

lived experiences, decisions or actions (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). *'Imagine, a collaborator like that, what reasons could he have had for collaborating? Well, then they'll come up with: he really believes in this ideology. For instance, when we talk about Jews. [he really believes] That they are an inferior race and he or she wanted to see them exterminated. Or (...) he was just trying to pursue a career with the German occupier and maybe that was his main reason for participating. Or maybe the Germans blackmailed him to actively trying to betray people, because he or his family were being pressured. Those are interesting findings to come up with for pupils. So that they don't just think: oh, a collaborator is pure evil (...) but that everyone has motives for action'*²²². By zooming in on how people from the past felt, made decisions and faced consequences, the Dutch collaborator during the Holocaust is given a face. *'For a long time, collaboration was a dirty word. As I also said a moment ago, this was also partly due to Lou de Jong, this whole therapeutic historiography to process collective trauma. But we are now gradually reaching a phase in which we can move on from that, and we can therefore look at collaborators without immediately cursing them and spitting on them as bad people who collaborated with the Germans. As I said before: collaboration, it is collaboration but that is not necessarily wrong. You have to be able to understand why people did that, you know; empathise.'*²²³ Collaboration is no longer taught as explicitly wrong. The conviction is held that when one truly considers the complexity of the position of collaborators, judging their actions as 'wrongdoing' would be unfair; all things considered, what would you do? This narrative matches Gans' observation about the tendency in Dutch society and historiography to present a 'grey' picture of the history of Dutch collaboration during the Holocaust (2010a). The Dutch who collaborated are not to be blamed because of the complex situation they were put in by the perpetrators. The hard choices they had to make turned them into collaborators.

This complexity afforded to the collaborators in Holocaust history is not afforded to the perpetrators in Slavery history. This is due to the application of positionality. In Slavery education the stress is placed on the context: *'What they almost all say is: yes, but the Slavery the WIC did is of course very bad. And that's true, but mainly from a modern perspective. But in those days, of course, I mean there were also opponents but mainly it was just the way it was, you know? I try to teach them that we look at things from today's point of view. We look at it now like; that cannot happen and that's ridiculous and so on, and rightly so. But at the time they justified it to themselves and [we ask ourselves] why do they do that? So they [pupils] can then begin to understand how those two times differ from each other.'*²²⁴ This teacher illustrates how positionality leads to an understanding in which the context of the perpetrator determines his or her position, and our current norms and values determine the difference in position and mentality between people who live now and people who lived then. By zooming in on the context, its idiosyncrasies determine what is right and wrong and, as a consequence, the complex position of the

individual appears subordinate.¹⁶⁰ Hence, there is no need to hold the Dutch responsible for the past, nor do they need to feel responsible for the repercussions of Slavery in current times; our present society is so far removed from those times, it has little or nothing to do with it.

10.4 An externalised perpetrator

*Yes, the story of the Holocaust, I tell from the German perspective. That makes sense because you can see the build-up that I have been talking about: the road to Auschwitz, I should just call it that. Yes, that is actually a German story for the most part.*¹⁶¹

The quotation above illustrates externalisation in Holocaust education already discussed – the atrocities are mainly considered German or otherwise foreign. Externalisation occurs in Slavery education as well and on multiple levels.

The first two forms of externalisation, temporal and moral externalisation can be interpreted as a distance that is constructed between Slavery history and current society. ‘Long distancing’ (Klein, 2017, 79) was discussed in the didactics chapters; it refers to the process in which the temporal distance between then and now is extended to highlight discontinuity. ‘Yes, that does not make much sense. I think, look, if you are now going to apologise for Slavery 400 years ago.’¹⁶¹ Then you are actually passing a moral judgement based on our standards and values today. But then we refer back to Piet Emmer, who says; no, in those days they looked at it very differently and it was the most normal thing in the world for the Dutch.’¹⁶² Emphasising historical distance leads to temporal externalisation; Slavery is catapulted into a distant, historical context. This quotation also demonstrates moral externalisation. Today’s Dutch society is based on norms and values that are in no way compatible with the colonial times when Slavery was a legal practice.

