The Cruelty behind Slaughter without Stunning

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Slaughter without stunning: video of investigation

Belgian slaughterhouses (2009) & Temporary slaughterhouses in Belgium (2012)
https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B5EiIjorq63-TWIybEE1SmZKVDg&authuser=0
The meaning of Cruelty

1. Behavior or action that deliberately causes pain to people or animals
2. The unfairness of something that happens
3. A desire that causes others to suffer
4. Actions that cause suffering
5. The quality or state of being cruel
6. An actor or occurrence that causes suffering
7. Denial that the action actually causes the animal(s) to suffer
8. Leading to an attitude of indifference to the animals’ suffering that is to be understood as a lack of concern about the animal’s suffering
What does the European law say?

« Business operators or any person involved in the killing of animals should take the necessary measures to avoid pain and minimise the distress and suffering of animals during the slaughtering or killing process, taking into account the best practices in the field and the methods permitted under this Regulation. »

« Many killing methods are painful for animals. Stunning is therefore necessary to induce a lack of consciousness and sensibility before, or at the same time as, the animals are killed. »

« Derogation from stunning in case of religious slaughter taking place in slaughterhouses was granted by Directive 93/119/EC. »

« In the case of animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites, the requirements of paragraph 1 shall not apply provided that the slaughter takes place in a slaughterhouse. »

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing
Slaughter without stunning: **the animal welfare point of view**

• “The animals which are slaughtered have systems for detecting and feeling pain and, as a result of the cut and the blood loss, **if not stunned, their welfare will be poor because of pain, fear and other adverse effects.** The cuts which are used in order that rapid bleeding occurs involve substantial tissue damage in areas well supplied with pain receptors. The rapid decrease in blood pressure which follows the blood loss is readily detected by the conscious animal and elicits fear and panic. Poor welfare also results when conscious animals inhale blood because of bleeding into the trachea.”


• “Slaughter without stunning increases the time to loss of consciousness, **sometimes up to several minutes.** During this period of consciousness the animal can be exposed to **unnecessary pain and suffering** due to:
  - exposed wound surfaces;
  - the possible aspiration of blood and, in the case of ruminants, rumen content;
  - the possible suffering from asphyxia after severing the *n. phrenicus* and *n. vagus.*”

  **Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, Position Paper 02/104, 2006**
Slaughter without stunning: scientific opinion

• “Due to the serious animal welfare concerns associated with slaughter without stunning, **pre-cut stunning should always be performed.”**
  
  European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), 2004

• “Whilst wounds which involve tearing of tissue or multiple cuts will affect a higher number of nociceptors than clean cuts, many nociceptors will still provide an input to pain centres in the brain when a long cut across the throat or a deep cut to sever blood vessels is made, however sharp the knife. **Any cuts intended to kill the animal by rapid bleeding will greatly activate the protective nociceptive system for perceiving tissue damage and cause the animal to experience a feeling of pain.**”
  
  Ibid.

• “FVE is of the opinion that **the practice of slaughtering animals without prior stunning is unacceptable under any circumstances.”**
  
  Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, Position Paper 02/104, 2006
Islamic ritual slaughter

What does the Qur'an say?

Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death].

Al-Qur'an 5:3
Ritual slaughter with stunning: Islamic authorities

“It is evident that *slaughter, following electrical stunning, is free of pain* and, as such, is commensurate with the recommendation of the Prophet “when you slaughter (an animal) do it with perfection”.

