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1 Introduction

The title of the thesis may to some portray a word game. Its playful character appears even provocative in the way it approaches a term heavily loaded with meaning. At the same time, however, it also challenges to question a subject one would never have wondered about. It indicates that there must be more behind “halal”, behind meat and behind a market. It simply asks for explanations.

A small story shall help to tackle the problem in its core and introduce the matter of this master thesis.

It was during the process of research, when a local Austrian News Channel, ORF, broadcasted a report about a sheep called “Dorli” (Url 1). The story told that a tourist of Arabic origin had bought a sheep from a local farmer in order to slaughter it for his own use. In a situation where the sheep was bound to a stake, looking abandoned, a local woman took it home. Following this incident, the police came in order to bring the sheep back to the owner, explaining the woman that this sheep had been bought and was meant for a ritual Islamic slaughter. This way of slaughter was explained by the news channel as a method where the animal has to be cut in the area of throat with the aim to achieve hemorrhage at best.

The result of this small incident about the confusion on ownership of a sheep was surprisingly manifold and had consequences for each actor involved in the story.

The local woman was indignant, claiming that this rite was not part of the Austrian “Kulturkreis” and that she as a private room hirer will never take Arabic guests anymore. Receiving many positive reactions by local and media audience, she then wanted to fight for the rights of the sheep and buy it, as ORF announced.

The owner of the sheep, the Arabic tourist, had to give the animal back to the farmer he had bought it from, since the official slaughterer and others now refused to conduct the slaughter for him. Also the farmer, former owner of “Dorli”, did not want to sell sheep to “anyone” anymore from then on.

To start with a news story about a sheep called “Dorli” lies in its power to unconsciously illustrate the complexity of Austria’s halal meat situation. With a straightforward way of reporting about the event, it provides an insight on how something that has to do with

“halal” is commonly represented and perceived. It further leaves us with the right questions leading to the subject of my thesis:

Why does a breeding ewe, meant for slaughter from the very beginning, get a name and receive media attention, when intended to be slaughtered by a Muslim? Why does it need to be saved and gain rights by local citizens? If we can buy so called halal meat throughout Austria, even around the corner in bigger cities, why does the Arabic guest still want to slaughter his own animal?

These are questions directly connected with the very matter: the halal meat market. It is a market that is defined, questioned and created from within and outside. As a niche market that crosses economic as well as religious spheres and many more, it calls for a closer investigation. Definition and meaning, political dimensions, as well as the positioning of the market are factors that in between lines are referred to in this news report. Throughout this master thesis, these are to be explained.

The Islamic ritual slaughter the Arabic guest intended to have performed is originally defined by the Holy Quran, as well as the tradition set by exemplary life of the prophet Muhammad, called Sunnah and also by Hadiths, the written teachings of the prophet. Animal welfare is at the core of all sources. The very principles are given when the act of slaughter is carried out by a Muslim, who is killing the animal in the name of god. This reciting of the Tasmiyya ought to remind the slaughterer that he is taking a life of a living creature. The healthy animal must be cut with a sharp knife and by severing the neck including carotid arteries and jugular veins. The sufficient blood loss as well as the fact that no other animal waiting to be slaughtered should observe this scene are important (Anil et al. 2010). Halal, the Arabic Quranic term for “permissible”, declares the rightfulness of this kind of slaughter.

While the story portrays a picture in which Islamic ritual slaughter is an individualized form of practice the reality shows that halal meat is very much part of the local Austrian market. Restaurants, kebab stalls, butcher shops and even leaflets for food delivery services are adorned with the label for halal – حلال – in various styles. For curious consumers, some halal meat providers emphasize the “halalness” of their products by showing certificates that are pinned to some place in the stall or restaurant.

It is estimated that there are around 570.000 Muslims in Austria (Url 2). Only by its number and consistent growth, the Muslim population is already a sign of an important consumer class, targeting a special kind of market, defined by religiously informed products.

An increasing number of producers and providers of halal meat represent the situation which shows that market shares are growing. The new niche has become attractive to many actors who have economic interests. Also media cover of recent years has put halal not only in light of ambiguous forms of slaughter, but also represented it as an interesting market that offers great potential for Austria's economy (Url 3).

The potential of this niche market was finally expressed in the Austrian halal standard – ON 142000 – created by the Austrian Standard Institute (ASI) in cooperation with the IIDZ, the Islamic Information and Documentation Center (Heine/Lohlker/Potz 2012: 162).

Juridical regulations and policies and their historical changes over time have defined the practices of today's halal meat production in Austria. It is a legal system, in which religious right stands above the laws on animal protection (Ferrari/Bottoni 2010a: 36 ff).

Like Austria, many European countries have witnessed immense changes in halal production and marketing over the last decades. Within the last centuries and due to the growth of Muslim migrants, halal meat production has become of importance, also in terms of global market shares that are constantly developing and expanding (cf. Tieman et al 2012). There is no other segment in the food market that is growing as fast as halal Food does (Ziegler 2008: 1).

A new high purchasing power is given by young and educated Muslims as well as the emergence of Muslim communities across the globe (Abdul-Talib/Abd-Razak 2013: 188). Thus, especially European nations have witnessed a new demand for halal meat and halal products (cf. Lever/Miele 2012: 528). Muslims make up about 6 % of the European population, so the food industry is facing a time in which Muslims claim labelled halal more than ever before (Bonne/Verbeke 2007: 36; Url 4). New consumer behaviors, especially the increase in meat consumption, but also identity reinforcement and religious revival, are part of this process (Lever/Puig de la Bellacasa 2010: 1).

These developments explain a shift in paradigm for halal products. Halal is today used as a term and leading factor for a new market with the tendency of becoming something similar to what the economy calls a brand (Wilson/ Liu 2010). Also governments, NGOs and agencies

have shifted their attention towards the halal sector in order to gain additional market shares for their national products (Ziegler 2008: 4). So have food chains seen massive influxes in their profits (Mukherjee 2014: 24).

The halal market, not only including meat products, is worth 150 billion dollar per year with an annual growth of almost 3 % (ibid.). These are developments which describe the growing European local halal market in numbers. Furthermore, they portray answers to the expanding export markets that are opening up due to new consumption patterns and new demands for halal products in key Muslim markets (Anon. a 2011: 3).

Discussions on religious, political and economic levels accompany these local, European and global developments. Such debates circle around the definitions and practice of the ritual slaughter, mostly referring to the subject of stunning. As a result, recent circumstances are illustrating a situation in which exporters struggle to balance need for commercial efficiency, religious requirements and the requirements of non-religious consumer groups by dealing with multiple standards simultaneously (Farouk 2013: 806). This leads to a situation in which “authenticity” of halal is especially at question among Muslims in non-Muslim countries (Lever/Miele 2012: 528).

With the growing interest in halal meat products from the side of supply and consumption, also scientific interest has risen, investigating exemplified facts and processes. However, especially in the field of anthropology barely any research has been conducted so far.

For Austria, only general information about the halal meat market is made available by Heine, Lohker and Potz in their book “Muslime in Österreich” (Muslims in Austria) and further by a diploma thesis, which mostly concentrates on the definition of halal and its legal status in Austria.

Also in a wider context, not locally specific, most researchers have focused exclusively on the economic site of the halal meat market or the religious slaughter debate. In contrast to this approach, I intend to focus on the social and cultural perspective on the developments in the halal meat branch in the local Austrian context. One that includes historical developments, political dimensions, social formations as well as cultural and religious aspects defining this niche market.

A contextualization of all these aspects may allow me to gain a new picture of the emergence of this market, explaining its various dimensions. It is about researching a market that not only produces a certain kind of meat, but also certain kinds of meaning.

But why has this market emerged only recently? Why it is important that Austria as a state is involved in this very market and what was the urge for it? How much and in which sense is this halal product in the end an “Austrian product”?

Assuming that the phenomenon of halal meat production is shaped on the local level - however influenced by global developments and transnational interconnections - leads me to the framing of my field locally, but analyzing it within its wider context. My research will focus on the emergence and developments of Austria’s halal meat market in the first place, but then it shall be contextualized to transnational and national forms of production and economy as well as political and religious thought.

The research subject is relevant and important on many levels. Muslim citizens become an active and visible part of Austrian society, they make up an increasingly important group contributing to the economic well-being and developments of the country. Being a diverse community of many different cultural backgrounds, it is highly interesting to investigate how the halal meat market develops, constitutes and reforms itself within the legal juridical and policy frame of the nation state Austria and by referring to one’s own manifold religious parameters.

Moreover, meat consumption and meat production in general have become sensitive subjects in many European countries, also in Austria. Meat industries are answering to the high consumer demands of our society with mass production and reduced quality in animal farming. At the same time, voices against these circumstances raise and have discussed negative impacts of today’s meat industry on economic, ecologic, but also moral levels (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung/Bund/Le Monde 2014) ever since. Within this context, it is also very important to look at niche markets in order to grasp a full picture of Austria’s meat industry. At best, my studies may contribute to a better understanding of recent developments in this industry and possibly bring more information and transparency to the very matter and extend the existing body of knowledge. This might be useful for the local Austrian context, but also very much in a European and global context, since they are connected and influence one another.

The following research question has led my empirical research.

How has the Austrian halal meat market emerged and which institutional and non-institutional factors facilitate this niche market?

How does this local niche market relate to the European and global halal meat market?

The aim of the thesis is to focus on the establishment of a market niche and all actors involved in it. The aspect of the consumer will only be part of the research in context to the production aspect.

Therefore, further scientific inquiry would be needed in order to define and conceptualize the halal meat market from the consumers' perspective.

Theoretically, a few anthropological fields are of relevance in order to grasp a full picture of Austria's halal meat market.

First and foremost, I will frame my research by general anthropological thoughts on economy and consumption in relation to markets. This will allow me to explain anthropological perspectives in order to investigate the halal meat market and the possible meaning that emerge from it. It will turn out that anthropology is not only applicable to phenomena in economy, business and production, but also that it is very necessary for reaching new insights into a world which is many times left to economists. The fact that economy also contains a cultural and social realm finds support in the following quote: "Markets although fluctuating, distorted, manipulated and subject to periodic crisis in the short term, over the long term provide the economy with a social verdict." (Robotham 2005: 50).

It is not new that anthropologists have been interested in diverse forms of material culture and commodities in order to understand and examine human behavior. As early as in ancient history of anthropology, researchers accomplished the position that understood products as commonly created and reshaped in local identity, as well as negotiated through consumptive practices (Jordan 2003: 74). Following up, anthropology today sees economy, marketing and consumption as important forces in human behavior worldwide. Thus, emerging structures are always to be seen within their cultural, historical and global context. Consequently, with the specific social and cultural framing of economy, new possibilities that see how markets affect and are affected by other areas of life, open up (Carrier 2005: 4).

The social world and market world have to be seen together, in order to evaluate impacts of policies, changes in values and social institutions on economic opportunities (Ortiz 2005: 74).

Even the economy in large-scale industrialized societies cannot be separated from social, religious, and political spheres anymore (Plattner 1989: 4).

Looking at Europe's expanding halal meat production, it becomes evident that migrants do not only play a major role in consuming halal products, but also in producing and merchandizing them. With ethnicity as a resource for business, ethnic entrepreneurs are understood to "adapt to the resources made available in opportunity structures and attempt to carve out their own niches" (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 21).

From this perspective, theoretical specification will be given through the insight on niche marketing and ethnic entrepreneurship. It will allow me to bring the consumption aspect in context to the production aspect - focusing on the producers, the production line and distributors. Furthermore, both approaches will help to clarify the actors' position within the market. While theories on niche marketing offer an approach to neoliberal aspects, ethnic entrepreneurship tackles the particularity of it for the case of halal meat business.

Following these concepts concentrating on "the market", the following discussion will evolve in a chapter that focuses on Daniel Miller's (1995, 2001) conceptualization of consumption. Here, also concepts focusing on more particular phenomena such as ethical consumption by James Carrier (2012) will be debated.

Generally, this theoretical discussion ought to give an insight on how goods help people make choices to make culture concrete (McCracken 2005: 4). Such assumptions draw back on cognitions by famous anthropologists, like Mary Douglas. These, too, were important for first thoughts in the field of anthropology on economy and consumption: "Consumption decisions are a vital source of the culture of the time. People reared in a particular culture see it change in their lifetime. They are playing some part in the change. And consumption is the very sphere in which culture is generated." (Douglas 2001: 263). Resulting from this basic perception, Carrier's work can additionally investigate the moral nature in consumption. His concept theorizes ethical consumption as a cultural distinction, a collective commentary on relationship between economy and society (Carrier 2012: 12).

These two approaches will lead to more detailed theoretical approaches on products and consumption – the anthropological thought on food and trust. Both concepts are essential to my research, since they provide tools to investigate characteristics that are inherent to halal meat products. They can tackle the construction of meanings for food products theoretically,

but also explain the dimension of relation between product, producer and consumer on the premise of trust.

The third chapter will give information about current halal meat market strategies. The information will be derived from various scholars of different fields who have researched on this matter. Here, theoretical conclusions will be debated and put in context to each other so that in the end, they can serve to conceptualize my findings on the Austrian halal meat market. The rather theoretical beginning will be continued with two paragraphs that are meant to provide facts about the global and European developments and economic governing in the halal meat market. Within this frame, I further intend to include the concept of Islam as a transnational public space by John Bowen (2004). This puts new light on the halal meat market's dimension and inherent structures. It approaches the global Muslim community, the Ummah, as boundary spanner with great potential for the halal industry and diverse Muslim markets. Hence, the internationalization among those businesses considered uniquely Islamic leads to the entry into new areas (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 83ff).

Since Islam has no site of central command and no set of firm laws that specify what should constitute halal, it becomes rather obvious that halal is mobile and adapts political, social, and corporal borders. Especially in new migrant societies, halal is at transition, increasingly de-connecting from former local historical and rooted forms of food tradition while manifesting new kinds (Mukherjee 2014: 65 ff).

These approaches understand that Halal will culminate in moving beyond of being something of just Islamic significance. On the one side, branding, marketing and product development for halal is taking shape, but on the other side, marketing and brand thinking has to adapt in order to accommodate and preserve what halal actually is (Wilson/Liu 2010: 109, 115).

Last but not least, a final theoretical framework for my research will be given by the anthropology of policy. The matter of policy investigation is very significant in the way that a policy analysis can unveil how halal meat market has been shaped on various levels by legal structures. Other than general policy studies, the anthropological approach offers a perspective that tries to unveil context and origin of a policy, as well as the process of

creation, its outcomes and related meanings for the individual and society. Using this theoretical framing, I will be able to investigate how Austrian policies, European policies as well as debates about global halal standardization policies have impact on the local market and how they constitute and transform this niche business. Leading authors within this field, Cris Shore, Susan Wright and Davide Però (1997/2011), will be my main references.

Methodologically, this research is guided by an empirical approach. Various tools of social and cultural anthropology have been conducted in order to investigate the field of the Austrian halal meat production, trying to involve all its dimensions.

In order to gain data about the halal meat market in Austria, interviews have been the main method applied. Partially structured expert interviews were the key techniques. Using the ethnographic interview as well as informal conversations to collect data allowed gathering information from individuals and advocates who could provide different kinds of knowledge. Actors from the production side, field of distribution and people who are involved in that market in one or the other way, constituted my main sources. The following interview group categories will illustrate my choice: local halal butchers, halal-meat wholesalers, Austrian slaughterhouses with halal meat production, national and international halal certifiers as well as Austrian public authorities. For the entire research, 17 interviews were conducted.

Complementary to my research, data was collected by forms of observation at market and production sites and their documentation in form of an ethnographic field diary.

The analysis, including the system of coding and memoing, will be inspired by the grounded theory and the qualitative content analysis. These texturing techniques were applied with the use of the computer software Atlas.ti for qualitative data research and analysis.

A third method for my research was finally applied in form of a media analysis. The focus of this approach was to analyze online representation and provision of information on the subject of the local, but also global halal meat market. Websites of international institutions for halal as well as online articles about Austria's halal meat business were my material.

This method allowed me to connect the Austrian market with the global one and to find out how they stand in relation to each other.

2 Theoretical Perspectives

2.1 Markets and Producers

2.1.1 Anthropological Perspectives on Economy and Markets

“Market” is a term one usually understands as disconnected from human social and cultural behavior and action. It almost appears as a world that seems existent on its own, parallel to the realities of people. While it is a common perception to find the market influencing people’s life, the other way round is hardly taken for granted.

Reason for such conception is the commonly present rhetoric by economists and business scientists. However, different, holistic approaches have long been provided by anthropologists who have been looking into the role of economy, economic exchange and commodities since the beginning of this scientific field. Traditionally, in early anthropology it was specific localities and groups of people and their economic structures and habits which were investigated. But also certain products and their economic and social dimensions became part of interest.

Today, with the rise of neoliberalism and an ever growing economy, the anthropological insight on economy and markets is more important than ever before.

In order to emphasize the relevance to not only study Austria’s halal meat market outside of a pure economic perception, this chapter will introduce and discuss anthropological conceptual strategies on “markets and economy”.

The very general approach understands that “From an anthropological perspective, economy covers the acquisition, production, transfer and use of things and services.” (Gudemann 2005: 94). These modes are - and this is specific and unique to anthropological understanding - always to be interpreted as imbedded in society (Plattner 1989: 4). Such crucial fact leads to the consequential view that “[...] economy is local and specific, constituted through social relationships and contextually defined values.” (Gudemann 2001: 1). This goes along with James Carrier’s thoughts on the social and cultural context as part of what people express in terms of economic activities and their thoughts and beliefs about them (Carrier 2005: 4).

Consequently, marketing and consumption are important forces in human behavior worldwide from an anthropological perspective (Jordan 2003: 64). We understand that economy is not abstract, but rather a network of different kinds of relationships that are establishing within and around the process of production and accumulation.

These relationships circle around values, goals and actions defined by their feature of being reciprocal – hence, the same accounts to economies. This is the reason why anthropology conceptualizes economies as informed by human values, and therefore culturally bound (Blim 2005: 306). Evolving from this theoretical framing, the anthropological major interest is to unveil how economic decisions are effected by social relations, obligations and actors' perception (Ortiz 2005: 59).

As Gudemann points out, there are, in his terms, up-close and far distant aspects in economy. These are referring to either being local and specific or also impersonal and global forms that are abstracted from social contexts. While they can be mutually dependent and interactive, they can also exist separately or in opposition to each other (Gudemann 2001: 1).

Such characteristics result in cognition that economy in any dimensional formation and especially in this globalized world should never be theorized outside of social and cultural parameters. Neither small communities, nor large scale industrialized societies can be separated from social, religious, and political spheres. A holistic picture can only be achieved if noneconomic realities of life are included for studying economic behavior (Plattner 1989: 4).

The sphere described abstractly here, where economy plays a role, can be visualized in forms of markets. The market serves as a sort of platform on which economic realities are created based on economic practice and relationships. Constitutive to markets are the realm with interested parties in competition and accumulation of gains as well as the realm of community, with its grounding in local values, associations and imagined solidarities and connected in institutions and practices (Gudemann 2001: 1). Shared interests are the common theme for communities and the driving force (Gudemann 2005: 95).

Blim further specifies by his division into spheres of action and their power. He understands that the private profit sector and the private non-profit one as well as the state as platform and player of interest provide the context for economic action while depending on their degree of bureaucratic organization and the portion of a given economy (Blim 2005: 307). If

we understand these forces that are creative to markets, one must realize that in this relation also world systems and political economy gain new insights (Jordan 2003: 64).

In summary, it has become clear that markets are the subset of economic life. According to Carrier, they affect and are affected by various areas of life due to social and cultural influences on the production and consumption (Carrier 2005: 4). The wider meaning of that view that includes today's neoliberalization developments is stated well in a quote by Applbaum: "As primary exchange locations, market places of all sorts are both sites of global commercial integration as well as one of the principal vehicle by which it is accomplished." (Applbaum 2005: 275 f). He describes that structures of exchange are the major features of markets. These affect among and from whom, in which manner, and to which extent goods are exchanged (ibid.: 276).

Hence it is the anthropologists' task to investigate by which powers and in which context these structures of trade are affected in relation to the market.

"Industry practice does often position products and services in terms of meaning, but again often these maps do not capture the culture from which meaning comes." (McCracken 2005: 183). This point stressed by McCracken asks for a new form of looking at meaning-making patterns. Especially in industrializing times where constantly new markets emerge around the world, such an approach brings significant insights to recent developments.

As a starting point, it should be acknowledged that each market has to respond to different worldviews of consumer groups and must be marketed differently (Jordan 2003: 64). The supply of new products is in this sense culturally figured and by product of demand (Applbaum 2005: 282). Such fact can be further depicted by Applbaum's theory that markets' continual focus to explore new areas of supply is due to the fact that it is not only transformative as a commercial paradigm, but also as a cultural one. This conceptualization of a cultural paradigm makes him assume that marketing practices in today's economically globalized world furthermore lead to the materialization of needs and wants. The idea that consumption and identification with lifestyle categories lead the individual to its expression of liberty in modern world is dominant (Applbaum 2004: 236). In short: "Markets further act upon the environment surrounding exchange, aiming to conjure a meaningful context for the commerce and consumption of their commodities." (ibid.: 21).

Part of this process is what Applbaum declares as materialization of identity. Attributes such as gender, ethnicity, race or other identity markers are perceived as cultural scripts. They serve the logic of commoditization and are working in the service of exchange value making (Applbaum 2004: 114).

The act of provisioning, what we call marketing in the modern world, is therefore “the institutionalization of the means to a particular understanding of satisfaction and the moment of this understanding’s replication in society.” (ibid.: 7f).

In conclusion, the discussed arguments lead to the fact that marketing is to be perceived as a culturally particularistic set of practices. Regarding this matter, marketing serves as a key agent in the capitalist system by containing power to produce meaning in a capitalistic world (ibid.: 21, 235). According to Miller, this leaves the anthropologist with the task to study objects people produce simultaneously to their present life. Statements with regard to the economy are important; however, the actions of the economic actors are even more important. It is all about the larger framework (Miller 1997: 16f).

2.1.2 Ethnic Entrepreneurship

The term ethnic entrepreneurship has emerged with the rise of studies on migrant groups and their forms of incorporation in host societies.

At the beginning of the 1950s and 1960s, western countries, especially in Europe, witnessed a great immigration process due to the expansion of its labor markets and economic boom. However, a high percentage of the newly immigrated people did not find their chance to enter into the labor market with the result that many people started their own small business enterprises (Blaschke 1990: 80).

Characteristics for ethnic entrepreneurship are disclosed by the very terms and their attributions it consists of. The word “ethnic” finds its roots in “ethnicity”. The term ethnicity is usually applied to social groups which are culturally (in a wider understanding) different from the main society. People define their ethnic groups by maintaining their individual symbolic norms and values. Yet, also the outside is constituent to their identity formation by articulating a specific perception on the other. Religion can be one example to define an ethnic group. A particularity of these groups is their powerful organizing principle in social life. Certain morals, social obligations, cultural recourses and trust are major factors to keep networks and the communities functioning (Erikson 2005: 359, 368).

The second term “entrepreneurship” is a form of economic activity. Migrants can be perceived within the concept of ethnicity and their economic engagement makes them what scientifically is called ethnic entrepreneurs.

While the circumstances for an economic well-being of migrants can be difficult, turning towards one’s own sources in all kinds may be the solution.

So does the initial market for immigrant entrepreneurs rise out of the migrant communities themselves (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 21). Their own resources in form of common values, attitudes, information, but also shared knowledge, skills, leadership and solidarity help people find their own way to build up their own economic enterprises (Oviat/McDougall 2005: 539).

Hence, the term “ethnic entrepreneurship”, which is often used today, refers to the various forms how migrants manage to find their own opportunity structures and access pathways to business within the given market conditions (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 21). These conditions are defined by the socioeconomic and political environment of the host countries’ society and their institutions environment (Klostermann et al. 1999, in Parzer/Kwok 2013: 264). The possibility of an ethnic group to share common pre-migration situations and current similar reactions to the host society become characteristic to them and their forms of incorporation. For this reason, ethnic entrepreneurs’ products and services are mainly oriented towards people of similar ethnic background (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 21). Social networks, which could be established in the country of settlement due to ethnic bondage as well as shared specialized knowledge, support access to the market (Blaschke 1990: 80).

While ethnicity might not have been a big feature of people’s everyday life before, in the situation of settling in a new country it happens to be perceived as helpful and necessary for successes (Parzer/Kwok 2013: 263). Especially Pécoud points out that the cultural attributes here explained such as trust, solidarity and skills, etc. are not to be understood as inherent to a group. In a circular process, these attributes are activated in the migrants’ social fields in their new country of settlement. While cultural attributes may lead to positive economic success, they can also reinforce the opposite developments such as exploitation of ethnic solidarity (Pécoud 2000: 447).

Parzer and Kwok, however, define ethnic entrepreneurship less ambivalent. To commoditize ethnicity is here understood as effort to obtain economic prosperity (Parzer/Kwok 2013: 275). Trust, bondage and networks are responses of ethnic groups facing a challenging situation in the host country (Parzer/Kwok 2013: 263). All in all, as Oviat and McDougall make clear, it is “a combination of innovative, proactive, and risk seeking behaviour.” (Oviat/McDougall 2005: 539).

Besides economic inclusion and well-being, emotional and cultural shelter that is established as part of it is a result of business engagement through the “toolkit” of ethnicity (Parzer/Kwok 2013: 274). In this process of networking and economically providing for one another in forms of small businesses, existing attributions are reproduced, yet they are also continually recreated and reinterpreted in these market strategies (Schammann 2013: 58). Especially in today’s global cities which are famous for their diverse population many forms of ethnic entrepreneurship come into light. Small shops offer an assortment of different kinds of ethnic food and products perceived as “exotic” by the host society have become part of the cityscape. It is no longer a venue for migrants only, but also many local citizens appreciate services and products of these entrepreneurs. The offering and formation by migrants has led to newly construed structures of consumption and diversity in services. Especially locations like markets and urban street markets are first focal points for migrants. They serve as economic possibility spaces (Dabringer/Trupp 2012: 11).

In summary, “ethnic strategies emerge from the interaction of all these factors, as ethnic entrepreneurs adapt to the resources made available in opportunity structures and attempt to carve out their own niches.” (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 21).

The largest critique on this depiction of ethnic entrepreneurship comes from Antoine Pécoud, as already implied. According to his analysis, the term “ethnic economies” is often used too simplistically. While he acknowledges the importance of migrants’ recourses and their disadvantaged situation and socio-familiar background for the emergence of so called ethnic entrepreneurship, he also stresses that the locally defined policies, the role of the welfare system, political circumstances and economic premises are essential for the constitution of ethnic economies (Pécoud 2000: 451).

Furthermore, he suggests to rather speak of “multiple ethnic economies” making up one diverse “general economy”, since any economy can be defined as ethnic, also the one in hands of the white majority. Therefore, “ethnicity” as a category for economic activity blurs and the question shall instead be “how ethnicity should be defined and interpreted” (ibid.: 456f).

The overestimation of differences between immigrants and non-immigrants is problematic, because both do business by using recourses and co-ethnic solidarity. Such false approach obscures the differences and diverse sets of relations in ethnic economies (ibid.: 457).

As a consequence of these dangers, the most important task for researches is - according to Pécoud – “a critical attitude toward the very notion of ‘ethnic economies’ and to use it with its limitations in mind” (ibid.: 459).

Moreover, Nina Glick Schiller and Ayşe Çağlar emphasized to rather make use of a concept of multiple embeddedness instead of using the ethnicity as a primary or exclusive unit of study. Entrepreneurial practices should rather be depicted within its diverse sets of social relations and multiple social fields of uneven power as well as multiple frames of action and ways of belonging (Glick Schiller/Çağlar 2013: 496, 501).

Their alternative approach includes a special attention towards the relation of time and place. For this reason, it is important to look at the migrants’ economic emplacement in relation to broader fields of power, the urban situation as well as transnational and global networks.

Local institutions, structures, but also narratives and the continuous reconfiguration of governance, urban space and also capital accumulation may have major impact on migrants’ economic positioning, as they develop in certain moments of cities’ historical progress. Institutions of unequal power and hierarchical networks, which reach from the local to the global sphere, are of influence (Glick Schiller/Çağlar 2013: 495ff).

By using this theoretical framework, researchers may examine changing opportunity structures, barriers to economic activity – trajectories for success or failure of immigrant entrepreneurs. Furthermore, such structural locational approach, which includes the investigation of influencing cross-border regulations and broader fields of power, might help to overcome the “ethnic lens” and to break out of “methodological nationalism” (ibid.).

“Migrant business positions itself, is shaped and in turn contributes to the constitution of the local, national and transnational within uneven hierarchies of power” (Glick Schiller/Çağlar 2013: 518)

With these critical aspects towards the understanding of ethnic entrepreneurship in mind, it is the task of anthropologists to find out how migrants discover opportunities and in which manners they evaluate, exploit and discharge them (Oviat/McDougall 2005: 540). Besides, ethnic entrepreneurship is an argument which proves that forms of globalization such as migration and their outcomes shape new local structures (Glick Schiller/Çağlar 2009: 196). In this context, the concept of ethnic entrepreneurship indicates great applicability for the halal meat market. It makes it possible to grasp local forms of incorporation, while investigating the wider background of the actors involved in it.

2.1.3 Niche Markets

On the basis of theoretical concepts on ethnic entrepreneurship in the previous chapter, I would now like to conceptualize the term “niche market”. This will allow me to analyze the halal meat market according to approaches and terminologies of business and economic sciences, but in combination with social and cultural approaches.

The word “niche” already suggests a few attributes such as “marginal”, “small”, “hidden” or “special”. Ethnic entrepreneurship, which was introduced by economically marginalized immigrant groups, can be seen as source for creating such a niche market. In this view, niche marketing can be regarded as a bottom-up tactic (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 41). With the use of ethnic marketers, market gaps could be filled and new niche markets were created (Parzer/Kwok 2013: 264).

Generally, niche marketing itself has not achieved much attention in any scientific field. There is no widely accepted theoretical basis. Only multiple approaches covered by only a few publications provide some facts (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 39; Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 272). Even in social science and anthropology, niche markets have only found attention within the literature on ethnic entrepreneurship focusing less on the perception on markets. The term “niche market” finds no mentioning here.

