When the progressives fail to progress

The HeForShe campaign, international norm diffusion and national identity in the Netherlands

Radboud University Nijmegen - Department of Political Science

Master Thesis Political Science - International Relations

Student: Ike Lieshout

Student number: s4107594

Supervisor: dr. J. M. Joachim

Date turned in: 09/08/2019

Words: 24.948

Abstract

In this thesis, I set out to examine how the traditional spiral model of domestic norm diffusion can be expanded in view of the actual negotiation and contestation of the gender norms established by the United Nations HeForShe campaign in the Dutch context. The trajectory of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands was described by means of process tracing, based on interviews, government documents and media analysis. From my analysis, it becomes clear that the spiral model does not effectively describe or explain the limited norm diffusion of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands. In direct opposition to the underlying logic of the model, the Dutch national identity as progressive and liberal hindered the norm diffusion, because it resulted in little to no international and domestic pressure being established around the new norm. Particularly noteworthy is the contrast between the lip service paid by most political leaders, and the lack of genuine debate and policy changes. The analysis also showcases the spiral model's limitations with regard to explaining diffusion failure, the effects of indifference and inaction on norm diffusion, and the Western bias of the model. These issues need to be considered to improve upon the spiral model.

Keywords: norm diffusion, gender equality, spiral model, HeForShe, national identity

Acknowledgements

One of the questions I got most often this last year was some variation of "so why exactly are you doing this *again*?". Writing a second master thesis does not necessarily seem like the type of thing reasonable people do, and if I'm honest, it probably wasn't a particularly reasonable thing to do. But here we are, and I did it anyway.

First and foremost, I am deeply indebted to the staff at the Political Science department at Radboud University. I know everyone always says that and you're sort of supposed to say that regardless of whether it's true, but I truly grew up in this programme. Special thanks are (still) owed to Marcel Wissenburg, who almost never agrees with me but still taught me how to make better arguments, and, crucially, to let go of the argument that doesn't really work no matter how much you want it to. Anya Topolski, who is fearless, always makes space for the radical argument, and taught me so much as both a teacher and a boss. Anna van der Vleuten, who was one of my first female academic role models, who has an uncanny ability to see through any well-told but ultimately nonsense story, and who probably deeply underestimates the impact she has had on both my academic and my personal development. Finally, Jutta Joachim, whose feedback was beyond valuable, who has been nothing but kind to me throughout the master programme, and who was consistently supportive of both me and this project throughout the writing process.

Throughout my bachelor and both my master's I have had amazing communities of fellow students. For this project specifically, I am deeply thankful to the support and friendship of three of them. Florian, thank you for drinking unacceptable amounts of coffee with me and talking to me both about my thesis and everything but my thesis. Lema and Louise: you're both amazing, fierce, intelligent and kind in a way which is nothing short of miraculous. Thank you for all the support, understanding and unabashed feminism (and all the wine).

Roelinde, Robin, Daan, Barbara, Simone and Midas: you're my very favourite political bubble to be a part of, thank you for all the joy and support. Thijs, thank you for a lot of very dumb memes and a lot of very good conversations.

As always, Sophie, Lydia, Jelle, Sara, Jordi, Joyce, Koen, Stefan, David, Cedric: I am beyond grateful for your friendship, the sheer joy and the unending support you have given me over the years and specifically the last couple of months. Here's to many more years of ridiculous jokes, too-enthusiastic dancing, and conversations that last well into the night.

Bob - thank you so much for all your advice and guidance over the years. Thank you for your kindness as an uncle, and your relentless critical eye as a teacher. I checked, there is no 'as such' anywhere in the document!

Mama - as promised, your belated Mother's Day gift! Thank you for taking me back into your house for weeks at a time. Thank you for doing all of this *again*. And thank you for being my first teacher of critical thinking, the importance of fairness, justice and open conversations, and for everything else. I promise I won't ever write one of these again.

Table of contents

Abstract 2

Acknowledgements 3

Table of contents 5

List of tables 8

List of Dutch political parties 9

Timeline HeForShe campaign 10

1. Introduction 11

1.1 Gender equality, HeForShe and the Netherlands 12

1.2 Research question 14

1.3 Theoretical approach 15

1.4 Methodology and data 16

1.5 Academic and social relevance 17

2. Theoretical framework 19

2.1 Constructivism and norms in International Relations 19

2.2 The spiral model of domestic change 21

2.2.1 Phases in the spiral 23

2.2.2 Benefits of the model 26

2.3 Western bias 27

2.4 A plurality of human rights norms 29

2.5 Conclusion 32

3. Methodology 34

3.1 The Case Study 34

3.2 Case selection 35
3.2.1 The Netherlands 35
3.2.2 The HeForShe campaign 36
3.2.3 The merit of the cases 37
3.3 Process tracing as a method 37
3.4 Process tracing in this thesis & hypotheses 39
3.4.1 Mechanism following from the spiral model 40
3.4.2 Alternative mechanisms and hypotheses 42
3.5 Data selection 43
4. Analysis 46
4.1 The HeForShe norm 46
4.1.1 Norm negotiation 50
4.2 2012: national elections 52
4.2.1 Election programmes 53
4.2.2 Government policy 54
4.3 2014: the start of the international campaign 56
4.3.1 Media response 56
4.3.2 Political response 59
4.3.3 Theoretical implications 61
4.4 2017: the start of the Dutch campaign and national elections 62
4.4.1 Media response 64
4.4.2 Election programmes 64
4.4.3 National election 65
4.4.4 New cabinet policy 66

4.4.5 Lack of active support 68
4.4.6 Theoretical implications 72
4.5 Conclusion 73
4.5.1 Effectiveness campaign 74
4.5.2 Shortcoming spiral model 75
4.5.3 National identity 77
4.5.4 Norms as processes 78
5. Conclusion 79
5.1 Summary 79
5.2 Reflection and contributions 82
5.3 Recommendations for future research 82
References 85

List of tables

Table 1	Dominant actors and modes of interaction within the spiral model	p. 26
Table 2	Effective and ineffective elements of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands	p. 75

List of Dutch political parties[1]

50PLUS: right-of-center party, focused on the right and needs of citizens above 50 years of age

CDA (Christen Democratisch Appèl): right-of-center Christian party

CU (ChristenUnie): moderate Christian party

D66 (Democraten '66): democratic party, economically moderate and culturally progressive

DENK: center-left party, focused on the rights of Muslims in the Netherlands (break away party from the PvdA)

FvD (Forum voor Democratie): populist conservative right-wing party

GL (GroenLinks): green party, economically left-wing and culturally progressive

PvdA (Partij van de Arbeid): labour party, mainstream left-wing

PvdD (Partij voor de Dieren): animal rights/green party, left-wing progressive

PVV (Partij voor de Vrijheid): populist anti-immigration party

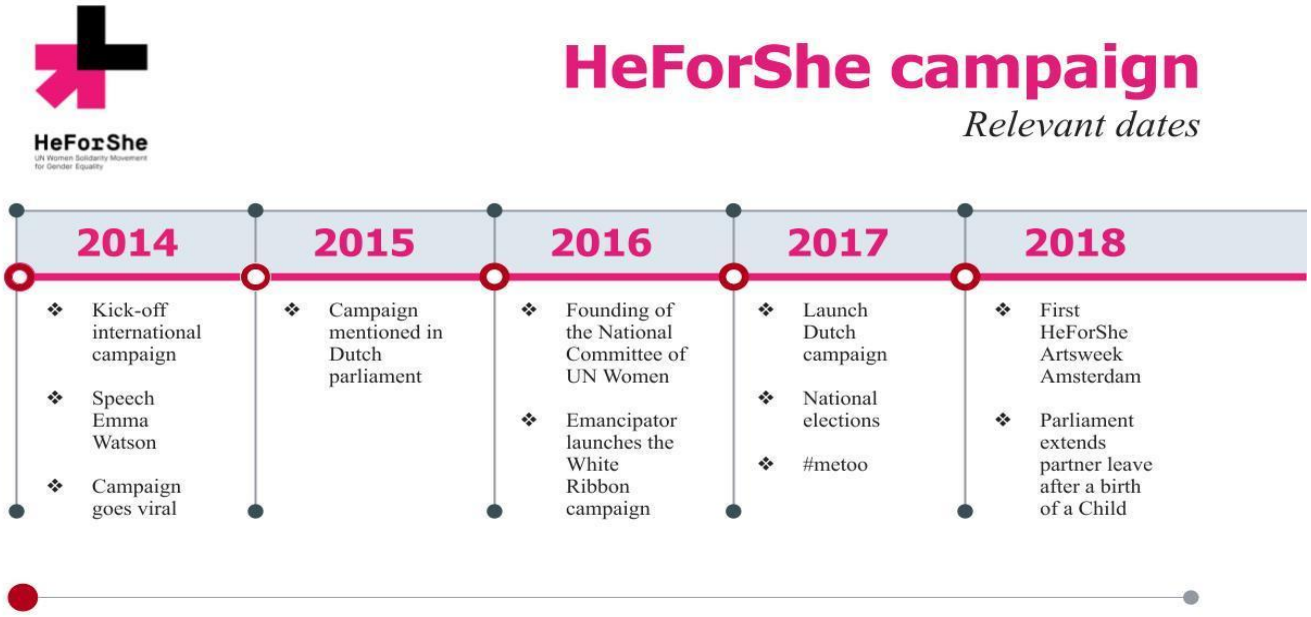
SGP (Staatkundige Gereformeerde Partij): conservative Christian party

SP (Socialistische Partij): socialist party, strongly left-wing

VVD (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie): mainstream right-wing party

[1] All parties that at some point in the 2012-2019 period held a seat in the national parliament have been included in the list. I have not included *eenmansfracties* (one man fractions), which are created when a member of parliament leaves their party in between elections but holds onto their seat.

Timeline HeForShe campaign



1. Introduction

The HeForShe campaign by UN Women started in 2014 with the "ambitious aim […] to mobilize 1 billion men to accelerate the achievement of gender equality" (HeForShe, n.d.-b). At its kick-off event, Emma Watson (primarily known for her role as Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter movies) held a widely viewed and shared speech about the meaning of feminism and her firsthand experiences with restrictive gender roles and sexism. Moreover, she spoke about the harmful effects of gender norms on men (and specifically her brother) and stated: "Men—I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. Gender equality is your issue too" (UN Women, 2014; United Nations, 2014). Reponses were largely positive, although critiques both from conservatives and feminists also quickly surfaced.

The HeForShe campaign is the first of its kind as a UN campaign concerning gender equality, focusing primarily on the role of (and potential benefits to) men in achieving gender equality, rather than empowerment of women or gender mainstreaming. In this respect, the campaign implies a certain change in the way gender issues and norms are understood, framed and communicated within the UN. The UN and other international organizations have been actively developing gender norms and strategies for decades and these norms and strategies have continuously changed. The development of gender equality policy and strategy is often divided into three stages, focusing first on equal treatment in legislation and later on gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming (Verloo, 2005), although these categories are not mutually exclusive. Where exactly HeForShe would fall within this categorization is not necessarily clear, because of the new focus and because of the multiple projects under the HeForShe umbrella. It aims for top-down change through "key decision makers in governments, corporations, and universities" (HeForShe, n.d.-c) in IMPACT 10x10x10, but also has ready-made action kits for individuals, organizations and students, as well as registering online pledges to fight against gender bias (HeForShe, n.d.-a).

Presuming the HeForShe campaign at least signals a shift in meaning of the norms regarding gender equality within the UN, the question arises what the effects of this shift have been and

whether these effects can be detected at the national level. For the purpose of this thesis, the focus will be on the diffusion of this norm in the Netherlands.

1.1 Gender equality, HeForShe and the Netherlands

The Netherlands was ranked 7th on the 2015 Gender Inequality Index of the United Nations Development Programme (United Nations Development Programme, 2016) and 13th on the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2015). However, by 2017 it was ranked 32nd by the World Economic Forum. Even though the country was still ranked 1st on the educational attainment measurement and 25th on political empowerment, it ranked 82nd on economic participation and opportunity and 108th on health and survival (World Economic Forum, 2017). Furthermore, the Gender Equality Index by the European Institute for Gender Equality indicates a stagnation or decrease in gender equality from 2010-2015 in most domains, with a few exceptions (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018). Indicators thus show a certain downward trend, both in comparison to the rest of the world and in comparison to the country's own history.

Five Dutch male political party leaders pledged support for HeForShe, including the current prime-minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte, who stated that

> Gender equality is not a 'women's issue'. Participation of women in all areas – in social, political as well as economic areas- is extremely important for welfare [sic] and wellbeing of societies as a whole. […] I am ready to make my contribution and I count on all of you to join the HeForShe campaign (UN Women NL, n.d.-d).

This pledge, as well as those of other political leaders, illustrates a certain political saliency of the HeForShe campaign and gender equality in general within the Dutch context. However, when asked in 2017 about the unequal gender distribution in his latest cabinet and specifically the fact that his own party only contributed one female minister, Rutte stated "I would have liked to have had more. But in the end we go for the best people. It is what it is"[2] (Joop, 2017).

[2] Translated from the original Dutch: "'ik had er graag meer willen hebben. Maar uiteindelijk geldt: we gaan voor de beste mensen. Het is wat het is."

Two prominent female party members, Edith Schippers and Neelie Kroes, publicly questioned this line of reasoning. Schippers stated that "the argument that they [qualified women] are not there is really nonsense. Apparently, the choice was made not to search good enough. If you end up with a cabinet with way more men [than women], you have not selected the best"[3] (de Volkskrant, 2017), while Kroes said "It cannot be the case that the liberal VVD delivers one female minister. And as if that was not enough, Mark says: 'I go for quality.' […] And then you see that bunch standing there on the steps of the palace and you think: we do not have to take this seriously, right?"[4] (de Volkskrant, 2017).

Moreover, at the time of writing, 2.08 million HeForShe commitments have been made online worldwide. Of those, 6.513 are from the Netherlands - and 19.101 are from Iceland, which has a population of roughly 340.000 people (UN Women, n.d.-c; United Nations, 2018, p. 22), compared to 17 million in the Netherlands (United Nations, 2018, p. 25). Iceland has been one of the countries where the campaign was most popular (UN Women, n.d.-c). However, the response rate of less than 0.1% in the Netherlands is in stark contrast to the early excitement for the campaign, as well as the Dutch self-image as a world-wide progressive leader.

These examples already showcase the complicated relationship between Dutch politics and civil society on the one hand, and gender norms in general, and the HeForShe norm in particular, on the other hand. The traditional spiral model, concerned with the diffusion of international (human rights) norms, stipulates that an embrace and internalization of norms goes together with the development of an identity based on respect for human rights (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 10). The model largely expects countries that have accepted human rights as a norm to follow through with norm-abiding behaviour. Although the model of course acknowledges the possibility that a country's human rights record becomes worse over time, there is an assumption

[3] Translated from the original Dutch: "het argument dat ze er niet zijn, is echt flauwekul. Blijkbaar is ervoor gekozen niet goed genoeg te zoeken. Als je uitkomt op een kabinet met veel meer mannen, heb je niet de besten geselecteerd."

[4] Translated from the original Dutch: "Als de liberale VVD één vrouwelijke minister levert: dat kan niet. En of dat nog niet genoeg was, zei Mark: 'Ik ga voor kwaliteit.' […] Vervolgens zie je dat stel op het bordes staan en denk je: dit hoeven we toch niet serieus te nemen?'

that the embrace and internalization of a norm will lead to behaviour which is consistent with the norm (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 12).

In many ways, the Netherlands should be the 'ideal case' for the diffusion of international human rights and gender norms if this reasoning is correct. The Netherlands is a Western country that has ratified most of the central human rights treaties and has a reputation for being concerned with human rights (Rijksoverheid, n.d.-a; Rijksoverheid, n.d.-b), as well as being one of the richest countries on earth (World Bank, 2016). It is the type of country that, in the traditional models, does not come to mind as still 'needing' change regarding human rights norms (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 32). However, Mark Rutte's behaviour indicates that the story is not that simple. The question arises whether an identity and a reputation linked to respect for human rights, always leads to effective norm diffusion – or whether this identity or reputation may work against norm diffusion. After all, if norms are presumed already to have been effectively adapted, the need to further diffuse (new or more far-reaching) norms may not be evident.

1.2 Research question

Following from this theoretical puzzle regarding the Dutch context and norm diffusion surrounding HeForShe, the research question of this thesis will be:

How can the traditional spiral model of domestic norm diffusion be expanded in view of the actual negotiation and contestation of the gender norms established by the United Nations HeForShe campaign in the Dutch context?

Most research into international (gender) norm diffusion is focused on the ways in which countries come to accept a basic gender equality norm. This thesis intervenes in this academic debate by focusing on a country which has adapted most international human rights norms, but which continues to struggle with realization of certain aspects of these norms, in this case gender equality. Specifically, my research is concerned with how new norms are received in a context where the international human rights norms regime has been so thoroughly internalized that it has become a part of national identity formation, but where behaviour is in many relevant ways not consistent with that norm. I will examine the possibility that, in contrast to what is often assumed in norm diffusion literature, norm socialization to the point of internalization of the

norm as part of a national identity does not necessarily lead to more norm-consistent behaviour, but can actually lead to a rejection of further norm abiding behaviour because this requires recognizing the gap that exists between self-identification and political reality.

Claiming an identity as a country concerned with human rights may make it difficult to admit that there are pressing human rights issues within a country's own borders – leading to downplaying of these issues, or the importance of specific aspects of human rights violations. Moreover, if a country is considered or considers itself to abide by human rights norms as they were previously established, changing norms at the international level may suddenly move them from the category of 'good' norm-abiding countries to that of those which still have human rights issues to solve, which would be an embarrassment to their identity and their international standing. If this is true, then it is to be expected that a changed human rights norm at the international level would have a fractured diffusion path within a national context where human rights have become part of the identity of the country.

1.3 Theoretical approach

A vast body of work has been established within International Relations regarding international norm diffusion, with competing explanatory models for the (lack of) effects of international norms at national or local levels, ranging from a world culture model to tipping points, boomerang effects and a spiral model of domestic change (Krook and True, 2010). Of these, the spiral model by Risse, Ropp and Sikkink (which incorporates many of the other models named) will serve as the theoretical starting point of this thesis, as it combines the impact of the state, domestic civil society and transnational actors in a causal model which specifically aims to explain domestic change with regard to human rights (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 20).

However, the model does leave some questions open. Firstly, it focuses on 'primary' human rights which are most widely shared, such as right to life and right to freedom from torture (ibid., 2-3). But one of the core aspects of the human rights framework is exactly that all human rights are part of the same framework and support each other – upholding one human right cannot be done without upholding all. Seen in this light, it is actually crucial to take into consideration more contested human rights issues, such as gender equality.

Moreover, the spiral model hinges largely on the idea that Western countries somehow 'control' human rights norms and can effectively pressure other states with respect to their human rights record. The model and the case studies which support it tacitly assume that Western European states have internalized human rights norms and show rule consistent behaviour with regard to human rights norms (ibid., p. 17-19). This means it is unclear what would happen with this model if certain Western states are precisely the states which do not abide by certain human rights norms.

In order to potentially improve upon the spiral-model by Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, two strands of research will be taken into account. Firstly, the Western-centric assumptions from the spiral model will be questioned based on Mutua's description of the metaphor of human rights, in which Western governments perceive themselves as saviours (Mutua, 2001), as well as Steinhilper's description of certain international human rights norms traveling from 'the Rest' to 'the West'. Based on this, the existence of a plurality of human rights norms can also be taken into account, and the identity of certain countries as progressive can be better understood.

Secondly, recent work concerning norms as processes will be used to investigate the concept of norms and the ways in which international norms interact with national politics and civil society. Van Kersbergen and Verbeek complicate our understanding of norms by redefining them, away from static things with a fixed meaning and towards ever-shifting processes where the meaning and interpretation of norms change throughout the political process of international norm implementation (Van Kersbergen & Verbeek, 2007). This potentially provides a way of seeing the establishment of the HeForShe norm at the UN as only the beginning of the story and makes it possible to research how the following political processes (re)shape the meaning of the norm.

