JOURNAL FOR MEDIA HISTORY
TMG

Andrea Meuzelaar

Reporting on the Rituals of Islam: Changing Televisual Narratives on Integration and National Belonging of Muslim Immigrants

Abstract

This article delves into the history of Dutch television representation of Muslim immigrants and traces the coverage of Islamic rituals over five decades. Since the arrival of Turkish and Moroccan 'guest workers' in the 1960s, these rituals have sparked discussions about the place of Islam in Dutch society. Ever since, Dutch television has exhibited a fascination for Islamic rituals, in particular for the two major Islamic celebrations – the Festival of Breaking the Fast and the Festival of the Sacrifice and the (related) rituals of Ramadan and halal slaughter. Studying the coverage of Islamic rituals over time reveals the evolving televisual narratives on national belonging and integration of Muslim immigrants. Finally, the article argues that in this historical process of representation, television has shaped two competing stereotypes: the well-integrated, domesticated Muslim deserving of 'our' hospitality and the maladjusted, fearsome Muslim undeserving of it.

Keywords

Dutch Television History | Muslim Immigrants | Islamic Rituals and Celebrations | Stereotypes | Deservingness

Introduction

After decades of xenophobic sentiments, fears of immigrants and Muslims, and anxieties over national identity in Dutch public debates, Geert Wilders' far-right PVV party's recent landslide victory (2023) once again thrust immigration and Islam to the forefront of political discourse. The current coalition's shift towards a stronger assimilationist stance has further widened the gap between legal citizenship and national belonging for (Muslim) citizens with a migration background. In November 2024, during the aftermath of football riots between the Israeli club Maccabi Tel Aviv and the Dutch club Ajax that were fuelled by tensions over the Gaza war, VP Mona Keijzer and PVV leader Geert Wilders blamed the Dutch

Islamic community. They accused Muslims of not being integrated and of holding beliefs incompatible with Dutch values. Soon after, liberal MP Bente Becker proposed tracking data on the cultural and religious values of Dutch citizens with a migration background, targeting the Muslim community in particular. The motion passed by a large majority, highlighting that Muslim religiosity is still seen as a threat to Dutch values, and that Muslims must continually prove their national belonging.

The current suspicions towards the religious beliefs of Muslims and the demands for them to prove compatibility with Dutch values tap into pervasive stereotypes, that have been reinforced by repetitive media coverage. Dutch media have often opposed 'their' otherness and difference to 'our' tolerance and hospitality, have depicted Islam as a potential threat to 'our' freedom, and have cast doubt on whether 'they' are deserving of 'our' hospitality, despite many having longstanding legal citizenship. The religious beliefs and rituals of Muslims (such as *halal* slaughter, the veil, the Festival of the Sacrifice) have repeatedly been portrayed as incompatible with Dutch values. Since their religion obliges Muslims to perform certain visible rituals (e.g. praying five times a day, dietary obligations, fasting, wearing a veil), Muslims are caught in what Morey and Yaqin have coined a 'double bind of performativity': 'called upon to demonstrate through performance their national identities, while at the same time performing what is sometimes viewed suspiciously as a conflicting allegiance to the overarching *Ummah*'.[1] Dutch media coverage of Islamic rituals reflects this pervasive distrust of the Muslim's loyalty towards the nation, as it often differentiates between acceptable and unacceptable religious practices. The coverage thereby follows what Knott, Poole and Taira describe as the 'good Muslim/bad Muslim approach', that operates to delineate tolerable from intolerable interpretations of Islam.[2]

This article delves into the history of Dutch television representation of Muslim immigrants and traces the coverage of Islamic rituals over five decades. Since the arrival of Turkish and Moroccan 'guest workers' in the 1960s, these rituals have sparked discussions about the place of Islam in Dutch society. Ever since, Dutch television has exhibited a fascination for Islamic rituals, in particular for the two major Islamic celebrations – *Eid al-Fitr* (Festival of Breaking the Fast) and *Eid al-Adha* (Festival of the Sacrifice) – and the (related) rituals of Ramadan and *halal* slaughter. By tracing this coverage, this article shows how television has imagined the religious identity of Muslims vis-à-vis the Dutch cultural identity throughout the years. The Dutch nation has often been imagined as hospitable and tolerant, and as rooted in Judeo-Christian values and the Enlightenment. Another influential narrative is the story of modernisation to a secular nation, that

values the separation of church and state. These narratives have often served to deny Muslims a place in Dutch society while advocating for their assimilation into Dutch culture. Studying the coverage of Islamic rituals over time reveals the evolving televisual narratives on national belonging and integration of Muslim immigrants. Finally, the article demonstrates, how in this historical process of repetitive coverage of Islamic rituals, television has gradually begun to follow the 'good Muslim/bad Muslim approach' and has shaped two competing stereotypes: the well-integrated, domesticated Muslim deserving of 'our' hospitality and the maladjusted, fearsome Muslim undeserving of it.

Over the last decades, significant work on Western media coverage of Muslims and Islam has proliferated. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) provides the classical framework for understanding the historical production of knowledge about the Orient in the Western world.[3] In this seminal work, Said identified various (contradictory) key stereotypes that the West has held about the Orient, and argued that Arab-Islamic peoples and their culture were often depicted as mysterious, exotic, irrational, backward, erotic, sensual, despotic, violent, fanatic, and inherently inferior to the Westerner. With his *Covering Islam* (1981, 1997), Said set another benchmark for research in the field of media representations of Muslims and Islam, arguing that in Western media Muslims were often associated with religious hysteria, militancy, extremism, anti-western sentiments and terrorism.[4] The bulk of the literature written after Said's seminal works identified the same pejorative and negative themes and homogenising discourses of Islam and Muslims. Early studies (dealing with the decades before 9/11) focused on the representation of Islam in global Western media.[5] Additionally, more localised approaches emerged, studying the representation of Muslims in national contexts.[6] These studies demonstrated that fear-laden stereotypes of Islam as violent and as a threat to the West were already widely in circulation before 9/11. More recent scholarship revealed that the intensity and pervasiveness of these stereotypes were enormously magnified by the events of 9/11 and the War on Terror. Various studies focused on the media treatments of Islamic terrorism and on the phenomenon of Islamophobia in the global and US context.[7] Furthermore, a lot of research on media representations of Muslims and Islam in various national and cross-national contexts emerged.[8] These studies of media representations of Muslim minorities in the West demonstrated that the discourse of Islam tends to be negative and hostile, that Islam tends to be represented as incompatible with Western values, and that these media representations can be considered contemporary manifestations of Orientalist discourse.

So far, little research has been done on media coverage of Muslims in the Netherlands.[9] Besides, a profound historical approach to the study of media representations of Muslims is very much underdeveloped.[10] Responding to these gaps, this study departs from the idea that any understanding of contemporary stereotypes of Muslims requires a sense of their historical emergence. Edward Said's identification of contradictory stereotypes in *Orientalism* laid the groundwork for the idea of the 'good' and 'bad' Muslim, which other scholars have recognised and expanded upon in the contemporary context. For example Cervi, Tejedor, and Gracia argue (building on the work of Mamdani) that the differentiation between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims' is the result of prejudice rooted in Orientalism, and that 'the good Muslim' is represented as secular, moderate, rational, and Westernised, while 'the bad Muslim' is depicted as fanatical and backward, thereby implying that Muslim individuals can be integrated through renouncing their 'backward' ideas and by embracing 'progressive' Western ideas.[11] Knott, Poole and Taire describe a similar mechanism, in which suspicion about the cultural values that Muslims hold results in the 'good Muslim/bad Muslim' approach: only Muslims who share the same values as 'us' are considered tolerable.[12] While these studies offer valuable insights about the media's stereotyping of Muslim minorities in the West, they focus on the contemporary context only. So far, hardly any publication offers a historical perspective that covers a substantial period of time. My study is based on systematic research that runs from the beginning of labour immigration in the sixties to the recent epoch of the War on Terror and anti-immigration sentiments. By examining the historical dimensions of television coverage of Islamic rituals through a longitudinal lens, this study provides insight into how the different phases of immigration and settlement of Muslims in the Netherlands correspond to specific televisual discourses of Dutch Muslims. Thereby, this study enhances the understanding of the historical roots of contemporary discourses of national belonging and integration of Muslims. The study shows that, as Islam became more contested, television coverage shifted from framing Muslims as exoticized to politicised, while increasingly presenting contradictory narratives of 'good' and 'bad' Muslims. Finally, I argue that the comforting depiction of the well-integrated and domesticated Muslim is merely driven by fear, forming the flipside of the same coin that depicts the frightening and maladjusted Muslim.