However, theoretical thoughts of scientists from the field of business will help to feature some important aspects of niche markets. First of all and very simply “[...] niche marketing is

assumed to provide high margins while mass marketing is believed to provide high volumes.” (Kotler 1989, in Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 273).

Usually, niche marketing refers to small, profitable and homogenous market segments which are meant for a small group of customers unified by their similar characteristics or needs. On this basis, a larger customer base can be built (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 40, 42). Throughout this approach, first parallels to the concept of ethnic entrepreneurship become clear.

Niche markets are an answer to needs and desires. This character distinguishes them from market segments where the emphasis lies on being a manageable part of the market (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 42). The better matching of customer needs results in the possibility to mark up prices (Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 273). Specific to niche markets and reason for their success are features which Toften and Hammervoll have defined as “uniqueness, high quality, relationships, commitment, dynamic capabilities, partial protection from competition, customer value or viable option” (Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 274).

A strong and long-term relationship component is essential for this kind of marketing. Part of this is the reputation as the key for its business (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 43). This is why successful economic trading requires the use of “specialization, relationship marketing, developing internal dynamic capabilities and building protective barriers” (Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 281).

Today’s western world is witnessing an enormous diversity of markets. This situation has been accomplished with the increasing diversity of societies based on migration, but also through advanced technologies which have been enabling new marketing approaches, deteriorating the surveillance of traditional marketing approaches (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 39).

The niche markets evolved throughout such developments also contain several benefits. First of all, a higher purchase frequency and performance define the business, but also growth possibilities are usually inherent offering future profit gains and increased sales. The specific value creation and perceived values hold customer loyalty more easily, making the business competitive (Toften/Hammervoll 2013: 274).

These characteristics mentioned indicate that niches might be relatively small at the beginning, but suggest the high potential of growing to large markets. Therefore, it is not surprising that many great markets originate from niches (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 40).

This fact also explains why niche marketing is important to look at in order to frame the halal meat market. It is a market that basically emerges from a niche, but as later will be explained in detail, has already gained the attention of large companies and diverse global players. Big companies tend to make use of niches. They aim at entering new areas for profit. However, this involves a process of adaptation and repositioning in ways of doing business (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 45). A slogan used by Dalgic and Leeuw - "getting bigger by acting smaller" - suits very well to describe the economic aspect of niche marketing (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994: 50). It might also explain why today we are witnessing that ethnic markets are no longer as marginalized as before and even break into mainstream markets (Brandellero 2009, in Parzer/Kwok 2013: 265).

2.2 Markets, Products and Consumers

2.2.1 Meanings of Consumption in Relation to Markets

Production of manifold commodities and their distribution at various market sites would seem irrelevant if there weren't people in need and with interest to buy. Consumers and their behaviors and preferences in consumption are therefore of great importance if we want to understand developments and patterns of markets and businesses.

Great thinkers in previous times have understood the importance of production and consumption for society. One of the most famous, Karl Marx, is well known for his philosophizing on the very subject. In the following statement, he sums up the essence and starting point for this chapters' subject.

"Production mediates consumption; it creates the latter's material; without it, consumption would lack an object. But consumption also mediates production, in that it alone creates for the products the subject from whom they are products. The product only obtains its 'last finish' in consumption." (Marx 2001: 32).

This statement leads to the first understanding that it is all about relations and interdependency. Both production and consumption are authentic sites at which social relations are created and influence one another (Miller 2001: 7). Generally, there is no ideal way, but many to consume. It is a plural process of social and cultural self-construction (Miller 1995: 41).

Mary Douglas, one of the first anthropologists interested within this field, emphasized that people's consumption is about stating one's own position in society. As a form of intended inclusion or exclusion, people use consumption as a form of expressing something about themselves, their families and their local background (Douglas 2001: 264). The consumer choice as form of positioning oneself within society may be depicted on the visible site, yet it refers much more to human's moral judgments about everything (Douglas 2001: 263).

Douglas' theoretical approach finds even more specification with aspects made by Miller. He states that the actual performance of consumption is rather influenced by complex and even contradictory backgrounds. Particular strategies of taste and prioritization are the result of it (Miller 1997: 310).

Miller points out that, "Consumption is simply a process of objectification – that is, a use of goods and services in which the object or activity becomes simultaneously a practice in the world and a form in which we construct our understandings of ourselves in the world." (Miller 1995: 30).

This appropriation of materially and symbolically classifying objects is what Bourdieu earlier acknowledged as a "generative formula of life-style". The leading force of differentiating life-styles is taste, which the individual or a certain group uses in order to mark distinctive preferences - making a statement, which is boundary driving. In that sense, life-style differentiates oneself from "the other" and taste is the practical operator for the transformation of things and commodities into particular and distinctive signs (Bourdieu 1984: 173f).

In Bourdieu's words this is

"[...] a symbolic expression of class positioning [...]. It continuously transforms necessities into strategies, constrains into preferences, and, without any mechanical determination, it generates the set of 'choices' constituting life-styles, which derive their meaning, i.e., their value, from their position in a system of oppositions and correlations." (Bourdieu 1984: 175)

Important influences on consumption patterns are different time sets and places which make people experience their society and economy differently (Carrier/Luetchford 2012: 11). Such fact also explains why "Consumption decisions are a vital source of the culture of the time. People reared in a particular culture see it change in their lifetime. They are playing

some part in the change. And consumption is the very sphere in which culture is generated.” (Douglas 2001: 263).

Furthermore and in this respect, consumption can also be understood as a political activity, which can perform and express power (Miller 1995: 2; Douglas 2001: 271). This is a characteristic that becomes clear if we look at the dominance of whiteness in labor markets and distinct cultural interpretations of materialism with its impact on global and local consumption patterns (Burton 2009: 368). “So consumption is a very active process, in the course of which all the social categories are being continually surveyed and redefined by everybody engaged in it.” (Douglas 2001: 264).

Also ethnic and religious affiliations can be revealed through consumption patterns, or even enhanced (Burton 2009: 361). Hence, consumption serves as an important tool in order to differentiate oneself or a group from “the other”. In this process, multiple identities come into being, while an unambiguous location in the semiotic of a very object remains possible, too (Miller 1995: 33).

These main thoughts introduced by Miller and Douglas further build on early points made by Bourdieu. He was one of the first who stressed the importance of consumption practices in order to form and maintain social relationships that are either of domination or submission. In his eyes, symbolic and cultural capital is displayed through the use of taste in form of consumption practices (Campbell 1995: 103).

Today, in a highly industrialized world which is globally connected, consumption reaches a new stage of importance. Consuming as a daily act has even increased due to capitalization of nation states and societies. More services and products are made available and it is no longer only the western world that consumes in the spectrum of bigger quantities. Of course, such developments also result in contested and shifting meanings of consumerism and production. New social relations and networks can be and are established. Also, the new masses of consumption and their ideas and demands translate into new forms of power on the production side.

Several developments can underline the previous argument. Daniel Miller argued that a global shift towards pluralism of “roots”, identity politics”, “religious revivals”, “regionalism”, and other movements had shaped the side of demand after 1968. He talks about a period that is also influenced by the new power of consumers, which opens new doors for

capitalisms to find new profits. There is a general increasing importance of consumption in the global economy (Miller 1995: 2, 48). While consumers usually do have the strength and ability to guide the production outcomes, new mechanisms hinder such process. Often relevant information, which would influence the consumer character and preferences, is held inaccessible or even prevented from consumers by the powers of producers (Keat 2001: 388).

Miller even argues that political options may be mainly developed at the domain of consumption. Human values find a new platform of dispute and empowerment. However, their diversity in forms of social networks remains present in opposition to the homogenization mechanisms of production and distribution as well as of institutions. Here, also the functioning of state and market plays a key role, inevitably depending on certain formation trends (Miller 1995: 40f, 48).

Anthropological thought contributes to a wider and better understanding of consumption and its influence on production and distribution, since it approaches it as correlating phenomena. It is rather people and their systems which are understood as driving forces than concepts of production and consumerism disconnected from the human being.

Consumption is not perceived as the end point of capitalism, but rather as an active and defining part of it (Miller 2001: 7).

In that sense, anthropologists conceptualize consumption as practice of stabilizing cultural categories. Cultural-making habits of individuals as members of a community influence their consumer motivation and practice (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2005: 223).

The role of business as embedded in society and its relation to people making use of it finds a helpful theoretical advice by Miller.

“The broader nature of consumption is better considered within an ethnography of society rather than an ethnography of business, because it is mainly related to the objectification of values.” (Miller 1997: 310).

Such theoretical framework is helpful, since it emphasizes that markets, their structures and ways of performing business are highly depending on local social and cultural characteristics and their influence on consumer practices and views.

2.2.2 Perspectives on Commodities

Resuming the previous theoretical conceptualization on the meaning of consumption, this chapter will give an insight on the actual relevance of the thing in between – the product – which by being produced and consumed is part of two sides. The characteristic and ascription of being something intermediate may already assume some of its tasks and special features.

“Each consumption good is attached to a vertically organized chain of activity, from the various stages of production through to distribution and retailing and to the processes and cultures of consumption themselves.” (Fine/Heaseman/Wright 2001: 74). At each part in this chain of activity, different attributions of a commodity may become important.

According to Grant McCracken, products are a medium of culture. People use it as identification or confirmation marker (McCracken 2005: 3 - 5). This statement basically confirms and supports the theoretical concepts in the previous chapter. It lines out that consumers play the crucial part in creating the product from its inception (Miller 1997: 4). Through this very process, culture is made concrete (McCracken 2005: 3 - 5). As a result, locally defined values are embodied in goods. They become a tool to express people's identity in the community (Gudemann 2001: 7f).

In subsuming words described by Miller: “The object is transformed by its intimate association with a particular individual or social group, or with the relationship between these.” (Miller 2001: 290).

Based on goods, private and also public meanings are kept with the ability to reflect meanings of a society. On the one side, products contain a meaning which can be traced from stereotypes such as “women”, “immigrants”, “age” and much more. On the other side, meaning is constantly created through the use of a good. In this manner, the act of purchase helps people make choices and select and assume new meanings (McCracken 2005: 3 - 5).

Therefore, the feature of serving as an indicator and mediator at the same time is essential to this dimension of products.

To substantiate this theoretical understanding, it means that goods help people express categories of culture. The acts of consumption are simultaneously and act of making sense of things. This performance can be understood as a non-verbal communication that is part of human creative faculty (Douglas 2001: 264).

Interesting is the approach by Douglas who derives from this concept the conclusion that goods serve as symbols to rituals. The ritual here is the act of consumption – the process to make sense of an ever redefining stream of events (ibid.).

This theoretical frame also explains why consumer goods can serve various personal and social functions. As much as the use of goods can be seen as a statement or expression of attitude, it can also be part of communicating solidarity or social distinction. It can be a manifestation of power or the struggle over it (Campbell 1995: 111). This fact has already been explained from the theoretical perspective on consumption and finds specification in this chapter. It is through goods that people find answers for their needs and desires (ibid.).

It is helpful to grasp the meaning of products on a rather abstract theoretical level by referring to them as a symbolic system. With this approach, society can be analyzed according to structures found among goods (Miller 2001: 8). Douglas even suggests seeing goods as a system of communication on analogy with language (Douglas 2001: 264). This is a concept that refers to a very similar understanding as Miller's does. In this way, we understand that "[...] through their symbolization, commodities become charismatically charged, potent things with which consumers can find themselves to be in a "natural" relationship." (Applbaum 2004: 71). This is also an explanation of how people are relating to objects as sources, as symbols. Besides the value of commerce, commodities also carry a value of semiotics (ibid.: 21, 72f).

Commodities seem to be a major constituent, especially to modern culture (Miller 2001: 291). Brands are an exemplifying form in which meaning is made available at the market; ready to serve as identification symbols (McCracken 2005: 178).

A branded good carries a fixed identity which ought to achieve a profitable business. Its identity is singularized on purpose to promote uniqueness. From here, companies hold control over the meaning and value of the good (Applbaum 2004: 95). From McCracken's perspective they can also be described as follows: "Brands are more like bundles or, in the metaphor of the moment, 'buckets' of meaning, aggregations more than associations." (McCracken 2005: 184).

Yet, brands are never freed from contestation. Consumers always influence products by their reaction to branding, advertising and strategies of selling (Miller 1997: 4).

Characterizing recent times are modern forms of consumerism. These are featured by enduring desires for new things and high levels of demand. It is the task of social and cultural scientists to examine the reasons and roles of processes through which novelty is continuously imported, created and spread in contemporary societies. There is a need for understanding the mechanism serving to ensure perpetual supply of cultural innovation. Concepts of old and new, as well as familiar and strange must also come under theoretical rethinking within this context (Campbell 2001: 246).

The most important it that it should be the anthropologists' aim to investigate how and in which ways types of products affect the structure of trade, also in relation to the market (Applbaum 2005: 279).

2.2.3 The Theory of Ethical Consumption

Within this part of the master thesis, I would like to discuss the theory of ethical consumption by James Carrier and Peter Luetchford (2012). This approach finds explanatory models for how and why people make certain choices in their consumption of food on a moral base. Initially, this concept serves to explain new habits of the consumption of organic products or goods that suit ecological sustainability.

Throughout the discussion within this chapter, it will become clear that this concept can also be used in a wider context. For the halal meat market, it may also serve as a model to explain certain consumption patterns and forms of morally influenced, but unexpressed demands by consumers.

It was Bourdieu who claimed in his early anthropological thought that choice and preference in certain foods derives from personal judgment and perception generated by social conditions. Habits formed and transitioned within families, education systems and multiple settings in life influence humans practice (Murdock 2010: 64).

Based on the previous insights on meanings of consumption as well Bourdieu's position, it can be stressed that all consumption patterns are influenced by several forces. The striving force in ethical consumption is of moral nature – a point which was also noticed by Mary Douglas. She explains that consumer choices can be seen as moral judgments about everything (Douglas 2001: 263).

Since morals are a strong component in religion, the possible connection to the consumption of halal products – religiously influenced commodities – is rather obvious.

Ethical consumption is about the decision if the background of an objects, the form of production and the presented meaning suit one's own moral conceptions. In the process of choice, the social, economic, political or environmental context of a product is evaluated, and through purchase agreed on or rejected (Carrier/Luetchford 2012: 1).

When people show ethical preference, they simultaneously reveal a set of values. According to Bourdieu, these are merits which are shaped in their social surrounding (ibid.: 25).

Carrier and Luetchford argue that the awareness for choosing "good food" has increased, especially in these days. People do this in order to declare a position, but also to influence market und production strategies. It can even reflect the wish to become part of a social movement. Results of such behavior are certification requirements and their actual implementation (ibid.: 2).

From a conceptual point of view, this means that economic and commercial worlds of production and distribution meet the social world of community and family through the performance of shopping (ibid.: 3). This is an approach which underlines Bourdieu's argument. Here the relationship between the realm of society and economy becomes "visible". Therefore, it is also a theory, which agrees on previous stated characteristics of consumption.

Ethical consumption can be based on broader social values and practices. People's motivation come from their thoughts on what these realms are like and how their relation should be. Carrier and Luetchford conclude that ethical consumption works as a collective commentary on these realms and their relationship (ibid.). The following statement will emphasize and clarify this point:

"Although different, these two realms are not independent of each other, with no way for the operations for the one to affect people in the other or with no way for the operations of one to be expressed in the other. In fact, ethical consumption is just such an expression, for it involves assessing the context of objects offered for sale in the economic realm in terms of values like personality, mutuality and equity, which are part of the social realm. In using these assessments to shape their market transactions, ethical consumers inject social values into the economic realm. In this they are using the economy as a signalling system." (Carrier/Luetchford 2012: 5).

The aspect of the importance and reliance on the market in order to achieve morally driven goals is of special significance (ibid.: 3). Existing economic institutions are necessary as a

platform and source for efficiency in achieving ethical driven goals. Economy is seen as a field of agency and the market becomes the vehicle for expressing the very morality (ibid.: 18f).

This insight strongly emphasizes the interdependency of economy and human action. Furthermore, it explains the inherently political dimension of it (ibid.: 3, 5).

Within this context, it can also be seen as a form of social practice and even expression of religious practices (ibid.: 6). With societies changing over time, also economic life which is shaped by society changes. As history tells, part of such process was the growing self-regulation of markets and increasing freedom of governments (ibid.: 7f).

Yet, ethical consumption does not only use consumption in order to make statements, but also to protect their social realm. Once more, this supports the point of view and argument of cultural distinction Carrier and Luetchford also refer to (ibid.: 10).

Usually, ethical consumers seek objects carrying a specific identity. They assume that the producers are congenial individuals who share the same values (ibid.: 15). This is an aspect which in reference to halal as an identity marker is enlightening.

The particular morals read into the objects shape their values in meaning and price (ibid.: 17). In the end, two points are important to conclude the impact of ethical consumption. First of all, it is important to understand it as a phenomenon that takes place within the set of other social processes and various sets of meaning and belief. Second, when it becomes something sufficiently common it will function as an element of commerce. Companies can make use of this fact in a good, but also bad and exploiting manner (ibid.: 26, 31).

In terms of halal meat, it will be interesting to investigate the ethical dimension of its production. The strong competition among certifying bodies, which is about rights and notions of authenticity, let assume that morality might play a big part in consumer choices and production managements (Lever/Miele 2012: 529).

2.2.4 Food – Product and Meaning

Halal meat is not just any product: it is food. Food is something that we consume in our daily life. We cannot live without it and we unconsciously associate it probably with much more than we ever thought of. Talking about a food producing market, it seems obvious that also the product itself – in this case meat – should be conceptualized.

“Eating is one form of creative activity in which subjects are allowed to make choices about what will come to constitute their very being, both corporeally and symbolically. It should come as no surprise that these decisions are politically charged and that they cannot escape the weight of history in their articulations.” (Rouse/Hoskins 2004: 246).

This statement reminds us of the findings in the previous chapters, in which meaning of consumption and choices were widely discussed.

Just as any product, food carries the cultural component. Patterns and regularities in food consumption are not random. Social status and values, ethnicity, belief, but also wealth influence people’s food consumption habits. Eating certain food also reflects the belonging to a certain social group and identity (Murcott 1982: 202ff), and it is shaped by emotional and socio-political processes (Rouse/Hoskins 2004: 234).

Therefore, taste is not only a matter of appetite – taste is social and contextual. Dominating powers may lead to a dominant taste (Carrier/Luetchford 2012: 24). Hence the act of eating is biological and social. So food carries both material and symbolic significance (Murcott 1982: 204).

The scope of the subject has been investigated by a few anthropologists. Sidney Mintz offered a new approach by investigating food in relationship to power. Even before, famous scientists like Durkheim, Mary Douglas and Edmund Leach were pioneers in researching the field of food taboos (Rouse/Hoskins 2004: 230).

“Taboo” as an informing element for eating habits seems also highly relevant for the matter of halal meat. The edible and non-edible is not naturally given, but defined by culture and usually religion. Often animals and plants are associated with cultural features, describing their qualitative features and containing hints for the daily use. The sacralization associated to food due to dietary laws makes food a symbol (Barlösus 2011: 93f, 107).

Moreover, food is a central medium to express religious commitment. Taboos for certain foods are hence a part of communicative process of social action (Rouse/Hoskins 2004: 227f). The result is a cultural order within the natural food availability due to the differentiation in edible and non-edible. Eating carries the highest demands in daily life from all areas of life. That is also why religious dietary laws have shaping power. For example, economic and ecological conditions may be influenced by religiously informed eating habits (Barlösus 2011: 94, 101, 107), but possibly also imagined modes of social organization and disorganization (Mukherjee 2014: 25).

When food habits and dietary laws come into new settings because of migration, they may come under scrutiny. Although they may change and adapt to the new setting, religion will continue to be the governing factor (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 44). The introduction of unfamiliar food preferences into a new cultural setting offers a situation in which it becomes easily unveiled that “Food issues are clearly political and relate to social stratification and power.” (Okongwu/Mencher 2000: 119).

In this context, food continues to be a site of repetitions of rites. It is a basic human need and type of communication, which through its moral, aesthetic and mnemonic dimensions helps identify oneself and others (Mukherjee 2014: 25).

2.2.5 The Matter of Trust

The consumer can never be sure about the “halalness” of a product. It is not a visible attribution, neither is it about taste. Only trust in a product declared as halal can bridge this lack. This is the reason why trust deserves mentioning as a concept.

When there is no way to control a situation, trust becomes a necessity (Kjaernes 2006: 919). In history, philosophers perceived trust either in terms of social relationship or faith (Zachmann/Ostby 2011: 2). Today, trust can be differentiated in a dimension of credibility and benevolence. Conceptually, this means that the word given to someone else in a written or oral form can be relied on. Besides, it can also mean the confidence in someone else and the belief in his benevolent intentions. The consequence for both versions is a commitment to a relationship, which can be in form of interpersonal trust or organizational trust - or a mix of both. Interpersonal trust is normally stronger than organizational trust (Ganesan/Hess 1997: 439f).

The matter of trust becomes interesting if we have a look at its role for consumption patterns, especially concerning food.

The problem to trust in food is related to the multidimensional perception of risk (Kjaernes 2006: 912f). In particular, the general institutionalized food sector has come under ambivalence considering the balance of trust and risk. The authority to guarantee has shifted to the big companies, science and the nation state. While consumers have a much greater choice, trust in food decreases a lot. The source for mistrust is the greater distance between the production site and final consumption. Long food chains and the lack of transparency about circumstances in the food’s origin have become normal. As a result, new food

standards and independent quality controls are the answer to gain new trust (Zachmann/Ostby 2011: 1- 6).

Kjaernes points out that by trusting in food people trust or distrust in someone and not something (Kjaernes 1999).

“They trust the provisioning system and the actors and persons inhabiting that system rather than the food items as such. Food purchase is the point where people interact most directly with the system of food provision, and indirectly with food regulators, experts, informers, watchdogs, etc.” (Kjaernes 2006: 919).

Trust can be comprehended if both sides of the relation will be explored – the producer or distributor and the consumer (Kjaernes 2006: 913). The relationship offers a moment in which the quality of a product can be assured. Therefore, quality is to be perceived as a judgment in cultural context which has consequences on specific meanings and legitimacy around relations of trust. Social interactions designate the very quality arising out of this context (Campbell/Murcott/Mackenzie 2011: 69). Relating to the previous chapter about the meaning of commodities, we come to understand that this includes nutritional aspects and most importantly, moral values and symbolic dimensions which are inherent to the perception on the products quality.

The first kind of relationship manifests at the point of sale. But principal indicators for trustworthy quality can already be provided by the store itself, brands, or labels and even prices of products. However, also the reputation of a salesperson and the sales system can play a major role for a trust-relationship. Key on the personal and impersonal dimension is the embodiment and representation of norms and values (Prigent-Simonin/Herault-Fournier 2005: 3 - 13).

If there are major changes in the food sector, the character of the relationship might be influenced, also affecting the consumer's trust negatively. A new counteract towards such developments are forms of transparency offered by formalized forms of organization. So-called audit systems were implemented in order to assure “stabilisation and fungibility of quality measures in food trading” (Campbell/Murcott/Mackenzie 2011: 69). They build the answer for the contemporary shift towards industrialized food production in most sectors (Kjaernes 2006: 922, 928). Also new policies and policy instruments become new tools for contributing to building consumer trust (Zachmann/Ostby 2011: 4f). Since the success of

business is often dependent on the trust as a key variable, its salvage is one of the industries' major concern (Prigent-Simonin/Herault-Fournier 2005: 7).

In conclusion, trust appears as an important element in economy. There is a mutual dependency on both sides.

At the symbolic dimension of trust, the consumer imagines which qualities are inherent to the product. It is a rather subconscious process (Prigent-Simonin/Herault-Fournier 2005: 8). From this results, an attitude which will lead the consumer's decision making. The daily routine of shopping facilitates mechanisms for establishing trust and allowing the act of consumption despite uncertainty. In this sense, it is tacitly embedded and relies on mutual acceptability. Furthermore, experiences and normative framing confirm people's trust (Kjaernes 2006: 920 - 25).

"Trust will take root in a composite system combining knowledge and beliefs." (Prigent-Simonin/Herault-Fournier 2005: 5). Next to knowledge about facts, which can only be collected over time and is always limited, belief remains a strong force. An emotional component characterized by identification and the feeling of attachment can be influencing (ibid.).

It is interesting in this context, yet questionable is Granovetter's presumption that "The more complete the trust, the greater the potential gain from malfeasance." (Granovetter 1985: 491).

Trust as a theoretical variable also plays a major role within the halal paradigm. It is interesting on two levels. First of all and most importantly, in Islam trust is an instant reciprocal element (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 89). Second, as I have mentioned before, the halal products offer a potentially uncertain quality (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 39).

The lack of transparency in the halal meat production chain, confusion about standards and diverse certification mechanisms make trust problematic for the consumer. The preference of many people to buy from local butchers instead of from super market chains reflects upon this issue (Bergeaud-Blackler/Evans 2010).

That is why consuming halal is always about a matter of trust. It is about confidence in the slaughterer, producer, distributor and anyone else involved in the meat production chain (Mukherjee 2014: 23). According to Campbell et al., one must investigate the agents and

principals which are representatives of both: the religious and commercial life. These include shareholders, local residents, taxpayers, future generations, shoppers, farmers, Imams, environmental health inspectors, NGOs and retailers (Campbell/Murcott/Mackenzie 2011: 77).

2.3 General Insights into the Halal Meat Market

2.3.1 Halal Marketing Strategies

Throughout the previous chapters it was indirectly made clear that meat is not just meat, halal not just halal and marketing not only pure business. Anthropological theories were used in order to illustrate various interrelated dimensions of products, their economic background as well as their symbolic meaning. The statement which has been very theoretical up until now is going to gain better understanding of the emergence of the halal meat market and its strategies investigated and discussed within the in the following chapter.

It has been stated that ethnicity, created from the inside and the outside, is an important indicator for group identities. Religion as part of ethnicity, in this case Islam, is the source for constituent groups and their symbolic universes. It functions as an organizing principle in social life (Erikson 2005: 359, 368). Already the famous thinkers Polany and Weber emphasized that economic activities and outcomes are driven by religious ideologies and practices (Coleman 2005: 340; McCleary/Barro 2006: 50).

Religion influences consumer attitudes and behavior in many ways, which influences the industry in turn (Bonne/Verbeke 2007: 35). Therefore, also religious Islamic prescriptions inform the production. As in the case of halal, they become inherent to the social and technical structuring of today's meat supply chain (Bonne/Verbeke 2007:36).

Certain consumer tastes have expanded, since many Muslims migrated to Europe and other non-Muslim countries in the world. At the new sites of residence, people still commonly request food and products conforming their habits and preferences (Knierbein/Aigner/Watson 2012: 100).

These consumer tastes defined by religion and origin provide a secure market position. Not only individuals have understood the advantage, but also the big industry has stepped in and acknowledged this special market niche (Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990: 27).

Recent developments are characterized by Muslims, who are upwardly mobile and increasingly “consumers” of Islam. Besides the traditional religious practices, also the demand for services and goods carrying Islamic flavor, have been developed by the new Muslim middle class (Skerl n.d.: 3). Moreover, especially for young diaspora Muslims, consuming halal has become a central feature for identity formation. For second and third generation immigrants, it can often carry a symbolic and emotional character (Lever 2013: 1; Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 43). This leads to a situation in which individuals are in between maintaining food habits and at the same time adapting to the given food choices (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 36). Yet, also pressure of social commitment is reason for Muslims to search for halal products in order to conform to religious requirements (Bergeaud-Blackler/Evans 2010). In this sense, according to Mukherjee halal also becomes a measure of faith (Mukherjee 2014: 44).

All these facts unveil that halal has today become a mainstream food phenomenon. Muslims have been acknowledged, as their own consumer group and various religious and commercial organizations have found attraction in this market niche (Lever 2013: 1). Applbaum describes such process as providential moment. Consumers and marketers have reached a shared vision of needs and desires and how they can be satisfied at the same time (Applbaum 2004: 5). While in the name of Islam, big business could be developed over the last decades, the industry remains linked to the religious and social foundations of Muslim identity (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 83).

Between the poles religion and economy, the form of marketing is the act where rivalries and consensuses are struggled over. Besides that “Marketing represents the institutionalization of the means to a particular understanding of satisfaction and the moment of this understanding’s replication in society.” (Applbaum 2004: 7).

A very basic understanding for halal marketing can be given with the acknowledgement that in Islamic teaching, all human activity is part of religious fulfilment. No sphere is to be seen outside of this concept. As a consequence, this implies that also religious teachings must be included to economic and business activities (Al-Faruqi 1992, in Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 89). In practice, this means that the industrial halal meat chain must be informed by religious dietary laws defining the favored quality (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 37).

The manner to proof religious compliance in the food production has been the biggest subject of discussion until now. There is no universal system which could be established so far. While marketers apply their own strategies, usually using the form of certifying and labelling, also in the rows of science researches for suitable concepts were unleashed. Theories of Halal Supply Chain Management (SCM) are just one example for proposed solutions. A kind of halal network management with the aim to guarantee halal integrity from production to end point of consumption is to be offered (Tieman/Van der Vorst/Ghazali 2012: 219).

A major form of proof is practiced by certification practices. Convenient shopping, a young Muslims' desire, is made possible based on this (Bergeaud-Blackler 2006, in Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 44).

Seeing halal in different label versions on many products, and not only for meat, makes it reach the level of branding. It is especially the big industry making increasing use of such practice. Here the Arabic word for halal – حلال – has been used as a brand element displayed at most products meant for Muslim consumers. It is used to display the religious integrity for the product and to reduce mistrust (Wilson/Liu 2010: 109).

The shared character inherent to both, "brands" and "halal", is best illustrated in the following statement: "[...] brands and Islam, both collectively and independently encourage worship and present a promise to consumers – as an affordable luxury, which is reaffirmed and offers perceived mass prestige." (Wilson/Liu 2011: 32).

On the other side, it seems even more important to recognize what halal as a brand can fail to achieve. If halal brands do not nurture "halalness" and are not defined within a certain religious standard, it might become ambivalent. Then, with its relative halal character, it would rather remain only a cultural product (Wilson/Liu 2011: 36).

Such assumption leads to the very crucial matter that also focuses on the Muslims' perception of what he or she supposes "halal" should be. The Muslim producer and consumer play a major role in this respect.