1.4 Methodology and data

In order to fully understand the ways in which HeForShe diffused within the Dutch context and what this says about the spiral model of domestic norm diffusion process tracing will be used. The HeForShe key speeches will be analyzed to establish the general aspects of the HeForShe norm and the ways in which it diverges from earlier UN gender norms. Process tracing will be used to understand the ways in which the HeForShe norm was picked up, negotiated, ignored,

contested and changed in the Dutch context. Process tracing as a method specifically makes possible researching how the HeForShe norm has been interpreted by different actors and what the consequences of this have been. Evidence has been collected through interviews with relevant actors, analysis of debate reports from the Dutch parliament, election programs and policy documents, and finally analysis of the related written media output in the Netherlands.

1.5 Academic and social relevance

This thesis intervenes in the academic debate concerning norm diffusion and contestation by focusing on how human rights norms are negotiated and shaped in liberal democracies, which are often left out of mainstream norm diffusion theory as they are seen as norm abiding. This interrogation of norm diffusion in the Netherlands, which is usually seen as an ideal case of human rights norm abidance, makes possible the investigation of how norms function within a context where identification with that norm has already taken place – and specifically how identification with a specific norm can to some extent become dysfunctional. Moreover, by doing so, this thesis increases our understanding of the diverse ways in which gender norms have been and can be conceptualized within a Western European nation, complicating the image of these countries as being the arbiters and protectors of human rights in general, and gender norms in particular. Furthermore, this approach to researching norms makes possible a more thorough understanding of the localized workings of norms and thus of when and how they become contested and/or become effective through the behaviour of central actors.

With regard to societal relevance, gender norms have been continuously changing for decades and can have incredible political impact. Understanding both what messages current gender norms are sending and how they are diffused in specific contexts is crucial to the emancipation and gender equality struggle, and might also provide some insight into the political fight for the rights of other marginalized groups. The focus on the Netherlands is important here because currently our understanding of how political struggle happens in liberal democracies after basic legal rights have been acquired is still wanting. Increasing knowledge of norm diffusion can thus empower national and international actors, ranging from governments and international organizations to grassroots movements, to impact this process. Moreover, understanding the way in which gender equality is conceptualized is particularly relevant at this point in time,

considering the fact that some journalists already characterize the period from 2012/2013 onwards as the fourth wave of feminism (Abrahams, 2017; Cochrane, 2013).

2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I shall set out the theoretical background to this thesis. This thesis will work with (an adjusted version of) the spiral model of domestic change as developed by Risse, Ropp & Sikkink and this chapter will describe both the model and some critiques that make alterations of the model necessary. Firstly, I will give a general introduction to constructivism and norm literature within International Relations. Secondly, I discuss the spiral model of domestic change as a starting point for the theoretical discussion surrounding the internalization of international norms within domestic contexts. Thirdly, I shall point out some of the pertinent theoretical shortcomings of the model: its Western bias, the assumption that a singular human rights norm exists and is internalized in similar ways all over the world, and finally the related assumption that norms are given. I will conclude with some modifications of the spiral model to explain (a lack of) taking up (new) international norms in domestic context, now that there are competing interpretations as to what human rights entail, and norms surrounding issues of for instance equality are still in flux and changing over time.

2.1 Constructivism and norms in International Relations

Constructivists, although they may disagree with each other on a number of accounts, in the end share "the view that because the material world does not come classified, the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language, and are therefore social artefacts" (Adler, 2012, p. 113). This means that empirical research cannot be seen as simply describing what is there - rather, the way in which research (and politics) are done *constructs* a certain reality. There is an interdependence between knowledge and reality: we cannot simply describe reality, without imbuing it with our own (implicit) beliefs and thoughts. This also means that constructivists share "a concern with the basic "sociological" issue bracketed by rationalists-namely, the issue of identity- and interest-formation" (Wendt, 1992, p. 393).

The basic claim of constructivism can be illustrated by the now famous argument by Wendt that anarchy is what states make of it, and that "self-help and power politics do not follow either logically or causally from anarchy and that if today we find ourselves in a self-help world, this is due to process, not structure" (Wendt, 1992, p. 394). This is a direct attack on the traditional

realist argument that states behave out of self-interest and self-preservation because of the existence of anarchy between states, and that this cannot be changed[5]. Wendt argues that although anarchy between states definitely exists, this does not exclude possibilities of collaboration or logics of interaction not based on self-help and power politics (Wendt, 1992).

All in all, constructivism can be "understood by distinguishing its position on the level of observation, the level of action proper, and the relationship between these two levels" (Guzzini, 2000, p. 1). On an epistemological level, it concerns the social construction of knowledge, and on an ontological level the construction of social reality (Guzzini, 2000). Moreover, it "asks us to combine a social theory of knowledge with an intersubjective, not an individualist, theory of action" (Guzzini, 2000, p. 1), and to take seriously the analysis of power in order to understand "the reflexive link between the two levels of observation and action" (ibid.).

International norms have been a fruitful area of research for International Relations scholars for decades now, especially within the constructivist research tradition. Risse, Ropp and Sikkink attribute the rise in constructivist literature to an empirical failure of theories focusing solely on material structures as the explanation for political realities. Although constructivism does not (necessarily) reject the impact of material structures, the relationship between ideas and materiality is interpreted differently than in other theories.

> While materialist theories emphasize economic or military conditions or interests as determining the impact of ideas in international and domestic policies, social constructivists emphasize that ideas and communicative processes define in the first place which material factors are perceived as relevant and how they influence understandings of interests, preferences, and political decisions (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 7).

Some of the relevant questions to explain (international) political reality than become how principled ideas (held by individuals), become norms (collective beliefs about correct behavior

[5] Wendt does go out of his way to say that when not dealing with questions of identity or interest formation, it may be very reasonable to assume interests in the way the rationalists do.

for an actor with a certain identity) and how these norms influence behavior and structures of the state and other institutions (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 7).

Norms have a certain duality to them, being both descriptive, based on the actual behaviour which occurs in a specific situation, and prescriptive, "normative expectations as to what ought to be done" (Hurrell & Macdonald, 2012, p. 69). This also means that norms are never completely separate from an empirical reality (i.e. if a country has never had a free and fair election, there is no norm for free and fair elections within that country), but norms are also not determined completely by empirical reality (i.e. there can be a norm which stipulates the importance of free and fair elections within a country, even if the latest election was not completely free and fair).

Linked to this two-sided relationship with description and prescription, norms also do not necessarily only concern moral or ethical forms of reasoning. As stated by Hurrell & Macdonald, "it is important to avoid artificially stark divisions between instrumental/strategic and moral forms of reasoning and action – since real political practices of argumentation and justification and legitimation draw in both together and in complex ways" (Hurrell & Macdonald, 2012, p. 71). This means that norms are not separate from economic and military realities - but how these realities are interpreted is influenced by norms and other constructions. In other words: "Legal, moral, and political norms [...] can play a communicative and epistemic role, shaping the conditions within which claims, including justice claims, can be made and debated" (Hurrell & Macdonald, 2012, p. 68).

Norms have thus become an important research issue within International Relations, especially within the constructivist tradition, which sees norms as mediating and constructing the relationship between material reality and the interpretation of that reality by actors. Many of these norms may be about process (i.e. how an organization should be run), but some of the most well-known international norms concern the formulation and protection of human rights.

2.2 The spiral model of domestic change

Risse, Ropp & Sikkink lay out the spiral model of domestic change with regard to international human rights norms in their 1999 book *The Power of Human Rights: international norms and*

domestic change, as well as supporting it with a broad variety of case studies (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999). The spiral model aims to provide an empirical explanation of changes in countries' domestic behaviors with regard to human rights issues, as a result of the internalization of international norms.

For Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, (international) norms are not just principled ideas, but rather collective expectations of behavior. As they note in their book:

> To endorse a norm not only expresses a belief, but also creates impetus for behavior consistent with the belief. While ideas are usually individualistic, norms have an explicit intersubjective quality because they are *collective* expectations. The very idea of "proper" behavior presupposes a community able to pass judgements on appropriateness (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 7).

Although norms may not determine behavior one-on-one, and thus norms can exist but still be violated by certain behavior, according to Risse, Ropp & Sikkink norms do impact the behavior of actors and in particular states. Specifically, "norms influence political change through a socialization process that combines instrumental interests, material pressures, argumentation, persuasion, institutionalization, and habitualization" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 37). As part of this socialization process, Risse, Ropp & Sikkink define three distinct types of ideal causal mechanisms affecting the internalization of norms by actors: 1) instrumental adaptation and strategic bargaining, 2) moral consciousness-raising, argumentation, dialogue, and persuasion, 3) institutionalization and habitualization (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 5; p. 11). The spiral model integrates all three of these mechanisms, and they are linked to specific steps of the socialization process.

The spiral model gets its name from the spiraling way in which domestic change occurs to Risse, Ropp and Sikkink. They distinguish five different phases of internalization: repression, denial, tactical concessions, prescriptive status, and rule-consistent behavior (ibid., p. 20). Risse, Ropp & Sikkink allow for the possibility that countries 'backslid[e]' to a phase in which international human rights norms are not as internalized. However, the authors do not expand on the circumstances in which this will occur, moreover 'skipping' a step is not perceived to be a possibility (ibid, p. 18).

The phases and the movement from one phase to another is determined by the dominant actors and the dominant modes of interaction between actors. In this respect, the authors of the model conceive of four distinct levels: international and transnational interactions between INGO's (international non-governmental organizations), international human rights regimes and organizations and Western states; domestic society and opposition within a norm-violating state; links between domestic opposition and transnational networks; and finally, the national government of the norm-violating state (ibid, p. 17-18).

The spiral model also stipulates that it is not the most economically weak countries that are most easily pressured to abide by international human rights norms, but rather countries which place importance on their international image and status as part of the international society. Money and trade are therefore seen as relevant, but not sufficient to explain (lack of) abidance to international norms by a state (ibid, p. 8-10).

2.2.1 Phases in the spiral

Roughly speaking, the spiral that then occurs looks as follows. During phase 1, *the repression phase*, domestic opposition is weak and little international attention is paid to the in-state repression occurring. However, information about the repression may slowly be acquired by transnational advocacy networks. Using this information, these networks can then put the norm-violating behavior on the international agenda, which will lead to phase 2 (ibid., p. 22).

During phase 2, *the denial phase*, international public attention towards the norm-violating state will grow, and transnational human rights networks will gather and disseminate information about norm-violations as well as try to mobilize international organizations and liberal states to put pressure on the repressive state. In response, the norm-violating state will usually deny the validity of international human rights norms, and reiterate the importance of the idea of non-intervention. The denial is therefore more far-reaching than denying that a specific event occurred; it denies the very validity of the norms being brought to the forefront by the transnational human rights networks, usually by contrasting it with a norm that is framed as more valid within the specific context (such as national sovereignty) (ibid., p. 22-24). Importantly, states in this phase do feel the need to deny the legitimacy of the norm: they are therefore to

some extent concerned with protecting their international reputation and thus likely to be sensitive to socialization (ibid, p. 23-24). Moving on from the denial phase towards tactical concession is often difficult, and "primarily depends on the strength and mobilization of the *transnational* network in conjunction with the vulnerability of the norm-violating government to international pressures" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 24). This vulnerability is determined both by economic and military dependence, and in how far a state sees itself as (striving to be) liberal (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 24).

During phase 3, the *tactical concessions phase,* the norm-violating state will do tactical concessions in order to pacify international criticism. There might be temporary or cosmetic changes, but no structural developments. Strategic logics are dominant in the behavior of the state, which is "trying to use concessions to regain military or economic assistance, or to lessen international isolation" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 25). Although the state's behavior may not yet be fundamentally different, transnational human rights networks and international attention can help strengthen and broaden domestic human rights organization, and there is often a shift towards stronger domestic opposition (ibid., p. 25-28). This is the part of the spiral which Risse, Ropp & Sikkink see as the most precarious phase, in which backlash from the state can occur which leads to strong repression of activists, whom are often still dependent on a small group of well-known leaders who can be targeted relatively effectively. However, if the state does not repress the activism, domestic and international actors will start to effectively pressure the state from two sides, and will often coordinate their efforts (ibid., p. 25-28).

Instrumental and argumentative rationality will both matter during this phase, with a shift occurring towards argumentative rationality. Domestically, opposition will likely be formed around the core ideal or human rights (argumentative), although some actors will perhaps subscribe to human rights norms at least partly because these ideals hold international support and legitimacy (instrumental) (ibid, p. 26-27). Internationally, the tactical concessions that have been made necessarily mean that the governments have (partly) recognized the validity of international human rights norms - the significance of which states, according to Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, often underestimate (ibid, p. 27). They often both underestimate internal opposition and underestimate how much they can get 'stuck' in their own rhetoric, often believing that 'talk is

cheap' until it becomes clear that they have lost internal and international control of the narrative (ibid.). Moreover, "the more norm-violating governments argue with their critics, the more likely they are to make argumentative concessions and to specify their justifications and the less likely they are to leave the arguing mode by openly denouncing their critics" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 28), which strengthens the argumentative rationality of human rights norms. What started out as tactical concessions will therefore turn into a true dialogue about improving the human rights record of a state, including recognition of transnational advocacy networks and domestic opposition as legitimate negotiation partners. At this point, strong repression is likely to backfire, so a move towards liberalization will often be made, or increased repression might lead to an overthrow of the government. Either way, a transition towards prescriptive status usually occurs (ibid, p. 27-28).

During phase 4, *the prescriptive status phase*, human rights norms are used by relevant actors to evaluate, defend or critique both their own behavior and that of other actors. Argumentative rationality thus becomes dominant as an ordering logic for behavior (ibid, p. 29-31). Because 'true beliefs' of actors cannot easily be determined, four indicators are used by Risse, Ropp & Sikkink to determine prescriptive status of human rights norms towards governments: 1) ratification of international human rights conventions and optional protocols; 2) institutionalization of the norms in domestic law; 3) institutionalization which makes possible complaints by citizens regarding human rights violations; 4) acknowledgment of the validity of human rights norms regardless of audience and genuine dialogue with critics (ibid, p. 29). Based on these indicators, it is expected that governments engage in dialogue with other actors, and that institutionalization of the norm begins, with the development of new laws, institutions and procedures (ibid, p. 29-31).

During phase 5, *the rule-consistent behavior phase*, actions by the state match with international human rights norms. This is more far-reaching than encoding norms into law: it concerns the actual behavior of states (ibid, p. 31-33). Pressure from domestic, transnational and international networks remains crucial in this phase, but is often more difficult to organize, because international attention is more easily drawn by massive violations of human rights. However,

pressure from both below and above is necessary to achieve rule-consistent behavior according to Risse, Ropp & Sikkink (ibid., p. 33).

The spiral model can therefore be summarized in the following table (table 1), which defines both the dominant actors in moving a country from one phase to another, and the dominant mode of interaction. This does not mean that other actors or modes cannot be found within this phase, but they are less crucial.

Phase	Repression	Denial	Tactical concessions	Prescriptive status	Rule-consistent behavior
Dominant actors moving process to next phase	Transnational human rights networks	Transnational human rights networks	Transnational human rights networks and domestic opposition	National governments and domestic society	National governments and domestic society
Dominant mode of interaction	Instrumental rationality	Instrumental rationality	Instrumental rationality → rhetorical action → argumentative rationality	Argumentative rationality and institutionalization	Institutionalization and habitualization

Table 1. Dominant actors and modes of interaction within the spiral model (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p.32).

Another way of understanding the spiral model is to imagine it as a slow shift in the burden of proof: over time, the burden of proof moves from domestic opposition and transnational human rights networks, which need to prove that anything is wrong, towards the states, which have to prove they are abiding by the norm that has been set (Gilardi, 2012, p. 467-468). The moment that his burden shifts can then also be seen as the moment the norm truly 'takes hold', and the power relations between proponents and opponents of the norm shifts.

2.2.2 Benefits of the model

The spiral model of domestic change holds a number of advantages when trying to explain the (lack of) adaptation of a human rights norm within a country, which is why it will be used as a basis for this thesis. Firstly, there is its strong empirical record, and it provides us with causal mechanisms about how, when and why certain norms get diffused. The theory is very clear about both the dominant actors and the mode of interaction within certain stages of diffusion and incorporates many theories that already existed, such as world time, two-level games, and boomerang effects (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999). Usually this incorporation is done with a specific

tie to a certain phase in the spiral model and/or certain actors. As a consequence of all of this, the theory can also be tested empirically.

Secondly, it provides a strong grounding of concepts such as normalization and internalization, as well as describing what types of states are most susceptible to human rights norms. Therefore, the model gives us a clear starting point for both empirical research and theoretical discussions, and gives direction to terms often used without much specification.

Thirdly, the model takes seriously and incorporates both domestic actors and transnational networks, and does not artificially separate the two. Using it does not necessitate, as some other theories do, to 'black box' either domestic or international actors.

However, there are some issues that must be raised with respect to the model, especially when it is applied to current day processes: the work having been originally written in 1999, some of its characterizations of world politics are necessarily out of date. In the following sections, I will therefore go over some of the theoretical and/or empirical issues that may be problematic with regard to the spiral model.

2.3 Western bias

The spiral model largely assumes, and even postulates, Western countries as the arbiters of human rights: they are assumed to pressure other countries so that they will become better actors with regard to human rights (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 19). As defined by Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, the global human rights polity consists of "the international-transnational interactions among transnationally operating international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), international human rights regimes and organizations, and *Western states*" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 17, emphasis added). Western states are not truly examined as potential norm-violators, and countries from outside 'the West' are portrayed as outside of the global human rights polity, and in some ways needing correction. This idea is further strengthened by the fact that their book discusses case studies from Africa, Asia, South-America and Eastern Europe, but not Western-Europe, North-America, or Oceania (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999).

The model therefore presumes that Western states are 'good' actors with regard to human rights, which do not have to be scrutinized and challenged to the same degree as other countries.

Moreover, it presumes non-Western states do not have the same moral and/or political standing with regard to human rights as Western countries, have no pressuring to do on their own, and are instead 'learning' their human rights conceptions from the West.

These assumptions bode particularly ill with the focus on 'core' human rights that Risse, Ropp & Sikkink have. Historically, much of the focus of, for instance, many African countries has been on socio-economic rights, (racial) equality and fighting against colonialism and slavery. Many of these issues are not considered 'basic' human rights issues by Risse, Ropp & Sikkink (1999, p. 2-3), but they are exactly the issues for which other countries have held European countries accountable. The categorization of human rights into 'basic' and less basic rights also links to the presumption that there is one human rights norm, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

The model also falls into what has been described by Mutua as the metaphor of human rights, made up out of a conception of savages, victims and saviours (Mutua, 2001, 202-204). In this metaphor, states that breach human rights are seen as savage and human beings within that state are helpless victims devoid of agency. On top of this,

> In the human rights story, the savior is the human rights corpus itself, with the United Nations, Western governments, INGOs, and Western charities as the actual rescuers, redeemers of the benighted world [...] The savior is ultimately a set of culturally based norms and practices that inhere in liberal thought and philosophy (Mutua, 2001, p. 204).

Mutua is deeply critical of the current human rights literature as a whole, and especially the cultural and political dominance imposed on developing countries by Western institutions through the human rights discourse (Mutua, 2001). The main critique of the spiral model that derives from Mutua's work concerns the way in which the human rights corpus "falls within the historical continuum of the Eurocentric colonial project, in which actors are cast into superior and subordinate positions" (Mutua, 2001, p. 204), as well as that

> Some of the most important events preceding the post-1945, United Nations-led human rights movement include the anti-slavery campaigns in both Africa and the United States, the anti-colonial struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and the struggle for women's suffrage and equal rights throughout the world (Mutua, 2001, p. 205).