In the following sections, I first elaborate on the conceptual paradigm of religion, rituals, and stereotypes that I draw upon, and situate my research further within the existing body of work on media representations of migrants. I then briefly explain how I have navigated the archive of Sound

and Vision, and provide information about the method I have used to map the history of Dutch television coverage of Islamic rituals. I then present my analysis of television coverage over five decades, through which I demonstrate that the more Islamic practices were evaluated in terms of integration, the more televisual stories about Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr revolved around the common denominators between Muslims and Dutch, while the coverage of halal slaughter and Eid al-Adha focused on essential differences. Finally, this shows how Dutch television has constructed the binary stereotype of the 'good' (well-integrated) and 'bad' (unadapted) Muslim.

Religion, Rituals, and Acts of Translation

Theoretically, this study departs from an anti-essentialist paradigm of religion and rituals. The idea that the very definition of religion is the result of historical processes has been advocated most forcefully by Talal Asad. In *Genealogies of Religion*, Asad contends that any universalist definition of religion that insists that it has an autonomous essence separates religion from the domain of power, risking the reiteration of Western hegemony.[13] He claims that consequently any translation of Islamic religious traditions and rituals produces versions of power.[14] In *Formations of the Secular,* Asad further explores how power constitutes the categories of the religious and the secular.[15] He maintains that the way Europe is ideologically constructed excludes Muslim immigrants, and that it is 'their attachment to Islam that many believe commits Muslims to values that are an affront to the modern secular state'.[16] The idea that European identity has an unchangeable secular essence that is rooted in Christianity and Enlightenment is according to Asad a 'symptom of anxieties about non-Europeans'.[17] By attributing to Islam an essence of hostility towards non-Muslims, Europe constitutes Islam as its primary other. Following Asad's ideas, this study examines how television's cultural translation of Islamic rituals has produced hegemonic power relations, showing how the identity of Muslims has been mediated through a Eurocentric and Christonormative lens.

To understand why the religious rituals of Muslims have sparked controversies in the Netherlands, I turn to Gerd Baumann's view of rituals as performances that create and maintain a community's cultural identity, and that always implicate others.[18] Baumann highlights the dynamic nature of rituals as social arenas in which groups communicate among themselves and to others. Similarly, Hughes-Freeland and Crane emphasise the performative aspect of rituals and their capacity to involve others: 'Ethnic and/or national minorities as well as diasporic societies utilize their own

performance as arenas in which they affirm their own identities, while also speaking to "outsiders".'[19] They consider rituals contested spaces for identity politics. Using these anthropological perspectives, I see rituals as performed social practices where identities are negotiated, affirmed and contested.

Finally, to comprehend how Dutch television's translation of Islamic rituals has often evoked Eurocentric approaches to Islam, it is helpful to briefly elaborate on the key rituals discussed. Eid al-Fitr (Festival of Breaking the Fast) is the celebration that marks the end of fasting during Ramadan, one of Islam's five pillars. Throughout Ramadan, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual intercourse from sunrise to sunset. After sunset, Muslims eat *iftar*, often with friends and family. It is a period of inner cleansing, self-reflection, willpower training, discipline, solidarity with the poor, and gratitude for the revelation. Eid al-Adha (Festival of the Sacrifice) is typically a three-day celebration that many Muslims consider the most significant of the two major Islamic holidays. It commemorates the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail in obedience to God. Muslims celebrate by sacrificing an animal, usually a sheep, and feasting with family and friends. Islamic dietary rules prohibit the consumption of blood, so the animal must be slaughtered in a way that ensures the blood is fully drained – only then is the meat considered halal. Islamic law requires that the person performing the ritual be a Muslim who is knowledgeable in halal slaughtering practices.

Stereotypes and Deservingness

This article departs from a framework that rejects the idea of stereotypes as mere distortions of reality. Instead, it sees stereotypes as forms of representation that are inherently implicated in repetition. Homi Bhabha's idea of stereotypes as a 'fetishistic mode of representation', expressing both fear and desire for the other, is useful to understand the emergence of conflicting stereotypes of Muslim immigrants.[20] Bhabha argues that stereotypes are intrinsically ambivalent and reliant on repetition. Similarly, Mireille Rosello emphasises the repetitive nature of stereotypes, defining them by their high degree of 'iterativity', rather than ideological content.[21] Her concept highlights the formal structure of stereotypes: their memorability, quotability and timelessness.[22] While the content seems to be the stereotype itself, Rosello argues this is a 'ruse of the stereotyping machine': 'Behind the smoke screen of what the stereotype says about a certain ethnic group, the identity and immense resilience of the stereotype resides in its apparently indestructible degree of iterativity'.[23] Rosello's

notion of iterativity helps explain how repetitive coverage of Islamic rituals has resulted in the emergence of the stereotype of the 'good' and the 'bad' Muslim.

To further understand this binary stereotype, it is helpful to situate this research within the academic debate on media discourses of migrants. Various scholars have noted that media coverage of migration often reinforces a discourse of deservingness, categorising migrants as either deserving and useful for the nation or undeserving and useless.[24] Kaarina Nikunen argues that migrant citizenship remains conditional; migrants must constantly prove their belonging to be seen as deserving.[25] Sara Ahmed describes similar mechanisms in her work on the politics of emotions.[26] She argues that the differentiation between 'some others' and 'other others' enables imagining the nation as hospitable and serves to define the conditions of 'our' hospitality.[27] Moreover, love for the other is conditional: 'the conditions of love differentiate between those who can inhabit the nation and those who cause disturbance'.[28] Finally, she maintains that love for others is an emotion that demands reciprocity: migrants are expected to return the favour of hospitality with gratitude, economic value or adaptation.[29] Therefore, the 'good Muslim/bad Muslim' approach operates not only to delineate an acceptable interpretation of Islam from an intolerable one, as Knott, Poole and Taira argue, but also to imagine the Dutch nation as tolerant and hospitable, and to define the conditions of 'our' hospitality.[30]

Methodology: Navigating the Archive of Sound and Vision

Since tracing the television coverage of Islamic rituals through television history requires a systematic methodology, I will clarify how I have conducted historical research in the archive of Sound and Vision, and how I have constructed and analysed the research corpus. This work was part of a larger project studying the history of Dutch public television coverage of Muslims (1960-2010) through the prism of the archive of Sound and Vision.[31] Inspired by the Foucauldian method of archaeology, I have developed a critical method for television historiography that is based on the collection and archiving practices of Sound and Vision. I have taken the (former) iMMix catalogue of Sound and Vision as a starting point, and I have let the metadata that Sound and Vision has used to disclose its collection (e.g. keywords such as 'Muslims' and 'Islam') guide me through television history. In my previous work, I have identified four discursive formations

of Muslims based on the historical moments of transformation of television's use of language to address Muslim immigrants, and of the thematic patterns of television coverage : the discursive formation of 'the single male guest worker' in the sixties and seventies, the discursive formation of 'ethnic minorities' in the eighties, the discursive formation of '*allochtonen*' in the nineties, and the discursive formation of 'dangerous Muslims' in the years 2000-2010.[32] These discursive formations serve as the starting point for a deeper exploration of Dutch television coverage of Muslims that I present in this article.

