditions of the visa to encourage holders to participate in more seasonal work. From 1994 until 2008, holders were required to spend at least three months—a quarter of their total stay in Australia—to ‘full-time employment in a regional area in ‘seasonal work’ (Reilly, 2015, p. 481) to extend it for an extra year. From 2008 onwards, ‘seasonal work’ was rephrased to ‘specified work’, which included industries such as ‘plant and animal cultivation, fishing and pearling, tree farming and felling, mining and construction’ (Reilly, 2015, p. 481). In addition, the Australian government is currently looking into changing the current policies surrounding the working holiday visa to encourage even more seasonal workers to join. <Say something about COVID impacts here to bring this u p to date??>

participate in meat production through land ownership in Australia. The Australian environment is generally not a matter of concern when it comes to meat production; instead, it is one of the industry's key assets and contributes to Australia's cultural economy. Foreign landownership is seen as a threat not only because of its protentional economic effects but because it would change the value of the industry in narratives of national identity.

The Netherlands

When discussing the growing meat consumption in China, Dutch news outlets did not only focus on critiquing this development or finding a place in the growing market. In addition to technologies to produce meat more sustainably and efficiently, alternative approaches to meat were popular topics in news articles concerning Chinese meat consumption. Two reoccurring developments discussed in the media discourse were in-vitro meat and insects as foodstuffs.

In-vitro meat was especially present in news discourses on China's increasing meat consumption during 2013 when the world's first in-vitro burger was released. The notion of insects as food was predominantly present during 2014 and 2015. This section first discusses how in-vitro meat was discussed in Dutch media and how approaches changed when insects became positioned as a meat replacement. In-vitro meat is edible animal tissue that is (ideally) grown artificially in a lab without being attached to a sentient body rather than being grown as animal bodies and eaten after the animal dies. The emphasis is on *ideally* because currently animal bodies still have to be sacrificed for the production of in-vitro meat. The first patents for in-vitro meat for the purpose of human consumption were granted by the European Patent Office in 1999 (Dillard-Wright, 2014, p. 1704) to three Dutch citizens. In 2013, Mark Post, who was part of the Dutch Maastricht University, presented the world's first in-vitro hamburger accompanied by a major press release. In-vitro meat press releases focused on the novelty and promise of the foodstuff.

While the science and technology of in-vitro meat have only been around for about two decades, meat grown without animals has been imagined for a much longer period. One of the earliest writings about the concept of in-vitro meat—although it was not named as such—was by Winston Churchill in 1932, predicting that “we shall outgrow the absurdity of growing a whole chicken to eat the breast or wing, by growing these parts separately under a suitable medium” (Churchill, as cited in van der Weele, 2014, p. 1219). Several science-fiction writers such as William Gibson (1984) and Margaret Atwood (2003), also included ideas of bodiless meat in

their imagined worlds. In 2003, artist Oron Catts was part of the art project 'Disembodies Cuisine', which cultured and consumed frog flesh (Catts & Zurr, 2013).

After the in-vitro burger was released, extensive media attention was paid to it in the Netherlands. The articles revolved around interviews with Post who was one of the key researchers in the development of the burger. His involvement first ensured a positive approach towards the development but also led to a limited representation of both the development of the in-vitro burger and the broader context in which the in-vitro burger is being developed. Post positioned meat production as being problematic for the aforementioned reasons. In addition, Post was, at times, critical of meat producers but never of meat consumers. For example, when asked about the differences between vegetarian burgers and the in-vitro burger, he explained:

We currently use 70 percent of all agricultural capacity to produce meat from livestock. This is partially because animals are very inefficient at converting vegetable proteins into meat. This is why you have to find alternatives. If we don't change anything, meat will become a luxury product and very expensive ... My vision is that we will ultimately keep a small number of donor animals. You slaughter those animals and then take out all the stem cells. In the end, we will still need animals for this technology. (Post, as cited in Peijs, 2013)¹²⁰

Post's critiques of the meat industry were usually in defence of the in-vitro burger. As the quote above shows, it is mainly the inefficiency of the regular meat industry that Post aimed to tackle by positioning the in-vitro burger as an alternative. The technology of the in-vitro burger does not aim to completely end the slaughter of animals. While the problems of the in-vitro burger were acknowledged, they were always positioned in relation to the problems of regular meat. The practice of growing meat in a lab was not questioned in its own right. In addition, the value of in-vitro meat was also always explained in direct relation to traditional meat production by its supporters.

Examining the before-mentioned discourses on in-vitro meat, it was evident that reasons for eating in-vitro meat were related to reasons for not eating meat at all. While in-vitro meat differs from plant-based meats in the cellular structure of the foodstuff, it does not differ from other non-animal-based meats in all the other aspects of the product. It emphasises a moral approach

¹²⁰ Original: Momenteel gebruiken we 70 procent van de hele landbouwcapaciteit om vlees van vee te produceren. Dat komt ook omdat dieren erg inefficiënt zijn bij het omzetten van plantaardige proteïnen in vlees. Je zult daarom alternatieven moeten vinden. Als we niets doen, wordt vlees een luxe product en erg duur ... Mijn visie is dat we uiteindelijk een klein aantal donordieren houden. Je slacht die dieren en haalt dan alle stamcellen er uit. We hebben voor deze technologie dus nog altijd wel dieren nodig.

to food and a rejection of the negative aspects associated with regular meat and its production. Regular meat is critiqued but the idea of meat as part of our diets is perpetuated by thinking of various ways of substituting for it. This trend is understandable to a certain extent; meat plays a central role in most people's food consumption and replacement is a more viable option than complete elimination. However, it underlines the central position of meat in most peoples' lives.

While in-vitro meat was discussed more often, those articles that mentioned insects as an alternative to regular meat are worth discussing because China was positioned very differently in these articles. Insects as a food option for Dutch people was reported several times in Dutch news articles during 2014 and 2015. The topic of insects as protein replacement was treated as both a novelty and an established product. A different range of people were quoted, but all were part of the insect industry in various manners. The focus was on sustainability. What was interesting about discussions about insects as replacements for meat as a protein source was how they positioned non-Dutch and non-European cultures as authorities in food production and consumption.

The articles on eating insects mentioned the problems related to global growing meat consumption (e.g., Massaut, 2015; Net als nootjes, 2014). Except for one article, the articles pointed to non-Western places such as Latin America and Asia as examples of insect consumption, which the Dutch should follow. The main reason for referring to other countries as leaders would arguably be that insects are not currently a common foodstuff in the Netherlands; showing that other people eat them might help potential consumers to overcome their barriers. It was the specific position held by insects in Dutch culture—which views them as vermin rather than food—that led to discussions of other countries as examples. For example, wholesale owner Jan Ruig was quoted saying: “Eighty percent of the world's population eats insects regularly, deep-fried, stir-fried, processed in spring rolls or omelettes; everything is possible. In Asia, it's a real delicacy. In the Netherlands, it's going slowly although our revenue doubles each year” (Ruig, as cited in Massaut, 2015). They all ended on positive notes, stating that while the Netherlands should increase its insect consumption, the industry was slowly growing. The one article that did not position non-Western countries as authorities was published in the national Reformed Newspaper. This article referred to the biblical story of Leviticus to normalise the consumption of insects as food (Net als nootjes, 2014).