In other words, many of the most fundamental human rights struggles have been in opposition to (colonial) Western states, and positioning Western states as the states that are best suited to pressure other states into better behavior ignores this history and instead claims a historically inaccurate moral high ground. This also includes the trap that many Western scholars are caught in, of seeing Western states as 'saviours' of relatively agency-less victims in 'barbaric' states (although the focus on domestic opposition within the spiral model does provide a certain amount of agency to inhabitants of countries with oppressive regimes).

On top of these critiques, the focus on human rights norms from 'the West to the Rest', ignores the reality that certain human rights norms are brought from 'the Rest' towards the West: not only in historical campaigns in opposition to slavery and colonialism, but also far more recently, for instance in the construction and diffusion of the Rights of Indigenous People framework within the UN (Steinhilper, 2015). Steinhilper points out that diffusion literature has often focused on how liberal Western norms are brought "from "the West" to "the Rest"" (Steinhilper, 2015, p. 16). The same can be said of the spiral model, which has little space for norms arising from outside the Western institutions, the potential need for Western states to improve their human rights record and the role non-Western and Western actors may play in this, or the improvement of human rights within non-Western states without Western interference.

In order to accommodate these critiques, certain changes to the model will be necessary. Instead of just Western powers, seeing other states as relevant actors within the global human rights polity may be more appropriate. Moreover, Western states should be seen as potential violators of international human rights norms. Finally, a simplistic belief in 'core' human rights should be avoided, instead examining exactly those rights which 'the West' may have seen as peripheral (such as equality and economic development), but are or should be as much a part of the human rights discourse as freedom of expression or fair judicial proceedings. This also creates space to examine the national identities of Western states, and how they might impact norm diffusion.

2.4 A plurality of human rights norms

Linked to, but not entirely addressed by, the Western centric worldview on which the spiral model is premised, is the assumption that there is a singular human rights norm which is

established on an international level (primarily by Western institutions and states), which is diffused into states. The model therefore ignores different interpretations and readings of human rights, except in so far as to discuss the tactic of norm-violating states to try to deny the validity of human rights or to frame certain human rights as non-applicable in their circumstance (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999, p. 22-24).

However, this ignores the multitude of interpretations of human rights that exist, even when abiding by a focus on institutions: the African Union, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Arab League, European Union, Council of Europe and the Organization of American States all have their own human rights treaties, which all in some way diverge from the United Nations treaty and policies. In these treaties, some rights may be less or more strongly positioned, some extra rights may be defined, some rights may be linked to specific policies, some rights may be limited to specific parts of the population such as children, etc. (African Charter on Human and People's Rights, 1981; American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 1948; Arab Charter on Human Rights, 1994; ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, 2012; Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000; European Convention on Human Rights, 2010). Either way, these treaties point to a multitude of human rights interpretations, which overlap and clash in different ways, and it is unclear why the United Nations treaty and/or their position on a specific issue should be the worldwide basis of human rights all together. This would assume that the differences among countries and regions are necessarily problematic and a sign of lack of abidance by the one true norm.

The model is therefore ineffective in dealing with genuine, good-faith clashes of understanding among actors with regard to what human rights are and should be, and how they should be implemented and protected. As part of this, the model presumes that oppression is always easily identified and always necessarily visible. This may be the case for those issues that they focused on (imposing the death penalty, for instance), but is far more problematic when it comes to issues such as equality or right to schooling.

Thus, the assumption that 'basic' human rights can be identified and used as effective test cases is also an issue. Firstly, because issues such as the abolition of the death penalty are perhaps most likely to be explained by other norms than human rights, such as religious beliefs. Secondly,

a diversity and balance of rights is central to the human rights regime (Brems, 2005, p. 300-302). In a system where rights cannot be seen as completely independent from each other, and rather balance each other out and both limit and reinforce each other, it is highly doubtful that focusing on a 'core' of human rights is truly effective. Finally, assuming that the right to equality and protection from discrimination is a secondary issue necessarily presumes that the human rights of part of the population are more 'core' than others: if for instance you abolish the death penalty, but women can be lawfully killed by their husbands, certainly you have not effectively tackled the human rights issue of people being illegitimately killed under the law.

Related to this issue, the spiral model assumes norms as given, rather than as processes. Literature on norms as processes has been developing over the last years and gives us an interesting insight into the way norms function. Van Kersbergen & Verbeek for instance have shown that subsidiarity as a norm within the European Union between 1991 and 2005 is best explained not through an understanding of norm internalization, but rather as a "recurrent battle between old and newly empowered actors over its precise meaning" (Van Kersbergen & Verbeek, 2007, p. 217). They therefore stipulate that norm implementation is not always or even usually a case of internalization of a specific, set norm and (non-)compliance with that singular norm, but rather that norms are themselves processes in which battles over framing and meaning take place (Van Kersbergen & Verbeek, 2007). When applied to human rights norms, this would mean that different actors over time shift the meaning of the human rights norm, and when this norm shifts certain behaviors may no longer be acceptable. However, this does not mean that the human rights norm itself has been abandoned or replaced: rather, the meaning of the norm has shifted, and whether actors abide by the norm is therefore not only determined by the actions of the actor, but also the specific shape the norm takes in a specific context. Therefore, it may be possible to envision an actor which was norm-abiding, but which has become norm-violating, not because its behavior has changed, but because the norm is itself a process. Or, following the wording of Krook and True, implementation and the content of the norm are both dynamic processes which change overtime (Krook & True, 2012, p. 103).

Moreover, Krook and True describe a relationship between how contestable the content of a norm is and how easily it will diffuse: the more a norm can be shaped and framed by a state, the

easier it will diffuse. However, if a norm is easy to contest and shape with regard to content, diffusion will look differently in different states (ibid., p. 123). Regulative norms are easier to shape and re-interpret than constitutive norms, so they will be diffused more widely, but there is also less certainty about the exact meaning of the norm, which is more sensitive to the processes of change as described by Van Kersbergen & Verbeek.

Considering that Risse, Ropp & Sikkink define countries concerned with their international prestige to be the most sensitive to international pressure to abide by human rights, the question arises what happens when different countries lay claim to the international prestige of human rights based on different norm interpretations. This problematizes the idea that countries most concerned about their international status are the most sensitive to pressure, because they can in certain circumstances perhaps credibly claim already to abide by a human rights norm.

This critique has a serious impact on the use of the spiral model. Firstly, the battleground at least partly becomes what a certain norm *means*, rather than whether a certain norm should be *accepted*. Norm diffusion therefore cannot be separated from the process of defining the norm, and it becomes important to trace the different meanings that are attributed to a certain norm during different steps in the diffusion process.

Moreover, specific phases are likely to look slightly different: for instance, according to Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, denial is based on denying the validity of a certain norm, sometimes in contrast with a competing norm. However, if the meaning of the norm itself is part of the debate, and can be reasonably disagreed on, the 'competing norm' which challenges the validity of the norm that is being diffused may well be that same norm, formulated differently. In other words, 'denial' may start to look like the contrast between two different interpretations of gender equality (such as liberal feminism and intersectional feminism).

2.5 Conclusion

At the time the spiral model of domestic change was developed, large-scale (abidance by) international human rights norms was relatively new. Roughly two decades later, we do not only see a shift in theoretical understanding and power dynamics which makes the simplistic Western centric imagery of the theory problematic. Multiple complementary and competing human rights

discourses have also been developed, both in different areas in the world and in different periods of time, which overlap but also divergence in important ways.

Especially with regard to (gender) equality, we have seen major shifts over the last decades both in lived experience and in (international) norms. Gender equality is an example of an area where major progress has been made, but also where strong opposition still exists worldwide, and where contestation of the meaning of 'equality' is very widespread. Some of these are, in line with the spiral model, in bad faith, but some of them are also genuine responses to different contexts. A more nuanced model will therefore need to find space for those changing norms and competing norms on the same issue.

Because of both the political and theoretical progression since the 1990s, it is necessary to critically examine the position of Western states with regard to human rights issues, alongside states which are more generally criticized for their human rights record. Moreover, a model explaining norm internalization will have to engage with the different competing norms on a specific issue usually being at play, both nationally and internationally: it is not only a matter of diffusing a 'new' norm, but rather also of examining the interaction between the new norm and old norms concerning the same subject, and the role of international identity in all of this.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the methodological background of my thesis. Firstly, the methodology of case studies will be discussed, as well as my case selection of the Netherlands and the HeForShe norm. Secondly, I shall give an overview of process tracing as a methodology, and explain its relevance to this project. Thirdly, I will formulate competing hypotheses for the purpose of the process tracing, linked to theoretical considerations from the former chapter. Finally, I will discuss my data selection.

3.1 The Case Study

As described by John Gerring, "a *case study* may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is - at least in part - to shed light on a larger class of cases" (Gerring, 2007, p. 20). Because of that focus on a specific case, within-case variation is often more of a focus for case studies than cross-case variation. Moreover, in comparison to cross-case studies, case studies are seen as concerned with hypothesis generating (rather than testing), internal validity (rather than external), insight into causal mechanisms (rather than causal effects), a deep scope of proposition (rather than broad), a heterogeneous population of cases (rather than homogeneous), a strong causal relationship (rather than weak), rare useful variation (rather than common), and concentrated data availability (rather than dispersed) (Gerring, 2007, p. 38). However, these are primarily matters of degree rather than of a binary yes/no, especially because there are many different types of case studies.

This particular case study is what Gerring calls an X1/Y-centered research, which entails a focus on particular causal relationships, rather than an attempt to explain an outcome without preconceptions about the potential causes (Y-centered), or an attempt to trace the effects of a cause without preconceptions about the potential effects (X-centered) (Gerring, 2007, p. 71).

Case selection can be based on a lot of different considerations. Gerring differentiates between nine case selection methods: typical, diverse, extreme, deviant, influential, crucial, pathway, most-similar and most-different cases. Deviant cases are cases that "by reference to some

general understanding of a topic (either a specific theory or common sense), demonstrate a surprising value" (Gerring, 2007, p. 105).

The HeForShe norm in the Netherlands may be seen as a deviant case, in which the Netherlands is treated as a representative case for Western liberal democracies, but in which the expected relationship between that status as a Western liberal democracy and relatively effective international human rights norm diffusion is not upheld. It therefore deviates from the expected causal pathway coming out of the spiral model and can be used to start formulating potential alternative hypotheses and changes to the model. A deviant case is specifically suitable to hypothesis generating, i.e. developing new explanations. In how far the case is representative of the newly described relationship will depend on future cross-case research (Gerring, 2007, p. 89). Deviant cases are model-dependent (ibid., p. 106). In this case, the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands is deviant from the trajectory of norm diffusion the spiral model describes.

3.2 Case selection

Because the spiral model describes a very clear causal pathway for domestic norm diffusion of international norms, it is suitable to testing through case-studies - which is also why Risse, Ropp & Sikkink illustrate the model with case studies in their book. This thesis also tests the spiral model against a case study, specifically the negotiation and contestation of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands. Below, some of the methodological and theoretical reasons for this specific case are laid out.

3.2.1 The Netherlands

The Netherlands as a (perceived) liberal, Western democracy, which puts significant importance on its international standing, should be relatively sensitive to international norm changes according to the spiral model. This makes the apparent lack of adaptation of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands even more interesting: it shows a clash in behaviour versus identity, which complicates the model being tested. On the other hand, Risse, Ropp & Sikkink leave out Western countries altogether in their model as countries in which norm diffusion is necessary and/or taking place. The Netherlands may provide a hard case for the theory, as it tests its

boundaries. This is also in line with Amitav Acharya's argument that "advanced industrial democracies with a history of national attachment to a competing norm" (Acharya, 2004, p. 4) are in general a hard case for constructivists in the norm diffusion debate.

Moreover, considering the theoretical critiques that I have discussed in the preceding chapter, closely examining the response of a Western country to an international norm change can balance the assumption in the model that Western countries are the arbiters of human rights. As I have discussed in the Introduction, one of the relevant questions which have come up since the spiral model was developed, is how norms are received in a context where the international human rights norms regime has been so thoroughly internalized that it has come to play a role in the national identity, whereas behaviour is in many relevant ways not consistent with that norm.

3.2.2 The HeForShe campaign

I regard the HeForShe campaign as (exemplary for) an international norm change. Although the specific meaning and interpretation of the norm will be part of my research, considering that the literature on norms as processes would suggest that the meaning of a norm cannot be presumed a priori or based solely on the intent of the actors that proposed the norm, a starting point can be defined. The HeForShe campaign specifically targets men with regard to gender equality: it asks men to address gender equality and make it their issue as well - which is why, for instance, the ambassadors for the project are all powerful men, rather than women (UN Women, 2014; UN Women NL, n.d.-c). Moreover, there seems to be a move towards recognizing the harmful effects of gender norms on men in the speeches given in relation to the HeForShe campaign (UN Women, 2014; TED, 2015).

This focus on men can be seen as a norm change within the international debate concerning gender equality. Where international gender equality policy and strategy is often understood to have started with a focus on equal treatment in legislation, later moving on to gender equality policy and, after that, towards gender mainstreaming, most of these strategies have been either about 'fixing women', or 'fixing the system, to help the women' (Krook & True, 2010; Verloo, 2005). Helping men, and specifically asking men to fight for gender equality, has not generally

been part of the campaigns. The fact that *UN Women* specifically created this campaign can be seen as a shift in focus in international norms surrounding gender equality, as they are, in their own words "the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women" (UN Women, n.d.-a).

It can be debated whether the campaign itself is a norm change, or whether it is exemplary of a general norm change towards focusing on men and men's issues in gender equality debates. However, the HeForShe campaign is at least the first codification of that shift in international politics and should be taken seriously as playing a role in forming the norm change[6].

Moreover, the HeForShe campaign is an important test for the spiral model because it does not fall under what Risse, Ropp & Sikkink define as 'core' human rights. Rather, it concerns (gender) equality, and specifically a shift in the understanding of gender equality that has arisen in the last couple of years. It therefore constitutes a hard(er) case for the spiral model.

3.2.3 The merit of the cases

Both the Netherlands and the HeForShe campaign stretch the parameters of the spiral model in ways which correspond with some of the critiques that I have formulated in my theoretical chapter, namely Western-centrism a focus on 'core' human rights and the assumption that norms are singular and diffused the same way worldwide. They therefore provide a good case to examine the merits of the spiral model outside of its 'natural habitat', as well as the validity of the theoretical critiques on an empirical level, and the potential for those critiques to be incorporated in the model.

3.3 Process tracing as a method

Process tracing is a form of within-case analysis which provides "systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analyzed in light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator" (Collier, 2012, p. 823). Process tracing aims to open the 'black box' of

[6] Feminists have argued both among themselves and with other actors about the *desirability* of this norm change, and reasonable arguments may be raised on both sides of that debate, but either way, the campaign can be seen as shifting the debate.

causality and causal mechanisms specifically, and narratively *trace* the way in which causality functions in a specific case (Bennett, 2011; Collier, 2012; Crasnow, 2017). And although it may be true that "causal mechanisms are ultimately not directly observable, our hypotheses about how these mechanisms operate generate observable implications that we can test against actual observations to make (potentially fallible) inferences on the validity and scope conditions of our hypotheses" (Bennett, 2011, p. 2135).

Causal mechanisms are central to process tracing, as the method aims to understand exactly how and why something occurred. More specifically, "successful process tracing reveals the coherence of the events when understood through the causal mechanism" (Crasnow, 2017, p. 12). Understanding what these mechanisms mean in process tracing is therefore crucial, and Sharon Crasnow defines three core features of mechanisms:

> 1) mechanisms have parts - they may be identified as activities, events, or entities, but the parts are in some sense discrete (if only analytically); 2) the parts are organized in some way - the mechanism has a structure; and 3) there is an active element that is seen through the inter-relationship of the parts - all characterizations of mechanism include the idea that an effect is brought about, produced, propagated, or maintained through the inter-relationship of the parts (Crasnow, 2017, p. 8).

Causal mechanisms often partly derive from theory, although not always, as process tracing can also be used to generate hypotheses (Bennett, 2011, p. 2135). Moreover, they help shape and give direction to the narrative, so as to prevent a 'laying out of the facts' without structure or possible conclusions (Crasnow, 2017, p. 10-11). As Crasnow explains: "the causal mechanism shapes the story line that helps us identify what we should look for in the case. The details of the narrative told through that mechanism also clarify what counts as relevant alternative hypotheses and supply the dynamic or generative features that are hallmarks of a mechanism" (Crasnow, 2017, p. 12).

In order to both discover and describe these mechanisms, process tracing builds on a variety of sources, depending on the research project: interviews, primary and secondary sources, content analysis, quantitative data, etc. From these building blocks of evidence, narratives are created. Importantly:

> The *descriptive* component of process tracing begins not with observing change or sequence, but rather with taking good snapshots at a series of specific moments. To characterize a process, we must be able to characterize key steps in the process, which in turn permits good analysis of change and sequence (Collier, 2012, p. 824).

Process tracing is especially suited to understand change, which is crucial in understanding norm diffusion, because it is at its core a process of change. Moreover, because of the room to create and test competing hypotheses, and the opportunity to combine several types of data to create a complex narrative around certain occurrences, deep understanding of a specific case becomes possible. At times this understanding may be generalizable to other cases, but at the very least, it provides a more complete image of the causal mechanisms within a specific case.

Because this thesis looks at one case, in-depth in-case analysis is crucial, and process tracing makes this possible. Moreover, the causal mechanisms of norm diffusion and norm formation are difficult to approach through most other methods, which may point to a causal relationship, but often do not explain how the interaction between certain elements leads to certain outcomes.

3.4 Process tracing in this thesis & hypotheses

This thesis will, therefore, be using the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands as a test for the spiral model. Based on certain already known realities and theoretical shortcomings of the model, the expectation is that the model will have a hard time dealing with this case. Alternative explanations concern norms as processes, as well as issues surrounding national identity. Process tracing is especially suitable for this project exactly because these multiple explanations can be tested simultaneously and in contrast with each other.

Because of the importance of causal mechanisms within process tracing, I will first discuss the mechanisms which follow from the spiral model, and based on this, hypotheses will be formulated about the expected trajectory of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands. After this, I will do the same for national identity and norms as processes.

3.4.1 Mechanism following from the spiral model

According to the spiral model, the Netherlands as a liberal, Western democracy caring about its international reputation, should be sensitive to international norm developments as a consequence of international and domestic pressure related to these developments. If a norm is not internalized in the Netherlands and norm-consistent behaviour is not attained, this should be explained either through lack of international pressure, and/or lack of domestic pressure (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, 1999). The model does not explain why one or both types of pressure do not exist in certain cases, although Risse, Ropp & Sikkink state about phase five of their model, that:

> The particular difficulty in this phase is that gross violations of fundamental human rights might actually decrease in the target state and that, therefore, international attention might decline, too [...] We argue that sustainable change in human rights conditions will only be achieved at this stage of the process when national governments are continuously pushed to live up to their claims and when the pressure "from below" and "from above" continues" (Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, p. 31-33).

Taking this argument further, the underlying logic of the model seems to suggest that liberal, Western states may not internalize human rights norms to the extent of consistent behaviour because international and/or domestic pressure is lacking. This would imply that a lack of diffusion of the HeForShe campaign could be explained by international actors not seeing the Netherlands as a relevant focus for international rights campaigns and/or Dutch domestic society not seeing (new) gender equality norms as a relevant human rights issue.

Based on preliminary research, it seems safe to assume the Netherlands is not in phase 1 of the spiral model, which would necessitate active repression of the norm, which has not occurred. Phase 2 also seems unlikely, as political leaders, including the prime-minister, have spoken out in favour of the campaign. Moreover, it seems unlikely that either prescriptive status (phase 4) or rule-consistent behaviour have been reached (phase 5). Although the case is likely different for a general gender equality norm, the norm for male involvement in emancipation, both for the benefit of women and of themselves, is not encoded into policy or law, and is not generally used as a critique on actors. Therefore, it seems likely that according to the spiral model, the

Netherlands should fall into the third (tactical concessions) phase. If the Netherlands is situated in phase 3 of the spiral model, we would expect the following trajectory:

1. The Netherlands does tactical concessions in order to pacify international criticism. There may be temporary or cosmetic changes, but no structural developments.