This particular study of the coverage of the rituals of Islam is based on original research in the archive of Sound and Vision. For building the corpus of this research, I have systematically traced the (key)words 'Ramadan', '*Suikerfeest*' (Eid al-Fitr), '*Offerfeest*' (Eid al-Adha) and '*ritueel/ halal slachten'* (halal slaughter) through the archive and collected all programmes that addressed these celebrations and rituals. I have focused on these particular celebrations and rituals, because these have consistently been covered since the beginning of Islamic immigration. As my research spans from 1960 to 2010, analysing this coverage allows me to identify patterns and changes over a lengthy period of time. My corpus is limited to broadcasts from Dutch public television, since the archive of Sound and Vision only collects programmes that were broadcast by Dutch public television. The Dutch public broadcasting system was pillarised (consisting of a Catholic, Protestant, socialist and various neutral broadcast organisations), and evolved from a single television network in 1951 to two in 1965, and expanded to three networks by 1988.[33] For defining my corpus, I have systematically selected all non-fiction programmes (news programmes, current affairs programmes, talk-shows and other non-fiction programmes from all the various broadcasting organisations) that addressed the Dutch context (excluding items about Muslims abroad).

Next, I have conducted a qualitative analysis of the obtained corpus, which consists of 464 items. I have watched all the material and I have examined the thematic patterns of the coverage by coding the material into the main themes addressed, such as: emancipation in the sphere of religion, the lack of facilities to practice the Islamic faith, providing information about the nature of Islamic rituals, animal rights, multicultural relations, and integration. I have then engaged in a close-reading of several exemplary programmes and items: I have investigated how the religious identity of Muslims was imagined in relation to the Dutch nation, and I have analysed the images used to visualize the stories. Where relevant, I have taken into account the

ideological vocations of the various broadcasting organisations. Finally, I have structured my findings around the four discursive formations identified in my previous work.

The Sixties and Seventies: Exoticising Gazes, Harmonious Encounters, and (Critique of) Dutch Hospitality

Similar to many other European countries, the arrival of Muslims in the Netherlands primarily stemmed from large-scale labour migration. Since the early 1960s, Turkish and Moroccan 'guest workers' entered the Netherlands due to post-war reconstruction efforts which had led to a shortage of low-skilled labour. During the first two decades of labour immigration, both the Dutch government and the 'guest workers' expected their stay to be temporary. In this discursive formation of 'the single male guest worker', most television programmes featuring Turkish and Moroccan migrants focused on their harsh socioeconomic conditions, such as poor housing and exploitation by Dutch employers.[34] The limited coverage of their religious identity addressed the rituals and celebrations of this 'new' religion.[35] In this initial period of labour migration, coverage of Eid al-Fitr and/or Ramadan and of Eid al-Adha and/or halal slaughter was similar in frequency, thematic tendencies, and visual repertoires, focusing on the lack of facilities to practice the Islamic faith, on the struggle for emancipation in the religious sphere, and on encounters with the Dutch.[36]

Ramadan and the lack of prayer rooms

One of the first current affairs programmes to address Ramadan and exemplify the tone of coverage in this period was *Kenmerk* (1967).[37] The item was set in the Mubarak mosque in The Hague, the first and only official mosque in the Netherlands at the time. The item opened with lengthy scenes of Islamic prayer, stressing its serenity and visual beauty, followed by an interview with its imam Hafiz about the nature of Islamic fasting (see figure 1). After Hafiz' detailed explanation of the ritual, the reporter compared Ramadan to Catholic fasting and inquired whether Ramadan was embraced with Dutch tolerance. Hafiz elaborated on the generosity of Dutch employers and churches in arranging improvised prayer rooms. By only faintly raising the lack of facilities to practice the Islamic faith and by stressing Dutch generosity, the item imagined the Dutch nation as a tolerant and hospitable country that

Figure 1. Stills from Kenmerk (IKOR, January 16, 1967)

cherished religious pluralism. Despite its Eurocentric approach to Islam, the item's comparative framing of Ramadan aimed to promote sympathy and tolerance for the Muslim immigrants. The item clearly reflected the broadcaster's (IKOR) religious foundation, valuing religious pluralism and tolerance, and advocated for the deservingness of these 'guest workers' of Dutch generosity and hospitality.[38]
In another item of *Kenmerk* (1975) about Ramadan, Dutch hospitality was more critically explored.[39] The item depicted a Turkish family's iftar meal, followed by a Ramadan service in a room of a Remonstrant church in Amersfoort, featuring lengthy scenes of communal prayers. After explaining Ramadan's significance, the voice-over highlighted the problems that Muslims faced, such as the lack of places of worship and the reluctance of Dutch employers towards fasting 'Muhammadan' employees. It also elaborated on the fact that the Remonstrant Church community only counted 500 souls, while the amount of Turks and Moroccans had reached more then 2000 people, and on the fact that Turks and Moroccans could not combine their religious services due to language differences. Clearly, by respectfully showcasing the Ramadan ritual, this item spoke from a position that considered religion as an important aspect of one's identity. By suggesting that the amount of Muslims have by far outnumbered the Remonstrant community, the hospitality of the Dutch Remonstrant Church was invoked as a natural responsibility, thereby underlining the overall argument of the item that Muslims have an obvious right to acquire facilities to practice their faith. While the item also displayed ignorance of Islam by referring to the followers of Islam as 'Muhammadans' (a term considered blasphemic by

Muslims), it did homogenise the identity of Islamic 'guest workers' and addressed the ethnic differences between Turkish and Moroccan Muslims.[40] Finally, the item figured the Dutch nation as respectful to religious devotion and tolerant to religious diversity (in line with the religious vocation of its broadcaster), but also as not yet hospitable enough to provide adequate facilities for Muslims.

Similarly, the current affairs programme *T Zand* (1979), broadcast by the Catholic KRO, invoked Ramadan in relation to the lack of prayer rooms for Muslims.[41] The episode followed a Turkish railroad worker, showing his interactions with (respectful) colleagues, his participation in a Ramadan service (see figure 2), and his partaking in iftar with his family. The voice-over emphasised the shortage of mosques and the difficulties this posed for Muslim 'guest workers' wishing to fulfil their religious obligations. It also featured an interview with a Dutch woman committed to establishing a mosque for Turkish workers. She argued that Muslims should feel at home and not be alienated from their culture. She also stressed that fact that Muslims could not hold their services in Catholic churches due to the prohibition of images in Islam. Again, this programme showed solidarity with the religious obligations of Islamic 'guest workers' and depicted them as deserving of Dutch generosity, suggesting that the Dutch nation is reigned by the principle of religious pluralism and should therefore adapt to their needs and live up to its hospitality.

So in this discursive formation of 'the single male guest worker', the coverage of Ramadan merely focused on the Muslim's struggle for emancipation in the religious sphere. Both the neutral news items and the items of the religiously inspired broadcast organisations depicted the religious needs of the 'guest workers' as compatible with the values of Dutch society, the latter explicitly stressing the role of the Church in providing places for worship for Islamic 'guest workers'. Strikingly, television's respectful coverage of Ramadan in these years was also reflected in its visual repertoire. Both news and current affairs items employed an observational style, featuring extended scenes of

Figure 2. Stills from 'T Zand (KRO, June 14, 1979)

people praying and reciting verses from the Quran. Images of the Mubarak mosque, Arabic inscriptions, preaching imams, and men performing communal prayers dominated the visual repertoire of these programmes (see figure 3). In many of these broadcasts, the camera emphasised the serenity and visual beauty of Islamic prayer. Clearly, television displayed curiosity for the Islamic rituals, thereby invoking Orientalist tropes and depicting the Islamic 'guest workers' as exotic and strange. The exoticising gaze of the camera often revealed both a sense of unfamiliarity with and fascination for the Islamic religion (see figure 4). While highlighting Islam's otherness, the observational style and exoticising gaze also conveyed a respectful attitude towards the religious rituals and devotion of the Turkish and Moroccan 'guest workers'.

Communal roasts for Muslims and Dutch during Eid al-Adha

While halal slaughter was not widely covered during these years, television did air several items about the celebration of Eid al-Adha. This coverage thematically resembled that of Ramadan and primarily revolved around the lack of religious facilities for foreign workers. Strikingly, it also focused on the celebration of Eid al-Adha as a moment of encounter between foreign workers and the Dutch. Whereas the Ramadan coverage focused on introverted acts of religious devotion, the Eid al-Adha coverage emphasised extroverted aspects of the celebration, such as food, music, and social interaction with the Dutch. For example, *Kenmerk* (1968) aired an item about the celebration of Eid al-Adha in a circus tent in Amsterdam's Vondelpark.[42] It included images of prayer, roasting sheep, foreign workers and Dutch partaking in a festive meal, and an interview with the event's initiator. He explained that the event aimed to compensate for the lack of facilities for 'guest workers' and bring them into contact with the Dutch. The visuals emphasised the festivity of this encounter (see figure 5).

