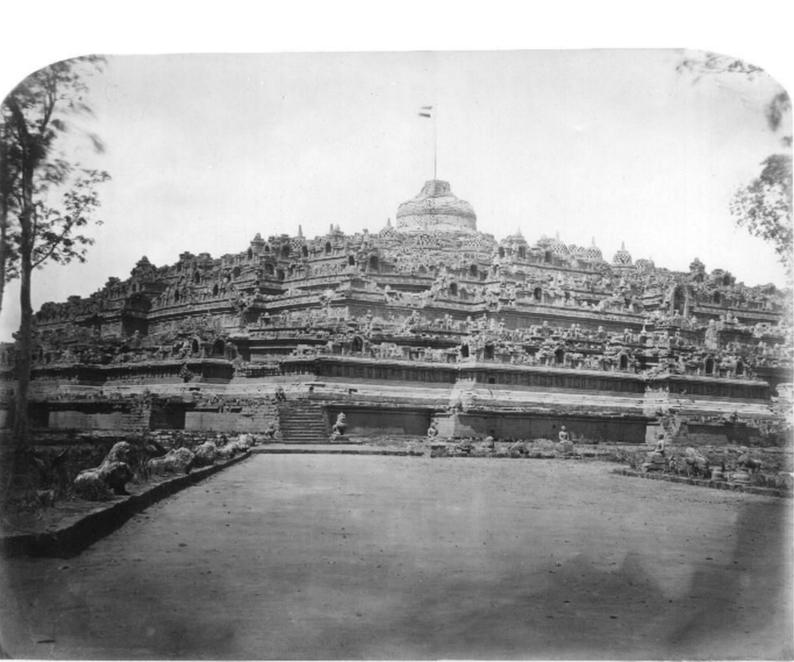# Religion in the Dutch-Indonesian Relationship

A Discourse Analysis to Uncover Assumptions on Religion in the Dutch Human Rights Reports of 2013-2020

Renske Veltman

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[1] Picture on front page by Isidore van Kinsbergen of the Borobudur, a Buddhist Temple, in Indonesia (1873). The Dutch flag can be seen waving from the central stupa. In my opinion, this picture combines a lot of the elements in this thesis. It is a Buddhist Temple, which is still a religion that features in Indonesia even though it is now a minority-majority religion. It is the largest Buddhist temple in the world and still remains popular for pilgrimage. At the same time, it is the most visited Indonesian tourist site. At the same time, the Borobudur featured, and still does, in colonial power structures. Some of the gravestones and Buddha heads, which are now in Dutch museum, belong on the ancient graves in Sumatra, yet have become part of national and international heritage politics. They could have continued to play a part in local religious practices, memory creation and changing signification of that place.
Jona Mooren, Klaas Stutje, and Frank van Vree. *Clues: Research into Provenance History and Significance of Cultural Objects and Collections Acquired in Colonial Situations* (Amsterdam: NIOD, 2022), 67.

[2] Picture on this page made by myself in the summer of 2017 visiting the Borobudur. Pictured are stupas on one of the three upper, circular, platforms.

Religion in the Dutch-Indonesian Relationship

A Discourse Analysis to Uncover Assumptions on Religion in the Dutch Human Rights Reports of 2013-2020

Abstract

This research employs the relational dialogism framework and a critical discourse analysis to analyse the Dutch human rights reports of 2013 until 2020. Ultimately, it answers the main research question "what role do assumptions about 'religion' play in Dutch foreign policy with Indonesia?" I argue that, within the human rights reports, religion is treated as a static, distinct, clearly definable thing. However, a more nuanced, multifaceted view of the ways in which religion has and continues to affect values, narratives, assumptions and practices within Western and global politics, would be more helpful. My advice thus would be to first research and assess embedded cultural assumptions and the interplay of religion and politics, to then make better policy decisions. Beside this, the Dutch approach to Indonesia is often one of paternalism. These were already present in the colonial relationship, in the independence war and also in the postcolonial decades. At the same time, it is one of hypocrisy, as the Netherlands committed inexcusable crimes in Indonesia over the centuries. Yet, more presently, the religious intolerance within Indonesia can also be seen, to a lesser degree maybe, in the Netherlands.

Master's Thesis

Religion, Conflict and Globalisation

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Ethics statement

This research mainly focuses on the analysis of documents. It is important to note that the analysis affects people and institutions, even though it does not directly analyse them. By examining the documents, conclusions and inferences are still indirectly made about the institutions and the people that work there. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the affect this research can have and, as such, to be mindful of ethical and moral principles in every step of the research, one of which is to avoid generalisations and discrimination. It is also important to be certain that the analysis is done critically, to avoid misinterpretations and misjudgements. Therefore, as the researcher, I should critically reflect and interrogate my own interpretations and analysis in an effort to present as balanced an analysis as possible. To avoid generalisations and discrimination, I will critically reflect on my findings and my conclusions will be made with caution and circumspection. Additionally, the selection of the conceptual framework, the methodological framework and the case study are decided upon with the utmost care, to ensure caution with applying existing key concepts and key theories to the thesis, and to ensure the coordination of documents within the topic.

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Introduction

In the Netherlands there are three (in name) christian parties that propagate Protestant-Christian values in parliament, while there are non for other religious beliefs. These are also parties, especially the Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA[1])(English: *Christian Democratic Appeal*), that have influenced Dutch politics and laws that have been adopted in the past decades. CDA and ChristenUnie (CU)(English: *Christian Union*) have been part of government for the past many years as well, and Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP)(English: *Reformed Political* Party) has ensured a majority for the adoption of certain laws as well. This dynamic, and the considerable influence of these three Christian parties, sparked my interest to examine the role of religion within the Netherlands. On the one hand, the Dutch government is marked by a separation between religious organisations and the state.[3] The Netherlands is a state in which religion does not feature as prominently or overtly as other countries, think of Iran or the United States. However, religion is always a feature within society, and within policy-making, as well as that it is part of bilateral relations. Either because the policy-maker has a certain view or stance on religion, which he then unconsciously make take into the process, or because of the country's background influencing present-day norms and values. Dutch law, culture and politics were also shaped by the history of christianity in Europe. There are three main aspects and developments that make Dutch foreign policy interesting to analyse and to unpack its assumptions about religion. First, the right to Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) is an important topic within the human rights agenda of the Dutch Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (BZ)(English: *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*).[4] Second, in 2017 an internal memorandum within BZ advised that communication, cooperation and (diplomatic) contact with other countries would be more effective with a thorough knowledge of religious history, context and customs of those countries.[5] Lastly, in 2019 the position of the Special Envoy for Religion and Belief was established.[6] The Netherlands claims to be a secular country and is considered by many as one of the most secularised countries in the world, yet this thesis will show the increasing salience of religion in Dutch politics and foreign policy in recent years, exemplified

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[3] While the phrase 'religious organisations' is not particularly satisfying, "there are also snags attached to the possible alternatives." J. Rivers. *Law of the Organised Religions. Between Establishment and Secularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
Sophie van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat: een klassieke norm in een moderne tijd," in: *Geloven in het Publieke Domein*, eds.: W.B.H.J. van den Donk, et. al. (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2006): 250.

[4] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017. Actualisering Buitenlands Mensenrechtenbeleid en Resultaten* (2017).

[5] Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, "Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaat van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (V) voor het jaar 2019," *Kamerstuk 35 000 V, nr. 55* (2018).

[6] Tweet by Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, @MinBZ, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4:26 pm, 18 July 2019.

most clearly in the establishment of the Special Envoy. That is what makes the Dutch case interesting. It is a country that is considered highly secularised, with a history of pillarisation and separation of religions from one another as well as from secular politics, but a focus on religion becomes more explicit and frequent in its domestic politics and foreign policy.[7] This phenomenon is the subject of this study.

I am interested in how religion, and by extension secularism, are understood within Dutch society, but more importantly the role they play in a specific case of Dutch foreign policy; the bilateral relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands. The Dutch had an enormous amount of influence over the Indonesian territory for three centuries. At present, this results in an ambiguous postcolonial relationship with scars from the colonial legacy, but also shared social capital. Indonesia is also part of supported countries in the Dutch Development Cooperation (DC), which, however, will be phased out and terminated by 2020.[8]

Main research question

This thesis builds on 'relational dialogism', an approach developed by Erin Wilson, to unravel the meaning of mainly 'religion' and, to a lesser degree, its supposed binary opposite the 'secular' within a specific, embedded context.[9] This context is Dutch foreign policy and, more specifically Dutch foreign policy towards Indonesia. It concerns the notions, preconceptions, and understandings of 'religion' in the Dutch Human Rights Reports written by BZ between 2013 and 2020. How is 'religion' understood in the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia? Wat are the 'religious' and 'secular' influences and how do they manifest in the Dutch-Indonesian relationship, following from the Human Rights Reports? As a result, the research question of this thesis is as follows; "what role do assumptions about 'religion' play in Dutch foreign policy with Indonesia?"

This thesis is then divided into four chapters, each with its own sub-question. The first chapter deals with how religion is understood in international affairs. It outlines the conceptual framework, discussing the foundational assumptions and defining the main concepts of this thesis; 'religion' and 'foreign policy'. As this thesis focuses on religion and foreign policy, the research is embedded in International Relations (IR) and Religious Studies so as to adequately address both aspects of the research. The second chapter answers the sub-question; "how is religion understood

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[7] Arend Lijphart. *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*, 2nd ed., revised ed. (Berkeley California: University of California Press, 1968).
Arend Lijphart. *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek* (Haarlem: Becht, 1990), 27.
Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 229-233.

[8] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Kamerbrief Focusregio's en andere Nota-onderwerpen (November 13, 2018).*

[9] Erin Wilson. *After Secularism. Rethinking Religion in Global Politics* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

within the context of Dutch and Indonesian history and national identity, respectively, and Dutch foreign policy with Indonesia". It is structured into four sections, with an account of the Dutch-Indonesian colonial relationship as well as their contemporary relationship, followed by an analysis of religion in Dutch and Indonesian society respectively. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology used for this study, a critical discourse analysis of the Human Rights Reports between 2013 and 2020. It explains and justifies the choice of the case study, the time frame and the sample set used for the discourse analysis. Finally, the fourth chapter is the actual analysis of the reports and presents the findings. Which are then analysed to connect the three preceding chapters.

I argue that, within the human rights reports, religion is treated as a static, distinct, clearly definable thing. However, a more nuanced, multifaceted view of the ways in which religion has and continues to affect values, narratives, assumptions and practices within Western and global politics, would be more helpful. My advice thus would be to first research and assess embedded cultural assumptions and the interplay of religion and politics, to then make better policy decisions. Beside this, the Dutch approach to Indonesia is often one of paternalism. These were already present in the colonial relationship, in the independence war and also in the postcolonial decades. At the same time, it is one of hypocrisy, as the Netherlands committed inexcusable crimes in Indonesia over the centuries. Yet, more presently, the religious intolerance within Indonesia can also be seen, to a lesser degree maybe, in the Netherlands.

Religion in international affairs

This chapter focuses on the main existing approaches to researching religion and foreign policy. It posits that most approaches are based on superficial understandings of religion, but through using an approach that is grounded in constructivism and intersectionality, I endeavour to develop a more nuanced holistic approach.

Within mainstream International Relations (IR) theory, religion has for the most part been treated as static, unchanging and monolithic. All religions are seen as essentially the same and operating in a similar ways. These views originate from the Westphalian presumption and the secularisation thesis.[10] Scott Thomas explains that this Westphalian presumption, or 'political myth', argues that religion as part of international public life brings intolerance, war, devastation, political upheaval and even the collapse of the international order. Therefore, religion should be separated from politics.[11] This means that, historically, the main drivers of state policy were often considered to be ideological, with state actors measuring success against military and economic capabilities in the service of one prevailing political vision or another. Religion was discounted as a primary factor in states' strategic thinking.[12] Significant thinkers of the nineteenth century, such as Karl Marx, Auguste Comte, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Friedrich Nietzsche and Siegmund Freud, believed that religion would gradually fade in importance and cease to be significant with the advent of industrial society - in line with the secularisation thesis.[13] This thesis posits a process of secularisation which leads to the loss of social significance of religious thinking, practice and institutions.[14] However, foreign policy analysts increasingly come to understand that state motivations interact with religio-cultural elements.[15] As such, the secularisation thesis has come under increased criticism. Peter L. Berger, who was an advocate of the secularisation thesis in the 1960s, recanted earlier claims in 1999, stating that

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[10] Scott Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously: the Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Society," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29, no. 3 (2000): 819.

[11] Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously," 819.

[12] John A. Rees, "The Four Religions of Foreign Policy," in: *Nations Under God. The Geopolitics of Faith in the Twenty-First Century*, eds.: Luke M. Herrington, Alasdair McKay & Jeffrey Haynes (Bristol: E-International Relations, 2015), 45.

[13] Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. *Sacred and Secular. Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 2n edition), 3.

[14] Bryan R. Wilson. *Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Comment* (London: C.A. Watts, 1966), xiv.

[15] John A. Rees, "The Four Religions of Foreign Policy," 45.

> *the world today, with some exceptions … is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places even more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labeled 'secularization theory' is essentially mistaken.*[16]

Ultimately, the events of September 11, 2001 showed IR scholars and experts how little they understood about religion in world politics. It was the inability of any theory of IR to predict the possibility of an event like the attacks of 9/11, coupled with absolute surprise and shock in response to the attacks, signalling a gap in the way IR scholars approached global politics in general and the question of religion in particular.[17] Or, as stated by Daniel Philpott, 9/11 emphasised that religion could still be a powerful force in global politics, yet one whose influence is only partly understood by scholars and practitioners.[18] This neglect has been transformed into a research agenda with research on religion and its connections to, among others, international relations theory, military, peacebuilding, and international organisations.[19] This study of religion and politics has also spilled into the field of foreign policy,[20] which is the topic of interest of this thesis.

Social constructs

Alexander Wendt argues for a constructivist approach to IR theory with the core idea that many key aspects of international relations are socially constructed, through ongoing processes of social practice and interaction, rather than them being inherent.[21] Michael Barnett states that we should take this constructivist approach to studying religion, as constructivism argues that ideas, norms, identity and culture have a causal significance in world affairs. However, Barnett concedes that constructivism subsumes religion under concepts such as identity, norms and values that are, in

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[16] Peter L. Berger. *The Descularization of the World* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999), 2. Compare this to arguments posed in Peter L. Berger. *The Sacred Canopy* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967).

[17] Erin Wilson. *After Secularism*, 1.

[18] Daniel Philpott, "The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations*," World Politics* 55, no. 1 (2002), 66-95.