2. Strategic logics are dominant in the behaviour of the state, which is trying to regain military or economic assistance and/or to lessen international isolation

3. Transnational human rights networks and international attention may help strengthen and broaden domestic human rights organization.

4. Assuming the Dutch state does not attempt to repress the norm developing, domestic and international actors start effectively to pressure the state from two sides, and will often coordinate their efforts

5. Instrumental and argumentative rationality will both play a role during this phase, with a shift occurring towards argumentative rationality.

6. What started out as tactical concessions, will turn into a true dialogue about improving the human rights record of a state, including recognition of transnational advocacy networks and domestic opposition as legitimate negotiation partners.

From this, a few hypotheses follow:

H1 The more focus on international prestige by the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H2a The more international pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H2b The more domestic pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

If these hypotheses hold, the underlying logic of the spiral stands, although specific elements of the causal trajectory might diverge, for instance because it concerns a liberal democracy, or because it concerns an equality norm.

3.4.2 Alternative mechanisms and hypotheses

Based on the theoretical critiques on the spiral model, two other hypotheses/mechanisms can be formulated. Firstly, one based on *national identity*, which would hold that the non-internalization of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands is because of the Dutch national identity clashing with the idea that more progress is needed, and that a changed human rights norm at the international level would have a fractured diffusion path within the Netherlands because human rights have become part of the identity of the country. A new norm and connected to that, certain behaviour now being characterized as norm-violating, challenges the Dutch identity and their status as moral actor within the international context, which creates a backlash effect. From this, another hypothesis follows:

H3 The more focus on a progressive national identity by the Dutch state, the weaker a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

Secondly, a mechanism based on the idea of *norms as processes*, which shifts the central question away from diffusion and norm compliance towards the meaning that is given to a norm. This understanding creates room for actors to give different meanings to the norm, which makes (non)compliance a less clear-cut issue. Moreover, a regulative and thus malleable norm is expected to diffuse more widely than a constitutive norm, but different actors will have different interpretations of the norm. From this, the final hypothesis follows:

H4 The more malleable the HeForShe norm is conceptualized, the stronger it will be diffused in the Netherlands

The crucial question therefore becomes understanding the exact causal mechanism which is at play in this case, and in how far it can be incorporated in the spiral model to increase its potential for explanations of empirical reality, or whether there is in this case a break with the logic underlying the model.

3.5 Data selection

Because process tracing is dependent on effective snapshots of specific points in time (Collier, 2012, p. 824), I shall use three different moments of measurement within this thesis: one before the start of the campaign (2012), one at the very start of the international campaign (2014), and one at the start of the Dutch campaign (2017).

To determine the 'starting' norm which the HeForShe campaign tries to establish, speeches on the campaign by Emma Watson (UN Women Goodwill Ambassador) and Elizabeth Nyamayaro (executive director of UN Women) will be used. Within the spiral model, this norm may be seen as the norm that is then diffused in domestic contexts (or not). In the literature on norms as processes, this establishes the starting norm which will then be contested, negotiated and shaped by different actors.

The further process of (lack of) diffusion and negotiation of the norm I shall examine based on several types of sources.

Interviews with relevant actors will give insight into how the campaign in the Netherlands was experienced by UN Women and specific political parties. It also gives access to reflections on the (lack of) success of the campaign and the contributing factors at play. Moreover, it gives insight into potential norm negotiation by specific actors. I performed three interviews for this thesis, namely with:

1. Kirsten van den Hul, member of parliament for the PvdA, spokesperson on the issue of Emancipation - interview by phone on 29/05/2019.
2. Marije Cornelissen, general director of the UN Women National Committee of the Netherlands - interview by phone on 27/06/2019.
3. Jasper van Dijk, member of parliament for the SP, spokesperson on the issue of Emancipation - interview by phone on 02/07/2019.

Furthermore, written questions were answered by:

1. Dorrit de Jong, policy officer Emancipation for GroenLinks - answers received on 08/07/2019.

2. Rosalie Azzi, personal assistant Ms. D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, spokesperson on the issue of Emancipation for the VVD - answers received on 11/07/2019.

The number of interviews was limited, and the interviewees were primarily actors who were supportive of the norm and the campaign. However, the interviews still provide insight into the trajectory of the campaign and the experiences of those who were actively supportive of the campaign.

In order to gain a better understanding of the political effects of the campaign and potential norm changes, I have compared the election programs of Dutch political parties from the national Dutch elections in 2012 and 2017[7]. I performed specific searches to find references to *emancipatie (*emancipation), *discriminatie* (discrimination), *mannen* (men), *vrouwen* (women) and *gender* (gender). Proceedings of the *Algemeen Overleg Emancipatie* (General Consultation Emancipation), a yearly meeting of the Dutch parliament, will be used to further investigate the political effects of the campaign. Proceedings from the only plenary meeting of parliament in which HeForShe was explicitly named, a debate on preventing violence against women in 2015, will also be taken into account. On top of this, the statements made by politicians in support of HeForShe at the start of the Dutch campaign will be analysed.

Finally, I have conducted a content analysis of statements on the HeForShe campaign in national newspapers. As part of this analysis, LexisNexis was used and searched for with the phrases “HeForShe” and “He For She”. These results were further specified to consider only news published in the Netherlands, and double postings were filtered out. This provides insight into the general societal debate and response surrounding the HeForShe norm.

[7] Only the election programmes of parties which won seats in the 2012 and/or 2017 election were taken into account.

This mix of several types of data will be used to build a narrative which can explain the way in which the HeForShe campaign and the norm it establishes have diffused, or failed to diffuse, in the Dutch context. Based on this, the hypotheses/mechanisms I have developed can be tested, and I can examine theoretical implications of the case.

4. Analysis

In this chapter, I shall first set out the HeForShe norm and the different interpretations of its meaning among different political parties. Second, I shall provide a chronological analysis of the HeForShe campaign, with 2012 as a baseline before the start of the campaign, 2015 as the starting year of the international campaign and 2017 as the starting year of the Dutch campaign. Finally, in the conclusion I will discuss the overall effectiveness of the campaign and the theoretical conclusions that can be derived from my findings.

4.1 The HeForShe norm

The HeForShe campaign was intended to "galvanize as many men and boys as possible to be advocates for gender equality" (UN Women, 2014). However, there are recurring elements to the norm beyond just getting men involved with gender equality.

First and foremost, the campaign is an explicit invitation to men to participate in gender equality issues (UN Women, 2014). Reaching out to men is also not just intended to help women. As stated by Nyamayaro, "we are tapping into something within men" (TED, 2015), one man writing to her thanking her for giving him a voice (ibid.). It is gender equality not just for the sake of women, but also for the sake of men.

This invitation to participate portrays an understanding of gender (in)equality in which male and female emancipation are two sides of the same coin, which are both important. The HeForShe campaign is "inviting men and boys from around the world to stand in solidarity with *each other and with women*" (TED, 2015, emphasis added). Or, in other words, it calls on men to participate "so their daughters, sisters and mothers can be free from prejudice but also so that their sons have permission to be vulnerable and human too - reclaim those parts of themselves they abandoned and in doing so be a more true and complete version of themselves" (UN Women, 2014). There is a focus on "uplifting all of us together" (TED, 2015).

However, this does not mean that the HeForShe campaign sees the issues facing women due to gender equality as exactly equal to those faced by men. At multiple moments, the equality and

freedom of men are portrayed as a way of getting to equality and freedom for women. For instance, Watson states both that "We don't often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes, but I can see that that [sic] they are and that *when they are free, things will change for women as a natural consequence*" (UN Women, 2014, emphasis added), and "if men don't have to control, women won't have to be controlled" (UN Women, 2014). So, gender equality for men is at least in part important because it makes possible equality for women. That this is the primary goal, is also made clear by the part of Watson's speech that addressed the downsides to not acting, which are all centered on women (UN Women, 2014).

The campaign is called He*For*She (emphasis added), not HeForHe or HeForUs or UsForEachother. The focus is on actions that can be taken by men, but with a final goal towards helping women. In part, this is out of tactical considerations. As Marije Cornelissen explained:

> It's often the commentary we get from other corners of the women's movement: 'yes, but HeForShe, that doesn't actually capture the issue'. And in some ways, they are right of course. But worldwide [...] it's much easier to approach men to help their mothers, daughters, wife, sisters, than to say 'you should participate in an emancipation trajectory for yourself'[8] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

That the HeForShe norm attempts to bring men into the gender equality debate - both for their own benefit and that of women - is the most obvious part of the norm, and the one reiterated by all interviewees (Azzi, R., personal communication, 11th of July 2019; Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019; De Jong, D., personal communication, 8th of July 2019; Van Dijk, J., personal communication, 2nd of July 2019; Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019). However, the speeches by Watson and Nyamayaro also address some other aspects of the campaign.

[8] Translated from the original Dutch: "het is ook vaak het commentaar wat we uit andere hoeken van de vrouwenbeweging krijgen. Van 'ja, maar, HeForShe, dat dekt de lading helemaal niet' en daar hebben ze natuurlijk op zich ook gewoon gelijk in. Maar wereldwijd [..] is het veel makkelijker om mannen aan te spreken om hun moeders, dochters, vrouw, zussen te helpen, dan om te zeggen 'ja, jij zou een emancipatieproces in moeten gaan voor jezelf'."

Firstly, there is a clear attempt to bring feminism and gender equality back to its fundamental core and away from heated debates about specific terms. Watson defines feminism as "the theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes" (UN Women, 2014). In this, she is responding explicitly to the image of feminism as man-hating (UN Women, 2014). At the same time, later on in the speech, she states "and if you still hate the word—it is not the word that is important but the idea and the ambition behind it" (UN Women, 2014). Watson also describes 'inadvertent feminists' in her speech: people who believe in equality and have an impact regardless of whether they would ever claim the label feminist (UN Women, 2014). There is even room for those not completely convinced yet, as Nyamayaro says: "this is an invitation for those who believe in equality for women and men, and those who don't yet know that they believe" (TED, 2015). Feminism in this campaign, therefore, seems to be about believing in certain core values and acting upon them, more than claiming a certain term or talking about a specific political ideology.

This ties into a second theme in the speeches - namely a clear desire to lower the threshold for participation. As Watson stated, "we don't just want to talk about it, but make sure it is tangible" (UN Women, 2014). Nyamayaro goes deeper into this, stating that:

> We are asking men to make concrete actions, calling them to intervene at a personal level, to change their behaviour. We are calling upon governments, businesses, universities, to change their policies. We want male leaders to become role models and change agents within their own institutions (TED, 2015).

There is a focus on direct actions which also appears from the projects which the campaign has organized in the years following these speeches. As Marije Cornelissen puts it:

> I think it's primarily focused on the idea 'everyone can do something'. [...] There are the 10x10x10 champions, so really the highest segment of men that rule the world, to involve them [...] Then we have the, let's say, male heroes. The soccer players of Valencia who participate [...], the rugby team of Georgia. We take the toughest of the tough, the manliest men of the country, who are really popular, and have them speak about the fact that violence against women is completely unacceptable in all circumstances [...] So the man as a role-model. And then we have all sorts of projects. So, one of my favourites is always one in Nigeria where men in a village got communal cooking lessons. And *en passant* they get told about women's rights and that violence is not great and that kind of thing. And because the men in the village do

> it together, they aren't side-eyed with regard to their masculinity because they are holding a pan. [...] So in that way we try to show men on all levels that they can do something[9] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

Linked to this focus on actions on all levels and the participation of all men, is the belief that people do not have to be perfectly informed, or very powerful, in order to act and do good. As Watson put it in her speech:

> In my nervousness for this speech and in my moments of doubt I've told myself firmly—if not me, who, if not now, when. If you have similar doubts when opportunities are presented to you I hope those words might be helpful (UN Women, 2014).

This is a clear call to action which reaches beyond the 'usual subjects' on an issue like gender equality: it calls on all people and all men to get involved, speak up and participate, even if so far they have felt unqualified to do so.

Finally, there is a clear frame of gender equality being about liberation: "if we stop defining each other by what we are not and start defining ourselves by what we are - we can all be freer and this is what HeForShe is about. It's about freedom" (UN Women, 2014). And "'it is my hope that HeForShe can help free us to realize that it is not our gender that defines us, but ultimately, our shared humanity" (TED, 2015).

All in all, this suggests the HeForShe norm is not *only* about male participation in gender equality. Rather, the norm may be summarized as follows:

[9] Translated from the original Dutch: "Nou ja, ik denk eigenlijk dat het vooral gericht is op het idee van 'iedereen kan iets doen'. [...] Er is de 10x10x10 champions, dus echt op het hoogste segment van mannen die de wereld beheersen [...] Dan hebben we de, zeg maar, mannelijke hero's. De voetballers van Valencia die zich inzetten, [...] het rugbyteam van Georgië. We nemen de aller-aller stoerste mannelijkste mannen van het land, die super populair zijn, en die laten we uitspreken dat geweld tegen vrouwen in alle gevallen totaal onacceptabel is [...]. Dus de man als voorbeeldfunctie. En dan hebben we allerlei projecten. Dus, één van de leukste vind ik altijd, in Nigeria waar mannen in een dorpje krijgen kookles met z'n allen. En dan en passant worden ze van alles verteld over vrouwenrechten en dat geweld niet zo leuk is en allemaal dat soort dingen. En omdat al die mannen van dat dorpje dat samen doen, worden ze niet door elkaar aangekeken op hun mannelijkheid doordat ze een pan in de hand hebben. [...] Dus ja, op die manier proberen we mannen op allerlei niveaus te laten zien dat zij iets kunnen doen."

1. Male participation in gender equality issues is important: for men themselves, for women, and for humanity as a whole.

2. Participation will look differently for different people, but everyone can participate in some way, and participation is more important than political labels.

3. Gender equality in the end serves to liberate people.

The norm is also clearly different from earlier norms. All my respondents pointed to the focus on men as a clear difference between this campaign and previous gender equality campaigns. Kirsten van den Hul stated that "it's not very often that men are so emphatically addressed with regard to their responsibility"[10] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019), and Cornelissen stated that "involving men and boys is of course relatively new. [...] I also think that it is really the next frontier in feminism"[11] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019). Representatives of the VVD and GroenLinks also underscored the innovative nature of the norm because of its focus on men (Azzi, R., personal communication, 11th of July 2019; De Jong, D., personal communication, 8th of July 2019).

4.1.1 Norm negotiation

In the HeForShe statements made by five Dutch party leaders, they all very clearly have their own focus. Where GroenLinks focuses on political representation (UN Women NL, n.d.-b), D66 is most concerned with sexual and gendered violence (UN Women NL, n.d.-e), VVD focuses on participation and the importance of gender equality to broader society (UN Women NL, n.d.-d), PvdA is focused on the balance of work and care responsibilities (UN Women NL, n.d.-f), and SP puts the gender equality debate into a broader framework of general equality (UN Women NL, n.d.-a). The political orientations of the political parties are clearly visible in this response: GroenLinks takes a progressive stance, VVD and D66 focus on behaviour that is actively harmful (such as sexual violence or exclusion), while PvdA and SP bring in their left-wing beliefs and, in

[10] Translated from the original Dutch: "het is niet heel vaak dat mannen zo nadrukkelijk worden aangesproken op hun verantwoordelijkheid"

[11] Translated from the original Dutch: "het betrekken van mannen en jongens is natuurlijk best wel nieuws. [...] ik denk ook dat dat echt de next frontier is in het feminisme"

doing this, seem to also be partly mainstreaming their gender approach to other policies (such as employment or education).

Also striking is the fact that PvdA and SP directly link their statements to policy, with the PvdA in particular discussing multiple policy proposals from their election programme (UN Women NL, n.d.-a; UN Women NL, n.d.-f). The other three parties, however, give statements of intent or belief, rather than (also) describing policy changes they believe to be necessary (UN Women NL, n.d.-b; UN Women NL, n.d.-d; UN Women NL, n.d.-e). Finally, it is worth noting that GroenLinks, SP and PvdA seem to be taking the importance of gender equality for granted in their statements (UN Women NL, n.d.-a; UN Women NL, n.d.-b; UN Women NL, n.d.-f). VVD defends that importance as a general societal good: "participation of women in all areas [...] is extremely important for [sic] welfare and wellbeing of societies as a whole" (UN Women NL, n.d.-d). D66 emphasizes the role women play in the lives of men: "it concerns your own daughter, mother, (girl)friend or wife"[12] (UN Women NL, n.d.-e).[13]

The HeForShe norm clearly leaves room for interpretation on the basis of political ideology - and political parties in the Netherlands have claimed that room. However, the core of the norm does not seem to be contested. Gender equality is important, men should get involved in fighting for it in a way which is workable for them, and liberty is the end-goal - these are not things contested in the statement by Dutch politicians in support of the campaign.

Moreover, room for these multiple interpretations was explicitly build into the norm itself. As Cornelissen makes clear:

> UN Women creates campaigns that have to be useable worldwide [...] I mean, with the UN, exactly because there are so many cultures and different countries involved, you're quickly on a lower common

[12] Translated from the original Dutch: "Het gaat om je eigen dochter, moeder, vriendin of vrouw."
[13] This argument has long been criticised by feminists because it can be interpreted as meaning that women are important because of their relationships to men, rather than because of their own humanity.

> denominator. A little less confrontational, but that still has its uses[14] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

In other words, the campaign was intended to be applicable worldwide, which already entailed creating a norm which would be slightly amenable to different political realities and beliefs. Considering this focus on broad participation, the norm clearly constitutes a regulative norm - there are not necessarily targets or explicit rules which would indicate norm abidance, rather, slight deviations of the norm are built into the norm itself.

However, importantly, there is no indication of a recurrent battle over the meaning of the norm. Different policy conclusions may be drawn by different actors based on their general political ideology, but these do not attack each other and can co-exist without contradicting one another. Because the core meaning of the norm remains stable, the applicability of norms as processes to this case already seems limited, regardless of the theoretical benefits of the concept. This might in part be due to the lack of resistance to the norm overall, which I will come back to later in this chapter, and which also means no actors were actively trying to frame the norm away from its initial meaning.

4.2 2012: national elections

On September 12, 2012, national elections were held in the Netherlands. The previous cabinet, Rutte I, had consisted of VVD and CDA, and received *gedoogsteun* from the PVV[15] (parlement.com, n.d.-c). The cabinet had fallen in April of 2012 because no agreement could be reached on a proposed set of spending cuts (ibid.). After the election, a cabinet was formed out of PvdA and VVD, with Mark Rutte entering into his second term as prime-minister. Jet Bussemaker, a PvdA member with extensive governmental experience, became Minister of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), responsible for the Emancipation portfolio (ibid.).

[14] Translated from the original Dutch: "UN Women creëert campagnes, die gewoon inzetbaar zijn over de hele wereld [..] Nou ja, bij de VN, juist omdat er zoveel culturen en verschillende landen aan meedoen zit je al gauw op een wat lagere gemene deler. Wat minder confronterend, maar dan nog heeft dat ook zo zijn nut."

[15] The PVV was not officially part of the cabinet and provided no ministers, but was included in negotiations because the party was necessary for the cabinet to have a majority in parliament.

4.2.1 Election programmes

In the election programmes for the 2012 election, emancipation of men is rarely mentioned. Two themes concerning men and gender equality do come up multiple times: the need to draw more men to teaching positions in primary education (CDA, 2012, p. 43; GroenLinks, 2012, p. 21; PvdA, 2012, p. 16), and the need to balance work and care responsibilities, especially for people with children and those who perform informal care responsibilities (CDA, 2012, p. 20, 44 & 54; ChristenUnie, 2012, p. 26; D66, 2012, p. 16; GroenLinks, 2012, p. 8 & p. 23; PvdA, 2012, p. 27 & 31; PvdD, 2012, p. 40; SP, 2012, p. 19). The SGP is the only party which resists increased labour participation of parents (SGP, 2012, p. 5). All in all, however, when gender equality is discussed, men rarely explicitly come up.