Also another episode of *Kenmerk* (1979) covered the celebration of Eid al-Adha, this time on the occasion of a strike of Moroccans working in an abattoir.[43] After explaining the nature of the celebration, the voice-over stated that the Moroccan workers had seized the occasion to campaign against their miserable working conditions, and had invited the film crew for their cheerful celebration. The item then showed scenes of Moroccans cooking, and scenes of Moroccans and Dutch gathering during a festive meal. Clearly, the item spoke from a position of solidarity with the Moroccan workers and depicted Eid al-Adha as a moment of encounter between them and the Dutch. Similarly, the newscast *Journaal* (1969, 1971) dedicated two items to Dutch participation in Eid

Figure 3. Stills from NOS Journaal (January 1, 1968) (1 and 2) and Televizier (AVRO, March 25, 1965) (3 and 4)

Figure 4. Stills from Van Gewest tot Gewest (NOS, November 6, 1974). Celebration of the Festival of Sacrifice in a circus tent in the Vondelpark

Figure 5. Stills from Kenmerk (IKOR, March 11, 1968)

al-Adha celebrations in circus tents in Amsterdam and Utrecht.[44] These items also included scenes of joyful gatherings of Muslims and Dutch, sheep roasting, festive banquets and music performances

Figure 6. Stills from Journaal (NOS, February 13, 1971). Celebration of the Festival of Sacrifice with Hadj Arough in Utrecht

(see figure 6). Clearly, television displayed appreciation for the way Muslims involved the Dutch in their ritual celebration, depicting their encounter as a consequence of mutual hospitality.

In this period, halal slaughter was very much in the margins of coverage. The current affairs programme *Attentie* (1966), broadcast by the Christian Protestant NCRV, was the only programme to address halal slaughter.[45] The item opened with a sequence of close-ups of Arabic inscriptions in the Mubarak mosque, followed by lengthy scenes of men performing communal prayer (see figure 7). A voice-over stated that these 'guest workers' felt at home in the Netherlands, due to the atmosphere of understanding for their religious needs, with local churches accommodating their religious celebrations. It then explained that, despite the fact that sensitivities and discontents were mostly avoided, the Muslims' objections to Dutch slaughter methods had led to problematic clandestine slaughtering practices. In the next scene, Imam Hafiz was interviewed extensively about the religious significance of halal slaughter. The voice-over explained that halal slaughter was banned under Dutch law and opposed by animal protection regulations. The item concluded with close-ups of meat in a

Figure 7. Stills from Attentie (NCRV, February 11, 1966)

Dutch butchery, while the voice-over commented that it was hard to imagine that Muslims would not touch this meat, even if this refusal was not a matter of unwillingness but of religious conscience. In the final scene, the camera zoomed in on an Arabic scripture on the wall of the mosque, slowly panning from left to right along the writing.

Clearly, this item displayed an unfamiliarity with Islamic religious practices. Both the hesitation of the reporter to take seriously the Muslim's reasons for refusing to eat Dutch meat, and the

exotising gaze of the camera rendered the Islamic religion as strange, different and unknown. The camera movement along the Arabic writing is a clear visual illustration of both the fascination for this mysterious script, and the ignorance that Arabic, the language of the Quran, is written from right to left. To some extent, the item tapped into old Orientalist tropes, depicting the Islamic 'guest workers' as having a tendency towards obscure rituals and barbarian practices. Despite the reporter's attempt to respect their religious practices, the item showed discomfort with their need for ritual slaughter and exhibited suspicion towards its compatibility with Dutch values. While portraying the Dutch nation as hospitable, the item implied that the Muslims' refusal to eat Dutch meat could be seen as ingratitude to Dutch hospitality, rendering them as potentially undeserving of it. Finally, this ambiguous portrayal of halal slaughter as both a legitimate and obscure ritual foreshadowed the heated discussions yet to come.

The Eighties: A Christian Comparative Framework and Commotion over Halal Slaughter

In the early eighties, the Dutch government abandoned the symbolism of the immigrant as guest, recognised that Turkish and Moroccan immigrants were here to stay, and finally implemented an immigration policy. The 'guest workers' transformed into 'ethnic minorities, whose stay was rearticulated as permanent, and Islam was gradually institutionalised. In this discursive formation of 'ethnic minorities', the religious identity of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants became more visible on television, and the variety of topics associated with Islam increased.[46] Besides the coverage of Islamic rituals, television reported on the opening of mosques, the foundation of Islamic schools, the second generation, Muslim women, and towards the end of the decade sporadically on Islamic fundamentalism (in particular after the Rushdie affair in 1989).[47] During this period, the coverage of Eid al-Fitr and Ramadan began to follow a different logic than that of Eid al-Adha and halal slaughter. The former emphasised similarities between Muslims and Dutch by adopting a Christian comparative framework, while the latter highlighted the incompatibility of halal slaughter with Dutch values.[48] With the discovery that Muslims were here to stay, gradually the first contours of the differentiation between 'good' Muslims (who resemble 'us') and 'bad' Muslims (who engage in barbarian practices) emerged on television.

Figure 8. Stills from Brandpunt (KRO, July 4, 1983). Iftar and prayers

Ramadan and its (assumed) equivalents in Christianity

The first programme to address Ramadan in this period was the current affairs magazine *Brandpunt* (1983), broadcast by the Catholic KRO.[49] The item portrayed two Turkish men and focused on their experience of Ramadan in the Netherlands. It included scenes from their workplace (highlighting the absence of prayer rooms), moments of iftar with family and Dutch neighbours, and communal prayers during Eid al-Fitr (see figure 8). The voice-over emphasised the difficulties of maintaining religious traditions in a foreign country, in particular for the second generation, and compared the significance of *Suikerfeest* to Christmas. In style and tone, the item resembled coverage from the sixties and seventies. It clearly spoke from a position of solidarity with the religious devotion of the Turkish men, observing their prayers with curiosity. The item chronicled how the lack of facilities to practice Islamic belief forced the Turkish men to improvise and adapt, depicting their Islamic identity as flexible and elastic. By comparing *Suikerfeest* to Christmas, the item – while revealing an Eurocentric approach to Islam – stressed the

holiness of the Islamic celebration and the similarities between Muslims and Dutch. Finally, by emphasising the compatibility of their religious rituals with Christian values, and by highlighting their adaptation to Dutch society and involvement of Dutch neighbours in their rituals, the item portrayed these Muslims as deserving of Dutch hospitality and reciprocating the hospitality extended to them.

There are many more examples of how television began stressing the similarities between Islam and Christianity through its comparative framing of Ramadan. For instance, the talk show *Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde* (1984), broadcast by the Catholic KRO, revolved entirely around Islamic fasting.[50] Recorded in a church, it aimed to dispel Dutch prejudice against and ignorance about Islam. Discussions centred on the roles of Jesus and Mary in the Quran, the positive relations between Christians and Muslims, the hospitality of the Christian church towards Muslims, and the similarities between Catholic and Islamic fasting. Clearly, the religious identity of Muslims was depicted as similar to 'us' and therefore acceptable, imagining the Dutch nation as a place where hospitality was very much contingent on religious faith, thereby echoing the broadcaster's Catholic roots. Likewise, the educational programme *Levende Rituelen* (1985) compared Islamic fasting to Lent, the Catholic period of fasting. The programme addressed the challenges Muslims faced in fulfilling their religious duties in the Netherlands, and promoted understanding by highlighting the religious proximity between Dutch people and Muslims. Finally, the informative programme *De Islam* (1987) portrayed a Moroccan family participating in Ramadan.[51] Aiming to provide information about Islam, the programme explained that the Dutch Muslim community was not homogenous and entailed various ethnicities (such as Indonesians, Moluccans, Surinamese, Turks and Moroccans). It extensively elaborated on explaining which biblical characters were also prominent in the Quran, such as Jesus, Mary, Abraham, and Jacob. Again, this comparative framework encouraged tolerance for Muslims in the Netherlands and demonstrated compatibility between the religious identity of Muslims and Dutch values.