In-vitro meat and insect protein were frequently proposed as sustainable alternatives to regular meat to meet increasing demands for animal-derived protein. Increasing meat consumption in

China contributed to Dutch discourses on the need to offer sustainable alternatives in two ways. First, there was a growing concern on the overall sustainability of meat production and consumption. Second, the concept of ‘exporting meat’ had to be reinvented. Because it is difficult for the Netherlands to increase export product in the form of meat due to its small size, the industry is shifting its focus on exporting knowledge and technology. Sustainability is a great concern in these technologies (Chivot, Auping, Jong, Roos & Rademaker, 2016). The focus on future and sustainability in the Netherlands influences how increased demands for meat are approached in national discourses and in food technology and development. Therefore, it is unsurprising that in-vitro meat was first patented in the Netherlands. While in-vitro meat offers a new technology but not necessarily a new phenomenon or idea—replacements for traditional meat have been on the market for a quite a while—it has become part of the Dutch narrative on progressiveness regarding agriculture and meat production.

Conclusion

This chapter examined Australian and Dutch discourses on the China’s growing meat consumption to examine how both countries frame the environmental consequences of the meat industry. The large-scale effects of the production of meat have grown to become a matter of concern; rainforests are chopped to grow soy to feed cattle and the meat industry’s carbon footprint contributes to global warming. While the problems of meat consumption appear to be clear, questions of how to resolve them and who is responsible are more complicated. Using the concept of the Anthropocene as its starting point, this chapter investigated how the effects of increasing global meat consumption and production were approached by two countries that rely heavily on meat export as a source of national income.

Ideas of the Anthropocene were not equally present in both country’s news discourses. In the Netherlands where these ideas were present, they fit into existing narratives of progress, technology and international trade. However, what was present in both countries’ news reporting on China’s increasing meat consumption were economic drivers. Academic discourses on the Anthropocene were often critical of capitalism, using concepts such as the Capitalocene. Critiques proposed by the Capitalocene framework can be identified in both countries. For example, both Australian and Dutch meat production and trade are driven by global markets. The Netherlands trades within Europe, but is highly dependent on transcontinental supply of livestock feed. Australian cattle grazes more locally but is sold to

various countries outside of Oceania. Livestock is seen as a product from which they can capitalise.

This chapter started from an environmental angle, although the economic importance of meat production became especially clear based on the empirical data from the media analysis. The Dutch and Australian discourses on the growing global demand for meat generally viewed this development as offering trade and profit opportunities. However, this importance was not purely financial: the economic and cultural overlapped in both Dutch and Australian discourses on China's meat consumption. Differences between the discourses were found in the underlying values expressed in the media coverage. While both countries view the natural environment as a central part of their narrative about meat consumption and production, it has been approached from rather different angles.

Within Australian and Dutch media discourses, a tension has been identified between environmental discourses and market forces. This tension has expressed itself in different ways between the two countries. Expressions of concerns regarding the impact of the meat industry differ between Australia and the Netherlands, which partially explains why these countries have different views on the future of meat production.

The Netherlands has strong faith in science, technology and innovation to reduce or reverse the changes brought about by intensive meat farming, again repeating Anthropocentric narratives, this time in terms of positivism. It is unsurprising that the Netherlands displays this attitude. Since the seventeenth century, the Netherlands has been a leading power in global trade. While this is a celebrated part of its history, it is not without critique. A strong focus on efficiency and progress has contributed to current environmental problems. Despite this controversial history, this tradition continues to be proffered in new contexts in which progress is nonetheless still celebrated. However, while these new approaches may seem more positive at first glance, original problematic patterns are in fact being repeated. Not only is the Netherlands presenting itself as a leading power, but it is also profiting from it. This time, the emphasis is on the positive contributions of new food production technologies. It is through trading that the Netherlands can continue to construct its identity.

In Australia, technology is changing the meat industry, which leads to a paradox in Australian discourses on farming regarding the tensions present between tradition and development. In farming discourses, farmers are portrayed as 'keepers' of the land, which is a romanticised

construct. While the general public is aware that farming practices are changing rapidly, the idea of farmers as idyllic figures at the root of traditional Australian values and traditions remains culturally embedded. Farmers are simultaneously dynamic and static, or at least stable figures that remain unchanged in an ever-changing industry. This apparent contradiction can be explained as the nation's need to navigate the demands of security and change; Australia's national identity remains rooted in historic symbolism in the face of social, environmental and economic uncertainty, and many think that change can be valuable if it benefits the nation, especially in terms of economic progress.

A key implication of thinking in terms of the Anthropocene is the need to consider the tensions arising between the global and the local in terms of responsibility regarding environmental welfare. These tensions are present in both countries. Now that the meat industry has rapidly grown due to the global increase in consumption, the effects of the industry are becoming more well-known. Australian news discourses displayed the most concern about the *future of the industry*. While Australian discourses regarding increasing global meat consumption did not question the global environmental impact of meat production to a great extent, the safety of Australia and its agricultural industries was questioned when non-Australian others wanted to partake in the production of meat. Agriculture is a core part of Australian national identity and farmers are seen as the symbols of this key Australian industry. Generally, Australians display high levels of trust in farmers to take good care of animals, crops and land. Australian farmers and Australian land are perceived to produce high-quality, trustworthy meat, which is desired by the middle-class meat consumers in China. The increasing purchasing of Australian agricultural land by non-Australians is seen as a cause for concern. Agriculture is not only seen as an Australian value; it should stay in Australian hands. How to define 'Australian' in this sense is complex because the agricultural industry relies heavily on foreign workers. Within Australian news discourses, a narrative is formed in which Australian food production embraces foreign consumers and foreign workers, but not foreign owners. In addition to fears of Australian meat production being taken over by non-Australians, another tension is notable in Australia's position between the global and the local. On the one hand, high levels of care for the Australian landscape are visible within Australian culture and values, this includes pastoral care for the Australian landscape; on the other hand, this land is used to raise non-Australian cattle, for international trade purposes.

Dutch reporting on meat production and its environmental consequences often showed narratives on transformations of the meat industry towards a greater focus on sustainability.

The Netherlands, a key player in the global meat trade, is taking responsibility for the effects of its industry. However, the strong economic drivers cannot be denied. Sustainability and the environment are becoming commodified. While the Netherlands takes up the responsibility of changing the industry for the better, it is implied that it is the responsibilities of meat producers everywhere to purchase these technologies. However, the credit for positive development is placed primarily with Dutch scientists in Dutch discourses.