The second two forms of externalisation address the perpetrators and the location of the atrocities. In Slavery education, geographical externalisation occurs as American Slavery history serves as a dominant point of reference for teachers. Teachers would sooner discuss Slavery in the American South than in the Dutch colonies. This makes the main perpetrators in Slavery American as well. The choice to focus on American perpetrators in a Dutch Slavery history lesson, is indicative of perpetrator externalisation.

160 This is observable in other Slavery history education sources as well. Educational clips from NTR show the Dutch perpetrators of the slave trade extensively and explicitly in a stereotypical way. A special focus is placed on the nature of the conditions on board, which are a reflection of the harsh conditions of the time in which the slave trade was legal. All actors involved with trading, buying and keeping slaves, are white, speak Dutch, use racist language and commit violence. They are not given names or backgrounds or histories. The perpetrators are portrayed as pawns in a gruesome spectacle far removed from present society.

161 The Dutch abolished Slavery officially in 1863, which in 2020 is 158 years ago. Not 400 years ago.

In the previous paragraphs, the proximity of Holocaust victims and collaborators was addressed, so where in Holocaust education can one find externalisation?

How teachers discuss the atrocities that happened during the Holocaust indicates perpetrator and geographical externalisation. When the Dutch participated in the persecution or genocide of the Jews, they are considered collaborators; the responsibility is externalised to the Germans. The atrocities of the Holocaust are also externalised geographically, as they are mainly placed in the concentration and extermination camps in Germany and Poland. A clear distinction is drawn between Westerbork and the extermination camps in the East, furthering a Dutch dissociation with perpetration. Even though, as Ido de Haan put it: *'Auschwitz should not be made into a "catchphrase" of what had happened, because the persecution of the Jews happened around the corner, on every doorstep and in front of one's house'* (1997, 14).

10.5 'Othering'

*'In the South of the United States, when the slave trade was abolished, it was really an economic necessity for them. So they, and then I make a comparison to horses to make it extra clear, they set up a breeding programme. Yeah, you breed horses, so slaves were also bred because they did need more slaves. And then they really looked at health and the healthy man and the healthy woman and they [were bred] just like a healthy stallion with a good pedigree and a healthy mare with a healthy pedigree., So I make them very aware of the fact that people were treated as property, as animals.'*²²⁷

In Slavery education the use of specific language underlines that the Africans were seen as less than human, by making comparisons with animals as the quotation above shows. In Holocaust education 'othering' occurs through descriptions of Jews as a separate people with different traits from other Europeans that caused them to be discriminated against for centuries. Below, I address how 'othering' in both Holocaust and Slavery education has similar effects.

In both subjects, the victim perspective plays a dominant role. In Holocaust education the focus on victims, through guest speakers and testimonies, may contribute to pupils getting an image of Jews solely as victims. Combining this understanding with the story that Jews have always been seen as different from Europeans, including the Dutch, creates a distance between the Dutch Jews that were murdered during the Holocaust and the non-Jewish Dutch. Some teachers explicitly paid attention to Jewish life and the traditions that were part of it, to counter the image of the perpetual victim. However, this sustains the image of Jews as the 'Other' in addition to seeing them as victims. In Slavery education, the victim category takes centre stage through the inclusion of fictive material such as films, series, re-enactments and literature. The general lack of emancipation stories

supports the stereotypical image that the African enslaved were incapable of helping themselves and needed European enlightenment to be freed. In Holocaust education also little attention is paid to stories of resistance. The African enslaved, like the Jews, are stereotypically portrayed as helpless victims in need of compassion and sympathy.

Jews and Africans are also both discussed as perpetrators. To provide pupils with a comprehensive image of what the triangular trade entailed, teachers teach how the supply of humans by African traders made it possible for the Dutch and other Europeans to enslave Africans in the colonies. In Holocaust education, teachers show that although the Jewish council did not intentionally help the Germans, their actions did contribute to the deportation and genocide of the Jews. A direct link is made between the actions of the Jewish council and the murder in the death camps. Such a link is generally not made between non-Jewish Dutch collaborators and the Holocaust. When the Jews during the Holocaust and the Africans during Trans-Atlantic Slavery are not portrayed as helpless victims, they are portrayed as collaborators and perpetrators.