Ritual slaughter and the issue of animal welfare

Alongside the recognition that Muslims were here to stay, halal slaughter became a contested issue, and its negative associations began to overshadow Eid al-Adha. The festive banquets and encounters between Dutch and Muslims vanished from television, and coverage began to focus on the commotion over halal slaughter. For example, *AKTUA* (1980) aired an episode about the legal action taken by the foundation *SOS for Pets* against abattoirs conducting halal slaughter.[52]

TMG JOURNAL FOR MEDIA HISTORY

While aiming for balance by presenting both sides of the argument (animal rights versus the freedom of religion), the episode displayed unease with the Islamic ritual. It included interviews with a foundation representative who argued that Muslims should adapt to Dutch norms, and with an imam who claimed halal slaughter was being abused to stir up xenophobia. The voice-over, after describing the controversy (animals were slaughtered without sedation), remarked that the foundation did not oppose Jewish ritual slaughter, because Jews only allowed experts to slaughter while Muslims tended to do it themselves. Here, the item implied that Muslims did not slaughter with caution and were inclined to illegally do it themselves, thereby tapping into the cliché of clandestine slaughters in bathtubs and on balconies, and casting doubt on the compatibility of the ritual with Dutch values.

While controversies surrounding halal slaughter were a recurring topic on television during these years, Eid al-Adha moved to the margins of coverage. The rare items that did report on the festival provided little information about the celebration's nature and began to associate it with animal suffering. For example, the newscast *Journaal* (1986) opened with a voice-over stating that 16.000 sheep would be ritually slaughtered without sedation for Eid al-Adha. It then showed interviews with an animal rights activist and a Muslim representative, illustrated with images of sheep being slaughtered.[53] In another episode, *Journaal* (1987) recorded an item about Eid al-Adha in an abattoir, and illustrated the voice-over's explanation of the festival with footage of sheep waiting to be slaughtered (see figure 9).[54] It also featured an interview with a Muslim, who was asked to comment on Khomeini and the events in Mecca, where a massacre had occurred after clashes between Iranian pilgrims and Saudi forces. Apparently, the emerging suspicion towards halal slaughter

Figure 9. Stills from Journaal (NOS, August 5, 1987)

coincided with growing mistrust of the loyalty of Muslims to Dutch values. By clarifying his allegiance to Muslims abroad, the Muslim man was demanded to perform his national belonging.

The Nineties: Successful Multicultural Relations and the Persistence of the Framework of Animal Welfare in the Coverage of Halal Slaughter

In the nineties, public debates on immigration, multiculturalism, and Islam hardened, and (the failure of) integration became a dominant topic on television. The Dutch government demanded more participation from minorities and implemented new policies focused on the integration of '*allochtonen*'.[55] The Rushdie affair (1989) sparked anti-Islam sentiments, and politicians such as Frits Bolkestein and later Pim Fortuyn took a lead in the promotion of hostility towards Muslims. In this discursive formation of 'allochtonen', television reported on the increasing fear of Islamic fundamentalism, the growing hostility towards Islam, the rise of Islamic school, and various issues related to the (alleged failure of) integration of Muslims.[56] This decade saw television's mounting obsession with veiled Muslim women.[57] While television began to associate Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr with multiculturalism and positive encounters between Muslims and Dutch, it continued to cover halal slaughter in relation to animal welfare, and Eid al-Adha nearly vanished from the screen.[58] As hostility towards Islam emerged and as Muslims were increasingly evaluated in terms of their integration, television's 'good Muslim/ bad Muslim approach' further proliferated.

Iftar for the Dutch

During this decade, the coverage of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr moved beyond the realm of religious belief, focusing primarily on intercultural relations between Muslims and Dutch. While the comparative framework of the eighties persisted, the focus shifted to successful interactions between Muslims and Dutch. For example, various items reported on the coinciding of Lent and Ramadan in 1992. The news cast *NOS Laat* (1992) portrayed a Dutch family observing Lent and a Turkish family participating in Ramadan, emphasising the mutual understanding between Muslims and Dutch.[59] The programme *Kruispunt* (1992) seized the opportunity to explore intercultural relations in an old city quarter of Utrecht, portraying a Dutch woman who took her Turkish neighbours to church and joined them to the mosque for iftar.[60] Additionally, television seized the occasion of Ramadan to address the

participation of the next generation in Dutch society. For example, the programme *Binnenland* (1994) interviewed two Moroccan young men about their experiences with Islam and sexuality and with adapting to Dutch society.[61] Similarly, the talk show *Barend & Witteman* (1997) interviewed young Muslims during Ramadan about love, sexuality, and balancing adaptation to Dutch society with respecting their parents' traditions.[62] In these cases, the Islamic identity of young Muslims was depicted as adaptable, open to change, and compatible with Dutch values.

During this period, television increasingly reported on Muslims' efforts to involve the Dutch in their religious practices. For instance, an episode of *Kruispunt* (1996) revolved around a Muslim family inviting their Dutch neighbours for iftar (see figure 10). The programme explicitly aimed to denounce ignorance about Islam. Similarly, the short documentary *Vreemd Land* (1997) portrayed Dutch employees of a North-African shop participating in Ramadan.[64] The current affairs programme *Binnenland* (1994) broadcast an item titled "Ramadan for non-Muslims", featuring a Turkish mosque's initiative to involve Dutch neighbours in the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. The programme clearly valued the intercultural dialogue initiated by Turkish Muslims.[65] Overall, television coverage of Ramadan and/or Eid al-Fitr presented a rosy narrative about intercultural relations in the Dutch multicultural society, showcasing the sharing of rituals as the perfect illustration of successful integration of Muslims, and the possibility of mutual hospitality and harmonious coexistence.

Figure 10. Still from Kruispunt (KRO, March 3, 1996). Islamic woman eating iftar with Dutch neighbour

Reporting on the abattoir

In the nineties, Eid al-Adha and the issue of halal slaughter were pushed to the periphery of coverage. In the scarce instances that the celebration and/or the ritual were addressed, television focused on the ins and outs of abattoirs and visualised its stories with graphic images of sheep slaughter. For example, the nature programme *Midas* (1993) aired an episode about an abattoir, that opened with the voice-over stating that 'Muslims have ritualised the killing of animals'.[66] The episode showed images of the immobilising of sheep, and close-ups of throat cuttings, and blood spewing from their bodies (see figure 11). A Dutch wholesaler of halal meat explained that halal slaughter is a humane way of slaughtering animals, that demands a lengthy education and respects extensive rules of hygiene. While the programme obviously aimed to take a neutral position towards the nature of halal slaughter, the visuals seemed to suggest that it was above all abundantly sanguinary. By naming the practice the ritualised killing of animals, the programme reiterated negative associations of barbaric animal abuse.

Likewise, the programme *Binnenland* (1995) dedicated a report to the operations of an abattoir on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.[67] The programme explicitly addressed the increasing Dutch fear of and ignorance about Islam. It opened with a voice-over stating that circulating wild stories about halal slaughter are incorrect, as it does not occur on balconies and in bathrooms, but under strict supervision in abattoirs. The programme featured interviews with the owner of the abattoir and an inspector, accompanied by images of sheep slaughter and blood-covered butchers. Although the

Figure 11. Stills from Midas (VARA, November 11, 1993)

programme was aimed at fighting prejudice about halal slaughter and Eid al-Adha, the visuals did reactivate the stereotype of the Muslim as animal abuser with bloody habits.

