DEPARTMENT
OF HISTORY
AND
CIVILIZATION

Fragmented Empire

Popular Imperialism in the Netherlands around the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Matthijs Kuipers

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

Florence, 26 February 2018

European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

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Department of History and Civilization - Doctoral Programme

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Abstract

This study examines popular imperial culture in The Netherlands around the turn of the twentieth century. In various and sometimes unexpected places in civil society the empire played a prominent role, and was key in mobilizing people for causes that were directly and indirectly related to the Dutch overseas colonies. At the same time, however, the empire was ostensibly absent from people's minds. Except for some jingoist outbursts during the Aceh War and the Boer War, indifference seems to be the main attitude with which imperial affairs were greeted.

How could the empire simultaneously be present and absent in metropolitan life? Drawing upon the works of scholars from fields ranging from postcolonial studies to Habsburg imperialism, I argue here that indifference to empire was not an anomaly of the idea of an all-permeating imperial culture, but the consequence of imperial ideas that rendered metropole and colony as firmly separated entities. The different groups and individuals that advocated imperial or anti-imperial causes – such as missionaries, former colonials, Indonesian students, and boy scouts – hardly ever related to each other explicitly and had their own distinctive modes of expression, but were nonetheless part of what I call a *fragmented empire*, and shared the common thread of Dutch imperial ideology. This suggests we should not take this culture's invisiblity for a lack of strength.

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Acknowledgements

This PhD project was possible only with a scholarship from EP-Nuffic, and, at a later stage, by the flexibility and generosity of my various employers at different times De Fietskoerier Utrecht, Maastricht University and Utrecht University.

My supervisors in Florence, Pieter Judson and Laura Downs, were vitally important to this project from start to end. I would like to thank them for the opportunity they gave me and for their support along the way. This gratitude also extends to Remco Raben, who was involved from the earliest inception to the finalization and whose support was of more importance to me than he probably realized.

Historical research involves libraries and archives. Numerous people kindly assisted me in their various capacities at these places. In particular I would like to mention Yvonne Treffer and Erwin van Delden of the now-defunct library of the Royal Tropical Institute (*Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen*, KIT) in Amsterdam, who found the time to help me amidst the chaos that ensued when the library fell victim to mortal budget cuts (imposed by a government that has demonstrated, time and again, not to value thinking and rethinking the colonial past and its legacies).

In Florence, the categories of colleagues, co-supervisees, political allies, cycling buddies, housemates and friends often overlapped. In no particular order I have to express a deep-felt gratitude to Esther Wahlen, Steffi Lämmert, Margot Béal, Thuc Linh Nguyen Vu, Roel Frakking, Christine Andrä, Itzea Goikolea, Bram Hoonhout, Jonas Brendebach, Marijn van der Sluis, Sabrina Marchetti, Miquel de la Rosa, Jelle Bruinsma, Sabine Mair, Mathias Kindel, Massi Tesi, and all the members of GRaSe. You all helped me through, one way or another.

Whenever I was back in The Netherlands for archival visits, I found that I could easily pick up the life I left behind when I moved to Florence. For allowing me this flexibility, my profound thanks go to my family and friends in Utrecht, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Maastricht and elsewhere. Sorry mom, Wietske and Laura, Hannie and Cees, the rest of the family, Guido and Saskia, Hans and Sanne, Roland, Robin and Mary Rose

(whom I also have to thank for their hospitatlity in Maastricht), Jan, Remy, Ayça, Rébecca, and finally, Lotje, for rushing in and out of your lives all the time.

I dedicate this dissertation to my mom, Hinke, whose neverending support I cannot possibly ever pay back, and to the lasting memory of my father.

Utrecht, July 2017

On names, terminology and writing conventions

The use of names from colonial Indonesia is fraught with the implications of history. In this context language is by no means a neutral conveyer of information, although it never really can be, as I should from within the current philosophical confines. During the colonial era there were two linguae francae in use in colonial Indonesia: Dutch and Malay. The use of the former was discouraged for non-Dutch; the latter functioned as shared tongue for the population at large, and would become *bahasa Indonesia*, Indonesian, after independence. In 1972 the old spelling was overhauled by the Enhanced Indonesian Spelling System (EYD), dropping Dutch fonetics in favour of non-colonial alternatives. Thus, *tj* became *c*, *dj* became *j*, *j* became *y,* and *oe* became *u*.

In this thesis I have opted not to follow rigid rules as to avoid the spelling quagmire. But any choice comes with caveats. The use of modern Indonesian spelling would acknowledge the sensibilities that come with decolonization, while the old spelling would favour historical accuracy. I tend to the latter option by not changing the spelling of names in quoted sources, and to avoid confusion, also adopt those names in my own writing surrounding source citations. Thus, here you will come across *Soewardi Soerjaningrat,* not *Suwardi Suryaningrat* (who, by the time of the spelling overhaul, had already adopted the name Ki Hadjar Dewantara, or Ki Hajar Dewantara in EYD). For geographical names, which do not so often appear in the historical sources I quote, I opt for modern spelling in most cases. You will find *Yogyakarta*, not *Jogjakarta*. There are exceptions. You will come across *Batavia* instead of *Jakarta* when the city's role as the center of colonial administration is stressed. Similarly I will use the name *Dutch East Indies* when the anachronistic implications of the use of (derivatives of the noun) *Indonesia* would be too absurd – there is no point in calling the colonial army, the *Koninklijke Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger* (KNIL), the Dutch-Indonesian army instead.

Another major obstacle in writing in English about colonial history in Dutch society are the confusions that arise with literal translations. The adjective *Indisch* is the most prominent point in case. It pertains to *Indië,* the abbreviated name used for the Dutch East Indies. From a metropolitan point of view it could refer to the entire colony,

while it more specific contexts it could also signify the same as 'native' or 'indigenous' in English. The noun *Indië*/Indies shifts from singular to plural when translated from Dutch to English, and then shares its adjective (Indian) with other nouns (India, the West Indies). The confusion that ensues in English can be avoided in Dutch, where *Indië* (the Indies) and *India* (India) are separate nouns with separate adjectives (*Indisch* and *Indiaas*, respectively). In order not to give in on historical accuracy – as the meaning of *Indisch* shifts subtly from context to context – I have chosen to not translate the adjective: you will find *Indisch*, in italics, throughout this work.

Introduction

The Still Waters of Empire Run Deep

"Wake up, Dutch people, and engage yourself!", is the message readers of the *Avondpost* (Evening Post) read when opening their newspapers on 12 October 1907. The words were part of an essay from someone writing under the guise of 'Wekker' (Awakener), and who addressed the issue of Dutch colonial policy in Aceh. His call to wake up suggests that people were oblivious about Aceh. The opposite seems to be true, however: even though indifferent attitudes to empire abound in Dutch colonial history, the Aceh wars, which raged intermittently from 1873 to 1903, always seemed to be the one exception to the rule of 'colonial oblivion' as they received massive media attention in the metropole and aroused popular sentiments. If there ever was such a thing as Dutch jingoism, that pompous mix of patriotism, militarism and imperialism, it was to be found here – very much contrary to the belief underpinning Wekker's address to the *Avondpost* readers. This is the central paradox of metropolitan attitudes regarding the colonies: they were there and they were not there, simultaneously. Colonial affairs could be vigourously debated on one day and be virtually forgotten the day after. Thus, when it comes to empire, jingoism and indifference are more closely related than one would expect.

Wekkers article series was published in book format (*Hoe beschaafd Nederland in de Twintigste Eeuw Vrede en Orde Schept op Atjeh*, How the Netherlands brought Peace and Order to Aceh in the Twentieth Century)[1] during the aftermath of the colonial war in Aceh. In this conflict Dutch colonial troops had attempted (and repeatedly failed) to subjugate the westernmost part of Sumatra. It was an atrocious affair that claimed over 100.000 victims.[2] While the military campaigns meant real war and bloodshed for the

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[1] The articles were subsequently published in one volume: Wekker, *Hoe Beschaafd Nederland in de Twintigste Eeuw Vrede En Orde Schept Op Atjeh* ('s-Gravenhage: Avondpostdrukkerij, 1907).
[2] Remco Raben, 'On Genocide and Mass Violence in Colonial Indonesia', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14, no. 3/4 (2012): 487.

Acehnese, it was a media war for the Dutch metropolitan public. Dutch and *Indisch*[3] newspapers attentively covered the events and thus shaped the metropolitan perceptions of what was going on. Some of the atrocities committed by the Dutch-*Indisch* colonial army (KNIL) elicited outrage – for example from the socialist faction in parliament – while others led to popular support and enthusiasm in response to victories of the colonial troops. Cast as part of the imperial project, the use of military force was referred to as 'pacification actions' in the press, rendering the brutal realities a necessity. What was at stake in Aceh was, according to the metropolitan mind, not just the outcome of a military confrontation but the idea of the Dutch Empire itself.

'Wekker', who turned out to be a former colonial army officer called W.A. van Oorschot, was as much informed by this idea that there was something bigger at stake than just military victory. His point of contention was military strategy nonetheless, as he criticed the way Dutch rule was enforced in Aceh. He was particularly critical of the leadership of military commander Frits van Daalen, who was responsible for some of the Aceh war's most well-known icons of brutality, such as the mass murder on the villagers of Kuta Reh in southeast Aceh, in 1904, and the regular killings of prisoners-of-war during the Gaju expedition. Such unbridled violence, the anonymous officer asserted, would not bring about sustainable Dutch control of the region. But whereas the strategy to 'pacify' Aceh was questioned, the need to do this was not, let alone the central premises of Dutch imperialism.[4] In that sense Wekker fits the recurring model of imperial criticism – sometimes mistakenly taken for anti-imperialism or anti-colonialism – that questions the means but not the end, and thereby firmly stayed within the confines of (Dutch) imperial ideology. That even applies to the most liberal proponents of an "ethical policy" – tas he liberal imperialism that had its roots in the abolition and emancipation movements of the mid-nineteenth century and its heyday in the first decade of the twentieth century was called – most of whom called for an end to the exploitation of the Dutch Empire's subjects, and instead appealed to the "moral calling" of the Dutch in "raising" the Indies. The calls for an Ethical colonial policy cut across all political affiliations and included liberals, socialists, and orthodox

[3] I will use the denominator *Indisch* throughout this study in its untranslated form. Please see the heading on the use of language and terminology below in this introduction.

[4] There are other interesting elements in the Wekker story, such as the role played by personal grudges held by Wekker (a Aceh veteran himself) against Van Daalen. For a thorough analysis of the contents of his writings in the context of Dutch imperialism, see: Paul Bijl, *Emerging Memory: Photographs of Colonial Atrocity in Dutch Cultural Remembrance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 118–119.

protestants.[5] To all the participants in metropolitan debates on the empire the same applied, namely, that the central premises of a shared imperial ideology were so hegemonical that they needed not be made explicit. From the Queen, who endorsed the ethical agenda in her 1900 annual speech, to 'Wekker', to most others: they were all fish swimming in imperial waters.

These 'imperial waters' are the subject of this study. The study of 'home imperialism(s)' or 'metropolitan colonial culture(s)', as this is often called, is about the often tacitly shared assumptions, mentalitites and attitudes towards the colonies in European countries. Some were simultaneously nation-states and imperial powers, others only the former, but in both cases such attitudes developed, making *home imperialism* a distinct and pervasive trans-European feature. While this was most visible within the ranks of political and academic elites, society at large was also caught in the imperial web, hence the term *Popular imperialism.* The central question, then, is how could this popular imperialism function? How could a culture of empire become rooted in all corners of society and the net effect still be zero in the eyes of contemporary commentators (and some present-day historians alike)? When was the empire invoked, and when not?

Popular Imperialism and the 'Charge of Indifference'

What exactly is popular imperialism? I will use John MacKenzie's work on British popular imperialism as a point of departure here. In a recent edited volume on popular imperialism across Europe – which comes almost thirty years after his own groundbreaking work *Propaganda and Empire* (1984) – he makes two references in an attempt at a definition. The first is to the idea of the 'colonisation of consciousness', originally coined by Jean and John Comaroff who used it in an African and missionary context, arguing that colonialism was more than trade-at-gunpoint or rule-by-coercion. It was predominantly a mental force, they stress, which planted the idea that imperialism amounted to the natural order of things in the minds of colonizer and colonised alike. Whereas this pertains to the situation in the colonies, according to MacKenzie the same mental force was operative in metropolitan societies. The second reference MacKenzie makes is to D.A. Low and his concept of 'internalised imperialism',

[5] For an overview of 'Ethical' thinking across the politcal landscpae, see: H.W. van der Doel, *Afscheid van Indië. De Val van Het Nederlandse Imperium in Azië* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2000), 19–56, http://library.wur.nl/WebQuery/clc/1615734.

which Low defines as the 'ingrained assurance of the inherent right to rule others'.[6] In the definition of 'popular imperialism' I propose here both ideas play a key role, but ultimately, they also present one of the binaries the study of popular imperialism should seek to overcome.

Studies into home imperialism – like this one – should not linger around the strong binary of sender (propaganda) and receiver (public reception). The two definitions from the Comaroffs and from Low are subtly different and represent the two sides of this binary: the former (colonisation of consciousness) invokes an image of top-down dissemination of imperial ideology, while the latter (internalised imperialism) refers to a state wherein the idea of empire is already successfully planted or internalized, suggesting a bottom-up version of imperial culture where all those who have internalised the idea of empire become agents of that empire in their own right. A related problem is that propaganda sources are more readily available to the historian, and in that way often result in neglect for the question of reception. As I will use the outlooks of the Comaroffs and Low here in combination, they make for a definition of *popular imperialism* that stresses the intertwinedness of those macro and micro levels of analysis. Imperial culture in the Dutch metropolitan society at the turn of the twentieth century, seen that way, is constituted by all parts of society rather than only by one.

The study of 'popular imperialism' should also break with another binary, namely that of imperial-mindedness as an on/off switch. It was not something that was simply there or absent, even though many historical studies on the Netherlands imply the latter by simply making no reference to the existence of the empire. My main hypothesis is that imperial-mindedness was situational and evoked various states of mind in the metropole, ranging from enthusiasm, consent and awareness, to ignorance, indifference and ambivalence. These should all be incorporated in our understanding of popular imperialism to avoid an ebb-and-flow interpretation that sees enthusiasm for the empire waxing and waning alternatingly. This means some paradoxes have to be accounted for, such as the one present in the Wekker case. While his writing implies a shared set of ideas and mentalities (what I called 'imperial waters' above), another of his assumptions runs diametrically against this, namely that the Dutch public slept when it

[6] John M. MacKenzie, ed., *European Empires and the People: Popular Responses to Imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 1–18; Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); D. A. Low, *Fabrication of Empire: The British and the Uganda Kingdoms, 1890-1902* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

came to imperial matters and needed to be awakened. His writing is a battle cry: he strongly urges the public to "wake up" and "inform themselves" on the realities of colonial warfare. The state of dormancy implied by Wekker suggests an indifferent, or only mildly interested public, while 'imperial waters' suggests a society steeped in imperial ideology. Can these two characteristics – indifference to and omnipresence of empire – be reconciled?

Wekker was not alone in his conviction that the public ought to be more interested in its empire, or that it was otherwise 'asleep'. The 'charge of indifference', as we could call this regularly made accusation against shortcomings of the public's attitude, echoed throughout the late nineteenth and entire twentieth century. Examples abound: the influential essay *Een Eereschuld* (1899, A Moral Debt), in which the liberal lawyer and member of parliament C.Th. van Deventer described the Dutch nation's conscience as not yet "awakened" by proponents – like himself – to the idea that Dutch economic colonial policy was exploitative (and shoud be altered)[7]; a propaganda organization founded in 1901 concerned itself with what it saw as a lack of popular interest in empire in the metropole and devoted itself to "the distribution of popular knowledge regarding our Indies amongst all the people and the stimulation of wealth in those regions and lending aid, in order to create a bond of true interest and love between the Netherlands and overseas."[8] After attending a political meeting on colonial affairs in 1914, organised by the Dutch labour party (SDAP), the young student Daniel van der Meulen remarked that in that way "*a small proportion* of the Dutch people became acquainted with what was truly our national problem: what to do with the East Indies?"[9]

There have been endless debates – most notably focused on the British case – that perpetuated the idea of popular imperialism as an on/off matter. These debates were not entirely unproductive, and as I will explain in the first chapter there are numerous cues to take from them, but ultimately we should transcend this binary of enthusiasm for empire as something either omnipresent or totally absent in metropolitan societies. In order to do this the question of indifference represents the biggest challenge. How to give indifference (to empire, to nationalism) a firm place in

[7] C. Th. van Deventer, 'Een Eereschuld', *De Gids* 63 (1899): 220.
[8] *Oost en West. Orgaan der Vereeniging*, 21 March 1901.
[9] Italics are mine. Daniël van der Meulen, *Ik stond er bij. Het einde van ons koloniale rijk* (Baarn: Bosch & Keuning, 1965), 16.

our understanding of the workings of empire and nation? Instead of desperately trying to measure something that is not there, the answer lies in redefining the problem to be about the expectation of a certain sentiment. In this case, which historical actors cared about the absence of imperial enthusiasm and why? One first interesting lead is provided by Paul Bijl in his recent book *Emerging Memory*, on the politics of collective memory regarding photos of colonial atrocities in colonial Indonesia. Bijl points at the paradox with regard to the charge of indifference: if that many alarmists complain about a the lack of an interest in empire, by their sheer quantity these people actually suggest that this consciousness is very much alive. We should therefore not adopt their framework – which would make us ask the same irrelevant question: why were people not enthusiastic for empire? – but we should rather study the frame of reference that rendered the empire as something in constant need of propagating in the eyes of this heterogenous group consisting of jingoist hardliners, humanitarian do-gooders and anti-colonial Indonesian nationalists, all of whom made the charge of indifference relentlessly.[10]

Another lead comes from those scholars who studied indifference, nationalism and empire in other contexts than the Dutch empire, or even other overseas empire that usually feature in comparisons. In the Habsburg empire, writes Pieter Judson, “concepts of nationhood and ideas of empire depended on each other for their coherence” and often spoke directly to each other but not so much to everyday life.[11] In the Dutch imperial context the notions of empire and nation developed in similar accord, for instance when it came to connecting (cultural) citizenship to ethnicity and racial hierarchies, as we will see in more detail in chapter 3. But while one could argue that indifference to one thing often simply implied adherence to another, for historians it is not simply a case of substituting affinity with empire or nation for, say, religious, regional or familial ties. As Tara Zahra remarks in her article *Imagined Noncommunities*, “indifference is […] fundamentally a negative and nationalist category. Indifference only existed as such in the eyes of the nationalist beholder.”[12] Likewise, imperial indifference exists primarily in the eyes of the imperial beholder.

[10] Bijl, *Emerging Memory*.
[11] Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 9.
[12] Tara Zahra, ‘Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis’, *Slavic Review*, 2010, 105.

In this study I therefore suggest that instead of treating this perceived *indifference* as an anomaly of the idea of an all-permeating imperial culture, we see the *perception* of indifference as stemming from imperialist ideas. The most important imperial idea in this respect is the long-held notion that that metropole and colony were firmly separate entities, and that the movements of people, goods and ideas within empires are decidedly centrifugal, emanating from the centres and affecting only the peripheries. The construct of an ignorant, indifferent or otherwise not-knowing public fits this idea of the metropole as immune to outside influences.[13] Not only registering indifference, as we have seen many contemporaries did, was an imperially-minded thing to do, but the act of indifference itself was, paradoxically, also imperially-minded. The question therefore is whether such indifference was a product more of ignorance or of a more active form of not-knowing.

The Idea of the Metropole

The idea of the metropole as a self-contained entity is so powerful that is not only governed the imagination of contemporaries, but also haunted history writing for a long time. Making the case for British historiography, historian Catherine Hall refers to this as the idea that:

> Britain could be understood in itself, without reference to other histories: a legacy of the assumption that Britain provided the model for the modern world, the touch stone whereby all other national histories could be judged.[14]

That legacy of course originates in imperial ideas, which makes the idea of the metropole an imperial idea. So to what extend does Halls statement apply to The Netherlands? Arguably The Netherlands were never thought of as a country that provided a model for the modern world, but contemporaries did think it could be understood in itself. It was perfectly feasable, for instance, to publish books for the celebration of hundred years of Dutch independence in 1913 without a single mention of the colonies. These celebrations even extended to colonial Indonesia, where the irony of doing so in colonized territories was lost to most, but not to Soewardi Soerjaningrat

[13] Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda', in *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, 1997, 15.

[14] Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 9.

(1889-1959), an early nationalist writer and later educational reformer (by then going under the name of Hi Kadjar Dewantoro) who addressed the issue in a scathing piece called *Als ik eens Nederlander was …* (If I were a Dutchman…).[15] Soewardi was exiled to The Netherlands as a result of his writings, ironically bringing him to the place that defined itself without reference to its colonies, making his presence somewhat of an anomaly in metropolitan eyes. The ensuing tensions show that the difference between Britain and The Netherlands – despite the difference in magnitude of colonial rhetoric in both places – were not as big as one would think and prompts the question whether the 'model for the modern world' Hall cites should be thought of as Western, white, or European instead of British.

That the idea of the metropole is itself an imperial concept only highlights the need to distinguish between historical and analytical categories, as Frederick Cooper argues in his acclaimed *Colonialism in Question* (2004).[16] This distinction is particularly important in colonial contexts, the understanding of which is marred by concepts and perspectives that have their origins in the imperial machinery, perpetuating the myth of Manichaen dichotomies such as metropole-colony. It has resulted in the words of Cooper and Ann Stoler, in "a historiography that has invested in that myth as well," and which made them express the urge that "metropole and colony […] need to be brought into one analytical field."[17] This study takes that advice to heart by featuring The Netherlands primarily as a geographical space and studying the various projections of (aspriring) imperial subjects and citizens on this space. In consequence I include things in this study that were not thought to be part of a metropolitan imperial culture at the time. The attempts to create enthusiasm among a religious public for the overseas missionary activities (chapter 6), for example, ostensibly have little to no apparent intersections with the metropolitan sojourns of Indonesian intellectuals, artists and students (chapter 3). I will question the extent to which this disjuncture was in fact a coincidence, and whether most Indonesians were not destined to leave The Netherlands *because* they were denied a place in the imagined community of those who shared 'cultural imperial citizenship' in the first place. The Indonesian artists and intellectuals I study claimed a form of cultural citizenship, yet rejected the clear-cut categories that

[15] R. van der Doll, *Neerland's onafhankelijkheid 1813-1913* (Maassluis: Waltman, 1913); Soewardi Soerjaningrat, 'Als ik eens Nederlander was, …', *De Expres*, 23 July 1913.
[16] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
[17] Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony', 9, 15.

nation and empire presented them. The combination of the third chapter with chapters that represent more common stories of home imperial culture – like chapter 2, on *Indisch* food – is therefore essential to problematize the divide between metropole and colony. The *fragmented* empire from the title refers first and foremost to this divide.

Metropolitan imperial culture was not a monolith. This is the second meaning of what I call a *fragmented empire*. It consisted of various sub-cultures located in diverse spaces in civil society, a number of which represent the various chapter of this study. The aforementioned chapter two examines social circles of retired colonials and the attempts to popularize the colonial cuisine in the Netherlands. Chapter four investigates teachers, school classes and attempts by museum curators of the Colonial Museum to reach them in order to promote a business-friendly take on empire. Chapter five documents how the Scouting movement was introduced in The Netherlands and what imperial themes it copied and omitted from the British original. Finally, chapter six shows how missionary organisations also targeted the Dutch public in what was called the Inner Mission. These different groups engaged in a range of different activities without engaging much (if ever) with each other. They developed their own independent initiatives and did not simply echo official colonial policy. And yet, the term *fragment* also implies a whole. The subjects of the various chapters have something in common. This smallest common denominator is the cultural grammar of the Dutch empire. The five case studies that constitute chapters two to six – food culture, Indonesian sojourners, schools, the scouting movement, and the Christian mission – are all part of the grassroots experience of what can be called 'home imperialism.' They appear to us in relative isolation – scouts did not attend mission festivals and vice versa – but indirectly they spoke to each other. Their efforts were shaped by an imperial mindset and in turn created that same mindset. The permeation of imperial cultural in society at large had that mindset in common, while the exact manifestations were highly situational.

One risk in studying popular imperialism is that, given the imaginative sway of empire, metropolitan *popular consent* to the nation's imperial endeavours easily becomes a premise rather than a conclusion. The work of John MacKenzie is a case in point here: "The development, existence and promotion of imperial rule," he writes, "must imply levels of consent, not least among the population of the dominant

powers."[18] Huge empires, according to this line of thought, 1) existed (which no one would deny), 2) could not function without a huge workforce of white Europeans, 3) and therefore must have had a huge recruiting pool to staff the empire in the form of an imperially minded nation. MacKenzie's question was not whether the metropolitan popularization of empire was successful, but how? The ensuing determinism and MacKenzie's tendency to find traces of empire virtually everywhere have drawn criticism from various sides. Most notably, Bernard Porter argued that the British were in fact 'absent-minded imperialists', meaning that they were not so much occupied by imperial affairs in their daily lifes and that their consent was tacit. Porter argues that this applied at the very least to a majority consisting of the lower classes, thereby challenging the third premise, that the recruiting pool must be enthused with empire in order to function as such. Opportunism might be another important factor as to why people would be ready to embark on imperial careers. More importantly, though, the idea of a nation as empire-enthusiastic or not reinforces once again the unproductive binary, something to which Porter also contributes with his recurrent insistence that "all that was required" from the British people for the empire to function "was a minimum of apathy."[19]

Legacies of Empire

While it may be the likes of Stoler, Cooper, and Hall that inform this study theoretically, it is the Porter-MacKenzie debate that shows how questions about the empire's past, and therefore also about the empire's legacies, are not neutral questions. In particular Bernard Porter's position – even though this is not the consequence he likely intended – lends itself for minimizing the importance of the British Empire, or for that matter the Dutch empire, today. In this way history can serve a particular agendas, says Dane Kennedy:

> There are those historians [...] who maintain that "the idea of a powerful and constraining colonial legacy is seriously flawed," especially as an explanation for the challenges that confront many of the peoples of former colonies because it minimizesboth pre- and postcolonial factors while exaggerating colonialism's lingering effects. In other words, it's time for them – and us – to get over it. There are other historians who advance the closely related argument that the British Empire was never as powerful and transformative as it is often made out to be; it

[18] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*, 1–2.

[19] Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 307.

> was an “improvised and provisional” empire, “always ramshackle and quite often chaotic.” In other words, it was not that big a deal anyway.[20]

Yet another strand does think the empire was a big deal, but in some macabre twist it values it positively, curiously echoing the civilising mission rhetoric of a century past. The main proponent of this position might be the British historian Niall Ferguson, who saw the British Empire mainly as the vehicle for spreading civilisation across the globe, and whose work was used rewrite the British school curriculum. In a nutshell this is all about the question whether “the empire should engender pride or shame,” as historian Andrew Thompson writes in what is to date one of the best syntheses of the respective positions in the debate.[21]

The Dutch case is complicated even more by the fact that, in contrast to the British, it was a small empire – not in terms of geography, or of atrocities committed, or the general impact colonial rule had on colonized and metropolitan societies, which are all things that are finally being documented in Dutch historiography, but rather in terms of culture and self-image. Instructively it was only as late as the 1980s that historians started to think of the Dutch colonial constellation as an empire.[22] This self-image as a non-empire left its traces in Dutch language. Whereas the capitalized combination of the words British and Empire feels all too familiar, the same cannot be said for the Dutch equivalent. References in Dutch are usually made to ‘the colonies’ or ‘overseas territories’ and empire (*rijk*) only has its distinctive meaning with the adjective ‘colonial’ attached to it. The risk this non-imperial, non-jingoistic self-image poses is that is easily leads to the conclusion that ‘it was not a big deal anyway.’

The assumption that the Dutch Empire was not a big deal has been challenged by historians and other scholars. Historian Susan Legêne already argued that “Dutch culture has developed itself as a colonial culture, which has left traces in today’s society,” and very recently anthropologist Gloria Wekker posited “an unacknowledged reservoir of knowledge and feelings based on four hundred years of imperial rule” which play an

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[20] Dane Kennedy, ‘The Imperial History Wars’, *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 1 (2015): 22.
[21] Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back?: The Impact Of Imperialism On Britain From The Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), 7.
[22] Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, *The Netherlands and the Rise of Modern Imperialism: Colonies and Foreign Policy, 1870-1902* (New York: Berg, 1991); Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, ‘Het imperialisme-debat in de Nederlandse geschiedschrijving’, *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (1998): 56–73.

important role in "dominant meaning-making processes" today and in the past.[23] While authors like Legêne and Wekker acknowledge the moral dimension of their histories, others have tried to refrain from taking such positions. In 2001 historian Jos de Beus even referred to the "rash confusion of ontological and moral calls of judgement" historians on the Dutch Empire tend to make in his eyes.[24] What was not so long ago seen as neutral and detached history writing, however, quickly loses its respectability. A claim like the one historian Joop de Jong made in the mid nineties – that "the Netherlands didn't do that bad" in the process of Indonesian decolonization – now seems to belong to another era.

"Domestic decolonization processes remain [...] incomplete," wrote Elizabeth Buettner recently in her comparative study of the postcolonial configurations of five former European imperial powers.[25] While what it means to write history in a 'neutral' and 'detached' manner is rapidly changing, it would be presumptuous to think that the historical discipline is exempt from this incomplete decolonization process. "An Olympian aloofness from the moral and political passions that surroundus," writes Dane Kennedy in this regard, "is neither fully possible nor, I believe, entirely desirable."[26] I mostly agree with that statement. While the bulk of the chapters (2 to 6) in this study address the role of the empire in Dutch society around the long turn of the twentieth century directly, the first chapter deals with historiography and reflects on the critical function history as a discipline has (and, unfortunately, often has not) had in the way the colonial past is remembered. That the Netherlands still 'has to come to terms with its colonial past', is an often-heard dictum by historians, activists and commentators, and while the reverberations of such psychological language are a matter to be discussed separately, it stands true up to today. But while the point that The Netherlands has to come to terms with the past suggests that these ambiguities are something solely of the present, a trauma that came with decolonization, I contend that imperialist feelings and

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[23] Susan Legêne, *Spiegelreflex: Culturele sporen van de koloniale ervaring* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2010), 8; Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Duke University Press, 2016), 3.
[24] Jos de Beus, 'God dekoloniseert niet. Een kritiek op de Nederlandse geschiedschrijving over de neergang van Nederlands-Indië en Nederlands Suriname', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review* 116, no. 3 (2001): 207.
[25] Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 4.
[26] Kennedy, 'The Imperial History Wars', 22.

colonial culture in the metropole contained these ambiguities from the start. To understand colonial consciousness today, we need to understand its past.

Chapter 1

The Metropole Revisited

New Perspectives and Old Divides in the Study of Metropole and Colony

> Europe's colonies were never empty spaces to be made over in Europe's unage or fashioned in its interest; nor, indeed, were European states self-contained entities that at one point projected themselves overseas.[27]

The citation above from Ann Stoler and Fred Cooper can be read as a criticism of two bodies of work. On the one hand there is historical scholarship on colonized territories, that tends to either not incorporate metropolitan stories or only render the metropole as the centrifugal centre of power. On the other hand there is the historiography of those metropoles, usually in the form of national histories, that tends to ignore the amount in which the colonial encounter shaped Europe. Since Stoler and Cooper made these remarks, and asserted instead that "metropole and colony […] need to be brought into one analytical field," many scholars have indeed done so, but usually – and just like this study is doomed to repeat – under the label of 'colonial history'. Whereas it seems utterly ill-informed to write any history of a colonized area without taking that colonial history and its legacies into account, it is still imaginable to do exactly that when it comes to the metropole.

In a substantial number of earlier studies the metropole has been entirely absent as an imperial space – whether it be colonial studies ignoring the metropole or metropolitan studies ignoring the colonies. Colonialism was something that happened elsewhere. Anthropological, historical and linguistic studies from colonial times leave

[27] Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony', 1.

the colonial power structure out of the picture almost entirely and describe their subjects as if they exist without their interference – think of the numerous studies into the primordial law and culture (*volksaard*) of indigenous people. Another strand of research that leaves the metropole out is the anti-colonial writings of the nationalist and independence movements that followed after colonial rule. Yet another body of scholarly work does include the metropole, but does so in a deeply unsatisfying way, as centres of power from which everything else followed. Such centrifugal approaches to empire focus on the colonial office, either literally or as a figure of speech.

As I will show in this chapter, these different approaches offer us one methodology that excludes the colony from metropolitan stories (histories of nationalism and liberalism), two that exclude the metropole from consideration (colonial-anthropological studies and anti-colonial nationalist writings), and two methodologies that include metropole and colony together (colonial office studies and Stoler and Cooper's approach which we could categorize under *New Imperial History*). In the following historiographical overview that features these five ways of (not) doing imperial history, they do not always succeed each other in neat chronological order. Finally, I will contend that only a *New Imperial History* approach remains viable for producing a full examination of colonial and metropolitan society together, and that Dutch history that considers the metropole in isolation need to be seriously reconsidered. Although invisibility may be a central quality of Dutch imperial culture in the metropole, this should not lead us to think it was not there.

Colonial and Anti-Colonial Writings

Colonialism itself and the study of it are historically interwined. Disciplines like anthropology and colonial history are traditionally part of the imperial machinery, and their taxonomies often justified colonial rule by providing legitimation for the idea of a natural hierarchy between worlds. But while studies from this category justify colonial rule, they also, paradoxically, obscure the position the colonizer has in the story. If present at all, the colonizer can be found discreetly in the background, as if development could be administered without any actual interference. Such studies linked the scientific

ideal of neutral observation with the idea that metropole and colony were distinct worlds that did not interact.

In *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht…. Nederlandsch-Indië in de xx^ste^ eeuw* (Something great was accomplished: The Dutch East Indies in the Twentieth Century), an anthology that promoted Dutch acclompishments in the Indies which was published in 1941, this position of the colonizer as overseeing but not interfering is clearly visible. Written on the eve of Indonesian independence, it was filled with contributions by the most prominent Dutch scholars working on the subject. Not all chapters avoid the colonizer's presence in the story, and one chapter is even dedicated to the question how the 'East Indies' had become the 'Dutch Indies'. The author writes that "circumstances necessitated the VOC to be not only trader but also sovereign." He stressed the role of 'persistence', which he saw as a typical Dutch characteristic, in the making of the colony. "Once set in motion it is hard to stop, and setbacks only stimulate him in his persistence," and continues to say that "our ties with the Indies exist because of this characteristic."[28] Despite being published so close to Indonesian independence it is noteworthy that to its authors the end of Dutch colonial rule was not something they could imagine, but which was also not at odds with their convinction that the civilising mission ("The Netherlands' great aim to bring peace and prosperity to its overseas empire") was coming to an end, as the past tense of the book's title professed.[29]

While *Daar werd iets groots verricht* was aimed at a larger public, its portrayal of the colonies is in line with scholarly writings of the preceding decades. Of course colonialism and the study of it are historically intertwined, something which is best illustrated by the case of anthropologist and orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), whose career was intimately bound to colonial Indonesia. As an advisor to the military commander Van Heutsz he played a vital role in the colonial wars in Aceh, while as a scholar and professor at Leiden University he advocated access to education for all colonial subjects. The resistance in Aceh, for which he blamed "gangs" led by "ulamas and adventurers" which he distinguished from the majority of the population, could not be negotiated with because "their doctrine and self-interest makes them

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[28] F.W. Stapel, 'Van Coen tot Van Heutsz: Hoe uit de Oost-Indiën Nederlandsch-Indië werd', in *Daar wérd wat groots verricht….: Nederlandsch-Indië in de XXste eeuw*, ed. Mr. W.H. Van Helsdingen and Mr. Dr. H. Hoogenberk (Amsterdam: N.V. Uitgevers-maatschappij 'Elsevier', 1941), 28–30.
[29] W.H. van Helsdingen, 'Voorwoord', in *Daar wérd wat groots verricht….: Nederlandsch-Indië in de XXste eeuw*, ed. W.H. van Helsdingen and H. Hoogenberk (Amsterdam: N.V. Uitgevers-maatschappij 'Elsevier', 1941), VI.

susceptible only to violence." His advice was therefore to "hit them hard" as this would prevent others from joining their forces.[30] Subjugation was a necessity for exerting colonial rule. Central in Snouck Hurgronje's analysis was Islam, which he saw as a fundamentally anti-modern force, incapable of the social and religious renewal he deemed necessary, and which had to be reckoned with in colonial governance. What he saw as the main task of Dutch rule in the Indies, "the emancipation of the Native," could therefore not be accomplished overnight but only through the gradual education of an Indonesian elite.[31] It is for this standpoint on education, and for his other beliefs that fitted within the paradigm of liberal imperialism – associated with the name *ethische politiek* in Dutch, or Ethical Policy – that Snouck Hurgronje is remembered as an enlightened element in the history of Dutch imperialism. It cannot be seen separately, however, from his call for violent subjugation of the Indies – 'pacification' in the imperial jargon – which was the other side of the same coin.

Snouck Hurgronje was a prominent exponent of the *ethische politiek* (henceforth Ethical School), the liberal school of imperial thought that had its heyday around the turn of the twentieth century, and which critized the existing colonial equilibrium, which its proponents deemed exploitative.[32] Other proponents included geography professor P.J. Veth (1814-1895), lawyer and member of parliament C.Th. van Deventer (1857-1915) and member of the colonial supreme court J.H. Abendanon (1852-1925). The Ethical Policy movement vented strong criticism on the Dutch colonial policy and practice of the nineteenth century. It considered the explotation of the Indies unethical, and advocated instead that colonial rule should be approached as a calling. Van Deventer coined the term *eereschuld* (moral debt or debt of honour) in 1901 in a discussion of Dutch rule in the Indonesian archipelago. The collective complicity in extracting the colony's wealth and labour now forced the Dutch to make up for their past mistakes, the movement believed, and the ultimate criterium for future colonial policy would have to be the extent to which it benefitted the colonial subjects whose labour it had claimed in the years prior. As the Dutch version of the civilising mission or *mission civilatrice*, the Ethical Policy was inherently contradictory, as it propagated simultaneously the emancipation of Indonesians and the infinite perpetuation of Dutch

[30] E. Gobée and C. Adriaanse, eds., *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje, 1889-1936. Eerste deel* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), 57.
[31] Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, 'Blikken in Het Zieleleven van Den Javaan?', *De Gids* 72 (1908): 441.
[32] While *Ethische Politiek* translates as 'Ethical Policy', henceforth I will opt for the term Ethical School to underscore that it was not only an erraticly implemented line of policy but also a school of thought.

guidance in the process. The oxymoron of 'guided emancipation' was attractive to Dutch progressive thinkers, as it did not deprive them of a colonial career in the foreseeable future. To Indonesians critical of colonial rule it was rather frustrating, as any steps towards education and (limited) democracy always seemed to stall short of what was promised.[33] Moreover, the military campagins to uphold Dutch authority, in particular in the peripheral regions of the archipelago such as Aceh, were premised on the movement's ideological basis: 'Ethical' emancipation could not do without guidance, and guidance could not be enforced without violent coercion.[34]

Emancipatory movements like the religious mass movement and trade union *Sarekat Islam* and the organization of the Indonesian upper class in the *Boedi Oetomo* (Perfect Endeavour) reacted antagonistically to ethical thinking because they fully realised the implications of the *guided* in *guided emancipation*. As precursors to the decolonization movement they only started to receive full scholarly attention after decolonization, with Akira Nagazumi's *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism* (1972) and Takashi Shiraishi's *An Age in Motion* (1990) as some of the most notable works. In particular the latter was groundbreaking in its approach to the early anticolonial movements in all their forms as a tightly interdependent network, with people and ideas moving across the institutional borders of the various organizations and movements.[35] It was predominantly foreign scholars who took an interest in the origins of the nationalist movement, while the most notable Dutch publication in the decades succeeding Indonesian independence were source publications. The choice for source publications has been interpreted as a sign of inability among Dutch historians to engage with this past, as a sign of colonial trauma even. Historian Elsbeth Locher-Scholten has argued instead that it should be seen not as a sign of a psychological inability to speak, but simply as a way to avoid the thorny questions and self-reflection required after decolonization.[36]Gradually, Dutch historians turned to a more critical assessment of the

[33] Matthijs Kuipers, 'De eerste verbanning van Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo: Javaans arts, Indisch politicus, zoon van een getergd volk. 1908-1914' (MA thesis, Utrecht University, 2011).
[34] Berteke Waaldijk and Suzan Legêne, 'Ethische politiek in Nederland. Cultureel burgerschap tussen overheersing, opvoeding en afscheid', in *Het koloniale beschavingsoffensief; Wegen naar het nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950*, ed. Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben, 2009, 187–216.
[35] Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism: The Early Years of the Budi Utomo, 1908-1918*, 10 (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1972); Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).
[36] Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Een bronnenpublicatie als signaal van koloniaal trauma? Ontstaan en ontvangst van de Officiële bescheiden', in *De leeuw en de banteng: bijdragen aan het congres over de*

colonial administration. It was the same Locher-Scholten who was particularly influential in addressing the inner contradictions of ethical thinking, while Maarten Kuitenbrouwer was the first historian to speak of Dutch Imperialism – a noun that had hitherto not been associated with Dutch colonial rule.[37]

Studies like Locher-Scholten's and others that followed were a welcome critical reassessment of historical figures like Van Deventer and Snouck Hurgronje, as it allowed for the deconstruction of imperial categories of thought. At the same time a lingering biographical focus on the flag-bearers of the Ethical School can be seen as a sign that this deconstruction is not yet complete. The binary colonialism-anticolonialism takes up a central position in much of the historiography: the works focussing on Dutch Ethical thinkers as well as studies of nationalist and anticolonial movements are often the result of this binary. Critique on colonial categories-of-thought and their anticolonial photo negatives is what emerged in a structural way in the 1980s from the then-nascent field of postcolonial and subaltern studies by scholars like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Partha Chatterjee, and in Britain, somewhat earlier, Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy.

A Postcolonial Turn in Historiography

It is as often noted as it is conveniently forgotten that *postcolonialism* does not only signify the temporal shift from a state of formal colonization to independence, but also pertains to a change in attitude, or even a decolonizing of the mind. The postcolonial state of mind may have gained momentum thanks to formal decolonization, but it was not precipitated by it alone (and, conversely, it should not be forgotten as one of the causes of formal decolonization). Postcolonialism is an attempt to break with previous relationships between knowledge and power. In the words of historian Catherine Hall: "While anti-colonialism had focused on the expulsion of colonising powers and the creation of new political nations, the postcolonial project is about dismantling the deep assumption that only white people are fully human and their claim to be 'the lords of

Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1945-1950, gehouden in Den Haag van 27-29 maart 1996, ed. P. J. Drooglever and M. J. B. Schouten (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 1997), 250–72.

[37] Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten: vijf studies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische archipel 1877-1942* (Utrecht: HES publishers, 1981); Kuitenbrouwer, *The Netherlands*.

human kind'."[38] This is why some studies of nationalist movements are also suspect in postcolonial eyes, as they easily reinforece concepts that were brought about by colonialism in the first place, such as the the teleology of progress and the idea of stages of development. This is not to say that Western concepts have not affected non-Western traditions, because they have and vice versa. This is what Dipesh Chakrabarty argued for in his influential *Provincialising Europe*, to see Western thought as an influence, but one among many others. European ideas were coming from a place called Europe and were mediated through the colonial encounter, not universal givens that could be applied indiscriminately around the world:

> A history of political modernity in India could not be written as a simple application of the analytics of capital and nationalism available to Western Marxism. One could not, in the manner of some nationalist historians, pit the story of a regressive colonialism against an account of a robust nationalist movement seeking to establish a bourgeois outlook throughout society.[39]

For Chakrabarty it was essential to dispense with the Western standard in our categories of analysis, and not to assume that Karl Marx or Max Weber – let alone the ancient philosophers – are as relevant to, say, early nineteenth century India as they are to early twentieth century Europe. The argument is not, however, to ignore European influence where it existed, which leaves us with the somewhat paradoxical statement that European thought is simultaneously "indispensable and inadequate" in thinking through the alternative modernities of former colonies, as Chakrabarty writes it. Tracing European influences should thus lead to locating its limits, rather than to proclaiming its universality.

Probably the most influential of all postcolonial writers on the discipline of history has been Edward Saïd. Like so many others he built upon the works of Michel Foucault by pointing to the mutually constituent relation between knowledge and power, or more specifically, the role Western knowledge-production in the form of images, literature, and fiction and art in general played in creating the image of an Oriental Other. It is this view of the Other that heavily determined how Europe conceived the rest of the world in recent centuries. Virtually everything could be rendered in stereotypes that either conformed with that of the Arabic barbarian, or with the exotic beauty of Scheherazade. *Orientalism* is the name of the work in which he

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[38] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, 7.

[39] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincialising Europe: Post-Colonial Thought and Colonial Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 15.

posited most of these ideas for the first time, but by now the term is also the shorthand for his ideas.[40] Said depicted Orientalism as an imperial mindset that permeated most, if not all, of Western culture, and can be detected in places such as the works of Joseph Conrad – someone who had a progressive voice on matters of empire in the eyes of his contemporaries. Conrad's *Into the heart of darkness* (1899), arguably his most famous work, is a sharp criticism of imperial practice. However, in that work, Said argues that Conrad also fails to expand this point to imperial ideology. Conrad could not envisage an alternative to imperialism, and even though he asserted that "the darkness" had an autonomy of its own he refused to draw the ultimate consequence from this, which would be, in Said's words to "grant the natives their freedom."[41]

It is not hard to see why Said captivated the historian's mind more than, say, Gayatri Spivak, another highly influential postcolonial scholar. In her highly influential essay *Can the Subaltern speak?* she answered the titular question with a resounding 'no'. But while her popularity (against the odds of a somewhat opaque style) arguably has to do with the philosophical soundness of the argument, the epistemological position that the subaltern 'cannot speak' (i.e. cannot be known) can hardly be called an invitation to further research. Said may have had the opposite effect, at least on historians. The subject of Said's work is, ultimately, not the Other but the cultural production of the Other in the West. And unlike the subaltern, Western Oriental fantasies are within epistemological reach. Ann Stoler – more influenced by Foucault then by Said – may not follow in Said's footstepts, but she does make a distinction between what she calls 'iconography' and 'pragmatics', and while her studies focus on the latter, she sees Said as the primary point of reference for the former:

> [S]exual images illustrate the iconography of rule, not its pragmatics. Sexual assymetries and visions convey what is 'really' going on elsewhere, at another political epicentre. They are tropes to depict other centres of power.[42]

Said's influence also shows when Catherine Hall writes on the "deep assumption that only white people are fully human", as I quoted above. Saids work has proven itself indispensable for those studying imperial imageries.

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[40] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).
[41] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), 34.
[42] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 44.

Said's reception by historians has not been unanimously positive, however. Most authors in volume V of the *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, on historiography, refer to Said and his arguments "constantly, if often dismissively," as Stephen Howe noted.[43] And whereas in *Propaganda and Empire* (1984) John MacKenzie took up Said's call to study colonial discourses to its everyday manifestations in the form of biscuit wrappings, soap bars, postcards and theatre plays, thus expanding the scope offered by Said, who was concerned predominantly with literature,[44] in *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (1995) he turned to a direct critique of Said. Some of the central points of his criticism were Said's failure to distinguish between high and popular culture and his absolute take on imperial hegemony. Instead, MacKenzie argues, the arts have a tendency to produce counter-hegemonic discourses, and they did precisely so in the case of the British empire:

> Said recognises that the traffic cannot all be one way, that Orientalism was forming the West as well as the Orient. The East 'has helped to define Europe' (p. 1), has been an 'integral part of European *material* civilisation and culture', a 'sort of surrogate and even underground self', at times (as for the Romantics) even a means of regenerating the West. Thus the discourse of Orientalism seems to go further than merely highlighting the alleged superiorities of Europe. It can modify and therefore surely even challenge the West. Said never follows through the logic of this, that the example of the Orient can become the means for a counter-western discours, that it can offer opportunities for literary extension, spiritual renewal and artistic development. Thus the Orient, or at least its discourse, has the capacity to become the tool of cultural revolution, a legitimising source of resistance to those who challenge western conventions, introspection and complacency.[45]

Before assessing MacKenzie's take on Said, it is important to note that his argument is different from many others. Much critique of Said revolves around the issue of *essentializing*, and claims that Said is guilty of his own charge; in other words, that he himself essentialises his subject as much as he claims the Oriental discourse does with the Orient. "The critique of Orientalism," writes Subaltern Studies apostate Sumit Sarkar, "and colonial power-knowledge does often use terms like 'Enlightenment rationality', 'colonial discourse', 'third-world culture', as well as of course 'Orientalism' itself, in the grossest of homogenizing ways." Not surprisingly, then, Sarkar thinks of Orientalism as

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[43] Stephen Howe, 'The Slow Death and Strange Rebirths of Imperial History', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 29, no. 2 (1 May 2001): 135, doi:10.1080/03086530108583122.
[44] John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960*, Repr. of 1985, Studies in Imperialism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).
[45] John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism. History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 10.

"a devil peculiarly difficult to exorcize."[46] As much as this 'charge of essentializing' may be true, however, we should also note that this kind of critique of Said is by now a form of orthodoxy on its own. The question is how Sarkar and MacKenzie relate exactly to this orthodoxy. Both disagree fundamentally with Said and partly overlap, but while Sarkar functions as a Marxist counterpoint to the relativist tendencies of subaltern approaches at its most postmodern, MacKenzie's main concern is not so much the issue of *essentializing* as the issue of *reciprocity*.

MacKenzie believes that the Orientalist discourse could itself undermine ideas of Western superiority, and therefore Orientalist discourses might not only be a tool of oppression in the colonial equilibrium, but also a channel through which 'the Rest' could affect 'the West'. This is, in other words, a way of assigning agency to the colonized. It breaks with the idea of colonialism as a purely centrifugal force, but also runs the risk of falling into another problematic binary that sees exploitation or complicity as the only options. MacKenzie, however, is not so much interested in the possibility of a shared complicity between colonizer and colonized, as he is in the opposite, that colonial history might offer some redemption for both. The West, he argues, was at times appreciative of Oriental influences. He points to the decidedly positive effects that came from Orientalist inspiration, depicting this simultaneously as a form of agency for the colonized and as a sign of 'genuine interest' in the East by Western artists and writers. "[T]here is no chronological coincidence," he writes, "between levels of artistic valuation and imperial rule, no consistent or monolithic relationship between aesthetic movements and power. The efforts to revive western crafts and infuse them with what were perceived to be superior levels of oriental design seem to have arisen out of genuine respect."[47] What shines through in this argument is MacKenzie's "affection for an artistic heritage that he feels has been unfairly accused of complicity in imperialism," as Dane Kennedy put in, combined with an unwillingness to assess the arts as part of the wider ideological configuration they were part of.[48]

While MacKenzie's represents a strand of historiogrpahy that appears unwilling to draw from postcolonial approaches for our understanding of colonial history others have taken up the *reciprocity* argument in a way that does reckon with the postcolonial

[46] Sumit Sarkar, 'Orientalism Revisited: Saidian Frameworks in the Writing of Modern Indian History', *Oxford Literary Review* 16, no. 1 (1994): 207.
[47] MacKenzie, *Orientalism. History, Theory and the Arts*, 133.
[48] Dane Kennedy, 'Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts by John M. MacKenzie', *The International History Review* 18, no. 4 (1996): 912–14.

impulse.[49] Prominentaly among them are Ann Stoler and Fred Cooper, with whom this chapter started. Drawing on the works of George Balandier, Bernard Cohn, and Jean and John Comaroff, among others, they make the case for bringing metropole and colony, colonizer and colonized, all these binaries have to be brought within the same analytical field in order to avoid, on the one hand, that the subject of study remains an ethnographic Other, and on the other hand, that "European agency remains undifferentiated, assumed, and unexplored." [50]

In the aforementioned programmatic and influential essay that opened their edited volume *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (1997) Stoler and Cooper make the case for a history of empire that adapts to the cultural turn in colonial studies, but without leaving out the material relations of production and exchange; a history that takes the composition of the colonial archive to be "the very substance of colonialism's cultural politics"; one that sees the tensions and ambiguities of colonial states with regards to questions of inclusion and exclusion or profitability versus morality not as signs of crisis, but that "puts contradiction at the centre of the colonial state's operative mode." Such a history is aware that official narratives were subject to rumor and doubt, and that "hierarchies of credibility [...] were continually breached by an indigenous population who turned European rumors about native insurrection and subversion against their authors and to other ends"; and, lastly, a history that challenges the 'post', the 'colonial' and the '-ity' in postcoloniality – in short, because "it homogenizes a power relationship whose limitations and contingencies need to be examined [and] because it suggests an essential quality to the fact of having been colonized."[51] Stoler and Cooper's essay is foremost an appeal to complexity – their success lies in their ability to diagnose the fallacies of different turns in imperial history writing, not in providing a concise research program for the future. If there is any key imperative to take from their work it is the webbed nature of the imperial (or any) world, an interconnectedness that suggests that encounters work both ways, and that any result in the balance of material or cultural power is negotiated through this web.

[49] Dane Kennedy, 'Imperial History and Post-colonial Theory', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 24, no. 3 (1996): 345–63.
[50] Georges Balandier, 'La Situation Coloniale: Approche Théorique', *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie* 11 (1951): 44–79; Bernard S. Cohn, 'History and Anthropology: The State of Play', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 2 (1980): 198–221; Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*; Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony', 16.
[51] Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony', 12–37.

However their work is interpreted, that maxim that "Europe was made by its imperial projects, as much as colonial encounters were shaped by conflicts within Europe itself" has inspired many works of history in the years that followed.[52]

Public Imperialism in Britain

The ideas above – that the colonial encounter was a two-way street; that the imperial mindset was not a creation *ex nihilo* but something that can and needs to be historicised – have also led to new understandings of the metropole in connection to empire, first in Britain and later in other former centers of empire. Given its prominence in historiography, I will first discuss work on Britain before turning to the Dutch case.

There was more to study there than just the 'official mind', as the arguably most influential scholars of British imperial history in the twentieth century, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, dubbed the opinions and ways of civil servants, policy-makers and politicians with regards to empire – in other words, the colonial policy as it originated in the halls of the Colonial Office. New inquiries shed light on phenomena as various as transnational networks of anticolonialism, the symbiosis of nationalism and empire (rather than being strictly separated spheres), and most notably, to popular culture. It was the same John MacKenzie who would later, in the nineties, offer the scathing critique of Said, who in the eighties had become the marquee pioneer in the study of imperial culture in the metropole with publishing *Propaganda and Empire* (1984). In this work he asserted that British domestic society was in fact steeped in imperialism, thus arguing against the idea that the effects or influences of empire were only 'centrifugal' in nature (and probably also laying the groundwork for his rejection of Said).

Imperial ideology, MacKenzie argued, was not only disseminated in official writings, but also through the imperial propaganda of many sorts to which the lower classes were increasingly exposed. Official propaganda was supported by 'education, juvenile literature, theatre and youth organisations' – in other words, more insidious ways to imbue the idea of empire in the masses. The Queen, for example, was positioned as an 'imperial matriarch', and, together with this, official militarism became more respected and disseminated in public life, thereby paving the way for the concord of

[52] Ibid., 1.

patriotism and imperialism.[53] MacKenzie identifies three distinct periods in the history of what he calls "popular imperialism" in Britain, a concept which he defines in *Propaganda and Empire* as propaganda disseminated by the government, official Imperial institutions, the school system and the media among the popular classes. The first phase doesn't end until the First World War and is marked by an adventurous and military discourse. In this period, advertisements for colonial goods like chocolate, tobacco or tea not only stressed their exotic origins but also explicitly associated with the royal house and the military. This is, in other words, the period of jingoism and the romanticization of overseas territories as sites of adventure. The second phase, between the world wars, sees the jingoism dropped in favour for internationalist ideas, such as presenting the British Commonwealth as a rival to the League of Nations. The third phase, then, sees this internationalist and development-oriented presentation wane again. In short, according to MacKenzie British society is steeped in imperialism, with only the emphasis of this imperial ideology changing over the years.[54] As a phenomenon it proved a constant presence in society, not one only expressed in jingoistic outbursts.

MacKenzie's early work was still heavily affected by the idea of an 'official mind' and was not so much a study of popular culture itself, as of the official attempts to shape popular culture. For MacKenzie, studying the latter was an indirect way of studying the former, which he suggests when he writes that he is interested in exploring popular trends rather than intellectual trends. And yet, his early work was more about the dissemination of propaganda in society, not directly about its reception, let alone about how imperial ideology was made 'from below.' Between the manipulators (the government, institutions, media, etc.) and the manipulated (the British people, in particular the lower classes), it is the former that have his attention.[55] A case in point is his particular use of newspaper articles as a source. Media discourse of course can be studied, but its effect on people (how much these articles were discussed, how they were valued, whether they were read at all) is ultimately an unknown. As many scholars of popular mentalities, public culture, and other everyday phenomena know, the ideal source – readers' accounts of what they read and how it influenced their thinking – are

[53] John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 2–9.
[54] Ibid., 16, 255–57; Cf. John Darwin, 'Decolonization and the End of Empire', in *The Oxford Handbook of the British Empire. Vol. V, Historiography*, ed. Robin W. Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 541–57.
[55] MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 1984, 254.

as indispensible for answering this question as they are unavailable. The whole endeavour of studying popular consciousness ultimately boils down to an attempt to circumvent this problem of sources.

Over the years MacKenzie's awareness of the problem has seems to have increased, and the balance between dissemination and reception in his work has shifted somewhat in favour of the latter. In his introduction to *European Empire and the People* (2011) he still writes: "So many cultural institutions (and these can include educational, publishing, entertainment, advertising and much else) adopted imperial content within their cultural frameworks."[56] But he also demonstrates an increased awareness of the top-down versus from-below dilemma when he adds that "it is necessary to analyse the supply of materials relating to empire as well as its potential consumption" when we try to assess the popular interest in empire.[57] "It became increasingly impossible for European populations, even many people in rural areas," he writes, "to imagine that their lives were based only on local circumstances", and that "the permeation of these [imperial] ideas was never a purely top-down phenomenon."[58]

This shift has not, however, altered his methods fundamentally, and his argument still relies on what is, ultimately, circumstantial, albeit compelling, evidence. In his chapter in *European Empires and the People* he points out that the possibility of emigration to colonial territories affected everyone: as a potential life course, and because virtually everyone who stayed behind had relatives who did migrate. "It would seem unlikely," MacKenzie concludes, " that such major movements of people had no effects upon the home populations."[59] Along similar lines he points out that theatre plays with imperial motifs were performed in small towns all across the country for lengthy periods of time, indicating their popularity. "It has been truly said that the box office does not lie," he remarks here. These play re-enacted historical moments, mutinies, and imperial wars, and depicted the empire as a place 'where fortunes were made, characters go and return, fabulous jewels emanate from' – a place, in other words, "which can influence, for good or for ill, the lives of the central characters of plots."[60]

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[56] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*, 4.
[57] Ibid., 58.
[58] John M. MacKenzie, 'Passion or Indifference? Popular Imperialism in Britain: Continuities and Discontinuities over Two Centuries', in *European Empires and the People: Popular Responses to Imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 4–5, 58.
[59] Ibid., 62.
[60] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*, 67–69.

This is the case MacKenzie makes: with so many references to empire in popular culture, it is simply infathomable that the empire was not a regular part of everyday life. The circumstantial evidence is too abundant to ignore.