Australian media focuses predominantly on the national consequences of meat production. I argue that this has been due to a combination of two reasons. First, in Australia, conservationism is a key national value but it predominantly occurs on a national level. Care for Australian native animals is held in higher regard than care for other species. Therefore, discussions about conservationism and the environment predominantly focus on the welfare of native species and Australia's other unique attributes. Chapter 1 elaborated on this. This is not to say that Australians display a lack of care about the environmental consequences of the meat industry; rising levels of attempts to reduce meat consumption among Australian citizens demonstrates that they do care. The second reason that Australia does not focus on global environmental consequences of meat production as much as the Netherlands is because these concerns have been less relevant for the industry. Australia has branded itself as offering 'clean' and 'green' meat produced on idyllic pastures. While meat production arguably has negative effects on the environment, not being associated with these concerns distinguishes Australian meat from the products made by other, cheaper exporters.

In the Netherlands, sustainability plays a much more central role in news discourses on growing global meat consumption. Environmental consequences of meat consumption are discussed more than in Australia. This focus is evident in critiques of the global increase of meat consumption and the search for alternatives to traditional meat consumption such as in-vitro meat and meat replacements based on insect protein. In addition, the shift from trading meat to trading meat production technologies has been regularly discussed. In these technologies, efficiency and sustainability are key. However, like Australian approaches to the meat industry, Dutch aims to produce the most sustainable strategies for the future of the meat industry are heavily profit-driven too.

The case study presented in this chapter examined how Australia and the Netherlands, two countries that are key players in the global meat trade, respond to increasing concerns about the environmental impact of the meat industry. The data and analysis presented highlight how meat

production and trade are part of each countries' national narratives. Australia presents a pastoral narrative in which farmers are keepers of the land, while the Netherlands presents a narrative of innovation. For both countries, these narratives constructed around meat production repeat existing narratives about broader societal and cultural values. The case study presented in this chapter examined news discourses on production of meat in the Netherlands and Australia. It began by utilising Anthropocenic and Capitalocenic frameworks. This illuminated how narratives concerning the meat industry construct nature, technologies, and non-human animal lives as malleable within a global capitalist economy.

In summary, while the environmental consequences of the global meat industry are undeniable, meat industries should not be reduced to the pure profit-motive alone. These industries should be understood for cultural values as well as their commercial prerogatives. The case study presented in this chapter demonstrates that the economic and cultural importance of agriculture often surface and appear to be intertwined. The agricultural industry, while responding to current concerns, was often positioned in contexts of national and historical narratives specific to each country. Matters of meat production cannot be reduced solely to natural environment, economy or culture. Instead, industries hold complex positions in societies. While transformations in practices of meat consumption and meat production are arguably becoming increasingly urgent, it is important to acknowledge the importance of multiple complex factors that make meat consumption and meat production valuable for various societies in economic *and* cultural terms. This is not to say that the meat industry should not be critiqued at all. Instead, it is important to approach and understand the meat industry and its stakeholders as parts of local and global societies, rather than mere antagonists within a world that is facing dire environmental challenges. A cultural economical approach towards the meat industry contributes to broader understanding of how capital and culture are part of a global system in which categories such as human/nature/global/local/capital/ecology are intertwined and in constant processes of making.

Chapter 4: Thinking about Food Animals and Us

Introduction

The substantive chapters of this thesis explored three case studies to examine how practices of eating animals are shaped within broader moral and societal frameworks. Within these three analyses, it was emphasised that ethics do not simply *exist*; ethics are something that we *do*. Ethics are more than values that supposedly enable us to be good humans by following them. Instead, ethics are constantly being negotiated within broader value frameworks. Performances of ethics affect societal values and structures. While the case studies have focused on food animals, it is not merely ethical rules and relations between human and non-human animals that have been negotiated within them. What has also been under negotiation are relations between different groups of humans and between different animals. The previous chapters have used critical theory and diverse evidence sources to gain a deeper understanding of food animal ethics. The three case studies have shown that what animals we eat, what practices of killing we accept and how we should respond to consequences of the global food industry, are questions that cannot be answered in isolation from larger societal questions and developments. Instead, ethics associated with food animals and practices of eating meat go beyond the contexts of production and consumption and are always in negotiation by diverse stakeholders within their broader value frameworks. In addition, these discussions do more than simply redefine ethical frameworks; they affect social relations and the human and non-human animals that partake in our globalising world.

Using posthuman theory, this chapter considers how food animal ethics can not only be understood using this framework but also how thinking about food animal ethics can contribute to understanding the theoretical frameworks used in this thesis. This chapter weaves together several aspects of practices of eating animals to highlight what thinking about food animals can teach us about different levels of identity-making. While deconstructing ideas on morality and identities is part of this chapter, my intention is not to repeat relativist or anti-materialist narratives. Instead, the previous chapters are drawn upon to examine how different identities are constructed in relation to each other through re-negotiations of the terms under which people consume animals. The first part of this chapter elaborates on how Butler's framework of grievable lives can be applied to the case study of un-stunned slaughter. Then, the role of intersectionality is examined further. The third section of this chapter uses Braidotti's

affirmative ethics to examine how case studies that look at polarised debates can also highlight commonalities between different groups.

Grievable lives: Food Animals as Existing Through Death

This section revisits the concept of Butler's *grievable lives* to explore what it can teach us about animal lives beyond the case of the kangaroo by showing how it can be applied to the case study of religious slaughter too. Applying the framework of grievable lives to thinking about food animals allows for new ways of thinking about life and death. I argue that food animals differ from other animals in that their value for humans lies completely in them having to die; first and foremost, they are meat in the making. However, death should not be interpreted as the end of the food animal. Instead, there is a complex dynamic between life and death in food animals' existence that forces us to rethink this binary.

Butler's (2009) concept of grievability will be employed to explain how food animals' identities are negotiated between life and death. Butler's (2009) concept of *grievable lives* issued to explain how certain food animals are mourned in their deaths. In Butler's (2009) words: "grievability is a condition of a life's emergence and sustenance" (p. 15). We only grieve what should have been.

In Chapter 1, I expanded on Butler's (2009) concept of grievability to discuss how kangaroo lives can be framed within these terms. Kangaroos undeniably suffer from being killed. Disagreement exists regarding to what extent sacrificing some kangaroo lives will benefit the wellbeing of the species. Those who support the industry have argued that kangaroo numbers are now so large that culling some will contribute to the prosperity of the others. Opponents of the industry have argued that killing kangaroos will endanger kangaroo populations. However, this debate goes beyond species conservation. The suffering of kangaroos as species from being culled is not unique, in that hunting and culling does not hurt them more than it hurts animals of other species, nor are they the only species that are hunted. I have argued that because kangaroos are wild animals, people can empathise with the future anterior of their lives. These animals do not have to die to become food; hunters choose to kill them. While food animals in the intensive livestock farming industry arguably do not have to die either, their deaths are implied from the moment they are conceived. Within the intensive livestock farming industry, animals are brought to life for the purpose of slaughter, unlike kangaroos. Second, it is kangaroos' status as national symbols and their purported role in the Australian landscape that

allow certain Australians to grieve their lives. The Australian landscape and kangaroos are crucial to national ideas of belonging. Therefore, turning kangaroos into meat can be framed in terms of endangering Australian identity.