[19] For example: Nukhet A. Sandal and Jonathan Fox. *Religion in International Relations Theory: Interactions and Possibilities* (London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2013); Ron E. Hassner, ed. *Religion in the Military Worldwide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Jeffrey Haynes. *Faith-Based Organisations at the United Nations* (London: Routledge, 2014); Daniel Philpott. *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Reconciliation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Philip E. Meuhlenbeck, ed. *Religion and the Cold War. A Global Perspective* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012); Luca Mavelli and Fabio Petito, "The Postsecular in International Relations: An Overview," *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 5 (2012): 931-942.

[20] Nukhet A. Sandal, "Religion and Foreign Policy," in: *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics* (2nd ed.), ed.: Jeffrey Haynes (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016): 284.

[21] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391-425.

turn, treated as secular phenomenon.[22] Yet, secular and religious elements are not so easily distinguished from each other. *"Religious values might be part of our international ethics and international order, having become institutionalised in the world's governing institutions, and our liberal international order might itself have a religious dimension".*[23] Socio-historical developments within a state may have influenced existing legal and political frameworks, as well as cultural and religious underpinnings of 'secular' states. Religious affiliations and religiosity, or faith, might affect how policymakers in democracies formulate their external policies. Additionally, it affects how they deal with religion abroad. They may either have a secularist bias, or they may incorporate ideas on religion.[24]

More theoretically, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd shows in her book *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* that due to the historical development and the impact of the Westphalian presumption and the secularisation thesis, almost all mainstream IR theories are underpinned by implicit secularist assumptions regarding the nature of religion, as well as its relationship with politics and society, particularly in relation to the West.[25] Religion should be recognised as being fluid and changing, as well as heterogenous, instead of static, unchanging and monolithic. Therefore, interdisciplinarity is important, where insights from sociology and anthropology of religion are incorporated to develop more nuanced approaches to understanding the role of religion in politics.

As Erin Wilson notes, 'religion' is not a distinct, clearly definable and identifiable category, and neither is the 'secular'. Therefore, to study 'religion', one must contest the idea of 'religion' and unpack its associated assumptions, as well as that of the 'secular'.[26] Barnett argues alike by stating that social concepts, such as religion, do not have an essence. By contrast, they are social constructs whose meaning is historically and culturally situated in relationship to other discursive kinds.[27] Talal Asad states that no universal definition of 'religion' is possible, since all such definitions

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[22] Michael Barnett, "Another Great Awakening? International Relations Theory and Religion," in: *Religion and International Relations Theory,* ed.: Jack Snyder (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 95.

[23] Barnett, "Another Great Awakening?," 105.

[24] European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), "Religion and Foreign Affairs," *ECPR General Conference Université de Montréal* (website), August 2015, https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/SectionDetails/468.

[25] Elizabeth Shakman Hurd. *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[26] Erin K. Wilson, "Being 'Critical' Of/About/On 'Religion' in International Relations," in: *Routledge Handbook of Critical International Relations*, ed.: Jenny Edkins (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2019), 143-144.

[27] Barnett, "Another Great Awakening?," 106.

are themselves the historical product of culturally specific processes.[28] Furthermore, Asad maintains that *"religion and secularism do not exist, but assumptions about what religion and secularism are do exist and shape and influence policy and practice".*[29] This shows that it is crucial that assumptions about 'religion' and 'secularism' are studied in specific contexts to understand their real-world consequences. This critical approach means studying what 'religion is, who gets to define what 'religion' is, how they define it and why they define it as they do.[30]

Defining 'religion' and 'foreign policy'

As there is no single definition of 'religion', it must be made clear what the understanding of 'religion' is within this thesis. Nukhet Sandal asserts that religion should be seen from an inclusive perspective, where religion may "*have different policy manifestations in different settings".*[31] Insights of reflectivity theories of IR, such as constructivism, historical sociology and feminism, show that religion has always been present in politics and within the public realm. As such, understanding religion's relationship with politics means moving beyond a dualistic vision of society in public and private realms, as is done by the secularisation thesis, to *"viewing all aspects of society as constantly interacting, influencing and shaping one another".*[32] As Sandal states, religious phenomena in the study of foreign policy, may be observed as *"an independent (as a cause), intervening (as a link between the cause and the resulting observation), and dependent variable (as the "product" of non-religious causes)".* Furthermore, religion does not have to be the single cause of an event, there may be multiple independent variables.[33] This thesis follows that broad, inclusive perspective of religion to be able to observe all religious phenomena in Dutch foreign policy towards Indonesia. This enables the analysis and the ways in which religion influences politics, and vice versa, both through implicitly and explicitly embedded cultural assumptions. This inclusive conception of religion is also at the basis of the conceptual framework that will be used in this thesis, namely relational dialogism.

Concerning the definition of 'foreign policy', this thesis uses the traditional understanding of a government's strategy in dealing with other nations, or its policy concerning relations with other

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[28] Bruce Lincoln, "Review of Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam by Talal Asad," *History of Religions* 35, no. 1 (1995): 83-86.

[29] Quote by Talal Asad in: Wilson, "Being 'Critical' OfAbout/On 'Religion' in International Relations," 147.

[30] Wilson, "Being 'Critical' OfAbout/On 'Religion' in International Relations," 147-148.

[31] Sandal, "Religion and Foreign Policy," 284.

[32] Wilson. *After Secularism.* 6.

[33] Sandal, "Religion and Foreign Policy," 284.

states.[34] In the context of this thesis, the focus is on the specific bilateral relations between The Netherlands and Indonesia, observed from the Dutch perspective. While this traditional understanding emphasises nation-states, it must be acknowledged that foreign policies are also influenced by transnational actors, local interest groups, and the beliefs of individual policy-makers. They are not made in a vacuum. Moreover, foreign policy is not just focused on other states, but also includes strategies towards international organisations and transnational networks.[35] To include all of these influences would make this thesis, unfortunately, too broad.

Relational dialogism

Erin Wilson developed a framework to understand the role and place of religion in politics and society as constantly shifting and changing. She refers to this framework as relational dialogism, which is one way of circumventing the mainstream secularist bias. Relational dialogism is the conceptual framework that guides and underlies the assumptions upon which this research is built. It serves as the justification and legitimation of this thesis, as well as that it structures the research. Wilson argues that the dominant understanding of religion within IR has been restricted by a dualistic thinking at the heart of the secular worldview. Therefore, through these dominant conceptions of secularism an understanding of religion has emerged based on three dichotomies; namely institutional/ideational, individual/communal and irrational/rational. Due to the influence of secular dualism, one element of each dichotomy is subordinated to the other. As such, religion defined as institutional, individual and irrational dominates much of IR scholarship and particularly in its focus on the West. The dualism inherent in IR secularism contributes to a limited understanding of religion's relationship with politics and the definition of religion itself.[36] Relational dialogism recognises the interrelationships between different elements within religion (institutional, ideational, individual, communal, rational, irrational, and experiential), as well as the interrelationships amongst religion and various dimensions of society (such as politics, justice, human rights, equality, and freedom).[37]

Using the framework of relational dialogism ensures an understanding of the relationship between religion and politics, through which religion is recognised as a significant historical and contemporary influence on political processes. Additionally, the framework does not subordinate one element of either of the three dichotomies of religion, institutional/ideational, individual/ communal and irrational/rational. This means that the relational dialogism model ensures "a more nuanced, multifaceted view of the ways in which religion has and continues to affect values,

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[34] Cambridge Dictionary, s.v. "Foreign Policy," https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/foreign-policy.

[35] Sandal, "Religion and Foreign Policy," 284-285.

[36] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 4.

[37] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 6.

narratives, assumption and practices within Western and global politics".[38] Moreover, the framework allows for the blurring of the lines between the very categories of 'religious' and 'secular'. This means that it becomes more complicated to analyse, yet it allows more for the many complexities between the interactions of religion and politics.[39]

Relational dialogism is a framework that combines insights of Julia Kristeva's Bakhtinian notion of dialogism and Raia Prokhovnik's model of relational thinking. The Bakhtinian notion of dialogism highlights the interaction of ideas, and as such emphasis fluidity and change. Dialogism strives towards harmony, while *"implying an idea of rupture (of opposition and analogy) as a modality of transformation"*.[40] Ideas are, thus, constantly in flux, developing and changing. As such, they can exist in harmony, but also in opposition to one another, even at the same time. Changes occur through the interactions with each other, through texts and across historical events. Concerning our views of religion and politics then, dialogism suggests that they are *"merely thoughts that will shift after interactions with other ideas"*.[41]

To ensure a move beyond noting that the relations are in constant state of rupture, Wilson inserts Raia Prokhovnik's model of relational thinking. Understanding concepts as existing in relationships, means that these concepts can be managed and used in practice, while remembering that the meanings of those concepts may change. The relational thought model understands connections among ideas as an ever-present, constant component of society, with possibilities for change. The relational thought model provides a 'both-and' approach, which promotes connections across the traditionally separated aspects of religion, namely institutional, ideational, individual, communal, irrational and rational. This validates the acknowledgement that elements of 'religion' and 'secularism' exist within the public political real, and, therefore, should be recognised. *"The secular and religious shape and define one another so that what is considered secular is affected by what is considered religious"*.[42]

This framework, which combines Kristeva's insights of the Bakhtinian notion of dialogism and Prokhovnik's model of relational thinking,

> *acknowledges connections among elements in religion that are not fixed, but are fluid, shifting and changing as they interact with each other, with other ideas and other texts, and with people's practical experiences, past, present and future*.[43]

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[38] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 91-92.

[39] ibid.

[40] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue and Novel," in: *The Kristeva Reader*, ed.: Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): 58.

[41] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 93-95.

[42] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 95.

[43] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 96.

This approach enables the study of ways in which religion influences politics, both through explicitly and implicitly embedded cultural assumptions. This thesis analyses the role of religion within Dutch foreign policy relations towards Indonesia. As such, discourses that challenge and disrupt dominant secular assumptions are analysed. Therefore, this framework of relational dialogism is appropriate for analysing religion's role in this particular relationship. The framework acknowledges that ideas, narratives, norms and values that are, at present, prominent within politics and society do not exist in isolation, but have developed through interactions across historical, social, philosophical and even theological contexts.[44] Relational dialogism encourages the examination of the influence of religious ideas on communities, societies, nation-states and civilisations, and not just the actions of individuals. These religious ideas may be implicit, or explicit, embedded assumptions that use religious languages, narratives, phrases and ideas as framing devices, which may justify particular policy actions to be more acceptable and legitimate.[45] This thesis unravels some of these implicit embedded assumptions, the way they are manifested and how the real-world consequences of these assumptions within the Dutch-Indonesian relationship.

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[44] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 99.

[45] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 104.

Religion in Dutch and Indonesian history and national identity

To understand the contemporary role of religion and secularism in the bilateral relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands, it is necessary to first briefly look at the colonial relationship between the two countries and the role of religion in the relationship during that time, as well as the the relationship between the two countries since independence. After that, the role of religion in respectively Dutch and Indonesian society will be briefly analysed. By placing this research within that historical background, the present-time assumptions about religion and secularism can be placed in context and, as such, better evaluated.

The Dutch-Indonesian colonial relationship

Before the Dutch arrived, the Portuguese conquistadors established themselves in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Large numbers of both rural and urban people were converting to Islam in the sixteenth century and they identified themselves as part of an international Islamic community.[46] During this time there was a race between Acehnese Muslims and Portugal, mostly involving trade and politics, but also religion. The Portuguese were not able to spread Christianity, except in Malacca. They fairly soon ceased to be a revolutionary force in the west of the archipelago and failed to control the Asian trade, as they had to spend all their available resources to defend themselves from attacks by the Acehnese, who mainly settled on Sumatra. For the Acehnese Muslims, supported by Islamic international connections, the continued encroachment of the Portuguese led to further consolidation of Islam.[47] In Eastern Indonesia some headway was made by Christian as well as Muslim missionaries with the still largely animist people of the Moluccas. Thus, the Dutch came to the territories with Muslims and Christians almost on a par.[48]

At the end of the sixteenth century, the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC)(English: *United East Indies Company*) arrived at the territories which now form present-day Indonesia and commenced operations from 1603 onwards.[49] The Dutch colonial enterprise was primarily interested in trade and the economic advantages of the Indonesian colony. Overall, profit was the overriding imperative of VOC expansion and not evangelism. However, Christian heritage played a part in the way that the role of religion in the colonial context was constructed. The Dutch Reformed Church

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[46] Anthony Reid. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680. II: Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), 143-145.
M.C. Ricklefs. *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 4.

[47] Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink. *A History of Christianity in Indonesia* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 9-20.

[48] Reid. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, 147

[49] Ricklefs. *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200,* 29

had an eye on the Indonesian colony from the start of the enterprise.[50] Initially, this concern was domestic, "fearing for the souls of the Dutchmen cast adrift in a sea of unbelief".[51] Their intention was to proclaim Gods word and to protect the Dutch nationals from the seductions of the Muslims and Atheists. Yet, later Muslims and Atheists became the intended targets of missionary societies. The 1602 octrooi (patent) of the VOC does not stipulate a policy on religion, but the 1622 octrooi does stipulate spiritual duties together with its commercial ones.[52] It reads that the VOC would also be concerned with the "maintenance of the public faith".[53] This reflects Dutch domestic developments and the outcome of the Dordrecht Synod of 1618-1619. The victory of the orthodox wing of the Reformed Church meant a strengthened duty of the state to "maintain the sacred service of the church, to prevent and eliminate every form of idolatry and false religion".[54] The Reformed faith was to be the leading religion in the Dutch Republic and in all of VOC territory. At the same time, different from the West-Indische Compagnie (WIC)(English: *Dutch West India Company*), which was to proclaim the knowledge of God to the inhabitants of Brazil, the VOC was only given the general obligation to maintain the public faith.[55] As such, this does not explicitly mean missionary activities.

In 1799, the VOC was declared bankrupt and became nationalised. As such, policy in the Indies were determined by the Dutch Crown, and after 1849 by Parliament, instead of a body of merchants. Accordingly, their policy became more and more guided by territorial and, by the turn of the 20th century, to some degree modern 'humanitarian' ambitions, than solely by trade.[56] It was also at this time that the colony of the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia, emerged as a continuous area under Dutch administration. However, Dutch occupation was opposed in prolonged freedom wars. Thus, not all of the territory was effectively controlled by the colonial government.[57] Only

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[50] Michael Laffan. *The Makings of Indonesian Islam. Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 65-70.

[51] Laffan. *The Makings of Indonesian Islam*, 70.

[52] "Octrooi verleend door de Staten-Generaal betreffende de alleenhandel ten oosten van Kaap de Goede Hoop en ten westen van de Straat van Magallanes voor de duur van 21 jaar," *Nationaal Archief*, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02/invnr/1/file/NL-HaNA_1.04.02_1_01.
"Octrooiverlenging verleend door de Staten-Generaal voor een periode van 21 jaar, met in het octrooi aangebrachte veranderingen," *Nationaal Archief*, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02/invnr/2/file/NL-HaNA_1.04.02_2_01.