*Report of a seminar organized by the Muslim World League and the World Health Organization, 1997*

“If the *electro narcosis* of the animal or any other anaesthetic procedure helps *bleed the animal* while weakening its resistance during the bleeding, and if this *electro narcosis has no effect on its life* (that is to say, if the animal comes back to normal life if the bleeding does not take place) *it is allowed* to resort to electro narcosis or any other similar type of anaesthetic procedure before the bleeding. *The meat of the animal bled in that way is licit.*”

*Egyptian fatwa Committee, 1978*
Ritual slaughter with stunning: **examples of countries**

Several muslim countries already accept some forms of stunning:

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- United Arab Emirates
- Jordan
Ritual slaughter with stunning: *examples of countries*

In several European countries, stunning is always compulsory before slaughter, also for ritual slaughter:

- Sweden
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Iceland
- Slovenia (2013)
- Denmark (2014)
Ritual slaughter with stunning: **examples of countries**

New-Zealand: Biggest exporting country of halal sheep meat. All sheep that are ritually slaughtered are pre-stunned.
Ritual slaughter with stunning: **examples in Belgium**

All meat that is sold in Carrefour and Lidl supermarkets – including halal meat – comes from animals which have been stunned before slaughter.
Ritual slaughter with stunning: public opinion

88% of the Belgian population thinks that all animals should be stunned before slaughter, including for ritual slaughter.

Poll conducted by IPSOS, 2012
Ritual slaughter with stunning: public opinion

10 000 people march in Brussels against slaughter without stunning

Brussels, 28 September 2014
L’ETOURDISSEMENT OBLIGATOIRE
GAIA
Voice of the Voiceless.
Recovery of animals after head only electrical stunning

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5EiIjorq63-RURodEZNdTA2dVU/edit?usp=sharing
Halal stunning methods

Electrical stunning already used for cows and sheep, also during islamic slaughter. Example: Jarvis Engineering Technologies (NZ)

The **reversibility** of this method has been proved by the Veterinary Academy of France in 2006:

“The electrical stunning of animals, sheep included, is reversible if correctly applied. The animals that receive this form of stunning stay alive, but are inconscious and insensible to pain.”
Electrical stunning

- **Head only stunning** for *Halal* slaughtered sheep & cattle

- Sheep: current flow across brain only
  Cattle: current flows from nose to neck

- Heart keeps beating
• When the brain is subjected to an electrical current there is an immediate, massive release of neurotransmitters, **instantly producing a state of unconsciousness.**
Minimum stun parameters

- Minimum current and time for stun to be successful:
  - Cattle 1.1A x 1.0sec
  - Sheep 1.0A x 1.0sec
Will the animal recover

- Electrical current **does no damage to the brain**

- Unless there is an intervention (Throat Cut and Bleed out) the animal will recover
  → It does not kill, it simply makes the animal unconscious

- **Sheep** begin to recover about 30 seconds after the stun
  **Cattle** begin to recover about 45 seconds after the stun
  (calves after about 40 seconds)

- **Signs of recovery**: return of rhythmic breathing
CONCLUSION

Head only electrical stunning is:

• Humane

• Halal compliant

• Reliable
The issue of Religious Freedom

-FATWAS ACCEPT STUNNING
-VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS
-THERE IS NO SINGLE RECOMMENDATION WITHREGARDS TO STUNNING
-BANNING RITUAL SLAUGHTER IS NOT THE ISSUE

HOW TO PREVENT ANIMALS FROM SUFFERING, GIVEN THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE?

IF ANIMAL WELFARE IS TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY THEN STUNNING IS NECESSARY AND IT SHOULD BE ACCEPTED/TOLERATED
EU LAW:

1. MS SHOULD AT LEAST HAVE THE LIBERTY TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE AND TO TAKE PROPER MEASURES INCLUDING STUNNING TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE OF THE SUFFERING OF ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER

HOW IS TO BE LEFT TO THE MS: THROUGH DIALOGUE AND/OR LEGISLATIVE COERCION

2. EU LEGISLATION SHOULD BE MODIFIED AND MAKE STUNNING MANDATORY WITH NO EXCEPTION
DANGER

The exception becomes the rule.

Almost, if not all sheep slaughtered in Belgium are slaughtered without stunning, for non ritual slaughtered included. And in the rest of the EU.
Thank you!