In teaching both topics, stereotypical language is used; both Jews and the African enslaved are at times compared to animals, to underline dehumanisation¹⁶². To teach pupils how the national socialists saw the Jews, comparisons with rats are made. Focusing on the incredibly high 'industrial' numbers associated with the Holocaust increases dehumanisation. This risk is acknowledged by teachers, yet the focus on numbers remains prevalent. In Slavery education, the animal comparison happens more frequently; it is used to explain the economic context in which the African enslaved had to be seen as products or as cattle in order to be traded on a massive scale.

Teachers mentioned the major obstacle of finding the balance between teaching about stereotypical language and recreating and sustaining stereotypical language. Teachers are aware of the implications of stereotypical language, but in Slavery education they appeared more conscious of it. The 'Black Pete' debate and the more recent public debates surrounding the appropriate labelling of skin colour¹⁶³ may contribute to this. The *Black Lives Matter* protests of 2020, which aimed to raise awareness of institutional racism in the Netherlands, may also have contributed to teachers addressing the use of racial slurs in the past and the present.

162 Literary scholar Kari Driscoll addresses how racialisation and animalisation have historically been essential to justifying perpetration in atrocities. He quotes Adorno when he concludes that 'the constantly encountered assertion that savages, blacks, Japanese are like animals, monkeys for example, is the key to the pogrom' (Driscoll, 2020, 195); a multi-directional comparison.

163 In this debate white Dutch people have to decide to what extent it is appropriate to refer to their own skin colour as white or 'blank', which is best translated as 'fair'. The other side of the coin is how to refer to people of colour or of African descent: 'neger', dark skinned, 'black' are all labels that are up for a debate that has not been settled (Rorink, 2019; Takken, 2018; Vermaat, 2017).

Some teachers addressed language in Holocaust education, but it appeared to be less urgent. In Holocaust education, anti-Semitic language and stereotypes are taught as a historical phenomenon, despite the observation by the Anne Frank Foundation and the Verwey Jonker Institute that anti-Semitic slurring is an ongoing problem in the Netherlands (Tierolf et al., 2017, 10). When racial slurs are discussed, or comparisons are made, it is generally done to teach pupils about the context of the past, not the present. Nevertheless, in Slavery education, it is pointed out that the language of the past is relevant now, as it remains subject of debate.

It appears to be quite a challenge to teach Holocaust and Slavery history without ‘othering’. One needs to understand what hatred of Jews entailed in order to comprehend why they were murdered on such a large scale. The Europeans singled out specific peoples for Slavery in the colonies; in order to address this properly, pupils need to learn why. However, when Jews are presented as historically different and the ‘othering’ of people who descend from Slavery continues to the present day¹⁶⁴, a distance is created between the victims of both histories and Dutch society then and now.

Moreover, ‘othering’ could easily be misinterpreted as a justification. *‘So, I try to show them above all; what was the position of the Jews in society and is it [anti-Semitism] then maybe a logical path it took to the Holocaust.’*²²⁸ In a story where Jews are portrayed as the eternal ‘unwanted Other’, the Holocaust is presented as a ‘logical’ consequence. A similar effect occurs when the enslaved are continually reduced to products. In Slavery education, the main reason or justification for Slavery is economic gain. This is further explained by magnifying the cattle and commodity comparisons that slave traders made at the time. Continuing this line of reasoning into the present, rather than critically engaging with it, could lead to an understanding of Slavery as a logical choice. Due to the commodification and dehumanisation of people¹⁶⁵, the slave trade, like the Holocaust, is presented as making sense.