[53] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 100.

[54] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 99-100.

[55] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 100.

[56] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 137.

[57] ibid.

around the 1910s did all parts of the archipelago come under effective rule of the Netherlands.[58] The Dutch gained more political and economic power and transformed the colony into an exploitation colony. Meaning that Indonesians were exploited by taking away their lands and by means of the cultivation system, or the system of compulsory crops. This was a Dutch government taxation policy, which required that the population had to devote twenty percent of their agricultural production to export crops, most notably coffee. Around 1850, this system accounted for a third of Dutch state income.[59] Almost a century later, on August 17, 1945, Sukarno declared Indonesian independence.[60] The Netherlands did not accept the loss of their colony and fought a bloody war of independence to re-establish their colony. The four-year struggle involved sporadic but bloody armed conflict, internal Indonesian political and communal upheavals and two major diplomatic interventions.[61] In December 1949 they conceded and formally recognised Indonesian sovereignty.[62] The last piece of territory, Western New Guinea, was also ceded to the Indonesian administration in May 1963.

In February 2022, a joint research program of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV)(English: *Royal Institute for Language, Land and Ethnology*), the Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie (NIMH)(English: *Netherlands Institute for Military History*) and the NIOD Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust and Genocidestudie (English: *NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Study*) wrote that the Dutch government and military leadership deliberately tolerated the systematic and widespread use of extreme violence by Dutch military personnel in the war against the Republic of Indonesia. The widespread and deliberate use of extreme violence was tolerated at all levels; political, military and judicial. The Netherlands wanted to defeat the Republic of Indonesia at all costs and was prepared to subordinate almost everything to this goal. In doing so, ethical boundaries that were applicable at the time were emphatically exceeded. The Dutch underestimation and rejection of the widely supported Indonesian independence movement was based on a deeply rooted colonial mentality, and Dutch superiority in

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[58] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 163.

[59] David van Reybrouck. *Revolusi* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2020).

[60] Benedict R. O'G. Anderson. *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 83.
Frances Gouda and Thijs Brocades Zaalberg. *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/ Indonesia: US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920-1949* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 119.

[61] Theodore Friend. *Indonesian Destinies*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 35.

[62] M. C. Ricklefs. *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300* [4th ed.] (London: Macmillan, 1981 [2008]), 344.
Gerlof D. Homan, "The Netherlands, the United States and the Indonesian Question, 1948," *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 1 (1990): 124-125.
Adrian Vickers, "The Revolution," in: *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 87-116.

their pursuit of control of Indonesia were mainly guided by economic and geopolitical motives and the idea of still having a mission in the 'East' and being indispensable there.[63]

Colonialism is a structure, or structures, through which one group of people (typically a nation) subordinates and exploits another, and then justifies this subordination and exploitation by claiming to be the intrinsically superior group. Colonial domination not only shaped ideas about race, but also strongly influenced how people thought about class, culture, gender, and sexuality. This also includes religion.[64] Nineteenth century thinking about non-Europeans built on these ideas; missionary thinking about non-Christian religions was determined by the degeneration theory. After the Fall, humankind still possessed some knowledge of God, yet due to the disobedience to God's commandments, knowledge had diminished and, in turn, the moral level had declined. Not all religions were on the same level, of course, with Christians valued on a higher moral level than Muslims or even adherents of tribal religions. In order to reach "debased" groups and individuals for salvation, missionary preaching was necessary. Since these people still had some knowledge of God, this was possible. Nevertheless, the missionaries' general view of non-Europeans was similar to that of their contemporaries. Europeans were ahead of others, with non-Europeans lagging behind with their inferior culture and religion.[65] In this sense, more 'humanitarian' ambitions were advanced. To "raise good Christians", missionaries tried to "mould the individuals into moral personalities capable of understanding and practising the Gospel".[66] The standard of living was to be raised as well, by promoting education and improving infrastructure, as well as healthcare and sanitary conditions.[67] These policies were encompassed in the Ethical Policy, introduced by the Dutch at the turn of the twentieth century to promote the welfare of indigenous Indonesians. More autonomy was also provided to Indonesians and the result was rapid social change. That also culminated into social dislocation manifested in unrest. As such, the Dutch reconsidered and discontinued the program.[68] However, the ethical policy also had the effect of allowing Islamic groups to establish themselves.[69]

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[63] NIOD. *Over de Grens. Nederlands Extreem geweld in de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog, 1945-1949* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022).

[64] Sankaran Krishna, "How does Colonialism Work?," in: *Global Politics: A New Introduction*, 2nd ed. eds.: Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 352.

[65] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 145-146.

[66] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 146.

[67] ibid.

[68] Ricklefs. *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200,* 163-180.
Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 163.

[69] Nathan John Franklin, "Islam and the Dutch in the East Indies: Oppression or Opportunity?," *The European Legacy* (2020), 2.

In territorial sense, the nineteenth century was "the great century of Christian missions".[70] Protestant Christianity was represented by the Protestant Church and by missionary societies. Between 1800 and 1900, about fifteen missionary societies started working in the Dutch East Indies, most of which remained active until the end of the colonial era and beyond. The largest was the German 'Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft', which founded churches in South Kalimantan (from 1835) and North Sumatra, Batakland (from 1862). The 'Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap' was the oldest and largest Dutch missionary society.[71] By 1900, missions had been established in almost the entire country. However, the number of Christians had hardly increased. Christian propagation was not applied consistently and usually confined to areas where a major religion was absent, to replace Catholicism introduced by the Portuguese, or at the request of a local rulers who sought Dutch help to defeat a rival. Instead, the 'real mission age' has to be located between 1900 and 1940.[72] During these decades, the number of non-European Christians rose considerably. Non-European Catholics increased from 26,000 to half a million and non-European Protestants from 285,000 to 1,7 million, together accounting for slightly over 3% of the total population. For contemporary comparison, in 2003 this had increased to close to 10% in a total population of 220 million.[73] These increases between 1900 and 1940 are due to the fact that Indonesia came under complete effective Dutch rule at the beginning of the twentieth century.[74] The results are two-fold, both contributing to an increase in Christians. Some areas that were more or less isolated from the outside world, were laid open to external cultural and religious influences . Both Muslims and Christian missionaries brought their, by their own perceptions, advanced cultures and civilisations. Missionary societies, thus, also broadened their activities and expanded into those territories they were not yet working in. In other areas, missionaries had already long been active. However, the arrival of the colonial army and the administration made it more desirable and possible for the population to pay attention to the message of missionaries. The Dutch colonial state and missionary societies had a symbiotic relationship. Even though missionary societies were sometimes critical of government policies, they were not opposed to the colonial system itself and always "deeply convinced of the superiority of

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[70] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 161.

[71] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 141.
This book of Aritonang and Steenbrink gives a great overview of Christianity in Indonesia; starting with pre-colonial Indonesia, during the Portuguese colonisation as well as that of the Dutch with a big overview from the 1800s onwards, and going into depth covering several separate regions of Indonesia. It is also considered the most comprehensive on the topic, with many other scholars referencing this book. That is also the reason I use it extensively for this thesis. Chapter 6 describes the abundance of missionary societies and their missions, which I will not delve into for the sake of readability and length.

[72] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, viii.
Nathan John Franklin, "Islam and the Dutch in the East Indies," 2.

[73] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 165.

[74] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 163.

Western, "Christian" civilisations".[75] The missionaries adapted themselves to the colonial order and cooperated with the colonial government. Colonialism, in their view, meant advancement of the colonised; the state had to act as their guardian in secular matters, as the mission was to do in things spiritual. As was also intended with the Ethical Policy, colonialism aimed at realising the maturity of Indonesians. For the time being, the Indonesian Christians accepted the political and religious paternalism of the missionaries. At a later time, with the emergence of the national movement, they developed a more independent frame of mind.[76]

Several points are important to consider. As Krishna asserts, colonialism does not produce exact clones of the coloniser among the colonised. Instead, a new hybrid space is produced that is neither one nor the other. As such, colonialism is a joint social formation.[77] The Indonesians should not be seen as the passive receiving side of a process of religious change, but in part also as "the acting and deciding party that took up the opportunity of the presence of a new religious system of meaning".[78] The Indonesians either rejected or accepted the Christian message for reasons originating in their own context. If they did accept it, they adapted it to their own context. As such, their faith was not a carbon copy of that of the missionaries, but to fit their religious, cultural and even political needs.[79] Besides this, as Nathan John Franklin posits, Islam benefited from the presence of the Dutch through its recognition as a legitimate source of local authority and law. As mentioned before, the initial main Dutch objective was trade and by extension peace and order so as not to disturb that trade. As the Portuguese were in constant conflict with the Islamic rulers, the Dutch offered relative religious freedom and even protection, which produced favourable conditions for the further development of Indonesian Islam. Therefore, local identity was relatively preserved and it allowed Islam to spread as well and develop as part of that identity.[80] In general, respect for religion in treaties gave the Dutch leverage to offer relatively easy concessions. As such, trade-driven objectives and colonisation could progress faster without having to spent resources on religious conflicts and extensive missionary work.[81] The way that the colonial state dealt with Islam can be categorised into three phases; (i) where the Dutch subdued all threats to establish their authority (1602-1919); (ii) where they avoided direct intervention and regulation of Islamic law, practices and education, while recognising its local religious authority (1619-1842); and (iii) where

[75] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 159-160.

[76] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 161-162.

[77] Sankaran Krishna, "How does Colonialism Work?," 357.

[78] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, vii-viii.

[79] Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in* Indonesia, 162.

[80] Nathan John Franklin, "Islam and the Dutch in the East Indies," 1-16.

[81] Nathan John Franklin, "Islam and the Dutch in the East Indies," 11.

they tried to understand Islam using an academic approach to deepen their understanding of the peoples of the indies (mid-nineteenth century onwards).[82]

The Dutch presence might have been, relatively, less missionary compared to that of the Portugese in Indonesia. To an extent there may have been religious freedom and even some protection for Islamic rulers. This does, however, not mean that the Dutch did not have a colonial mentality and were not patriarchal. Those (un)conscious beliefs were very present. It was encompassed in the Ethical Policy, in the expansion of the work of missionary society and their symbiotic relationship with the Dutch colonial state, and the entire colonial enterprise in the Dutch East Indies.

Dutch-Indonesian contemporary relationship

Relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands after independence have been full of ups and downs. Obviously, the two countries have a shared history that influences the relationship. In relations between postcolonial states and their former colonial powers there can be mistrust. At the same time, there is a common cultural heritage, through common historical references, linguistic practices, political models, sometimes in religious and social practices, and so on. Furthermore, at the more individual level, there are exchanges of populations with the presence of significant diaspora groups. However, as Élise Féron and Valérie Rosoux show, whenever postcolonial interstate relations are concerned, there is an ambiguous impact of these shared elements and relations.

> *In most other interstate settings, these would be considered as assets. But within a postcolonial frame, social capital can seemingly act both as an asset in the building of trust at the international level, and also as an actual obstacle to it.*[83]

The shared elements and relations, in other words, the sharing of norms, exchanges of populations, the common linguistic practices and institutional linkages, might enhance cooperation and strength at the international level. At the same time, due to 'unfinished business', colonial left-overs or scars inflicted during violent episodes during the process of decolonisation, mistrust may be generated. Feelings of inferiority and superiority, which are often embedded in paternalistic policies or discourses may also factor into the interstate relations after decolonisation.[84] There is a deep

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[82] ibid.

[83] Élise Féron and Valérie Rosoux, "Introduction: Far Away and Yet So Close. Former Colonial Powers and the Management of Political Crises in their Former Colonies," *European Review of International Studies* 1, no. 3 (2014): 7. (7-15)

[84] Féron and Rosoux, "Introduction," 7.

ambiguity that characterises any post-colonial relationship.[85] The ambiguity is also present in the relation between the Netherlands and Indonesia, with periods of closer connections and periods of a more distant relationship, in terms of a diplomatic and political relationship, as well as that of economics and trade.

Initially, the Indonesian government, led by Sukarno, cut of all diplomatic ties with the Netherlands. Only in 1968 were those ties restored by the New Order government under Suharto. Yet, the separatist intentions of the West Papua Movement as well as those of the Republic Maluku Selatan (RMS) have influenced the ties in the following decades.[86] After the proclaimed Indonesian independence in 1945, early organised indigenous resistance came from the South Moluccas with support and aid from the Dutch government and military. The South Moluccan rebels initially clung to an early post-colonial treaty that prescribed a federal form of statehood, but Sukarno changed the states character to that of a unitary state. As such, they unilaterally declared the fully independent RMS in 1950. Finally, after years of struggle against the Indonesian forces, the government in exile moved to the Netherlands in 1966 from which it has continued its fight. Indonesia regards the RMs as an illegal separatist movement. Even so, the RMS tried to force the Netherlands to pressure Indonesia into allowing for their self-determination by staging a series of violent attacks, including a train hijack, in the Netherlands during the 1970s.[87] When the RMS filed a request to the Dutch court in 2010 to arrest the then-Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for alleged human rights violations, he cancelled his state visit to the Netherlands at the last moment.[88] Two months later, a court in The Hague rejected a motion based on similar charges filed by the RMS to arrest former Indonesian foreign minister Hassan Wirajuda. Then-Indonesian ambassador Junus Effendi Habibi remarked to the *Financiële Dagblad* that no senior government official would visit the

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[85] See also Phillip Darby, "A Disabling Discipline?," in: *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* eds.: C. Reus-Smit and D. Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 94-105; Alison Brysk, Craig Parsons and Wayne Sandholtz, "After Empire: National Identity and Post-Colonial Families of Nations," *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 2. (2002): 267-305; H. R. Nau. *Perspectives on International Relations* (Washington: CQ Press, 2009): 440-443.

[86] Possible good overviews given by Eileen Hanrahan. *West Papuan Decolonisation Contesting Histories* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); John Saltford. *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua, 1962-1969. The Anatomy of Betrayal* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Emma Kluge, "West Papua and the International History of Decolonisation, 1961-69," *The International History Review* 42, no. 6 (2020): 1155-1172; C. L. M. Penders. *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonisation and Indonesia, 1945-1962* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002).

[87] Niek van Lent, "Wat gebeurde er tijdens de Molukse Treinkaping bij de Punt?," *NPO Kennis*, https://npokennis.nl/longread/7672/wat-gebeurde-er-tijdens-de-molukse-treinkaping-bij-de-punt. Peter Bootsma en Hans Dortmans. *De Molukse Acties. Treinkapingen en Gijzelingen 1970-1978* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2000).
Frank Westerman. *Een Woord Een Woord* (Amsterdam/Antwerpen: De Bezige Bij, 2016).

[88] Al Jazeera, "Indonesian Leader delays Dutch Visit," *Al Jazeera*, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2010/10/5/indonesia-leader-delays-dutch-visit.

Netherlands as long as RMS was allowed to bring lawsuits against members of the Indonesian government.[89]

Despite the above-mentioned tensions, there have been other high-level visits. In the early 1970s Indonesian President Suharto visited the Netherlands, which was reciprocated by the Dutch Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard. Queen Beatrix and Prince Clause also paid a royal visit in 1995, as well as King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima in March of 2020.[90] The visit of Queen Beatrix resulted in a deterioration of relations, as the Queen addressed her host about the poor human rights situation in Indonesia, yet ignored the crimes the Dutch had committed in Indonesia over the centuries.[91] The Queen could not make apologies as the Dutch Prime Minister at that time, Wim Kok, deemed the country not ready in 1995. In 2020, however, King Willem-Alexander made surprise apologies for the excessive violence used by the Dutch. He did so in "full realisation that the pain and sorrow of the families affected continue to be felt today".[92] The Dutch government had apologised before, in 2013, for its colonial troops' war crimes committed during the independence war.[93] The Netherlands will also pay compensation to widows of executed men, as well as their children.[94] Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo responded to King Willem-Alexander that while history cannot be erased, it does serve as a "lesson for our commitment to grow a relationship

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[89] Alexander Weissink, "Interview Ambassadeur: 'Ik wil niet dat mijn president hier als een clown wordt neergezet'," *Financieel Dagblad*, September 23, 2010, https://fd.nl/frontpage/Archief/659191/ interview-ambassadeur-ik-wil-niet-dat-mijn-president-hier-als-een-clown-wordt-neergezet- oca2cajchduM.

[90] Het Koninklijk Huis. *Overzicht van Staatsbezoeken afgelegd door Koningin Beatrix*, https:// www.koninklijkhuis.nl/onderwerpen/staatsbezoeken/documenten/publicaties/2017/08/15/overzicht- van-staatsbezoeken-afgelegd-door-koningin-beatrix.
Het Koninklijk Huis. *Staatsbezoek aan Indonesië*, https://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/onderwerpen/ staatsbezoeken/uitgaande-staatsbezoeken/staatsbezoek-indonesie.

[91] Roel Frakking and Anne-Lot Hoek, "Een Nederlands Onderonsje," *De Groene Amsterdammer*, March 4, 2020, https://www.groene.nl/artikel/een-nederlands-onderonsje.
NOS, "Juliana en Beatrix op Staatsbezoek in Indonesië," *NOS*, March 9, 2020, https://nos.nl/video/ 2326473-juliana-en-beatrix-op-staatsbezoek-in-indonesie.

[92] Remco Meijer, "Koning biedt excuses aan voor geweld in Indonesië," *De* Volkskrant, March 10, 2020, https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/koning-biedt-excuses-aan-voor-geweld-in- indonesie~bb7801a9/.
Het Koninklijk Huis. *Verklaring van Koning Willem-Alexander tijdens het Staatsbezoek aan Indonesië*, https://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/onderwerpen/staatsbezoeken/documenten/toespraken/ 2020/03/10/verklaring-van-koning-willem-alexander-tijdens-het-staatsbezoek-aan-indonesie.

[93] NOS, "Schikkingen weduwen Zuid-Sulawesi," *NOS*, August 8, 2013, https://nos.nl/artikel/537984- schikking-weduwen-zuid-sulawesi.

[94] Reuters, "Netherlands offers compensation to children of executed Indonesians," *Reuters*, October 19, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-netherlands-indonesia-compensation- idUSKBN2741XY.

that is equal and with mutual respect and mutually-beneficial".[95] Dutch foreign ministers have over the years repeatedly committed to further intensification and strengthening of cooperation in a wide range of fields, for example concerning human rights and media, reform of the security sector, supporting peace, legal reform, development and anti-corruption.[96]

The Netherlands has provided development assistance to Indonesia between 1966 and 1992 within the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), which was established to help coordinate the flow of foreign aid to Indonesia.[97] However, Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk, became increasingly critical of Indonesian domestic policy in the early 1990s. The Indonesian reaction was to indicate its wish to no longer participate in annual IGGI meetings in The Hague. Indonesia perceived the link that Pronk made between development money and the human rights situation as neocolonial.[98] It also preferred a new donor consultative group, the Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI) to be established and chaired by the World Bank. While the Netherlands was initially not invited to CGI meetings, it later also became a member of the group.[99] In 2020, the Netherlands stopped their developmental relationship with Indonesia.[100] In lieu, the two countries are strengthening their economic relationship. Both countries are already trading partners. The Netherlands is one of Indonesia's most important trade partners in Europe, with the Port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport being main entry points for Indonesian products into the European Union. Similarly, the Netherlands exports many products to Indonesia. Between 1995 and 2019, Dutch exports increased at an annual rate of 0.091% from $919 million in 1995 to $939 million in 2019. During that same time, Indonesian exports to the Netherlands have increased at an annualised rate of 3.64% from $1.33 billion in 1995 to $3.15 billion in 2019.[101]

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[95] Marcho Irfan Gorbiano, "BREAKING: Dutch Monarch offers apology for past 'excessive violence'," *The Jakarta Post*, March 10, 2020, https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/10/breaking-dutch-monarch-offers-apology-for-past-excessive-violence.html.

[96] Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, "Political Affairs," *Ministerie van Buitenlandse* Zaken, December 1, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20101201154138/http://www.minbuza.nl/PostenWeb/I/Indonesië/Netherlands_Embassy_in_Jakarta/the_Embassy/Departments/Political_Affairs#internelink3.

[97] Dutch development policy in Indonesia, including the work of the IGGI, is discussed in detail in J.A. Nekkers and P.A.M. Malcontent, eds. *Fifty Years of Dutch Development Cooperation 1949-1999* (The Hague: Sdu publishers, 2000).

[98] Frakking and Hoek, "Een Nederlands Onderonsje," https://www.groene.nl/artikel/een-nederlands-onderonsje.

[99] Nekkers and Malcontent. *Fifty Years of Dutch Development Cooperation*, 51.

[100] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Landen en Regio's,* https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/partnerlanden-en-focuslanden.

[101] A.J.G. Simoes and C.A. Hidalgo, "The Economic Complexity Observatory: An Analytical Tool for Understanding the Dynamics of Economic Development," *Workshops at the Twenty-Fifth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence* (2011).

Religion in Dutch society

Within the Netherlands, the freedom of religion has been secured since 1579 when the Union of Utrecht stipulated that nobody could be prosecuted because of their faith and Catholicism was to be left untouched.[102] While this also marks the start of a process of, sometimes more and sometimes less, disestablishment, the Reformed Church had a privileged and dominant position, which was further reinforced in 1619 following the National Synod of Dordrecht.[103] Presently, the principle of separation between religious organisations and state is an important and generally accepted principle in the Netherlands and belongs to the fundamental principles of constitutional planning, even if it is not explicitly enshrined in the constitution or any other law.[104] This principle is expressed in the interplay with constitutional rights, of which article 6 (freedom of religion and belief), article 1 (equal treatment and non-discrimination), and article 23 (public and special education) of the Dutch Constitution are of interest. Moreover, it should be assessed in light of other principles, such as the freedom of religion and the freedom of neutrality of the government.[105] The separation between religious organisations and the state entails that there can and may not be an institutional control of one over the other or direct influence in the affairs of the other. As a result, religious organisations are free to develop without state interference, and the state is free of religious influence and observes neutrality. This neutrality means that the state should be neutral towards "worshippers of various gods in all denominations", but also towards believers, atheists and agnostics alike.[106] Religious organisations and the state are at the same time, as Sophie van Bijsterveld shows, separated, yet they do not operate in separated worlds. As such, there may be indirect influence

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[102] *Union of Utrecht.* (1579), https://www.law.kuleuven.be/personal/mstorme/unievanutrecht.html.

[103] Much has been written about Dutch Church history, the separation between religious organisation and state, and (financial) ties between the two. For further reading I would recommend: Herman J. Selderhuis, ed. *Handbook of Dutch Church History* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co., 2015); O.J. de Jong, "Uitkeringen aan kerken," in: J. de Bruijn e.a. (red.), *Geen heersende kerk, geen heersende staat. De verhouding tussen kerk en staat 1796-1996* (Zoetermeer: Meinema 1998); J. de Bruijn, "Kerk en Staat - Historisch. De Verhouding tussen Kerk en Staat in Nederland (1579-2003)," in: Drs. L.C. van Drimmelen and Prof. Mr. T.J. van der Ploeg (red.), *Kerk en Recht* (Utrecht: Uitgeverij LEMMA BV, 2004); A.H.M. Dölle, "De verhouding tussen kerk en staat in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden," *Tijdschrift voor bestuurswetenschappen en publiekrecht* 57, no. 10 (2002): 684-693.

[104] Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 250.

[105] Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 251.

[106] Fleur de Beaufort. *Separation of Church and State in Europe: With Views on Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Greece* (Brussels: European Liberal Forum, 2008), 62.
There is a vast amount of literature on the separation of religious organisations and state. For instance: Robin Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation and Belief in Britain and Beyond," in: *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed.: Richard K. Fenn (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001); Steve Bruce. *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

through norms and values of citizens. Moreover, there may be consultation and participation between the government and religious organisations in the preparation or implementation of government policy.[107] Ira Lapidus shows that there are numerous examples of the interaction of church and state in many nations, including the West. He argues that the view of a profound separation of state and religious institutions

> *ignores the variety and complexity of the European cases. This view ignores the numerous examples of state control of religion, the phenomenon of established churches (such as the Anglican Church in England), and the concordats in Italy. It ignores the integral connection between religious and political nationalism in such countries as Ireland or Poland. It ignores the close identity between religious affiliation and nationality in Holland and Spain.*[108]

While Lapidus wrote this in 1996, I think that this still holds as will be shown in the next few sections.

Van Bijsterveld illustrates two presuppositions concerning religion within the Netherlands. First, she shows that religion has come to be understood as a private matter. As such, due to secularisation and individualisation, as I discussed in the previous chapter, citizens have become unused to seeing religion as a social factor. However, van Bijsterveld argues that this is a constitutional and political-philosophical construction.[109] As discussed previously, religion has consequences for the way we see humanity and society, for our view on the world. Therefore, religion does have socio-cultural dimension as well. Wilson suggests that religion forms an important part of the cultural and political backdrop against which these norms and values play out in Western politics and society. She argues that our dichotomised view of religion and politics as separated has obscured the strong connections between liberal principles and beliefs within the Judeo-Christian tradition. Thus, specific, overt, religious beliefs, doctrines and institutions were excluded from the public sphere, while other elements had an influence on the development of arguments concerning universal secular morality. These assumptions and narratives, such as universality, relationships between humanity and nature, and the character and purpose of history, do underpin political norms and values that constitute the West.[110] The second presupposition that van Bijsterveld illustrates is that of concerning fundamental rights, which was, for the past decades, implicitly understood as continuously expanding. Some of the previous discussions surrounding religious freedom were in the context of guaranteeing more freedom and removing legal obstacles to practicing the ritual dimension of Islam. However, more recently, the discussion has altered to one of limiting fundamental rights.[111] For example, one could think of the debate concerning ritual slaughter and

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[107] Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 249.

[108] Ira M. Lapidus, "State and Religion in Islamic Societies," *Past & Present*, no. 151 (1996): 3(-27).

[109] Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 229-231.

[110] Wilson. *After Secularism,* 105.

[111] Van Bijsterveld, "Scheiding van Kerk en Staat," 231-233.

animal welfare and the call for either a ban on ritual slaughter or the use of sedation.[112] Furthermore, recently there have been debates about the exceptional position that religious organisations have. This has been sparked due to exemptions from COVID-19 regulations for religious organisations, such as gatherings with a maximum of thirty people, but also before that with the possibility of 'discrimination-at-the-door' for religious schools that can refuse students on grounds of their sexuality or religion.[113]

Van Bijsterveld also shows that Dutch society is both highly pluralistic in terms of religion and belief, as well as pragmatic. Christianity is dominant, yet a wide variety of denominations within Christianity is represented, and there are various other religious communities. Combined with pragmatism, this means that Dutch society can be characterised as an open system that is adaptable to change.[114] A second characteristic of Dutch society is that of "pillarisation", or "verzuiling" in Dutch. This refers to the peculiar nature of social divisions within Dutch society and its political institutions. Arend Lijphart shows that

> *Dutch society was divided by cross-cutting class-based and religious cleavages into four dominant interest groups or blocs -Catholics, Protestants, Socialists, and Liberals- around which formed "virtually all politically and socially relevant organisations and group affiliations*.[115]

Each of these blocs were represented by their own political party, two for the Protestants, and many other social institutions were similarly constituted. Think of trade unions, media, social welfare, educations, etc. This also influenced patterns of friendships, marriages, job recruitment and other social relations. While Lijphart periodises the pillarisation from 1917 to 1967, he also argues that it is a process that developed slowly, stretching back centuries before 1917. Moreover, the decline or "depillarisation" was also a gradual process.[116] At present, there are two features in Dutch society that are linked to this specific background. First of all, many political parties are still linked to this pillarised system. However, there has been a rise in new political parties that are not linked to

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[112] Gerhard van der Schyff, "Onverdoofd ritueel slachten getoetst aan het EVRM. Het Deense verbod als Europees Vraagstuk," *Tijdschrift voor Religie, Recht en Beleid* 6, no. 1 (2015): 54-68.
Baukje Kruize, "Het politieke debat in Nederland over onbedwelmd ritueel slachten: welke argumenten, feiten, waarden en principes liggen aan het debat ten grondslag?," *Scriptie MSc Applied Communication Sciences*, Wageningen University, Department of Social Sciences (2015).

[113] Dit is de Dag, "Tim Hofman in gesprek met voormalig theoloog des vaderlands Stefan Paas," *NPORadio1*, October 15, 2020, https://www.nporadio1.nl/fragmenten/dit-is-de-dag/455dbda6-32b2-4945-a1df-102862ccedf4/2020-10-15-tim-hofman-in-debat-met-voormalig-theoloog-des-vaderlands-stefan-paas/

[114] Sophie van Bijsterveld, "Religion and Law in the Netherlands," *Insight Turkey*, 17, no. 1 (2015): 121-123.

[115] Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation.*

[116] Lijphart. *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*, 27. This book extensively discusses the pillarisation, its rise and decline, politics, and the stability of this system.

specific denominations, with a peak in the 2021 elections. Secondly, the nineteenth century showed the expansion of the state in social and cultural domains. While religious organisations have also historically been active in these domains, there had to be closer cooperation between both the religious organisations and the state.[117] On the one hand then, there are state facilities in the social and cultural domains that are neutral from the point of view of religion and belief, and, on the other hand, the existence of confessional facilities.[118]

Religion in Indonesian society

Indonesia is a Muslim-dominant, yet also highly pluralistic, country. Since its independence in 1949, Indonesia has been a republic with a compromise between the ideas of a secular state and an Islamic state.[119] In 1945, future President Sukarno promulgated Pancasila as the foundational philosophical theory of a new united Indonesian state. Pancasila is composed of five inseparable and interrelated principles: (i) belief in the almighty God; (ii) just and civilised humanity; (iii) the unity of Indonesia; (iv) democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives; and (v) social justice for all of the people of Indonesia.[120] Especially that first principle is much debated and often quoted. It is also enshrined in the Indonesian Constitution through article 29, which states that "the state shall be based upon the belief in the One and Only God" as well as that the state guarantees everyone's freedom to worship their own religion or belief.[121] As Nadirsyah Hosen argues:

> "The Pancasila-based state is a place where no religion in Indonesia wins, and no-one loses.
> It is a win-win solution for all religions, since it is a state where religious life is supported and

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[117] De Bruijn, "Kerk en Staat - Historisch," 54.

[118] Van Bijsterveld, "Religion and Law in the Netherlands," 123.

[119] In 2010, the Indonesian Constitutional Court ruled on the 1965 Blasphemy Law and stated in its ruling that "Indonesia is a country with a 'belief in God' (*bertuhan*), not an atheist country," As such, Indonesia is a compromise between a secular state and an Islamic state; Melissa Crouch, "Indonesia's Blasphemy Law: Bleak Outlook for Minority Religions," *Asia Pacific Bulletin* 146, January 26, 2012, https://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/private/apb146_0.pdf.
Nadirsyah Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution: A Recent Debate," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2005): 419-440.
Benjamin Fleming Intan. *"Public Religion" and the Pancasila-based State of Indonesia: An Ethical and Sociological Analysis* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 40.
Myengkyo Seo. *State Management of Religion in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 44.
Ismatu Ropi. *Religion and Regulation in Indonesia* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 61.

[120] Roger M. Smith and Clark D. Neher. *Southeast Asia: Documents of Political Development and Change* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 174-183.

[121] Indonesia*, Constitution* (August 18, 1945), article 29.
Intan. *"Public Religion"*, 18.

advanced on one hand, and thus is not secular; on the other hand, religion is not directed at other faiths coercively, and thus it is not a religious state either".[122]

However, the ambiguity between the secular state and the religious state has been present throughout the decades since independence. This can be divided into three time periods: (i) the Old Order with Sukarno as President; (ii) the New Order when Suharto was in power; and (iii) the post-1998 period. The Old Order can be characterised by antagonism between adherents of a religiously neutral state symbolised through the Pancasila state, and the proponents of an Islamic state who wished to introduce shari'a law. Some of those proponents of the latter type even took up arms fighting for an Islamic State of Indonesia, which was the Darul Islam rebellion, while others fought through constitutional means by trying to obtain majority rule. However, in the Constituent Assembly, tasked with defining the nature of the Indonesian state, those in favour and against establishing an Islamic state were balanced. Due to that deadlock, Sukarno re-introduced the 1945 Constitution in July 1959, which mentions Pancasila in its preamble. Following this, the Pancasila state ideology was propagandised strongly, with deeply religious Muslims and their organisations suffering.[123] The generals operating in the New Order were highly suspicious of political Islam and groups demanding a state based on shari'a instead of Pancasila. Only those groups that did not question Pancasila as the state-foundation were tolerated, others were exiled or imprisoned.[124] In 1985, government policy stated that all organisations and political parties, including religious ones, had to acknowledge Pancasila as their 'only basis' (*asas tunggal*). From the general compliance, the administration concluded that Pancasila was safe and allowed for greater participation by devout Muslims in politics and the introduction of measures intended to placate Muslims.[125] In the post-1998 period, exiled and imprinted Muslims were respectively returned and released. The *asas tunggal* became irrelevant and people were allowed to campaign for an Islamic state. Some called for top-down Islamisation through legislations, while others campaigned for societal reform before implementing Islamic law.[126] Even so, Pancasila has maintained its importance. Most Islamic political parties acknowledge Pancasila and are not propagating a complete transformation of Indonesia into an Islamic state. Secular parties, on the other hand, have started to emphasise Islam and have collaborated with Islamic political parties. As such, new national and regional legislation have gotten a distinctly fundamentalist Islamic stamp.[127] All in all, in contemporary Indonesian society, there have

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[122] Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution," 434.

[123] Jajat Burhanudin and Kees van Dijk. *Islam in Indonesia: Contrasting Images and Interpretations* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 7-8.

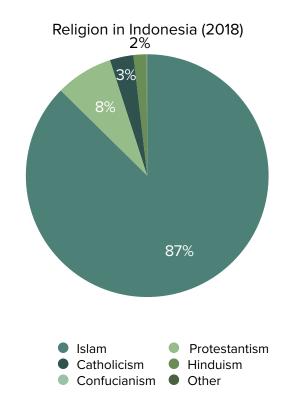[124] Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution," 427.

[125] Burhanudin and an Dijk. *Islam in Indonesia*, 8-9.

[126] Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution," 425.

[127] Burhanudin and van Dijk. *Islam in Indonesia*, 9.

been long debates on Pancasila and especially article 29, of the Constitution: whether to leave it as is; to modify it and include shari'a law; to include all religions; or to include all principles of Pancasila.[128]

At present, several different religions are practised, with a significant collective influence on Indonesia's political, economic and cultural life. Indonesian law places religion in a sort of three-step hierarchy of status. Even though the freedom to worship one's own religion or belief is enshrined, the state only recognises six official religions (*agama*): Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.[129] In 2018, Indonesian government statistics showed that Indonesians predominantly identify as Muslim, with a smaller section identifying as Christian, either Protestant or Catholic. As is shown in the pie chart, the remaining official religions are identified with even less.[130] Recently, Islam has manifested itself more in Indonesia.

Religion in Indonesia (2018)

2%
3%
8%
87%

Islam   Protestantism
Catholicism   Hinduism
Confucianism   Other

There is a stricter adherence to Islam, with Muslims observing their beliefs more faithfully, and fundamentalism has gained strength. A Pew Research Center survey found that 85% of Indonesians favour a more important role for religion in their country.[131] As a result, Islamic symbols and elements have become more widespread in Indonesian public life.[132] Hinduism is especially prominent in Bali, but also Sumatra, Java, Lombok, Kalimantan and Sulawesi have significant Hindu populations, due to Balinese migration through government sponsored transmigration program.[133]

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[128] Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution," complete, and specifically, 428.

[129] Paul Marshall, "The Ambiguities of Religious Freedom in Indonesia," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 16, no. 1 (2018), 85-96.
Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution," 419-440.

[130] Kementerian Agama Ri, "Berdasar Jumlah Pemeluk Agama Menurut Agama," September 3, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20200903221250/https://data.kemenag.go.id/agamadashboard/statistik/umat.

[131] Jacob Poushter and Janell Fetterolf, "3: How People around the world view religion's role in their countries," *A Changing World: Global Views on Diversity, Gender Equality, Family Life and the Importance of Religion*, April 22, 2019, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/04/22/how-people-around-the-world-view-religions-role-in-their-countries/.

[132] Burhanudin and an Dijk. *Islam in Indonesia*, 7.

[133] United States Department of State, "Indonesia," https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2008/108407.htm.

Second, there are also many traditional religions (*aliran kepercayaan*), or cultural belief systems. These are not legally recognised and may face discrimination. As such, these beliefs are often combined with one of the recognised religions, in turn in a way altering the statistics previously mentioned. There are approximately 400 different *aliran kepercayaan* spread throughout the archipelago.[134] As these are not recognised as full-fledged or distinct religions worthy of the protection of religious freedom, they suffer discrimination, condemnatory fatwas or occasional persecution. These believers may also face difficulty obtaining official documents.[135] This is due to the fact that Indonesian law requires its citizens to identify with one of the six religions on their Kartu Tanda Penduduk (KTP)(Indonesian Identity Card). Legally citizens may leave this section blank, but some local government officials were not familiar with this option.[136] As such, while members of indigenous religions are entitled to the same access of basic services, they still face difficulties in accessing government services, including obtaining birth certificates, marriage licenses, access to education, and in engaging in private transactions such as obtaining insurances and mortgages.[137] Third, lowest in the hierarchy, are those designated as *aliran sesat*, meaning deviant or heretical versions of other religions. These are not accepted as *agama*, but as deviations from it and thus are not protected by law. In practice, *aliran sesat* applies mainly to minority and unorthodox groups with respect to Islam. Some victims of this designation are Shi'ite Muslims, Ahmaddiya Muslims, and Gafatar, a syncretic community combining Islamic, Christian and Judaic elements. They face both governmental restrictions and societal hostilities.[138] Finally, Atheism is in principle banned on the grounds that it violates Pancasila, but the government does not seek out atheists.

To nuance the preceding, Indonesia is a very diverse country, with over a quarter of a billion people generally coexisting peacefully and generously in religious matters. There is a marked regional variation in religious intolerance and attacks; with over 80% occurring in just three regions, Aceh, West Java and South Sulawesi. The province of Aceh, at the northernmost tip of Sumatra, has always had a distinct character and is the only place in the archipelago ruled by shari'a law. However, Aceh is markedly atypical and should not be the lens through which to view the whole of Indonesia. Western Java, in that regards, has more in common with the rest of Indonesia and yet is still the site of the largest number of acts of religious intolerance. In Indonesia as a whole, religious

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[134] Marshall, "The Ambiguities of Religious Freedom," 86-87.

[135] Marshall, "The Ambiguities of Religious Freedom," 87.

[136] United States Department of State, "Indonesia," https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2008/108407.htm.

[137] United States Department of State, *2016 Report on International Religious Freedom - Indonesia*, August 15, 2017, https://www.refworld.org/docid/59b7d89a13.html.

[138] Crouch, "Indonesia's Blasphemy Law," https://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/private/apb146_0.pdf.

persecution, while sometimes violent, is sporadic and relatively uncommon.[139] Undisputed, however, is the fact that religion has had and still does have an important place within the public and private sphere of the country.

Conclusion

The Indonesian-Dutch relationship stretches from 1603 onwards, and from the start the concept of religion was also involved. Over the following three centuries, Christian heritage played a role in the proceedings of the VOC, that of the Protestant Church and missionary societies, and as a result of the Dutch Ethical Policy. The structures of colonialism and thoughts based on the degeneration theory, resulted in a division between the morally 'higher' Dutch Christians and the 'debased' Indonesians following Islam or tribal religions. Missionaries tried to mould the individuals into moral persons that understood and practiced the Christian faith. In colonial times, the Dutch colonial state and missionary societies had a symbiotic relationship with both aimed at realising the 'maturity' of Indonesians. The long historic relations during those centuries also affected the post-independence relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia. Diplomatically, the struggles of the West Papua Movement and RMS influenced the relationship and impeded several high-level visits from Indonesian officials to the Netherlands. Other high-level visits by the Dutch monarchy were strained due to the fact that Dutch crimes committed in Indonesia were ignored. Only in 2020 did King Willem-Alexander apologiser for the excessive violence and in the 2010s were processes of reparations for Indonesian victims of the independence war started. Economically, the development assistance has ended and more is invested into the economic and trade relationship.

Within the Netherlands, there is a strict separation between religious organisation and state. Religion is understood as a private matter, but this is a constitutional and political-philosophical construction. The Judeo-Christian tradition has strong connection to norms and values in Western politics and society, which some values are still in the public sphere. The history of pillarisation also has had a lasting effect, in the form of political parties with specific denominations and a large body of confessional facilities in the social and cultural domain. While previously the discussions concerning religious freedom were always in favour of expansion, this has more recently shifted to one of limiting fundamental rights. Dutch society is highly pluralistic in terms of religion and belief, and pragmatic. Christianity is dominant, but Dutch society can be characterised as open and adaptable to change.

Indonesia, while also highly pluralistic, is muslim-dominant. It is a republic with a compromise between secular state-ideas and that of an Islamic state. Pancasila, is in that regard, a very important principle, especially the first one; the belief in the one and only God. The ambiguity between the secular state and the religious state has been present throughout the decade, with different degrees of freedom for discussion during the Old Order, the New Order and the post-1998 period.

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[139] Marshall, "The Ambiguities of Religious Freedom," 91-92.

Presently, different religions are practised, but they are placed in a three-step hierarchy of religions; first the *agama*, which are the six official religions; then the *aliran kepercayaan*, which are the traditional religions or cultural belief systems; and lowest, the *aliran sesat*, the deviant or heretical versions of other religions. With each lower level on the hierarchy, the believers have less protection and suffer more discrimination and occasional persecution. However, there is a marked regional variation in religious intolerance and attacks, and generally Indonesian citizens coexist peacefully and generously in religious matters.

Thus, the Netherlands is, or finds itself to be, more 'secular', yet shows an increased salience of religion. In Indonesia, religion has an undisputed important role in the public and private sphere However, it is interesting to note that in both countries there are some trends towards limiting fundamental rights and the right to religious freedom.

The next chapter delves into the specific case study and analyses the sample set identified in the introduction.

Methodological framework and case study

This research looks at assumptions embedded within norms, values and intentions in Dutch foreign policy towards Indonesia. As discussed in the first chapter, relational dialogism builds upon insights from reflectivist theories. This thesis also follows that reflectivist tradition in its methodological framework, meaning that it rejects the ideas that underlie the positivist approaches within the field of IR. Those approaches aim to give explanations for certain phenomena. Reflectivist, or interpretivist, research is, instead, more concerned with describing and understanding internal meanings and values. It is aimed at interpreting, among other sources, textual data to observe the production of intersubjective meaning. Within the context of this thesis, employing this methodology is particularly useful as it will make a deeper analysis possible of the implicit embedded assumptions concerning religion and secularism in the Dutch-Indonesian relationship. The data analysed during the research process is always "saying something of something" within the interpretivist tradition.[140] Therefore, this thesis analyses Dutch Human Rights Reports from 2013 until 2020 to gain an insight into the role of 'religion' and 'secularism' in Dutch foreign policy concerning Indonesia, as well as to unpack associated assumptions of the two categories. In doing so, the research examines what 'religion' and 'the secular' is within the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia, who defines these concepts, why they are defined as they are, and finally, what the real-world consequences of those understandings are.[141]

This thesis employs a qualitative approach with an analysis of non-numeric data, mainly of yearly Dutch Human Rights Reports, to demonstrate the embedded assumptions regarding religion and secularism in Dutch foreign policy. This is the object of analysis. Those official yearly reports from BZ are used as primary data sources, which are outlined and justified in the section concerning the sample set below. These primary sources are supplemented with secondary sources, such as peer-reviewed academic articles, to provide background and to construct the frameworks. This can already be observed in the preceding two chapters. The method of analysis is a critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the implicit understanding of both 'religion' and 'the secular'. CDA is a form of qualitative analysis that interprets linguistic forms of communication. Language plays a performative role in this regard. To follow Michel Foucault's conception, discourse is a "system of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs, and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak".[142] As such, to understand religion and international relations, and their interaction, it is important to be aware of the discourse that constructs those subjects. Within this method of CDA it is important how and why particular

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[140] Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinesse Cockfight," *Daedalus* 134, no. 4 (2005): 83.

[141] Wilson, "Being 'Critical' OfAbout/On 'Religion' in International Relations," 147.

[142] Iara Lessa, "Discursive Struggles within Social Welfare: Restaging Teen Motherhood," *The British Journal of Social Work*, 36, no. 2 (2006): 283–298.

discourses emerge, become dominant, and are used by actors.[143] By analysing, interpreting and coding the content of the primary data sources, the implicit, underlying, unconscious conceptions or assumptions about what 'religion' and 'the secular' are becomes clearer. Jennifer Milliken identified three key assumptions that underpin discourse analyses in IR.[144] First, "discourses are systems of signification which construct social realities".[145] Discourses are both linguistic and non-linguistic practices that constitute a specific interpretation and/or representation of a phenomenon. This is very similar to the constructivist understanding of meaning as mentioned in the first chapter.[146] Second, discourses do not only help with interpreting and understanding the world, but also serve to (re)produce ways of being in and responding to the world. This is what Milliken terms 'discourse productivity'.[147] Discourse productivity produces some means of interpretation, while rejecting others. As such, it may reproduce "collectively held subconscious ideas".[148] Third, discourses are not static, but are in constant play. Therefore, Milliken refers to the third assumption as 'the play of practice'.[149] Discursive analysis of religion within foreign policy is interested in

> the ways in which narratives, images and ideas drawn from religious traditions and/or ideas about 'religion' in general or specific 'religions' in particular [...] play in efforts to maintain one interpretation of events and exclude or silence other interpretations in order to open up and justify one set of policy options over others.[150]

Therefore, CDA is particularly useful for applying the relational dialogist framework to the Dutch-Indonesian relationship and to observe the impact of religion and secularism on real-world policy responses. Additionally, it is crucial to observe the 'unwritten' to understand how language indirectly communicates specific aims, meanings and values. Therefore, the discourse analysis is complemented by a content analysis to observe broader patterns.

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[143] Christopher Lamont. *Research Methods in International Relations* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2015), 91

[144] Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 2 (1999): 228.

[145] Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations," 229.

[146] ibid.

[147] ibid.

[148] Johan Galtung. *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilisation* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 211.

[149] Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations," 230.

[150] Erin K. Wilson, "The Power Politics of 'Religion': Discursive Analysis of Religion in Political Science and International Relations," in: *Discourse Research and Religion: Disciplinary Use and Interdisciplinary Dialogues*, eds.: Jay Johnston and Kocku von Stuckrad (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), 129.

It should be noted that a limitation of document-based research is that many aspects of social interaction may be relevant to the topic at hand, yet that it is not recorded in the official publications. Therefore, those aspects remain invisible for this research. This may be an avenue for further research, where one could try to find those social interaction patterns by means of field research and interviews.[151] A possible weakness of a discourse analysis may be that the discourse analysed will be interpreted according to the researchers, thus my, perception. In other words, inferences and conclusions might be made that other researchers would possibly not make. However, wildly inconsistent and biased claims can be avoided by analysing the texts within their cultural and political context. This is why the contextualisation and the background research of the second chapter is so important. Any conclusions drawn in the analysis have to be consistent with the broader cultural and political assumptions and trends identified there. At the same time, as I state in my ethics statements, I will continually reflect on my own interpretations and analysis to critically look at my own positionality and to ensure balance in this research. Furthermore, I will explicitly state what I am interpreting, how I conduct my research and how I make inferences and conclusions.

Case study

Some states have made religion a prominent component of their politics, including their foreign policy, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United States. As such, there is often a predominant focus on those countries when discussing the role of religion in (international) politics.[152] The Netherlands is, conversely, state in which religion does not feature as prominently or overtly. As such, this case is also not covered much within the research agenda. However, as I mentioned in the introduction already, religion is always a feature within society, and within policy-making, as well as that it is part of bilateral relations. There are a three main aspects and developments that make Dutch foreign policy interesting to analyse and to unpack its assumptions about religion and secularism.

First of all, religion is, on the whole, mainly a topic within the human rights agenda of BZ. In its foreign human rights policy, the Netherlands focuses on six priorities; namely (i) freedom of speech and internet freedom; (ii) freedom of religion and belief; (iii) equal rights for women and girls; (iv) human rights defenders; (v) equal rights for LGBTI; (vi) promotion of the international legal order/ fight against impunity.[153] The Human Rights Reports are also roughly structured around these priorities. Concerning the second priority, the Netherlands aims to uphold the international right of

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[151] Lamont, *Research Methods in International Relations*, 82.

[152] Jeffrey Haynes, "Religion in Foreign Policy," *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Politics* (2007). Jeffrey Haynes, "Religion and Foreign Policy Making in the USA, India and Iran: Towards a Research Agenda," *Third World Quarterly*, 29, no. 1 (2008): 143-165.

[153] While I would prefer the use of the initialism LGBTQIA+, the Dutch human rights reports use LGBTI. As such, that is the one also used in this thesis. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 7.

choosing your own religion or belief, including the right not to belief or to choose one's belief. In 2013, BZ introduced 'A New Agenda for Aid, Trade and Investment', where the promotion of human rights is done through, or in association with, development cooperation. The connection between human rights and business is due to its strong connection with broader issues in the field of corporate social responsibility and chain sustainability.[154]

Besides this, the Eenheid Strategische Advisering (ESA)(English: Strategic Advice Unit) of BZ drew up an internal memorandum on the subject of 'religion and foreign policy' in December 2017. The core message of this memo was that the communication, cooperation and (diplomatic) contact with other countries would be more effective with a thorough knowledge of religious history, context and customs of those countries. As such, "religious literacy is an important attribute for policymakers and diplomats".[155] However, BZ has a "secular bias" and a "lack of religious literacy".[156] The memo affirms that the Netherlands is relatively 'secular' and policymakers often find themselves in a more religious context in other countries.[157] Religious literacy is important so that those working for BZ can evaluate situations by their own circumstances and whether or not to work or cooperate with religious leaders and/or organisations.[158] The inclusion of religious leaders and/or organisations can help in mediating with economic or security cooperation. Yet, on the other hand, sometimes these leaders and/or organisations propagate principles that are in conflict with Dutch human rights policy.[159]

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[154] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Kamerbrief Intensivering Mensenrechtenbeleid* (October 30, 2018).

[155] *Kamerstuk 35 000 V, nr. 55* (2018), 1.

[156] Katholiek Nieuwsblad, "Ministerie Buitenlandse Zaken 'Religieus Ongeletterd'," *Katholiek Nieuwsblad*, November 14, 2018, https://www.kn.nl/nieuws/ministerie-buitenlandse-zaken-religieus-ongeletterd/.
Harvard Divinity School defines religious literacy as "the ability to discern and analyse the fundamental intersections of religion and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses". As such, in short, a basic understanding of the world's religious traditions and their interaction with particular social, historical and cultural contexts is important, as well as the ability to discern religious dimensions of those contexts across time and place.
Harvard Divinity School. *What is Religious Literacy?*, https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/what-we-do/our-approach/what-religious-literacy

[157] *Kamerstuk 35 000 V, nr. 55* (2018), 2.

[158] ibid.

[159] ibid.

Finally, in 2019 the position of the Special Envoy for Religion and Belief was established.[160] This is in accordance with a motion by Martijn van Helvert (CDA[1]) and looks to be in line with the recommendations of the internal memo that religious literacy within BZ's policies should be improved.[161] The Special Envoy, currently Jos Douma, works to promote freedom of religion and belief abroad, including the right not to believe. He does so in discussions with both governments and civil society to draw attention to the right of apostasy or to change one's faith.[162] The special Envoy speaks to local secular and ecclesiastical authorities, and partakes in seminars (both in person and online due to COVID-19) organised by interest groups and civil society organisations. Through bilateral consultations Douma has deepened partnerships with like-minded countries.[163]

Bilaterally, the Netherlands finances multiple project, for example multi-year support to the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Freedom House for the Projecting Belief Fund, as well as a new five-year grant tool, Power of Voices, for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation with religious communities.[164] Multilaterally, the Netherlands is part of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and the Third Committee of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. In those bodies, the Netherlands invariably stresses the right to freedom of religion and belief by calling for the inclusion of passages relating to this in resolutions. Additionally, recommendations on religion and belief are made during the Universal Period Review (UPR), which have been given previously to, among others, Algeria, India, Indonesia Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Netherlands is an active member of the International Contact Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief (ICG-FoRB) and the International Religious Freedom and Belief Alliance (IRFBA), but also in European Union (EU)-context there is close cooperation.[165]

The CDA of Dutch foreign policy is specifically concerning Indonesia. For three centuries, the Dutch had an enormous amount of influence over the Indonesian territory. Between 1603 and 1947, Indonesia was a Dutch colony and after Indonesia declared their independence, the Netherlands

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[160] Humanistisch Verbond, "Speciaal Gezant Religie en Levensovertuiging," *Humanistisch Verbond*, October 16, 2019, https://www.humanistischverbond.nl/speciaal-gezant-religie-en-levensovertuiging/.
Tweet by Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. @MinBZ, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4:26 pm, 18 July 2019.

[161] Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. "Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaat van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (V) voor het jaar 2019." *Kamerstuk 35 000 V, nr. 26* (2018).

[162] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Kamerbrief Kabinetsreactie Initiatiefnota "Vrij zijn om niet te geloven" van het lid Sjoerdsma (TK 35 264, nr. 1) en uitkomsten van de verkenning rond de Mensenrechtentulp* (December 13, 2019).

[163] Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, "Mensenrechten in het Buitenland," *Kamerstuk 32 725, nr. 314* (2020), 2.

[164] *Kamerstuk 32 725, nr. 314,* 2-3.

[165] *Kamerstuk 32 725, nr. 314,* 3.

tried to violently keep control until formally ceding control in 1949. There is still a shared history, a common cultural heritage and exchanges of population with the presence of significant diaspora groups. As argued in the foregoing, contemporary relationships between postcolonial states and their former colonial powers can be ambiguous. The shared social capital might enhance cooperation and strength, but the colonial legacy or scars from the colonial times and the process of decolonisation may be an obstacle. This ambiguity was, and still is, also present in the postcolonial relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands. Therefore, it is interesting to further investigate and unpack the assumptions from the Netherlands concerning Indonesia within their foreign policy. Furthermore, Indonesia was one of the supported countries in the Dutch DC. This bilateral DC has been phased out and terminated by 2020. This was decided during the term of Rutte II and operationalised during the term of Rutte III. While phasing out the DC, the aim was to strengthen the economic relation with Indonesia.[166] Incidentally, the deployment of Dutch development aid resources in Indonesia, as well as other countries with which the DC has been terminated, remains possible from central thematic programs that are not set up country-specifically, such as for example in the field of religion and belief.[167] This also, roughly, coincides with the newly established position of the Special Envoy.

Time frame

The time frame for the case study is from 2013 until 2020. Starting with 2013 as that is the year that the new "Aid and Trade" agenda was introduced, merging the human rights agenda with trade objectives. Dutch policies promoting the freedom of religion and belief are united with DC. In 2013, furthermore, the Dutch government reached a settlement with ten widows whose husbands were shot by Dutch soldiers in South Sulawesi in 1946 and 1947. They each received a financial compensation of €20.000 and the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia publicly apologised on behalf of the state.[168] There had been successful 'Indonesia-cases' brought before the Dutch courts, which also included apologies for the excesses of the Dutch state at that time.[169] However, this settlement

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[166] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Kamerbrief Focusregio's.*

[167] ibid.

[168] NOS, "Schikkingen weduwen Zuid-Sulawesi," https://nos.nl/artikel/537984-schikking-weduwen-zuid-sulawesi.

[169] An overview of these 'Indonesia-cases': Nederlands Juristen Blad, "Schadevergoeding voor weduwen en kinderen naar aanleiding van executies in Zuid-Sulawesi," *Nederlands Juristen* Blad, March 26, 2020, https://www.njb.nl/nieuws/schadevergoeding-voor-weduwen-en-kinderen-naar-aanleiding-van-executies-in-zuid-sulawesi/.

is different as it offered a general apology for all summary executions by the Dutch army between 1945 and 1949.[170]

The Dutch DC with Indonesia was phased out and stopped by the Netherlands in 2020 in favour of a strengthened economic relationship instead. As such, my presumption is that the relationship changes somewhat, as the phasing out of DC was already in play. This is why the scope of this research also goes until 2020. 2019 will then be an especially interesting year to study the role of the Special Envoy and the responsibilities that he takes up, as well as whether there is a redefinition and reworking of religion.

Sample set

The sample set for the discourse analysis consists of the yearly human rights reports published by BZ. These are the reports of 2013 to 2020 to fit with the time frame discussed above. The yearly reports are picked for reasons of uniformity, to really observe whether there is a changing view on religion, in connection to a possibly changing relationship with Indonesia. The human rights reports describe the efforts and results of Dutch human rights policy abroad. The reports serve as a communication tool for providing wider information on activities carried out and results of their policies. The information in the annual reports should allow citizens and the Dutch Tweede Kamer (English: *House of Representatives*) to see the evidence of actions taken and decisions made, but it also allows for accountancy of actions.

It is good to keep in mind that the reports do not specify all of BZ's human rights efforts everywhere, as "the promotion and protection of human rights is deeply permeated in the foreign policy of the Netherlands".[171] The reports primarily mention Dutch efforts and intentions. While a clear overview, the best practices are highlighted, with less successful projects not mentioned or highlighted explicitly. Moreover, some efforts may still be carried out, but on a lower burn compared to other efforts. While for a number of projects the outcome, impact and consequences are named, for a fair amount of projects this is not elaborated upon. This may be because they are still in process. However, the combination of mostly highlighting the best practices with mostly mentioning efforts and intentions also gives the suggestion that these reports and a good deal of foreign policy initiatives are mostly concerned with the appearance of doing something rather than actually doing something. In this regard, the reports mention a limitation:

> *However, naming results in the field of human rights remains difficult. After all, human rights are difficult to measure and it is often difficult to indicate to what extent the consequences can be attributed to Dutch interventions. Various factors contribute to the achievement of*

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[170] Wendelmoet Boersema, "Waarom Nederland worstelt met een Koninklijk Excuus aan Indonesië," *Trouw*, March 6, 2020, "https://www.trouw.nl/binnenland/waarom-nederland-worstelt-met-een-koninklijk-excuus-aan-indonesie~b43a4f21/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F.

[171] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013* (2014), 6.

results, which are largely outside the Dutch sphere of influence, such as the domestic
political situation and regional political, security and macroeconomic developments. For
quiet diplomacy, reporting on results is all the more difficult, as publicity can be harmful and
thereby jeopardise effectiveness.[172]

Even though this is a solid limitation and something that is to be expected in such reports, it feels a bit easy. The Netherlands spends millions on their human rights policy each year and even intensified their efforts, as will be shown in the next chapter. Their efforts most probably follow analyses of where to focus their efforts on most effectively. Moreover, more pragmatically, these efforts are paid for by Dutch tax money. As such, outcomes, impacts and consequences should be discussed more to actually show the results of the Dutch efforts and also to be more transparant.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the methodological decisions made in this research as well as the justification for these choices. By using a CDA the relational dialogism framework can be operationalised to explore the place of religion in Dutch foreign policy towards Indonesia. The following chapter will feature that CDA that unpacks the yearly human rights reports between 2013 and 2020, and the final conclusion will tie all themes together and presents the main argument following from this research.

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[172] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016* (2017), 7.

The Human Rights Reports between 2013 and 2020

This chapter features the discourse analysis of the Human Rights Reports published by Dutch BZ between 2013 and 2020. I read each report once but very carefully. Beside the reports I had four documents open according to the three points this thesis researches; religion, Indonesia, and the work of the Special Envoy. I also had a document for general notes, with sentences or sections of the reports that I found interesting or remarkable and which said something about the way the Dutch approached their human rights policy. Everything that fit into one of the four themes, I copied into the documents using the exact phrasing of the reports with their corresponding page number. I also made sure to try and catalogue them together already. Concerning the general notes, three points of interest quite quickly became clear, namely cooperation, credibility and Aid & Trade.

This chapter is structured according to the four main themes; a tripartite section of general notes concerning the Dutch approach to human rights policy and the content of the reports, the place of religion and FoRB in the reports, the way the reports discuss and mention Indonesia, and lastly the role of the Special Envoy and the outline of his responsibility in the reports (which only comes into focus in the reports of 2018 onwards).

General notes

In general, there are three points of interest that come forth in the reports, which I termed cooperation, credibility, and Aid & Trade. First of all, the Netherlands focuses a lot on cooperation, and more specifically trilateral cooperation. This is because they believe that the chance of an actual effect is greatest then.[173] Besides this, very pragmatically, working together ensures a greater voice. For example in the context of the EU; "the voice of 28 countries is stronger than that of one".[174] The first three reports, those of 2013-2015, even have a separate chapter on the fora and instruments through which human rights policy is propagated.[175] This chapter on Dutch policies globally and multilaterally returns in the report of 2020, but it focuses on the cross-thematic deployment and results.[176] The reports of 2016-2020 have a thematic focus based on the human rights priorities. The work within multilateral bodies and forums as well as in the regions and countries, then serves that

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[173] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 8.

[174] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016*, 21.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 6.

[175] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 44-56.
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014* (2015), 37-51.
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015* (2016), 7-15.
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019. Inzet en Resultaten Buitenlands Mensenrechtenbeleid* (2020), 11

[176] Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020. Inzet en Resultaten Nederlands Buitenlands Mensenrechtenbeleid* (2021), 6.

thematic focus and are discussed in those chapters.[177] Interesting to note is that from 2017 onwards, the reports have more references to background and news sources, as well as parliamentary papers.[178] The Dutch focus on an integrated approach, meaning that there is a focus on strengthening and reinforcing a whole scale of human rights. According to the reports, the whole spectrum of civil, political, socio-economic, and cultural rights are included in the Dutch policies.[179] Moreover, there is a focus on trilateral partnerships:

> *"It is primarily up to citizens and civil society to safeguard human rights in every society. For this, a good network is indispensable, and must therefore reach further than government authorities alone. The Netherlands invests a lot in this network and cooperates as much as possible with local and non-governmental partners".*[180]

The Netherlands frequently mentions their commitment to giving a stronger voice to civil society and they seek to work with partners at different levels, locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally.[181] In this regard, they discuss trilateral cooperation, which is broader than cooperation between governments, but it also involves collaboration between and with social organisations, companies and knowledge institutions.[182] The focus on civil society as part of Dutch policy, increases throughout the reports (which can also be seen in the increase in pages to reference in the footnote). Especially from 2016 onwards, this becomes a very explicit focus as part of the "Samenspraak en Tegenspraak" (English: "Consultancy and Contradiction")(2016-2020), which was to be followed by the programme "Versterking Maatschappelijk Middenveld" (English:

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[177] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016*, 8.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 8.

[178] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*.
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018. Inzet en Resultaten Buitenlands Mensenrechtenbeleid* (2019).
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020.

[179] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 6, 11, 14-15.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 6.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 7, 45.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 45.

[180] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 14.

[181] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 5.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 10.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016, 6-7, 35.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 5-7, 25.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 3, 9, 23, 26-30.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 11, 24, 26, 34, 37, 39, 42, 47.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 3, 8, 26, 29-30, 33-34, 36, 41, 51.

[182] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 11.

Strengthening Civil Society)(2021-2025).[183] The strategic partnerships under these policy frameworks are aimed at strengthening the position of local civil society organisations in the field of advocacy and influence. "The Netherlands finances strategic partnerships of civil society organisations because they are experts on specific themes".[184] In the yearly reports, the importance of contact with non-western partners are explicitly stated.[185] "Because with knowledge of the local context and sensitivities, they often know better how to conduct an effective dialogue and approach human rights issues in a meaningful way".[186] Finally, in the 2016 report, there is also an explicit focus on continued dialogue with partners with contrasting views. This is connected to the fact that some countries find (certain) human rights a western concept. As such, there are conversations "with countries with which we are not on the same page. Not teaching from one's own moral right, but with an eye for the similarities and differences, and from equality".[187]

The preceding shows a certain ambiguity in the reports and, by extension, Dutch global human rights policy. On the one hand, there is an awareness that cultural awareness is important and that the Netherlands should work extensively with local partners as they are more knowledgeable. Yet, the response to the fact that human rights are seen as a western concept is not to have that discussion and to find or formulate human rights that are more universal, but to employ silent diplomacy.[188] The Netherlands still pushes their human rights priorities. I find this at once both showing cultural sensitivity and paternalistic tendencies.

Second is the concept of credibility. In every report, it is stated that credibility within the international arena is of the utmost importance to conducting an effective human rights policy. As such, they have an "open attitude towards critical remarks and recommendations from international organisations with regard to compliance with international human rights obligations" and they "strive to achieve effective human rights protection at home and abroad in collaboration with International organisations".[189] The reports do not only focus on Dutch credibility, but also of that of the EU as a whole and in its individual member states.[190] This can be summed up by the expression: "practice

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[183] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020*, 29.

[184] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 28-29, 37.

[185] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 5.

[186] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 5.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 29.

[187] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016*, 6, 35.

[188] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018,* 27.

[189] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 6, 11, 32, 42.

[190] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 6,16-18.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 10.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 12.

what you preach, and preach what you practice".[191] However, to be fair, the Dutch do not mention explicit critical remarks made against the Netherlands. The report of 2014 does mention some, however, it is a pity that it is then also immediately stated that such efforts also give more international credibility. The 2015 report mention the oral hearings to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which gave more than 60 recommendations, and to the UN Committee against Racial Discriminiation. In context of the latter, the report identifies specific subjects where the Netherlands must better itself.[192] Most shocking to me was the mention of the Artificial Intelligence strategy, which, among other points, focuses on protecting public values and human rights. In this regard, explicit mention of being aware of bias in underlying data or in the algorithm that could lead to unfair discrimination between groups was made.[193] This at a time when this bias was present in the Netherlands at the Belastingdienst (English: Tax and Customs Administration) which resulted in unjustified suspicions of fraud with childcare allowances and the strict recovery of errors; the 'Toeslagenaffaire'. All in all, while the reports of 2013-2015 offer little examples of where the Netherlands can improve nationally, the reports of 2016-2020 offer even less. As such, the focus on credibility feels a little hypocritical.

Third, the connection between human rights and business as introduced in the 2013 Aid and Trade Agenda features in the reports, they are even part of their own thematic focus. The 2017 report explains why the connection is found to be so important:

> "We are fully convinced that compliance with human rights leads to a more stable and prosperous world from which the Netherlands also benefits. [...] Promoting human rights is also in our own interest, because a democratic constitutional state is the best breeding ground for prosperity, stability, growth and development".[194]

Fundamentally, the Dutch thus see that respecting human rights ultimately also leads to beter chances for economic prosperity.[195] The Netherlands also enforce this in EU-context by making the observance of human rights a condition for preferential trade tariffs. This is the so called Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), where countries must implement 27 international

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[191] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 10-11.
 Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 17.

[192] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 31.

[193] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 20.

[194] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 6.

[195] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018*, 3.

conventions on human and labour rights, the environment and good governance in return for the cut of import duties to zero on more than two thirds of the tariff lines of their exports.[196]

Besides this, the reports mention projects in the field of human rights and business as well as their integration into trade missions,[197] with specific focus on opportunities for sustainable development resulting from cooperation with the business community.[198] The reports also explicitly mention the connection between civil-political rights and socio-economic and cultural rights. Finally, besides only mentioning the positive combination, the reports focus on the aim of preventing human rights violations by companies, directly or in production chains.[199]

Religion and FoRB

As mentioned before, the Dutch have the freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) as one of their priorities in their human rights policy. As such, religion features most prominently in those sections of the reports, but there is some mention of religion in other parts as well. This is, however, limited to mentioning certain projects that have some aspect of religion. To make this more illustrative, there are several projects that aim to improve the position of LGBTI people worldwide and some focus on the dialogue regarding homosexuality and Islam, or sexual orientation and gender identity within Christian communities.[200] The Netherlands has deployed both multilateral and bilateral instruments to guarantee and promote the rights of individuals in the area of FoRB. "This includes the right to hold theistic, non-theistic and atheistic beliefs, the right to change one's faith, or to live without any

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[196] European Commission, "Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+)," https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/generalised-scheme-preferences-plus-gsp.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 9.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 10.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 12.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 48.
Since this paper is on assumptions on religion in correspondence with the relationship with Indonesia, it does not make sense to go into the theoretical background and foundations of these ideas and policies. However, it would be a very interesting topic for further research.

[197] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013, 56.*
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 35.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 38.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016, 27.

[198] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 38.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 45.

[199] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 40.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 29.

[200] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 14.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 20.

religious belief or activity".[201] This description was expanded upon in the 2014 report, by including the "the right of the individual to shape his or her religious or ideological identity". Moreover,

> the Netherlands promotes the separation of church and state and opposes it if fundamental rights and freedoms, such as those of women, children or LGBTI people, are curtailed on the basis of religious or traditional values. The Netherlands makes no distinction between religious groups that have difficulty shaping their faith or belief in freedom.[202]

The latter part of that last sentence is then removed in the description in the 2015 report, to state that the Dutch make no distinction between religious groups full stop. This gives the meaning that there is no difference in religious groups that are oppressed, but also not in groups that oppress.[203] The 2016-2018 reports follow this same definition.[204] The 2019 report has a different wording of the description and the additions of 2014 are removed. As such, the Dutch commitment to FoRB is aimed at:

> protecting the right of everyone to make his or her religious or ideological choice [...]. This also includes the right to change one's faith or to live without religious or ideological convictions. The Netherlands makes no distinction between religious groups among themselves, or between theistic, atheistic or agnostic beliefs. The Netherlands will therefore make every effort to improve the situation of oppressed Christian minorities as that of Muslims, Baha'is, non-believers or other groups that are vulnerable to persecution.[205]

The way in which this last sentence is phrased in Dutch, shows the Dutch self-evidence with Christianity. The 2020 report follows the same description as above but adds:

> To reduce global discrimination and persecution of religious groups, the Netherlands is committed to the implementation and adherence to international standards. In addition, the Netherlands is committed to a tolerant and inclusive religious climate both in society and within religious communities and for strong international coalitions to promote FoRB.[206]

In 2014, one recommendation is to treat FoRB in conjunction with other human rights issues, yet FoRB is still very much treated as its own theme within the human rights reports. Sometimes, the reports talk about difficulties due to traditional values obstructing the promotion of other rights. This gives the connotation of religious values, but when looking at the conceptualisation of FoRB in the

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[201] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 8.

[202] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 26.

[203] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 35.

[204] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016*, 25.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 19.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 19.

[205] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 23.

[206] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020*, 19.

reports, religious and traditional values are separated. This distinction between them is, however, not clear. The reports also do not linke religious values with progressive ones anywhere. This aim to treat FoRB in conjunction with other human rights issues, increases some over the following reports. However, besides a connection with rights for LGBTI as well as women and girls, this is not notably so.[207]

From 2017 onwards, in line with motion Voordewind (Kamerstuk 34775V, nr. 29), the effort on FoRB is intensified.[208] This intensification is further increased in 2018 and 2019 with new motions.[209] In addition to financial and policy intensification, the Netherlands also has deployed more manpower worldwide for, among other things, FoRB and the strengthening of civil society.[210] The report of 2020 has a predominant focus on non-believers, which is in accordance with the nota 'free to not believe'.[211]

What also becomes clear from the reports, is that the importance of cooperation, discussed in the preceding section, also features in the sections on FoRB. The cooperation in multilateral fora is discussed, with Dutch involvement in the development of EU-guidelines, which as a result connect seamlessly to Dutch policy on FoRB.[212] Besides this, trilateral cooperation is featured in the sense that the Dutch find it important to facilitate a dialogue between leaders of religious groups themselves and/or with the government to jointly develop inter-religious initiatives.[213] But also to cooperate with partners with contrasting views and to focus and further the concepts that they are in agreement about.[214]

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[207] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 7, 30-32.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 21.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 23.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 19.

[208] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 7.

[209] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018*, 6.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 23.

[210] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 7.

[211] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020*, 20.

[212] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 38.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 26.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 10.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017, 19.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 9, 19-20.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 25-27.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 8, 19-23.

[213] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 27.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 25-28.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 21-23.

[214] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 20.

The 2016 section on FoRB was very brief and general.[215] The priority also did not feature much in other parts of the report, and there was little discussion on religion.