The scholarly consensus was not unanimous on this point, however. MacKenzie's most famous critic over the years has been Bernard Porter, who challenged MacKenzie directly with the thesis he offered in *The Absent-Minded Imperialists* (2004).[61] Their dispute revolves around one assumption on which MacKenzie's argumentation rests, namely his claim that popular consent for empire was a prerequisite for "the development, existence and promotion of imperial rule." An entity as large as the British Empire, he assumes, could not exist only as the result of the endeavour of a small elite. We could call this assumption 'MacKenzie's circle': the empire could not exist without popular support, there was an empire, thus, there must have been popular support. Combined with the circumstantial evidence on which his further argument relies, this makes MacKenzie's overall interpretation – however plausible – prone to criticism. Porter atacks him on exactly this point, arguing that the British empire was in fact constituted and maintained absent-mindedly, without constant popular awareness, and without any coherent and pervasive imperial ideology governing the process. He reverses MacKenzie's logic concerning the abundance of imperial propaganda:

> The MacKenzie school tended to assume that [the propaganda] must have been overwhelming because there was so much of it; an alternative reading, however, might be that it could not have been all that persuasive, if the propagandists felt they needed to propagandize so hard.[62]

Porter accuses MacKenzie (and Saïd) of 'blowing up' the imperial details in 'the photograph' of domestic imperialism. "This is why it is imperative to look at the empire's impact on British society in *context*," he argues, "to survey – [in an] archeological metaphor – the whole site." Porter believes this is a semantic game around the definition of 'empire', and asserts that some of the features of what is thought to be 'the empire', such as territorial expansion, existed long before there was an imperial ideology to serve as a frame of reference for such events. It is therefore possible to account for many events-thought-of-as-imperial without actually invoking the empire or

[61] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*; For the polemic between MacKenzie and Porter, see furthermore: J. M. MacKenzie, '"Comfort"and Conviction: A Response to Bernard Porter', 2008; Bernard Porter, 'Popular Imperialism: Broadening the Context', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 5 (2011): 833–45.
[62] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 6.

imperial ideology, leaving it a weak category of analysis. Empire can refer to brutal coercion and to collective mindsets alike, which makes the question 'how imperially conscious was British society' difficult to answer.[63]

The ensuing result in the scholarly debate, however, is exactly the semantic and interpretative game Porter accused his opponents of. Take for example the exchange between Porter and MacKenzie on the works of Charles Dickens. In Dickens' plots the empire is occasionally present, but it is seldom central to the plot. MacKenzie argues that the background presence of empire as 'the place were fortune is made' is extremely important: that emigration (and thereby the empire) can function so easily as a "regenerative, morally improving experience" proves that empire was an "everyday phenomenon." In his plays, MacKenzie concludes, Dickens expresses and confirms widely acknowledged imperial values.[64] Porter sees the same imperial references as 'marginal', they should be seen as 'wings behind which the actors can appear and disappear' and are therefore a tool, nothing more.[65] Porter applies the same kind of reasoning to other sources, too. When he tries to assess the 'amount of imperialism' in British middle class schools, for instance, it comes down to counting the number of pages in schoolbooks where the empire was mentioned. The resulting low number is meant to support Porter's argument, but he also turns to a more qualitative reading of schoolbooks, which leads him to conclude that the empire was approached rather critically from liberal perspectives, and was seldom mentioned in connection with patriotic pride. Maps are interpreted by Porter in the same way as textbooks: the famous "red-bespattered" maps – maps of the world almost entirely coloured to indicate the vast (nominal) territory of the British Empire – may have appeared as early as in the 1840s, he claims, but they were too expensive to hang on the walls of ordinary classrooms. This is the gist of most of Porter's interpretations of empirical evidence, be they books, maps or otherwise: there was little 'empire' in them, and if there was, they were not read extensively or disseminated widely.[66]

[63] Ibid., 8–13.
[64] John M. MacKenzie, '"Comfort" and Conviction: A Response to Bernard Porter', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 36, no. 4 (2008): 659–68.
[65] Porter, 'Popular Imperialism'.
[66] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 64–82.

Political Stakes and New Imperial History

British historiography on imperialism has moved well beyond the terms of this MacKenzie-Porter debate. Influenced by the theoretical works of, most notably, Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, a large number of scholars has studied the British Empire with a reorientation "from politics to cultures, from institutions to identities, from the intentions of imperial elites ("the official mind") to the experiences of colonial subjects ("subalterns" in all their variety)," as historian Dane Kennedy puts it in a recent article.[67] The problem of the 'game of numbers', which seems so unavoidable in Porter and MacKenzie's dispute, poses no problem at all for historians who see culture as plural, and who don't pursue an absolute ontology of metropolitan colonial culture as much as they ask how and when it manifested itself in a more situational or more phenomenological approach.

Such an approach is shared among scholars in a wider field than just the study of British imperialism. Tara Zahra, an historian of Eastern Europe, has argued for abandoning our binary understanding of national loyalty as something present or absent, an that argument can be expanded to other kinds of loyalty as well. "It seems more productive," she writes, "to analyze inaction, evasion, and indifference as potential forms of political agency," and adds that indifference "can only be understood situationally."[68] Nationalist (and, for that matter, imperial) identities often overlap with other loyalties and practices, making them into something else than the monolith proponents of such identities would have it. "[E]ven ostensibly patriotic members of rural nationalist associations," writes Pieter Judson on the language frontiers in Eastern Europe, providing another example, "continued to engage in child exchanges with their neighbours despite the dangers of 'Germanization' or 'Czechifications' that nationalists believed such choices would incur."[69] In doing so, scholars of empires all across history, whether it be the Habsburg Empire or the British Empire, follow the impetus from critical gender and race theorists, a field in which for example Sara Ahmed questions the "ontological given" of whiteness and asks instead "what 'whiteness' does."[70]

[67] Kennedy, 'The Imperial History Wars', 12.
[68] Zahra, 'Imagined Noncommunities', 113.
[69] Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Harvard University Press, 2006), 3.
[70] Sara Ahmed, 'A Phenomenology of Whiteness', *Feminist Theory* 8, no. 2 (1 August 2007): 150, doi:10.1177/1464700107078139.

Why, then, this focus on the game of numbers between MacKenzie and Porter? I would argue that their dispute, and their respective shortcomings, highlights the ideological stakes in the writing of the histories of empires. This is not because they themselves are more (nor less) ideologically inspired than others, but because their work illustrates best how works on the ontology rather than on the phenomenology of empire can be co-opted for more overtly political ends. In *The Empire Strikes Back?* (2005) historian Andrew Thompson rightly points out that the disagreements in debates about the history of the British empire and its effects on Britain stem only in part from different approaches to reading the evidence.[71] There are grand narratives of British history that govern how we interpret the role of empire in it, such as clinging to the idea of Britain's uniqueness or stressing the decline of Britain, either by lamenting the loss of Empire among other things, or by citing the Empire as the reason for Britain's "inflated ideas of its international role." A focus on decline cuts right across the political Right and Left, although that distinction, too, remains relevant, for the Right and Left would still attach a different value to the loss of empire. Bernard Porters writings may be governed by the idea that class was particularly important in the making of British society (a point that, in itself, is hard to argue with), and therefor be reluctant to assign too much significance to empire. Liberals, too, might downplay the importance of empire, Thompson suggests:

> [S]ince the loss of imperialism's intellectual respectability after 1945, there has been a tendency among Liberals to argue that it was never all that important to the British public anyway. In this sense there have been good and bad 'imperialisms', and 'non-imperialisms' too.[72]

The political implications of certain standpoints thus quickly become messy. It might be a decidedly leftwing argument to stress the importance of class, but what if this proceeds at the expense of stressing the vital role played by categories of race and sexuality in the making of empire, which also undoubtly left their traces on British society? Is MacKenzie anti-liberal because he thinks the empire was important to the British public? Or is he, because his aim in his *Orientalism*-book seems to be to find some respectability in the thoughts and aesthetics of Western Orientalists? It is difficult to place MacKenzie and Porter on different sides of such right-left divides in a meaningful way.

[71] Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back?*, 239.
[72] Ibid., 8.

In one important respect MacKenzie and Porter are not on different sides at all. They both seem to express misgivings about postcolonial theory (and poststructuralism in general). MacKenzie is a traditional historian – although he appears to have changed somewhat since the days that he wrote that 'aesthetic movements' (i.e. culture, arts) have nothing to do with power (i.e. imperial rule)[73] – while Porter's Marxist leaning is at odds with the emphasis postcolonialists put on other axes of difference.[74] They both have adopted a decidedly positivist approach to history. MacKenzie's choice of subject and his approach to doing history made him both a pioneer of and outlier within what is called *New Imperial History*. His objections to Said are what made him an outlier, but before he is labeled as belonging in the same category as the old historians of empire, it would be important to take note of the criticism those historians made of MacKenzie's work. "[S]erious doubts remain as to whether imperialism truly made an impact on the lives of the British people," writes for instance C.J.D. Duder in a 1987 review of MacKenzie's *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (1986). Duder also lamented the fact that MacKenzie and his fellow authors seemed to interpret imperialism as "exclusively [the] British domination of other races," and did not touch upon "the extensive sporting, kinship, and emotional ties between Britain and the self-governing dominions."[75] These last words amount to a sophisticated way of asking 'what about the railways?' – something which MacKenzie decidedly does not do.

The reformulation of imperial history in Britain is not only linked to the works of the aforementioned authors, such as Spivak or Said, but even more so with that of Paul Gilroy or Stuart Hall, the former of whom asserted that the legacies of colonial history had not affected white notions of British identity, from which blackness was still excluded.[76] To ask, as MacKenzie does, how the colonized territories affected British

[73] MacKenzie, *Orientalism. History, Theory and the Arts*, 133.

[74] There is a long history of anti-colonialism and anti-capitalism working alternatingly in concord or in opposition. For a recent clash between postcolonial and anti-capitalist scholars, see: Vivek Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London: Verso, 2012); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Review of Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 27, no. 1 (2014): 184–198, doi:10.1080/09557571.2014.877262; Vivek Chibber, 'Making Sense of Postcolonial Theory: A Response to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak' (Routledge, 2014); On the blind eye of British historians working on class, see: Susan Thorne, 'The Conversion of Englishmen and the Conversion of the World Inseparable: Missionary Imperialism and the Language of Class in Early Industrial Britain', *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, 1997, 252–53; Henry Pelling, 'British Labour and British Imperialism', in *Popular Politics and Society* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968), 82–100; Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class* (London: Routledge, 1972).

[75] C.J.D. Duder, 'Imperialism and Popular Culture (Book)', *Victorian Studies* 30, no. 4 (1987): 528.

[76] Key publications are: Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (London: Hutchinson, 1987); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993); Stuart Hall,

society, is to ask a question that fits within the postcolonial program. And yet MacKenzie did not explore the kinds of questions of race and British identity explored by Gilroy or Hall. This prompts two related questions. To what extent did New Imperial History follow in the postcolonial footsteps of Gilroy and Hall? And does MacKenzie belong in the category of New Imperial History? These questions are hard to answer, not least because New Imperial History is not clearly defined. "There is little consensus and a clear manifesto is absent," Remco Raben remarks in a recent discussion of British and Dutch historiogrpahy, but if there are any salient characteristics of New Imperial History they are the distinct influence of cultural studies (Said, Gilroy); the focus on spatial dimensions and imperial circuits of people, goods and ideas (stressing the reciprocal and webbed character of this space); and the symbiosis between nationalism and imperialism, challenging the notion that British society and identity developed in isolation, unhinged by empire.[77]

If some historians – like Porter and MacKenzie – remain too ambiguous to be unequivocally placed within the ranks of New Imperial History, others more firmly embraced its program. Susan Thorne's contribution to *Tensions of Empire*, as well as her later work, showed the intertwinedness of overseas and domestic missionary activity, pointing to the vast missionary presence on the local level, the accompanying propaganda, and the ideological similarity in the approach of subaltern classes overseas and at home.[78] This last observation is also made by Laura Tabili, who noted the 'Othering' of the British working classes. Class divisions were racialised and vice versa. The interwinedness of the ideologies of race and class are a theme in her earlier work too, where she wrote on the racialization of dockworkers and seamen in Britain during the interwar period, demonstrating how the racial divisions of labour came into form when government and industry defined colonial labour as second-class. In the maritime sector this was a response to secure cheap labour when decline set in, showing how empire, metropole, economy, race, and class are tightly interwined.[79] Catherine Hall also

'When Was "the Post-Colonial"? Thinking at the Limit', in *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti (New York: Routledge, 1996), 242–60.

[77] Remco Raben, 'A New Dutch Imperial History? Perambulations in a Prospective Field', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (2013): 7.

[78] Thorne, 'The Conversion of Englishmen and the Conversion of the World Inseparable'; See also: Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[79] Laura Tabili, *We Ask for British Justice: Workers and Racial Difference in Late Imperial Britain* (Cornell University Press, 1994); Laura Tabili, 'A Homogeneous Society? Britain's Internal "Others," 1800-Present',

looked at the missionary organizations as one of the prime examples that show how the relation between colonizer and colonized went both ways. "The right to colonial rule," she writes in *Civilising Subjects* (2002), "was built on the gap between metropole and colony: civilisation here, barbarism/savagery there. But that gap was a slippery one, which was constantly being reworked." She continues:

> The impossibility of fixing lines, keeping people in separate places, stopping slippage, was constantly at issue in Jamaica. And this was mirrored in England: Jamaican commodities, Jamaican family connections, Jamaican property in enslaved people, did not stay conveniently over there; they were part of the fabric of England, inside not outside [...][80]

In other words, a colonizer's identity played an important part in British society, but at the same time it was inherently unstable.

Summarizing this section, there are a number of leads in the study of colonialism, imperialism and the metropole to be drawn from the historiography on empire and on nationalism for the purpose of this study. Our attention for the instability of an ideology of difference and a reality that could never accommodate that ideology is one such a lead, coming from New Imperial History and postcolonial studies circles. From the wider field of those studying imperialism, colonialism and nationalism comes the insight that, rather than take national or imperial identities as ontological givens, we should approach it as something way more ephemeral, asking when and how such identities are claimed. In the words of sociologist Rogers Brubaker, who argued along these lines:

> It it may be more productive to focus on practical categories, situated actions, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, common-sense knowledge, organizational routines and resources, discursive frames, institutionalized forms, political projects, contingent events, and variable groupness. [81]

Finally, while MacKenzie brought *indifference* to the agenda in the study of empire, it might be an improvement to heed the findings of historians like Tara Zahra when it comes to bringing *indifference* into the analytical scheme. However, MacKenzie's work, and his debate with Porter, may also contribute to serve as a reminder of the political minefield that comes with the subject of imperialism.

One unresolved tension in the historiography discussed so far is between generalization and particularity. On the one hand we should be wary about categories of

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in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 53–76.

[80] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, 10.

[81] Rogers Brubaker, 'Ethnicity Without Groups', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 43, no. 2 (2002): 186.

analysis that are too large or assume an ontological status where there is none. Empires, approached in a way inspired by Brubaker's citation above, should be seen as situational, practical, and crosscutting with other loyalties. On the other hand there is the idea that there was something like a repertoire of imperial rule and culture. This is the central thought in Jane Burbank and Frederick Coopers recent work on empires in global history, but the idea can be found elsewhere too.[82] For instance, there might have been an "internationalised discourse" rather than "specific national cultures of empire," writes Remco Raben writes.[83] In Dutch historiography this point is seldom made, however, as it is often said to have evolved somewhat in isolation – the 'exceptionalism' of empires is apparently easily transposed to those studying said empires. In the next section I will therefore turn to Dutch colonial historiography to see how this body of research relates to the international developments describes above.

Dutch Colonial Historiography

If British historians of empire pondered long over the usefulness of postcolonial approaches, Dutch historians took even more time, and many have remained sceptical. In his book *Postcolonial Netherlands* (2011) historian Gert Oostindie exemplifies this position by cautiously praising the inspiration many Dutch historians have drawn from the likes of Edward Said, Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, only to conclude that it was no great deficiency that the Dutch colonial world has not produced its own authoritative postcolonial voice. Oostindie particularly fears the "strong tendency towards uncompromising political correctness" and the "horrible jargon" he detects in postcolonial studies, and thinks it would jeopardise "solid, empirical, and comparative research."[84] These remarks are a sneer, not a developed argument, and this allows Oostindie to circumvent problems he would otherwise have to address, such as what he means by political correctness and which studies he deems not empirically grounded. Interestingly, at other times Oostindie has struck a more critical chord. When a documentary on the history of slavery was aired on national television, for instance, he

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[82] Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton University Press, 2011).
[83] Raben, 'A New Dutch Imperial History?', 23.
[84] Gert Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands: Sixty-Five Years of Forgetting, Commemorating, Silencing* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 237–38.

was among those criticizing it for its "excessive relativizing", which could give the audience the impression that "life wasn't that bad on Surinamese plantations."[85]

What would such a Dutch postcolonial debate entail? Historian and anthropologist Lizzy van Leeuwen has defined is as "a critical and systematic effort to acknowledge the political, historical and cultural consequences of Dutch colonialism for power relations in today's society and for the international relations with Indonesia, Suriname and the Antilles, and with other former imperial powers."[86] Most scholars agree such a debate is absent in The Netherlands, but the interesting question is why this is the case. Why would someone like Oostindie – who writes critical accounts of colonial history himself – oppose this? Historian Ulbe Bosma, who adds to Van Leeuwen's definition by saying that "what is missing in the Dutch case is the ambition to achieve an overarching theoretical perspective on its colonial legacy," has identified a number of reasons for this Dutch denial of continuity between colonial past and present.[87] One reason is that around the critical decades of decolonization there were few connections between Dutch and Indonesian intellectuals – the former did not have a public intellectual tradition compared to, say, France, while the latter came of age occupied by their own internal struggles and bloodshed, outside of Dutch culture (as opposed to those early nationalists with a Dutch education, like Sukarno or Sjahrir). Other factors Bosma points to are a "staunchly conformist society" in The Netherlands, which forced immigrants from the former colonies to either assimilate or remain on the margins, a general academic aversion to theoretical perspectives, the association of multiculturalism – which abroad spurred much theorizing on cultural difference and colonial legacies – with immigrant groups that were not from the former colonies but from Turkey and Morroco, and, lastly, an enduring Orientalism and exoticism in those places – mostly literature – that were concerned with the colonial past. "The immense amount of historical and literary production that finds its inspiration or roots in the colonial past and the post-colonial present," writes Bosma, "is sitting on coffee tables, not fuelling debates."[88]

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[85] Aspha Bijnaar, Gert Oostindie and Alex van Stipriaan, 'Serie slavernij was te vaak relativerend', *De Volkskrant*, 15 October 2011.
[86] Lizzy van Leeuwen, *Ons Indisch erfgoed: zestig jaar strijd om cultuur en identiteit* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2008), 12.
[87] Ulbe Bosma, 'Why Is There No Post-Colonial Debate in the Netherlands?', in *Post-Colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands*, ed. Ulbe Bosma (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 202.
[88] Ibid., 209.

This is nothing new. Dutch colonial history was long infused with attitudes that can be described as colonialist itself. Until some decades ago, writes Remco Raben in a recent discussion on historiography, the historians' *communis opinio* was as follows:

> Until about forty years ago historians of empire were mostly concerned with the faits et gestes of the colonial elites and the history of the colonised world was mainly narrated, in the famous words of Dutch historian J.C. van Leur, as seen 'from the deck of the ship, the ramparts of the fortress, the high gallery of the trading-house'.[89]

The image of history writing 'from the deck of the ship' is a notably powerful one. It is also evoked by Paul Bijl in his recent book *Emerging Memory: Photoghraphs of Colonial Atrocity in Dutch Cultural Remembrance* (2015), and before by Cees Fasseur in *De weg naar het paradijs en andere Indische geschiedenissen* (1995), where he stated that Van Leur was "at least twenty years ahead of his time" with the decolonized worldview he expressed in his dissertation (1934) on ancient Asian trade.[90] Perhaps twenty years is a somewhat conservative estimate, for even today it is still somewhat contentious to think of the Dutch Empire as an *empire*. The literal translation of the word 'empire', *rijk*, has a decidely different connotation. Dutch historiography usually opts for the words 'colonies' and 'colonialism' – words that externalize the imperial project more than 'empire' and 'imperialism' do, that depict it as something that happened 'over there', and that, thus, also perpetuate the idea of metropole and colony as distinct entities, in relative isolation form one another. Remco Raben, again, notes how different this is in English:

> The words empire and imperialism, as they have been used in the English language, have determined historical horizons and invited looking for 'empire' in history. This is not a mere play of words: the research agendas are firmly rooted in the daily practice of operating the 'empire' and reflect the spatial relationships, the extension of networks, the scale of operation, the number and variety of people involved and the diversity of colonial experiences.[91]

Possibly the most quintessential history-from-the-deck is the aforementioned edited volume by W.H. van Helsdingen and H. Hoogenberk, *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht…. Nederlandsch-Indië in de xx*[ste] *eeuw* (1941), but it should be noted that from-the-deck

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[89] Raben, 'A New Dutch Imperial History?', 1.

[90] Bijl, *Emerging Memory*, 16–17; Cees Fasseur, *De weg naar het paradijs en andere Indische geschiedenissen* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 1995), 254. For Van Leur's original words, see: J.C. van Leur, 'F.W. Stapel (ed.), Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië II and III', in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 79 (1939) 589-595.

[91] Raben, 'A New Dutch Imperial History?', 9.

was the dominant perspective in most Dutch publications on the colonies. This ranges from educational books with titles like *Mooi en nijver Insulinde* (The Beautiful and Diligent Indies, published in 1924 and written by J. Koning) to travelogues in which the from-the-deck perspective is quite literary, as in this excerpt from *Indrukken van een tòtòk* (Impressions from a Dutchman, 1897) by journalist Justus van Maurik, describing the sight of local fishermen whilst on board a ship from Padang to Batavia:

> They are mostly fishermen, dauntless seafarers, as much at ease on their brittle vessels as we are on our huge steamer, trying to earn their daily platter of rice by catching fish, which is dried and then sold on the markets.[92]

Authors like Van Maurik offer a blend of natural sightings, political reflections and his personal awe for the exotic. While such writings do not offer an exhaustive take on the colonial enterprise, but rather provide snapshots, they do discursively support the claims made in scholarly works like Van Helsdingen's *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht*. That book's account of the Dutch East Indies, Van Helsdingen claimed, "reflects the truth, and thus testifies to the Netherlands' great aim to bring peace and prosperity to its overseas empire," the past tense of the title reflecting the opinion that the civilizing mission was almost complete.[93] Without any ironic intent Van Helsdingen added that in the anthology the authors had attempted "to eschew the extremes: no abundant praise on the one hand, no fierce public accusal on the other."[94] He furthermore refered to the "moral vocation" the Dutch had towards "the people inhabiting those regions", thereby echoing the 1901 annual speech of Queen Wilhelmina in which she used those words, and which has for long been regarded as the inaugurating the era of the Dutch civilising mission, as opposed to the previous exploitative and mercantile faces of Dutch imperialism. To sum up, the view expressed in *Daar werd…* was that the civilising mission in the Dutch East Indies was carried out and successfully completed in the handful decades leading up to the 1940s.

There are many implicit and explicit myths encapsulated in this view. We could call this set of beliefs *old imperial history*, in lieu of a better term, and as opposed to *New Imperial History*. Some of its claims were left behind early, while others still persist today. Uncovering those myths is an ongoing process, which is seen, for instance, in the

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[92] Justus van Maurik, *Indrukken van Een Tòtòk: Indische Typen En Schetsen* (Amsterdam: Van Holkema & Warendorf, 1897), 78.
[93] W.H. van Helsdingen and H. Hoogenberk, eds., *Daar wérd wat groots verricht….: Nederlandsch-Indië in de XXste eeuw* (Amsterdam: N.V. Uitgevers-maatschappij 'Elsevier', 1941), VI.
[94] Ibid., 526.

remembrance of Multatuli (pen name of Eduard Douwes Dekker, 1820-1887), who still stands as the lone light of Dutch anti-colonial writing in the nineteenth century. In *De Weg naar het Paradijs* (1995) the remembrance of Multatuli and his novel *Max Havelaar, of de Koffieveilingen der Nederlandsche Handelmaatschappij* (1860, tr. Max Havelaar, or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company) is critically assessed by historian Cees Fasseur. It is considered the most important work of Dutch anticolonial literature, as it can be read as a criticism of the Dutch *cultuurstelsel*[95] on Java, and had it been written in English it would no doubt have featured in Said's *Orientalism*. But notwithstanding that anti-colonial reputation, Fasseur argues, it was not a plea for abolishing the system as such. Instead Multatuli was advocating a reform of the system to resolve the tension between the *cultuurstelsel* and the traditional feudal system on Java. It was this tension that Multatuli held responsible for the corruption and abuse of power that he lamented on Java, not the system itself, which he by no means wanted to abolish in its totality.[96] He was, in other words, as anticolonial as a Dutch writer in the mid-nineteenth century could be; that is, not very much according to our current standards, but quite so in their contemporary context. In that way Fasseur's assessment of Multatuli is not very different from Said's reading of, say, Joseph Conrad. Little of this trickles down to the public at large, however, which still regards Multatuli an anticolonial hero of sorts.

Another instance in which *old imperial history* persists is in the interpretations of the civilizing mission. While Elsbeth Locher-Scholten's seminal study *Ethiek in Fragmenten* (Ethical Thinking in Fragments) already pointed at the way coercive rule and civilizational development are intimately connected, and while others, such as Maartje Janse, have later argued that we should look for its origins way back in the nineteenth century, the myth persists that the Civilising Mission started with Queen Wilhelmina's 1901 speech, or, alternatively, the essay by lawyer C.Th. van Deventer one year earlier, in which he coined the term *eerenschuld* (debt of honour) to acknowledge the benefits the Dutch had drawn from a century of exploitation and the debt they consequently owed. The ideological origins of the idea that the imperial project is a humanitarian endeavor in fact go back further, as Janse shows, and can be seen in

[95] Known in English as the Cultivation System. This Dutch colonial policy appropriated a part of any agricultural production on Java or alternatively required from peasants sixty days of forced labour on government plantations.
[96] Fasseur, *De weg naar het paradijs en andere Indische geschiedenissen*, 10–27.

connection with the movement for the abolition of slavery and other attempts to alleviate the fate of subalterns at home and overseas – an attempt that, despite its ostensibly benign intentions, revolved more around the humanitarian subject than the suffering object.[97]

Indonesian independence offered the chance for a fundamental revision of old interpretations of colonial history, but it turned out to be almost exclusively foreign historians who turned to this task first. The focus on "autonomous histories of the indigenous peoples in the colonies and on the pernicious effects of colonial rule," as Remco Raben characterized it, led to the study of Indonesian nationalism, its early origins, and the ways it asserted its right to rule during the events of the 1940s.[98] In what is now a classic in Indonesian history, George McTurnan Kahin criticized the Dutch colonial rulers for their complete lack of contemplating viable futures for the colony, and for their reactionary response to the emergence of Indonesian nationalism during the first decades of the twentieth century.[99] Continuing on the same path, Robert Van Niel also undermined the Dutch idea that the Indonesian desire for decolonization was roused by recent events – most notably the years of Japanese rule – by devoting his attention to the formative years of the idea of Indonesian independence in the 1900s and 1910s. He remarked that Dutch colonial policy was nothing like the authors of *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht* imagined it, and that the conservative rule played an important rule in alienating the Indonesian elites.[100] Also works by Rudolf Von Albertini, Benedict Anderson, Takashi Shiraishi can be placed in this tradition, as many other works coming from Cornell University.[101]

Dutch historians writing around the same time were highly critical of the aforementioned foreign scholars and of what they believed to be their misappreciation

[97] Lynn Festa, 'Humanity without Feathers', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 1, no. 1 (2010): 3–27; Maartje Janse, 'Representing Distant Victims: The Emergence of an Ethical Movement in Dutch Colonial Politics, 1840-1880', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (2013): 53–80; Maartje Janse, *De Afschaffers: Publieke Opinie, Organisatie En Politiek in Nederland 1840-1880* (Wereldbibliotheek, 2007).
[98] Raben, 'A New Dutch Imperial History?', 5.
[99] George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952).
[100] Robert Van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1960).
[101] Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972); Benedict O. Anderson, 'Time of Darkness and a Time of Light'', in *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia*, 1979, 219–248; Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*; Takashi Shiraishi, 'The Disputes between Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo: Satria vs. Pandita', *Indonesia*, 1981, 93–108; Nagazumi, *The Dawn*; Savitri Prastiti Scherer, 'Harmony and Dissonance: Early Nationalist Thought in Java' (MA thesis, Cornell University, 1978).

of Dutch colonial rule. Many of those Dutch historians, notes historian Cees Fasseur, were former colonial civil servants themselves, and thus felt a personal connection to the imperial project. A point in case is W.Ph. Coolhaas, one of the successors of F.C. Gerretson as professor of the history the Dutch East Indies. Gerretson was one of the contributors to *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht….* and was the main Dutch proponent of the anti-humanitarian branch of Dutch colonial thinking. His chair was funded by industry, which resulted in the nickname *olie- en petroleumfaculteir* (Oil and Petrol Faculty) for his deparment at Utrecht University. Coolhaas responded venomously to the foreign criticism of Dutch colonialism in a review of Von Albertini's work, recounted here by historian Cees Fasseur:

> In an agitated manner, Coolhaas posed the question if Von Albertini harboured resentment against the Dutch, and if, given the complicity assigned to the German people in the crimes of Hitler, he perhaps wanted to demonstrate that others had had their share of misdeeds too?[102]

As a result of this antipathy Dutch and foreign historiography on colonial Indonesia developed in splendid isolation from one another. Fasseur remembers that "in the 1960s, the study room of the National Archive in The Hague was frequented almost exclusively by American, Australian and English specialists on Indonesia, who had acquired just enough knowledge of the Dutch language to study the rich colonial archives."[103] This particular memory of Fasseur served needs of its own – more on which below – but the question that concerns us now is: if Dutch historians of the colonial past were not in the national archives during the 1950s and 1960s, then where were they?

In fact, most students of colonial history know the answer, because most of us are familiar with the fruits of the labour started in these years: the various source publications on the modern history of colonial Indonesia, the decolonization war, and the relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia in the 1950s and 1960s, instigated by historians like I.J. Brugmans and S.L. van der Wal, the latter of whom edited most of the series' issues until his death in 1978.[104] Van der Wal saw the focus on collecting

[102] Fasseur, *De weg naar het paradijs en andere Indische geschiedenissen*, 257.
[103] Ibid., 259.
[104] Best known is the series on the years 1945-1950, which comprises twenty volumes and was published between the early 70s and the mid 90s: S.L. van der Wal, P.J. Drooglever, and M.J.B. Schouten, *Officiële bescheiden betreffende de Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1945-1950*, 20 vols ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1971); The series on colonial Indonesia covers the years 1900-1942, and includes, among others, the following publications: S.L. van der Wal, *Het Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië 1900-1940. Een*

sources as a guarantee for a "purely scientific selection from the available materials," and rejected the offer in 1969 to expand his task from source selection to "wider academic research" and to enlarge his research team. The leading adagium was that "source selection comes prior to history writing." All other arguments seem to have been bended to this point, such as Van der Wal's expressed fear that a larger staff would harbor different political leanings, or his statement that qualified candidates were not available.[105]

The reception of the source publications was generally good, getting praise from within the Netherlands and abroad, but the format also raised questions. Various reviews described the *Officiële bescheiden betreffende de Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1945-1950* – the series that encompassed the timeframe of the war for Indonesian independence, even though the title only mentions 'Dutch-Indonesian relations' – as an important contribution, and foreign scholars like Ruth McVey and Robert Van Niel praised the works as well. Others, most notably Elbeth Locher-Scholten, raised the question whether a 'colonial trauma' had led to the publication of source collections instead of conventional history books. It had not only been Van der Wal's personal objections that had prevented anything more than source publications; other actors in government were of the same opinion. Locher-Scholten noted the stark contrast between the source publications on Dutch colonial history with the accessible and narrative-oriented state-commissioned works on the history of the Netherlands during World War II by Loe de Jong and his team at the National Institute for War Documentation (RIOD, *Rijkstinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie*, currently NIOD), the writing of which commenced around the same time. Whereas De Jong's work provided an at that time welcome form of moral judgement about WWII, Van der Wal could avoid

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Bronnenpublikatie, vol. 1, Uitgaven van de Commissie Voor Bronnenpublicatie Betreffende de Geschiedenis van Nederlands-Indië 1900-1942 van Het Historisch Genootschap (Gevestigd Te Utrecht) (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1963); S.L. Van der Wal, *De volksraad en de staatkundige ontwikkeling van Nederlands-Indië: een bronnenpublikatie* (Groningen: Wolters, 1964); S.L. der Wal, ed., *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indië: Een Bronnenpublikatie*, Uitgaven van de Commissie Voor Bronnenpublicatie Betreffende de Geschiedenis van Nederlands-Indië 1900-1942 van Het Historisch Genootschap (Gevestigd Te Utrecht) 4 (Groningen: Wolters, 1967); R.C. Kwantes, *De Ontwikkeling van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië: bronnenpublikatie*, 4 vols, Uitgaven van de Commissie voor Bronnenpublicatie betreffende de Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië 1900-1942 van het Nederlands Historisch Genootschap 8–11 (Groningen: H.D. Tjeenk Willink, 1975).
[105] Locher-Scholten, 'Een bronnenpublicatie', 258.

the thorny moral questions raised by the Dutch colonial project by eschewing analysis altogether.[106]

So was there a 'historical trauma' that governed the way Dutch historians treated the subject of Dutch colonialism and Indonesian independence? At the very least there is a psychologized discourse that invokes not only terms such as trauma, but also words like silence, repression, denial, and forgetting in relation to the Dutch colonial past. Many scholars have asserted, for instance, that the 1950s and 60s were a time of silence regarding the colonies. Pamely Pattynama writes that the overseas territories seemed a "closed book", and that "when media attention for rapatriates had waned, *Indië* got lost from the public eye and became a well-kept family secret, a *blind spot* in the Dutch view."[107] This was the case in the public sphere at large, as well as in the ranks of academia, suggests Marieke Bloembergen: "The phenomenon of 'imperialism', with respect to the Dutch colonial project, has been largely *denied* in the Netherlands until the late 1960s, also in scholarly debates."[108] Interestingly, Locher-Scholten answers her question – 'do source publications point at a historical trauma?' – in the negative:

> Speaking in social-psychologic terms like 'trauma' and 'processing' of the Dutch past is to a high degree metaphorical. What we call trauma was in fact a political dispute on colonial memory and history writing.[109]

In her reluctance to apply psychological concepts to collective memory and perception Locher-Scholten does not stand alone. In the same volume this sentiment was also expressed by journalist Jan Blokker, who wrote that he shivered at hearing 'big words' like 'colonial trauma', in particular when it would imply "a shared experience, a collective trauma, which would necessitate national therapy to 'shrug off' the Indies."[110] The politics of emotions eminent in such remarks has only recently become the subject of historical research – as the discipline is making what is called an *affective turn*

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[106] P.J. Drooglever, 'Necrologie: In memoriam prof. dr. S.L. van der Wal', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 95, no. 1 (1980): 248–50; Locher-Scholten, 'Een bronnenpublicatie'; The first volume of the history of The Netherlands during World War II was published in 1969: Loe de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 29 vols ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969).

[107] Pamela Pattynama, *Bitterzoet Indië: herinnering en nostalgie in literatuur, foto's en films* (Amsterdam: Prometheus; Bert Bakker, 2014), 11. Emphasis mine.

[108] Marieke Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning: Nederland en Indië op de wereldtentoonstellingen (1880-1931)* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2002), 28–29. Emphasis mine.

[109] Locher-Scholten, 'Een bronnenpublicatie', 266.

[110] Jan Blokker, 'Dekolonisatie en openbare mening in Nederland', in *De leeuw en de banteng: bijdragen aan het congres over de Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1945-1950, gehouden in Den Haag van 27-29 maart 1996*, ed. P. J. Drooglever and M. J. B. Schouten (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 1997), 298.

following the lead from other disciplines – but Locher-Scholten's observation that we are in fact dealing with a political dispute on the interpretation of colonial history is of immense value.

This affective turn has made many scholars from across the humanities come to opposite positions regarding the usefulness of 'trauma' as an analytical category. Literary scholar Stef Craps writes, for instance, that we should "expand our understanding of trauma from sudden, unexpected catastrophic events that happen to people in socially dominant positions to encompass ongoing, everyday forms of violence and oppression affecting subordinate groups."[111] While this focus on everyday forms of oppression helps to understand cultural trauma among subordinate groups, the same framework also helps to understand everyday forms of trauma among dominant groups, who may not be *imagined* victims, since the nationalist imaginery often depicts dominant groups as subordinate victims, bereft or otherwise under threat to stake its political claims – be it nationalist sentiments today, or the Dutch mourning of the loss of 'its colonial possessions' in 1945.

While Locher-Scholten's reluctance to think in terms of trauma in the Dutch treatment of the colonial past may be a manifestation of the lack of a critical or theoretical tradition in Dutch historiography, her explanation for the choice to publish sources deserves attention. This was not a case of repression of trauma, she writes, but a case of *politics*. What was at stake here was the control over the first phase of Dutch historicizing the events of decolonization and before. The works by Van der Wal, Drooglever, Kwantes, and others are not born out of trauma, but out of the idea that there was some legitimacy to the colonial project, or, if not legitimacy, that at least some redemption could be found in the good intentions of the Dutch actors in the final days of its imperial rule. Albeit critical regarding the death toll the Dutch military actions inflicted in the years 45-49, Drooglever also asserts that Dutch pressure for a federally organized Indonesia – which would have allowed for a large extent of (neo)colonial control by the Dutch – was "a response to the problems of that moment, and a step towards gradual decolonization, which would have ensured Dutch-Indonesian ties in the

[111] Stef Craps, 'Wor(l)ds of Grief: Traumatic Memory and Literary Witnessing in Cross Cultural Perspective' 23, no. 4 (2009): 5; as quoted in: A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and the Terror of History', *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 92–93.

future."[112] If Drooglever's language is one of 'missed opportunities', someone like J.J.P. de Jong is more straightforward and bluntly states that "The Netherlands wasn't doing so badly" during the years 45-49.[113] His final judgement over Dutch doings during these years focuses heavily on policy and policy-intentions. Violence is mostly mentioned in the context of the Bersiap period, that is, when it is Indonesian-perpetrated violence, while he stresses that the so-called 'police actions' were "extremely brief military operations, each lasting no longer than fourteen days" which were not "representative of the entire 45-49 period." As the leading proponent of a self-proclaimed revisionist school De Jong's views never gained much traction, however, beyond a few endorsements, which included Drooglever. In an approving review of De Jong's dissertation Drooglever wrote that De Jong was critical of Dutch policy, but that he definitely was not among those "who condemn it *a priori.* This is rather a sharp criticism on the technical implementation of a policy that is seen in principle as presentable."[114]

The obsession with Dutch colonial policy – its crafting, its intentions – may have hampered the development of critical engagement with the past. Take for example the moment when the Dutch public was introduced to the mass violence perpetrated by the Dutch during the struggle for decolonization by the testimony of veteran Joop Hueting in 1969. Insofar as this brought atrocities to light, it also obscured them: the official investigation incited by Hueting's televised testimony established the use of the term *excess* in reference to these instances of violence. In doing so, the *Excessennota,* as the official report was entitled, paved the way for the view that these violent outbursts were exceptions to the rule that the Dutch (colonial) army had generally behaved 'correctly' during the decolonization years. Only later did a full picture emerge. The reign of terror of the notorious Dutch army captain Raymond Westerling received a good share of attention, but while his actions were qualified as "systematically excessive violence", for instance by Willem IJzereef in his book *De Zuid-Celebes affaire* (1984), such attention for

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[112] Pieter Drooglever, 'Dekolonisatie in twintig delen. Een persoonlijke impressie', in *De leeuw en de banteng: bijdragen aan het congres over de Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1945-1950, gehouden in Den Haag van 27-29 maart 1996*, ed. P. J. Drooglever and M. J. B. Schouten (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 1997), 277.

[113] De Jong's words come from an op-ed he wrote in the mid-90s: Joop de Jong, 'Nederland deed het zo slecht nog niet in Indië', De Volkskrant, 21 January 1995. See also: JJP de Jong, *Diplomatie of strijd: Een analyse van het Nederlands beleid tegenover de Indonesische revolutie 1945-1947* (Amsterdam: Boom Uitgevers, 1988).

[114] P. Drooglever, 'J.J.P. de Jong, Diplomatie of Strijd. Een Analyse van Het Nederlands Beleid Tegenover de Indonesische Revolutie 1945-1947', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 105, no. 2 (1990): 380–310.

the most notorious figures of this war also perpetuated the idea that it was the evil of indivuals that was to blame.[115]

The idea that violence was the outcome of colonial logic was established only later, although some groundwork was already done by the sociologists J.A.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix, who published *Ontsporingen van geweld: over het Nederlands/Indisch/Indonesisch conflict* (1970, Derailment of violence: on the Dutch/*Indisch*/Indonesian conflict), in which they suggested that extreme violence was systematically part of the process of decolonization.[116] Some thirty years later, in his inaugural lecture *A State of Violence* (2001) Henk Schulte Nordholt referred to Dutch rule in colonial Indonesia as a 'state of violence', which Dirk Moses and Bart Luttikhuis referred to as an "agenda-setting contribution" – not because he was the first to write in detail about Dutch violence in colonial Indonesia up until the decolonization war, they stress, but because he was innovative in terms of "analysis, judgment and conceptual discussion."[117] Their special issue of the *Journal of Genocide Research* further explored the topic. In it, Remco Raben states that the excessive attention Dutch historiography paid to "the internal decision-making processes and political bickering on both sides" – such as in De Jong's *Diplomatie of Strijds* and Wim van den Doel's *Afscheid van Indië* (2000)[118] – are a "blatant denial of the conflict's real nature."[119] He also criticized the pendulum swing from denying the genocidal aspect of violence in colonial Indonesia to its overuse as an analytical catch-all concept, advocating an approach that does not reduce colonialism to violence, but sees violence in relation to other mechanisms of control, coercion and domination.

The renewed effort to study colonial violence has had its culmination recently in Rémy Limpach's *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* (2016), a study into the conduct of Dutch troops during the five years of the Indonesian war for for independence. The conclusions Limpach draws leave no room for misunderstanding. "Extreme Dutch violence," he writes, "was clearly not incidental or a regrettable

[115] W. IJzereef, *De Zuid-Celebes affaire. Kapitein Westerling en de standrechtelijke executies* (Dieren: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1984).
[116] J.A.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix, *Ontsporing van geweld: Over het Nedelands/Indisch/Indonesisch conflict* (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1970).
[117] Bart Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses, 'Mass Violence and the End of the Dutch Colonial Empire in Indonesia', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14, no. 3–4 (1 November 2012): 257–76.
[118] H.W. van der Doel, *Afscheid van Indië. De Val van Het Nederlandse Imperium in Azië* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2000).
[119] Raben, 'On Genocide and Mass Violence in Colonial Indonesia', 490.

exception. Dutch military structurally commited mass violence, and some units even did so systematically. The latter implies that extreme violence was part of a strategy, a system, as with the special forces in South Sulawesi and the systematically employed torture practices of the intelligence service."[120] As to the question of what permitted this heavy use of violence, Limpach is meticulously detailed in dissecting how the Dutch army (KL) and the colonial army (KNIL) functioned and points to many factors, including failing mechanisms of prevention, control, investigation and punishment, and other 'violence promoting factors', such as the employment of troops without morale and without discipline, permanent understaffing, and being 'prisoners of the past."[121] On young conscripts he writes:

> They perpetrated their acts out of fear, out of unfamiliarity with the local culture or language, because there was weak leadership and officers presented them with a wrong example, because of a lack of training, or to avenge their fallen comrades.[122]

Limpach demonstrates how the Dutch colonial army functioned, and how this allowed for mass violence. While his work is groundbreaking in terms of the amount of evidence studied and in the fact that he does not restrain himself in shunning the euphemistic language of the past, his work raises questions in another respect. He often refers to some underlying mentality that allowed for extreme violence, for example with the term 'prisoners of the past' quoted above, when he mentions racism as one of the factors in the mix, or when he states that policymakers inhibited views "geared towards the past." This allowed for "the acceptance, neglect, denial or relativization of Dutch mass violence," Limpach writes when he addresses the wider colonial context in which the events of 45-49 unfolded.[123] The question is how to address the issue of colonial mentality, which is arguably less tangible than the precise workings of the military apparatus, but is far from an incidental presence in the long list of contributing factors to the extreme violence during the war for independence.

What did this Dutch colonial mentality entail? What mentalities, attitudes, self-images and 'structures of reference' were formed in the nineteenth and early twentieth

[120] Rémy Limpach, *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2016), 738.
[121] Rémy Limpach, *Dutch Mass Violence in the Indonesian War of Independence, 1945-1949*, lecture at the European University Institute (EUI), 16 November 2016.
[122] Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 745.
[123] Ibid., 750, 761.

century?[124] When we speak about the time of modern imperialism, any definition must include the fond belief in the humanitarian qualities of the Dutch colonial project, and the willingness to turn a blind eye to the violence and coercion this necessarily brought along. A groundbreaking study in this respect was Elsbeth Locher-Scholten's aforementioned *Ethiek in fragmenten*, in which she noted the absence of a 'jingo mood' in the Dutch public opinion in the early twentieth century. The national self-image was that of a civilizer, and the Dutch imperial project was a civilizing project, or, as it became known in the Dutch context, as the pursuit of an *ethical policy* (Ethische Politiek). The 'pacification', that is, military submission, of its subjects was intertwined with the civilising ideal, but this connection was often forgotten in the metropole.[125] As mentioned before, given the intimate ties between the colonial project and academia, it may not surprise this left its traces in historiography. It was only in 1985 that Maarten Kuitenbrouwer established the term *imperialism* as applicable to the Dutch case.[126] Up until that moment the debate whether or not the Dutch colonial project was in fact an instance of imperialism had remained a technical discussion, in which Dutch overseas history was put to the test of the theories of Robinson and Gallagher. Some historians conceded that the Dutch indeed practiced a form of 'reluctant imperialism.' But when they did so, like the historian W.B. Schaper in 1970, another aspect of the use of the word *imperialism* came to light, namely its negative moral connotations. Schaper stated that the Netherlands fit the international definition of imperialism, but he accompanied this conclusion with the remark that 'imperialism' is not a word for scholars. The word was seen as too activist for academics, and Kuitenbrouwer reminds us of its origins in the Dutch context:

> The term was introduced around 1900 by social democrats with the polemic claim that the Netherlands waged an imperial war of banditry in Indonesia just like the English did against the cognate Boers in South Africa.[127]

The fear to be seen as too activist has long haunted historians. Whereas 'imperialism' is by now part of the professional jargon, remnants of the same fear are still alive. When Remco Raben made the plea in his inaugural lecture to pay more attention to those

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[124] Said calls this the 'cultural archive': Said, *Culture and Imperialism*; The concept has been employed recently by Gloria Wekker to analyse the case of Dutch imperial attitudes: Wekker, *White Innocence*, 3, 19–20.
[125] Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*.
[126] Kuitenbrouwer, *The Netherlands* Based on his dissertation, which was published in 1985.
[127] Kuitenbrouwer, 'Het imperialisme-debat in de Nederlandse geschiedschrijving', 57.

historical actors that don't fit in the usual categories – i.e. colonizer and anti-colonial Indonesian nationalist – he felt he had to excuse himself for what he calls *transcolonialism* by saying "maybe it sounds somewhat *activist*, but these are pertinent matters."[128]

The study of colonial Indonesia has moved ahead since Locher-Scholten and Kuitenbrouwer. To capture something of the totality of colonial reality, in particular the group of Indo-Europeans drew scholarly attention. Jean Gelman Taylor's *The Social World of Batavia* (1983) was pioneering in that it focused on the social making of the colonial world, its family life, its racial hierarchies and its other identity constituting factors such as class, gender, education and upbringing.[129] Remco Raben and Ulbe Bosma offered a more extensive study of the social realities of the colonial world in the Dutch East Indies in their acclaimed *Being Dutch in the Indies* (2003, original title *De oude Indische wereld*), in which they presented Indo-Europeans as a distinct racialized group in the colony. Most Indo-European men aspired to "Dutch status." According to the law they would either have 'European' or 'native' status, but even with the nominally full citizenship of the former category they faced exclusion and discrimination. Aspring to Dutch status was therefore also a cultural question, and many sought out Dutch lifestyles and Dutch schooling. Even so hardly anyone could fully transcend the racialized colonial order. This experience transformed them in effect into a group of their own, even though Raben and Bosma warn that we should not fix this idea of *Indische* people as a static, third group. Instead, the *Indische* group had firm ties (socially, professionaly, familial) with both indigenous and Dutch people, and this thoroughly embedded them within the colonial world. Many *Indische* Dutch heavily depended upon careers in colonial governance. "The Indische world," the Bosma and Raben write, "thus formed a chain of strongly localised European communities, in which newcomers from Europe sometimes played a powerful part but were never unequivocally dominant." Indische people were the nexus of the constant social, cultural and economic flux that constituted the Indies, making the Dutch Indies a 'Creole empire', rather than an empire as designed at the Colonial ministry in The Hague.[130]

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[128] Remco Raben, *Wie spreekt voor het koloniale verleden? Een pleidooi voor transkolonialisme* (Amsterdam: Stichting Indisch Herinneringscentrum, 2016), 18. Emphasis mine.

[129] Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

[130] Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008); Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *De Oude Indische Wereld 1500-1920*

What *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies* demonstrated was that the imagined boundaries of empire – along the lines of class, race, education, upbringing, religion – were not fixed but fluid. They tell us most about the fixation on clearly defines boundaries in the heads of colonizers and other colonial actors. In that sense Raben and Bosma built upon the work of not only Taylor, but also of other Dutch and foreign scholars who turned to the gendered and racialised forces at work in colonial society. Ann Stoler pursued the "connections between the broad-scale dynamics of colonial rule and the intimate sites of implementation" in the nineties in various publications, and saw it as essential to our understanding of colonial power. This was not because they are "touching examples", "convenient methapors" but because concerns over racial purity and sexuality in fact "figures so prominently in the perceptions and policies of those who ruled" and thus lead us to the "microphysics of colonial rule."[131] Dutch scholars like Frances Gouda and Elsbeth Locher-Scholten recognized the importance of gender in analyses of the colonial situation and published on the role notions of motherhood played in the contruction of modernity, and how the increased presence of white, European women from the 1900s unwards changed the colonial power dynamics and assigned "white wives and daughters the role of defending the social pecking order and articulating the moral superiority of European civilization in their daily lives," as Gouda writes.[132]

Popular Imperialism in the Netherlands

While the (modern) history of colonial Indonesia has started to catch up with the agenda of New Imperial History agenda, there are still questions that need to be addressed. Dutch popular imperialism – the question of how the metropolitan public related to the empire, constituted it from below, engaged with imperial propaganda from above, the question how excitement and indifference alternated as imperial-states-of-mind, the question who was included in the imagined imperial community and who was excluded

(Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2003); See also: Ulbe Bosma, Remco Raben, and Wim Willems, *De geschiedenis van Indische Nederlanders* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2006).

[131] Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 7. See also: Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

[132] Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 6; See also: Julia Ann Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam; London: Amsterdam University Press, 2000).

– is one of those unexplored areas. Colonialism was not just a matter of administration and coercive rule, but also a cultural force, a 'colonisation of consciousness' that legitimized colonial rule. Rather than a conscious effort this was an uncontrolled and erratic force with repercussions in colony and metropole alike, as Ann Stoler writes:

> Critical colonial studies, or the "new imperial history," starts from the premise that colonizing bodies and minds was a sustained, systemic, and incomplete political project in colonial regions and in Europe. In a range of colonial contexts, that project has come to be seen as one with unanticipated effects.[133]

Most scholars agree that in the Dutch case colonial and metropolitan histories are seldom described as dealing with the same unanticipated effects Stoler describes. Recently, most attention went to the cultural residu of empire that exists today. The way the legacy of colonialism haunts present-day society is the subject of, for instance, Gloria Wekker's *White Innocence* (2016). An important premise of Wekker – drawing on Said – is that colonial attitudes have formed a cultural archive over four hundred years of colonization. "I am oriented," she writes, "toward the construction of the white self as superior and full of entitlement. I offer my reading of the consequences of slavery in the western part of the empire, Suriname and the Antilles, on white Dutch self-representation." Her portrayal and exploration of this "unacknowledged reservoir of [imperial] knowledge" mostly focuses on public Dutch culture of the last two decades. The phenomena she describes are similar elsewhere in Europe, according to historian Elizebeth Buettner, who writes that the 'decolonization of the mind' is still far from complete across in most former imperial nations.[134]

While authors like Wekker and Buettner focus on the latter half of the twentieth century, past reincarnations of this cultural residu have received less attention. If domestic decolonization is an incomplete process, what about the domestic colonization that must have preceded it? How was the cultural archive formed?[135] One of the chapters in *White Innocence* is an exception to the general time-frame observed by Wekker and presents a casestudy from 1917 on the racislised self-understanding in relation to gender of white upperclass women in the Hague, but such casestudies are

[133] Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 10.
[134] Wekker, *White Innocence*, 1–29; Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 1–20.
[135] Remco Raben, 'Schuld en onschuld in postkoloniaal Nederland', *De Nederlandse Boekengids* 1, no. 5 (2016).

rare.[136] In a recent survey of the work on imperialism and popular culture in the Netherlands, historian Vincent Kuitenbrouwer writes:

> [N]ot much is known about how the public debate was structured during the colonial period. Certain topics, such as imperial imagery in cinema and advertisement, have received particularly little attention and research is needed to get an overview of the available sources. But there might also be a deeper issue at hand, which says something about the meaning of Dutch imperialism. Compared with the British Empire its so-called 'cultural economy' was rather small.[137]

We know little of the way the public at large engaged with the empire, and this is not only due to a lack of research, but also due to the stealthy way the Dutch empire was 'promoted', which lacked the overly self-conscious style of British jingoism. The ways Dutch imperialism played out in domestic culture, Kuitenbrouwer asserts, were as the "songs of an imperial underdog."[138]

But how, then, did these songs of an imperial underdog sound? The main point on which Kuitenbrouwer sees consensus among historians is in the role imperialism played in nation-building. Maarten Kuitenbrouwer for instance pointed out that the conquests of peripheral territories in the Indies was a form of 'nationalist expansion' in a double sense: it was a geographical expansion of the Dutch colonial enterprise, and at the same time it was an expansion of a truly national political space, as the empire was one of the scarce terrains where the different socio-religious groups and their political representatives had few disagreements. This expansionist nationalism was thus complementary, or even supportive, to the domestic situation, as it did not challenge the ongoing struggle between ermerging societal pillars.[139] Thus seen imperialism was one of the binding factors or sets of values in a nation divided into groups struggling for dominance, just like the civic virtue of *burgerlijkheid*[140] was another of those factors, as

[136] Wekker, *White Innocence*, 81–107.
[137] Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, 'Songs of an Imperial Underdog: Imperialism and Popular Culture in the Netherlands, 1870-1960', in *European Empires and the People: Popular Responses to Imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester University Press, 2011), 94.
[138] Ibid.
[139] M. Kuitenbrouwer, *The Netherlands*, 27, 348–49.
[140] 'Burgerlijk' (adjective) translates to 'bourgeois', but the terms are not identical. The latter can refer, in a strict definition, to a material upper-middle class and is mainly associated with the nineteenth century and Marxist analysis, while the former also carries the connotation of the seventeenth century burghers of the Dutch Republic and refers to the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth set of moral values of middle-class propriety. See Henk te Velde, 'How High Did the Dutch Fly? Remarks on Stereotypes of Burger Mentality', in *Images of the Nation: Different Meanings of Dutchness 1870-1940*, ed. Annemieke Galema, Barbara Henkes, and Henk te Velde (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1993), 59–60.

historian Henk te Velde has argued.[141] From the 1910s onwards, however, the empire lost its prominence in the national imagery. Vincent Kuitenbrouwer relates this decline to the completion of the conquest of Aceh and other territories in colonial Indonesia, to the end of the Boer War, and to the annexation of the Boer republics by the British, thus also ending what was arguably the episode of international politics that stirred the arousal of the Dutch public most.[142]

This is also the thesis put forth by Martin Bossenbroek in *Holland op zijn Breedst* (1996), a study of the ways the Indies and South Africa – (former) Dutch colonies at that time – affected Dutch metropolitan culture around 1900. It is the first book-length study into metropolitan imperial culture – the first that explicitly explores the subject of the centripetal effects of empire. The title, literally 'Holland at large', refers to the Dutch imperial expansion from the 1880s onwards, in terms of territorial conquest and cultural power, the latter mostly rendered in terms of the amount of public interest generated for the colonies. "The hitherto forgotten and despised Afrikaners were suddenly discovered as kin-related [*stamverwanten*], when they faced the force of the almight Albion in 1880," he writes, "and also the possessions in the Indische archipelago, not known or beloved outside a small circle, saw a steep gain in public interest."[143] Bossenbroek sees public interest in the colonies appearing even before 1870, in small groups or with individuals, such as military officers, scholars or missionaries, who saw the potential the colonies offered for their respective professions. With the start of the Aceh war colonial "heroism and tragedy" were introduced in Dutch society, but still with limited resonance. Only later did civic interest at large grow. Bossenbroek marks 1883 as an important year, when not only the Krakatoa volcano erupted, but also when the World Exposition took place in Amsterdam. The combined effect of these events – and others, such as the ermergence of Indisch-themed prose – was that colonial Indonesia transformed from an unknown site of potentialities into a known site, suited to the Dutch colonial project. "It turned out that heroism could be combined with charity," Bossenbroek writes, "patriotism with indigenous culture, the motherland with exoticsm, and high culture with popular culture."[144]But this totality of imperial endeavours – military, scientific, missionary, trade – were overwhelming for the metropolitan public,

[141] Ibid., 72–73.
[142] Kuitenbrouwer, 'Songs of an Imperial Underdog', 118.
[143] Martin Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst: Indië en Zuid-Afrika in de Nederlandse cultuur omstreeks 1900* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 1996), 10.
[144] Ibid., 347.

and instead of resulting in a sustained commitment it resulted in a climax. After that point doubts returned, only exacerbated by the loss of the Boers in South Africa – "the end of a dream," in Bossenbroeks dramatic sketch.[145] The metaphor he employs for the coming and going of public interest in the colonies is borrowed from athletics: the triple jump, or hop, skip and jump; the enthusiasm slowly gained momentum before the 1870s (the run), swayed part of the country, mostly elites in the 1870s (the hop), then blossomed in full swing until the 1890s (the step), had its climax in the enthusiastic support for the last stages of the expansion wars in Aceh and elsewhere around 1900 (the jump), only to disappear in a relatively short time (the landing). In his cautious style Vincent Kuitenbrouwer remarked that Bossenbroek's metaphor is "rather peculiar."[146]

As the first of its kind, Bossenbroek's study raises as many questions as it answers, and while its pioneering quality was important it also exhibited several shortcomings. First, his project reflected the conceptual difficulties surrounding the terms 'metropole' and 'colony', terms that any persuasive study must address. His study floats freely between metropole and colony without reflecting much on geography, usually isolating metropole and colony from one another and arbitrarily picking only one of them for his narrative. A point in case is the chapter on missionaries, in which he tracks the emergence and development of missionary activities in colonial Indonesia, but ignores the domestic activities of these organizations. Topics such as the Mission Festivals (*zendingsfeesten*), or even the domestic activies of missionary organizations more generally, are ignored, even though they arguably are at the nexus of overseas missions and domestic imagination.[147] Secondly, Bossenbroek approaches metropolitan engagement in binary terms: the public was either aroused, for the better or worse, or it was not aroused. While the jingoist mood of the Aceh war and the dwindling of this mood afterwards has been noted by many historians, it hardly tells the whole story. In fact, as Locher-Scholten and others have demonstrated, the repression of jingoism might have been one of the key characteristics of Dutch imperialism. The absence of a publicly displayed jingoist mood therefore does not necessarily equal a lack of enthusiasm for empire. This is far different from Bossenbroek's conclusion that after the triple jump's landing "the voice that roared was stifled; the message, after being heard, was

[145] Ibid., 352.
[146] Kuitenbrouwer, 'Songs of an Imperial Underdog', 91.
[147] See the chapter in this thesis on the Inner Mission and the chapter on Mission Festivals in: Annemarie Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders: godsdienst, burgerschap en de Nederlandse natie (1850-1900)* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2009).

smothered."[148] Thirdly, he seems to interpret imperialism as a game of geo-politics, and as an opportunity for eager Dutchmen to make careers for themselves, but less so as a state of mind imbued with the idea of natural hierarchies between peoples. In his concluding words, he states:

> New-Holland under the sky of the southern cross was a dream that bursted. 'Our Indies' was a dream – an evil dream, some found it, an opinion others still profess – that became reality. Or did it remain a dream? Maybe. Maybe, but without dreaming nothing is achieved.[149]

Colonial history, in the way Bossenbroek renders it, becomes something that "enriched [Dutch] national culture," a form of collective character building that turned the Dutch into a cosmopolitan stock. It is the appreciative language of *achievement* and *dreaming* that indicates a lack of critical distance to the subject, which, at its worst, can support a nostalgic longing for a past cleansed from thr warfare, deaths, and coercion so central to colonial practice.[150] Such tensions of empire are absent in *Holland op zijn breedst*.

Perception of the colonies in the metropole has always been coloured more by imperial ideology than by actual colonial experience. The genre of the colonial exposition illustrates this phenomenon perfectly, as it "mainly reflected prevailing views of Dutch identity and the Netherlands' place in the world and told viewers little about colonial relations," as Marieke Bloembergen put it in *De Koloniale Vertoning* (2002, translated as Colonial Spectacles), her book on Dutch contributions to colonial expositions around the turn of the twentieth century.[151] According to Bloembergen the expositions served to "present a justification of Dutch colonialism and its expansionist policies," and she identifies three possible fields that were imaginable for the makers to depict: dutch economic interests; civilization and development; and military triumphalism. Of these three, only economic interests were always present in exhibitions throughout all the years of modern imperialism. Echoing Bossenbroek's findings on this point, she notes that military justifications of colonization were present in 1880 but they withered later, while the civlising narrative only took the full spotlight in 1910, in the heydays of Ethical thinking.[152] She also points to the differences in

[148] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, 349.
[149] Ibid., 358.
[150] Ibid., 10.
[151] Marieke Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles: The Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies at the World Exhibitions, 1880-1931* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006), 331; For the original published version of her thesis in Dutch, see: Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*.
[152] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 321.

representation before national and international audiences, remarking that military triumphalism was notably absent in international contexts, probably because the Netherlands did not want to provoke rival imperial powers, while the military narrative was seen as less problematic for a strictly national audience. To explain why the Dutch contributions to international expositions did not amount simply to 'complacent imperialism' she refers to the divided state of the political elite on the issue – there was no clear line in colonial politics, and hence no clear message to convey.

One of the questions Bloembergen thus raises is that of *reception*. If the expositions were top-down orchestrated affairds, yet lacked a clear message about what Dutch imperialism entailed, then what lasting impression did they make on the public, if any? According to Bloembergen:

> The reception history of the colonial spectacles presents an ambivalent picture. Some visitors came away more convinced than ever of the greater progress and superiority of their own (Dutch) culture, some were imbued with respect for the otherness of the indigenous culture of the Dutch East Indies, and there were numerous responses in between.[153]

In other words, the different kinds of reception by the public simply reflected a range of elite-opinions on the colonies, from bolstering the belief in white superiority to putting that same belief in question. We can see the latter case in the public admiration for native art, as an example of which Bloembergen cites "the woodcarvings of indigenous dwellings and the Sumatran fabrics woven with gold thread." The widespread appreciation for batik fabrics is another example.[154] These examples show that questioning western civilization in this context did not necessarily mean that the other civilization was appreciated fully. It still took the form of what Mathew Cohen recently called the "detached appropriation of exotica", and which Stuart Hall referred to as "the spectacle of the other."[155] Visitors romanticized the "simple life" of "people not yet alienated from their natural surroundings."[156] While the content of the message might have been unclear, the form was decidedly not.

Ultimately, the question of engagement remains unanswered in both Bossenbroek and Bloembergen, just as it remained unresolved in the Porter-MacKenzie

[153] Ibid., 327–28.
[154] Legêne, *Spiegelreflex*, 119–20. See also the sections in Chapter 2 of this study on the arts and crafts shop Boeatan.
[155] Matthew Isaac Cohen, *Performing Otherness: Java and Bali on International Stages, 1905–1952* (London: Pallgrave MacMillan, 2010), 4; Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, Culture, Media, and Identities, bk. 2 (London: Sage, 1997), 223–79.
[156] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 328.

debate. Ordinary exposition visitors did not write about their experiences at expositions, nor, if we leave that particular genre behind, did they write lengthy essays about their appreciation of Dutch imperialism. Bossenbroek claims to use an "anthropological definition of culture", but this should be interpreted as his way to distinguish from "normative culture," which amounts to formal art. Still, the actors in his narrative are generally from the upper middle-class, representatives of a *burgelijke* culture.[157] Bloembergen meanwhile runs into the same problem that Alexander Geppert noted in his study of various colonial expositions in Europe, namely that the public is, not surprisingly, not very articulate in expressing its experiences at said expositions and was in for entertainment rather than education. Postcards send from expositions – a popular activity, which can be considered as one of the 'compulsory' rites of the expositions as a tourist attraction – contained little more information than a brief description of the weather and the equally brief statement that the signatories were having a good time. Guiseppe Finaldi, in a contribution to MacKenzie's latest edited volume, makes the remark that MacKenzie is ultimately left with a load of circumstantial evidence (state propaganda, in this case) when he claims that the empire could "regenerate […] the British themselves […] and by creating a national purpose with a high moral content lead to class conciliation," as his evidence could only indirectly support this.[158] The evidence brought up by Bossenbroek and Bloembergen is similarly circumstantial. The only way around it is to change the question to be answered – the postcards, for example, might not give a detailed description of the impression the exposition left on a visitor, but it does suggest that the colonial expositions were tourist attractions, and that a visit was an opportunity to "gaze at live inhabitants of these territories in a quasi-authentic reproduction of their normal surroundings" for entertainment, as Bloembergen writes.[159]

The schematized thinking in terms of sending and receiving might miss other discursive effects that imperialism had on Dutch society. Take, once more, the exoticized representations at colonial expositions. They normalized the idea of other cultures as attractions, to appropriate them in the context of an exposition. It might be the form of

[157] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, 18–19.
[158] Giuseppe Finaldi, '"The Peasants Did Not Think of Africa": Empire and the Italian State's Pursuit of Legitimacy, 1871-1945', in *European Empires and the People: Popular Responses to Imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 198.
[159] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 113.

the message, more than its content, that is of importance here. What did this form of imperial propaganda – and, consequently, imperialism at large – do "to the white psyche?", as Gloria Wekker has asked, is the central question here.[160] The study of popular imperialism is the study of public memory, of collective mentalities, or of all those other terms that imply that there is a collective reservoir of images – in the past and present – whose meaning is more than just the sum of all the propaganda, cultural expressions, and imperial titbits we can find in the aforementioned work by Bossenbroek and Bloembergen or MacKenzie and Porter. While Wekker prefers to use the concept of a *cultural archive* to refer to this reservoir of knowledge, others, like Paul Bijl, have opted for the concept of *cultural framing* to denote the rendering of information as meaningful or meaningless, as the essential element in constructing collective mentalities and memories – so that it is not so much a question of which information was publicly available, but of how, when and by whom meaning was assigned to it.[161]

A similar conception can be detected in Susan Legêne's *Spiegelreflex: culturele sporen van de koloniale ervaring* (2010, tr. Cultural Traces of the Colonial Experience), in which she set out to study "Dutch cultural history as a colonial history," which has its effect on "expressions of art and cultural patterns, but also, in a more general sense, on dominant views.[162]In earlier work, together with Berteke Waaldijk, she already made the case that there had been such a thing as a colonial form of cultural citizenship, the latter defined as participation in a cultural community:

> Citizenship in the first place concerns the formal claims, rights and obligations of citizens in a nation-state. This bond between citizenship and nation-state is not self-evident or exclusive, however. Citizenship also concerns participation in a cultural community, which is not necessarily limited to a national context. [...] Research in the field of 'cultural citizenship' puts emphasis on recognition, participation and identity. This concept allows for an interpretation of the relation between state and subject beyond its political and legal definitions.[163]

This took the form of taking an interest in the Indies, reading books and articles on them, and was therefore closely related to the 'Ethical' civilization project. In that respect it also perpetuated the hierarchies of empire, since it reserved the role of civilizer for metropolitan members of the imperial community. Someone like Soewardi

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[160] Wekker, *White Innocence*, 3.
[161] Bijl, *Emerging Memory*.
[162] Legêne, *Spiegelreflex*, 8.
[163] Waaldijk and Legêne, 'Ethische politiek', 188.

Soerjaningrat, who was one of the first to articulate a stinging critique of Dutch colonial rule in his 1912 essay *Als ik eens Nederlander was…* (If I were a Dutchman…; see chapter 3), was therefore ultimately "an uninvited guest" in the metropolitan "microcosm of empire" when he joined the conversation with his essay.[164]

Dutch imperial culture was stealthy, even invisible, at times. This does not mean, however, that it wasn't there, or that it wasn't a consistent factor in the construction of national culture. As the discussion above has shown, indifference is simply one of the registers in which contemporaries expressed their sense or understanding of of empire, among others. In the next chapters we will see there were different sites of imperial construction in Dutch society, with each their own registers of expression, but also with a common thread of a Dutch imperial ideology, which suggests we should not take its invisiblity for a lack of strength.

[164] Ibid.

Chapter 2

Culinary Colonisation

A Cultural History of the *Rijsttafel* in The Netherlands[165]

When Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte sat down for a Q&A session on social media in 2015, he answered the question as to what his favourite meal was with the "Indonesian rice table."[166] What this signifies is that the rice table is a non-partisan pick today, in The Netherlands, when it comes to food – after all prime ministers do not, generally speaking, try to be divisive in garden variety interviews like the one in question. But while a safe pick can be expected from a prominent politician in this context, the take-away for our purposes here is that the colonial rice table has acquired this status quite succesfully. The idea of the rice table as a "typical national dish" traces back to at least the early 1980s, when Minister of Foreign Affairs Max van der Stoel made this claim in response to questions from parliament after the dish was served in Washington to commemorate two hundred years of bilateral relations between the United States and the Netherlands.[167] In 2006 the the Dutch national UNESCO committee made the status as national dish as official as such a status can get by naming the rice table intangible cultural heritage. The committee judged that "the Indische group has profoundly affected Dutch society [...] by their take on hospitality, sharing happiness, the famous Indorock [music] ... and of course by the taste and scents of the *Indische* cuisine."[168]

How did the rice table – a colonial invention – reach this status as "national dish"? It was, as we will see in this chapter, not always that popular. And how does it come that

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[165] Part of the research from this chapter has been published as: Matthijs Kuipers, '"Makanlah Nasi!(Eat Rice!)": Colonial Cuisine and Popular Imperialism in The Netherlands During the Twentieth Century', *Global Food History* 3, no. 1 (2017): 4–23.
[166] 'Rutte: eierbal was een aanrader!', *Metro*, 17 June 2015.
[167] 'Van der Stoel:"Amerikanen dol op rijsttafel"', *Leeuwarder Courant*, 4 February 1982.
[168] Nationale UNESCO Commissie, Immaterieel erfgoed in Nederland (2006), 39, as found in: Van Leeuwen, *Ons Indisch erfgoed*, 10.

Rutte claims it is Indonesian, while the UNESCO (and many others) would consider it *Indisch*-Dutch heritage, and others claim it is a "Dutch invention."[169] This chapter will explore the nineteenth and early-twentieth century histories that preceded the rice table's ascend to national fame, in order to contribute to answering these questions. I will show that its rise to fame was not always the success story the prime minister or others imbued with colonial nostalgia would like to have it. Negative sentiments surrounded the rice table in its early metropolitan days as much as positive sentiments, and the picture is decidedly more complicated than either one that sketches the rice table as always popular, or as simply having gone from metropolitan rejection to embrace. The introduction of colonial foodways in the metropole is therefore a case that reflects on the question of nostalgia, and could provide more depth to our understanding of the different registers in which it was expressed. The debates on colonial nostalgia focus much on its founding moment, with Lizzy van Leeuwen and Sarah de Mul arguing that this was around the moment of decolonization, while Paul Bijl contents its origins should be sought much earlier, around the turn of the twentieth century. But, as Bijl also notes, "tempo doeloe is, in fact, part of a broader mnemonic culture in which the colonial order of things, if not the colonial system, is seen as a state of affairs to which a return is preferable."[170]

We can therefore expect to find more than only a longing for the Indies in the metropolitan history of the rice table. One element of what Bijl calls the mnemonic culture of empire was the idea that the metropole and the colony consisted of strictly separated entities, as I have already elaborated on in the introduction. As the rice table, as a colonial invention, breaches this imagined border between two worlds, the same anxieties elicited by food practices in the colony were introduced in the metropole with the introduction of the rice table. Seen in the wider context of home imperial culture, these negative sentiments should therefore not simply be taken for the absence of nostalgia, but rather as an expression in a different colonial register. Only taking nostalgia as a lense through which to observe colonial foodways in the metropole brings along risks. Restaurants are prone to do this – one restaurant in Amsterdam, for instance, claims that the rice table sprang from spice traders' appreciation for the authentic Indonesian cuisine, and that "the rijsttafel has been a Dutch tradition ever

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[169] '14. Eten En Drinken', *Weerzien Met Indië*, 1994, 323.
[170] Paul Bijl, 'Dutch Colonial Nostalgia across Decolonisation', *Journal of Dutch Literature* 4, no. 1 (2013): 129.

since" – but academic works sometimes hoover in the same direction.[171] Historian Annemarie Cottaar claims that the *Indisch* character of cities like The Hague and Arnhem around the turn of the twentieth century laid the ground the postcolonial appreciation of the rice table, but while I agree with her point that this history dates back earlier than the mass arrival of *Indisch*-Dutch people after Indonesian independence during the 1950s, it is not a straightforwardly crescendo story leading from the 1890s to the 2010s. Joop van den Berg, for instance, sketches an extremely uncritical and nostalgic picture of a colonial paradise where the *kokki bitja* (beloved cook) ruled the planter's kitchen and pioneered the rice table, which subsequently rose in popularity and inevitably found its way to the metropole.[172]

Evidence for early metropolitan rice table appreciation, which could support narratives like Van den Berg's, is readily available for those on the lookout. In 1886, for instance, an entrepreneur residing in The Hague decided he was in for a change. He sold his estate with the intention to invest the money in a restaurant in Scheveningen, the seaside town adjacent to The Hague. It was quite a gamble, not because of the restaurant business per se, but because of his choice to style his not yet opened restaurant an *Indisch* dining, and his idea to locate the venue on a vessel at the beach. Had his project gone through it would have been the first *Indisch* restaurant of The Netherlands. Alas for him the city administration decided otherwise: for unknown reasons the man, named Van Sprew, was not granted the permission he was seeking. Why exactly his request was declined is unclear, as advisers within the administration initially advised in favour of his plans, and even went so far as to assign him an exact location.[173] Most interesting for our purposes here, however, is that as early as the late 1880s it was apparently conceivable for someone without known *Indische* roots or colonial experience to set up an *Indisch* restaurant.

However, while the story above is an instance of positive metropolitan appreciation – in this case in the form of seeing a potential business in it – there are also numerous examples that illustrate the contrary. When large groups of Dutch and

[171] Matthijs Kuipers, '"Makanlah Nasi! (Eat Rice!)": Colonial Cuisine and Popular Imperialism in The Netherlands During the Twentieth Century', *Global Food History* 3, no. 1 (2017): 2.
[172] Joop van den Berg, *'Ajoh dan, neem... néém...': De Geschiedenis van de Rijsttafel* ('s-Gravenhage: Uitgeverij BZZTôH, 2002), 41–42.
[173] Haags Gemeentearchief (NL-HaHGA), Raadscommissie voor Plaatselijke Werken en Eigendommen, 0668-01, inv. nrs. 35, 289; Verslagen en handelingen van de gemeenteraad 1851-2005, Handelingen 1886, beeldnummer 269.

Indisch-Dutch migrated to The Netherlands in the wake of Indonesian independence in the 1950s and 60s, the inclusion of the latter group into Dutch society was hampered by Dutch suspicions of cultural otherness (and, as is often noted, by the simultaneously expressed notion that integration efforts were unnecessary because the *Indisch*-Dutch were, after all, Dutch citizens). Anecdotal evidence is provided, among others, by Lizzy van Leeuwen and, recently, by Gloria Wekker. "The postwar uplifting regime," Wekker writes, collecting from her childhood memories, "consisted of regular unexpected visits from social workers, who came to inspect whether my mother cooked potatoes instead of rice, that the laundry was done on Monday, that we ate minced meatballs on Wednesday, and that the house was cleaned properly."[174] The social workers she mentions were likely from the *Centraal Comité van Kerkelijk en Particulier Initiatief* (CCKP, Central Committee for Church and Private Initiatives), an organisation linked to the Dutch Reformed Church (*Nederlands Hervormde Kerk*), a protestant denomination, that was commissioned by the state to provide social care for migrants coming from the newly independent Indonesia to The Netherlands, the metropole of the empire they had lived in. The aim of the assimilation efforts of the CCKP was to transform the repatriates – as all migrants from Indonesia after 1945 were called, but which usually specifically refers to the *Indisch*-Dutch group – into 'potato eaters' (*aardappelvreters*).[175]

When and why did the rice table – a rice dish with several side dishes such as *sateh*, *petjel* and *gado gado*, minimally defined – acquire this symbolic meaning? According to Mrs. Vemerius, a household manual writer from the late nineteenth century, the rice table was simply this:

> The *Indische* rice table's main dish is rice, hence the name; usually one adds spicy meat and vegetables to it; this can be adjusted according to taste.[176]

But while Vemerius' words suggest that the rice table can be discussed in mere material terms, the very inclusion of its definition in a cook and etiquette manual already suggests there is more to the story. As I will argue here, the *rijsttafel* is best described as a product of colonial history, rather than as an offspring either of traditional Javanese

[174] Wekker, *White Innocence*, 9.
[175] H.G. Surie, 'De Gerepatrieerden', in *Allochtonen in Nederland: Beschouwingen over de Gerepatrieerden, Ambonezen, Surinamers, Antillianen, Buitenlandse Werknemers, Chinezen, Vluchtelingen En Buitenlandse Studenten in Onze Samenleving*, ed. H. Verwey-Jonker ('s-Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij 's-Gravenhage, 1971), 79.
[176] Mevrouw Vemerius, *De vrouw in de keuken: nieuw Nederlandsch kookboek: volledige verzameling van praktisch beproefde recepten voor dagelijksche- en feest-maaltijden, gevolgd door de Indische rijsttafel* (Schiedam: Roelants, 1892), 286.

culture or of European inventiveness. While Van den Berg, in his attempt to repudiate the colonizer from any blame (he mentions he want to present "the white planter in a positive way"), claims that the "most decisive figures surrounding the rice table were not those who consumed it, but those who prepared it, the *kokki bitja*, the planter's partners, the traders, and all those others hovering around."[177] While Van den Berg sees this as an argument that the rice table is not a colonial invention, presumably because agency is not limited to the white planter, I would argue the opposite, namely that the rice table exemplifies the colonial situation. Debates about its authenticity and its (supposed) relation to tradition reveal some of the inner logic of the imperial project, and places the rice table among those everyday life tools that maintained the racialised and gendered hierarchies of empire. The dish – or rather, the cultural amalgam of the way the food was prepared, consumed, served and depicted – became tightly and exclusively linked to Dutch modern colonialism.

Among colonial symbols, however, the *rijsttafel* is ostensibly void of political meaning. This does not mean it is an innocent symbol of the 'good old days overseas', but it does ensure that most people express their thoughts about it without much reservation. Disputes about its meaning therefore easily present themselves, such as the aforementioned claims that the rice table is Dutch, Indonesian, colonial, or *Indisch*. There are more such ambiguities. For someone like Van Sprew, the *Indisch* kitchen represented nothing more that a business opportunity. For others, most notably in circles adherent to a liberal, "ethical", colonial policy, the same cuisine was a field where colonial ideology could be promoted, maintained or contested. The rice table, I will argue here, had the same Janus face as the liberal colonial policy of the early twentieth century: at times it appears as an apolitical symbol of modernity and progress, while its other side, where the colonial divides are maintained and colonial rule is enforced, remains inevitably linked. Moreover, the rice table shows what I will call 'the limits of permeation.' Either as an apolitical food or as a vessel for imperial ideology, for about a century the rice table arose little interest in the metropole. This contradicts popular belief, which mainly focuses on the steep increase of the popularity of ethnic food in many former colonial powers after decolonization, and thereby overlooks the long but

[177] Berg, *'Ajoh dan, neem... néém...'*, 58.

ambiguous presence of colonial food in the European metropoles.[178] As a multifaceted imperial symbol, the *rijsttafel* demonstrates both the metropolitan imperial permeation and its limits.

Dichotomies of a colonial dish

What is the *rijsttafel*, except for a bulk of rice with side dishes? As mentioned in the introduction above, according to one's vantage point it could be considered both "European" and "Javanese." Tradition has it that the *Indische* kitchen, and thereby the *rijsttafel*, has furthermore been affected Portuguese, Spanish, French, Chinese and Indian influences.[179] Besides European/native, there are other dichotomies that crosscut this colonial dish, such as ordinary/extraordinary and traditional/modern. Some of these dualities neatly reflect the colonial social order, as a *rijsttafel* was usually consumed by Europeans and Indo-Europeans, but prepared and served by Javanese or by people with other ethnicities from the Indonesian archipelago. Others are more ambiguous. But in any case, the 'hybridity' of the *Indische* kitchen does not refer to some kind of equal blend of literal and metaphorical ingredients. It more reflects the multitude of inequalities of the colonial world itself.

The confusion of tongues when speaking about the *rijsttafel* can partly be put to an end if we make a distinction between its material components on the one hand, and the way of presenting these on the other. The abundance of side dishes is an eclectic and heterogeneous mixture of dishes originating in different parts of the archipelago. To say that the *rijsttafel* is European is therefore not to claim that *sateh* is not Javanese, or that *rendang* does not originate on the west coast of Sumatra. As a cultural practice of presenting a wealth of different dishes, with the roles of preparing, serving and consuming distributed along colonial lines, the *rijsttafel* is the result of colonial history. Claiming it to be 'authentically European' or 'Javanese' therefore is besides the point. At the turn of the twentieth century, the *rijsttafel* was often referred to with the Dutch

[178] On ethnic food, see Buettner for Indian restaurants in the United Kingdom and Cottaar for Indonesian restaurants in the Netherlands. Elizabeth Buettner, "'Going for an Indian': South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism in Britain"," *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 4 (2008): 865–901; Cottaar, "Een Oosterse Stad"; On the empire in a metropolitan context, see John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); Porter, *The Absent-minded Imperialists*; Andrew Stuart Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back?: The Impact Of Imperialism On Britain From The Mid-nineteenth Century* (Pearson Education, 2005).
[179] Ellen Derksen, Lillian Ducelle, and Eva van Geleuken, *Met kruiden en een korrel zout. Smaak en geschiedenis van de Indische keuken* (Den Haag: stichting Tong Tong, 1994), 7.

adjective *Indisch*. This denotation would also hold as an analytical category, as it is a liquid term itself, covering the ambiguities of colonialism. This liquidity, at same time, limits the analytical value of employing the term other than as a historical category.

Image 1 – A modern day Javanese *tumpeng*. According to the description, during the 1929 slamatan in restaurant Van Geemert in The Hague a similar dish was served. Source: flickr.com, tbSMITH (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Tracing the *rijsttafel*'s genealogy, the association of the dish with feasts and rituals is not to be missed. It bores visual similarities with the Javanese *tumpeng* (*image 1*) – a large plate with a conal-shaped rice-tower in the centre, surrounded by a variety of meat and vegetable dishes – that is served at the *selamatan* ritual.[180] According to the well-known anthropologist Clifford Geertz, writing in the 1970s, the *selamatan* is "the Javanese version of what is perhaps the world's most common religious ritual, the communal feast", that could be held at a wide variety of social occasions.[181] To assess how 'traditional' the *tumpeng* and the *selamatan* were in colonial times is not the point here, but the image of authenticity was well established, even in the metropole. This in itself can be read as a sign of approval from the side of the colonizers: in other colonial contexts customs regarded as 'authentic' or 'traditional' were to be protected, while things without this status would be prey to intervention and modernizing reform –the colonial power balance in these matters therefore evolves around granting the

[180] Thanks to Indry Oktaviani for pointing this out to me.
[181] Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 11.

designation 'traditional.'[182] When the restaurant owner J. van Geemert in The Hague wanted to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his *Indisch* restaurant, he decided to have an "*écht-Indischen Slamatan.*" It was reported in the press as overwhelming manifestation of exoticism and as a celebration of the colonial ties between the Indies and the metropole.[183]

The celebratory character of the *rijsttafel* manifested itself on official occasions. Meetings between European and native members of the colonial administration were often held over an afternoon *rijsttafel*, as many journals and travelogues testify.[184] Moreover, the *rijsttafel* served as a means to impress within European circles. Semi-official dinners, which were an important social element in the upper circles of European civil servants, featured the *rijsttafel* in its most abundant form. In the household manual *Ons huis in Indië*, Mrs. Catenius-van der Meijden (*image 2*) gave advice to ladies running *Indische* households. The dinners had to be announced eight days in advance, and detailed instructions how to serve which dish had to be "drummed into" a high number of servants. Catenius' instructions express a strong sense of hierarchy, with special care to the orders of entrance and seating, according to one's position in society. It is in this world that the *rijsttafel* was a means to impress.[185]

A quotidian variant of the *rijsttafel* as afternoon meal existed all along, however (*image 3*). In a travelogue of his journey to and in the colony, the Dutch doctor Jan Gramberg describes the *rijsttafel* as the ordinary lunch for Dutch people in the Indies:

> […], they usually consume the rice table around noon. One tucks into some rice with curry and sambal, picks a chicken or a fried fish, tries the omelette and finishes with some fruits [...] [186]

In cookbooks that discuss the regular eating pattern of Dutch colonials in the Indies, the *rijsttafel* is also mentioned as the designated dish for lunch – although some commentators note that around 1910 the *rijsttafel* looses ground to 'European food' in

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[182] Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001), 149–72.
[183] 'Een "Slamatan" bij van Geemert', *Mondain Den Haag*, 19 July 1929.
[184] 'Iets uit den nalatenschap van Mr. D. Koorders', *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, 1869, 342.
[185] J. M. J. Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indië: handboek bij de keuze, de inrichting, de bewoning ende verzorging van het huis met bijgebouwen en erf, naar de eischen der hygiëne, benevens raadgevingen en wenken op huishoudelijk gebied* (Semarang: Masman & Stroink, 1908), 208–10.
[186] J.S.G. Gramberg, 'De vallei van Pelantoengan', *Nederland: proza en poëzie van Nederlandsche auteurs*, 1 January 1869, 356.

the lunchtime habits of Europeans in the colonies.[187] As a part of daily colonial routine, the *rijsttafel* never lost its connotation of rest or even relaxation, as Gramberg's description shows. More even than practical means, the *rijstafel* fulfilled a role in the social world of colonial administration.

Image 2 – Mrs. Catenius-van der Meijden, writer of cookbooks and household manuals for The Indies. Source: *Ons huis in Indië* (Semarang: Masman&Stroink 1908)

Image 3 – A *rijsttafel* in a colonial domestic setting. The original caption reads "Jos, Guusje en André Meijers aan de rijsttafel te Semarang." Photo by Willem Meijers, circa 1900. Source: *KITLV Digital Media Library*

The social dimension of food was not something one learned in the metropole before departure to the Indies – making it into a rare instance where it gave an advantage to be Indies-born over European-born. Daily food practices in The Indies were not part of the curriculum that had to prepare future civil servants for their time overseas. The *Indische Instelling* in Delft, which existed between 1864 and 1901, was one of the institutions that prepared students for a career in the colonial civil service. A student in 1890 had to attend various courses in a two-year program that included history, geography, ethnology, religious law, native institutions and customs, imperial public institutions and languages. In the latter category, Malay and Javanese were

[187] N. van Berkum, *De Hollandsche Tafel in Indië* (Gorinchem: Noorduyn, 1913), 2.

obligatory, as was a third language of choice, such as Sundanese, Madurese or Makassarese.[188]

That the curriculum was not designed so much to prepare for daily life in the service, is suggested by Taco Roorda in his opening speech at the *Rijksinstelling van onderwijs in de Indische taal-, land- en volkenkunde* on the methods and aims of teaching Javanese to future colonial civil servants. Although he stressed that this teaching was of a practical rather than academic nature, according to him even the practical gains for his students of learning Javanese were not the core:

> Yet learning to comprehend and command Javanese, gentlemen, is not chief amongst my aims in teaching you this language at this state institution. The principal goal is, to put it briefly, knowledge of the Javanese language as a mirror of the Javanese people, their character and customs.[189]

This is in tune with many of the teachings and propaganda on colonies in Europe. A booklet by the Dutch colonial propaganda organisation *Oost en West* displays an identical range of topics: climate, plant and animal life, geography, ethnology and natural resources –resulting in a static and pre-modern image of the overseas territories, a virgin territory suited for imperial ambitions.[190] The grammar of these images can be found across other European colonial powers – in Germany for example the descriptions of Brazil and Chile “looked like an encounter with forests and trees, rather than with human beings.”[191] These discourses about a state of nature are closely connected to policies of settlement colonisation – but it can be added that they are also closely related when there is none or only limited settlement, as the same ‘state of nature’ discourse also supports claims to a civilizing mission.

A more practical preparation for colonial everyday life was given to women engaged to colonial civil servants. The curriculum of the *Koloniale school voor meisjes en vrouwen* (‘Colonial Girls’ and Women’s School’) in The Hague, founded in 1920, included among other courses ‘tropical hygiene’, dressmaking and cooking. The school was concerned with:

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[188] Clara Brinkgreve, *Met Indië verbonden: een verhaal van vier generaties, 1849-1949* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2009), 48–51.

[189] Taco Roorda, *Over het voorname doel en de methode van het onderwijs in de Javaansche taal, tot opening van de lessen aan de Rijksinstelling van onderwijs in de Indische taal-, land- en volkenkunde te Leiden, den 14den Sept. 1864* (Leiden: Akademische boekhandel van P. Engels, 1864), 5.

[190] J. Habbema and Herman Dirk Hendrik Bosboom, *Een boekje over onze Oost: voor hen die er niet geweest zijn* (Amsterdam: Van Looy, 1907).

[191] Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im deutschen Kaiserreich* (München: Beck, 2006), 248.

> The many married women and girls that sail to the Indies without being prepared for their task. [...] It is useful and necessary that these women gain acquaintance with the task of being a mother and taking care of children, with tropical hygiene, with nursing and first aid, with *Indische* kitchen and household, with contact with natives and Malay linguistics and ethnology. [...] Gaining this knowledge is an advantage for the fullblood European woman, who is completely unfamiliar with the Indies.[192]

The appearance of the Colonial School can be seen as a manifestation of what Elsbeth-Locher-Scholten has called *'totokisation'*[193] or Westernization of European role models in the Indies. A metropolitan preparation for a life in the colonies replaced learning by practice in the Indies. The numerous household manuals and cookbooks on the Dutch market can be seen in the same light.[194] Not withstanding this Westernization, preparing a *rijsttafel* was part of the school's curriculum. The school's influence should not be overstated, however, as its number of students was not particularly high in its first days, with 135 pupils turned out in the first five years.[195]

Altogether, the *rijsttafel* remained a relatively mysterious aspect of Dutch colonial life for the men and women that had not seen the Indies yet. The introduction to the well-spiced meals upon arrival in the Indies obtained a status of something close to an initiation rite.[196] The novel *Lief en leed uit eene kleine wereld* (1869, 'Life's joy and sorrow in a small world') by Christine Muller features the following extract, that illustrates this aspect of one's first *rijsttafel*:

> It were strangely pungent foods he got served; only the rice and chicken were familiar, and it was all strong and highly flavoured with spices, blazing Otto's Dutch mouth. "That, Mr. Welters, is what we call a *rijsttafel*", Mr. Arnolds said.[197]

Similar sketches can be found in the novels of Jan ten Brink. The recurring theme is that of newcomers in the colonies who only have vague notions of what a *rijsttafel* is, let alone how to properly help oneself to it.[198] In time the mystery evaporated, however, as the *Indische* kitchen made its way to the metropole. The earliest advertisement for the home delivery of *rijsttafels* I came across dates back to 1879, suggesting that the

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[192] NL-HaNA, Koloniale School voor Meisjes en Vrouwen, 2.20.24, files 40, 78.
[193] *Totok* was the Malay word –commonly used in Dutch– to denote newly arrived Europeans or the ones sticking to a European rather than *Indische* lifestyle.
[194] Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State*, 145–46.
[195] NL-HaNA, 2.20.24, 40.
[196] 'Klimaat en acclimatie in Indie.', *Surinaamsche courant en Gouvernements advertentie blad*, 6 September 1868.
[197] Christine Muller, *Lief en leed uit eene kleine wereld* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen, 1869), 62–63.
[198] Jan ten Brink, *Oost-Indische Dames En Heeren. Vier Bijdragen Tot De Kennis En Usantiën Der Europeesche Maatschappij in Nederlandsch-Indië. Eerste Deel.* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1863), cited in Derksen, Ducelle, and Geleuken, *Met kruiden en een korrel zout*, 46.

metropolitan Indies food culture has an older genealogy than suggested by accounts that specifically deal with food. That this has been overlooked is peculiar, since the presence of Indonesians in The Netherlands dates even further back.[199]

The metropolitan *rijsttafel*

Contemporaries in the early twentieth century assumed that the *rijsttafel* entered The Netherlands with the increase of back-and-forth migration of military and civil servants to and from the Dutch East Indies. "Given the great number of people living in The Hague that either have been in The Indies or are from there, the emergence of restaurants serving Indies food may not surprise," wrote an anonymous commentator in 1925.[200] And indeed, the emergence of Indies food and the emergence of a colonial migration circuit are paired, although this dates a little further back than the 1920s the commentator had in mind. According to Bosma, Raben and Willems, the overseas journey from the Indies to the Netherlands became 'democratized' after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, as the Indies' middle class now could afford it.[201] Moreover, the second half of the nineteenth century saw a sharp increase of civil servants from The Netherlands, and their metropolitan presence when on furlough did not pass unnoticed. As mentioned above, it is around the same time when Dutch readers could get first notice of the word 'rijsttafel' in their periodicals and magazines. Thus, without directly making causal claims, it can be stated that the migration circuit and the introduction of the *rijsttafel* are parallel developments at the very least.

In the 1880s the first grocer's shops with Indies commodities entered the Dutch streets. The import firm of W.A. Albrecht opened shops for colonial cooking ingredients in Amsterdam and in The Hague, both named Toko Betawie ('Batavian shop'). According to its advertisements, it sold jams, *atjars* ('pickle relish'), fishmeal, sambals and *boemboes* ('spice pastes').[202] Cookbooks like Mrs. Vemerius' *De vrouw in de keuken* advised to frequent toko's like Albrecht's in order to get spices, although this advice was given somewhat half-heartedly, as Vemerius also urged her readers not to buy premade sambals:

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[199] Cf. Cottaar, 'Een Oosterse Stad'; Harry Poeze, *In het land van de overheerser I. Indonesiërs in Nederland 1600-1950* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1986).
[200] "Indie in Holland." *De Indische Courant*, August 10, 1925.
[201] Bosma, Raben, and Willems, *De geschiedenis van Indische Nederlanders*, 41.
[202] Advertisement, *Het Nieuws Van Den Dag: Kleine Courant*, May 24, 1882.

> One can get hold on premade *sambelans* and *sambel-gorèngs* with ease in Holland, but the self-made pastes, made out of dried spices with the numerous given recipes, have more savouriness and aroma. Moreover, one can adjust the ingredients according to taste.[203]

A handful of toko's emerged in the three decades to follow. This did not pass unnoticed, and the flourishing of Indies grocery stores attracted attention from the Indies press, as it stood in contrast with the diminishing of the popularity of the very same *rijsttafel* in the Indies:

> Two subsequent owners of Toko Betawi in The Hague, at the absolute top of Indies groceries, have "après fortune fait" withdrawn from business and have sold up their business to a pure European gentleman, who, although never been in the Indies, has a knowledge of spices that matches the late Veth's knowledge of Java. A modest and unpretentious shop in the Van Kinsbergenstraat, named *Toko Moerah*, has the finest ingredients for preparing an exquisite *rijsttafel*. Do not ask how his business is doing. Just take a look at his decent but abundant stockroom, and at his smiling face, to see he's prospering. [...] Do not ask, how many *Toko's Baroe* there are in the peripheral quarters, or how many ordinary grocers have at least some *rijsttafel* ingredients on display to attract customers, who otherwise would have passed their shop. [...] Old colonials, for whom a Dutch dinner would be sufficiently delightful, still regard the *rijsttafel* as a delicacy, while *totoks* more and more come to appreciate the wealth of this Indies dish.[204]

This account in the *Sumatra post* may have been a little exaggerated in the service of rhetoric. Waterreus, one of the grocery stores that is mentioned, sold many other commodities. Moreover, they mainly targeted an upper-class public, putting doubts on how widespread this development was.[205] Another account on Indies groceries is given by J.J. Meijer in *Weekblad voor Indië*:

> Beyond doubt the groceries that sell *rijsttafel* ingredients, never were confronted with a stagnancy of business, and the owners would never consider a clearance sale or reduced prices. All *Haagsche Indiërs* are among their clientele. [...] But alas, there is one unfortunate catch. It is all quite pricey, and would you want to have a *rijsttafel* in *Negari Wolanda*, of the same standards as it is served in *Insulinde*, it will cost you fortunes. If you cannot resist your desire for delicious food, very soon your bulging purse will be a *kantong kosong* (empty pouch).[206]

Meijer also points at the popularity of the toko's, but adds that they have a tendency of becoming more and more expensive. Here again, the hidden agenda of the author should lead to some suspicion, as the article was meant to promote an Indies restaurant ("suits all purses") the author had connections with. Altogether, the picture that establishes

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[203] Vemerius, *De vrouw in de keuken*, 388.
[204] 'De Rijsttafel in Holland', *De Sumatra Post*, 10 September 1911.
[205] *Geïllustreerde gids voor 's-Gravenhage, Wassenaar, 't Westland, Rijswijk, Voorburg en Scheveningen* ('s-Gravenhage: J. van der Schouw, 1894), 6.
[206] J.J. Meijer, 'Soedikampir, de Indische restauratie in Den Haag', *Weekblad voor Indië*, 25 April 1909.

itself nonetheless shows a closed and modest group of *Indische* clientele that paid well for the grocers' colonial goods. Only as early as the 1920s there is mention of Indies spices as *not* being expensive.[207]

As '*Indisch*' around 1900 was a catch-all term, the clientele for colonial groceries is likely to have been heterogeneous, consisting of people of both Dutch and Indonesian descent, retired and on furlough, civil servants and military. It should not be overlooked, however, that they all had something in common besides their various ties to the colony, namely their very presence in the metropole. Not everyone wanted to cross the oceans, nor was everyone eligible for (paid) furlough, and the latter had much to do with (supposed) Dutchness.[208] In other words, all *Indische* people that did make it to The Hague also felt Dutch in one way or another.

The *Indische* community in The Hague around 1900 is therefore much like the ethnic minorities as described by Donna Gabaccia in the case of the United States, but with some differences standing out. The dividing lines between the receiving society and the 'ethnic minority' are drawn less stark. The shared history in the Indies was a strong tie that functioned as glue of the community, but the Dutch society on the other hand was not all that alien. This is reflected by the nature of many of the toko's. Some of them specialized in colonial goods, but many groceries were as hybrid as their customers, selling the ingredients for both 'Dutch' and '*Indisch*' food. Gabaccia sees 'cultural conservatism' as a problem for the spread of ethnic food, which backfired mainly at ethnic entrepreneurs who found themselves in a food niche with only a small market to sell to. These entrepreneurs, at the same time, could use their position as cultural insiders to advance the adaptation to new food in their community.[209] This incentive is virtually absent in the case of *Indisch* food in The Hague. A grocery could at any time adapt their assortment to the market circumstances. The label of "ethnic entrepreneurship" only partly fits the bill.[210]

The driving force behind the presence of the *rijsttafel* in the metropole is to be found in the demands of the *Indische* community itself. Interestingly enough, the same

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[207] J. M. J. Catenius-van der Meijden, *Makanlah nasi! = (Eet rijst!): de Indische rijsttafel (voor Holland)* ('s-Gravenhage: Ort & Van Straaten, 1922), IX.
[208] Bart Luttikhuis, *Constructions of Europeanness in the Dutch East Indies (ca. 1910-1940)*(PhD thesis, European University Institute, forthcoming).
[209] Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 44–66.
[210] Cottaar, 'Een Oosterse Stad', 265–66.

commentators that note the increasing popularity of the *rijsttafel* in the metropole, also note that in the Indies this dish is giving way to "European food."[211] There is no contradiction here, however, if one takes in mind the different vantage points within the respective metropolitan and colonial societies. In the latter situation, Europeanness was key to exercise of rule, while in Europe this logically hardly made any distinction. Here, the same group identified as *Indisch*, as this was what set their lives apart from others in metropolitan society.[212]

The incentive for fostering a colonial identity in the Netherlands was strong. The *Indisch* kitchen formed an ideal depoliticized element. There were hardly any concerns for the availability of ingredients, which again contradicts Gabaccia, who argues that the (non-)availability of certain foods is a driving force in accelerating adaptation processes.[213] Spices that were native to the Indonesian archipelago were only available in powdered form in Europe. This has never been seen as a problem, and the use of substitutes and powders was an accepted practice. Mrs. Vemerius advised to use spring celery in case no *daong kemangie* was available, to replace *mie* noodles by "thin macaroni" and to use salted milk instead of coconut milk. Her list includes substitutes as well as mere translations, such as the pair *ketoembar* and coriander, which is essentially the same.[214] Ingredients could be replaced by substitutes without any concern over health or authenticity.

Also kitchen hygiene was not regarded a problem in Europe. It was, nonetheless, an often-heard concern regarding the Indies kitchen *on colonial territory*. According to another influential writer of instruction books for the household and the kitchen, Mrs. Catenius-van der Meijden, the Javanese kitchen had low hygienic standards. "A point that most arrests the attention of a European woman in the Indies – and let's add for clarity, it is a *disappointment*, is the spacious but grimy, smoky and dusky kitchen." She continues: "And still, [an initially clean and European kitchen] soon gets an *Indisch* cachet, due to the native women labouring there, who want to have it all their own way. They are not European, and feel, it seems, ill at ease in such a bright palace."[215] Although

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[211] 'Indie in Holland.'; Vemerius, *De vrouw in de keuken*.
[212] For a discussion on dichotomies and the importance of vantage points, see: Susan Gal, "A semiotics of the public/private distinction," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (2002): 77–95.
[213] Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat*, 206.
[214] Vemerius, *De vrouw in de keuken*, 394.
[215] Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indië*, 142.

Dutch women were urged to do the cooking themselves, the argument never backfired to the mainly Javanese *kokkies* working in Dutch restaurants.

During the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many followed the line as propagated by Vemerius and Catenius-van der Meijden. The latter's main message was not to miss, as the title of one of her cookbooks read *makanlah nasi!* – eat rice![216] The *rijsttafel*, and the Indies kitchen in general, was seen as a distinct pallet of cooking, but could be described by the same 'grammar' in cook books as meals and dishes that were considered Dutch or European. Outward rejection was scarce, and mainly to be found at sites that rejected other trends in eating and cooking in vogue at that time, such as vegetarianism. For example, in *Onze Keuken* (1902, 'Our kitchen'), a book on preparing meals and the science of nutrition, the use of Eastern spices is advised against. They serve in improving the taste and have a good effect on the digestion, but "are not completely harmless," this work stated.[217]

Who's cooking?

Although restaurants may be more about stories and people than about food proper, as Rebecca Spang has argued, it is not to say that food is completely absent in the picture.[218] If restaurants are all about images, sociability and stories, it is not far of the hook to say that many of those stories are at least stories *about* food. Many a restaurant is identified with the cook at work there, to the extreme that the restaurant *is* its chef. In the less extreme cases, it still matters *who* cooks. Regarding the Netherlands, in late nineteenth-century this is true at least for the smaller restaurants or *café-restaurants*.

In advertisements, the spare room was most commonly used to give the name of the restaurant and the name of the chef in charge. The announcement that *café-restaurant* de *Keizerskroon* in Amsterdam opened its doors in 1892 mentioned they were a *restaurant à la carte*, thus displaying themselves as a restaurant in French style. The advertisement was signed by the chef, whose credibility was backed by the information that he was the former chef of a restaurant called *Mille Colonnes* – a place

[216] Catenius-van der Meijden, *Makanlah nasi!*
[217] P.H. Schreuder jr. and N. Cariot, *Onze keuken: de bereiding der spijzen met berekende maaltijden volgens de eischen der voedingsleer toegelicht* (Amsterdam: Van Looy, 1902), 102.
[218] Rebecca L. Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000), 176.

with an impressive wall of mirrors, which besides that was oddly enough best known for its good beer.[219]

Moving up to the higher echelons of places to dine, the identification with Parisian-style restaurants does not change. Menus are mostly in French, and many a restaurant's name is in that language, even if the owners decided to associate there business with other regions or places, leading to names as *Des Indes* and *d'Angleterre* for hotels in The Hague. Positioning itself as a first-rank hotel at its opening in 1881, *Hotel Des Indes* in The Hague claimed to be one of the largest hotels, very well located and splendidly furnished.[220] The reference to the colony in the name was meant to attract *Indische* families as customers – not as a signpost for high standards and exclusive meals, which was indicated rather by the use of French, as was the standard at the turn of the twentieth century.[221]

Indische restaurants were no exception in the story above, here as well it mattered *who* did the cooking. The division of roles was a neat transplantation of the colonial social order, with restaurants ran by Dutch, while the food was prepared and served by Javanese.[222] Many restaurants promoted the fact Javanese were involved in the preparing and serving of dishes, as it was believed to add to their authenticity. When Mr. J. Bremer, the shopkeeper of the *Zwitsersche Winkel* in Arnhem, started to advertise for his *rijsttafels* in the late 1870s he added they were "prepared by a Javanese."[223] And in The Hague, *Indisch Restaurant "Tampat Senang"* stressed that their food was being served by "authentic Javanese."[224]

In sharp contrast with other Dutch restaurants, the names of the Javanese *kokkies* were seldom mentioned, resembling much of the practice surrounding domestic servants in the colonies, who were for example seldom named in the descriptions of photographic family portraits on which they appeared as "background."[225] Just so, the advertisements for and descriptions of *Indische* restaurants usually only bore the

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219 Advertisement, *De Tijd: Godsdienstig-staatkundig Dagblad*, December 19, 1892; "Amsterdamsche Brieven," *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, January 26, 1880.
220 Advertisement, *De Tijd: Godsdienstig-staatkundig Dagblad*, November 4, 1881.
221 NL-HaNA, Kist, 3.20.69, file 596, "Menukaarten ingekomen bij Joost Gerard Kist, voor maaltijden gehouden ter viering van diverse familie-aangelegenheden."
222 'Indie in Holland.'
223 'Makanan Djawa', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 13 March 1881.
224 *Officieel zak-adresboek van hotels en restaurants in Nederland en in Nederl.-Oost-Indië* (Den Haag: Lasschuit, 1934), 58.
225 Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 183–94.

reference that “a Javanese” did the cooking or that customers were “served by Javanese” or “served authentically” –who these persons were was not deemed important.

Many of the restaurants’ personnel came to the metropole as domestic servants to Dutch families on furlough. The roles assigned to Javanese servants in the colonies showed a gendered pattern, with a variety of jobs and task in and around the household, that could be assigned either to men or women. Gardening would be a men’s task, while nursing small European children would be taken care of by women. Cottaar mentions that the lion’s share of domestic servants that came to the Netherlands was female. The men that appear in the historical records as having been in the metropole, for example on pictures and in marriages, were most likely to be sailors, she claims.[226] This had its repercussion on the composition of many a restaurant’s personnel, where dominantly female workers populated the kitchen. A photo, accompanying an account of the decennial celebration of *Tampat Senang* in 1929, by then just called by it’s owners name *Van Geemert*, shows the restaurant’s personnel (*Image 4*). With a few exceptions they are female, dressed in white *kabaja’s* for the occasion. In more aspects the owner Van Geemert obeyed colonial logic. His party, a “traditional slamatan”, had separated meals for his European guests and his *Indische* guests, where *Indisch* this time denoted native or Javanese. In the Annemarie Cottaars discussion of ethnic restaurants in the Hague, the featured *Indische restaurants* seem only to be populated by female workers.

When restaurant *Waroong Djawa* issued a postcard for the promotion for its business (*Image 5*), the *image* of the serving personnel was completely altered however. The card shows an old colonial sitting at a dining table, with an infinite row of native personnel serving him. The row is infinite, disappearing in the horizon, thus once more stressing the abundant character of the *rijsttafel*. The waiters wear what appears to be native headwear, combined with a white colonial costume, and are all male. What may have caused this gender reversal is unknown, though in general in Europe male servants were seen as luxury, while maidservants were seen as basic need.[227]

The restaurant workers only came out of anonymity from the 1920s onwards, when restaurants owned by Javanese started to appear. Oddly enough though, one of the first examples, the restaurant *Senang Hati* which was founded in 1922, was owned by a

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[226] Annemarie Cottaar, *Ik had een neef in Den Haag: nieuwkomers in de twintigste eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders; Haags Gemeentearchief, 1998), 76.

[227] Carolyn Steedman, *Labours Lost: Domestic Service and the Making of Modern England* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 141.

former domestic servant whose name was corrupted into proper Dutch. The newspaper that wrote about him and his restaurant, though, still felt the need to put his name in quotation marks, speaking of "meneer Bouman" and thus restoring the initial colonial order.[228]

In sum, not everything surrounding the *rijsttafel* was void of the politics of colonial rule. While home cooking of colonial dishes, as reflected by cook books, became normalized, the restaurants show a different picture. Not attracting its clientele from a wide range, the social order of the restaurants mirrored the social order in the colonies in a mitigated form. Not all colonial lines of division were among the forefront of contestation. But some sites of contestation, such as gambling and carnal relations, were equally prominent in their metropolitan context, as the next section will show.

Image 4 – Postcard of *Indisch* restaurant Waroong Djawa, the stamp dates 1939. By Jan Lavies. Source: *KITLV Digital Media Library*

The politics of colonial food

If we look behind the scenes of *Indische* restaurants in The Hague, the politics of imperial food immediately make themselves clear. The first Parisian-style Indies

[228] 'Indie in Holland.'

restaurant of The Hague, *Oost en West*, even sprang from an explicitly political project, namely the propaganda association with the same name that was founded in 1899. Due to the entanglements of *Oost en West*'s various activities, we have to start at the association's core activity: the promotion of arts and craft from the Indies.

Oost en West's founder was G.E.V.L. van Zuylen, a former colonel from the Dutch colonial army (KNIL) who retired after a long overseas career in the 1890s and subsequently returned to the Netherlands.[229] His wife Mrs. Van Zuylen-Tromp was also among the group of founding members and became the first president of the association. The *Vereeniging "Oost en West"* described its goal as "the distribution of popular knowledge regarding our Indies amongst all the people and the stimulation of wealth in those regions and lending aid, in order to create a bond of true interest and love between the Netherlands and overseas." In serving this goal, five committees were created, entrusted with a variety of tasks, such as creating propaganda material and editing the fortnightly association mouthpiece. This magazine, that soon adopted the name *Het Koloniaal Weekblad*, was supposed to be politically impartial and adorned with the association's motto: "the colonial interest is the mother country's interest."[230] In the first years, its number of members grew to above one thousand, of which a majority resided in The Hague. It consisted mainly of elite circles, leading the *Indische Gids* to comment on the *Oost en West* as an "in-crowd enterprise."[231]

The so-called "Fifth Committee" got entrusted with the promotion of Indonesian arts and crafts. In the first years a selection of weapons and metal objects from the Indies travelled from exhibition to exhibition, visiting among other places Groningen, Utrecht and Rotterdam. According to their internal reports, there was critical acclaim but the number of visitors lacked behind.[232] In 1903 the committee commences a "permanent exhibition", for which means the *N.V. Boeatan* is founded. This limited company heavily depended on the financial backing of the committee's most wealthy members, as well as on a gift from the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, resulting in a seed capital of around twenty thousand guilders. The group included among others the president Mrs. Van Zuylen-Tromp and G.P. Rouffaer, secretary of the *Koninklijk Instituut van Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde in Nederlands-Indië,* as members of the managing board

[229] NL-HaNA, Stamboeken Officieren Landmacht en KNIL, 2.13.04, bestanddeel 669.
[230] *Oost en West. Orgaan der Vereeniging*, 21 March 1901.
[231] *Oost en West. Orgaan der Vereeniging,* 30 May 1901.
[232] *Het Koloniaal Weekblad*, 7 November 1901.

and G.E.V.L. van Zuylen, the retired colonel, and J.H. Abendanon, a liberal lawyer, and prominent exponent of the "ethical policy", as shareholders.[233]

At the second meeting of members of the Fifth Committee and Boeatan's shareholders –the two categories were not mutually exclusive– there is an agreement on deleting the philanthropic foundation of the company from its statute and making it into a commercial enterprise. Rather than an exhibition, Boeatan is set to become a shop. Amongst the members there is a strong belief that arts and craft objects from the Indies have commercial potential. It proved to be wishful thinking, as for years the company remained dependent on financial backing of its shareholders. In the first six years there is an average annual loss of one thousand guilders. By 1909, the belief in Boeatan's commercial potential is vanished, and the recurring financial aid is regarded an investment in society "for the advancement of our main goal: the promotion of native arts and crafts from the East and West Indies."[234]

For the involved members of the Fifth Committee, the activities that expanded from Boeatan were profoundly connected with its political agenda. Not only did the shareholders see their financial backing as an "investment in society", but the very belief in the commercial potential sprang from a belief in the righteousness of the liberal colonial policy or "ethical policy" that the members supported. The discussions on the first meeting of Boeatan's shareholders show that the logic worked in the reverse direction: not aiming at a profitable enterprise was seen as a moral bankruptcy even before the project could step off.[235] When it turned out that sales fell short, the committee's hope was projected on any sign of increasing attention the shop's collection could possibly arise, such as correspondence with interested foreigners. Also the visits from interested but not-purchasing "artist souls" sprinkled hope that eventually the public at large would turn its attention to the Indies:

> Yet the ones that feel most like [purchasing], usually are not taxed with the highest rates. It is moving to see those artist souls, with their small purses, yearning for the *Indisch handwerk* they admire, whose sheer beauty so forcefully attracts them that they have only one wish, to own it, so they can enjoy it in their proximity.[236]

[233] NL-HaHGA, N.V. Maatschappij Boeatan, 0280-01, file 1.
[234] NL-HaHGA, 0280-01, files 1, 7.
[235] NL-HaHGA, 0280-01, file 1.
[236] NL-HaHGA, 0280-01, file 7.

The reactionary press was not all too negative about Boeatan's activities, which should be seen in relation to the ethical agenda being relatively hidden. Without the Fifth Committee's hope for reaching a wider audience, what was left of Boeatan was a meeting place for usual suspects with strong ties to the Indies. When Boeatan moved once again in 1909, the inauguration of the new premise was describes in this way by *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*:

> Boeatan's secretary, Mr. J.J. Meijer, briefly explained the decorations and expressed the hope that on this location, which would continuously remind one of the Indies, many cups of coffee would be drank, many games of billiard would be played, not only by tanned *oudgasten*, but also by rosy-cheeked *Blandas*. The premise truly promotes Boeatan: here one sees how a Dutch room can be decorated with objects from the Indeis. With the words "Long live the queen" and "Long live Insulinde" he concluded his speech.[237]

Other activities had to boost Boeatan's attractiveness for the public. The array of propaganda means was never limited to exhibiting and selling arts and craft objects: from Boeatan's start the shop is joined by a tearoom where "tea with *Indisch* cake" is served (*Image 5*). Later on, also *rijsttafel* is served, although initially only to members of *Oost en West* and their guests. Through the first years the tearoom makes a small profit, although the annual account cannot be seen entirely separated as the shop and the tearoom shared the premise and a caretaker. This entanglement of activities comes to an end in the end of 1903. For budgetary reasons the complex of activities (the shop, the tearoom and the office and reading room of the The Hague branch of *Oost en West*) moved to another premise, though without what is by then called the restaurant, which remained located at the Laan van Meerdervoort 195, a peripheral location in the west of the city.

As soon as the restaurant became an independent enterprise, its "miserable tale of woe" started, as a later commentator dubbed it.[238] In 1904 the widow Mrs. Ten Bosch-Bosscher, in charge of the day-to-day management, is absent for a while due to illness.

[237] 'Een Indisch hoekje in Den Haag', *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 29 September 1909.
[238] Meijer, 'Soedikampir'.'

Image 6 – Original caption: "Boeatan's tearoom, Heulstraat 19, Den Haag. Tea with Indies cake from 3 to 6 pm. All days except Sunday." Source: *NL-HaHGA, 0280-01, file 7*

During this period, the restaurant turns into a gambling joint and a "rendezvous house in the unfavourable denotation of that term," as the board of *Oost en West* would later refer to it.[239] Also in a later period, when Ten Bosch is bound to bed due to illness again, "four young and handsome *baboes* get frequented by male visitors when dinner time is over."[240]

The supposed prostitution activities summoned concern from several sides, chief among them the association *Oost en West* itself. The (supposed) rumours notwithstanding, it was only in 1906 that the national board found out. In a crisis meeting, Ten Bosch (who is also a member of the very same board) denied the accusations, declaring that all what had happened was that a game club named *Koempoelan* had formed, whose members played at dice and had held "just a party." The board decided to close the restaurant and to publicly stress the financial grounds for this decision, as the restaurant was not making good profits, thereby "out of discretion" clearing Ten Bosch for any responsibility. The clemency for Ten Bosch should be seen in relation to the fact that her efforts in the management of the restaurant were voluntary, something *Oost en West* could not do without.[241]

In another incident the *kokkie* Roosminah either was dismissed or left by herself –in any case both parties seemed to be satisfied with the parting of ways. In an account of the event by one of Boeatan's board members, J.J. Meijer, the situation was explained

[239] Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (NL-LdnKITLV), Archief van de Koninklijke Vereniging "Oost en West", H 1077, inv. nr. 37.
[240] 'Te innige associatie!', *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 19 August 1914.
[241] NL-LdnKITLV, H 1077, file 37.

through Roosminah's character. She pretended to be of aristocratic descent, he wrote, "and the courtesy she met, made her so overconfident, that many an old colonial got annoyed by her near-impertinent familiarity." The board member accused Roosminah of lying, writing that she pretended to be of noble birth, but in fact was not a *poetri* ('princess') but a *poetri tangsi*, a 'barracks' princess' –in other words, that she had been a soldier's concubine in the Indies. For Meijer, the social and sexual liberties Roosminah took were strongly connected, and to uphold the colonial order the Javanese personnel or servants had to remain servile. He praised Roosminah's successor, Moenah, who "remained who she had been in the Indies: a modest and humble Javanese maid."[242]

Eventually though, Mrs. Ten Bosch's restaurant did not close. Although the board persisted in their desire to hive off the restaurant, it was also receptive to the unrest this decision caused within their association's ranks. To settle the issue, it gave the local chapter of The Hague the opportunity to assume the responsibilities concerning the restaurant, as it was deemed to have "a local function" in social terms, functioning as a meeting place for old colonials. It was also acknowledged that a restaurant could in principle be a good propaganda instrument, if only it attracted "people who did not know the Indies by experience", if it would be located more strategically and if the *rijsttafel* would be of excellent quality. As the restaurant did not meet any of these demands, retaining the business was not considered worthwhile. The local chapter did take the opportunity it was offered, and obtained the responsibility for the restaurant.[243]

Ever since the attention of colonial and imperial historians turned (among other things) to the inherent contradictions of imperial ideology, many a historian's account laid bare the tensions between the civilizing mission's inclusive agenda and the dividing lines along the axes of race, class, gender and culture set up by virtually every imperial activity.[244] This not only applies to the colonies, but not seldom applies with equal force to what we can term "model areas": colonial exhibitions, world fairs and propaganda material – those places, whether they be in space, on paper or on photo, that were expected to show *how it should be*.[245]

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[242] Meijer, 'Soedikampir'.
[243] *Het Koloniaal Weekblad*, 6 February 1908.
[244] Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony'.
[245] See for examples: Yael Fletcher, 'Capital of the Colonies: Real and Imagined Boundaries between Metropole and Empire in 1920s Marseilles', in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, 1999, 136–155; Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*.

The "model restaurant" of *Oost en West* can be added to that list. Precisely because it was designated to promote the Indies, all parties reacted as they did. The association's board did not turn to the police, as their main concern was that rumours would "tarnish our good reputation."[246] The reactionary press, on the other hand, was all too ready to jestingly conclude that this was bound to happen due to the nature of *Oost en West*'s enterprise. This is a recurrent theme, as sexual desire and gambling, in particular the dice game of Hazard, were among the chief concerns in upholding colonial rule.[247]

The limits of permeation (conclusion)

The spread of colonial food practices in The Hague as a part of the permeation of 'empire' in the metropole is not to miss. When Indies food turned into outright imperial propaganda, as with the restaurant *Oost en West*, we see the process of the 'colonisation of the European mind' directly at work.[248] Moreover, the core values of the imperial project were not bounded to *Oost en West*, but discursively made their way to various sites, such as the postcard of *Waroong Djawa* and the newspaper covering of Mr. Bouman's restaurant, to name a few of the examples above. It also shows, however, that the colonisation of the European mind –or in this case: the Dutch– was at best only partly successful: the dissemination of 'empire' in the metropolitan society was limited, at least according to *Oost en West*'s own standards.

Nonetheless, in the eyes of certain beholders, the Indies were present everywhere in the metropole. In 1933, the writer H. Salomonson, under the alias of Melis Stoke, wrote that "there are complete quarters in our city where the *baboe* is seen as frequently [as in the Indies], where she takes the children for a walk, and where she negotiates at the door with the suppliers."[249] And in a later episode he writes: "If the *baboes* would disappear for some reason, it would be noticed. […] They are part of the townscape."[250] Melis Stoke was not alone in making observations of this kind. Another

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[246] NL-LdnKITLV, H 1077, file 37.
[247] Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indië*, 140; Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.
[248] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*.
[249] Melis Stoke, 'Indisch Leven in de Residentie. XXI. Koloniale Sporen II.', *De Indische Verlofganger*, 27 January 1933.
[250] Melis Stoke, 'Indisch Leven in de Residentie. XXIII. De Haagsche Baboe.', *De Indische Verlofganger*, 10 February 1933.

commentator wrote that some of The Hague's quarters had a distinctly *Indisch* character, which he illustrated with the following example:

> A tram conductor, who served in the colonial army and has warm memories of the tropics, is reported to have said he always enjoyed passing the Waldeck Pyrmontkade with tramline A because then his Indies memories revived, and he could at that moment imagine being in one the quarters of Batavia. This is at least heavily exaggerated, but still you can't miss the exotic air in this remarkable neighbourhood with its cheerless side streets. Here, a tobacconist names his shop Toko Roko[251] and sells Javanese cigarettes of a brand you won't find elsewhere and smelly straws. The grocerer has a display window that resembles a showcase of the Colonial Museum in Haarlem, where one finds odd flat little spoons and plaited baskets, jars with dried fruits, various bundles of exotic straw and hay, and queer sweets. There is a school with solely *Indische* pupils. [...] The furniture stores, where old colonials enjoy to buy and sell, constantly have skittish shadow puppets and *sirihstellen*[252] on display.[253]

What this fragment illustrates in the first place is how impalpable such a thing as a 'townscape' is. The elements –cigarettes, *Indische* school children and *sirihstellen*– taken apart unmistakably bore a relation with the colonies, but whether they altogether set a distinctive seal on the city or not depends one one's perspective. In this fragment, a tram conductor with colonial experience is required to see it.

That is not to say that 'empire' did not permeate on a quotidian level, because it did. Almanacs show that timetables for the tram, for sailing to the Indies and for the mail were all put together as intangible parts of the city's running scheme. For shops that did *not* sell *Indische* groceries, it was nonetheless common to advertise with the message that shipping to the Indies was within the bounds of possibility.[254] Hotel guides gave addresses for recommendable places to stay in the Netherlands and in the Indies, however unlikely it was that this booklet would be consulted for both sections on one and the same trip. [255]

But what if you had no background such as the above-mentioned conductor? For his yellow press covering of The Hague's low life in 1905, the journalist Bernard Canter spent two weeks in the city, disguised as beggar. The result was a sensational account, full of exaggerated images and stereotypes of the dregs of society, of students and of the well-to-do. The supposed *Indisch* character of the city is absent however, except for the

[251] *Roken* is the Dutch infinitive for 'to smoke'.
[252] A small machinery (*stel*) for burning betel leafs (*sirih*).
[253] Arie, 'Haagsche Causerieën IX.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 7 March 1923.
[254] A.J. Servaas van Rooijen, ed., *Haagsch Jaarboekje voor 1889* ('s-Gravenhage: W. Cremer, 1888).
[255] *Officieel zak-adresboek van hotels en restaurants in Nederland en in Nederl.-Oost-Indië.*

rather general notion that "groceries sell colonial wares."[256] Other tourism guides were much in line with this, and made no mention at all of the colonial character of the *Archipelbuurt*. The *10 cents gids*, for instance, mentions the same quay that gave the conductor his dear memories, as "prosperous and airy", and the nearby *Sweelinckplein* as "magnificent."[257] The *Geïllustreerde Gids,* with lengthier descriptions and walks, mentions that most of the streets in what is here called *den Indischen Archipel* "do not have anything of interest that demands a visit."[258] The only reason the colonies could not be ignored altogether was that the streets bore names that referred to the geography of the region, with names like *Javastraat* and *Atjehstraat*. It was another image that the *Geïllustreerde Gids* wanted to create. The city, in their words, "is not only court capital ['*hofstad'*], but as such the place where aristocracy and administration are located. [...] the Arts and Sciences are honoured and practiced, and class and decorum are preserved with high regards."[259]

Other, sometimes competing images of the The Hague are added over the course of decades, although the image of the city as a centre of the empire's administration, as a city of high class, does never fade. In 1927, a tourist guide described the seaside town of Scheveningen as a "luxury resort", and The Hague itself as "garden city" with a spaciousness similar to Paris, or, alternatively, as a city of great "international significance" with institutions such as the Permanent Court of International Justice.[260] In a city of "international justice", a city of class and decorum, the peculiarities of the *Indische* group did not fit in well. As the magazine *Mondain Den Haag*, concerned with the sophisticated side of the city, noted, the "brown faces" of old colonials attracted negative attention in the city's cultural nightlife.[261] The *Indisch* character of the city never became a defining element in the city's identity beyond *Indische* circles.

This limited reach of the colonies was exactly what concerned the association *Oost en West*. Although a cultural community stretching to all corners of empire never

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[256] Bernard Alexander Canter, *Twee Weken Bedelaar* (Rotterdam: W.L. & J. Brusse, 1905).
[257] *10 cents gids voor 's Gravenhage en Scheveningen: bevattende alle noodige inlichtingen bij een bezoek aan de stad en hare omstreken. Eene volledige lijst van straten, bezienswaardigheden, openbare gebouwen, aanwijzing van wandelingen, rijtoeren enz. enz* ('s-Gravenhage: Van der Schouw, 1897).
[258] *Geïllustreerde gids voor 's-Gravenhage, Wassenaar, 't Westland, Rijswijk, Voorburg en Scheveningen*, 82.
[259] Ibid., X.
[260] *Officieele Gids voor 's-Gravenhage, Scheveningen en omstreken* ('s-Gravenhage: Vereniging tot Bevordering van het Vreemdelingenverkeer, 1927), 5–8; See also Pepijn Corduwener, "Risee van de wereld of land van Grotius? De synthese tussen nationalisme en internationalisme in het Nederlandse fin de siècle," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 125, no. 2 (2012).
[261] *Mondain Den Haag*, 4 January 1929.

existed, it was this ideal that fuelled their activities. It lead Maartje Janse to conclude that "in the period between 1840 at 1880, the sense of connectedness of Dutch citizens to the colonial project increased."[262] It should be noted, however, that *Oost en West*'s members represented rather a colonial elite than a general category as the Dutch citizens. Moreover, their ongoing efforts in promoting the colonial project were situated well after the mentioned period, which puts doubts about the extent of their success. This is further enhanced by their own observation that the public at large showed little interest for their activities –be they selling arts and craft object or running an *Indisch* restaurant. The nature of the public's interest in colonial affairs is yet to be understood in more detailed terms, but it certainly did not contain anything close to a sense of 'cultural citizenship' or the feeling of responsibilities towards the overseas territories.

That is not to say there were no *Indische* traces in the metropole of The Hague, as the account of the introduction of the *rijsttafel* above has showed. The Dutch East Indies were omnipresent in the metropolitan The Hague – but just as long as you had the wish to see it.

[262] Janse, 'Representing Distant Victims: The Emergence of an Ethical Movement in Dutch Colonial Politics, 1840-1880', 78.

Chapter 3

'If I were a Dutchman...'
Indonesian Elites, Cultural Citizenship and the Metropolitan Microcosm of Dutch Imperialism

> If I were a Dutchman [...] I would wish for the independence festivities to be as copious as possible. Yet, I would not wish for the natives of these lands to take part in them, I would prohibit them to cheer along. [...] It would be so indecorous, so presumptuous, so inappropriate, if we – I still imagine myself to be Dutch – would let the native cheer along in the commemoration of *our* freedom.
>
> Soewardi Soerjaningrat, *Als ik eens Nederlander was, ...* (1913)[263]

> Several pamphlets in Dutch and Malay have circulated [over Java]. The first pamphlet, 'If I were a Dutchman...', gave the impression that The Indies compare to The Netherlands in the same way as The Netherlands compared to France one hundred years ago. This depiction is as unfaithful as it is vicious. The Indies were ruled by native kings who oppressed the population. We have brought peace and order, and have treated the population in better ways.
>
> C.Th. van Deventer, addressing the Dutch Parliament (12 November 1913)[264]

Als ik eens Nederlander was... (If I were a Dutchman...) was a pamphlet written by the Javanese journalist Raden Mas Soewardi Soerjaningrat (1889-1959)[265] and was published in the late summer of 1913. It was a critical response to Dutch intentions for celebrating the 100th anniversary of Dutch independence, festivities the Dutch intended also to take place in the colonies. Such a centennial was a true cause for celebration, Soewardi admitted, but in the Netherlands, not in the Indies. What caused even more

[263] Soewardi Soerjaningrat, 'Als ik eens Nederlander was, ...', *De Expres*, 23 July 1913.
[264] 'Staten-Generaal', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 13 November 1913
[265] Also known as Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, the name he adopted later in life as founder of the *Taman Siswa* schools in Indonesia.

offence was that the festivities were partly funded through 'voluntary' collections among the colonized people. For anyone who reads *If I were a Dutchman* today, Soewardi's argument comes across as disarmingly simple: don't celebrate your freedom in front of people whose very own freedom you are impeding. Or, in his own words: "It is unreasonable and inappropriate to ask the natives to contribute to the festivities' funds. On top of the offence of celebrating Dutch independence, the natives' purses are also emptied for that purpose. It is truly a moral and material affront!"[266]

At the time of publication, however, Dutch commentators, journalists, and politicians were infuriated by *Als ik eens Nederlander was…*, and many of them repudiated Soewardi's argument. His pamphlet rested on the premise that all colonized subjects in the Indies formed a nation that was – or ought to be – on equal footing with the Netherlands, and that had to assert its autonomy as soon as possible. This statement contained some relative novelties at that time. The unity of an Indonesian nation was far from reality, and many colonized people adhered to their regional or ethnical origin, referring to themselves as either Javanese, Minangkabau, or Ambonese, to name just a few. Indonesian nationalism was only in its early stages of development. Equal footing between colonizer and colonized was something the former imagined to be feasible within the span of a century, which was to say, beyond the horizon of everyday practice. In the colonizer's mental universe, to add to any statement about the advancement of the Indonesian people the words 'as soon as possible,' was to make the difference between supporting or undermining the imperial order.

The responses Soewardi received were so visceral that, arguably, there was more at hand than a mere political disagreement. The intensity indicates this was not a sec debate on the essence of nationality or the future of the Indies. By demonstrating his lack of joy by the centennial of Dutch independence, Soewardi showed the 'wrong' emotion. As Sara Ahmed has argued: "Not to feel happiness [like Soewardi in the present case, MK] is to become not only unsympathetic but also hostile, as if your unfeeling masks a disbelief in the national good, a will to destroy the nation."[267] The words of Conrad Theodor van Deventer (1857-1915) fit this pattern, as they displayed a barely disguised disgust for the pamphlet. He was a lawyer who had made a fortune in the

[266] E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, and R.M. Soewardi Soerjaningrat, *Onze Verbanning: Publicatie der Officiële Bescheiden, toegelicht met Verslagen en Commentaren, betrekking hebbende op de Gouvernements-Besluiten van den 18en Augustus 1913, nos. 1a en 2a, regelende de toepassing van artikel 47 R.R. (interneering)* (Schiedam: De Indiër, 1913), 69.
[267] Sarah Ahmed, 'Not in the Mood', *New Formations*, no. 84 (2014): 28.

Indies. Upon his return to the Netherlands he served several terms as a Member of Parliament (*Tweede Kamerlid*) and Senator (*Eerste Kamerlid*) for the *Vrijzinnig Democratische Bond* (Liberal Democratic League). It should be noted that Van Deventer's reaction was by no means out of the ordinary in the panoply of responses, even though he was a proponent of the so-called *ethical thinking* within Dutch colonial politics, which is the Dutch equivalent of the *mission civilisatrice*.[268] That even a person like Van Deventer was enraged betrays that this was not just a contingent reaction, but signifies a profound emotional disparity regarding nation and empire between the various parties.

Does this mean we ran into the dividing line between colonialism and anti-colonialism here? The lived experience of Soewardi and many of his compatriots defies this simple opposition. In the first decades of the twentieth century, people came to develop ideas about transforming the Dutch East Indies. The 'dawn of Indonesian nationalism', has it has been called, is an apt metaphor for this time.[269] Although these years clearly demarcated the rise of Indonesian nationalism, the morning clouds only ascended in a slow pace, rendering the contours of citizenship, sovereignty, or autonomy unsharp for contemporaries. A disbelief in the Dutch national or imperial good was not inevitable, and did not always oppose desires for more autonomy in whatever form. Citizenship in the Dutch East Indies had a history that tied it to cities. It concerned rights and duties regarding city defense, participation in the produce of the East India Company (VOC), and worked in the advantage of specific ethnical or racially-perceived groups, such as Molucans or Indo-Europeans, at a local level. These backgrounds never lost their relevance, making this form of citizenship characteristically unassimilationist.[270] In fact, the Dutch East Indies has a remarkable non-history when it comes to citizenship or any other way to define the status of its inhabitants. The legal code (*Regeeringsreglement;* RR) governing the colony made a distinction between 'Europeans', 'Foreign Orientals', and 'Natives.' The Dutch law did not know such a distinction. The act on Dutch citizenship (*Nederlanderschap*) of 1892 did not address the

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[268] In Dutch, ethical thinking is usually referred to as *ethische politiek*. Although this is common reference, there is a point to make that *politiek* (policy) suggests this liberal program was actually implemented. In fact it was only partly established, much due to the ambiguous nature of this *mission civilatrice* in the first place. 'Ethical thinking' might therefore provide a more apt description. See: Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten: vijf studies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische archipel 1877-1942* (Utrecht: HES publishers, 1981); Rutger Bregman, "'De gustibus non est disputandum?', Het debat over de 'ethische politiek' binnen het Indisch Genootschap, 1890-1910" (MA Thesis, Utrecht University, 2011).

[269] Nagazumi, *The Dawn*; Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*.

[270] Bosma, Raben, and Willems, *De geschiedenis van Indische Nederlanders*, 97–107.

vast population of the colonies: Dutch citizenship was passed on by birth or could be obtained by naturalization, for which one of the requirements was to have resided for at least five years in the Netherlands *or its colonies*. Technically, all inhabitants of the Indies, although not in the position to obtain the status of 'equal-to-European' within the colony, could therefore have applied for full Dutch citizenship – in practice, however, they remained in a legal limbo until 1908, when the 1892 act was amended to designate the colonized peoples as Dutch subjects (*Nederlandsch-onderdaanschap*).[271]

More informal ways of inclusion and exclusion than mere legal ways therefore played an important part in the Dutch colonial world. It presents us with the notion of the cultural sphere as an alternative arena to the legal sphere. In his work on colonial India Partha Chatterjee has mentioned the more autonomous ways in which anticolonial nationalisms were creating their own, cultural, domains of sovereignty, at a time when political sovereignty was out of reach. Yet, he also warned for "the dubious promise of being granted membership of a second-rate 'civil society of subjects.'"[272] Cultural citizenship, then, becomes second best. In lieu of other options, cultural inclusion and social advancement was what many Indonesians, in diverse ways, strived for. It is telling that Soewardi, after being forced into exile in the wake of his publication, set sail for the Netherlands. The metropole was his logical destination, as it was the only place on earth besides the Indies were there was considerable public interest in his cause. Moreover, in the Netherlands he vould work to find political allies, and proceed with his journalistic work. His pamphlet had been published in Malay and Dutch, therefore his public included most inhabitants of the Indies and the metropolitan public. Soewardi was participating in the cultural community of Dutch colonialists – as many anticolonialists in history before and after him, he was culturally tied to the very entity he wanted to bring to an end.

Simultaneously, the idea of imperial citizenship as located in the cultural domain also came from another souce. At this time, in the first decades of the twentieth century, ethical thinking or *ethische politiek* was a strong current of Dutch colonial thinking, much like its British (white man's burden) and French (*mission civilisatrice*) counterparts. It rebranded the Dutch colonial mission from revolving around

[271] *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer*/Parliamentary Files (1891-1892), Kamerstuknummer 130, Ordernummer 1; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer*/Parliamentary Files (1908-1909), Kamerstuknummer 266, Ordernummer 1.
[272] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 26.

exploitation to an edifying endeavour, aimed at the advancement of the colonized people. One of its main proponents was Van Deventer – besides as MP he was foremost known as a legal scholar – and it was him who coined the term *eereschuld* (debt of honour) to connect the profits gained in the nineteenth-century exploitation of the Indies[273] to the moral obligation to groom the Indies in the twentieth century towards autonomy.[274] Not surprisingly, ethical thinking could not do without humanitarian involvement of the empire's metropolitan citizens, as it boiled down to a new legitimization of colonial rule rather than anything else. This resulted in a notion of *imperial citizenship* constituted by "a self-image of demonstrating interest in and having knowledge of the cultures of Indonesia, paired with a sense of responsibility and good intentions" – it was, in other words, a cultural practice of the empire's metropolitan citizens.[275]

The cultural space of empire in the metropole was thus approached from two sides: by metropolitan citizens, exercising their humanitarian desires, and by Indonesian intellectuals, mainly students and artists, most of them staying in the Netherlands for study purposes, or, more exceptionally like in Soewardi's case, in exile. Other than the Indonesian domestic servants, who where present in the metropole for a longer period already, the first students arrived in the 1890s. Raden Adjeng Kartini's brother Raden Mas Pandji Sosrokartono was possibly the first to arrive in 1896, or at least the first to give a public lecture in 1899. The doctor Abdul Rivai arrived soon afterwards. The historian Harry Poeze states that by 1907 a total of twenty Indonesians were receiving education in the Netherlands, a majority of them Javanese aristocracy. In the 1910s this would grow to several dozens, although precise estimations are lacking. As an indication it is worth noting that the *Indische Vereeniging* (Indies Association; IV), founded in 1909, had 47 members by 1913.[276] This group of students, artists and intellectuals had a tight rope to walk in the metropole. As 'native' intellectuals they were welcomed in the midst of 'ethicals' (adherents to the *ethische politiek*) as they were seen as trailblazers of the advancement of the population of the Indies at large. Yet, trapped between the inclusive liberal rhetoric of ethical thinking and the exclusive notion of difference this colonial

[273] Needless to add that Dutch colonial involvement in the Indonesian archipelago stretched back much further, but it was the mid nineteenth century system of forced plantation labour (*cultuurstelsel*) that Van Deventer had in mind here when he referred to exploitation.
[274] Deventer, 'Een Eereschuld'.
[275] Waaldijk and Legêne, 'Ethische politiek'.
[276] Poeze, *In het land*, 29–71.

ideology rested on, they were destined to remain an isolated vanguard, never to reach the full potential of the ethical promise. Hommi Bhabha called this colonial mimicry: "[T]he desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite."[277] As a colonial subject, to participate in the metropolitan community of imperial citizens, was to obey the dictate of colonial mimicry.

Soewardi did not obey that dictate. With *Als ik eens Nederlander was…* he was "blatantly entering the microcosm" of Dutch imperialism, as the historians Berteke Waaldijk and Susan Legêne have put it.[278] In this metaphor, the 'microcosm' does not stand for the practice of Dutch imperialism proper, for the reality of lived experience in the Indies, but rather for imperialism's metropolitan self-image, and for the shared premises of Dutch imperialism among the colonial elites which converged in ethical thinking. The microcosm stood for colonialism as experienced by colonizers on a far distance from the Indies, in the halls of Dutch academia, business and politics – in other words, it stood for the world inhabited by the metropolitan 'imperial citizens.' Soewardi might have entered blatantly, he entered nonetheless, and literally so, as he and his fellow exiles spent their banishment from the Indies in the metropole. This chapter deals with the many Indonesians – exiled or on leave, students or artists – who entered the *microcosm* of Dutch imperialism and assesses how they shaped their cultural citizenship in this cultural sphere. Whether they met or created confrontation or cooperation, in various ways they contributed the "colonization of consciousness" of the imperial citizens they encountered, thereby shaping popular imperialism, which is – ultimately – the subject of this project.[279]

Yet, to see the Indonesians in the Dutch metropole as only affecting the consciousness of the metropolitan imperial citizens, is to miss the fact they were bearers of popular imperialism in their own right. By entering the microcosm of metropolitan imperialism, they participated in that community. Canning and Rose have remarked citizenship is "one of the most porous concepts in contemporary academic parlance," and that it "can be understood as a political status assigned to individuals by states, as a relation of belonging to specific communities, or as a set of social practices that define the relationships between peoples and states and among peoples within communities." Former theories regarding citizenship, most notably the work of T.H. Marshal, would

[277] Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', *October* 28 (1984): 126.
[278] Waaldijk and Legêne, 'Ethische politiek'.
[279] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*, 1.

confine the meaning of the concept predominantly, or even exclusively, in the first meaning, as a status bestowed upon people by the state. It has made citizenship into "a lens for analysing the changing and shifting boundaries within societies and communities."[280] This implies that 'participating' in a community is not a neutral act, but a claim to (cultural) citizenship, regardless what content the participation entails. By looking at citizenship as a practice, we not only broaden the scope beyond formal relations, but it also prompts us to see claims-making at various levels or communities that not always coincide with the nation, or, for that matter, the empire. As Frederick Cooper recently remarked:

> The notion of "belonging" that is intrinsic to citizenship might crystallize around collectivities that are both smaller—based on ethnic affinity—or larger—notably the possibility of citizenship in an imperial or multinational political entity […].[281]

The cultural practice of *imperial citizenship* thus becomes localized in the metropole, and is only one of many possible affinities. It presents us with the question what Soewardi and many others made of their stay in the Netherlands, and of this specific local imperial space. Did they feel included in Dutch society, or in circles of 'imperial citizens'? How did the confrontation, or participation, affect their thoughts regarding the societal status quo in the Indies, the dawning Indonesian nationalism, or their affinities based on ethnicity? To this end, this chapter presents the partial biographies of three of them: Wim Tehupeiory (1883-1946), an Ambonese doctor who obtained his medical degree at the University of Amsterdam and was granted Dutch citizenship, and was considered "one of the intellectual leaders of the native population;"[282] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo (1883-1943), a Javanese doctor and journalist and one of the fellow exiles of Soewardi, who continued his opposition to the colonial government from his metropolitan base during his two year stay, but was deemed "Western synthetic" by Indonesia's first prime minister Sutan Sjahrir;[283] and Raden Mas Jodjana (1893-1972), an acclaimed Javanese artist "fueled by old national dance passion or dance tradition"[284], but also regarded

[280] Kathleen Canning and Sonya O. Rose, 'Gender, Citizenship and Subjectivity: Some Historical and Theoretical Considerations', *Gender & History* 13, no. 3 (November 2001): 427–28.
[281] Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 5.
[282] 'Indisch Genootschap.', *De Telegraaf,* 27 May 1917.
[283] Sjahrazad (pseudonym of Sutan Sjahrir), *Indonesische Overpeinzingen* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1945), 74.
[284] J.W.F. Werumeus Buning, *Twee Eeuwen Danskunst en Curiositeit* (Amsterdam: Em. Querido's Uitgevers-Mij., 1927), 28.

“kitsch” and “essentially Western” by critics.[285] Recently, Bart Luttikhuis has reiterated that if we want to enhance our understanding of the migration circuit between the Indies and the Netherlands, we should not limit our attention to the so-called ‘empire families’ – the white, colonial elite – and expand our narrative to include others, in his case “poorer employees” of the *Spoorbond* who regularly went on European furlough as well.[286] This chapter, on its turn, adds accounts of some the metropolitan experience of an Indonesian elite to the balance.

Naturalization and social mobility

In a letter dated 27 April 1908, A.H. Carpentier Althing counseled the brother-in-law of a woman named Anna Ommering about the intended marriage between her and Wim Tehupeiory (1883-1946), an Ambonese doctor residing in Amsterdam, where he studied for his doctorate in medicine. Ommering’s brother-in-law had had concerns about what was considered an interracial marriage and was seeking Carpentier Althing’s advise on the “risks” such a marriage would entail, who responded with the following words:

> The Ambonese is much closer to the European [than the Javanese or the Sumatrese], but of course a huge gap remains regarding view on life [*levensbeschouwing*]. [...] When a non-European, after having spent some time in Europe, returns to his own race and kinsmen, he usually reverts into an Oriental, with all the consequences this brings. [...] In such cases, a pure European woman will be unable to feel entirely happy. [...] She will remain foreign to native surroundings. [...] As a means of prevention it should be ensured that Mr. T does not return to Ambonese surroundings.[287]

Carpentier Altingh’s point of reference are common ideas about race and culture at this time. The culturalist vein of his reasoning his hardly distinguishable from biological racism, and can be classified under the header “cultural racism,” whit its strong discursive links between race and culture. *Levensbeschouwing* is approached with the same essentialist rigueur as physiological appearance and qualities are in scientific racism, even though the word only signifies ‘outlook on life.’ Similarly, the Ambonese surroundings (*omgeving*) Carpentier Altingh refers to drew on what Ann Stoler has called “a Lamarckian understanding of environment,” meaning that features of race and

[285] WM, ‘Konfrontatie met Jodjana’, *De Nieuwsgier*, 23 May 1956.
[286] Bart Luttikhuis, ‘Negotiating Modernity: Europeanness in Late Colonial Indonesia, 1910-1942’ (PhD thesis, European University Institute, 2014), 259.
[287] ‘Letter from A.H. Carpentier Altingh (27 April 1908)’, *IISG*, Archief Willem Karel Tehupeiory, file 6.

nationality could be altered by "the physical, psychological, climatic, and moral surroundings in which one lived."[288]

Carpentier Altingh himself did not think of his judgment as racist, as is a common treat in 'cultural racism.' As he put it: "I hold no objections against the racial difference in itself. Luckily we have transcended the old prejudices."[289] Perhaps because of this conviction not to engage in essentialist thinking, Carpentier Altingh failed to mention what the profound differences between Dutch and Ambonese people actually entailed, other than that these were matters of *levensbeschouwing* (outlook on life) and that he implicitly stated a hierarchy in which the Dutch trumped the Ambonese. His distaste for 'old prejudices' did not prevent him from making these statements, yet it did prevent him from specifying the grounds for his racial differentiating. Wim Tehupeiory has probably read Carpentier Altingh's letter, since the letter is part of the archive containing Tehupeiory's personal papers. Unfortunately, there is no indication as to what his reaction to the letter was, but we may safely assume he did not welcome the opinion Carpentier Altingh expressed.[290] To the couple's luck the letter had little effect, and in July 1909 they got married.

That race played a role in how he was perceived was nothing new for Tehupeiory, as this was a rather common thing in the colonial society of the Dutch East Indies. It is likely that the letter brought back memories of his time in Batavia, as it was one of the more rare occasions in the Netherlands in which his race was targeted so explicitly. One of these memories is mentioned in a letter he wrote some years later, while being stationed as European Physician in the tin mines of Banka: "On the meetings of the A.S. [*Ambonsch Studiefonds*] it regularly occurred that one of the former board members would shut down a *dokter djawa* with the words: what do you have to bring in anyway, your father was a servant of my father, you should be happy to sit on a chair next to Europeans."[291] The same letter reveals another character treat of Tehupeiory, one that was probably typical for the colonial society he had matured in. He expressed

[288] Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 97.
[289] 'Letter from A.H. Carpentier Althingh (27 April 1908).'
[290] Tehupeiory's papers were discovered by journalist and historian Herman Keppy. He wrote a biographical novel based on this material. Keppy, using the freedom fiction allowed him, imagined Tehupeiory's reaction to Carpentier Altingh's letter to have been: 'Does he expect me to dress in loincloth and practice headhunting upon return to Ambon?' Herman Keppy, *Tussen Ambon en Amsterdam: historische roman* (Schoorl: Uitgeverij Conserve, 2004), 170.
[291] 'Letter from Wim Tehupeiory to unnamed recipient (25 May 1912)', *IISG,* Archief Willem Karel Tehupeiory, file 3.

his contempt for the "upward aspirations" of those who aspired to the legal status of "equal-to-European", and remarked that the decision of the *Indischen Bond* (The Indies League, an association concerned with the interest of Indo-Europeans) to reject from their ranks those who were regarded 'native' as something that would have "many of them reconsider their foolish imaginations."[292]

Tehupeiory's life course perfectly matches the kind of "upward aspiration" he so contemned in his letters. He was born on Ambon in 1883. Together with his brother Johannes Everhardus Tehupeiory he attended the *School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen* (STOVIA; School for Native Doctors) in Batavia, where they graduated in 1902. As *dokter djawa's* (native docters) they were eligible for various functions within the colonial administration. He worked in Laboean-Deli, Medan and Loeboe Pakan before being honorary discharged from the colonial administration's services in order to turn to private practice, which allowed him to create the savings he needed to study medicine in Amsterdam.[293] In 1907 he commenced his studies in medicine at the University of Amsterdam, again together with his brother Johan, while their sister Leentje joined them in the Netherlands to study pharmacy.

The decision to go to the Netherlands for study purposes was not to be taken lightly, as Abdul Rivai – one of the first *Indische* doctors to obtain his medical degree in Amsterdam – advised his fellow countrymen that aspired to follow his example. "They should know that the Netherlands differ a whole lot from the Indies … and is very far away," he started ominously. His advise, in its core, was that one had to be very sure, for money was tight (his advise was explicitly not directed at the wealthy sons of Javanese aristocracy, to whom this would not apply) and the metropolitan life expensive. Only a higher aim, like study, would suffice for a journey overseas, and he continued by explaining how many hours (eight to ten a day, six days per week) were needed to learn Dutch in a way that it would allow for participating in the *Indisch* trades. Dutch society, he hinted at, was not very welcoming:

> Most important is that one does not put hopes in landing a job in the Netherlands, when money turns out to be tight. This hope should *never* be fostered. Also, don't hope for financial support of the Dutch people. They do not like the very idea of aiding money in such cases. […] But, one can count on assistance from the Dutch

[292] Ibid.
[293] 'Geneeskunde', *De Sumatra Post*, 10 September 1903; 'Personalia', *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 7 March 1904; 'Nederlandsch-Indië', *Bataviaasch nieuwsblad*, 14 June 1905; 'Dr. djawa Tehupeiory', *De Sumatra Post*, 23 June 1905.

> when it does not concern financial expenses. For instance by finding a cheap teacher, or finding a room in a good pension. [...] One should know not to give anyone reason to laugh or mock at them. When your clothing is out of tune, and you're someone with a brown color of skin, it will result in dozens of children following your steps when you walk along the main street.[294]

According to the guidance Rivai had outlined, the Tehupeiory brothers were model students: two years later they both obtained their doctorate degree in medicine. This was a politicized event in a time when Dutch intellectuals and politicians discussed the progress of the Indies, and for whom 'native success' by people such as the brothers Tehupeiory served as proof for the potential in development the Indies contained. This was the kind of success C.Th. van Deventer exulted over, in stark contrast with the indignance he would express some years later over Soewardi's pamphlet. As one of the leading figures within the so-called Ethical current in colonialist thinking, he wrote in a favorable tone about the first Javanese to obtain a European degree in medicine, just a year before the Tehupeiory brothers followed suit:

> A Javanese – the first of his people – has already acquired the title of doctor, which, thanks to a wise decision of Minister Fock, will allow him entrance into the ranks of *officier van gezondheid* [Health Officer] in the colonial army. Others are preparing to follow this example, and not only sons of Java, but also children of Sumatra and Ambon.[295]

According to Van Deventer, the Tehupeiory brothers and others who obtained a European degree were trailblazers for native emancipation. He firmly adhered to what the so-called idea of 'association', the belief that native people could reach the same level as Europeans provided with the right circumstances. Gradually, then, they would collectively approach the European standard, and some talented Ambonese and Javanese would already enter the higher echelons of the colonial administration as trailblazers of their cause. Yet, this made the Tehupeiory brothers into mere representations of a larger development in the eyes of the likes of Van Deventer, at the expense of being valued for their personal merits. Not coincidentally, the first Javanese to complete his medicine studies in Amsterdam remains anonymous in the quotation above – who he was, was not relevant in Van Deventer's narrative.

A similar mechanism of depersonalization occurred in what arguably was the academic highlight of Tehupeiory's stay in The Netherlands. On 28 January 1908, Wim

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[294] Abdul Rivai, 'Raadgevingen van Abdul Rivai', Bintang Hindia, 22 August 1903, as quoted in: Poeze, *In het land*, 42–43.
[295] C.Th. van Deventer, 'Insulinde's toekomst', *De Gids* 72 (1908): 70.

Tehupeiory was invited to address the assembled members of the *Indisch Genootschap* (IG; The Indies Society), a learned society with an interest in all subjects related to the Dutch colonies. Among its members in 1908 we can find names like those of literary scholar J.H. Abendanon (1852-1925), the doctor and anthropologist J.H.F. Kohlbrugge (1865-1941), the economist and former Minister of Finance N.G. Pierson (1839-1909), and the already mentioned Van Deventer. A majority of the society's members was drawn from the ranks of former colonial civil servants, but because many leading figures brought an aristocratic flair with them, they gave the society an elitist outlook.[296] The recipe for their gatherings was simple: at their monthly gatherings one member – or else some prominent outsider – would introduce a subject with a lecture, upon which the other members would engage in a lengthy discussion.

The subject of Wim Tehupeiory's lecture at the *Indisch Genootschap* was the question of native doctors (*dokter djawa's*). It was a response to two recent talks at the society on the same subject by the members A.J.H. Scherp and the aforementioned Kohlbrugge. Tehupeiory engaged with their arguments about the *dokter djawa* school in Batavia. Scherp, for instance, had suggested to split the four-year program in two parts in order to prevent the older pupils from exerting a "pernicious influence" on the younger ones, to which Tehupeiory responded in his lecture by stating that the exchange between cohorts was already very low, and if present, of a positive nature. In order to address all the concerns surrounding the schools, Tehupeiory asserted, a set of simple measures would suffice: teachers would have to be full-time engaged (as opposed to the side-job it still was in 1908) and serve as role models for their pupils, the teachers would have to be married, pupils should not be allowed to spend their extended lunch breaks in the *kampong* (village), which Tehupeiory identified as the real source of malice, and, most importantly, their remuneration – once graduated and in the service of the government – should be elevated to a proper standard in order to improve the standing of native doctors within the colonial society. In this, he fundamentally disagreed with Kohlbrugge, who had stated that "a man from the tropics simply cannot grasp European concepts" to account for the lack of advancement of native doctors. To Tehupeiory, on the other hand, indifference of native doctors was only a consequence of the lack of acknowledgement they received. He refrained from essentialist notions – nothing restricted native doctors from advancing to the same level as their European

[296] Bregman, 'Het debat', 15.

superiors. To reach this conclusion, it might have been of assistance to Tehupeiory that he himself embodied this social advancement, as he and his brother at that moment were well on their way of obtaining their medical degree at the University of Amsterdam.[297]

Wim Tehupeiory received acclaim from various sides upon his address at the *Indisch Genootschap.* "It was a remarkable occurrence, and later it will no doubt become one of the landmarks of *Indische* history," the commentator of the *Bataviaasch Handelsblad* remarked.[298] Another qualification in the press was "competent."[299] In the debate following Tehupeiory's lecture, IG-member Van Deventer qualified Tehupeiory's talk as "a proof of the spiritual evolution of the native population in the Dutch East Indies" and lauded him for his perfect command of the Dutch language and novel ideas.[300] Just as he had done before, Van Deventer saw Tehupeiory primarily as the embodiment of his ideas on advancement for native people. Again, it made it more important *that* Tehupeiory lectured, than what exactly he said. This is generally what charecterises most reactions to the lecture. If we weigh the words of the commentator of the *Bataviaasch handelsblad* in more detail, the same impression emerges:

> With courage Mr. Tehupeiory took the stage, to come up with his own opinion on a matter of general interest, to explain himself and defend himself. The robustness of the content was paired with a sober style, impeccably shaped, and, over all, a correct use of language and pronunciation.[301]

Were these commentators surprised? Almost without exception the correct use of language by Tehupeiory is mentioned. For some readers of Dutch newspapers, unacquainted with the colonies, and equipped with racist notions about colonial subject, it might have been news that an Ambonese doctor had perfect command of the Dutch language – but a person like Van Deventer, whose career was build on knowledge of the Indies, it was unimaginable *not* to know that young native intellectuals, who had spent their school careers in Dutch-language schools, would speak Dutch like any other. His words therefore can only be interpreted as supportive evidence for his vision on colonial politics, rather than a genuine comment on Tehupeiory's efforts.

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[297] 'Inlandsche geneeskundigen', *Soerabaijasch handelsblad*, 28 February 1908.
[298] 'Een mijlpaal', *Bataviaasch handelsblad*, 27 February 1908.
[299] 'Samenwerkin in Indië', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 10 April 1908.
[300] Bregman, 'Het debat', 59.
[301] 'Een mijlpaal', *Bataviaasch handelsblad*, 27 February 1908.

In light of the above, it is interesting to ask whether Tehupeiory and his fellow Indonesians experienced more or less freedom in the Netherlands, and whether they were subject to more or less racism, than in the Indies. It is a well known trope in Dutch colonial history that more freedom could be exerted by Indonesians in the Netherlands, compared to in the colony. This argument can be found, for example, in Harry Poeze monumental *In het land van de Overheerser*, a groundbreaking work on Indonesians in the metropole, where he writes that "Indonesia had a color barrier, which categorized every individual as 'us' or 'them.' Interpersonal relations were marked by the color of one's skin. This was different in the Netherlands: the Indonesian was approached and treated as an individual, the students might even have received a favorable treatment, as they were cherished by the 'Ethicals.'"[302] Poeze employs this point to explain the difficulties many Indonesians had in settling back in colonial society once they had visited the metropole. Abdul Rivai, a Minangkabau doctor and acquantance of the Tehupeiory siblings who had published with Johan Tehupeiory in the periodicals *Bintang Hindia* (1902-1907) and *Bandera Wolanda* (1908-1910), has expressed his feelings on this point as follows:

> Shortly upon arrival in the Netherlands, we experienced that the Dutch in the Netherlands came across as more sympathetic towards us, than those in the Indies.[303]

Wim Tehupeiory's lecture at the IG shows the up- and downside of this 'favorable treatment' by the metropolitan Dutch: it is not far-fetched to imagine that he came in touch with Van Deventer in part because of his Ambonese descent, and yet, the depersonalized assessments of his lecture by Van Deventer and others make it hard to read in it the appreciation of an individual. Wim Tehupeiory was primarily seen by the IG members as the token of the native or Ambonese advancement.

Tragedy was not spared upon the three Tehupeiory siblings in The Netherlands. Only a few days after Wim and Johan obtained their medical degrees, the latter died at the age of 26 due to carbon monoxide poisoning, while staying at a pension in Utrecht, the city where is fiancée lived. The obituaries that appeared in the press praised the accomplishments of the young doctor, who was generally considered to be the most promising among his siblings – at the *Dokter Djawaschool* Johan had ranked first of his

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[302] Poeze, *In het land*, 57.
[303] Ibid., 58.

cohort, his brother Wim second.[304] J.H. Abendanon, a former director of Education, Religion and Crafts (*nijverheid*) of the colonial administration and a prominent Ethical ideologue, called Johan Tehupeiory a "guidepost for the natives" at the funeral ceremony.[305] He was praised for his book *Onder de Dajaks in Centraal-Borneo* (Among the Dayak People of Central Borneo), a "fascinating travelogue", although part of the excitement was also found in the fact that the "*Indische* literature is not blessed with many works written by natives in the Dutch language."[306] On a memorial service later that year, the chairman of the *Indische Vereeniging* (IV) Soetan Casajangan remarked that the living memory of Johan Tehupeiory "represented the developing bond between metropole and colony", which would in turn help to realize his aims.[307] Johan Tehupeiory had been a fierce defender of education in the Dutch language for the *Indische* population at large, as his speech earlier that year at the *Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond* testified of: Dutch language represented 'civilization' to him, and a Dutch speaking "bulwark from the beaches of North-Sumatra to the coral rocks of New Guinea" would become reality with improved education for the population at large.[308] Johan Tehupeiory was at ease with the assimilationist views of the ethical branch, and his brother Wim was on the same path.

In 1910, Wim Tehupeiory obtained Dutch citizenship in a seemingly smooth process.[309] The act of naturalization was rather rare: over the period 1850-1937, Dutch citizenship was granted only to 887 individuals from the Dutch East Indies in total.[310] It was not similar to obtaining the status of *gelijkgestelde* (equal-to-European) in the colonies, which gave the holder the same rights and duties within the colonies, but ultimately was not on par with full Dutch citizenship. Some Members of Parliament (*Kamerleden*) were insistent on the question why Tehupeiroy was considered eligible for Dutch citizenship, as a recently passed bill had designated all inhabitants of the Indies without European status (and without Dutch citizenship 'Dutch subject'

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[304] 'J.P. Tehupeiory †', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 24 December 1908.
[305] 'Begrafenis-Tehupeiory', *De Sumatra Post*, 29 December 1908.
[306] 'Onze Boekentafel.', *De Sumatra Post*, 21 August 1906.
[307] 'Gedenksteen Tehupeiory.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 23 October 1909.
[308] Kees Groeneboer, 'Nederlands in den vreemde. Het Algemeen-Nederlands Verbond in Nederlands-Indië 1899-1949', *Neerlandia* 97 (1993): 144.
[309] NA, 2.09.05 (Ministerie van Justitie, 1876-1914), file 5925.
[310] D.M. de Calonne and Tj. Schilhorn van Veen, *Database Gelijkstellingen, Toepasselijkverklaringen en Naturalisaties Nederlands-Indië en Indonesië*, http://naturalisaties.decalonne.nl/

(*Nederlandsch-onderdaan*).[311] The MPs suggestively enquired whether there was some "special incentive" for the naturalization. For these MPs the two categories were fundamentally at odds with each other – citizens could not be(come) subjects, and subjects could not be(come) citizens. In response to the inquiries, the minister simply answered that there was no such special reason to grant Tehupeiory citizenship, but that there was no special reason to deny it to him either. The minister furthermore reported that he assumed Tehupeiory was seeking to obtain citizenship "with an eye on eligibility for appointments within the colonial administration [*landsbetrekkingen*]."[312]

Both the objections by the MPs and the rebuttal by the minister have some contingency over them, and seem to have been directed by a *feeling* about whether or not Tehupeiory was fit for Dutch citizenship, rather than by the text of law. This is not a surprise if we take a look at the law in question that governed naturalizations: it did not specify general conditions of eligibility other than that the person had to be an adult, had to have transferred hundred guilders to the state, and either had have had his citizenship revoked in the past or had to have lived in the Netherlands or its colonial possessions for a duration of five years.[313] According to these criteria all colonial subjects ("all natives and Chinese in the East and West Indies") would qualify for naturalization, something that some Members of Parliament "regarded very questionable," while others maintained "it would give a odd impression, but nonetheless were of the opinion that there would be no true objections," when they discussed the bill in 1892.[314] The 1908 bill that regulated the status of Dutch subjects did not alter the act of 1892, and although exhaustive (covering both citizens and subjects), they were not explicit on compatibility. It is not unlikely that the regulations of the colonial legal code played a role in the decision making process as well, because other that with the metropolitan law, this code was very detailed on how 'European' and 'native' statuses related to each other. The equal-to-European status required "complete suitability for European society," which included a belief in Christianity, fluent command of the Dutch

[311] *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer* (1908-1909), 266, 1.
[312] *Handelingen Eerste Kamer 1909-1910*, 6 April 1910, p. 436; 'Naturalisatie', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 11 March 1910.
[313] *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (No. 268) Wet van den 12den December 1892, op het Nederlanderschap en het ingezetenschap, Art. 3* (1892).
[314] *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer* (1891-1892), 130, 4, p. 14.

language, "and training in European morals and ides." Moreover, as Ann Stoler has noted, would had to have distanced himself from being native (*Inlander-zijn*).[315]

His European degree and his Dutch marriage were of little luck to Wim Tehupeiory. It is unknown whether he had already publicly announced his intentions to move back to the Indies by the time the minister Heemskerk speculated about the possibility of a return into colonial civil service. Alternatively, the minister's remarks can be read as representative of the general opinion that saw a return to the Indies as the logical path for Tehupeiory. Either way, he spent the years 1910 to 1916 in Blinjoe at the island Banka, in the occupation of European doctor (*Europeesch geneesheer*) at the tin mines. During these years, he was accompanied by his wife Anna Ommering and their children. His remuneration was 500, and later 600, guilders per month, which was around five times what he could have earned in colonial service as a native doctor. In 1916, the family went to the Netherlands, as Tehupeiory was granted an eight months leave after six years of service. Making a career in the Netherlands proved nigh impossible, and Tehupeiory felt forced to take the decision for a return to the Indies because his efforts in seeking employment in the Netherlands had remained fruitless. For an Ambonese doctor in 1910, it was virtually impossible to find a suitable job in the Netherlands. This time without his family, he sailed back in 1922 as doctor on board of a cargo steam ship, that on its way to the Indies would pick up pilgrims on their return from Mecca. In the colonial capital Batavia he established a prospering private practice. Yet, as successful as his practice was, so dramatic was his personal life. His family would never reunite, and he did not manage to establish an enduring connection with his wife and children in the Netherlands. In 1939 Anna Ommering filed a divorce.[316]

It is hard to place Wim Tehupeiory in one of the available categories of identity. He was naturalized, but did he feel Dutch? It is hard to give a definitive answer to that question. He must have noticed how he remained being seen as an outsider, and was judged accordingly. In the colonial society where he was raised, Dutchness was an attribute that could aid one's social mobility, but in order to be successful in this, one had to convey that it was rather not an attribute, but a sincerely felt identity. This paradox cannot be solved without perpetuating the colonial way of mind, and to ask

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[315] Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 99; Stoler refers to: William Edward van Mastenbroek, *De Historishe Ontwikkeling van de Staatsrechtelijke Indeeling Der Bevolking van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Wageningen: H. Veenman & Zonen, 1934), 70.

[316] *NA*, 2.10.36.22 (Ministerie van Koloniën: Stamboeken Burgerlijke Ambtenaren, Serie A), File 934, Folio 52.

whether or not Tehupeiory was 'truly' Dutch is therefore beside the point. In any case, Dutch and Ambonese were not mutually exclusive identities, and it is important to note that Tehupeiory never turned his back on the latter. Today Tehupeiory is remembered first and foremost as the founder of the *Ambonsch Studie Fonds* (1909, Ambonese Funds for Education), which assisted Ambonese youth financially to pursue their studies for *Inlandsch arts* (native doctor) or civil servant in Batavia. His inclusion in Dutch society, meanwhile, was at best half-heartedly. Highs and lows were in close connection, such as his marriage and Carpentier Altingh's letter. As an Ambonese, he felt little for Indonesian nationalism, and his involvement with the *Indische Vereeniging* (IV; Indies Association) did not extend to the terrain of politics. This was Tehupeiory's general stance. Also with the *Ambonsch Studie Fonds* he attempted to remain as apolitical as possible. It was this strategy that was in part responsible for making him "cherished" by the Ethicals, but provided no advantage in landing a metropolitan career.

Political dissent in the metropole

The act of exiling instills a fundamental opposition between two places in an "othering" fashion: the place where one is exiled from is by definition specified, whereas the place where one is exiled to (or is spending his or her banishment), is only defined as not being the place where one is not allowed to set foot. The exiled person thus becomes an outsider in his or her place of exile, only there because he or she cannot be in the place of first choice. The authority responsible for the banishment, by that very act, reveals its sense of geographical hierarchy, as the Dutch colonial government in the Indies did by exiling nationalist and communist leaders to places remote from the administrative center Java, like the island Banda and later more notoriously Boven-Digoel on New Guinea. An odd occurrence, therefore, was the exile of Soewardi Soerjaningrat (1889-1959), Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo (1886-1943) and Ernest Douwes Dekker (1879-1950) – the latter being the leader of the *Indische Partij* (IP; Indies Party) and the two former being affiliated to the IP in different ways. With their exile to The Netherlands in 1913 the imperial logic was turned upside down by making the colonial metropole a place momentarily defined by its colonial possessions in the negative.

This turning of logics made the presence of the three IP men in the Netherlands charged in a way Wim Tehupeiory's stay was not. Many people from the colonial society of the Dutch East Indies spent time in the Netherlands on occasions, be it for study purposes (like the Tehupeiory siblings), for family visits (like the thousands of civil servants and military on European leave), for career-related reasons, or a combination of the above – what set the IP leaders apart, of course, was that their stay was involuntary and defied the imperial order. Students and persons on leave visited the Netherlands in a way that resembles much of what Benedict Anderson called the 'bureaucratic pilgrimage': the movements of these persons circumscribed the full imperial space, rendering it into one, and marked the ascent of colonial careers, culminating in an education or furlough in the metropolitan centers.[317] For the three exiles however, this was not a culmination – their political struggle was concentrated on the Indies, and more specifically on Java, not on the metropole. Their efforts were aimed primarily at mobilizing people in the colonies, not in convincing political leadership in the Netherlands.

Tjipto, from a lower *priyayi* background, and Soewardi, son of higher Yogyakarta nobility, were first put into custody after the publication of Soewardi's aforementioned pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was…* (see introduction to this chaper). Ernest Douwes Dekker's arrest followed when he defended the two shortly thereafter, declaring them martyrs for their cause.[318] Soewardi's pamphlet was published by the *Comite Boemipoetra* (Committee of Sons of the Soil), which besides Tjipto and Soewardi also included Abdoel Moeïs and Wignjadisastra. The full, satirical name was Native Committee for the Commemoration of the Netherlands' Centennial Freedom (*Inlandsch Comité tot Herdenking van Neêrlands Honderdjarige Vrijheid*). As mentioned above in the introduction, the committee's direct aim was voicing protest against the centennial celebrations in the form of pamphlets (*vlugschriften*), but the renewed effort at staging protest cannot be seen apart from the events earlier that year, when their stint in party politics ended prematurely with the prohibition of their *Indische Partij* (IP, Indies Party).

The IP was a short-lived political movement led by Ernest Douwes Dekker, founded in September 1912. From a legal perspective the party never existed, as any

[317] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006), 114–15.
[318] Ernest Douwes Dekker, 'Onze Helden: Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo en R.M. Soewardi Soerjaningrat', *De Expres*, 5 August 1913.

association's by-laws had to be approved by the colonial government. The IP's by-laws were denied in March 1913, effectively prohibiting a party that had functioned as such during the months in between and that left a lasting mark on the Indies' political field. The IP propagated the advancement of Indo-Europeans and Indonesians alike, and advocated an autonomous future for the Indies with a place for everyone who 'felt *Indisch*', a very inclusive stance that only excluded those *totoks*, metropolitan Dutch, who were intransigent regarding their colonial politics. The *Indiër* (Indian) "is anyone who is prepared to give his very best to the Indies for the many things that this land has given him and who feels that the same political and even economic interests unite him with the groups of many others."[319]Fundamentally, it was a civic take on citizenship, and all citizens-to-be had to transform into *Indiërs* regardless their present ethnicity or legal status. The Indies and its people had to be prepared to exist in its own independent right from the Netherlands (*onafhankelijk volksbestaan*), and anything less such as an autonomous government (*zelfbestuur*) was rejected. With this program Douwes Dekker toured over Java, attracting considerable audiences.[320] At the time of the official founding of the party in late December 1912 it had accumulated close to five thousand members, with a vast majority from Java.[321] During the same period, Tjipto, Soewardi and Douwes Dekker worked together at the editorial board of *De Expres* (1912-1913), a newspaper that functioned as the official party organ of the IP.

The colonial government was quick to prohibit the IP, as article 111 of the *Regeeringsreglement* (RR, Code of Government) stipulated that associations and assemblies with a political nature (*staatkundige aard*) were not allowed. That the IP had a political aim, and was therefore subject to Art 111, was beyond doubt of both the administration and the IP leadership. This was something Douwes Dekker had anticipated on: generally speaking, his actions were aimed at exposing what he called the 'foul play' of the colonizer. For Douwes Dekker, this foul play contained the promises of the colonial administration to work towards some form of autonomy for the Indonesian people, without taking any concrete step, or, as in the case of the prohibition

[319] 'De Indische Partij; Verslag der propaganda deputatie (15 September-3 October 1912)', Het Tijdschrift 2-4, 15 October 1912, pp. 136-137, as quoted in: Paul W. Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly: Dutch Colonialism and the Spirit of EFE Douwes Dekker* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2006), 189.

[320] Van der Veur mentions 70-80 individuals in Yogyakarta, but several hundreds in Semarang. See: Ibid., 188–90.

[321] Ibid., 198.

of the IP, actively frustrating any movement towards the goal of self-rule or independence.[322]

The foundation of the *Comite Boemipoetra* and the publication of *Als ik eens Nederlander was…* took place just a few months after the IP was prohibited, and it made things move ahead much quicker. It provoked a direct response from the colonial government. During this time, Douwes Dekker was absent, and the initiative for the committee came solely from Soewardi and Tjipto. The latter seems to have made a 180 degrees turn with regard to political strategy. When he entered the editorial board of *De Expres,* he had stated not to share Douwes Dekker's preference for agitating words, but the whole endeavour of the committee seems to point in the other direction. In a meditating piece he wrote while imprisoned, he noted that "the more turmoil on the other side, the closer the mark was hit! It is flattering!"[323] Savriti Scherer has sketched an image of Tjipto has a 'harmless dissenter' in the eyes of the colonial administration, but it is worth noting that dissent was not what resulted in his and his companion's exile. Although of course not favoured by the administration, it often feigned ignorance towards dissenting voices as long as they remained within intellectual circles and as long as it was in Dutch – a language the majority of the population had no command of. What had triggered the less forgiving treatment of Tjipto and the others was that the Comite Boemipoetra pamphlets were published in Dutch as well as Malay, and therefore could have an inciting effect on a considerably large audience. 'Harmless' it was not, or so was the opinion of governor-general Idenburg.[324]

Instead of putting any charges on the three leaders, governor-general Idenburg used his extra-judicial powers to expel them from Java and Madura, the colony's central and most densely populated islands, where their presence was seen as a political threat. Removal from the political center of the colony was the main aim of this act, whereas the destination of exile was merely of secondary importance. Tjipto and Soewardi were above all, as the Minister of Colonial Affairs later put it in parliament, "to be removed from the *milieu* in which they resided."[325] The 'milieu' in this case was a direct reference to Douwes Dekker, who was seen as an 'evil genius', without whose presence Tjipto and

[322] Ernest Douwes Dekker, 'De Indische Partij, haar Wezen en haar Doel. Een verhandeling in hoofdstukken over haar program. 1. De Doelomschrijving', *De Expres*, 2 January 1913.
[323] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Mijmeringen uit mijn gevangenschap', *De Expres*, 18 September 1913.
[324] Scherer, 'Harmony and Dissonance', 164.
[325] *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*. Vaststelling der begrooting van Nederlandsch-Indië voor het dienstjaar 1914. 19 November 1913. p. 235.

Soewardi would soon resort back to their cooperative stance towards colonial government. A stay in exile would give them the opportunity "to think and reach different conclusions."[326] This assessment failed to see Tjipto and Soewardi in their own right. Interestingly, the risk of being seen as Douwes Dekker's puppets is something Tjipto seemed very well aware of: before his affiliation with the IP and taking up the role as editor of *De Expres,* he went at great lengths to stress his independent position. In a lengthy piece published in *De Expres,* he set out his position vis-à-vis Douwes Dekker, which in short boiled down to sharing the goal of independence for The Indies, but opposing to the means Douwes Dekker employed. To Tjipto's taste, Douwes Dekker was too much of an agitator, while he championed the idea that "expletives were to the mind what stimulants were to the body" – excessive use would make them blunt.[327]

Governor-general Idenburg assigned Banka, Banda (Mollucas) and Koepang (Timor) as residencies for respectively Tjipto, Soewardi and Douwes Dekker, where they had to remain 'for a while' – which, given the unlikely prospect of any of the three men changing their mind in a way acceptable to the colonial government, could expand into an indefinite amount of time just as well. However, Douwes Dekker never seriously considered an exile in Koepang. The colonial legal code allowed those with European status to opt for leaving the territories instead of confinement to an assigned peripheral location within the territories, and thus Douwes Dekker filed a request to do so, with the intention of heading for the Netherlands instead. It was granted without much deliberation. Soewardi and Tjipto, who were regarded 'native' by colonial law, had no such legal option. Yet, it stands clear that they would also prefer a stay in the Netherlands over one in Banka or Banda respectively. In the metropole the future of the Indies was a matter of public debate, or at least in some circles, so given their involvement in the IP it was a more interesting destination than two islands that were remote from the colony's political centre.

Tjipto and Soewardi took the opportunity to appeal for equal treatment and be granted the same liberty of movement as Douwes Dekker, and requested permission to leave the colony as well. Even though The Netherland was a logical destination for them, it was not seen as such by the colonial powers. Colonial laws reflected this: they did not prohibit 'natives' to spend their exile abroad, nor the opposite – instead the legal code

[326] Ibid., p. 236.
[327] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Een eerlijk word van een eerlijk vriend', *De Expres*, 27 November 1912.

imply did not foresee the mere possibility of people like Tjipto and Soewardi having any interest in this option, and thus did not stipulate anything. Somewhat surprised by the request, the governor-general granted Tjipto and Soewardi their wish. In September 1913, the three men and their families left Batavia's port of Tandjoeng Priok on board of a German steam ship that would carry them to Europe. And although the Netherlands were preferred over remote places in the archipelago, Tjipto never tired of remarking that "a lifelong deprivation of liberty" should not be depicted as "a not unpleasant exile."[328]

Douwes Dekker was a seasoned activist for whom the administration's actions must have been simply the next in the long line of his not-so-friendly encounters with colonial governments. At the turn of the century, for instance, he was imprisoned by the British for his involvement in the Boer War in South Africa. And when Soewardi and Tjipto were detained, he knew exactly what to write (the article 'Our Heroes') to provoke the colonial government to put him in detention too, joining his colleagues in the by himself proclaimed martyrdom.[329] For Soewardi and Tjipto, on the other hand, the events in 1912 were a formative experience, as it was the first time they went into direct confrontation with colonial authorities. The first decade of the twentieth century was one of the most hopeful periods for Indonesian nationalism. It runs the risk of providing for a teleological reading of Indonesian history to use the term nationalism here, but just as Indonesian nationalism was in an early stage of development, so was the colonizer's opposition to it. It was a time welcome to those Indonesians envisaging a more autonomous future for the Indies, regardless whether this would imply independence or a simple alteration of the ties with the Netherlands. Moreover, it was an inviting moment for personal advancement. People like the Tehupeiory brothers, Tjipto, or Raden Adjeng Kartini (1879-1904), the woman whose fame rose after her letters to her European friends (many of them proponents of the Ethical Policy strand) were posthumously published in 1911, were heralded by progressive colonials as a sign of Indonesian advancement. For many of those 'harbingers of Indonesian modernity', however, this promise remained empty, as their life trajectories demonstrate the limits as much as the potential of advancing in colonial society as an Indonesian. Kartini, despite being acknowledged as the first to voice the need for women's emancipation in

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[328] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'De actie onzer Bannelingen. In de pers en in het openbaar. "Wij zullen voortgaan!"', *De Expres*, 8 December 1913.
[329] Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, 261–62.

Indonesia, died at the age of 25 shortly after giving childbirth to her son, as the third wife of Raden Adipati Joyodiningrat, the regent of Rembang. On an altogether different level, also Wim Tehupeiory's aspirations were suppressed and forced him to migrate back to the Indies. For Soewardi and Tjipto, the events leading to their exile in 1913 constituted this moment in which hopes were crushed.

On the voyage from the Indies to the Netherlands Tjipto testified of this sense of a rupture in his own consciousness. In a series of letters to his brother he expressed his feelings regarding the exile and the events that lead to it. In the ninth of his *Baarsche en Barbaarsche Brieven* (Savage Seapost) he lamented the Dutch for coming up with new excuses that would impede Javanese from developing, signaling his waning trust in the colonizer:

> There was a time they claimed that our talent for intellectual development was too low for us to ever aspire to be on par with our guardians. This has been falsified, now we receive daily reports about our youth not only obtaining degrees at Dutch universities, but also leaving lasting impressions there. Since then, they have changed course. The moral *fond* of the Javanese would not allow further development or the acquisition of an autonomous position – or so the argument runs.[330]

To be sure, Tjipto's trust in the colonial government regarding autonomy for the Indies had already been low in the preceding years, in which Tjipto got involved with the IP and was an editor at *De Expres*. But albeit his low expectations, Tjipto often gave the administration, and its agents, the benefit of the doubt. Telling is his memory of his time as a medical officer (*dokter djawa*) in Demak, battling a malaria epidemic. He recounts that he had to supervise ten *magangs* (medical assistants) who gave quinine injections to the sick, although technically his responsibility was the "scientific part", of which little was left since the European doctor visited each day. Tjipto continued:

> It was unavoidable that the magangs saw me as their direct superior. One day they all came to me and complained that their remuneration of f10 a month did not cover their expenses. I requested they instructed me what they needed, and after adding all expenses together it turned out to be around f12. With their humble request I returned home. [...] The *controleur* fully agreed that f10 was not a fit salary for the labour done. [...] In a letter to the *assistant-resident* of Demak I explained the imperative of an increased remuneration for employees battling the malaria virus. [...] But what happened? Apparently, the European doctor found this too bold a move from a native doctor. When we ran into each other during work, he reproached me saying that Javanese would only work when paid generously. Responding to a higher calling would be unfamiliar to us, etc. [...] With tears in my eyes I stood right in front of him, and demanded his approval of the increasing of

[330] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Baarsche en Barbaarsche Brieven. X. Scheuren in Nederlands opperkleed. Zelsbestuur in Indië nodig,' *De Expres,* 17 December 1913.

> the *magangs'* wages, or else I would resign. He could not yield, so that very same afternoon I wired Batavia for my resignation.[331]

What stands out is Tjipto's inclination to respect procedures. He did not file a reason for his resignation, in the hope it would prompt an inquiry into the situation. Needless to say this inquiry never came. "How naïve could I be," Tjipto remarked in retrospect.[332] This naivety was definitely lost when he embarked on his journey to the Netherlands, although it could be questioned whether he ever was as naïve as he depicted himself here. Throughout his career in the colonial administration and his doings within the *pergerakan*[333] – literally 'the movement', used as a shorthand for the complex of *Indisch* and Indonesian (proto-)nationalist organizations in the 1910s and 1920s – there are numerous accounts of Tjipto taking very principled stances in opposition to the administration or to Javanese feudal structures. But on all those occasions he seemed to have one clear effect in mind: to expose the hypocrisies, follies, or inconsequent actions of those wielding power. Very illustrative of this is the anecdote that recounts of Tjipto's time in Surakarta (Solo), where he had a private practice in the last years of the first decennium. He enraged the sunan, the monarch of the Surakarta principality, by practicing with his span of horses on the central square – a privilege that was usually reserved for the royal family only. It shows Tjipto did not eschew direct confrontation, and was not always only the soft-spoken well-mannered person many commentators observed, well before the IP period of his political career.[334]

Upon arrival in the Netherlands, Tjipto asked whether "*kuru-shetra* will be needed?"[335] His reference to *kuru-shetra* signified two things. First, by referring to the mythical Hindu war he showed his renewed interest in Javanese traditional sources. After the disappointing stance of the colonial government in his quest for more political freedom in the Indies, he seemed to have become more suspicious of the modernity narrative associated with the European colonizers. Whereas before he only cherry-picked from Javanese tradition by adapting the idea of the *ksatria* (warrior) as way to

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[331] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Ervaringen uit het leven. Kracht boven recht,' *De Expres*, 30 September 1913.

[332] Ibid.

[333] In the use of the designation *pergerakan* (movement) I follow Takashi Shiraishi. Although it is ostensibly a container term that runs the risk of obscuring the (wide) differentations among popular and elite nationalist movements, the greatest advantage of its use is that it breaks thoroughly with the categorization of the colonial administration (nationalist, communist, Islamic) which does not resemble the entangled nature of these activities and organisations. See: Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

[334] Scherer, 'Harmony and Dissonance', 114–16; Meulen, *Ik stond er bij. Het einde van ons koloniale rijk*, 17.

[335] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Zal Kuru-shetra nodig zijn?', *De Indiër*, 23 oktober 1913.

transform the in his eyes docile Javanese into emancipated *Indiër*-citizens, he now more fully embraced mythology as way to render his experiences meaningful. He saw himself as the protagonist in an old wayang story, in which a child (Tjipto himself) is on a quest to find his father, 'Raden Ardjoena' (Arjuna, the character from Hindu mythology, here representing the quest for political freedom). The child is raised by his grandfather, and comes to the realization he has to find his father through conversations with his him – Tjipto takes the many conversations he had with his peers to stand for this grandfatherly instruction. Tjipto also interprets other occurrences in such a way as to fit into the wayang narrative, including a small earthquake when he is imprisoned in Bandung just after Soewardi's publication, and the phosphorescence of the sea he witnessed in the Gulf of Aden on his way to Europe. "It was as if the *dewa's* [Hindu gods] wanted to make it unambiguously clear that they had sent us to impart their will onto the Javanese and their opressors."[336]

Secondly, the reference to *kuru-shetra* signified Tjipto's hardened stance: he would not shy away for confrontation. His remarks became more cynical and he professed a certain resignation with the fact that the colonizer was unlikely to remove any obstacle in his political fight – meaning that if the movement would persist in its political demands, as was certainly his intention, it could lead to war, whatever that would mean exactly in this stage of (proto-)nationalist development. The idea of the *ksatria,* the warrior, became essential, as it provided Tjipto with the moral guidance he was seeking. The *ksatria's* maxim was, according to Tjipto: "It is not the way of a *ksatria* to return halfway. Once you have aimed for something, strive for it with all valour in you, and with all the power you possess. Is the objective unattainable, then it is better to die in pursuit of it than to surrender."[337] In a way, Tjipto resigned to fate, seeing himself as a passive wayang doll whose actions depended on the will of the *dalang*, the puppet master of the wayang play. In a very apt observation, Tjipto's brother Soejitno remarked twenty-five years later that his brother had "a remarkable gift to adapt to the circumstances. He is a fatalist in its Eastern meaning: he asserts that you are what your fate has destined. 'Fate', it is a vague and banal word, but my take is that he needed it in

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[336] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Baarsche en Barbaarsche Brieven. Oostersch inzicht. III', *De Expres*, 21 October 1913.
[337] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Mijmeringen. Onze "lakon"', *De Expres*, 15 September 1913.

order to accept the turn his life took."[338] Despite Tjipto's immersion in Javanese Hindu tradition, he did not embrace it fully and uncritically – a return to traditional Javanese feudal relations was certainly not on his agenda. The idea of the *ksatria*, warrior, is a specific pick which allowed for personal subjecthood, for *Indisch* citizenship, and negated the tutelage of both Dutch Ethical thinking and feudal Javanese society.[339]

Despite Tjipto's enhanced cynicism, he also appreciated the relative freedom the Netherlands offered. Since the colonial government's main concern was the risk of the three exiled men inciting the Indonesian population, and since this 'risk' was notably absent in the metropole, they were not restrained in their ways. Tjipto was enthusiastic about the public debates:

> I cannot deny that life in the country of our elderly brothers [the Dutch, MK] starts to gain value. There is a thriving public life, an interest in the world, which sets Europe principally apart from our country. There have been protest gatherings about the Beilis trial in Russia, where an innocent person might receive capital punishment, *only for being a jew*, and because word has it the jews do not shy back for ritual murder during pesach.[340]

The sense of freedom and excitement Tjipto testified of are similar to the experiences of many other intellectual Indonesians during their stays in the Netherlands. Yet, each came to the revelations of his or her own. For Tjipto, to read about the Beilis trial installed a feeling of injustice in him. Once deemed guilty as charged, it was neigh impossible to get acquitted, which reminded him much of his own experiences once he and Soewardi were put into custody and were not allowed to seek legal advice. Even more poignantly was that Douwes Dekker was allowed a counselor, presumably because of his European status. It invoked anger in Tjipto: "Most odious I find that brother D.D. did receive legal council in his cell, and I didn't. Why did they make this distinction? Why didn't they champion the motto 'what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander'? Why…? I will not elaborate on this issue, I'm getting bitter when I think of the legal dualism our country is blessed with."[341]

The freedom of engaging in public life pleased Tjipto, but it had its limits. A prominent member of the Social Democratic Workers' Party (*Sociaal-Democratische*

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[338] Letter of Soejitno Mangoenkoesoemo to E. du Perron, Buitenzorg (Bogor) 22 March 1940, as published in: 'Brief van een Indonesiër aan E. du Perron', *Criterium, algemeen cultureel maandblad*, August-September 1947, p. 490.
[339] Shiraishi, 'The Disputes', 104.
[340] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Baarsche en Barbaarsche Brieven. X. De S.D.P. en de pestbestrijding in Indië', *De Expres*, 22 December 1912.
[341] Ibid.

Arbeiderspartij, SDAP), the *Eerste Kamerlid* (Member of the Senate) H.H. van Kol, characterized Douwes Dekker and his *Indische Partij* "unprocessed [*onbekookt*] and mindless." As the party specialist on the Indies, his words had some weight, although it was mainly rhetoric with the function to disassociate him and his party from the IP. Similarly, the SDAP had refused to give the IP the status of one of its local chapter, which might have allowed it to circumvent the prohibition it faced from the colonial administration.[342] Van Kol's formal position on the colonies was that the Netherlands should make serious work of the economic development of the Indies – for instance by not letting defense put too much pressure on the Indies' budget – but took care to add according to him "the Indies and the Javanese are not mature for autonomous governing."[343] Despite the fact that Van Kol and the parliamentary fraction of his party disagreed in their judgment and wording regarding Douwes Dekker and the exile of the three IP men, they were not on different ground regarding colonial policy: much in the Ethical vein, the SDAP supported 'development' of the Indies, but remained opposed to loosening Dutch rule, and therefore was opaque when it came to development of the democracy. A dispute between Van Kol and Tjipto emerged, as the former claimed that the Tjipto's IP was not working in the interest of the Javanese, and had not gained much support among them. Tjipto reacted with a piece that was published in several newspapers where he simply refuted Van Kol's claims, stating that the IP had considerable support among this group.[344]

[342] Letter from Tjipto to SDAP central board, 17 March 1913; International Institute of Social History (IISG), *Archief SDAP*, 1717.
[343] 'Interview-Van Kol', *Het Centrum*, 5 November 1913.
[344] Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'De heer van Kol en de Indische Partij', *Het Volk*, 11 November 1913.

Image 7 - The Indiërs Committee. From left, first row: Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, Soewardi Soerjaningrat, second row: Frans Berding, G.L. Topée, and J. Vermaesen.

Despite the difficult relations with the SDAP, there was significant – albeit small – support for Tjipto and his fellow exiles in the metropole. Upon their arrival, a small crowd had awaited them at the train station in The Hague. A committee called the *Indiërs Comité*, that had formed on Douwes Dekker's previous visit to the Netherlands, was of support to the three exiles. Among its members were G.L. Topee (a former member of the IP and on leave in the Netherlands) and Frans Berding (a Dutch journalist). The committee was instrumental in assisting the three exiles in practical matters, and arranged meetings and talks for them. Most notably, on 20 October 1913, Tjipto and his fellow exiles delivered speeches at a SDAP event in The Hague at a venue named Diligentia. Reportedly, around three thousand people attended. On many occasions, the three had to start from scratch with introducing their struggle, and relate the recent events in the Indies in detail. Yet, it is interesting to note how Tjipto adjusted his talk to his audience. In The Hague, he criticized the plans for a Colonial Council (*Kolonialen Raad*), exactly pinpointing the divergence between him and Van Kol – for whom did not see Indonesians fit to rule in the coming the century, the design for the KR might have been appealing, but as Tjipto argued, it was only "something to keep us at bay", and it resembled "everything but a people's representation," as the appointed

members would most likely be regents (*regenten*), the highest appointment for Indonesians in the colonial administration.[345]

At the mass event in The Hague, the level of acquaintance with the colonies as a political subject was low for most of the audience. Daniel van der Meulen, at that moment a student in preparation for a career in colonial civil service, remembers the event as highly revelatory, as it made him aware of the political desires of Tjipto's generation. He remembered Tjipto's "mild, polite smile" and his "friendly, unusually melodious voice."[346] It made a lasting impression on the young student, of which he testified after his colonial career, but it did not make him doubt the naturalness of Dutch colonial rule during his career: "My consciousness always gave me confirmation, when I saw how welcome the masses were to [colonial] authority, or how imperative it was for the people's wellbeing."[347] It is not a coincidence Van der Meulen was present at the three exile's speeches: he felt he had to be there since he was preparing for a colonial career. The prospect of such a career was an accepted reason to engage with the Indies as a metropolitan citizen, just as it was for retired colonials, politicians, or family members of those with direct colonial experience. For others this was not the case. The *Diligentia* event was laypeople's territory, but to engage with colonial affairs beyond that point was frowned upon, as Frans Berding experienced. He was not only one of the members of the *Indiërs Comité* members, but also co-editor of *De Indiër* with Tjipto. This weekly publication can be seen as the metropolitan counterpart of *De Expres,* which soon dwindled and folded in the absence of Douwes Dekker, Tjipto and Soewardi.[348] Berding recalled his former colleagues reproaching him at this event for his involvement with the exiles' cause. Why was he sympathetic with Indonesian nationalism? He had neither a colonial career nor family in the Indies. Why should he care? In Dutch society around the turn of the twentieth century, this was difficult to grasp.

Tjipto's stay in the Netherlands ended prematurely, as he was allowed to travel back in early 1915 for health reasons. He had fallen seriously ill. In contrast, his fellow-exile Soewardi remained in the metropole until 1919. Tjipto would remain active in political affairs. Some of his actions created new resentment from the administration, such as inspiring strikes of Javanese labourers from the late 1910s to the mid 1920s, and

[345] Madjoe, 'De actie der bannelingen in Holland. I. De eerste vergadering', *De Expres*, 24 November 1913.
[346] Van der Meulen, *Ik stond er bij. Het einde van ons koloniale rijk*, 17.
[347] Ibid., 65.
[348] Frans Berding, 'Waarom we óók iets met Indië te maken hebben', *De Indiër*, 23 oktober 1913.

he was continually under police surveillance. On other occasions, he was seen as a respectable figure by the authorities. Takashi Shiraishi has suggested that the police harassment prevented Tjipto from gaining a stable political basis in the political movements of the time, which in turn made him a welcome candidate for the *Volksraad* (People's Council) that was installed in 1918. This representative body was the first proto-parliament in the Indies and the result of long deliberations and postponements by the colonizers, who were only lukewarmly enthusiastic for what had to be a first major landmark in the political development of the Indies as autonomous entity. Nonetheless it was presented by the administration as a body that would express "the will of the people."[349] However, all members were appointed rather than chosen, making it into a *caisse de résonance* for the government's line. Tjipto was a notable exception. Despite his harsh criticism of the *Kolonialen Raad* (one of the *Volksraad*'s many predecessors that was never actualized) while he was in the Netherlands, he got appointed as one of the initial members of the *Volksraad*. His tenure did not last long, and effectively ended when he was first forced to live in Bandung in 1920. In 1927, he was exiled to the island Banda, in the east of the archipelago, which marked the end of his politically active life. For the next generation – people who would form the first government of independent Indonesia, like Sutan Sjahrir, Sukarno, and Mohammed Hatta – he would be both an inspiration in their struggle, and someone inexplicably close to Dutch colonizers. The latter left Sjahrir wondering why the Dutch had not co-opted Tjipto more: "They could have made excellent use of him."[350]

The arts and the idea of association

In the same period as the exiles' arrival in the Netherlands, another Indonesian makes his way to the metropole: Raden Mas Jodjana, born in 1893. He spent his youth at the court of Yogyakarta and had subsequently attended both the *Opleidingsschool voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren* (School for Native Civil Servants, OSVIA) and the *Opleidingsschool voor Inlandsche Rechtskundigen*, but without success. His aim was to

[349] S.L. Van der Wal, *De volksraad en de staatkundige ontwikkeling van Nederlands-Indië: een bronnenpublikatie* (Groningen: Wolters, 1964), 599, as cited and translated in: Shiraishi, "The Disputes," 93.
[350] Sjahrir, *Indonesische Overpeinzingen*, 74.

study at *Nederlandsche Handelshoogeschool* in Rotterdam, but his precise motivation his unclear. It is likely that expectations from his family played a role in his choice to stay enrolled in his studies, as a career in the colonial administration was the primary way to go for sons from aristocratic families. With this background he would have already met disdain when pursuing a career in medicine, which was the other viable alternative and the way Tjipto and Tehupeiroy had chosen, let alone when he would have explored more radical alternatives. Yet this was exactly what Jodjana did: his true interests lay in literature, arts and philosophy, and it is not unlikely that he saw studying in the Netherlands as a way to pursue these interests relatively undisturbed, without the same pressure to obtain his degree as on Java.[351] Through the story of another Indonesian in the Netherlands we know how this pressure could look like: the poet Noto Soeroto made a choice similar to Jodjana, devoting his time to his journalistic and artistic activities instead of obtaining an academic degree. His father wrote him:

> Stop it, Soeroto. That kind of activity is bound to antagonize the European colonial officials, who, besides, will probably think or say: "There you are, there's another one of those inexperienced Javanese starting to write against us. You don't realize what the consequences of this may be.[352]

Almost all Indonesian students in the Netherlands were member of the *Indische Vereeniging* (Indies Association, IV). People like Jodjana and Noto Soeroto found this to be hospitable environment to their artistic ambitions. In early 1916 Jodjana got elected secretary of the IV, which had slightly less than hundred members at that time.[353]

The political course of the IV had been determined in the preceding years, and the result was a firm alignment with the ideals of Ethical school, going against the more far-reaching ideals as for instance expressed by the *Indische Partij* and its three prominent members in exile, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Raden Mas Soewardi Soerjaningrat (Ki Hadjar Dewantoro), and Ernest Douwes Dekker. It was Noto Soeroto who wrote that the IV would adhere to the idea of "association with the colonizer [*overheerscher*]" because the Indies were not fit for independence in the century to com: "The *Indische Partij* manifests a strong anti-Dutch-nationalism, the *Indische Vereeniging* is loyal; the former contains the questionable seeds of division and turmoil, while these times beg for concentrated cooperation, the latter attempts an approach to the idea of association as

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351 Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 109–10.
352 Letter from Notodiredjo to Noto Soeroto, 12 June 1909, as cited in: Madelon Djajadaningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 'Noto Soeroto: His Ideas and the Late Colonial Intellectual Climate', *Indonesia* 55 (1993): 45.
353 'Indische Vereeniging', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 11 January 1916.

expressed by so many great men."[354] Dissident voices came from Douwes Dekker and Tjipto. On a meeting in late 1913, the former stated that he "heard a Dutchman speak, instead of a Javanese," when listening to Noto Soeroto. Yet it did not prevent Noto Soeroto to be re-elected chairman of the association, and although he stated upon this occasion that the IV would have to develop from a leisure club into an interest group working for the benefits of their "*Indische* fatherland", which would require them to "demonstrate interest in the issues of our time", but without "taking sides in our society's struggles." With Noto Soeroto's election, the position of the IV was sealed. Also later chairs, like Gerungan S.S.J. Ratulangie, prolonged this line even though they were considerably less Ethical than Noto Soeroto was. Not picking sides did not always imply following the course of association and adhering to the Ethical school of colonial thought, it rather meant the students in the Netherlands were aware that there small faction should maintain some kind of unity to be heard at all. It also meant ample space for activities deemed 'cultural', as this allowed for asserting a distinct Javanese or *Indisch* identity without being politically subversive.[355]

In early 1916 one of the regular *Indische kunstavonden* (Indies Art Evenings) was dedicated to raising money for a flooded Java. It was organized by the IV, the association *Oost en West* and the *Indologenvereeniging* (Orientalists' Association), and it attracted guests of high stature, most notably Queen Wilhelmina and her husband Prince Hendrik, who stayed until the break, Th. B. Pleijte (the Minister of Colonial Affairs), P.W.A. Cort van der Linden (the Minister of Interior Affairs), D. Fock (a former Minister of Colonial Affairs), H.A. van Karnebeek (the mayor of The Hague), and J.H. Abendanon, the jurist who published the letters of Raden Adjeng Kartini. Several daily national newspapers reported on the first evening (a second evening followed two days later on 17 March), without much divergence in their reporting. They reported that the "technical guidance" came from Mr. Kloppers and Chris Lebeau, a versatile Dutch artist famous among other things for his adapted batik technique. With the soothing fact of this European lead, the audience was presented a program which the newspapers praised in a presumptuous way. There was acclaim for the program "that opened with Gamelan music played by *Indische* youth, first the Monggong (Welcome to the court), and subsequently the Ritjih Ritjih (Welcome to the audience). With great attention the Javanese musical and dance

[354] Poeze, *In het land*, 94.
[355] Ibid., 95–105.

idyll was witnessed, which interested mostly the well presented *Indische* families." After the break, when the royal pair had left, the program continued with "a Hindu legend, recited by Ms. H. van der Harst, a Kelono dance, Eastern songs sung by madame Sorga, a plastic allegory in which simple imagery demonstrated some key moments in the cultural revolution of the inhabitants of Insulinde; all songs that were highly appreciated by the public, as testified by the applause that followed each time." The tone was haughty, noting also, for instance, that "the decors and staging considerably enhanced the effect of the colourful *Indisch* scenes [*kleurige Indische toneeltjes*]."[356]

According to the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* the *Indische* arts evening gave the audience sight on "an important part of *Indische* life, [it] resonated part of the mental life of the Javanese."[357] This was the core of the intentions the IV had with these programs – besides of course raising money for a disaster-stricken Java in this particular case. As Mathew Cohen has pointed out, many IV members believed that fostering Javanese culture would help to "establish a spiritual connection between Java and Holland that is stronger than all political and economic connections."[358] This spiritual connection did not exist at that moment, most commentators agreed. This lament is a recurring trope in metropolitan circles, and time and again there is the expression of hope that an event or initiative would change this for the better. Likewise in this case, as *Het Vaderland* wrote: "More of these evenings, with a more extensive explanation, and the complaints that the Netherlands and Insulinde are so unacquainted with one another will die out."[359] Although commentators and the Indonesian students themselves often referred to their art as Javanese, it was not in fact limited to Java. The newspapers mentioned the traditional dresses that adorned the performers, each indicating the specific region of origin. By stressing the diversity, it was hard to see their performance as an expression of proto-Indonesian nationalism. In fact, the endeavour of showing "their homeland's cultural riches," as Matthew Cohen put it, was altogether reconcilable with the idea of association. The idea of a harmonious conversation between cultures contributed to the idea of imperial harmony, while giving dignity to the various cultures present in the empire. Yet, by casting these cultures as such, defined

[356] 'Indische Kunstavond.", *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 16 March 1916.
[357] 'De Indische Kunstavond.", *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 16 March 1916.
[358] Hindia Poetra, as quoted in: Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 111.
[359] 'De Indische Avonden.', *Koloniaal Weekblad*, 23 March 1916.

by their region and subaltern position within empire, they were also deadlocked into tradition.

Even though the *Kedono* dance was listed on the program of the arts evenings in March 1916, it is not clear who performed this particular piece. It might have been Jodjana, although a photo also shows him playing the Gamelan at another point (Image 1). In any case, Jodjana soon became known as one of the more gifted dancers among the IV performers. During the March 1916 evenings, the group more than once stressed to consist "only of mere amateurs."[360] But soon some of the IV performers would put their studies to hold and dedicate themselves full time to the arts. Soorjopoetro and Noto Soeroto began to write about Javanese music in a series named *Causerieën over Javaansche Muziek*, for music and arts were the way to gain insight into the Javanese soul. They believed that "mutual understanding and appreciation" of "the ultimate beauty that resides in people" would bring East and West closer to one another.[361]

Jodjana turned professional by taking up a role in the opera *Attima* by Constant van de Wall. The story ties in to many tropes from colonial fiction: the Indies-born composer and journalist had written a love story about a young Javanese woman who fell in love with a Western man against the odds of her traditional background. The story revolved around the dancers Attima, Wangi and Aïssa, part of a Javanese Gamelan orchestra. Their violin player Kartono feels love for Attima, but the European sub-officer Armand does so too, and Attima answers the latter's advances. Armands colleague Rudo advices against "a love affair with a native woman," but Armand and Attima proceed regardless. Then, Aïssa, who on her turn loves Kartono, informs him on Attima's ways. In the confrontation that follows, Armand and Kartono both end up mortally wounded. A reviewer mentioned that Van de Wall was someone "who knows the Indies and *Indisch* life deeper than just from a superficial perspective," yet is disappointed that this doesn't show in the opera: "From someone with such a background, one expects music with an Eastern soul, Eastern melancholy, and an Eastern temperament. […] more than once the music could have been written by a composer with no more knowledge of the Indies than that Batavia is its capital." It was Jodjana, in contrast to the opera's composer, who received the bulk of critical acclaim for his role: "The dance and gamelan music pleased

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[360] 'De Indische Kunstavond.", *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 16 March 1916.

[361] Poeze, *In het land*, 10.

us, due to the lucky inspiration of the composer […] but also due to the command in dance of Raden Mas Harsaja,[362] the most perfect we ever witnessed in terms of choreography. It was sublime; just for this reason alone one should see Attima."[363]

Jodjana's star would rise quickly after his performance in *Attima*. He was primarily valued as an *Eastern* dancer, as someone who could offer a window on this unknown territory for many Dutch people, or as someone who could reinvoke memories of the Indies for those old colonials or people on leave. According to Mathew Cohen, Jodjana performed 'character-based mime dances', and the characters were drawn from Hindu mythology, like Kelono, Vishnu, or Arjuna, or from Javanese tradition.[364] This provided colonials with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the Indies. Although most of Jodjana's audience probably had little disposable knowledge of wayang mythology, the reviews show that most critics (and probably the audience alike) felt not restricted to assume a judgement on 'how *Indisch*' the performance was, rendering that the only category to measure Jodjana's performance against. The idea of the colonial experience as something that could only take place in the Indies without loosing its essence was much defended in the Indies itself. H.F.E. Visser for the *Sumatra Post* wrote that for who wanted to experience traditional dances by 'girls and young women' simply could not do without a trip to the Indies. This was different however for dances performed by men, Visser claimed: "Through the outstanding achievements of Jodjana (to the extent his performances were *real* Javanese dances) the Netherlands have witnessed Javanese male dancing in a satisfying manner."[365] Jodjana had de facto become a cultural ambassador in the Netherlands, claimed by colonials and Indonesians alike.

This status or *Indisch* representative also had its repercussions. As Visser's opinion on Jodjana reveals, there was a critical eye for the kind of dance Jodjana performed. Were they "real Javanese", or something else? As Jodjana developed himself more as an artist, he explored other avenues, not necessarily limited to traditional forms recognizable for a colonial audience as authentically Javanese. Cohen mentions that by

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[362] Jodjana performed under this pseudonym to conceal the fact he was playing a part in an opera for his father, who believed his son was concentrating on his studies. Jodjana never obtained his degree. Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 114–115.

[363] 'Attima', Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant, 9 January 1917; 'Fransche Opera.', Algemeen Handelsblad, 9 January 1917; Ibid., 113.

[364] Ibid., 115.

[365] H.F.E. Visser, 'Een oordeel over Indie's kunst', *De Sumatra Post*, 16 March 1922.

1930, Jodjana performed an abstract dance which he called *Semang-semang,* meaning 'Uncertain', "a dance which expresses a State of being in which there is perfect Union between Master and Servant."[366] The thematics might still have been inspired by his earlier motifs, but it was hard to tell from the abstracted forms Jodjana employed on stage. The Netherlands offered little opportunity for Jodjana to develop himself as modern dancer, and he was mostly seen as Eastern dancer, representative of the Indies – modern and *Javanese* would be mutually exclusive categories in the eyes of his audience. This could as easily turn back on the performer of *Indische* art, when sentiments nostalgia or colonial knowledge made way for what I would call *colonial fatigue*: the idea in metropolitan conservative circles without involvement in the colonies that they were excessively exposed to liberal, humanitarian colonial propaganda. As soon as the opportunity presented itself, harsh remarks followed, as for instance in *De Telegraaf*:

> What do those Easterners and their European facilitators want with their propaganda for Eastern art? I recall an *Indisch* art evening this summer in The Hague, which was too amateuristic to convey the beauty of Eastern music to the Western ears. And now this Eastern evening at the Rotterdam Art Society (*Rotterdamschen Kunstkring*)! A program with Bengal, Persian, Hindu and perhaps other eastern songs, sung by a white lady with a sweet voice, hardly in tune [...] The usually accompanying "tromapei" – as the Javanese narrator called it – was absent, and thus all fourteen songs were supported by a monotonous and muted string instrument, that soon gave the impression as if a monstrous and agile fly contributed to the singing. Then there was Javanese dance by Mr. Jodjana. There might have been little to bring in against them, other than that it was not very diverse, had they signalled through some rhythmic constellation in the performance that they were somehow connected to the music. To make their "tunings" public they need another sound palette as accompanying decors or inspirational source than a piano played by someone [...] who was not even able to play the monotonous and harmony-ridden music with the one finger it required. Even as a mere attempt this Eastern arts evening had no beauty.[367]

This critical stance was always a parallel presence to the Ethically attuned press, who remained optimistic, and on this occasion for instance remarked that the absence of a Gamelan was to be pitied, but that the accompanying piano tried to make the best of it.[368] As it were, the appreciation of *Indisch* or Eastern arts evenings was predisposed by one's political stance. Ethicals were inclined to admire Jodjana, conservatives the opposite.

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[366] Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 115.
[367] R., 'Muziek te Rotterdam. Oostersche kunstavond', *De Telegraaf*, 16 October 1920.
[368] Dr. Hans Eibl., 'Opmerkingen over eenige esthetische vragen van den dag.', *Het Vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad*, 15 October 1920.

In the early 1920s, Jodjana established contacts with other artists, and became a performer in his own right, independent from the *Indisch* art evenings, but without losing his 'Eastern' label. He performed in the framework of *Kring Petrucci*, an art circle that aimed for "East-West synthesis" by "enhancing the spiritual exchange between Easterners and Westerners, to prepare for the higher unity of thought in which the one-sided accentuation of Eastern and Western thought has dissolved."[369] *Petrucci* had many members among the IV ranks and from *Chung Hwa Hui*, the association for Chinese students in the Netherlands. At the *Petrucci* evenings, Jodjana used to perform the *Kelono* dance, which was to become one of his signature pieces. It portrayed the character of the vain king Kelono, who madly desires the princess Candra Kirana, and is only brought back to his sense by a court retainer. Mathew Cohen, who describes this scene in *Performing Otherness*, makes the following analysis drawing on the work of dance ethnologist Claire Holt:

> Traditional dances in the wayang style maintain emotional consistency. Holt writes that the dancer 'cannot, stepping out of his framework, externalize in gestures conflicting emotions, as for instance a change from self-possession to abandonment, or the alternation of lyrical and strident moods. The hero he impersonates retains a relatively homogenous temperament, and in every situation, acts "in character."' Jodjana's interpretation of Kelono showed something that could not customarily be enacted: self-realization and transformation. Jodjana's Kelono enters proud and vain, adorned in fine garments, strutting like a peacock, preening, drunk with love. […] And then suddenly from the mirror's depths emerges a strange, deep voice, speaking rhythmically in poetic Javanese – Kelono's own voice admonishing Kelono in the word of gods and kings. Kelono is visibly shaken. He gets hold of himself, recovers his dignity, exiting with serenity worthy a sovereign.[370]

[369] 'Japansche Kunstavond.', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 24 January 1921.
[370] Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 116–17.

Image 8 - The Gamelan orchestra at the *Indische* art evenings in March 1916. From left: Soewardi, Samoed, Soorjopoetro, Jodjana, Soerjowinoto, Noto Soeroto, Samsi Sastrowidagdo, Loekman Djajadiningrat, Sosro Sawarno. Source: Poeze, *In het land*, 108.

Critics noticed these layers in Jodjana's dance. Hanna Beekhuis explained her readers that Jodjana's dance was close to theatre, in particular pantomime, because it was based on dramatic, religious or lyrical emotions: "Through the body, this emotion is represented, sometimes by enacting an event, sometimes by a heavily stylized visualization of a Symbol. Jodjana does not walk over the stage, he conveys 'Advancing" [...] as Idea. [...] In its core Jodjana has remained true to Javanese dance, he kept all forms that do not hinder him in his depictions; he has rejected everything that had became a dead formula."[371]

This made Jodjana's work open to interpretation, as it conveyed ideas. His Kelono, just like his portrayal of a *ksatria*, a warrior, centers on the idea of self-transformation. Interestingly, even despite the fact that Jodjana never expressed himself on political issues (the *Petrucci* circle, for instance, was explicitly a-political, but "focused on the practical side" of cultural exchange), by locating the potential for self-transformation in wayang mythology, he made the same step as Tjipto, who saw in the figure of the *ksatria*

[371] Hanna Beekhuis, 'Raden Mas Jodjana', *Leeuwarder Courant*, 2 February 1929.

the model for the self-transformation of the Javanese, and other Indonesians, which they had to make in order to become *Indiër*-citizens.

This parallel was lost to most of the Dutch audience, however, who mostly saw Jodjana a very refined performer of authentically Eastern dance, sometimes with comical ignorance: one commentator, for instance, merely wondered about the money Jodjana could make from his popularity, only to ironically dismiss the thought as a "Western materialistic way" to write about his "Eastern 'art.''[372] And the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* concluded that despite *Petrucci*'s aim to bridge East and West, "the whole evening we experienced the gap between East and West as colossally huge." The line heading their review made erroneously mention of a "Japanese arts evening."[373]

Soewardi had also wondered how the dance he, Jodjana, and other Indonesian students performed, were interpreted by the metropolitan audience. What did they think of this act, which he saw as slightly subversive, as they "demonstrated heart and fervour to make propaganda for our national art, in the land of our overlords." Soewardi reported various answers to his question:

> Some find Javanese art amusing, but primitive. From this they derive thoughts on the relation between the Indies and the Netherlands. Others say to truly admire the same art. They feel proud, because this art is native to a country where the red, white and blue has been waving for three centuries. And a third feels shame, once he realizes that he is part of the peculiar people that assumes reign over these born artists.[374]

For Soewardi making Javanese art was a political deed in the context of colonialism. For Jodjana, this may have been the case as a matter of fact, but not what he aimed or desired for. Making art and being recognized was what he lived for, and to which end he sought his artistic desires in foreign lands. He performed from Berlin to Paris, and before the Second World War he led the *Centre Jodjana*, operating from Dardennes (and later other villages). The Italian newspaper *La Stampa*, for instance, described Jodjana as "exquisitely modern" after his performance in the theatre of Torino in front of the dukes of Genova and Pistoia.[375]

Also in the Netherlands some critics saw Jodjana's work as modern, as already mentioned above. F.M. Schnitger, for instance, called Jodjana's art "not Javanese dance

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[372] 'Een droom', *De Sumatra Post*, 10 April 1920.
[373] 'Japansche Kunstavond.', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 24 January 1921.
[374] Soewardi Soerjaningrat, 'Dans en tooneel der Javanen', as quoted in 'Paleis voor Volksvlijt', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 25 January 1921.
[375] 'Al teatro di Torino: Raden Mas Jodjana', *La Stampa*, 25 November 1930.

on modern principles [*grondslagen*], but modern dance on Javanese principles."[376]Others would go further, and insist that Jodjana's modern character went at the expense of being *Indisch*. In a polemic with Jodjana in Noto Soeroto's magazine *Oedaya,* Th. B. van Lelyveld insisted that Jodjana was:

> An inspired emotionalist, his individual spirit and individual temperament are closer to Western modes of artistic expression. [...] His work is modern and Western in conception and has only a slim relation to the classical dance of Java.[377]

Van Lelyveld denied Jodjana his distinctly Javanese modernity, claiming that being modern and being Javanese were irreconcilable. It posed a problem for 'association' – the idea that two distinct cultures would associate, brotherly raise to equal heights, i.e. that Javanese culture would match Dutch culture. As soon as the metropolitan audience discovered artistic value in Jodjana's performances, he could not be Javanese, but would he remain Javanese, there could be no artistic value – it is in a nutshell the paradox of association. The three possible reactions to Jodjana's art that Soewardi identified lead, optimistically perhaps, to the idea that at a certain point the Dutch audience would feel shame about its colonial rule. He did not reckon the denial of modernity a fourth possible stance, one that kept the fundaments of colonial superiority intact, as it desired association without granting the possibility of a distinct modernity. In the meantime Jodjana's objection, that the adaptation of external influences was also a Javanese tradition, remained tragically unheard.[378]

Imperial Citizenship and Double Consciousness (conclusion)

What do the trajectories of Soewardi Soerjaningrat, Wim Tehupeiory, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, and Raden Mas Jodjana tell us about the cultural space of empire? They do not represent the full panoply of possible ways to position oneself in the colonial world, and this chapter only highlighted the histories of some of the most privileged among the colonized. Despite the fact that some of the people traveled with

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[376] 'Nederland's Beleid in Indië', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 17 October 1929.
[377] Th. B. van Lelyveld, *De Javaansche Danskunst* (Amsterdam: Van Holkema & Warendorf 1931), 37, as quoted in: Cohen, *Performing Otherness*, 125–126.
[378] Ibid.

their wives and sisters, little is known about them, and their passing in Dutch society has remained virtuously unnoticed. If we take the fruits of Subaltern Studies or New Imperial History to be that the imperial 'stories from below' are told, it should also lead to the realization that this process of finding new perspectives and remapping the stories of empire is never finalized. The words of Catherine Hall are helpful here:

> A re-thinking of the British imperial legacy needs input from the 'peripheries' for it would be very limited to re-think that history only from the 'centre'. Australia and Jamaica, in very different ways, provide my counterpoints which allow me to begin to re-map the history of Empire.[379]

What are peripheries? In a geographical sense, Jamaica and Australia help Hall tell the history of Baptist missionaries and the British empire from a counterbalanced point. In this chapter, it was about remapping the history of metropolitan imperial culture, with the aforementioned protagonists as counterpoints. To represent Indonesians in the Netherlands as a motley flow of people, like Harry Poeze does in his groundbreaking *In het land van de overheerser*, runs the risk of presenting them as an anomalous presence in the metropole, something this chapter has also not entirely been able to avoid. However, a distinction ought to be made between histories told in isolation, and isolated histories, and the point here is that the cultural presence of Soewardi, Jodjana, and all others, was of the latter kind: part of empire, but as fragments, just like the school discourse (Chapter 5) represents another fragment in relative isolation.

The strategies presented by the protagonists of this chapter ranged from assimilation (Tehupeiory), to opposition (Tjipto), to association (Jodjana). These could be called the basic models to shape cultural citizenship as an Indonesian in the colonial world. Yet, for neither of them did this seem to be an exclusive strategy – their identities were tied to collectivities varying from city of birth, to the imperial citizenry, and – although these featured less in this chapter – to international networks crosscutting these affinities. These networks are not only political, as the case of Raden Mas Jodjana shows us: he made an international career in the arts.[380] To talk about collectivities and affinities, is to talk about belonging. The question 'where did Soewardi, Jodjana et al. belong?' is beside the point, however, for it implies that there would be a simple answer,

[379] Catherine Hall, 'Histories, Empires and the Post-Colonial Moment', in *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti (New York: Routledge, 1996), 67.
[380] For the transnational political networks Indonesians would be active in, in particular during the 1920s, see: Klaas Stutje, 'Indonesian Identities Abroad: International Engagement of Colonial Students in the Netherlands, 1908-1931', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (19 March 2013): 151–72.

such as 'Ambon', 'the Dutch East Indies', or 'Indonesia.' It is remarkable that there is no equivalent in the *Indische* history for W.E.B. Dubois' term *double consciousness,* which would do more to comprehend the lives and thoughts of the Indonesians in exile. The term double consciousness is well known from Paul Gilroy's acclaimed work *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993). It is worth looking what Gilroy implied by the term, writing on Dubois here:

> Du Bois's travel experiences raise in the sharpest possible form a question common to the lives of almost all these figures who begin as African-Americans or Caribbean people and are then challenged into something else which evades those specific labels and with them all fixed notions of nationality and national identity. Whether their experience of exile is enforced or chosen, temporary or permanent, these intellectuals and activists, writers, speakers, poets, and artists repeatedly articulate a desire to escape the restrictive bonds of ethnicity, national identification, and sometimes even "race" itself. Some speak, like Wells and Wright, in terms of the rebirth that Europe offered them. Whether they dissolved their African-American sensibility into an explicitly pan-Africanist discourse or political commitment, their relationship to the land of their birth and their ethnic political constituency was absolutely transformed. The specificity of the modern political and cultural formation I want to call the black Atlantic can be defined, on one level, through this desire to transcend both the structures of the nation state and the constraints of ethnicity and national particularity.[381]

Gilroy's black intellectuals were positioned within set nationalities – such as the English – and at the same time, given their non-canonical status within these national cults, formed an effective counter-culture, challenging Britishness or Americanness, not by direct opposition, but by the cultural formation Gilroy named the *black Atlantic*, transcending the old bonds and spanning the full Atlantic space. It may be worth drawing a parallel between pan-Africanism and Indonesian nationalism here, as the latter, in these early stages, was as brutalizing essentialist as the former is sometimes seen even today. What sets them apart in hindsight, of course, is that the promise of Indonesian nationalism, even though contested, has been delivered in the form of the Indonesian state. An equivalent *Indisch* term for *black Atlantic* would therefore always connote vastly different, but we might speak of *Indisch Consciousness.*

Another idea worth exploring has to do with what happened in the structure of the nation, namely the assertion of cultural citizenship in the various ways we witnessed. We might recall, again, the words of Sara Ahmed, who reminded us that "to share in the body of the nation requires that you place your happiness in the right

[381] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 19.

things."[382] As we saw in the introduction, this meant for instance placing your happiness in the centennial of Dutch independence, or else, like Soewardi, not to share in the body of the nation, or for that matter, the empire. A developing *Indisch Consciousness* might be tied to this repulsion from the imperial body politic. The agency for this exclusion is located not only with Soewardi et al. – who could impossibly feel happiness over the celebration of Dutch independence – but also with the agents of empire in this case, the Ethicals like Van Deventer. It is interesting to note that their empathic failure has been noted already before, as Rob Nieuwenhuys, the expert on *Indisch* literary culture, wrote on Van Deventer:

> He was a man on the moral highground, socially engaged, but without true knowledge of human nature [*mensenkennis*]. In this respect he is characteristic for *the* Ethical from these years, always floating and abstract.[383]

As the critical response to Jodjana showed, to maintain the Ethical concept and the idea of association, one had to remain abstract. Van Deventer's inability for emotion fit the Ethical bill.

To conclude, referring back to the Soewardi's pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlanders was…*, it is clear that Soewardi was not alone in having more fluid notions of what it meant to be 'Dutch', '*Indisch*' or 'imperial citizen' than many Dutch colonizers, but that this applies to all protagonists from this chapter. In the double play in Soewardi's pamphlet he not only imagined to transgress the division between native and Dutch himself, but also invited his Dutch readers to go along with him and imagine themselves first to be natives, and from that vantage point to imagine themselves to be temporarily Dutch again. On an abstract level, Jodjana's dance and Tjipto's writing posited a similar invitation. Historiography of popular imperialism tends to focus on the limits provided by nation and empire. The risk is that *Indisch Consciousness* is overlooked as constituent of popular imperialism and imperial citizenship, as the cases in this chapter have testified they are.

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[382] Ahmed, 'Not in the Mood', 26.

[383] Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Oost-Indische Spiegel. Wat Nederlandse schrijvers en dichters over Indonesië hebben geschreven vanaf de eerste jaren der Compagnie tot op heden* (Amsterdam: Em. Querido's Uitgeverij, 1978), 319.

Chapter 4

Teaching Imperial Citizens
Dutch Imperialism and the School Curriculum

The Dutch schools at the turn of the twentieth century have never been the stage of heated debates regarding the colonies. It all seems to have missed the Dutch schools: challenging the surplus on the annual account (*batig slot*) as the leading principle of Dutch colonialism, the civil society's outrage over slavery and the abolitionist movement, debates on associationist policies versus nativist ones, or later, the rise of Indonesian nationalism. Equally so, patriotic visions on empire and jingo language seem to have been relatively rare in the classrooms. This glaring absence of the empire in schools may surprise, as it was here that the hearts of the nation's next generation were shaped – or this was the case at least in theory.

In practice, around 1850 many primary schools were nursery schools in disguise (*bewaarscholen*), with outdated books, unqualified teachers and classes that typically consisted of fifty pupils, if not more. During the course of the second half of the nineteenth century, two general educational developments changed this: an ongoing professionalization of schools (school attendance, the teacher's qualification and the influence of pedagogical insights all increased) combined with a notion of teaching that got stripped from its moral core, as teaching became equaled with knowledge-transfer, while moral shaping was relegated to the private sphere of the family.[384] In the first situation, teaching future imperial citizens was limited by the practical means schools offered for imperial propaganda to spread. In the second situation, it was limited by the

[384] L. Dasberg, 'De visie van de negentiende-eeuwse onderwijzer op zijn taak als maatschappelijk en cultureel werker 1840-1905', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 92, no. 2 (1 January 1977): 242–69; P.Th.F.M. Boekholt and E.P. de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school in Nederland vanaf de middeleeuwen tot aan de huidige tijd* (Assen, Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1987).

notion what it entailed to teach – the slippery and politically charged grounds of what was morally right were too important to be left to the state and 'shaping the hearts' of children was relegated to the realm of the family – not coincidentally the place where the socio-political movements of the time, most notably the orthodox Protestants, more easily asserted their influence. "Fostering patriotism"[385] may have been the official and ostensibly univocal aim of history education since the reforms of 1857, but what this patriotism entailed was highly contested.

It is in this limited playing field that we have to consider the lessons in empire – be they either real ones or snippets of empire that can hardly qualify as such – that the future citizens of the Dutch nation were taught. The title of this chapter, 'teaching imperial citizens', bears the same ambiguity as Catherine Hall's acclaimed *Civilising Subjects*, as it can refer both to the youth who got taught, as to the teachers and other historical agents who performed the act of teaching.[386] It is in this latter group that we will discover people who functioned as advocates of empire as part of the official curriculum, and found their way in the limited playing field that they were allowed. It is in this light that we should interpret the introduction to the 1863 textbook *History of Dutch Overseas Possessions*:

> To know how a small nation like the Dutch conquered its vast possessions and colonies across the globe, to know how it established, maintained and extended its authority overseas – this all may be a powerful tool to get acquainted with our ancestors, with their virtues and vices, their wisdom and aberrations. It serves either to follow their example or to take caution from their mistakes, and at the same time makes one realize the impact of these gloriously obtained possession on the course of events in The Netherlands.[387]

The author of these words was A. Pompe, an army officer located in Kampen. He was a teacher at the army's training institution for future colonial military, hence his focus on the colonies. Textbooks like this were available in abundance: they glorified the deeds of fellow countrymen, depicting the events in The Indies and elsewhere as achievements attributed to the Dutch nation. In Pompe's words, this was a way to get to know our ancestors. The chapters were exclusively devoted to the events concerning Dutch rule in the East and West Indies in different periods of time. With the reciprocal effects of empire – a term he explicitly mentioned – he was not displaying a sense of present-day

[385] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, 272.
[386] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*.
[387] A. Pompe, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Overzeesche Bezittingen geschetst ten dienste van het onderwijs en van hen, welke zich naar die gewesten begeven* (Kampen: B.L. van Dam, 1863), I–II.

imperial historiography or postcolonial theory *avant la lettre* – rather, he simply meant that these glorious deeds overseas reflected back, positively, on the Dutch nation, enhancing its stance in the light of world history.

Some features of Pompe's book would remain present in Dutch imperialism in the decades to follow, such as seeing imperialism as an attribute to the nation, making it as much a question of national identity as anything else. Another element that would not wither was the sense of advocating a cause: he was neither the first nor the last to voice the opinion that Dutch colonial affairs deserved more attention in classrooms. However, when it comes to the pedagogical approach (or rather the lack thereof), works like Pompe's *History of Dutch Overseas Possessions* would soon loose their prominence. At the vanguard of educational models new approaches appeared – ones that had, in short, more eye for the learning process students and pupils went through. Knowledge was actively made intelligible, and instructive illustrations made their entry. Two main exponents of the so-called *aanschouwelijk onderwijs* ('teaching with visual aids') brought the colonies into the classroom. First, the private institution of the Colonial Museum started the initiative of providing schools with *schoolverzamelingen* ('classroom collections'), collections of material objects from the Dutch East Indies, which had to give pupils a material impression of the riches and nature of the colony. Second, maps and illustrations for the classroom walls took a high and provided generations of school children with imperial imagery. But even although the colonies were, sometimes literally in the form of material objects, brought into the classrooms, little changed in the image of empire the school youth was confronted with. In this chapter I will argue this image resulted in a form of *latent imperialism* – enough to be activated once the former school youth would opt for colonial careers, or too even recognize this option, but too little otherwise. Before reaching this conclusion in the last section, I will set off with a section that gives an overall sketch of the school system, the role of the teacher and its development, and ideas about moral upbringing. The second section will then turn to the textbooks used for history lessons, whereas the third section is devoted to the aforementioned classroom collections of the *Koloniaal Museum*.

Schools, teachers and pupils

A wide variety of types of schools existed in The Netherlands around 1850. From the age of six to thirteen, children could attend primary school (*lagere school*). Secondary education contained more options: there were schools for commercial education (*handelsonderwijs*), agricultural education (*landbouwonderwijs*) or technical schools (*ambachtsonderwijs*); daytime civic school and evening classes (*dagschool* and *avondschool*); the Higher Civic School (*hbs, hogereburgeronderwijs*, since 1864); grammar school (*Gymnasium*); and schools for the training of teachers (*normaalschool, kweekschool*). These different school types were not complementary to each other, nor did they display any kind of uniformity – even within certain school types the length and content of the program varied wildly, and there was a considerable overlap between schools and school types. Even the distinction between primary and secondary education was not always clear-cut, as the MULO schools showed (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*): they offered the same courses as primary schools, with some (at least one) course(s) added to the program. They were seen both as a repetition of primary school and as a cheap alternative to the Higher Civic Schools, but were left out of the 1863 regulation of secondary education.[388]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Dutch school system was subject to several disputes and struggles – some of them attempts so streamline the complex of school types, others attempts to establish one's own worldviews more firmly in the education system. An instance of the latter is the struggle of protestant factions for the full recognition of religious private education, which for them meant to include state funding – in fact, private schooling was already allowed by then, but did not receive any funding by the state, and it was this latter point that was at stake. In their overview of the history of Dutch schools, Pieter Boekholt and E.P. de Booy name two areas of conflict in schooling. First of all, the decades following 1860 are known as the 'School Controversy' (*schoolstrijd*) – a political struggle from the Protestant factions of the nations to gain state funding for private and denominational education (*bijzonder onderwijs*). Although this liberty was granted even before the 1848 constitution, there where many practical caveats, chief among them the lack of state funding, which was reserved for public schools. At the same time many orthodox Protestants were convinced that religion at public schools was on its last legs. As one pastor put it:

[388] Boekholt and de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school*, 178.

> The very common religiosity that can be cultivated [in children] at public schools, is by no means bound to be Christian according to the principles of the Holy Scripture. On the contrary, the more the teaching staff is raised under the influence of modern, worldly views, the more it will become non-Christian, or even counter to our beliefs. The state, as an unreligious institution, has no control whatsoever on the religious principles of teachers.[389]

And indeed, religious control over public schools was hard to maintain, as the case of the Veenendaal-based teacher H.P. Dewald shows. He got fired as headmaster of the local primary school, and suspected "orthodox harshness" (*Veensch-orthodoxe hardvochtigheid*) to be an important factor in this decision.[390] Commentators questioned the opaque reasons for this dismissal, which were hard to retrieve and raised suspicion.[391] It is hard to determine the true reasons for Dewald's dismissal, but that he abolished the practice of singing (religious) hymns at this school in Veenendaal is not likely to have made a positive contribution to his relation to the local administration. What this shows it that Protestants depended more and more on private education to fulfill their desires for what they regarded proper Christian education, as they did not have sufficient control over public schools, not even in homogenous orthodox towns like Veenendaal – they did eventually manage to discharge Dewald from his position, but the public outrage shows this was very much a contested act. Tensions like these would continue, however, as the School Controversy took its time to unravel and ultimately culminated in the equal status for public and private schools only in 1920.[392]

Secondly, Boekholt and De Booy identify an "economic struggle" surrounding Dutch schools. This involved not only questions on how to finance education, but also related questions on how schools had to look like in order to be eligible for state funding. The reforms were aimed at standardizing education: the curriculum was set, as where things as teacher's wages and retirement age. In 1857 the curriculum for primary education was extended with history, geography, natural history, geometry and singing, in addition to the courses that were common on Dutch schools already: reading, writing, mathematics and Dutch. The administration of public schools was delegated to the level of municipalities (the town administration became responsible for supervision, the

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[389] F.W. Merens, *Wat willen de voorstanders van het Christelijk onderwijs? Open brief aan den wel eerw. zeer gel. heer A.M. Cramer, predikant te Middelburg, naar aanleiding van zijne brochure: Weest toch onpartijdig* (Vlissingen: P.G. de Veij Mestdagh, 1866), 7.

[390] H.P. Dewald, *Open brief aan den heer L. Mulder, Inspecteur van 't Lager Onderwijs in de Provincie Utrecht* ('s Gravenhage: C.G.J. Pietersen & Co., 1871), 19 See also: De Wekker, weekblad voor onderwijs en schoolwezen 26 January 1872, p. 2.

[391] *De Wekker, weekblad voor onderwijs en schoolwezen* 27 October 1871, p. 2.

[392] Boekholt and de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school*, 151.

finances, and for appointing teachers) while the state, at least theoretically, ensured that the legal framework was met by visitations and inspections. A school inspector would, for example, check on the number of students per class, which had also become subject to regulation. With every extra fifty pupils, another auxiliary teacher had to be appointed. It was the definite push for teaching in classes and school buildings became arranged accordingly.[393]

The second major reform, twenty-one years later in 1878, went further ahead on the same path. From now on, a new teacher had to be appointed for every forty pupils; trainees were not allowed to teach anymore; and assistant-teachers were leveled up to the rank of teacher. Although still modest, it also strengthened the position of female teachers somewhat. The course that made there presence inevitable even for hardliners of teaching as a male profession, fancywork for girls, made the transition from an optional course to one that schools were obliged to offer. For this reason women became the preferred gender for teaching the lower classes – something that was often interpreted as if they could *exclusively* teach the lower grades. Heads of school got a more defined set of tasks, which included roster making, arranging the classes and prescribing the literature to be used in class.[394]

Compulsory education was established in 1900. In the preceding years (during the reforms mentioned above, and the subsequent reform of 1889) it was already on the agenda, but a majority in support of a compulsory education act could not be found in parliament. School attendance was mainly promoted through indirect measures: poor families were cut on their state support when their offspring failed to attend school and child labor was ultimately prohibited in 1874. One of the main obstacles in finding a majority was the opposition from the confessional MPs, whose arguments revolved mainly around their desire for state-funded private education of religious signature. An obligation to attend public, non-religious schools infringed their religious freedom, they argued, and on this conscientious ground they refused to support the compulsory education act of 1900. The socialists also opposed, but for them the key issue was the lack of income the act would result in, as it would keep under-twelve year olds from making a supplementary family income. Nonetheless the Liberal law made it, although

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[393] The exact numbers reported by Boekholt and De Booy are thus: for over 70 pupils, a teacher trainee (kwekeling) was required, with over 100, a teaching assistant (hulponderwijzer), and with 150 both. Then, for every fifty another trainee and for every 100 another assistant. Ibid., 151–53.
[394] Ibid., 153.

with the lowest majority possible. In turning to an all-time favourite anecdote in Dutch historiography, Boekholt and De Booy underline the contingency of this event, as the situation would have been reversed, had not the MP of confessional signature Schimmelpenninck been bound to bed after falling from his horse and had the liberal MP Van Kerkwijk not been brought to parliament by horse carriage straight from his death-bed.[395] However, the contingency should not be overestimated, as the structural developments pointed in the direction of a more state-regulated school system for some decades by 1900 and child labour was battled on a parallel front. Absence from school gradually decreased in these decades, and the two landmarks (the 1874 law that prohibited child labour and the introduction of compulsory attendance in 1900) that use to illustrate the progression towards full-time education are only in the end only relative points in time – they did not make child labour and school absence disappear overnight. Also after 1900, for example, teachers received questionnaires about child labour by their pupils.[396]

The story of the quotidian reality in Dutch classrooms, however, is not yet told with the narrative of increasing state regulation alone. As the fights for compulsory education and minimum teacher's benefits show, these matters were not a given: during the latter half of the nineteenth century school attendance varied wildly, and teachers did not always receive full salary – hence their role was different from present-day fulltime teachers, as nineteenth-century teachers had to find supplementary sources of income. In social standing teachers traveled a long way. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, they were "more fit to work with the plough [...] than to mould the youth's hearts [...] and frequently lacked the knowledge to read, write and calculate themselves."[397] Halfway the century they had become, as Lea Dasberg describes it, "true social workers:" teachers in the 1850s and 1860s had many tasks that went beyond teaching the subject matter in classrooms:

> The teacher was burdened with a load of tasks that today are the responsibility of numerous agencies with an extensive professional staff: tasks like that of the medical and educational advice center, the school doctor, the youth library, the social worker, the community center, mental health center, the public health, the

[395] Ibid., 154–56.
[396] Dasberg, 'De visie', 265–66.
[397] J. Mulder, 'De klasseindeling op de scholen in stad en platteland', Gids voor den onderwijzer, I (1880) 97. Cited from: Dasberg, 'De visie'.

> adult education center, socio-cultural training, and so on. He took on a large part of the upbringing from the family. [398]

This extensive set of tasks and roles decreased over the course of the decades – partly because teachers started to earn a sufficient salary that took away the need for side jobs, partly because the external situation altered: child labour is reduced on the one hand, while it is not considered a teacher's task anymore to 'raise' his pupils. The latter should be connected to the turning tide concerning private education and the opposition of Protestants to a too liberal and worldly education of their youth in public schools. By the turn of the twentieth century there is a clear division of educative spheres, Dasberg asserts, which can be summarized as 'head-heart-hands'. "Moulding the heart" became an exclusive element of upbringing in the sphere of the family, while "the head" came to stand for the knowledge transmission that is supposed to be the essence of teaching at school. The latter concerns basic knowledge like writing and reading and general knowledge like history, geography and languages, whereas learning crafts (the "hands" from the trinity) is confined to technical schools as secondary education.[399] As noted above, the family claiming 'the heart' should be considered as part of the Protestant sphere expanding its influence: rather than being brought into the private sphere of each individual household, it was brought into the alternative public sphere of orthodox Protestantism as opposed to the general or liberal public space.[400]

The concerns of teachers beyond the 'pure transfer of knowledge' during the latter half of the nineteenth century should additionally be seen in the light of the deplorable state of school attendance in combination the home situations of many working class children. For many families, children provided part of the household income – attending school simply meant a sharp decrease in income for the whole family. It was for this reason that socialists opposed measures to increase school attendance without tackling this problem simultaneously. The socialist newspaper *Het Volk* time and again brought the detrimental effects for working class families to the

[398] Ibid., 245.
[399] Ibid., 266–67.
[400] This dichotomy was not experienced as such by most Protestants, as they liked to view their public sphere as a bottom-up construction of private families: "[...] in the twentieth century the Christian idea [of education] prevailed: *the right to educate* belongs *to the parents,* who are free to found a school according to their own views, as long as they conform to *formal* rules concerning housing, teachers and subjects." D. Wouters and W.J. Visser, *Geschiedenis van de opvoeding en het onderwijs, vooral in Nederland* (Groningen: P. Noordhoff, 1926), 7.

fore, and after attendance became obligatory reported on court cases against parents who failed to enforce attendance on their children:

> Pending before the court district were six offences regarding school attendance. One of the accused could not do without the f 1,50 his 12-year old boy earned, which the teacher confirmed. Another [defendant], a widow, had a job herself so could not ensure her unwilling patients would reach school. The same arguments applied to two fathers, who did their utmost best, but whose wives let their children slip. In all cases it was requested the accused would be discharged. Only two of them, who failed to prove they did everything reasonable within their means, were fined.[401]

Poverty and school absence were too entangled to be handled separately, is what socialists asserted in their struggle to get poverty on the list of legitimate reasons for absence (a list which included things such as illness – although that on itself could also be the result of the poor conditions working class children grew up, as would be argued later in the same title.)[402]

Another story not told by the increasing state regulation is that of didactics. On a theoretical level, the only appropriate way to characterize the changes in this field during the latter half of the nineteenth century is to speak of a paradigm shift. Halfway the century, the notion of didactics on itself was virtually absent from the classrooms. By the 1920s, a textbook on schools and didactics would not be complete without mentioning the complete pantheon of didactics, including Fröbel (1782-1852), Montessori (1870-1952) and Pestalozzi (1746-1827). A new method would hardly be implemented before it would be replaced be the next, in a frenetic quest for "the ideal" way of teaching. It lead D. Wouters and W.J. Visser, who wrote about the history of the Dutch schools and education in the 1920s, to the criticism that there was a tendency to overlook that what was accomplished, and to deem right things wrong or even inferior.[403]

Instead of transferring knowledge proper, teaching came to be seen as a process with the teacher as guide. Although schools adopted different didactic theories in different variations, the smallest common denominator was the understanding that pupils learned and gained insight more autonomously, by themselves, in a playful way. We can see how this looks like in an article by drawing teacher Thyza C. de Vries-Wijt in the *Vaktijdschrift voor Onderwijzers* ('Professional Journal for Teachers'), where she

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[401] *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 19 October 1901.
[402] Ibid., 22 October 1903.
[403] Wouters and Visser, *Geschiedenis van de opvoeding*, 350.

described how she gave her pupils understanding of drawing perspective. She told them of a painter who painted a stretched-out lane. A bystander, the story runs, would stand behind the painter and comment on his work, saying that he understood objects in the distance are depicted smaller, but mocking the fact that lines running from the foreground to the horizon would appear tilted: "The road is flat, you cannot paint it like it's rising." The bystander would then be invited by the painter to do the job himself, and paint a row of trees – their tops in the right perspective, but at their roots all of equal length disregarding their distance from the point of view. It is at this point, De Vries-Wijt wrote, that several pupils would raise their hands, if not just talk out of turn, to point out that the priggish bystander drew the tops of the trees similar to the painter, and messed up the roots. This represented the new ideal of teaching: the teacher would present some facts and figures, and the pupils would draw the final conclusions on their own from the chunks supplied.[404]

Boekholt and De Booy point at reading lessons in primary education to illustrate the didactic shift: the old textbooks were steeped in morality and failed to make a distinction between getting the moral message across and teaching the act of reading. What did not change, however, was the basic conception behind it: "Language," a 1840-textbook allegedly reads, "is the means to get one's thoughts across."[405] But where most textbooks halfway the century failed to make the subsequent distinction between medium and message, by 1880, these lessons in morality were virtually gone and replaced by textbooks with a more didactic nature. Texts were selected for there functionality in the learning process, rendering the content irrelevant. Or, alternatively, they were belletristic, which can be regarded a counter reaction to this renewed attention for functionality. In general reading obtained a more auxiliary function – it was seen as a prerequisite for undertaking other subjects. Without reading, no geography or history.[406] And after all, it were these subjects – geography, history, literature – that were, as Bernard Porter reminds us, the most "potentially empire-friendly", the ones that could serve as medium for imperial propaganda.[407]

[404] Thyza C. De Vries-Wijt, 'Kinder-Teekenen', *Vaktijdschrift Voor Onderwijzers* 9, no. 1 (1905): 7–9.
[405] Cited in: Wouters and Visser, *Geschiedenis van de opvoeding*, 317.
[406] Boekholt and de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school*, 178.
[407] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 65.

History Lessons

During their training, (assistant) schoolteachers in training (*kweekelingen*) were supposed to learn the "main points of history, in general and of the fatherland in particular, especially of the recent centuries," according to a teacher's teacher.[408] Although there were no state-prescribed books in primary education, there is no empirical evidence that suggests the training teachers received was not shaping their history lessons once they became teacher. The 'main points of history' are therefore our first reference, but as contemporaries already noted, this definition leaves at the very least room for interpretation. To tackle this problem, P.H. Dewald[409], headmaster in The Hague at the teacher training college (*kweekschool*), published a book where he spelled out what he considered to be the main points of "general or world history." These were the perceived landmarks of humankind, the great deeds, the empires which spanned considerable parts of the globe, or the 'discoveries' of continents by Europeans. The different sections were chronologically ordered, starting with a small section on prehistory. Then followed the antiquity (*Oude Geschiedenis*), the middle ages (*Middeleeuwen*) and the modern times (*Nieuwe Geschiedenis*) – all receiving equal attention, ending with the recent events of the Franco-Prussian war. Dewald's history book reads as a political history of Europe. The Dutch nation is of no importance here, and the only reference to The Netherlands in this last section comes with the French revolution of 1848 and its indirect effect on The Netherlands, where the constitution was introduced in that year, effectively the beginning of parliamentary democracy in the Netherlands.[410]

The dawn of an age of overseas imperialism featured in Dewald's main points of general history in the form of "discoveries" (like the first rounding of the Cape of Good Hope) and "inventions" (like the compass). Although most major imperial powers were named (Spain, Portugal, Britain, The Netherlands), the attention in the subsequent two pages was mainly devoted to Spain and Portugal and their South-American conquests. The tale that was told is as much about conquest as it was about scientific progress, as

[408] P.H. Dewald, *Vraag- en repetitieboek over de algemeene geschiedenis: een wegwijzer bij zelfonderzoek, voornamelijk ten dienste van aanstaande Hulp-onderwijzeressen en Hulponderwijzers* (Schoonhoven: S.F. van Nooten, 1870), VII.
[409] As far as I could trace, this is *not* a case of identity confusion. The aforementioned H.P. Dewald was dismissed as headmaster of the primary school in Veenendaal, while P.H. Dewald was based in The Hague, taught at the *kweekschool* and wrote history textbooks.
[410] Dewald, *Vraag- en repetitieboek*, 123.

these conquests were enabled by better maps and new improved conceptions of geography. Altogether, 3 pages out of 125 can be counted as dealing with overseas empires and conquests – in the light of world history, as it was taught to Dutch assistant teachers in training at this time, European imperialism was a twinkle at best, while The Netherlands as such were hardly featured at all.

This is not say the history of The Netherlands was deemed of no importance. It was simply not part of *world* history, but relegated to the distinct domain of national history. In Dewald's *Tijdtafel der Geschiedenis van Nederland* (Timetable of Dutch History), written around the same time as his book on general history in the early 1870s, we can see what national history entailed. Although the story commenced at 100 BC with the arrival of the Batavians in the lower Rhine basin, the Frankish times soon followed and the centre of gravity was located in the middle ages. It is a long history of counts and counties, dukes and duchies in the low countries, revolving around Holland and Gelre with the Frisians as the everlasting internal enemy.

The history of the Dutch empire was seen by Dewald as a part of national history. In a single paragraph he praised the flourishing of The Netherlands after the Peace of Munster in 1648 – the fine arts prospered, universities were thriving, and overseas territories like Formosa (1624) and parts of Ceylon (1645) were conquered. In this sense, overseas territories were seen as attributes to a flourishing nation the same way in which a surplus on the annual budget, or a scientific discovery would have been seen. Not without a sense of patriotism Dewald wrote down: "The Dutch flag flies from all corners of the Earth [...] The fine tricolor is feared and esteemed everywhere."[411] But the overseas lands did only function in the metropolitan imagination as the stage on which conquests were made. They were also *territories*, lands that could be drawn in red on world maps, without much regard for the actual control exercised over these territories (which was limited) or rivaling claims from indigenous rulers (who regularly contested claims to Dutch sovereignty). Dewald describes the foundation of Batavia on Java in 1619, after the nearby town of Jakarta was conquered, and mentions that this was from now on to be "the capital of the Dutch East Indies", thus rendering the world in clear-cut territories adorned with a capital city, much in contrast to the messy

[411] P.H. Dewald, *Tijdtafel der geschiedenis van Nederland, ten dienste van de lagere school* ('s-Gravenhage: Gebroeders Belinfante, 1871), 61–62.

metropolitan history of counties, duchies and dioceses and their spheres of influence that could be found on the surrounding pages in the same textbook.[412]

Some pages in the course of Dutch imperial history aroused criticism from late nineteenth-century history book writers, such as the Chinese Massacre in Batavia in 1740. Their moral outrage was no novelty, as this event served as a token moral footnote since its occurrence. And to be sure, the Chinese Massacre provided ample reasons for outrage. In the year in question, Chinese sugar plantation labourers sieged the town of Batavia, the stronghold of the ruling East Indian Company (VOC). It was a countryside-based revolt, as many historians have stressed, which was not a coincidence since until then the power equilibrium between the Dutch rulers and the Chinese labourers was based on the situation in urban Batavia, not on the beyond-control outer lands that were the stage of sugar production. The illegal residency of many Chinese, both in urban and rural areas, enhanced corruption; in rural areas, without the checks and balances that were present in Batavia, the Chinese depended on local sheriffs, who overcharged the Chinese for ignoring their much-needed illegal residents. An additional and more direct cause for the uprising were the rumours that the VOC wanted to settle the "Chinese problem" once and for all by forced migration of most Chinese, possibly to Ceylon (a plan that was, to say the least, "not very realistic", historian Leonard Blussé remarked). During the siege, the Dutch havoc was geared at the urban Chinese population, even though they were no party in the conflict. Their ethnicity was enough to spur allegations that they were on the side of the rural Chinese revolters, branding them as an enemy within. The result was the killing of approximately 10.000 Chinese townspeople. Blussé refers to the massacre as 'Holocaust' in his article on the Chinese in Batavia during the century before the massacre.[413]

It is instructive to see how schoolbooks handled the Chinese Massacre. According to Pompe (*History of Dutch Overseas Possessions,* 1863), the defense of the city stirred up unrest among the Dutch, and they came to see the Chinese townspeople as a potential threat. In these circumstances…

> … Valckenier [the governor-general] was of the opinion the Council of the Indies had to convene, and he suggested to the council that 'safety might require we dispose ourselves of the Chinese.' With disdain the council rejected the vile and cruel proposal to treacherously kill quiet and defenseless people. Instead, another

[412] Ibid., 57.
[413] Leonard Blussé, 'Batavia, 1619-1740: The Rise and Fall of a Chinese Colonial Town', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (1981): 176–78.

> proposal was accepted: to issue a proclamation that intended to calm down the most heated, and get them back to reason. It had little effect. […] Only a few moments after the proclamation was issued, the rumour spread that four Chinese houses were on fire, and that the administration had ordered to kill all Chinese residing within Batavia. Later, fellow defendants of Valckenier testified that he had already gathered volunteers among the troops that morning, aiming to commence the killings, and had orally given the order to start the extermination of the Chinese. Even if this testimony does not speak the truth, it is certain that Valckenier, during these precarious moments, has not attempted to stop these detestable deeds. He allowed for Dutchmen and other foreign rabble committed arson and looted, and murdered men, women and children who did not even attempted any defense.[414]

Similar words can be found in Dewald (*Timetable of Dutch History*, 1871), who describes Valckenier as someone "who acted on behalf of enlarging his own wealth, [rather] than on the Company's or people's interest." He continues:

> […] without any sign of their complicity, the Chinese in town were assaulted, mostly quiet and defenceless citizens, and thousands of them got killed. The governor-general, who ordered the killings, died in prison awaiting his process.[415]

Both authors clearly did not shy away from adding this critical note on Dutch colonial rule. At the same time, however, their accounts omitted any structural elements and fully blame the hot headedness and low moral standards of Valckenier and his henchmen for the massacre. It has been argued that textbooks on Dutch colonialism from the period of modern imperialism tended to review past eras of colonial rule critically, whereas they depicted contemporary colonial rule as truly enlightened.[416] It should, however, be noted that the retrograde criticism we find in Pompe and Dewald does not target Dutch colonial rule at large, but rather individuals, or more precisely, the person of main instigator Valckenier. But it is even questionable if these passages served at all as an accusation against people like Valckenier. When we consider that both authors were also keen on including the *metropolitan outrage* of 1740 over the atrocities in their story, it is all turned upside down: what they demonstrated in this way was that the dominant public opinion in The Netherlands was condemning colonial atrocities like the Chinese Massacre. In other words, that the metropolitan public demonstrated a moral judgment that suited them in the role of colonizers. By referring to "the people's interest" in his criticism of Valckenier, Dewald invoked the vocation of the civilising

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[414] Pompe, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Overzeesche Bezittingen*, 193–94.
[415] Dewald, *Tijdtafel*, 78–79.
[416] Bastiaan Nugteren, 'De koloniale geschiedenisles. Het geschiedenisonderwijs in Nederlands-Indië (1900-1940)', *Aanzet* 28, no. 2 (2013): 3–13.

mission, and this is were this passage was most about: the question what it took to rule in a civilising way, rather than questioning colonial atrocities per se.

A similar mechanism can be detected in later textbooks. In *A Short History of the Dutch East Indies from the Earliest Times Onwards* (1921), for example, the author W. Carelse discusses the rise and fall of the *cultuurstelsel*, the system of forced farming on Java. In this system, Javanese peasants were forced to yield one fifth of their produce to the colonial administration. Officially, this form of taxing replaced the rent farmers were hitherto forced to pay for the use of lands, and in case the profit on these goods would exceed the rent, the surplus would be refunded. "If these rules were indeed obeyed," Carelse writes, "it might have worked in the benefit of the people. However, something else happened."[417] As he subsequently explains, since the installment in 1833, no refunds were ever carried out, the gains for the common good were subject for debate, and the amount of the produce yielded to the government regularly exceeded one fifth, but went up to one third. The gains were predominantly used to support the national budget, which was under heavy pressure due to the war of the Netherlands with Belgium. Carelse presents the abolition of the *cultuurstelsel* thus: "Luckily several men in the mother country pointed out how severe the pressure of this system on the Javanese was. Forcefully they argued the imperative of improvement. And finally, after 1850, several excessive effects of the system were tackled, although it still took until 1870 before the system as a whole was abolished."[418]

The general tendency in textbooks from the 1870s to the 1920s is subtle: the militaristic jingo decreases, while there is an increase of gendered rhetoric of the Netherlands as a father fulfilling its parental obligation in taking care of the Indies. Nonetheless both aspects remained present to some extent all this time. The Aceh War (1873-1914), for example, is considered too big to ignore for Carelse, who mentions most 'pacification' on smaller scale as the act of 'disciplining' rulers that refused to acknowledge Dutch rule. And some other books never the transcended the form of the heroic saga, and literally only read as conquests of tough seafarers on rivaling imperial powers and unwilling sultans. In *Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis* ('National History', 1907) by J.A. de Bruyne, for example, it is noted that "it must have been a firm and powerful

[417] W. Carelse, *Korte geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië van de vroegste tijden af voor de hoogste klassen der lagere scholen, mulo en middelbaar onderwijs* (Amsterdam: Drukkerij en Uitgeverij J.H. de Bussy, 1921), 89.
[418] Ibid., 90.

sort of persons, that audaciously risked endeavours like these. The paintings from this period testify how vigorous, bursting with health and prosperous our ancestors were, in their picturesque clothes of dark velvet or cloth."[419] If we turn again to the example of the Chinese Massacre, however, it is telling to see how it features in *Daar wérd iets groots verricht* ('Something great was accomplished there'), a 1941 publication on the history of the Dutch East Indies. The atrocities of 1740 are mentioned twice in subordinate clauses. It is called a "dark stain" on the otherwise "excellent understanding" between the Dutch and the Chinese, who were thought to share some characteristics in their collective identities, namely their outstanding work ethic, trader's mentality and commercial acumen.[420] The very brief appearance of the massacre in *Daar wérd iets groots verricht*, when compared to the aforementioned books, makes clear that there is literally almost no space in this narrative to elaborate on these atrocities. Likewise, the conquest of many peripheral regions of the archipelago is relegated to a relatively limited number of pages and described in the gendered metaphor of family relations, where the colonial administration had to discipline (*tuchtigen*) the disobedient (*ongehoorzamen*).[421] Tellingly, militaristic jargon was nonetheless still very present in *Daar werd iets groots verricht…* Although the military expeditions were described in gendered metaphors, the modernization projects of the civilising project on their turn were depicted in the language of military conquests, such as "conquering the long distances." Despite the overall development from a militaristic to a more civilising discourse in textbooks, these two outlooks seemed to be too intertwined to manifest themselves in isolation from the other.

Classroom Collections

Although the content of history textbooks shifted, the didactic model behind it would barely change. That is not say new didactic insights did not influence the subject of history. Rather, they supplied lessons and ways of teaching which complemented (but did not replace) the old-style readings of commissioned textbooks. One notable way in which the teaching of empire was enriched by innovative methods was the use of so-called *schoolverzamelingen* ('classroom collections'). These collections were an initiative

[419] J.A. de Bruyne, *Vaderlandsche geschiedenis ten gebruike bij het middelbaar en gymnasiaal onderwijs* (Voorburg: J. Odé, 1907), 135–36.
[420] Helsdingen and Hoogenberk, *Daar wérd wat groots verricht....: Nederlandsch-Indië in de XXste eeuw*.
[421] Ibid., 39.

of the Colonial Museum in Haarlem. In 1892, it started to send boxes with 60-part collections of material objects originating from the Indies to any school that would request one. The school collections were an exponent of what was called *aanschouwelijk onderwijs* ('teaching with visual aids'), which became popular in the second half the nineteenth century and which can be seen as a direct consequence of the didactic shifts at that time. Within *aanschouwelijk onderwijs,* pupils had to be able to see and touch the subject matter, in particular when the subject called more for memorizing (such as topography or natural history) as opposed to gaining insight (such as in arithmetic). Teaching with visual aids not only entailed the classroom collections – maps, atlases and illustrations in general can be rubricated under its heading.

The idea of teaching with visual aids got its impulse from concerns over the state of what was called *zaakonderwijs* (literally 'object education', meaning the learning of facts) – in other words, the opinion that pupils in general did not have their facts straight, and that this was hindering further education as a certain minimum amount of general knowledge was required to start off with any deepening of understanding. One teacher wrote that pupils would know (lists of) names by heart, but lacked any understanding of the words and were not able to recognize the material objects they knew the names so well off: "Bright little Pete, who knows the geography of The Netherlands by heart and is able to list the various produce of Zeeland: wheat, barley, madder, sugar beets, etc., is at his wit's when confronted with a collection that contains all this."[422] The idea was that the physical presence of the objects and things pupils were supposed to learn, would enhance their understanding of it and would prevent them learning lists by heart without grasping the further meaning of it. Small objects – say, a coconut – were brought into class, while large objects – say, a continent – would be represented on maps or globes.

The initiative for classroom collections on the colonies came from the Colonial Museum in Haarlem, which later merged into the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam. The museum was founded in 1864 by Frederik van Eeden sr.[423] and aimed to collect raw materials and natural objects from the Dutch colonies (it usually explicitly included the West Indies). In its early stages the museum was little more than an extensive private collection, held at Van Eeden's home. In 1871 the museum moved to the ground floor of

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[422] A. van Wamel, 'Schoolverzamelingenn', *Tijdschrift Voor Onderwijs En Handenarbeid: Orgaan Der Vereeniging Voor Handenarbeid* 1, no. 1 (1896): 34.
[423] Father of writer Frederik van Eeden, see page 213.

paviljoen Welgelegen, an imposing building with two spacious wings, close to the tramline that connected the town to the capital Amsterdam. Although the museum never wasted a chance to stress the fact it was a private institution, and therefore heavily depended on gifts for its survival, there was substantial government support: no rent had to be paid for the use of the pavilion. The museum did not only collect raw materials and made inventories, but also performed (chemical) research in their laboratory, leading for example to publications that provided the exact nutritional value of many of the Indies' products. Arts and craft objects were included as products of the Indies, and through this rubrication more ethnographical material eventually found its way to the museum. At first, however, it was seen as "not belonging" in a 'trade museum'; in the 1890s, ethnographic objects were donated to the *Rijks Etnhographisch Museum* ('National Ethnographic Museum') to clean up the stuffed attic of the museum. By the early twentieth century, however, ethnography was represented in the museum by a variety of objects, from weapons, to cooking equipments and canoes. On the instigation of various business parties, who saw the museum and its complex of related activities as a perfect and prestigious propaganda tool to promote their wares, the Colonial Institute was founded in 1912. It was intended be based in Amsterdam, and to incorporate the *Koloniaal Museum*, as well as an ethnographical collection from the Artis Zoo and a new department for 'tropical hygiene.' For various reasons, not least financially, the construction of a new, pompous building at the Mauritskade was delayed several times. The Colonial Institute opened its doors as late as in 1926 in a ceremony attended by queen Wilhelmina – arguably not bad for an institute that prided its private status.[424]

The *Koloniaal Museum* started its practice of sending out classroom collection upon direct request from teachers, who wished to show their pupils some of the typical produce from the Indies. The museum selected those objects and materials it considered "[indispensable] for knowledge of the colonies and its *nuttige voortbrengselen* ['useful products']" and aimed to eventually provide every single one of the 7000 schools for primary and secondary education with a collection. There was an optimistic idea of the everyday practice in schools: the museum believed students and teachers would expand their collections with additional materials, and that their use would resemble the image

[424] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, 263–87; *Het Koloniaal Instituut. Artikelen en beschouwingen ter gelegenheid van de officieele opening door H.M. de Koningin geschreven voor de Telegraaf door zijne exc. Dr. J.C. Koningsberger, Prof. Dr. L. Ph. Le Cosquino de Bussy, Prof. Dr. J.C. v. Eerde, Prof. Dr. J.J. van Loghem, Ir. W.L. Ütermark en J.F.L. de Balbian Verster* (Amsterdam, 1926).

of "small school museums."[425] Others shared this assumption, such as the teacher A. van Wamel:

> The best assistants [in expanding the classroom collections] are the pupils themselves. It may not all be useful what they bring with them, but when we do not discourage them, their assistance is not to be despised. It is with pleasure that I think back to the surprises provided for by the school population. If it was not an uncle or a brother, than half of them had at least a cousin who sailed for the East or the West. Sunfish and flying fish, the jaws of a sawfish, the head of an albatross, serpents and scorpions in jars, various ores and countless shellfish were donated to our "museum" in no time.[426]

The first official colonial classroom collections were sent to a few schools in 1894 and this practice would be prolonged by the museum and its successors until the 1970s. The number of classroom collections cumulated to 310 in 1901, while another 312 were requested and were placed on a waiting list. Over the years the demand for the collections would always surpass the number delivered by the museum. In combination with the habit of the museum to report the numbers cumulatively, this lead to impressive figures featuring the annual reports. In 1912, for example, it read that 1500 collections were hitherto sent, while "the requests, from all provinces, are still piling up. In total there are 2000, while despite our great efforts, the material is only collected at a low pace."[427] One reason for the cumulative counting was the that the museum did not look upon the task of providing classroom collections as something infinite, that would continue at a steady (but not necessarily fast) pace. Rather, it wanted to reach the aforementioned goal of 7000 as quickly as possible, so it is against this number that the total amount of delivered collections had to be read. If we recalculate the cumulative numbers provided by the museum, however, the following pattern emerges for collections provided per annum:

Year	Delivered	Requested	Year	Delivered	Requested
1895	50	430	**1917**	24	
|			**1918**	70	
1902	67	71	**1919**	119	
1903	143	285	**1920**	131	

[425] *Gids voor de bezoekers van het koloniaal museum te Haarlem, tevens beknopte handleiding bij de schoolverzamelingen. Met plattegrond en vele afbeeldingen.* (Amsterdam: J.H. de Bussy, 1912), 89–90.
[426] Van Wamel, "Schoolverzamelingenn," 32.
[427] *Gids voor de bezoekers*, 89.

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<tr><td>1915</td><td>174</td><td></td><td>1931</td><td>127</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>1916</td><td>69</td><td></td><td>1932</td><td>72</td><td></td></tr>
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Table 1 - Annual number of classroom collections sent by the Koloniaal Museum and the number requested by schools. Source: *Koloniaal Museum Bulletin* 1893 (2) and the bulletins of the subsequent years.[428]

The table shows that the classroom collections were close to an instant success halfway the 1890s, with the number of requests far exceeding the amount the museum could handle. In good years a three-digit number of collections would be delivered, while the shortage of some materials made it at times difficult to complete a substantial number of collections. The steep drop in the years of 1916 to 1918 is to be ascribed to the closing of supply lines with the Indies due to the First World War.

The choice the museum made to present the figures cumulatively should be seen in the light of the impression these high numbers made on the readers of the museum's annual reports. Moreover, it hid small drops in the number of requests, which reduced the chance that any small drop in the number of requests would be interpreted as a decline of the popularity of the classroom collections, simply because these drops would not be noted in the sea of cumulativity. That the museum's administrators feared for such interpretations says much about the way they measured the success of the classroom collections, which was done almost exclusively in a quantitative manner. Other ways of measuring the success, or lack thereof, of the classroom collections

[428] I am indebted to Dick Rozing, who generously shared his notations of figures from the Koloniaal Museum's bulletins with me. For his work on *aanschouwelijk onderwijs* in general and the classroom collections in particular, visit his personal website at http://www.dickrozing.nl

proved to be difficult. There are no accounts from teachers or pupils that recall the actual handling of such a collection in detail.

However, the use of the classroom collections did not quite resemble that of a 'miniature museum,' as the *Koloniaal Museum* had envisaged it. Rather than small-scale museums, actively maintained in a coordinated effort by teachers and students alike, the faith of many collections might have been less bright. Doubts about the actual success of the collection were kept internal, however. In an evaluation, an employee uttered his suspicion that many collections did not fulfill the central role in classrooms the museum had aimed for:

> To investigate this matter I visited the district's school inspector. He called the classroom collections an outstanding good effort, but after we rid the conversation of all unnecessary endorsements, he honestly admitted that the collections were seldom used. At many schools it has a prominent place in the attic.[429]

Adapting the collections did happen, but not in the constructive way the museum had hoped for:

> From educational circles I received the message, that one was of the opinion that the boxes [that came with the classroom collections] were found to be excellent to store a collection of shells in – the colonial products that were once in there were long gone.[430]

This report was one of the rare instances where the classroom collections were questioned internally. For most of the time, the museum had no idea what fate the collections had found. When schools started to ask for replacement of the labels, as they got old and were barely readable, it was noted in the annual report that "it would be quite interesting to be able to make an inspection round through the country to see what could be done in advance of the collections."[431]

Despite criticisms, doubts and a lack of good evaluation, the *Koloniaal Museum* and its successor, the *Koloniaal Instituut*, remained faithful to their initial idea of providing every single school with a colonial classroom collection. The museum's officers did not take their task lightly, but believed that they fulfilled an essential role in the fostering of Dutch home imperialism. The mission statement regarding the collections in one of the museum's guides ties in to this idea:

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[429] Archive KIT, file 5483.
[430] Ibid.
[431] *Koloniaal Museum Bulletin* 1906 (1), p. 126.

> We are convinced that a special vocation goes out from education in The Netherlands, and that the Dutch colonies should feature prominently therein. This concerns primarily the state of society and the prospects of our youth.
> Not a single nation owes so much to its colonies as The Netherlands. Not a single nation has such a vast territory opened up for cultivation as The Netherlands, when compared to its population. It is therefore a plight for Dutch teachers to point this out to all Dutch people from their early childhood onwards. And equally there is a plight for all fellow country people in the colonies, to support this cause and provide us with educational material according to one's ability.[432]

The last point the museum made here – that everyone should feel the moral obligation to assist the museum in its endeavours to reach out to the metropolitan school youth – is a recurring element in their propaganda. In their view this was a *national vocation*, not a private obsession stemming from business with stakes in the colonies. Other parties were also asked to work along. The two shipping companies in charge of the sea link with the East Indies, for instance, shipped materials for the *Koloniaal Museum* at half rate, and the trade section (*Afdeeling Handel*) of the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Trade of the colonial administration regularly ordered materials on the museum's behalf and paid the invoices in advance. The *Afdeeling Handel* did this with untamed enthusiasm, which at times met skepticism. One of the suppliers, for instance, let them know that the panicles of sugarcane fall apart easily, and that ordering 1000 of them would be "not advisable", given the "limited pedagogical value" that could be provided by "bare stems and a lot of fluff."[433] However, purchasing material was only the second-best option for the museum, the first being provided with material for free, for which they urged private individuals for their cooperation. At times these gifts made a considerable contribution to the collections, like the parcel sent in 1902 by G.J. Oudemans, the *assistant-resident*[434] of Buitenzorg on Java. It consisted of 100 angklung (musical instruments), 100 opium pipes, cans, wayang dolls made out of leather and paper, cinnamon, weaver bird's nests, eggs from turtles and iguanas, fruits like rambutan*,* mango and nutmeg, and snakes, lizards, scorpions and grasshoppers.[435] These things without doubt represented the more exciting part of the collection, as other regular materials consisted of different variants of wood, coffee, tobacco and seeds, to name just a few.[436] Probably the main reason that limited the number of collections

[432] *Gids voor de bezoekers*, 90.
[433] Ph. van Harreveld (*Proefstation voor de Java-Suikerindustrie. Cultuur Afdeeling te Pasoeroean*) to *Afdeeling Handel van het Departement van Landbouw, Nijverheid en Handel, Buitenzorg*, 28 March 1922. Archive KIT, file 5863.
[434] Rank in the colonial administration, head of a district.
[435] *Koloniaal Museum Bulletin* 1903 (2), p. 49.
[436] For an inventory, see for example *Koloniaal Museum Bulletin* 1893 (2), p. 24.

could be delivered on an annual basis also lies here: the scarcity of some of objects that were part of the collection and the dependence on gifts to require them.

The public role the *Koloniaal Museum* asserted, despite being a private institution, was also reflected in their entrance policy. In addition to all benefactors, also school youth had free entry to the museum. The impact of museum visits was limited, due to the limited number of visits that could be made. In fact, this was one of the incentives for classroom collections in the first place.[437] If we compare the number of school youth visitors to the museum, we see that they indeed clearly lag behind when compared to the dissemination classroom collections:

	Paying	Not paying	School youth	Total
1910	1034	7253	445	**8732**
1911	820	5292	325	**6437**
1912	951	5152	617	**6720**
1913	686	3832	587	**5105**
1914	464	4425	441	**5330**
1915	676	6482	628	**7786**
1916	780	6941	535	**8256**
1917	895	3053	370	**4318**
1918	968	4034	252	**5254**
1919	1300	7197	364	**8861**
1920	1411	4898	607	**6916**

Table 2 - Number of annual visitors at the Koloniaal Museum. Source: 'Kort Verslag van de afdeling Handelsmuseum van het Koloniaal Instituut over 1 januari - 1 december,' KIT 4947

Maps on the wall (conclusion)

In Britain, the British Empire left its mark in every single classroom through a large world map, with the empire in red, thus covering half the globe. This symbol of dominance and superiority left its mark in every child's head, nurturing every generation anew into loyal imperial citizens, imbued with the idea of empire. Or so at least the myth runs. It is this very story that was at stake in the debates on popular imperialism. As Porter argues, despite their symbolic representation of the British

[437] Van Wamel, "Schoolverzamelingenn," 28–29.

Empire as a gigantic monolith, and the easy assumption these maps must have been everywhere, the conclusion that schools must have been factories producing empire-minded citizens is a too-easy adding up of two assumption. It bypasses the simple facts, for example, that "these maps [...] were far too expensive for middle-class (let alone elementary) schools" and that the invention of color-coding only found its way into school use relatively late.[438]

The world map stands for most educational means that passed by in this chapter – and the same questions about the extent of their dissemination into the Dutch school youth's minds should be asked. This breaks our task up in two parts: (1) what message was sent across by textbooks and classroom collections alike and (2) where and how did this message land? As for the first point, just as John MacKenzie argued that the message in British textbooks was "a highly simplified one, of racial and cultural superiority, breeding a sense of self-satisfaction only rudely scattered in the most recent decades", a similar argument could be made for the message transmitted by the Dutch 'lessons in empire.'[439] Halfway the nineteenth century the history textbooks were patriotic, and the way they treated the colonies tied in to the way they treated all other history: as a collection of battles and conquests. In this scheme, the battles in the East and West Indies neatly fitted in. A sense of racial and cultural superiority was certainly transmitted, given the logics of Dutch rule overseas was taken for granted. More interestingly, though, is how this attitude was later bended into the paternalizing stance we know as the civilising mission. Here, the history books worked in concerted effort with the initiatives of the *Koloniaal Museum.* The classroom collections showed the Indies predominantly through an economic lens, as if it were farmlands, whose characteristics are solely constituted by its produce. Material objects in isolation from human beings and culture enhanced the sense of entitlement and possession, and resonated the idea of an empty land waiting for its cultivators.

The second point – what elements from the imperial ideology landed in the youth's mind? – is more difficult to assess. As Martin Bossenbroek noted after describing the whole complex of educational efforts to promote the empire in schooling, it is not likely that any singe individual student was ever confronted with all material on empire

[438] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 343.
[439] MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 1984, 194.

in its entirety.[440] But some of it did resonate for sure. In an 1879 survey, the journal *De Economist* showed the occupations of *HBS* (higher secondary education) graduates over the period 1865 to 1878. Out of the total sample of 1527 graduates, a number of 210 (13.7%) were enrolled in the training program for civil servants in the Dutch East Indies. The total amount that eventually would set sail for the Indies was in all likelihood higher, as the category of civil servants evidently excludes other groups, most notably military. From the same sample, 123 (8.0%) graduates were enrolled in the *KMA* (Royal Military Academy) to receive training as military officers, and 12 (0.8%) already made it overseas and were working in the forestry in the East Indies.[441] What these figures show in the first place is that The Indies constituted a substantial career opportunity for (higher educated) school youth – regardless what place the Indies had in the patriotism, nationalism and forms of national self-perception they encountered during their schooling.

The incorporation of the colonies in the Dutch narrative, as reflected in the school curriculum, may have been limited – the more so if we consider that many of the aforementioned textbooks in some cases never made it into the classroom. A further differentiation according to school types is required here, but it is instructive to look at the extremes. The geography and history programs at *gymnasiums* (grammar schools), for instance, were focused predominantly on the classics, as this school type required. The history classes in the first years would consist solely of Roman history, Greek history, the history of Near Eastern peoples, and end with landmark moments such as the rise of Charlemagne. In the higher years, national history would appear, up to the end of the seventeenth century and sometimes up to the present. This was, however, not a given – in 1905, the final year of the *Stedelijk Gymnasium* in Utrecht came as far as the 18th century, while at the same time there was ample time for repetition of the ancient era. The tendency was to overlook Dutch colonial history, along with all contemporary national history. In that sense, geography was more 'reliable' from an imperial perspective, as the geography of the East Indies was regularly listed.[442]

As for the dissemination of imperial ideology into the schools, the story is not told with the formal program alone. Discursively, some rudimentary form of Dutch

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[440] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*.
[441] Steyn Parvé, "Een en ander over de Hoogere Burgerscholen," *De Economist* 28, no. 1 (1879): 418–419, as cited in: Boekholt and de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school*, 188.
[442] NL-UtHUA, 1355-1, file 396.

imperialism was the very least that made its way, as there are aspects that, despite the developments in subject matter, pedagogy and didactics, remained relatively stable and were reinvoked continuously from all sides. For instance, the mainstream discourses never confronted students with anti-colonial or anti-imperial ideas. Voices of Indonesians were seldom heard, if ever, and when named in textbooks, it was usually in the role of oriental villain, revolting against Dutch rule. If one thing was taught at Dutch schools, it was the superiority of Western civilization and the implication of entitlement over others – as subjects of colonial, humanitarian, or other endeavours – this brought along. A strong, coordinated effort to bring imperial ideology (either in its patriotic, jingoistic variant or with the veneer of liberal or ethical approaches) to the school youth may have been absent, but the ground was laid for the underlying mental infrastructure. This latent imperialism was fit to activate an imperial set of mind on a later moment, when a new generation asserted the ranks of colonial administration.

Chapter 5

'A scout must think autonomously'[443]
Imperialism, Scouting, and the Dutch 'Wilderness'

In his memoirs, the Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans (1925-2004) brings us back to his time as a boy-scout.[444] Some fifty years after date he recalls his experience at the World Scouting Jamboree of 1937, held on the Dutch country estate of Vogelenzang: "Here I made my first Javanese friend, Ali," Oltmans writes, "he always used to wear a red fez." Oltmans' memories on scouting are not only worn out by time, there are also very little of them, a treat that perhaps comes with the genre of memoir writing. There is only one other reference to the jamboree, a mention of "the beautiful *pendopo*, a bamboo building" where the scouting troops from the Dutch East Indies were housed. For Oltmans, whose later professional life was that of a journalist-provocateur with a special interest in the Dutch East Indies, the Jamboree must have provided him with one of his first colonial encounters.[445] In a country where the colonies were predominantly a textbook reality, the implications of the visit of Ali and his fellow *Indische* scouts must not be underestimated. It is asking too much to ascribe the love Oltmans later in life developed for the eccentric, the exotic, and the foreign to his self-reported friendship

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[443] Frederik van Eeden, *Open brief aan de padvinders* (Amsterdam: W. Versluys, 1911), 11.

[444] A note on terminology: the Dutch word *padvinder* (pathfinder) was used by the Dutch Scouting organization NPV as a direct translation of the English 'Scout', and was used to denote Scouts from all age groups. Cub Scouts were *Welpen*, Scouts in the central age group of 11-17 were *Verkenners* (a direct translation of 'scout'), and Rover Scouts were *Voortrekkers.* In this chapter I will use the English denotations for Scouts of all nationalities, as the context will indicate to which national organization someone belonged. Oltmans referred to himself as *padvinder.*

[445] The ever flamboyant Oltmans had a career as investigative journalist. He was highly critical of Dutch foreign policy and, being born in the Indies, in particular of Dutch policy regarding Indonesia. He interviewed and befriended Sukarno in 1956, which made him a personal enemy of Dutch secretary of state Joseph Luns, and by extension an enemy of the state. This hindered his work extensively. In 2000 he won a drawn-out court case against the Dutch state and was awareded eight million guilders (roughly three and a hald million euro at the time) in compensation.

with Ali, but the encounter should not be dismissed entirely either, for it was representative of the many friendships across cultures that were sealed at the Jamboree.

Notwithstanding the real, imagined, temporal, or long lasting friendships conceived at the 1937 Jamboree, it was hardly a camping exercise of an egalitarian brotherhood. It rather resembled the dynamics of a colonial exposition, where each nationality adhered to a performed version of itself in displaying traditional arts, crafts and customs. For the metropolitan youth at the campsite it was a 'training in Empire' in more than only the literal sense, as they were not only presented with foreign arts and displays, but also got a sense of the hierarchies implied in the imperial worldview. The red fez and the single denotation 'Javanese' render Ali exotic to Oltmans' readers.[446] Oltmans was fascinated by Ali's appearance, just as the Dutch Scouting public was fascinated by what was described as "*Javaantjes*"[447] or "dark types with phlegmatic eyes."[448]

A fascination for other cultures has been one of the central elements of Scouting since its conception by Lord Baden Powell in the first decade of the twentieth century.[449] Mostly, this fascination led to the kind of exoticism practiced by Baden Powell himself. In his foundational textbook *Scouting for Boys* (1908) he included references to the rites of adolescence among the Zulu, appropriated in a way so they would pose an example to the allegedly debilitated, frail British youth, and without much regard for actual Zulu customs, which may not surprise given that Baden Powell's experience in southern Africa was mostly limited to military warfare.[450] Reinvigorating the youth of Britain was the key challenge in securing the future of nation and empire alike, according to Baden Powell, and it was what led him to set up Scouting in the first place. Imagination and playfulness played an important role in the movement's pedagogy. Through games and plays, in which boys – and to a lesser extent, girls – were invited to imagine themselves 'Indians', spies, military scouts, or indigenous warriors, they learned by implication about the relevance of empire, of masculine qualities, and of the hierarchies that maintained the imperial order.

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[446] Willem Oltmans, *Memoires 1925-1953* (Baarn: In den Toren, 1985), 36.
[447] Dutch diminutive of 'Javanese.'
[448] *Herinneringen aan de Jamboree in 125 foto's* (Helmond: N.V. Boekdrukkerij 'Helmond', 1937), 36.
[449] On Baden-Powell, among the numerous biographies, see: Tim Jeal, *The Boy-Man. The Life of Baden-Powell* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1990).
[450] Timothy Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!: Zulu Origins of the Boy Scout Movement and the Africanisation of Imperial Britain', *Parliamentary History* 27, no. 1 (2008): 58.

Early historiography on the movement mostly glanced over the implicit teachings through play and the attempt to coopt desirable elements of 'tribal life' that were so essential to Scouting. Chief among the reasons for this was the heated debate around the militarist aspects of the movement, which are as old as the movement itself. Opponents believed children were to be kept away from "militarist stuff" and were suspicious of the nationalist underpinnings, which were all too real as one of the prominent members of the *Vereeniging De Nederlandsche Padvinders* (NPV, The Dutch Scouts Association), Gos Lingbeek, advocated to state-supervise the movement and to train its scoutmasters.[451] In the words of another contemporary critic, the writer Frederik van Eeden, Scouting demanded the impossible from its pupils and would not prevent war and misery from happening – words that foreshadowed the Great War and revealed a consciousness of the atrocities committed in the name of the empire overseas. Van Eeden mocked Baden-Powell's imperative to "think autonomously", addressing the boy-scouts directly: "What would you do when your country and government require you to assault people who, to your sincere conviction, don't deserve it?" The alleged militarist aspects of the movement thus came at the forefront of inquiry, whether it was from people from within the movement or from its critics. Consequently, they both studied the movement on its own terms as a pedagogical program for training in character and national and imperial citizenship for boys.[452] The debate had its climax in Michael Rosenthal's key work *The Character Factory* (1986), where Baden-Powell is characterized as a "compelling personality who gave the world its most distinctive youth organization" as well as "a thoroughly indoctrinated exponent of imperial ideology who articulated the prejudices and ideals of an incipiently crumbling empire," and the movement's main global appeal is identified as "the satisfaction afforded by uniforms, badges, and bracing masculine activities."[453] Recent work does not ignore this militaristic aspect – as it is somewhat beyond dispute – but has turned to hitherto ignored layers of Scouting's cultural fabric. The historian Timothy Parsons has pointed to the reciprocity in the cultural transmission Scouting facilitated: the Anglicized version of indigenous cultures with which Scouting familiarized metropolitan youth with constituted a counter-centrifugal

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[451] 'Padvinderij.', *De Sumatra Post*, 6 July 1917.

[452] This would not account for the wide appeal Scouting had, not only on lower-class boys, but cross-cutting gender and background. See: Tammy M. Proctor, '(Uni)Forming Youth: Girl Guides and Boy Scouts in Britain, 1908-39', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 45 (1998): 103–34.

[453] Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory: Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 280, 283.

force in the Imperial world, giving agency to subjected peoples as they affected the metropolitan parts of empire. While Parsons concludes that "African boys were drawn to the anglicised version of their own cultural heritage,"[454] others, like historian Christina Wu, take the argument further by asserting that for indigenous boys, Scouting contained both emancipatory promise (as it let indigenous boys play at being a colonial or a frontiersman) and racial restriction (as the role models of Scouting would, ultimately, always be White). "Indigenous [Malayan] Scouts could effectively mimic and play at being 'white colonials' within the framework of an 'imperial play ethic'," she writes, as these scouts would "play Indian" just like their white peers – thereby ironically using a generic category of 'native' in which their own identity was absorbed.[455]

If Parsons and Wu broadened the scope of studying Scouting by taking respectively the suppressed cultures Baden-Powell drew inspiration from and indigenous boy-scouts into account, this chapter tracks Scouting as it was transplanted from one imperial power (Britain) to another (The Netherlands). With its explicit aim groom boys into loyal, imperial, well-trained citizens, Scouting as such directly concerned itself with the subject matter of this thesis: popular imperialism. By drawing a comparison between the British and Dutch scouting movements, moreover, it not only becomes apparent how the architects of the Dutch movement wanted to achieve this goal, but also which methods and motives they deemed unfit, as they did not copy Baden-Powell's blueprint in its entirety, but left out elements, designed their own, and emphasized different aspects. In particular omitting elements from Baden-Powell's design was a favoured strategy for the leaders of Dutch scouting, as it arguably involved less trouble than creating a pedagogical program anew. Thus, the worldview that the NPV instilled in its members was predominantly based on British imperial imagery. The doctrine on citizenship, the model of the frontiersmen, the racial anxieties, and models of masculinity were essentially distilled from Edwardian Britain. This imperial mirror game becomes even more curious when we take *Indische* boy scouts into account, who were confronted with the idea of a generic 'native culture' drawn from another imperial world, yet eerily familiar to them. In this chapter my aim is to demonstrate that on the occasions where the Netherlands' own imperial experience was invoked in Scouting, a

[454] Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 66.
[455] Jialin Christina Wu, '"A Life of Make-Believe": Being Boy Scouts and "Playing Indian"in British Malaya (1910–42)', *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 616.

disparity in imperialisms manifested itself. Whereas Baden-Powell absorbed indigenous influences as a means to reinvigorate the British youth, the imperial worldview prevalent in Dutch scouting had a longer pedigree and saw imperialism in the first place as an overseas endeavour of colonial heroes, a radiant force originating in Europe. On other occasions, however, Dutch scoutmasters seemed hesitant to refer to empire at all, and put more emphasis on physical exercise and discipline than roleplaying with imperial and adventurous scenarios. Indonesian indigenous culture was seldom a source of inspiration for Dutch scoutmasters.

Indifference to empire – as we can detect in the early Dutch Scouting movement – is one of the modes of public imperialism, and the one most easily overlooked, as the absence of something is by definition elusive. The case of Dutch scouting provides one of the rare opportunities were such an absence is tangible, as imperial motives were prominently present in Baden-Powell's foundational text *Scouting for Boys*, which was the main source of inspiration for the trailblazers of Dutch scouting, but were largely ignored. This is surprising as, to some extent, the same breeding ground was also provided in both countries. In the Netherlands there were the same concerns over a frail and corrupted city youth, unable to defend and maintain country and empire, which had sparked Baden Powell to set up his movement. In parliamentary debates over the 1906 budget of the Ministry of War, the then Minister Henri Staal defended his plans by stating that he "wanted nothing more than send good instructors all over the country to make the youth acquainted with shooting and gymnastics," while he expressed his concerns about the level of army volunteers and "sons from the higher classes the refuse to do better than the rank of sergeant or corporal."[456] Staal's words can be interpreted as lip service in an attempt to fend off pressure for installing people's militias (*landweer*), which he vehemently opposed, but on the other hand he shared the concerns over the current inability of the Dutch people to defend themselves.

Not coincidentally one of the zealous advocates of a *landweer*, the Amsterdam-based journalist Gos. de Voogt, would play a key role in bringing Baden-Powell's invention across the English Channel just a few years later. De Voogt put a mark on Scouting's early development in the Netherlands. His obsession with national borders, and his lack of personal colonial experience, may account for some of the lack of interest

[456] 'Vergadering van 20 December. ALG. OORLOGSDEBAT', *De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig dagblad*, 20 December 1906.

in imperial motives in the early Scouting movement. His was not a contingent influence, however, and in this chapter I will track the development of the Dutch Scouting movement all the way to the 1937 World Jamboree, which was held in the Netherlands. The movement did not diverge from De Voogt's initial path, and the same centrifugal imperialism that marked its early days still prevailed in the Dutch branch of the Scouting movement at the time of the Jamboree. Not only Ali was defined by his red fez, all foreign participants at the Jamboree were cast to perform their nationalities – a consequence of the international nature of the Jamboree as much as the non-engagement with the empire rampant in the Dutch Scouting movement.

The Advent of Dutch Scouting

The story of Colonel Baden-Powell's boy-scouts movement rapidly gained attention in the Dutch press in the years after the movement's conception in 1907. "Already 400,000 boys are associated 'to make fun', but, fun 'with a purpose,'" the liberal daily *Algemeen Handelsblad* wrote admiringly about the state of the scouting movement in Great Britain.[457] The tone of the article revealed some envy for the British success. It went on to eagerly sketch the sway of Baden-Powell's youth organization in the Netherlands, citing the publication of two booklets directly based on Baden-Powell's foundational text *Scouting for Boys* (1908), a magazine called *De Padvinder* (The Pathfinder), and a (short-lived) boy-scout organization named *Bond van den Hollandschen Jongen* (League of the Dutch Boy). The name of the organization was based on the first of the two aforementioned booklets, *Op! Hollandsche jongens naar buiten* (Go! Dutch Boys Heading Outside), based on Baden-Powell's famous book and written by W.J. van Hoytema, a retired army officer. By 1911, the first nation-wide scouting association was founded, the *Nederlandsche Padvinders Organisatie* (NPO, Dutch Scouting Organisation), soon followed by the *Nederlandsche Padvinders Bond* (NPB, Dutch Scouting League). When the two organisations merged into the association *De Nederlandsche Padvinders* (NPV, The Dutch Scouts) in 1915 their ranks numbered 2500, just below half a permille of the country's total population.[458] In comparison, the approximately 100,000 registered Scouts in Britain in 1910 constituted around a quarter percent of the total UK population, which made the Netherlands trail behind their British counterparts at

[457] 'Sport en Wedstrijden. Een Padvinders-vereeniging.', *Algemeen Handelsblad* 8 December 1910.
[458] Jan van der Steen, *Padvinders: 100 jaar scouting in Nederland* (Walburg Pers, 2010), 117.

roughly fifteen percent.[459] By the early 1930s, membership of the NPO had more than quadrupled in relation to the population, and was twice as popular in relative size compared to Great Britain.[460]

Initially there were not only two Scouting associations in the Netherlands, but also two interpretations on how to scout the Dutch wilderness. The merger between the NPO and NPB into the *Vereeniging De Nederlandsche Padvinder* (NPV, Association The Dutch Scout) in 1915 did not fully end this dispute, although it united all Dutch boy-scouts momentarily. It excluded girls, though, who where previously allowed in the ranks of the NPO and the NPB, but were not allowed to enter the newly formed NPV. Girls were organized in the *Nederlandsch Meisjes Gilde* (Dutch Girls' Guild) a month later, in early 1916. Even though the dispute on the correct interpretation of Scouting did not end with the merger, it did mark the increasing dominance of the 'orthodox' line, which claimed not to deviate from Baden-Powell. The opposing faction, they claimed, put too much emphasis on physical exercise. In 1919, for example, the NPV's magazine – edited by the 'orthodox' Jan Schaap – criticized the experimental scoutmasters camp organized by Van Hoytema: "Had an outsider got his hands on the [leaders camp's] schedule, he would have had the impression we are a sports association or preparing for military service."[461] The orthodox concerns over too much physical exercise without play elements echoed the British concerns of appearing too militarist, and Schaap never grew tired of insisting that others did it wrong by organizing boys in patrols that were too large. He contended that patrol groups had to consist of six boys and that their 'exercises and outings' had to be 'boy-ish and adventurous', but also that these outings should not be too meek, as heavy hikes would separate the lazybones from those with a 'real scouting character.' Thus, even though Schaap's interpretation became dominant in Dutch scouting, heavy exercise was not ruled out entirely. It was fought rhetorically more than in practice, much like Baden-Powell's own concerns over militarism were a question of public appearance, not of aversion against militarism. In this way the

[459] 'The History of Scouting', ScoutBaseUK, retrieved at: https://web.archive.org/web/20070704123611/http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/history/census.htm (18 August 2007)
[460] 'Dr. C.P. Gunning contra de N.P.V.', *Het Vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad*, 9 November 1933.
[461] Steen, *Padvinders*, 135.

opposites of playful adventure and wearing-out exercise were both incorporated in the movement.[462]

In their strive to 'orthodoxy', the pioneering Dutch scoutmasters indeed copied the British original in some ways. Just as in Britain, for example, there was an ideal-image of Scouting as something that auto-organized bottom-up, with bands of boys that spontaneously formed troops as soon as word of Baden-Powell's revolutionary book spread. And just as in Britain, this contrasted sharply with the reality of the authoritarian command-lines that characterized the movement. Organization charts – printed steadily on the first page of many editions of *Scouting for Boys*, Dutch and British alike – leave no doubt as to who was in control, as all lines led back to the Imperial Headquarters, headed by the Chief Scout: Robert Baden Powell.[463] At the same time, the canonized narrative of how Scouting came into existence in the Netherlands recounted that six boys were already practicing weekly something that resembled scouting, before a certain W. van Ouden proposed to be their first scoutmaster and to pioneer "Baden-Powell's idea."[464] The idea of auto-organization remained strong, which is apparent in claims that "the patrol system allows for mutual self-education [*onderlingen zelfopvoeding*]," as *Het Leidersblad* (Scoutmasters' Magazine) asserted in 1927.[465] The idea of spontaneous organization went hand in hand with ideas of a natural state of boys and men that reigned in Scouting: whether it was about the playfulness or competitiveness of boys, or the leadership qualities of a scoutmaster, the opinion was that these were essences which would prosper when free of restraint, rather than qualities to acquire by training. See for example the following words of the Dutch chief scout, J.J. Rambonnet:

> It goes without saying that a leader must have certain character traits which cannot be trained or taught. This booklet therefore does not aim to do such things,

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[462] The dominance of the orthodox British line can be clearly detected in history books that sprang from the scouting movement itself, like *Padvinders*, whose author is a former scout and conservator of the national scouting museum. His disdain for the "own (Dutch?)" way of scouting is hardly veiled. Ibid., 133.
[463] Sir Robert Baden Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship through Woodcraft* (London: C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., 1929), 1.
[464] 'Zij waren Neerlands eerste padvinders: pioniers van het spel van verkennen' [1938], as inserted in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek's copy of: Gos. de Voogt, *De Padvinders in woord en beeld* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff's Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1913).
[465] 'Op den uitkijk, aan het roer', *Het Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van "de Nederlandsche padvinders"*, 15 November 1927.

> but it does aim to provide the leaders with suggestions, on which they can develop themselves.[466]

Rambonnet wrote these words in the introduction to the Dutch translation of *Aids to Scoutmastership*, Baden-Powell's instruction manual for scoutmasters, and they reveal some tension that plagued scouting at large. While auto-organization and the desired boyishness as an essential quality suggest there should be little interference from above, practice dictated otherwise, as the very publication of an instruction manual for scoutmasters demonstrates. Hence the cautious tone, and the styling of the book's instructions as 'mere suggestions' or aids (*wenken*). In the Dutch scouting movement, just as in the British mother organization, authority had an egalitarian veil.

Rambonnet's leadership style – and his corresponding idea of society – revealed itself more clearly later. As former Minister of the Navy (1913-1918) and freshly appointed member of the Council of State (*Raad van State*), he was appointed chair of the NPV's board in 1920. He brought along the same military stature as his predecessor, J.B. van Heutsz, the former governor general of the Dutch East Indies (1904-1909).[467] With a dramatic gesture he resigned from his position in 1927, as the chair *ad interim* Th. F. Egidius announced during a general assembly in June that year "Don't expect me to be some impersonal agent of the board," Rambonnet had written earlier that year. "Does every decision or initiative need the board's approval? [...] Are we indeed a normal, *burgerlijke*, association with a board that needs to govern by the vote of a majority?"[468] His set-up worked. The assembly voted in favour of making the humble request to Rambonnet to take up his position again, this time while granting him the powers he desired and donning him with the hitherto unused title of Chief Scout of the NPV. In anticipation of how the events would unfold, Rambonnet had already delegated

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[466] Foreword by J.J. Rambonnet in: Lord Baden Powell, *Wenken voor Leiders: de theorie van het spel-van-verkennen*, trans. Jan Schaap (Dordrecht: Schefferdrukkerij, 1930), 9.

[467] In the Netherlands, Van Heutsz was widely regarded 'the hero of Aceh' for his leading role in the violent suppression of resistance in Aceh, killing entire villages in a guerilla war against Acehnese forces. The term 'hero of Aceh' was frequently used in Dutch periodicals at the time to describe Van Heutsz, and the designation gradually popularized throughout the twentieth century. The term was never undisputed, however. Socialist factions referred to the general's popular acclaim as "*ransige ethiek*" (heinous ethics): 'De kinderen en Van Heutsz.', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 9 July 1904. The small liberal newspaper *De Grondwet* reminded its readers of Van Heutsz' troops "regular massacres" and the "63 men and 369 women, children, and babies" that were killed in the town of Likat (Aceh) in early July 1904: *De Grondwet,* 2 August 1904.

[468] 'Op den Uitkijk en Aan het Roer', *Het Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van "De Nederlandsche Padvinders"*, 15 January 1927.

Egidius to accept the appointments on his behalf.[469] It all allowed Rambonnet to live by his motto on leadership – "leadership is not enhanced by talking about it" – and sealed his position as undisputed leader of the NPV for the years to come. Part of his success was due to the "state of emergency" of the organization, as reportedly the number of members dwindled at the finances were in a dire state, and which prompted the chapters critical of Rambonnet to not cast a vote against him, as "the state of emergency *must* end." Another part of his success was that Rambonnet's romantic vision of leadership, organization and democracy fit well with the movement. He abhorred the democratic ideal that would see his organization ruled by consensus, and referred to it pejoratively as *burgerlijk*, meaning bourgeois, middle-class. As a true conservative, he felt solely responsible for the NPV.

Rambonnet's was not the only voice to obey, though. Upon entering the ranks of the NPV, a boy had to pledge his loyalty to several institutions and codes, again, just like their British counterparts. In 1927 *Het Leidersblad* published a translation of the British oath which made scouts pledge loyal to God, the King, and the Scouting Law. The Law, on its turn, prescribed scouts to obey their parents, scoutmasters and superiors, among other things (such as chivalry, charity, love for animals, reliability, and loyalty).[470] In a pointed letter the writer Frederik van Eeden mocked these conflicting loyalties, and referred to the Boer War as an example, as it would would put Dutch patriotism on odds with British patriotism. The Netherlands sided with the Boers, who were considered *stamverwanten*, next of kin, which put the British and the Dutch on opposing sides in this war. In a world of competing nationalisms this would be nothing out of the ordinary, but in the world Scouting, with its attempts to uphold a sense of international camaraderie, it would pose a problem. Both sides were firmly locked in their prominence in the public imagination: Baden Powell was the "hero of Mafeking", and his role in the Boer War was what had brought him the fame his Scouting movement relied on, while Dutch support for the Boers is one of the scarce instances of genuine popular enthusiasm.[471] According to Van Eeden, it was nigh impossible to be truly "chivalrous, honest, autonomous in

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[469] 'Notulen der Buitengewone Algemeene Vergadering der Vereeniging "De Nederlandsche Padvinders", gehouden te Amersfoort in de Sociëteit "Amicitia" op 18 Juni 1927 n.m. te 2 uur.", *Het Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van "De Nederlandsche Padvinders"*, 15 July 1927.
[470] 'Voortrekkersrubriek', *Het Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van "De Nederlandsche Padvinders"*, 15 February 1927.
[471] Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, *War of Words : Dutch Pro-Boer Propaganda and the South African War (1899-1902)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

thoughts, loyal to the own conscience and to what one would regard a divine call", as Scouts were required to.[472] In theory, this would pitch someone against worldly or divine authorities more often than not, but the practice of Scouting was the opposite, which led Van Eeden to the conclusion that the entire movement was "a vain twittering of big words, a swanky fuss."[473]

Essential to Scouting was not delivering on those pledges and promises, though, but the act of making them. As Michael Rosenthal has mentioned, working class boys were central to Baden-Powell's endeavour, and one of his objectives was to provide, with Scouting, a training that aimed "to produce one overriding trait in their boys: an all-consuming loyalty."[474] Traces of this objective are found in Dutch Scouting too. Take for instance the following essay by Jan Schaap. The rather serious essay starts off as a plea for more humour in the movement: "Among each other, we can take things so much in earnest, bitter earnest," he wrote in 1919.[475] But when he explained himself, it became clear what he meant with humour: "Humor is not resolute wit, [...] which so readily depraves into sarcasm or satire. Wit is cold and analytical, humor friendly and cherishing." He asserted humour (not wit!) would ease tensions in everyday situations, as it would allow Scouts to laugh away their annoyances. It would also guard against arrogance and presumptuousness. What Schaap expected from boys, in other words, was an "unshakable optimism" that would go at the expense of a critical conscience. What Schaap preached was all-consuming loyalty as right path for boys to mature.

As a pedagogical movement, Scouting all revolved around the development of children, and sought to instill in boys (and, only sometimes, girls) the earnest attitude they would need later in life in the face of calamities, or even war. For this, they had to toughen up, or so the Dutch scouting pioneers G.W.S. Lingbeek (a Boer War veteran) and journalist Gos. de Voogt thought. They wrote *Een Padvinders-vereeniging* (A Scouting Association, 1910), one of the booklets mentioned above, that first introduced the concept of Scouting to the Dutch public. In this work, they imagined the ideal Dutch boy scouts like this:

> Boy scouts were boys who practiced their religion through daily helpfulness, dutifulness, loyalty, love for humans and animals. Boys who would not kick a dead

[472] Van Eeden, *Open brief aan de padvinders*, 21–24.
[473] Ibid., 6.
[474] Rosenthal, *The Character Factory*, 91.
[475] J. Schaap, 'Humor in de padvinderij', *Het Leidersblad: Officieel orgaan der vereeniging "de Nederlandsche Padvinders" voor leiders en bestuursleden*, 1 February 1919.

> ball, but go out on adventures, observe living nature, know how to camp, make a fire, trace the trails of humans and animals, know how to sign messages over long distance, place signals (unintelligible for others), read compass and stars like a clock at home, and who can assist police and firemen.[476]

Lingbeek and De Voogt also clearly state what a boy scout should not be, namely a nail biter, a whiner, an anxious sould, and everything else that did not fit their image of able-bodied explorers, adventurous yet loyal. The Dutch boy-scout as imagined by Lingbeek and De Voogt was rooted in nineteenth-century ideas on education, with its central spot for the higher morality offered by Christianity. Baden-Powell's intention of creating good citizens appealed to these two Dutch authors. Just as in Britain, a good citizen meant a Christian citizen. It is hard to imagine Lingbeek and De Voogt's boys as just boys, as they were practically proto-adults, getting groomed for grown-up tasks. This was reflected in the popularized stories of boy scouts, as for instance the youth novel *Svend de Padvinder*, a translation from the Danish *Svend Spejder* (1911, Svend the Scout). In this story, Svend and his self-organized troupe of scouts start off with self-handedly catching poachers, but a looming threat of war with Germany is a red thread throughout the book. It culminates in a very real defense effort, where Svend and his group "do away with their scout staff and insignias, and replaced it with a mariner's rifle, bandolier and cutlass."[477] Instead of poachers they catch a real German spy and his airplane, much to the surprise of grown-ups in Nyborg, where they deliver their catch to the mayor and officer in command. When Germans attempt to land on the coast of Fynd, the scouts participate with the successful Danish defense forces, but at the cost of on of their lives. On the battlefield, small Otto's "dreams of glory and heroic acts had become reality!"[478] What the story shows is that the pre-Great War tensions provided an atmosphere in which it was not unthinkable that adolescents would participate in war efforts, and in which Scouts were regarded as best equipped for that task. But in lieu of real war, other events could also serve as proper *rites de passage* for boy scouts. Train disasters and fire calamities in particular show up often in the literature as situations in which scouts could prove themselves sufficiently prepared, such as the Coulsdon train crash of 1910, after which Baden-Powell praised the local scouts for the first aid they provided in

[476] 'Sport en Wedstrijden. Een Padvinders-vereeniging.', *Algemeen Handelsblad* 8 December 1910.
[477] Walter Christmas, *Svend de padvinder*, trans. A. de Fremery (Gouda: G.B. van Goor Zonen, 1911), 192–93.
[478] Ibid., 225.

exemplary fashion after the crash.[479] This was what the boy-scouts had to "be prepared" for, as the motto of the movement ran. Scouting entered the Dutch wilderness as a fast-track for boys to enter mature life. And despite the initial concerns over an abundance of physical exercise, this is in fact the point where they deviated from the British example, as there was little regard left for the way maturing was paradoxically entangled with boyishness in the British case.

An Empire without Boys

Scouting did not only attempt to make boys into men. The reverse was true as well, as Baden-Powell's original intent was to try and save the boy in men. This paradoxical quality was not fully appreciated in the Netherlands, where the concerns of scoutmasters like Lingbeek and Schaap over military-like exercise seemed to be limited to the extent of what standing this would give the movement in the outer world – but not out of the conviction that boyish qualities were, selectively, something to be cherished instead of rooted out. To further grasp this peculiarity of Dutch Scouting, though, we should first ask what the role of boyhood was in British Scouting in the first place.

The idea of perpetuating boyhood was twofold. First off, it was a means to arrive at the end of serious, loyal and responsible citizens, as boyish elements would ensure the attractiveness of Scouting. In other words, as something fun and exciting it would be accepted more readily by the boys in question than something dull and dreadful. As he put it in a note to instructors: "Boys are full of romance, and they love "make-believe" to a greater extent than they like to show. All you have to do is to play up to this, and to give rein to your imagination to meet their requirements."[480] Boyhood also began to play a more dominant role in the popular imagination of empire. The historian Bradley Deane speaks in this respect about a "remarkable rebellion against masculine maturity" around the turn of the twentieth century, when the liberal, civilising projects of empire-building fold and the conservative undercurrents of imperial ideology regain their strength and visibility. Liberal imperialism had stressed *development*. Colonies would turn into autonomous nations, British boys into mature imperial administrators, and colonial subjects into full-fledged citizens. Its conservative, reactionary variant presented a more

[479] Steen, *Padvinders*, 25–26.
[480] Baden Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, 321.

static idea of empire: colonies would remain colonies, outposts would remain outposts, and savages would remain savages. This was, in other words, the idealized playground of imperial adventurers like the missionary David Livingstone, or like veteran-heroes of imperial wars like Lord Baden-Powell himself. [481]

The model of masculinity that Scouting provided fitted well with the new imperial ideologies of the time. "[I]mperialists found in enduring boyishness a natural and suitably anti-developmental model of identity," Deane writes, arguing that a perpetuated boyhood was not just supportive of the new imperialism, but a necessary response to it, providing in the need for apt, compatible identities.[482] In literature – Deans's playground – it manifested itself for instance in the genre of pirate stories, where "conventional moralizing" is replaced by "the rules of play."[483] Deane connects this to the attitude of children, who live in an immoral or pre-moral time, and whose action are "judged only by the internal rules of their closed system and not by the moral consequences that they have left, as it were, on the distant shores of the mundane.[484] Some classical works by Joseph Conrad can be interpreted in this key – Kurz in *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and *Lord Jim*'s (1900) titular protagonist both operate guided by ethics of imperial play rather than by some absolute morality. Kurtz, whose little empire is a literal closed system, illustrates this probably most fittingly.

Since the Dutch scouting movement showed little interest in perpetuating boyhood beyond its function in attracting the attention of boys, it begs the question whether this 'rebellion against masculine maturity' had unfolded in the Netherlands at all. For a start, it is hard to find a Dutch equivalent of literary protagonists like Kurtz or Lord Jim. If we take a look A. Albert's story *Groen* (1949), for instance, a different image arises. The story is about a colonial administrator who finds himself on an outpost in the Dutch East Indies and grows disillusioned about the prospects of the Ethical policy. He sees the other white man on the island, stationed fifty kilometer away, turn mad and commit suicide, and only late realizes he is heading towards the same fate if he does not interfere in his demise. The island of *Groen* is by no means the pure imperial adventurer's playground of Deane's romantic imperialism. Even though the protagonist literally traverses the island as an adventurer in his attempt to reach a mythical tree

[481] Bradley Deane, 'Imperial Boyhood: Piracy and the Play Ethic', *Victorian Studies* 53, no. 4 (2011): 689–714.
[482] Ibid., 690.
[483] Ibid., 691.
[484] Ibid., 697.

border, this serves primarily to showcase his personal crisis. This crisis is not connected to the two whites' failure in each other's eyes, as it would have been in the closed moral circuit of child's play, but about the failure of a progressive imperial ideology to deliver on its promises. The story is infused with the external and absolute morality of the civilising mission, and the protagonist's crisis is linked up with the crisis of that civilising mission. While stories like *Groen* are not unique in the *Indische* literature, it is harder to come across adventure stories of the kind mentioned above. Dutch Imperialism did not provide the same breeding ground for adventurism as Great Britain did. It is telling that most adventure stories that circulated were not originally Dutch, but translated works; there was no Dutch equivalent of the tale of Dr. Livingstone, only a translation from English. Adventure was something done in other empires.[485]

Likewise, the "martial tribes" that formed an important inspiration for Baden-Powell's Scouting were virtually absent in the Netherlands. Baden-Powell capitalized on boys' fascination with tribal life. One of the central stories in his handbook is that of the maturing ritual Zulu adolescents had to endure. As historian Timothy Parsons remarked, "Baden-Powell could hardly be considered an authority on Zulu customs," but in Britain this hardly mattered, as there was a general ignorance on virtually all subjected people in the British Empire. "Communities like the Zulu came to represent the simpler, savage, but nobler qualities that nostalgic observers worried were vanishing from Edwardian Britain," Parsons furthermore says, and it was in this key that admiration for 'martial tribes' had to be seen: "They were confident enough in their cultural superiority that they could appropriate and reinterpret what they considered to be the most virtuous aspects of 'tribal life."[486] So a cherry-picking-reverence for warrior tribes was part and parcel of Scouting, and yet little of this became part of Dutch scouting. Not only were the British examples not copied, but nor were they replaced with examples from the Dutch colonies, despite the fact there was a tendency among colonials to regard certain people, like the Ambonese, as more martially mature than others in the colony.

To be sure, some traces of the appropriating of other cultures remained visible in Dutch Scouting. There was the popular association of Scouting with 'playing redskin.' In his *Open Brief,* Van Eeden remarked that "we have all played soldier, or robber, or

[485] Coen van 't Veer, 'Het Innerlijk Oerwoud: Overeenkomsten Tussen "Groen" van A. Alberts, "Der Amokläufer" van Stefan Zweig En "Heart of Darkness" van Joseph Conrad', *Indische Letteren* 17 (2002).
[486] Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 58–59.

redskin, when we were young."[487] He went on to question whether Scouting provided merely the same, albeit on a larger scale – but for our purpose here it matters to observe that Scouting was associated with these children plays. 'Redskin' imagery was most prominent in Dutch Scouting. In the monthly magazine *De Padvinder* – which did not feature an abundance of illustrations to begin with – the staple blueprints used to highlight certain articles or mark the end of a feature consisted of an array of 'Indian' images: Indians, cowboys, tipis and the like. A series of articles, translated from English, conveyed the advise of the fictional Sioux *Arendsoog* (Eagle Eye) on various matters, [SUCH AS]. Dutch Scouts, and probably the Dutch public in general, were familiar with the trope of 'Indians' or 'redskins' from Scouting publications and other juvenile literature. Tropes more specific to the British empire, like particular customs of the Zulu and Ghurka as represented by Baden-Powell, featured remarkably less prominent in Dutch sources; tropes derived from the Dutch empire were virtually absent.

Imperial Imagery in Dutch Scouting

In February of the year of the World Jamboree (1937), the Dutch scoutmasters' magazine *Weest Paraat* (Be Prepared) described some games for scoutmasters to adopt. The recurring column drew from a variety of themes in the games it considered apt for its boy-scouts, from smugglers, to sailors, to hunters. In this edition it featured a game called *stomme ruilhandel* (dumb trade). It would provide two troops of boy-scouts with a narrative for what would essentially be a quest or hidden trail through a Dutch forest, imagined as a trading game between Borneo tribes, as the readers were told that:

> The island Borneo is home to tribes with a peculiar way of trading. They leave their goods at certain spots in the forest and in this way trade them for any other product left by another tribe. The names of these tribes are the Dojoks and the Dujuks. The spots where they leave their goods are marked with simple signs.[488]

Inspired by this example, the two troops were supposed to mark a route with signs and leave their 'trade wares' at the end of the route. Subsequently, they were supposed to return to their shared point of departure and try to follow one another's signs to find the goods. As an instance of drawing inspiration from the empire, the 'Borneo trade game' is

[487] Van Eeden, *Open brief aan de padvinders*, 5.
[488] 'Spelen voor Verkenners', *Weest Paraat*, February 1937.

a rare occurrence in the published NPV materials. Games mostly featured sailors or policemen and thieves, who appealed more to the boy-scouts' imagination. Moreover, though, the game was not based on reality but made up by the magazine's editor. The 'Dojoks' and 'Dujuks' did not exist as such – both names are fantasized corruptions of *Dayak,* the name for the indigenous peoples of Borneo. If we follow Timothy Parsons in his assertion that British Scouting's mimicking of 'tribal life' was all about the "[appropriation of] desirable African cultural elements, [reimagining] them, and [making] them their own"[489], the bleak conclusion for Dutch Scouting seems to be that they found Indonesian cultures to have little desirability in them, and that this accounts for the near absence of re-imagination of Indonesian cultural traits.

That is not to say the empire was not on the mind of the leaders of the Dutch scouting movement, nor that there was no imperial imagery whatsoever. It was there, but simply informed by a different view of empire. Instructive is the 1928 translation of *Scouting for Boys*, which marked a change with previous editions. Instead of a direct translation, "the parts [that are of particular interest to British boys] are now replaced by history and context written in the same spirit that concern the Netherlands and the Dutch," chief scout Rambonnet explained the work of translator Jan Schaap.[490] It is instructive to juxtapose Baden-Powell's original text with Schaap's Dutch additions. Take for example the concept of 'peace scouts.' According to Baden-Powell, this were "real men in every sense of the word, substantially trained in scouting skills; they can survive in the wilderness, find their way, and recognize the smallest traces." Elements of such an exemplary lifestyle, he asserted, could be found among the "the trappers North America*,* the hunters of Central Africa*,* the explorers and missionaries in Asia and all uncivilized parts of the world*,*" among others.[491] His examples included 'imperial explorers' and the 'uncivilised' people these very explorers set out to subject. In the Dutch translation, Jan Schaap added some examples of what he considered exemplary 'frontier life' drawn from the Dutch imperial world:

> Charlemagne and his braves, William I, and our crusaders carried Dutch valiance and chivalry with them to distant lands. Jan Pietersz. Coen and Abel Tasman opened up new territories in respectively the Indies and Australia. […] There is no

[489] Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 65.
[490] Lord Baden Powell of Gilwell, *Het Verkennen voor Jongens: een handboek voor de opleiding van jongens tot goede burgers*, trans. Jan Schaap (Schefferdrukkerij, 1929), 7.
[491] Ibid., 21.

> need for further reference to our country's seafaring prestige after dropping the names of De Ruyter, Tromp, Evertsen, Piet Hein, van Galen, and Kortenaer.[492]

Some salient differences are that Schaap named his exemplary 'peace scouts' (instead of ideal-types, as with Baden-Powell, they were actual persons) and that he omitted colonized people entirely (Schaap's list only includes the canonical 'colonial heroes' one could find in Dutch school books of that time). This disparity runs through many of the material published by the NPV, the main Dutch Scouting organization for boys since 1915. Whereas Baden-Powell perceived some masculine, noble qualities in subjected peoples across the Empire (besides finding them 'savages' – a hint of white supremacy is never far off), and consequently thought that cherry-picking from the cultural array the empire provided would be vitalizing for the British youth and prevent them from becoming frail city boys unable to play a role in de defense of their country. This line of thought was absent in Schaap's additions to *Scouting for Boys*. Instead, he sketched a pool of great national heroes, which was not only was a testimony to the Dutch Empire, but would also help Dutch boys to develop their "character and skill" if they followed the example set before them.

Schaap's view on empire echoed the line Dutch scouting in general followed when it came to the empire. The colonies where a canvas to project the superiority of colonizing nation on, as became also apparent in a radio speech in October 1927, held by the Dutch Chief Scout, J.J. Rambonnet:

> That the native did not profit so much [from colonial industry and agriculture] as would have been possible, is for a great part caused by the circumstance that the profuse tropical nature takes away the imperative for developing those character treats that pave the way to prosperity. For this reason, among others, the Scouting movement can be of great meaning in educating native society, because it creates an atmosphere of *can do*.[493]

Virility and energy thus traveled a long way through multiple empires. The Baden-Powellian prescript was for British boys to derive it ("dracula-like", as historian Elleke Boehmer put it)[494] from the tribal people of the British Empire. Rambonnet identified that energy as part of the idea of Scouting that had travelled from Britain to the Netherlands, and sought to export it, in turn, to the Dutch colonies. The Southern African

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[492] Ibid., 22–23.

[493] J.J. Rambonnet, 'De Padvindersbeweging in verband met onze Nationale Toekomst: Radiorede uitgesproken op 9 Oktober 1927', *Leidersblad* October 1927.

[494] Daniel Brückenhaus, 'Ralph's Compassion', in *Learning How to Feel: Children's Literature and Emotional Socialization, 1870-1970*, ed. Ute Frevert et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 92.

origins of that "atmosphere of *can do*" were long forgotten during this last stage, which in effect resulted in a neat reversal of Baden-Powell's doctrine.

To diverge like that from the British stance on empire was not uncommon for other Scouting organizations across Europe. We could characterize Baden-Powell's relation to other cultures as *asymmetric reciprocity*. Reciprocal, because there is, as Timothy Parsons put it, "Baden-Powell's appropriation and reinterpretation of 'tribal' tradition demonstrates the indirect influence of subject peoples of the empire on metropolitan British society." Asymmetric, because, again in the words of Parsons, "[Britons] were confident enough in their cultural superiority that they could appropriate and reinterpret what they considered to be the most virtuous aspects of 'tribal life'," in other words, the unequal power relations of empire were still at play.[495] This engagement with other cultures was seen as outright suspect in other countries, and labeled 'cosmopolitan'. In Germany, for instance, Scoutmasters where prevented from introducing oriental tropes to German youth out of fear this would result in a lack of patriotism – in the eyes of German nationalists, the interest in other cultures was a threat to the love for one's own culture, and could therefore undermine the stringent nationalism that was gaining momentum in the early twentieth century. According to historian Jeffrey Bowersox it resulted in an idea of imperialism as a one-way interaction with the world:

> The litany of "pathfinders of Germandom" does not suggest a story of people who went to the world's exotic regions and came back as more capable people; rather, it tells a story of capable people who went to exotic areas and did great things there simply because they were German.[496]

In Bowersox' characterization of German Scouting we recognize the same brand of imperialism as practiced by Schaap, although the latter was not so much a zealous nationalist as someone whose imagination did not reach far. Consequently, Schaap's idea of imperialism echoed the nineteenth-century textbooks in its repetition of the names of centuries-old imperial conquerors. But because stringent nationalism was not the central motive of Schaap, this also meant 'cosmopolitanism' was not rigorously banned from Dutch scouting sources. In the translation of *Scouting for Boys,* Baden-Powell's original content was left largely untouched, while Schaap's Dutch-specific content could

[495] Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 59, 64.
[496] Jeff Bowersox, *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire: Youth and Colonial Culture, 1871-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

be found next to it, which again raises the question if Schaap was fully aware of the disparity between the two.

In the Dutch translation, entitled *Het Verkennen voor Jongens,* he still included the *Eengonyâma* song, "a warrior song that the Zulu would sing for their chief." The song – with the following lyrics: "Leader: 'He is a lion!' Choir: 'Yes! He is more than that, he is a hippo!'" – was supposed to function as a valve to control the release of energy boy-scouts were expected to have in abundance, which only seems like an apt assessment of the effects the disciplinal scouting regime would have on children. It had to be sung "during a march, or to cheer at games, races and gatherings."[497] A detailed instruction on how to perform the song during a 'war dance' follows:

> Into the centre of [the circle a scout] steps forward and carries out a war dance, representing how he tracked and fought with one of his enemies. He goes through the whole fight in dumb show, until he finally kills his foe; the Scouts meantime still singing the Een-Gonyama chorus and dancing on their own ground.[498]

When we turn to Schaap's own content, however, it suggests he had little interest in Baden-Powell's fascination with 'tribal life' or 'savage martiality', such as manifested in the latter's inclusion of the *Eengonyâma* song. In one of Schaap's own chapters he recounted the seafaring past of the Netherlands with its leitmotif of "[achieving great results] with poor means, often facing powerful adversaries."[499] The absolute heroes of this past were Jan Pietersz. Coen and Michiel de Ruyter, to whom the bulk of space on those pages went. The former, for example, is described as follows:

> Coen's career proves how a man of character can rise. The secret of his success is his great vigor and sense of duty. [...] It were hard times, but full of opportunity for bold men with nerves. Such a man was Coen. His labour in the Indies made him the founding father of Dutch authority in the Indies and of incalculable merit to his country.[500]

Probably sensing that this would not necessarily inspire boys to become admirals, Schaaps also mentioned the dangers Dutch colonial conquerors had faced, which included 'hidden cliffs', 'native pirogues' and 'English and Spanish warships.' This had not, however, inspired the play example that concluded the chapter, which is a translation of a whale hunting game that Baden-Powel retrieved from E. Thompson

[497] Baden Powell of Gilwell, *Het Verkennen voor Jongens*, 91–92.
[498] Ibid., 107; English original as quoted in: Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 57–58.
[499] Baden Powell of Gilwell, *Het Verkennen voor Jongens*, 132.
[500] Ibid., 133.

Seton's *Birchbark of the Woodcraft Indians.* The admiration of a 'savage martiality' was largely absent from Dutch Scouting.

Colonial and metropolitan Scouting were embedded into the same organizational structure. It allowed Dutch officials to keep track of the movement in the colonies, but in practice the Indies' branches of the NPO, and subsequently of the NPV, were neglected members. Their status must have been somewhat unclear to readers of the Scouting outlets *De Padvinder* and *Het Leidersblad*, where the colonies appeared only irregularly in the organizational chart. In 1915, *De Padvinder*'s editors wrote about the Batavia branch, lauding the progress it had made as a newfound local branch under the imperial umbrella, but thereby also establishing a clear hierarchy between them:

> Slowly, very slowly, Scouting is landing the Indies. The current reports, though, are very unlike those in the beginning. The inauguration speeches, reports, everything testifies of a serious will to find the right direction, and of great enthusiasm.[501]

The same issue of *De Padvinder* featured photographs from the Batavian Scouts. One of them displays a "cooking exercise near Tjimahi", with a handful scoutmasters standing and a dozen boys sitting around a large cooking pot. The majority of the party has their eyes fixed on the pot, with a few boys' eyes wandering off in other directions, and one scoutmaster gazing intensely at the lens. The group is presumably a mix of Dutch and Indo-European boys, but *De Padvinder* provided little cues to the precise context of this particular cooking and camping exercise, other than that it proves there were in fact outdoor gatherings and that the groups were ethnically diverse.

That there were in fact outdoor gatherings is not as obvious a point as one would expect given the intimate relationship between Scouting and camping. The outdoors were at the forefront of the imagination of the *frontier life* as idealized by Baden-Powell, but in practice the activity of camping was constrained in various ways, and was easily seen as either too dangerous or too luxury. The former was a recurring concern in the colonies, "where it is not possible to go camping or make firm hikes," as the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* mentioned in the early 1930s.[502] It was probably an overstatement, as there is ample evidence of outdoor outings in the colonies, with only excessive rain mentioned as a probably deal breaker.[503] In the metropole, camping was seen as an intrinsic part of Scouting, as testified in the following account by a scoutmaster:

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[501] 'Indië', *De Padvinder: Algemeen Maandblad voor de Ned. Padvindersorganisatie*, November 1915.
[502] 'Jeugdbeweging, voornamelijk in Ned. Indië.', *Bataviaasch nieuwsblad*, 24 September 1931.
[503] See for instance: 'Padvinderij.', *De Indische Courant*, 14 April 1934.

> I'm still in a camp mood, longing for my tent, located at the high banks of the river Regge, longing for the peninsula, for the camp bakery, for the swimming water, for the free, free tent life, with the power and agility of your tanned corpus and the refreshed mind, after dull and nervous city hassle. […] We bemoan those who have not grasped to see the relation between crawling like Indians, boyish glee, and the camp life with its outings, plays and fires. Our ideal [can't be too high-aimed: a better species, a better human]; they don't understand that the path to this ideal must not be dull or preachy.[504]

While the 'real wilderness' in the colonies was sometimes deemed unfit for camping outings, the gentle, if not wet, circumstances in the Netherlands provided a friendly environment to uphold a real sense of adventure, or even the fiction of *frontier life*.[505] Infringements to that idea were readily countered, as happened with what we could call the 'luxurious camp gate', which revolved around the U.S. contingent at the 1937 Jamboree and the allegation their equipment provided them with so much comfort it could not qualify as camping anymore. "In comparison with the other camps, the American section was a 'luxury camp'," a commentator wrote, adding with vile that "the others used the means available, approaching it all in a Scouting spirit." The American defense boiled down to 'safety first', as they cited the country was below sea-level and infamous for its "rain and fog, ditches and ponds, and malaria," which led a Sumatran newspaper to the conclusion it was all a misunderstanding, as the Dutch climate was not in fact so dire as presumed by the Americans.[506] What the controversy demonstrates is the importance of camping to scouting, and the unstable definition of what comprised a outdoors environment friendly enough to camp in, but harsh enough to convey a sense of survival. The Jamboree incited many such misunderstandings, as it was the site where the imaginations and realities of Scouting met, functioning as a microcosm of the imperial world at large.

The 1937 Jamboree

The fourth international Scouting Jamboree was held from 31 July to 9 august 1937 in the Netherlands, at the country estate Vogelenzang, near Bloemendaal. A total of nearly thirty thousands Scouts gathered. Jamborees, besides being a meeting ground for vast

[504] 'Kampeeren.', *De Padvinder: Officieel orgaan van de afdeelingen 's-Gravenhage, Leiden en Dordrecht der Nederl. Padvinders-Organisatie*, September 1915.
[505] On the perceived dangers of outdoor camping and the connection with the idea of a frontier life, in particular in British-Malaya, see: Wu, "'A Life of Make-Believe,'" 604–606.
[506] 'Amerika's "luxe-kamp"', *De Sumatra Post*, 2 August 1937; 'Amerikanen kwamen met klamboes. Het luxe-kamp der Jamboree. Geheel verkeerde voorstelling van Nederland.', *De Sumatra Post*, 25 August 1937.

numbers of Scouts, have a high symbolic value in instilling ideas of nation or citizenship upon its participants and to the outside world. The choice of location, imagery, and selection of participants were therefore not simple, neutral calls for the organizers.[507] The thousands of foreign Scouts tot the 1937 World Jamboree were not just visitors – they were living propaganda, ready to be employed for the ends business or ideology, as some ready examples illustrate. An Australian delegation, described reverently in the papers as "from the country of the Melbourne race," paid a visit to the newly opened airport Schiphol to highlight the technological innovations and the promise of passenger aviation.[508]

Likewise, a group from the Dutch East Indies visited the *Koloniaal Museum* (Colonial Museum) in Amsterdam. "They found their Indies back," read the report on the event by the *Nieuws van den dag voor Nederlands-Indië*. The newspaper's choice of words suggests some ambiguity in the visit, as the Scouts were looking at images and artifacts from their homeland, but found themselves at the side of the barrier usually reserved for visitors without that intimate relation with the things exposed.[509] Colonial exhibits have received their share of scholarly attention. Timothy Mitchell, for instance, identifies the distinguished status of the observer – "an observing gaze surrounded and set apart by the exhibition's careful order" – as what makes an exhibit a representation of reality rather than reality itself.[510] The *Indische* scouts, by their very presence, subverted this neat distinction between observer an observed. Moreover, the exhibition at the Colonial Museum was nothing like the reenactments as usually seen at colonial expositions – the genre of world expositions witnessed an "increasing codification of a standard repertoire", writes historian Alexander Geppert, and the abundant spectacle of reenacted Oriental scenes can easily be recognized as one of the mainstays of the genre – as it was a quiet affair in Amsterdam, limited to displays behind glass.[511] To the scouts, the museum was a dim and distorted mirror, which could not possibly relate to the vastly different experiences of colonial society the group had, as it consisted of boys

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[507] A consciousness of the symbolic value of World Jamborees trippled down to national and regional variants. For example, see the 'arctic' Jamborees that aimed to instill 'the idea of north' in Canadian boys: James Trepanier, 'Building Boys, Building Canada: The Boy Scout Movement in Canada, 1908-1970' (York University Toronto, 2015), 242–73, http://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/30069.
[508] The delegation made its way back to Australia by ship – intercontinental passenger flights were indeed still nothing more than a promise, as some commentators noted not without irony.
[509] 'Zij vonden er Indië terug', *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 26 July 1937.
[510] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 9.
[511] Alexander C.T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 240.

referred to as 'Javanese', 'Chinese', 'native', 'Dutch', 'Eurasian' and '*verlofgangers*' (Europeans on leave in Europe). These paradoxes, inherent to the medium of the exposition, led Mitchell to call them "labyrinth[s] which includes in itself its own exits", and is indeed difficult to say when the *Indische* scouts left the exhibit, as their entire stay had the characteristics of an exhibit, while simultaneously the other Jamboree scouts and the Netherlands unfolded itself as a reversed exhibition to them.[512] This dazzling Droste effect (the recursivity of an object looking at an image of itself looking at an image) applied to the entire Jamboree, where it was impossible to draw a line between observer and observed as the two fluidly related to each other.

[512] Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 10; On the idea of a reversed exhibit, see Geppert's section on 'the city as exposition': Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 236–40.

Guitig kijken de zwarte oogen van dezen Amboneeschen padvinder onder den breed-geranden hoed. Hij zal zich zeker niet vervelen in Holland en bovendien heeft hij altijd nog zijn fluit om vroolijke wijsjes te blazen!

Figure 1 – The national daily *De Telegraaf* reported on the arrival of the *Indische* scouts in the Netherlands. The original caption translates as follows: "Playful the black eyes of this Ambonese scout stare at us from under the brim. He will not be bored in Holland, and otherwise he will always have his flute to play joyous tunes." Source: *De Telegraaf,* 14 July 1937.

The *Indische* scouts were not the only representatives of distant lands at the Jamboree, as thirty-five nationalities were present in total.[513] By its very nature the Jamboree revolved around the act representation. Not only was a major part of the program filled with 'national demonstrations' and 'national performances', where each nationality could demonstrate arts, crafts and performances from their homeland, but also outside the official program the scouts were preoccupied whence the others came. Most strikingly, a frenzy for autographs took hold of the camp. The signature of a foreign scout was seen as a lasting memory for the Dutch troops, as it was explained in a photo book soon published after the Jamboree: "The signature booklet will be the unequalled

[513] There are contradicting reports on the number of nationalities. The figure of 35 is taken from the statistics in the official jubilee book, but other sources report up to fourty-odd different nationalities. Ton Koot, *Jamboree Logboek 1937: kleine middelen, grote resultaten* (Haarlem: Stichting 'Wereld-Jamboree 1937, Bloemendaal-Vogelenzang', 1937), 135.

possession of the Dutch scout. […] When the foreign scout has returned to his people and climate, he will have left a trace in the booklet as well as in the hearts of our scouts and grateful cub-scouts."[514] A similar sense of collecting was provided by a booklet with recipes, distributed among the Jamboree participants by the Dutch lobby organization for the dairy industry. It included Dutch and foreign recipes, including a "Dutch-Indies dish", and drawings from a previous Jamboree detailing the outfits and appearances of scouts of various nationalities.[515] The photo book also marveled at the presence of Scouts from far-away countries, much like the young Willem Oltmans hold a lasting impression of the scout Ali and his red fez. Not only did the book mention that the signatures of the British-Indian scouts were "the most sought-after," but it included a number photos of individual scouts described with orientalist fascination. One photo of a British-Indian scoutmaster was captioned "the gorgeous head of a British-Indian, with his mysterious smile," while another was described as "a dark type, with phlegmatic eyes."[516]

That the 'brown-coloured faces' of overseas participants attracted the specific attention from the European scouts was not surprising, as it followed the exact script of the Jamboree's promotional material. In one of the official posters announcing the event, four scouts sit around a stylized campfire. The figures were designed to resemble two Asians and two Europeans, both generic in outlook, with three of them visible to the viewer *en face* and the fourth one seen from the back. The latter is European, which converges his perspective with that of the viewer. It thus shows the Jamboree primarily as a ground of opportunity for Europeans to meet their colonial subjects.[517] On the campsite, this resulted in a rigid ethnification of the participants, channeled through the official demonstrations that formed a returning element in the daily programs. There were "Scots from Dundee building [a] fortress-like entrance port" and Estonian scouts in traditional garbs, but the category that stood out particularly was the 'warrior dance' performed by various groups. As it was part of the Scouting discourse, most boys were most likely familiar with such dances in the form Baden-Powell introduced it in his *Scouting for Boys*: a feverish dance with excited chants in a language unknown to Western-European boys. The photo book depicts an Australian "ready to perform a

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[514] *Herinneringen aan de Jamboree in 125 foto's*, 21.
[515] A. van Aggelen, *Padvinders van heel de wereld! Kamprecepten van Nederland. Een Jamboree-herinnering, Vogelenzang 1937* ('s-Gravenhage: Het Zuivelbureau, 1937).
[516] *Herinneringen aan de Jamboree in 125 foto's*, 30, 36.
[517] Koot, *Jamboree Logboek 1937*.

Maori dance", and "Indians performing warrior dances." The excitement for the scouts to see 'real' warrior dances must

Figure 2 - Poster with campfire image to promote the 1937 World Jamboree, held in Vogelenzang, the Netherlands.

Figure 3 – Illustration depicting a Jamboree scene in scouting magazine *De Verkenner*, September 1937

have been great, and it mattered little that the dances were no more real than their own performances of such dances, as the American 'Indians' were in fact white Americans dressed up with warbonnets. In the book they are described tong-in-cheek style as if they were native Americans, including many familiar tropes such as references to their "peculiar totem poles" next to their tents, and a procession described as "Indians advancing, but with peaceful intent."[518]

The rigid ethnification at the Jamboree was exceptional within Baden-Powell's movement. In the everyday world of Scouting, common practice was the opposite of what was seen at the massive Jamboree gathering. Just like a Dutch scout could 'play Indian' in normal circumstances, a native Malaysian boy could dress up in campfire gear

[518] *Herinneringen aan de Jamboree in 125 foto's*, 35–36.

inspired by the American image of Indians, and combine with other native motives from around the world. The result was a cultural mishmash of native customs from around the world, molded by imperial hands, but also available to all. As historian Christina Wu noted, this had some limited emancipatory effect, as it allowed native boys to play at being a Colonial playing to be a native, even though it doesn't come close to the egalitarian claims Baden-Powell made for Scouting himself.[519] At the Jamboree, on the other hand, all participants stuck to those expressions associated with their respective countries or empires. Thus, a white Australian could perform a 'Maori dance' with an authority a British-Indian could not. In this way, with proximate knowledge of a custom a prerequisite for inhabiting it, the perceived authenticity of cultural expressions was enhanced. It is worth noting, however, that this 'authenticity' came at the expense of the snippet of emancipatory potential harbored by scouting in its everyday appearance. In a telling paradox, the compartmentalization of ethnicity and the claim to an "international brotherhood"[520] went hand in hand at what was supposed to be the high mass of Scouting.

How did this affect the scouts from the Dutch East Indies at the Jamboree? In her opening speech, Queen Wilhelmina addressed them specifically as fellow compatriots of the Dutch empire:

> Currently addressing you, scout-compatriots, I would foremost of all welcome those from the overseas Empire, who took up the long journey to join this gathering in the mother country. I hope you will take beautiful experiences with you back to your birth ground. Scouts from all parts of the empire, you must never forget you are a host here. Fulfill this task with merry benevolence, to honor the Netherlands' name as a hospitable country.[521]

The queen made a distinction between mother country (*moederland*) and birth ground (*geboorteland*), with which she meant the metropole and the colonies respectively, but all the same urged the native scouts from the Dutch East Indies to act as hosts at Vogelenzang. Likewise, before their departure, the Chief Scout of the Dutch Eacht Indies, G.J. Ranneft, had urged his scouts to "ensure that the Netherlands, as a great colonial power, is represented accordingly at the Jamboree."[522]It all suggests the empire was the default unit of belonging at the Jamboree. On the other hand, the *Indische* scouts were

[519] Wu, '"A Life of Make-Believe"', 589–90.
[520] Koot, *Jamboree Logboek 1937*, 22.
[521] Ibid., 35.
[522] G.J. Ranneft, 'Van uit de Stuurstoel', *Het Indisch Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van de Nederlands-Indische Padvinders*, March 1937.

the representatives of a Dutch colony apart from the metropole. They wore tokens of their ethnicity, as batik neckerchiefs fastened with a rotan woggle adorned the boys' necks.[523] Besides the already mentioned *pendopo* – a "very effective use of bamboo construction", according to Baden-Powell, suggesting Java was "in no way behind"[524] – and visit to the *Koloniaal Museum*, we can get another glimpse of the demonstrations they performed in an item from the Dutch cinema newsreel *Polygoon*, which had caught up with the delegation some days prior to the Jamboree at their visit to Amsterdam. The Scouts from the East Indies are shown in several exercises: three boys portraying presumably a *garuda*, two boys performing a somersault, and a large group around a campfire engaged in an enchanted dance, most probably the *Een-Gonyama* song.[525] Another demonstration at the Sunday afternoon gathering, not included in the newsreel, was a troop from the West Indies staging a sword dance.[526] The East Indies delegation also paid homage to the tomb of *pater patriae* Michiel de Ruyter, the famous admiral from the 17th century. One day later, they were reported to perform a wayang dance.[527] At the Jamboree, a present to Baden-Powell made the ethnicity of the *Indische* scouts stand out once more, as they gave him a kris (dagger) from Solo, one of the royal centers on Central Java.[528]

The program of the *Indische* delegation was as heterogenous as the Queen's message to them was ambiguous, but in fact followed the lines of two different imperatives both stemming from their chief scout Ranneft. The program contained 'national duties' like the homage to De Ruyter –with the implications of colonial subjects honoring a colonial conqueror seemingly lost to all commentators – and native customs like wayang performances – by then not only national Indonesian heritage, but also part of the colonial's canon of a generic native *Indisch* culture. The visit to De Ruyter's shrine can easily be seen as part of Ranneft's already mentioned call to represent the Netherlands as an imperial power. The indigenous arts and craft, on the other hand, are in line with another statement by Ranneft, where he described the Jamboree as a "friendly match" between nations, where "each nationality demonstrates their own

[523] 'Aankomst der Indische Padvinders', *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 23 July 1937.
[524] 'Na de Wereldjamboree', *Weest Paraat*, September 1937.
[525] *Polygoonjournaal* (37-30), 19 July 1937, retrieved at http://www.openbeelden.nl/. My thanks to Christina Wu for bringing this source to my attention and sharing her interpretation.
[526] 'R.K. Verkennersgroepen Demonstreeren. Curaçaosche padvinders zullen zwaarddans uitvoeren', *De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig dagblad*, 14 July 1937.
[527] 'Indische padvinders in het Kol. Instuut', *Soerabaijasch handelsblad*, 19 July 1937.
[528] 'Ned. Indië is present op de Wereldjamboree 1937', *Weest Paraat*, July 1937.

folkore."[529] The two different objectives Ranneft thus identified were not always mutually exclusive, as testified by a commentator who wrote that the composition of the *Indische* troops "provides an interesting image of the diversity of peoples in our East": at times, the very display of ethnicity was seen as a testimony to the Dutch empire.[530]

The burden or representing the Netherlands as a colonial empire fell solely on the shoulders of the *Indische* scouts. The demonstrations of the Dutch troop bore no reference to the empire at all. The inaugural demonstration of the Dutch scouts included flag throwing, cyclists, tent-mounters, and tower-builders – as scouting magazine *De Verkenner* judged with some reservation, it was "a fine demonstration."[531] It is hard to pin down why the Dutch troops eschewed from absorbing 'native' cultural display while other colonial powers happily engaged in the practice. One possible explanation is the quest for authenticity that was prevalent at the Jamboree. Arguably, the Dutch public would find a sword dance by Javanese scouts more mesmerizing than one by metropolitan boys. Another explanation could be to elude the mockery in the Dutch press for some of the demonstrations. The enthusiasm for the totems and war dances was great among the scouts. In the press it was met with a combination of ridicule and humorous approval. A reporter for *De Telegraaf* wrote he had seen some "jolly entertainment", referring to the Australians dressed up as 'aboriginals' hunting down 'kangaroos' and 'emus', played by "scouts in grotesque jute furs, unleashing a burst of laughter."[532]

Scouting and Dutch Imperialism (conclusion)

Scouting's British source materials provided imperial themes on a silver platter to other empires, like the Dutch, that adopted Scouting. The lukewarm handling of those themes in the Dutch scouting movement hints at the absence of imperial consciousness on behalf of the trailblazers of Baden-Powell's invention in the Netherlands. As others have noted, Baden-Powell's 'silver' was rather dim, offering "romanticised trappings of

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[529] 'Radio causerie voor de Nirom gehouden door den H.C., Onderw.: De Wereldjamboree 1937.', *Het Indisch Leidersblad: officieel orgaan van de Nederlands-Indische Padvinders*, May 1937.
[530] Koot, *Jamboree Logboek 1937*, 20.
[531] 'De Vijfde Wereld-Jamboree, Vogelenzang-Bloemendaal, Nederland – 31 Juli – 9 Augustus 1937', *De Verkenner, geïllustreerd maandblad,* August 1937.
[532] 'Kostelijke middag in Jamboree-stad', *De Telegraaf*, 6 August 1937.

African culture", as Timothy Parsons put it.[533] Compared to that, Dutch Scouting offered romanticized trappings of Dutch imperial culture, and not, notably, of Indonesian culture. In the teachings of a prominent Scout like Jan Schaap, in the form of additions to the translation of Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys*, virtue was found in imperial heroes like Jan Pietersz. Coen and Abel Tasman, not in the subjected peoples around the globe. In the Netherlands, the asymmetrical reciprocity of Baden-Powell's original work was replaced with a centrifugal imperial ideology – a space figuratively inhabited by the imperial conquerors sailing the world. These conquerors were not imperial heroes like Lord Jim (drawn from the British imperial imagination), nor like *Groen*'s unnamed protagonist (drawn from the Dutch imperial imagination), but figures from Dutch textbooks: men who embodied the stoutness and earnestness Schaap imagined to be necessary for maintaining the Dutch empire, and served as the ultimate exemplary role-models for Scouting's pupils, and by extension, Dutch boys.

The 1937 Jamboree in the Netherlands demonstrated that the Scouting movement as a whole was perceptible to the culturally essentialist mode of imperialism that was so dominant in Dutch scouting, and which was, remarkably, diverging from Baden-Powell's pick-and-choose style of cultural adaptation. The Jamboree saw every Scout represent their nation or ethnicity, in a rigid way that ran counter to Scouting's other face of fluidity in imagery, roles and identities. While belonging to the same empire provided enough proximity in the Scouting universe for Australians to impersonate the indigenous people of Australia in a fantasized hunting dance, the Dutch scouts refrained from the display of *Indische* cultural expressions, as this task fell upon the *Indische* scouts, many of them from the indigenous and Chinese communities in the colony, who arguably had a more authentic claim to such performances.

Whether Baden-Powell's ultimate aim was in line with that of Dutch scouting – creating unconditionally loyal citizens that would make an effort to mimic the 'work ethic' of imperial conquerors like Jan Pietersz. Coen – is a hard call to make, but his method of employing adventure and boyishness to capture the youth's attention is so intricately bound to his imperial ideology that it is hard to make a distinction between the two. It suggests Baden-Powell valued boyish characteristics on a more fundamental level than his Dutch followers. On this point, the Dutch scouting movement deviated from the British lead, as it seemed more concerned with what was proper conduct for

[533] Parsons, 'Een-Gonyama Gonyama!', 64.

young boys, than with providing them with adventure, or saving 'the boy in men.' The stern demand of loyalty to the monarchy, God, the state, parents, and scoutmasters was mocked by critics, like writer Frederik van Eeden, who asserted that the imperative to 'think autonomously' lost all ground in the face of so many potentially conflicting authorities. What it truly inspired was reverence for authority.

The question that ultimately surfaces what underpinnings of Dutch imperial culture made the scouting movement differ so saliently from its British example. The imperial ideology embodied by the Dutch chief scout J.J. Rambonnet or the organization's magazine's editor Jan Schaap was not a strong set of ideas on par with the romantic model of masculinity and corresponding imperial ideology offered by Baden-Powell. More than a conflict of ideologies, the Dutch Scouting case is that of a relapse into outdated modes of imperialism. It is instructive that Baden-Powell's ideals of frontier life and eternal boyhood were replaced nor erased in Dutch Scouting materials: as they were deemed unintelligible to the Dutch audience, they were simply left for what they were, with the Dutch-specific additions tapping from an entirely different register "Boyishness […] was neither frivolous nor harmless," concludes Bradley Deane in his discussion of the boyhood ideal in Baden-Powell's project, and, by extension, British imperialism. Here we could add that the Dutch absence of ideals of eternal boyhood, frontier life, or romanticized trappings of indigenous life, does not negate that claim. In the microcosm of the World Jamboree, *Indische* scouts were allowed only a strictly confined role; just as the Dutch scouting movement tacitly – perhaps absent-mindedly – subscribed to an imperial ideology that left little agency for the subjected peoples of the empire.

Chapter 6

The Inner Mission[534]

Missionary imperialism and the metropolitan public

By the 1860s, the annual meetings of the *Zeister Zendelingsgenootschap* (ZZG, Zeist Missionary Society) had evolved into much more than just a meeting where the society's formalities where rushed through. The Mission Days (*Zendingsdagen*), as they were called, attracted around two thousand people to the small village of Zeist, most of whom would arrive by train. They would spend the day attending a service, receive updates from the foreign missionary front, enjoy each other's company, listen to 'edifying music' and make hikes in the surrounding forests. For these numerous visitors, it must have been an enjoyable day. For the conveners, the local Moravian Church (*Broedergemeente* or *Hernhutters*), on the other hand, it was much of a burden as they experienced difficulties in handling this amount of people. One of the loyal visitors, the Harderwijk-based pastor Simon Hendrik Buytendijk, would later recall it in this way: "The congregation appreciated the visitors, but we should remind ourselves that also good things can come in abundance. […] To avoid the hustle during the evening sermon, I went for a walk instead. I ran into some Moravian nuns, and they expressed their lament."[535] As we will later see, this experience was the incentive for Buytendijk to take the concept of mission days to the next level. The next year he organised a mission festival (*Zendingsfeest*), which attracted a crowd thrice as large the meetings in Zeist. It was the start of a tradition spanning decades.

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[534] In the history of the Dutch mission, a distinction ought to be made between the Protestant *Zending* and the Catholic *Missie*. In this chapter, with 'mission' I refer to the *Zending*, unless explicitly stated otherwise.
[535] Simon Hendrik Buytendijk, *Het veertigjarig bestaan van het Christelijk Nationaal Zendingsfeest* (Vereeniging 'Christelijk Nationaal Zendingsfeest', 1903), 6–7.

The early 1860s witnessed popular demand for mission days and festivals. Apparently, there was such a thing as a *missionary public*: a public that showed interest in the mission and whose existence was not orchestrated top-down, as the Moravion Congregation barely advertised their meetings. The missionary public, and the 'home mission' or 'inner mission' directed at them, are the subject of this chapter. In her book on Baptist missionaries and the home mission in Britain, *Civilising Subjects*, Catherine Hall suggests to take move to a new and more inclusive definition of 'the public sphere' (and of the public itself), thus departing from Habermas's classic model. Joining the long row of critics of Habermas, Hall argues that his public sphere is too secular: it is rational, unrestricted and with equal access for all, and this classic model does not leave room for the place the church had in the British society. She suggests an alternative public sphere that includes religion:

> [R]eligious belonging was central to a large section of the population, and myriad practices focused around churches and chapels, structuring the daily lives of their congregations. These public places were sites for the construction of identities for men and women, for the creation of new subjects, civilised and civilising subjects. They were places of belonging, connection and identification, within which moral codes and obligations were enunciated, duties spelt out, responsibilities articulated. […] The missionary public, conceptualised as a site for the construction of the constitution of Christian subjects […] requires an expanded notion of public and an awareness of its private and psychic dimensions.[536]

This is the case for The Netherlands as well, where a variety of practices existed around organized religious life. It was the breeding ground for imperial, national and religious public identities. Of this latter category, this chapter has its focus on the dominant religious group in The Netherlands at this time, the orthodox Protestants.[537] It spanned from the massively attended mission festivals to women's auxiliary organizations going door-to-door to raise funds on a grassroots level. In this chapter, I set out to explore what it entailed to participate in these activities. How did the various cross-sections of the public identify themselves against the backdrop of a home missionary culture? And did this align with the intentions of the instigators, the administrators and ideologues

[536] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, 293.

[537] For the nineteenth century, religious life in The Netherlands predominantly revolved around various Protestant denominations. Catholicism and Judaism were the most notable religious minorities. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, their numbers were relatively stable; they respectively constituted around 35% and 2% of the total population. See: Hans Knippenberg, *De religieuze kaart van Nederland: omvang en geografische spreiding van de godsdienstige gezindten vanaf de Reformatie tot heden* (Uitgeverij Van Gorcum, 1992), 265–89.

within the missionary movement? Who found "dignity and meaning in relation to their nation's far-flung empire," as Susan Thorne has argued for the case of Britain?[538]

In this chapter, I will turn to the metropolitan missionary public on some occasions were it manifested itself, but before doing so, I will turn to the concept of the 'Inner Mission.' The long history of the term notwithstanding, it has largely been obscured by Dutch missionary societies. The missionary world professed that its core activities were directed at non-Christian peoples overseas, mostly imperial subjects, and these activities were indispensable for the missionary organizations. It is difficult to conceive of them without their overseas endeavours, as much as it would be harmful to belittle the detrimental impact it has had on many societies.[539] That missionary societies self-conceived as overseas business, however, obscures the long history *home front* and the coordinated efforts from these same societies to simultaneously win support at home for the overseas converting activities and edify the masses. Subsequently, I will turn to some faces of the metropolitan missionary public. First of these are the mission festivals: large outdoor gatherings with up to ten thousand visitors, in a time when mass public outings were still a rarity. The mission festivals revolved around celebrating the overseas work of the missionary societies, but simultaneously helped shape a protestant public at home. Secondly, in an attempt to read 'against the grain', the missionaries themselves come to speak in two sections. Although they formed the inner core of the missionary in-crowd, I would like to look at them as once-outsiders, since all of them went through a moment of recruitment, where they made the transition from outsider to insider. What drew them to the mission and made them decide to opt for this lifetime career? As the subsequent section will show, the mission provided different groups with different opportunities, much along lines of class and gender. Another section will deal with one of the most precarious aspects of Dutch missionary organization: their quest for money. As the foreign mission was a costly enterprise, difficulties with squaring the budget was a perpetual theme in the history of most missionary societies. Numerous people made donations of sometimes mere cents to the mission. This network of support was fostered mainly by women's auxiliary organizations, as women were

[538] Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century England*, 4.
[539] See for instance: Patricia Grimshaw, 'Faith, Missionary Life, and the Family', in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 260–80.

believed to be better suited for the task of going door-to-door, entering sometimes literally people's private spheres.

Internal colonialism

At first glance, the mission appears to have been an *inherently overseas* project. At its motivational core we find a mix of theological considerations, compassion, and the desire to advance the spread of civilisation. The foundation of the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* (NZG, Dutch Missionary Society) in 1799 was defended by the claim this would bring "true civilisation" to a larger part of the Earth, with the bible being "the book of true civilisation."[540] For the willing eye, a lack of civilisation could probably be seen anywhere, but the NZG directed their efforts of the "advancement of Christianity" not equally at everyone, but "in particular at the heathens," as the subtitle of the society's name ran.[541] After all, non-Christian people were to be found in abundance in the colonies, while the majority of metropolitan citizens was Christian already. Although the usual disclaimers about the connection between official denomination on the one hand, and what is actually professed on the other, apply here, the percentage of the Dutch population that was registered as either Catholic, Dutch Reformed (*Hervormd*), Christian Reformed (*Gereformeerd*) or of minor Christian denominations never dropped below 95% throughout the nineteenth century.[542]

This image of the mission as something with an outward direction is enhanced by the messages sent out through missionary channels, such as periodicals. This remains so in the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond, although at this time there was, in fact, already a thriving home missionary culture. If we open a random issue of the *Maandberigten* (Monthly Reports), the NZG's main communication channel, it typically consists of one article of around fifteen pages, followed by organisational

[540] Anonymous orthodox protestant pastor (1801), as quoted in: Joris van Eijnatten, "Beschaafd Koninkrijk: Het NZG en de motivering van de Zending rond 1800," in *Twee eeuwen Nederlandse zending 1797-1997. Twaalf opstellen*, ed. Th. van den End (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997), 6; In the second half of the nineteenth century, civilising and converting become the poles in a heated debate among missionaries, revolving around the question which of the two should come first in attempts to bring Christianity to non-Christian people: August Theodoor Boone, *Bekering en beschaving: de agogische activiteiten van het Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap in Oost-Java (1840-1865)* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1997).

[541] *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap ter voortplanting en bevordering van het Chrisendom, bijzonder onder de Heidenen* (Dutch Missionary Society for the advancement of Christianity, in particular among the heathens).

[542] Joris van Eijnatten and Fred van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 330.

announcements regarding the membership fees, the members of the board and committees, and all gifts and inheritances received including the names of their benefactors.[543] The articles report 'from the field', and without notable exception feature an exotic geographical location in their titles. The organisational matters, on the other hand, give the impression of a small metropolitan base whose sole *raison de être* is to enable the overseas activities, in a purely functional fashion. The 'gifts and inheritances' section did not just fill space – which was scarce in a monthly magazine consisting of approximately fifteen pages – but carried along the main message for its metropolitan readers: the mission was not possible without these gifts. The home base of the missionary society was furthermore enhanced by the fact the *Maandberigten* were read out aloud monthly in church.

The focus on overseas activities within missionary periodicals is reflected in the historiography on the subject. In *Holland op zijn breedst* (Holland at Large), for example, Martin Bossenbroeks tackles the question of the colonies "in Dutch culture", but his chapter on the mission almost exclusively deals with the activities in the Indonesian archipelago and the corresponding ideas on this work of ideologues and administrators of the mission in the metropole.[544] Nonetheless, his work contains some important clues for our purpose here. First of all, he notes that before 1800 the mission clashed with the trade interests of the East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, VOC). Missionaries were present nonetheless, but had to curtail their activities to the regions previously converted to Catholicism by the Portuguese. In predominantly Islamic regions any missionary activity was forbidden. In the first half of the nineteenth century, when control over the colonies was transferred from the VOC to the Dutch state – interrupted by fifteen years of British rule during the Napoleontic era – little changed. On Java, the Mission remained a prohibited activity. Bossenbroek identifies the period from 1800 onwards as that of the "New Mission." This period, spanning the long nineteenth century, is characterized by an increase of missionary activity, partly due to the replacement of the VOC as the administrator of the colony by a state-led colonial administration at the end of the eighteenth century. Trade interests were not completely out of the picture, however, and the mission could only expand gradually and was still

543 *Maandberigten voorgelezen in de maandelijksche bedestonden van het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap, betrekkelijk de uitbreiding van het Christendom, bijzonder onder de heidenen. Voor het jaar 1870.* (Rotterdam: M. Wyt & Zonen, 1870).
544 Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*.

mainly bound to the outer regions of the archipelago. Among them, the Minahassa (the northern part of Celebes, present-day Sulawesi) became the most prominent site of missionary activities.[545]

Secondly, Bossenbroek raises the issue of the relation between mission and state. Formally, the two were independent, and their interests did not always coincide, as the restriction for the NZG to expand their activities shows. Yet, the presence of NZG missionaries in the outer regions of the colony meant they found themselves at the frontiers of imperial expansion. In converting and civilising colonial subjects at these frontier regions, their interests were close to those of the colonial government. In the Batak region on Sumatra, the presence of various missionary organizations from the 1860s onwards was the first structural encounter with colonial interference. In contrast, missionary activities on Java were only allowed long after colonial rule was established. But the contrast between "flag following cross" or "cross following flag" should not be exaggerated, Bossenbroek concludes, as they were never "more than a single day's march apart."[546]

The image of state and church working with concerted efforts on a joint imperial project dissolves rapidly when we shift our attention to the metropole. In one of the *Maandberigten* of the NZG, the relation between state and religion was sketched as follows. In the metropolitan imagination, the state and the church were rivals, battling for the same ground:

> In some regions of the immense territory of the United States of Northern America […] live the distinctive tribes of Indians, or the so-called redskins, the poor remains of what were once numerous people, who used to rule that land. Just like elsewhere, the government does little to nothing for their spiritual needs. The statesman rather seems of the opinion that they ought to be ousted or exterminated; whereas the Christian thinks that these pagans should be won for the empire of God. In this way they are preserved, elevated and civilized.[547]

In this depiction of the situation in the United States, the reader is invited to picture him- or herself in the position of the Christian. In this hierarchical world where one either educates or is educated, this meant the Dutch public could imagine being part of the former half. It also juxtaposed the state and the church, depicting the latter as compassionate and the former as coldhearted. The true civilizing mission, the implication was, resided with the church.

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[545] Ibid.; Frans Lion Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der zending* (Amsterdam: J.A. Wormser, 1896), 190.
[546] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, 137.
[547] NL-UtHUA, 1102-1, file 333: *Maandberigt no. 5* (1879)

Moreover, religious movements, and in particular the orthodox protestant branch, aimed at constructing a blueprint for a national, Dutch identity, thereby promoting their particular protestant identity to be the desired national identity. Paradoxically, this political stance of the church sprang from a development that initially hinted at the opposite: around 1800 religion started to be located in the minds of individuals rather in the public domain. "Christianity," writes historian Peter van Rooden, "was depicted as a moral power that affected individuals. It did not aspire to change the public sphere directly."[548] Consequently, the religious order became an educative, patronizing force, directing itself at citizens and their private sphere. According to Van Rooden it is this mindset – the idea to educate and transform citizens – that can also be found at the birth of the modern missionary project in the colonies. Thus, the church had similar attitudes to subjects at home and overseas. As Joris van Eijnatten has put it: "To those remote places they did not only bring their belief in the Kingdom of God, but also a new idea of what that Kingdom entailed. It was a modern idea, and its pedagogical nature was profoundly restrictive – and therefore fit to discipline the masses at home and in the colonies."[549]

The two domains of missionary activities became known as the inner mission (*inwendige zending*) and the outer mission (*uitwendige zending*). They remained firmly separated. When the NZG was founded, the home mission was not mentioned, and the similarities in attitude towards subjects overseas and in the metropole not noted. Still, it is striking that the founders of the NZG saw the need to specify at whom they directed their efforts of spreading Christianity, as they added "among the heathens" to the title of their society. During the nineteenth century the distinction was articulated more explicit. When a pastor published a booklet in 1869 to explain the aims and origins of the NZG, he stated that the NZG's efforts "were distinct from the work done to improve cases of neglect in our own circles, which is usually referred to as the inner mission."[550] What was regarded by contemporaries as the 'home mission', on the other hand, was the sphere of poor relief and philanthropy. The life of Otto Gerhard Heldring (1805-1876), one of the prominent orthodox protestant pastors most associated with the inner mission, illustrates the variety of causes that constituted the inner mission. He was

[548] Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes: over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland 1570-1990* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), 126.
[549] Van Eijnatten, 'Beschaafd Koninkrijk'.
[550] J. Craandijk, *Het Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap in Zijn Willen En Werken* (Rotterdam: M. Wyt & Zonen, 1869), 9.

actively engaged in the administration of two homes for 'neglected girls', wrote against alcohol abuse and was associated with orthodox revival movements such as the Reveil.[551]

The idea that the NZG and other (outer) missionary organizations did not heave any stake in the inner mission field was a negation of reality. The entire metropolitan infrastructure that supported the overseas mission, which included numerous magazines, fairs, and mission festivals, was not merely functionalist from a financial point of view. It was also an attempt to civilise the metropolitan population, in other words, it was a home mission. The periodicals issued by the NZG aimed at increasing the devotion and Christian engagement of its readers.[552] But the colonial comparison never took root, and the literal use of the term for 'home purpose' is only found in the 1930s in a completely different context: the colonisation of reclaimed land and the establishment of state-led model societies on these new lands.[553] Although a distinction ought to be made between internal colonisation and internal colonialism (the former referring to populating remote areas through settling; the latter the Marxist idea of the control of the center over the periphery), it is striking that both terms seem to bear a primarily geographical connotation.[554] Home missions, on the other hand, were rather based on distinctions in class, race or gender, and geography only enters in second instance, through spatial segregation along class and race distinctions. The geographical dimension is sometimes reinvoked metaphorically in direct comparisons between the outer and inner missions. These comparisons were, however, rare in the Netherlands – a situation that was completely different in Britain, where comparisons between the metropolitan poor and the overseas heathens were explicit, and articulated in racial discourse.[555]

Although the NZG and other missionary societies may not have seen the inner mission as their key task, they did in fact initiate home missionary initiatives. Despite the lack of the explicit racialising of the Dutch lower class, the inner and outer missions had a lot in common as soon as we expand our notion of the home mission from fields of

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[551] H. Reenders, *Alternatieve Zending: Otto Gerhard Heldring (1804-1876) en de verbeiding van het christendom in Nederlands-Indië* (Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J.H. Kok, 1991), 23–84.
[552] Van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes*, 123–124.
[553] Liesbeth van de Grift, 'On New Land a New Society: Internal Colonisation in the Netherlands, 1918–1940', *Contemporary European History* 22, no. 4 (2013): 609–626.
[554] Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 23.
[555] Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century England*.

alcohol abuse and neglected youth to more far-reaching events. The mission days and festivals that came in vogue in the 1850s and 1860s show the missionary public in an odd double role. Catherine Hall's phrase 'civilising subjects' is most instructive here: this was a process where the public was both being civilised (being the object of the action) and vicariously participating in civilising others.[556]

Mission festivals

At the end of July 1863, a number of Dutch newspapers announced that later that summer an Ecumenical Evangelic National Mission Festival[557] (*Algemeen Evangelisch Nationaal Zendingsfeest*) would be held in the forests surrounding Wolfhezen, a small town in the east near Arnhem. Potential visitors were allured with "twenty speakers from all over the country, including pastors from Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht." In addition, "cheap bread, coffee, tea and beer" would be for sale on the festival terrain, with the explicit mention that strong liquor was prohibited, and festive songs (*feestliederen*) would be printed for the occasion.[558] It was a profoundly religious gathering, to be sure, but at the same time a leisurely day out. For the decades to come, the festival would remain to hold the middle between piety and fun.

It was not the first mission festival to be held in the Netherlands. The congregation of the Moravian Church (*Broedergemeente*) in Zeist, most notably, already held an annual meeting for its Zeist Mission Society (*Zeister Zendingsgenootschap*), and the increasing popularity showed the imperative for something on a vaster scale. What made the Ecumenical National Evangelic Mission Festival –henceforth Mission Festival – without precedent was not only its scale, though, but also the fact it united all denominations. This had more to do, however, with the fact it was initially a private initiative of the Harderwijk-based pastor Simon Hendrik Buytendijk. The different protestant denominations were far from united. In its early stage, the project could not count on support from the missionary organisations due to its ambitious aims. They

[556] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*.
[557] The name later changed into *Christelijk Nationaal Zendingsfeest* (Christian National Mission Festival), probably because 'Evangelical' lost its non-partisan connotation and became associated with one particular denomination.
[558] See for example *De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig dagblad*, 25 July 1863, or, for a more lengthy announcement, *Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant*, 28 July 1863.

only later joined in; the published program of the first festival in 1863 still featured a call for them to join in and benefit from the collections that were to be held.[559]

At the sixth of August that year, the Mission Festival attracted six thousand visitors. A special shuttle train (*Expresse Spoortrein*), that only stopped at a handful of stations in the West of the country, brought about half of them directly to the festival terrain. In the subsequent years, cities in the North and East joined the express connection. In the first year, a Rotterdam newspaper reported on the good mood of the people who, early in the morning of, boarded the festival train in that city: “The train had only just set in motion when the travelers univocally commenced in singing spiritual songs, which they persisted all the way until they reached Wolfhezen just after 9 in the morning.”[560] The day consisted mainly of talks concluded by singing. There were general lectures at the start and end of the day, but for the body of the program the different speakers were dispersed over four locations. Visitors had to choose whom to listen to, and the speakers spoke to an audience of sixteen to seventeen hundred each.

The green surroundings were not ‘on the program’ in the same sense as lectures and songs were, but it was a defining element in the experience of a mission festival. In the midst of nature, the visitors could hike, rest, and spend time together with like-minded people. The Mission Festival was therefore more than an open-air church service, and was seen as a day out. This raised questions from the side of religious hardliners. One of the organizers, Simon Hendrik Buytendijk, had to assure that religion took central stage and was not undermined by the pleasure-element of the festival:

> Had they been in for the fun only, then they could as well have taken the train a day earlier, and for less money. No, these visitors preferred to combine the two: express their interest in the expansion of the Kingdom of God, as well as enjoying nature in the company of like-minded people.[561]

But was the Mission Festival about the ‘Kingdom of God’, or about the mission specifically? For Buytendijk, the two were not mutually exclusive. The festival’s public was cast in a double role: it was both converter in the colonies, as it was the object of missionary endeavours at home. The inner and outer mission had a different vantage point, and the metropolitan public found itself on different sides respectively:

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[559] *Programma van het eerste Algemeen Evangelisch Nationaal Zendingsfeest, te houden te Wolfhezen den 6den Augustus 1863* (Rotterdam: G.B. Poeschmann, 1863), 6–7; Buytendijk, *Het veertigjarig bestaan*, 7–8.
[560] *Rotterdamsche Courant,* 7 August 1863
[561] Buytendijk, *Het veertigjarig bestaan*, 6.

> To name what had happened in Wolhezen a Ecumenical Evangelical National Mission Festival made sense; Mission should be understood in a twofold way, the so-called outer and inner mission. The latter not its philanthropic meaning, but in the sense of preaching the gospel to those who are deprived of it in their hometowns, or to those who are not familiar with it. This mass came for a word of the heart, to be edified and raised in their faith.[562]

It can hardly be said that the outer and inner missions had the same status, as missionary organisations originally preoccupied themselves with the converting colonial subjects overseas, whereas the mission on metropolitan territory was not conceived to be on their agendas. In the depiction of his mission festivals, however, Buytendijk presented the inner mission as having a long pedigree, associating it with the missionary saint Willebrord, the famous missionary who, according to the school books, converted 'the Dutch'[563] at the end of the seventh century, and with Adelbert and Engelmund, early eight-century preachers who came to the low countries in Willibrord's wake. In 1870, the festival took place near Heiloo: "There in the surroundings the famous Anglo-Saxon missionary Willebrord had his main seat," Buytendijk wrote not without pride. According to him, Heiloo and other places nearby where the festival would be held in years to follow, were sites consecrated by history.[564]

Outsiders tended to see the festival without these echoes from a distant past in a less lofty fashion, and were more critical at the role it fulfilled in the (then) present. The festival took up a new name in 1874 and became the *Christelijk Nationaal Zendingsfeest*. Commentators regularly mocked the two new adjectives, Christian and National. In a long treatise on popular feasts and festivals, the jurist R. Vorstman doubted the national scope of the Mission Festival: "The Mission Festivals are far from national in character, and probably never will be. Just a small minority of the Dutch people [...], drawn from the bourgeoisie, has the hearts and minds for this kind of festivities." Moreover, he mocked the Christian nature of these gatherings, and argued that most of the visitors were not likely to be driven by religious interest, but rather by a general curiosity. These were not religious festivals, but '*buitenfeesten*' or picnics, and even for those who wanted to listen to the delivered sermons this was impossible, as none of the speakers allegedly was audible in the open terrain.[565]

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[562] Ibid., 16.
[563] Suffice it to say that the Dutch nation did not exist as such in the 7th Century. For more, see: Marco Mostert, In de Marge van de Beschaving: De Geschiedenis van Nederland, 0-1100 (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2009).
[564] Buytendijk, *Het veertigjarig bestaan*, 20.
[565] Mr. R. Vorstman, *Volksfeesten* (Leyden: Jac. Hazenberg, Corn. Zoon, 1869), 40–41.

The missionary aspect of the events was criticized too. As noted by the orthodox political leadsman Abraham Kuyper, the mission was merely a pretext for much more, as it combined the treats of a religious service, a day out and a network meeting.[566] For the strong anti-liberal and anti-modern branches in orthodox Protestantism, these more profane aspects were harmful to the religious purity of the festival. Even many years later the newspaper associated with Kuyper's strict-orthodox movement would describe the Mission Festival's various functions with a clear sense of hierarchy – enjoying nature came first, the mission last – as we can see here:

> The aim they have with the Mission Festivals is, besides enjoying nature, beautiful in God's creation, and in association with like-minded people, is to enhance the interest in the missionary works overseas.[567]

These quarrels over how Christian, national and missionary the Mission Festival was, show how contested its status was and how unstable the hierarchy between imperialism, nationalism an orthodox Protestantism in the public sphere was. Although the Mission Festival could hardly be called 'national' in character, the aim of many Protestant leaders was to let Protestant and national identities coincide. Even though Abraham Kuyper, the orthodox political leadsman, and Buytendijk, the festival organizer, disagreed profoundly on the religious purity of the event, on this question they agreed: both of them equated the orthodox cause with the national cause. This is reflected in many festival talks. In his speech on the first festival in 1863, for example, the pastor H.C. Voorhoeve, head of the Missionary School (*Zendelinghuis*) in Rotterdam, claimed that converting heathens in the Indies was in the interest of the nation:

> The other enemy on Java is the Islam, the religion of Mohammed. He spreads and takes root everywhere. [...] What he would like upmost is to see us murdered and expelled from the colony. When Islam reaches the people's heart, and the true population adheres to Mohammedan principles, then the war of religions becomes a holy plight. The danger is we would loose Java. Evangelisation is a state interest.[568]

There were several similar arguments circulating. All offered an orthodox blueprint for the Dutch nation, not acknowledging any other subgroups in The Netherlands. The only dichotomy that was maintained was that between colonizer and colonized. And as

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[566] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 118.
[567] *De Heraut*, 9 June 1912.
[568] Jan Andel, *Het Eerste Algemeen Evangelisch Nationaal Zendingsfeest, den 6den Augustus 1863 te Wolfhezen gehouden, herdacht: Verslag van wege de commissie, door een harer leden opgesteld; benevens de gehoudene toespraken* (Rotterdam: G.B. Poeschmann, 1863), 70.

colonizers, the Netherlands horribly failed. As one pastor put it, "deep shame will come over us […] once we get fully acquainted with the history of the Mission […] once we become familiar with the unfulfilled debt of Christ to the heathen." The Dutch nation was indebted by the abuse of its rule and responsibility in the years before, the atrocities filling everyone who read reports from overseas with shame, this pastor argued. What he meant was that colonial rule had not been Christian enough, as the Dutch nation had not been Christian enough. Repaying this debt meant becoming a more Protestant nation, which would consequently rule its colonies in a more Protestant fashion.[569]

If the missionary activities in the Indies served the Dutch nation, then so did, by extension, the mission festivals in the Netherlands. This is indeed one of the conclusions Annemarie Houkes made in her study on the orthodox-protestant community in the Netherlands during the second half of the nineteenth century. According to her, the various mission festivals helped to imagine a nation-wide orthodox community, thereby referring to Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities. "By exploring the boundaries of their community," she writes, "through the experience of the ritual of the mission festival, through songs and lectures, through all these things the mission festival shaped the mental construction of the orthodox-protestant community."[570] Given the fact Houkes's primary interest was this community, it may not fully surprise us that she read the mission festivals through the lens of community building rather than through a missionary lens. But as she demonstrates, there were more aspects to this process of imagining a community that can be found in the mission festivals. The missionary theme was one of the aspects, but so were other moral struggles, such as the orthodox desire for a ban on liquor. All in all, the Mission Festival was not exclusively about the mission.

So far, most accounts of the mission festival that featured here came from people for whom there was something at stake: they were either fierce defenders or severe critics. In-crowd sources like these should be read against the grain.[571] Although distanced commentators can provide a good source, it is good to bear in mind that absolute indifference of contemporaries cannot give meaningful historical insight either – these people would probably not write about the home mission, and if so, it would be collateral to whatever had their interest, which places a question mark to their

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[569] Ibid., 37–38; See also: Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 123–24.
[570] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 130; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
[571] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 182.

reliability. To explore the limits of witness's reports, and see what elements of the mission festivals prevailed, and how the different interpretations relate to each other, I will now turn to some 'outsiders' – some are truly outsiders, others are participants that are excluded in one way or another, but all of them shine some light on the constituency of the Mission Festival. The writer Frederik van Eeden (1860-1932)[572] is on of those outsiders – as an adult, he never visited mission festivals, nor was he a fierce opponent of them. The world of colonialism at large, on the other hand, was not unknown to him as he his father was the director of the Colonial Museum in Haarlem. In his career as writer, psychologist and political-utopian thinker, however, the colonial world hardly ever featured. On a young age he witnessed a mission festival, and he used this experience in his children's novel *De Kleine Johannes* (1892, translated as Little Johannes).[573] In this coming-of-age story the protagonist finds himself in a thumb-sized phantasy world, where he is guided by the fairy *Windeskind*. Out in the forest, the following occurs:

> There they came, the people – The women carrying baskets and umbrellas, the men wearing straight black top hats. They were primarily black, very black. In the sunny and green forest they resembled ink stains on an exquisite painting.
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> [...]
>
> A man rose from the crowd and positioned himself on a hillock. He was pale, with long blonde hair. When he gave a sign all the people opened their mouths widely, and started to sing. It was so loud that cawing crows flew up from their high nests, and the curious rabbits, assembled at the edge of the dunes, got frightened and started to run for fifteen minutes, until they were well-safe.[574]

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[572] Frederik van Eeden, writer and psychiatrist, was on of the leading figures of the *Tachtigers*, an influential movement in late-nineteenth century Dutch literature. He was the son of the director of the *Koloniaal Museum* in Haarlem. Although the *Tachtigers* rebelled against morality and utilitarianism (they were associated with the slogan *l'art pour l'art*), he later became more political and developed into the direction of anarchism. He gave substance to his ideals by founding the commune *Walden*, which existed from 1897 to 1907. In a later stage, he converted to Catholicism. His most famous works include *De Kleine Johannes* (1885) and the novel *Van de Koele Meeren des Doods* (1900).

[573] E.M. ten Cate, 'Korte inleiding tot "de Kleine Johannes"', *Vragen van den dag: Maandschrift voor Nederland en koloniën, staathuishoudkunde, staatsleven en godsdienst, natuurwetenschappen, uitvindingen en ontdekkingen, aardrijkskunde, geschiedenis en volkenkunde, koloniën, handel en nijverheid enz.* 34, no. 3 (1919): 194.

[574] Frederik van Eeden, *De kleine Johannes. Deel 1* (Den Haag: Mouton, 1892), 52–54. The original: "Daar kwamen zij aan, de menschen. - De vrouwen met manden en parapluien in de hand, de mannen met hooge, rechte, zwarte hoeden op. Ze waren meest allen zwart, erg zwart. In het zonnige, groene bosch zagen zij er uit als groote, leelijke inktvlekken op een prachtig schilderij. [...] Een man rees op uit de menigte en ging op een heuveltje staan. Hij had lang, blond haar en een bleek gezicht. Hij zeide iets en toen deden alle menschen hunnen mond erg wijd open en begonnen te zingen, zoo hard, dat de kraaien krassend opvlogen van hunne hooge nesten en de nieuwsgierige konijntjes, die van den duinrand gekomen waren

The event Johannes and Windeskind witnessed in this story was a mission festival: a popular open-air gathering dedicated to the works of missionary organisations overseas, which gained widespread popularity among the Dutch orthodox protestant public in the course of the nineteenth century. From the perspective of this thumb-sized world of Van Eeden's protagonists, the festival's visitors are disturbing nature, let alone 'in touch' with it. Still, most visitors experienced the mission festivals as an exercise in appreciating the outdoors, as their accounts testify. The discrepancy is salient: what for the one group feels like a spiritual gathering amidst the green country estates, for others comes across as a breach of peace in the very same area.

Which of all these festival ingredients prevailed? And for whom? For the circle of pastors and politicians, the main pool from which the speakers where drawn, the reflections on their faith and the mission were without doubt of major importance. The question is whether the majority of the visitors was similarly impressed by theological treats. As we have seen above, some feared the festival was too much of a loud fair, and this is indeed the image that arises from accounts of the festival with attention for the broader audience. Waling Dykstra, who wrote a booklet about the festival in Oranjewoud in 1873, vividly describes a scene where three visitors have a misunderstanding with a waiter in one of the catering places. They order three beers, but due to their accent, the waiter understands *Beijersch* (meaning 'from Bavaria') and brings them large beer mugs. The quarrel that unfolds is about the price: the three visitors are only willing to pay the price that was advertised for beers in the festival program (five cents), whereas the waiter explains they should pay more, since they specifically ordered larger beer mugs. Dykstra explains: "They were no crooks, but simply thought they were in their rights to do so. They did not grasp their *bijer* sounded as *beijersch*. But I could see they frequented the church more often than the beer house."[575] So although Dykstra in the end defends these three men as loyal churchgoers, the image that arises is that of a scene where taking a principal standpoint could concern the price of alcohol as easily as religion. Later on, Dykstra gives a sketch of the festival audience:

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om eens te kijken, verschrikt aan 't loopen gingen en een kwartier lang bleven doorloopen, toen zij reeds veilig weder in 't duin waren."

[575] Waling Dykstra, *Reis naar het zendingsfeest in het Oranjewoud op den 9den Julij 1873* (Leeuwarden: L. Schierbeek, 1873), 4–5.

> On this day in Oranjewoud I saw Christian boys with brightly coloured summer trousers, dashing jackets, creative hats; girls in full parade, with fine velvet hats, all according to the latest trends. The Christian youth came in couples, just like other youth goes to fairs in couples. They joked around, laughed and talked about vain matters of all sorts.[576]

This resembles much of a decent but worldly event. The youth that Dykstra describes parades and saunters; religious interests seem to follow way behind on their priority list – if at all. For others, though, it is exactly the pious element that is salient, as it was the only thing that truly set the Mission Festival apart from more profane fairs. Take for example the writer Gerard van Eckeren[577], who had an orthodox background and came from a preachers' family.[578] In the story *Ida Westerman* he lets his young title character express her disdain for the festivalgoers:

> She tought of all those people over there on the lawn, swarming around the wooden canteen. She lightly shivered. It was wrong, she knew it, but she despised all those people.[579]

It is only after hearing some open-air sermons that Westerman lets her alter her view, and she starts to feel something of the transcendental experience and the feeling of brother- and sisterhood with the other visitors. It is likely that Van Eckeren tried to depict how the festival experience should be like, from the orthodox perspective: he acknowledged one could be hesitant at first, like his protagonist, but in the contours of the protestant community should sharply enter your mind. It is telling that the outer mission, in the meantime, is completely absent in Van Eckeren's story.

The festival as a place where one seeks spiritual inspiration is also the main theme in a report on the second festival in 1864 by Elise van Calcar. According to her, the outdoor location of the festival invited for readings from the Genesis creation narrative. However, the talks she heard came across "monotonous", and she missed any reference to Genesis. She found herself a quiet spot on the festival terrain in the shadow of a large tree, and let her thought run free – the result, the speech she had wanted to hear, delivered to her "by the tree", can be found in her writings. Her report provoked anonymous criticism from a fellow-townsman, who asserted that the style figure of the preaching tree was pedantic and a sign of bad taste, as it was *her* speech, which she had

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[576] Ibid., 9.
[577] Pseudonym of Maurits Esser (1876-1951).
[578] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 300.
[579] Gerard van Eckeren, 'Ida Westerman', *Onze Eeuw: maandschrift voor staatkunde, letteren, wetenschap en kunst* 8 (1908): 183.

wished to relate to the audience. He continues: "That is why she is so critical of the orators [*de heeren redenaars*], they spoke too much and too long, and robbed her of the opportunity to speak herself." There is a heavily gendered element in this polemic, as this commentator brings the sex of Van Calcar to the fore in every second sentence, suggesting she is not entitled to speak.[580]

The imaginary community of orthodox Protestants, with its very real manifestation in the form of the Mission Festival, was indeed not all-inclusive. Women like Elise van Calcar found themselves on the listening side and do not feature the extensive list of speakers that was published in 1903, to celebrate the fourteenth anniversary of what was by then called the Christian National Mission Festival (*Christelijk Nationaal Zendingsfeest*).[581] This exclusion did not only target women, as many of the lower class visitors better not had any aspirations of once making it to the speaker's chairs. How could Van Calcar remain an exception in her protest? At the surface, however, there were some unmistakably egalitarian elements in the mission festivals. There where for example no assigned seats, so everyone had a chance to find themselves close to the speaker. This has led Annemarie Houkes to argue that the visitors of the Mission Festival were invited to imagine themselves as being part of a "community of believers", spanning the whole empire, even including the newly-converted subjects in the colonies.[582]

There was, however, one important dividing line running through this empire-wide imaginary community. As noted earlier, the festival's public was cast in two roles: at home, they were subjected to missionary endeavours of Buytendijk and others, whereas in the larger picture they were invited to identify with the missionaries. The foreign heathens were not imagined equals; rather, they were objects of humanitarian pity from the metropolitan public.[583] Paradoxically enough, by re-invoking the dichotomy between metropole and colony, this dividing line helped to conceal the un-egalitarian character of the mission at home. Protests such as Van Calcar's thus remained the exception – the public at the mission festival remained the object of

[580] Elise van Calcar, *Het feest te Wolfhezen, 14 Julij 1864* ('s Gravenhage: J.M. van 't Haaff, 1864), 29–39; "Wassenaar," "Het feest te Wolfhezen, 14 Julij 1864, door Mevrouw Elise van Calcar. 's Gravenhage, J.M. vn 't Haaff," *De Gids* 28 (1864): 199; M. E.J.W.K., "Het feest te Wolfhezen, 14 Julij 1864, door Mevrouw E.v. Calcar. 's Gravenhage bij J.M. v. 't Haaff 1864. 50 cents.," *Vaderlandsche letteroefeningen* 1865 (n.d.): 14–17.
[581] Buytendijk, *Het veertigjarig bestaan*.
[582] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*.
[583] Festa, 'Humanity without Feathers'.

edifying endeavours, while in their imagination they were the ones bringing civilization and revelation to others.

The choice for a missionary career

The double-cast role for the missionary public brought along the same paradox as the civilizing mission did in the colonies. On the one hand, the missionary discourse invited Dutch citizens to participate in the missionary project, while on the other hand, there were limits to the extent of this participation – after all, not everyone could rise to become a converter him- or herself. The upper echelons of the missionary machinery were remarkably closed. They were predominantly male and white, and usually came from families with strong ties to the orthodox church. Nonetheless there were outsiders who became missionaries. These men and women went through a transition: from the outer circle of the missionary public at large, they were recruited to the inner circle of the missionary project. For many missionaries this was a lifetime opportunity. Lower class men with little education could not aspire functions with similar power and stature at home. Likewise, women could exercise more freedom in their colonial careers, although they would still be relegated to subordinate positions compared to their (European) male counterparts. In a typical situation, a man would lead a missionary station, while women would have the position of nurse or teacher. In all cases they chose for a lifetime-career.

Notwithstanding its limited success, the concept of the *Christen-Werkman als Zendeling* ('The Christian Craftsman as Missionary') forms the best illustration of the social mobility a career in the missionary world had to offer. The idea came from Ottho Gerhard Heldring (1804-1876) and the German pastor J.E. Gossner (1773-1853). In their view, the gospel would be best spread by craftsman without notable theological education – their pious presence amidst the heathen population in the colonies would be contagious, but they would not take up preaching as such, it would rather be a collateral effect of their presence as craftsmen. Although only a very limited number of missionary-craftsmen actually made it overseas, the idea of sending not-too-sophisticated men and women for the missionary cause could also be detected in other instances. The official requirements for prospect missionaries of the *Zendelinghuis* (the NZG training institute) in 1870, for instance, read as follows:

> No one will be allowed to the [missionary] exam, than those whose life, character and ability, as testified by authorized persons, give us the hope that he will devote himself to God from a pure heart hart, a clean conscience and an unfeigned faith. […] Furthermore, he should be able-bodied, in good health, between 16 and 23 years old, a parish member […] and ready to given himself unconditional to the missionary vocation. The exam should show that those who wish to be hired are able to:
>
> a) Read clearly and with verdict;
>
> b) Have a clear handwriting;
>
> c) Know the general rules of arithmetic, including common and decimal fractions, and the rule of three;
>
> d) Have acquainted themselves with the basics of Dutch language;
>
> e) Are not unfamiliar with general history and geography, in particular regarding the Holy land, the fatherland and its overseas possessions;
>
> f) Have possession of the extent of knowledge of the Bible, that can be assumed from a well-educated Parish member.[584]

These requirements that education, but a low level would suffice. Yet, simply being able to read, write and do arithmetic's would not bring you there alone – the two more unspoken rules you had to comply with were your gender (although not explicitly mentioned, the training was only open to men), which had to be male, and your background, as the 'life, character and ability' mentioned were open to interpretation, and in practice needed strong backing in the form of reference letters, preferably from the local pastor. To see how this process of becoming a missionary looks like, we will now turn to one particular example.

In his memoirs, the Dutch missionary Cees Hoekendijk (1873-1948) tried to answer the question of how he became a missionary. He recalled: "[In the 1890s] a large leprosy hospital was founded in Jerusalem, named 'Jesus Hilfe'. An appeal was heard all through Germany and the Netherlands, urging young men and women to devout their lives to this work. The call also entered my soul, and I burned of desire to devout my life to this cause."[585] The summoning call he remembers shrinks somewhat in size and volume, however, when it is compared with the only mentioning of this leprosy colony

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[584] *Maandberigten voorgelezen in de maandelijksche bedestonden van het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap, betrekkelijk de uitbreiding van het Christendom, bijzonder onder de heidenen. Voor het jaar 1870*, 31. For a more detailed description of the requirements, see *Vereischten, dergene, die wenschen te worden opgenomen in het Zendelinghuis*, NL-UtHUA 1102-1, file 697.

[585] C.J. Hoekendijk, *Bladen uit mijn levensboek: autobiografie van ds. C.J. Hoekendijk (1873-1948)*, ed. Th. van den End (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1993), 46.

in the Dutch newspapers: “In Jerusalem are two hospitals for leprosy patients. One old Turkish house, where the patients are packed like cattle, and a new building, the foundation of a German baroness, where a more dignified shelter is provided for the poor patients.”[586]

Hoekendijk was one of those adolescents who craved for adventure. It made him remember this appeal for applications from the leprosy hospital in Jerusalem as a summoning call going as a shockwave through the country. In fact, however, only two national newspapers mentioned the existence in an overview of leprosy in the Middle East. The memory therefore reveals more about Hoekendijk’s ambitions than about the call itself, the more because this was eventually not the path Hoekendijk took. As there were so many applicants, no position “was left for him,” and he was denied. A few years earlier, little would have predicted Hoekendijk’s desire for a missionary’s career. After attending primary school until the age of twelve, he took on jobs as tailor’s apprentice and assistant shopkeeper. Without notable education, nor with any special talent laid bear, his future seemed to be bound to the city of Utrecht, his career restricted to the opportunities in unskilled labour the city had to offer.

After his unsuccessful application for the leprosy hospital, Hoekendijk set his mind on becoming a deacon at a nursing home for epilepsy patients. This home, Meer en Bosch in the city of Heemstede, southwest of Amsterdam, was not unknown to Hoekendijk. His late brother was nursed there before his death, and another older brother preceded him there in serving as deacon. Although he remembers his mother’s initial reaction as slightly disapproving, she soon sent him to Heemstede for an appointment with the director of the nursing home. For Hoekendijk, this meeting with the former missionary J.L. Zegers must have made an everlasting impression, as he recalled “he did not just look at you, he saw right through your soul, and it was in vain when you tried to hide some of the corners of your heart for him.”[587] Zegers allowed Hoekendijk, then seventeen years old, to commence as soon the next month (april 1891) as an apprentice at Meer en Bosch.

It is during his four years at the epilepsy nursing home Meer en Bosch that the mission came into view as a viable career option, although his pious choice of words prevented Hoekendijk from ever speaking of it in terms of career. Key in his increasing

[586] *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 9 November 1891
[587] Hoekendijk, *Bladen uit mijn levensboek*, 48.

interest for the mission was Zegers, who was a missionary in Indramayu, on the west of Java, for twenty-two years and used this experience in his lessons at the nursing home. In his memoirs, Hoekendijk recalls this vividly: "Step by step we collectively read our way through the Acts of the Apostles. Zegers guided us in tracing the steps of Paul, the great apostle. It was not his purpose, but through the radiation of his own missionary heart, Zegers lid a fire for the Mission in all of us."[588] With support from Zegers, Hoekendijk signed up for the Missionary School (*Zendingshuis*) of the *Nederlandse Zendingsvereniging* (Dutch Mission Association, NZV), of orthodox Dutch Reformed denomination, where he got admitted in 1895. At the end of the nineteenth century, the NZV was one out of many orthodox missionary organisations. As opposed to other associations, it had little ties with the official church and was constituted of "petty middleclass men."[589]

"My mother didn't say much, but deep in her heart she hoped God would forbid," Hoekendijk wrote about his mother's reaction to his admission to the Missionary School.[590] Besides strikes of parental love like these, in fact his family did not object anything to his career. He was able to drastically alter his path of life, after spending his teenager years in small unskilled jobs, and apparently this was not too off-bound a choice. His trail was blazed by his older brother, who also worked at Meer en Bosch, and this was an opportunity to gain status – his great example, Zegers, came back as missionary from Java to enter the respectable position of director of the foundations for epilepsy patients in Haarlem and Heemstede and the nursing home that served as educating centre for deacons and deaconesses. Hoekendijk simply testified that he followed the path God had chosen for him – it was not an extraordinary one though, but a path well within the bounds of what was expected and permitted.[591]

Gendered role models

The trajectory that was remarkably quotidian for Hoekendijk to follow, was not available to women. The official missionary education recruited men, and as shown above, the bucket list of knowledge, character traits and skills that new recruits for the *Zendelingenhuis* (Missionaries School) had to meet was steeped in masculinity. Although

[588] Ibid., 68.
[589] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 108.
[590] Hoekendijk, *Bladen uit mijn levensboek*, 65.
[591] Ibid., 64.

women were present in missionary efforts in both metropole and colony, their presence has a long tradition of being obscured, and their perceived tasks were thought of as second-ranked or auxiliary. According to missiologist Pierre Charles, writing in the 1950s, the origins for this even trace as far back as to medieval associations of women with heretic movements and their prominent role in religious sects. Ever since the church suspected women and limited their tasks to the charitable and auxiliary spheres.[592] This is also reflected in the Protestant church. As late as in 1955, a book dedicated to the life stories of trailblazing women in the Protestant mission, described female presence in the mission thus:

> The relevance of women in the existence of young churches can best be illustrated with a series of life stories of some trailblazers in the domain of the mission. Here, one finds the accounts of women who, with love and patience, with sacrifices and prayers, supported the work of their men.[593]

Moreover, by selecting the lives of a limited number of women, their leadership and novel efforts were rendered exceptional – this was not the normal way for women to behave. The duties of a missionary's wife that are mentioned in the introduction of the same book give the same sense of exceptionality to every woman who was able to do more than these domestic tasks:

> They laboured as missionaries' wives. Through their family task, and next to it, they found themselves next to their husbands, situated in the missionary assignment (*opdracht*). It required great sacrifices and efforts from those, who had received little education for their task, to raise their families in remote areas without any medical aid.[594]

The idea of exceptionality made its way into historiography, where women missionaries are notoriously absent, or at best depicted in submissive roles as the above examples show. As Carine Dujardin noted, many standard works on the Catholic mission (where, due the orders of nuns, women's involvement in the mission historically might have been of a larger scale and more formally organized than in its Protestant counterpart), even fail to make mention of women altogether. Alternatively, their presence is described as "*un phénomène extraordinaire*", as Simon Delacroix did in the *Histoire*

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[592] Pierre Charles, *Missiologie antiféministe* (1951), pp. 23-25, as quoted in: Carine Dujardin, "Gender: Een beloftevolle invalshoek voor de studie van missie en zending," *Trajecta* 12, no. 4 (2003): 279.
[593] C.B. Rijnders and H.A. Wiersinga, eds., *Zij gingen vóóraan ... levensbeschrijvingen van baanbreeksters uit de zendingswereld en het leven der jonge kerken* (Amsterdam: Ten Have, 1955), blurb.
[594] Ibid., 4.

Universelle des Missions Catholiques (1957).[595] Dujardin gives three reasons for this bias in historiography. First, the very same gendered pattern that rendered women's work in the mission less worthy than men's work, is the same set of values that many historians of the mission adhered to. This tunnel vision resulted in a lack of academic interest for both women's presence as for the gendered codes that ran through the whole mission world. Secondly, the self-perceived central task of the mission was teaching the gospel. Although this was a task for both sexes in the apostolic times, over the course of centuries preaching was rendered a men's task, resulting in women being sidelined in missionary projects. And thirdly, something what Dujardin calls the "geopolitical" circumstances: the crusades of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were an impulse for the mission, but they were military enterprises, thus favouring men. The missionary revival of the nineteenth century, she argues, was entangled with industrialisation and colonialism, which brought women back on the missionary fronts.[596]

To be sure, also the historiography of the Dutch Protestant missions has the same bias – partly due to historians' own shortcomings, partly due to the gendered reality of the missionary organisations. In his writings on the ideological background of the founders of the *Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap* (NZG), Joris van Eijnatten had to deal with a group of founders that was exclusively male. The mental shift from 'religious freedom' to 'education' that accompanied the missionary societies in the early nineteenth century had a pedagogical dimension, he demonstrates, but he does not mention any gender component.[597] In *Holland op zijn Breedst*, Bossenbroek does not go into the details of missionary personnel, thereby partly circumventing the gender question, but nor does that question seem to be on his radar in any other respect.[598] And Gerrit Noort, in his book on Dutch missionary education, limits himself to formal missionary education, which singled out men.[599] To be sure, the missionary world was a men's world when it comes to influential positions and formal structure, but many studies have seemed to fail to transcend the historical categories the missionary archives supplies them with.

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[595] Simon Delacroix, *Histoire Universelle des Missions Catholique*, vol. III (1957), p23, as quoted in: Dujardin, "Gender," 276.
[596] Ibid., 276–79.
[597] Van Eijnatten, "Beschaafd Koninkrijk."
[598] Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*.
[599] Gerrit van Noort, ed., *Protestantse Zendingsopleiding in Nederland (1797-2010)* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2012).

Who, then, were the women working in the Protestant mission? Unlike Hoekendijk and the numerous other male missionaries, they did not have concrete role models in the form of the elder retired missionaries that provided their education. In literature, however, these role models emerged by the end of the nineteenth century. In *Van heinde en ver op het Zendingsterrein, vertelstof ten dienst van zondagsscholen* ('Misson Stories from Afar', 1922), a collection of stories for Christian education in Sunday schools, four exemplary missionaries are presented to the reader. The authors drew on British sources, and presented their audience the lives of the famous explorer and missionary David Livingstone (1813-1873), the Scottish missionary to present-day Nigeria Mary Slessor (1848-1915) and Robert Morrison (1782-1834), the first Protestant missionary in China. There are some common themes in the life stories. For example, for all three 'Protestant saints' their modest background is stressed. Morrison, as the story begins, was a young shoemaker. "While his hands crafted the wood, his eyes followed the lines of a Latin book, which lay open in front of him, and repeated the words whispering."[600] From their modest background, these exemplary missionaries go through a transformation and experience a revelation, find God and turn on the missionary path. But there are also stark contrasts between them. Livingstone is depicted as an immortal hero, who barehandedly saves the Africans he encounters from the dangers lions and crocodiles pose, buys a small slave girl her freedom, and digs an irrigation system to demonstrate that rainmaking rituals sort no effect. Maria Slessor is depicted as a white saviour too, but of a different kind. Her strength was that "she was a lone woman, unarmed, approaching them with a smile and without fear." In the story, she settles herself in a village and blends in, passively enduring the hardships of living in a hut made out of "clay, bamboo and a roof of palm leafs." Her fearlessness is not of the heroic and masculine kind as Livingstone's, but only rooted in a firm belief in "being accompanied by Jesus."[601] These were the character traits that were exemplary to women missionaries-to-be: passively enduring hardships, a firm belief in God's guidance and a strong affinity with providing care for the young. Their weapons in the missionary field were, as Judith Rowbotham put it, their feminine attributes.[602]

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[600] *Van heinde en ver op het zendingsterrein: vertelstof ten dienste van zondagsscholen, enz.* (Zendingsstudie-raad, 1922), 18.
[601] Ibid., 12–18.
[602] Judith Rowbotham, '"Soldiers of Christ"? Images of Female Missionaries in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain: Issues of Heroism and Martyrdom', *Gender & History* 12, no. 1 (2000): 98.

Similar propaganda material featuring Dutch female missionaries did not exist for a long time, as opposed to the numerous memoires and life stories of male missionaries, for whom publishing their memoirs after retirement was close to an obligation. Their female counterparts lagged behind: it was only in 1929 that the *Vrouwen Zendings-Bond* (Women's Missionary League) was founded, and only 1955 when the league's founder, Anne Elisabeth Adriani (1866-1944), had her life story published in *Zij gingen vóóraan,* the volume mentioned above that celebrated the "[female] trailblazers in the missionary world."[603] Here we encounter the Dutch missionaries from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and their background reveals a background different from the exemplary tales about David Livingstone or Mary Slessor. They were usually the daughters of parents highly involved in the missionary or orthodox movement. Adriani herself, for example, was a pastor's daughter. In 1889 her father became the president of the *Utrechtsche Zendings Vereniging* (Utrecht Missionary Association). Another chapter is the volume is devoted to Jacqueline van Andel-Rutgers, the daughter of an orthodox professor at the *Vrije Universiteit* (Free University) in Amsterdam.

This privileged background cannot be seen separately from the career these women went through. Adriani's first interest in the mission is dated "at the visit of the missionary Woelders and his wife, who stayed at her parent's place together with a boy from New Guinea."[604] The boy, named Ali, and was a stepson of the Woelders family, and accompanied Woelders during his lecture your through The Netherlands, which included a performance at the 1879 edition of the Mission Festival. Despite being part of the Woelders family, Ali was used as an attraction, culminating in printed photographs with his portrait. The photos were offered for sale as a 'souvenir' to the experience of having seen this representative of far away lands, and the funds thus created were used for the orthodox mission in his home country.[605]

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[603] Rijnders and Wiersinga, *Zij gingen vóóraan*, 8.
[604] Ibid., 9.
[605] *Nieuw Guinea Koerier*, 16 July 1960. The article is a retrospective of Ali's life history, and reports his failure to stay on the 'straight path' provided by the upbringing in the Woelders family, as he allegedly became a '*koppensneller'* (head hunter). In this respect, the article reinforces the trope that is particularly thriving in the 1950s and 1960s, and that could be described as the 'fallen educated native': people of colour who receive a Dutch or European education – for example by being adopted into a European family – but later in their lives 'fail' to live up to the expectations this raised, thus adding to the discourse of biological essentialism. See also: Christina Wu, 'Under the Skin: Anxieties of the Domestic Realm in the Maria Hertogh Controversy', in *Studies in Malaysian & Singapore History*, ed. Bruce Lockhart and Lim Tse Siang (Kuala Lumpur, 2010), 115–60.

Turning our attention back to Adriani, being part of a family where the mission had such a quotidian presence must have contributed to her desire to become a missionary herself. She attended training for becoming a teacher and was appointed head of the *Salembaschool* (a girls-only school near Batavia), an appointment she refused however. In 1896 she accepted another appointment and became headmistress of the *Staats-Meisjesschool* (State School for Girls) in Pretoria, South Africa. She held different successive leading positions in South African schools and was praised in her own circles as the one who laid the foundation for some thriving decades for these schools. Fifty years later a magazine celebrating the anniversary of the school *Ermelo* read: "If the foundations are of poor quality, the building will crack – instead of being an ornament to its environment, it will pose danger. That our education here at Ermelo is such an ornament and still fills us with pride, is thanks to the efforts of Miss Adriani."[606] Adriani was not only a teacher. She preached the gospel to female domestic workers in what became to be known 'garage sevices' – literally sermons in a garage – and was active in editing books: she wrote biography of her brother N. Adriani, a linguist, and translated works on the gospel from English to Dutch. These activities were not unrelated, as for Adriani all depended on thorough knowledge of the Bible. When she found the Women's Missionary League in 1928, Bible exegesis became the cornerstone of the program.

There is a discrepancy between the role for women Adriani propagated and her own role. According to her, women had an auxiliary function in the mission. As it is described in her life story:

> From the start [of the Women's Missionary League] it was stressed that women had a role in the mission that was their own, but not separate. This own task, an auxiliary task – that was where out quest should lead us, under the joint responsibility of men and women for the whole range of missionary labor. This applied to the work abroad, and to the Home Base here.[607]

This was much in line with other (male) voices in the Protestant missionary world at that time. Cees Hoekendijk – whom we know all too well from the section above – also wrote on the topic of women and the mission and arrived at similar conclusions. He rhetorically wondered what would "have become of Christianity without women" and saw their labour as essential: not only in their role as missionary's wives, but also as

[606] Rijnders and Wiersinga, *Zij gingen vóóraan*, 14.
[607] Ibid., 19.

independent teachers and nurses in the colonies, and in the metropole. At home, they were "simply better" in collecting the small amounts of money needed to fund the mission or to give the missionary organisations visibility on fairs. As teachers and nurses in the foreign mission fields, or as female missionaries, "they could do the same among female heathens, as male missionaries do for both sexes."[608] These tasks included home visitations, childcare, attending funerals and childbirths, where eventually the female missionary should not be present herself, but rather the indigenous sisters she educated, while she herself would supervise. Only then, Hoekendijk argued, would the female missionary be able to "stand next to a man," which meant something close to being an omnipotent assistant without prospect for any advance, as the hierarchy was perpetually reinforced by essentialist notions of gender and race – leaving the indigenous sisters on the very bottom.

Adriani herself does, however, not fit the picture of 'omnipotent assistant.' Unmarried during the whole of her life, she remained in independent functions from the start of her career onwards, most of the time as headmistress of schools. The firm leadership she displayed is not among the qualities Hoekendijk praised female missionaries for. She is described as a "pioneer", who intervened as much as possible in the organizations she was involved with, until long after her official retirement.[609] One of the few earlier Dutch women whose life stories or memoirs were published, was Elisabeth Jacoba van Vollenhove (1824-1906). As the wife of a high-ranked military in The Indies she founded Sunday schools for Javanese children. Her memoirs, published in 1904 and entitled *Zonnestralen in den vreemde* ('Beams of Sunlight in Foreign Lands') reveal the working of internalization of gendered missionary standards: she gives little attention to her time as a missionary's wife, and does not mention at all her own autonomous efforts in establishing Sunday schools, instead opting to highlight the travels that had a more leisure character and her meetings with other well-to-dos in Florence, Rome and Basel.[610]

The similarity between Adriani and Van Vollenhove is their privileged background in elite Christian families. They did not go through a moment of revelation, like the exemplary Mary Slessor, as their lives were steeped in religion early on. A telling

[608] C. J. Hoekendijk and J. Bliek, *De vrouw en de zending - Zijt gij geroepen? - J. Bliek. Een uitnemend voorstel* (Van der Wagt, 1914), 18.
[609] Rijnders and Wiersinga, *Zij gingen vóóraan*, 20–21.
[610] Elisabeth Jacoba van Vollenhove, *Zonnestralen in den vreemde: reisherinneringen eener tachtigjarige* (Utrecht, 1904).

anecdote in Van Vollenhove's memoires is when she finds herself in the Swiss town of Locarno and informs whether there is a Protestant service in town. The response from the hotel owner, she wrote, was: "Oh yes [there is], but [it is] not suitable for you, it is for common folk."[611] Women like Van Vollenhove, Adriani and Van Andel-Rutgers depended on their privileged background to take initiatives in the missionary field. Yet in their memoirs they reeled back to meet the expectations (Christian) society had of them. Or, to come back to the reminder *Zij gingen vóóraan* gave its readers: "With love and patience, with sacrifices and prayers, these missionary wives [supported] the work of their men."[612]

Finding funds (conclusion)

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the NZG lost its prominent position. Dissatisfaction on the terrains of Church doctrine (more orthodox factions found the NZG too liberal and too lenient) and of missionary strategies (according to some, missionary work overseas was too curtailed by the colonial administration and the NZG did not push enough to lift this) led to the founding of new, rivaling, missionary societies. As those organizations, such as the *Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging* (UZV, 'Utrecht Missionary Association') and the *Java-Comité* ('Java Committee'), grew, the NZG had to fight its declining number of members. One of the implications of this decline is that the NZG, more than any other missionary organization, was in need of countermeasures to turn the tide. Relying on contributions and donations, this meant an investment in their grassroots support: the numerous women and men who donated amounts to support the Mission, starting with mere cents.

As the annual reports of the NZG show, the society struggled to maintain a credit balance. The figures from the 1880s illustrate the turbulent times the NZG found itself in:

Year	Balance
1880	– *ƒ* 7 724
1884	– *ƒ* 18 458
1885	*ƒ* 20 585

[611] Ibid., 22–23. Original: "O ja, maar dat is niet voor u, alleen voor eenvoudige luitjes."
[612] Rijnders and Wiersinga, *Zij gingen vóóraan*, blurb.

1886	*ƒ* 17 460
1887	– *ƒ* 8 590
1888	– *ƒ* 12 445

Table 3 - Annual balance of the Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap (NZG) in the 1880s. Source: *Maandberigten*, NL-UtHUA 1102-1, file 333.

As the table shows, considerable surpluses in some years were alternated by huge deficits. The years that yielded a surplus, moreover, are years in which the society received an exceptional amount of legacies. It somewhat macabrely indicates that the NZG depended on its members to pass away on a regular pace to have ends meet.

Not surprisingly, with the rhythm of an agitated beat the NZG board issued calls for new donations or urged their backers to increase their support. In 1885, a new peak was reached when a call for donations was given the title "Aan het Volk van Nederland" ('[Manifesto] to the Dutch People'), thereby directly referring to the tradition of previous famous (and less famous) calls to the nation. Unfortunately for the NZG's board members, their initiative remained somewhat of a desperate effort, and it did not reach any further than page 7 of the *Leeuwarder Courant*, a northern regional newspaper.[613] In this two-and-a-half page manifesto the readers were told that "a new disaster" was threatening the Indies when the NZG would be forced to cease its activities there:

> What would be the fate of our missionaries and their families, the native assistant-preachers and teachers, the new parishes and the Christians that were once Heathens? What about the promises we made them, and the prospects opened on their needs? What about curtailing of the Islam by Christianity, also important politically? [...] We cannot think of it without being moved. Where the light is extinguished, darkness sets in.
>
> [...]
>
> Dutch people! You cannot let this be the embarrassing end of what was started by your forefathers. Your honour is at stake here, and so are your interests.[614]

Pleas like this manifesto could sort the desired effect – in this case, a few extra thousand guilders was collected, which was not enough to fill the deficit, but nonetheless a substantial amount. At other times, however, too-desperate calls appeals could backfire. One addressee of an appeal letter wrote back thus in 1880, slightly agitated:

> Since you request a response quite pressingly, I will give you one. I could not imagine that your letter of 20 October was received at the right address, since my name is J. Boogert and not J. Bogerd, and I should not be addressed with *weledele*

[613] 'Ingezonden', *Leeuwarder Courant,* 5 February 1885, p. 7.
[614] *Manifest aan het volk van Nederland,* NL-UtHUA, 1102-1, file 564.

> ['noble Sir'] since I am only a servant, in the service of M.C. Lebret, trader in ironmongery in Dordrecht. I make a living of my earnings with wive and three children. For years I have been committed to save ƒ2,50 from my pennies, to contribute to the NZG. As long as I can reasonably manage, I will continue to do so, and bring this sum to D. Pijzel in early January. I trust you are now familiar with my situation and call myself your obedient servant.[615]

The contributions from J. Boogert and the thousands of people like him may have been small for the NZG, but for their contributors they represented considerable sums.

What is most striking in the example of J. Boogert is the for-granted status of his contribution. Although the NZG, as just one of many missionary societies at that time, was fighting a lost battle, it was loyal supporters like this servant they relied upon. They were all members of a missionary public, the contributors of cents, the women's auxiliary organisations that collected them, the local pastors who read the monthly reports of the NZG in their churches, and the visitors of the mission festivals. The many dividing lines that ran across the missionary world (between colonizer and colonized, between men and women, between leading intellectuals and supporting labourers) were brushed away in the public's imagination – only thus could the mission festival visitor imagine him- or herself to be part of missionary work that in fact took place overseas, and only thus could workers imagine that their support was essential to the overseas missionary work.

[615] NL-UtHUA 1102-1, file 562.

Conclusion

Dutch Popular Imperialism and the Postcolonial Question

The subject of this study has been the Dutch public consciousness vis-à-vis the Dutch colonial empire during the time of modern imperialism, roughly spanning the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. This collective mentality is usually referred to with the term *public imperialism*, and its relevance as an object of study was established by British historians who held the assumption that, in order to administratively maintain the British Empire, a large pool of imperially-minded citizens was needed from which to draw the workforce needed to do so. Scaling down both the colonizing nation and the empire in question, the case of the Netherlands provides a similar *problematique,* bringing to the fore the questions how this conquering of the metropolitan mind worked, how 'steeped in empire' Dutch society was, and what the limits of this cultural permeation were. But valid as these questions are, they also assume a monolithic public consciousness and provide a restraining binary logic of successful permeation or the lack thereof. In order to address these shortcomings, and in an attempt to render visible public ignorance and indifference to empire, other shades of empire-mindedness such as anti-colonialism, and hitherto left-out narratives of Indonesians in the metropole, I have proposed here to approach Dutch imperialism as fragmented.

The idea of *fragmented imperialism* allows us to see the diverse instances of popular imperial culture around the turn of the twentieth century, located in various places within civil society at large. There was no dominant imperial ideology that clearly affected churches, missionary organizations, and other associations alike, but they all linked to the imperial project in their own ways. Among the myriad of ways to relate to empire, two were salient and resonated beyond single (sub) cultures or sites. The first,

ethical imperialism or *liberal imperialism*, is rooted in the humanitarian traditions from the 1850s onwards, and culminated in attempts to formulate an 'ethical policy' (*ethische politiek*) around 1900. In this thesis it is represented in various chapters. The missionary organizations, for instance, were afflicted with the most quintessential civilizing impetus in their attempts to insert Christianity as the basis of subjected peoples' civilization (chapter 6). It reflects the ostensibly good intentions of this branch of imperialism, as well as its self-serving nature and the fundamentally (and therefore oxymoronic) patronizing attitude. The same imperial mindset is reflected in the attempts of the association *Oost en West* (chapter two) to increase metropolitan popular knowledge of the Indies, which was essential in mobilizing support for the civilizing mission implied by ethical imperialism. This case study also illustrates the thin line between self-reportedly serving the interest of other peoples and serving self-interest, as the association's slogan ("The colonial interest is the mother country's interest") aptly reflected.

This brings us to the second imperial mindset that prevailed, namely, *patriotic imperialism*. Its origins go back further than liberal imperialism and are even beyond the scope of this study. During the period under hand here, this type of imperialism served as a backdrop for most other forms, and borders on the attitude of indifference. One leitmotif is that of conquerors and heroes. This is, for instance, reflected in the Dutch adaptation of Baden-Powell's foundational handbook *Scouting for Boys* (1907), which enumerated the admirals and conquerors most associated with Dutch imperial prowess, such as Michiel de Ruyter and Abel Tasman (chapter 5). As a consequence, it regarded imperialism as a fundamentally centrifugal force, something which radiated from the metropolitan centers to the colonized peripheries. The adjective 'patriotic' comes in lieu of a more fitting label, as this brand of imperialism encompassed both conservative and reactionary traditions, as well as romantic takes on empire. In the traditional scholarly chronology applied to these imperial mindsets, patriotic imperialism is both a predecessor and successor of ethical imperialism. As my findings suggest, however, we should rather see patriotic imperialism as a looming presence throughout the entire era of modern imperialism.

None of these imperial ideologies ever reached a sole hegemonic status. Instead, in the absence of a leading central colonial culture, they existed simultaneously, at times in a dialectic relationship, at times in direct confrontation, and at times without any

interaction in a parallel existence. Consider again the missionary organizations (chapter 6). They drew on ethical imperialism and its civilising impetus, to be sure, but they did not simply resonate ideologues of the *ethische politiek*. In fact, their depiction of the colonies as the stage of a Manichean clash between Islam and Christianity put more weight on religion than other imperial discourses did, even though Christianity was one among several defining elements of European or white identities in the colonies. This can be interpreted as an attempt to turn the national cause of ruling an empire into a religious one, and thereby to assert religion in a national framework, while at the same time it reinforced Christianity as one of the pillars of colonial citizenship. Other frames of reference were less permeating. Even though foodways have proven to aid, solidify or even inform the power structures of empire (Chapter 2), colonial food culture and its discontents remained tied to *Indische* social circles and had no echo in mission festivals or scouting activities, where food was not politicized within the context of empire (no doubt it was politicized in other frames – the class aspect of the 'day out' that included affordable nourishments which the mission festivals provided remains of secondary importance here, but is certainly noteworthy).

Why did Dutch imperialism remain fragmented? Why did no strong, central, Dutch imperialism emerge? The answer to this question lies in the realization that a weak, fluid and fragmented imperial culture in fact supported the imperial project. It allowed the imperial project to be casted in an auxiliary role to other interests: those of the nation, those of religious groups, and those of retired colonials, to name a few. Thus, the empire could be invoked almost everywhere, without overtaking the stage – a convenient characteristic for those who were preoccupied not so much with the colonial world, as with local concerns, such as instilling desired values upon the nation's youth or churchgoing masses. Moreover, in this way, Dutch imperialism did not clash with notions of Dutch nationalism. The self-image of the country as small, neutral, and peace supporting went through an important formative stage during the era of modern imperialism, and was cultivated inside and outside colonial contexts. A colonial culture that only lingered in the background fitted this image of the national self well – tellingly, in concordance with this the Dutch language did not develop an imperial discourse like the British; the word for Empire, *Rijk*, is not afflicted with the overt colonial connotation it British counterpart has.

Because Dutch imperialism appeared fluid and fragmented, it could seem as if colonial affairs only played a marginal role in civil society. The empire would surface at select moments or select sites, and disappear in the next. Imperial identity formations, associations, material traces, references; Dutch society, around the long turn of the twentieth century, was rife with them, and yet, as easily as they could come into view, so they could ostensibly disappear. To contemporary commentators and latter-day historians alike the history of Dutch imperialism has proven itself elusive for that reason. Dutch identities – whether we approach this concept by looking at political discourse, at the various 'pillared' subcultures, as something expressed in holidays, the royal family, or other national symbols – could do very well without the colonies. That it was often invoked nonetheless made the empire a non-essential part of what it meant to live in Dutch society, but a part nonetheless. Thus, instead of the consequence of an analysis falling short, *ambiguity* is a defining feature of public imperialism in the Netherlands.

The deeply entrenched separation between nation and empire is an historical category and not a category of analysis. There is, after all, the postcolonial imperative to study metropoles and colonies in "a single analytical field", as the anthropologist Ann Stoler and historian Frederick Cooper put it in their agenda-setting introduction to their anthology *Tensions of Empire* (1997).[616] After centuries of keeping the empire at an arm's length of the nation, however, this rigid divide between center and periphery to be firmly rooted in our minds. In order not to reproduce this dichotomy here, the question on the table appears like an oxymoron: how can we study the metropole without using the category of 'metropole'? This thesis was, therefore, not a study of the 'centre', but that of one half of a web of asymmetric reciprocity. It looked remarkably like the other half: we saw, among other things, the same power relations and cultural transmissions as in the Dutch East Indies, a similar instability of the category of race, upon which colonial rule leaned heavily, and the same intimate relation between inclusionary ('liberal') and exclusionary ('conservative) politics. A common theory found in studies in imperialism and colonialism is that the fictions of empire – such as monolithic rule, white supremacy, an unambiguous 'scientific' racism, a force radiating from Europe to the world – were imaginations of the metropolitan mind, which were in turn contradicted by the lived reality in the colonies. The idea of *fragmented imperialism*

[616] Stoler and Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony', 4.

alters this interpretation by demonstrating that the fictions and fantasies of empire are also contradicted by evidence from the metropole.

As a consequence of discarding the concept of the metropole this study has included stories of colonial culture that would hitherto have been left out in accounts of public imperialism. Not only do some fragments of popular imperialism remain autonomous, such as the home mission of missionary organization, but others relate even more tangentially to the entire body of public imperialism. The imperial space Soewardi and his fellow exiles moved through included Java, the Banda Islands in the Moluccas, and the Netherlands – and if their presence in this study feels anomalous, it is because only the latter is included here. When we study the metropole while renouncing it as an imperial concept, what is left is a mere geographical definition. The stories that emerge as a consequence necessarily provide a multitude of experiences, potential narratives, and idiosyncrasies, as the physical reality of a geographical region never fully coincides with the concepts of nation or empire that are imposed on it.

This brings new directions to the study of *popular imperialism*. Its fragmented nature should urge us to look beyond mere popular enthusiasm or its photonegative, which usually gives a distorted impression of the daily reality of colonial culture. As John MacKenzie has concluded with regards to the British public, "run-of-the-mill imperial matters seemed to cause boredom and a failure of interest."[617] This holds true for the Dutch case. Small groups of empire-spirited enthusiasts tried to arouse popular interest in things like Indonesian craftworks, to collect funds for missionary activities, to instill a taste for the *rijsttafel*, or conservate and expand the Colonial Museum's collections of sample goods, to name just a few examples drawn from this study; often to no avail. Popular indifference to empire is one of the most notable threads running through the history of public imperialism. The challenge of future studies on the subject is to detect this way to relate to the empire, as well as the various other shades of (non-)engagement – anti-colonialism and alternative notions of colonial citizenship chief amongst them.

The moral implications of the question of popular imperialism should also not be overlooked. Another shortcoming of the original question in this field of study – how could imperial powers draw enough agents for their empire to function? – is that it is situated on a slippery slope towards a positive appraisal of empire, as it turns the

[617] MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People*, 82.

concerns of imperialists of the pasts into research questions of today without much alteration. Andrew Thompson, writing on the British case, put it thus: “To ask in what ways Britain was constituted through its imperial experience is moreover to pose the thorny problem of whether the empire should engender pride or shame.”[618] It is both sides in the MacKenzie-Porter dispute that carry along this risk. The former because of the reason cited above; the latter because the claim that the people were ‘absent-minded imperialists’ easily leads to an apologetic account of history – most metropolitan imperialists were only unconsciously involved, and can therefore cannot be held fully responsible, or at least it was not central to nationhood. To avoid the question altogether, though, as Thompson seems to wish, is impossible. The questions we ask ourselves about the past are ideologically charged, because they are tied to the present – moral questions do not tend to disappear by ignoring them over decades.

If there was ever such a thing as spontaneous tumult in the Netherlands regarding the Dutch East Indies, or regarding the state of being an imperial power, three moments qualify. The first two are the moments of war around the turn of the century, the one fought in Aceh between the Dutch Colonial Army (KNIL) and local resistance forces, and the Boer War, where the British fought the white Boers, who were rendered ‘next of kin’ (*stamverwant*) in the Dutch public opinion. We should not forget they were both media wars, too, which problematizes notions of the grassroots nature of the popular support expressed in these cases. The third instance of ‘spontaneous tumult’ was during the independence war, when Dutch forces attempted to restore colonial authority despite the declaration of independence in 1945. The sentiments expressed during this episode revealed a limited understanding of the political realities of Indonesia in the Dutch political arena. It is the time when the infamous phrase *Indië verloren, rampspoed geboren* (The Indies lost, catastrophe born) was coined, and Dutch politicians clung to the idea of the Netherlands being a colonial power.

The postcolonial collective memory of the colonial past in the Netherlands can at best be called erratic. The infamous phrase *Indië verloren…* may have lost its *Salonfähigkeit* over the years, but it has not been replaced by other collective sentiments regarding the colonial past, such as shame, or guilt. Instead of coming to terms with its past as a colonizing power, the Dutch nation is situated in a postcolonial limbo. It is unable to address the questions of the past and their resonances in the presence, lacking

[618] Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back?*, 7.

the words to do so, something called *colonial aphasia* by Ann Laura Stoler, or, as Paul Bijl has argued recently, lacking the cultural frame to render meaning to the present manifestations of the past.[619] Those manifestations recur with reliable frequency, but are, as a consequence of this condition, not collectively recorded. It leaves every instance of the discovery of photos of colonial atrocities, of KNIL veterans confessing to their actions of referring to what they witnessed, or of calls to improve the curriculum, in a free-floating state. Some matters are even hardly recognized as pertaining to the country's imperial past, such as the matter of *Zwarte Piet*, the blackface character that adorns the national holiday on the fifth of December, and who many whites refuse to see as anything other than an innocent tradition. Thus, the nation's problematic postcolonial condition becomes painstakingly clear vis-à-vis the minorities for whom the colonial past has less ambivalent connotations. For them, symbols like *Zwarte Piet* or photos of colonial atrocities are not only reminders of a painful past, they are also present-day confrontations with the state of cultural aphasia. This is an explanation not only for the intensity expressed in these cases, but also why the often-heard apology why we should bother with things from the past in the first place is so painfully inaccurate.

The ultimate argument presented here is one about continuity. The idea that Dutch colonial remembrance is erratic and suffers from aphasia, which I underwrite, has the unfortunate implication that decolonization is a breaking point. It implies that before this moment, during the colonial era, collective imperial mentalities were coherent, had a ready vocabulary, and a central leading idea. It precludes the possibility of what Bernard Porter has called absent-minded imperialism, just as it precludes the possibility of indifference, or the possibility of parallel imperialisms, such as expressed in the alternative political explorations of the likes of Soewardi and Tjipto, the *Indische* activists who were exiled to the Netherlands, and who advocated nor colonialism, nor Indonesian independence *avant la lettre.* And yet, my thesis is not one of Dutch absent-minded imperialism, but one of fragmented imperialism, of parallel strands that express strong ideology, opposition and indifference alike. Colonial remembrance was already ambivalent before colonialism was a thing of the past. This continuity from colonial times to the present should prompt the question to what extent these mentalities are, indeed, solely a thing of the past.

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[619] Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France," *Public Culture* 23, no. 1 (December 21, 2011): 121–56; Paulus Adrianus Louise Bijl, "Emerging Memory: Photographs of Colonial Atrocity in Dutch Cultural Remembrance," 2011.

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Scouting Nederland Museum

A considerable selection of the newspapers and periodicals I have consulted are available, free of charge, at http://www.delpher.nl (the online periodicals database of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek) and http://dbnl.org (repository for primary and secondary sources of cultural history).

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