According to Wilson and Liu, halal is a matter of interpretation. Therefore, they argue it would be easier if one renders brands according to the diverse groups of people, the Muslims themselves instead of Islam, in order to understand current marketing of halal (Wilson/Liu 2011: 40).

Furthermore, labelling is also important on the matter of value evaluation. Putting a label on a product means also raising the market value (Ziegler 2008: 6). With this in mind, the matter of halal can illustrate well how marketing can be a mixture of transforming value deriving from religious and cultural meaning into a value of profit. Marketing serves as a sphere where meaning is generated, managed and distributed (McCracken 2005: 174).

In summary, with halal entering the industrialized markets locally and globally, various challenges arise. There is an increasing interdependence of commercial and religious culture and interests on both sides. At the moment, these are negotiated by several actors and institutions keen on directing this niche market. However, the implementation of a successful industrial logic satisfying for all parties is missing due to the lack of clear information as well as the complexity of the subject. This situation has resulted in hybrid forms of governance that are driven by manifold interpretations on what halal actually is. In the eyes of Lever and Miele, only a trustworthy, independently controlled label might be a solution for this challenging situation (Lever/Miele 2012: 533ff).

Because halal is a credence quality attribute and it neither can be examined nor ascertained by the individual consumer, trust plays an instrumentalizing role. For that reason, the consumers' personal confidence on halal meat authenticity is rather based on trust than the industry (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 36, 43).

Romi Mukherjee regards the developments described here as severely critical. This finds expression in the following statement:

“[...] global Halal is radically post-modern, a religiosity embedded in a field of consumption, profit, and cartels, a religiosity whose claim to depth and soul sanctification is the by-product of the trust or feigned belief in the verity of surfaces.” (Mukherjee 2014: 42)

His main approach of analysis is embedding the halal market in the context of what he calls politics of belonging and exclusion as well as a multi-billion dollar market. Here, halal is part of a discursive construction in which religious codes are negotiated, it resumes as a market of spiritual authenticity.

This dialectical process is, as he describes, defined by absorption of religiosity into today's global industry and religious organizations at the same time, which are longing to inform marketing agendas with the right information and material. The halalization of science and

the scientization of halal is part of the result. In his opinion, halal-labelling is an authenticity reduced to a sign (ibid.).

Similar to Wilson and Liu, Mukherjee stresses that Muslim consumers' behavior should be read as a cultural construct. He calls for the need that marketers shall also approach Islam through varied lenses of Muslim consumers, including their imperfections (Mukherjee 2014). Yet, Wilson and Grant go even further and argue that Islamic marketing should be derived from the view and practical approaches by non-Muslims alike. Only in this way, the whole picture resulting in differing theoretical interpretations and practices can be apprehended (Wilson/Grant 2013: 18).

The discussed exposition of "halal's" meaning in the market sphere leads to the assumption that the halal paradigm is rather dynamic and a cycling process (Wilson/Liu 2011: 37). This fact might be best subsumed in a generalizing statement by Wilson and Grant: "Marketing is both a concept and lived experience, manifest in the competitive exchange of commoditized thoughts, feelings, actions and objects – between engaged individuals and collectives." (Wilson/Grant 2013: 7).

This assertion leads to a final point which I would like to mention in this chapter. It is about the acknowledgement of double roles of individuals in capitalist societies: One must understand that the marketer is never only the marketer. He is also the consumer and vice versa. Both positions simultaneously make the market a transitional and dynamic space (Wilson/Grant 2013: 10). Such point must be stressed, since it humanizes and "culturalizes" the marketer as well. He no longer can exist as a neutral actor that is only reacting to market opportunities and needs of people. The opposite: "[...] Economic actors are just as concerned with their social standing, their identity and autonomy as they are with maximising utility or income in the conventional sense." (Oritz 2005: 74).

Concluding the insights on the halal paradigm, this chapter is to illustrate and support theoretical approaches discussed before. It shows that various forms of production, distribution and consumption are influenced by culture, religion and ethnicity and become the striving forces in the global hegemony and its transitions and changes (Miller 1995: 50).

2.3.2 The European Halal Meat Market

The establishment of a grand halal meat business in Europe is a relatively new phenomenon. With its increasing importance, also investigations on the side of social and economic

sciences are growing. However, so far official data or statistics have not been available (Lever/Puig de las Bellacasa 2010).

The biggest insights, which give information on many levels of the subject, are provided by the DIAREL research project. The study conducted from 2006 to 2010 was funded by the EU and involved representatives and scientists from various countries (Url 5).

Western Europe's population includes approximately up to 13 million Muslims with 44 million as a total number accounting for the entire Europe (Bonne/Verbecke 2007: 35; Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 109). Especially since 2000, halal meat has witnessed growing sales (Needham 2012: 2).

The wide picture on halal production shows very diverse settings. This circumstance derives from a situation in which the EU entitles each member state to decide in which manner they allow ritual slaughter. In this respect, the way halal slaughter can be performed depends on the nation states' policies and their laws, particularly the subject of stunning. The result is that each European country displays different formations of this economy in its character and dimension (Skerl n.d.: 9).

The subject of stunning is very controversial in most EU member states. Part of the debate are various players - government agencies, NGOs, supply chain operators - who work in the name of either protecting human rights or standing for animal welfare (Lever/Miele 2012: 535). Further detail will be provided within the chapter of anthropology of policy.

To unify the market and in order to simplify the business, calls for a uniform European halal standard have grown in the last few years. First initiatives have been started, but have not reached any breaking results so far. In 2010, a project committee - CEN/TC 425 – was created by the European Committee for standardization and held by the Austrian Standardization Institute ASI (Skerl n.d.: 7).

In order to circumvent the current lack of a unified standard, a common solution to bypass the lacking standard problematic is the establishment of independent certification organizations that became active. As a consequence, a European Association of Halal Certifiers (AHC) was founded in Brussels in February 2010 (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 113). Because certification is particularly required for the export of goods, most certifiers use foreign standards for their assurance system. Especially Malaysia is known for developing

strategies to target fragments of selected European economies. As a result, many EU countries use the Malaysian standard JAKIM (Lever 2013: 1).

But also many other halal requirements are applied (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 113). In this respect, certification has become a very profitable business and many Islamic associations are trying to gain their position (Ziegler 2008: 5).

Generally, the European halal market provides a picture in which many players started to invest in halal production. Also big companies, supermarket chains and fast food restaurants have discovered their share (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012, Lever/Miele 2012). However, the local market is still dominated by small and domestic businesses. Hence, Muslim migrants can help enter new OIC markets, serving as boundary spanners (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 91).

The first port globally certified as halal in Rotterdam is just one sign of a fast development (Anon. a 2011: 6). Most halal goods are channeled through the Netherlands entering markets in the Middle East and Africa (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 109).

While the introduction of Europe's halal market to the global sphere seems to be on its way, it has to improve a lot on the local level. State institutions like hospitals and schools are far away from providing halal food to the big Muslim public (Bergeaud-Blackler/Evans 2010).

2.3.3 The Global Halal Meat Market

Goods have achieved a new social importance these days and no longer only one nation, region or economy decides over its production and distribution (Robotham 2005: 41 - 58). The same accounts to halal products. Numbers of its global market potential differ. However, estimated numbers going beyond only meat products range between US\$ 560 and \$ 635 billion a year, with an annual growth of 20 percent (Skerl n.d.: 3; Anon. a 2011: 3). This makes it worth around 16 % of the entire global food industry (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 109). In addition, the growing Muslim population worldwide with an estimated growth ranging from 23 percent to 27 percent until 2030 plays a major role (Farouk 2013: 806, Anon. 2011: 6). Importing countries in the Middle East, Asia Pacific and North Africa are high-potential markets (Skerl n.d.: 3; Anon. a 2011: 6). The member countries combined in the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) make up the largest markets. Furthermore, seven of the proposed emerging markets in the world are Muslim majority countries (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 86f). Interestingly, 80 percent of the halal trade is conducted by

non-Muslim countries (Skerl n.d.: 3). Europe, the West Midlands in Great Britain, the US state Illinois, but also Malaysia are becoming new centers for halal meat production (Mukherjee 2014: 31). Bergeaud-Blackler has found that such developments have erupted within the last two decades, in which religious marketing has experienced intense internationalization (Bergeaud-Blackler 2007: 977).

When there is no unification for a European halal standard, it is rather obvious that there is neither a global one. The different and conflicting schools of thought within Islam have different degrees of influence and are the biggest obstacle in order to find consensus (Lever/Miele 2012: 530, 534).

For several years, there have been attempts worldwide to develop a universal standard. Mostly internationally acting certification organizations are the leading force in this debate, trying to find a single voice for an international consensus on the halal definition (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 110, 116). A leading player in this global debate is the nation state Malaysia. In 2004, the country established its own halal standard, JAKIM, finding high resonance and adoption by other countries that entered the halal market. Commercial interests were leading this national standardization process as much as religious interests (Lever/Miele 2012: 534).

Also other countries, such as Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates and other Persian Gulf countries have developed their own halal standard (Van der Spiegel et al. 2012: 110). Yet, these nation states' standards are often in conflict. Especially the OIC utters religious and economic concerns about the Malaysian JAKIM standard. While both are accepted in European countries as well by the World Trade Organization, they tend to increase the complexity of Europe's halal meat market (Lever/ Miele 2012: 530f).

2.3.4 Islam as a Transnational Space for Markets and Consumer Groups

The teachings of Islam are no longer home to a single nation, neither a continent – Muslim communities have spread all over the world. While the message of the prophet Mohammed was revealed to the Arabic ancestors, its content refers to human kind anywhere in the world.

Islam is commonly understood as a universal religion speaking to humanity. It contains guidance for diverse social issues, social organization and moral behavior. Knowledge is

supposed to be highest endeavor for each individual. Most important, however, is the permanent interconnectedness of religion and society - Islam as the main parameter to define society (Ahmed 1984: 3).

The unity of all Muslims worldwide is expressed in the concept of Ummah, the global Muslim community. It crosses national boundaries and unites people of different origin through shared values (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 83).

Regarding these aspects as part of Islamic understanding, John Bowen has created a new approach defined as “transnational Islam”. Here he stresses that Islam has created a transnational public space which goes beyond migration. Bowen argues that this space emerged out of the characteristics just mentioned inherent to Islam: an imagined global community among Muslims and the transnational character Islam promotes itself (Bowen 2004: 881f).

Bowen’s approach should be seen in context to general concepts of “transnational spaces”.

Thomas Faist and Özveren concretely theorize them as follows:

“By transnational spaces we mean relatively stable, lasting and dense sets of ties reaching beyond and across the borders of sovereign states. They consist of combinations of ties and their contents, position in networks and organisations, and networks of organisations that cut across the borders of at least two nation-states. Transnational spaces differ from clearly demarcated state territories.” (Faist/Özveren 2004: 3f).

The cultural, political and economic practice of individuals and groups in territories and places define space. The links between actors make up ties, which are embedded in locality but transformed by transnational exchange. Faith can be one characteristic to build these ties. While depending on policies, they can also reach institutionalized forms. Deriving from this concept, Faist and Özveren declare symbolic and social ties as the smallest analytical unit: either in time-space compression or in terms of organization of ties. The first refers to the extensity and intensity of activities. The second refers to the infrastructure, law and state policies and institutionalization (Faist/Özveren 2004: 4ff).

In summary, transnational spaces refer to social settings outside of national context. They imply an open ended set of cross-border connections. New emerging and networking actors make up the transnational community (Morgan 2001: 115). Types of transnational spaces may be conceptualized according to areas of contact and diffusion (e. g. exchange of goods), small groups (e. g. kinship), issue networks (e. g. business people) or communities and

organizations (e. g. religious groups) (Faist/Özveren 2004: 7). Emerging from these multiple spaces, diverse types of transnational communities may exist. Diasporic communities and their specific social formation, as well as certain cultural production and capital can be sources for new sites of activity (Vertovec 1999, in Morgan 2004: 117). However, it is important to stress that transnational social actors are deeply embedded in specific contexts, while they can be part of various transnational and national communities. At this new level of interaction, they may create new kinds of relationship (Morgan 2001: 118, 127). In the end, “all transnational communities are imagined in some sense, but perhaps some are more imagined than others.” (Morgan 2004: 125).

Deriving from this theoretical approach, also “transnational Islam” can be conceptualized as a space of social and symbolic ties. Nevertheless, the term is misleading in its very abstract character. Transnational Muslim performance might be more accurate, since we refer to the religiously influenced enacted space and not Islam as a concept.

This transnational Muslim performance was constituted throughout demographic movements, global religious institutions and a field of Islamic debate and reference. It has become a global public space. Cross-national communication, cross-national migration and religious practices interrelate to one another. An emerging debate in a transnational Muslim space on the role of Islam in the Western world is part of this (Bowen 2004: 880ff). Bowen further concludes that “[...] Islam complicates current lines of transnational analysis by emphasising its own universal norms and its practices of deliberating about religious issues across national boundaries.” (Bowen 2004: 880).

Again, this approach has to be seen critical. It refers to Islam as a vacuum, what it has never been. It does not complicate the analysis, it rather has to be analyzed as inclusive. This fact might be better understood with an approach by Talal Asad – the discursive tradition. He argues that Islam should be analyzed in throughout the time formed on communicated traditions which originate from the base of the Holy Quran and Hadith. It is what he calls a tradition of Muslim discourse, manifesting itself on Islamic past and future with reference to a certain contemporary Islamic practice (Ma’aruf 1987: 316).

In this way, one message could be received in different places. Yet, at each location it was also interpreted according to local value standards (Featherstone 1990: 10, in Akbar/Donnan 1994: 3).

Also for the investigation of the global halal meat market developments, the discussion of transnational spaces, transnational Muslim thought and practice or transnational Islam can be interesting. However, it has to be seen in context to general economic globalization changes. New institutional forms and politico-economic interactions define these times. The involvement of governments has shifted towards a privatized system of governance. Today, states play a less important or at least different role in economic activity (Sassen 1999: 190ff). In this context, transnational communities offer a new perspective of looking at emerging developments in the international economic system. Interests of a specific transnational social space can structure markets outside of national interests (Morgan 2004: 117).

International entrepreneurship is one way to look at new transnational social formations in marketing (Oviat/McDougall 2005: 537). "International entrepreneurship is the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities – across national borders – to create future goods and services." (Oviat/McDougall 2005: 540). "Transnational entrepreneurs" is just another name for the same phenomenon. Schumpeter stresses that they have the ability to introduce new goods, methods of production, open new markets, to tap new sources or restructure an existing industry (Schumpeter 1989, in Disbudak 2004: 149).

In case of the halal meat market, its industry revolves around the Muslim community – the Ummah – and not around location-specific characteristics, argue Schotter and Abdelzaher. (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 95). Similarly, Mukherjee stresses that what he calls global Islam and capitalism are dialectically bound (Mukherjee 2014: 54). He identifies halal and its industry as a political strategy and unifying element in which a global habitus and common religious know-how is created. In his opinion, halal has become a discourse, a code and a way of taking action within the world. Community and civil affair are thus conceived in a national, yet also transnational background. Rather controversial is his assumption that this is a form of destabilization of religious place and space with the result of new modes of transnationalism that are in need of a, what she calls, "portable religion" (Mukherjee 2014: 24ff). Such statement can be countered by two different aspects of the Islam and the Muslim Ummah. First of all, there is the propensity to approach Muslims and their communalities in an over generalizing manner (Wilson/Liu 2010: 115). Second, Muslim transnationalism and global marketing practices are not new phenomena. Quite the opposite, Muslims have been

engaged in marketing practices of functional, but also symbolical values on a global scale from their beginning. There has even been a long tradition of the Islamization of ideas, science and aesthetics (Wilson/Grant: 2013: 19).

A further and very crucial point is that transnational practices and disputed halal industry is led by Muslims regardless of their religious observation or form of belief. Thus, transnational Islam also goes beyond faith. It is practiced by secular Muslims as well as by practicing Muslims with the same zeal (Wilson/Grant 2013: 17). While Muslim migrants have become active cross-cultural boundary spanners by bridging the socio-cultural and religious gap for non-Muslim international firms in the halal meat market, one should question how much these non-Muslim actors have become participants within this transnational field (Schotter/Abdelzaher 2013: 90).

2.4 Anthropology of Policy

The way local and global halal meat markets developed not simply depends on the makers and demanders. Policies also have a crucial part in shaping and influencing recent outcomes of this niche market.

A great step was made when several scientists included policy as a field of investigation in social and cultural anthropology. A new perspective on social developments and formations was created and also previous policy studies gained new insights.

The following chapter offers an insight to the main thoughts in the anthropology of policy, focusing on aspects which are relevant for the study of the halal meat market. The leading authors in policy studies, Chris Shore and Susan Wright, will be main references. However, also contributions by other researchers will be included.

The anthropology of policy can focus on many aspects that are part of social life. This is why I would like to begin with a statement by Janine Wedel, who positions the matter of policy in all its dimensions: „The study of policy deals with issues at the heart of anthropology such as institutions and power, interpretation and meaning, ideology, rhetoric, and discourse, the politics of culture, ethnicity and identity, and the global and the local.” (Wedel 1999: 694).

From this point of view, I would like to go further and conceptualize policy within an anthropological angle.

In general, there is no proper definition for policy agreed on. Policy can actually account to many different matters. It can simply be understood as a field of activity. But usually, it refers to a specific proposal, a program, a piece of government legislation or a label for governmental achieved outcomes (Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 35). Many people understand policies as guidelines motivating and legitimating a certain kind of behavior. For governments, especially for western and international institutions, it is conceived as a tool to regulate population from top down (Shore/Wright 1997: 5f).

Hence, policy can be described as a kind of force or even tool to organize, shape and regulate contemporary societies in all areas of life. It equips the individual and groups with a category, status and role and constructs subjects as objects of power (Shore/Wright 1997: 4; Shore/Wright/Peró 2011: 20).

Policies are always a result of a particular context and a piece of history and culture in which they emerged (Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 33). In this sense, policies should be understood as a continuous process of contestation taking place in a political sphere. Actors involved can reach from local individuals to certain interest groups or local authorities and institutions. But also national governments, businesses, supranational entities such as the media, NGOs and other international agencies take part in it (Wright/Reinhold 2011: 86; Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 31f).

This leads to the assumption that policy is not geographically bounded. As a site of decision-making power, it becomes even inherently political with the strength to silence voices (Yanow 2011: 306; Shore/Wright 1997: 8).

Shore and Wright argue that the political nature is usually disguised. Policies operate as instruments to promote pragmatism, efficiency and effectiveness and by this achieve a neutral masking and legitimizing function. As a result, the cultural system, which policies entail, stays unrecognized (Shore/Wright 1997: 8ff). Yet, the cultural component always contains certain ideologies which again are linked to public policies (Okongwu/Mencher 2000: 110). This is why policy must be understood in form of ideas and as a set of processes, which are complex and not systematic (Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 43; Wedel 1999: 694).

Anthropologists' ability to look behind phenomena, to contextualize them as well as to translate them into a "different language" also accounts for the investigation of policies. It is

urgent to include anthropological approaches to the studies of policy, since it offers a corrective and reflective perspective. The policies usually perceived as neutral and unproblematic come under scrutiny (ibid.).

It is the anthropologists' task to unveil the constellation of actors, activities and other ascendancies that shape the creation of policies, policy decision making, the result and the following implementation. In this way, they simultaneously try to understand how modern identities are fashioned and related to each other by policy, and how new categories are actively created. On the ground, this leads to the examination of how society in its organization and with its networks has impact on policy processes and those who enact these. Specifically, the state as a policy maker is a site of investigation. Anthropology puts at question how local individuals and communities experience and interpret state policies and government processes (Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 30ff).

In this sense, anthropologists connect different sites and scales at which policy takes place in any form. Such approach may unveil structures of governance and political systems' policies are embedded in. It can grasp historical changes and unfold the dimension of power (Peró 2011: 223). Therefore, the question arises of how and in which ways policies work as instruments of governance (Wedel 1999: 694). It is of interest what policies mean to different audiences and how this meaning is conveyed (Shore/Wright/Peró 2011: 20). Furthermore, it is about "Tracing ways in which power creates webs and relations between actors, institutions and discourses across time and space." (Shore/Wright 1997: 14). The anthropologist explores how policy discourses are supportive to sustain created networks, even without face-to-face relations (Wedel/Shore/Feldman/Lathrop 2005: 39).

"Studying through" is a method, a tool, which was created in order to handle the complexity of policy studies. The main challenge for anthropologists is the shift towards different resources and incorporation of new investigation sites. Normally applied methods such as participant observation and qualitative interviews may not serve to gather all information around policies. "Policy as a cultural category and political technology" has to be looked for between different sites and levels (Shore/Wright 1997: 12ff). Policies' virtue to regulate people collectively in a non-face-to-face setting demands the anthropologists' ability to examine in a non-local ethnographic setting for discourse (Feldman 2011: 45). This again requires the inclusion of new material such as government reports, official documents, even newspaper articles or other sources (Shore 2011: 173).

Hence “[...] ‘studying through’ entails multi-site ethnographies which trace policy connections between different organizational and everyday worlds, even where actors in different sites do not know each other or share a moral universe.” (Shore/Wright 1997: 14). The key is to study policies as they develop and as they enact. Following their processual character, one can understand their reinterpretation while crossing cultural boundaries and application outside their authors’ intended forms (Shore/Wright/Peró 2011: 20). It is about grasping the large scale picture, tracing the formation of power across particular sites and over time (Wright 2011: 27). Doing so, it can be revealed how policies work as instruments of governance in form of ideological vehicles and authority organizing agents with the aim to trace down who has the power to define (Shore/Wright 1997: 18, 35).

Policy, although contested and shaped in discourse, mostly finds its expression in the written word in form of texts. This is why special attention should be given to the role of language. The chosen language itself presents a pattern and source of policy power. Practice is derived from certain styles of language creating particular meanings. Furthermore, text uses data, which is selected on purpose and conscientiously. By the use of certain styles of expression and genres, the primary aim of the policies’ language is to persuade rather than inform (Apthorpe 1997: 43ff). In this context, policies are understood to be written and managed in a manner that tries to control the public debate and provoke particular outcomes. The trick lies in the way that discourses are made to appear neutral. The ideological content is meant to be perceived as common sense having the effect to disguise the forces that lie behind. The power of language finds its final expression at the crucial moment when usually politicians give them a voice. In this manner, also irrational and ideologically loaded goals are achieved (Shore 2011: 169ff). “This veiling of the political under the cloak of legal-rational neutrality is a characteristic feature of modern power.” (Shore 2011: 171).

Starting from the previous insights, also the matter of morality must be looked at. It may provide a strong influential character within the field of policy making. Like policies, morality serves and functions as regulation system in societies throughout all levels of daily life. Therefore, morality is also a strong force that carries ideals and provides in meta-discourses of power and legitimacy. The form of a policy serves as a platform and space in which morality may find its rationalization (Vike 1997: 197f). It is striving that through the ones in

power of defining policy, morality can be controlled from below and thus finds structuring of its limits (Vike 1997: 213).

Especially for the policy discourse around the halal meat market, such approach will provide helpful theoretical framing. Besides that, it relates to aspects that I have already introduced in the chapter of ethical consumption.

Also at economic sites, policies and their implementations have great impacts on how they develop. The way production takes place is informed by policies and often generated by global actors. It further leads to the fact that in times of industrialization, policies force an economic restructuring. This results in the circumstance that various segments of a national populations witness different impacts due to policies differing to race, class, ethnicity and gender (Okongwu/Mencher 2000: 114f). Exemplifying is the shift in national performance of economy. There has been a change towards cross-sector stake holders in order to increase the economic diversity and competitiveness within globalization. In particular, such developments have become visible in urban economies where migrants and their business do not only find acceptance, but also governmental support. Hence, new policies serve the purpose of developing further reaching trade networks by using diaspora networks (Syrett/Sepulveda 2012: 239 ff). We understand that policy is used to control minorities and interest groups here and to make them allies. In the case of migrants, this can be empowering, but still functions in the interest of the powerful groups (Peró 2011: 225).

Yet, people are never silent or conform in the ways they reply to policies. Instead, they simultaneously contest the given governance by having their own interpretation of what their role in society should be (Shore/Wright/Peró 2011: 18). Alternative visions and policy agendas are uttered by individuals, but also collectives. The articulations defined as unbridling by Peró can enable migrants to challenge discourses of national governments and oppose dominant logics (Peró 2011: 224ff). It is a point of view which supports the ideas that policies may turn out to be contested and provoke different consequences, which originally were not intended. Hence, policies remain social change mechanisms on purpose or unintendedly (Yanow 2011: 302ff).

One last aspect for the study of policy should be made at this point. Focusing on the matter of policy at economic sites, once again the transnationality aspect reaches importance. This

is because international competitiveness and business have become striving forces in the shaping of national policy discourses. And governments are no longer the only policy making institutions (Okongwu/Mencher 2000: 110). Also international organizations, as well as transnational non-state actors like NGOs, interest groups, think tanks, law firms, banks and consultant firms define policies. They have become transfer agents of a number of policies (Stone 2007: 549f) and throughout transnational networks, they become vehicles for the global dispersal of policy. Ideas, knowledge and practices are spread. And political and governmental settings of one place may today influence outcomes of policies in others. These are processual developments where policy is created by diffusion (Stone 2007: 545f). In summary, “[...] transfer is more the outcome of structural forces; that is, driven by industrialization, globalization or regionalization forcing a pattern of increasing similarity in economic, social and political organization between countries.” (Stone 2007: 547). Mechanisms embedded in markets have gained wide impact on policy transfer today (Stone 2007: 549).

Non-state actors still rely on governments and international institutions in order to institute transferred policies. The European Union as an institution is an example of a transfer agent of policy and promoting convergence in their implementation (Stone 2007: 553ff). But also in reality, this involves a long process of discourses around conflict and compromise in the political sphere. Nevertheless, those circle around a mode of manipulation in order to push back cultural boundaries in favor for commerce and neo liberal governance (Shore/Wright 1997: 27ff). The new trend seems to be the construction and governance of mass identities, which can refer to the same or at least similar policies (Shore 1997: 165).

Hence, it remains the anthropologists’ task to contextualize details of daily local life to larger processes of social and political transformation in order to grasp the picture on both ends (Wright 2011: 29). Besides that, this chapter could explain why and how

“Policies are inherently and unequivocally *anthropological* phenomena. They can be read by anthropologists in a number of ways: as a cultural text, as classificatory devices with various meanings, as narratives that serve to justify or condemn the present, or as rhetorical devices and discursive formations that function to empower some people and silence others. Not only do policies codify social norms and values, and articulate fundamental organizing principles of society, they also contain implicit (and sometimes explicit) models of society.” (Shore/Wright 1997: 7).

2.4.1 The Matter of Policy in the Halal Meat Industry

“Food issues are clearly political and relate to social stratification and power.” (Okongwu/Mencher 2000: 119). According to this statement and in reference to the introduction to the anthropology of policy, it appears obvious that also the matter of halal meat production is strongly influenced by political decisions and other regulatories. It also supports the idea of Adam Smith who claims that the very nature of a religious product is influenced by government regulations and subsidies that inform and support religious providers (Smith 1791, in McClearly/Barro 2006: 51).

The matter of policy for “halal” is relevant in terms of definition and its translation into regulatories for the ritual slaughter. Basically, three sides are involved in the establishment and discourse for a halal policy: first of all, EU and government regulations, secondly points of view of religious scholars and institutions who define halal and last but not least, representatives of the economic sector.

The main concern informing and driving the opinion of all three sides is their opinion on stunning in context to animal welfare. At the moment, there is a contestation between an increasing awareness of animal welfare verses the protection of fundamental human rights to religious freedom which has loomed (Ferrari/Bottoni 2010a: 1). While Islamic scholars argue on the issues of prohibition on stunning animals before slaughter, it is the greatest consideration of the states’ legal systems, since it contrasts state legislations on slaughter in entire Europe (Anil/Miele/Bergeaud-Blackler/Velarde 2010: 2).

As a consequence, European states translate the problem into different legislations and practical implementation. Policy debates will continue to be held and they will also be protested by various actors. In the following, a closer picture of the legal situation in the EU and particularly in Austria will be given.

2.4.1.1 Policies in the European Union

Historically, ritual slaughter has attracted attention for a long time due to the Jewish population in European countries. While the so-called shechita was prohibited during the Nazi period in most countries of Western Europe, this was changed at the beginning of the post war era. The matter of religious slaughter gained new importance when a major influx of Muslim migrants took place in the 1960s. Almost simultaneously, compulsory pre-stunning requirements were made across Europe. From then on, there have been

controversies about the practice of ritual slaughter. The European nation states' focus on animal welfare did not conform to the practice of slaughter without stunning. Although there has not been a certain agreement until today, neither proof on the animals suffering, prejudging points of view last on the proponents' and opponents' side (Bergeaud-Blackler 2007: 967).

The EU's council directive 93/119 of 22th December 1993 was the first measure provided. It postulated regulation on animals' protection at the time of slaughter or killing. As an exception, it offered that nation states could choose if they want to allow ritual slaughter for religious communities or not. This directive was replaced on January 1st 2013 with the new council regulation 1099/2009. Also within this legal framework, existing slaughter methods not including stunning were still possible. However, stricter rules could be imposed by nation states if they wanted to exempt religious slaughter from pre-stunning regulations (Needham 2012: 1, 5). Article 9 of the European convention in the European court of Human Rights is essential for the possibility of inclusion of ritual slaughter. It portrays the ritual slaughter as a religious act and therefore it is to be considered under the protection of human rights and the fundamental freedom of religious groups' expression (Sims 2011: 2).

Following these two legal regulations, European nation states took different and with time changing stances on this matter, translating it into various laws. As mentioned before, two major positions have heavily influenced and still influence the law decision making. On the one hand, welfare organizations are concerned about the animals' suffering if killed under religious slaughter methods. On the other hand, the non-acceptance of ritual slaughter in legal regulations can be considered as an attack on religions (Lever/Miele 2012: 531). Due to the development that some countries have made the issue a matter of experts and others prefer to open it to the public created a dividing line between countries (Bergeaud-Blackler 2007: 970).