2000-2010: Ramadan as Showcase of Successful Integration and Continuing Controversies over Ritual Slaughter

During this decade, the traumatic events of 9/11 (2001) and the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh (2004) by a radicalised Dutch Muslim seriously disturbed the country, resulting in an extreme polarisation of the public debate about integration, multiculturalism and Islam. Several incidents, such las the rise of populist politician Geert Wilders and the controversy surrounding his anti-Islam film *Fitna* (2008), caused commotion in Dutch society. Debates about integration and multiculturalism began to focus entirely on Islam, and integration became the buzzword of this era. In this discursive formation of 'dangerous Muslims and failed integration', television became obsessed with stories about the failure of integration of Muslims, and reported on the radicalisation of young Muslims, 'home-grown' terrorism, hate-preaching imams, contested mosques, fundamentalism in Islamic schools, repressed veiled women, women in 'burqa', and other issues associated with fundamentalism and terrorism.[68] In this period, Muslims began to perform national belonging by transforming iftar into a national event. While television showcased these iftars as examples of successful integration of Muslims, it continued portraying Eid al-Adha and ritual slaughter as gruesome affairs, that might commit Muslims to values that are incompatible with Dutch values.[69] Finally, in this tumultuous decade of anti-Islam sentiments, the stereotype of the 'good' (well-adapted) and 'bad' (unadapted) Muslim became fully established in the television coverage of Islamic rituals.

Ramadan, the promotion of intercultural dialogue, and iftar as public event

During these years, television began consistently covering the start and end of Ramadan, indicating that Ramadan had been recognised as a fully-fledged part of Dutch society. Thematically, the coverage of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr became intertwined with issues of integration, national belonging, and intercultural dialogue. Programmes from religiously inspired broadcasting organisations continued to frame the ritual of Ramadan comparatively, focusing on the importance of

the ritual for fostering dialogue and combating prejudice. For example, various programmes seized the occasion of the coinciding events of the Dutch celebration *Sinterklaas* and *Suikerfeest* in 2002 to celebrate the harmonious encounter between Dutch and Muslims. The newscast *Journaal* (2002) reported on a school celebrating both festivities simultaneously, framing this *'Sintersuikerfeest'* ('Santasugarfeast') as the pinnacle of integration.[70] Likewise, the current affairs programme *Twee Vandaag* (2002) aired an item about a controversy over the simultaneous celebration at a school in Zuilen, that was stirred up by the populist party LPF's claim that the Islamic celebration was incompatible with the Dutch tradition of *Sinterklaas*.[71] The item aimed to prove the opposite and explicitly highlighted that the Islamic celebration could easily coexist with a Dutch one. Finally, the reality show *Man Bijt Hond* (2002) broadcast an item titled 'Imam meets *Sinterklaas*', revolving around the harmonious encounter between Muslims and Dutch.[72] The item was set in a mosque where children had gathered to celebrate both festivities. The item opened with an interview with *Sinterklaas*, in which he stated that if it were up to him, *Suikerfeest* (Eid al-Fitr) could always coincide with his birthday. The item showed scenes of children performing communal prayer and singing the jingle of a typical *Sinterklaas* song. The item concluded with a scene where *Sinterklaas* congratulated the imam on the end of Ramadan, followed by the imam wishing him a happy birthday (see figure 12). Again, the Dutch nation was imagined as a place where Islamic traditions (of 'well-adapted and successfully integrated' Muslims) could peacefully coexist alongside Dutch customs.

During these years of rupture, Muslims increasingly involved the Dutch in their Ramadan rituals to negotiate their place in society and promote intercultural dialogue. Television reported on

Figure 12. Still from Man Bijt Hond (NCRV, December 5, 2002). Sinterklaas visits the mosque

this trend as a sign of the successful integration of Muslims and as the perfect illustration of how multicultural society could thrive if hospitality was mutual. For example, the newscast *Journaal* (2001) covered Muslims distributing roses to Dutch neighbours during Ramadan to stimulate dialogue after 9/11.[73] Similarly, the programme *Opium* (2001) reported on a Moroccan artists' initiative to encourage conversation between Dutch people and Muslims during Ramadan and to bridge cultural differences in the aftermath of 9/11.[74] The current affairs programme *Twee Vandaag* (2002) dedicated an item to Muslims promoting dialogue by organising a shared iftar between Dutch and Moroccans after a Dutch man was murdered by a Moroccan man.[75] The newscast *Journaal* (2004) reported on Minister Balkenende's visit to a mosque for the celebration of Eid al-Fitr following the murder of Theo van Gogh.[76] Additionally, television began covering the new phenomenon of 'national iftar' (that later evolved into the 'Ramadan Festival'), aimed at bridging the gap between Muslims and Dutch and at fostering dialogue. Various programmes and newscasts reported on these occasions, where politicians, representatives of religious organisations and others gathered for iftar, and celebrated the attempts of Muslims to involve the Dutch in their rituals and demonstrate national belonging (see figure 13).[77] Here, television framed Muslims as deserving, for the very reason they reciprocated 'our' hospitality with adaptation and successful integration.[77]

Persistent debates about the place of Eid al-Adha and halal slaughter in Dutch society

Although the coverage of Eid al-Adha and halal slaughter slightly intensified compared to the nineties, it remained limited compared to the coverage of Eid al-Fitr and Ramadan. Halal slaughter

Figure 13. Stills from Journaal (NOS, October 4, 2005). National iftar during Ramadan festival

continued to be a polemical issue, especially after the murder of Theo van Gogh, when rumours spread that he was 'ritually slaughtered'. While television began regularly informing its audience about the beginning and end of Ramadan, this was less common for Eid al-Adha. Most programmes addressing Eid al-Adha were set in abattoirs and invoked the issue of animal welfare. While these programmes did not necessarily judge Eid al-Adha as harmful for animals, they often activated the stereotype of Muslims as animal abusers by reiterating the associations and by featuring bloody images of animal slaughter. For example, the newscast *Journaal* (2006) showed a report about an abattoir during Eid al-Adha, featuring bloody images of sheep slaughter.[78] Similarly, the youth programme *Moveyourass* (2006) dedicated an episode to the question whether Eid al-Adha was animal friendly.[79] The programme was set in an abattoir and included images of blood-soaked sheep (see figure 14). Finally, the programme *De Wereld Draait Door* (2008) dedicated its daily ironic item *De Jakhalzen* to Eid al-Adha.[80] The reporter, while walking through an abattoir, asked all sorts of suggestive questions to Muslims, such as whether they were willing to sacrifice their sons, whether they considered decapitating sheep festive, and whether they would make sheep cake or sheep ice cream with the meat. In a final scene, the reporter looked at bloody abattoir waste and walked out pretending to vomit. Here, despite the irony, the item reiterated the stereotype of the Muslim as a barbaric animal abuser.

In some rare instances, television reported on the attempts of Muslims to implicate the Dutch in the Eid al-Adha, in a manner comparable to the coverage of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. For example,

Figure 14. Still from Moveyourass (LLINK, January 18, 2006). The text says: yearly almost 100.000 sheep are sacrificed

the newscast *Journaal* (2006) dedicated an item to an initiative of various imams, who had sent out an appeal to the Muslim community to give away part of the meat to the food pantry. The item prominently featured a Dutch employee of the organisation, who stressed the willingness of Muslims to participate and integrate. Likewise, the talk show *Boter, Kaas en Eieren* (2007) revolved around a similar initiative and showed a report in which various representatives of the participating organisations talked about how Muslims have increasingly become more Dutch (meaning integrated/assimilated).[81] Here, despite these more positive depictions of Eid al-Adha, television persisted in reporting on the rituals of Islam through the binary logic of 'good' and 'bad' Muslims.