Chapter 2 examined the slaughter of animals in the animal industry and provided a more complicated argument of food animals being both alive and dead. The deaths of food animals, which are always taken for granted, became a cause of concern in the Dutch debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering. Unlike kangaroos, the animals that were the topic of discussion were bred for the purpose of dying so that humans could consume their flesh. For a long time, their lives and deaths went relatively unnoticed. This situation changed in 2008, when Marianne Thieme submitted a legal change. The legal change aimed to ban un-stunned religious slaughter. The proposal was eventually rejected after having sparked a national debate. While some critique was voiced on the industry in general, the narrative of the incompatibility between freedom of religion and animal welfare dominated. Within narratives against un-stunned religious slaughter, the deaths of the animals became part of their lives. Not only were the deaths now considered, the deaths of the animals allowed them to become part of political narratives about the structure of the Dutch multicultural society.

Food animals hold value in very measurable terms. They embody the commodification of life and bodies because their worth is literally in the value of their flesh. Death is an unavoidable part of this process. Before one can die, they must have been alive. In the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, only deaths were politicised and the lives of the animals went relatively unnoticed. Food animals live *bare lives*. Their lives are depoliticised to the point that their deaths are hardly mourned. However, the debate on un-stunned religious slaughtering allowed *some* animals to be framed as having to be protected against an enemy—consumers of religiously slaughtered meat. Yet, what was grieved was not the lives that should have been—as noted previously, critiques on meat-eating were mainly absent during the debate—it was the *deaths that should have been*, that were mourned. However, it was not food animals in general that were mourned. Only animals killed in *certain ways* that were prescribed by *certain people* became animals of concern.

The debate on un-stunned religious slaughter demonstrates that death can be political and that it is not only human deaths that become politicised. What is happening in the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter is that the deaths of animals become politicised to continue the oppression of marginalised peoples, who are framed as non-Western, despite them being part

of and partaking in Dutch society. While death can be political, this does not mean it necessarily radically transforms existing power relations. ‘Rights’ for some can come at the cost of rights of others.

In summary, the framework of grievable lives offers a valuable tool to examine animal lives and deaths. While Butler uses grievability to examine human deaths, chapter 1 of this thesis and this section illustrate that some animal lives are deemed to be grievable too. Food animals specifically inhabit a space between life and death, their purpose is to die and turn from animal to meat. On the one hand, it may seem counterintuitive to use Butler’s framework of grief to understand these animals’ lives and deaths because Butler identifies that is the lost future anterior of life that is part of identifying a life as grievable. At the same time, grievability precisely explores the space between life and death, by exploring what happens to a life *after* death. It is after death, that certain lives become politicised, and, as this section illustrates, animal lives are not necessarily an exception to this.

Intersectionality and Animal-linked racialisation

The second case study presented in thesis used framework of *animal-linked racialisation* to uncover the uneven power structures at play in the Dutch debate on un-stunned religious slaughter. This case study illustrated how animal welfare and cultural difference are inextricably intertwined within this debate. The framework of *animal-linked racialisation* is an intersectional framework that explains how animal bodies are used in broader contexts of cultural differences. In other words, values of animal welfare are used to project moral superiority of one group of people over others who have different values on animal welfare.

In the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter, animals were used to underline and contribute to hierarchal divides between different cultures. A debate that started specifically about animal welfare, can now not be understood without considering cultural relations as the right to practice religion became a key topic in the debate. At the same time, there was more at play than a mere distinction between religious consumers of Halal and Kosher meat and consumers of ‘regular’ meat. ‘Religion’ was treated in a complex manner; different religious minorities were treated differently within the same debate. The data analysis of the case study showed that Muslim Halal consumers of un-stunned meat were met with less sympathy than Jewish consumers who follow an arguably stricter Kosher diet. In addition, there was a difference of care for different animals. Animals that are slaughtered for religious reasons that mattered in this debate; the

suffering of other food animals in similar, almost indistinguishable predicaments was only addressed marginally.

The intersections between animal welfare and cultural difference can also be recognised in the first case study which looked at Australian discourses surrounding kangaroo consumption. Debates on the role of the kangaroo as a food animal demonstrate how nationalism and meat consumption intersect. The proposal to work actively towards a greater consumption of kangaroo meat, was met with great support and opposition. The proponents the commercial kangaroo industry argued the opposite. Their argument was that the consumption of kangaroo meat benefits the Australian landscape. Because the Australian landscape is such a key value in Australia's national identity, it is through consumption of kangaroo meat that one can enact 'Australianness'. This has been framed in terms of history—think of the reference of pre-settler Australia when “kangaroo was the main source of meat. It could again become important” (Garnaut, 2011, p. 547)—and contemporary distinctions between native and non-native animals. In this narrative, one exercises good morality and citizenship through the consumption of kangaroo meat. The development of the kangatarian diet is a clear example of this. Kangatarians eat kangaroo meat but do not consume meat derived from other animals. Kangatarian lifestyles are mainly motivated by ethical and environmental concerns; other meats are rejected on the premise that their production is bad for animals or the environment. However, *eating kangaroos* is separated from *eating meat* for kangatarians. It is the consumption of this specific type of animal that is not only morally admissible but even morally desirable. Proponents of the kangaroo industry have framed their arguments mainly around kangaroo meat *consumption*. They have argued that it is a sustainable way of consuming meat because kangaroo meat can replace sheep and cattle grazing, which will increase the overall quality of the Australian landscape. However, decreasing animal farming could be achieved in multiple ways, such as through reducing consumption of meat and hence decreasing demand.

Opponents of the kangaroo industry argued that one should not eat kangaroos because they are national symbols and because they belong to a shared Australian identity, thus making their lives worthy of protection and conservation. Consuming kangaroos was constructed as a violent act against the Australian landscape and the Australian nation. Not all opponents of the commercial kangaroo consumption are against all forms of meat consumption. In their arguments, the kangaroo is positioned as different and more valuable than other animals.

Kangaroos are iconic Australian animals. Both opponents and proponents of the commercial kangaroo industry link kangaroo consumption to human performances of Australianness. In other words, the consumption of kangaroo is a signifier of how the consumer performs Australian values. Within processes of valuing of kangaroo lives, and thus determining whether they classify as food animals or not, human consumers are also assigned value within similar frameworks of national values. Animal lives and human lives are thus understood not merely in relation to each other, but in term of national values too.

The third case study presented in this thesis initially aimed to look at how Australia and the Netherlands, two meat export countries, relate to the global environmental consequences of the meat industry. The original hypothesis was that both countries would position blame for the environmental consequences on non-Western countries. However, the data showed that neither country looked overly unfavourable upon the meat consumption of other countries. Australia, which exports most of its meat products to Asia, and China specifically, hardly discusses the environment in a negative manner in discourses surrounding meat consumption, production, and export. Instead, Australian meat production is constructed as ‘green’, ‘clean’, and thus sustainable. The Netherlands acknowledges the environmental consequences of meat production but takes an optimistic approach toward the consequences of meat production. New technologies and procedures are deemed to offer ways toward sustainable meat production. In addition, the Netherlands is increasingly including these technologies as part of their export strategies.

The analysis of both countries’ responses illustrates how they have different approaches towards the environmental consequences of meat production and consumption, and positioned these responses in the cultural economy each respective country. Certain material consequences are obvious, such as impacts on land, soil and wild animal populations. Beyond that, trade affects more than just economies. Producing goods and selling them is also a cultural endeavour. As argued, Australia highly values its nature and landscape as part of its national identity. Meat production is no different to this, and pastoral narratives have been included into narratives about the landscape. The Netherlands has long histories of cultural and technological innovation. Environmental issues are fit within these histories and thus constructed as opportunities, rather than misfortunes. Questions such as who can buy and who can sell meat, how goods should be produced, but also what alternative demands can be created and catered for, make the economical political and personal. Matters of environment and national identities intersect strongly with capitalist values to create these narratives.

In summary, the case studies examined in this thesis suggest that is beneficial for intersectional approaches to approach social and cultural phenomena from various angles to allow analyses to demonstrate how power structures are constantly shifting and work in multi-directional ways.

Affirmative Ethics and Commonalities in Difference

While the debates selected as case studies for this thesis originated from different perspectives regarding meat eating, they have shown that within these polarising debates, multiple commonalities can be found. Practices of eating meat are part of identity-making and are at the crossroad of intersectional identities being practiced. This thesis has demonstrated that questions such as what animals can and cannot be made into meat, how animals should be killed for meat and how to deal with the consequences of global increasing meat consumption, can lead to polarising debates in globalising societies. However, values concerning meat and practices of meat eating do not have to be framed in antagonistic terms. This section takes an affirmative approach to examine how a greater focus on shared values, rather than antagonistic ones, could change not only the debates in which these values arise but society in general.

Within Western thinking, there has been a long history of not only thinking in binaries but in *hierarchal* binaries (Lloyd, 1984; Plumwood, 1993). Genevieve Lloyd (1984) offers a feminist history of Western thinking, in which she traces the conceptual roots that led to the exclusion of ‘woman’ from the concept of reason. Her starting point is in the early Greek theories of knowledge. Discussing the Pythagorean table of opposites, she explained that “the Pythagoreans saw the world as a mixture of principles associated with determinate form, seen as good and others associated with formlessness—the unlimited, irregular or disorderly — which were seen as bad or inferior” (Lloyd, 1984, p. 3). Plato took these dualisms up in his work and “construed the dualism between intellect and matter as a simple dichotomy between unitary soul and the body” (Lloyd, 1984, p. 6). Lloyd’s critiques are not as much about thinking in terms of difference but about the ways in which this occurred in Western thought. Differences were slowly reduced to binaries and these binaries were not neutral but always framed in hierarchal relations to each other. The ‘dialectics of otherness’, as Braidotti (2013) referred to hierarchal, binary thinking, is not limited to gender relations. Braidotti (2013) argues that exclusion also applies to “non-White, non-masculine, non-normal, non-young, non- healthy, disabled, malformed or enhanced peoples” (p. 68). Due to the exclusion of marginalised people from Reason, as she continues,

All these 'others' are rendered as pejoration, pathologized and cast out of normality, on the side of anomaly, deviance, monstrosity and bestiality. This process is inherently anthropocentric, gendered and racialized in that it upholds aesthetic and moral ideals based on White, masculine, heterosexual European civilization. (Braidotti, 2013, p. 68)

There is a long tradition of not only focusing on difference, but using difference as a means to advance oneself, at the expense of other groups of human and non-human cultures. Within debates on food animal practices, these developments can be recognised. However, these debates do not have to follow narratives of conflict and opposition. This thesis, and the first two chapters in particular, have shown how the focus in these debates was predominantly on opposition and antagonism, despite the presence of shared underlying values. This section explores how the three case studies that were examined in this thesis show that opposing parties often show similar concerns and motivations.

Despite holding oppositional ideas regarding how to approach their concerns, commonalities were easily found between the two sets of stakeholders in the case study in Chapter 1. Both opponents and proponents of the kangaroo industry share concerns about Australian land and the beings on it, especially kangaroos. They agree that kangaroos are iconic animals and part of the Australian landscape. They are invested in minimising kangaroo suffering. The kangaroo industry does this by following strict guidelines for hunting while opponents of the industry aim for a complete ban on the kangaroo hunt. Both are also invested in thorough research and express critiques about industry-funded research.

The second case study (see Chapter 2) discussed a polarising debate. Animal welfare and freedom to practice religion became values that appeared to be incompatible within the question of un-stunned religious slaughter. However, while the debate took an antagonistic turn, many underlying values and concerns emerged, even if they were not explicitly acknowledged. The transparency of the meat industry is mentioned as a concern by both sides several times. Opponents of un-stunned slaughter fear that their meat will be contaminated with meat meant for religious consumers. Simultaneously, religious meat consumers fear that while the meat they purchased was sold as Halal or Kosher, the labels that identified the meat as such were not trustworthy. Finally, concerns about animal welfare were shared by most parties involved in the debate. The difference lay in how animal welfare was framed; for opponents of un-stunned religious slaughter, animal welfare was approached in a quantitative manner while consumers

of Kosher and Halal meat framed animal welfare in terms of individual consideration and attention for the animals slaughtered.

The third case study (see Chapter 3) showed the tensions and connections between the environmental concerns regarding increasing meat consumption and the economic value of meat industries. Australia and the Netherlands hold different approaches to meeting the increasing global demands for meat. However, both in their own ways were invested in ensuring meat can keep being produced and exported in the future. In Australia, the clean green branding of its meat production for which Australia is known is part of what distinguishes Australian meat production from its international competitors. The environment is not a concern as much as a strength in Australian meat production. Dutch food producers have investigated the possibilities of creating meat options that require less land and energy to produce. Environmental concerns, in this sense, open up new business opportunities. However, these new strategies and approaches towards meat production are continuing the same progress narratives that led to intensive meat industry. In both countries, their meat industries have become extensions of broader values connected to national identities. The meat industry is more than a threat to the global environment; it embodies broader national and cultural values held by societies. Of course, the impact of the global meat industry on the Earth should not be denied or ignored. Instead, I propose that conversations about the impact of the meat industry and strategies to mitigate against its adverse environmental impacts should take into account the nuances that are part of the industry to allow fruitful conversations rather than simply antagonistic ones.

The three case studies demonstrated tensions between care and division, in which all parties start from good intentions informed by moral frameworks. However, this does not have to be the case. Difference between humans, non-humans, cultures, ethics and knowledges is inevitable. However, there are ways to think differently about and with difference. Difference does not have to be radical and dividing; it can be affirmative. Braidotti (2013) argues that “contemporary practices of posthuman subjectivity” (p. 192) do more than offer critiques. Becoming posthuman requires engaging in:

A process of redefining one’s sense of attachment and connection to a shared world, a territorial space: urban, social, psychic, ecological, planetary as it may be. It expresses multiple ecologies of belonging, while it enacts the transformation of one’s sensorial and perceptual co-ordinates, in order to acknowledge the collective nature and outward-bound direction of what we still call the self. (Braidotti, 2013, p. 193)

Posthuman approaches to understanding and being in the world require letting go of the idea of oneself as a unitary subject. Instead, we all inhabit a multitude of different identities that engage with and leave their marks on the world we inhabit. Letting go of ideas of being *right* and trusting and embracing “the powers of planetary diversity” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 193) is crucial in posthuman approaches. Embracing diversity does *not* imply impartiality or relativism. Instead, it requires engagement with others that is not fuelled by self-centred individualism and takes into account the ever-changing needs of the world around us. Practices of eating meat offer strong support for the necessity of posthuman relations and relating. These practices are the results of long histories and embedded in complex value frameworks. Simultaneously, they ask for constant reconsiderations as the societies in which these practices take place are constantly changing. These changes are partially fuelled by the practices of eating meat.

Conclusion

Food animals enable us to rethink relations between human and non-human animals and the category of the human. This thesis argues that food animals cannot be understood merely in terms of culture and discourse. Thinking about food animals requires taking the material into account, which is understood in the broadest sense of the word, referring to animal bodies, the human animal visceral experiences of eating meat, as well as global capitalism. Humans cannot be understood as one coherent group or category and neither can animals. Pluralities of difference exist, form and take shape between and within groups as relationships between and within groups are constantly negotiated.

Conclusion

This thesis has presented discourse analyses of three case studies to examine the production of ethical values regarding the treatment of food animals to examine the extent to which cultural difference has been part of discussions about eating animals. These analyses showed that negotiations about food animal ethics are embedded in broader cultural contexts in which ethics and identities are negotiated.

Examining the role of kangaroos as a potential food animal in Australia, Chapter 1 argued that decisions about which animals can or should be eaten have been strongly influenced by different prior types of relationships between potential consumers and animals. Prior emotional relations between human and non-human animals exceed what might be viewed as reasonable arguments for replacing traditional meat consumption habits with the eating of kangaroo instead.

The second case study (see Chapter 2) examined acceptable ways of killing animals. Discussing debates on un-stunned religious slaughter in the Netherlands, Chapter 2 illustrated that different religions with comparable religious guidelines to slaughter were treated differently in the debate. While objections towards certain types of slaughter may be motivated by concerns for animal welfare, other underlying values also drove this debate.

The consequences of the meat industry are becoming progressively apparent as demand for meat products continues to increase. The final case study (see Chapter 3) discussed different responses to the environmental impact of the meat industry and views on increased meat consumption in China. While the environment was present in both Australian and Dutch discourses, it was represented in different ways. In Australia, the environment was part of the meat industry's brand. Rather than a concern caused by the industry, it was marketed as a strength of the industry. In the Netherlands, media discourses showed evident concern for the environmental impacts of the meat industry. However, the industry was simultaneously portrayed as a potential business opportunity because the environmental impact of the industry could be reduced through new, marketable technologies and innovations. The divergent positions of the environment in both countries has been as much a reflection of the values with which the countries identify as of the values themselves. Moral values, despite being positioned as being objective and reasonable, are never static, but always in the making. Therefore,

discussions regarding food animal ethics should always be understood in broader frameworks of cultural values and identity.

This conclusion will start by answering the research questions posed at the start of this thesis. The significance and contribution of this thesis will be discussed after the research questions. Finally, the conclusion will discuss the limitations of this projects and the possible further research possibilities that follow from this project.

How do views about eating animals become appropriated in either positive or negative manners in societal discourses in the context of how views on particular cultures are shaped and expressed?

The three case studies illustrated that discussions on food animals go beyond animals and consumers. Looking at what animals should or should not be viewed as food animals began with focus on environmental concerns. Questions on whether nations and societies should prioritise freedom to practice religion or animal welfare in policies, laws, and regulations were originally driven by animal welfare concerns. The global consequences of the increasing demand across the globe for meat initially had a predominantly environmental focus. However, the three case studies illustrated that these discussions have been driven by other values and concerns, even if these were not explicitly expressed in the discourse associated with the debates.

The debate over the role of kangaroos as food animals showed a divide in what it means to be 'Australian'. The kangaroo industry and animal welfare activists stood in stark opposition regarding how to ensure the wellbeing of the Australian landscape and kangaroos. The kangaroo, and the commercial kangaroo industry are a large part of Australian trade, identity and land management. Conversely, some animal welfare groups have argued that culling animals is not the best way to protect them. Both parties agreed that the key to being Australian is a shared custodianship over the Australian landscape. While this displays some consensus, the lack of more diverse voices represented in these debates about the edibility of the kangaroo should be noted. While Aboriginal peoples have played minor parts in the kangaroo industries and have participated in some research groups within the kangaroo industry, Aboriginal experiences and opinions were never specifically noted or addressed. Instead, the focus on conservationism placed early settler-migrant values as being central to the debate. Therefore, this debate has led to narrow understandings of who and what is Australian. There was never a

question about whether the kangaroo was essential to Australian identity—it always was. The debate placed two different but narrow groups of *settler* Australians as being central. While both used care for kangaroos as a symbol of their Australianness, it was their different performances of care that caused radical disagreement. The choice to eat kangaroos or not was constructed as a part to construct ones' one identity as Australian.

While Thieme's proposal to end the legal approval of religious slaughter in the Netherlands without stunning the animal beforehand was motivated by animal welfare concerns, the debate took a different turn. As the debate progressed, it went beyond animal rights. Politicians and voters were placed in a position in which they had to choose between two values, rather than allowing both to co-exist. The debate on un-stunned religious slaughter revealed and contributed to multiple layers of difference in the Netherlands. The first layer of difference encompassed people who did and did not consume meat that was slaughtered according to religious guidelines. Second, there was a discrepancy in treatment between Jewish and Muslim consumers. Xenophobia was expressed towards both groups, but arguably much more towards Muslims. Within religious communities, representation became a pressing question. While Muslim and Jewish Dutch people were considered to be 'minorities' in the Netherlands, questions regarding who could speak for religious communities and differences within the community played an increasingly significant role in these discussions. However, attempts to bridge differences were also visible. Alliances between Jewish and Muslim Dutch citizens emerged. In this sense, attempts at polarisation by some led to new connections between these groups. In addition, not all critiques were directed at 'Other' cultures. Implicit critiques of non-religious and secular Dutch practices and values were expressed. For example, malpractices in the general meat industry were regularly addressed. The position of non-human animals also changed during the debate. The consumption of food animals was initially taken for granted and it was ways in which food animals were killed that came to be scrutinised. Only animals slaughtered by groups that were framed as 'Other' from the norm were included in responsibilities of care by the hegemonic group. However, the care for this relatively small group of food animals blended into concern about the entire meat industry.

International trade inevitably creates competition between countries. Regarding the meat industry, it was originally hypothesised that the effects of meat production on the global environment would be a focus of criticism. However, most Australian and Dutch news reports on the increasing global meat consumption generally did not critique foreign meat consumers or producers. In addition, while the increasing negative effects of the meat industry have

become apparent, neither Australia nor the Netherlands rejected the industry. Eating animals was not condemned although the negative effects associated with its production were sometimes highlighted. Instead, Australia and the Netherlands continued to engage in practices that they deemed to be sustainable. Australia's focus on maintaining the quality and safety of their meat follows from its history as an agricultural country of which its green brand is one of its main market strengths. Meanwhile, the Dutch focus on alternative approaches to meat production continues its history of innovation in agriculture. Responses to the increasing meat demand in China were met in ways that reflected and contributed to broader ideas of national and cultural identities.

The analyses presented in this thesis also illustrate how the category of 'animal' cannot be understood in a singular sense. Instead, the three case studies showed how animal identities are also constructed within discourses on practices of eating meat. Some groups of people identify as closely, if not more closely, with *certain* animals than they do with other animals, or other humans for that matter. The idea that certain animals are accepted as food, while others are not, is an indicator of the difference that humans assign animals. For example, in Western societies, chickens are generally accepted as foods while cats are not. However, even between food animals there are differences. The next section will elaborate on this based on the case studies examined in this thesis.

In Australia, kangaroos are central to ideas of national identities and in the Netherlands, some groups of people empathised more with animals than with other humans. At the same time, kangaroos suffering from being hunted is similar to the suffering of other game animals. However, the suffering of kangaroos is offered much more space in public debates than the suffering of these other animals. Similar patterns can be recognised in the debate on un-stunned religious slaughter. Whereas it is becoming increasingly common knowledge that all forms of slaughter carry levels of harm for animals, it is un-stunned religious slaughter specifically that became (and continues to be) a large topic of debate. There is a 40-second rule put in place between the slicing of the animal's throat and the animal's death, and it is only in these 40 seconds that the animals experience differs from that from other food animals. Yet it is these animals that received higher levels of care than the other animals who are in very similar situations except for that 40 second moment.

Practices associated with eating animals have been various and changing and so too have the societies in which these practices happen. This fluidity means that ethical considerations of

practices of eating animals need to constantly be negotiated within these changing social and economic frameworks. While these negotiations can lead to practices of ‘Othering’, which has often been the case, these dialogues and tensions can also produce new alliances and positive relations. Therefore, difference is not inherently negative but instead drives and is driven by formations of new relations.

How are different cultural identities of Western and non-Western subjects shaped in the discourses surrounding eating animals and what are the consequences for our views on diverse cultures?

While the debates on practices of eating animals stemmed from differences, analysis of the debates found that human and non-human animals were all connected through practices of eating meat. Therefore, one of the conclusions that can be drawn from this thesis is that thinking in terms of Western and non-Western is restrictive and counterproductive for the development of a richer understanding of human–animal relationships for two main reasons. First, the dualism between Western and non-Western is not valid. Identities can and should not be reduced to singular categories. Second, a more productive response to this question could result from shifting the focus from difference towards shared values, experiences and identities.

The case studies presented in this thesis show that there are various groups of non-Western subjects that were part of discourses that were examined. The first case study examined the debate on the status of kangaroos as food animals. The case study illustrated that both opponents and proponents of increasing the commercial kangaroo meat industry connect their standpoints to notions of pastoral care and ‘Australianness.’ The third case study looked at meat production and farming in Australia. Narratives on pastoral care were identified in the data for this case study too. Within narratives on the consumption of kangaroo meat and the farming of cattle, care for the Australian landscape is constructed to be the responsibility of white, settler Australians. Chinese people and other foreign meat consumers, as the third case study shows, are welcomed as customers of Australian-produced meat but not as owners of agricultural land. Indigenous Australians are rarely included in news articles discussing meat production and the kangaroo industry. This is striking, as Indigenous people consumed kangaroo meat long before settler Australians arrived at what is now the Australian continent. The second case study showed how in the debate on which types of animal slaughter are deemed acceptable in the Netherlands. In these debates religious slaughter, specifically un-stunned slaughter according to Jewish and Islamic guidelines, was framed as un-animal friendly or inhumane. Regular

slaughter practices, in contrast, were framed in line with animal welfare concerns. Within the debates, secular Dutch society became framed as having more moral care for animals than Jewish and Muslim communities within the Netherlands. In summary, ‘non-Western’ subjects are diverse and treated in different manners, and should thus not be reduced to one category.

The case studies and debates revealed that identities and cultures are constantly in the making, even if this is not actively or frequently acknowledged. Within the debates, there was a strong focus on difference. Different practices implied different moral guidelines, which were supposed to be incompatible. The debates stemmed from needs to reconsider *who* was included as being allowed and able to make judgements regarding the treatment of non-human animals. However, closer examination of the debates revealed that oppositional parties have often shared concerns. In addition, these shared concerns generally arise from care and investment to do what is *best* rather than out of bad intentions towards other groups of human and non-human animals. In addition, even if antagonistic feelings towards cultures were drivers in some of the debates, these feelings were responsive to broader trends such as rapid globalisation and increasing multiculturalism. Therefore, I argue that while different cultural identities of Western and non-Western subjects are being shaped within debates on the welfare of food animals, it is important to recognise that not all of these discourses are being framed negatively purposefully for the sake of being negative. Rather, they reflect and partake in broader societal and global contexts and are often driven by genuine concerns for animal welfare.

How can we integrate posthuman strategies into public debates about eating animals to create more nuanced and productive understandings about the moral and other complexities related to eating animals?

This thesis aimed to present a more complex approach to traditional ideas about ethics, knowledge and identities in the context of food animals and humans. Rather than seeing humans and animals as being radically different, this thesis has positioned all beings in relation to each other. While forms of control are exercised over groups of human and non-human animals, this control is not solely unilateral. Although critiques against the treatment and exploitation of animals in the food industry are persuasive and important, posthuman interpretations of the meat industry illustrate how human and non-human animals are intra-dependent and their lives are closely interconnected. Posthuman interpretations of practices of eating animals allow insights into the conceptual roots that lead to ‘difference thinking’, with a focus on species and racial/cultural difference.

Early critical theory has been accused of being too focused on language and not considering the materiality of bodies or the importance of history, which has risked relativism as a result. Simultaneously, analytical theory has been too limiting and abstract. A focus on narrow moral principles does not allow space for the plurality of views and experiences that shape society. Posthumanism is a framework that underlines the importance of change and inclusion without losing sight of the existing histories, values and experiences. It is simultaneously materialist and discursive.

Food animals affect human lives in multiple ways. First, food animals become part of their consumers' bodies. An increasing emphasis on meat quality and food safety (see Chapter 3) illustrates consumers' awareness of the deep impacts of consumption. People's hesitance to eat meat that is slaughtered in ways in which they find inhumane is another example of how consciousness of the visceral relations between consumers and the animals they consume is expressed. These relations were explored in further detail in the second case study (see Chapter 2). Further, the environmental effects of the animals in the meat industry are also increasingly apparent. The first case study (see Chapter 1) has shown how this leads to questions of what animals should be considered to be food animals. The third case study (see Chapter 3) illustrated how different providers of meat often responded to increasing concerns about the environmental impact of the meat industry in the contexts of national and historical narratives specific to each of these countries. Within these discourses, economy, environment and national and cultural identities are intertwined.