Throughout the documents, a few other themes also arise. Firstly, there is a strong focus across the political spectrum on emancipation and women's rights when discussing international relations, conflict and development aid (CDA, 2012, p. 28-29; ChristenUnie, 2012, p. 77-78; D66, 2012, p. 59 & 61; GroenLinks, 2012, p. 32 & 34-35; PvdA, 2012, p. 63 & 65-66; PvdD, 2012, p. 27). Almost all parties which address international relations also call for a specific focus on gender equality in this policy area - including parties which provide almost no policy proposals for gender relations in the Netherlands (ChristenUnie, 2012; D66, 2012; PvdD, 2012). Moreover, multiple parties claim a need to defend Dutch achievements with regard to gender and LGBT+ equality against migrants and/or Muslims/religious people (PVV, 2012, p. 35 & 45; VVD, 2012, p. 50).

Secondly, several parties link gender equality to their own history and lay claim to their contribution to the history of women's emancipation - most explicitly the VVD and PvdA (PvdA, 2012, p. 29; VVD, 2012, p. 50).

Thirdly, out of all elected parties, the PvdA pays the most attention to emancipation issues in their election programme. They provide the most numerous policy proposals for a diverse set of areas, such as employment, care responsibilities and violence against women (PvdA, 2012, p. 27, 30-31 & 35).

Fourthly, the strongest resistance against women's rights comes from the SGP, which argues that equal treatment and anti-discrimination are part of a secular morality which is imposed upon

other communities, losing sight of the importance of Christian values to Dutch national identity (SGP, 2012, p. 23). "Man and woman have different dispositions and callings [...] Pushing for equality and mutual interchangeability of man and woman denies natural reality"[16] (SGP, 2012, p. 3). The PVV, known to identify the Dutch culture as Judeo-Christian although the party has no official religious affiliation, also strongly opposes a lot of gender equality policy (PVV, 2012, p. 25). They call quota for women's participation in companies a European Union nightmare and reject all "'positive' discrimination, preferential policy' or other diversity nonsense'"[17] (PVV, 2012, p. 25).

From this, an image of Dutch politics emerges in which emancipation is generally subscribed to as important by most parties, but is interpreted as almost completely a woman's issue. Moreover, emancipation is clearly not the most salient theme of the election, most parties do not have specific subsections of their election programmes devoted to the issue of equality, and many party programmes are limited to a few policies, or even just goals without policies attached to them. Finally, the salience of gender equality is clearly higher where it concerns international relations than domestically.

4.2.2 Government policy

In 2013, Bussemaker sent the *Hoofdlijnenbrief Emancipatiebeleid 2013-2016*[18] to parliament. In it, the core values of the cabinet with regard to emancipation are defined, namely: autonomy, resilience and equivalence[19] (Bussemaker, 2013, p. 6-7). In the document, men and/or boys are brought up twice. Firstly, in relation to education. Girls had started to outperform boys in school, leading the government to start researching whether this constituted the success of girls, or the problem of boys (Bussemaker, 2013, p.13-14). Secondly, with regard to the role of men in emancipation:

[16] Translated from the original Dutch: "Man en vrouw hebben een verschillende aanleg en roeping [...] Het hameren op gelijkheid en onderlinge uitwisselbaarheid van man en vrouw miskent de natuurlijke werkelijkheid."
[17] Translated from the original Dutch: "positieve' discriminatie, 'voorkeurbeleid' of ander diversiteitsgeneuzel".
[18] A letter outlining the primary issues at stake in the Emancipation policy for 2013-2016.
[19] The term equivalence (in Dutch *gelijkwaardigheid*) often comes up in Dutch emancipation debates, usually to suggest that men and women are not exactly the same (equal), but do have the same worth (equivalence).

> The government can also ask of men and fathers to contribute their share to the emancipation of women. Men can, for instance, help clear the road for more women in top positions in companies. And if fathers are more involved with the upbringing of their children, mothers have more of a chance to participate in the labour market[20] (Bussemaker, 2013, p. 9).

This is a clear subscription to the HeForShe norm *avant la lettre*. It is limited to one paragraph in a fourteen-page letter, but nonetheless, the call for men's role in emancipation is there. There is also a clear framing of men's participation as a way to help women - the potential benefits to men are not addressed.

Moreover, we also see the international focus of the election programmes here, with the minister stating that:

> In the international debate conservatism and fundamentalism in orthodox-religious countries and circles is on the rise [...] An active international effort is necessary with regard to this [women's and LGBT+ rights]. The Netherlands *is traditionally a leader on this issue*, which is still very topical, and which will remain essential in the coming years. At the same time, we cannot close our eyes to what is happening in our own country[21] (Bussemaker, 2013, p. 10, emphasis added).

This clearly positions the Netherlands as (seeing itself as) a worldwide leader on the issue of emancipation. The minister nevertheless warns for the loss of focus in the Netherlands itself:

> In the societal debate, the connection between different sub-issues seems lost, while these issues are inseparably connected [...] there is a risk of carelessness, while emancipation necessitates constant maintenance[22] (Bussemaker, 2013, p. 14).

[20] Translated from the original Dutch: "Daarnaast mag de overheid ook van mannen en vaders vragen hun steentje bij te dragen aan de emancipatie van vrouwen. Mannen kunnen bijvoorbeeld helpen de weg vrij te maken voor meer vrouwen in de top van bedrijven. En als vaders meer bij de opvoeding van hun kinderen betrokken worden, krijgen moeders meer kans te participeren op de arbeidsmarkt.

[21] Translated from the original Dutch: "In het internationale debat is sprake van een opkomend conservatisme en fundamentalisme binnen orthodox-religieuze landen en kringen [...] Een actieve internationale inzet op dit punt is zeer noodzakelijk. Nederland heeft hierin van oudsher een koploperrol die anno 2013 nog altijd actueel is en ook de komende jaren zeer essentieel blijft. Tegelijkertijd moeten we onze ogen niet sluiten voor wat er in ons eigen land aan de hand is."

[22] Translated from the original Dutch: "In het maatschappelijk debat lijkt het verband tussen de verschillende deelkwesties zoek, terwijl deze kwesties onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden zijn [...] het risico bestaat dat er sleetsheid optreedt, terwijl emancipatie constant onderhoud behoeft. "

Overall, in 2012-2013 the issue of emancipation was a side issue in national politics, with men's role in that emancipation being even more a footnote, although not entirely absent or ignored. However, even clearer is the importance put on emancipation in international policy, coupled with a self-identification as a leader on this issue, side by side with a questionable willingness to invest in gender equality in the Netherlands itself.

4.3 2014: the start of the international campaign

On the 20th of September 2014, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador Emma Watson held a speech at the kick-off event for the HeForShe campaign at the United Nations Headquarters. Her speech was not just an international success, but was also viewed by a lot of Dutch people and was shared especially among younger Dutch people. As Van den Hul described it:

> I think relatively many young people have come across this campaign, have liked it. It went pretty viral, and not just the speech, the campaign as well. And I think that has everything to do with Emma Watson herself, I think she is an extraordinarily well-chosen ambassador for this theme[23] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

The message of the campaign thus seemed to hit home with at least a subsection of the Dutch population.

4.3.1 Media response

Six news articles mentioning the HeForShe campaign were published in the Netherlands in 2014 in mainstream newspapers (Algemeen Dagblad, 2014-a; Algemeen Dagblad, 2014-b; Het Parool, 2014; Trouw, 2014-a; Trouw, 2014-b; NRC.NEXT, 2014). These articles were all neutral or positive in nature, although it can be argued that one of these rather missed the point of the campaign, interpreting Watson's speech instead as a call against man-hating (Algemeen Dagblad, 2014-b).

One of the articles suggests that the popularity of the speech falls within a broader movement, by stating that "Not just the environment and peace are cool again, feminism is also acceptable

[23] Translated from the original Dutch: "Ik denk dat de campagne heel erg geslaagd is in termen van publieksbereik: ik denk dat relatief veel jonge mensen deze campagne hebben voorbij zien komen, hebben geliked. Hij is zeg maar best wel viral gegaan, en niet alleen die speech, maar ook de campagne. En dat heeft denk ik alles te maken met Emma Watson zelf, ik denk dat het een uitzonderlijk goed gekozen ambassadeur is voor dit thema,"

again. Since a couple of days, the UN speech by Emma Watson [...] is a big hit on the internet[24] (Algemeen Dagblad, 2014-a).

Another article calls Emma Watson brave for her 'coming out' as a feminist, because "outspoken feminism is a luxury that independent filmmakers, writers and artists can afford themselves"[25] (Trouw, 2014-b). However:

> But it is also certainly a smart move from Emma Watson. And from the UN. You would imagine that this campaign with a 'cool' figurehead like Watson, which is specifically focused on boys and men, achieves more than campaigns to fine hissing on the street[26] (Trouw, 2014-b).

Regardless of the positive coverage, six articles in a year does not point to particularly vigorous media attention. However, there are indications that the speech and campaign did a lot more online. Although it falls outside the scope of this thesis to do in-depth research into social media trends at different points in the campaign, the interviews and newspaper articles suggest that social media were more important for the campaign than traditional newspapers. Van den Hul was not the only one to describe the online popularity of the campaign. It is telling that one of the articles, which named Watson 'world citizen of the week' for her speech, started with the comment that: "Emma Watson hit the right chord with her UN speech in the past week *and the speech was shared on countless Facebook Pages*"[27] (Het Parool, 2014, emphasis added).

Moreover, Klaas Dijkhoff, VVD member and then state-secretary of Safety and Justice, stated in parliament that he had shared the campaign on his Facebook page, which suggests that even the political response partially occurred online (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015).

This salience of social media would also match with statements by both Van den Hul and Cornelissen that the campaign was more successful among younger people - who may be

[24] Translated from the original Dutch: "Maar niet alleen het milieu en de vrede zijn weer helemaal cool, ook feminisme mag weer. Sinds een paar dagen is de VN-toespraak van Emma Watson [...] een grote hit op internet"
[25] Translated from the original Dutch: "Uitgesproken feminisme is een luxe die onafhankelijke filmmakers, schrijvers en kunstenaars zich kunnen veroorloven"
[26] Translated from the original Dutch: "Maar een slimme move is het zeker ook van Emma Watson. En van de VN. Je stelt je zo voor dat deze campagne met een 'cool' boegbeeld als Watson die zich speciaal richt op jongens en mannen meer bereikt dan campagnes die vragen om boetes voor sissen op straat."
[27] Translated from the original Dutch: "Emma Watson raakte met haar VN-toespraak verleden week de juiste snaar en de speech kwam op talloze Facebookpagina's voorbij."

expected to be more involved with social media, also specifically when it concerns political engagement and participation (Holt, Shehata, Strömbäck, & Ljungberg, 2013). As stated by Van den Hul and Cornelissen:

> Starting the discussions, or helping start the discussions, in that top layer [of the population][28], that is going really well. [...] Getting really large groups of men and boys involved in the battle, we have not yet been successful in that[29] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

> The campaign went viral and I think that you definitely, among a younger demographic, especially among let's say students… there are few students who have not come across this on their timeline. [...] it also had to do with the message, that really resonated with a lot of young people. And gave guys the opportunity to speak out. I think a lot of guys and men actually really wanted that[30] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

Another seven articles mentioning the campaign would be published in 2015. One about the UN summit on men in 2015 (de Volkskrant, 2015), one calling for volunteers (Bennekoms Nieuwsblad, 2015), two wherein speakers mentioned the campaign in the article (Dagblad van het Noorden, 2015; Trouw, 2015), one in which the campaign was used as an example of feminism among actresses (Algemeen Dagblad, 2015) and one on the return of feminism, stating "They [feminists] are back! But now they are fun"[31] (Haarlems Dagblad, 2015). Finally, there was one article which did not manage to stay away from sexist language while discussing a speech on gender equality, stating "there were also speakers at Davos which were nice to look at, eh, listen to"[32] (Quotenet, 2015).

[28] Later in the interview, Cornelissen agrees to the characterization that this 'top layer' consists mainly of young, highly educated, progressive men.
[29] Translated from the original Dutch: "Het starten van de discussies, of het meehelpen daaraan, binnen die bovenlaag, dat lukt heel goed. [...] het aanpikken van echt een grotere groep mannen en jongens bij de strijd, dat is nog niet gelukt."
[30] Translated from the original Dutch: "De campagne is viral gegaan en ik denk dat je zeker binnen een wat jongere doelgroep, zeker zeg maar studenten… er zijn weinig studenten die dit niet voorbij hebben zien komen op hun timeline. [...] het had ook heel erg te maken met de boodschap die heel erg resoneerde bij een heleboel jonge mensen. En ook jongens de kans gaf om zich uit te spreken."
[31] Translated from the original Dutch: "Ze zijn terug! Maar nu zijn ze leuk."
[32] Translated from the original Dutch: "Er waren te Davos ook leuke sprekers om naar te kijken, ehh, luisteren"

From one of the articles it also becomes clear that Sigrid Kaag, at that point ambassador for the UN in Lebanon, referenced the campaign positively in her speech at an event for the 100 most influential women in the Netherlands (Trouw, 2015).

In other words, a handful of references to the campaign existed, scattered around articles which mainly had a different primary focus. Also, interestingly, most of the people talking about the campaign in the national media seem to have been women, rather than men - at the very least notable for a campaign focused on involving men in the gender equality debate.

4.3.2 Political response

Besides these media responses, the campaign got mentioned in parliament in June of 2015 by the PvdA member of parliament Marith Volp[33], who said the following:

> I presume that the men here in *vak-K*[34] will position themselves as champions for gender equality. I would like to call on them to also involve their male colleagues, sons, brothers, all men and boys, in the importance of a world without violence against women [the topic of the debate], in which men and women may not be equal, but will be equivalent[35] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-b).

In response, Klaas Dijkhoff stated that he had pledged to the campaign and had also called on all the men on his Facebook page to support the campaign (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-b). This seems to be the only time the campaign is mentioned during a plenary debate in parliament. No official policy naming the campaign or Emma Watson was proposed by the government.

In 2015's *Algemeen Overleg Emancipatie*, the one issue concerning male emancipation that regularly comes up is partner leave after the birth of a child (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a). Other than this, explicit comments about male emancipation were made by Keklik Yücel, Member of Parliament for the PvdA, who stated that "in this [work/care responsibilities], men

[33] Formerly known as Rebel-Volp, and addressed as Ms. Rebel in parliamentary proceedings.
[34] Vak-K (section-C) is often used to reference the section of parliament where members of the cabinet are seated during parliamentary debates.
[35] Translated from the original Dutch: "Ik ga ervan uit dat de mannen hier in vak-K zich zullen opstellen als voorvechters voor gendergelijkheid. Ik wil hen ertoe oproepen om ook hun mannelijke collega's, zonen, broers, alle mannen en jongens, te betrekken bij het belang van een wereld zonder geweld tegen vrouwen, waarin mannen en vrouwen misschien niet gelijk maar wel gelijkwaardig zijn."

themselves also still have to emancipate"[36] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a, p. 3), and "let's make sure that, if children are born, men can also work three or four days and that there is a balanced distribution between labour and care"[37] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a, p. 8).

In response, the minister of Social Affairs and Employment Lodewijk Asscher, from the PvdA, stated:

> You have to find a balance between on the one hand the costs that this brings with it for companies and the government and on the other side the big interest of genuine leave for fathers, exactly because of the issue of emancipation of men [...] emancipation is not just the business of the wife[38] and/or mother but just as much of the husband[39] and/or father. Leave is part of that. On the other hand, a culture is needed in which it is normal that partners talk to each other about the distribution of care and labour[40] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a, p. 22).

Minister Bussemaker, of OCW, later added to this:

> I was glad that Ms. Van Ark[41] pointed to the role that men can fulfil. What we can do, is to be pay more attention to that. Women can do a lot; men can help enormously and are indispensable to make sure that gender equality is actually reached[42] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a, p. 27).

The norm therefore was mentioned during the proceedings, although it seemed to have been largely limited to PvdA party members[43]. It also was not coupled to any specific policy proposals,

[36] Translated from the original Dutch: "Daar hebben mannen zelf ook nog in te emanciperen."
[37] Translated from the original Dutch: ""Laten we ervoor zorgen dat, als er kinderen komen, ook mannen makkelijker drie of vier dagen kunnen werken en dat er een evenwichtige verdeling tussen arbeid en zorg is."
[38] May also be translated as 'woman', this translation was chosen because of the context
[39] May also be translated as 'man', this translation was chosen because of the context
[40] Translated from the original Dutch: "Je moet immers een balans vinden tussen aan de ene kant de kosten die dit met zich brengt voor bedrijven en overheid en aan de andere kant het grote belang dat er daadwerkelijk sprake is van verlof voor vaders, juist ook uit het perspectief van de emancipatie van de man. [...] dat emancipatie niet alleen een zaak is van de vrouw en/of de moeder maar net zozeer ook van de man en/of de vader. Daar hoort het verlof aan de ene kant bij. Aan de andere kant hoort daar een cultuur bij waarin het gewoon is dat partners met elkaar spreken over de verdeling van arbeid en zorg."
[41] After multiple searches, the comment Van Ark made cannot be found in the official transcript - it may either be missing, or the minister actually intended to address Ms. Yücel.
[42] Translated from the original Dutch: "Ik was blij dat mevrouw Van Ark verwees naar de rol die mannen kunnen vervullen. Wat wij kunnen doen, is daar meer aandacht aan besteden. Vrouwen kunnen heel veel; mannen kunnen enorm helpen en zijn onmisbaar om ervoor te zorgen dat gendergelijkheid echt wordt bereikt"
[43] And potentially the VVD, if Ms. Van Ark also did address the issue

except perhaps the extension of partner leave, which Minister Asscher admitted himself had been necessary to even slightly close the gap with other to other European countries[44] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2015-a, p. 23). There seems to be very little resistance to the norm when it is brought up, but it also does not seem to be a primary focus.

4.3.3 Theoretical implications

At this point in time, there is no evidence of widespread denial of the UN norm, but there is also no tangible evidence of particular political salience, either within the government or in domestic society. No news reporting or other indicators point to any international pressure being put on the Netherlands to support the campaign. At the same time, lip service is being paid by cabinet Ministers and, as discussed in the Introduction, the prime-minister.

None of this fits very neatly into the spiral model as described by Risse, Ropp and Sikkink. The HeForShe norm is clearly understood to be markedly different from former norms by most interviewees (Azzi, R., personal communication, 11th of July 2019; Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019; De Jong, D., personal communication, 8th of July 2019; Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019), which would suggest diffusion is necessary. No real rejection of the norm is taking place - some parties may deny the gender equality norm in general, but not so the government or the majority of parliament. However, at the same time the norm is not implemented into policy. There is no indication that international pressure is being put on the Netherlands by international actors, that transnational human rights networks are at play, or that civil society is pressuring the government. The lack of international and domestic pressure would explain a halted norm diffusion, but does not explain the success in achieving expressed support by parties in government. Even presuming that the first two phases of the model can be 'skipped', most of the expected trajectory for stage 3 seems to be absent in the Dutch political reality at this point.

[44] In 2019, the European Parliament would adopt a law with more far-reaching partner leave stipulations (RTL Nieuws, 2019)

4.4 2017: the start of the Dutch campaign and national elections

The Dutch National Committee[45] of UN Women was founded in October of 2016. The organization is run completely by volunteers, including the board (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019). The Dutch national HeForShe campaign was one of the first campaigns the Dutch Committee set up, and coincided with a national election in March 2017. The National Committee UN Women NL "played into this by asking male party leaders to make their own promise, as HeForShe Champion, to promote women's rights and gender equality"[46] (UN Women National Committee, 2018, p. 4). Prime-minister Mark Rutte (VVD) had already made a statement in 2015; Alexander Pechtold (D66), Lodewijk Asscher (PvdA), Emile Roemer (SP) and Jesse Klaver (GroenLinks) now joined him (UN Women National Committee, 2018, p. 4). The quotes were shared by UN Women NL via social media from 8 March until 15 March, election day. This PR boost also lead to 65 new Dutch signatories on the HeForShe website (ibid.).

On top of these political champions, cultural champions were also selected: Harm Edens (writer and presenter), Stijn Schenk (graphic story creator), Sepher Magshoudi (designer), Klaas Bense (director) and Colin van Heezik (journalist) (UN Women NL, n.d.-c). Most of them were involved in the first HeForShe Artsweek in 2018, which UN Women NL spend the later months of 2017 preparing for (UN Women National Committee, 2018, p. 5).

Besides these individual involvements, initial support was primarily given by other organizations concerned with gender equality (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019). Especially relevant to the HeForShe campaign is Emancipator, an organization which "strives for social justice by working towards changing the position of, and ideas about, men and masculinity"[47] (Emancipator, n.d.-a). Its founder, Jens van Tricht, has worked on the issue of male

[45] National committees are different from field offices - field offices (60 in total) do more hands-on projects within their communities, while national committees (13 in total) have a double goal of working towards implementation of women's rights in their own country and collecting funds for the worldwide efforts of UN Women (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

[46] Translated from the original Dutch: "heeft hierop ingespeeld door de mannelijke lijsttrekkers te vragen een eigen belofte te doen, als HeForShe Champion, om vrouwenrechten en gendergelijkheid te bevorderen"

[47] Translated from the original Dutch: "Emancipator werkt aan sociale rechtvaardigheid door in te zetten op het veranderen van de positie van en ideeën over mannen en mannelijkheid."

emancipation and male involvement with gender equality since the 1990s (Emancipator, n.d.-c), and the organization was named both by Kirsten van den Hul and Marije Cornelissen as a crucial actor in the Dutch landscape on this issue:

> Jens [van Tricht] is the poster boy of the emancipation of men in the Netherlands, of course, so whatever happens on the issues of emancipation of men in the Netherlands, Jens is there[48] (Cornelissen, M., Personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

> We do get a lot of support from fellow organisations. [...] we work a lot with Emancipator, because they also see that the HeForShe brand draws certain people in which they can then do some fun things with[49] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

> The work of Jens van Tricht and Emancipator, they were really already working on this themselves, [...] it was a sort of mutual support of each other's story, let's put it that way, the White Ribbon campaign and Emancipator and HeForShe[50] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

In other words, Emancipator plays a significant role in the Netherlands when it comes to men and gender equality and was active before the HeForShe campaign started. They have also supported international campaigns and promoted them in the Netherlands, including the White Ribbon campaign other campaigns focused on men's role in preventing (sexual) violence against women (Emancipator, n.d.-b; Emancipator, n.d.-d). This, coupled with the fact that the PvdA launched the *Plan voor de Man* (Plan for the man), a policy aimed at involving men in gender equality, in 2007 (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019), would suggest fertile ground for the HeForShe norm in the Netherlands, because the discussion had clearly started a few years before 2014.

Moreover, this active role of NGO's and specifically Emancipator's coordination with other international actors fits in with the spiral model's interpretation of international human rights

[48] Translated from the original Dutch: "Zij hebben het ook inderdaad echt superdruk. Maar dat is natuurlijk ook al een teken op zich. En Jens is natuurlijk de posterboy voor mannenemancipatie in Nederland, dus wat er ook maar gebeurt rondom mannenemancipatie in Nederland, daar is Jens."
[49] Translated from the original Dutch: "Waar we wel heel veel steun van ondervinden zijn collega-organisaties. [...] Emancipator werken we nauw mee samen, omdat zij dat ook wel inzien, dat dat HeForShe merk gewoon bepaalde mensen binnen trekt en dat zij daar dan weer leuke dingen mee kunnen gaan doen."
[50] Translated from the original Dutch:"Het werk van Jens van Tricht en Emancipator, die waren eigenlijk hier al zelf mee bezig, [...] dat was een soort wederzijdse versterking van elkaars verhaal zal ik maar zeggen, die White Ribbon campaign en Emancipator en HeForShe."

networks, which exchange information and tactics. However, this does not seem to have resulted in direct action, government responses or media attention.

4.4.1 Media response

Seven news articles were published regarding the HeForShe campaign in 2017. One of them discussed the statements made by the political party leaders just before the elections (De Telegraaf, 2017). In most of the other articles, the HeForShe campaign is primarily discussed as related to Emma Watson, rather than to the national context (de Volkskrant, 2017, March 30; de Volkskrant, 2017, June 10; Elsevier Juist, 2017; Het Parool, 2017; NRC.NEST, 2017). Even the HeForShe Artsweek in 2018 seems to not have garnered much national media attention - announcements of events at the Artsweek would not be published in national newspapers until the second Artsweek in 2019 (NRC Handelsblad, 2019, March 2; NRC Handelsblad, 2019, March 9-a; NRC Handelsblad, 2019, March 9-b). Because the quotes by politicians were shared by UN Women NL on social media (UN Women National Committee, 2018), it again seems likely that more engagement was to be found there.

4.4.2 Election programmes

In the election programmes of 2017, many of the parties barely formulate emancipation policy - it is almost absent in the programmes of, for instance, the SP, CDA, FvD and PVV[51] (CDA, 2017; Fvd, 2017; PVV, 2017; SP, 2017). When it is mentioned, one common thread is very striking: the way in which emancipation and equal treatment of men and women is linked to issues of migration, refugees and integration, and/or international relations and development (CDA, 2017, p. 36; D66, 2017, p. 135, 140, 142 & 143; GL, 2017, p. 49, 73, 74 & 76; PvdA, 2017, p. 17, 18, 61, 63 & 64; PvdD, 2017, p. 34; ChristenUnie, 2017, p. 30, 31, 100 & 104; VVD, 2017, p. 11 & 30). In other words, gender equality and women's rights come up primarily in opposition to an 'other' or outsider who needs to be 'taught' the Dutch values. This is especially notable in the election programmes of the VVD, CU and CDA, which have little to no explicit policy with regard to gender equality outside of these realms[52] (CDA, 2017; ChristenUnie, 2017; VVD, 2017). This would also

[51] The PVV programme of 2017 did consist of one page, so very little policy was extensively discussed.
[52] The Christian parties do all object to the model of legal prostitution in the Netherlands and argue for limitations on if not abolishment of this system.

support Van den Hul's statement that "sometimes people are inclined to say, 'oh but in óther countries, there's a lot of work to do there, but here, nooo'. And I do think that is a risk"[53] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

The PvdA comes out again as one of the only parties with a separate section on emancipation (PvdA, 2017, p. 13-14). Moreover, emancipation is mentioned in other policies as well, such as cultural education, labour issues and health care, pointing at a certain amount of mainstreaming of gender equality (PvdA, 2017, p. 26, 44 & 52). D66 also has extensive emancipation policy proposals, including extended partner leave and policies to prevent domestic violence such as stimulating "good and extensive sexual education on all schools for girls ánd boys"[54] (D66, 2017, p. 122).

Again, we see relatively little salience of emancipation in general, let alone specifically men's involvement in gender equality. The parties which extensively address gender equality are once more PvdA, GroenLinks and D66 (D66, 2017; GroenLinks, 2017; PvdA, 2017). And active resistance can again only be found in the SGP programme (SGP, 2017, p. 14-15, 26 & 30). Although five parties had at this point spoken out in favour of HeForShe, this is not really reflected in their election programmes, with the possible exception of PvdA and D66.

4.4.3 National election

On 15 March 2017, national elections were held. After a long coalition formation, a cabinet was eventually presented consisting of VVD, CDA, D66 and ChristenUnie (parlement.com, n.d.-b; parlement.com, n.d.-d). Out of these, VVD & D66 had supported HeForShe. Ingrid van Engelshoven, D66 member, became minister of OCW. Mark Rutte stayed on as prime-minister (parlement.com, n.d.-b). Criticism emerged because of the unequal gender distribution in the cabinet, with ten out of sixteen ministers being men (de Volkskrant, 2017; Joop, 2017). As discussed in the Introduction, prime-minister Rutte's defense at the time consisted of a prioritization of quality, thereby implying that there were no more suitable women available in

[53] Translated from the original Dutch: "soms zijn mensen geneigd om te denken 'oh, maar in ándere landen, daar is nog heel veel werk te doen, maar bij ons, neeee'. En dat vind ik dus wel een beetje een risico. "
[54] Translated from the original Dutch: "uitgebreide seksuele voorlichting gericht op meiden én jongens"

the country (ibid.). The contrast with his personal promise that "men are and should be allies [...] I am ready to make my contribution" (UN Women NL, n.d.-d) is stark. Moreover, the lack of discussion of this contrast puts into question the relevance attributed to the HeForShe norm in Dutch politics.

4.4.4 New cabinet policy

Probably due to election season, the *Algemeen Overleg Emancipatie* was held twice in 2016 (10 February and 27 October) and did not take place in 2017. Because of this, the first *Algemeen Overleg* after the start of the Dutch campaign was in 2018, when the new government had been formed and the *Emancipatienota 2018-2021*, outlining the government's policy plans, had been published.

The *Emancipatienota* was called *Principes in praktijk* (Principles in Practice), stemming from the cabinet's conviction that "broadly supported principles have not yet adequately become practice"[55] (Van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 1). Men crop up a few times in the document: where it concerns work versus caretaking responsibilities and the gender norms in this regard, for both women and men; when discussing the prevalence of male offenders in sexual assault and #metoo; and regarding gender stereotypes in educational choices and the lack of male primary school teachers (Van Engelshoven, 2018).

However, these few mentions gather little policy effects. The government does state that "by opposing stereotypes, the cabinet wants to enlarge everyone's freedom: men and women, girls and boys, and people who cannot be put into such a box"[56] (Van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 12). However, when discussing the policies linked to this desire, it is the stereotypes about women and LGBT+ people which are discussed (Van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 13). And although the minister acknowledges men's role in violence against women and domestic violence in general, men are not named in the policy proposals concerning domestic violence (Van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 8-11). The government does have an alliance with the organisation Act4respect, working to prevent

[55] Translated from the original Dutch: "Toch zijn al deze inmiddels breed gedragen principes nog niet voldoende praktijk geworden."
[56] Translated from the original Dutch: "Door stereotypering tegen te gaan wil het kabinet de vrijheid vergroten van iedereen: mannen en vrouwen, meiden en jongens, en mensen die zich niet in een hokje laten vatten."

domestic violence which focuses on "both (potential) victims and offenders"[57] (van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 11). Almost all policy regarding work and labour focuses on women, the only (partial) exception being extending partner leave following the birth of a child (van Engelshoven, 2018, p. 5-8).

In short, although the role of men in emancipation is not absent in the document, it is also clearly not central - and is translated into policy loosely or not at all.

In the *Algemeen Overleg Emancipatie*, the only person who really focused part of their time on the role of men in emancipation was Member of Parliament Van den Hul, stating:

> Breaking through this [the breadwinner model] starts with acknowledging that emancipation is not a woman's affair, but the affair of all of us. Does the minister agree with us on this, and if so, what will be her efforts to help precisely men to emancipate? Because don't men have at least as much to win with emancipation? How is the minister going to seduce them into caring more and working less? And it is not enough to extend the parental leave. That is a good start, but it is still only half the work[58] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018, p. 3-4).

The minister replies that Van den Hul's question is "very warranted"[59] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018, p. 25). She then discusses both the extension of the partner leave, and specific alliances the government has with, for instance, Emancipator for campaigns focusing on men, finally concluding "so yes, we are fully committed also to make boys and young men aware that emancipation is also their job, because emancipation is a process which works in two directions"[60] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018, p. 25).

[57] Translated from the original Dutch: "zowel op (potentiële) slachtoffers als op daders"
[58] Translated from the original Dutch: "Dat doorbreken begint bij het erkennen dat emancipatie geen vrouwenzaak is, maar een zaak van ons allemaal. Is de Minister dat met ons eens en zo ja, wat wordt haar inzet om juist ook mannen te helpen Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2017–2018, 30 420, nr. 291 3 emanciperen? Want hebben mannen niet minstens zoveel te winnen bij emancipatie? Hoe gaat de Minister hen verleiden tot meer zorgen en minder werken? En we zijn er niet met een verlenging van het ouderschapsverlof. Dat is een goed begin, maar nog steeds het halve werk."
[59] Translated from the original Dutch: "hele terechte vraag"
[60] Translated from the original Dutch: "Dus ja, we zetten volop in om ook jongens en jonge mannen er zich van bewust te laten zijn dat emancipatie ook een taak is die bij hen ligt, want emancipatie is een proces dat altijd twee kanten op werkt."

Later on in the meeting, Van den Hul responded by asking:

> If we indeed agree that emancipation is something we all have a stake in, would it not be important to, in the future, in our emancipation policy and in a paper such as this one, not specifically focus on all the things that women have to improve, change or where they can participate even more, but to also specifically address what the contribution of men is in this and to also report to us [parliament] about that, to have it as a specific focus?[61] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018, p. 29).

The minister's replied that she had already addressed the actions taken in this regard, but "if you are saying that it could have been expressed more strongly in the text and tone of the paper, then I think you actually have a point there. I will pay more attention to it"[62] (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018, p. 29).

So once again, we see very little resistance to the norm when it is brought up - but it is also only brought up twice in a meeting that took almost three hours (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2018). The norm is not necessarily objected to, but it also seems to hold very little salience. This when the HeForShe campaign is about four years underway, and the #metoo movement has been making headlines for months, and has even been brought up during the meeting (ibid., p. 21-23).

4.4.5 Lack of active support

It is striking that although two of the biggest parties of the cabinet - VVD & D66 - supported the HeForShe campaign, the issues brought up by that campaign are still clearly underrepresented in the cabinet's specific emancipation policy. This lack of action from the government side was also addressed by Marije Cornelissen, who stated:

> The ministry or the government find all of that a little tricky and difficult. So yes, that is a little unfortunate. So they are, cooperation on this… They are very extensively participating in the Orange the World

[61] Translated from the original Dutch: "als we inderdaad met elkaar eens zijn dat emancipatie iets is van ons allemaal, is het dan niet zaak om voortaan ook in ons emancipatiebeleid en ook in zo'n nota niet specifiek te focussen op wat vrouwen allemaal nog moeten verbeteren, veranderen of waar ze nog meer kunnen participeren, maar juist ook specifiek te benoemen wat daarbij de bijdrage van mannen is en daarover ook aan ons te rapporten, om dat specifiek als focus te hanteren?"

[62] Translated from the original Dutch: "Als u zegt dat het iets meer in de tekst en de toon van de nota tot uitdrukking had moeten komen, dan heeft u daar volgens mij best een punt. Ik zal daar ook scherper op letten.

> campaign, thankfully, against violence against women. But the way they do it in Germany or Iceland or Australia, they don't do it like that here. Well, that is also partly because of the wrong parties in government. So, yes, that would be a party who can do far more with it. If prime-minister Rutte would declare himself to be worldwide HeForShe champion and would really push that, that would help[63] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019)

Kirsten van den Hul also addressed the limited willingness to act on the government's side, saying:

> But I myself for instance do think it's a shame that our prime-minister has not more explicitly spoken out in favour of it [HeForShe]. [...] It stays at 'okay, I support this'. But I think the 'and thus?' is at least as important[64] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

This cannot be characterized as active resistance to the HeForShe norm - two out of four of the parties in cabinet have explicitly supported the campaign, including the prime-minister, and none of the parties have actively objected. However, although inaction and silence may not constitute active resistance, they also do not help. In much the same way in which emancipation is left out or sidelined in the election programmes of many parties, the damage done to the campaign may not be through explicit resistance. So, although Van den Hul stated that she could not name parties which had spoken out against the campaign (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019), this does not mean active support was widespread.

In a similar vein, it also proved to be a struggle to involve corporations and famous individuals. As described by Marije Cornelissen:

> Because of that [the conviction that emancipation is 'done' in the Netherlands], there are also less companies who think, I'm going for this. For instance, PricewaterhouseCoopers, they are very enthusiastic about our campaign in a lot of other countries and here we can barely get them to move. Unilever,

[63] Translated from the original Dutch: "het ministerie of de regering vindt dat allemaal een beetje lastig en moeilijk. Dus ja, dat is toch een beetje jammer. Dus die zit sowieso, samenwerking hierop… Ze doen nu wel uitgebreid mee aan de Orange the World campagne, gelukkig, tegen geweld tegen vrouwen. Maar, ja, zoals ze dat in Duitsland of IJsland of Australië doen, doen ze dat hier niet. Nou ja, dat ligt ook deels aan de verkeerde partijen in de regering. Dus, ja, dat zou een partij zijn die er veel meer mee zou kunnen. Als premier Rutte zich bijvoorbeeld zou verklaren tot wereldwijde HeForShe champion en daaraan zou trekken, dan zou dat wel helpen."

[64] Translated from the original Dutch: "ik vind het zelf bijvoorbeeld wel jammer dat onze premier daar niet zich uitdrukkelijker voor heeft uitgesproken [..] Dat het dus blijft bij 'okay, ik steun dit'. Maar ik vind de 'en dus?' minstens zo belangrijk."

> worldwide they are thé HeForShe champion. But when we asked whether they would support the HeForShe Artsweek, we could not even get someone on the phone[65] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

This is even more striking because the CEO of Unilever and the Global Chairman of PricewaterhouseCoopers are both HeForShe champions for the international campaign (UN Women, n.d.-b), and their companies are extensively featured in the 2016 Corporate Parity Report of the international campaign (UN Women, 2016).

The fact that companies are very willing to support issues worldwide but not in the Netherlands itself seems to indicate a difference in the Dutch context versus that of other countries, and/or a specific willingness of certain Dutch-based companies (i.e. Unilever) to throw their support behind a cause abroad, while they will not work towards it domestically - something which strongly mirrors the election programmes of many of the political parties in the Netherlands, which are primarily concerned with gender equality in other countries.

In contrast, Cornelissen describes Iceland, where:

> The local basketball association do their best for it [the HeForShe campaign] and Domino's Pizza promotes HeForShe on their boxes. Things like that. So yes, way more is necessary to make it more broadly known[66] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

Moreover, for instance in the UK:

> They have Benedict Cumberbatch there who is supporting them, and they have a group of celebs there who want to do that. And the mayor of London is a strong HeForShe champion. So, you just need to have a couple of nationally known pioneers. And we do have a few, but it's not the mega-stars that want to participate[67] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

---

[65] Translated from the original Dutch: "Daardoor zijn er ook minder bedrijven die denken, hier ga ik voor. Bijvoorbeeld PricewaterhouseCoopers, die zijn in heel veel andere landen echt dol enthousiast over de campagne en die krijgen we hier bijna niet in beweging. Unilever, wereldwijd, die is dé HeForShe voorvechter. Maar toen wij vroegen of ze die HeForShe Artsweek wilden komen ondersteunen, toen kregen we überhaupt niemand aan de lijn."

[66] Translated from the original Dutch: ""De lokale basketball association die doet daar z'n best voor en Domino's Pizza die promoot HeForShe op hun dozen. Nou ja, dat soort zaken. Dus ja, daar is echt veel meer voor nodig om dat heel breed kenbaar te maken..

[67] Translated from the original Dutch: "daar hebben ze dus bijvoorbeeld Benedict Cumberbatch die zich leuk inzet voor hen en hebben ze een groep celebs die daar zit die dat wil. En de burgemeester van Londen is een overtuigd

All of this suggests that in other countries, civil society and politicians were more willing to get involved with the campaign and put pressure on the government. So, what is it about the Netherlands that makes civil society so hesitant to act on a new gender equality norm? As Kirsten van den Hul states:

> I think the Netherlands, if I compare it to other countries, is a little more traditional where it concerns man-woman relations. You can also see that in the numbers, Dutch people do think in very large numbers that women are better in caretaking, are actually okay with women being financially independent less often than men. So [...] we had to come from far here[68] (Van den Hul, K., personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

So, although the Netherlands may actually be rather conservative when it comes to gender equality issues compared to much of Western-Europe, there is a strong belief that emancipation is no longer an issue here. As Cornelissen put it:

> In the Netherlands, for a very long time, multiple decades, about thirty years, it has been the idea that 'feminism here, emancipation here is done, we've arranged for everything legally, if you're still subordinated now it is probably because of your own level of ambition and because you just did not negotiate well enough at the kitchen table'. So very focused on the individual and less on the whole. Yes, that's something that's an issue for us as well[69] (Cornelissen, M., personal communication, 27th of June 2019).

Moreover, Van den Hul states:

> I do think that there is a lot of resistance against emancipation themes in general. I notice that myself in my work [...] People who literally say 'oh, there she is with that women bullshit', or 'with that emancipation blabber', or whatever word they put to it. It's not a theme which is very mainstream in the Netherlands [...] [I] see a lot of people who really think we're already there, quite a few people who think

HeForShe champion. Dus je hebt gewoon een aantal nationaal bekende voortrekkers nodig. En daar hebben we wel een paar, maar dat zijn dan toch niet de mega-grootten die zich in willen zetten."

[68] Translated from the original Dutch: "ik denk dat Nederland, als ik het vergelijk met andere landen, wat traditioneler is waar het man-vrouw verhoudingen betreft. Dat zie je ook terug in de cijfers, Nederlanders vinden toch voor een heel groot deel dat vrouwen beter zijn in zorgtaken, vinden het eigenlijk prima dat vrouwen minder vaak financieel zelfstandig zijn dan mannen. Dus het startpunt, zeg maar, in Nederland, we moesten wel van ver komen hier."

[69] Translated from the original Dutch: "In Nederland is het natuurlijk echt heel lang, diverse tientallen jaren, wel dertig jaar, het idee heel erg geweest van 'feminisme is hier wel, emancipatie is hier wel af, wettelijk is alles geregeld, en als je nu nog achtergesteld bent zal dat wel liggen aan je eigen ambitieniveau en dat je het gewoon niet goed hebt onderhandeld aan de keukentafel'. Dus heel erg op het individu en veel minder op het geheel."

> we've got it figured out in the Netherlands. And that can be a handicap, that can really work to your disadvantage, because if you think you're already there, that everything is actually kind of fine, that we have it figured out, then the need to invest in gender equality and get men involved with that is also a little less for some. The urgency isn't always felt[70] (Van den Hul, K. personal communication, 29th of May 2019).

All of this suggests a certain disconnect between the national identity of the Netherlands (as a worldwide leader on the issue of gender equality) and its domestic reality and willingness to discuss gender equality within the Netherlands itself.

4.4.6 Theoretical implications

If the Netherlands was in phase three of the spiral model, it would be expected that international pressure would be put on the Netherlands, a shift from instrumental rationality to argumentative rationality would take place, and domestic actors would be becoming more important. Overall, shifts towards true dialogue would be made.

There are indications that after the launch of the Dutch campaign, there was more domestic effort made in support of the campaign, and domestic NGOs also started to become more involved. The Dutch National Committee of UN Women being launched obviously did a lot to boost the campaign inside the Netherlands, and the work done by Emancipator also seems to have been important. At the same time, there are no real indications that an extensive network of international organizations, states and domestic opposition was involved in getting the HeForShe campaign on the agenda. This would again bring into question the empirical pathway described by the spiral model.

Of course, it is possible that the Dutch government and many of the political parties preemptively supported the campaign, in order to prevent the predicted damage done if they would have to

[70] Translated from the original Dutch: "Ik denk wel dat er ook wel heel veel weerstand is überhaupt tegen emancipatie thema's. Dat merk ik zelf ook in mijn werk. [...] Nou, mensen die letterlijk zeggen 'oh, komt zij weer met dat vrouwen gezeik', of met dat emancipatiegelul, of wat voor woord ze er dan maar aan op plakken. Het is niet een thema wat in Nederland heel erg mainstream is. [...] zie toch ook wel dat veel mensen denken dat we heel erg er al zijn, best veel mensen die denken dat we het in Nederland eigenlijk heel goed voor elkaar hebben. En dat is soms ook een handicap, dat kan ook heel erg in je nadeel werken, want als je denkt dat je er al bent, dat alles hier eigenlijk wel prima is, dat we eigenlijk alles al wel geregeld hebben, dan is de noodzaak om te investeren in gendergelijkheid en om mannen daar ook bij de betrekken is voor sommige mensen wat minder. De urgentie wordt hier niet altijd zo gevoeld.

explain why they were *not* defending it. It may be true that the general human rights and gender equality norms have been so internalized that Dutch politicians by and large self-managed their support before anyone had to intervene. This explanation would not fit neatly in the causal model presented by Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, but it may be an addendum concerning countries which have internalized the general human rights corpus enough not to want to be caught not subscribing to a newer norm.

However, the question then arises why, if that norm has been so internalized, it did not lead to more discussion, policy changes and general political salience in the Netherlands. It seems that one of the elements the spiral model does not effectively take into account is the detrimental effects of inaction and silence from crucial actors, also in the later stages of the campaign. The model describes mainly action, either with the goal to support or to suppress a norm. The possibility that a debate may simply not come off the ground, even when stage three of the spiral model has already been reached, does not feature in the model.

What seems to have happened in the Netherlands with regard to the HeForShe campaign is that a country which is very proud of its human rights track record, which has human rights and specifically gender equality and LGBT+ rights front and center in its international work and identity, and which therefore would be expected to quickly pick up a new gender equality norm, simply did not care to do so. In this, the divide between the country's national identity and its actual behaviour becomes starkly visible. But it also shows a gap in the spiral model. Not only is inaction as a strategy not effectively understood in the theory, but the potential that a country which is convinced of its own good intent can become inactive *exactly because of its belief in its own status as a progressive state* also cannot be accounted for.

4.5 Conclusion

From this analysis some conclusions may be drawn about the effectiveness of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands, which I will discuss in the first part of this section. In the second part, I will describe some of the theoretical implications which can be derived from the case study.

4.5.1 Effectiveness campaign

A few conclusions about the campaign seem to apply across the Dutch political spectrum. Firstly, that the goal of the campaign (bringing men into the gender equality discussion) is important and should be supported. Secondly, that this constitutes a norm change and a diversion from former policy. Thirdly, that the campaign was effective internationally, and in its awareness raising in specific subsections of the Dutch population. Fourthly, that this is where its effect stopped, and that no further internalization occurred, and no real policy conclusions were drawn.

Moreover, the lack of knowledge about the campaign among some actors currently involved in this issue is striking. The SP supported the campaign in 2017, but had a leadership change in 2018. Its current spokesperson for Emancipation is a man, who broadly supports the message of the campaign, but who also had not been aware of the campaign before I emailed with an interview request, and had not seen the Emma Watson speech in 2014 (Van Dijk, J., personal communication, 2nd of July 2019). The respondents for GroenLinks and VVD also seemed largely unaware of the trajectory the campaign had had in the Netherlands and in their party, although they were aware of its existence and its goals (Azzi, R., personal communication, 11th of July 2019; De Jong, D., personal communication, 8th of July 2019). This may be in part the result of their positions in their respective parties. However, it also seems that knowledge of the campaign and its norms has not been institutionalized and is largely dependent on individual people's personal conviction and support. In this, for instance Kristen van den Hul and Jens van Tricht seem to have an above-average involvement with the campaign.

Looking at the various elements of the norm - male involvement in gender equality, participation by all types of men, and gender equality as a way towards more liberty - two things are particularly noteworthy. Firstly, many of the primary actors in the HeForShe campaign were women, and it were again and again women who brought up the campaign and its goals of male emancipation in parliamentary debates. Secondly, the campaign seems to have been most successful exactly among the 'usual suspects': progressive, highly educated young men. Very little evidence can be found of a large reach among other subgroups of men, despite the

campaign's focus on accessibility and malleability to personal circumstances. This is further proof of a lack of diffusion.

I have summarized my findings about the campaign in the table below (table 2).

Effective elements campaign	Ineffective elements campaign
Societal discussion and awareness raising	Policy changes and direct action
Reach among younger, progressive men with a university degree or higher vocational education	Reach among older men, conservative or moderate men, and/or men with secondary vocational education or no tertiary education
The HeForShe Arts Week	Pledges on the website and fundraising
Lip service by politicians	Creating long-term, institutional knowledge

Table 2: Effective and ineffective elements of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands

4.5.2 Shortcoming spiral model

It becomes clear from my analysis that the causal pathway of the spiral model is not able to describe the events as they occurred in the Netherlands. Although for instance the support for the HeForShe campaign and the extension of partner leave were perhaps, in part, tactical concessions to prevent international criticism, there is no clear evidence that international pressure played any role. There are also no signs that transnational human rights networks and/or international attention helped domestic human rights organizations, or that effective, coordinated pressure was applied by domestic and international actors.

There was, however, a clear focus on the part of Dutch political parties and the Dutch government on international prestige, specifically on the issue of gender equality. However, this did not lead to stronger norm diffusion. Hypothesis 1, the more focus on international prestige by the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands, therefore does not hold.

What does seem to be true, is that lack of international and national pressure hindered the campaign in reaching its full potential. This it is in line with hypothesis 2a, the more international pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands, and hypothesis 2b, the more domestic pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands. However, in contrast to what is

expected according to the causal pathway of the model, professed support for the norm did not force the government to change policy and deal with the issue at hand. Rather, talk seems to have actually been cheap here, with a professed belief being enough for most international and national actors, without pressuring the government to act any further.

A few shortcomings of the model are thus illustrated by this analysis. Firstly, the fact that how and why diffusion fails, falters or in other ways does not go as predicted does not get nearly as much theoretical attention, especially in the later phases, as how effective diffusion would occur. As a consequence, the model has a hard time explaining how a norm can fail to diffuse.

Secondly, the focus on 'core' human rights in actively oppressive regimes, also means that certain steps of the spiral model are almost by definition less applicable to a functioning democracy. In phase 3, for instance, one of the final steps includes recognition of transnational advocacy networks and domestic opposition as legitimate negotiation partners. However, this is already generally the case in the Netherlands. There is no specific reason to assume that in this case, suddenly advocacy networks were no longer considered legitimate. This might also partially explain why the Netherlands seems to have 'skipped' phase one and two of the model completely - by virtue of being a democracy with established gender equality norms, active oppression of the campaign was far less likely. However, this disrupts the pathway as described in the spiral model substantially. Not only are certain steps skipped and others reached prematurely, the organization and collaboration between international and national supporters of the norm also does not materialize as expected. Because of this, although phase 3 may have been the most applicable description of the Netherlands with regard to the HeForShe norm, it is not actually a perfect fit, and the causal pathway also does not follow the expected steps.

Thirdly, the model deals primarily with active support for and active resistance against human rights norms. What the Dutch case illustrates is that silence and disinterest can also be very harmful to norm diffusion, but in a very different way from active resistance. Whereas in the model the focus is on the government and potential other actors working to oppose a norm, what we see in the Netherlands are actors which explicitly support the norm and attach no consequences to that support. Every time the norm is brought up, everyone concurs with it - but

this seems to be happening in a vacuum, as if support of the norm need not have any impact on policy or other political choices. Moreover, none of the supporters of the campaign seem to be called to task for this by other actors. Public support combined with a strong lack of salience of a norm does not seem to fit in the spiral model.

4.5.3 National identity

This is also where national identity comes into play. Because, as appears from the election programmes, the government policy briefs, and the interviews I have held, the political parties in the Netherlands are very concerned with gender equality the moment it relates to countries, or the Muslim and/or immigrant population of the Netherlands. Gender equality is claimed as a Dutch value, but this does not lead to actions to support gender equality in the Netherlands. Rather, the assumption seems to be that everything is already taken care of here, and the only thing left to do now is to enlighten everyone else. The ironic consequence is that effective mobilization of political parties, civil society and the government in favour of a new gender equality norm is complicated in the Netherlands because they are so concerned with the Netherlands' international reputation on the issue of gender and LGBT+ emancipation, that this is their only focus. Hypothesis 3, which predicted that the more focus on a progressive national identity by the Dutch state, the weaker a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands, is therefore supported - the belief in a progressive national identity, coupled with an international focus, impeded norm diffusion.

Here, Mutua's description of the metaphor of human rights might provide some insight: after all, if Western states are the saviours in the story, they cannot also be the barbarian who suppresses people. Recognizing human rights issues in states with a reputation for norm abidance is thus complicated by their reputation and an interpretation of human rights in which perpetrators, victims and saviours are always distinct and easily identifiable. The Netherlands therefore seems to fall into the trap Mutua describes, of viewing itself as a saviour in the international perspective, rather than as a country where human rights norms and specifically equality norms have a long way to go domestically.

It is important to note that the pathway of the effect of the national identity was different than expected: the primary effect seems to have been disinterest and inaction, rather than active rejection based on defensiveness over a national identity. Comfort with the national status as progressive seems to have been more important, and also made possible acceptance of the new norm without acting on it, instead of having to deny the validity of the new norm in order to protect international status.

4.5.4 Norms as processes

As to norms as processes, we do see a reshaping of the norm by different actors. However, this seems to have negligible effect on the trajectory of the HeForShe norm in the Netherlands - perhaps in part because personalization of the norm was a part of the norm. There is no recurring battle over mutually exclusive interpretations of the norm by different actors. There are different focus areas among different actors, but this does not fundamentally challenge the meaning of the norm. The norm itself therefore show little evidence of being a process. As a consequence, hypothesis 4, the more malleable the HeForShe norm is conceptualized, the stronger it will be diffused in the Netherlands, does not apply here - a very malleable norm was in place, but it did not diffuse effectively, and its meaning was not fundamentally contested.

5. Conclusion

I set out to examine how the traditional spiral model of domestic norm diffusion can be expanded in view of the actual negotiation and contestation of the gender norms established by the United Nations HeForShe campaign in the Dutch context. In this conclusion, I shall first provide a summary of my thesis, as well as some reflections on my research and its theoretical contributions. I shall end with a few recommendations for future research.

5.1 Summary

In this thesis, the trajectory of the HeForShe campaign in the Netherlands was described by means of process tracing. Based on interviews, government documents and media analysis, I have investigated the norm diffusion in the Netherlands.

The spiral model of domestic change, developed by Risse, Ropp & Sikkink, functioned as the theoretical starting point of my thesis, as it includes in-depth description of the causal pathway of norm diffusion of an international norm in a national context. The HeForShe campaign was developed by UN Women and had domestic effects in the Netherlands, so the theory held potential. I have discussed some theoretical critiques of the model, including its Western bias, and its focus on 'core' and singular human rights. Both the Netherlands as a Western state and the HeForShe norm as an equality norm were deviant cases for the spiral model, which made this an interesting case to consider the potential limitations of the model. Because the Netherlands did not follow the spiral model trajectory exactly, in this thesis I have tried to pin-point what elements of the model did and did not hold up in the Dutch case. I have introduced national identity and norms as processes as potential alternative explanatory factors, which may be useful to develop the spiral model further.

Based on the spiral model and its theoretical critiques, I have formulated the following hypotheses:

H1 The more focus on international prestige by the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H2a The more international pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H2b The more domestic pressure on the Dutch state, the stronger a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H3 The more focus on a progressive national identity by the Dutch state, the weaker a new international norm will be diffused in the Netherlands

H4 The more malleable the HeForShe norm is conceptualized, the stronger it will be diffused in the Netherlands

On the basis of my subsequent analysis, it may be concluded that hypothesis 1 did not hold up. Although the Netherlands put a lot of emphasis on its international status in government documents, election programmes and parliamentary debates, and this status was even specifically tied to the issue of gender equality, the norm diffusion of the HeForShe norm was very limited. This poses a real problem for the spiral model, which would assume that norm diffusion in a country concerned with its international standing should occur relatively quickly and effectively. Moreover, because of the immediate verbal agreement with the norm by political leaders, the Netherlands seems to have 'skipped' phase 1 and 2 of the model, if any of it is applicable. This also directly contradicts the spiral model, and may be part of the reason why there is no perfect overlap between the Dutch case and phase 3 of the spiral model.

On the other hand, hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported by the analysis in a negative way. There was so little international and domestic pressure put on the Dutch state with regard to the HeForShe campaign, that this resulted in a very limited norm diffusion. What constitutes a puzzle for the spiral model is why so many political parties readily supported the campaign considering this lack of pressure - this may be due self-regulation to prevent backlash, or perhaps genuine support for the message of the campaign. Either way, it seems that in the Netherlands, despite what is predicted by Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, talk actually was cheap. Governments getting 'trapped' in their professed support for a norm is dependent on international and/or domestic pressure, and both were lacking in the Dutch case.

Hypothesis 3 was applicable: a focus on and belief in a progressive national identity by most Dutch political parties and the government hindered the effective diffusion of the HeForShe norm. As a result of their conviction that the Netherlands are in many ways 'done' with emancipation, and a strong focus on actors seen as 'other' that are seen as 'not done' in the emancipation debates (i.e. other countries and Muslim and/or immigrant populations in the Netherlands), the HeForShe campaign did not become societally salient. The pathway of this mechanism did differ from what was expected: rather than defensiveness being the reason for denial of a newer norm, comfort in the Dutch status as a progressive leader caused inaction beyond verbal agreement to the norm.

Finally, hypothesis 4 did not apply. The HeForShe norm was clearly a regulative and malleable norm, which according to the model should have helped diffusion. However, no actual negotiation over the meaning of the norm took place. Moreover, in this case the malleability of the norm only seems to have made possible a verbal agreement to the norm without any actual policy consequences, which meant norm diffusion halted relatively early. Although the theoretical basis for the hypothesis was strong, the data showed no support for it. It may be the case that a similar analysis with a broader focus, such as gender equality as a whole throughout Europe, would show more negotiation and contestation.

In light of my findings, it seems inescapable that the spiral model has to be amended in order to deal with a case like the Netherlands and the HeForShe campaign. The potential of lack of domestic salience and international interest in norm diffusion even in earlier stages of the model needs to be taken into consideration, especially where it concerns more malleable norms (such as gender equality). Moreover, the strategy of agreement to a norm without further consequences being tied to this, needs to be incorporated as a potential bar to norm diffusion.

Furthermore, the human rights myth in which Western states and international actors are saving victims from their barbarian governments, seems to be complicating progress in Western countries themselves. The consequences of not just being seen as, but also seeing yourself as, one of the international arbiters of human rights, should be incorporated in the model. In general,

more attention should be paid to a country's national identity, as seen both by domestic and international actors, and the negative effects they may have on norm diffusion.

5.2 Reflection and contributions

In researching a Western country with respect to a new gender equality norm, I have pushed the boundaries of the spiral model. This was fruitful in so far that I have shown the limitations of the spiral model, specifically in dealing with ineffective norm diffusion, norm diffusion in Western states, and regulative norms. My research therefore contributed to our understanding of norm diffusion by taking a deviant case and trying to make visible what parts of the causal pathway as described by the spiral model do not apply.

Moreover, due to its focus this thesis controls for the implied assumptions in the spiral model that human rights in Western states are a done deal, and that gender equality norms are less important or crucial than other human rights norms. I have demonstrated that precisely these blind spots in the model lead to inaccurate predictions in the Dutch case and the HeForShe campaign.

I have researched a deviant case from the perspective of the (current) spiral model. The question that remains is whether the Netherlands is representative of other Western states, and whether the HeForShe norm is representative of other (equality) norms. Taking some superficial characteristics into account, the Netherlands is likely to be representative for at least the majority of Western European states. However, some other considerations make this representativeness questionable, such as the specific Dutch focus on international prestige regarding gender equality, the role of Christian parties in the Dutch parliament and a relatively underdeveloped activist civil society with respect to gender equality. The HeForShe norm, being both regulative and concerned with a subsection of gender equality, is also relatively specific in nature and deviant from the norms considered in the spiral model. However, it seems likely that the case is at least representative for other regulative equality norms, which are very prevalent.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

In order to establish the representativeness of the Netherlands, more research into the effect of a progressive national identity and/or reputation on international norm diffusion will be

necessary, especially but not exclusively where it concerns human rights. In this, resisting Western bias will remain important, by introducing a focus on Western countries as potential norm-violators and/or a focus on the role of 'the Rest' in developing international human rights norms.

Moreover, it would be worthwhile to look at new, individual international norms as part of a broader norm system. In the same way that for instance HeForShe is part of a larger gender equality debate, and cannot completely be separated from it, other norms are also related to larger norm systems. Researching the effects of norm systems surrounding a new norm may give more insight into why certain diffusion processes may 'skip' earlier phases of diffusion, and whether this can have negative effects in later stages of the norm development (for instance because no effective domestic activism network has been developed).

With regard to norms as processes, it may also be worthwhile to look at the issue of male involvement in gender equality issues over a longer period of time, and on a slightly more abstract level. For instance, a comparison of the way in which men's role in emancipation was addressed in the first, second, third and fourth wave of feminism may show more actual norm contestation and negotiation by different actors.

Furthermore, it may be argued that equality norms are in some ways different from other international human rights norms, because they focus on equal application of certain norms, rather than the specific content of that norm. For instance, live-able wages and equal pay may be related issues, but they are not exactly the same. It would therefore be relevant to look into potential differences in norm diffusion of equality norms, when compared to norms which stipulate specific rights. Specifically in relation to debates on gender mainstreaming and intersectionality, exploring in how far equality norms are purely about equal application of already existing norms, and where equality norms actually necessitate different (human rights) norms, would be relevant.

My thesis illustrates that international human rights norm diffusion is not a done deal anywhere, partly because new interpretations of human rights are developed over time, and partly because norm abidance is more complicated to achieve than verbal agreement to a norm. Whether talk

is cheap is dependent upon domestic and international pressure - and an unfounded belief in a country's norm abidance will lead to a lack of both and therefore a stagnation of progress. This points to the importance of honest empirical assessments of the human rights situations in countries, not just in comparison to each other, but also in comparison to human rights norms themselves. Moreover, for organizations and political parties concerned with human rights, it necessitates an attitude in which critique on a country's human rights record is not a reason for defensiveness or silence, but a reason for reflection and change.

References

50PLUS (2012). *50 plusplunten [50 plus points].* Election programme.

Abrahams, J. (2017). *Everything you wanted to know about fourth wave feminism—but were afraid to ask*. Retrieved January 16 2018, from https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/everything-wanted-know-fourth-wave-feminism.

Acharya, A. (2004). How ideas spread: Whose norms matter? Norm localization and institutional change in Asian regionalism. *International organization*, 58(2), 239-275.

Adler, E. (2012). Constructivism in international relations: sources, contributions, and debates. In Carlsnaes, W., Risse, T. & Simmons, B. (Eds.) *Handbook of International Relations, 2nd edition* (p. 112-144). SAGE Publications.

African Charter on Human and People's Rights, June 27, 1981. Retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3630.html.

Algemeen Dagblad (2014, September 23-a). *F-woord is weer hip [The F-word is hip again].* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Algemeen Dagblad (2014, September 23-b). *Feminisme staat niet voor mannenhaat [Feminism is not equivalent to man-hating].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 2 May 1948. Retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3710.html.

Arab Charter on Human Rights, 15 September 1994. Retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38540.html.

ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, 18 November 2012. Retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/50c9fea82.html.

Bennekoms Nieuwsblad (2015, November 25). *Vrijwilligerswerk Wageningen [Volunteering in Wageningen].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Bennett, A. (2011). Process Tracing. In Badie, B., Berg-Schlosser, D., & Morlino, L. (Eds.). *International Encyclopedia of Political Science (Vol. 1)* (p. 2134-2138). SAGE Publications.

Brems, E. (2005). Conflicting Human Rights: An Exploration in the Context of the Right to a Fair Trial in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. *Human Rights Quarterly,* 27(1), 294-326.

Bussemaker, J. (2013). *Hoofdlijnenbrief Emancipatiebeleid 2013-2016 [outline letter Emancipation policy 2013-2016]* [Letter to parliament]. Retrieved July 11 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2013Z09164&did=2013D18874.

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Dec. 7, 2000, retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3b70.html.

CDA (2012). *Iedereen [Everyone].* Election programme.

CDA (2017). *Keuzes voor een beter Nederland [Choices for a better Netherlands].* Election programme.

ChristenUnie (2012). *Voor de verandering: zes christelijk-sociale hervormingen [For change: six Christian-social reforms]*. Election programme.

ChristenUnie (2017). *Hoopvol Realistisch: voorstellen voor een samenleving met toekomst [Hopeful Realistic: proposals for a society with a future].* Election programme.

Cochrane, K. (2013). *The fourth wave of feminism: meet the rebel women*. Retrieved January 16 2018, from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/10/fourth-wave-feminism-rebel-women.

Collier, D. (2011). Understanding process tracing. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(4), 823-830.

Crasnow, S. (2017). Process tracing in political science: What's the story? *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A*, 62, 6-13.

D66 (2012). *En nu vooruit [And now, forwards].* Election programme.

D66 (2017). *D66 Verkiezingsprogramma 2017-2021 [D66 Election programme 2017-2012]*. Election programme.

Dagblad van het Noorden (2015, 13 March). *Een festival is meer dan zomaar een reeks films [A festival is more than a bunch of movies].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

De Gelderlander (2018, March 7). *'Me schuldig voelen, dat ben ik zat' ['I'm done with feeling guilty'].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

De Stentor (2016, February 18). *Vrouwenclub wil Zwolle oermoeder schenken [Women's club wants to gift an Eve to Zwolle].* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

De Telegraaf (2017, March 8). *Belofte tot gelijke rechten [A promise of equal rights].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2015, January 21). *VN-top over mannen. Dat werd tijd. [UN Summit on men. It was about time].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2016, September 3). *Noem mij geen feminist*. *[Don't call me a feminist].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2017-a, March 30). *Krijg nou tieten [Well, get tits![71]].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2017-b, June 10). *4 redenen waarom u Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka moet leren kennen [Four reasons why you should get to know Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2017-c, June 24). *Vrouwen, smijt ons niet de kerk uit [Women, don't cast us out of the church].* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

de Volkskrant (2017-d, December 23). *Edith Schippers: VVD is tekortgeschoten, Rutte zocht niet goed genoeg naar vrouwen voor ministersposten [Edith Schippers: the VVD fell short. Rutte did not adequately look for women for minister-positions]*. Retrieved March 16 2018, from https://www.volkskrant.nl/politiek/edith-schippers-vvd-is-tekortgeschoten-rutte-zocht-niet-goed-genoeg-naar-vrouwen-voor-ministersposten~a4548968/.

Elsevier Juist (2017, March 16). *Emma Watson; leven in beeld [Emma Watson; life in images].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Emancipator (n.d.-a). *Emancipator.* Retrieved July 16 2019, from https://www.emancipator.nl/.

Emancipator (n.d.-b). *Imagine: inspiring male action on gender equality in Europe.* Retrieved July 16 2019, from https://www.emancipator.nl/portfolio-item/imagine/.

Emancipator (n.d.-c). *Jens van Tricht.* Retrieved July 16 2019, from https://www.emancipator.nl/portfolio-item/jens-van-tricht-4/.

[71] Dutch expression to show surprise

Emancipator (n.d.-d). *Stop geweld tegen vrouwen [stop violence against women].* Retrieved July 16 2019, from https://www.emancipator.nl/stopgeweldtegenvrouwen/.

European Convention on Human Rights, as amended by Protocols Nos. 11 and 14, June 10, 2010 [first entry into force September 3, 1953, as European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms]. Retrieved 18 August 2018, from http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3b04.html.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2018). *Index score The Netherlands 2015*. Retrieved March 16 2018, from http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2015/NL.

Forum voor Democratie (2017). *Concept verkiezingsprogramma 2017-2021 [Draft election programme 2017-2021].* Election programme.

Gilardi, F. (2012). Transnational diffusion: Norms, ideas, and policies. In Carlsnaes, W., Risse, T. & Simmons, B. (Eds.). *Handbook of international relations, 2nd Edition* (p. 453-477). SAGE Publications.

GroenLinks (2012). *Kansen pakken [Seize opportunities].* Election programme.

GroenLinks (2017). *Tijd voor verandering [Time for change].* Election programme.

Guzzini, S. (2000). A reconstruction of constructivism in international relations. *European journal of international relations*, 6(2), 147-182.

Haarlems Dagblad (2015, February 28). *Ze zijn er weer: de feministen; Net als toen op de bres voor vrijheid, eerlijke verdeling en gelijkheid [They're back: the feminists; fighting for freedom, fair distribution and equality like old times].* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

HeForShe (n.d.-a). *HeForShe.* Retrieved January 16 2018, from http://www.heforshe.org/en.

HeForShe (n.d.-b). *HeForShe Overview*. Retrieved January 16 2018, from http://www.heforshe.org/-/media/heforshe/files/our%20mission/heforshe_overview_brief.pdf?la=en.

HeForShe (n.d.-c). *IMPACT 10x10x10*. Retrieved January 16 2018, from http://www.heforshe.org/en/impact.

Het Parool (2014, September 27). *Wereldburger van de week [World citizen of the week].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Het Parool (2017, March 11). *De ene blote borst is de andere niet [Not all bare breasts are equal].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Holt, K., Shehata, A., Strömbäck, J., & Ljungberg, E. (2013). Age and the effects of news media attention and social media use on political interest and participation: Do social media function as leveller?. *European Journal of Communication*, 28(1), 19-34.

Hurrell, A., & Macdonald, T. (2012). Ethics and Norms in International Relations. In Carlsnaes, W., Risse, T. & Simmons, B. A. (Eds.). *Handbook of International Relations, 2nd edition* (p. 57-84). SAGE Publications.

Joop (2017). Premier Rutte denkt dat vrouwen geen kwaliteit bezitten [Prime-minister Rutte thinks women do not have quality]. Retrieved March 16 2018, from https://joop.bnnvara.nl/nieuws/rutte-vrouwen-kwaliteit.

Krook, M. L. & True, J. (2010). Rethinking the life cycles of international norms: The United Nations and the global promotion of gender equality. *European Journal of International Relations*, 18(1), 103-127.

Metro (NL) (2016, 26 January). *Emma en Amber [Emma and Amber].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Mutua, M. (2001). Savages, victims, and saviors: The metaphor of human rights. *Harvard International Law Journal,* 42(1), 201-245.

NRC Handelsblad (2019, March 2). *No headline in Original*. Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

NRC Handelsblad (2019, March 9). *No headline in Original.* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

NRC Handelsblad (2019, March 9). *Expositie Inspiratie voor werken aan je relatie [Exposition provides inspiration to work on your relationship].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

NRC.NEXT (2014, September 25). *I'm a feminist. Fuck me!; Is dit het nieuwe feminisme? [I'm a feminist. Fuck me!; Is this the new feminism?].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

NRC.NEXT (2017, July 14). *Dames, zit toch niet zo op elkaar te vitten [Ladies, would you stop niggling each other].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

NRC.NEXT (2019, March 9). *Voorstelling #MeToo of de positie van de vrouw; Agenda 0903/ 1603 [Performance #MeToo or the position of the woman; Calendar 0903/1603].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Parlement.com (n.d.-a). *Kabinet-Rutte II (2012-2017) [Cabinet Rutte II (2012-2017]*. Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.parlement.com/id/vj47glycfix9/kabinet_rutte_ii_2012_2017.

Parlement.com (n.d.-b). *Kabinet-Rutte III (2017 -) [Cabinet Rutte III (2017 -)]*. Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.parlement.com/id/vkidc8m3p1sz/kabinet_rutte_iii_2017.

Parlement.com (n.d.-c) *Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2012 [Parliamentary elections 2012]*. Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.parlement.com/id/viyyadlrltn1/tweede_kamerverkiezingen_2012.

Parlement.com (n.d.-d) *Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2017 [Parliamentary elections 2017].* Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.parlement.com/id/vk1wljxti6u9/tweede_kamerverkiezingen_2017.

PvdA (2012). *Nederland Sterker en Socialer [The Netherlands Stronger and More Social]*. Election programme.

PvdA (2017). *Een verbonden samenleving [A connected society].* Election programme.

PvdD (2012). *Hou vast aan je idealen: laat ze niet wegcijferen [Hold onto your ideals, don't let them be negated]*. Election programme.

PvdD (2017). *Plan B: hou vast aan je idealen [Plan B: hold onto your ideals].* Election programme.

PVV (2012). *Hún Brussel, óns Nederland [Théir Brussels, óur Netherlands].* Election programme.

PVV (2017). *Nederland weer van ons! [The Netherlands ours again!].* Election programme.

Rijksoverheid (n.d.-a). *Mensenrechten in Nederland* [Human rights in the Netherlands]. Retrieved April 6 2018, from https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/mensenrechten/mensenrechten-nederland.

Rijksoverheid (n.d.-b). *Organisatie Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken* [Organisation Ministry of Foreign Affairs]. Retrieved April 6 2018, from https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/organisatie.

Risse, T., Ropp, S.C. & Sikkink, K. (1999). *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SGP (2012). *Daad bij het Woord! [Matching deeds with the Word].* Election programme.

SGP (2017). *Stem voor het leven [Voice/vote for life]*. Election programme.

SP (2012). *Nieuw vertrouwen [New trust]*. Election programme.

SP (2017). *#PakDeMacht: programma voor een sociaal Nederland voor de verkiezingen van 15 maart 2017 [#GrabThePower: programme for a more social Netherlands for the election of the 15th of March 2017].* Election programme.

Steinhilper, E. (2015). From "the Rest" to "the West"? Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Western Bias in Norm Diffusion Research. *International Studies Review*, 17(4), 536-555.

TED (2015). *An invitation to men who want a better world for women.* Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_nyamayaro_an_invitation_to_men_who_want_a_better_world_for_women/transcript.

Trouw (2014-a, July 6). *Personalia*. Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Trouw (2014-b, September 25). *Yes you can, Hermione!* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Trouw (2015-a, April 23). *Vrouwen hebben een streepje voor bij Streep [Women have an advantage with Meryl Streep].* Retrieved July 25 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Trouw (2015-b, 14 October). *De meisjes van Wilhelmina [Wilhelmina's Girls].* Retrieved July 20, 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2012). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 15 maart 2012 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 15th of March 2012].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2011Z24279&did=2012D13118.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2013). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 13 juni 2013 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 13th of June 2013].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from

https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2013Z09164&did=2013D29591.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2014). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 13 maart 2014 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 13th of March 2014].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2014Z00494&did=2014D10662.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2015-a). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 5 maart 2015 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 5th of March 2015].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2014Z23816&did=2015D10544.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2015-b). *Plenair verslag Tweede Kamer, 91e vergadering, Woensdag 3 juni 2015 [Plenary report House of Representatives, 91st meeting, Wednesday 3th of June 2015].* Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/plenaire_verslagen/detail/ef27e8ca-bea6-4b01-bc44-afe36a7d4065#id6f064812.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2016). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 27 oktober 2016 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 27th of October 2016].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2016Z18518&did=2016D41673.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2018). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 5 april 2018 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 5th of April 2018].* [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2018Z05748&did=2018D24160.

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal (2019). *Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg over Emancipatiebeleid op 18 juni 2019 [Report on a General Consultation on Emancipation policy, on the 18th of June 2019]*. [Parliamentary proceedings]. Retrieved June 27 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?id=2019Z05067&did=2019D27191.

United Nations (2014). *Emma Watson at the HeForShe Campaign 2014 - Official UN Video.* Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkjW9PZBRfk.

United Nations (2018). *Statistical Yearbook 2018, 61st issue.* Retrieved July 23 2019, from https://www.un-ilibrary.org/economic-and-social-development/statistical-yearbook-2018_d78978fd-en-fr.

United Nations Development Programme (2016). *Table 5: Gender Inequality Index.* Retrieved March 16 2018, from http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII.

UN Women (2014). *Emma Watson: Gender equality is your issue too.* Retrieved January 16 2018, from http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/emma-watson-gender-equality-is-your-issue-too.

UN Women (2016). *2016 IMPACT report.* Retrieved July 27 2019 from https://www.heforshe.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/HeForShe%20Corporate%20Parity%20Report%202016.pdf

UN Women (n.d.-a). *About UN Women.* Retrieved May 4th, 2019, from http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women.

UN Women (n.d.-b). *IMPACT*. Retrieved July 27 2019, from https://www.heforshe.org/en/impact.

UN Women (n.d.-c). *HeForShe*. Retrieved July 27 2019, from https://www.heforshe.org/en.

UN Women National Committee (2018). *Rapport inzake Jaarrekening 2017 [report concerning the financial statements of 2017].* Retrieved from https://www.cbf.nl/uploads/paspoort/jaarverslag-incl-jaarrek-2017-un-women-id-52935.269c2a.pdf.

UN Women NL (n.d.-a). *De SP is voor gelijke kansen voor iedereen, ongeacht je achtergrond [The SP stands for equal opportunity for everyone, regardless of your background].* Retrieved July 17, 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/emile-roemer-sp/.

UN Women NL (n.d.-b). *Gelijkheid tussen man en vrouw zou vanzelfsprekend moeten zijn [Equality between man and woman should be self-evident].* Retrieved July 17 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/jesse-klaver-groenlinks/.

UN Women NL (n.d.-c). *HeForShe Champions Nederland [HeForShe Champions the Netherlands]*. Retrieved May 4 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/heforshe-champions-nederland/.

UN Women NL (n.d.-d). *Participatie van vrouwen op alle terreinen is heel belangrijk. Mannen zijn hierbij medestanders [Participation of women on all terrains is very important. Men are associates in this].* Retrieved July 17 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/mark-rutte-vvd/.

UN Women NL (n.d.-e). *Samen roepen we seksisme een halt toe [Together we can stop sexism].* Retrieved July 17, 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/alexander-pechtold-d66/.

UN Women NL (n.d.-f). *We lopen in Nederland echt nog steeds heel erg achter [We're still really behind in the Netherlands].* Retrieved July 17 2019, from https://heforshe.unwomen.nl/lodewijk-asscher-pvda/.

Van Bijsterveldt-Vliegenthart, J. M. (2011, 8th of April). *Hoofdlijnen emancipatiebeleid: vrouwen- en homo-emancipatie 2011-2015 [Outlines emancipation policy: women's- and gay*

emancipation 2011-2015] [Letter to parliament]. Retrieved July 11 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2011D18661&did=2011D18661.

Van Engelshoven, I. (2018). *Emancipatienota 2018-2021: Principes in praktijk [Emancipation memorandum 2018-2021: Principles in practice]* [Letter to parliament]. Retrieved July 11 2019, from https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2018Z05748&did=2018D22311.

Van Kersbergen, K. & Verbeek, B. (2007). The Politics of International Norms: Subsidiarity and the Imperfect Competence Regime of the European Union. *European Journal of International Relations*, 13(2), 217-238.

Verloo, M.M.T. (2005). Mainstreaming gender equality in Europe: a critical frame analysis. *The Greek Review of Social Research*, 117, 11-34.

VVD (2012). *Niet doorschuiven maar aanpakken [Don't push it back, deal with it]*. Election programme.

VVD (2017). *Zeker Nederland [Secured Netherlands].* Election programme.

Webnews (2019, June 19). *Persbericht: Jean-Pascal Tricoire van Schneider Electric is benoemd tot een Glassdoor Top CEO van 2019 [Press release: Jean-Pascal Tricoire of Schneider Electric has been named Glassdoor Top CEO of 2019].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.

Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics. *International organization*, 46(2), 391-425.

World Bank (2016). GDP per capita (current US$). Retrieved March 16th 2018, from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?year_high_desc=true.

World Economic Forum (2015). *Rankings Global Gender Gap Report.* Retrieved March 16 2018, from http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/rankings/.

World Economic Forum (2016). *Rankings Global Gender Gap Report.* Retrieved March 16 2018, from http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/rankings/.

World Economic Forum (2017). *The Global Gender Gap Report 2017.* Retrieved March 16 2018, from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf.

Quotenet (2015, 23 January). *Quote´s van de dag: heult Derk Sauer met Moskou? Emma Watson en Frans van Houten spreken Davos toe [Quotes of the day: is Derk Sauer in cahoots with Moscow? Emma Watson and Frans van Houten speak at Davos].* Retrieved July 20 2019, from LexisNexis Academic Database.