For the moment, Germany, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia allow slaughter without stunning. Countries that allow ritual slaughter in form of requesting a form of post cut stunning are Austria, Estonia and Slovakia. Ritual slaughter is completely forbidden in Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Latvia, Sweden, Poland and partially in Finland (Caspar 2003: 312; Ferrari/ Bottoni 2010a: 1; Needham 2012: 6). Proof that ritual slaughter also on a legal level continues to be debated and translated into new policies can be given by law changes in certain countries like Germany and Poland. While Germany has again allowed

ritual slaughter since the early 2000, Poland has just released its prohibition in 2013 (Mukherjee 2014: 34). Reading these given laws and recent developments according to the anthropological policy analysis a few facts become clear at this point. Bergeaud-Blackler, who did her own research on the subject of halal meat in France, argues that European policy suggests that ritual slaughter is defined within the frame of ordinary slaughter regulations. As a consequence, ritual slaughter does not benefit from the statue of right, but rather from its statue of exception (Bergeaud-Blackler 2007: 965). Hence, also the religious freedom is somewhat restricted (Caspar 2003: 312).

But also other developments have structured these policies and have influenced their application. The inner Islamic discrepancy on the necessity of non-stunned slaughter informs decision makers of policies. In practice, this can mean that in countries where ritual slaughter is allowed, requests might still be declined. In such situations, the argument between Islamic scholars and institutions is interpreted as if ritual slaughter is not compelling (Ilkilic 2003: 317).

Furthermore, science is used to provide theories and instruments (Bergeaud-Blackler 2007: 974). Each side can make use of it in their own favor.

While there are policies on the actual act of slaughter, until today there are no regulations on labelling the goods produced by using this certain way of slaughter (Needham 2012: 6).

Also in the global context, policies experience transformations. It is exemplary that both the OIC and the Malaysian standard have accepted stunning since 2009 and 2010. Although only in exceptional cases applied, such changes are a great illustration of the major influence of the economy in policy regulations (Lever/Miele 2012: 531).

2.4.1.2 Policies in Austria

In Austria, ritual slaughter also has a long tradition because of its Jewish community. For the first time, it was prohibited during the time of Nazi legislations starting in 1938. After the Second World War, it was repealed again and Austria's provinces started to enact individual laws. First regulations on the protection of animals were made and according to the differing rules in each area, the permission of ritual slaughter was possible.

In times when a wave of Muslim migrants started to settle in Austria and ritual slaughter was required by new masses, first attempts were made to prohibit this way of slaughter. The constitutional court, however, always refused these by considering them as violation of the right to religious freedom (Ferrari/Bottoni 2010b: 39).

Only in 1996 such arguments were included into Austria's legal system by the supreme court. The legal directive OGH of 28th March 1996 and 15 Os 27/96 suggest that religious slaughter must be perceived as a manifestation of religious freedom for Muslims and Jews. It is not immoral, neither opposing to public order, health or the rights and freedoms of others. Furthermore, in 1998, religious slaughter was protected under Austria's constitution and European convention of human rights. In Austria's case, its national acknowledgement of different opinions and the right to practice rite regardless which standpoint one supports are very interesting. The only precondition is the request by a recognized religious community with a common traditional basis in faith (Ferrari/Bottoni 2010b: 39f).

Another major change in policy took place when the provincial laws were replaced with a new animal welfare act, BGG 2004 118, which came into force on 1st of January 2005. Now, a national frame for religious slaughter regulation was given and legislative power was in the hands of the state. These regulations allow ritual slaughter for all legally recognized religious communities if it is mandatory to them. From then on, it must be conducted in certain slaughter houses, which are officially approved and specially equipped. In presence of a veterinarian only a knowledgeable person must perform the slaughter and directly after the incision the animal must be stunned.

Besides these developments, the Austrian parliament further requested from the federal minister for health, family and youth to provide more scientific knowledge about the state of the art with detailed information on the issue of slaughtering and killing animals. This new task is especially interesting, since it not only serves to gain more knowledge for policy makers, but it simultaneously allows the minister to prohibit certain methods and make them subject to authorization. Moreover, he shall create new regulations for slaughterhouses and the treatment of the animals that will be ritually slaughtered (Ferrari/Bottoni 2010b: 36).

This overview on the policy regulations in the EU and Austria given will be completed by even more detailed information explained in the chapter of empirical findings.

3 Methodology

3.1 Study Design

The following chapter will discuss and evaluate methodological approaches which were applied in the research of the Austrian halal meat market. According to the research interest and subject of investigation, several choices were of importance.

As a study within the field of social and cultural anthropology, a qualitative scientific research style guided with an ethnographic approach was chosen. This form of research is characteristic to anthropological work. It offers great tools and forms of investigation in order to perceive different and pluralistic insights on matters of culture and society. The aim to grasp a picture from the inside of a field and its actors, the emic perspective, makes it specific in its form of conduct. Particularly for the investigation of a niche market, such approach can be very helpful in order to gain distinct and new results on economic matters out of a new perspective.

With the prospect and knowledge about the field, its manifold dimensions and involved actors, the study was conceptualized as a multi-sited ethnography. Such approach traces social and cultural formations across and within multiple sites of activity recognizing a diffuse time and space component. It acknowledges variously situated subjects as part of the field as well as the multi scalar assemblage of artefacts. In result, the fieldwork was conducted cross-sectionally investigating the valency and meaning of the halal meat market in its diverse arenas (Marcus 1998: 79f; Faubion 2001: 52).

The art of conduct was characterized by a methodological triangulation. Qualitative interviews, forms of observation as well as a document analysis were methods applied. The following paragraphs will explain, reinforce and discuss the significance of these methodological theories and tools.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Fieldwork

The first crucial task to start research is to frame the field of investigation. For this study, the field of “Austria’s halal meat market” was chosen. As a locally specific field, it contains two

areas of formation and performance, which I attempted to enter. One area of interest can be defined as the visible sphere. This field is marked by sites where halal meat products are offered, advertised and distributed. It is where halal is made public.

The second area can be defined as the invisible sphere. It is enacted and influenced by policies, regulating institutions, but also sites of production. Both spheres make up one field: the field of research. Each sphere again is divided into various levels and several actors representing them. In order to find access to each level and to different kind of data and information, several ethnographic methods needed to be applied.

The detailed structuring of the field in respect to the research question suggested that certain actors of different positions in the market would need to be approached. This assured that manifold information and several points of view of the niche market were included. Furthermore, it made sure that all levels of the market were part of the study.

Thus, in order to enter the field, a concrete choice of informant groups was made:

1. Local halal butcher shops in Vienna (five representatives)
2. Halal meat wholesalers (three representatives)
3. Austrian slaughterhouses with halal meat production (three representatives)
4. National and international Halal certifiers (three representatives)
5. Authorities involved with the matter of halal (three representatives)

Some of the representatives approached were chosen due to preceding research, others were found during the fieldwork itself.

3.2.2 Interviews

The main method for collecting research data was reached by interviews. This was a particular choice due to the fact that the halal meat market represents a field which gains most insight due to people's concrete information. The form of interviewing as a major method in the social and cultural anthropology could in this case serve best to collect different perceptions and interpretations of issues by individuals (Friedrichs 1990: 208). The benefit and significance of this method lies in its capability to capture insights of a deep level. Observational research, survey or other forms can barely achieve these (Hockey/Forsey 2012: 71).

In order to treat the given information with discretion, most interview partners will be kept anonymous.

3.2.2.1 Problem Centered Interview

According to Mayring (2002), interviews are particularly helpful for theoretically framed researches. This is, as he argues, due to the fact that aspects of the problem analysis can be added to the interview guidelines. From this stance, Mayring derives a certain type of interviews, which he refers to as problem centered interview. This interview method chosen for the conducted research is characterized by an open, but half-structured style. It was performed in all realized interviews.

While the interview partner is encouraged to lead the interview, it is in the hands of the researcher to always lead back to the main problem/subject – the focus on a certain theme. All interviewees were questioned with a partially structured interview guide. The conducted style meant to introduce an open interview, in which the subject was able to utter subjective opinions and make his own standpoints and conclusions. Introductory questions, following central questions and ad hoc questions are characteristic to the interview procedure (Mayring 2002: 67ff). Through reflections on the conversation by the researcher as well as by asking comprehension questions and confrontations with contradictory statements, it was possible to lead back to the subject at the right time (Schlehe 2003: 78).

Yet, also another new understanding of this method was leading the performance of interviews. Inspired by Hockey and Forsey (2012), the method of interview was perceived as vital to anthropological knowledge like participant observation is often declared. This point of view derives from the conclusion that the interview must also be understood as a moment of engagement. It offers a site of participation in the life of researcher's interviewees (Hockey/Forsey 2012: 71, 75). According to Forsey, conducting ethnographic interviews includes attributes of participant observation. The moment of interviewing is about combining social structures and behavior of individuals due to material conditions and structural forces with the meaning people give to these forces and conditions (Forsey 2010, in Hockey/Forsey 2012: 83).

This approach gives new relevance to the method of interviewing. Since many interviews took place at sites of production or distribution of halal meat, such methodological approach was practiced. Particularly for the conducted interviews with representatives in slaughterhouses and also sales persons at the local markets, the observational aspect had strong relevance and was always an active part of the interview.

3.2.3 (Participant) Observation

Forms of ethnographic observation were chosen to be the second method applied. Most of the times, it was used concomitant to the ethnographic interviews as explained above. Known as the main method in social and cultural anthropology, participant observation aims to investigate the research object in a preferably natural setting. Especially the outsider perspective of the research shall be circumvented. Thus, participant observation tries to come closer to reality by combining a descriptive natural and qualitative phenomenological perspective (Mayring 2002: 55). Various forms of awareness are asked for in this context. Good visual perception, the ability to communicate in a strange setting, but also the listening are important skills the anthropologists must prove (Adler/Adler 1998).

Since each field of research is framed by a particular setting and offers specific circumstances, also the method of participant observation must be adapted. According to this fact, Gold developed a typology which tries to offer different adjustment strategies. These offer that the researcher can become a complete participant, or only a participant as observer, he can be a participating observer or even complete observer (Gold 1958). Besides that, the researcher can choose between an artificially constructed field and a given one, where he or she obeys systematically or unsystematically (Flick 2005: 200f). The researcher's awareness of his/her functioning in the field is very important and often emphasized throughout the development in anthropological thought. His or her critical thinking and ethical reflections are crucial (Mayring 2002: 57).

The method of participant observation was chosen in order to gain access to and investigate the actual places and areas that define the halal meat market. It was a significant method to contextualize the data collected during the interviews.

Forms of participant observation were conducted at two settings. First of all and as already explained, it became a method partially applied during the interviews. It was rather characterized by observation and helped gain an insight on the settings of meat production and distribution. In summary, it can be described as a form to observe types of behavior from behind (Dewalt/Dewalt 2011: 21). The observation was applied during the interviews of representatives of the slaughterhouses and with butchers.

The second settings were several local markets in Vienna. A pure observational form with a concealed style was chosen in order to collect data on the setting's structure (Flick 2005: 200).

Concluding, the practiced form of observation was an applied field strategy that offered simultaneous document analysis, interviews, observation as well as introspection (Denzin 1989: 157f). Protocolling in form of a field diary was chosen to conserve and reflect the data. While participating, whether in an active or non-active way, it is essential to write down in regular and systematic ways. During the fieldwork, several facts such as the circumstances, the ethnographer's position, activity and emotional responses influence the process of observation. Consequently, findings can never be absolute and a field diary supports consideration (Emerson/Fretz/Shaw 1995: 1, 11f). In this regard, the research was always conducted in an open and reflexive manner. The ethnographer's position in the field was characterized by a professional style, yet casual approach.

3.2.4 The Analysis

The Analysis is the essential method to translate the collected data into meaning and into text. Here, the literal transcription of interviews is necessary and forms the base for detailed examination (Mayring 2002: 89). Several analysis methods can be used for qualitative research data. For the investigation of research material collected during the fieldwork on the halal meat market, a combination of two analysis theories was chosen to reach the best possible results. Approaches deriving from the grounded theory as well as from the qualitative content analysis were applied.

The grounded theory is defined by its dual character of creating a concept while collecting data. This means that the analysis takes place at the same time of doing fieldwork. During the collection of research material, a theoretical frame is created and modified and completed throughout time (Mayring 2002: 104).

The qualitative content analysis on the other hand starts at the end of data collection, when all data is transformed into processable material. It provides methods to systematically and gradually analyze any form of text (Mayring 2002: 114).

The grounded theory approach was chosen, as it offers the possibility to adjust theoretical framing throughout the process of data collection and first analysis. It is characterized by its priority to develop analytical propositions rather than to verify them. In this sense, a frequent comparison across collected data takes place frequently (Mayring 2002: 143). While the research project started with a clear concept and theoretical frame, it became

apparent that some parts of the theoretical frame needed to be extended due to several findings in the field. Hence, the grounded theory is helpful in its open character. The simultaneous inductive and deductive way of analysis was best to grasp the halal meat market in Austria in a wide, but specific angle (Mayring 2002: 144). In practice, ideas and insights about meaning in the data was collected during the entire fieldwork. Hence, theoretical memos were written down and either lead to more literature research or first findings. In this way, memos helped explore the relationship between coded field notes and provided further investigation of the subject (Mayring 2002: 155, 162).

The qualitative content analysis completes approaches of the grounded theory best. This form of analysis is defined by a concept-driven character. The reason for choosing this method lies in its ability to flexibly reduce data in a systematic way. It is a strong method which focuses on selected aspects of meaning which derive from the research question. A certain coding frame must be matched to the material and drives the data. In this process, the entire material must be investigated in each part. By the repetition of some steps, the coding frame can be modified. As a result, a higher level of abstraction may be achieved (Schreier 2014: 171ff).

The material collected during field work consisted of transcribed interviews as well as field diary notes of various observations.

The detailed explanation by Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) of both analytical methods provided best insight how to actually conduct the analysis.

At first, field notes were investigated by close reading, which followed open coding and initial memos. This step was followed by a form of focused coding and integrative memo writing (Emerson/Fretz/Shaw 1995: 173). This form of qualitative coding is essential, since “we ask questions of data in order to develop, identify, elaborate, and redefine analytic categories and insights.” (Emerson/Fretz/Shaw 1995: 175).

Thus, open coding allowed finding many themes and categories within the elaborated material. First categories were found through “asking” specific questions to passages of the data. Also first rudiments for developing interpretations became possible. This step was followed by a selection of themes, which also found relevance in accordance to the research question and theoretical framework. Relationships, structures and patterns throughout the material could be received by fine grained coding. Writing integrative memos helped link

given information with contextual and background information and provided a first conceptualization for creating explanatory text of the analysis. Such process is described as a reflexive and dialectical interplay between theory and data by Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995).

The use of computer software especially developed for qualitative analysis – Atlas.ti – was very helpful in the process of analysis. Such software, as Graham stresses, is well applicable for grounded theory and qualitative content analysis. Its strength lies in the support to construct, modify and maintain code lists. In the case of this research, it eased the analytical procedure by providing structural tools, which could be retrieved and linked (Gibbs 2014: 279f). The process of memoing was, however, again conducted manually.

3.2.4.1 Document Analysis

The document analysis is particular, as it includes a great variety of material in its analysis. Also films, texts, audio recordings, tools, art objects and much more can become part of the research. This kind of material is not involved in classical methods, but it offers great insights and conclusions on human thinking, acting and feeling, too. As a ready material which does not need to be evaluated firsthand, it offers new access, when there is no possibility for participant observation or interviews (Mayring 2002: 46ff).

This method was chosen due to its strength in offering a great possibility to gain access to data about the global halal meat market. The main focus was on the website representation of players in the global halal network. Besides, also online articles, public online debates on the matter of halal in Austria and policy papers were collected.

The focus in document analysis is tackling the inner characteristics of the document. By referring to its particular context's main aim, the agenda behind shall be unveiled. Here, the origin and time context is of special importance (Mayring 2002: 46ff).

Because visual representations became the main material in the document selection approaches of the field of visual anthropology were included. This field perceives as naturally "[to use] the visual as a documenting tool, as a form of interrogation, a 'way of knowing/seeing' and representation" (Pink 2006: 2). Hence, this method investigates the construction of narratives in visual representations.

In this respect, images that portray "halal" in one way or the other were included. Since these are as well as produced by human subjects, they must be understood in context of or

in response to social action. As representations, they remain iconically or indexically tied to what they shall represent (Banks 2014: 294). Meaning is understood to be created at three sites: the site of production, the site of the image as well as the site of reception. Each site entails technical, compositional and social modalities (Rose 2012: 40, 346). In this research, the main focus was put on the site of the image and on the site of production as far as it was achievable. The investigation of the site of reception would open a new chapter, which was not part of this study, yet it could be interesting for following research.

Reflecting upon “halal” images by conceiving them as polysemous images (Barthes 1999: 37) made a great difference to the empirical findings. It allowed “[...] to connote a much broader symbolic field beyond the purely rational level of awareness.” (Hall 1999: 311).

4 Discussion of Empirical Findings

4.1 The Emergence of a Halal Meat Market in Austria

Meat production and meat consumption is deeply rooted in Austrian society. Thus, meat displays an essential and traditionally embedded foodstuff, which belongs to the daily consumption of many individuals. Most slaughterhouses and meat-processing companies in Austria have been run as family businesses since decades. The knowledge about meat production developed in the rural context grew from farmers' small enterprises to more industrialized forms of meat processing and modern slaughterhouses. The market is characterized by strict laws and regulations for the art of conduct so that Austria has become known for its qualitative and controlled meat products (Danner/Stoll 1993). Especially over the last few years, Austria's meat production has experienced increasing demand and sales. Since 2009, meat has been the highest prizewinner in the food market sector – quantity and value have increased immensely (Anon. b 2010: 5).

The creation of the halal meat market is situated within this historical and contemporary context. By referring to the empirical findings, the following paragraph shall unveil developments and facts which lead to the emergence of this very market niche.

By accounts of several halal meat stall operators, halal meat was a matter of individual acquisition in the beginning. If Muslim migrants wanted to be sure to eat ritually slaughtered meat, the personal endeavor to go to Austrian farmers in order to conduct slaughter was the only way. In times of first migration flows of guest workers starting in 1964 mainly from Turkey, Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia (Bauer 2008: 5f), large families would come together in order to slaughter at the farmers' site for their home requirements. This practice dates back to times of the arrival of the first Muslim migrants and was commonly practiced until the mid-eighties. However, this was a small group of migrants. The request to specifically consume ritually slaughtered meat was relatively low according to my empirical findings. The majority of Muslims would buy regular meat in Austrian supermarkets as long as it was not pork.

A slaughterer portrayed this situation very critical from the perspective he has today: *“The way we shopped was disastrous. I think we ate a lot of meat which was not halal.”*¹ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014) He further explains that at that time, opinions existed which declared that the practice of praying over the meat before eating it was sufficient to consider it as halal. And other Muslims would not even request the halalness of meat in those times. The Manager Senior Auditor of the halal Food Council of Europe further explained the consumption of regular meat used to be seen as permissible for migrants in Europe, since Muslims are allowed to eat meat slaughtered by people of the book, like Christian Europeans. This perception, however, changed over time, since many Christians in Europe are perceived as secularized.

These matters of facts display a situation unveiling that “halalness” of meat was only a minor issue in the beginning. Yet, it must be emphasized that this disinterest in purchasing meat designated as halal does not necessarily lead back to disbelief as the statements also reveal.

Besides, one must acknowledge that Muslim migrants came of a background where the “halalness” of meat was never a matter of questioning. The majority of migrants who settled in Austria came from Muslim majority countries where meat was perceived as naturally slaughtered according to Islamic standards. Therefore, the lack of the awareness towards Austria’s non-halal meat was not only one of ignorance, but also part of an awareness-building process. It was just the beginning of opinion making of Austria’s Muslims and how they perceive halal today.

The Muslims’ step into the production of halal meat was nothing more than an answer to their own needs as consumers as well as of the wider Muslim community. Muslim consumers soon became producers and are therefore to be seen as a major player in the forming new habits and practices of halal meat consumption.

In addition, the study reveals that at the beginning of the mid-eighties, several developments took place. One of these developments were some newly established mosques which made it their task to provide proper halal meat. Back then, it was common to find a small sales area in some mosques where Muslims were able to purchase halal meat.

¹ „Wir haben alle katastrophal eingekauft. Ich denke einmal, wir haben viel Fleisch gegessen, welches nicht halal war.“ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014)

Even until today, several mosques in Vienna continue to provide their own slaughtered halal meat.

Besides these developments, another particular place gained significance. A former market in the third district of Vienna (near “Landstraße”) was soon known for a meat stall run by owners of Turkish background. This so-called company *Miedler* was mentioned as the first butcher by many interviewees and it did not sell any pork. This fact attracted many Muslim migrants who found their satisfaction in the availability of meat which had not been in physical contact to tabooed pork. Also the rarely available lamb meat was reason for this company to find fast recognition in the Muslim migrant community. It even attracted people from Vienna’s surroundings who would particularly come to purchase their meat here.

A parallel development was growing recognition by some Muslim migrants on the lack of halal meat in the open market. The one who claims to be the first who established a small shop providing ritually slaughtered meat is the operator of today’s well known Turkish supermarket chain “Etsan”.

The owner of the family business had before worked in several work areas and decided along with nine other friends to buy a small shop in Vienna’s 10th district, which is known for its migrant inhabitants. After all friends had left the business, relatives’ financial help allowed Mr. Ünal to continue to run the shop. Because he acknowledged the halal meat demand within his community, his decision was to distribute halal meat. The shop’s name, Etsan, proposed his new offer: “et” meaning meat and “san” industry. Today, the Etsan Company is known throughout Austria. It has grown to a big enterprise with about 16 branches. For a long time, the company has not only provided meat, but ethnic products, mostly for the Turkish consumer taste.

The personal story of Etsan is exemplary for a significant moment in Austria’s meat business. It is the story of one company, accompanied by many others that represented a new gained interest, which again found translation into a niche market. In reference to early theoretical concepts, this fact proves that the beginning of a local halal meat business in Austria came to existence by the use of a bottom up tactic (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994). Still, it did not derive from a certain strategy, but rather emerged within the social and economic circumstances of Muslim migrants. The establishment was as consequence and some sort of answer to desires and needs of a certain group in society, a point which was emphasized as characteristic to niche markets by Dalgic and Leeuw (chapter 2.1.1).

Part of stepping into business and marketing was the emerging necessity to find partners and sites for production. This following involvement of meat suppliers remains the crucial moment for the initial awareness-building process by Austrian farmers and slaughterhouse owners towards a growing interest in specially produced meat. Furthermore, it declares a shift towards an institutionalized form of production.

At the beginning, small quantities of meat were slaughtered by family members or later by operators of small stores, who would drive to the farmer, slaughter and take the prepared product home or to the store. At the end of the 1980s, first Muslim butcher operators turned to slaughterhouses. The demand for more quantity in meat goods also meant that a new system of production needed to be introduced.

All Muslim interviewees explained that the process of contact winning and partnership building was almost natural and easy. One wholesaler explained that he would just go to a slaughterhouse, say hello, explain his request and that was it. He said it was very easy.²

Neither the first contact to farmers nor the following contact to industrial slaughterhouses was difficult, as more interviewed butchers and wholesalers explained. This was due to the fact that in these times, the ritual conformed to the farmers' own traditional ways of slaughter. Hence, it was no problem at all to establish partnerships. Also slaughterhouses rather perceived it as a special request, which would open up new business partnerships. The way of slaughter was not questioned.

In this manner, business partnership networks were established. Recognizing the demand, migrants made contact with slaughterhouses in order to find new sites of production and in order to supply their stores with the required halal meat. This was the starting point for a growing halal meat business in Vienna.

The 1990s then mark a period of the establishment of an increasing number of butcher shops offering halal meat. Most of the individuals who decided to start this kind of occupation had been familiar with the butcher profession before. Some entrepreneurs brought special education in this field already, while others were connected to this field by their fathers who had been active in this profession in the country of origin. Before starting

² "Ich bin einfach zum Schlachthof gegangen und habe gesagt 'grüß Gott, grüß Gott, entschuldigung ich habe eine Frage' [...] ganz einfach". (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014).

their own business, most entrepreneurs had accomplished further education within this field or already worked in one of Austria's slaughterhouses gaining the first step into this market. In this way, halal meat has become available at many sites. Vienna, however, remained the starting point for halal meat's entry in the market. Due to the lack of demand, slaughtering for one's own requirement was practiced much longer throughout Austria. Here, much fewer migrants lived concentrated.

These historical developments of the niche market gain new relevance and detailed insights once contextualized within the approaches of ethnic entrepreneurship (chapter 2.1.2).

It can be stressed that ethnic entrepreneurship as a concept applies to two dimensions of the emerging halal market. On the one hand, the idea and inspiration to bring halal meat to the market derived from the need and desire of the rows of a wide ethnic community – the Muslim community – defined with their shared religion and belief in Islam. It included individuals and groups of different national background. Shared norms and values, as well as sets of symbols made them to a group of similar desires. This point supports the theory that the market for ethnic entrepreneurship derives from within, from the ethnic communities' unanswered demands.

On the other hand, the strength of ethnic entrepreneurship lies in networks, shared information, knowledge, skills and solidarity among a group. The story of the company Etsan is exemplary for this case. Its history of establishment is one that displays various characteristics typical of the concept of ethnic entrepreneurship.

Etsan and other halal butchers established at that time are also an example of economic integration. By creating and using opportunity structures, the halal meat business became their way of incorporation into Austrian society. Furthermore, these facts support the idea that markets offer possibilities for economic acting and economically securing livelihood (Knierbein et al. 2012: 100).

Today, we witness a situation in Austria in which the halal meat production has risen immensely. While the 1990s portrayed a decade of a slow, yet continuous development, at the end of 1990s and the beginning of 2000, a second major shift in this market segment occurred. Witnessing the success of the first halal butcher shops, more individuals gained interest. Hoping to have found a profitable business, an increasing number of entrepreneurs opened up meat shops.

As a consequence thereof, former small entrepreneurs grew to wholesalers in order to provide the new masses requested. Using their gained knowledge and consisting networks, it was easy for them to expand.

A new step of institutionalization in the market sector took place. It can also be declared as the time, in which halal meat had become to a profitable product. From a small individually driven supply system, a market had emerged. From then on, it was not the butcher himself anymore who became responsible for the meat production. Over the years, several wholesalers had established their business. At the moment, more than three widely known wholesale companies supply local butchers in Vienna and surrounding. The ones interviewed are all of Turkish origin, which emphasizes the fact that the Turkish community is very well connected throughout the meat business.

This shift towards an industrialized halal meat production brought along several major changes and the inclusion of more actors taking part in it. It influenced the definition and meaning of halal meat, it changed forms of consumption as well as practice in production. In a way, it also portrays changes in the Austrian society and economy due to its new citizens, who are no longer new to the place, but have become part of society. Migrants shape the economic landscape of Austria not only marginally, but with a growing impact.

Today, halal meat is something that the consumer does not need to look for. It is literally to find around the corner. Many kebab stalls and restaurants run by Muslims post halal signs in form of advertisement. These can be found anywhere in Vienna, but also in small towns and bigger cities throughout Austria.

The main points for direct meat sale are local markets in Vienna. Some of them have at least one or two halal meat stalls, while others have more than ten. But also supermarkets have become places for halal meat distribution. Most of them are Turkish supermarket chains, but also the Austrian supermarket chain *Merkur* included halal meat into their assortment not long ago.

The production of the meat mostly takes place at several Austrian slaughterhouses, which included halal meat into their assortment due to request. Other butchers reserved themselves not to buy from wholesalers and instead slaughter themselves.

Because there is a high price competition among butchers and fast food restaurants like kebab stalls, today a lot of the halal meat is imported. In Austria, meat is more expensive to

produce, which is why especially poultry and ready fabricated kebab meat as well as other meat products are imported from Germany and Hungary. Also kinds of animals which do not belong to Austria's mass agriculture, such as lamb, are imported, mainly from hubs in the United Kingdom. Yet, also the sale of much cheaper halal meat from Poland and Romania has entered the Austrian market sphere and fuels competition.

The following chapters will portray the situation and multiple actors of Austria's halal meat market today in detail and discuss various processes and results.

4.2 The Actors in the Austrian Halal Meat Industry

4.2.1 The Producers and Distributors

This chapter will portray and discuss different actors and different sites, which play a role for the production and distribution of halal meat. It aims to tackle their position in the market as well as their scope of influence and acting. After the insight on production sites, such as slaughterhouses, the role and position of wholesalers will be introduced; and last but not least, the position of butchers shall be depicted.

4.2.1.1 Production Sites and Slaughter-Facility Operators

With a growing demand for halal meat due to Muslim migrants' establishment of the halal market segment, which has continuously grown in the last fifteen years, big slaughterhouses started to include halal slaughter into their program.

Throughout my research, I was able to detect several slaughterhouses producing halal meat. Most of them do not advertise their practice of halal slaughter and it was only possible to find out about them based on long research. Besides the ones traced, it is sure that there are even more production sites, however, these are hard to find out about. Especially the knowledge about small slaughter facilities is difficult to gain. Many of them are not officially certified.

Also detailed information about halal certified companies by the certifiers cannot be provided. Especially the director of the IIDZ emphasized that many companies do not want their involvement in the halal business made public - a fact which will be discussed in a following chapter.

Companies for beef production are: Grandits, Trunkel, Neugeschwandtnr, Marcher, Großfurthner, Abdullah Fleisch and Handlbauer. Companies for poultry are: Tschiltsch,

Wech, Titz, and Huber's Landhendl. All companies offer big slaughter facilities and are situated throughout Austria.

The study revealed that all three interviewed slaughter facilities' operators entered the halal meat market sector due to requests by customers. It was those migrant entrepreneurs, referred to in the chapter of the historical development, who uttered their need of halal meat. The above mentioned firms are the companies who were approached and who agreed on stepping into the market. The particular stories of three slaughterhouse operators will give a more distinct insight on their entrance into the halal meat branch.

Grandits was one of the first companies entering the halal meat market. At the beginning of the 1990s, the company's production site was situated in the heart of Vienna, the St. Marx slaughter facility in Vienna. Later, the company moved to locations in Lower Austria. *Grandits* is one of the first mass production facilitators in the halal niche and until today, the company has played an important role for this market. This specific position leads back to several facts and developments.