Indonesia

The change to a thematic focus in the reports from 2016 onwards, as discussed above, also has consequences for the detailed account of projects in Indonesia. From 2016 onwards, the reports do not go into depth into all countries in which the Netherlands advances its human rights agenda. As such, the observations and analysis concerning Indonesia differs from 2016 onwards in the sense that discussions on and references to the country are more dispersed and interwoven into the thematic focus. What is new, however, is a financial overview, that (often) does mention the country and title of the project explicitly, as well as to what human rights priority it is aimed at.

What becomes clear from the reports, is that the Netherlands has a (unequally divided) twofold relationship with Indonesia. On the one hand, Indonesia is part of the human rights reports in the sense that projects are carried out and there is work to be done on human rights priorities. As such, they are very much part of a DC-relationship with the Netherlands and receive Dutch support. On the other hand, but to a lesser degree, Indonesia is also a partner. Together with Indonesia and other countries, in varying compositions, the Netherlands has submitted resolutions at the UNHRC. [216] Indonesia has also organised conferences and fora on various topics, and given seminars with the Netherlands to representatives of other Asian countries.[217] The chapter on FoRB from the 2017 report shows this ambiguity, in the context of religion, very well. On the one hand there is a focus on Indonesia to improve the right to FoRB with the human rights ambassador raising the topic, projects were carried out in Indonesia financed through the Dutch human rights agenda to increase FoRB, and Indonesia was requested to abolish its blasphemy law. At the same time, however, the Netherlands speaks positively of the cooperation with Indonesia in the ICG-FoRB.[218] Although, one could question the extent to which Indonesia feels they cannot support Dutch resolutions, given the amount of development aid, history and now economic trade from the Netherlands that Indonesia relies upon.

The general observations about the reports, also feature in the sections of the report on Indonesia. In the description of the activities in and regarding Indonesia, trilateral cooperation and

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[215] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016*, 25-26.

[216] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 18, 41.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 7.

[217] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 11, 36.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 66-67.

[218] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 19, 37.

the importance of civil society are emphasised.[219] As well as the ways in which the Netherlands works on these projects together with the EU and the UN.[220] The Dutch embassy has a big role in pushing and supporting projects in Indonesia, as well as denouncing human rights violations. Several projects that are recurring in the reports:

- Concerning the palm oil sector about the importance of sustainable production and trade of palm oil, as well as support for the UNICEF Children's Rights and Business Principles with a focus on Dutch companies in the palm oil sector.[221]

- Concerning HIV/AIDS harm reduction and to increase the access, among others, to HIV prevention, care and AIDS treatment for key populations.[222]

- Support for the *Better Work*-programme of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) aimed at compliance with labour rights.[223]

- Support for the *International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour* (IPEC) of the ILO aimed at strengthening (vocational) education.[224]

- Concerning the *Influentials Programme* of BZ, in combination with RVO.nl and the Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW)(*English: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science*) for activist from, among other countries, Indonesia.[225]

- Concerning Papua, where the human rights situation is a point of concern, with the region being closed for journalists, international organisations and parliamentarians. There are also concerns about the (lack of) freedom of speech and position of (local) journalists and human rights defenders.[226]

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[219] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 11, 42, 68.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 26.

[220] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 32, 47, 68.

[221] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 42.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 36.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 45.

[222] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 68.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 20.

[223] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 36.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 43.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016, 29.

[224] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 45.

[225] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 20.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016, 14.

[226] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 60-61.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 66-67.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 6.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019, 8.

- The equal rights for LGBTI were regularly discussed during bilateral ministerial and senior official visits with Indonesia. These visits may have also been part of silent diplomacy efforts.[227]

Two topics that are of interest to delve into a little bit deeper concern religion and capital punishment. First off, capital punishment is featured in connection to Indonesia in every report between 2013 and 2016. The Indonesian government has stressed the importance of law enforcement, including the implementation of the death penalty in drug cases.[228] This resulted in the execution of 14 persons at the beginning of 2015, including one Dutch national. The Dutch embassy has taken part in a total of three EU-démarches to denounce the death penalty.[229] Nothing has been said about capital punishment in Indonesia in the reports of 2017-2020.

Second, concerning religion there are a couple of interesting observations. Financially, the money the Dutch spend on projects in Indonesia are predominantly for projects that fall into the area of FoRB.[230] Dutch projects, and also their focus within the human rights reports between 2013-2016, is on religious (in)tolerance. The 2013 report criticises the new Mass Organisation Act (Ormas), which provides for greater government control over NGOs and religious organisations. It also details projects on Maluku and on Java to cultivate understanding between Muslim and Christian communities and between Shi'ite and Sunni communities respectively.[231] The 2014 report details that Indonesian president Widodo also announced measures aimed at promoting religious tolerance. It also describes a project aimed at improving the police's ability to reduce violence against religious minorities and the installation of a special rapporteur on religious minorities.[232] The 2015 report again details projects generally intended to "facilitate dialogue, adjusting national legislation and/or government policy, monitoring and providing legal assistance in individual (criminal) cases, raising awareness about religion-related issues, and disseminating knowledge about religion and religion and belief in general.[233] The report describes the significant increase in religious intolerance over 2015 compared to 2014.[234] Whereas it also shows the start of a project

[227] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2017*, 31-32, 37.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018, 31.

[228] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 60-61.

[229] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 60-61.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 66-67.

[230] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 91.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014, 83.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015, 91.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016, 49-50.

[231] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2013*, 68.

[232] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2014*, 60-61.

[233] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 36.

[234] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 66-67.

that tries to stimulate a culture tolerant towards religious freedom.[235] The projects detailed in the reports between 2017 and 2020 also aimed at improving religious tolerance.[236]

The way in which religion features in the human rights reports concerning Indonesia is thus predominantly aimed at combatting the religious intolerance found within Indonesia through various projects. This religious intolerance is also discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. There is an unofficial three-step hierarchy of religion in Indonesia and with each lower level, believers receive less protection and suffer more discrimination and occasional persecution. One such group that was also mentioned in that regard were Shi'ite. In that sense, my above-mentioned observations on the human rights reports fit in with my contextualisation of religion in Indonesia.

The Special Envoy

The Special Envoy for FoRB is first mentioned, or announced as you will, in the 2018 report stating that it was the wish of the parliament and that he will be instated in the summer of 2019.[237] The 2019 report, then, goes more into depth into his position and activities. The work of the Special Envoy falls into three issues; namely, (i) advancing the FoRB priority, including the right to apostasy or to change one's faith; (ii) deepening and broadening knowledge within BZ; and (iii) the exchange of knowledge and building networks with stakeholders nationally and abroad.[238] Especially in the interaction with experts, interest groups and representatives of diverse faith and belief groups, also in the Netherlands, does the Special Envoy find his responsibilities.[239] As part of this, Jos Douma, also partakes in many conferences on the topic of FoRB, serving as host. The report of 2020 also discloses that BZ has worked to broaden and deepen knowledge about religion, diplomacy and DC. The Special Envoy was able to supervise a number of sessions reflecting on dealing with religion and religious actors with the Academy of International Relations.[240] This, as well as the third issue mentioned, is in line with the recommendations of the internal memorandum on 'religion and foreign policy' by the ESA as I discussed in the previous chapter.

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[235] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2015*, 36.

[236] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 25.

[237] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2018*, 19.

[238] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 24.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 12.

[239] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2019*, 24.
Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020, 11-12.

[240] *Mensenrechtenrapportage 2020*, 12.

Conclusion

This chapter explored in more detail four themes relevant to answering the main research question. I tried connecting the findings across the reports and observing similarities and differences. Generally, three points were of interest in all reports; cooperation, credibility, and the Aid & Trade Agenda. I will connect these points with the other three themes of religion, Indonesia and the Special Envoy in the Conclusion. Connecting them with the relational dialogism framework of the first chapter and the contextualisation of the second chapter, makes for a clear overview.

Conclusion

The preceding chapters have first discussed religion in international affairs, religion in the context of Dutch and Indonesian history and national identity respectively, as well as in Dutch foreign policy with Indonesia. This research employed the relational dialogism framework and a critical discourse analysis to analyse the human rights reports, and this conclusion will finally answer the main research question; "what role do assumptions about 'religion' play in Dutch foreign policy with Indonesia?"

      This research discussed the Dutch-Indonesian colonial relationship. The Dutch presence might have been, relatively, less missionary-oriented compared to that of the Portugese in Indonesia. To an extent there may have been religious freedom and even some protection for Islamic rulers. This does, however, not mean that the Dutch did not have a colonial mentality and were not patriarchal. Those (un)conscious beliefs were very present. It was encompassed in the Ethical Policy, in the expansion of the work of missionary society and their symbiotic relationship with the Dutch colonial state, and the entire colonial enterprise in the Dutch East Indies. Moreover, it was very much present in the opposition to Indonesian independence. The postcolonial relationship shows an ambiguity, with alternating periods of closer contact and a more distant relationship originating from both sides. Shared social capital and the presence of diaspora groups in both countries ensures that they will have a persistent connection. However, since Indonesian independence, that connection was and still is uneven. The Netherlands still occupied Western New Guinea until 1963. But more importantly, the Netherlands still provided development assistance to Indonesia, which only came to a stop in 2020. The way in which a more balanced relationship develops from this, then, can be the topic of another research in a few more years.

      Both Indonesia and the Netherlands are highly pluralistic in terms of religion and belief, but while Indonesia is Muslim-dominant, the Dutch have a Judeo-Christian background. In Indonesia there is an ambiguity between the principle of Pancasila and that of a secular state. In the Netherlands, there is a so-called strict separation between religious organisations and the state and the understanding that religion is a private matter. However, the Judeo-Christian background and the history of pillarisation influenced values which are still present in the public sphere. For example, in the existence of confessional facilities in the social and cultural domains. Indonesia theoretically allows for the freedom to worship one's own religion or belief, yet there is a three-step hierarchy of accepted, discriminated, and unaccepted religions. With each lower level, believers have less protection and face more discrimination and even occasional persecution. The Netherlands sees a move towards limiting fundamental rights instead of favouring unlimited expansion, with even debate on the exceptional positions of religious organisations. The contextualisation shows that while the Netherlands is, or finds itself to be, more 'secular', religion is not completely delegated to the private sphere. Religion plays, clearly more than in the Netherlands, an undisputed role in the public and private sphere of Indonesian society. However, it is interesting to note that, even though

not in the same areas and not to the same degree, in both countries there are trends towards limiting fundamental rights and the right to religious freedom.

Within the reports, religion is very much treated as its own separate entity. The 2014 report recommend that the right to FoRB should be furthered in conjunction with other human rights issues, yet this does not feature in the discussion of projects. As such, it is presented as something that is treated as a distinct, clearly identifiable 'thing'. However, as I have shown in my first chapter, it is far more complex. Religion is in flux, it is changing and developing and manifests differently in different times and places. The reports, however, often speak of 'religious and traditional values' as a static thing. Wilson's framework of relational dialogism which

> acknowledges connections among elements in religion that are not fixed, but are fluid, shifting and changing as they interact with each other, with other ideas and other texts, and with people's practical experiences, past, present and future.[241]

The approach of relational dialogism enables the study of ways in which religion influences politics, both through explicitly and implicitly embedded cultural assumptions. Relational dialogism encourages the examination of the influence of religious ideas on communities, societies, nation-states and civilisations, and not just the actions of individuals. These religious ideas may be implicit, or explicit, embedded assumptions that use religious languages, narratives, phrases and ideas as framing devices, which may justify particular policy actions to be more acceptable and legitimate.[242] The view that follows from the reports is not one in which the Dutch follow this same line of thinking. Instead, in those cases where advancing the human rights priorities may prove difficult, the Dutch move towards silent diplomacy. The Dutch find trilateral cooperation essential. Strategic partnerships with civil society are important, as they know better how to conduct effective dialogues and approach human rights issues in a meaningful way. As such, it would be my suggestion that before instigating these numerous projects, the Netherlands first research and assess embedded cultural assumptions and the interplay of religion and politics. Through the use of the relational dialogism framework. With those findings, better policy decisions can then be made.

The paternalistic and 'knows it better' tendencies that I described in the second chapter as present in the Dutch-Indonesian relationship is also present in the Dutch human rights reports. The preceding show this already as it is, to a certain degree, present in the way that the Dutch push their conception of the human rights priorities. It is part of the way in which credibility comes forth in the reports. It is said to be of the utmost importance to conducting an effective human rights policy, but the reports do not show many critical remarks towards the Netherlands to improve upon. The most shocking was the fact that the importance of being aware of bias in algorithms that may lead to unfair discrimination between groups is stated, yet this is exactly what is beneath the Toeslagenaffaire. The 1992 visit of Queen Beatrix to Indonesia already showed the hypocrisy of the

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[241] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 96.

[242] Wilson. *After Secularism*. 104.

Netherlands. Where the Queen addressed her host about poor human rights in Indonesia, yet ignored the crimes the Dutch had committed in Indonesia over the centuries.

The way in which religion features in the human rights reports concerning Indonesia is predominantly aimed at combatting religious intolerance found within Indonesia through various projects. As I have shown in the second chapter, there is a problem of religious intolerance within Indonesia and as such should be addressed. However, the Netherlands is also moving towards more religious intolerance nationally. There are moves to limit some fundamental rights and public, collective discussions on this are becoming louder. This chafes when observing the importance that the Dutch place on their credibility. The relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia has been, and still is, unbalanced. This is clear when evaluating the colonial relationship, but also that of after independence. The Netherlands advances their human rights priorities, while Indonesia was dependent on DC. One can argue whether their relationship is that of equals.

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List of Abbreviations

In order of appearance:

CDA[1]	Christen Democratisch Appèl (English: *Christian Democratic Appeal*)
CU	ChristenUnie (English: *Christian Union*)
SGP	Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (English: *Reformed Political Party*)
FoRB	Freedom of Religion and Belief
BZ	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (English: *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*)
DC	Development Cooperation
IR	International Relations
VOC	Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (English: *United East Indies Company*)
WIC	West-Indische Compagnie (English: *Dutch West India Company*)
KITLV	Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (English: *Royal Institute for Language, Land and Ethnology*)
NIMH	Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie (English: *Netherlands Institute for Military History*)
RMS	Republic Maluku Selatan
IGGI	Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia
CGI	Consultative Group on Indonesia
KTP	Kartu Tanda Penduduk (Indonesian Identity Card)
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexual, Asexual, and +.
ESA	Eenheid Strategische Advisering (English: Strategic Advice Unit)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Period Review
ICG-FoRB	International Contact Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief
IRFBA	International Religious Freedom and Belief Alliance
EU	European Union
GSP+	Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus
Ormas	Mass Organisation Act