164 Hondius (2014) studied the perceptions of Europeans on people of colour in Europe and provided a historical overview in which she identified five main tropes. Infantilisation refers to the process in which Europeans had a tendency to treat black people as infants. This attitude is presented and perceived as well intended (4). Exoticism is the process in which black people are regarded as exceptionally, attractive, fascinating and intriguing whilst a little bit dangerous. Bestialisation refers to Europeans associating black people with animals, both wild and dangerous or as cattle and livestock (4, 38). Exclusion and distancing black people literally have contributed to there being a small black presence in Europe. This last trope is closely related to exceptionalism, which is connected to favouritism: an expression of a relationship of power (4, 326). All of these tropes Hondius places under the umbrella term of paternalism of European race relations: “a passive strategy to manage long-term inequalities” (19). Stereotypical and racist perceptions of black people persist to this day, causing social stigma through ‘othering’ (Essed & Hoving, 2014, Hayes et al., 2018, Wekker, 2016).

165 In this discussion of dehumanisation and commodification, racism is generally not taught. Instead, in a story where Africans are presented as products (not people) who accept their fate (no resistance), the enslavement of Africans makes sense, and partly absolves European perpetrators.

'Othering' can be explained by the prevailing exclusivity that is attached to Dutch identity. 'The memory of the persecution of the Jews is not part of the national identity. On the contrary, it is a violation of it, which can only be overcome by a renewed sense of nationhood' (De Haan, 1997, 230). The Holocaust as it unfolded in the Netherlands is selectively appropriated¹⁶⁶ and commemorated in cultural memory as well as education. Its complex position in Dutch society is further illustrated by the Holocaust remaining a source for reverence as well as envy, discomfort and Anti-Semitism (Gans, 1994; 2014; Tierolf et al., 2017). Colonial and Slavery history have also mainly been studied and represented outside a Dutch national frame (Bijl, 2012; Legêne, 2003, 2005). Historian Paul Bijl argued: 'traces of colonialism and its violence appear to lie outside national history and Dutch concerns' (458). He concluded that due to cultural aphasia¹⁶⁷: 'the victims of colonialism are not memorable within a national context and there is no language available to discuss them as part of Dutch history' (2012, 458).

This relates to the notion that Dutch Jews and those who descend from the African enslaved, to this day, are not considered truly Dutch. In 2008, Essed and Trienekens discussed how 'belonging' in the Netherlands goes hand in hand with being perceived as white (2008, 58). Similarly, Jones argued based on analysis of Dutch political discourse that 'whiteness' still is represented as one of the essential conditions of 'real' Dutchness (2014, 332). This Dutch whiteness according to Gloria Wekker is defined not just based on skin tone it also includes not having a memory of oppression (Wekker, 2016, 7). Observations like these can further explain why Jews and those who descend from Slavery continue to be perceived as 'Others'.

Conclusion

This chapter examined similarities and differences in Holocaust and Slavery teaching practices based on a comparative analysis of didactics, pedagogical strategies and narratives.

A striking difference is that while in Holocaust education, extensive attention is paid to anti-Semitism, in Slavery education, racism is not widely considered. This was observable in the Dutch Slavery canon window as well. The omission of racism can be explained by the lack of a discourse on racism in Dutch society, as a whole (Essed & Hoving, 2014).

166 I call this selective appropriation because the Dutch identify with Jewish victimhood even though the experience of Dutch Jews was dissimilar to most Non-Jewish Dutch victims of Second World War. Furthermore, as De Haan argues, claiming the Holocaust as a national trauma, negates the role Dutch people played in the actual genocide ('Jodenvervolgning geen nationaal trauma', 1995). Thus, appropriation goes hand in hand with a selective memory.

167 To explain the way the French have come to terms with their colonial history, Ann Stoler developed the concept of colonial aphasia. She describes it as: 'calling the phenomenon colonial aphasia (...) rather it is to emphasise both loss of access and active dissociations. In aphasia, an occlusion of knowledge is the issue. It is not a matter of ignorance or absence. Aphasia is a dismembering, a difficulty speaking, a difficulty generating a vocabulary that associates appropriate words and concepts with appropriate things' (Stoler, 2011, 124). Stoler's concept led scholars to address how empires give meaning to their colonial legacy. Paul Bijl utilised Stoler's notion to examine Dutch colonial memory, specifically in relation to Indonesia.