Due to demands on behalf of the Muslim, yet at the same time Jewish community, asking for the inclusion of religious slaughter procedures at *Grandits*, its production site, a major investment, was implemented. Vienna's municipality, the Jewish religious community as well as the company itself invested in a so called "shechita drum". This device enables a ritual slaughter without common pre-stunning procedures. With this particular equipment, *Grandits* gained a unique position in Austria. It became the first supplier for new wholesalers and in that served their establishment simultaneously. The company facilitated the industrialization of halal and thus also played part in the actual formation of a market. Until today, it has been the biggest provider for Austria's halal meat wholesalers. Up to 10 % of its goods are halal meat.

Over time, the practical implementation has not changed for the production and distribution chain, but the form of conduct has.

Farmers supply cattle which will be slaughtered on one or two days a week by a Muslim slaughter man who is provided by the wholesalers. Veterinarians are always on site in order to control the killing of the animal. The slaughtered animal is marked with a halal seal, then processed and packed by employees of the slaughterhouse and later again distributed to the wholesaler. Separate cold storage houses make sure that the halal products are not contaminated or mistaken with non-halal goods.

A major shift in the form of production took place with the removal of “shechita drum”. From this point on, this equipment was only used by the Jewish community that strictly rejects slaughter with prior stunning.

Although this change in slaughter practice occurred in consent with the Muslim business partners, it had different impacts for each actor.

The reasons to change towards conventional slaughter methods are based on pure economic reasons for the slaughterhouse operator. To him it offers more convenience, fewer problems and a much faster slaughter procedure as he explained. Although he is still the only one who could facilitate ritual slaughter with this special gadget, it is not in his interest to do so. He is rather pleased to have found agreement on a more economic method which is more convenient for him. Another reason of justification is his interest not to enter a problematic situation with big customers, such as *McDonalds*, who conduct strict audits and openly oppose ritual slaughter methods on grounds of animal welfare.

With these developments in focus, the study shows that general capitalist streams and market developments have affected the halal meat industry immensely. The profitable aspect gained upper hand and affected how the ritual slaughter will be performed. This means that a religious traditional rite became contested due to market interests for the first time. Thus, the aim to satisfy religious demands was adapted to the industries’ new trends and demands.

Another influential fact is the pressure on behalf of the large-scale industry. It is dominant in driving the decision making for permitting traditional ritual slaughter procedures. Hence, the opinion and policy of big companies determine the implementation of local halal meat production practices. Their economic power position has major impact on meaning and interpretation of how today’s halal slaughter practice in Austria shall take shape.

The access to the halal meat market can also have a slightly different reason, as the personal story of the plant “Niederhof” will illustrate (new company name, Interview slaughterhouse operator 2). There are manifold ways to find entrance to this niche market.

According to the managers’ narrative halal slaughter was introduced by an employer in 2001 who had asked if he could perform ritual slaughter for his family requirements. Over time, the worker also started to prepare meat for friends and acquaintances who had heard that he slaughtered according to Muslim rules in a cattle-only slaughterhouse. The early

beginning of an employee's request to prepare meat for himself ended in a new production segment of this company. Today, *Niederhof* has about 800 private customers, who order halal meat at this slaughter facility. New cooling houses have been installed. The number of animals for slaughter has grown from 15 a week to 200. Today, halal slaughter takes place once a week, applying the procedure of normal pre-stun processing. The employee who had introduced halal to this plant is now in charge of the organization of the halal customer segment and two new Muslim slaughter men have taken over his initial job.³

The manager takes this market niche very seriously and sees a great and increasing profit in it. He aims to continuously expand his client base and products. With his position in the country side and distance to the main distribution site Vienna, he can supply the Muslim population that is concentrated in smaller towns and Austria's countryside. His target groups are mainly private customers of the region, meat production companies, wholesale long distance markets and gastronomy.

The certificate by the IIDZ is a significant advantage for him, but most importantly the Muslim employer who he understands as facilitator for Muslim specific culture and religion. With him as a person of trust for this market, he aims to promote best meat quality, which is 100 % halal and offers the customer a shopping experience *"Ein Stück Heimat – a piece of home"*.⁴

In context to the theory about perspectives on economy (chapter 2.1.1) as well as niche markets (chapter 2.1.3), this personal story supports several theoretical assumptions. First of

³ [...] und dann haben wir einen Burschen gehabt. Der ist nach wie vor bei uns und organisiert auch jetzt das Halal Fleisch Segment. Er ist selber Moslem, und der ist immer am Samstag her gekommen [...] und hat gefragt, ob er sich a paar Kilo Fleisch selbst herrichten kann [...]. Erst hat er mir beim Arbeiten geholfen und dann hat er sich für ihn und seine Familie Fleisch hergerichtet. Da er gesehen hat, dass bei uns nur Rindfleisch gearbeitet produziert wird, und dann hat er sich das hergerichtet, dann hat er für seine Freunde schon mitgenommen, und dann ist das immer mehr und mehr und mehr geworden [...]. Und, ja so ist das eigentlich losgegangen. Dann hat er sich für Andere schon mitgenommen [...].

Jetzt hat er zirka 800 Kunden [...] das sind nur Privatkunden, die sich jede Wochen des Fleisch bei ihm bestellen [...] der eine Kunde will 15 Kilo, der andere will 30 Kilo, der nächste will 10 Kilo [...]. Und der Arbeiter ist jetzt mittlerweile so stark, also, oder wir sind eigentlich so stark, dass uns da in Oberösterreich Niemand mehr überholen kann. [...] Und dieser Markt ist natürlich entstanden und immer mehr und immer mehr und immer mehr geworden. Das ist nicht über die Nacht so gesteigert worden, sondern das ist über 10, 12, 14 Jahre so gesteigert worden in dem Ausmaß. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 2, 24.04.2014)

⁴ [...] Und bei denen ist das so, dass das Stück Rindfleisch erstens einmal halal sein soll; zweitens müssen sie dem Arbeiter vertrauen; das Ganze ist eine komplette Vertrauenssache, weil der ist wirklich streng gläubig. [...] Und drittens wollen die das so haben, wie sie es bei ihnen daheim haben. [...] Und der Arbeiter macht das denen so. Der erfüllt denen die drei Sachen und ihre Sprache spricht er und er kann mit ihnen kommunizieren [...] und hauptsächlich funktioniert das mit Mundpropaganda. Also wir machen da kein Millimeter Werbung. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 2, 24.04.2014)

all, the realm of the Muslim community and shared interest, which are grounded in the group specific norms and values, facilitated a specific and new market segment in this region of Austria. A point which leads back to Gudemanns (2001) theoretical thoughts on markets as a platform of economic practice and relationships constituted by several interest parties.

Secondly, the company's history supports statements of Toften and Hammervoll (2013) pleading the necessity of uniqueness, high quality and commitment for niche marketing.

The uniqueness was understood by the director in that he perceives halal meat as a piece of culture, which he wants to provide. Such approach towards merchandizing finds explanation in McCracken's (2005) theory of products as media of culture, which people use as identification or confirmation marker (McCracken 2005). The unique culturally influenced product – "the piece of home" was well implemented for economic success.

Specialization, but also long term relationships and reputation are the key for this business (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994) as the important role of the Muslim employee could prove.

The successful and steadily growing business for this company can further support the assumption that serving a niche market includes benefits of future profit gains and increased sales (Toften/Hammervoll 2013).

A key element for the company's success can be explained with the concept of trust (chapter 2.2.5). The particular story of the company proves that trust is an important element for the economy. Actually, trust was the first and most important element enabling the establishment of a halal meat segment for this slaughterhouse operator. The Muslim worker not only called attention for a lack of a particular product in this area of Austria, he further became the trusted representative and thus the key actor. He functions as a mediator between the social and economic site by representing a certain value system and symbolic identity marker. Trust in the halal product of this company emerges out of the trust relationships, which are provided and maintained by the worker. His key position is attained by him being a representative of a common religious community and not by him being an employee of this company.

That halal business can also evolve in strictly pragmatic terms which will be shown with the example of a poultry slaughter plant. For five years, the company has held a halal certificate (by the IGGiÖ), which followed the decision to include halal products into the assortment. Also in this case, the idea for a halal product segment was brought from the outside, by a

wholesaler of the halal meat industry. Instead of performing the slaughter for halal meat on special days, it was decided to make the entire production halal. In practice, this means that the mechanical slaughter machine must be started by a Muslim. He has to utter the short prayer when pushing it and each time after it has been turned off again. Furthermore, a Muslim must be in charge to control the chicken after they have run through the killing machine. Prior to the slaughter, the poultry has been stunned by a CO2 gas daze. In this manner, as the quality manager explained, the entire products are made “halal capable”. As a consequence, products which go out to supermarket chains and gastronomy are sold as “normal” meat, while the same product is sold as halal meat to its Muslim customers.⁵

This example of halal meat production is very illustrative for the crucial shift in Austria’s halal meat production towards an industrialized system of procedure. The depiction of the procedure as “halal capable” itself unveils the adaption of a religious requirement to standards and aims of the industry, which tries to cover as many market segments as possible. The fact of the assurance of this procedure by a Muslim certifier who acts in the name of the Islamic determination of Austria as well as the acceptance of the Muslim customers of this product yet also shows that this transition has been accepted and even finds support. Although it can be critically seen as a crucial change of a traditional and religiously required ritual, this form of conduct is most likely to be the future market potential.

Furthermore, this example shows that the company tries to respond to different norms and values of consumer groups. Only the form they market the product makes it something different: either halal or not (Jordan 2003).

The facilitators of halal meat products introduced here have in common that they answered to requests of a certain customer class. All of them conduct an industrialized form of slaughter, which includes the use of the form of stunning prior slaughter which is seen controversially in Islamic rows. One company explained that the meat is more expensive than regular meat.

⁵ [...] da muss ein Moslem die Schlachtung vornehmen, und zumindest er muss geschult sein auf die Halal-Schlachtung [...] der muss dann die Betäubungsmaschine einschalten und muss ein Gebet sprechen. Das ist das gesamte Ritual. [...] wir produzieren über den gesamten Ablauf halalfähige Ware [...]. Wir haben den ganzen Tag bei der Schlachtung einen Moslem [...] dadurch haben wir dieses Ritual über den gesamten Schlachtprozess, über den gesamten Tagesablauf. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 3, 29.04.2014)

The companies' step into the market includes wishes of future profits and to prevail as a player in a growing market segment. For all three companies, halal slaughter is applicable as long as it does not require a slow procedure ritual slaughter performance without stunning. Two of the companies also serve export markets.

Only one slaughterhouse in Austria that wishes to stay anonymous allows ritual slaughter without pre and post cut-stunning. Here, halal poultry is produced on a regular base. It is a much slower process, resulting in higher costs for the final product.

As one slaughterer and butcher shop manager explains, ritual slaughter without stunning is only possible in small companies. The big industry sees it as a loss of time and profit. This also explains the situation in Austria, where ritual slaughter with post cut stunning and in one case even without stunning, is performed only at small slaughter facility sites.

An additional reason for the minor ritual slaughter procedures described here is the requirement of an official application for allowance. This fact is a reason which obviously exacerbates this sort of production procedure and has in consequence slaughter facilities overlooking this request. In the chapter "Ritual Slaughter versus Halal Slaughter" (chapter 4.3.1.2), this aspect and its effects will be discussed in detail.

In summary, the step of Austrian slaughterhouse facilitators into the halal meat production enabled the expansion of this niche market and systematic industrialization. They hold power positions in deciding on the implementation of slaughter procedures and therefore influence a traditionally and religiously influenced ritual.

4.2.1.2 Wholesalers

Vienna is the hub for halal meat marketing and distribution. Until today, the branch has been lucid in that only very few wholesalers competing in this market sphere are active players. The most popular and well-known companies are "Etsan" and "Abdullah", which both distribute from the f-eins meat market hall in Vienna's central market "Großgrünmarkt".

Etsan is, as illustrated before, known through his long establishment in the market, while *Abdullah* was established later by a former employee of *Etsan*. Both companies take responsibility to produce their own beef, while lamb and other animals are partially imported. A big quantity of poultry products are imported from Hungary or additionally purchased from halal producing poultry slaughterhouses in Austria. The fact that some of the meat imported from Hungary is produced in plants that are in hands of Austrian

businesses is important to point out. This transfer of the production into Austria's neighboring country is a result of the increased demand of halal poultry on the one hand and the side possibility to produce by cheaper means which helps compete in high price competition on the other hand. One wholesaler explained that in this manner, all customer needs can be answered. Austrian poultry, products declared as quality meat, are meant for a different consumer class than the Hungarian product. For Hungary, this expansion of the halal market is also a big economic gain. Since Muslims are a great minority in Hungary accounting to only about 50.000 Muslims it is rather obvious that the increased halal meat production in Hungary of the last year is not a result of its own Muslim population's demands (Url 6).

Besides *Etsan* and *Abdullah*, also other wholesalers like *ER und ER*, *Özköseoglu* or *Yasin poultry trade* define the market. All of the companies mentioned here were established by migrants of Turkish background. This is an aspect which also reflects upon the demography of Austria's Muslim population.

According to the interviewed wholesalers' statements, all of them have their own customer retail trade niche and not much competition defines their trading. Everyone in the business is familiar with each other and there are clear lines in business which would not be crossed due to preconditioning trust-relationships.⁶ Such descriptions have to be seen critical. But they can find explanation in the historical development of the wholesalers. As it was illustrated before, most of them erupted in various forms of ethnic entrepreneurship. Hence, their establishment arose from group specific resources and reliance on ethnic specific solidarity, which, as the statements suggest last until today.

However, with the growth of the market and increase in wholesalers and especially retailers, this solidarity, which facilitated the market first, comes under raising scrutiny.

Also the opinion on the trustworthiness of the wholesalers is divided and shows one of the biggest problems in the market: while trust is considered as a major component inherent to the market, it simultaneously is the most contested and doubted element to many.

⁶ „Die halten schon zusammen. [...] Die haben alle ihren eigenen Platz im Markt. Eigentlich, die tun niemanden angreifen, jeder bleibt bei seinen Kunden. [...] so reden wir schon untereinander. Ab und zu, zum Beispiel fragen wir einander, wie die Lage ist [...] und was passieren kann [...]. Wir fragen immer untereinander [...] ich frage zum Beispiel, was sie diese Woche machen und wie die Preise ausschauen und wie es läuft für die nächste Woche. (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

Particularly the step towards the import of halal meat by the wholesalers is seen critical. One slaughterhouse director explained that especially these big wholesalers abused the halal meat market by importing questionable halal meat with low-quality goods from neighboring countries in which animal welfare and slaughter conditions are much worse. Such circumstances are reason for him not to cooperate with them. He does not want his quality meat to be compared with imported meat, which he considers very bad-quality meat. He stresses that the word halal is exploited extremely, especially by Turkish migrants that are involved in the market.⁷

Many of these kinds of accusations prevail in the rows of the halal meat industry. While here it is an Austrian who utters his concerns, the same accusations are made by the two certifiers, Muslim meat retailers and wholesalers themselves as well. It is just one of many indicators revealing that the halal meat industry has become a competitive market sphere in which halal has become a brand to sell a profitable product and in which the religious aspect is secondary for many.

Since very few wholesalers supply the market niche, it is in the hands of very few to decide on changes of slaughter procedures and shifts towards an industrialization of halal meat in Austria. They are the striving forces in structuring the market, but also in defining what kind of halal is sold to the consumers.

4.2.1.3 The Retailers

The numbers of halal meat retailers has grown drastically in recent years. Not only an increasing demand has led to this situation, but especially the assumption of many that sale of halal meat is very profitable. Retailers that have been part of the business for more than 20 years see such developments very critical. According to the interviewees, one of the

⁷ „Die nutzen das Wort einfach so viel aus und machen so viel Schindluder damit, nur das damit Geschäfte gemacht werden. Also alleine wenn ich mir das Geschäft in Wien anschau zum Beispiel der I. [abgeänderter Anfangsbuchstabe] oder der, was ist der zweite Große da, [...] die ziehen das Fleisch mit, die kriegen das nicht mehr aus Österreich, sondern die beziehen das aus Polen, aus Ungarn, aus Rumänien. Ich möchte nicht wissen wie viele Pferde und Esel bei denen schon verkauft werden. Und die schimpfen sich Halal, weil sie selber Türken sind und weil sie das ganze halal verkörpern. [...] Also ich traue es mir nicht laut sagen, weil ich will auch mit denen überhaupt nicht anhängen und darum beliefere ich auch diese Firmen nicht. [...] Viel von den eigenen Leuten. Die eigenen Leute, sind Türken speziell [...] man hört es ja immer wieder; das Wort Halal wird so viel ausgenutzt. [...] die haben das mit Schweinefleisch gemischt und lauter so Sachen, das gibt's ja auch Banditen bis zum geht nicht mehr. [...] Sowohl bei den Österreichern, als auch bei den Türken. Da kenn ich auch so einen Türken der sich in einem Schlachthof die Minderwertigen Fleischstücke geholt hat, die schon fast zum Wegschmeißen waren. Er hat das dann daheim bei ihm irgendwo im Bauernhof zerlegt und hat es dann nach Wien als Halal-Fleisch und super Hennenfleisch eingeführt.“ (Interview slaughterhouse operator 2, 24.04.2014)

major problems is the lack in quality of the meat and the questionability of the “halalness” for many products.

Also the halal commissioner of the IGGiÖ considers the halal meat market in Austria to be disappointing. Much of the goods are incorrectly declared as halal and many mercenary individuals are involved. This point has been approved and supported by many other statements of various actors involved. So did the certifier of the IIDZ mention that he is convinced that many Turkish retailers just go to slaughterhouses and do not ask if the product they buy really is halal.

Another wholesaler explained that today anyone can claim that his products are halal by advertising them as such. The practice, however, shows that this is at odds with the truth. Usually, the retailers’ focus lies on the prices and not the halalness of a product. He calls halal a fraud and “label decoration”. He claims that many retailers and companies “produce under the bridge” or they buy from any slaughterhouse later declaring it as halal.⁸

According to experienced retailers, the other major problem which goes hand in hand with the questionability of the “halalness” is the assumption of many migrants to see meat as profitable business. This conjecture derives from the idea that if someone owning a butcher shops shows to have much money, by having a nice car etc., this is immediately seen as successful business. As a result, many individuals who have no experience as butchers or in the meat business step into the industry, hoping to be successful. This situation rather harms the market by raising the competition, which has influence on the quality of the meat and also the aim of new retailers to really sell halal.⁹

⁸ „[...] Das schreibt ja heutzutage jeder auf irgendwelche Prospekte oder Werbematerialien, dass seine Produkte Halal sind. Nur wir wissen aus der Praxis, dass das nicht so ist. Da wird eigentlich nur auf den Preis geschaut. Halal ist eigentlich so eine Mogelpackung. Und das kann es nicht sein, das ist so ein Etikettenschmuck. Betrug [...] diese Firmen, die unter die Brücke produzieren, zerlegen, schlachten und so weiter. Es gibt auch diese. Kaufen von irgendwo, von irgendeinem Schlachthof und sagen ok das ist Halal. Da haben wir viele Beispiele.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

„Im großen LKW wird dann das Schwein und Lamm und Rind alles gemischt. Später bezeichnet man dieses als helal, die helal Geschäfte.“ (Interview butcher 2, 06.05.2014)

⁹ „Das ist so, dass die Leute sehen das einer ein Grillgeschäft gemacht hat und viel Geld verdient. Er hat viel Geld, einen großen LKW, drei vier Busse, er fährt ein großes Auto, [...]. Die denken nur so! Die glauben wir verdienen viel, aber wir verdienen nicht viel. Wir verdienen nur in der Menge! [...] Die machen das nur wegen dem Geld. Wenn sie viel Geld sehen, dann machen das. (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

Der Brunnenmarkt war tot. [...] Früher gab es kein Fleisch, jetzt aber haben sie gesehen, dass das Fleisch gut geht und eröffnen nebeneinander. [...] Viele, und die nehmen wirklich klumperte Ware, und die Leute spielen mit 5 Kilo, 6 Kilo Preisen [...] die schauen immer auf die anderen, wenn sie sehen, dass einer viel Kunden hat und das Geschäft gut geht, dann machen sie das gleiche. Es gibt so viel Anderes zu machen, Angebote die

Such developments have led to a radical shift in the local market structures. The Brunnenmarket and Hannovermarket are especially exemplifying, both situated in districts of Vienna that are known for a high population with migration background. Here, one halal stand follows the other. Some of them are specialized to offer all kinds of meat, others only offer poultry. It is also possible that one company has different stalls, in each one providing a different product. Besides that, there are retailers which have stalls at various local markets. The meat that most of them sell is basically the same as it comes from the same source, as one wholesaler explains.¹⁰ He claims that he serves the whole local market with his products and the only difference in the meat is the quality the retailers decide to buy from him. To make money for retailers and wholesalers depends on the sale of quantity. Only when you sell masses, one earns.¹¹

In order to attract different kinds of customers, various advertisement marketing strategies are applied. This manifests in different forms of labelling and use of language. The most common label is the word “halal”, which usually is designed as a seal and in Arabic letters. In reference to the theoretical part “Perspectives on Commodities” (chapter 2.2.2), it becomes clear that the use of “halal cachets” has become a form of marketing. It rather serves as a brand, as it does not really guarantee the halalness of a product. Since the word and its form of display is attributed with a clear meaning, on part of the Muslim customers trust in this “brand” is instantly provided. Hence, the target clients for these butcher shops are obviously Muslims. The halal sign serves as an identification symbol, as certification and as advertisement.

But due to a lot of fraud by many butchers and the difficulty to prove halalness, it is not a symbol the consumer can rely on, it is no proper quality seal.

Just as Applbaum (2004) claimed, a branded good which represents a certain identity enables companies to control the meaning and value of very good quality. The meat stalls

fehlen, aber daran denken sie nicht. [...] Aber auf die Idee kommen sie nicht.“ (Interview butcher 2, 06.05.2014)

¹⁰ Die verkaufen theoretischer Weise alle dasselbe Fleisch. Alle bekommen das gleiche Fleisch. [...] Also nicht das Gleiche, sondern der eine kriegt 100Gramm und der Andere 200 Kilo. So aufgeteilt. [...] Einer will billige Ware haben und der andere will teure Ware. (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

¹¹ Ja, wenn wir Menge machen, dann verdienen wir Geld. Wenn wir ein paar Hundert oder paar Tonnen machen, dann kommt nix besonders bei raus. (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

use this sign to present the religious conformity of their products. It is a statement and advertisement at the same time.

Although most Muslims in Austria are not familiar with the Arabic language, halal signs frequently appear in the letters which represent the origins of Islam. It is a clear religious connotation. But besides that, the Turkish “helal” sign is used at the same time in order to particularly approach the biggest Muslim community in Vienna – the Turkish community.

Besides the halal signs, also Halal certificates by the IGGiÖ, the IIDZ and the Hungarian determination are openly shown in meat stalls. Also religious prayers or wordings as wall decoration serve to the attraction to the shop. Both elements have impact on the consumers’ trust in the shop and hence the product. Their display serves the relation of trust between the consumer and salesperson. Also names of the shops such as “Mekka halal Fleisch” or Güvenir – Turkish for trust – have the same intention. In the end, it is about making trust visible.

The local aspect of the product is also used in order to declare quality and forms of inclusion. “All meat from Waldviertler farmers” or “real Steirisch chicken” are phrases decorating several meat stalls. They indicate that also the aspect of meat origin is important for the disposal. Here, “halal” has become a local product. The ascription to halal meat of being something foreign and only for foreigners hereby is contested. The use of such framing can be interpreted as a form of making the market somewhat Austrian and transferring it to a local product, not only in its production, but also perception.

Besides these openly declared halal butcher shops, stalls which do not advertise their halal products can be found within the local market landscape. Owners of these shops emphasized that the majority of customers are Austrians with no Muslim background. They can sell more expensive and quality products, because these clients accept given prices as it was explained. Muslim consumers are not the customer group approached primarily.

A huge lack in this market can be found in the missing halal meat products in regular supermarkets. What has become common practice in countries like France, England, Belgium and Holland, has found entry only in one of Austria’s supermarket chains. The supermarket *Merkur* is the only chain which has offered minced halal meat as well as chicken products for a few years. On grounds of customer demand, the company decided to include halal as a customer segment in order to serve all customer requirements.

This diversity of distributors for the availability of halal meat clearly shows the fragmentation into different customer segments which have evolved over the last few years. With different form of advertisement, consumer groups are attracted and maintained as clients.

4.2.2 The Certifiers

4.2.2.1 The IGGiÖ

Concomitant with the growth of the halal meat market in Austria was the question of assurance. According to butcher Mr. Yuri, it was as early as at the years 1993, 1994 and 1995 when a first “halal debate” erupted. Some imams took the initiative and started to check farms that became sites of ritual slaughter if they were halal conform. This was, however, an unorganized procedure and a generally marginalized attempt. Many trials in establishing a certification system were unofficial and failed. This fact may lead back to the circumstances, in which the halalness of the produced meat was not questioned often, as Mr. Yuri explains. Only much later, in 1998, the IGGiÖ, Islamic denomination of Austria, made it their task to provide a certification system for halal meat production sites and their products.

The denomination established in 1979 on grounds of the Islam law of the year 1912 understands itself as the representative of all Austrian Muslims. The certification of meat production sites was aimed at becoming a new field of service the institution intended to offer. In search for a professional in this field, Mag. Dr. Boufalgha was chosen to become the first commissioner to control ritual slaughter. His education in halal auditing results from self-study of the Sharia board as well as from attending several audits by Air East and Air Malaysia. Also the knowledge of auditing inspectors from Qatar and the United Arab Emirates became sources for his halal knowledge. Since 1998, when the first certificates were given out, Dr. Boufalgha has remained the responsible person in this field for the IGGiÖ and has become a known person throughout the halal meat market.

4.2.2.1.1 Scope of Duties

The institution’s area of responsibility only includes the auditing and verifying of the slaughter institution as well as the act of slaughter. According to Dr. Boufalgha, the IGGiÖ has no authority to intervene or act judgmental. His assignment lies in controlling slaughterhouses which have applied for his inspection in order to receive a halal certificate. Also non pre-announced inspections are declared to be part of the procedure. While Dr.

Boufalgha is the main responsible, also colleagues and friends sometimes help him conduct the audits as he claims.

Once the slaughterhouse has received first auditing, it has to be renewed each year. The costs amount to about € 3000 for every inspection. This money is used for charitable projects, as Dr. Boufalgha explained.

According to most slaughterhouse operators, this inspection is a short visit, in which the Muslim employee, who is in charge of the slaughter, receives a short check-up and a training of 15 minutes. Focus of the audit is to control if the slaughter is performed by a Muslim and if a form of stunning is performed, which does not kill the animal before. This procedure states clear that stunning for ritual slaughter is accepted on behalf of the IGGiÖ.

Besides the certification of the meat industry, also any other goods which need the assurance of halal requirements can be and are inspected by the IGGiÖ.

At the beginning, the institution also operated internationally in cooperation with the United Arab Emirates. Due to an insufficient reporting system, the required accreditation by the UAE was revoked as a representative of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber explained.

The problem and reason for losing international accreditation lies in the attitude of determinations as the director of the second certification institution IIDZ declares. He has made similar experiences in Hungary and Denmark where like the IGGiÖ the religious institutions worked with the attitude *“We are the determination, we can do this”*. According to Mr Rusznak, determinations adhere to their religious standpoint and argue that everything necessary for certification is written in the Quran. As a result, several determinations show a lack of a functioning halal department which conducts proper documentation and conforms the demands of a complex large-scale industry. (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)¹²

¹² „Zur Glaubensgemeinschaft kann man nur sagen, dass sich die Leute auf den religiösen Standpunkt stellen. Das ist auch im Fernsehen gewesen, ein Vertreter der Glaubensgemeinschaft, hat im Fernsehen behauptet es steht alles im Koran, was man für die Zertifizierung braucht. Fünf Sätze stehen im Koran, über verbotene und erlaubte Dinge. Das ist alles. Und die Leute glauben halt, dass sie mit dem Koran unterm Arm zur Großindustrie gehen können. Das geht nicht. Und das ist ihre Einstellung, von der sie nicht abgehen und ich weiß nicht, wie lange sie das noch durchhalten wollen in dieser Richtung. Sie lehnen alles und jedes ab, Dokumentation und so weiter und durch das haben sie auch die Akkreditierung verloren in den Emiraten [...]“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

4.2.2.1.2 Problematic Perceptions on the IGGiÖ

Several accusations by slaughterhouse operators as well as by butchers reflect upon the actual performance of IGGiÖ's certification service critically. The commissioner Dr. Boufalgha is well known throughout the rows of this niche market – yet mostly negatively referred to. The first problem results from his reputation of supposedly being mainly interested in monetary transactions. Several stories about corruption prevail. Furthermore, interviewees accused Dr. Boufalgha of trying to make deals with provision that go to his side. Also the conduct of the audit was perceived as extremely short and unprofessional, leaving the impression that his work is only about collecting money. A statement by a slaughterhouse operator explains this problem as follows “For what they come for, half an hour in the plant, only to pick up the money, for this it is very expensive. Because besides that, they have no extra effort with us throughout the entire year.” (Interview slaughterhouse operator 3, 29.04.2014)

Especially butchers who take the certification of halal meat very seriously show great disappointment in the work of the IGGiÖ. They see deficiency in the lack of more than one control a year and perceive it as a major failure in the work of a certification institution. As a consequence, these opinions oppose Boufalgha's claim to conduct a systematic controlling system, which includes non-announced auditing. Also Mr. Yuri, who is butcher and wholesaler, claimed that they do not control at all. This is because they do not have enough financial resources for hiring more staff. Furthermore, they do not show any ambition in improving the situation. Rather they express to believe in the continuous proper implementation of the once audited slaughter procedure. This, however, is what Mr. Yuri explains to be irresponsible because “*Believe is one thing and control is another thing*”. He argues that at least once a month, controls should take place. (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014)

4.2.2.2 The IIDZ

In 2005, a second certification service in form of a trade business was established by the institution IIDZ - the Islamic information and documentation center.

According to the director of the IIDZ, Mr Rusznak, his institution came into being due to the IGGiÖs' loss of accreditation in the international market. Since there was no more official institution which could certify for export markets, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ) approached him in order to create a new certification institution. This request was

followed by several implementations. Mr Rusznak, an Austrian Muslim, set up a team of Islamic scholars and food engineers. The following and biggest step, which led to his international current success, results from the creation of a halal norm. As Rusznak explained, the idea to form a standard derives from his understanding to know it would be impossible to approach the industry with the Quran in your hands, intending to certify just like this. He acknowledges that the industry needs fundamentals.¹³

In cooperation with the Austrian Standard Institute (ASI), the halal standard ONR 142000/142001 was shaped and now serves to provide Europe-wide certification.

The standard is special in many aspects. It opened a new chapter for the further development of Austria's halal meat market. First of all, it proves to be the first state-operated and facilitated halal norm in Europe, which was initiated on behalf of the Austrian economy. Second, this standard is only used and referred to by the IIDZ, which can operate with it throughout Europe.

4.2.2.2.1 Scope of Duty

Today, the IIDZ already works from two headquarters. The first one is based in Linz, while the second one represents the first foreign department with another team of 20 employees based in Hungary.

The IIDZ is specialized on the certification of industries that would like to receive a halal authorization for their production sites and products. Besides the auditing of slaughterhouses, any food industry can receive certification. According to Mr Rusznak, the center works based on a strictly religious and scientific foundation.¹⁴ From the checklist to the standard and auditing everything is planned in detail. In practice, the focus in the institution's auditing task lies in checking the slaughterhouse facilities and improving them, if necessary. If there is no proper installation to soak big animals before slaughter, the facility must be improved.

Some international certifiers come every other year to check on the facilities that have been audited by the IIDZ.

¹³ „Die erste Sache war einmal, dass wir sofort mit dem Austrian Standard Institute in Verbindung getreten sind, weil wir genau gewusst haben, wir können nicht zur Industrie gehen und mit dem Koran untern Arm geklemmt sagen ‘bitte wir zertifizieren euch jetzt’. So geht das nicht.“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

„Die Industrie braucht Grundlagen, die Industrie braucht Unterlagen und so weiter, jetzt haben wir mit dem Austrian Standard Institut die OMR 142000 gemacht.“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

¹⁴ „Wir arbeiten auf streng religiöser, wissenschaftlicher Basis.“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

The IIDZ is acknowledged and accredited by many international authorities. Among them are the General Secretary of Municipalities in Dubai, the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS), the Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) and IFRC in Malaysia. The IIDZ is a member of the International Halal Integrity Alliance and further alliances exist with the World Halal Food Council (Url 7). This network within an international market is specific to the IIDZ, making the institution a monopolist in Austria. It is also the main point that distinct the IIDZ's work and scope of duties from the IGGiÖ. It allows them to dominate the certification market for Austria's export. Yet, also industries situated in other European countries such as Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary use the certification service by the IIDZ, making it a Europe-wide known institution. The market in Western Europe, including Holland, Belgium and France does not belong to its working field due to a vast amount of certifiers in these areas, as the director of the IIDZ explained.¹⁵

4.2.2.2 Problematic Perceptions on the IIDZ

Also the Islamic Information and Documentation Center is perceived critically in the Austrian halal meat industry. The main accusation is uttered on behalf of the IGGiÖ. Dr. Boufalgha accused the IIDZ of being an economically driven and only economically interested trading business that misuses the market. He further understands it as a non-Muslim organization which finds support in the Austrian economy on behalf of the WKÖ as well as allies in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates. He explains the turn of the IIDZ towards the international market as a consequence of their failure in the local market.

Statements like this make clear that both institutions have become competitors, not only on an economic, but especially on a personal and emotional level. Numerous indictments and court proceedings initiated from both sides during the last years are proof to it.

Also the butcher Mr Yuri exclaimed doubts in the trustworthiness of the director Rusznak. From other sources, he had become familiar to what he referred to as dubious machinations. Besides that, many other interviewees saw in him and his institution the only interest in gaining money.

¹⁵ „Polen, Tschechien, wird auch mitgenommen, während wir, in Holland, Belgien und Frankreich gar nichts machen, weil dort genug Zertifizierer sind und auch das sprachlich ein Problem wird. Bei den anderen Ländern, da geht's meistens mit Englisch, aber sie wissen bei den Franzosen hat man seine Probleme und ich möchte auch gar nicht, dass man da überall vertreten ist, es bläht sich dann so auf, es geht dann auf Kosten der Qualität und das bringt dann nicht das, was sein sollte.“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

4.2.2.3 Meaning of the Certifiers' Positioning

The history and current position of each certifier as well as their identity attributions have strong influence on the formation and development of the Austrian halal meat market and how it is perceived.

Their historical developments display very well a situation that portrays the transformation of the halal meat market itself. It shows that the production of halal meat had actually grown to a real market segment, which now needed new situating within an economic arena. In context to the theoretical approaches on trust (chapter 2.2.5), it can be explained as a common phenomenon. Like in any other industrializing food industry, new ways to guarantee food quality become necessary in order to maintain consumer trust. As a growing industry, also the halal meat industry chose forms of standards and quality controls in order to conduct the shift from a small marginalized production towards a bigger one. The IGGiÖ and the IIDZ were the first and so far only institutions to create a trust element for the market.

The current position of the certifiers as well as their perception within the halal meat industry does not only depend on their background, support and means, but very much on the individual personalities that represent them and what the institutions represent to the outside. Not only the way the certifiers actually conduct work, but how they are perceived, provides each institution with a specific positioning in the market.

Although the certification of the IGGiÖ suffers from bad reputation due to the critically seen work by its commissioner Dr. Boufalgha, these are the certificates which can be seen most often. Many market stalls, restaurants and kebab stands use the certificate from the Islamic determination of Austria.

Besides that, a slaughterhouse operator explained that he had to switch from the IIDZ to the IGGiÖ due to the request of his biggest customer, who does not accept the first institution. Even though the operator considered the work of the IIDZ more professional, he followed the claims of his customer in order to keep his position in the local market. However, for his export interest, another plant of the same company retained being certified by the IIDZ.

In a later conducted interview, the customer, who requested this change of the certification institution, explained that halal is a religious question and this is why they want to work with the IGGiÖ. There is a strong sensibility within this matter and trust and trustability in the

firms are a necessity. If there is not enough trust on side of the consumers, one can have 100 certificates and would not have a chance.¹⁶

He further explains that he personally does not see any problem in the work of the IIDZ. Nevertheless, the IIDZ supposedly does not receive the needed trust for the market, which he claims to depend on the director Rusznaks. The mistrust, he declares, results from the IIDZs primary display of economic aspects instead of religious ones.¹⁷

Such insights unveil two crucial facts. First of all, some Austrian companies choose certifiers according to their reputation and the need of access to the international market. This is a decision driven in favor of successful business.

Secondly, despite the fact that basic guidelines of both certifiers are almost the same and also understood as very similar, other companies prefer to choose a religious certifier which is supposedly acknowledged more in the community. This is the case although he is known for less structured auditing and accused of the same main interest in economic prosperity as his competitor.¹⁸

Also this decision, although argued from a religious point of view, I argue is of economic interest rather than religious adherence. The simplest reason lies in the fact that both certifiers provide the same kind of religious assurance in the way they conduct their audits and in what they accept for the slaughter. The other reason is to find in context and best to understand within theoretical concepts previously discussed.

Especially theoretical approaches on commodities (chapter 2.2.2) where the importance of products as identification markers and tool to express culture was stressed, underpin my argument. In this context, also the halal product gains a special connotation by that it is

¹⁶ „Natürlich, also wir arbeiten mit der islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich. Da schauen wir, dass das von denen Zertifiziert ist, weil das in diesem Bereich eine religiöse Frage ist. Es ist eine hohe Sensibilität da wo es um das Vertrauen und die Vertrauenswürdigkeit der Betriebe geht.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

„Das Problem ist, dass ich 100te Zertifikate haben kann, aber wenn die Kunden sagen, dass es für sie nicht vertrauenswürdig ist, dann hab ich keine Chance.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

¹⁷ „Das Problem bei denen ist, dass einfach nicht dieses Vertrauen am Markt haben. [...] das kommt zu allererst über die Person Herrn Rusznak. [...] der sehr nach außen transportiert hat, wie wenn er nur wirtschaftliche Aspekte hat. Und die islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft sagt, dass das mit wirtschaftlichen Aspekt nichts zu tun hat, weil es um das Religiöse geht, die Religionslehre. Und die Religion der Menschen darf nicht das Wirtschaftliche im Vordergrund haben.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

¹⁸ Rein die Grundrichtlinien sind die gleichen. [...] Im Prinzip hat man keine großen, verschiedenen Forderungen. Die sind immer gleich. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 3, 29.04.2014)

certified by a religious institution. It supports the idea of a religious product, with which the consumer shall identify. The IGGiÖ - not in its conduct of work but with what it represents - provides a symbolic dimension which again favors the economic prosperity of the very products.

This symbolic dimension can again be conceptualized within the frame of trust, which has crucial impact on economic decision making. According to theoretical approaches on the subject of trust (chapter 2.2.5), the findings clarify that trust is not only based on facts and positive experience, but especially on shared concepts of norms and values. Trust in the certifier and the certificate in the halal meat industry of Austria very much builds on moral values and symbolic dimensions which are more attributed to a religious community (IGGiÖ) rather than to a trade business (IIDZ) which supports the very same ones.

The circumstance that the symbolic dimension, which forms the level of trust prevails to be much stronger, is interesting. While in the theoretical chapter on trust it is argued that the social relationship designates the role of trust, the social relationship in the halal meat industry complicates the trust in the relation to each certifier.

These findings, however, only account to the local Austrian halal meat market and only in occasions in which the choice is driven by a person of Muslim background. Other examples, especially considering the Europe-wide certification, which includes the accreditation by global players, show the opposite.

The IIDZ has great success in certifying in companies throughout several countries in Europe. Here, it is actually the structured and economically adapted way of conduct which attracts many customers and what builds the base for a trust relationship. The religious character of the procedure for certification is as much emphasized as the standardized economic character of it by the IIDZ. Also Mr Rusznak's background plays a major role of how international business partners perceive him. As a person converted to Islam 20 years ago, the reactions are rather positive than negative. He does not see any negative influence because of that on his business. On the contrary, especially for the German speaking customers his appearance and proper German knowledge as well as Austrian humor receives positive feedback.¹⁹ Such facts lead to the assumption that his role as an Austrian and

¹⁹ „Ich bin 20 Jahre Moslem, und wenn die Leute das hören, dann ist man Moslem, also da gibt es nichts, was dagegen sprechen könnte. Im Gegenteil Leute freuen sich dann, also also die Kollegen von den Halal-Zertifizierern die sagen dann Alhamdulillah, also Lob sei Allah, das es eben Leute gibt, die zum Islam konvertieren [...] den typisch österreichischen Scham oder Schmä, das kommt bei den Firmen wahnsinnig gut

Muslim at the same time gives him special access to the pure economic side, which also includes European non-Muslim companies. At the same time, he finds inclusion to the group of international Muslim halal actors. His personal attributions hence serve as certain, but differing identity markers. The different international players of non-Muslim and Muslim background refer to the one they can identify with. So Mr Rusznak shows to be a boundary spanner in the halal meat industry.

One last point shall be concluding this chapter and clarify one last crucial matter of fact. In reference to chapter 2.4, one can argue that also the Halal norm ONR 142000/142001 is a piece of policy with major influence on Austria's halal meat market development. It is the reason for the shift from the local market sphere to a global one in a new dimension.

It is very interesting to look at the stakeholders behind the norm: the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ), the Islamic Information and Documentation Center (IIDZ) and the Austrian Standard Institute (ASI). As representatives and organs of the nation state Austria in terms of economic growth and development, the WKÖ and ASI clearly acted in favor of and with interest in Austria's economy. The IIDZ was the organ to respond to this demand and translated it into action by giving it identity. The justification for a norm is in this sense the need of access to the global halal market and the goal is the implementation of halal export business.

All three institutions benefit from a strong power position, which in consequence may have led to this strong division between the two certifiers, which are focusing to contrast their roles as certifiers. Furthermore, the current situation displayed in the preceding examples shows that policies can have a different meaning for different actors. While for the IGGiÖ, the new halal norm has become a threat to their own position in the certification industry, for the IIDZ it is not much more than a tool.

Last but not least, the Austrian halal norm is also a great example of failure, as it is not generally applied as a standard, but rather dismissed by everyone else but the IIDZ. So far, it remains a one-institution standard.

an. [...] Also die Leute sind immer froh, wenn nicht irgendein Moslem hinkommt, der dann sprachliche Probleme hat, was auch sehr häufig passiert [...] und wir dann wirklich auf Augenhöhe mit den Leuten kommunizieren. In Deutschland ist unsere Sprache und so weiter, unsere Scherze was wir machen und so weiter, kommt wahnsinnig gut an, hilft uns auch also, aber das ist nicht ausschlaggebend [...].“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2014)

4.2.3 The Consumers

That consumers play a specific and crucial role within the analysis of economic arenas has been discussed in the theoretical part of this master thesis (chapter 2.1.1; 2.2.1; 2.2.3). It was displayed how the culturally influenced identities and habits of consumers have impact on ways economies shape and transform over time.

Although the side of consumption has not been part of this research, it shall find mentioning in respect to the producers' and distributors' perception on the halal meat consumers.

Most importantly, butchers have displayed their clients as very diverse. Not only Muslims come to purchase at their stalls, but also many Austrians and other non-Muslim customers. Many come because the meat is of good quality, but cheaper than at other places. The role of Muslim customers was often mentioned and discussed by the interviewees. Why and how will be explained in the following chapter.

The conducted research has shown that consumers are considered as important participants in the halal meat market, however, they are attributed with contradictory characteristics.

First of all, and as mentioned before, Muslim consumers are acknowledged to have gone through a process of awareness-raising in the eyes of Muslim interviewees. This is perceived as a shift towards a conscious belief, which manifests in the particular obedience of consuming halal products – a deliberate form of choice in goods.²⁰

²⁰ „Viele hatten keinen bewussten Glaube. Jetzt schaut jeder zum Beispiel auf die Getränke, was in den Getränken enthalten ist, bei der Schokolade und bei dem Zucker. [...] Aber mittlerweile ist zweite Generation sag ich einmal schon bewusster damals geworden, sie lebten bewusst den Islam, und sie haben auch bewusst dann schon Fleisch oder andere Halal-Produkte bezogen.“ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04. 2014)

„Ich hätte gedacht, dass das Ganze mit der zweiten, dritten, vierten Generation nachlässt. Das nicht mehr so viel auf Halal geachtet wird. Aber auf der anderen Seite - Es geht zwar auch verloren, aber auf der anderen Seite steigt die Nachfrage auch. [...] Aber mittlerweile ist ja dieses Halal Thema bei vielen Anderen auch angekommen, wo halt die Nachfrage steigt und es ist jetzt kein rasanter Wachstum. Aber es steigt beständig. [...] Ich meine es gibt halt einige, und das ist glaube ich diese neue Halal-Käuferschicht, die mehr darauf achtet, als wie man das von zu Hause aus kennt. Dieses wissentliche halal-Fleisch-Essen. (Interview wholesaler 2, 14.04.2014)

“But now people are going more and more to the halal direction.” (Interview Qureshi, HFCE, 05.05.2014)

„Naja, es ist, äh einmal eine Bewusstseinsbildung bei den Muslime ist einmal klar“ (Interview Rusznak, IIDZ, 23.05.2005)

Especially if we take the concept of ethical consumption by Carrier and Luetchford (2012), explanation models for this phenomenon come about.

One interpretation can be that this new way of decision making in food choices can be considered as a new way of ethical consumption. New choices are made according to old moral norms and values which are embedded in Islam. The act of shopping is essential to communicate this new consciousness. It is the sphere in which Muslim consumers influence the Austrian halal meat market and vice versa receive shaping of their consumption habits. While the consumption of products declared as halal might at first suggest religious obedience, on the other hand it is likewise a form of cultural distinction through seeking objects with specific identity. Certainly, without this new form of ethical consumption – a conscious choice and interest in halal products - as well as a growing consumer group within the religious community, the halal meat market would not have such gains.

Contrary to the developments depicted here, another and quite different form of perception defines a parallel debate. Particularly actors in the halal meat market of a non-Muslim background see the new consumer class as changing to a less religious one. Religion is seen as no more fully observed. Thus, young generations are considered as less believing, which results in non-ethically influenced consumption.²¹

This consumer development shall not be seen conflicting with the first one; it should rather be understood as a parallel process taking shape. While one consumer group particularly chooses only halal products, the other might not care as much or not at all.

In another aspect, the general Muslim ethical consumer is seen very critical in the eyes of many actors in the halal meat industry. Although many consumers place value on the purchase of products clearly declared as halal, it is not of their interest to control or doubt the halalness of these products. Most important is the price of the meat as all interviewed

²¹ „Ich sag einmal, dass es wird von der Kundenseite her eher immer uninteressanter wird, obwohl mehr Muslime in Österreich leben, wie vor 20ig Jahren noch. Nur die junge Generation, die achtet nicht mehr darauf, oder die sind nicht mehr so gläubig, dass die da 100 % schauen, ob das alles eingehalten wird. [...] die leben nicht mehr nach den muslimischen Glaubensgrundsätzen. Schon, aber immer weniger. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 1, 12.05.2014)

„Ja, jetzt persönlich glaub ich mal, dass die Anforderungen vor vier fünf Jahren etwas stärker waren. Und das sich sehr viele Moslems jetzt auch schon zutrauen nicht mehr Schweinefleisch zu essen und so weiter. [...] Also, diese Integration von Einigen passiert schon in Österreich.“ (Interview slaughterhouse operator 3, 29.04.2014)

butchers stressed. Halalness and also quality are secondary. Reason for such uncritical behavior can be explained with the trust element, which is instant and reciprocal in Islam - meaning that the responsibility whether the product really is halal is in the hands of the one that declares it as such. The halal commissioner of the IGGiÖ explains that the problem lies in the naivety of many Turkish who trust in "Hussein" or "Mohamed".

In the eyes of Mr Ali, such behavior is harmful as the consumers' attitude remains too uncritical and weak. He argues that if people have lived here for more than 20 years, they must know about the doubtfulness of most halal meat and choose carefully.²² However, such standpoint demands a high effort on part of the consumer. Since the halalness of meat is never 100 % traceable, attempts to follow the origin and production line of a certain product can help achieve security. Yet, trust still remains the last element to "know" if a good really is halal.

Furthermore, the study revealed that most consumers as portrayed are satisfied with labels and certificates and not even interested if products are really what they claim to be. Statements of butchers even suggest that consumers consciously know that some halal meat they buy is not really halal. According to the interviewees, this little pressure on behalf of the consumers' side on the product's credence as well as the consumers' demand for cheap products result in a market characterized with fraud, circulation of a lot of fake halal meat and a high pressure on retail prices.²³

²² „Die Leute haben Recht auf einer Seite. Wenn diese Leute als Touristen in die Stadt gehen, ok, dann können sie das machen, aber, wenn Leute 20ig 30ig Jahre hier leben, dann ist das schwach. Das muss man dann wissen. [...] Wenn ich hier lebe, und es steht halal und ich vertraue – nein das darf man nicht, das kann man nicht abgeben. [...] Die Mehrheit der folgen nicht so streng der Regel. Wie ich gesagt habe, einer sagt er hat halal gesagt und das ist genug für ihn, der ist dann selber Schuld. Es einen großen Teil von denen. Aber der kleine Teil oder sagen wir ein Drittel, für die ist es sehr wichtig, wie das geschlachtet ist. Ein Drittel und zwei Drittel ist so kann man sagen, er hat eh halal gesagt. Aber sie essen keine Schwein und so weiter.“ (Interview butcher 4, 16.04.2014)

²³ „Es kommen viele muslimische Kunden – zuerst zählt ihr Glauben und das das Halal Fleisch ist und zweitens zählt die Qualität. Wenn ich Halal Fleisch habe und billige Qualität, dann kommen sie nicht; wenn ich Qualität habe, aber kein Halal, dann kommen sie nicht. [...] Es kommen auch die anderen Gläubigen die nicht daran interessiert sind, ob das Halal ist. Wir brauchen Qualität, ja. So ist das.“ (Interview butcher 3, 15.04.2014)

„Und günstig ist nicht immer Halal, das kann es auch nicht sein. [...] Also 100% können die Kunden sowieso nicht kontrollieren. Oder [...] muss der Kunde so wie Sie das machen nachforschen. [...] Und für den Kunden ist generell der Preis wichtig, [...] vielleicht liegt das daran, dass der Wohlstand der Ausländer, sag ich einmal der türkischen Familie nicht so gut ist - sie schauen auf die Preise. Und dann sie fragen natürlich schon, ob das Halal ist, [...] wenn sie dann den Verkäufer fragen ist das Halal, sagt er sofort ja, aber ob das dann wirklich stimmt oder nicht? - sie vertrauen dann gerne dem Verkäufer.“ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014)

„[...] Das wichtigste ist die Preisfrage. [...] Da schaut keiner mehr, ob das Helal ist oder nicht Helal. Die wissen

But because the consumers eventually remain the control whilst deciding whether to buy or not (Interview slaughterhouse operator 2, 24.04.2014), the halal meat market could look differently. If the consumer, as one butcher explains, is ready to pay more for eating real halal there would not be any problems. It is all about the request of the consumers (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014). Thus, until consumers unconditionally want to eat cheaper, pressure on the wholesalers remains.

In conclusion, it can be said that producers and distributors have a certain picture of the Austrian Muslim halal meat consumer. Generally, it portrays a very critical view on their behavior, yet at the same time acknowledges their ability to influence and change the market. The interplay of the economic sphere and social realm comes to light. In the end, it leaves the impression that halal is consumed out of religious reasons on the one hand, but also as “something that you do” or even as a fashion.

Halal for the consumer has become a common element of commerce and in a way also is consumed as such. Its halalness is taken for granted.

Hypothetically, I argue that there is actually a massive gap between the production side and consumption side on definitions and perception on the halal meat market and what it should be like. It would be of further interest and necessity to investigate such aspect within another study – one that concentrates particularly on the consumption side.

4.2.4 The Network of Actors in the Halal Meat Industry

The depiction on the particular players in the halal meat market shows that a tight network defines the production and distribution. While at many levels of the network contacts and cooperation prevail, the study also showed that on the level of production sites collaboration does not exist.

The relation between slaughterhouse facilitators and wholesalers or smaller retail butchers was portrayed as very positive by Muslim actors in the field. Neither the request of implementing halal slaughter was ever a problem, nor the current practice of it. The professionalism and disciplined work by Austrian companies was mentioned commonly as a

ganz genau (dass die Ware nicht wirklich halal sein kann). Die wissen es. Wichtiger ist, dass es billig ist!“ (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

positive aspect in the niche market. The enterprises perform great collaboration, follow the agreed rules and provide quality goods as commonly uttered.

On the other side, the facilitators of slaughterhouses and Austrian companies which produce halal meat offer a different picture on this relationship. The work with the Muslim slaughterers is seen as positive, yet the collaboration with the wholesalers as problematic. The payment morals were argued to be the major obstacles. Also the increasing pricing pressure for the wholesalers plays part in this fact, as one slaughterhouse operator emphasized. Also a Turkish butcher, who has been in the business for more than 20 years, agreed on this aspect. He only collaborates with Austrian companies who hire Muslim slaughterers, and not with companies in Turkish hands. He described them as crooks and you can supposedly never be sure about the quality and halalness of the meat (Interview butcher 2, 06.05.2014).

All local butchers commonly expressed that “everyone knows everyone” in the halal meat industry. The study showed that some of the ones interviewed are familiar to each other or even working together. The two most important wholesalers, Abdullah Fleisch and Etsan, were known by everyone, however, perceived as either absolutely trustworthy or the opposite.

It must be stated that the market itself is very opaque. Much more retailers have entered the market, constantly finding new sites of production and distributors for their meat – within and beyond Austria. This, as a consequence, has created a much less lucid situation, for the outsiders as well as for insiders. It is sure that much distrust defines the attitude of many retailers towards others involved in the business.

The role of the certifiers for the network is less of importance. A good relation to either of the certifiers may help create some cooperate trade, yet this was only fact in two cases.

Two other circumstances were interesting. More than three wholesalers independently of one another had tried to approach Austrian supermarket chains to include halal meat goods into the assortment. This request was declined for all. Wholesalers explain that they understand from this reaction that migrants are not seen as attractive consumers, which derives from a rather political background such as the fear of boycott by Austrian clients.

The example of Merkur shows that such fear is not necessary, which is the only supermarket chain that included halal meat. Not the common wholesalers had here entered the supermarket niche, but new players. Merkur, which is like Penny and Billa a supermarket chain under the patronage, was explained to have a higher number of costumers which is reason for expanding the range of products towards halal.

In this way, Merkur is the only non-Muslim provider on the distribution level.

4.3 Developments and Current Outcomes

4.3.1 Definitions of Halal – The Matter of Ambivalence

When there are so many accusations of fraud and fake halal one might wonder – what then actually is halal? What kind of halal do all these labels and certificates refer to? Who defines their halal and who on which grounds perceives his meat as more halal than the one of the other one?

Everybody involved in the business, from the producer to the small retailers, speaks about halal if it was a clear matter of fact and supposedly one form of conduct to make a halal product. Indeed, such common understanding for halal does not exist in reality and as a consequence, also the performed way of slaughter varies immensely. Nevertheless, such circumstances might not be surprising since the preceding chapter can show that part of the confusion finds its roots in the division between “halal slaughter” and “ritual slaughter”. Yet, also other factors, which are closely linked to this issue, play part in the debate of “what real halal is”.

In fact, the essence of the market’s product, the definition of its basic standards, faces harsh times of confusion, contestation and controversies. In the chapter of halal marketing strategies (chapter 2.3.1), first insights could be given, suggesting halal as a matter of interpretation. It was already made clear that “halal” has come under scrutiny and transformation of its attributions due to the step into the mass industry.

Similarly, this study revealed that there is high confusion of what halal should be like, how it should be enacted for slaughter and how the varying local practices are perceived. The empirical findings display a situation of transformation and reinterpretation in halal’s scope. The actual source for distrust is in the market, too.

The major obstacle for a unified halal perception is the dispute about whether stunning is permissible for halal slaughter or not. But also the reach of halal meaning differentiates massively as well as to which kind of animal it shall apply in which manner.

Opinions come together on a simple definition as one wholesaler expressed *“halal actually means “healthy” to us”* (Interview Wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014). Where the assurance of the animals’ healthiness begins and where it stops, however, is argued between the diverse representatives.

One butcher stressed that “halal” also includes the right way to feed animals, meaning not to include carcass meal. In addition, he does not accept captive bolt stunning, which is commonly used for halal slaughter in Austria. Instead, the animal must be laid down, calmed and then quickly slaughtered. (Interview butcher 4, 16.04.2014) Since this is made difficult to practice routinely by law, another butcher explained that he as a slaughterer can do anything, also stunning. Most important is that the one who slaughters must be a Muslim. Halal for him finds its definition in the law frame given by the Austrian government. (Interview butcher 3, 15.04.2014) This statement hints to the fact that the emergence of redefining halal considering the acceptance of stunning does not only derive from an inner Islamic erupted issue, but from outside regulations that have impact on the possibility to perform traditional non-stunning slaughter. Analyzing this finding from a policy analytical point, one understands that it is the local circumstances and policy condition, which here have strong impact on traditional perceptions on halal slaughter.

Besides that, the definition for halal is not left exclusively to religious stakeholders anymore. Now also governmental authorities and economic representatives have reached a power position for this matter. Each one of them has their own stance on the subject, trying to redefine or maintain halal meaning according to their benefit. The religious prescription for rightful acting, which is embedded in the religious script and tradition, in this sense has entered a new sphere of debate and meaning. Since this is a recent development of processual character, it is no surprise that confusion and contraries define the market. Such developments can be quite frustrating, as one butcher uttered in the following statement: *“There are all sorts of people. One says halal is already halal. The other one says no! And then the fuss begins.”* (Interview wholesaler 1, 25.04.2014)

All interviewed representatives agreed on the problem that a vast amount of dissensions prevail in this market niche. Also the representative of the Austrian Federal Economic

Chamber considered such circumstances as complicated. She stressed that one generally must be careful concerning what kind of halal the matter is about. Each Islamic determination has its own beliefs what halal should be and she has more than five differing halal interpretations at hand with each one claiming to be the one and only.

In detail, a whole set of problems becomes the case. It is not only about whether stunning is accepted or not, but which kinds of stunning should be permitted and how the prayer may be applied for masses of animals which are killed in the industrialized slaughter procedures.

While the debate continues, the practice predominantly shows acceptance for the application of stunning in Austria. Stunning procedures such as penetrating captive bolt, pneumatic captive bolt, electric stunning and CO₂ gas stunning are commonly performed.

The greatest concern using these forms of stunning revolves around the possibility of the animals' death before slaughter. Also, the insufficient blood drainage is seen problematic. Despite such prevailing doubts, these forms are used for halal meat available at the Austrian market.

Also the form of reciting the short prayer - the tasmiyya - before slaughter is debated. There is no agreement if all animals (also small ones like poultry) should receive individual recitation, one prayer for one batch, or if even the push of a button while reciting can be sufficient.

However, the fact is agreed that it is almost impossible to reach a joint opinion. For the industry, such confusion has a great advantage. Because there is no standard, companies which would like to join the halal meat production simply can turn towards Muslim business partners who stand for the least strict halal definition. As a result, we can see that most halal slaughter is not practiced much differently to regular slaughter. The only difference remaining is the Muslim who must be responsible for the act of slaughter.

Statements like *"I think that 80 % of the sold halal meat in my opinion is not halal"* (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014) have to be understood in this context. Halal remains, as explained in the theoretical part, a matter of interpretation and ambivalence. In Mr Yuri's eyes it is not that 80 % of the halal meat is regular meat which is sold as halal, but 80 % of the halal meat does not conform to his definition of halal.

It is interesting that the change and transformation of the traditional and religious ritual remains even problematic for the Muslim actors in the market, who accept or even implement new forms of halal slaughter.

Many interviewees portrayed Austria as one of the few countries where “real” halal meat (referring to non-stun slaughter procedures) is produced, contrasting themselves mostly to Germany or Poland. However, this argument is contradicting their own statements and their own practiced form of slaughter as well as Germany’s regulations.

Although these butchers and wholesalers had announced that they accept and practice slaughter performed with stunning, they emphasized “real” halal to be without stunning. Explaining with the argument that slaughter without stunning is forbidden in Germany (which is false information), they claimed Austrian halal meat to be more halal. Even more contradicting than this statement is the fact that although they could apply for the ritual slaughter with post cut stunning in Austria, in fact they themselves conduct slaughter with regular stunning.

Exemplary for such misconception and false depiction is the statement of a wholesaler, who wrongly claims to slaughter without stunning. *“In Austria it is even more halal I would say, because the animal is not stunned.”* (Interview wholesaler 2, 14.04.2014)

With many more statements similar to these, it became obvious that there is a gap between the definition of halal, the understanding of halal, the practice of slaughter and the actual Austrian policies towards halal slaughter. Many contradictory opinions and knowledge about the niche market by the actors that actually define the business, form the market.

For the time being, the way of slaughter became a matter of “halalness”. As Mukherjee (2014) also emphasized: Halal is perceived in degrees – sometimes it can be seen as more halal or less halal – yet it is always sold as 100 % halal.

In the end, for the majority the halal definition only revolves around the act of slaughter and not the holistic idea on upbringing and treating the animal well. Not only religious rules and morals define what is eatable and what not, but that what the industry is willing to produce. Interestingly, this debate is like a “hidden” process, hidden from the consumers who want and expect to buy “real” halal. None of the labels and advertisements used in Austria display if stunning was used or not. The halal sign can postulate many forms of practices standing

for different kinds of halal definitions. Also the halal certificates give no information on this matter.

Butchers who do not slaughter themselves, but buy from wholesalers often do not know if their animals are slaughtered with or without stunning. However, they referred to it as “real” halal. Wholesalers like *Abdullah* and *Senpilic* show videos about their productions sites on their websites. Here it is assured that 100 % halal meat is produced, but no word is said about the actual performance of slaughter and application of the practiced stunning method.

These examples show that halal meat marketing strategies in Austria circumvent the uncomfortable subject of differing definitions of halal and their implementation.

Yet, the involvement of the consumers into this debate, who most probably are not familiar with the issues or even heard about it, might be a game changer. Until now, however, consumers have the only choice to trust that the labels, certificates and advertisements conform to their idea and definition of halal.

4.3.1.1 Solution Finding

4.3.1.1.1 Alignment on the Jewish Shechita

The issue of a standardized practice and definition is seen especially critical by actors of the halal meat business, who see danger in the current industry driven leads. These actors utter great concerns about the loosening regulations for the traditional ritual slaughter and the unsatisfying performance of the certifiers.

To follow the example of the Jewish way of slaughter, the Shechita, is one desirable way to counteract current developments as the research showed.

The Jewish ritual slaughter is traditionally very similar to the Muslim ritual slaughter. Yet, the way the Jewish community performs slaughter in Austria shows major differences to the Muslim community.

Especially these strict requirements and forms of conducts are seen as admirable by some Muslim butchers as the following statements show:

“Kosher is the better halal.”

“We should learn from the Jews. I have to tell you honestly – the Jews slaughter more properly.”²⁴

“Well, at the company Finke (changed), Jewish people come, they slaughter there, too. I admire their way of conduct, how they take their work seriously. Well, I wish we could be as strict as them. [...] Actually I envy the Jews. [...] How accurate they are. [...] Very thoroughly and controls they do, too.”²⁵ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014)

Shechita in the way it is conducted today finds its roots in developments of the pre-migrant Europe. Back then, the Jewish religious community faced a similar problem like the Muslim community these days. With the time, the problematic to supply kosher food was solved by the establishment of the rabbinic tradition of ritual slaughter and inspection. From then on and still practiced today, only special slaughter men, skilled by the Jewish determination, are allowed to conduct slaughter and each procedure has to be accompanied by a rabbi, who is the control element. (Campbell/Murcott/Mackenzie 2011: 71)

Deriving from the knowledge about the Jewish way of slaughter, Muslim butchers take inspiration. One butcher explained that he would welcome if the Muslim community had professionals in Islamic slaughter, too, who hold proper certificates. This to him would be a solution to guarantee animal welfare and the assurance of 100 % halal meat.

Yet, although Ms Howorka, who is working in the department II/B/12 of the Federal Ministry of Health, being responsible for animal welfare at slaughter and food safety in Austria's meat production; explained that the Jewish community applies for its ritual slaughter permissions under the same law (as the Muslim community does), several halal meat producers and distributors argued that the Jewish community has a different power position in Austria. They must be treated with sensitivity and are supposedly supported by a much more powerful lobby and the Austrian government does not dare to intervene.

Whether these facts entail accuracy cannot be answered within this master thesis. On the other side, they point out that religious communities have different positions within the legal Austrian framework. Stakeholders of the determinations have different interests in

²⁴ „[...] Wir sollten von den Juden lernen muss ich dir ehrlich sagen. Die Juden schlachten richtiger.“ (Interview butcher 4, 16.04.2014)

²⁵ „Also bei der Firma S. [Anfangsbuchstabe abgeändert], stechen auch die Juden. Ich BEWUNDERE ihre Art, wie sie Arbeit ernst nehmen. [...] Also ich wünschte, dass wir so streng sein könnten. [...] eigentlich beneide ich die Juden. [...] Wie genau sie sind. [...] Sehr gründlich und die Kontrollen machen sie auch.“ (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014)

regulating the traditional ritual slaughter practices, but also their power to find implementation of their requests might be different.

For further research it would be of particular interest to investigate in what way and under which institutional influence the Jewish Austrian determination defines and implements its kosher standard; and whether the Jewish community has similar ties to the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber as the Muslim community partly has.

4.3.1.1.2 Future Visions

Also other actors of the halal meat industry agreed that the current situation must be improved. In order to make sure that Austria's Muslims really eat halal can only be secured by official controls. One way to do this would be possible if the Islamic determination took a greater step in this respect and show responsibility, as Mr Yuri explained. Various actors stressed that high criteria and requirements would be necessary. Only a very strict way may help to bring system, control and halal assurance to the Austrian market. Furthermore, such strict norm would help to prevent that "everything" can be sold as halal.²⁶

According to Mr Chapan, wholesaler 3, a leading and innovative wholesaler in the halal meat niche, the creation of a quality label program in this area would be the best solution. Exemplary to him is the AMA cachet. The AMA cachet is controlled by the Austrian agricultural market and serves to prove traceability and extraordinary quality of food products (Url 8).

Mr Chapan explains that if something similar would exist for the halal meat industry, the market could be made more trustworthy for the final consumer. Companies that work in dubious manners in this way have no chance to proceed as they wish. But at first, a standard will be necessary in order to continue to create such cachet. Besides that, it would need to become the work of the religious determination to properly inform about halal and ritual slaughter. Prejudices and misinformation currently prevailing in the Austrian society can be counteracted in this form.²⁷

²⁶ „Es wäre gescheiter ganz streng [...]. Hohe Kriterien, hohe Auflagen. [...] Dann kann sich jeder dran halten. [...] Wenn es nicht streng ist, und es verschiedene Auslegungen gibt, dann macht jeder was er will und sagt das ist Halal und der andere sagt auch Halal.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

²⁷ „Ja, also das ist einfach momentan. Aber es wird in Zukunft dann nicht mehr so einfach sein. Ja, zum Beispiel gibt es das AMA Gütesiegel. Das AMA Gütesiegel kann sich auch nicht jeder draufhauen. Nur beim Halal, da nimmt jeder ein Logo und sagt das ist Halal und pickt das drauf auf die Produkte, auf seine Werbematerialien und so weiter. Und das muss natürlich eingestellt werden. Und dann werden die Menschen, die Konsumenten vertrauensvoller, also die haben dann mehr Vertrauen [...]. Es muss eine Ordnung, es muss eine Regulierung da

Here the study has revealed that discontent in the rows of halal market actors exist, although marginalized. The success of their ideas, desires and requirements yet differ by their interpretation of halal and further depend on their ability to find power positions.

Hence, the biggest obstacle remains the definition of halal. So far, the Austrian government and Austrian economy has been on the side of the halal meat production. If this circumstance will remain when the direction of a standard goes towards a non-stun slaughter system, like the Jewish community practices it, is questionable. This is also, because various actors from this side have already uttered their satisfaction with the current situation. A step “backwards” to “real ritual slaughter” is not in their interest and on side of the slaughterhouse providers openly rejected.

4.3.1.2 Ritual Slaughter versus Halal Slaughter

First insights on the matter of legal regulations concerning the matter of ritual slaughter could already be given in the chapter of “Austrian Policy” (chapter 2.4.1.2). According to the EU Council regulation No. 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing, it is reserved for each European nation state to decide whether ritual slaughter without stunning shall be enforceable or not. In reference to these legal regulations and according to the Austrian Federal Law on Animal Welfare BGB.I 2004/118, ritual slaughter (with post cut stunning) is allowed with a special permission which can only be handed to officially recognized determinations.

Since Islam was officially acknowledged with the act of recognition in 1912, Muslims can make use of this law.

The interviewed stakeholders had very differing knowledge about this legal status on ritual slaughter. While many emphasized the special status of Islam in Austria, others did not know that slaughter with the procedure of post cut stunning is possible at all.

Furthermore, it became clear that ritual slaughter without prior stunning was perceived to be harder to conduct nowadays. Such point can only be explained with the shift of the

sein. Wenn das reguliert wird, von einer seriösen Stelle, Institution, dann ist das kein Problem. [...] Darum brauchen wir ein Qualitätsgütesiegelprogramm auch in diesem Bereich. [...] Konsumenten müssen diese Lebensmittelsicherheit haben. Ein Gütesiegel wäre das Höherwertige [...]. Halal braucht einen Standard, dann braucht es ein Gütesiegel [...] Das ist die langfristige Perspektive. [...] Und wir müssen in Zukunft zum Beispiel auch besser über halal informieren, auch die islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft. Sie müssen mehr Informationen raus geben, dass das hat mit Barbarentum, mit Tierquälerei und so nichts zu tun hat.“ (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

Animal Welfare law becoming a matter of state decision instead of particular federal state decisions due to the BGB.I 2004/118. With this transfer of power control, the grant of permission for ritual slaughter must have become more difficult.

Such new developments probably have their source in the general governmental perception that ritual slaughter accounts to specific ritual slaughter practices like the sacrificial feast - Aid al Adha. According to Ms Howorka from the Federal Ministry of Health, the paragraph for ritual slaughter is meant for such kind of special circumstances. She says:

“The ritual slaughter, which here is noted in the Animal welfare act, without prior stunning, is not to be compared to halal slaughter [with prior stunning according to the Norm ONR 142000/142001] for the purpose of meat production. This is a big misunderstanding. [...] There is the ritual sacrificial feast, which always takes place after the fasting month. And in the setting of this feast in this case, an animal is ritually slaughtered without prior stunning [but with post cut stunning], since it belongs to this rite.”²⁸ (Interview Howorka, 24.06.2014)

Such perception is very interesting, since it distinguishes halal slaughter into two needs and two forms of ritual slaughter, even two kinds of rites accounting for Muslims in Austria.

From the perspective of the interviewed Muslim stakeholders, such regular framework and the actual translation into practice is source to the differentiation into “real halal” and “quasi halal” explained in the next chapter.

On an abstract, yet also theoretical level, these matters of facts display a crucial shift of a traditional and religious concept of slaughter. Due to a new legal and differently culturally informed context, it has been transformed.

Despite the fact that the policy phrasing accepts religious difference and religious freedom, at the same time it informs of how this religious freedom will take shape. People in power strongly influence the interpretation of legal text and thus also the form of conduct that might derive from it.

Accounting to them are representatives of Austrian official institutions, veterinaries and slaughterhouse operators who are made responsible for the matter of ritual slaughter.

²⁸ „Die rituellen Schlachtungen, die hier im im Tierschutzgesetz drinnen stehen, ohne vorherige Betäubung, sind nicht gleichzusetzen mit halal Schlachtungen zum Zwecke der Fleischgewinnung. Das ist ein großes Missverständnis. Es gibt dieses rituelle Opferfest, das immer nach den Fastenmonat stattfindet und im Rahmen dieses Opferfestes wird unter Umständen ein Tier rituell geschlachtet ohne vorherige Betäubung aber mit „post cut Betäubung“, weil das zu diesem Ritual dazu gehört ja.“ (Interview Howorka, 24.06.2014)

But in the end, it is representatives in the economy that decide what kind of ritual slaughter – hence what kind of halal – is distributed to the masses. Most mass producing wholesalers circumvent the costly protracted path of gaining permission for producing the traditional ritual slaughter with post cut stunning. A fact which is also in favor for export trading; since non-stunned meat cannot be sold outside of Austria, because it must only serve the compelling need of a local determination.

This kind of development is in favor of many. It eases the local and international halal business and fastens production. Also on part of the Austrian authorities, not much hazards are to be expected – neither special administrative effort, nor political contestation. Herby, the difficult subject on animal welfare issues concerning non-stun slaughter is also left out. Although that this would be only a matter of political attitude. In Austria, non-stunning means post-cut stunning, which causes no animal welfare problems in any way.

4.3.1.3 The Matter of Certificates

Certificates in Austria are provided by the IGGiÖ as well as the IIDZ, as it was explained in detail in the preceding chapter. Since a lot of halal meat is provided from Austrian companies which produce in Hungary, also the certificate of the Hungarian determination is often shown in meat stalls and restaurants. For individual butchers who sell self-slaughtered meat certificates are less important. This is due to their opinion that it is enough that they themselves know that the animals were slaughtered correctly, which they can assure their clients without certificates. Furthermore, one butcher claims that *“I can have this certificate, even if my meat is not halal”*. (Interview butcher 3, 15.04.2014) Also another butcher emphasized that *“the certificate actually is a piece of paper without value”*. He explains that in many cases someone makes a certificate and photocopies of it, which will be distributed to others without any of the certifiers controlling (Interview butcher 1, 15.04.2014).

In Austria, small halal meat producers still work without any certification. Their business only relies on trust relationships. But for wholesalers and Austrian companies, certificates are required tools in order to enter the market or to maintain their position. It serves as a basis for building trading partnerships.

According to Ms Howorka, of the Federal Ministry of Health, certification serves the purpose to assure the halal product and to make it a convenient product. This is why the economy is

interested in a cachet for halal in order to promote their products. But also for the Muslim determination it is of advantage, as it keeps what it pledges for.

Such aspect is also supported by both certifiers. Mr Rusznak from the IIDZ explains that it, other than fantasy logos, can be traced back to the certifiers and their standards. Also Mr Boufalgha from the IGGiÖ stressed that it helps give the consumers security.

The first step has been made by the establishment of the two official Austrian certifiers. However, what is needed much more - as the study revealed - is a unified halal standard everyone in the business can and wants to use. Only recently such attempt has been initiated.

4.3.1.3.1 A New Halal Norm for Austria

Policies and regulations can be contested. In the end, they are areas of negotiation. The example of the Norm ONR 142000/142001, which was initiated by the IIDZ, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and the Austrian Standard Institute, shows this in a paradigmatic way. Although the norm served the purpose to enter the international market sphere and to find wider international acceptance, it stayed contested in the local Austrian market. It suffers approval on behalf of Islamic determinations in Austria and thus can never reach full structural power and implementation. This lack has been acknowledged and a new initiative that will include all stakeholders was started in January 2014. Both conflicting institutions, the IGGiÖ as well as the IIDZ, representative on behalf of the Austrian halal economy, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and the Austrian Standard Institute and all different Islamic determinations – Sunni, Shia and Alevi – build a new committee. The aim is to create a new norm, which will include all aspects and opinions of these diverse stakeholders. Interestingly, the same group is also involved in a newly initiated standard debate by the European standard institute.

Especially on behalf of Austria's economy it is desired to successfully establish a European halal norm since it offers a large entrance to an expanding market, as Ms Howorka explained. It would be a great breakthrough and the creation of a brand one can believe in.²⁹

²⁹ „Ich hoffe, dass das mit der Europäischen Norm auch was wird, weil das wirklich ein Durchbruch wäre. [...] Und es liegt einfach an den Beteiligten, die jetzt bei der Norm mitarbeiten, dass sie das auf gescheite Füße stellen, mit den Zertifizierern. Das das eine Marke ist, an die man glaubt ja. [...] Dann ist es sicher ein Erfolgsprodukt.“ (Interview Howorka, 24.06.2014)

Such new initiatives and developments mark again a new structural shift in the Austrian halal meat market. It shows that responsibility on behalf of the religious representatives has become more of a concern. But also the interest in sharing the profit of the certification market might play part in the decision making for a joint accomplishment for a new Austrian standard as well as European standard. Alone the fact that representatives of the economy who are involved in this debate for no other reason than economic gain are accepted by the religious determinations in order to contribute to the standards character, shows the economic interest of the representatives for these determinations.

But as the certifier of the IIDZ expressed, an end to the discussion and a convergence on the subjects such as stunning, is not in sight.

4.3.1.4 Political Situation

Throughout the theoretical part it was made clear that markets do not emerge in a neutral environment, directed and defined by only one kind of stakeholders. Producers, distributors and consumers all play crucial roles in the formation of each market sphere. But also the political context, which finds expression in policies and social formations of a society, plays a major role.

Since the halal meat market emerged in context to the Austrian Muslim community, the political sphere has also impact on the niche market and provokes certain kinds of facts and developments.

Insights on the political situation can be given by looking at several online articles about the Austrian halal meat market. Most of the articles are purely descriptive and neutral in the way they portray the halal meat industry. One report by the magazine “das Biber”, which aims at representing the multi-ethnic Austrian community, and another report by the “Österreichische Fleischerzeitung” are exemplary (Url 9). However, it is also easy to find negative articles, which focus on halal slaughter as cruel and barbaric. Their main concern is to create aversion to Muslims in the main society by portraying Muslim migrants as “not integrable” as well as “too different”. One specific report by the openly politically incorrect webpage “unzensuriert.at” even accuses the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber to work in collaboration with the IIDZ and hereby would misuse membership subscriptions in order to gain access to the unwanted Muslim clients and the halal market segment (Url 10).

Also the certifier from the IIDZ confirms this problem and explains that people from the right-wing scene continuously promote an anti-Islamic picture through their online petitions.

Islamic slaughter is often displayed as animal abuse. This is also reason, as he explains, why supermarkets are not willing to include halal products in their assortment. They fear online shitstorms and bad reputation.

Similarly, the certifier of the IGGiÖ explained that the problem starts when the subject of halal and ritual slaughter is transferred into media. Because Austrian society is very xenophobic, publicity makes the subject even more complicated. In this manner islamophobia continuously finds supporting voices.

The halal meat market is perceived critical not only in the public sphere. Also Ms Howorka emphasized her problem to often have to deal with people's misunderstanding about halal slaughter in Austria. Frequently she needs to clarify for parliamentary requests that the halal meat produced in Austria is absolutely animal welfare conform.

In the opinion of a wholesaler representative, there is a crucial problem within the political sphere. Austria's leading parties fear the small influx winning right-wing parties. Currently, dangerous trends are taking the lead and such parties with anti-immigrant concepts polarize the issue even more. One result, as he explains, are such online blogs and forums promoting anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim opinions.

But also slaughterhouse representatives pointed out that political bents affect their work. There is a certain pressure on behalf of the agricultural side, because farmers actually say that they do not want to sell their cattle to Turkish.³⁰ This is also due to the fact of lacking knowledge and their beliefs that the halal slaughter is not animal welfare conform.

Also on other levels, restrictions in the business due to political circumstances become obvious. A wholesaler who created his own niche by producing convenience foods for public institutions such as kindergartens struggles to enter these government controlled institutions. While he sees the supply of halal food in kindergartens as a form of necessary element for integration, government officials reject it by expressing that there is no need. Such position is absolutely incorrect as the wholesaler explains as follows: *"[...] You are the administration. You cannot, if you are the clerk there, say we do not have need for I don't know how many Muslim children's food - then you are wrong. This is not your need, it is the need of these children."* (Interview wholesaler 3, 06.05.2014)

³⁰ „Wir haben schon von der landwirtschaftlichen Seite Druck, weil die Landwirte eigentlich sagen 'meine Rinder will ich nicht an Türken verkaufen'“. (Interview slaughterhouse operator 1, 12.05.2014)

These various representations of different actors in the halal meat market make clear that the halal meat market is a highly politically influenced field. Prejudices and disinterest create a situation in which the market has not only become a flourishing business, but also a contested sphere. The matter of identity plays a crucial part. Dissociation from the “unpredictable other” is as much practice as increasing attempts to gain voice and become active in finding forms of incorporation in the Austrian society. New forms of agency manifest here.

Due to these difficult political circumstances, Austria’s economic representatives try to enter this promising market niche unsighted. The confidentiality provisions for most Austrian companies certified by the IIDZ as well as the halal meat production by most Austrian producers, which is not declared openly, are proof to this fact.

That Austria is seen as a developing country by the director of the IIDZ might as well find its source in the issues displayed here.

4.3.1.5 The Global in the Local

Part of the initial research question was to unveil in which context the Austrian halal meat market relates to the European and Global halal meat market. Within the reference to the theoretical chapters “Islam as a Transnational Space for Markets and Consumer Groups” (chapter 2.3.4.) and “Anthropology of Policy” (chapter 2.4), empirical findings will be discussed.

The research showed that the Austrian halal meat industry is compared to markets such as in England, Belgium, France and Germany still in their beginnings and much smaller. The knowledge by local butchers about other European halal markets is slight and entails false and vague information.

More knowledge about halal market trends in Europe exists in the rows of wholesalers and slaughterhouse operators. Also in the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and the Federal Ministry of Health Knowledge within this wider field was posed.

This circumstance can be explained with the differing involvement into the international business networks by these different actors. Butchers who themselves produce their products or buy them from wholesalers are neither involved or familiar with the global debate about halal standardization, nor widely informed about the differing kinds of

practices in the diverse halal meat markets. Yet, wholesalers and slaughterhouse operators find their entrance to international debates and networks due to interest in import and export trades.

On the European level, Austria's halal meat industry is rather involved in terms of import. Since meat and meat products from countries like Germany, Poland and England are much cheaper, Austria's producers can hardly compete.

The first step to access the European market was made in recent years, when Austrian companies started to transfer their production to cheaper countries, particularly to Hungary. First collaborations between Austrian wholesalers and German firms have also been established in this context. Hence, these developments show an increasing interest on behalf of various Austrian stakeholders to participate in this growing market niche and in becoming leading actors by expanding their trade business.

In terms of the global market sphere, the matter of export is more of importance. Several Austrian companies produce mainly for the export to the United Arab Emirates - especially Dubai - and the Arab League. Also Turkey used to be one of the biggest customers for Austrian meat exporters, but with a newly implemented regulation on part of the importer, this market broke off. Besides those matters of fact, it is in the interest of various interviewed stakeholders to establish relationships to foreign markets, although this was explained to be very difficult and costly.

Most export trade relationships are established due to the work of the Austrian Federal Economic chamber (WKÖ). It is the institution's task to build circumstances for new commercial partnerships by functioning as a business mediator and bringing new actors together for trade. However, as it was emphasized by a representative of the WKÖ, the halal market is not of special interest and only one business specification of many.

Nevertheless, the WKÖ stressed the marginalized interest for this niche, the opposite can be proven through its major initiative to establish a certification institute and support the creation of a halal standard needed for the export.

This now active institution, the IIDZ, is the internationally most involved and best networked stakeholder for Austria's halal meat market. It is an internationally accredited and known certification institution, which already companies from other European countries make use of due to its professional reputation. As a member of the World Halal Food Council and

International Halal Integrity Alliance, it is the only Austrian Institution taking part in global standardization debates and networking halal fairs at the moment.

The fact that the IIDZ oriented the Austrian halal norm on the Malaysian JAKIM standard is very interesting, too. This also serves the purpose to conform internationally already accepted norms. The useful policy on ritual slaughter for the industry hereby was informed by non-governmental stakeholders as well as governmental ones, and transferred from one setting to another. In reference to what Stone (2007) argued theoretically, international certification institutions and think tanks on the matter of halal certification have not only formed a transnational network, but also shape one another in their definitions and implementation of policies. Besides that, these currently established networks influence the speed of internationalization of halal products.

The IIDZ's method and structure is similar to many internationally active certification institutions. Religious and business interests are combined and as such represented as well as implemented. Commonly, these certifiers promote the aim to make halal available internationally and therefore introduce the halal concept to the industry. While it seems important to increase the "halalization" of the industry, it is just as important to justify this with religious reason and obligation. Umbrella institutions such as the AHC (European Association of Halal Certifiers) and the World halal council function as transnational boundary spanners. Part of their task is to lead and coordinate the discussion around standardization, education and accreditation. Worldwide occurring halal councils and halal fairs build platforms for different national certifiers to network and discuss non-solved issues.

However, that big business interests are the core and striving force behind the growing numbers of national and international certification institutions becomes clear with the advertising phrase of the Halal Food Council of Europe: "Why Seek Halal Certification? – 1.6 billion reasons! Muslim consumers are considered the fastest growing consumer group worldwide. The concept of halal is basic to every Muslim and even the least observant Muslim would avoid consuming foods that are not considered halal."

First of all, this advertising slogan shows that halal is not for religious consumers only and thus indirectly promises much wider sales figures. Halal in this context much more reaches the status of a brand than being a certified religious assurance. It is promoted as an identity marker and not only a necessity for religious observance.

Furthermore, certification nowadays includes much more than meat products, basically anything from food stuff to pharmaceutical products can receive halal certification.

Nevertheless, the religious intentions of the institutions are commonly promoted. Website representations work with pictures of the holy Quran, mosques and references to suras of the holy script, in which halal is explained. Various forms of halal seals with the Arabic letters for halal decorate the web pages.

The shared interests depicted here and forms of conduct by certifiers and halal umbrella institutions support the points made by Shore and Wright (1997). With the examples given, it can be traced down how different actors at different sites share moral universes. The aim to define a global standard is of processual character and it involves manifold players with different interest. Besides the practical character behind such norm, it carries strong ideological norms and values deriving from religion. But only in combination with the economic world and in policy wording, the industry is willing to implement special religious features. Power for agency is simultaneously reached for the actors trying to support a prosperous market niche and also the ones who would like to support the religiosity in markets and products. Often both intentions lead back to the very same actors.

With representatives from western and non-western business and social world's boundaries are spanned. According to given policies in each national context new forms of policies are reinterpreted and adjusted – not always in the form which was intended first (Shore/Wright/Peró 2011). Buying meat certified by global and internationally accredited certifiers means buying something defined in agreement to economy, governments and religious scholars.

At the same time, moral universes can be interpreted differently as the interview with the Manager of the Halal Food Council of Europe, HFCE, showed. It revealed that even referring to the same international standards, such as JAKIM, does not mean to support the same definition on halal. The HFCE is strictly against stunning; only using it for poultry. Furthermore, it does not accept to recite prayer only when pushing the machine's start button.

For the IIDZ, however, such practice conforms to exemption clauses of the JAKIM standard and is therefore totally applicable. With the point of view that animals should be stunned for animal welfare reasons, it is an even idealistically supported procedure for ritual slaughter.

However, such difference in opinions and practice was not known by the HFCE - neither the legal and policy status for halal production in Austria was familiar to the manager.

As an institution which declares itself to be a Council of Europe for the matter of Halal, such lack of information shows that also in the rows of the Europe-wide halal meat market, a gap in knowledge and much confusion prevails.

These insights on the global network of stakeholders in the halal meat industry approve the theoretical approach of a “transnational Islam”. It is a global community of Muslims who debate and ponder about the status of halal. It is an imagined community in that it supposedly refers to one set of morals and values with the Quran and Sunna at its core. A transnational space of differing stakeholders has been established over time, cutting across many nation state borders. Their ties are rooted in specific political and cultural contexts and are differently institutionalized. Over time and in exchange they are partially transformed by the transnational exchange. Yet, it is not only faith building and maintaining these ties, but strong business interests. Thus, it is a transnational space defined by the exchange of goods as well as through the religious community.

Opposing Bowen (2004), it cannot be referred to as a pure transnational Muslim space. The empirical findings rather revealed this religiously influenced transnational field has been entered by many non-Muslim stakeholders who strongly influence the transnational developments concerning the thought on halal as well as new translations into practical forms of application. But also Muslims who actively take part in this transnational space cannot be expected to only act in the name of belief. They present different interests and interpretations deriving from their various local values standards and positions, too.

The study showed and hereby confirms the standpoint of Wilson and Grant (2013) that transnational Islam in reference to the halal meat market does go very much beyond faith.

5 Conclusion

Halal meat is much more than a religiously conform food product. Its definition and meaning is embedded into various discourses evolving from a specific local, cultural and political background – yet, also global trends have had impact on its symbolic transformation and practical implementation.

The research has shown that halal meat has become a particular good of a market niche which has emerged only over the last two decades. Several factors and players had massive impact on its emergence and development.

The empirical findings made clear that halal meat, as Gudeman (2001) stressed in his theoretical approach, embodies locally defined values and hereby reflects upon private and also public meanings in Austrian society. It became clear that halal meat serves likewise for Muslim consumers and Muslim entrepreneurs as an indicator and mediator for norms, values and identity associations simultaneously. The meaning of the halal product created and recreated in this manner is proof to Douglas' (2001) and Miller's (2001) view on goods as expressing cultural categories and symbolic systems.

With the settlement of Muslim migrants in Austria and its growing community over time, new needs and desires became apparent. The requirement of a special commodity, which was individually solved in the beginning, was soon recognized as a lack in the Austrian market sphere and thus introduced by migrant entrepreneurs. The commitment of Muslim individuals in context to their strong social community network and ethnic recourses, but also the willingness of Austrian slaughterhouse operators to include halal meat production into their business, led to the facilitation of this niche market.

In context to the theoretical perception on the markets, this process can be described as the materialization of needs and wants (Applbaum 2005). It marks the starting point for the emergence of a new area of supply, which responds to a new consumer group and their worldviews (Jordan 2003). This was a step toward incorporation and expression of liberty for the Muslim community in Austria, which was made possible through new forms of consumptions (Applbaum 2005).

The empowerment and implementation of this new market can be well explained with the features of ethnic entrepreneurship. By the discovery of opportunity structures and the use of strong social relationships, knowledge and tools based on an ethnic community, Muslim migrants shaped a new local economy structure. Yet, at the same time the market is not lead by a closed ethnic community, but manifold actors including many non-Muslim Austrian stakeholders (Glick Schiller/Çağlar 2009, 2013; Waldinger/Aldrich/Ward 1990).