Additionally, television prominently featured several disputes regarding the place of halal slaughter and Eid al-Adha in Dutch society. Various programmes covered the debate about whether Eid al-Adha should be recognised as a national holiday.[82] For instance, the talk show *Barend & Witteman* (2000) hosted a discussion on whether granting official status to the festival would help advance the integration of Muslims.[83] The presenter suggested Dutch hesitation stemmed from the festival's association with ritual sheep slaughtering. Here, national belonging and deservingness of Muslims was explicitly linked to concerns about animal suffering. Furthermore, television covered controversies surrounding the sale of halal meat in Dutch shops. For example, the consumer programme *De Keuringsdienst van Waarde* (2004) dedicated an episode to the Islamic slaughter method and halal meat. It featured a slaughter expert who argued that the Islamic ban on sedation might lead to animal suffering, accompanied by graphic footage of a cow being slaughtered in an abattoir.[84] Likewise, the consumer programme *Radar* (2006) and the talk show Pauw *& Witteman* (2006) addressed the decision of Dutch supermarket Albert Heijn to start selling halal meat.[85] Both shows featured extensive scenes of animal slaughter and interviews with opponents, discussing the practice as barbaric and as occurring in bathtubs and on balconies. Again, the programmes suggested halal slaughter is a ritual that commits Muslims to values incompatible with Dutch norms.

Conclusion

By tracing television coverage of two annual Islamic celebrations and related rituals of Ramadan and halal slaughter over fifty years, this article has revealed the evolving televisual narratives on integration and national belonging of Muslims and the gradual emergence of television's 'good Muslim/bad Muslim' approach. During the first two decades of Islamic immigration, both coverage

of Ramadan and/or Eid al-Fitr and coverage of halal slaughter and/or Eid al-Adha revealed curiosity towards the 'new religion' of Islam, and raised the issue of the lack of facilities for 'guest workers' to practice their faith, thereby constructing Muslims immigrants as exotic, but also as deserving of 'our' hospitality. However, with the discovery that Islamic 'guest workers' were here to stay in the eighties, television coverage of Eid al-Fitr and Ramadan began to follow a different logic than that of Eid al-Adha. While the coverage of Eid al-Fitr and Ramadan increasingly began to revolve around the common denominators between Muslims and Dutch, the coverage of Eid al-Adha and halal slaughter focused more on (alleged) essential differences. As Islam became more and more contested over the next two decades, and as Muslims began to be evaluated in terms of adaptation and integration, television increasingly started to display two competing narratives: one of the well-adapted, successfully integrated and deserving Muslim, whose religious capital was depicted as sacred and in line with the values of the Dutch nation, and another of the maladjusted, undeserving Muslim, whose religious capital was contested and delegitimised as conflicting with the values of Dutch society. These competing narratives were supported by two different visual regimes: the first consisted of images of serene communal prayers, harmonious iftars, and gatherings of Muslims and Dutch, and the latter mainly of bloody images of abattoirs and animal slaughter.

Particularly since the eighties, halal slaughter and Eid al-Adha have been held captive in the realm of harsh stereotyping. Although the negative and gruesome connotations of ritual slaughter – stretching along a continuum from the guest worker who illegally slaughters sheep on balconies and in bathtubs, to the Muslim as barbarian animal abuser, to the extremist Muslim who ritually slaughters infidels – were partly generated outside the realm of television, television's constant repetition of formulaic stories about abattoirs and the frequent parading of bloody images fed into the iterativity of these stereotypes and gave them greater currency. While stories about Ramadan and Eid al-Adha followed a different logic – a logic according to which the exotic was made intelligible and acceptable – the softer stereotype of the tolerable and well-adapted Muslim emerged in this historical process of representation. Clearly, television's compulsive repetition of Eurocentric stories about common denominators between Muslims and Dutch was mainly driven by anxiety and fear. Therefore, the resulting comforting depiction of the domesticated and well-integrated Muslim forms the other side of the coin that figures the frightening and maladjusted Muslim. Finally, this good Muslim/bad Muslim approach operates to set the conditions of Dutch hospitality, and demonstrates

that only Muslims who are similar to 'us' and who have reciprocated 'our' hospitality with adaptation and integration, can inhabit the Dutch nation.

Endnotes

1. Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping and Representation after 9/11* (Harvard University Press, 2011), 40.
   The term *Ummah* refers to the global community of Muslims bound together by ties of religion.
2. Kim Knott, Elizabeth Poole and Teemu Taira, *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred. Representation and Change* (Ashgate, 2013), 88.
3. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Pantheon Books, 1978).
4. Edward Said, *Covering Islam. How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (Vintage Books, 1981).
5. See for instance: Karim H. Karim, "The Historical Resilience of Primary Stereotypes: Core Images of the Muslim Other," in *The Language and Politics of Exclusion. Others in Discourse,* ed. Stephen Harold Riggins (SAGE publications, 1997); Kai Hafez, ed., *Islam and the West in the Mass Media. Fragmented Images in a Globalizing World* (Hampton Press, 2000).
6. See for instance: Elizabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam. Media Representations of British Muslims* (Tauris, 2002).
7. See for instance: Karim H. Karim, *Islamic Peril. Media and Global Violence* (Black Rose Books, 2003); Elizabeth Poole and John Richardson, eds., *Muslims and the News Media* (Tauris, 2006); Simon Cottle, *Mediatized Conflict, Developments in Media and Conflict Studies* (Open University Press, 2006); Brigitte Nacos and Oscar Torres-Reyna, *Fueling Our Fears. Stereotyping, Media Coverage, and Public Opinion of Muslim Americans* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007); Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin, *Television and Terror. Conflicting times and the Crisis of the News* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg. *Islamophobia. Making Muslims the Enemy* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008); Ather Farouqui, ed., *Muslims and Media* Images (Oxford University Press, 2009); Evelyn Alsultany, *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation After 9/11* (NYU Press, 2010); Tareq Ismael and Andrew Rippin, eds., *Islam in the Eyes of the West. Images and Realities in an Age of Terror* (Routledge, 2010); Christopher Allen, *Islamophobia* (Ashgate, 2010); Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin,

Framing Muslims. Stereotyping and Representation after 9/11 (Harvard University Press, 2011); Rosemary Pennington and Hilary E. Kahn, eds. *On Islam: Muslims and the Media* (Indiana University Press, 2018).

8. See for instance: John Richardson, *Misrepresenting Islam. The Racism and Rhetoric of British Broadsheet Newspapers* (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004); Amir Saeed, "Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media," *Sociology Compass* 1.2 (2007); Kai Hafez and Carola Richter, "The Image of Islam in German Public Service Television Programmes," *Journal of Arab and Muslim Research* 2.3 (2009); Julian Petley and Robin Richardson, eds., *Pointing the Finger. Islam and Muslims in the British Media* (Oneworld, 2011); Christopher Flood, Steven Hutchings, Galina Miazhevich and Henry Nickels, *Islam, Security and Television News* (Palgrave, 2012); Stefan Mertens and Hedwig de Smoek, *Representations of Islam in the News: a Cross-Cultural Analysis* (Lexington Books, 2016); Laura Cervi, Santiago Tejedor, and Monica Gracia, "What kind of Islamophobia? Representation of Muslims and Islam in Italian and Spanish media." *Religions* 12.6 (2021).
9. There are only a few publications on the representation of Muslims in the Dutch media: Ron Haleber, ed., *Rushdie Effecten. Afwijzing van Moslim-Identiteit in Nederland?* (SUA, 1989); Wasif Shadid, "Berichtgeving over Moslims en de Islam in de Westerse Media," *Tijdschrift voor Communicatiewetenschap* 33, no. 4 (2005): 330-340; Leen D'Haenens and Susan Brink, "Islam in the Dutch Press, with Special Attention to the Algemeen Dagblad," *Media, Culture, Society* 29, no. 1 (Winter, 2007): 135-161; Wasif Shadid, "Moslims in de Media. De Mythe van de Registrerende Journalistiek," in *Mist in de Polder. Zicht op Ontwikkelingen omtrent de Islam in Nederland*, eds. Sipco Vellenga, Sadik Harchaoui, Halim El Madkouri, Baukje Sijses (AUP, 2009).
10. My PhD project offered a historical perspective on the representation of Muslims on Dutch Television: Andrea Meuzelaar, "Seeing Through the Archival Prism. A History of the Representation of Muslims on Dutch television," PhD Diss., (University of Amsterdam, 2014). The research in this current article was conducted as part of my PhD project. See for similar historical approaches to the representation of Islam on Dutch television: Andrea Meuzelaar, "From Single Male Guest Worker to Muslim: an Archaeology of Iterating Archival Footage on Dutch Television," *NECSUS* 5, no. 2 (2016): 15-48; Andrea Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes: Tracing the History of Representation of Muslim Immigrants along the Archival Grain," *VIEW Journal of European Television History and Culture* 10, no. 20 (2021): 121-142; Andrea Meuzelaar, "Angry Muslim Mobs on Dutch Television: the Reappropriation of the Rushdie Affair," in *Provocative Images in Contemporary Islam*, ed. Leonie Schmidt et. al, (Leiden University Press, 2023).