Posthumanism was used in this thesis to offer insights into making and negotiating ethics and identities. Rather than approaching moral questions as requiring definite answers, a posthuman approach enables novel approaches that consider productive debates not merely as means but also as ends. Instead of deciding who is right or wrong, this project argues for the forming strategies to understand and engage with changes in a globalising world. In addition to debate and engagement with involved parties, it is critical to keep considering which parties are included in within these practices and how to represent those who cannot immediately represent themselves. In practices of eating animals, non-human animals play an important role. Their wellbeing should be included in considerations of practices of eating animals. Posthuman approaches enable deeper understandings of animals as part of our worlds, rather than solely as means for human ends. Appreciation for the important roles that animals play in our world and identity-making will also encourage consideration of their interests. At the same time, the ways

in which animals are understood and included should not be singular either. It is essential that animals do not become pawns in broader debates and used to ‘other’ certain humans.

Significance and Contribution

This thesis has contributed to existing scholarship by approaching debates on practices associated with eating animals in a novel way. This thesis used posthuman theory to investigate three case studies that focused on questions of how consumers have negotiated what animals can be considered as food animals, what are considered to be humane ways of slaughtering food animals and how increasing and globalising demands for meat should be met. The first case study (see Chapter 1) revealed how sociocultural relations and national values have affected the role of the kangaroo as a food animal in Australia. The second case study (see Chapter 2) demonstrated how ethics surrounding the killing of food animals have been influenced by religious difference and increasing multiculturalism. The final case study (see Chapter 3) explored the relation between economic and cultural values of meat industries in a world in which the environmental impacts of industrialised meat production have become increasingly apparent while global demand for meat continues to grow.

This thesis has contributed to existing scholarship by not only focusing on how animal lives are affected within debates on animal rights and welfare, but also showing that discussions on practices of eating meat do not affect *either* animals *or* humans. Instead, human and non-human identities and positions in society are constantly being negotiated in relation to each other. Debates about animals reflect societal and cultural structures, and in renegotiating human-animal relations, intra-human relations are being renegotiated too.

Looking at the role of kangaroos as food animals, ideas of human national identities can be seen to be closely related to the roles that different animals hold in specific countries. Kangaroos are significant to Australia’s national identity, which is why positioning them as food animals is controversial. At the same time, differences exist between human ‘Australians’, which has led to different perceptions of kangaroos as food. The second case study (see Chapter 2)—which focused on when killing animals for food becomes morally permissible—showed how permissibility of killing animals has depended on broad frameworks of religious, cultural and social values, which extend far beyond the meat industry. Exploring negotiations on legislation about how animals can be killed in ways that are deemed to be humane forces us to reconsider positions towards animals in society and relations between different cultural groups. The third

case study (see Chapter 3) elaborated on national reactions towards increasing meat consumption on a global level, with a focus on China. It demonstrated that while both Australia and the Netherlands have acknowledged the environmental impact of the meat industry, the industry's importance to national and global economies has greatly influenced their responses. Both countries turned the environment into a profitable aspect of their meat industries, which simultaneously reiterated pre-existing cultural traditions and histories. In the Netherlands, these strategies followed a long history of trust in innovation and technology. Australia—a country heavily reliant on its reputation of clean, green and safe meat production—has focused on its reliability when it comes to food safety and quality. The meat industry plays a key role in both countries political economies, so environmental concerns did not motivate both countries to decrease the meat industry. Instead, these concerns were integrated within strategies about the future of the industries.

The results of this thesis have emphasised the importance of animals *for* and *in* our world. This approach offers a new perspective in the question of the food animal and broader human and non-human relations. The discourse analyses presented in this thesis illustrates how the treatment of animals by humans does not occur within a vacuum; species difference is mutually constituted with cultural and inter-species difference. Previous research with a focus on animals has often positioned the exploitation and suffering of animals as central. These concerns are valid but run the risk of limiting understandings of how food animals take part in shaping human experiences of the world. This thesis has argued that we require new approaches to consider food animals' positions in the world that we share with them. By using posthuman theory, and affirmative ethics, this thesis shifted away from the focus on traditional understandings of power and oppression and instead asked for recognition and appreciation of the forces of non-human life in our shared world. While food animals are subjected to human actions, they are not merely passive subjects. Their presence leaves material and cultural marks. Posthuman theory was used in this thesis to offer novel ways of understanding practices of eating animals. By using posthumanism as a tool to investigate human practices of eating animals, this thesis has demonstrated that posthumanism is more than a theoretical tool, which can offer understanding in current developments regarding human–animal relationships. Instead, this thesis has shown that it is crucial to investigate how different human and non-human identities are always being shaped and practiced in relationship to each other. This world is already posthuman.

Limitations and Further Research

This thesis has placed the relations between humans and food animals at the centre of its considerations and used a combination of critical theory and discourse analysis to offer insights into discourses surrounding practices of eating animals. The focus of this thesis was on how two different Western countries and cultures have constructed ideas regarding values and identities of themselves and human and non-human Others.

Relations between human and non-human animals are rich and diverse. While the three case studies presented in this thesis addressed core questions regarding the ethics and practices of eating animals, much more space is left for further research. Chapter 1 unveiled how social-cultural values have affected questions of what animals can be eaten in Australia. The second case study (see Chapter 2) discussed how religious and secular values have influenced how animal welfare is understood. The final case study (see Chapter 3) showed the importance of cultural economy in relation to questions of sustainability of meat industry and consumption. While this thesis has shown how practices of eating meat must be understood in complex and contingent frameworks of cultural and societal values, this research has been limited in the countries investigated and the questions asked. Questions of how other cultures and nationalities understand and negotiate human-animal relations are worthy of further investigation on micro and macro levels.

Additionally, further research on how different types of relations between human and non-human animals have informed ideas on ethics and identities would contribute to greater understanding of how the world is shared by human and non-human animals. Think for example of practices and values regarding human treatments and interactions with companion animals, entertainment animals and research animals.

Finally, the research methods of this thesis have limited the analyses to discourses on food animals as presented in media. More anthropological research methods such as interviews or observational fieldwork might lead to different findings regarding human-animal relations and are warranted for future research. However, media discourses were felt to be a useful means for investigating the research questions under consideration in this thesis, particularly given its wide scope in terms of geography.

In conclusion, this thesis has demonstrated new frameworks for considering human-animal relations. Using a posthuman framework to examine practices of eating animals shows how

human and non-human identities are constantly in the making in relation to each other. Differences take place on inter- and intra-species level, whether the species is human or not. These insights underline the possibilities for new understandings of power relations between human and non-human subjects. This thesis offers examples on how to approach this, namely in the forms of open dialogues rather than questions that require definite answers. Many more opportunities exist to further examine human–animal relationships beyond practices associated with eating animals. As our ever-changing world becomes increasingly more globalised and human, and non-human animals continue share and co-inhabit it in traditional and novel ways, the importance of understanding how we are all in this together remains urgent.

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