The transfer from an individual production level towards a slowly growing industrial form of production outlines a crucial and historical shift. New stakeholders with increasingly differing interests were introduced to the market, becoming very influential on how halal meat is perceived and produced today. This is also the point when halal meat entered the market sphere. A niche market, which was and still is strongly socially and culturally influenced, took shape.

The reasons illustrated in the empirical findings for the emergence of the halal meat market as well as its characteristics endorsed theoretical insights on niche markets provided. Ethnic and religious markers were an important fact to the niche markets creation (Parzer/Kwok 2013). It is a specialized market that depends on strong long-term relationships (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994; Toften/Hammervoll 2013). Throughout the study, it became clear that also the halal meat niche gained the attention of large firms and diverse global players, which aim at entering new areas for profit (Dalgic/Leeuw 1994). While the Austrian halal meat industry on a local level remains rather marginalized on a global level, it has already entered the mainstream markets (Brandellero 2009).

Within the period of the market's establishment, it became apparent like Gudemann's (2001) theory suggests that the realm of community sourcing in particular values, shared concepts of an imagined solidarity and connected through institutions and practices; yet, also the interest parties in competition and accumulation were constitutive to this market niche. At the same time, the halal meat market emerged within the given economy of the regular meat industry and depended on the degree of bureaucratic organization of players from the non-profit sector, the private profit sector and the state platform as frame (Blim 2005). This was especially true in the advanced stage of the halal meat market's development.

The majority of Muslim migrants turned towards consuming products declared as halal officially and visually. The new widespread availability of halal meat shaped the attitude of conscious consumption choices on behalf of many Muslim consumers and hence supported growth of the local halal meat market. In that it was a reciprocal process between consumers and producers, which until today has increased the halal meat production. These are facts which support Marx' and Miller's understanding of the production mediating consumption and vice versa with social relations shaping and influencing one another (Marx 2001). The new consumption patterns in Austria's halal meat market are exemplary for unveiling consumption as a process of objectification. In this sense, the empirical finding of a new consciousness of the Muslim halal consumers is a form of constructing understanding, and it is used as a tool to differentiate oneself to the non-halal, non-Muslim consumer – "the other" (Bourdieu 1984, Miller 1995).

The concept of ethical consumption (Carrier/Luetchford 2012) was able to approach this matter in particular. Within this concept, halal can be understood as an identity marker for shared moral values. Through consumption the social realm or even cultural distinction can be stated and enter the economic sphere.

The given legal situation, new Austrian non-Muslim stakeholders on the production side as well as certification bodies established later have strong influence on the fashion of production, but also the symbolic dimension of the religious product to the present day. The structures of exchange shaped by these circumstances and players are constituent for the major features of the halal meat market (Applbaum 2005).

Another vital development manifested when the Austria Federal Economic Chamber initiated the establishment of a certification institution which would enable Austrian companies to become part of the global halal market. By then, Halal meat production had become important for the Austrian economy – on a local, yet now newly in a global dimension. No longer was halal meat only produced to satisfy the Muslim local consumers and their needs – the interest of economic gains became a driving force for many actors defining the market.

The process of creating and forming this niche market opened up new discourses and contestations. It involves various actors who established a certain power position in the market and hence influence the product's attributes and systematic distribution.

Slaughterhouse facilitators provide the necessary platform and setting for halal meat production. In the way the operators perceive and allow the halal slaughter performance, they become part of directing the trends on the implementation of post cut-stun ritual slaughter or regular stun ritual slaughter. Objectors of the traditional ritual slaughter due to animal welfare concerns or certain political attitudes of stakeholders of the regular meat market have strong influence on the operators' opinion on this matter. But also the profitability and industrial development have crucial impact on the realization of kinds of ritual halal slaughter.

New policy elements can contribute to build consumer trust or at least intend so as the investigation of the two Austrian certifiers showed (Zachmann/Ostby 2011).

The two certification bodies, the IIDZ and the IGGiÖ, accept both ways of conduct, however, promote and mostly assure the pre-stun form of ritual slaughter. The institutions' differing reputation in the local market deriving from their more or less religious image defines their position in the Austrian halal meat industry and their acceptance by wholesalers and retailers. Nevertheless, their economic success is rather given through certification access in the global market sphere. Here, the IIDZ maintains a clear power position. At the same time, it is Austria's only player that has access to the international and global network with regard to the halal market – where the industry meets religious discourse on halal standardization. Furthermore, the policy structure of the IIDZ emphasizes the theoretical aspect by Stone (2007) of policies' transnational character and their global spread.

Despite the IIDZs peculiarity, a recently initiated committee debating on a new Austrian and European halal standard leads to a possible rearrangement of the different players' positions. It equally involves stakeholders from various determinations, both certifiers and particular wholesalers. Such developments show a new willingness to make halal meat production not as much a contested field, but one that must function under conformity of various actors.

Until today, the Austrian halal meat market has been in the hands of very few wholesalers. Their economic interest and pricing pressure on behalf of the consumer side lead to their

decision turning towards industrialized slaughter structures without previously practiced post cut-stunning slaughter practices.

Some wholesalers have extended their business and entered new niches, such as convenience food production, kebab production and processed meat production. Over a long time, established business networks, from which many are of social community background, help wholesalers remain in their strong position in the market.

However, the picture of retailers and small butchers has changed immensely in the past decade. While there were only very few in the beginning of the niche market's development, today many more individuals have stepped into the business. Their decision to participate in the market can derive from existing knowledge and education in the field. But especially the hope of a prosperous business is a leading factor. The matter of the traditional way of slaughter is one of importance in this case, too. The majority of retailers receive their meat from wholesalers, whereas others make use of their right to slaughter with the post cut stunning method and produce their goods themselves.

The major issue remains around the doubtfulness of the meat sold as halal. The consumer cannot be sure whether the retailer who supplies the meat sells traditionally slaughtered halal meat using post cut stunning, to the industry adopted pre-stun halal meat, or even regular meat, which is declared as halal. These circumstances underline Keats' (2001) point that new mechanisms of inaccessibility to information on production and even prevention from it are characteristic to current developments.

It is the strong element of trust which circumvents making this issue official and public. The instant trust in the Muslim producer's and distributor's responsibility is source for trust in the halal product and hence supports a vital market. Although the halal meat supply is strongly suspected by many players being part of the business, they only marginally questioned and contested it.

Throughout the research, it became clear that people trust and distrust in the retailers and wholesalers, who are responsible for producing and supplying halal meat, not the food product itself. Hence, they trust the provisioning system (Kjaernes 1999).

The concept of trust, which recognizes a symbolic dimension that unconsciously allows the consumer to imagine the qualities inherent to a product, was helpful to explain the unquestioned consumption practice of Austria's doubtful and uncertain halal meat products (Prigent-Simonin/Herault-Fournier 2005). Through trust the product becomes halal.

The introduction of the religiously influenced product to a gradually industrializing market in a non-Muslim country had major consequences on the product itself – particularly on its symbolic dimension. This is also due to the fact that Muslims with differing interpretations of halal as well as non-Muslims are involved in the interpretation and implementation of laws and policies on ritual slaughter. But also the way these actors promote the “new” product is crucial for the dimension of the product’s attributions and meaning.

The study has shown that food issues relate to social stratification and power and thus become clearly political (Okongwu/Mencher 2000).

Ritual slaughter with stunning in a rather industrialized slaughter performance has succeeded due to its wide acceptance on behalf of Muslim entrepreneurs. This is in favor of Austrian authorities, international business trading and uncomplicated local market structures. Furthermore, its definition has come much closer to what Austrian non-Muslims would like to be – an unproblematic regular slaughter procedure with a convenient religious connotation that is not asking for much political or animal welfare questioning attention.

However, this shift towards a new form of ritual slaughter has left a big confusion about the “halalness” of the halal product – even in the rows of its promoters. Many actors who accept and use the form of stunning explain “real proper” halal to be only without stunning. This point is not uttered in form of a clear explanation. It is rather a result the empirical findings provided. In this context, such circumstances unveil that the fast development of the market and the thereby occurring changes of a traditionally embedded and perceived ritual led to a mode of continuous transformation. Old concepts of a slaughter ritual are contested and changed. But because it is culturally and religiously deeply embedded, its reformation in a new setting struggles true change on a symbolic and definition level. The practice has changed, but the perception on it remains on a traditionally informed unchanged ideological level.

The decision making of Muslims on changing the traditional slaughter performance is strongly influenced by political circumstances, policy interpretations and tempting prospects in the industrial sphere. But also global factors play a crucial role in this process. Since stunning recently is also marginally allowed by Muslim nation states and international standards, new doors for profits have opened, yet also new doors for interpretation. At the

same time, such fact is proof for raising economic interests which allow exemptions for transformed, usually unaccepted ritual slaughter practices.

This local and global process of transformation of the perception and definition on the traditional rite influences the interpretation of legal statuses as well as non-Muslim understandings of the term.

Part of these developments is the global debate about the definition and standardization of halal. The concept of transnational Islam (Bowen 2004) showed how this processual formation and relation of different players from different global sites can be understood as kind of a transnational space. Here, social and symbolic ties are created as well as maintained. They have impact on international economic systems and structure markets outside of only national interests (Morgan 2004). In this context, the empirical findings support Mukherjee's (2014) point that halal is part of discourse and a form of taking action in the global sphere.

In the Austrian context, halal reached a new, still unstable definition and application in the production sphere. But it is questionable that this shift has reached the platform of consumption. At the distribution site, halal products, which were produced with differently defined and performed rites, are sold as "100 % halal" products. No clarification considering the change is communicated at the point of sale. In that halal meat can remain an unquestionable product for the consumer. It fulfils its symbolic character and transports its religious meaning and the traditional sense of halal conformity.

Although the halalness of the products is ambivalent, halal did not lose its religious meaning and importance in any respect. Rather the opposite – the introduction of halal meat to the Austrian market sphere has made religion available in a product. The market shapes the practice of religion by providing a religious good, but also decides on its halal character.

In form of supplying a new convenience good, the halal meat market has slowly become visible in the last two decades. In this sense, it became a form of integration of the migrant Muslim population into the local Austrian society. Halal has become part of the Austrian economy and may serve for many individuals as an identification marker. Hence, it was economy that brought religion to a new level. It has become an industry driven religious

revival in form of a new “brand” – “halal” – which was introduced by migrants’ incorporation in a local market and raising economic interest on behalf of Muslim countries.

The suppliers’ display of halal almost like a brand with the use of certain forms of advertisement serves not only to assure the halalness to the consumer, but also serves to achieve profitable business. This is because - as Applbaum (2004) argues - brands own a singularized identity over which meaning and value can be controlled.

Halal meat in Austria reveals different kinds of meanings and values: it is locally specific, structured and interpreted by various stakeholders in different power positions and symbolically laden for its ethnic consumer class. It allows the Muslim migrant community to state difference and incorporation at the same time. As a result, the niche market’s development is a reflection of Austria’s society change and the growing influence of migrants due to their economic engagement.

The study has also detected that the halal market emerged and remains in a highly political setting. Negative political attitudes and prevailing prejudices affect the scope and opportunities of development. Certain forms of exclusion become apparent within this context. Currently, new segments within the niche market, such as kindergarten halal food, and its difficulty to be accepted as need and necessity in public institutions are exemplary. It once more states how “halal meat” in Austria has become an important matter on many interrelating levels – the economic, the social, cultural and religious as well as the political level. The research on this market could unveil certain power relationships as well as the strength of policies and actors positioning. Furthermore, it uncovered new forms of agency. The matter of the ritual slaughter policy and the official Austrian halal norm showed how they work as forces to organize, shape and regulate the Austrian halal industry. The statuses and roles these policies promote for certain players are crucial to their power positions and opportunities (Shore/Wright 1997; Shore/Wright/Peró 2011). But the current debate about a new standard and differing conducted practices under the legal framework prove that policies are a continuous process of contestation taking place in a political sphere (Okongwu/Mencher 2000). The moral perception on traditional ritual slaughter is not as much inherent to the policies as much as it is expressed through the interpretation of them (Vike 1997).

Referring to the introduction story of the sheep Dorli saved from the ritual slaughter, now findings of this research can give clear answers. First of all, it is the perception on ritual slaughter as a cruel, animal-welfare-opposing traditional Islamic rite which made the Austrian woman act as a lifesaver. Furthermore, her lack of information on the legal status for ritual slaughter is the second reason for her decision. Yet, as we know from the empirical findings, no matter if the animal is slaughtered with regular pre-stun procedures or not - it will not suffer any pain, since it must be post-cut stunned according to Austrian law in case of a traditional slaughter performance. Her misconception and the non-clarification in the Austrian media display the political attitude and its promotion in the main society towards Muslims and their religiously influenced habits.

The Arabic guest in contrast seemed informed enough to know that the halal meat he can buy at any market stall or Turkish supermarket might not conform his requirement on ritual slaughter. But he was unlucky enough to leave the sheep alone for a short time and in consequence of the following events find no one anymore to perform his perfectly legal and animal welfare conform ritual slaughter. A result, which sources in political pressure concerning this subject.

The research of the Austrian halal meat market was able to unveil important facts and current developments. It was able to fill gaps of information on this very subject. The case study showed how markets and economies always emerge in social and cultural contexts, which people express in the particular forms of economic activity. Especially the halal meat industry's actors and their different kind of relationships were analyzed and hence unveiled certain values, goals and activities (Gudemann 2001; Carrier 2005). As much as the research showed the materialization of religious identity, it also emphasized how marketing structures contain power to produce meaning in a capitalistic world (Appelbaum 2004).

By investigating this local market, detailed insights could be given. These serve to help gain a new perspective on the local setting, and simultaneously give hints on global developments or provide material that can be compared.

The research has further shown that increasingly multicultural societies like Austria are platforms to see different traditional perceptions on rites mingle according to the given opportunities. The outcomes might be like in this case, introduced and transformed within a

new market niche. Here, industrial maximization and profit gains became a key feature, yet the religious element always remained important to satisfy the believing consumers.

Besides that, the research was able to fill certain gaps of information and show the interrelation of the differing stakeholders and it may serve to provide new knowledge for possible dialogue and new fields of discussion.

In this context, it remains of striving importance to include the consumption side into the discourse. As the theoretical insights could already make clear – consumers and their form of responding to economic developments and circumstances are crucial for receiving a complete perspective on economy and markets. Therefore, also halal meat consumers should be investigated within another research on this topic.

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Director
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HFCE-Halal Food Council of Europe,
Manager-Senior Auditor
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Howorka, Birgit
Bundesministerium für Gesundheit (Federal Ministry of Health)
Person in authority for animal welfare at slaughter and food safety,
24.06.2014, Austria

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Vorberg, Dr. Ulrike

REWE INTERNATIONAL AG, Merkur

Veterinary Surgeon, Quality Management Senior Project Manager

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17. Interview:

Lorencz, Anka

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

Federal Guild of Food Industry

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7 Appendix

7.1 Interview Guidelines

Interviewleitfaden Fleischer

Es ist eine neu, dass es in Wien viele Halal-Fleischereien gibt.

Warum haben sie eine Fleischerei aufgemacht? Warum war es wichtig Halal Fleisch auf dem österreichischen Markt anzubieten?

Was ist ihnen wichtig in diesem Geschäft?

Wann haben sie ihre Fleischerei aufgemacht und wie war die Situation damals?

Welche rechtlichen Wege muss man beachten, um eine Fleischerei aufzumachen?

Haben sie ein offizielles Halal-Zertifikat? Warum? Welches?

Schlachten sie ihr Fleisch selbst? Worauf achten sie bei der Schlachtung?

Verkaufen sie auch importiertes Fleisch aus anderen Ländern?

Wer sind ihre Kunden?

Der Halal-Fleischmarkt ist in Österreich noch relativ klein.

Wie hat sich der Halal-Fleischmarkt entwickelt?

Was wissen sie über den österreichischen Halal-Fleischmarkt und wie sehen sie die Zukunft für diesen?

Was denken sie darüber, dass es immer mehr Halal-Fleischangebot gibt?

Welches Image für Halal Fleisch in Österreich ist Ihnen wichtig?

Können sie mir erklären, warum gerade in der letzten Zeit so viele neue Halal-Fleischer aufgemacht haben?

Kennen sie andere Fleischer und Schlachthöfe? Arbeiten sie eventuell zusammen?

Welchen Bezug haben sie zu den österreichischen Schlachthöfen?

Was denken sie darüber, dass auch Merkur Halal Fleisch anbieten?

Wissen sie etwas über Halal-Schlachtung in anderen europäischen Ländern? Oder Global?

Was halten sie von einem globalen Halal-Standard in der Schlachtung von Tieren?

Interviewleitfaden Schlachthöfe

Ein wachsendes Angebot an Halal Fleisch ist in Österreich eine neue Entwicklung.

Wie sind sie dazu gekommen Halal Fleisch in ihre Produktion aufzunehmen?

Was hat sie an diesem spezifischen Markt interessiert?

Wie haben sie nähere Informationen zu diesem Thema in Erfahrung gebracht?

Welcher Vorbereitung bedurfte es, um in diesen Marktbereich einzusteigen?

Welche rechtlichen Regelungen waren zu beachten?

Wie haben sie ihr Zertifizierungsinstitut gewählt? Wie haben sie ihr Halal-Zertifikat erhalten?

Welche Kontrollen gibt es?

Welches Image für ihr Fleisch möchten sie verbreiten?

Wer sind ihre potentielle Kundschaft bzw. Abnehmer?

Wie konnten sie Kontakt zu lokalen Fleischern schaffen, um ihr Fleisch zu vermarkten?

Wie kann ich mir die Zusammenarbeit mit ihren Schlachtern vorstellen?

Was hat sich für ihren Betrieb geändert, seitdem sie unter anderem Halal Fleisch produzieren?

Welche Reaktionen haben sie erhalten, als sie sich dafür entschieden haben Halal-Fleischschlachtung in ihrem Betrieb durchzuführen?

Was wissen sie über die derzeitige Marktentwicklung in diesem Sektor?

Kennen sie andere österreichische Bauern, die Ihrem Beispiel gefolgt sind?

Dienen sie mittlerweile auch als Referenz für andere in Bezug auf ihr Wissen in der Halal-Fleischproduktion?

Was wissen sie zur europäischen und internationalen Entwicklungen in diesem Sektor?

Interviewfragen an REWE INTERNATIONAL AG, Merkur

Es ist relativ neu, dass auch Sie als große Supermarktkette Halal Fleisch anbieten.

Wie sind sie dazu gekommen, dieses Produkt in ihr Sortiment aufzunehmen? Was hat sie dazu bewegt?

Warum ist es wichtig bzw. notwendig, dass sie Halalfleisch in ihr Sortiment aufgenommen haben?

Was bedeutet für sie die Aufnahme von Halal-Fleischprodukten in den allgemeinen österreichischen Fleischmarkt?

Von wo bzw. von wem beziehen sie ihr Fleisch?

Haben sie Kontakt zu österreichischen Schlachtbetrieben, die sich auch auf Halal-Schlachtung spezialisiert haben?

Welches Image für ihr Fleischsortiment ist Ihnen wichtig?

Wie und bei wem haben sie sich über Halal Fleisch und die Halal-Fleischproduktion informiert?

Wie haben sie ihr Zertifizierungsinstitut ausgewählt?

An welche Richtlinien müssen sie sich halten?

Wie haben sie auf das neue Produkt aufmerksam gemacht bzw. wie haben sie es vermarktet?

Welche Kundschaft versuchen sie zu erreichen?

Wie waren die Reaktionen der Konsumenten auf ihr neues Produkt?

Warum haben sie sich entschieden Halal-Faschiertes anzubieten, und nur dieses?

Würden sie gern ihr Angebot erweitern?

Bieten sie in allen Filialen Halal Fleisch an?

Nach meinem Wissen sind sie der einzige Supermarkt, der Halal Fleisch verkauft. Merkur gehört zur REWE International AG. Dazu gehören auch Billa und Penny.

Können sie erklären, warum diese Supermärkte kein Halal Fleisch anbieten?

Was wissen sie zur europäischen und internationalen Entwicklungen in diesem Sektor?

Inwiefern beeinflussen diese ihr marktstrategisches Handeln?

Interviewfragen an Zertifizierungsinstitute IGGiÖ und IIDZ

Die Produktion von Halal Fleisch in Österreich ist in den letzten Jahren erheblich gestiegen. Als Zertifizierungsinstitut spielen sie in diesem Geschäft eine wichtige Rolle.

Können sie mir dazu mehr erzählen, wie dieser Markt entstanden ist und wie er sich entwickelt hat. Welche Rolle spielte ihr Institut bei dieser Entwicklung?

Welche Entwicklung erkennen sie auf dem heutigen österreichischen Halal-Fleischmarkt? Welche Tendenzen zeichnen sich ab?

Was war die Notwendigkeit für eine österreichische Halal-Fleischproduktion?

Warum ist es wichtig, dass sich Österreich in dieser Art der Fleischproduktion beteiligt?

Warum hat ein Aufschwung in der Halal-Fleischproduktion gerade jetzt stattgefunden?

Wissen sie mehr über die Zusammenarbeit der verschiedenen österreichischen Halal-Fleischproduzenten?

Sie sind ein Institut, welches Halal Zertifikate ausstellt.

Wie ist es möglich diesen Status als autorisierte Stelle zu erhalten? Von wem wurden sie als Zertifizierungsstelle anerkannt und von wem werden sie kontrolliert?

Welche Rolle spielen sie als Institution für die einzelnen Schlachtbetriebe?

Nach welchen Kriterien verabreicht ihr Institut Halal-Zertifikate?

Welche Rolle spielen regelmäßige Kontrollen in den Schlachtbetrieben, wenn sie ein Halal-Zertifikat erhalten haben?

Sie sind eines der Zwei autorisierten Zertifizierungsstellen in Österreich.

Wie unterscheiden sich ihre Institution und ihr Zertifikat von der anderen Stelle?

Was wissen sie über die Einstellung und das Handeln des österreichischen Staates gegenüber der wachsenden Produktion und Nachfrage im Halal-Fleischgeschäft?

Was können sie mir zu den geltenden Richtlinien zur Schlachtung in Österreich erzählen?

Inwieweit arbeiten sie mit Institutionen des österreichischen Staates zusammen?

Welche Bedeutung hat die hiesige Gesetzgebung bezüglich der Halal-Fleisch Produktion?

Was wissen sie über die Gesetzgebung in anderen EU-Staaten?

Inwiefern spielen andere EU-Halalmärkte eine Rolle für den österreichischen Markt?

Wird in Österreich auch für den Export produziert?

Können sie mir erklären, wie solche internationalen Wirtschaftsnetzwerke aufgebaut werden?

Wie erklären sie den Einstieg von österreichischen Bauern in den Halal-Fleischmarkt?

Wissen sie näheres über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den österreichischen Bauern und den muslimischen Schlachtbeauftragten?

Welchen Schlachtbetrieben in Österreich haben sie Zertifikate ausgehändigt? Was können sie mir zu den verschiedenen Schlachtbetrieben erzählen? Wie ist ihr Bezug zu diesen?

International, sowie in der EU gibt es in der allgemeinen muslimischen Gemeinde eine große Debatte, die sich mit dem Thema eines einheitlichen Halal-Standards beschäftigt. Verschiedene muslimische internationale Institutionen beteiligen sich an dieser Debatte.

Was wissen sie darüber und welche Rolle spielt dies für Ihre Institution?

Beteiligen sie sich an solch einer globalen Debatte?

Gibt es bestimmte Institutionen mit denen sie zusammenarbeiten?

Gibt es einen spezifischen Austausch in Bezug auf die Halal-Fleischschlachtungsrichtlinien in Europa innerhalb der muslimischen Gemeinde?

Inwiefern beeinflusst der globale und EU-Halal-Fleischmarkt den Österreichischen?

7.2 Abstract

This thesis investigates the local halal meat market in Austria. The focus of the study is to examine the emergence and the shaping of this niche market as well as to position it with regard to its cultural and political context. It is intended to unveil how the different institutional and non-institutional actors support this market in its shaping of today and how they contributed to its emergence.

By investigating this locally specific market, it is clarified how different stakeholders shape the production and distribution of a religious specific product. Moreover, it is examined how such developments have an impact on the definition as well as on the transformation of Muslim ritual slaughter practices.

In this context, the power positions of various actors are explained and hereby give new insights on Austria's relation to the global halal meat market. Furthermore, the analysis of policies and the impact of legal frameworks help gain a new picture of the newly established niche market.

The multi-sited ethnographic case study involved qualitative methods deriving from social and cultural anthropology. The qualitative content analysis and the grounded theory were the two major research strategies.

The data was collected from seventeen high-quality interviews, participating observation as well as several policy documents and information presented online. Scientific literature collected from archives was used to embed empirical findings in a theoretical framework. Main works from the anthropology of economy and markets, but also theories on ethnic entrepreneurship, ethical consumption, transnational spaces and the anthropology of policy were principal references.

This thesis offers new insights on halal meat production as a contested field. It depicts how it has shifted from an individual supply level to a currently established halal meat industry. The new need for a particular religious product in the Austrian meat market and great economic prospects have led to the involvement of competing Muslim and non-Muslim actors in the industry. As a consequence of these circumstances as well as the legal situation, the definition of halal and the implementation of traditional slaughter practices have transformed and come under scrutiny.

Discourses on standardization and various forms of slaughter methods are a result of this. Because a lot of confusion, lack of information and facts hidden from the public characterize

the market sphere, trust remains the crucial element to maintain a vital halal meat market in Austria. Yet, also the political context in Austria leads to difficulties for the flourishing business.

7.3 Abstract (deutsch)

Die hier vorliegende Masterarbeit untersucht den lokalen Halal-Fleischmarkt in Österreich. Der Fokus dieser Studie ist darauf ausgerichtet, das Entstehen und die Ausformung dieses Nischenmarktes zu untersuchen, sowie im kultur- und politisch-spezifischen Zusammenhang zu positionieren. Dabei soll ebenso enthüllt werden, wie bestimmte institutionelle sowie nicht-institutionelle AkteurInnen den Markt in seiner heutigen Ausformung unterstützen bzw. entstehen lassen haben.

Im Rahmen der Untersuchung dieses lokal spezifischen Marktes kann so im Detail dargestellt werden, wie verschiedene Interessensgruppen das Segment der Produktion und Distribution eines religiös spezifischen Produktes prägen und mitbestimmen. Zugleich wird examiniert, wie solche Entwicklungen Einfluss auf Definition und Transformation muslimisch ritueller Schlachtung haben können.

In diesem Zusammenhang werden verschiedene Machtpositionen von AkteurInnen erläutert und neue Einblicke in Österreichs Beziehungen zum globalen Halal-Fleischmarkt gegeben. Des Weiteren verhilft die Policy-Analyse und die Untersuchung verschiedener Einflüsse von Gesetzeswerken, einen neuen Blick auf diesen spezifischen Nischenmarkt zu gewinnen.

Es handelt sich um eine „multi-sited“ ethnographische Fallstudie, in der qualitative Methoden der Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie angewendet wurden. Die qualitative Inhaltsanalyse sowie die Grounded Theory gehörten dabei zu den hauptsächlichen Forschungsstrategien.

Die Daten der Studie erschließen sich aus siebzehn qualitativen Interviews, teilnehmender Beobachtung sowie verschiedenster Policy Dokumente und online präsentierter Informationsdaten. Wissenschaftliche Literatur zu verschiedenen Bereichen der hier dargestellten Thematik diente dazu, die empirisch ermittelten Ergebnisse in einen theoretischen Rahmen einzubetten. Hauptwerke aus der ökonomischen Anthropologie, aber auch Theorien zu „Ethnic Entrepreneurship“, „Ethical consumption“, „Transnational Spaces“ und die „Anthropology of Policy“ gehören zu den Referenzen der Studie.

Diese Masterarbeit bietet neue Einblicke in die Halal-Fleischproduktion als ein umstrittenes Feld. Sie stellt insbesondere die Wandlung von einer Eigenbedarfsproduktion hin zu einem neuen Industriezweig für Halal-Fleisch dar. Der Bedarf und das Verlangen nach einem bestimmten religiös spezifischen Produkt im österreichischen Fleischmarkt führten zur Beteiligung verschiedener konkurrierender muslimischer und nicht-muslimischer Akteure. Als Konsequenz dessen und durch die spezifische österreichische Rechtslage hat sich die Definition von Halal-Fleisch verändert. Im Zuge dessen bzw. damit einhergehend veränderte sich auch die traditionelle Art und Weise der Schlachtung und steht damit auch in der Kritik. Standardisierungsdiskurse und verschiedenste Formen der Schlachtungsweise sind das Resultat dessen. Aber auch fehlende Informationen und Fakten, die nicht an die Öffentlichkeit getragen werden, führen zu einer hohen Verwirrung, die den Markt charakterisiert. Dabei ist auch der politisch schwierige Kontext in Österreich, der Schwierigkeiten für ein gutes Geschäft darstellen kann, nicht außer Acht zu lassen ist. Als Folge bleibt das Vertrauen ein entscheidendes Element für einen florierenden Halal-Fleischmarkt in Österreich.

7.4 Curriculum Vitae

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Education

Oct 2012 - Jan 2015	MA CREOLE Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes University of Vienna, Austria Focus of Study: Migration, Policy, Transnationalism, Ethnic Entrepreneurship, Anthropology of Consumption
Oct 2008 – Aug 2011	BA Social and Cultural Anthropology University of Vienna, Austria Focus of Study: Anthropology of the Middle East, Modern and Biblical Hebrew, Arabic Culture and Language
Sep 1998 – Jun 2005	A level Evangelisches Ratsgymnasium, Erfurt, Germany

Internships and Voluntary Work

Dec 2011– Mai 2012	Windows - Channels for Communication , Tel Aviv, Israel Volunteer Research, Project Organization
Jan 2012 – März 2012	Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation , Tel Aviv, Israel Intern Planning and Organization of Events and Projects, Research
Jul 2010 – Sep 2010	Acco Theatre Center , Acco, Israel Volunteer Assistance of Theatre Projects, Organization of Theatre Festival, Fundraising
Mai 2008 – Jul 2008	MAMA A.C. / Orphanage Guadalajara, Mexico Volunteer Administrative Work, Educational Coaching, Childcare and Supervision

Languages

German (native)
English (fluent)
Spanish (fluent)
Hebrew (basic)
French (beginner)
Arabic (beginner)