11. Laura Cervi, Santiago Tejedor, and Monica Gracia, "What kind of Islamophobia? Representation of Muslims and Islam in Italian and Spanish media," *Religions* 12.6 (2021), 5. See also: Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim. America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004).
12. Kim Knott, Elizabeth Poole and Teemu Taira, *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred. Representation and Change* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013): 88.
13. Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (John Hopkins University Press, 1993).
14. Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 1.
15. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford University Press, 2003).
16. Asad, *Formations of the Secular,* 159-160.
17. Asad, *Formations of the Secular,* 160.
18. Gerd Baumann, "Ritual implicates 'Others'. Rereading Durkheim in a plural society," in *Understanding Rituals,* ed. Daniel de Coppet (Routledge, 1992), 92.
19. Felicia Hughes-Freeland and Mary Crain, ed., *Recasting Ritual: Performance, Media, Identity* (Routledge, 1998), 3.
20. Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question. Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *Out There. Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed. Russel Ferguson, Martha Gever and Felix Gonzalez-Torres (MIT Press, 1990), 81.
21. Mireille Rosello, *Declining the Stereotype. Ethnicity and Representation in French Cultures* (University Press of New England, 1998).
22. Rosello, *Declining the Stereotype,* 37.
23. Rosello, *Declining the Stereotype,* 37.
24. Simon Goodman et al., "The evolving (re) categorisations of refugees throughout the "refugee/ migrant crisis," *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 27 no. 2 (2017): 105-114; Maria Kyriakidou, "Hierarchies of deservingness and the limits of hospitality in the 'refugee crisis," *Media, Culture & Society* 43, no. 1 (2021): 133-149; Kaarina Nikunen, "Once a refugee: selfie activism, visualized citizenship and the space of appearance," *Popular Communication* 17, no.2 (2019): 154-170.
25. Nikunen, "Once a refugee," 164.
26. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* 2nd ed. (Edinburgh University Press, 2014).
27. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion,* 46.
28. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion,* 16.

29. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion,* 130 and 137.
30. Knott, Poole and Taira, *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred*, 88.
31. Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism," 2014.
32. Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism", 67-79; Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 4.
33. The Dutch church-state model - pillarisation (*verzuiling*)- shaped Dutch society and its political landscape from the 1920s until the 1960s. During these years, civil society consisted of a Catholic and a Protestant pillar, and a Socialist movement and a Liberal sphere. These ideological blocks determined the political relations and fragmented the Dutch population. The pillars ran through all classes. Each pillar had their own political parties, trade unions, schools, universities, media and other associations. Although Dutch society had de-pillarised since the sixties, the Dutch school system and public broadcasting persisted to be pillarised.
34. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes",4-5.
35. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 5-6.
36. In this period, nine programs addressed Ramadan and/or the Festival of Fast-Breaking, and eight programs halal slaughter and/or the Festival of Sacrifice. See for a complete overview: Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism", 151-152 and 177-178.
37. *Kenmerk* (IKOR, January 16, 1967).
38. IKOR (*Interkerkelijk Overleg inzake Radioaangelegenheden*) was the interchurch broadcast organisation; its mission was to advocate inter-religious dialogue.
39. *Kenmerk* (IKOR, October 1, 1975).
40. In Islam, the prophet Muhammad is the last and most important prophet, but he has no divine qualities- what the term "Muhammadan" might imply. The oneness of God is one of the five pillars of Islam (there is no God but God).
41. *'T Zand* (KRO, June 14, 1979).
42. *Kenmerk* (IKOR, March 11, 1968).
43. *Kenmerk* (IKON, November 7, 1979).
44. *Journaal* (NTS, March 2, 1969 and February 13, 1971).
45. *Attentie* (NCRV, February 11, 1966).
46. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes",7-8.
47. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 9-10.

48. In this period, 31 programs addressed Ramadan and/or the Festival of Sacrifice, and 11 programs halal slaughter and/or the Festival of Sacrifice. See for a complete overview: Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism", 158 and 183.
49. *Brandpunt* (KRO, July 4, 1983).
50. *Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde* (KRO, November 27, 1984).
51. *De Islam* (STV, December 19, 1987).
52. *Aktua* (TROS, November 10, 1980).
53. *Journaal* (NOS, Augst 15, 1986).
54. *Journaal* (NOS, August 5, 1987).
55. The word "*allochtoon*" had been coined in 1971 by the sociologist Hilda Verweij-Jonker and refers to immigrants and their descendants (as opposed to *autochtoon*: ethnic Dutch). Although the term was proposed as a neutral term, it has been criticised for being stigmatizing. Since 2016, the Dutch government has stopped using the term.
56. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 11-12.
57. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 12.
58. In this period, 72 programs addressed Ramadan and/or the Festival of Sacrifice, and 21 programs halal slaughter and/or the Festival of Sacrifice. See for a complete overview: Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism", 163 and 187.
59. *NOS Laat* (NOS, March 5, 1992).
60. *Kruispunt* (KRO, March 8, 1992).
61. *Binnenland* (NOS, March 11, 1994).
62. *Barend & Witteman* (January 16, 1997).
63. *Kruispunt* (KRO, March 3, 1996).
64. *Vreemd Land* (NPS, April 14, 1997).
65. *Binnenland* (NPS, February 19, 1995).
66. *Midas* (VARA, November 11, 1993).
67. *Binnenland* (NPS, May 7, 1995).
68. Meuzelaar, "The Emergence and Persistence of Racialised Stereotypes", 15-16.
69. In this period, 268 programs addressed Ramadan and/or the Festival of Sacrifice, and 44 programs halal slaughter and/or the Festival of Sacrifice. See for a complete overview: Meuzelaar, "Seeing through the Archival Prism", 168-169 and 190-191.

70. *Journaal* (NOS, December 5, 2002).
71. *Twee Vandaag* (AVRO, December 5, 2002).
72. *Man Bijt Hond* (NCRV, December 5, 2002).
73. *Journaal* (NOS, December 16, 2001).
74. *Opium* (AVRO, December 1, 2001).
75. *Twee Vandaag* (EO, November 18, 2002).
76. *Journaal* (NOS, November 14, 2004).
77. For example: *Soeterbeeck* (RKK/KRO, October 2, 2007), *Journaal* (NOS, October 4, 2005 and September 29, 2006 and October 14, 2006).
78. *Journaal* (NOS, January 10, 2006).
79. *Moveyourass* (LLink, January 18, 2006).
80. *De Wereld Draait Door* (VARA, December 8, 2008).
81. *Boter, Kaas en Eieren* (RVU, January 20, 2007).
82. For example: *Middageditie* (NPS, March 16, 2000), *Het Lagerhuis* (VARA, March 13, 2000), *Barend & Witteman* (VARA, March 15,2000).
83. *Barend & Witteman* (VARA, March 15, 2000).
84. *Keuringsdienst van Waarde* (RVU, November 16, 2004).
85. *Radar* (TROS, 23-10-2006); *Pauw & Witteman* (VARA, October 25, 2006).

Biography

Dr. Andrea Meuzelaar is a lecturer in media studies at the University of Amsterdam. She holds a MA in Film and Television Studies from the University of Amsterdam, and a PhD from the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis. Her PhD research, entitled *Seeing through the Archival Prism. A History of the Representation of Muslims on Dutch Television*, explores the history of Dutch television coverage of Islamic immigration in the Netherlands. Her research interests lie in media representation of (forced) migration, television history, audiovisual archives, and documentary film. Currently, she is working on a project on the history of representation of forced migration on Dutch television.

TMG Journal for Media History

Volume 28 No (2)/2025

DOI

http://dx.doi.org/10.18146/tmg.924

PUBLISHER

Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision